

# THE NAVAL WAR OF 1812

❧ *A Documentary History* ❧

Volume IV



Edited by Christine F. Hughes and Charles E. Brodine, Jr.

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### Volume IV

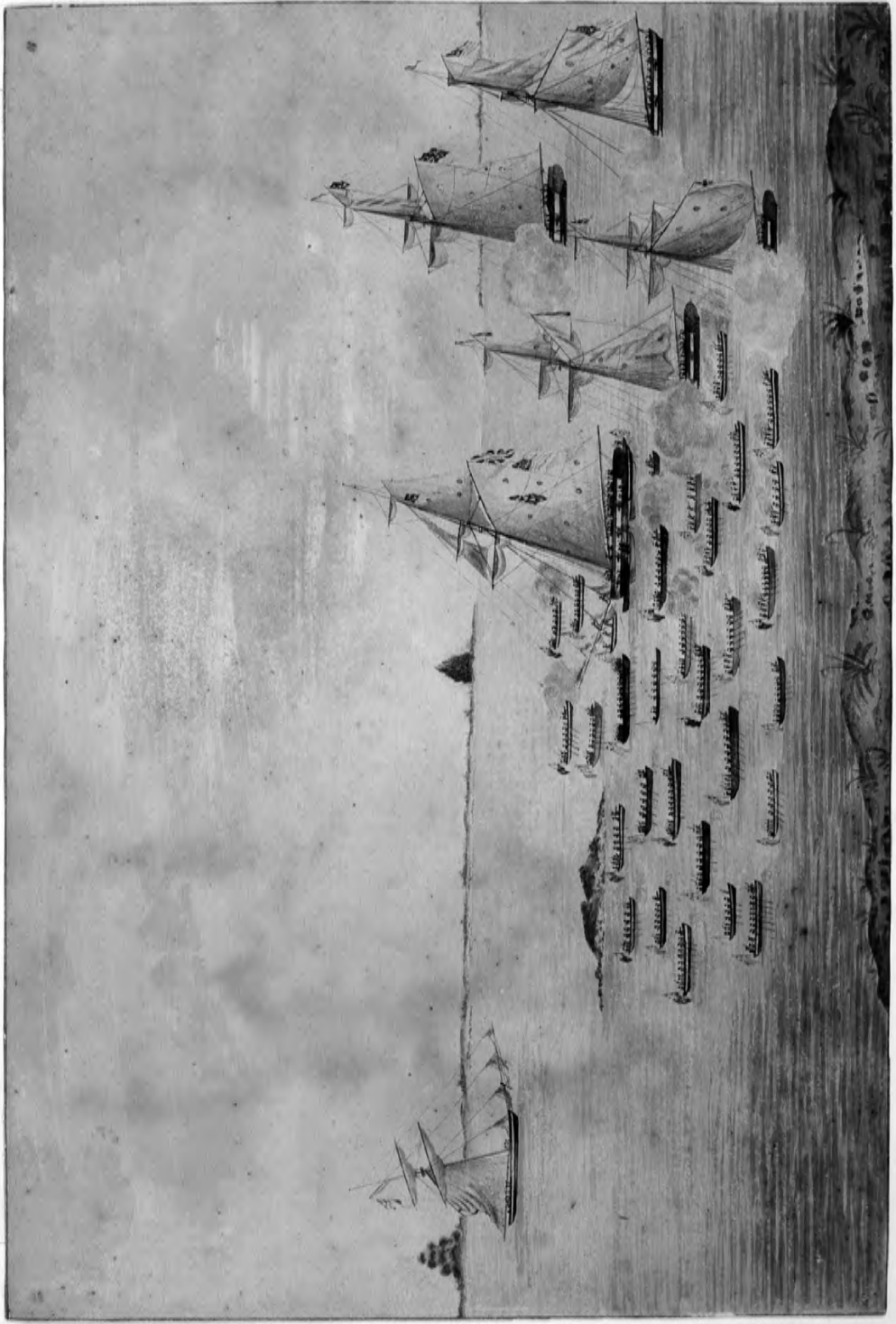
The fourth and final volume of *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History* focuses on the Atlantic and Gulf theaters of operations in 1814 and 1815. Highlights of the volume include the blue-water engagements of USS *Frolic*, *Constitution*, *Wasp*, *Hornet*, *President*, *Siren*, *Rattlesnake*, and *Peacock*, as well as the coastal defense efforts against British incursions off New England, South Carolina, and Georgia that culminated in the Battle of New Orleans. Recurring themes in the volume include problems of discipline, promotions, medical treatment, shipbuilding, prisoners of war, diplomatic missions, courts-martial, the British naval blockade, privateering, Navy Department personnel, supply distribution, naval reform, and demobilization. The government's growing fiscal crisis in 1814 left Navy Secretary William Jones with a rapidly diminishing supply of monies to meet the needs of his far-flung stations. With the strategically important Lake Ontario Theater demanding a growing proportion of his department's resources, Jones had little choice but to divert men and matériel from the Atlantic and Gulf stations to support operations on that inland sea. This decision, though necessary, starved ship and station commanders in those theaters of the means to counter effectively an increasingly aggressive British foe. A theme that echoes and reechoes through this volume is the declining capacity of the Navy Department in 1814 to fund and man the operations of a greatly expanded fleet. Fortunately, the war ended before the Navy's operations collapsed under the crushing weight of its fiscal and manpower needs. The War of 1812 proved a defining moment for the United States Navy. Before the war, the question of whether the nation needed a permanent naval establishment remained politically unsettled. The Navy's brilliant performance during the war—on inland lakes, on distant seas, and in protecting the young nation's coasts—ended all debate in favor of America's sea service.

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# THE NAVAL WAR OF 1812

*A Documentary History*



*Capture of the American gun vessels off New Orleans, 14 December 1814*

THE NAVAL WAR OF 1812  
*A Documentary History*

Volume IV  
1814–1815  
Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico

CHRISTINE F. HUGHES AND CHARLES E. BRODINE, JR.  
Editors

With a Foreword by  
SAMUEL J. COX  
Director of Naval History

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NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND  
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON, DC  
2023

Published by  
Naval History and Heritage Command  
805 Kidder Breese Street SE  
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5060  
www.history.navy.mil

Dust jacket: *Battle of Lake Borgne*. Oil painting by Thomas L. Hornbrook, 1815–1844.  
(The Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans, LA, #1950.54)

This is an official U.S. Government edition of this publication and is herein identified to certify its authenticity. Use of ISBN 978-1-943604-36-4 is for this edition only. A Section 508–compliant PDF is cataloged under ISBN 978-1-943604-37-1.

### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

The Library of Congress has cataloged v. 1–3 as follows:

The Naval War of 1812: a documentary history/  
William S. Dudley, editor; Michael J. Crawford, associate editor; with a foreword by  
John D. H. Kane, Jr.

v. <1–3>; ill. 26 cm.

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

Contents: v. 1. 1812—v. 2. 1813—v. 3. 1814–1815

1. United States—History—War of 1812—Naval operations—Sources. I. Dudley,  
William S. II. Crawford, Michael J. III. Naval Historical Center (U.S.)

E360.N35 1985

973.5'25—dc19

85-600565

ISBN 978-1-943604-36-4 (v. 4)

## Foreword

On 18 June 1812, the United States declared war on the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland to defend its rights as a neutral maritime nation. The contemporary expression “Free Trade and Sailors’ Rights” pithily captures the ideals the American government sought to protect by force of arms in 1812. Ironically, the Madison administration envisioned little role for the U.S. Navy in winning this war fought for freedom of the seas. Instead, it trusted that the quick seizure of Upper Canada by U.S. regulars and militiamen, coupled with a robust privateering campaign against Britain’s oceanic trade, would secure an easy American victory. These hopes were soon dashed by the U.S. military’s failed attempts to invade Canada in the summer and fall of 1812. For this reason, and others, President Madison recognized that the war against Britain could not be won without the contributions of the infant republic’s Navy.

Although government leaders may have considered the Navy an afterthought at the beginning of the war, a string of stirring ship-to-ship victories by U.S. warships between August and December of 1812 catapulted the nation’s sea service into the consciousness of an admiring public. The Navy’s triumphs continued through each year of the war, with two in particular—the battles of Lake Erie and Plattsburgh Bay—yielding important strategic results in favor of the United States. At war’s end, Navy sailors helped rout an invading British army at the Battle of New Orleans, preserving Louisiana’s state capital from enemy occupation.

This record of combat success, though impressive, represents just a part of the U.S. Navy’s 1812 story. The Navy also performed valuable service in defending the nation’s maritime frontier, in protecting American seaborne trade, and in providing logistical and tactical support to the U.S. Army. In addition to these accomplishments, one must also note that the Navy experienced its own share of wartime frustrations, setbacks, and humiliating defeats. Taken as a whole, then, the U.S. Navy’s role in waging the War of 1812 was complex, wide-ranging, and eventful.

Capturing that sweep of the Navy’s 1812 history has been the goal of *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History*. The first volume of the series treated events of the war through 1812, the second through 1813. Volume III examined the final 14 months of the conflict on the Northern Lakes, Chesapeake Bay, and Pacific Ocean theaters. This, the final volume of the series, surveys the war at sea for the Atlantic and Gulf Coast theaters in 1814 and 1815.

The nearly 600 documents devoted to Atlantic Theater operations cover a range of significant topics, including activities at all navy yards and shore installations; all blue-water cruises by Navy warships ranging from the diminutive brig *Enterprise* to the powerful 44-gun frigate *Constitution*; the construction of the Navy’s first 74-gun ships of the line as well as its first steam-powered warship; and the Navy Department’s first initiatives to promote service-wide reform. The 170-plus documents treating naval operations on the Gulf Coast provide a more focused set of themes than will be found in the Atlantic Theater chapter. Fully

three quarters of these materials bear on the pivotal New Orleans campaign and its immediate aftermath. Collectively, they offer a rich documentary record of that hard-fought campaign and the Navy's important role in winning it.

If there is a theme that echoes and reechoes through this volume, and that of Volume III, it is the declining capacity of the Navy Department in 1814 to fund and man the operations of a greatly expanded fleet. The government's growing fiscal crisis in that year left Navy Secretary William Jones with a rapidly diminishing supply of monies to meet the needs of his far-flung stations. With the strategically important Lake Ontario Theater demanding a growing proportion of his department's resources, Jones had little choice but to divert men and matériel from the Atlantic and Gulf stations to support operations on that inland sea. This decision, though necessary, starved ship and station commanders in those theaters of the means to counter effectively an increasingly aggressive British foe.

Even had the Navy Department enjoyed ample funding, it is questionable whether it could have found enough Sailors to man its entire fleet had the war continued well into 1815. The two 74-gun ships of the line launched at Boston and Portsmouth in summer and fall of 1814 remained largely unmanned at year's end. Commodore Isaac Chauncey expected even larger battleships to join his squadron on Lake Ontario in the spring of 1815. Finding the 3,000 officers and seamen to crew these four leviathans would likely have proved an insoluble conundrum for the department. Further complicating matters was the shortage of experienced officers to serve in and command the fleet's new ships. The Navy's stunning success at the beginning of the war owed, in part, to the experience and professionalism of its officer corps. Two and a half years of fighting had thinned this cadre of quarterdeck leaders to the point that Commodore John Rodgers believed the department was unwisely advancing inexperienced junior officers to positions of command. Fortunately, the war ended before the Navy's operations collapsed under the crushing weight of its fiscal and manpower needs.

The War of 1812 proved a defining moment for the United States Navy. Before the war, the question of whether the nation needed a permanent naval establishment remained politically unsettled. The Navy's brilliant performance during the war—on inland lakes, on distant seas, and in protecting the homeland—ended all debate in favor of America's sea service. Over two hundred years later, one of the great icons of the War of 1812, "Old Ironsides," remains in commission, berthed at the Charlestown Navy Yard inside Boston Harbor. This ship, and the Sailors who share its story, provide a living reminder of the courage, honor, and commitment that sustained the Navy through the War of 1812 and remain its core values today.

*The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History* comes to a close with the publication of this fourth and final volume in the series. The series was launched under the aegis of Dr. William S. Dudley, a former director of naval history, in the hope that it would inspire new scholarship on the 1812 Navy—then, an understudied topic. The extensive number of 1812 articles, books, and graduate writings that have profitably exploited the content of this series testify that Dr. Dudley's hopes have been realized. I expect the current body of scholarship on the naval War of 1812 to grow further with the publication of this final volume in the series.

The present volume is the culmination of years of intense labor by the able and dedicated Christine F. Hughes and Charles E. Brodine, Jr., historian-editors



of the Histories Branch. The volume's preface identifies other branch members who contributed their talents to various stages of the process, as well as many additional historians, editors, librarians, archivists, and officials who supported the project in a multitude of ways. All who contributed to this valuable work have my gratitude.

For well over a century, the Navy Department has supported the publication of documentary editions that capture its operational history. Of the nation's military services, the Navy stands alone in publishing its history in this unique format. This command and its predecessor offices have published, or continue to publish, records relating to the Navy's role in seven major conflicts, ranging from the American Revolution to World War I. These special editions make available documents that tell a fuller, more detailed and nuanced story of the fighting Navy than any narrative history can capture. It is my great pleasure to continue the Navy's commitment to this important publishing tradition with the addition of Volume IV of *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History* to its documentary library.

SAMUEL J. COX  
Director of Naval History



## Preface

The mission of the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) is to provide historical services to the Navy Department, other branches of government, and the American public regarding the Navy's past. One way the command seeks to fulfill this important charge, is by publishing collections of documents that highlight the U.S. Navy's pivotal role in defending the nation and its maritime interests. Such publications provide not only an enduring record of the Navy's history over time, but serve as a critical source of research materials for scholars who seek to write about and interpret the history of America's sea service.

NHHC's predecessor office began producing documentary editions in 1894 with the Civil War records project and continued into the 1940s with the publication of the *Quasi War with France* and the *Barbary Powers* volumes. A hiatus in further publishing until 1957 occurred when the command chose to undertake a comprehensive edition of naval documents on the American Revolution. The editors of the *Naval Documents of the American Revolution* series decided to include non-American documents. Buoyed by the positive response to the Revolution series, the command decided to launch in 1978 a series on the War of 1812 that was to be a selective, not comprehensive, three-volume series. The 1812 editors would continue to scour domestic and foreign repositories for primary source material, but, in a conscious effort to restrict the size of the series, would print only a small number of the available documents.

Volume I treats the origins of this important conflict, beginning with events in 1805 and continuing through the first six months of the war. Volume II emphasizes the Navy's challenge to man, train, equip, and build a naval force to offset even the limited resources Great Britain could commit to the American conflict while engaged in its military struggle with France. The tempo of the war increased significantly in 1814 with Napoleon's defeat, and the series editors determined that a single volume for 1814–15 would not suffice. Volume III, therefore, covers the Chesapeake Bay, Northern Lakes, and Pacific Ocean theaters in 1814 and 1815, while this fourth and final volume in the series covers the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, as well as administrative issues facing the Navy Department during the last 14 months of the war.

We have arranged our publication according to theaters of operations: Atlantic, Chesapeake, Lakes, Gulf, and Pacific. The editors have taken an active role in laying out the volumes so that they are user-friendly. A detailed table of contents directs the reader to specific areas of interest. Introductory essays at the beginning of the Atlantic and Gulf theaters provide the setting both domestically and internationally for the succeeding groupings. Our intention is to render a select sampling of the major naval themes of the war. The groupings are arranged in chronological order and preceded by a headnote to give background context. The annotation of the documents and an extensive name and subject index are intended for the readers' benefit.

The series editors owe a debt of gratitude to many individuals and organizations that have assisted with this project over the last 40 years. Dr. William S. Dudley, former director of the Naval Historical Center, NHHC's predecessor, stood up this War of 1812 series while an assistant branch head of the Documentary History Section. His vision continued the Navy's 125-year tradition of recounting its history through the dissemination of its documentary record. As Thomas Jefferson so aptly wrote in 1792, "Time and accident are committing daily havoc on the originals . . . let us save what remains: not by vaults and locks, which fence them from the public eye and use, in consigning them to the waste of time, but by such a multiplication of copies as shall place them beyond the reach of accident." The historians in the Documentary Histories Section of NHHC strive to democratize history with their work.

Dr. Michael J. Crawford, former senior historian at NHHC and Dr. Dudley's successor as branch head, has provided historical and editorial expertise as editor, associate editor, and consulting editor over the years. His wide-ranging knowledge of early naval history and superb writing skills have been an asset to both the 1812 and the American Revolution documentary projects. Dr. Kristina Giannotta, our former Histories Branch supervisor and her former deputy Scott Anderson were steadfast in their encouragement and in allocating personnel to assist in the final stages of the project.

Documentary editions have maintained the support of the following directors of naval history: Rear Admiral John D. Kane, Jr.; Dr. Ronald Spector; Dr. Dean C. Allard; Dr. William S. Dudley; Rear Admiral Paul Tobin; Rear Admiral Jay DeLoach; Captain Henry J. Hendrix; and Rear Admiral Samuel J. Cox.

We owe a special debt of gratitude to our colleagues in the Documentary Histories Section, Dr. Dennis M. Conrad, Dr. Gregory D. Bereiter, Dr. Richard A. Hulver, Dr. Peter C. Luebke, Daniel P. Roberts, Dr. Thomas D. Sheppard, Dr. Martin R. Waldman, Dr. Matthew A. Yokell, and Dr. Joel M. Hebert, who cheerfully lent their editorial expertise in shepherding the volume through the project's final production and publication phases.

Former 1812 editors Dr. Michael A. Palmer, Dr. Tamara Moser Melia, Marycarol Hennessy, and Carolyn M. Stallings undertook the initial repository searches and assisted with the first volumes.

Several branches within the command have been instrumental in seeing this series between covers. Historian Margherita Desy, NHHC Detachment Boston, has been an invaluable resource on USS *Constitution* and the early sailing Navy. Library reference and cataloging staff, especially Glenn Helm, Dr. Young Park, and Tonya Montgomery have assisted with fulfilling interlibrary loan requests and divining obscure citations. Lisa Crunk, Dave Colamaria, and Jonathan Roscoe in the Archives Branch's Photographic Section provided advice and information relating to illustrating the volume. The Art Gallery's Gale Munro, Pam Overmann, and Karin Haubold guided us in finding pertinent artwork and their colleague, Morgan Wilbur provided draft maps for the Gulf Theater. James M. Caiella and Carsten H. Fries, senior editors in the Publications Branch, cheerfully directed us through the intricacies of publishing and skillfully rendered the volume shipshape.

Naval historian Christopher McKee, scholar-in-residence at the Newberry Library, has responded to innumerable queries about early 19th-century naval personnel. His cogent insights have contextualized many naval occurrences for us.

The staffs of several repositories merit significant recognition: Cristina Prochilo, Archives Manager, Historic New England; Becky Smith, Head of Reader Services, Historic New Orleans Collection; Library of Congress; Sierra Dixon, Research & Collections Associate, Connecticut Historical Society; National Archives and Records Administration; Freya Levett, Rights & Images Coordinator, National Maritime Museum; National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; Chelsea Ordner, Library Director, Woolworth Library, Stonington Historical Society; Susan Lintelmann, Manuscripts Curator, U.S. Military Academy Library; Tracie Logan, Museum Curator, U.S. Naval Academy Museum; Sarah Watkins, Director of Collections & Learning and Kate Monea, Archivist, USS *Constitution* Museum; William L. Clements Library; and, Susan I. Newton, Photographic Services Coordinator, Winterthur Museum.

A number of interns over the years have overcome the hurdles of reading cursive to provide draft transcriptions: Megan Braun, Martha Buckley, Lee Butcher, Josh Easterson, James Furgol, Anne Marie Reid Howarth, Adam Liberman, Ryan Lynch, Nicholas McGrath, Daniel Norby, Laura Petty, Allyson Reeves, Andrew Schwartz, Seamus Scullion, Jeremy Steinberg, Emma Voigt, and John Young.

A special thanks is directed to Bill Keegan and Kristen Noble Keegan of Heritage Consultants for their cartographic expertise. Their maps add another dimension to the historical record. Finally, Ms. Frances S. Lennie of Indexing Research capped the publication process by providing technical assistance with the Cindex indexing program that has made it possible to create a detailed, subject-laden index.

As editors, we accept full responsibility for any mistakes or errors of fact or misinterpretations found in essays, headnotes, or annotations. We believe that those documents we have selected fairly represent the concerns of the Navy Department during the last years of the War of 1812. We hope that this documentary series will spark investigation of previously overlooked themes of the war.

CHRISTINE F. HUGHES and CHARLES E. BRODINE, JR.  
Naval History and Heritage Command  
Washington Navy Yard  
Washington, DC



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by

Bill Keegan and Kristen Noble Keegan

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## Editorial Method

### Selection

There are thousands of naval documents available in the National Archives, Library of Congress, and other repositories, from which we have selected for this volume over 800 as being representative of the War of 1812. Our intention has been to choose documents evocative of topics and persons of that period. With citations and references provided, the interested reader can locate similar classes of documents of the particular period and theater of war in question. The majority of documents selected for publication are of an official nature, addressed to the Secretary of the Navy by officers in command of ships or naval stations. Added to these are orders from the secretary to his commanders, excerpts from logs and journals, and letters to the Navy Department from private citizens. We continue to strive to balance the narrative with a representative selection of British documents.

In most cases, the version printed is the original letter or recipient's copy; it frequently happened, however, that the original never reached its destination. Authors of letters customarily took the precaution of sending at least one and sometimes two copies to ensure arrival of their communication. Where one of these copies, in lieu of the original, is printed, it will be designated as a "copy" in the source note.

The Secretary of the Navy carried on a vast correspondence with all ranks of officers, for he was the operational chief of the Navy as well as its principal administrator. The most complete record of the secretary's outgoing correspondence is contained in letter books into which departmental clerks copied each letter, but not its enclosures. In many cases, the only extant copy is the official letter book copy. Benjamin Homans, the chief clerk of the Navy Department in 1814 and 1815, signed departmental correspondence in the secretary's absence and during the period between William Jones's resignation and Benjamin W. Crowninshield's official appearance in the cabinet.

### Transcription

Transcriptions adhere as closely as possible to the originals in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and abbreviation. The following exceptions apply: The names of ships are italicized; complimentary closes are printed immediately at the end of the last paragraph; and the only superscripts retained are those used in signatures.

## Textual Devices

The editors use brackets with roman type to supply letters that have been lost in the gutters of bound original documents. They clarify in a footnote or with bracketed italics any word whose spelling is so unclear as to be misleading. The editors use bracketed, italicized terms, [*blank*], [*torn*], [-], and [?], for missing or illegible words. The virgule, /, indicates a line break in addresses, endorsements, and docketings when these are reproduced in source notes.

## Placement of Documents

Volume IV is divided into two theaters: Atlantic and Gulf. Documents are arranged by theme, usually in chronological order, and cover the period from 1814 through the 1815 demobilization, the return of U.S.S. *Peacock*, and a post-war “War of Words.”

## Chapter Essays and Head Notes

An introductory essay precedes each of the theaters, contextualizing the groupings of documents contained therein. The head notes orient the reader and provide the transitional framework for understanding the themes.

## Document Layout

The title or rank, first name, middle initial, and last name of originators and recipients of documents precede the documents when known. The bracketed phrases [Extract] and [Enclosure] appear in roman type at the left margin, below the heading, to designate an extract, or after the cover letter to designate an enclosure. A document's dateline appears as in the original; the editors supply corrections and supplementary datelines in bracketed italics. If an address forms part of the salutation, it is retained; however, those found at the end of a document, as well as addresses and endorsements found on the reverse side of a letter, are usually not reproduced unless significant.

## Source Note

The first note following the documentary text is unnumbered and gives a description and the source of the document. Lists of abbreviations used to describe the manuscripts, repositories, and collections follow this essay. The source note may also contain biographical information on the signer or the recipient if not previously identified. The editors also use this note for textual clarifications.

Annotations

Numbered footnotes provide essential clarification, explanation, or information about persons, places, or subjects mentioned in the text. The editors refer the reader to the relevant scholarship for further consultation on a particular subject. The prefatory material contains a short title list of references used. The editors furnish a full citation to letters cited by date in the text of a document if the information is considered relevant to the subject under discussion. When enclosures are not printed, summaries are provided.



## Abbreviations Used to Describe Manuscripts

AD	Autograph Document
AdfS	Autograph Draft Signed
AL	Autograph Letter
ALS	Autograph Letter Signed
D	Document
DS	Document Signed
LB	Letter Book
LS	Letter Signed

## Repository Symbols and Other Abbreviations

Adm.	Admiralty
AF	Area File
AOR	Letters Sent Conveying Appointments and Orders and Accepting Resignations
BC	Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Officers Below the Rank of Commander
CaOOA	Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario
CL	Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy: Captains' Letters
CLS	Confidential Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy
CM	Proceedings of General Courts-Martial and Courts of Inquiry of the Navy Department
CNA	Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy to Commandants of Navy Yards and Navy Agents
CtHi	Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, CT
DLC	Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, DC
DNA	National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC
F.O.	Foreign Office
InU	Indiana University, Lilly Library, Bloomington, IN
MaSaPEM	Peabody Essex Museum, Phillips Library, Salem, MA
MC	Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanders (Masters Commandant)
MdAN	U.S. Naval Academy Museum, Annapolis, MD
MH-H	Harvard University, Houghton Library, Cambridge, MA
MiU-C	University of Michigan, William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, MI
MLR	Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy: Miscellaneous Letters
MLS	Miscellaneous Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy
NcD	Duke University, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Durham, NC

NDL	Naval History and Heritage Command, Navy Department Library, Washington, DC
NHi	New-York Historical Society, New York, NY
NWM	U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY
PHi	Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
RG15	Records of the Veterans Administration
RG21	Records of District Courts of the United States
RG24	Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel
RG45	Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library
RG46	Records of the United States Senate
RG56	General Records of the Department of the Treasury
RG59	General Records of the Department of State
RG107	Records of the Office of the Secretary of War
RG125	Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Navy)
R.N.	Royal Navy
ScU	University of South Carolina, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, SC
SNL	Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy to Officers
UKENL	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, United Kingdom
UKLNMM	National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, United Kingdom
UK-KeNA	National Archives, Kew, United Kingdom
U.S.A.	U.S. Army
W.O.	War Office

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# THE NAVAL WAR OF 1812

*A Documentary History*



# Chapter One

## The Atlantic Theater: December 1813–February 1816

*The destruction of Great Britain's mercantile trade remained the touchstone of William Jones's wartime strategy as he entered his second year as head of the Navy Department. The Navy Secretary's blue-water campaign for 1814 began auspiciously as no fewer than seven American cruisers put to sea from four different Atlantic ports between December 1813 and March 1814. In another stroke of good fortune, two U.S. frigates, Congress and President, returned home safely during this same period. Except for Peacock's capture of H.M.S. Epervier, the results of these first American sorties were disappointing, as they yielded few prizes and occasioned the loss of two U.S. warships, Frolic and Siren. The failure of one of these cruisers, "Old Ironsides," to complete its mission so angered Secretary Jones that he ordered the frigate's commander, Charles Stewart, to appear before a naval court to explain his delinquent actions.*

*Between April and June of 1814, another four Navy vessels eluded the British blockade to take another crack at John Bull's merchant marine. As earlier in the year, the outcomes of these cruises were largely frustrating, with only one warship, the sloop of war Wasp, enjoying spectacular success that included the destruction of H.M.S. Reindeer. Yet again, though, another two vessels were lost to the fleet. Although Jones continued to issue cruising orders up until his last month in office, no other public warships put to sea before he resigned as head of the Navy Department on 1 December.*

*Some of the Navy's most memorable 1812 operations occurred during the last two full months of the war. In mid-December 1814, U.S.S. Constitution broke out of Boston Harbor on a cruise that would culminate in a dramatic nighttime battle in which the American frigate fought and bested two Royal Navy warships singlehanded. This was shortly followed by "Old Ironsides'" dramatic escape from the Azores island of Fayal with a three-ship enemy squadron in pursuit. Constitution's sister ship, U.S.S. President, was not so fortunate in its gambit to break the enemy blockade. In mid-January 1815, the frigate ran aground while trying to slip out of New York harbor under cover of a nighttime winter storm. Although President's crew managed to refloat their ship, its sailing qualities were significantly impaired, enabling a five-ship British squadron to chase, overtake, and capture the wounded frigate. Two final cruisers, Hornet and Peacock, made sail from New York eleven days after President's capture. On 23 March, off the island of Tristan de Cunha in the South Atlantic, Hornet captured H.M.S. Penguin, tallying the*

*Navy's final wartime victory against the Royal Navy. Peacock's operations carried it into the East Indies, where the American sloop of war fired on and captured the East India brig Nautilus on 30 June 1815, some four and a half months after the Anglo-American peace treaty had been ratified.*

*The declining ability of the Navy to get its ships to sea owed to several factors, the most important being the growing number of Royal Navy ships assigned to the North American Station. The heavier presence of British warships off the major U.S. ports reduced opportunities for Navy warships to escape into the Atlantic. The heightened vigilance of British blockaders, for example, kept the frigates United States and Macedonian trapped in Connecticut's Thames River for the last 18 months of the war. Another circumstance contributing to the idling of Navy cruisers was the growing shortage of departmental funds to repair, fit out, and man vessels. Even when funds were available, Navy recruiters found too few seamen willing to serve in public warships on extended cruises. This was the case with the frigate Congress, which remained "in irons" at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, from late December 1813 until the restoration of peace.*

*The Navy's manning problem also compromised the operational readiness of those smaller craft—gunboats, barges, and galleys—devoted to harbor and coastal defense. The hard and disagreeable nature of service in these vessels discouraged potential recruits from signing on for such duty. As a result, station commanders from New Hampshire to Georgia were unable to maintain an adequate naval presence to defend the coasts and port towns in their charge. This manpower crisis came at a time when the new British naval commander, Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, initiated an aggressive campaign of coastal raids, not only in the Chesapeake Bay, but along the New England seaboard. One such strike against the town of Pettipaug, Connecticut, in April 1814, captured or destroyed 27 vessels. Larger-scale operations against the District of Maine between June and September of 1814 aimed at nothing less than the permanent occupation of American territory and a redrawing of the U.S.–Canadian border.*

*With the U.S. Navy unable to offer much protection against such devastating and destructive attacks, some communities took defensive steps drawing on their own resources. This was possible for more prosperous cities such as Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, where governmental leaders raised moneys to arm militia, outfit armed ships, and build forts. In more vulnerable towns and communities, Americans had to pursue other alternatives to protect their homes and livelihoods. U.S. citizens living in occupied Maine had to surrender their weapons and swear an oath of allegiance to the British Crown in order to remain in their homes. The islanders of Nantucket declared their neutrality rather than face starvation and economic ruin by being cut off from the mainland by British blockaders.*

*Because Secretary of the Navy Jones had to devote a growing amount of resources to winning the war on the Northern Lakes, he found it increasingly difficult to provide for the needs of his Atlantic yards and stations. The ambitious shipbuilding program launched in 1813 slowly ground to a halt in 1814 as the department ran*

*out of funds to complete and send to sea the two new 74-gun ships of the line built at Portsmouth and Boston and the 44-gun frigate constructed at Philadelphia. Jones would leave that charge to his successor in office, Benjamin Crowninshield, who took up his departmental duties in mid-January 1815. Before leaving office, Jones championed legislation to provide for the administrative reform of the naval establishment. His efforts resulted in the creation of the Board of Navy Commissioners, a body charged with performing administrative duties requiring a high level of professional expertise, such as the design and construction of warships, the management of yards and stations, and the training and discipline of officers and men. This innovation would remain in place until 1842 with the establishment of the Navy's bureau system.*

## A Question of Discipline

*Inter-service conflict frequently marred relations between Navy and Marine officers during the War of 1812, particularly navy yard and Marine barracks commandants.<sup>1</sup> This friction was rooted in the fact that the Marine Corps was ruled by two sets of disciplinary regulations. Aboard ship, Marines were governed by Navy discipline, but when serving ashore these sea soldiers came under the Army's Articles of War. This bifurcation of disciplinary codes restricted the authority of Navy commandants to punish refractory Marines stationed at their yards.*

*When the misconduct of Marines assigned to the Charlestown and Philadelphia navy yards went unchecked owing to these restrictions, William Bainbridge and Alexander Murray, the station commandants, appealed to the Navy Department to resolve their disciplinary conundrums. The exchange of correspondence between these two officers and Secretary Jones reveals the contrasting views held by the Navy Department and its officers on the proper governance of Marines attached to Navy installations.<sup>2</sup>*

1. See section 4 of "An Act for establishing and organizing a Marine Corps," in Statutes at Large, Vol. 1, p. 595.

2. For an earlier jurisdictional dispute at the Philadelphia Navy Yard between Commodore Alexander Murray and Marine Captain Anthony Gale, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 179–83.

### COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard, Charlestown, Mss  
15th December 1813.

Sir,

I request you will be pleased to authorise me to order a Court Martial to be convened for the trial of Jonathan Frothingham,— a private marine stationed within this Navy Yard, under my command,— on the enclosed charge.

I enclose a copy of my orders to Lieut. Anderson,<sup>1</sup> Commanding the Marine Guard stationed here, to arrest said Frothingham.

The Marines on this station very frequently get intoxicated, and in consequence not only neglect their duty, but expose the public property to be depredated. It has appeared difficult for their immediate Commanding Officer thoroughly to correct that injurious practice. The regulations which the Marines have been under here (in my opinion incorrectly), not subjecting them to corporal punishment, increase their insubordination.—

I contend that the Marines, while doing naval duty, are legally subject to naval discipline: for further explanation on this subject, I beg leave to refer you to a note relative thereto, annexed by Capt. Morris and myself, in our report to you on general subjects of our Navy. I have the honor to be, sir, with the Greatest respect, your very obt. sert.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1813, Vol. 8, No. 56 (M125, Roll No. 33).

1. William Anderson was promoted to captain on 18 June 1814.

[Enclosure]

Copy

Navy Yard, Charlestown, Mss.  
15th. December 1813.

Sir,

You will arrest Jonathan Frothingham, a private Marine, stationed within this Navy Yard, under my command,— to answer to the enclosed charges before a Court Martial, for which I shall apply to the Honble. Secretary of the Navy.— Respectfully, your ob st.

(signed) Wm Bainbridge

Lieut. Wm. Anderson,  
Commanding the Marines  
Within the Navy Yard, charlestown.—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1813, Vol. 8, No. 56, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 33).

[Enclosure]

Copy

Charges and Specifications against Jonathan Frothingham a private Marine.—

Charge: Deserting his Post, Neglect of Duty and Intoxication.—

Specification: On the 14th. of December, 1813, between the hours of 5 and 6. p.m. while stationed on Post at the S.W. Gate of the Navy Yard in Charlestown Mss. the said Frothingham deserted his post and

after being repeatedly hailed, he came forth from without the Navy Yard, being then in a state of intoxication.—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1813, Vol. 8, No. 56, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 33).

COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard, Charlestown, Mss.  
January 12. 1814

Sir,

I regret that necessity should compel me again to request that you will authorize me to convene a Court martial for the trial of another of the private Marines stationed within this Navy Yard under my command.— The Enclosed charge against William Horrell will show the magnitude of his crime; and I request for the good of the service, and particularly for the safety of the Seventy four building here, authority will be granted to me, to order a Court martial for his trial:— And I cannot but regret that permission has not been given me for a court martial on Jonathan Frothingham, as solicited by my letter to you of the 15th. ultimo.—

In fact, Sir, the great responsibility I feel for the security of the Seventy four building under my direction,— which certainly would be exposed to any incendiary, without a vigilant guard.— makes it necessary, in justice to myself, to request that the Marine detachment within this Navy Yard should be subject to my authority precisely as it would be, if attached to a Ship under my immediate command; or, if that cannot be granted, that it may be removed from here and employed where the public property cannot be so much jeopardized by their neglect of duty, and where more confidence can be placed in it by a different rule of discipline—

I have no improper feelings, Sir, against the marine Corps. I consider it a Body valuable to our Navy; but I do contend that the manner in which they are placed and governed within our Navy Yards, is injurious to the service and productive of insubordination in discipline.— In this opinion, the Officers of the Navy unanimously agree, and it is confirmed by the practise of all maritime nations except our own.

The repeated derelictions of duty, which have come within my own observation, since my command of this Establishment, have proven the absolute necessity for a change.— Very many instances have occurred, that have not been reported to the Department.—

In addition to the most unpardonable neglect of the Centinel Horrell, some one of the centinels, stationed on a Battery in another part of the Yard, suffered a match staff, the match on which was kept lighted under his care, to be nearly burnt up; thus endangering the Yard and all the valuable public property within it— I have the honor to be, Sir, with the highest respect, Your ob: Servt.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge

[Enclosure]

CHARGE & SPECIFICATION VS. WM. HORRELL, A PRIVATE MARINE,  
STATIONED WITHIN THE NAVY YARD, CHARLESTOWN MSS.

Charge—: Deserting his Post and Neglect of Duty.

Specification: That the said William Horrell, a private marine did on the 13th day of January 1814, between midnight & 1 A.M. leave his post, which was on the Southeast side of the wharf where the 74 is building within this Navy Yard, and went within the Shed that covers the said 74, and there laid down asleep, with his musket lying on the ground some distance from him, his hat off without the Shed.

Navy Yard, Charlestown Mass:  
January 13. 1814—

D, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 26, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

Commodore William Bainbridge  
Commandant Navy Yard  
Charlestown Ms.

Navy Department  
Jany. 12th. 1814.

Sir,

Conformably to your letter of the 15th December last, you will receive the order for a court Martial on Jonothan Frothingham a private Marine. whatever of reason and argument may be Offered to shew the propriety of placing the Marine Guard of a Navy Yard under the command of the commandant of the Yard, it has no foundation in Law.—

The Marine corps and the regulations by which it is governed, were established before Navy Yards were known, Marines when doing Naval duty on board ships of War, are subject to Naval command, but when on shore are under the command of the commandant of the corps;— As to the improvement of dicipline by corporal punishment, the best examples of dicipline in the universe are to be found where corporal punishment is unknown.—

It may brutalize but cannot reform, and its adoption in the service of a mild and humane people would display a strange dereliction of principal, when the most enlightened and able Officers even in the British service where the practice has had the santion of ages in its support, protests in the most solemn manner against its continuance.— I am very respectfully your Obedt. Servt.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 1, pp. 547–48 (M441, Roll No. 1).



## COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard, Charlestown, Mss.  
19th. January 1814.

Sir,

I have received your letter, of the 12th instant, enclosing an order for a Court Martial on John Frothingham. The latter part of your letter is so exceedingly painful to my feelings, that, however unpleasant it may be, I must beg leave to offer some remarks.—

When I made use of the following observation, in my letter to you, “The regulations which the Marines have been under here (in my opinion incorrectly), not subjecting them to corporal punishment, increase their insubordination—,” I could not have possibly conceived that it would have been considered by the Secretary of the Navy as expressive of a disposition to brutalize, or that its adoption would be considered a strange dereliction of principle; and I am at a loss to conjecture by what excess of reasoning such sentiments can be maintained.— Pray, sir, does not the Navy over which you preside, legally inflict corporal punishment? and are not these very marines legally subjected to it by the Rules and Regulations of said Navy? I trust the officers of your Navy Sir, possess as strong principles of honor and humanity as any other class of people in our country.

As to the Marine Guard, within a Navy Yard, not being legally under the command of the Captain Commandant, I still think differently; but since it has been so decided by you, sir, I am under the necessity of returning your order for convening a Court Martial for the trial of John Frothingham: For if the guard is not subject to Naval command,— which your letter states,— the accused is not liable to the Rules and Regulations of the Navy, and of consequence I could not legally order a Court Martial on him.<sup>1</sup>

As the marine Guard is made, by your letter of the 12th. inst., distinct from my command, I expect that I shall not be held responsible to correct their inattention in vigilantly guarding the public property within this Yard, particularly the seventy four building under my direction.

I regret extremely, sir, that any cause should ever make it necessary for me to express my feelings thus freely to the Navy Department, for which no officer entertains a higher respect than myself.— But Sir, when my principles of humanity or my correctness are called in question, I must, in justification of my own honor, defend them from whatever source it may arise.— I have the honor to be, sir, with the highest respect; Yr. ob. servt.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 51 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. The order for Frothingham’s court-martial was not enclosed with this letter. Less than a week later, Bainbridge returned the order for Marine Private William Horrell’s court-martial. See his letters of 24 and 25 January, in *ibid.*, Nos. 66 and 67.

## COMMODORE ALEXANDER MURRAY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard Phila. Station  
July 16th. 1814

Sir/

Mr. Humphreys reports to me that his store has been again broken open, & the Liquor pilfered in consequence of Capt. Gales taking off all the Marines but five out of the Yard & with himself gone down to Frenchtown in consequence of the late alarm, & wh. I had no notion of, till the moment of his departure

I have now procured the services of a City Volunteer Company to guard the Ships during his absence;

I wish to be advised, whether he is to be considered under my con[s]tra[i]nt, as he never consults with me upon any occasion; contrary to the opinion of the Naval Constructors, & without any previous notice, he erects buildings, & pens where he pleases in the Yard for his convenience & never disposed to harmonize with us in any respect If I knew the intent of his powers from Colo. Wharton I should then know how to act, I have no wish to be at variance with him, but respect at least is due to my Rank & Station, I do not conceive that he can have authority to absent himself from his duty here, without consulting me I have the Honor to be Your Mo. Obt.

A Murray

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 1 (M125, Roll No. 38).

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE ALEXANDER MURRAY

Como. A Murray,  
com'dr. Navy Yard  
Philadelphia }  
}

Navy Department  
July 30th. 1814

Sir,

Your letter, of the 16th, has remained unanswered longer than I could have wished, from the pressure of other business.— The motive which induced major Gale to volunteer his services, on a sudden and, as it was supposed a very important emergency, was laudable, and may furnish an apology for taking the marines with him, but you are to understand, distinctly, that the proper Marine guard, attached to the Navy Yard, cannot be employed for any other purpose, or withdrawn from the Yard, without your approbation.— As there is a Lieutenant belonging to the guard, Major Gale may volunteer his personal services, on any emergency, with propriety.—

Whatever Military duty you may require of the guard within the Navy Yard, for the preservation of order, and of the public property, the commandant of the guard is bound to execute, upon your requisition.—

As commandant of the Navy-Yard you have authority to designate the posts, and the duties of the centinels, and to establish the general police of the Yard, by which all persons within its walls are to be governed.—

No building can be erected, nor ground occupied within the Yard, but for public uses and with your approbation, except the private quarters of Major Gale, with its reasonable accommodations, the avenues through the enclosures of which into the Navy Yard, ought to be private, and subject to the police of the Yard.—

The order, discipline, internal police and economy of the Marine guard, and of the Barracks, are under the direction of the commanding Officer of the Marine Guard, who reports to the commandant of the corps on all things relating thereto; but you will restrict and regulate all the avenues through the walls or fences of the yard, to the public streets, except that leading from the quarters of the commandant of the Marine Guard.—

I shall direct the Lieut. Colo. commandant of the Marine Corps to transmit to me the detail of the guard attached to the Navy Yard under your command which shall be forwarded to you.—

With these explanations and regulations, you will exercise your due authority, and the Officer of the guard, his proper duties, under a strict responsibility to the chief of his corps, according to the regulations by which that corps is governed, while doing duty on shore, and I see no room for difficulty or collision.— I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 147–48 (M441, Roll No. 1).

## Cochrane Takes Command

*On 4 November 1813, the British Admiralty issued instructions relieving Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren of command of the North American Station. Warren's recall owed to the Admiralty's disappointment with his lethargic direction of naval affairs in American waters. They hoped that his replacement, Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, would lead a more aggressive and energetic naval campaign against the United States, one productive of war-winning results. The transition of command between the two men did not go smoothly, with Warren unwilling to surrender direction of the station for more than three weeks following Cochrane's arrival at Bermuda on 6 March. As Warren was senior in rank to Cochrane, there was little the aggrieved Scotsman could do to force the issue beyond complaining to his superiors in London. As a result, Cochrane's plans to begin active operations received a serious initial check.<sup>1</sup>*

1. For assessments of Warren's direction of the North American Station, see Le Fevre, "Sir John Borlase Warren," pp. 238–42, and, Drolet, "North American Squadron," chapters 4 and 5.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

By the Commissioners for Executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain & Ireland &ca.

Whereas We have this Day signed a Commission appointing you Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships & Vessels at Halifax; You are hereby required and directed to repair forthwith to Portsmouth and hoisting your Flag on board His Majesty's Ship *Asia* at Spithead, remain there until you shall receive further orders.

Given under our hands the 27th of December 1813.

J Yorke  
Geo Hope  
H Paulet

By Command of their Lordships  
J Barrow

DS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2342, fol. 16. Endorsed: "recd. in London." Enclosed in Barrow to Cochrane, 27 December 1814, *ibid.*, fol. 18.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No. 11

By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland &c.

You are hereby required and directed to proceed forthwith to Portsmouth, and hoisting your Flag on board His Majesty's Ship the *Asia*, and taking under your command the *Superb*, the Captains of both which Ships have been directed to follow your orders, proceed in company with the latter Ship without loss of time to Bermuda; And having directed Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren, on your arrival to place under your Command the Flag Officers, and all the Ships and Vessels, under his orders (a List of which is herewith transmitted)<sup>1</sup> except the *St. Domingo*, and to deliver over to you all such standing and unexecuted orders and Instructions relating to the North American Command as my remain in his Hands, either in the whole or in part unexecuted, together with any Intelligence of the State of the Enemy or other information of which he may be in possession proper for your knowledge; You are to take under your command the Flag Officers and Ships and Vessels aforesaid accordingly, and proceed to carry our orders into execution. Given under our Hands the 25 January 1814.

Melville,  
Geo. Hope  
H. Paulet

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2342, fols. 95–96. Signed below address line: “J W Croker.” Endorsed: “recd in London.”

1. Original list not found. A copy of it is appended to the letter book version of this letter. It itemizes a force of 80 vessels, including: 11 third rates (ships of the line), 3 fourth rates, 18 fifth rates (frigates), 30 sloops, 4 brigs, 3 schooners, 2 cutters, 2 troop ships, 2 receiving ships, 1 hospital ship, and 4 prison ships. See Admiralty to Cochrane, 25 January 1814, UK-KeNA, Adm. 2/933, pp. 91–95.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO  
ADMIRAL SIR JOHN B. WARREN, R.N.

No. 5

By &c.

Whereas by a commission bearing date the 27th of last Month<sup>1</sup> we have appointed Vice Admiral the Honble. Sir Alexander Cochrane K B. to relieve you in the command of His Majesty’s Ships and Vessels on the Coast of North America, and have ordered him to proceed forthwith to Bermuda in His Majesty’s Ship the *Asia*; You are hereby required and directed on being joined by the Vice Admiral, to place under his command the Flag Officers and all the Ships and Vessels under your orders, except the *St. Domingo* and to deliver over to him all such standing and unexecuted orders and Instructions relative to the said Command as may remain in your Hands either in the whole or in part unexecuted, together with any Intelligence of the state of the Enemy or other information of which you may be in possession proper for his knowledge, and so soon as you shall have delivered over the command to the Vice Admiral, you are to repair yourself in the *St. Domingo* to Spithead, transmitting to our Secretary for our information an Account of your arrival & proceeding. Given &c. 25 January 1814.

J. S. Yorke  
G. J. Hope  
H. Paulett

LB, UK-KeNA, Adm. 2/933, pp. 96–97. Docketed in left-hand margin of p. 96: “Admiral Sir J. Warren to deliver up the command return to England.”

1. See Admiralty to Cochrane, 27 December 1813, above.

ADMIRAL SIR JOHN B. WARREN, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 23

Bermuda 28th. January  
1814.

Sir

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 4th. of November last,<sup>1</sup> communicating to me, that my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty finding it expedient, in the present circumstances and appearances of the War, again to separate the Stations, on the Union of which I was appointed to my present Command, and thinking it therefore unnecessary any longer to

employ me upon the North American Station, their Lordships have commanded you to acquaint me therewith, and to signify their direction, on being relieved by the Officer who will be selected to Command on the Halifax Station, to return to Spithead in the *San Domingo*, or in any other Ship that may be in more immediate necessity of returning to England—

And further informing me of [their] Lordship's intentions with regard to [the] number of Ships to be appropriated [to] each Command, with their directio[ns] [to] me to complete the force of each Stat[ion] in the shortest possible space of time

I am happy to shew their Lor[dship's,] by the enclosed particular<sup>2</sup> of the pr[esent] district force in the West Indies, [that] at Jamaica the number of Ships [of] each Class already corresponds w[ith] the Scheme they have arranged, exce[pting] in large Frigates, which is two sho[rt] but counterbalanced by the *Barham* [of] 74 Guns having been ordered by m[e] to be retained by Rear Admiral [Brown] and the *Statira* as expressed in my [letter] dated the 16th. October No. 224,<sup>3</sup> being [likewise] intended to be sent to that quarter.

At the Leeward Islands there [is a] surplus of two Sloops—

Under my own immediate Comma[nd] on the whole extent of the Gulf of [St.] Lawrence, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the American Coast, I am deficient according to the proposed arrangement, of 3 Frigates, and 2 Small Frigates or Sloops, besides the *Chesapeak*, not fitted out, and 4 of my best Sloops unmanned by their Crews, having been sent to the Lakes in Upper Canada, as stated in my letter No. 18 the 26th. Instant.<sup>4</sup>

I shall obey the orders of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty in all the foregoing particulars, as well as in their instructions relative to a superior hostile Force appearing in the West Indies. I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant.

John Borlase Warren

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 340–41. Bracketed text supplied from another copy of this letter on fols. 295–96.

1. For the letter book copy of this letter, see Croker to Warren, 4 November 1813, UK-KeNA, Adm. 2/1378, pp. 146–51.

2. Not printed here. This enclosure listed all the vessels assigned to the stations under Warren's command: the North American (under the heading "The Squadron at Halifax &c."), the Jamaican, and the Leeward Islands. It appears on fols. 342–45.

3. Warren to Croker, 16 October 1813, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/504, fols. 210–11.

4. Warren to Croker, 26 January 1814, *ibid.*, fols. 198–99.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 6

*Asia*, Bermuda,  
31st. March 1814.

Sir,

Upon the 7th. Ultimo I wrote you<sup>1</sup> by a Schooner that went direct to England informing you of my arrival here upon the preceeding day and my having

produced to Admiral Sir John Warren my Order<sup>2</sup> from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to assume the charge of Commander in Chief upon the North American Station.

From No. 25 of the Papers with which you furnished me,<sup>3</sup> previous to my leaving England, I did expect that the Command of His Majesty's Ships would have been resigned to me immediately upon my producing the Order to assume it, and that their Lordships Letter before alluded to, bearing date the 4th. of November,<sup>4</sup> was sent to Sir John Warr[en] purposely to prepare him to give it up upon the arrival of a Commander in Chief to the American Statio[n] as that Letter annulled the Commission he previously held for the combined Stations.

In these expectations I have been disappointed, Sir John Warre[n] persisting to hold the Command until his departure and I have consequently been kept in total ignorance of the state of the Squadron notwithstanding I officially inform[ed] him of the Troops I daily expected to arrive and for which no time ought to be lost in making preparations for the intended Expedition being immediately undertaken.

Their Lordships will see by the enclosed Copy of a Correspondence how ineffectual my endeavours have been:— I owe it to myself to declare that responsibility must not rest with me if from want of due preparations and the means of obtaining the necessary intelligence of the Situation of the Enemy's ports the Expedition against Portsmouth shall be abandoned, as I can only date the Commencement of my preparations from the day Sir John Warren thinks proper to deliver up to me the direction of the Squadron; their Lordships may however depend upon my most zealous exertions in harrassing the Enemy during the short time the Troops shall continue with me; and that those remaining with me after the two Regiments proceed to Quebec shall be employed to the best advantage. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane  
Vice Admiral and  
Commander in Chief

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 420–21.

1. Cochrane meant the 7th instant, or, 7 March. See Cochrane to Croker, 7 March 1814, *ibid.*, fol. 317.

2. See Admiralty to Cochrane, 25 January 1814, *above*.

3. Croker provided Cochrane with copies of some of the more important orders and instructions issued to Warren by the Admiralty. An itemized schedule of this correspondence describes paper No. 25 as a 4 November 1813 letter from Croker to Warren "Respecting the separation of the stations united under his orders." This letter was missing from the set of Warren correspondence provided to Cochrane. See Croker to Cochrane, 20 January 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2340, fols. 171–72. The itemized schedule of Warren correspondence follows on fols. 173–75.

4. See Croker to Warren, 4 November 1813, Adm. 2/1378, fols. 146–51. This is the letter book copy of paper No. 25 described in the preceding note.

[Enclosure]  
a Copy.

*Asia*. 21st. March 1814

Sir,

When I received my Commission from my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty appointing me Commander in Chief upon the North American Station, I was then informed that their Lordships had communicated to you their intentions by His Majesty's ship *Severn* and that immediately upon my arrival the Command of the Squadron (the *San Domingo* excepted) would be delivered over to me and placed under my immediate controul.

When I arrived at Bermuda upon the 6th. Current I found the *San Domingo* was at Sea, but as she has now arrived I beg leave to submit to your consideration the propriety of my being placed in the Command to which I am appointed, as without being so I cannot make the arrangements f[or] carrying into execution the confidential Communications with whic[h] I am charged, nor can I be responsible for their Success unless the direction of His Majesty's Squadr[on] is placed in my hands.

The advanced Season of the Year and the Service upon which the Troops under Major General Conran are to be employed require a corresponding distribution of His Majesty's Ships as also a proper selection of Officers and Ships for the various services to be performed and this does not admit of a moments delay.

When Sir Francis Laforey produced to me his Commission appointing him Commander in Chief upon the Leeward Islands Station I considered it as superceding the one I held and consequently immediately resigned to him the Command; the same has taken place between Sir Francis Laforey and Rear Admiral Durham, although Sir Francis Laforey still remains on that Station until the sailing of the April Convoy with which he is to proceed to England, and as two Commissions as Commander in Chief upon this Station cannot exist at the same time, I consider it my duty, in obedience to my Instructions from my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, to request to be placed in full possession of the functions committed to my Charge as Commander in Chief— I have the honor to be &ca.—

(Signed) A. Cochrane  
Vice Admiral

Admiral The Rt. Honble. Sir John Borlase Warren Bart. K:B:  
Commander in Chief  
&c &c &c<sup>1</sup>

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 422–23. Endorsed in Cochrane's own hand opposite dateline: "A Cochrane." For Cochrane's draft of this letter, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 39–40.

1. This address line appeared at the foot of the first page.



[Enclosure]

A Copy.

Bermuda 22nd. March 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated yesterday on the subject of resigning to you immediately, the Command of His Majesty's Ships upon this Station. In reply, I beg leave to acquaint you, that agreeably to the orders of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, I shall without delay return to England, and have selected the *San Domingo* for that purpose, as soon as she can be prepared; when I shall deliver over to you the Command of His Majesty's Ships.

In the mean time, I shall feel great pleasure in accelerating the views and intentions of His Majesty's Government, to the utmost of my Power, and will appropriate any Ship or Ships you may desire, or think necessary to be sent to any particular destination on that occasion, with the exception of the *Sophie* Sloop whic[h] I have appointed to Convoy the Trade from hence to the West Indies, and the *Orpheus* to escort the same within a few leagues of Barbadoes— I have the honor to be &c.—

(Signed) John Borlase Warren  
Admiral of the Blue and Commander in Chief  
&c. &c. &c.

The Honble. Sir Alexander Cochrane. K.B.  
Vice Admiral of the Red  
&c— &c— &c<sup>1</sup>

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 424–25. Endorsed in Cochrane's own hand opposite dateline: "A Cochrane." The received copy of this letter is in UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 45–46.

1. This address line appeared at the foot of the first page.

[Enclosure]

A Copy.

Asia. 22nd. March 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this days date in reply to mine of Yesterday, and as you there state, you shall feel great pleasure in appropriating any Ship or Ships I may desire to any particular destination with the exception, of the *Orpheus* and *Sophie* Sloops, I beg leave to request that I may be furnished with a copy of the distribution of the Squadron in order that I may judge of what additional Force may be required to watch the points of Attack so as to completely blockade those parts of the Coast and if possible obtain Pilots

and Information of the Enemy's Force and movements so as to enable the Expedition on leaving this to proceed direct and without delay to its ultimate object. I have the honor to be &c

(Signed) A. Cochrane  
Vice Admiral—

Admiral The Rt. Honble. Sir John Borlase Warren Bart. K B.  
Commander in Chief  
&c.— &c.— &c.<sup>1</sup>

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 426–27. Endorsed in Cochrane's own hand opposite dateline: "A Cochrane." For Cochrane's draft of this letter, see UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 42.

1. This address line appeared at the foot of the first page.

[Enclosure]  
A Copy.

Bermuda 22nd. March 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this days date, and with reference thereto, to acquaint you, that I shall furnish you with Copies of the orders of His Majesty's Ships under my Command and a state of their disposition, upon my departure from hence and delivering over to you the Command, agreeably to the orders of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, as before stated in my letter to you of this date.

The *Orpheus* may return to any particular Service you may wish. I have the honor to be &c.

(Signed) John Borlase Warren  
Admiral of the Blue and Commander in Chief  
&c. &c. &c.

The Honble. Sir Alexander Cochrane K B.  
Vice Admiral of the Red  
&c.— &c.— &c.<sup>1</sup>

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 428. Endorsed in Cochrane's own hand opposite dateline: "A. Cochrane." The received copy of this letter is in UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 43–44.

1. This address line appeared at the foot of the first page.

[Enclosure]

A Copy

*Asia*, 23rd. March 1814

Sir,

Upon considering your Letter of yesterday in which you acquaint me that you will appropriate any Ship or Ships I may desire, or think necessary to be sent to any particular destination, I do not think that the proposed arrangement can be attended with any beneficial consequence to His Majesty's Service. A divided command must ever be subject to much inconvenience and although I may be furnished with a Copy of the distribution of the Squadron, which I requested of you in my Letter of yesterday, it can be of no further Service than that of giving me the general outline.

To carry into execution my Instructions I ought to have been placed in the command of the Squadron upon my arrival at this Island, and the Admiralty expected, from the previous notice sent you by the *Severn*, that I would have found you ready to proceed to England upon my reaching Bermuda; I was therefore hurried out to make preparati[ons,] that upon the arrival of the Troops from England I might be able to pro[ceed] without delay in carrying the views [of] the Government into effect previous to the opening of the River St. Lawren[ce]

It is very far from my desire to urge any point contrary to your wishes, but situated as I feel myse[lf] to be, without I am placed in the immediate command of the Squadro[n,] I will not be responsible for carrying the intentions of Government into execution—

I certainly did expect that upon my producing to you that Order of the Admiralty for my assuming the Comm[and] of the Squadron employed on the North American Station (the *San Domingo* excepted) that you would have resigne[d] to me the controul of the Ships acting under Your Orders, and what you n[ow] propose, of appropriating Ships as I may desire, to any particular destination I cannot accept of: half measures I never found to answer and this would be derogating from the authority with which I am vested.

While you remain here I can consider you in no other light than that of my Senior Officer without any Special Command. The Commission of Commander in Chief of the Squadron on the North American Station is vested with me alone and this I ought to date from the 7th. of the present month, the day on which I produced to you the Order of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty directing me to assume it. I know of no other Commission for this Station than the one I hold; the extensive one you possessed has been annulled of which you have received official information from the Admiralty and the Admirals upon the Leeward Islands and Jamaica Stations are vested each with his respective and entire Command.

Upon these considerations I feel myself authorized to request that the immediate Command of the Ships remaining upon this Station be delivered to me (the *San Domingo* excepted) that I may, without delay make my arrangements, without which I will not be responsible for the consequences that may result from the absence of the Force I may find necessary to assemble, and the failure of the expediti[on] to be undertaken upon the arrival of the Troops shall not rest with me.

From what I already perceive I shall find it a most difficult tas[k] to prepare the Naval part of the Expedition, the Ships being so much scattered Vessels must be sent in all directions to collect or relieve tho[se] particularly wanted: even the Ships now going with Convoy to the West Indies ought to sail under my Orders, without which my ultimate arrangements as far as respect them cannot be carried into effect. The *Orpheus*, particularly, I have to charge with a special mission of the utmost importance to our Indian Allies on the Southern States<sup>1</sup> which would render it necessary for her being attended with one of the Armed Vessels. I have the honor to be &c.

(Signed) A. Cochrane  
Vice Admiral

Admiral The Rt. Honble. Sir John Borlase Warren Bart. K B.  
Commander in Chief  
&c.— &c.— &c.<sup>2</sup>

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 430–32. Endorsed in Cochrane's own hand opposite dateline: "A. Cochrane." Postscript in left-hand margin of first page of which the first line is obscured: ". . . have furnished me with a Copy of the Disposition, which I found afterwards he had refused, in reply to my former Letter requesting it. A. C." Bracketed text supplied from another copy of this letter in UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 49–52.

1. For *Orpheus*'s special mission to the southern Indian tribes, see pp. 822–32.

2. This address line appeared at the foot of the first page.

ADMIRAL SIR JOHN B. WARREN, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Bermuda 23rd. March 1814.

Sir

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date,<sup>1</sup> and must decline entering into any discussion of the points set forth by you, relative to my Command; I shall strictly conform to the orders of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty as to delivering over to you the Command of his Majestys Ships upon this Station, received by the *Asia* on the 6th. Instant, and am therefore to inform you that I shall not be prepared to place you in the command thereof until the end of next Week, when the *San Domingo* will be ready for Sea—

In the mean time, I shall order the *Orpheus* and the *Shelburne* Schooner to follow your directions for any specific Service, you may wish them to proceed upon, as set forth in your letter. I have the honour to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

John Borlase Warren  
Admiral of the Blue and  
Commander in Chief  
&c. &c. &c.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 47–48.

1. Cochrane to Warren, 23 March 1814, above. The two admirals traded six letters in which they disputed command of the North American Station. Cochrane forwarded copies of five of these letters (reproduced above) to the Admiralty. The sixth letter of this correspondence is reproduced here to complete their exchange on this subject.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 7

*Asia*, Bermuda  
1st. April 1814.

Sir,

Be pleased to inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren has this day delivered over to me the Command of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels upon the North American Station, a Copy of the Number and Disposition of which, handed me by the Admiral, I send herewith.<sup>1</sup> I would also forward an Abstract of their State and Condition but that time will not admit of its being correctly made out before the sailing of the *San Domingo*. I send, however, a List of the Number of Seamen Boys an[d] Marines which the Squadron appears to be deficient of in its complement,<sup>2</sup> and hope their Lordships will direct Men to be sent from England to compleat it, as our means of recruiting for the Ships in this country are very limited. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble servant

Alexr. Cochrane  
Vice Admiral and  
Commander in Chief

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fol. 434.

1. Not found. However, one week before writing this letter, Cochrane forwarded Croker a list of vessels that would remain attached to the station once Warren resigned his command. See Cochrane to Croker, 25 March 1814, *ibid.*, fols. 367–68.

2. Not printed here. See *ibid.*, fols. 444–41.

## Wilmington—Station Report

*Thomas N. Gautier continued as the naval officer in command of the Wilmington Station in North Carolina in 1814. Secretary Jones had rewarded Gautier's diligence in September 1813 by appointing him an acting lieutenant. That confidence dissolved by November 1814 when Jones accepted his resignation.<sup>1</sup> Gautier's duties in 1814 continued as before: obtaining and distributing supplies for his outpost, purchasing more vessels, recruiting sailors, facilitating the disposition of prizes brought to Wilmington, and patrolling the North Carolina coast to enforce the embargo and defend against British incursions. Gautier led a peripatetic life—constantly on the move overseeing his station.*

*1. Jones to Gautier, 30 September 1813 and 25 November 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, pp. 41 and 236 (T829, Roll No. 382). For more on charges of fraud and abuse of power preferred against Gautier, see pp. 618–23.*

ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Wilmington N.C January 1st 1814

Sir

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Circular relative to the Embargo<sup>1</sup>

In consequence I contemplate immediately Sending S. Master Evans of *No. 147* & S. Master Wolfenden of *No. 146* to Ocracock & S Master Manson *N 7* to Beaufort;<sup>2</sup> altho, thier Cables are unworthy & our want of Boats extreme; It was impossible to send them previous to this time, owing to thier deficiency of men, & the Confused State of thier accots. which Mr. Potts<sup>3</sup> could not sooner Settle. I shall visit the Boats as soon as they arrive at thier stations, & report to you— S Master Alcorn has proceeded to Baltimore on furlough<sup>4</sup> & I have given to Mr. Peter Frazier<sup>5</sup> Masters Mate the command of *No. 148*, he is an intelligent & good officer. I have the Honour to be very Respectfully Sir Your Obdt. Servt.

T N Gautier

LS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 2 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. See Jones to Officers, 17 December 1813, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 176–77 (M149, Roll No. 11) for Jones's circular about the new embargo law. Jones forwarded to his officers a circular from the Secretary of the Treasury to the collector of the customs that described the new embargo act that passed on 17 December 1813. This act charged the Navy with "stopping all vessels attempting to depart contrary to the provisions of the said Act, or by aiding the Officers of the Revenue in the execution of the Law." Circular to Officers, 17 December 1813, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 176–77 (M149, Roll No. 11). For a copy of the embargo and instructions on enforcement, see DNA, RG56, Treasury Circular Letters (M735, Roll No. 1 or PHi, Uselma Clark Smith Collection, William Jones Papers, Vol. 1).

2. George Evans's sailing master warrant dated from 11 June 1812. Sailing Master John Wolfendon's (often misspelled Wolfenden) warrant dated from 27 June 1812. Jones accepted Wolfendon's request to move from the Charleston, South Carolina, to the Wilmington, North Carolina, Station because of his familiarity with Ocracoke Inlet. See Wolfendon to Jones, 9 July 1813, DNA, RG45, BC, 1813 Vol. 3, No. 14 (M148, Roll No. 12). John C. Manson, a sailing master since 15 July 1812, also left the Charleston Station in the summer of 1813 to serve at Wilmington.

3. Joshua Potts was the navy agent at Wilmington, but he had also served as storekeeper and purser in 1813.

4. After a short furlough due to ill health, Sailing Master James Alcorn, whose warrant dated from 29 June 1812, was discharged from the Navy on 18 April 1814.

5. Peter Frazier was not identified.



Map 1. Wilmington Station

ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Wilmington NC Jany. 17th 1814

Sir

I propose going in the Ketch *N 167* to Swansborough, Beaufort thro the Sound [*to*] occacoke to Elizabeth & generally to explore the different anchorages to find out the dispo[*si*]tion of the people on the Sea Coast & to make such necessary arrangements with Confidentiall persons as I can depend on in case of invasion. *N. 146* Wolfenden has arrived at Beaufort & *N 7*. Manson went over the Bar yesterday with a leading wind I have no doubt but that she is in safe S. M George Evans will command in my absence if you honor my intentions with your approval<sup>1</sup> I have the honor to be with much respect your Obdt. Sevt.

T N Gautier

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 22 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Jones approved Gautier's plans. See Jones to Gautier, 25 January 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 201 (M149, Roll No. 11).

ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Swansborough NC 1814 Feby. 21st.

Sir

I have the honor of acquainting you that I am with *N 148* in company arrived at S[*w*]ansborough a heavy sea from the SEt. & the weather very thratning deterred me from fetching Beaufort I shall embrace every opportunity to get to Elizabeth City the weather is very unsetled Smugling is carried on at Beauford & thro the sounds & dangerous to inform even goods seized the Collector is obliged to deposit the articles on board the Gun Boats for safety the generallity of Beauford & sound setlers are in opposition to Government & will evade the Laws in every manner they dare to do & every officer doing his duty will be execrated by them I shall report to you my observations occasionally & hope to merit your approbation which is my highest pride with great respect I have the honor to be your most Obedt. Sert.

T N Gautier

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 80 (M148, Roll No. 13).



ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

13th. March 1814 Washington NC

Sir

I have the honor to acquaint you that I arrived at Ocracock the 10th. Inst. the wind been a head sent the Boats to Portsmouth for water in returning two boats swampt but by the activity of the Pilot Cain Blackledge who put off in his whale boat from shell Castle<sup>1</sup> I am happy to report no accident or loss occurrd it blowing soon after at SEt. I broke ground & fetched [?] river & proceeded three miles below Washington wooded watered & examined into the state of stores & provisions deposited there two & half years ago there is now 14Bills. beef 40 Bills. Whisky one Cable 8 inch there are six 18 pd. Cannon left here by mistake three years ago there is a Company of Sea fencibles Capt Brooks also here The british have something in Contemplation from the Number vessells on the [*Sd.*] Coast aboat landed at ocracock with a flag with prisoners offered lb 3 for sheep that a Buzard would hardly eat for want of flesh & lb 40 for a boat load of Wood shall sail the 1st. wind for Elizabeth *N 148* not fetching to Windd. & the Brant shore she bore away by Signall to Neast. Given I have *No. 146* in Company when I arrive at Elizabeth I shall have the honor of submitting to you my observations I have the honor to be with respect

T N Gautier

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 120 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Shell Castle, a small island port in the Pamlico Sound near Ocracoke Inlet.

ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

March 23d. 1814 Elizabeth City

Sir

I beg leave to acquaint you of my arrivall at this place we have experienced of Gales & head winds enough for one season I have observed in my passage much to speak of the Essex Junto of Tories<sup>1</sup> are not more in opposition to government than the settlers on these Sounds rivers & bays but more so South of Harbour Island their is a well organized system of Smugling in & out the number of small Inletts the small distance of transpotion from the Banks to & from vessells at Anchor when I arrived at Beaufort three boats were dispatched at night for no other purpose but to give notice of my arrivall Mr. Cook at Beaufort is a meritorious officer I may add Bryan Heller late Collector & Cooks brother are the only persons trust worthy to give you an idea of the place two magistrates a Coll. who was high sheriff of the County carried of from Mr. Cooks cellars a large quantity

of Coffee & Sugar & no man dares inform if the Gun Boat was not there it would be unsafe for Mr. Cook to do his duty the Collter. belonging to Newbern has been at ocracock but three times since the Embargo I arrived in Washington the 12th. & left it the 14th. I had much conversation J. G. Blount Esqr.<sup>2</sup> he speaks highly of the Confidence to be put in the Ocracock Island men & the company & Settlers about New Inlett

when we have our barges & some good rowing boats we shall have full employment this summer

If I have presumed to much in offering my thoughts to you Sir from whom it is my duty simply to recieve my Orders & as an officer strictly to obey I beg you to impute it to my zeal of Service

The Boat is just returned from town & I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your orders of 19th. February for me to proceede to Norfolk to select & take charge of Stores &c<sup>3</sup> I shall start by first stage I have the honor to be most respectfully your obdt. Sert.

T N Gautier

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 139 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. The Essex Junto were dissident Americans opposed to Democratic-Republican Party policies.
2. John Gray Blount was a successful North Carolina businessman.
3. See Jones to Gautier, 19 February 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 220 (M149, Roll No. 11).

SAILING MASTER WILLIAM BLANEY TO  
ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER

On Board US Gun Boat *No. 148*  
Elizabeth 26 March 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you of my arrival here after a passage of fifty four hours from Newbern— with this you have a copy of remarks respecting the trade in Core Sound— likewise the situation of places where I have put in— besides have been particular in my enquiries relative to what supplies could be obtained by an enemy in case they should attempt the sound— In the first place the Inhabitants are very poor and get their living by Oystering and fowling which they carry to Newbern, Washington, and other ports in the Sound— there Cattle which are numerous is generally fed on the Banks on the sea-board; large quantities can be drove to Cedar Inlet and taken off with safety— some small supplies can be got at Jards & Nelsons Bay on the Nwst side. there is eight feet water leading from the channel into to each of these Bays—

It is useless to say any thing of Portsmouth banks, for should the Enemy not come in at Occracook Cedar Inlet is by far more convenient—

There is a passage between Cedar Island and the main leading into Pamptico sound and water sufficient for a Vessel drawing four & half feet; a vast number of Cattle are fed here— there is but about 5½ feet water on Harbor Island bar— this is effected much by the wind— if from the northward it makes the highest tide—

There has not been a light at Occracook since the invasion— When in Newbern I learnt goods were frequently smuggled in, from Beaufort by way of the haul over— the Inhabitants here do not appear any ways friendly disposed toward gun Boats or their Officers—

There is 9 ft water at New Inlet into Pamptico

4 feet do.—at Roanoak—

5 feet do.—at Carthys

& at Currituck 10 feet but in Currituck sound there is but four & ½ feet I have the Honor to be Sir your Mo. Obedt. St.

W<sup>m</sup>. Blaney<sup>1</sup>

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 34 (M148, Roll No. 13). This letter was numbered separately, but enclosed in Gautier to Jones's cover letter, 21 April 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 33 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. William Blaney's sailing master warrant dated from 3 February 1814.

[Enclosure]

List of Stores and Provisions received from Norfolk—

By Canal Boat *No. 1*— 50 Bbls Pork, 3 casks contg. 500 lb cheese,

[*illegible*] pump tacks in a cask with deck nails

1044½ lb. of Sheathing Paper, 1191 lb. of Sheathing Nails—

400 lb. of Deck nails, 166 lb. of Spikes, 100 lb. of 4 dy. nails

160 lb. of 6 dy. nails, 100 lb. of 8 dy. nails, 100 lb. of 10 dy. nails, 100 lb. of 12 dy. do. 100 lb. of 20 dy. nails—

By Canal Boat *Globe*— 80 Hooks & Thimbles, 4 Thimbles 50 Blocks & 4 Snatch Blocks, 8 Pegs of Lead,<sup>1</sup> 1 Ton of Grape & Cannister, 50 Bbls of Pork, 2 nine pounders Carriages, 10 Six Pounders & Carriages, 12 Laddles & worms, 12 Sponges & rammers, 12 Gunners Handspikes, 36 Tackles, 10 breechings 12 Aprons, 36. Gimbles, 36 Prickers, 12 iron crowbars, 1 Cambouse & 2 sheets of Iron for do, 2 Bbls of oil, 2 beds & coins ea.—

By Canal Boat *No. 2*—

2 boxes contg. Medicine, 2 Bbls & 1 Package Seine Twine, 50 Fire buckets, 12 Kegs white Lead, 22 Bolts Canvas, 48 Coils of Cordage of different Sizes, 4 Cables & 8 Hawsers, 1 Bbl contg. 5100 Quills, 6 doz. Saw files, 1 Boatswains call, 4 Gross sail needles, 3 hand vices, 3 doz. paint brushes, & 12 Screw drivers—

By Canal Boat *Royal George*—

60 Bbls of Beef & 40 Bbls of Bread—

T. N. Gautier Act Liut.

21st. April 1814

DS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 34, enclosure (M148, Roll No. 13). This list was numbered separately, but enclosed with Gautier to Jones's cover letter, 21 April 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 33 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Unrefined lead is cast in blocks called pigs.

ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Beaufort N.C. 6th May 1814

Sir.

I had the honor to inform you in my last letter of the 24th Ulo.,<sup>1</sup> of my intention of sailing, and have now to acquaint you of my arrival here, with two Lighters loaded with Stores, & *No. 146*. SM Wolfenden & *No. 148*. SM. Blaney in Company— I had the pleasure of finding *No. 147* SM. Evans here, whom I informed you of having ordered round from Wilmington, the very great exertions of this valuable officer and the delegece used by him, merit my best thanks— I shall proceed on with the first fair wind, with the two Lighters under our convoy, which will consist as follows of *Nos. 7, 147, 148, 146, & 167*, I understand there is an armed Schooner off Swansborough, she may be the *Cancer* for the rascals I believe give every information to the Enemy,— A Schooner from Wilmingn. Georgebriets, Stanton master, was fired at by her in a fog 5 days ago, and made her escape, Mr. Evans must have passed within a few leagues of her

With your permission I will return to these waters if necessary, we have had a great deal of very bad weather, Gales, thunder, & rain, it now blows a Gale from the Sd. I have the honor to be with very great respect Sir your Obt. Sert.

T N Gautier

LS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 66 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Gautier meant his letter of 21 April. Gautier to Jones, 21 April 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 33 (M148, Roll No. 13).

## New Barges to Enforce the Embargo

*Station commanders often sent the Secretary of the Navy their annual reports in early January. Captain John H. Dent, the commander of the Charleston Station, had the same mandate for 1814 as he had in 1813—to protect coastal trade against British depredations and enforce the embargo against American mercantile evasions. Dent dutifully provided Secretary Jones with this report and proposed the utility of four to six additional barges to expand his flotilla's effectiveness. Jones readily agreed to contract for five vessels. By June, all five were outfitted, but only three were operational because recruitment of sailors lagged.*



Map 2. Charleston Station

## CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston 1st Jany. 1814

Sir

I have made the following disposition of the Schooners, Gun Boat *No. 10*, and the barges under my command,<sup>1</sup> since the receipt of your circular order of the [17] December.<sup>2</sup> The *Carolina* and *Nonsuch* in Rebellion roads ready for sea. The *Ferret* & *Alligator* cruizing on the coast and inlets between North Edisto and Port Royal, Gun Boat *No. 10* at Georgetown, Barge *No. 7* cruizing at the mouth of Stono river, *No. 8* refitting for Bulls Bay, *No. 9*, Stationed in the channel between Sullivans Island & the main, *No. 10* as Convoy of Government's Stores to Georgetown, and Cruize in Bulls and the Santees, *No. 11* Guard in Wappoo Cut, to prevent vessels leaving the port, through the inland navigation *No 12* Guard duty on the bar; which disposition, I hope will meet your approbation, and Shew that four or six more barges are required to watch the important rivers of Combahee, North & South Edisto. I have ordered Lt Kearney, to remain in Port Royal, and Sailing Master Bassett, in St Helena,<sup>3</sup> so as to carry into execution the Act laying an Embargo &c. these two sounds are the most important, and where produce can be shipped, as was done to a great amount during the last Embargo, without detection. I Have the Honor to be With great respect yr most obt Svt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 1 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. For the June 1813 report of vessels stationed at Charleston, South Carolina, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 786. The terms "barges" and "galleys" were used interchangeably throughout the naval correspondence.

2. For more on the new embargo law, see p. 20, footnote 1.

3. Both Dent and the Navy Department often misspelled Sailing Master (appointed acting lieutenant 1 March 1814) Russell Bessett's and Lieutenant Lawrence Kearny's last names.

## CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charlestown 5th Jany. 1814

Sir

Having been informed yesterday that the Collector<sup>1</sup> intended to permit Letters of Marque to proceed to sea, I called on him, and on examining his instructions predicated on the Act Laying an Embargo I gave it as my decided opinion that vessels of that description could not be permitted to proceed to sea as provision was only made for private Armed vessels intended to cruize against the enemy, and that letters of Marque could not come under that description as they are obliged to enter and clear at Custom House as other merchant vessels, and could not be granted but as specified in that order. I found that the Collector had taken the opinion of lawyers on that article many were of opinion that vessels commission commissiond as Letters of Marque, could, under the act laying

an Embargo proceed to sea. I requested him to refuse the permit to that class of vessels untill the pleasure of the Secretary of the Treasury<sup>2</sup> was known, while with the Collector, and after he decided not to grant permission to Letters of Marque to proceed to sea application was immediately made by those persons for Commissions as Privateers for their vessels some of twenty five & thirty tons with small arms and from seven to ten men each, those vessels are principally from the Eastern States and North Carolina and have made use of the pretext of Commissions to evade the Embargo. I have not Sir received as yet the Act and instruction as inform'd by your circular of the 17th I should. I have seen those of the Collectors and have governed myself accordingly—I shall not untill I receive your further orders permit any vessels of the above description to leave the port as I am satisfied they are not intended to cruize against the Enemy but have made use of the Commissions to evade the Embargo law I am sorry to add that this necessary and judicious measure drawn with so much care, embracing every preventative against Commerce or intercourse with the Enemy, will be evaded by every means within the Power of a portion of the Mercantile speculators in this district. I shall use every exertion to prevent any infringement or evasion of the law, by the keeping the Barges moving in all the Rivers & Inlet within my Command. and have seized all Boats & Craft of every description not having the regular permit from the Custom House I Have the Honor to be With great respect Your Obt Svt

J H Dent

LB, ScU, John H. Dent Letter Book, 1813–1814.

1. Simeon Theus, collector of the port of Charleston.

2. Albert Gallatin was Secretary of the Treasury from 4 March 1809 to 9 February 1814.

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

Captain John H. Dent, U.S. Navy.  
Charlestown, S. Ca.

Navy Department  
Jany. 8th. 1814

Sir

Your letter of the 1st. instant is received.— I approve of the disposition of the force under your Command, and, in order to encrease that force, forward to you a draught and plan of one of the Galleys now in service here; which is in all respects a perfect and efficient Vessel, you will in conjunction with the Agent,<sup>1</sup> take measures for contracting, for the building of five Gallies in every respect like the Draught and plan now sent,<sup>2</sup> and upon the most reasonable terms, when the terms are perfectly understood and agreed upon, the Agent will enter into the Contract in proper form, The terms on which they have been built in Baltimore and else where, are as follows:—

For the large Galleys, Two thousand dollars each, to be completed in every thing, except the blocks, rigging, sails, and beds for Carronades.

For those of the smaller Class, Fifteen hundred and Fifty dollars each, with the additional charge of the spars for one mast, The Iron Tiller and the rudder

Irons.— Those which you are authorized to Contract for the building of are to be of this Class.— I am very respectfully your Obt. Servt

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 189 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. John Robertson, navy agent at Charleston.
2. These were not found.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston. 22nd Jany 1814

Sir

I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 8th inst, also the plan and draught of a row galley; I think the plan an admirable one, and well adapted for the defence and protection of the inland navigation of this State.

I have directed the Agent to advertize for contracts to build them, and when entered into, shall inform you thereof; I shall adhere strictly to the directions in building, and your orders as regards economy. There are no eighteen pound cannon on this station. I shall endeavor to obtain a loan from General Pinckney<sup>1</sup> of the number required for the galleys; There are no other carronades here but four thirty two pounders, which I think too heavy for those boats, eighteen or twenty four pounder carronades may be had on very reasonable terms. I shall use every exertion to have those boats compleated as early as possible, as they are required in the large sounds to the southward. I Have the Honor to be With great respect Your most Obt Svt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 58 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. Major General Thomas Pinckney, U.S.A., commanded the Sixth Military District, composed of North and South Carolina, and Georgia.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston. 1st Feby 1814

Sir

Not untill yesterday, was there a contract effected, for building two gallies; there has been other propositions but not such as I approved, in a day or two I expect they will be all contracted for; Mesrs Johnson & Taylor Ship Carpenters, have contracted to build two for thirteen Hundred dollars each, finding all materials, iron work &ca., except for gun carriages and sails.<sup>1</sup>



I made a requisition upon Col Drayton<sup>2</sup> commanding Military officer in this harbour, for the loan of five 18 pound cannon for the use of the gallies, which he informs me cannot be complied with, having none, but what are required for the use of the garrisons, I have made a similar requisition on the Governor,<sup>3</sup> who is absent and have not yet received his answer, I shall require for the Armament of the five gallies 100 stand of arms with accoutrements complete, 100 sabres and 80 pair pistols; carronnades may be purchased here on very advantageous terms, to suit the gallies.<sup>4</sup> I Have the Honor to be With great respect Your Obt Svt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 88 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. In early March, Dent ordered Lieutenant Lawrence Kearny to superintend the building of five gallies under a contract issued to the firm of Johnson & Taylor. Kearny was also ordered to oversee the recruiting officer, who was authorized to entice seamen with a five dollar bounty and three months of advanced pay. See Dent to Kearny, 4 March 1814, ScU, John H. Dent Letter Book, 1813–1814.

2. Colonel William Drayton, U.S.A., from Charleston, South Carolina.

3. Joseph Alston was governor of South Carolina from December 1812 to December 1814.

4. Jones authorized Dent to requisition through Navy Agent Robertson all the 12-, 18-, and 24-pounder carronnades, small arms, and other equipment that he needed for the new barges. See Jones to Dent, 2 February 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 206 (M149, Roll No. 11).

### CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston 19th June 1814

Sir

The five Gallies are compleated, and fitted for service— three are manned; and cruising in the inlets— the other two have not a man; should the enemy appear on the coast in force, I shall man them from the *Nonsuch*. Having no officers for the two now here, I have entered masters of vessels, as Master's Mates to take charge of them, they are smart, active, and well adapted for flotilla service, and well acquainted with the Inlets, coast, and inland navigation, which is all important in this service. Will you authorize me to give them the appointment, of Acting Masters for flotilla service. I have received information, that several coasters have been captured inland near Darien (Georgia) by a Providence Privateer, and recaptured with the Privateer, by a Baltimore Private Armed Schooner— this is one of the three I had information of sailing for this coast,<sup>1</sup> and shall keep a look out for the others. A few day's since a Frigate sent her boats into Bulls Bay, after some coasters, and were chased out by the barges & gallies I Have the Honor to be With great respect Yr Obt Svt.

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 79 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. Dent had received information that New Providence, Bahama Island, privateers were headed to the southern coast to prey on the inland trade.

## Defending the Portsmouth Station

*The Portsmouth Navy Yard was one of the more difficult naval installations to defend during the War of 1812. For one thing, the site of the yard placed it on the border of two states—New Hampshire and Massachusetts—whose Federalist-dominated governments were hostile to the Republican-led war effort. The civil officials of these two states proved maddeningly indifferent to Hull's repeated requests for aid in manning and repairing the forts that lay within their jurisdictions and guarded the harbor. Then, there was Hull's own civilian leader, William Jones, who expressed first incredulity, then irritation at the Navy captain's repeated claims of Portsmouth's vulnerability to attack. Finally, there was the geography of the Portsmouth region itself, which seemed to invite attack from a variety of approaches. Faced with an active enemy at his doorstep, and lacking a proper naval force to turn back a determined attack, Hull had good reason to fear for the well-being of his command. The following documents highlight the defensive challenges Hull faced as commandant at Portsmouth and the range of officials to whom he turned for help in meeting them.*

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard Portsmouth  
3d Jan. 1814

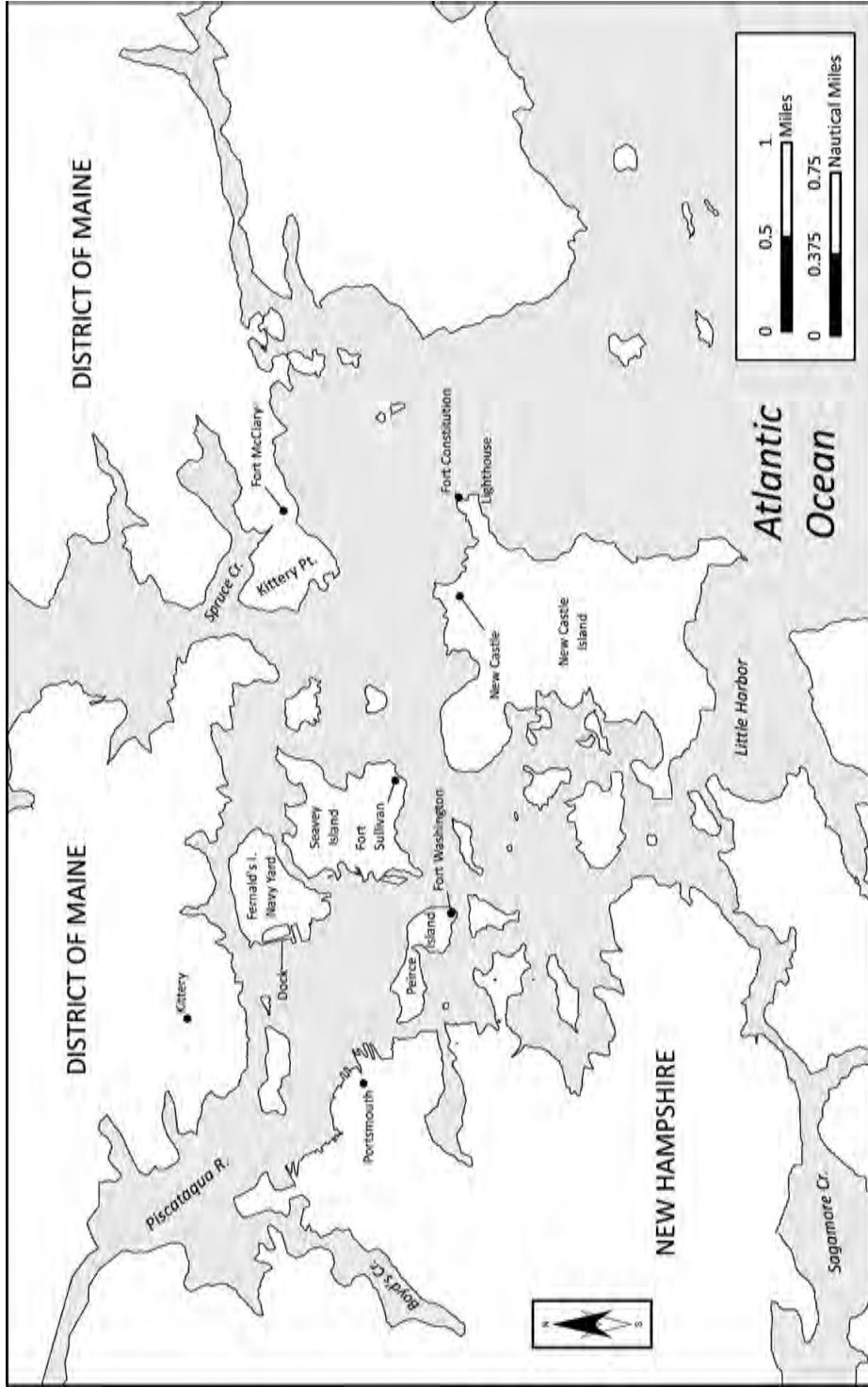
Sir,

I have the honour to forward you the monthly Return of Stores by which you will see that there are but very few articles in this Yard, that Ships will require in their outfits, and as the Season is now come in which Guns, Shot and all other heavy articles can be transported by water, better than at any other Season of the year, I should therefore strongly recommend that all articles we shall be in want of next summer should be collected, in the course of this winter.

In asking this I cannot but invite your attention to the Situation of this harbour as to its strength. I feel confident that unless measures are taken to man the Forts that are now built and to erect others, and man them, our Ship will not be safe longer than the month of April, as there is nothing now to prevent a very small force from entering the harbour

Heavy Guns will be wanting on the Island, and it will be necessary for all the Gunboats on the Station to be man'd and a look-out boat, to sail fast and carry one to two heavy Guns will be absolutely necessary. We are so near the sea that unless a good look-out is kept outside of the harbour to give us timely notice of the approach of the Enemy they would have it in their power to come upon us in a very few moments from sea.

Should you be pleased to let me build a small vessel for that purpose, it can be done in the Yard and at a small expense, as many of the materials might be furnished from the docks that will not answer any other purpose. I Should be much pleased to have your answer on that subject. I have also to request that you will be pleased to suffer me to build a small Hospital on the Island. Our sick are now suffering for the want of accommodation[s] and there are several men on board the *Congress* that must be landed, and we have no place to put them. I could build a small wooden building that would answer every purpose of the Yard, for a small



Map 3. Portsmouth Harbor

sum, and as there will at all times be more or less Seamen here on the Doctor's List, accommodations for them are absolutely necessary I have the honour to be With great Respect Sir You Obedt. Servant.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 10 (M125, Roll No. 34). Bracketed text supplied from letter book copy, which is misdated 2 January 1813. See NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 1, pp. 227–28.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Isaac Hull Esqr.  
Commanding Naval Officer }  
Portsmouth N.H.

Navy Department  
Jany. 14th. 1814.

Sir,

Your letter of the 3d. instant is received; and advantage will be taken of the Winter Season, to transport, in fast sailing vessels, all the Guns required for the Service to the Eastward, and such shot as may be ready, exclusive of the demands for the Middle and Southern Stations.

It will, however, be proper to guard against disappointment; and as shot can be furnished to the Eastward, you will be pleased, immediately, to make the necessary requisitions upon the Navy Agent, to contract for,

100 tons of 32 pound Shot,  
20 " " Grape & Stools;  
50 " " 24 pound Shot,  
10 " " Grape & Stools;  
30 " " 18 pound Shot,  
6 " " Grape and Stools;— also for a proportion of Canister Shot.

The Seventy Fours will be armed entirely with Guns of 32 pound Calibre viz.

Lower Battery 30 Guns, Weight 60 to 62 Cwt.

Main Deck 30 " " 54 to 55 "

Upper Deck 26 Carronades.

When the intention of the Government to build the 74's was known, all the intelligent men from the vicinity of Portsmouth, represented the place to be so strong by nature, as to require very little protection from art; but to create and maintain the force, contemplated in your letter, would be an effectual bar to building at Portsmouth; as the expense of defending the Ships while building, if the means of defence natural and artificial are really as feeble as represented, would cost more than the Ships would be worth when built.

This is a subject which I wish distinctly to understand, before farther expense is incurred on the establishment, for had I conceived the situation to be as vulnerable and exposed as it is stated to be, I should certainly not have authorized the great expense already incurred.



*Issac Hull*

I do not perceive the necessity of building a Look out Vessel, as the sound of the tocsin, alone, will not avert the danger.

This subject shall be duly represented to the President, and to the Department of War, whose province it is to provide fortifications &c. but the active operations of the War, require so much of our fiscal and physical means, that I doubt whether any very material force may be expected for this object.

You are at liberty, Sir, to erect a small and cheap frame Building, for the purpose of a Hospital. I am, very respectfully, your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 1, pp. 563–64 (M441, Roll No. 1).

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 25th Jan. 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to enclose you a Draught of the Harbour of Portsmouth,<sup>1</sup> shewing the points that are fortified, and those that in my opinion ought to have guns mounted on them—

I regret extremely that you should have been led into an error as regards the strength of this harbour, for most certainly with the force here now and all last summer, there would not be the least difficulty in entering the harbour with boats, and destroying not only the Ship, but the town.

You will see that nature has done every thing that could be wished for the defence of the place; but very little has been done by art. Fort Constitution<sup>2</sup> at the light-house is a neat little fort, and if well manned would do much towards the defence of the place, but there seldom has been more than one hundred men in it, and very often not more than fifty, to man the guns in that & fort McCleary<sup>3</sup> on the opposite shore, so that there is not generally more than two men to a gun to these two forts. Boats may pass them in the night with muffled oars, and when that is accomplished they are out of danger, or should they rather take Little Harbour passage, they avoid the forts altogether, and come upon us without giving any alarm below. To avoid this, and to have something in reserve for them should they pass the forts below, I should recommend the putting the works thrown up last war (called Forts Sullivan and Washington)<sup>4</sup> in order for receiving a few pieces [of] heavy guns, which might be done at a small expence, as the works are now in tolerable repair; & nothing but a little labour in forming the embrasures, and laying platforms would be necessary, and a small guard then is all that would be necessary, as they are so near the town that the Citizens could be at the guns in less than ten minutes, and ready to meet the Enemy, should they pass the Forts below.

Colonel Walbach<sup>5</sup> is now I believe at Washington if so he will be able to give every information relative to the harbour and its defence and will point out to you the situation of forts Sullivan & Washington & Should our guns arrive in the

course of the Winter, they can be placed in these forts on Ship Carriages, and remain there until they are wanting for the Ship.

I should also recommend purchasing or hiring a number of the river Scows for the purpose of placing heavy Cannon in. They would answer every purpose of Gun Boats and would be equally useful, and could lie with the Gun on board ready for Volunteers to jump on board should they be wanting. They can be purchased for one hundred Dollars each, which is not half the price of a barge, and as there is an appropriation for building barges, I should suppose they could be paid for out of that fund.

For the mode of warfare that we may expect next summer from the Enemy, I do not think the preparation I have recommended is more than ought to be done for the preservation of the town and the Shipping at the Wharves was there no 74 building here consequently it ought not to be chargeable to her. I have the honour to be With great respect Sir, Your Obedt. Servant

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 70 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. Enclosure not found.
2. Fort Constitution, formerly Fort William and Mary, was sited on the northeast corner of New Castle Island, overlooking the Piscataqua River and the Atlantic Ocean.
3. Fort McClary, built at the mouth of the Piscataqua River at Kittery Point.
4. These two fortifications guarded the main navigational channel of the Piscataqua River. Fort Washington, on Peirce Island, protected the west side of the river channel, while Fort Sullivan, on Seavey Island, defended the channel's opposite side.
5. John Baptiste de Barth, Baron de Walbach, commonly known as John de Barth Walbach. See Rosengarten, *German Soldier*, pp. 160–65.

### CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SENATOR JEREMIAH MASON

U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, (N.H.)  
25th March 1814

Sir,

I have long since been wishing to write you on the subject of the defenceless situation of the harbour of Portsmouth, but have delayed it with an expectation that a force adequate to its defence would have been ordered here, but I have not as yet learnt that any measures for that purpose have been taken, I cannot therefore but draw your attention to that subject. As you and several other Gentlemen now at Washington are perfectly acquainted with the situation of the harbour and the force necessary to its defence, it becomes unnecessary for me to say any thing on that subject further than to state generally that there is not, at this time force sufficient to defend the place against three hundred men exclusive of the crews of the Ships now here, and they will be off probably in a short time when we shall be left as before stated. As this is the only seaport in the state of any magnitude I cannot concieve that a request that the forts at the mouth of the harbour, should be fully manned and kept so during the summer by the United States, would be an unreasonable one, when we take into view the immense number of

fine Ships now lying at the wharves and other valuable property that is in danger of being destroyed by a very small force.

I should recommend that a few heavy pieces of Ordnance should be placed on Pierce's Island and in Fort Sullivan on the high ground, this perhaps might be reasonably be asked of the State Government, and no doubt would be granted, if some person of influence who is acquainted with the situation of the town would point it out to the Legislature. That it ought to be done there can be no question—

I hope I am not unnecessarily alarmed, nor do I feel any other than what my duty as Commanding Officer on this Station obliges me to feel, but when I know we have an army about to enter Canada, and that the enemy have selected one of their most active Officers to command on this Coast, I cannot but believe the war will be carried on very differently from what it was last summer, and I see no reason why we ought to calculate that our seaport towns will be left unmolested, nor have we any right to expect lenity of this sort. We ought therefore to be ready to resist any force they may bring before us.

I have written this day to Col. Walbach<sup>1</sup> on the subject who is better acquainted with the harbour than I am, & with the state of defence it is in, and can give you or the Secretary of War every necessary information. I have the honor to be With great regard & respect Sir Yr. Ob. Servt.

Sign'd Isaac Hull

Hon. Jeremiah Mason  
City Washington

LB, NH, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2.

1. See Hull to Walbach, 25 March 1814, *ibid.*

### CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO GOVERNOR JOHN T. GILMAN

[*Portsmouth, N.H.*] 11th May 1814

Sir,

You will no doubt have received a letter from General Storer<sup>1</sup> covering one I this day received from a respectable Merchant at New Haven.<sup>2</sup>

The information contained in that letter you may be assured was received by the gentleman who wrote it, and from a source that left no doubt in his mind but an attack on this place was intended by the Enemy

When I last had the honour of seeing you I gave you my opinion as to the defenceless situation of the harbour and hoped measures would have been taken before this either by the United States or the State Government to have a force stationed here adequate to the defence of the place at least against one or two thousand men, but as yet, nothing or but little has been done by either. The Forts are without men and I know of no measures having been taken to man them, consequently every thing remains as when you were here. I should therefore (as



the United States have any disposable force that can be ordered here immediately, recommend that at least One thousand men/militia should be called out and encamped in the neighborhood of Portsmouth ready to act at any point they may be wanting at. That force with what we have would no doubt keep the Enemy in check until a larger one could be collected, or it is possible were these men called out immediately and a knowledge of its having been done gets to the Enemy, it may prevent an attack if one was intended. It is decidedly my opinion that if Militia were ever wanting for the defence of any place they are now wanting at Portsmouth. I have the honour to be &c

His Excellency Jno. T. Gilman  
Govr. of the State of New Hampsr. Exeter.

LB, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2.

1. A resident of Portsmouth, Major General Clement Storer commanded the 1st Division of the New Hampshire State Militia in 1814. *Report of the Adjutant General*, p. 22, unnumbered footnote.

2. See an unsigned letter to Hull of 9 May 1814 bearing the dateline of New Haven, Connecticut, in DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 19 (M124, Roll No. 63). The correspondent shared intelligence from a Bermuda informant that an enemy expedition was then underway to attack Portsmouth.

#### CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 11th May 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to enclose you a copy of a letter<sup>1</sup> I have this day received from a respectable gentleman in New Haven.

The information contained in this letter agrees precisely with information received from other sources and forwarded you, which leaves but little doubt on my mind but an attack will be made on this place before the Summer is out.

I have written to the Governour of the State on the subject giving him such information from time to time as I have received, and have given him very freely my opinion of the defenceless state of the harbour, but no measures have as yet been taken by the state government except furnishing from fifty to seventy five men to man three guns I had mounted on Pierce's Island; nor do I believe that the least calculation ought to be made on the Militia of this part of the country to act against the kind of force that will be sent against it.— If the Enemy should land for 24 or 48 hours, the Militia would no doubt in that time get ready to act. But that will not be the mode of warfare. If the Enemy come, it will be with a considerable force, and what they do will be done in a short time. A force ought therefore to be ready to receive them. The Forts are not manned, nor do I know of regular troops enough in this neighborhood to man them.

About one hundred men have within two or three weeks been ordered here, but I understand by Colonel Upham (whose command they are under) that they are to leave this on Monday next, when Fort Sullivan with three heavy guns on a very commanding height will be left without men. I shall write to Governour Gilman again tomorrow and urge him to send some force to the defence of this place.

By returns I had the honour to enclose you som[e] days since, you will observe that there is only Two hundred men attached to the Gun Boats and Navy Yard, and when the boats are manned we have not enough men in the Yard to work more than two or three Guns, and I can make but little calculation on the Carpenters in case of an attack, particularly if it should take place in the night, for they will have there own affairs to attend to before they come to assist us on the Island if they come at all, so that in the event of a force coming against us of from one to two thousand men you can easily suppose what the result will be, situated as we now are—I have the honour to be, with great respect Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 54 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. See footnote 2 of Hull to Gilman, 11 May 1814, above.

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO MAJOR GENERAL HENRY DEARBORN, U.S.A.

[*Portsmouth, N.H.*] July 16th 1814

Sir,

I understand some days past that you intended visiting Portsmouth, when I hoped to have had an opportunity of shewing you the defenceless situation of this harbour, but I have since been informed that you had for the present, given up the idea of coming. I cannot therefore but assure you that this harbour is not sufficiently defended against a force that may shortly be expected on our coast and that unless measures are taken immediately to place men in the forts that have been abandoned by the Militia we shall be obliged to remove the Guns and give up the most commanding heights, to be made use of by the Enemy if they should think proper to take charge of them.

I regret extremely, your not having visited us, for I differ so widely in opinion as to the means and force necessary for the defence of this place, from the Honble. the Secretary of War and many other people that are perhaps judges that I should have been much pleased to have your opinion on the subject after having visited us.

I have so often asked for an additional force to be stationed here that it now only remains for me to give my opinion, as to the necessity of it, and leave it to those higher in authority to order them or not as may be thought proper. I have the honour &c &c, with great respect Sir Your Ob. Servt.

Major Genl. H. Dearborn  
Commg. Military District No. 1— Boston.

LB, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2.

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO  
ADJUTANT GENERAL JOHN BROOKS,<sup>1</sup> MASSACHUSETTS STATE MILITIA

[*Portsmouth, N.H.*] 29th July [1814]

My dear Sir,

I some time since had the pleasure of writing you on the Subject of the defence of this harbour, the state of the Militia &c. I have since learnt that you had it in contemplation to visit us, and take a look at the defenceless state we are in.— I should be delighted to see you not only for that purpose, but to have the honour of a visit from a friend I have so long known and esteemed. If then you can find leisure why not take a ride with some friend and spend a few days with us. We will endeavour to make your time pleasant, and if you are fond of good fishing, and chowder made of them after they are caught we can yet venture on the ground to catch them.

You will have seen what has passed on the subject of the defence of this place; between the Governour of the State and the Secretary of War, and are acquainted with the result. We are now left in a worse state than if the Militia had not been called out; for they have not only left two forts in the most commanding part of the harbour without a man to take care of them, but care has been taken by the different Newspapers to tell the Enemy the precise state we are in and the number of that can be brought against them. Fort Sullivan, one of the Forts in which I caused guns to be mounted, is the most commanding situation in the harbour indeed it commands every thing else. It is in Massachusetts consequently not a man will be sent there from N Hampshire, of course unless something is done by the former state, it must remain for the Enemy to take possession of when ever they think proper and if they get possession the whole country within the reach of their guns. Could there not be one hundred of the men that are to be called out for the defence of the state sent to that fort? They would be ready to act at Kittery, York, or any other part of the Coast and would be ready to defend a valuable part of the state independent of the service they would render the general government in defending the Public property. I indeed wish you could see the situation we are left in and I am confident you would think with me, that something ought to be done immediately I have the honour to be with great respect &c

General John Brooks  
Boston

LB, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2.

1. Brooks bore the rank of brigadier general. See *Massachusetts Register*, p. 122. He succeeded Caleb Strong as governor of Massachusetts.

## More Barges for St. Marys

*The gunboat reduction that Secretary Jones had instituted across naval stations in February 1813 emanated from a manpower shortage.<sup>1</sup> Jones economized by decommissioning poorly manned gunboats. By August 1813, Jones recognized that barges were often preferable to gunboats because they were faster, and he offered to build four or five barges to replace some of “the heavy moving Gun Boats” at the St. Marys Station, if Commodore Hugh G. Campbell could recruit more men.<sup>2</sup> By December 1813, Campbell was hopeful about his prospects for recruiting, but reiterated his need for brigs to stop “Embargo Breakers.”<sup>3</sup> Campbell’s problems with smugglers evading the embargo law mirrored those of his fellow southern station commanders, but were more numerous because Georgia shared a border with Spanish-held Florida.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the Georgia Station commander faced the continuing threat of a British landing that could sever communication between Savannah and St. Marys. On the last day of 1813, Campbell lamented his severe lack of officers and entreated Jones to assign him two sailing masters and four midshipmen.<sup>5</sup>*

*By early 1814, Campbell finally convinced Jones to augment the vessels on the Georgia Station, despite recruiting and desertion challenges. The Navy Secretary contracted with Thomas B. Eyre, a master carpenter from Philadelphia, to build six barges at St. Marys.<sup>6</sup> However, numerous construction problems reduced that number to two.*

1. For documents pertaining to the 1813 gunboat reduction, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 52–54.

2. Jones to Campbell, 28 August 1813, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 65 (M149, Roll No. 11).

3. Campbell to Jones, 20 December 1813, DNA, RG45, CL, 1813, Vol. 8, No. 78 (M125, Roll No. 33).

4. For Secretary Jones’s 17 December 1813 circular to his commanders regarding the Navy’s role in supporting the enforcement of the embargo law, see DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 176–77 (M149, Roll No. 11).

5. Campbell to Jones, 31 December 1813, DNA, RG45, CL, 1813, Vol. 8, No. 123 (M125, Roll No. 33).

6. Jones to Eyre, 8 January 1814, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 69–70 (M209, Roll No. 4).

### COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary’s 4th January 1814—

Sir

I beg leave to repeat the pressing necessity there is for a greater force on this Station— The few men and officers we have are not sufficient to do the duty required of them— the daily arrivals at Amelia oblige them to let pass many vessels that ought to be detained— We have now under consideration and trial Eight vessels and daily expect four more from Liverpool, which I have particular information of, and how many more are on their way I know not

Herewith I enclose for your consideration a copy of my orders to the commanders of Gun Vessels on that Subject— The Embargo may favor us in recruiting men,—<sup>1</sup> our progress heretofore has been dull, add to this, there are seven wide inlets between Savannah and St Mary’s to guard, exclusive of Tibee entrance, three of them affording water for Frigates, the others for merchant Vessels, in and out of which much Business has been carried on in the Smuggling Line and the most convenient part of the world I ever have seen for Illicit Trade— To attend strictly to our duty off this Bar and swash channel It would require three active Gun Vessels well mand. and officered,—in neither case are we efficient



Map 4. St. Marys Station

Three more Gun Vessels could be well employed, especially as we have the Embargo Law to support— A few Barges might be likewise employed to advantage, were it not for two difficulties attending their operations— The first is they should be manned with the best of men who cannot be had, Secondly, the impossibility to prevent desertions, which will now in all probability encrease in a double degree as the Vessels at Amelia are offering from 35 to 40 dollars pr. month, and sailors in General not being men of much reflection, are apt to embrace the highest offer, without consideration of the Flag under which they sail I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 11 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. The commandant of the New Orleans Station, Daniel T. Patterson, expressed similar hopes that seamen idled by the recently passed embargo would seek berths in Navy vessels. See Patterson to Jones, 31 January 1814, p. 808.

[Enclosure]

—Orders—

You will consider it your duty to send in for examination all Vessels from British ports, and all other Vessels you may suspect of improper measure

Be off the bar in time to board them previous to entering spanish waters—nor must their being in spanish waters prevent your boarding them, and enquiring into their characters, what news &c in conformity with your boarding list, a form of which you will receive with these orders— You will likewise board and strictly examine all Vessels bound out from Amelia, for deserters, examine them strictly for papers, and should you find letters for any of the British Dominions, you will open them, and such as treat on British property being at Amelia or expected at that place or to any part of the United States must be forwarded to me or take such notes from them as may be useful— Seize all Vessels going from Amelia inland with cargoes on board that have not a clearance from the custom house at this place likewise examine those that may have cargoes, whether or no it agrees with such clearance, those in ballast must likewise be searched— Hibberson and Young,<sup>1</sup> or other British agents at Amelia may send out their clerks in a Pilot Boat, to board vessels they expect from British ports, previous to your doing so, by which means they will take from them papers most essential to us— this you must prevent by all the means in your power, and should they succeed in the attempt you must detain such Pilot Boat and every person on board until strict search is made of the boat, and persons on board, for papers, and such as may be found must be forwarded with other papers of the Vessel— This will shew the necessity of being on the Alert, and when the weather and tide will not permit the Gun Vessel to go out, you must proceed in the small boats to effect that object—

Do not expose yourselves to Capture by British Cruisers, yet it will be proper to keep the sea day and night when the weather will permit—

While in the execution of this duty you will not loose sight of your former instructions relative to american Vessels, nonintercourse and support of the

revenue Laws— Separate as much as possible the crews of such vessels as you may detain, keeping Supercargos from the captains, and mates from both of them, when it can be done Giving the commander the preference of his own cabin with a good watch over him,—suffer no communication between them but in your hearing, nor with any person from the shore until examined by the commissioners— You must not be unmindful of the station you hold as a public officer, a becoming deportment, civility and a deliberate determination must form the leading traits of your conduct, This is not only proper but Politic— Respectfully

Hugh G Campbell

St. Marys.— Nov Id, 1813

To the Commanders of Gun Vessels St Mary's Station Georgia

DS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 11, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. Fernandina residents James Hibberson and Henry and Philip Yonge were partners in the commercial firm of Hibberson and Yonge. See Cusick, *Other War of 1812*, p. 114.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO THOMAS B. EYRE

Thomas B. Eyre  
Present.—

Navy Department  
Jany. 18th. 1814.

Sir/

You will herewith receive a Letter from this Department to Wm. Doughty Esqr. Naval constructor at the U. States Navy yard, who will give you every information and instruction relative to the construction of six Barges at St. Marys in Georgia, for which purpose you are engaged upon the terms stated in my letter to you of the 8th. Inst.<sup>1</sup> of which you have signified your Acceptance.

You will examine Minutely and carefully the manner in which the Barges at this place are built, and equipped in all respects, and will remain here a day or two for that purpose; you will keep an Account of your Necessary expences, while detained here, for that purpose, and on your way to St. Marys you will stop, a day or two at charleston So. C; in order to communicate to Capt. Dent the Commanding Naval Officer, all the information that may be necessary in Addition to the draughts and plan of the Barges, which have Already been forwarded to him, and of which five are to be built And equipped under his direction. Your necessary expenses at both places will be allowed to you.

On your arrival at St. Marys, you will report yourself to Commodore Campbell, the Commanding Naval Officer, there under whose direction the work you are to execute is to be done, And he will furnish you with materials And Workman for that purpose, you will also exhibit to him this letter, and that of the 8th. inst. from this Department,<sup>2</sup> and he will cause to be paid to you the expences you may incur in Charlestown, And your daily pay regularly from the day you may report yourself to him.

Your daily pay from the 16th. Inst. inclusive, and your Stage fare of which you will keep an account to the day you report yourself to him, he will also cause to be paid to you, deducting One hundred dollars now advanced to you. calculating with confidence upon your best exertions, to accomplish the object for which you are engaged, with the greatest possible dispatch and economy.— I am very respectfully your Obt. Servt.

W. Jones

P.S.

I agree to allow you, reasonable Travelling expences from Philadelphia to St. Marys; of which you are to keep an account and Commodore Campbell will cause the same to be paid to you, as well as the stage fare, but it is understood those expences are Only to be such as you incur by travelling, direct in the mail stage, except the time you may be detained at this place, and charleston by the order of the Department.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 1, pp. 550–51 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Jones to Doughty, 18 January 1814, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 1, p. 549 (M441, Roll No. 1). Jones to Eyre, 8 January 1814, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 69–70 (M209, Roll No. 4).

2. Jones to Eyre, 8 January 1814, *ibid.*

#### COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Marys 5th March 1814

Sir

Mr. Eyre has been here these three weeks— We find ourselves disappointed in a part of the workmen, that could have been procured some time past in consequence of the demand for carpenters at Amelia, I have, with the opinion of Mr. Eyre Contracted with a Mr Young Ship Builder here to build two Barges agreeable to the plan—

He served his time with Mr Penrose<sup>1</sup> of Philadelphia, and is not only an Excellent workman but a very great drafter

The price is twelve hundred dollars complete, [*how?*] work excepted with masts, Gun carriages sweeps &c— This is all that can be undertaken at this place— Mr Eyre will go to Savannah with a view of building one there, which I apprehend will require a greater length of time than you contemplate This number I am inclined to believe will be as many vessels of that description as we can possibly man, sailors having a Great aversion to that description of vessels, and the difficulty of keeping them on board, will be rendered almost impossible— Should Mr Eyre succeed in Building one at Savannah, I shall stop any further measures until your pleasure is known as to the building of the whole of them



Those already contracted for will not be complete in less than four months I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir Your obedient Servant

Hugh G. Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 14 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Charles Penrose, Philadelphia shipbuilder who supervised the construction of the 74-gun ship of the line *Franklin*. See Leach, *Penrose Family of Philadelphia*, p. 64.

THOMAS B. EYRE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St. Marys Georgia March 5th. 1814

Dr. Sir/

I have the pleasure of acknowledging the Reciept of a few Lines from you, & take the Liberty of informing you that agreable to your direction, have laid down the draught of the fifty feet Barges & Moulds are made, & the Timber is cutting & have got two Keels & Stems hawled, & nearly worked out but shall not be enabled to dispatch them as soon as you would wish for there was not a Stick of Timber, nor more than four or five Carpenters One Blacksmith, & One Sail Maker in the place, & Commodore Campbell proposes, in Order to forward the Work that I should go to Savannah, & build a third Barge for which place I shall start to Morrow, & for my own part I think they can not be built, unless in a very long time, South of Charleston, for there are, as far as I can find out, not more than Six or Seven Carpenters in the Whole State of Georgia, Besides Commodore Campbell has a very unfavourable Opinion of Barges for this Quarter, principally on Account of not being enabled to Mann them The Men preferring to go in Vessels, that use Sails altogether, at least not smaller than Gun Boats, & thinks One or two fast Sailing Schooner Gun Vessels, would be far preferable to Barges for this Station, & If you think proper One might be built in Charleston, with more dispatch & Oeconomy than South—of that place— I have made Enquiry concerning the Islands belonging to the United States, & find they are timbered generally with small Timber, not much of it, large enough for Frigates, however there is considerable small Timber & very easy of access for Transportation, There is a great deal of fine Timber about this Country & particularly at Sappello Island, where there is now a Quantity of it cut & been lying there some time, there is also a Brig loaded with live Oak Timber laying at Darien 12 Miles from Sapelo Island which I immagine could be bought low— With Sentiments of Respect your Obt. Servt.

Thomas B Eyre

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 75 (M124, Roll No. 61).

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO THOMAS B. EYRE

Mr. Thomas B Eyre  
 Shipwright care of A. S. Bulloch Esqr.  
 Navy Agent, Savannah

Navy Department  
 March 16th. 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 5th. current—and also one from Commodore Campbell of the same date on the same subject.

The difficulty and delay attending the Building of the Barges is such, and the difficulty of manning them no less, that I have directed Commodore Campbell to build only the two that are contracted for at St Mary's.<sup>1</sup> You will therefore decline the one which you proposed to build at Savannah, as I have determined to substitute two fast Baltimore schooners of about 70 tons each and to purchase them at that place.

You will therefore employ yourself in exploring and examining the Forrests of Live Oak and ascertain where and on what terms, frames for ships of 74 and 44 guns can be best procured, cut to the moulds and rough bevillings, and delivered at a landing.

You will ascertain whether it can be done by contract, or by persons employed by the Department, and in which way to the most advantage.

You will particularly examine the Islands belonging to the United States, mentioned to you in my last letter, and when you have accomplished this object, and committed to writing all the information you may have obtained, and the observations you may deem necessary, you will return to this place, in order to report the same, and await the further orders of the Department. You will also examine and report upon the Red cedars, Red Bay, Yellow Pine, and Cypress timber, that you may meet with.<sup>2</sup> I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 13 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Jones to Campbell, 17 March 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 243 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. By 30 May 1814, Eyre had completed a survey of timber growing on several islands along the Georgia and South Carolina coasts. Jones then ordered Eyre to Erie, Pennsylvania, where he remained until the end of the war, superintending repairs of the squadron there. The Navy Department employed him in the postwar years as well. Jones to Eyre, 30 May 1814, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 175–76 (M209, Roll No. 4) and Crowninshield to Eyre, 15 April 1815, *ibid.*

## Prisoners of War

*The capture of American vessels and confinement of their crews in Canada, the Caribbean, South Africa, and England created severe hardships for seafarers and administrative burdens for the Navy Department, which was responsible for providing for American prisoners in British custody. Naval personnel and privateersmen in British prison facilities endured horrid conditions and harsh treatment, while the Secretary of the Navy and his agents worked to furnish them with pay and negotiate their release or exchange.*

*The British seized over 20,000 American seamen during the war, nearly one third of whom they imprisoned at Dartmoor, an infamous prison depot on the Devonshire moors. A bleak granite structure 17 miles inland from Plymouth, Dartmoor admitted more than 6,000 sailors and privateersmen between early 1813 and early 1815.<sup>1</sup> On 6 April 1815, over three months after the Treaty of Ghent was signed, British guards at Dartmoor fired on a large assembly of restive yet unarmed prisoners, killing seven Americans and wounding scores more.*

*The bloodshed at Dartmoor Prison spurred British and American officials to accelerate postwar repatriation of prisoners, the progress of which had been hampered by financial and logistical problems. Upon their return to the United States, former prisoners of war often found themselves destitute, disabled, or stranded while the commissary general of prisoners and the Navy Department struggled to pay those who came home and to identify those who never would.*

1. See especially Dye, *Fatal Cruise of the Argus*, pp. 291–96 and Fabel, “*Self-Help in Dartmoor*.”

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
ALEXANDER GLENNIE, SON AND COMPANY

Messrs. Alexander Glennie,  
Son & Company, London.

Navy Department,  
January 4th. 1814.

Gentlemen,

You will receive from George Harrison, Esquire, United States Navy Agent Philadelphia, a bill for Five thousand pounds sterling, on account of this Department, which you will apply to the payment of the Officers and Seamen of the United States' Navy who may be prisoners of War in Great Britain.—

In order that this expenditure may not exceed the amount which the Officers and Seamen may be entitled to, on account of their pay and rations, a Purser of the United States may, if any such should be prisoner, or if no purser then the Senior Naval Officer will, make out a pay-roll, including the name, rank and quality, of every prisoner belonging to the Navy of the United States, and the Vessel to which each was attached, from the day of Capture to the day of payment. Each Officer and man to be entitled to pay and rations according to the enclosed Schedule.

The Purser, or Senior Officer, as the case may be, must sign duplicate pay-rolls and receipts for the amount to be distributed, according to the said pay-roll, one of which must be forwarded to this Department, and a Notarial Copy thereof by a distinct conveyance.

The Purser, or senior Officer, must be informed that he will be held responsible for the accuracy of the pay-rolls, and for the vouchers for the distribution of the monies.

Whatever advances each Officer and man may have received from you, you will deduct from the amount of pay and rations due to each. You will pursue the same plan with all prisoners, belonging to the United States' Navy, during the War, and the necessary funds will be provided by this Department, from time to time, as advice may be received from you.

The Officers & Seamen of the United States Navy, prisoners in England, are entitled exclusive of the pay and rations herein provided for, to the allowance from the Agent for American Prisoners.— I am, Gentlemen with very great respect, Your Obed. Servant

W. Jones

Schedule exhibiting the Pay and Subsistence allowed to the Officers, Petty Officers, Seamen, Ordinary Seamen, & Boys in the Naval service of the United States.

Rank or Station	Pay per <u>Month</u> Dollars	Rations <u>per Day</u> Number	Remarks
Captain of a Vessel of 32 Guns and upwards	100	8	The value of the rations estimated at 20 Cents
Captain of a Vessel of 20 Guns & under 32 Guns	75	6	
Master Commandant	60	5	
Lieutenant Commandant	50	4	
Lieutenant	40	3	
Chaplain	40	2	
Surgeon	50	2	
Surgeon's Mate	30	2	
Master	40	2	
Purser	40	2	
Boatswain	20	2	
Gunner	20	2	
Carpenter	20	2	
Sailmaker	20	2	
Midshipman	19	1	
Master's Mate	20	1	
Captain's Clerk	25	1	
Boatswain's Mate	19	1	
Cockswain	18	1	
Yeoman of the Gun Room	18	1	
Quarter Gunner	18	1	
Quarter Master	18	1	
Carpenter's Mate	19	1	
Armourer	18	1	
Steward	18	1	
Cooper	18	1	
Master at Arms	18	1	
Cook	18	1	
Seaman	12	1	
Ordinary Seamen & Boys from —	6 to 10	1	

## GUNNER MATHEW ROGERS TO JOHN MITCHELL

Melville Prison, April 15 1814

Sir,

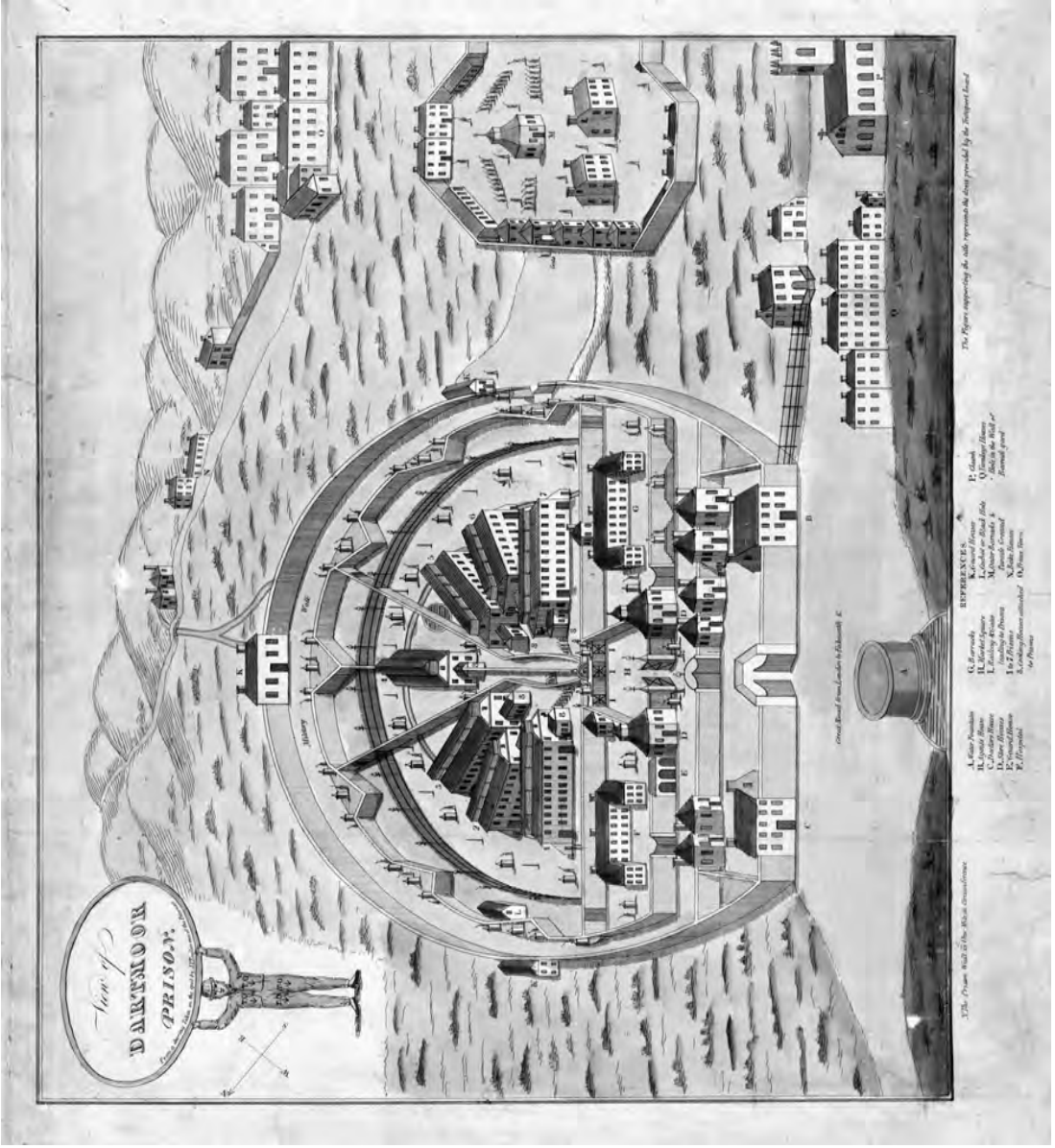
haveing Reason to think that there is a cartile goeing from this place with a number of prisoners home to the united States I hope you will take my case into consideration my being confined as a hostage for five months & seven days I expect that was the Reason that I did not goe home in the *Anelawson*<sup>1</sup> with the rest of the officers I should not trouble you But I Received a leter from my wife stateing to me that her half pay was stoped since December last I did not take it for longer then 12 months I am very uneasy aboute my family haveing A wife & five Small Children and no means of suport but my pay which has being stoped I hope you will doe your Endavours to send me home as you are the only person that can be the mains of Doeing It If you cant send me home I hope you will Be so good as to obtain my parole for me to preston<sup>2</sup> as I find that my health is geting impaired By being so Long Confined If Mr. Miller<sup>3</sup> Should be against me goeing on parole which I know that I am Entitld to it I shal Write to Mr. Prince<sup>4</sup> the marshal of massachusets aboute it which I expect that will be the mains of keeping oficers of Equall Rank with me in confinement as Mr. Prince is my frend I hope that he will think of it The Carpenter Mr. Miller<sup>5</sup> cant get his cloaths untill the woman is paid ten Dolors wee hope that you will pay her And charge five dolors to Each of us Mrs Lawlor the woman that wee borded with will goe unto youre house I hope Mr. Mitchel that you will Doe all in your power to Send us boath home and you will oblige your humble Servant

Mathew Rogers<sup>6</sup>  
Late gunner of the US  
frigate *Chesapeake*

be so kind as to Send me a few lines as answer

ALS, DLC, John Mitchell Papers, Vol. 3, fols. 539–40.

1. *Analostan*, U.S. cartel brig.
2. Officers on parole often resided in the nearby settlements of Preston or Dartmouth.
3. Lieutenant William Miller, R.N., British agent for prisoners of war at Halifax until the end of April 1814.
4. James Prince, a prominent merchant and marshal for the district of Massachusetts.
5. Acting Carpenter George Miller.
6. The gunner's warrant for Mathew Rogers dated from 17 August 1812. He was dismissed for drunkenness in October 1818.



The Figures representing the walls represent the design provided by the Surgeons General

- REFERENCES
- A. City Prison
  - B. County Prison
  - C. County Prison
  - D. County Prison
  - E. County Prison
  - F. County Prison
  - G. County Prison
  - H. County Prison
  - I. County Prison
  - J. County Prison
  - K. County Prison
  - L. County Prison
  - M. County Prison
  - N. County Prison
  - O. County Prison
  - P. County Prison
  - Q. County Prison
  - R. County Prison
  - S. County Prison
  - T. County Prison
  - U. County Prison
  - V. County Prison
  - W. County Prison
  - X. County Prison
  - Y. County Prison
  - Z. County Prison

View of Dartmoor Prison

View of Dartmoor Prison

LIEUTENANT PEREZ DRINKWATER, JR., TO ELBRIDGE DRINKWATER, JR.

DARTMOOR PRISON Saturday Morning.  
May 20th, 1814.

Dr. Brother— I am sorry to have to inform you that I am in the country, and have been so this 4 months we was taken on the 13th of January by the Brig *Billerkin* after a short chase of 9 hours and a small resistance with our guns which was to no purpose for she was a Brig of 20 guns and 130 men.<sup>1</sup> We arrived into Plymouth on the 20th of January was put on board the *Brave* prison-ship, on the 24th and was landed from her on the 31 and marched to this place in a snow storm.— This Prison is situated on one of the highest places in England and it either snows or rains the whole year round and is cold enough to wear a great coat the whole time their is 10,000 of us here now but the French are about going home, I shall send this by A Frenchman that will Leave heir to morrow for France but I expect it will be a long time before you will receive it as it has got to go by the way of France to get there. This is the first time that ever I was deprived of my Liberty and when I sit and think of it it almost deprives me of my senses for we have nothing else to do but sit and reflect on our preasant situation which is bad enough god noes for we have but 1 lb. and a half of black bread and about 3 ounces of beef and a Little beef tee to drink and all that makes us one meal a Day the rest of the time we have to fast which is hard times for the days are very Long heir now I want to get out of heir before the war is over so that I can have the pleasure of killing one Englishman and drinking his blood which I think I could do with a good will for I think them the worst of all the human race for there is no crimes but what they are guilty of. If these rebels<sup>2</sup> are the bullwark of our religion I think that I will never have any for I cannot think of being so much Like them for yisterday when they called up 500 French men to go away their was one that had been in prison Nine years and had worn his blanket out so that he had but half of it to give those rebels and on that account they sent him back and put him on the bottom of the books for exchangeing, the man took it so hard that he cut his throught and was found dead between the prison dores, and a thousand other such deeds they have been guilty of since we have been confined heir in this cursed place and a monght these rebels for I can call them nothing better and I shall never dye happy till I have had the pleasure of killing one of them which I am determined to do if an oppertunity ever offers to me to doe it turn over

I have got my head in the Lien's mouth and must try to get it out as easy as possible for he is a huge creature to deal with and a tiranicle master when he has got the power in his own hands which he has at preasant. It is a great misfortune to me to be placed heir in my Preasant situation but I shall bear it with as much fortitude as I am posed with for I scorn to complain to those rebels for I would dye before I would ask them for a mousel of bread I hold up my head as high as possible and mean to Live through it if possible and return home to See you once more if ever I get my Liberty which I hope will be this summer for it is said heir that Negotiations are going on at Cottenburg<sup>3</sup> and that their is a probability of a peace between these rebels and America and a thousand other reports that we catch at like a drowninge man at a straw, we must hope

for the best for the worst comes fast enough, we have plenty of creepers<sup>4</sup> heir to turn us out in the morning, them and the Englishmen together don't Let us have much peace Day nor night for they are both enimyees to us and Likewise to peace and the more they can torment the human rase the better they are pleased.

If you should inquire after my helth It at preasent is good and has been so since I left you for the most part of the time and by the blessing of God I hope that it will continue so till my return to my Native Country. I make out to Live tolerable well with the help of a little money that I can raise our agent allows us 2- per day to by us tobacco and sope to wash our Clothes with and Like wise they have allowed us some Clothes so that we are quite cumfertible at preasent my best wishes are that when these few Lines come to your they will find you in good helth and Likewise all my Friends and Wife and Child for god knows when I shall see them. You must take good Care of them and help them all you can for I can render them no asistance at preasant for I have as much as I can do to take care of myself remember me to them and Likewise to my Parents Brothers and Sisters to Capt. Gray and his Wife and to all other inquireing Friends tell them that I should be happy to see them but when I shall I cannot tell. I hope that you will write to me every oppertunity that offored you to do it for it would be a happy thing for me to heir from you I have wrote several Letters to you be fore and shall still continue to write every oppertunity, you must tell Sally to bare her misfortunes with as much fortitude as she can till my return I must conclude with wishing you all well. So god bless you all and be with you for I cannot From your sincere friend & Brother.

Perez Drinkwater junr.

Printed, *The Machias Union*, (Machias, Maine), Vol. 28, No. 46 (3 May 1881). The newspaper used "Jr." for both Perez and Elbridge Drinkwater.

1. Drinkwater was captured while serving as lieutenant on the Massachusetts privateer schooner *Lucy*.

2. Drinkwater's pejorative for the English.

3. Peace talks were initially slated for Göteborg, Sweden, but were relocated to Ghent, in present-day Belgium.

4. A colloquialism for lice and bedbugs.

ALEXANDER H. COFFIN TO ALEXANDER COFFIN, JR.

Ashburton July 4th 1814

Dear Father

Sir/

I now take this opportunity of writing to inform you of my Situation &c we were taken on the First of December one Day out of France By the *Pyramus* Frigate & sent into Plymouth and put on board of the Prisonship *Brave* and from thence one hundred and thirty two of us marched to Dartmoor Prison we was Robed of every thing in the world but what we stood in we had not a second



Shirt to shift our selves, Mr. Allen formerly 2d. Lieut. of the U.N.S. Brig *Argus* Now in this Place hearing of my imprisonment wrote to Admiral Coffin and he Obtained my Parole to this place which I am very thankfull for. Dear Father I took the Liberty of writing to Messrs. Rathbone Hodgson & Co. of Liverpool for a Small sum of Money which they Advanced me 20£ and I gave them my note on you, which when I received it I paid my Debts and got me one suit of Clothes and ½ Dozen Shirts which took the whole I hope my Dear Father you will not be angry at me for taking that Liberty for God knows I was in extreme want I let Mr. Thompson our Chief mate have a little of the money as I never would se[e] a Shipmate in want if it was in my power to help him. I should be very happy if you would write to me and to Messrs. Rathbone Hos. & Co. and let them know whether they shall advance me any more or not as God only knows when we shall get away from here as I se[e] know Prospect in the world of our getting away— All the Non Combatants in this Place are going away to morrow which I send this Letter and Introduce you to Dr. Inderwick<sup>1</sup> formerly Doctor of the U.N.S. Brig *Argus*—

All the Prisoners on Parole at Reding<sup>2</sup> are Removing to this Place which Among them are several Nantucket men Coffins Folger and several others Nothing more at Present My Dear Father But I am in hopes that I shall soon get home again once more and Find you all well and harty Give my Love to my Dear Sisters & my Dear Little Brother tel Harriot to Kiss Little FW. for me my Love to all enquiring Friends God be with you all so no more at present I Remain your ever Dutifull Son

Alexr. H Coffin

NHi, John E. Stillwell Collection, MS 595.

1. Doctor James Inderwick was attached to the *Argus* in May 1813, and shortly after was commissioned a surgeon in the U.S. Navy.

2. Reading, then the largest town in Berkshire, England.

### JOHN MITCHELL TO REUBEN G. BEASLEY

16: Augt. 1814

Sir,

Since I had the Honor of Writing You by the Packet, When I informed you of 400. of our Prisoners being sent from Hence for England, I have been so much indisposed as to be able to get into Halifax until yesterday, When I learn'd from Captn. Cochet<sup>1</sup> that a list of six hundred was making out to be embarked the 20[t]h. inst. for England,— since the Embarking of the 400.—about 350—have been sent to the US. & about 140 received— from this you'l perceive the plea of thining the Prison, is not the reason for sending our Prisoners to England. I think it is also well to Observe that, for 3 Months past, there never has been 30 in the Hospital at a time.— And as the Crews of Privateers & Letters of Marque are chiefly selected, the Object it is clear is, for to harass and distress that description of persons. How this will be received in the UStates, I can't inform You, nor do I expect for some time to find an Occasion to advise our Government of the

intended Embarcation of the 600.— I had hope we should not again be reduced to the Necessity of renewing the retaliatory System, but, the sending of our men to such a distance from home. will I fear force Us to detain their people and march them to the interior.<sup>2</sup>

I have not heard from Gl. Mason since I had the pleasure of Writing You, but expect shortly the return of a British Cartel and hope to hear by Her,— various reports are in Circulation of depredations on our Coast, particularly in the Chesapeake where Villages are said to be burned, Warehouses plundered & Negros carried off— in Canada We are said to have been Success[ful] in one instance under Gl. Brown, but that the late reinforcements had reversed things & that He had since been defeated. I can't place Confidence in this report, tho it is well Known the reinforcements had reached Quebec

Nothing is known here respecting our Commissionrs. in Europe— the expected Packet I hope will bring some certain intelligence of What is to be expected.

My last private intelligence from the US. mentioned a degree of supineness & indifference in the people as regards the War, that is unaccountable if not to say Culpable— to me it appears Culpable to be inactive When the Enemie is at the Door & Unless the people do rouse all the Exertion of of the Administration will be ineffectual, I am Sir,

J M

LB, DLC, John Mitchell Papers, Vol. 4, fol. 632.

1. Captain John Cochet, R.N., British agent for prisoners of war at Halifax from April 1814 to March or April 1815.

2. In a letter to Beasley of 23 August, Mitchell asserted that the order to transport American prisoners from Melville Island to England emanated from the British Transport Board. DLC, John Mitchell Papers, Vol. 4, fol. 639.

### MIDSHIPMAN THOMAS H. BROWN TO JOHN MITCHELL

Mellville Island 6th Novr. 1814

Dr. Sir

Will you be Kind enough to ask Captn. Cochet to let me go over to Preston for my cloathes, I am suffering here for want of them, a few hours to go over with the turn Key, would be sufficient, If Capt. Cochet is Sick, perhaps some other officer at the Transport office would grant it If you will attend to this you will much oblige your fellow contryman & Well wisher

T H Brown<sup>1</sup>

Late midshipman U S Ship *Frolic*

ALS, DLC, John Mitchell Papers, Vol. 4, fol. 654.

1. Thomas H. Brown had served as an acting midshipman since 27 November 1812. His warrant dated from 9 November 1813.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO JOHN MITCHELL

John Mitchell Esq.  
Present

Navy Department  
Feb'y. 7th. 1815

Sir

It is a subject of frequent complaint among our suffering Seamen, that they cannot receive the Pay due to them for wages, because you have not furnished an account of advances to them while Prisoners of War.

I have therefore to request that you will as soon as possible transmit your account of moneys disbursed for the Naval Service to Prisoners of War to enable this Department to do justice to the officers & men who have claims for wages.<sup>1</sup> I am respectfully your Obt. Servt.

B W Crowninshield

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 268 (M209, Roll No. 4).

1. Crowninshield forwarded this letter to Commissary General of Prisoners John Mason to ensure a clear chain of command and compliance on the part of Mitchell. Crowninshield to Mason, 7 February 1815, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 268 (M209, Roll No. 4).

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF PRISONERS AT DARTMOOR PRISON

We, the undersigned, being each severally sworn on the holy evangelists of Almighty God, for the investigation of the circumstances attending the late horrid massacre, and having heard the deposition of a great number of witnesses from our own personal knowledge, and from the depositions given in as aforesaid,

## REPORT AS FOLLOWS:

THAT on the 6th of April, about 6 o'clock in the evening, when the prisoners were all quiet in their respective yards, it being about the usual time of turning in for the night, and the greater part of the prisoners being then in the prisons, the alarm bell was rung, and many of the prisoners ran up to the market square to learn the occasion of the alarm. There were then drawn up in the square, several hundred soldiers, with captain Shortland<sup>1</sup> (the agent) at their head, it was likewise observed at the same time, that additional numbers of soldiers were posting themselves on the walls round the prison yards. One of them observed to the prisoners, that they had better go into the prisons, for they would be charged upon directly. This, of course, occasioned considerable alarm among them. In this moment of uncertainty, they were running in different directions enquiring the cause of the alarm—some towards their respective prisons and some towards the market square. When about one hundred were collected in the square, captain Shortland ordered the soldiers to charge upon them, which order the soldiers were reluctant in obeying, as the prisoners were using no violence; but on the order being repeated, they made a charge, and the prisoners retreated out of the

square into their prison yards, and shut the gates after them. Captain Shortland himself, opened the gates, and ordered the soldiers to fire in among the prisoners, who were all retreating in different directions towards their respective prisons. It appears there was some hesitation in the minds of the officers, whether or not it was proper to fire upon the prisoners in that situation; on which Shortland seized a musket out of the hands of a soldier, which he fired. Immediately after, the fire became general, and many of the prisoners were either killed or wounded. The remainder were endeavoring to get into the prisons when going towards the lower doors, the soldiers on the walls commenced firing on them from that quarter, which killed some and wounded others. After much difficulty (all the doors being closed in the entrance, but one in each prison) the survivors succeeded in gaining the prisons; immediately after which, parties of soldiers came to the doors of Nos. 3 and 4 prisons, and fired several volleys into them through the windows and doors, which killed one man in each prison, and several wounded.

It likewise appears, that the preceding butchery was followed up with a disposition of peculiar inveteracy and barbarity.

One man who was severely wounded in No. 7 prison yard, and being unable to make his way to the prison, was come up with by the soldiers, whom he implored with for mercy, but in vain, five of the hardened wretches immediately levelled their pieces at him, and shot him dead on the spot. The soldiers who were posted on the walls, manifested equal cruelty, by keeping up a constant fire on every prisoner they could see in the yards endeavouring to get in the prison, when their numbers were very few, and when not the least shadow of resistance could be made or expected. Several of them had got into No. 6 prison cook-house, which was pointed out by the soldiers on the walls, to those who were marching in from the square—they immediately went up and fired into the same, which wounded several—one of the prisoners ran out with the intention of gaining his prison, but was killed before he reached the door.

On an impartial consideration of all the circumstances of the case, we are induced to believe that it was a premeditated scheme in the mind of captain Shortland, for reasons which we will now proceed to give—as an elucidation of its origin we will recur back to an event which happened some days previous. Captain Shortland was at the time absent at Plymouth, but before going he ordered the contractor or his clerk, to serve out one pound of indifferent hard bread, instead of one pound and an half of soft bread, their usual allowance—this the prisoners refused to receive—they waited all day in expectation of their usual allowance being served out, but at sunset, finding this would not be the case, burst open the lower gates, and went up to the store, demanding to have their bread.

The officers of the garrison on being alarmed, and informed of these proceedings, observed it was no more than right the prisoners should have their usual allowance, and strongly reprobated the conduct of captain Shortland in withholding it from them—they were accordingly served with their bread, and quietly returned to their prison. This circumstance, with the censures that were thrown on his conduct, reached the ears of Shortland on his return home, and must then have determined on the diabolical plan of seizing the first slight pretext to turn in the military to butcher the prisoners for the gratification of his malice and revenge. It unfortunately happened, that in the afternoon of the 6th

of April, some boys who were playing ball in No. 7 yard, knocked their ball over into the barrack yard; on the sentry in that yard refusing to throw it back to them, they picked a hole in the wall to get in after it.

This afforded Shortland his wished-for pretext, and he took his measures accordingly; he had all the garrison drawn up in the military walk, additional numbers posted on the walls, and every thing ready prepared, before the alarm bell was rung; this he naturally concluded, would draw the attention of a great number of prisoners towards the gates, to learn the cause of the alarm, while the turnkeys were dispatched into the yards, to lock all the doors but one of each prison, to prevent the prisoners retreating out of the way before he had sufficiently wreaked his vengeance.

What adds peculiar weight to the belief of its being a premeditated, determined massacre, are,

*First*—The sanguinary disposition manifested on every occasion by Shortland, he having, prior to this time, ordered the soldiers to fire into the prisons, through the prison windows, upon unarmed prisoners asleep in their hammocks, on account of a light being seen in the prisons; which barbarous act was repeated several nights successively. That murder was not then committed, was owing to an overruling Providence alone; for the balls were picked up in the prison, which they passed through the hammocks of men then asleep in them. He having also ordered the soldiers to fire upon the prisoners in the yard of No. 7 prison, because they would not deliver up to him a man who had escaped from his *catchot*,<sup>2</sup> which order the commanding officer of the soldiers refused to obey; and generally, he having seized on every light pretext to injure the prisoners, by stopping their marketting for ten days repeatedly, and once a third part of their provision for the same length of time.

*Secondly*—He having been heard to say, when the boys had picked the hole in the wall, and some time before the alarm bell rung, while all the prisoners were quiet as usual in the respective yards—“*I’ll fix the damn’d rascals directly.*”

*Thirdly*—His having all the soldiers on their posts, and the garrison fully prepared before the alarm bell rung. It could not then, of course, be rung to assemble the soldiers, but to alarm the prisoners, and create confusion among them.

*Fourthly*—The soldiers upon the wall, previous to the alarm bell being rung, informing the prisoners that they would be charged upon directly.

*Fifthly*—The turnkeys going into the yards and closing all the doors but one in each prison, while the attention of the prisoners was attracted by the alarm bell. This was done about fifteen minutes sooner than usual, and without informing the prisoners it was time to shut up. It was ever the invariable practice of the turnkeys, from which they never deviated before that night, when coming into the yard to shut up, to halloo to the prisoners, so loud as to be heard throughout the yard, “*turn in, turn in!*” while on that night it was done so secretly that not one man in a hundred knew they were shut; and in particular their shutting the door of No. 7 prison, which the prisoners usually go in and out at, [and which was formerly always closed last]<sup>3</sup> and leaving one open in the other end of the prison, which was exposed to a cross-fire from the soldiers on the walls, and which the prisoners had to pass in gaining the prisons.

It appears to us that the foregoing reasons sufficiently warrant the conclusion we have drawn therefrom.

We likewise believe, from the depositions of men who were eye-witnesses of a part of Shortland's conduct on the evening of the 6th of April, that he was intoxicated with liquor at the time; from his brutality in beating a prisoner then supporting another severely wounded; from the blackguard and abusive language he made use of, and from his having frequently been seen in the same state. His being drunk was of course the means of inflaming his bitter enmity against the prisoners and no doubt was the cause of the indiscriminate butchery, and of no quarter being shewn

We here solemnly aver, that there was no preconcerted plan to attempt breaking out. There cannot be produced the least shadow of a reason or inducement for that intention, the prisoners daily expecting to be released, and to embark on board cartels for their native country. And we likewise solemnly assert, that there was no intention of resisting, in any manner, the authority of this depot.

*N.B.* Seven were killed, thirty dangerously wounded, and thirty slightly do. Total, sixty-seven killed and wounded.

(Signed)

WM. B. ORNE,  
WM. HOBART,  
JAMES BOGGS  
JAMES ADAMS,  
FRANCIS JOSEPH,

JOSEPH F. TROBRIDGE,  
JOHN RUST,  
HENRY ALLEN,  
WALTER GOLTON,  
THOMAS B. MOTT.  
*Committee.*

*Dartmoor Prison, April 7, 1815.*

Printed in James Adams, *Dartmoor Prison, A Faithful Narrative of the Massacre of American Seamen* (Pittsburgh: S. Engels, 1816), pp. 55–59.

1. Captain Thomas G. Shortland, R.N., the agent for prisoners of war at Dartmoor from November 1813 to April 1816.

2. *Cachot*, the French term denoting a dungeon or isolation cell, also known colloquially as a “black hole.” Confinement in the *cachot* was a common punishment for an escape attempt.

3. Square brackets in original.

### REUBEN G. BEASLEY TO JOHN MASON

London 13th April 1815

Sir,

I had the honor to receive yesterday your letters of the 15 Jany. 6 6 & 8 March, I shall avail myself of the earliest occasion to notice their contents in detail. In the mean time I have to inform you that I have communicated to the Transport Board the correspondence between yourself and Mr. Baker on the subject of the restoration of Prisoners, and have called on them to undertake the Transportation to the U States of our Prisoners in this country. Prior, however, to the receipt of your letter on this subject I had engaged in this port 9 ships for the conveyance of our Prisoners, several of which have sailed for Plymouth to

take them on board. In the first instance, I endeavoured to engage vessels at Portsmouth and Plymouth, but the turn of affairs in France<sup>1</sup> having induced this Government to take up Transports for the conveyance of Troops, I could obtain none in those Ports.

It is with extreme regret that I have to state that on the 6th Instant, the Guard of the Depot at Dartmoor, by order of the Agent fired on the American Prisoners, killed 5 and wounded 34; I transmit herewith two reports of this unfortunate affair, one from the Transport Board and one from the Admiralty Office through the Foreign Office.

By the latter you will perceive that the American Prisoners are accused of having attempted to liberate themselves by force, and are stated to have been urged to this by the impression they were under, that their own Government had neglected to provide means for their early conveyance home.

As the American Prisoners have been constantly informed of the exertions made by me for their release, and as on this occasion, I had written twice to let them know, the number of vessels taken up for their conveyance home and the time they might be expected at Plymouth. it is difficult to believe under such circumstances that this is really the cause of this melancholy occurrence, I shall therefore inquire minutely into all the circumstances attending it, and shall communicate the result to you, as also the names of those who have been killed and wounded. I, am, Sir, your obedient humble servant

R G Beasley

LS, DNA, RG45, AF 4 (M625, Roll No. 4).

1. Napoleon had returned from exile on the island of Elba at the end of February and reached Paris on 20 March, initiating his reign of the Hundred Days (*Les Cent-Jours*).

### CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Navy Yard, Charlestown, Mss  
August 16. 1815

Sir,

You have no idea of the injury which the service suffers by our not being furnished with the accounts of the men who are daily arriving from Prison. we have now on this station men that belonged to the *Chesapeake*, *Siren*, *Adonis*, *Rattlesnake* & several vessels on the Lakes, all of whose times are expired: And I have asked for their accounts again and again, but as yet not one of them has been forwarded. I most sincerely wish that measures may be taken to enable me to discharge those men The Yard is constantly full of them, many of them belonging at a distance, without clothes or money to purchase them with. As we cannot tell whether they have money due them or not, they cannot be furnished by the Purser of the Station.

Purser Beal<sup>1</sup> has not yet made his appearance on this station to pay the prize money of the officers and men lately under the command of Captain Macdonough. Some of the officers are in distress for the want of the money, and the

men now on board the *United States* are extremely dissatisfied at not being paid before this time, as Mr. Beal has had the money many weeks.

I should be highly gratified if the honble. the Commissioners would urge the forwarding these accounts, as it would relieve me from the trouble of those men and the Service of a heavy expense. Respectfully I have the honor to be Sir, Your obedt. Sert.

Isaac Hull

Commo. Rodgers  
President of the Navy Board  
Washington City

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 115 (M125, Roll No. 45).

1. Purser George Beale received his commission on 3 August 1813 and served on the Lake Champlain Station during the war.

## *Adams Slips Out to Sea*

*In recognition of Charles Morris's gallant conduct as Constitution's first lieutenant in the capture of H.M.S. Guerriere, Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton advanced him to the rank of post captain, offering him his own seagoing command, the 32-gun frigate Adams.<sup>1</sup> While Morris greeted the news of his promotion with enthusiasm, his response to his appointment as Adams's commander was likely more muted, for the frigate had been inactive since 1807 and was in dire need of repairs to render it seaworthy. In fact, Adams's structural defects proved so severe that a more extensive overhaul than was first anticipated was deemed necessary to correct them. This included converting Adams's hull and rig from a frigate's to that of a flush-decked corvette. These time-consuming repairs delayed Adams's readiness for sea until the fall of 1813.<sup>2</sup> Unhappy with the uneven sailing qualities of his newly altered ship, Morris lobbied the Navy Department for a change of command. But his request to transfer his flag to another ship was denied. Once at sea, Adams's poor performance under sail would validate Morris's complaints that the corvette, in point of handling and speed, was an inferior man-of-war.*

*Secretary Jones permitted Morris to select Adams's cruising grounds from among those detailed in five sets of instructions recently issued to Navy ship commanders. Morris chose to adopt a portion of the route described in the brig Siren's orders and cruise off the West African coast before returning home to the United States. Upon the completion of Adams's overhaul at the Washington Navy Yard, Morris dropped down to the mouth of the Potomac River, where he remained stationed until mid-January 1814. On the 18th of that month, he descended to the lower Chesapeake, and, under the cover of a driving, nighttime snowstorm, slipped past the British warships guarding the bay's entrance, passing into the Atlantic on a three-month cruise. Adams was the only U.S. Navy vessel to break the Royal Navy's blockade of the Chesapeake Bay during the war.*

1. See *Hamilton to Morris*, 5 October 1812, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 1, pp. 516–17.

2. On the repair and conversion of Adams, see Morris, *Autobiography*, pp. 67, 69, 70–71; and ASP: Naval Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 342.



## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS

Captain Charles Morris  
 Commanding U S Ship *Adams* }  
 Point Lookout

Navy Department  
 January 6th. 1814.—

Sir,

I have this instant received your Letter of the 31st. enclosing Captain Stewart's determination which is just as I had anticipated, for I could not discover a possible motive for leaving so fine a Ship under circumstances so auspicious to his fame.—<sup>1</sup>

I fear the strong prejudices which the original defects of the Ship *Adams* excited have taken too deep root and adhere to her even in her improved condition, for it is a fact even with men of strong & intelligent minds that deep and cherished impressions frequently continue after the cause which produced them shall no longer exist. The *Adams* is far from being perfect, and in her form very different from that which a skilful Constructor would adopt as an original yet I cannot but think, with the important alterations and improvements, she has undergone, she will prove a safe efficient and swift Vessel if in proper trim. and under your judicious Command.— The want of stability it is acknowledged no longer exists, and as to goodness of materials and solidity of combination, no Vessel can exceed her.—

The tremulous motion in the Rudder of which you complain though it produces a disagreeable sensation, can never produce the serious effects you appear to apprehend. on this subject I can speak with some confidence having in practice and theory devoted much attention to the form, proportions and construction of Ships of all descriptions, and to the effects produced by all the variations of form and proportions.—

I have seen many very fine Ships with the dead flat as far aft as that of the *Adams*. The hypothesis by which you account for the tremulous motion of the Rudder does not accord with my conceptions of the principles of philosophy applicable to the case. A short full after body terminating abruptly at the post, would produce the eddy about the rudder which you assign as the Cause of the motion, but a long thin after body the lines of which for a great distance before the post are nearly parallel to the keel cannot produce that eddy. I have no doubt about the cause, and I think it susceptible of easy demonstration.— The figure of the after frames and Cant timbers of the *Adams*, forms an excessive sharp hollow from the middle ribband downwards, and for a considerable distance forward of the Post, forming an exceedingly thin and deep dead wood, without any lateral support from those timbers which in the usual form act as lateral props to support the dead wood against the pressure of the fluid on either side. the want of this support in the thin deep dead wood of the *Adams* renders it elastic as the fluid presses it out of the perpendicular from either side alternately— tis this as I conceive that produces the tremulous motion, but this elasticity cannot I am confident loosen work so substantial and well combined.

As to her Sailing I hold it to be impracticable justly to appreciate her relative velocity until you have an opportunity of confirming it under fair and equal circumstances with some Vessel or Vessels of approved velocity.—

If the Officers who are in her shall condemn her without trial (for I maintain she has had none upon which to decide) who shall undertake the experiment.—

I presume it is not proposed to abandon so costly and efficient a Ship.— as to their application for removal, that is altogether inadmissible.— If the interest of the service should dictate your removal to another Ship, I request that it may be explicitly understood, that your Officers are not to be removed.— I have seen enough of the effects of the practice to prove its inconsistency and injury to the service. can any thing be more absurd than the alternate transfer of Officers from Ship to Ship one thousand miles perhaps asunder, from mere personal convenience or feeling.—

Captain Smith is willing to give up the *Congress* to you provided he is ordered to the new Frigate at Philadelphia; but this I cannot stipulate for reasons which appear to me proper. I need not reassure you of my perfect confidence and desire to place you in the most eligible command.— My own opinion is that it will be well for you to get to sea as soon as possible, make a Cruize according as the qualities of the Ship shall develop themselves, and when you return (to the Delaware if practicable) take your chance for the command of the *President*, *Constitution*, or some other Ship equally desirable, and with this view I send you Copies of my instructions to Captains Rodgers, Stewart, Gordon, Parker and Creighton, from which you may make your election, intimating to me which you are most likely to pursue.—<sup>2</sup> I enclose to you a Letter this day received from Com Bainbridge.— I am very respectfully your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 88–89 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. In this letter Morris expressed his dissatisfaction with the unseaworthiness of the recently repaired *Adams*—a sentiment shared by his officers who considered the corvette an unsafe “cruising vessel.” Anxious to exchange command of *Adams* for a ship with more favorable sailing qualities, Morris wrote to Charles Stewart hoping to persuade that officer to relinquish command of *Constitution* in favor of one of the new frigates then under construction. Although Stewart believed that “the new frigates” would “prove much better ships than the old ones,” he declined Morris’s proposal, expressing his own strong “wish to have a cruise.” See Morris to Jones, 31 December 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 401–2, and, Stewart to Morris, 17 December 1813, DNA, RG45, CL, 1813, Vol. 8, No. 120, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 33).

2. See Jones to Rodgers, 4 October 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 254–55; Jones to Parker, 8 December 1813, *ibid.*, pp. 294–96; Jones to Creighton, 22 December 1813, *ibid.*, pp. 296–97; Jones to Stewart, 19 September 1813, pp. 1077–79; and Jones to Gordon, 5 January 1814, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 86–87 (T829, Roll No. 453).

#### CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *Adams*. Jany. 7th. 1814.  
Mouth of the Potomac—

Sir,

On the 4th inst. the weather indicating a N.E. snow storm we got underway from the Patuxent and stood down the Bay ready to avail ourselves of any

opportunity which might offer to get to sea— The weather continued favorable until we passed the Piankitank when it ceased moving and became so light that it was deemed by the officers and myself inexpedient to proceed further at that time We accordingly lay at Anchor in the Bay till yesterday morning when the gale moderating we proceeded to this place— There were no vessels of the Enemy above point comfort yesterday.

The uncertainty of the weather and of the position of the Enemy, have determined me to wait till after the moon quarters, unless some very favorable opportunity should sooner occur—

I enclose a letter received this evening from Capt Hull—<sup>1</sup> Should you have any communications to make me they will find me if you direct them to Point lookout. should we be yet in the river or Bay—

The *Asp* also will immediately return as I wish to keep the ship's stores and provisions complete— With much Respect Your Obt. Servant

C Morris.

Will you please signify whether you would wish the *Scorpion* and *Asp* to return to Washington or proceed to Baltimore when we may leave them. Respect. &c.

C Morris

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 18 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. Letter not found.

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS

Captain Charles Morris  
U.S. Ship *Adams*.  
off Point Lookout.

Navy Department  
Jany. 12th. 1814

Sir/

I have this day received your letter of the 7th. instant, enclosed you will receive a copy of my letter of instructions to you of the 6th. the original of which, with the papers referred to therein were sent to the Navy Agent at Annapolis,<sup>1</sup> with orders to deliver them through a confidential person, and I presume that you will have received the same.

When you may leave the *Scorpion* and *Asp*, order them to Baltimore, to report to the Commandant of the U.S. Flotilla.

I enclose to you a letter from Capt. Hull.— I am respectfully your Obedt. Servt.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 190 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. John Randall.

## CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U S.S. *Adams* Mouth of Potomac  
 Jany. 16th. 1814.

Sir,

Your several communications by Midn. Whittington<sup>1</sup> I had the honor to receive last evening—

I believe Sir, you have misconstrued some passages of my letter of the 31st. Decr.— Neither my officers nor myself think this ship unfit for service but we consider her very defective as a Ship of War— Neither do I think the motion of her rudder ought to detain her in port, but I do think it will very materially affect her durability— We were prevented from prosecuting an attempt to go out, by circumstances which I think authorised it— This has been the only chance which offered any reasonable hope of success and I pledge myself that none which may hereafter offer shall be neglected— That the Officers would be pleased with an exchange to other vessels was mentioned to shew their opinion of this, but was not intended as an application for removal— I deemed it but an act of justice to them and to myself to state our opinions of the Ship in which we serve—

By a boat from Norfolk we learn that the Enemy's force in Lynhaven consisted of five vessels on the 8th. inst— They further inform that on the 11th. saw several schooners standing down the Bay above New Point Comfort all of which suddenly hauled their wind by a signal from the headmost' one— Several heavy guns were heard down the Bay yesterday, and these circumstances induce me to suppose they are above York Spit—

I have not received your communications by way of Annapolis— I shall dispatch the *Scorpion* there immediately for provisions

Should we get out I propose to cruise to windward of Barbadoes, and from thence take such a direction as circumstances may render most expedient—

We have at this time provisions for about 100 days, which will of course determine the length of our cruise— Should I have occasion to write in cypher I shall make use of the "Telegraphic Dictionary" as published under the direction of Comr. Rodgers—making use of the numbers opposite to the words I wish to express—<sup>2</sup>

I again assure you Sir that no one can be more anxious for our getting to sea than are the officers of this Ship very respectfully Your Obd. Servant

C Morris

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 38 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. Clement Whittington was appointed a midshipman on 24 October 1812 with a warrant antedated to 18 June.

2. Perhaps the *Telegraphic Dictionary* printed in Brooklyn, New York, in 1812 by Thomas Kirk. In the same year, Kirk also published the signal book used by U.S. naval forces at New York entitled *Signals to Be Used by the Squadron under the Command of* . . .

## CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

USS. *Adams*. Jany. 17th. 1814.  
Off. Point lookout.

Sir.

Your several communications of the 6th. Inst by way of Annapolis have just been received—

After perusing the instructions to the different commanders which you did me the honor to forward I beg leave to propose the following route for this ship, subject however to such variations as a better acquaintance with her properties, particular information, or unforeseen accidents may render expedient—

Immediately on crossing the Gulf Stream I propose keeping on its southern edge to Lat 30°. having been informed that a convoy is to sail from Jamaica on the 21st. of this month.— From thence to the Eastward is the best positions for intercepting the windward, homeward bound fleets, or vessels from the West Indies to Bermuda— Thence towards Madaira & Cape de Verd Isles. From the latter islands either pursue the track marked for the *Siren* to St. Thomas'. and return to windward of Barbadoes, or run down in 2°. or 3°. north and haul for the same place,= And when leaving that ground. pass down to northd. of Portorico & St Domingo and passing through the Caycos passage<sup>1</sup> return to the Delaware or such other port as circumstances might render most eligible—

I shall pay attention to those passages in the different instructions relative to the disposal of prizes, and prisoners, and other general subjects in the same manner as if specially addressed to myself

I feel grateful Sir for the confidence you have reposed in me, and anxiously anticipate such winds and weather as shall enable me to prove whether it has properly bestowed With much respect. Your Obed. Servant

C Morris.

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 39 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. Caicos Passage, Bermuda.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS

Captain Charles Morris  
U S Ship *Adams*  
Chesapeake Bay

Navy Department  
January 19th. 1814

Sir

I have received yours of the 16th., and have never for a moment supposed that any possible opportunity of getting out would pass unimproved.— I know the difficulties you have to contend with in attempting to escape, but am confident that in any event, your judgement and resource will accomplish all that is

practicable.— The *Rattlesnake* & *Enterprize* sailed on the 10th. Instant.— Mr. Adams Mr. Bayard, Mr. Clay (Speaker) and Mr. Russell have been confirmed as Commissioners to treat with Great Britain at Gottenburg.— The latter Gentleman is appointed Minister plenepotentiary to Sweden. The *John Adams* will go as a Cartel to carry out the two latter Gentlemen to Gottenburg,—<sup>1</sup> I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 93–94 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. For documents relating to *John Adams's* mission as a diplomatic cartel, see pp. 88–99.

LETTER OF OFFICER IN *ADAMS* TO A FRIEND IN NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

[27 April 1814, Savannah, Georgia]<sup>1</sup>

“We have just made the land, after an unsuccessful cruize of 100 days.— Sailed January 18th, at 5 o'clock, P.M. in a severe snow-storm;— at 11 o'clock struck;— we fortunately succeeded in getting off from York spit, and again stood down the Bay; at about one, we passed so close to the *Dragon*, a seventy-four, that we could plainly distinguish her;— at fifteen minutes past one, passed three other Men of War, close on board, without being discovered.— On the 24th, spoke two Russian ships;— On the 26th, spoke a Portuguese brig;— On the 29th, captured the English schooner *Prince Regent*, from Malaga for Halifax, fruit and wine; took from her what we required, and burnt her.— February 9th, captured schooner *Industry*, of Glasgow, from New-Brunswick for Grenada, fish and oil, and burnt her.— Feb. 24, made the I[.]se of Sal— March 4th, made Cape Mount, on the Coast of Africa, and captured a small sloop, with rice and camwood, from Sierra Leone; took out the rice, and restored her.— Standing down the Coast, March 11, captured brig *Roebuck*, of London, on a trading voyage; took from her six tons of ivory, and other parts of her cargo, consisting of small articles, and gave her permission to proceed to Sierra-Leone, with the prisoners; first taking out her armament.— Continued down the Coast, in sight of land, to 4° 00' N. lat. and 5° 20' long. W.;<sup>2</sup> when finding our provisions getting short, were compelled to bear up; reducing our allowance from three-quarters to two-thirds— March 25th, in lat. 33° N. and 19° 30' W. long.<sup>3</sup> captured, after a running fight of 40 minutes, the *Woodbridge* East-Indiaman, a most beautiful ship;— took possession—and sent the Captain on board; the crew, that is the Europeans, in the boat with me;— when, on the clearing up of a squall, discovered 29 sail of the enemy, close on board of us—coming up with a fine breeze, and we becalmed;— abandoned the prize;— got our crew on board—and permitted her Captain to return in our boat, which we cut adrift;— at 6 o'clock, the nearest ship, a frigate, within four miles on our lee-quarter, gaining fast on us;— a 74 and a sloop a-stern, they making signals during the night;— at 3 o'clock, A.M lost sight of the enemy;— at day-light, made the enemy to leeward;— the Men of War continuing the chase— the frigate nearing us;— at 11, the convoy being out of sight from mast-head, the frigate bore up, and gave up the chase.— On the 28th, in 2° S. spoke a Portuguese ship, for the Brazils;— run down the Brazil coast,

from the line;— from thence, along the coast of Cayenne and Surinam;— hauled up, and went to windward of Bermuda; kept away, and run down to Northward of the Islands, about two degrees from them, speaking only three neutrals in our course, and seeing but two other vessels who escaped us on the 25th inst.; gave chase to the schooner *Clara*, of Baltimore, from Havanna; at 6 boarded her; during the chase, she hove over a considerable part of her cargo. Have enjoyed good health during the cruise; in which time have sailed 11,300 miles.<sup>4</sup>

Printed, *Newport* (Rhode Island) *Mercury*, 21 May 1814.

1. The newspaper's editor states that his letter was written "under the date of April 27 off Savannah."

2. Approximately 111 nautical miles southwest of Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

3. Approximately 113 nautical miles west of Madeira.

4. For the published letter of another one of *Adams's* officers, see the *Farmer's Repository* (Charlestown, West Virginia), 19 May 1814. This letter, penned from Savannah, Georgia, on 30 April 1814 and addressed to the officer's friend in Baltimore, appeared under the heading: "CRUIZE OF THE ADAMS."

#### CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U S.S. *Adams*. off Tybee  
April 29th 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that I this morning arrived off this port, having been induced to do it from the misrepresentations of some persons on board, and from the false account given of the harbor in the coast pilot— I find we cannot cross the Bar, but hope to receive some provisions and water which I have directed the Agent<sup>1</sup> to furnish— I shall endeavor to procure a pilot for Beaufort and if possible get into that harbor till my wants are supplied— I enclose a short account of our cruise my time not permitting me to enter into detail—and am with every respect yr. Obed. Servant

C Morris

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 197 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Archibald S. Bulloch.

[Enclosure]

U S.S. *Adams*. April 29th. 1814.

Sir.

Having passed the Enemy in Lynhaven on the night of the 18th. Jany. last I steered to the Southd. of Bermuda and crossed the Atlantic between 28 & 32 degrees N Latitude— On the 29th. Jany. captured an English Schooner from Malaga to Halifax with a cargo of Wine, oil, & fruit which we burnt, as we likewise did another Schooner from Newfoundland to Grenada with a cargo of fish and oil captured on the 9th. February—

On the 4th. March captured a Small Sloop boat under Cape Mount on the coast of Africa with a little rice & camwood on board— Twenty leagues East of Cape Palmas we captured on the 11th. March the Brig *Roebuck* of London with a small quantity of Ivory a quantity of Palm oil & various other articles, after destroying her armament & cargo, we paroled our prisoners, & gave them the Brig as a cartel to Sierra Leone— After a long chace on the 25th. March the last four hours of which was in thick weather, we captured the English India Ship *Woodbridge* with a cargo of rice & Dye Woods, but had barely taken possession of her when the weather cleared up, and we discovered a fleet of 25 Sail immediately to windward of us & two Ships of war standing for us— we were compelled to abandon the prize with precipitation and attend to our own safety till, 11, AM the next day when they gave over the chace & returned to the fleet—

I enclose the paroles signed by the prisoners & am with great respect your Obed. Servant

C Morris.

P.S. Our Ship sails tolerably well in smooth water but in a head sea every clump we have chaced has beaten us— I shall now endeavor to gain a northern Port— with respect yr Obd. Servant

C Morris,

Honble William Jones  
Secy. of the Navy  
Washington

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 198 (M125, Roll No. 35). This enclosure was numbered separately.

CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U S.S. *Adams* April 30th 1814  
Off Tybee Light—

Sir

The Agent sent us a pilot who has just anchored us within the Bar— our position is not such as I expected, but will I hope be sufficiently secure till we obtain a supply of provisions, water Spars & other stores— I am very anxious to obtain them before the enemy are informed of our position that we may be able to proceed immediately on another cruise.

our men are in general very healthy, we have had but two deaths. and they have contented themselves with a very reduced allowance with much cheerfulness. very respectfully yr. Obd. Servant

C Morris.

ALS, RG45, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 202 (M125, Roll No. 35).



## Capture of the U.S. Sloop of War *Frolic*

The U.S. Navy's combat success early in the war prompted Congress to authorize a new program of ship construction, including six sloops of war. *Frolic* was the first of this class to put to sea, embarking on its maiden cruise on 18 February 1814 under the command of Master Commandant Joseph Bainbridge. Like its sister ships, *Wasp* and *Peacock*, the William Doughty–designed *Frolic* was a “superior instrument of war,” uniting qualities of speed, firepower, maneuverability, and stout construction. These qualities rendered *Frolic* an ideal weapon for Secretary Jones to unleash upon Great Britain's merchant marine.<sup>1</sup>

While *Peacock* and *Wasp* fulfilled their promise as commerce raiders, *Frolic* most certainly did not. In less than nine weeks at sea, the new sloop managed to tally a paltry two prizes before being taken itself off the northern coast of Cuba. The circumstances of *Frolic*'s capture made this loss even more humiliating in the eyes of the American public, for Bainbridge had struck his colors to the enemy without firing a single shot.<sup>2</sup>

A year would pass before Bainbridge could offer a defense of his conduct before a naval court of inquiry. Although the court absolved Bainbridge of blame in the loss of *Frolic*, his reputation never recovered from this reversal and he “was denied responsible commands in his later career.”<sup>3</sup> However, the reason for Bainbridge's fall from grace may have had less to do with the capture of *Frolic* than with his suspected alcoholism, a suspicion that was raised by the naval court at the close of its proceedings.<sup>4</sup>

1. Quoted text in McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, p. 231. See also Canney, *Sailing Warships*, p. 139.

2. A Boston correspondent of Purser Thomas Chew reported: “Public opinion is rather against poor J. B. & I have had many a fight with people disposed to condemn him for not fighting the *Orpheus*.” Charles W. Greene to Thomas J. Chew, 16 May 1814, MiU-C, Thomas Chew Papers.

3. McKee, *Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession*, p. 447.

4. In evaluating the Navy's captains in early 1815, John Rodgers offered the following assessment of Joseph Bainbridge: “Capt Bainbridge, the Junior, I do not think qualified for any command as I have reason to believe him intemperate, & I am induced to mention this that you may be guarded against giving him a command at sea—” See Rodgers to Crowninshield, 11 February 1815, p. 754.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO MASTER COMMANDANT JOSEPH BAINBRIDGE

Joseph Bainbridge Esqr.  
Master Commandant  
US Sloop *Frolic* Boston

Navy Department  
January 16th. 1814

Sir

Presuming that on the receipt of this you will have the U. States Ship *Frolic* under your Command, in perfect and efficient order for a cruise, you will avail yourself of the first favorable wind and prospect to get to Sea, and passing to the Southward of the Gulph Stream, and to the eastward of Bermuda, shape a Course for the Island of Anagada, thence by St. Thomas down the north sides of Porto-Rico, St. Domingo and Jamaica, round the West end of Cuba; thence to the Balize and along the Coast of Mobile and Pensacola; thence round Cape Florida to the Doubleheaded Shot and Catkey,<sup>1</sup> retaining this station for a short

time; thence along the Florida Coast to St. Mary's Bar, off which you will call for information and further orders, should they be deemed necessary.—

Unless the orders of this Department or the information you may receive from the St. Mary's, should render it inexpedient, you will run along the Coast to Charleston Bar, where you may probably meet with some of the Enemy's light Cruisers, and will receive a communication from this Department.

In the course of this route you may probably obtain partial Supplies and refreshments, if not completely replenish your stock. Water and Rice you are sure to get in abundance.

In the route delineated you may probably fall in with the United States Brigs *Rattlesnake* and *Enterprise* and probably some of our Frigates, in which case you will have a free communication and reciprocation of information, and you will regulate your time, at any particular point, according to the probability of success, and the danger to be apprehended from a Superior force.

Should adverse Circumstances, or particular information, which you may receive at any time, satisfy you that a strict adherence to these instructions may endanger the safety of the Ship under your command or produce serious inconvenience to the service, you are authorized to pursue such course as the exercise of your best judgement may dictate for the public interest, conforming, as much as the circumstances may admit, to the spirit of the instructions now given.—

The port of Charleston may, probably, be watched by a superior force during the winter, and such prizes as you may determine to send in, had better run for the Ports of Georgia and North Carolina, particularly the latter, if their draft of water will admit.

The great object however is the destruction of the Commerce of the enemy, and bringing into Port the prisoners, in order to exchange against our unfortunate Countrymen who may fall into his hands.— You will, therefore, man no prize, unless the value, place of capture and other favorable circumstances, shall render her safe arrival morally certain.—

As the ransoming of British Ships is prohibited by a statute, and the ransom Bonds declared void, you will not agree to the ransoming of any prize.— The Enemy has also, in violation of his own agreement, and of good faith, refused to recognize Cartels made at Sea.— You will therefore grant no Cartel, nor liberate any Prisoners, unless under circumstances of extreme and unavoidable necessity.

The Character of the American Navy stands upon a basis not to be shaken, and needs no sacrifices by unequal conflict to sustain its reputation.— You will therefore avoid all unnecessary contact with the Cruisers of the enemy, even with an equal, unless under circumstances that may ensure your triumph without defeating the main object of your Cruise, or jeopardizing the safety of the Vessel under your Command.—

Be assured Sir, that the confidence of our Country cannot be enhanced by any new achievements of our gallant Navy; it is now entire, and the services of an Officer will now be estimated by the extent of the injury, he may inflict upon the vital interest of the enemy, in the destruction of his Commerce.

I have the command of the President of the United States to prohibit the giving, or accepting, of a Challenge Ship to Ship, directly or indirectly. When the chance of war shall bring you alongside of an equal foe, I have no fears for the result.

Direct your Purser, on the eve of your departure, to transmit a correct muster Roll to this Department, and on no account, to neglect this duty.

Please to acknowledge the receipt of this letter and accept the best wishes, for a prosperous and honorable Cruise of Your Obdt. Servt.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 91–93 (T829, Roll No. 453). For another copy of this letter, see DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 205 (M273, Roll No. 8).

1. Double Headed Shot Cays, or Keys, comprise 23 islands, part of the Cay Sal Bank, in the Bahamas. The bank is situated some 60 nautical miles southeast of the Florida Keys, between Andros Island, Bahamas, and Cuba. North and South Cat Cays, or Keys, are two small islands in the Bimini Chain of the Bahamas and should not be confused with Cat Island, one of the larger islands in the Bahamas.

CAPTAIN HUGH PIGOT, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

His Majesty's Ship *Orpheus*  
New Providence April 25th. 1814

Sir,

I have the pleasure to acquaint you that on the 20th. Instant after a chase of 60 Miles (the point of Matanzas in Cuba bearing SSE 5 Leagues) we Captured the United States Ship *Frolic*, Commanded by Master Commandant Joseph Bainbridge. She had mounted twenty 32 Pound Carronades, and two long Eighteens, with 171 Men, but a few minutes before striking her Colours, threw all her Lee Guns over board, and continued throwing also her Shot, small arms, &c until taken possession of, she is a remarkable fine ship of 509 Tons and the first time of her going to Sea, she has been out from Boston two Months and frequently chased by our Cruisers, their only Capture was the *Little Fox*, a Brig laden with Fish, which they destroyed.— I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

h Pigot. Captain

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fols. 8–9. This letter contained two enclosures, an abstract of *Frolic's* log, printed below, and a list of the American sloop of war's dimensions, which appears on fols. 12–13. For copies of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 213 and 225.

[Enclosure]

An Abstract of the Log of the late United States Sloop of War *Frolic* Captured by His Majesty's Ship *Orpheus* on the 20th. day of April 1814, —

Sailed from Boston on the 18th. February 1814 and on the 19th. in Latte. 42°, 7 boarded a Ship the *Mereah* from Bartholomew bound to Boston out 25 day's, observed 3 sail One to Windward and 2 to Leeward— made all sail in chase for the one to Windd. 20th.—discover'd the sail ahead, to be a large Man of War, tacked and stood from her with all sail to the best Advantage endeavouring to

make our escape from her, she being in Chase of us, the ship bearing NNE at 6 PM, the ship bore away and made sail— on the 17th. March, observed a sail bearing SbW. made sail in Chase, came up with her, proved to be a Brig *Little Fox* from St. Johns bound to Tobago 17 days out, Cargo, Fish, Lumber &c— employ'd discharging her Cargo she being a Prize, latte. 10° 24—

On 18th. set Fire to Prize—

On the 19th. made the Island of Sambrero<sup>1</sup> bearing NNW Distance 3 Leagues, bore up Sambrero bearing S.E. 3 Leagues On 20th. saw Anaguada WbS½S, 14 Miles in the course of the day saw the High land of St. Thomas bearing W.SW.6 Leagues Latt 20°—19.—

On the 23rd. saw the Land bearing SWbW½W 9 Leagues Latte.—19°—3

On 24th Old Cape Francis bore W½S, Cabarosa South, 7 Leagues, observed a Brig on the Larboard Bow made Sail in Chase, Chase made Sigl. and fired a Gun to Leeward, nearing the Land quite fast gave up the Chase, and tack'd to the Northd. and Wd. observed a sail in our wake made sail from her Strange sail bearing ESE, 10 Miles Dist. standing for us Latte. 20—5— On 26th. St. Iago SbE 18 Miles Isabella Point S½W Distance 23 Miles the Strange Sail bearing NEbN— On the 27th. observed a Strange Sail to Leeward 12 or 15 Miles— at 3 PM, the stranger in our wake gaining on us made sail from her at 5 made the Isle of Hen-evaga ahead; 6 Lost sight of Strangers

On 29th. observed a small sail on one point on the larbd. Bow. at ½ past 8 PM, discover'd a schooner standing out for us at 9 received a shot from her called all hands to Quarters & clear'd ship for Action at ½ past 9 near'd us and fired several times at 20 past 10 we open'd fire which was kept up un[t]il 11 PM, when they call'd for quarters being in a sinking Condition, lower'd 3rd. Cutter and sent her alongside she proved to be under Ca[r]thegenian Colours<sup>2</sup> but on examination we were inclined to think she was a Pirate 10 past 11 sinking fast got a Hawser on board and hauld her alongside, and five Minuits afterwards she sunk, no one Kill'd or Wounded on board of us,—

2nd. April— Observed 2 sails on the Larboard bow, made sail in Chase saw them seperate, one a Brig and the other a Schooner came up with the Brig proved to be the St. Juanifrone from New Orleans bound to St. Iago de Cuba, the Master reported the schooner to be the *Saucy Jack* Privateer of Charlestown, he had been in possession of the *Saucy Jack* 8 Day's Plundered of all his ammunition and two Brass Guns, abandoned her when on our chasing them & got clear of us Lat 19—50 On 3rd. April saw a sail on the Starboard bow, made sail and came up with her, lowered 3rd. Cutter and boarded a small schooner with Turtle—Lat[*titud*]e 20 18 On the 4th. discharged her of her Turtle and broke her up for Fire Wood Lat[*titud*]e 20°—14

On the 6th. boarded a schooner the *Candalevo* from Segal bound to Havannah 8 Days out Late 21—40—

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fols. 10–11. For copies of this document, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 214–15 and 226–27.

1. Sombrero Island, also known as Hat Island. It is part of the British overseas territory of Anguilla and the northernmost island of the Lesser Antilles.

2. Cartagena, a seaport in northern Colombia, on the Caribbean Sea, declared its independence from Spain in 1811. Its republican government issued letters of marque authorizing privateers to cruise against Spanish merchantmen.

MASTER COMMANDANT JOSEPH BAINBRIDGE TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New York, June 3d. 1814.

Sir.

I availed myself of an opportunity by a Cartel that left Nassau immediately after my arrival there for Newport to perform the painful duty of apprising you of the capture of the U.S. Sloop *Frolic* by his Britannic Majesty's Frigate *orpheus*— I had not then time to communicate the circumstances attending this disaster, but will endeavour now to make them known to you minutely & precisely, as is practicable by transmitting to you the particulars extracted from the Log Book—

On the 20th. of April last being in the Florida Passage & about equidistant from Matanzas & the Havanna at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 5. A.M. a strange sail was discovered from the Masthead bearing N.W. by N. apparently under easy sail— At  $\frac{3}{4}$  past 5. two more were seen, one bearing N. the other N.W. turned all hands up & made sail to reconnoitre them— at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 7. made one out to be a Frigate and another an armed Schooner— The Florida Reef then bore N.E. by N. It being impossible to fetch to windward of the Reef the wind being E. by N. we tacked ship & stood in toward Cuba shore— The Frigate and Schooner immediately made sail in chase— Finding the Chase outsailed us I resolved to endeavour to go into Matanzas it being impracticable to bear up for the Havanna and clear the Frigate she having edged off & fallen directly into our wake. At 9. A.M. saw the land— The Pan of Matanzas<sup>1</sup> bearing S.S.E. and the course into the Harbou[r] was S.E. The Schooner kept her wind & at 10 minutes past 10. bore N. distant 6 miles and the Frigate at [that] time bore N.W distant 3 miles— At 1. P.M. we were within 2 miles of the land but owing to a strong curren[t] setting to the Westward had fallen leeward of Matanzas— The Frigate was one point on our lee quarter— The Schoon[er] on our weather beam— tacked ship & passed the Friga[te] within half gun shot,— She fired one shot that went over us— stood in shore & soon after tacked— whilst she was in stays, we bore up, out studdingsails & set all the light sails— The Frigate & Schooner made sail in chase— Finding them still gaining on us, commenced lightning the ship— cut away the Starboard anchor— started the water &c. &c. The chase still gained on us & apparently faster than when we were close upon a wind— we gradually hauled our wind— in studding-sails— threw the larboard guns overboard— all the gun-tackle—cutlasses, muskets—Pistols—Pikes &c. &c. At  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 1. the Schooner was on our weather beam within musket shot and the Frigate the same distance in our wake— We were now close in with the land— Knowing, from the nature of the Coast, that running the ship upon the rocks, would be unattended by the hope of saving the life of one of my officers or crew, observing the Frigate edging away and prepared to fire her broadside, and believing that to contend with a force so superior, was not exacted of me as an officer, and would not have comported with my duty as a man, I struck my

flag & surrendered the *Frolic* to the British Frigate *orpheus*, Captain Hugh Pigot, and the British Schooner *Shelburne*, Lieutenant Hope.

Previous to our Capture, I had in pursuance of your orders left Boston in the *Frolic* on the 18th. of February last— had passed to the Eastward of Bermuda, cruised along the North side of Porto Rico & Jamaica and entered the Gulf of Mexico by the Windward-Passage— Had been off the Mouth of the Mississippi, Mobile & Pensacola and was endeavouring to gain my position off Charleston through the Florida Passage when we fell in with th[e] *orpheus* and *Shelburne*.

The second day after leaving Boston we were chased by a Frigate, which I have since understood was the British Ship *Junon*, but escape[d] from her by lightening the *Frolic*— on the 17th. March in lat. 18. 24. N. Lon. 62.33. W. we fell in with and captured the British Brig *Little Fox* from St. Johns bound to Tobago with a cargo of Fish & Lumber and burnt her— on the 29th. March being close in with th[e] land on the North side of Cuba at ½ past 8 P.M. we discovered a Schooner standing out toward us & at 9 received a shot from her— at ½ past 9 she repeated her fire & continued firing until she came within fair range of our broadside— We returned his fire & in a few minutes heard them crying for quarter— It proved to be a Privateer under Carthaginian Colours— were told she was sinking and at 10 min past 11. perceiving that she was settling very fast got a hawser on board her & hauled her alongside— but in five minutes afterwards she sunk— Every exertion in our power was instantly made to preserve the lives of her people and we succeeded in saving thirty one of them— We had not a man killed or wounded and the damage sustained by the ship was very trifling— on the 3d. of April off Cape Antonio we captured a small Schooner belonging to the Grand Caymans and destroyed her— I have the honor to be sir with the highest respect, your most obedient & most humble servant—

Joseph Bainbridge

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 139 (M147, Roll No. 5). The bracketed text was supplied from a copy of this letter in DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 205 (M273, Roll No. 8).

1. The Pan of Matanzas is a conical mountain or loaf (that is, shaped like a sugar loaf), 1,277 feet high, located behind the town of Matanzas, on the northern coast of Cuba, 58 miles east of Havana.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JOSEPH BAINBRIDGE

Joseph Bainbridge Esqr.  
Master Com'dt. U.S. Navy  
New York

Navy Department  
June 13. 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 3d. Inst. detailing the circumstances of the loss by capture, of the U.S. Ship *Frolic* under your command, which though much to be regretted, is among the casualties of War which upon a formal

enquiry to be held in due time, will I have no doubt to be found to have been unavoidable and blameless on the part of her commander, Officers & Crew. I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 340 (M149, Roll No. 11).

COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE LOSS OF U.S. SLOOP OF WAR *FROLIC*

[U.S. Frigate *Constellation*, New York, 20 April 1815]

Sailing Master Wright  
Late of the *Frolic*, sworn.

Q— What do you know of this enquiry.

A— On the 20th April, at 10 minutes before six, all hands were called to quarters. cleared ship for action. headed N— by E— with the wind E.— We were standing with our starboard tacks aboard, and a sail in sight bearing N.W— half N— Capt. B. ordered me with a spy glass to the foretopsail yard. I discovered a vessel with her larboard tacks aboard on a wind, a ship steering W— and a schooner S.W. came below and reported myself to the commander, and told him I could not tell what the first vessel was, but she appeared to be a cruizer— The ship wore and stood to the northward—the schoone[r] came under the lee of the strange vessel. We saw that the schooner had a flag at her fore top gallant mast head, but could not distinguish it. We kept the *Frolic* N— & by W— half W. At this time we could not discover whether the stranger was a ship or brig—hove signals out and she hove others not understood— We found she was an enemy's frigate and tacked—heading S— & by E. the enemy heading S—forereaching us, her larboard tacks aboard. We stood to the S—till we got within a mile of the island of Cuba—7 miles to the leeward of Matanzas—the frigate 1 & ½ miles from us—we tacked—in the act of tacking, the wind hauled E.N.E. and headed us off N— & by W— Favoured the *Orpheus* she headed up S.E. & by S. We passed her within pistol shot— She hove one shot over us—fired again—and the shot fell short within about 20 yards of our main chains Out with fore top mast starboard studding sail— The *Orpheus* tacked— The *Shelburne* schooner worked to windward—and bore down on our starboard bow—no guns could get to bear upon her—the *Orpheus* within half a mile distance on our lee quarter— Capt B— proposed to the officers whether it was not best to lighten— It was a vote. We hove over the larboard guns, 11 in number, muskets, cutlasses, pistols; took in fore top mast studding sail— Finding that the *Orpheus* gained upon us and that the *Frolic* sailed better upon a wind than with the wind free we hauled our wind—within pistol shot distance at the time— The *Orpheus* had put her helm starboard, and was endeavouring to give us a broadside close under our quarter— Capt, B— took the officers advice whether it was best to receive the broadside, or haul the colours down— The first Lieut— J— Wilkinson answered, “As we have tried to get clear by lightening, I think that it is prudent to haul them down.” And the

principal officers agreed to it— The colours were struck and in five minutes from that time the enemy was along side, and fired a volley of musketry into us after we struck—

Q— by the Court—What did you first throw overboard?

A— The guns and the anchor— We hove over water and provisions when chased out of Boston—

Q— Could you not run the sloop on shore without losing the lives of the men?

A— No! The situation of the shore would not permit it—

Q— Did Capt B— appear to be perfectly cool and collected during the chase!

A— He did.

Q— Did you discover any thing like confusion in him, or in any of the officers and men, before or after the flag was struck.

A— None while I was on board—

Q— Was Capt— B's conduct during the cruize such as you would approve?

A— It was good.

Q— Does his official letter contain a correct statement of facts?

A— I believe so in every important point.

Q— Is there anything further in relation to the enquiry before the court that you have not stated? if so, state it—

A— Nothing. . . .

It having been rumoured that Capt. Bainbridge was addicted to intoxication, the Court deemed it their duty, as well as that due to Capt. B's own reputation to put the following question to all the witnesses—

Q— Do you know any thing of Capt. Bainbridge being addicted to the vice of intoxication?

A. of Lt Gillian— I never heard of it before—

A. of Lt Armstrong. I have sailed [*with*] him for six years and never knew him to be inebriated. He would take his glass as other gentlemen do—

A— of Mr. Wright— I know nothing of the kind

A. of Mr. Robinson. I know nothing of that sort. . . .

April, 21st, 1815.

The Court being cleared and the whole of the proceedings read over to the court by the Judge Advocate, the following Opinion was pronounced:

#### Opinion.

The Court, after mature deliberation, on the evidence produced before them relative to the loss of the late U.S. Sloop of War *Frolic*, Joseph Bainbridge, Esquire, Commander, by capture, are of opinion, that the same was not lost through the fault, intention, or negligence of Captain Bainbridge.

It appears to the Court that Captain Bainbridge, and the officers and men of the ship's company did their utmost to preserve her, and after the loss thereof behaved themselves agreeably to the discipline of the navy.

It also appears to the Court that Captain Bainbridge conducted himself during the chase with perfect coolness and self possession and with the courage becoming an officer and a gentleman.



It has been proved to the Court that the enemy fired a volley of musketry into the *Frolic* after her colours were struck.

A Murray Prest.

Henry Wheaton  
Judge Advocate—<sup>1</sup>

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 205 (M273, Roll No. 8).

1. In addition to Commodore Alexander Murray and Henry Wheaton, the other members of the court were Captain Samuel Evans and Captain Jesse D. Elliott.

## The Challenge

*The ardent desire of U.S. ship commanders to seek battle with their Royal Navy foes had contributed to the loss of the U.S. brig Argus on 14 August 1813—or so thought Navy Secretary William Jones.<sup>1</sup> The loss of this ship and its gallant crew distressed Jones greatly. The decision of its fallen captain, William Henry Allen, to seek battle rather than avoid it vexed him even more, for it had sacrificed the great object of Jones's strategy—destruction of the enemy's commerce—for the sake of Allen's thirst for martial glory. In a letter to President Madison, a frustrated Jones lamented: "The excessive ardour & prowess of our officers will not be restrained until we sustain a few losses."<sup>2</sup> "Would it not be amiss," Madison replied, "to instruct such Cruisers positively, never to fight where they can avoid it, and employ themselves entirely in destroying the commerce of the Enemy."<sup>3</sup>*

*Madison's recommendation was incorporated into cruising instructions issued by the Navy Department in the winter of 1813–14. With variations in wording, they prohibited commanding officers "from giving or receiving a Challenge, to, or from, an Enemy's Vessel."<sup>4</sup> But such departmental strictures were given only to the officers readying their ships for a cruise; they were not promulgated service-wide. Thus, the officers of Stephen Decatur's squadron felt little hesitation in accepting a challenge to fight ship-to-ship duels with the enemy vessels blockading them in Connecticut's Thames River. When both American and British commanders failed to agree on the terms of combat, the proposed sea fight was called off. Upon receiving Decatur's report of the affair, a relieved Jones warned the frigate captain that such arranged encounters were now strictly forbidden.*

1. For the details of *Argus's* capture, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 222–24.

2. Jones to Madison, 13 October 1813, Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 6, p. 694.

3. Madison to Jones, 15 October 1813, *ibid.*, p. 698.

4. Jones to Parker, 8 December 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, p. 296.

COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO CAPTAIN SIR THOMAS M. HARDY, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

United States Frigate *U. States*  
New London Jan'y. 17th 1814

Sir/

Having been informed by Nicholas Moran, the master of a Sloop recently captured by his Britanic Majesties Ship the *Endymion* now lying before this port, that whilst he was on board the *Ramilies* & in your hearing Capt'n. Hope of the

*Endymion* did ask him whether the Frigate *United States* would not avoid an action; he further states that he heard you declare it to be your wish that if the U.S. Ship *Macedonian* should have a meeting with his Britanic Majesties Ship the *Statira*, that you would furnish men, & give room for such meeting but that you would not permit the challenge to come from your Side,— The *Endymion* I am informed carries 24 pounders and mounts 50 guns in all, this Ship also carries 24 pounders and mounts 48 guns beside a 12 pd. carronade a boat gun— The *Statira* mounts 50, the *Macedonian* 47—metal the same—so that the force on both sides is as nearly equal as we could expect to find. If Mr. Morans Statement be correct, it is evident that Capts. Hope & Stackpole have the laudable desire of engaging with their Ships the *U. States* and *Macedonian*, we Sir are ready & equally desirous for such meeting, forthwith,— The only difficulty that appears to be in the way is from whom the formal invitation is to come, If Sir, you admit Morans Statement to be correct, the difficulty will be removed, & you will be pleased to consider this as an invitation, At the Same time we beg you will assure Capts. Hope & Stackpole that no personal feeling towards them induces us to make this communication,— They are solicitous to add to the renown of their country—we honor their motives—

Captain Biddle who will have the honour to deliver you this note is authorized on our part to make any arrangments which may be necessary— I am Sir very respectfully &c

Signed. Stephen Decatur

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 49 (M125, Roll No. 34). Addressed: "Commodore Sir Thos. M Hardy."

1. Hardy served as Admiral Horatio Nelson's flag captain in H.M.S. *Victory* during the Battle of Trafalgar (21 October 1805). He was one of Nelson's most valued and trusted subordinates.

CAPTAIN SIR THOMAS M. HARDY, R.N., TO  
COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

*Ramillies* off New London  
18 Jany 1814

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date by Capt Biddel, signifying a desire on your part, and that of Capt Jones, as Commanders of the United States Frigates the *United States*, and *Macedonian* to meet His Britannic Majestys Ship *Endymion* and *Statira*, in consequence of a conversation reported to you by Mr. Moran Master of a Sloop recently captured; and in reply I beg to inform You, I have no hesitation whatever in permitting Captain Stackpole of the *Statira* to meet the *Macedonian*, as they are Ships carrying the Same weight of Metal and number of Guns; but as it is my opinion the *Endymion* is not equal to the *United States* being 200 Tons less, and carrying 26 Guns on her main deck, and only 32 lb carronades on her quarter

Deck and Fore castle, when I am informed the *United States* has 30 Guns on her main Deck and 42 lb Carronades on her quarter Deck and Fore Castle, I must consider it my duty (tho' contrary to the wishes of Captain Hope) to decline the invitation on his part

The Captains of His Britannic Majestys Frigates under my orders, as well as myself, cannot too highly appreciate the gallant Spirit, that has led to the communication from you Sir, and are equally convinced that no personal feeling towards each other can ever influence a laudable ambition to add to the Naval renown of our respective countries

I have the honor to enclose a letter from Capt Stackpole bearing your address, and I pledge my honor to facilitate by every means in my power the meeting on the Rendezvous pointed out by him—and that none of the Captains junior to me shall interfere— Captain Stackpoles proposals amply provides against that of a Senior Officer.

Should success attend the *Macedonian* I guarante her proceeding unmolested to any port to the Eastward of this anchorage and I propose the Same from you Sir; for the *Statira* to proceed to Bermuda

Captain Coot will have [*the*]<sup>1</sup> honor to deliver this letter to you and to make any farther arrangements that may be necessary. I have the honor to be Sir your most obedient humble servan[*t*]

T. M. Hardy Captain

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 48, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34). For another copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 214–15.

1. This text was missing in the original but appears in a printed version of this letter published in the 21 March 1814 edition of the *Boston Daily Advertiser*.

[Enclosure]

His Majesties Ship  
*Statira* off New London  
January 17th 1814

Sir

Captain Sir Thomas M. Hardy Bt. and Commodore off New London, has this afternoon handed me a letter from you; expressing a desire that the United States Ship *Macedonian* Commanded by Capt. Jones, should meet his Majestys Ship *Statira*, under my Command; and that the United States Ship *United States* bearing your broad pendant would embrace the same opportunity of meeting the *Endymion* Commanded by Captain Hope; In the event of Sir Thomas Hardy permitting our joint acceptation of this rendezvous, I of course must be the Senior Officer; but in the interim I shall confine my reply to your Obliging letter; as to the future acts of His Majestys Ship I have the honor to Command.

It will afford her Captain Officers and crew, [*the greatest pleasure*]<sup>1</sup> to meet Captain Jones in the *Macedonian* to-morrow, next day, or whenever such a meeting, may better Suit his purpose; let him only be pleased to appoint the day and place, say six or ten leagues South of Montuck point, or further if he pleases, my only object for Selecting this distance, from the Shore is to avoid any interruption;

little I think can be apprehended, as all the Captains Commanding Frigates excepting one, in these seas are junior to me; and in the event of chance, or accident, meeting him, I will hoist a flag of truce pledging the word and honor of a British Officer (further I can not offer) to keep the truce flying until the *Macedonian* is out of Sight, and in the event of a junior officer appearing, the same guarantee of safety shall be kept flying until I can detach him.

In accepting this invitation Sir it is not to vaunt or in the most trifling degree to enhance my own professional character; or take from what is so justly due to Captain Jones; Altho I have been twice mortified in being obliged to retreat on the 26th and 28th of August 1812 by Six American men of war and for twelve weekes together cruising alone it has never fallen to the *Statiras* lot to meet one Singly.

The honor of my King, defence of my country engaged in a just and unprovoked war, added to the glory of the british flag is all I have in view— I perceive by a statement in your letter of the comparative force of the two Ships, “and as I fear you have been led into error” I shall take this opportunity to say the *Statira* carries only forty Six guns instead of fifty with two little boat guns of more utility in exercising the men, than any effect they might have in the hour of battle; without any external finery is Simply is Simply a british man of war of her class, nevertheless a more fair and equal match, in Ship and guns, may not soon occur, in numbers of men I am aware of “having a superiority to oppose,” all that I request is that both Ships may quickly meet.

Having receivd. your communication by the hand of Sir Thomas M. Hardy Bt. I shall convey my reply thro., the same channel requesting you will be so good as to hand it to the Captain of the *Macedonian* I remain Sir with every consideration  
Your Most Obedient Humble Servant

(Signed) Hassard Stackpole  
Capt of H Majesty’s  
Ship *Statira*

Commodore Stephen Decatur  
Commanding the United States Ship *United States*  
New London

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 48, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34). For another copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 212–13.

1. This text was missing in the original but appears in a printed version of this letter published in the 21 March 1814 edition of the *Boston Daily Advertiser*.

COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO  
CAPTAIN SIR THOMAS M. HARDY, R.N.

U.S. Ship *United States*  
New London Jany. 19th. 1814

sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of yesterday with the enclosure from Captain Stackpoole by the hands of Captn. Coote— The proposition for a contest between H.B.M. Frigates *Endymion* and *Statira* and this

ship & the *Macedonian* was made by me in the full belief that their force was equal but it has been declined in consequence of your entertaining a different opinion on this subject from my own—

I do not think myself authorized to comply with the wishes of Capts. Jones & Stackpoole for a meeting in the Ships *Statira* & *Macedonian*— This Squadron is now under Sailing orders from the Government & I feel myself bound to put to sea the first favourable opportunity that may occur— In my proposal for a meeting of the four Ships I consented and I fear incautiously, that you should make up the complements of the *Endymion* & *Statira* from the crews of the *Ramillies* & *Borer* I was induced to accord this indulgence from supposition that their crews might have been reduced by manning prizes and a hope that the selected men would be divided between the two Ships the advantage would not be overwhelming— But sir, if the *Statira* is to avail herself alone of this concession it must be obvious to you and every one that I should be yielding to you an advantage that I could not excuse to my Govt. and in making the crew of the *Macedonian* in any degree equal into such a conflict I should be compelled to break up the crews of this Ship and the *Hornet*, and thus render a compliance with my orders to proceed to Sea utterly impracticable—

You will have the goodness sir, to inform Captn. Stackpoole that his letter was shewn to Captain Jones according to his request—that Capt. Jones is extremely desirous a meeting should take place between the *Statira* & *Macedonian* but is controled by me for the reasons I have stated— Whether the war we are engaged in be just or unprovoked the part of Great Britain as Capt. Stackpoole has been pleased to suggest, is considered by us, as a question exclusively with the Civilians, & I am perfectly ready to admit—both my incompetence & unwillingness to confront Capt. Stackpoole in its discussion— I am sir with the highest consideration & respect your most obedt. & very humble servt.

signed Stephen Decatur

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 50 (M125, Roll 34). For another copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 210–11 and 216–17.

CAPTAIN SIR THOMAS M. HARDY, R.N., TO  
COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Copy.

*Ramillies* off New London  
20th. Jany. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you that I will communicate to Captn. Stackpoole your letter of the 19th Instant, I this morning had the honor of receiving by Captain Biddel, and I have nothing further to offer in addition to my former letter on the subject of the meeting between the Ships of the United States and those of His Britannick Majesty, but that I will give every guarantee in my power in case of the *Macedonian's* success should the meeting ever take place.—

I beg to assure you Sir, I shall hail with pleasure the return of an amicable adjustment of the differences between the two Countries.— and I have the honor to be Sir, Your most Obedient humble Servant

Signed T. M. Hardy Captain

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fol. 218. Endorsed opposite dateline in Admiral John B. Warren's hand: "J B Warren." This letter was enclosed in Warren to Croker, 2 February 1814, *ibid.*, fol. 208.

LIEUTENANT ALEXANDER CLAXTON TO THOMAS CLAXTON<sup>1</sup>

*Macedonian*, New-London, Jan. 19, 1814.

*Dear Father*—For the two last days we have been all anxiety; an American captain returned on parole from the *Ramilies*, 74, a few days since, and communicated to commodore Decatur, a consultation he had with captain Hardy, in which the latter said "that now that two frigates were off, of equal force to the *United States* and *Macedonian*, that he should have no objection to a meeting taking place, but that he could not allow the challenge to come from the English commanders." The hint was embraced in a moment, and captain Biddle dispatched with a challenge from our commanders. In the mean time every preparation was made, on our side, for an immediate engagement, which we all supposed no objection could be made to, the crew of both ships were called together, and addressed by their commanders, who made known to them the substance of the business then on foot, they were answered by three hearty cheers. Captain Jones concluded his short and pertinent address in the following words, spoken with great modesty, "my lads, our cruize will be short, and I trust, a very profitable one." Captain Biddle went on board the 74, a signal was immediately made for the two commanders of the English frigates, and they went on board. Captain Hardy addressed them, "gentlemen here are two letters<sup>2</sup> for you, it rests altogether with *you* to decide on the matter." Stackpole of the *Statira*, answered with the greatest affectation "[u]pon honor sir, it is the most acceptable letter I ever received" The final answer was to be given yesterday. Captain Biddle returned, and related the circumstances as I have mentioned. For myself, I thought from the manner of Stackpole that he would be the first to flinch, I am not able to say that he did, it is enough, that the captain of the *Borer* (sloop of war) came in yesterday and made known that they had declined meeting us. This circumstance has made a vast deal of conversation here much to the credit of our commanders—it will probably be distorted into a hundred different shapes before it is done with, I have therefore given you a correct though brief account of it. The *Endymion*, mounts the same weight of metal with the *United States* and three or four guns more, and the *Statira* is superior to us by one or two guns. The disappointment is very great with us, for every soul calculated on taking her with ease. You see we must trust altogether to our heels. Yours affectionately,

A. CLAXTON.

Printed, *Daily National Intelligencer*, 24 January 1814. This letter appears under the heading: “POSTSCRIPT,” below which is written: “*Copy of a letter from Lieutenant Claxton to his father, dated.*”

1. Thomas Claxton served as doorkeeper of the U.S. House of Representatives from the Fourth through the Sixteenth Congress. His son and namesake Midshipman Thomas Claxton, Alexander’s brother, died on 7 October 1813 from a wound received one month earlier in the Battle of Lake Erie. See *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, and, *Daily National Intelligencer*, 14 October 1813.

2. Unidentified.

COMMANDER WILLIAM B. MENDS, R.N., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JAMES BIDDLE

Private

H.B.M.S. *Loup Cervier* off new London  
24th. Jany. 1814—

Sir,

On my return to this Anchorage I was informed by commodore Sir, Thos. M. Hardy Bart. of your expressing a wish to meet the *Loup Cervier*, and as I feel actuated by the same motives as yourself, I willingly accept your Invitation on the equal terms you proposed, provided of course, the commanding officers of the respective Squadrons Accede to them.— the Size, and force of the *loup Cervier* (late *wasps*) is well known to you, and on my receiving from you, a statement of the number of souls you command, I pledge my honor, to limit mine, to the same,— I leave to you to fix on local circumstances, and Such other Security against recapture, or interference of other force as you may deem fair, and equally honorable to both parties.— I have the honor to be Sir with every consideration of respect Yours

W B Mends Commander

LS, Andalusia Foundation, Biddle Family Papers, Commodore James Biddle Letters, Vol. 2. Addressed: “To Captain Biddle/U.S.S. *Hornet*.”

MASTER COMMANDANT JAMES BIDDLE TO  
COMMANDER WILLIAM B. MENDS, R.N.

U.S. Sloop *Hornet* Jany. 25. 1814

Sir,

I had the honor to receive your Communication of yesterday’s date by the hand of Lt. Hamilton.

While on board the *Ramilies*, I did express to Come. Sir Thomas Hardy Bt. in the course of conversation a wish that a meeting might take place between this Sloop and the *Loup Cervier*, & this wish was expressed in answer to the question put to me by Sir Thomas whether such a meeting would not be acceptable to me. I do not however recollect that any terms were proposed or mentioned by me, as from your Communication, it would appear is the impression of Sir Thomas

Hardy; and I pray you to assure Sir Thomas that in supposing me to offer any proposition on this subject he must I think have misunderstood me, since I had no authority from my Commanding Officer, with whom it exclusively rested to permit or refuse the meeting— In expressing a wish, Sir, to meet the Ship under your command, you will I trust do me the justice to believe that I was not in the slightest degree influenced by any feeling of personal hostility or disrespect toward yourself— I have submitted your communication to the perusal of Comodore Decatur— Come. Decatur feels unauthorized to permit that the Crew of this Ship should be strengthened by a selection from any other ship under his command, since, by so permitting, he may be disabled from complying with the orders of his govt. He is unwilling that an advantage secured to this Ship should be allowed to the *Loup Cervier*. I have the pleasure however to acquaint you that I am authorized to communicate to you that Come. Decatur has given me permission that this ship shall meet the *Loup Cervier*, under a mutual & satisfactory pledge, that neither Ship receive any additional Officers or men, but shall go into action with their original crews respectively— This Ship mounts twenty guns: the *Loup Cervier* at the time of her capture mounted eighteen guns. If the armament of the *Loup Cervier* is still the same, I will take off two guns, and thus place the two Ships on an equality. These favors I trust will be acceptable to you— I have the honor to be, With great consideration and Respect, Sir, your Mo. Ob. St.

J Biddle

Mem: When I visited the *Ramilies* with a Communication from Come. Decatur to Sir Thomas Hardy challenging the *Endymion* & *Statira* frigates to meet the frigates *United States* & *Macedonian*, I was desirous that the *Hornet* might be brought into the Combat. I was well aware that it would have been improper in me to have expressed this desire to Sir Thomas, unless something leading to it shd. in the first instance be mentioned by him— I therefore made many enquiries respecting the *Loup Cervier*, when Sir Thomas Hardy at length said to me, “I suppose you want to have a fight out of the *Loup Cervier*” or words to that effect. This was exactly what I wished him to say, & considering it as a fair opportunity of mentioning my wishes, I urged very strongly to Sir Thomas the importance to both Countries of having a fair challenge fight between two such Vessels &c. &c. At this time the *Loup Cervier* was absent but was every day expected from Bermuda— On her arrival off New London I recd. the Communication from Capt.: Mends. I wished Come. Decatur to permit me to acquaint Capt.: Mends of the number of men I commanded, & meet him on his own proposition— This Come. Decatur would not permit because the *Loup Cervier* would then have a picked Crew— I then wished him to permit me to ask Capt.: Mends how many men he commanded, and if my number was the greatest to reduce it to his number & then meet him— This Come Decatur said he could not justify himself in permitting, because the govt. having fixed the Complement of Men allowed to my Ship, he was unauthorized to permit the number of men to be reduced. All I could obtain from Come. Decatur was permission to write such a letter as I did write, & it was with difficulty I could prevail upon him to allow me to offer to take off two guns— My letter was carried out to the British Squadron by Lieut. Claxton of the *Ramilies*— I never afterwards heard from Capt. Mends—

J. Biddle



ALS, Andalusia Foundation, Biddle Family Papers, Commodore James Biddle Letters, Vol. 2. Addressed: “William B. Mends Esqr./Comg. H:B:M: Sloop *Loup Cervier*/Off New London.”

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Come. Stephen Decatur }  
 U.S. Ship *United States* }  
 New London }

Navy Department  
 March 12th. 1814

Sir,

I have been incessantly occupied with objects of the most pressing nature which have procrastinated my desire to reply to your letters on the subject of the correspondence between yourself and Sir Thomas Hardy, the result of which has maintained for yourself and Captain Jones, the elevated ground on which your own merits and the sentiments of the nation had placed you.

The documents were not published, because the President does not incline to give his sanction to the principle on which the invitation was founded, and indeed in every instruction that has been given since that, from the Department to yourself, I have by his direction prohibited the giving or accepting of a challenge. His objections are as well those of principle as of policy, owing to the great inequality of the Naval force of the Enemy and our own, a just want of confidence in the candour of the Enemy, demonstrated in the facts ascertained in the case of the *Shannon & Chesapeake*, compared with the insidious and deceptive challenge which was intended for, but which did not reach Captain Lawrence, and to the superfluous exposure of men whose prowess and skill is at the highest point of exaltation and acknowledged by the wholesome precaution of a mortified, though ostentatious & arrogant foe.<sup>1</sup>

These objections however you were not to know, having never been instructed upon that point.

If an exception to the general principle was at all admissible, it was in your case. The rigorous blockade you had sustained, seemed to sanction more than ordinary risk, and the oblique manner in which the intimation was given was more exciting than an open manly invitation. you have however placed your adversary on unenviable ground and whatever may be the sentiments of the President on the abstract principle he views with high satisfaction the noble spirit which our gallant officers on this, as on all other occasions have displayed

You will please however, Sir, to consider the interdiction of the practice by direction of the President as obligatory in future. I have constantly viewed with anxious solicitude the harassing and mortifying detention which you have experienced and which the advance of the season renders almost hopeless. I wish to afford some alleviation to yourself, as well as to avail the nation of the services of a body of men so valuable. I therefore wish to obtain from you as soon as possible information on the following points.

Is it practicable, by lightening the *United States* and *Macedonian* as much as possible, to place them at the head of navigation in safety from the Enemy without their crews to defend them.

If in the affirmative it is my purpose to transfer yourself, officers & crew to the U.S.S. *President* at New York (presuming that it will be acceptable to you) where her repairs will be speedily made, and from whence you can get to sea without delay.

I contemplate another arrangement for Captain Jones and his crew. You will however confine this intimation to yourself and captain Jones, untill ready for execution.<sup>2</sup>

The *U States* and *Macedonian* dismantled and in security,<sup>3</sup> the Enemy would doubtless raise the blockade when the *Hornet* would succeed either in getting to Sea, or to New York. I am respectfully Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones,

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 240–241 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. On the challenge issued by Captain Philip B.V. Broke, R.N., to Captain James Lawrence and the battle between H.M.S. *Shannon* and U.S. frigate *Chesapeake*, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 126–34.

2. Decatur replied on 20 March that the squadron's pilots had determined that the frigates could be moved 13 miles up the Thames River to the "head of navigation," where they would be safe from any incursion except a raid by small boats. To protect against that threat, he suggested that Jones assign six gunboats to guard the ships. DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 54 (M125, Roll No. 35).

3. In a letter of 6 April, Jones, after confirming his order that *United States* and *Macedonian* be dismantled and laid up "in ordinary," ordered Captain Jacob Jones and his crew transferred to the naval base at Sacketts Harbor. DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 265–66 (M149, Roll No. 11).

## The Diplomatic Mission of *John Adams*

*From the war's commencement, James Madison had signaled his readiness to reach a negotiated settlement with Great Britain. Despite this disposition, the President's quest for peace remained elusive, as American efforts to reach an accommodation with Britain proved unavailing through 1813. The diplomatic stalemate ended in early January 1814, with the receipt of a British proposal for direct peace talks between the two combatants. Madison promptly accepted the offer, appointing Henry Clay and Jonathan Russell to what would become a five-member U.S. peace commission.<sup>1</sup>*

*On 23 February, Clay and Russell sailed from New York in the U.S. frigate John Adams for Göteborg, Sweden, one of the proposed sites for the peace negotiations. The American warship arrived off the Göteborg Peninsula on 11 April, after a six-week passage. A shift in the location of the peace talks from Göteborg to Ghent, Belgium, required John Adams to perform one final service for the U.S. peace commission before returning home. In mid-June, the frigate carried Russell and his fellow minister, John Q. Adams, to the Dutch port of Den Helder, whence they travelled overland to Ghent. Its mission completed, John Adams departed European waters on 28 August, arriving off Sandy Hook, New Jersey, on 5 October, bringing to a close its seven and a half month-long voyage.*

1. *John Q. Adams, James A. Bayard, and Albert Gallatin comprised the remaining members of the American delegation. For additional reading on the peace negotiations, see Perkins, Castlereagh and Adams, chapters 4–7, and, Hickey, War of 1812, chapter 11.*

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL EVANS

Captain Samuel Evans  
 Commandant of the U. States  
 Navy yard New York.

Navy Department  
 Jany. 21st. 1814

Sir,

The U. States Ship *John Adams* is destined to convey the Ministers of the U. States appointed to treat with those of Great Britain, to Gottenburg, and as that ship was ordered to be kept in perfect readiness for the cruize, I presume she will be found in perfect readiness for the object.

It is not yet determined, whether her entire armament will be deemed expedient as a Cartel, but if the armament sent from that ship to Albany had been replaced by that which was ordered to be immediately prepared it is probable that it may remain.— The Water, Provisions and stores I presume are all stowed for a full Complement of Men. This will not be necessary,

The water will remain, but you will reland so much of the provisions and stores, as will reduce the quantity on board to eight Months Supply for one hundred Officers and Men. You will be pleased therefore, to have the ship prepared as soon as possible, to receive the Ministers, and report to me by return Mail the state and condition of the ship the officers and men attached, and the day she will be prepared to depart.

You will be informed in a day or two of the Officer who is to Command the *Adams*, and of the Manner in which her crew is to be completed. I am respectfully your obedt. Servt.

W. Jones—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 197–98 (M149, Roll No. 11).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
 MASTER COMMANDANT SAMUEL ANGUS

Samuel Angus Esquire<sup>1</sup>  
 Master Commandant  
 U.S. Navy. Present.—

Navy Department  
 Jany. 26th. 1814.

Sir/

You will immediately proceed to New York, and take the Command of the U.S. Ship. *John Adams*, reporting yourself to Captain Samuel Evans for that purpose. The *John Adams* is destined to convey to Gottenburg the Ministers of the U.S. appointed to treat with those of Great Britain at that place, She will therefore proceed as a flag of truce.

I enclose for your Government a Copy of my letter to Captain Evans, directing the preparatory steps to be taken for the equipment of the *John Adams*; And calculate with Confidence, that She will be ready to depart the Moment the

Ministers are prepared to go on board, which will be at furthest on the 2nd. of the ensuing Month.

I expect to receive by tomorrows Mail the report of Captain Evans upon the state of the Ship, and the officers and crew. The officers and crew will be ordered as soon as that report shall be received, they will amount to 75.

Your final instructions will be prepared in due time, and I have now only to urge your best exertions to hasten the preparations for your departure, So that not a Moment May be lost, when the Ministers are prepared. Immediately on your taking Command you will report to me the state and condition of the Ship.— I am respectfully your Obedt. Servt.

W. Jones

NB This Letter being enterd wrongly }  
in this Book, the Press Copy is }  
filed with Officers Letters.— }

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 1, p. 554 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Angus was a 14-year veteran of the naval service. For additional documents on his 1812 career, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 1, pp. 371–74, and, Vol. 2, pp. 199–204, 438–39. See also, Langley, “Tragic Career of Captain Angus.”

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL EVANS

Captain Samuel Evans  
Commandant U.S. Navy  
Yard. New York

Navy Department  
Feby. 4th. 1813 [*1814*]<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

Enclosed is a list of the Officers and crew to be attached to the U.S. Ship *John Adams*, under the command of Captain Angus, destined to proceed as a flag of truce to convey the Ministers of the United States, and their suite to Gottenburg. another Lieutenant will be ordered in due time, and the complement of Midshipmen are ordered, and will be with you on Wednesday next at farthest, The residue of the warrant and petty Officers, seamen and ordinary seamen, you will either draw from the flotilla or recruit if Practicable in due time, as you may deem most expedient, and you have herewith enclosed an order to the commanding officer of the flotilla to that effect. The marine guard is ordered, but you will have to engage the drum and fife, and it is desireable that the music should be good, The ship must be ready to weigh at a moment's warning on thursday morning next. If the anchor intended for the ship should not arrive in time, you must take that which is in the Navy though too heavy by ten Cwt.

Captain Angus informs me that some of the elevating screws &c for the Guns, would require some days to finish, This however must not detain the ship an hour after the ministers are ready, and by seeing the Hon. Mr. Clay after his arrival at new york, he will inform you at what time Mr. Russell is to join him,

and when they will be ready to go on board. I shall forward in a day or two the final instructions of Captain Angus, If Lieutenant Thompson's state of health will permit him to perform the voyage, you will order him to join the *John Adams*, as I wish a first Lieutenant of more experience than Lieutenant Yarnell, (though he is an excellent Officer) and know not whether I can command one in time.— I am very respectfully your Obedt. Servt.

W. Jones

List of the Officers & Crew to be attached to the United States Ship *John Adams*.—

1. Commander	1. Boatswains. Mate
3. Lieutenants	2. qu. Masters
1. Master	1. Clerk
1. purser	50. Seamen
1. Surgeon	<u>15.</u> Ordy. do
1. Chaplain	95
1. Master's Mate	1. Lieutenant Marines
10. Midshipmen	1. Sergeant— do.
1. Gunner	1. Corporal
1. Boatswain	10. privates
1. Carpenter	1. drum
1. Sail Maker	1. fife
1. Cook	
1. Steward	<u>110. Total</u>
1. Gunner's Mate	

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 208–9 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. The copyist misdated this letter as 1813.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT SAMUEL ANGUS

Samuel Angus Esqr.  
Commanding the U.S. Ship,  
*John Adams*, New York.

Navy Department  
Feb'y. 9th. 1814.

Sir,

The United States' Corvette, *John Adams*, under your command, having been selected to proceed as a Flag of truce to Gottenburg, with Henry Clay and Jonathan Russel Esquires, two of the Envoys of the United States, appointed to enter upon negotiations for peace with the Envoys of Great Britain, at that place, you will receive on board, those Gentlemen, with their suite and attendants, and accommodate them, in the most comfortable and convenient manner, which the apartments and means, under your command, will enable you to do.

Your own urbanity will secure to these distinguish[ed] Gentlemen, every mark of personal respect and attention and your intelligence and duty will point out those public marks of distinction, which the national character and dignity owe to the representatives of the Nation, in foreign countries.

You will take especial care, strictly to observe the conduct and regulations, which govern Flags of truce; displaying, on all proper occasions, the Flag, which distinguishes that character, and the authority for assuming it, which the Ministers themselves possess, in the Passport from the British Admiral, Commanding the blockading Squadron off New London;<sup>1</sup> and you will make no other use of your armament, than that which may be necessary for Signals and Salutes. As you proceed to Gottenburg<sup>2</sup> under the sanction of a Flag of truce, so you will return from thence to New York, and if any additional sancti[on] shall be deemed necessary for the voyage home, the Minis[ters] of the United States will obtain such from the British Envoys at Gottenburg, or from the British Commanding Naval Officer near that place.

You will remain at Gottenburg, not exceeding two Mon[ths] to receive such despatches as the Ministers of the United States may desire to forward to their Government, with which, you will return to the Port of New York, with the utmost despatch.

As the *John Adams* is now in the most perfect order, and abundantly furnished with provisions and Stores of every kind, for eight months; it is presumed you will require no other expenditure at Gottenburg, than that which may be incidental to your stay at that place, and you will, therefore, avoid all that is superfluous. For that which may be actually required, you will obtain the necessary funds, either by the sale of a Bill on this Department, or on Messrs. Alexander Glennie Son and Co. of London, at the most favorable rate of exchange, giving the preference to the former mode. You have, herewith, enclosed, triplicate letters of credit on Alexr. Glennie Son & Co.,<sup>3</sup> which, should you draw on them, you will forward by separate safe opportunities.

As it is exceedingly desirable that the Envoys should meet at Gottenburg, with the least possible delay, you will proceed the moment they announce their readiness to depart, and render the passage as short as possible. I am, respectfully, your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 97–99 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. On 25 January 1814, Rear Admiral George Cockburn signed a passport for the American commissioners, copies of which may be found in Angus to Jones, 15 February 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 54, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5), and, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fol. 228.

2. Modern-day Göteborg or Gothenburg, Sweden.

3. See Jones to Alexander Glennie, Son, and Company, 10 February 1814, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 107 (M209, Roll No. 4).

MASTER COMMANDANT SAMUEL ANGUS TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

US Ship *John=Adams*  
N=york Feby. 23d. 1814

Sir,

It is with pleasure I inform you of the Ministers having embark'd to=day at 2 P.M. off the North=Battery (New=York), for the purpose of Sailing the first fair wind.— The wind is now at South=East with the prospect of remaining so for a day or two.— We cou'd only get Forty Seamen to volunteer from the Gun=Boats;<sup>1</sup> We however shall be able to make out with them.— We have twenty ordinary Seamen and Boys; and a Sergeants guard of Marines (say 12).— The Total number of Officers & Men belonging to the Ship amount to 113.— With the highest respect I have the honor to be your Obedt. Servt.

Sam<sup>l</sup>. Angus

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 64 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. On the difficulties of securing volunteers from the gunboats stationed at New York, see Evans to Jones, 8 February 1814, pp. 159–62.

NEWS ACCOUNT OF THE DEPARTURE OF *JOHN ADAMS*

NEW-YORK, Feb. 24. [1814]

Yesterday morning, the corvette *JOHN ADAMS*, Capt Angus, dropped round into the North River, where she anchored to wait for the embarkation of Messrs. CLAY & RUSSELL, our newly appointed Ministers, to repair to Gottenburg, to negotiate for Peace with commissioners that may be appointed on the part of G. Britain.— At a quarter past three o'clock in the afternoon, the above gentlemen, with their suits, took their departure from the Battery, and proceeded to the *Adams*, under a salute from her guns. As soon as they reached the deck of the corvette, her anchor was weighed, and she dropped down between Castle Williams and Fort Dearborn, where, from the lightness of the breeze, she again came to anchor, and will, we understand, remain there until the wind may favor her final departure.

Printed, *Federal Republican* (Georgetown, DC), 2 March 1814.

MASTER COMMANDANT SAMUEL ANGUS TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

US. Corvette *John=Adams*  
Wargo<sup>1</sup> Harbour April 14- 1814

Sir,

I address'd myself to you on the 23d of Feby, the day on which the Ministers embark'd at New=york; and wou'd have done myself the honor of writing to you again, on the Ships departure from Sandy=Hook (the 26h. Feb'y, Sea=day); but no Pilot=Boat appearing for the Pilot, & night approaching, I determin'd (as there was a fine breeze at W.N.W) not to wait.— On the 18t. March (Sea=acco.—) we made the Islds. of Bara<sup>2</sup> & Rona,<sup>3</sup> bearing W by S, off Fair=Island,<sup>4</sup> distant 142 Mls.; On the 20 March, pass'd thro' Fair Island passage, with light breezes from W.S.W.— The fore part of our passage, was extremely tempestuous; the Ship scudding under her Fore=Sail, & going some part of the time 11 Knots, labouring much, & shipping considerable water.— From the 21st. 'till the 31t. Mar.; we were beating about in the North=Sea; the prevailing Wind (being a=head) from the Southwd. & Eastwd.— On the 31st., finding we cou'd gain nothing by remaining out, the current also being against us, their Excellencies Messrs. Clay & Russell expressing a strong desire to be at Anchor in any port of Norway [*to*] avoid the unpleasant weather; (in addition to which, our men were greatly worried, and many sick from the constan[t] succession of bad weather;) I therefore put into the Port [of] Rasvaag in the Island of Hittero;<sup>5</sup> being about 35 mil[es] to the Northwd. & Westwd. of the Naze=of=Norway.— On t[he] 9th. of April a light breeze springing up from the N.W; got [un]derway, & stood up the Skagarac;<sup>6</sup> and on the 11t. April, a[r]riv'd at the Island of Wargo; eight miles S. West of Got[hen]burg; being the Second vessel that had Succeeded in getting [*up*] (the one before us being a small Galliot) We having warp'd thro' the Ice in a fog; leaving a large English Convoy out=side which did not then succeed in getting in.— The p[as]sage warp'd thro', had been cut some few day's before (for an English Packet bound out,) having cost upwards [of] £700 Sterling.— The Passage between this & Gothenburg is closed; The Ministers this day, left the Ship, and pa[ssed] over the Ice in Slead's for that City.— I have the honor to remain with the highest respect Your Obedt .Servt.—

Sam<sup>l</sup>. Angus

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 106 (M147, Roll No. 5). Angus enclosed a variant copy of this letter in his correspondence of 8 October to Secretary Jones. See Angus to Jones, 8 October 1814, *ibid.*, Vol. 2, No. 62, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Vrångö Isand, Sweden.

2. Barra Island, a part of the Outer Hebrides.

3. North Rona, a small Scottish island lying between the Outer Hebrides and Faeroe Islands.

4. The Faeroe or Faroe Islands, located some 540 miles northwest of the Shetland Islands.

5. Modern-day Hidra Island.

6. The Skagerrak or Skagerak.



## HENRY CLAY TO MASTER COMMANDANT SAMUEL ANGUS

(Copy)

Gottenberg 31t. May 1814—

Dear Sir,

The Seat of the negotiation between America & Great=Britain, being transferr'd from this place to Ghent; you will be good enough to have your Vessel in readiness, to carry Messrs. Adams & Russell to such port, as they may direct, convenient to that place. I presume it will be Antwerp or Ostend— I shall proceed myself by land.—

Messrs. Adams and Russell, will, I imagine be here in Seven or eight days; and will be ready immediately, to proceed to Sea.— You will of course receive their further directions.— I remain Yrs. &c.

(Sign'd) H. Clay

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 57, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5). Enclosed in Angus to Jones, 5 October 1814, below.

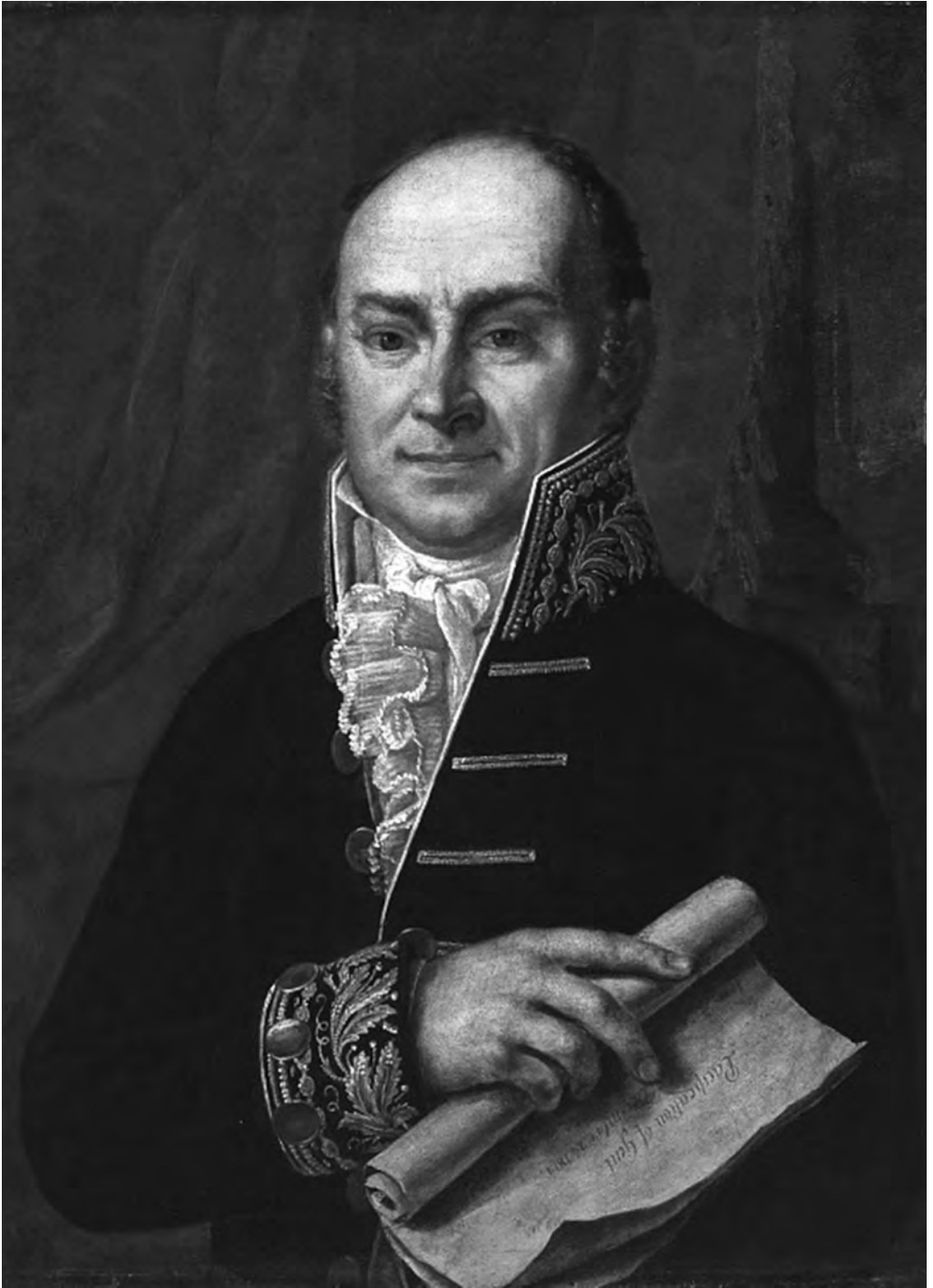
## DIARY OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

[Extract]

Göteborg, Sweden<sup>1</sup>

11.V..30. [11 June, 5:30 a.m.] Captain Angus came up this morning from the Ship, and informed us that the wind was fair, and he was ready to sail; Mr Russell and myself concluded to go on board this day. . . . About six, this afternoon we came in the ship's Boat, on board the United States Corvette *John Adams*, Samuel Angus Commander. She was lying about three marine Miles in the harbour below the Town. When we came on board we were received with the Marines under Arms, and a salute of 13 Guns was fired. . . . Mr. Hall came on board with us, and we found Mr. Strong here— Also Captain Barron of our Navy, who arrived this Morning from Copenhagen, with the wish to embark in the ship for the United States.<sup>2</sup> He asked my opinion whether he could take passage in her, without a departure from the neutrality of a Car-tel— I thought he could not, and had expressed the same opinion, in relation to fifty or sixty American Seamen, who are here waiting for an opportunity of returning to America— Mr Russell being of the same opinion, none of them were admitted. . . . Captain Barron, Mr. Strong and Mr. Hall left us to return on shore about ten this Evening, immediately after Mr. Connell came on board. . . . Captain Angus concluded to weigh anchor at 3 O'clock to-morrow Morning.

U.S.S. *John Adams*, at sea



*John Quincy Adams*

12.IV. [12 June, 4 a.m.] About four this morning, we sailed from the anchoring place in the harbour of Gothenburg, with a fair, but very light breeze, and fine weather— We passed Wingo-Castle in two or three hours, and soon after were entirely out of the harbour, and on the Skager-Rack.<sup>3</sup> The Skaw Light-house was in sight this afternoon,<sup>4</sup> but in the interval our breeze had died away to a calm, and was succeeded by another so scanty that we were obliged to make a Tack of four or five hours to clear the Skaw Point— We had Land in sight the whole day. . . .

U.S.S. *John Adams*, at sea

13.IV..30. [13 June, 4:30 a.m.] The wind last night, and the whole of this day was fair, but so small that our progress was slow; we came down the sleeve between Norway and Jutland; all the way down in sight of the Jutland Coast. This Evening we had entered on the North-Sea, and about midnight the wind came round, almost directly a-head— The weather has continued fine, and we have scarcely felt more motion than if we were on Shore. . . . In February, March, and April, 1778, I crossed the Atlantic in an American frigate.<sup>5</sup> From that time until now I have never again been in the same situation, except in the spring of 1779, when I was for some weeks on board the *Alliance*. I now find the recurrence of many incidents which revived recollections that have been during that long interval buried in oblivion. The *John Adams* though only a Corvette, or Sloop of War, is nearly of the same size as was the *Boston* Frigate. She carries twenty-two Guns, but is now only half-armed, having but twelve 42 pound Carronades Latitude 57..38]

U.S.S. *John Adams*, at sea

14.IV..30. [14 June, 4:30 a.m.] A Fresh breeze, almost a gale, blowing the whole day, and nearly a-head— The weather dull, and cold— The ship pitching in a manner far from comfortable— Part of our Passengers were Sea-sick, and I was myself not altogether well.— Wrote however in my Journal to redeem the time. . . . We saw in the course of the day several Vessels, but spoke with none— Latitude 55..20. As we proceed Southward The nights very perceptibly lengthen; and we have already two or three hours of darkness in the twenty-four.

U.S.S. *John Adams*, at sea

15.V.30. [15 June, 5:30 a.m.] Our wind continued nearly a-head the whole of this day, but with a light breeze, and not much motion of the Ship. In the afternoon we had the prospect of a Calm, and a thick fog at a distance nearly round the horizon, which assumed very much the appearance of Land— Towards Evening we had a short Calm, and the wind shifted three or four times, flattering us with a favourable change, but finally settling against us, as it has been the preceding day— I was unwell with a Cold, and sore throat. Lat: 54..38

U.S.S. *John Adams*, at sea

16.V. [16 June, 5:00 a.m.] The Night was almost calm; but as the morning came a fresh breeze arose, which before 8 O'Clock increased to a strong gale; with appearances of the sky so threatening that the ship was put under close reefed topsails, and Captain Angus was somewhat alarmed— He told me we had a dreary prospect before us, and that he wished we were in. The Captain's health is yet infirm, and his nerves are unusually irritable—<sup>6</sup> The gale was neither violent nor long, though it blew hard enough to spring the mizen-top sail yard— It soon moderated, and the sky cleared away, and shewed us the face of the Sun; about 9 O'Clock the Land was made, which proved to be the island of Schelling.<sup>7</sup>

16 [16 June]—about 30 miles North of Texel— There was a heavy swell this whole day, and the wind was so directly a head, that after a tack of four hours, and a second of two or three, we found ourselves at 6 in the afternoon a mile of two to the Leeward of the place where we had seen the land this morning— We spoke with a small Dutch Galliot, and were told that the land was Schelling— Towards Night the wind freshened again, and started one or two points in our favour.— We saw a Frigate this morning, but she did not approach us.

U.S.S. *John Adams*, The Texel

17.IV.45.[17 June 4:45 a.m.] We were beating to windward from seven O'Clock last Evening, untill 4 this morning; when we tacked again with a breeze which carried us between 9 and 10 knots an hour, upon a wind. About 8 this Morning the Land again appeared, and this time it was the Texel— A gun was fired for a Pilot, and at 10 there were two on board the ship. We were obliged to lay to, and wait for the high Tide, about four hours.— On the Bar at the entrance of the Roads we had only 3¼ fathoms of Water; and the Ship draws 18 feet— The Captain thought her keel struck the ground as we passed— We anchored in 16 fathom of water at 3 in the afternoon. . . .

*The Diaries of John Quincy Adams: A Digital Collection*. Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 2009; <http://www.masshist.org/jqadiaries>; Diary 29, 1 August 1813–31 May 1816, pp. 112–14. For another printed version of this diary, see Adams, *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, Vol. 2, pp. 643–45.

1. Place line is derived from information contained in individual diary entries.

2. For more on Captain James Barron and why he was in Europe, see Barron to Jones, 22 July 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 190–91.

3. The Skagerrak.

4. That is, Skag or Skagen Lighthouse, Denmark.

5. Continental Navy frigate *Boston*. Adams sailed in *Boston* when he accompanied his father, John Adams, to France in 1778.

6. Angus experienced temporary bouts of insanity after *John Adams* arrived in European waters, see Langley, "Tragic Career of Captain Angus," pp. 29–30.

7. That is Terschelling or Ter-Schelling Island, one of the Dutch West Frisian Islands.

MASTER COMMANDANT SAMUEL ANGUS TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U S. Corvette *John=Adams*  
Sandy Hook  
New=york<sup>1</sup> Oct 5th. 1814

Sir,

I have the satisfaction to acquaint you, with the arrival of the U States Corvette *John=Adams*, at this place; after a passage of 36 days from the Texel; with Mr. Dallas<sup>2</sup> on board, bearing Government Dispatches from our Commissioners at Ghent.—

The detention of the *John=Adams*, arose from the meeting of the Envoy's being transferr'd from Gottenburg, to Ghent; and I enclose copies of letters receiv'd from Mr. Clay relative to this Subject.—<sup>3</sup>

At Amsterdam I was induced to enter for the U States Service 14 Seamen; Americans, who were in a very destitute situation; I hope that this measure, may meet with your approbation.—

The *John=Adams* Sailed from the Texel, 3 days after her passport was receiv'd from England; being on the first occasion of a fair wind— I have the honor to be With the highest respect your Obedt. Servt.

Sam<sup>l</sup> Angus

The only opportunity which occur'd (during ou[r] absence) direct for America; was a Sweedish vessel fr[om] Gottenburg for Boston, but as I am apprehensive tha[t] that vessel met with interruption I enclose a Copy therefore, of the letter which I had the honor to address you by her—<sup>4</sup> very Respectfully

Sam<sup>l</sup> Angus

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 57 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. New Jersey.

2. George M. Dallas, who served as secretary to peace commissioner Albert Gallatin.

3. The first of these enclosures, Clay to Angus, 5 May 1814, is printed above. The second enclosure, Clay to Angus, 20 August 1814, states that a letter was sent to Secretary of State Monroe explaining why *John Adams* was detained so long on its mission. For this explanatory note, see Clay et al. to Monroe, 18 August 1814, DNA, RG59, Records of Negotiations Connected with the Treaty of Ghent, 1813–15 (M36, Roll No. 1).

4. Circumstances prevented Angus from forwarding this letter to the Navy Department until the 8th of October. See Angus to Jones, 8 October 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 62, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5).

## The 1814 Cruises of U.S. Sloop of War *Peacock*

*One year transpired between the March 1813 Congressional legislation authorizing the construction of six sloops of war and Peacock's maiden voyage<sup>1</sup>. Commerce raiding highlighted Secretary Jones's naval strategy in 1814. After months spent outfitting and*

conducting sea trials, Master Commandant Lewis Warrington's new cruiser sailed from New York on 12 March and headed directly to St. Marys, Georgia, to drop off supplies intended for the naval station there. Peacock then cruised southward hoping to intercept British fleets from Jamaica and other West Indian islands, but only chased a few enemy vessels until 29 April, when it sighted a small convoy escorted by the British warship *Epervier*. In a short engagement, Peacock defeated *Epervier* and forced its surrender. Successfully returning Peacock to Georgia with the British brig-sloop as a prize, Warrington quickly refitted his ship and left on another cruise.

In its second cruise from June to October, Peacock logged thousands of miles but encountered only a handful of British merchantmen, which were of limited value. The American sloop of war's captures during its two 1814 cruises barely influenced British shipping and insurance rates and did not deflect Royal Navy assets from other pursuits. Factors such as the blockade, manpower shortages, and procurement problems kept much of the American fleet sidelined. Jones's expectations for his commerce raiders were high at the beginning of 1814. Peacock's cruises, despite the capture of *Epervier*, were more of an annoyance than a threat to the British.<sup>2</sup>

1. For background on preparing Peacock for sea, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 225–29 and 259–60.

2. For an assessment of Warrington's 1814 cruises, see *McCranie*, *Utmost Gallantry*, pp. 238–41.

### MASTER COMMANDANT LEWIS WARRINGTON TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S. Sloop *Peacock* New-York Jan'y 24th 1813 [1814]

Sir

Having for some time been anxious to try the *Peacock's* sailing, I last Saturday availed myself of a strong breeze, and got under way, with a fast sailing privateer Schooner, which had agreed to sail with us, and I am much pleased, that the report which I have to make of the Sloop's movements is ~~much~~ greatly in her favor<sup>1</sup>

She works quick and close, is very weatherly, stands stiff on her legs,<sup>2</sup> and moves fast through the water— In turning to windward in this narrow channel, the Schooner necessarily had the advantage, and soon gained our wake; but we soon quickly discovered, that we invariably forereached her when on the same tack, and beat her also with ease going large— We b[e]at to the tail of the west bank, and returned, where we anchored sometime before the Schooner— I found that our Miz: T. and T. G. Sails were of no use, as we could not by any means make them set on a wind— The Main T. Sail overlaps them so much, that I fear all the rake we can give the Miz: Mast, will not remove the curl—<sup>3</sup>

If it should meet your approbation I think a pole Miz: T. Mast, on which we could occasionally carry a flying T. G. Sail, would be found more serviceable, would be free from the inconvenience of a fidded mast T. G. Mast, and might be obtained with no other expense, than the mere cost of the rough spar, as our own Carpenters could make it—

Our late Master (Parker)<sup>4</sup> has I believe absconded. About fifteen days past, he obtained my permission, to go in quest of some friends, who he observed



*Lewis Warrington*

were necessary to the clearing up of his character— Previous to his departure, I took (for safe keeping) from him, his Warrant and all papers received from the Department; and have heard nothing of him since—

Mr. Randlet, the person of whom I made mention in my last, is very anxious to get the vacancy on board the *Peacock* and as several respectable Merchants here have given him letters and also spoken to me personally in his behalf, I am induced to mention it a second time—I think he would answer— If not there is a Mr Rodgers in the flotilla here, who I think would, and of his character and standing, you may be informed by Captn. Lewis, who is now at Washington—<sup>5</sup> Our crew is complete, and when the guns are completely equipped, which will be in six or seven days, we shall be ready for a start— I am particularly anxious to have the men well organised before sailing and for that purpose, wish after receiving orders to have a week for it respectfully your Obdt Servt.-

L. Warrington

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 29 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Some four months earlier, Jones had described *Peacock* as “a noble and elegant Vessel 118 feet Gun Deck & 32 feet Beam, capable of carrying 20, 42 Pd Carronades & 2 long 24s.—Her form combines all the properties of fleetness stability and accommodation.” Jones to Isaac Chauncey, 19 September 1813, DNA, RG45, CLS, p. 70 (T829, Roll No. 453).

2. By “stiff,” Warrington meant *Peacock* could carry a significant amount of sail without overly inclining to one side.

3. By this, Warrington meant that the main topsail cast such a wind shadow on the mizzen top and topgallant sails that he could never shed the luff from those sails.

4. James Parker was warranted a sailing master and ordered to *Peacock* on 17 August 1813. A controversy surrounding his character resulted in his being struck from the Navy’s rolls. Jones to Warrington, 27 January 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 202 (M149, Roll No. 11).

5. There is no one by the name Randlet in the Navy Register. James Rogers, who held a sailing master’s warrant since 6 April 1810, was ordered to the New York Flotilla on 7 July 1813. On 9 March 1814, Sailing Master John Percival, whose warrant dated from 6 March 1809, was entered on *Peacock’s* muster roll. Percival was appointed an acting lieutenant on 18 November 1814 and promoted to lieutenant on 9 December 1814. He replaced James Parker.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT LEWIS WARRINGTON

Lewis Warrington Esqr.  
Commanding the U.S. Ship *Peacock*, New York

Navy Department  
Feby. 26th. 1814.

Sir,

I have directed Mr. Bullus, the Navy Agent, to procure, immediately, and put on board the *Peacock*, certain articles, the list of which he will shew to you, and which you will deliver as hereafter directed.

As soon after the receipt of this letter as the winds and weather, and your preparation for departure, will admit, you will proceed to sea, and direct your course for the Mouth of St. Mary’s River, on the coast of Georgia; off which place, you will heave to, and, if the weather is favorable, send your boat into the town of St. Mary’s, and inform Commodore H. G. Campbell, who commands on that



station, of the articles, which I have directed Mr. Bullus to ship, and which are to be delivered to him.

My letters will inform Com. Campbell of your intention, and he will, probably, have a look out boat at the Bar, to answer your Signal, and receive the articles for that station.

So soon as this duty is discharged, you will run along the coast of Florida as far as Cape Carnaveral; and between that and the N.W. reef of Walkers Key,<sup>1</sup> on the little Bahama Bank, you will cruize until the middle of April, regulating your stay, however, by the prospect of success, and the information you may receive relative to the Jamaica fleets, or other British trade. In this situation you will have an opportunity of seeing all that passes from the Florida Channel to the Ocean; and should you be fortunate in making captures, you can get them into St. Mary's, Savannah, or the ports in North Carolina, in a few days, and recover your crew as you return along the coast. Having remained in this situation as long as your success and prospects shall warrant, you will return, along the coast, to the mouth of the St. Mary's, and obtain information and refreshment from Commodore Campbell. Here, also, you will land your prisoners; and this consideration alone, is of vast importance, in order that we may obtain the means of a prompt exchange.

The information you may obtain, will decide, whether the force of the enemy off Charleston Bar, shall be such as to warrant your coming in contact, with a reasonable prospect of a successful issue.

This point being settled, the season will have sufficiently advanced, to proceed into a higher latitude; and you will shape your course, in the usual track of the Jamaica fleets, passing about a degree to the South of the tail of the Grand Bank, where it may be well to cruise ten or twelve days; and thence to a point, about 30 leagues N.W. of Corvo and Flores, cruising, at this point, a fortnight or three weeks, and thence into the Mouth of the Irish Channel, in order to intercept the homeward and outward bound fleets, either before they have joined, or after they have parted convoy, and, in particular, to annoy and destroy the coasting trade. This will be the scene for vigilant enterprize. The success of the *Argus*, on this ground, in the course of but a few days, was astonishingly great; and had the gallant spirit of Captain Allen,<sup>2</sup> but submitted to the restraint of his excellent judgment, he would have rendered more essential service to his Country, perhaps, than any single vessel ever did. What may be done, on this ground, must be done quickly; for the enemy will soon take the alarm, and a change of station will be necessary. It will, then, be well to run round the North of Ireland, through the Fair Island passage, to the Naze of Norway, and make a short cruise, near that point, in order to intercept the Baltic trade. The many fine ports of Norway will be open to you and your prizes; and you can get water, if no other refreshments. The prizes you may make, it is to be hoped and expected, may replenish your provisions and stores, so as to enable you to continue your cruise, until November or December next; when you will endeavour to enter New York or Delaware Bay.

After you leave the coast of Norway, you will run for the Shetland Isles, where, in point of time, you may probably intercept the Archangel fleet returning home. From this point you will return, homeward, in such track, as in your judgment, may promise the greatest success.

After you leave the Southern Coast of America, and launch into the Ocean, the chances of getting prizes into port are so precarious, as not to warrant the attempt, unless in some very peculiar cases. You will, therefore, Sir, unless in some extraordinary cases, that shall clearly warrant an exception, destroy all you capture; and by thus retaining your crew, and continuing your cruise, your services may be enhanced tenfold. The service you may render your country, will be estimated by the extent of the injury you may inflict upon its implacable enemy; and this will be in the annoyance and destruction of his commerce; from which, no other object should be suffered to divert your attention for a moment. With this view, as well as from the rational and obvious policy opposed to the practice, I have it in command from the President, strictly to prohibit the giving or accepting, directly or indirectly, a challenge to combat Ship to Ship.

You will direct your Purser,<sup>3</sup> before sailing, to transmit, to this Department, a correct Muster Roll of the crew of the *Peacock*. You are at liberty to select a Sailing Master,<sup>4</sup> and a blank Warrant will be forwarded to you, tomorrow, for that purpose.

With entire confidence in your valour, skill, and patriotism, and wishing you a prosperous and honorable cruise; I am, very respectfully, Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 102–5 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. Walker's Cay, northern Bahamas.

2. On the cruise of the U.S. brig *Argus*, Master Commandant William H. Allen, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 217–24.

3. Herman Thorn held his purser's commission from 24 July 1813. He served as *Peacock's* purser from 4 September 1813 to December 1814. Benjamin F. Bourne (purser's commission dated 26 March 1814) replaced Thorn on 16 December 1814.

4. Sailing Master John Percival.

### JOURNAL OF MIDSHIPMAN WILLIAM T. RODGERS<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

1814—

[*March*]

Saturday March 12th. having previously recd. orders we weighed anchor & stood out to sea—. in the evening without seeing any of the Blockading squadron, but next Morning was chased by three sail apparently the ships of the enemy—but soon run them out of sight

March 16th. in a storm shipt a sea over the stern which stove the Jolly Boat to peices—

29th. made Amelia Island—

[*April*]

1st. April discharged some Powder, canvas & copper—taken aboard at NY for the use of the Naval station at St Marys on Board US. Gun Boat *No 165*.

- Commanded by, SM. Dow[*se.*]<sup>2</sup> From Amelia Island We ran down the coast of Florida, the Land being daily in sight to Cape Canaveral,
- 17th. —made Land—among the Islands forming the Bahama Keys,— “Memory Rock”
- 18th. came to anchor off the “Great Isaac”<sup>3</sup> at 11 AM— & on the
- 19th. at 3 AM weighed anchor & stood to the Nd. & Wd.—
- 20th. Boarded Russian ship “*Joaquim*” from Toppenburg<sup>4</sup> to St. Marys—
- 25th. saw a sail to windward gave chase but the wind being light did not near the chase much— at ½ past 4 manned our boats with about 60 armed men & sent them to Board the chase ½ past 5 chase Bore up for us— 5¾ cleared ship for action & beat to quarters— At 6 the Boats boarded the chase—she proved to be a Spanish Government Packet from Havanna to Cadiz— same day at 8 AM boarded Spanish Ship from Havanna to Cadiz—
- 27th. boarded Spanish Ship—from Havanna to Cadiz—
- 28th. at 6 PM came to anchor in Lat 27°. 17'—in 22 faths—
- 29th. at 5 AM saw a sail on weather beam ½ past 5 AM saw another—got under weigh & stood for them at 6 saw a sail standing to Nd. & Wd gave chase to her, at 8 Made chase out to be a Brig, she bearing down for us— at 25 minutes before 11 the Brig Bearing down for us, hoisted English Colors — shortened sail, beat to quarters, & cleared ship for action, made her out a Man of War— at 5 minutes before 11 commenced the action with starboard Guns within Pistol Shot— at 40 past 11 after a heavy & almost incessant cannonade our opponent struck her colors She proved to be His Brittanic Majestys Sloop of War *Epervier* Richard W Wales Commander of 16. 32 pounders & 2 Eighteens—& one Hundred & 53 Men,<sup>5</sup> the damage we received was our fore Yard severely wounded, nearly cut in two— some few backstays cut away & many shot grape & round through our sails—& but two men slightly wounded The enemy lost his Main top mast, His Four Mast very badly wounded, his Larboard fore rigging cut all away but one shroud—many shot hole between wind & water, three Guns dismounted 12 killed & 13 wounded—<sup>6</sup> Not a shot struck our Hull—! One Hundred & Eighteen thousand Dollars were found on board the prize which was removed to the *Peacock*—Mr. Nicolson 1st Lieut. Mr. Greeves Midshipman Mr. Baldwin Masters Mate<sup>7</sup> & Myself & 12 Men were put on board to carry our prize into a port in the united states after having rigged a spare main top mast— bent some new sails— We continued in company standing toward St. Marys untill
- Saturday April 30th. when in sight of Amelia Island we parted co—the *Peacock* being chased by a Frigate in the *Majestic* & We (*Epervier*) by another,<sup>8</sup> she being to Leeward of us— about 7 same day in the evening the vessel in chase of us being dist about 4 Miles sent her boats to reconnoitre us. but they on hearing that we were prepared to meet them pushed off & left us to make a port—<sup>9</sup>

[*May*]

Sunday 1st. boarded a Spanish Schooner from Savannah bound to St. Augustines who informed us of the USS *Adams* Capt. Morris being at Tybee Light—

Next Morning Monday we came to anchor off Tybee Light near the USS Adams, in the afternoon of next day arrived at Five Fathom Hole near Savannah—  
 May 7th. got the Prize in safety up to the town—  
 May 9th landed the prisoners & the specie taken from the *Epervier*  
 May 11th. joined the *Peacock* then laying at Five Fathom she having arrived in safety the Next day but one after us—  
 May 14th. the citizens of Savannah gave a public Dinner to Captn. Warrington & His officers “in celebration of the Glorious affair of the capture of His Brittanic Majestys Sloop of War *Epervier*” The entertainment was conducted in an elegant style. Harmony & patriotism prevailed throughout— Savannah is a neat little town laid out regularly though not paved. the Inhabitants polite & very hospitable—Exports, Cotton & Rice— The USS Peacock dropped down from Five Fathom Hole on

D, DLC, Journal of William T. Rodgers. The editors have arranged the journal contents to facilitate finding specific dates.

1. William T. Rodgers entered *Peacock* on 20 November 1813 as a newly warranted midshipman and served on that ship throughout the War of 1812.

2. Probably Midshipman Edward W. Dowse whose rank dated from 17 December 1810. See Tucker, *Jeffersonian Gunboat Navy*, p. 200.

3. Both Memory Rock and Great Isaac Cay are in the Bahama Islands group.

4. Possibly Trelleborg, Sweden.

5. H.M.S. *Epervier* was a brig-sloop. Commander Wales reported a crew of 118; Master Commandant Warrington reported 128.

6. In his after-action report, Warrington gave *Epervier's* casualties as 8 killed and 15 wounded.

7. John B. Nicolson (lieutenant, 19 May 1812); Thomas Greeves (midshipman, 9 November 1813); Denizen Baldwin entered *Peacock* as a master's mate in October 1813.

8. The ship *Majestic* (56 guns) pursued *Peacock*; the 18-gun *Morgiana* pursued *Epervier*.

9. The British mistook *Epervier* for an American warship and Commander David Scott of *Morgiana*, assuming his ship to be outgunned, decided to await help. During the night, *Epervier* slipped away under cover of darkness. McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, pp. 205–6.

MASTER COMMANDANT LEWIS WARRINGTON TO  
 NAVY AGENT JOHN BULLUS

*Peacock* off St Mary's March 29th 1814

Dear Agent. You will not let me call you Dr.

I hope you got my note by White—<sup>1</sup> As the Devil would have it, instead of a dark night, it turned out a fine one, after we had left the Hook,<sup>2</sup> and I expected every minute, to see some of Jno: Bull's men— They however were not discovered untill the next morning, when the very course that I had almost convinced myself, would carry us clear of them, (steering to the Sd and Ed, in hopes of leaving them to the Wd) brought us in the midst of a brig a frigate & line of battle ship between the hours of 6 & 9 AM— The brig was the first seen, and chased us for about 20 minutes, The other two were then discovered, about 12 miles off, one on the weather and one on the lee beam, so that we were completely ensnared— They both chased us about 1 hour and then desisted, as I suppose they were fearful of running so far off their station, being then 140 miles to leeward of the Hook.

I can't say positively that this was the English squadron, but I, as well as the Officers have not doubt of it, as it was composed of the same number and description of vessels as their's is— The two sails on the weather and lee beam, were ships, standing to the N<sup>d</sup> when first discovered, under easy sail, but as soon as they made us out, they gave chase to us—

If Brown<sup>3</sup> has sent in his bills, I think you had better enclose them to the dept., which can send them here, under cover to Capt. Campbell<sup>4</sup> for me to sign on my return, which will be in a month at farthest, when I also hope to get a line from you, under cover to that same person— Adieu God bless you

L. Warrington

My respects to Mrs Bullus, Mr Astor and Gen'l Morton,<sup>5</sup> tell the latter I consider myself engaged to dine with him on my return, as I sailed the day before I was to have dined with him

When you see Leggett tell him that we have been at work ever since we came out, repairing his iron work<sup>6</sup>

ALS, NHi, John Bullus Collection, MS 2958.1446.

1. Warrington is probably referring to his 12 March 1814 letter to Bullus in which he announced *Peacock's* departure; asked Bullus to settle a financial obligation; and promised to write him from St. Marys. NHi, John Bullus Collection, MS 2958.1446.

2. Sandy Hook, New Jersey.

3. Presumably shipbuilder Adam or Noah Brown, *Peacock's* builders.

4. Commodore Hugh G. Campbell, commander of the naval station at St. Marys, Georgia.

5. Charlotte J. Bullus; probably John Jacob Astor; General Andrew Morton.

6. Mr. Leggett has not been identified.

MASTER COMMANDANT LEWIS WARRINGTON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S. Sloop *Peacock*. at Sea.  
Lat: 27.47 Long 80.09— 29th. April 1814

Sir.

I have the honour to inform you that we have this morning captured after an action of 42 minutes, His Majesty's Brig *Epervier* rating & mounting 18 thirty two pound carronades with 128 men, of whom 8 were killed and 15 wounded (according to the best information we could obtain) among the latter is her 1st. Lt. who has lost an arm and received a severe Splinter wound on the hip—<sup>1</sup> Not a man in the *Peacock* was killed and only two wounded, neither dangerously so— The fate of the *Epervier* would have been determined in much less time, but for the circumstance of our Fore yard being totally disabled by two round shot in the Starbd quarter from her first broadside, which entirely deprived us of the use of our Fore & fore topsails, and compelled us to keep the Ship large throughout the remainder of the action—<sup>2</sup>



*Peacock vs. Epervier, 29 April 1814*

This with a few T. Mast & Top Gallant Back stays cut away, a few shot through our Sails, is the only injury the *Peacock* has sustained— Not a round shot touched our hull, our masts & spars are as sound as ever— When the enemy struck, he had five feet water in his hold, his main top mast was over the side, his Main Boom shot away, his F. Mast cut nearly in two and tottering, his fore rigging and stays shot away, his Bowsprit badly wounded and 45 shot holes in his hull, 20 of which were within a foot of his water line above and below—<sup>3</sup> By great exertions we got her in sailing order just as dark came on—

In fifteen minutes after the enemy struck, the *Peacock* was ready for another action, in every respect, but her Fore yard, which was sent down, fished and had the fore Sail set again in 45 minutes Such was the spirit and activity of our gallant Crew— The *Epervier* had under her convoy, an English Hermaphrodite Brig, a Russian and a spanish Ship, which all hauled their wind and stood to the E.N.E— I had determined upon pursuing the former, but found that it would not answer to leave our prize in her then crippled state, and the more particularly so, as we found she had in 120,000\$ in specie, which we soon transferred to this sloop—<sup>4</sup> Every Officer, Seaman and Marine did his duty, which is the highest compliment I can pay them— I am respectfully

L. Warrington

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 114 (M147, Roll No. 5). On the address sheet is the following note: “From Lt. Nicolsons report who was counting up the *Eperviers*, there were 11 Killed and 15 wounded L.W.”

1. Lieutenant John Hackett, R.N., lost his arm. Commander Richard W. Wales of *Epervier* listed a lower number of casualties, a smaller crew size, and different armament for *Epervier* in his after-action report. See Wales to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, 8 May 1814, below. It appears that Warrington’s count of the crew is correct, while Wales’s account of the armament—16 32-pound carronades and 2 18-pound carronades—is correct. McCleary, “Lost by Two Navies,” (June 1996) pp. 85–86; (September 1996) p. 132.

2. By sailing “large,” Warrington meant they had to sail with the wind directly (abeam) or almost directly behind (one or two points abaft of abeam) the *Peacock*.

3. A number of reasons have been put forward to explain the disparity in damage to the two combatants. In his after-action report, Wales cited the disabling of a number of guns on *Epervier* and an inability to maneuver because of damage to spars, rigging, and sails. See Wales’s court-martial statement below. Historian William James, a contemporary, mentioned the issue with *Epervier*’s carronades, saying it was “a defect common to the vessels of this and the smaller classes, nearly all of them being contract-built.” He also called the brig’s crew “a disgrace,” noting that “two of the crew were seventy years of age, that several others were foreigners, many disaffected and few even of ordinary stature.” James, *Naval History of Great Britain* [1886 ed.] Vol. 6, pp. 159–61.

4. In a letter to Jones of 12 May, Warrington wrote that \$118,000 from *Epervier* had been deposited in the bank and that \$10,000 had been plundered by the crew of the brig-sloop with the forbearance of Captain Richard W. Wales. Warrington also included a list of stores taken from *Epervier* by him for *Peacock* and by Captain Charles Morris for *Adams*. As this distribution of the enemy’s stores expedited the departure of *Adams*, Warrington assumed Jones would have no objections. DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 125 (M147, Roll No. 5).

MASTER COMMANDANT LEWIS WARRINGTON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Savannah 4th. May 1814

Sir

I have great satisfaction in being able to report to you the arrival of the *Peacock*, at this anchorage today, and also the arrival of the *Epervier* on Monday last—<sup>1</sup> I have now to detail to you the reason of our separation— We made sail as mentioned in my last on the evening of the 29th April— The next afternoon, we were at half past five, abreast the center of Amelia Island with the Vessels in sight over the land, when two large Ships which had been seen some time previous, a little to the Northward of the Island were clearly ascertained to be Frigates and in chase of us. In this situation, at the suggestion of Lieut. Nicolson, I took out all but himself and sixteen officers and men and stood to the Southward along shore on a wind, leaving him to make the best of his way for St. Mary's; which place I felt confident he would reach, as the weather Frigate was in chase of the *Peacock*, and the other was too far to leeward to fetch him— at nine we lost sight of the Chaser but continued standing all night to the Southward in hopes to get entirely clear of him— At day light we shortened Sail and Stood to the northward and again made the Frigate ahead, who gave Chase a second time which he continued until 2 P.M. when finding he could not come up he desisted— In the Evening we resumed our course, and saw nothing until day light on Tuesday morning when a large ship (Supposed to be the same) was again seen in chase of us, and was again run out of sight.

This morning at half past three we made Tybee light, and at half past Eight anchored near the U.S.S. *Adams*.— As the Enemy is hovering close to St. Mary's I concluded that he had received information of, and was waiting to intercept us, accordingly we steered for this place, where we received intelligence of the *Epervier's* arrival, after frightening off a launch, which was sent from the Enemy Ship to leeward on Saturday Evening to cut him off from the land.

From the 1st of April to the 24th. we saw but one neutral and two Privateers both which we chased without overhauling altho we ran one amongst the shoals of Cape Canaveral and followed him into four fathoms water— We have been to the Southward as far as the great Isaacs and have cruised from thence to Maravilla reef, and a long the Florida shore to Cape Canaveral. Not a single running Vessel has been thro the gulf in all this time— The fleet sails from Jamaica under convoy of a seventy four, two Frigates, and two Sloops, from the 1st. to the 10 May. They are so much afraid of our cruisers that several Ships in the Havanna, ready for sea, which intended to run it (as it is called) were forced to wait the arrival of the Convoy from Jamaica—

The *Epervier* and her convoy were the first English vessels we had seen.

We shall proceed, in the execution of your further instructions, as soon, as we can get a fore yard, provisions, and water—

The *Epervier* is one of their finest Brigs, and is well calculated for our service, She sails extremely fast and will require but little to send her to sea as her



armament and stores are complete. I inclose you a list of the Brigs crew, as accurately as we can get it.<sup>2</sup> I am respectfully

L. Warrington

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 119 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. 2 May 1814.

2. No crew list was found with this correspondence.

COMMANDER RICHARD W. WALES, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Savannah, State of Georgia in the  
United States of America 8th May 1814

Sir

It is with the deepest regret I have to report to you the capture of His Majestys late Brig *Epervier* under my command by the United States Ship *Peacock* of 22 guns on the 29th. ultimo. in latitude 27°.47" north longitude 80°.09" west when on my passage from Jamaica to Bermuda with a convoy—

At 8 am the wind being about east south east I saw a strange sail in the Southwest apparently in chace of us, at 9 perceiving her to near very fast and to be a Square rigg'd vessel of war I shortened sail and haul'd to the wind on the larboard tack to be between her and the convoy, being rather a head of them— The wind at this time veering round to the Southward enabled the stranger to lay up for us, and finding she did not answer the private signal I concluded her to be an enemy, and prepared for action accordingly, and shortly after saw her hoist american colors— At 9,50 am we weather'd her and exchange'd broadsides, having part her beam we tack'd shortened sail and continued in close action until 11 am, when five of our larboard guns being disabled by the breaching bolts giving way<sup>1</sup> and three others by shot, and unable to manœuvre so as to get the starboard guns to bear in consequence of the rigging and sails being cut to pieces in the early part of the action by star shot, the main boom shot away, the foremast wounded in several places and apparently in a falling state, and several shot between wind and water with four and a half feet of water in the hold and the enemy seemingly in a state to continue the action, I deemed it prudent to surrender, but am happy to add the convoy escap'd— The weather being very fine enabled the captors to stop the shot holes and equip the *Epervier* so as to get her into this port—

I cannot too highly express my satisfaction of the conduct of Lieutenant John Hackett my first, who I lament to say was wounded severely in three places early in the action while encouraging the men in their duty and has since been oblig'd to suffer amputation of the left arm but am happy to add is now doing well; also of Lieutenant John Harvey; and Mr. David Goalen, the Master, who conn'd the *Epervier* in her disabled state with great skill; likewise Mr. Laurence Kennedy the

Purser who rendered much service in his exertions at the after guns by getting them in a fighting state again when unship'd by the fighting bolts coming out of their places; and Mr. William Reardon late master of His Majesty's Ship *Argo* (a passenger) who assisted at the foremost guns—

I have to lament the loss of killed and wounded a list of which is annex'd; also a statement of the force of the two vessels and have the honor to remain Sir Your most obedient Servant

R W Wales Comr.

Killed—Edward Jones Captain of the main Top—John Vinters Ships Carptr. Peter Johnson ordinary seaman—Keith Farquarson landman—John Newman and Thomas Smith Private Marines—

Wounded—James Ward Captain of the Mast mortally—Lieutenant John Hackett and William Gardner Carpenters Mate Severely—Mr. Thomas Young Carpenter, George Quilton Boatswains mate William Morris and George Jones able seamen, James Trill and William Shearman ordinary seamen, John Neirney landman, Matthew Dew Private marine slightly

*Epervier*—16 thirty two pounder carronades and 2 eighteen pounder carronades. 103 men and 15 Boys

*Peacock*—20 thirty two pounder carronades and 2 french eighteen pounder long guns 182 men and 3 boys the whole of which were chosen previous to being shipp'd

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fols. 22–23. A copy is in UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 564–65.

1. Breeching bolts, which were located on each side of the guns on the carriage, were used to attach the guns to ropes that in turn were attached to the sides of the ship. These ropes, known as breechings limited the guns' recoil when fired.

STATEMENT BY COMMANDER RICHARD W. WALES, R.N., TO  
A COURT-MARTIAL CONCERNING THE LOSS OF  
H.M. BRIG-SLOOP *EPERVIER*

[Portsmouth, England, twentieth Day of January 1815]<sup>1</sup>

To the Honourable President and Members of the Court —<sup>2</sup>

The Narrative of R.W. Wales Commander of His Majesties late sloop *Epervier*, from the 14th day of April 1814 untill the 29th of the same month, on which day the said Sloop was Captured, by the United States Ship of War *Peacock*, in Latd. about 27°-47' N. and Longd. 80°-07' West—

Having received Orders from Rear Adml. Brown,<sup>3</sup> then commanding at Jamaica, to give Instructions to ships bound to the Havannah, Bermuda and Nova Scotia, also to any others which may be bound to the Northd. as far as our courses lay together, I sail'd on the morning of the 14th. of April from Port Royal,

it being the day appointed for our sailing, with seven sail in Company, three of which separated on the 16th and 20th Ult. for their destination, on the 24th PM arrived off Havannah, and having seen the ships bound there safe in, and the Vessel bound to Bermuda being in want of Water, I anchor'd. with the *Epervier* at the entrance of the harbour, my Orders being to wait there 24 hours for any Vessels that might be bound to the Northward, having made the same known to the merchants, and that my Orders were limited, I weigh'd the following morning at daylight, and made the Convoy signal for ships bound to the Northd. and remain'd off the harbour mouth the greater part of the day—when not perceiving any other Vessel coming out to Join me, I made sail with the one only bound to Bermuda, Nothing particular occur'd until the 29th. Inst. when at day light 2 Sail appear'd ahead the wind being about ESE. and our Course about N by E— at 7H 30' AM spoke one of the stranger under Russian Colours, who was from the Havannah bound to Boston, who inform'd us the other sail under Spanish Colours was bound their also, soon after saw a sail in the SW Quarter at 8-30 AM observed the stranger to be a square rigged Vessel and apparently a man of war in Chase of us, by her closing very fast we then shorten'd sail, and at 9 AM haul'd our wind on the Larboard Tack, finding the wind veering round to the Southward- and made sail, so as to get between the Convoy and Stranger— at 9-20 AM made the Private Signal, which was not answer'd by the Stranger, but shortly after a Blue English Ensign and Pendant hoisted, which I consider'd as Suspicious, and made the signal to the Convoy for an Enemy and to proceed for her safety; Beat to quarter and clear'd ship for action, at 9-40 AM observed the stranger to haul down the English Ensign and Pendant, and hoist an American at the Peak and another at the Fore Topmast head, at 9-50 AM being within half Gun shot of the enemy, Observed her to keep away, as I supposed to bring her broadside to bear on us, which we avoided by putting the Helm up also, and keeping before the range of her Guns— and then rounding too, firing our starboard Guns at the Enemies bow, when three of the Carronade unship'd, by the fighting bolts jumping out of the Chocks, which were again ship'd, and when abaft the range of the Enemies Guns, we Tack'd and haul'd up the main Sail, during which period the Enemy appear'd to have luff'd up to bring her guns to bear several of which were fired, but without doing us any material Injury, in doing this she got in the wind as I apprehend, as their head Yards appear'd to have been braced abox, by which manouvre, and the *Epervier* falling round off, brought immediately to close action again, when we stood with the wind about abeam, the Enemy then directing her fire chiefly at our sails and rigging, I am sorry to say, too well succeeded by completely dismantling us in cutting away our sails and running rigging with their Star and bar shot, and shot away the Jaws of the Main Boom— at 10-30 AM Observed the Enemies Fore Yard Arm droop, Cheer'd, soon after this several of the Larboard Carronades unship'd by the fighting bolt coming out of its place, ship'd them again and continued Firing, some of them still continued to unship when fired—<sup>4</sup> at 10-40 AM the Boom Topping lift gave way and the Boom fell on [*the*] Wheel, which from the head sails being shot away, threw the *Epervier* in a situation to be raked, but the Enemy not immediately perceiving it and the Brigg having head way, we succeeded in bringing our broadside towards our Opponent again, without receiving more than three or four shot, while in that

Position, after this the enemy fired chiefly at our Hull and disable three guns in the waist, and several shot through the Hull below, at this time several of the Crew had fallen, amongst whom was the first Lieutenant, at 10-55 AM the breaching bolts having drawn, I consulted with the Master to get the *Epervier* round so as to engage on the Opposite side, the Larboard Broadside being totally disabled with the exception of one Carronade, which was now the only gun we had to return to Enemies Fire, but this was thought Impracticable from being to near the Enemy and rather advanced before her beam, without getting on board of her, I then Orderd the Officers Aft, and ask'd if they were of opinion we Should succeed by boarding, but this was consider'd Impossible from the Enemies apparant Superiority, and that nothing more could be done, at 11 AM the Main Topmast fell, and the Four Mast Tottering being much crippled by Shot and all the Larboard rigging Shot away— and the *Epervier* laying in a defenceless state, the Carpenter reporting her to be makin water, and that their was then four feet and a half in the hold, to prevent the loss of any more men, the Convoy having escaped, I was under the mortifying necessity of ordering the Colours to be hauld down, when the Enemy soon took Possession of us, and sending a strong party of Seamen and Carpenter on board, the weather being very moderate and Smooth water, they succeeded in stopping the Shot holes and securing the Foremast, and got her safe into Savanah

I herewith annex for the Information of the Court the effective Force of the crew on board H Majesties late Sloop under my command at the commencement of the Action—Viz

Officers—Nine	AB—Thirteen	Marines Sixteen
Petty offcrs twenty Six	Ordy—Eighteen	Boys—Fifteen
Bnmates	LM—Twenty.	Supery—one <sup>5</sup>
		Total 118 <sup>6</sup>

D, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/5447. Attached to Wales's statement is a list of the names of the officers, warrant officers, and petty officers of *Epervier*:

1. The place and date was taken from the transcript of the court-martial.

2. The president of the court was Rear Admiral Edward J. Foote. The members of the court were Captains: Benjamin Williams, George Fouke, John Tremayne Rodd, David Lloyd, Edward Brace, George Mundy, Henry E. R. Baker, Charles Bullen, Peter Heywood, John Tower, Edward Hawker, and John Hancock.

3. William Brown.

4. The "fighting bolts" passed vertically through the carronade's slide cradle and into the deck. The fighting bolt did not pull loose because usually a forelock was driven through the bolt and clenched into place. McCleary, "Lost by Two Navies" (June 1996); pp. 84–85. In his testimony, Wales told the court that the carronades on *Epervier* were secured to the deck by "drop Bots with a Shoulder at the Bottom, and no forelock." The second lieutenant of *Epervier*, John W. Harvey, testified that while the crew of *Epervier* "exercised" the guns regularly, they only once did so using powder and shot. UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/5447. Had they fired the guns on more than one occasion, there is a good possibility this issue would have been discovered.

5. The abbreviations used here translate to: Bnmates (bosunmates); AB (able seamen); Ordy (ordinary seamen); LM (landsmen); Supery (supernumerary).

6. Warrington in his 29 April 1814 letter to Secretary Jones puts the number of crew on *Epervier* at 128.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO MASTER COMMANDANT  
LEWIS WARRINGTON

Lewis Warrington Esqr. }  
Com'dg US Ship *Peacock* }  
Savannah }

Navy Department  
June 11th. 1814

Sir,

I have this moment received your letter of the 1st. inst. and regret that I had not written to you immediately on the knowledge of your arrival, but from your observation that as soon as a fore yard and some provisions could be procured you would proceed without delay upon your cruise, and knowing the anxiety which the proximity of a superior enemy must have excited, I had not the least expectation that the return mail would have found you in port.—<sup>1</sup> The continuance of this impression may account for my silence until this time, for be assured I was too well satisfied with the result of the brilliant action you had detailed, to withhold for a moment the just tribute of approbation and high gratification sincerely felt and warmly expressed by the President and no less cordially entertained by this Department.—

I am perfectly satisfied that your detention has been unavoidable and that no opportunity has been or will be lost to pursue with energy the objects of your cruise. the instructions for which I perceive no cause to alter or modify except as to the ports of Norway which from the political change which has taken place and its utter destitution of the supplies you may require, it will be proper to avoid.—<sup>2</sup>

The impression made by the gallant conduct of the worthy Officers whom you have mentioned with just encomium, will command the attention of the Department and doubtless every proper distinction by the President.—<sup>3</sup>

In respect to your prize the *Epervier*, the Department is disposed after she shall have gone through the regular ordeal of the District Court to purchase her for the public service at her fair and full value, for which purpose I am ready to negotiate with any Agent authorized by the captors, for the purchase of the *Epervier* together with all her armament, equipment and Stores of what kind soever including every thing captured on board and belonging to the vessel: Whatever therefore may have been taken out of the prize either for the use of the *Adams* or of the *Peacock* will of course be included and will thus supersede the necessity of a distinct valuation of those articles.— It will however be desirable that as little should be taken out of the prize as possible as it will be difficult to replace the articles on that remote and unprovided Station.—

The Department is not disposed to become a competitor at a public sale as there can be no real private bidders, and it will be better that the court should authorize either a public Sale, or a private one, by the agent of the Captors to the Government of the U States.—

The only chance of this reaching you is the possibility of your being blockaded, and as you may have departed, it is left open for the perusal of the Navy Agent to whom you probably will in that event have communicated your views on this subject.— A correct Inventory of every thing on board the *Epervier* at the time

of capture will be acceptable to the Department and proper in the event of purchase by the public.—<sup>4</sup> I am respectfully &c.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 338–39 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Warrington had written Jones on 4 May, above, announcing his arrival at Savannah.

2. Jones's instructions are in his letter to Warrington of 26 February 1814, above. Norway was a pawn of Denmark and Sweden in the Napoleonic Wars, and Norwegians suffered tremendously from the British blockade of its coast.

3. Warrington on 5 May had sent Jones a letter detailing the contribution of the officers and certain warrant officers of *Peacock* in the victory over *Epervier*. DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 120 (M147, Roll No. 5).

4. Warrington and *Peacock* sailed from Savannah before Jones wrote this letter. On 24 July 1814, Jones wrote Archibald S. Bulloch, the navy agent at Savannah, directing him to buy *Epervier* for the Navy, but not to pay more than \$55,000 for the brig and its "armaments, ammunition, provisions, stores of all kinds." DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 140–41 (M441, Roll No. 1).

[Extract]

### JOURNAL OF MIDSHIPMAN WILLIAM T. RODGERS

[Savannah, Georgia]

[June 1814]

3rd June being under orders for sea—

& on 4th. (civil acct) she put to sea on Her second cruize May prosperous Gales attend Her!

on the 5th. at ½ past 5 AM saw two large sail under easy sail supposed to be Enemies cruizers not yet got over their 4th June frolic<sup>1</sup> they luckily could not see us—

From that day to 17th June we did not see any thing, when on the Grand Banks of New Foundland we captured the Brig "*Sea Flower*" Henson from St. Johns bound to Barbadoes cargo codfish crew 10 in number Burnt her—

on the 18th. saw several large Islands of Ice in Lat. 39°.33 North—

26th. saw two sail to windward. gave chace, at night lost sight of the chace—

[July]

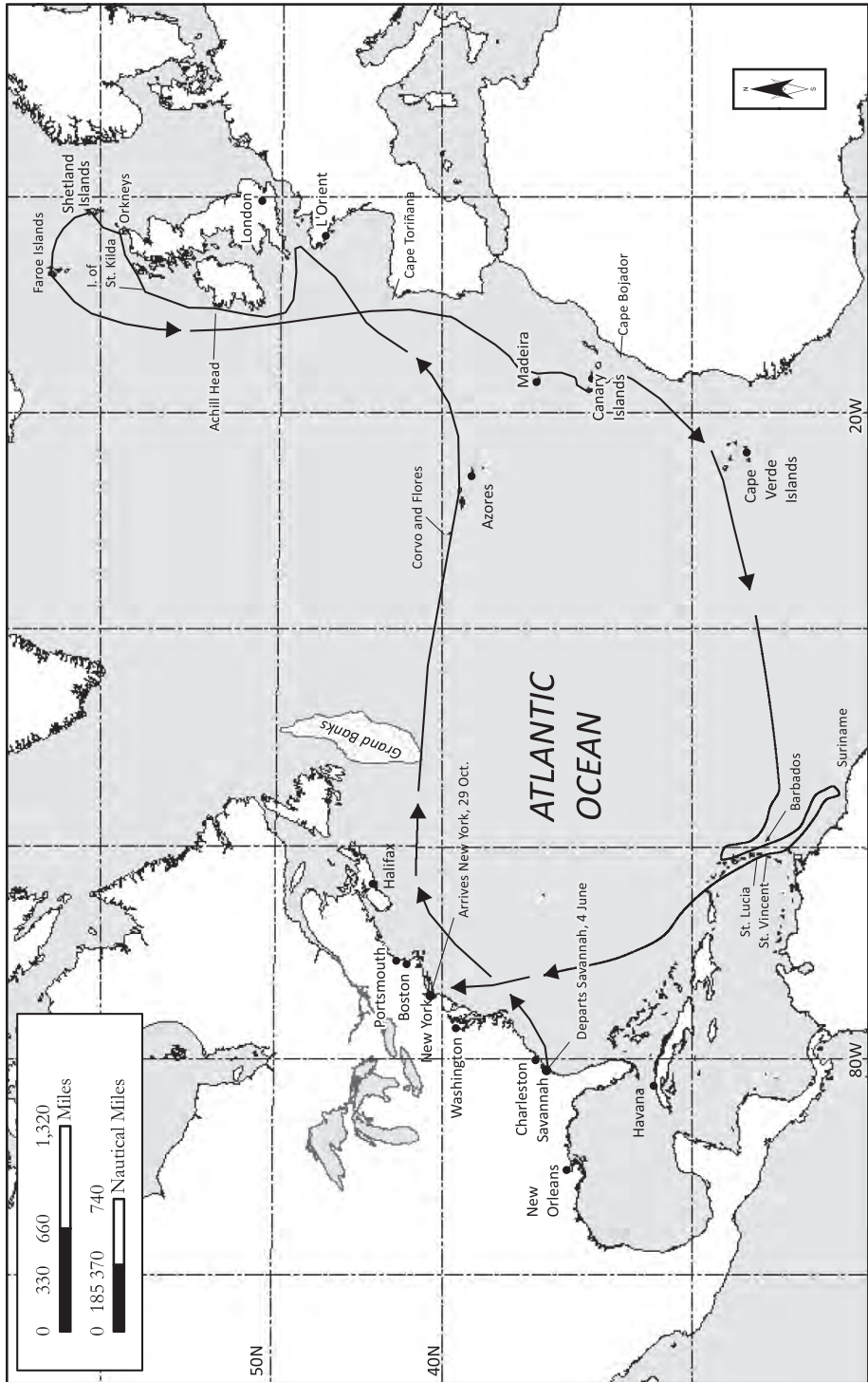
3rd July boarded a Spanish Brig from Havannah to St. Andora (Spain)—<sup>2</sup> Same day at ½, past 10 AM made the Island of Flores (one of the Azores)

July 4th. celebrated the Independance of our country between the Islands of Flores & Corvo

5th. & part of 4th. boats employed in watering the ship.

5th— landed the prisoners crew of "*Sea Flower*" at "Santa Cruz" Flores—

6th. while taking in Water saw a sail to Windward dismissed the shore boats & made sail in chace at ¼ before 10 PM beat to quarters & cleared ship for action— at 10 close aboard of the chace—hove to & boarded her—she proved to be the English Brig "*Stranger*" from Buenos Ayres to Greenock



Map 5. Peacock's 4 June–29 October 1814 cruise

cargo Hides & Tallow—mounting 4 Guns having thrown overboard 6 in a storm some time previous—crew including officers 13 in number— same day landed Capt. Laudon & crew at Santa Cruz— on the 7th. Burnt the prize— the Governor of Flores paid our ship a visit on the 6th. He is a shewy Man about 45 or 50 He seemed much pleased with our Ship— Flores is a very pleasant island for living on as regards agriculture the ground being rich— Corvo to the Northward of it is also a very high land & pretty fruitfull.—<sup>3</sup>

From 10th. to 20th. cruized to the Nd & Wd of the Islands—

on 14th. Landed at Flores Watering— at ½ past 3 PM saw a sail on our weather Bow, gave chace— at ½ past 9 Beat to quarters & cleared Ship for action, it being so dark that we could not see what the chace was— suspecting from the lights seen on her deck that she was a Man of War— at ½ past 12 brought to & boarded the chace, she proved to be a Portugese ship from Brazils bound to Lisbon on same day at ½ past 9 scared out of our wits by a smoke arising from the Gunners store rooms occasioned by some matches having taken fire, but t'was soon extinguished—

Wednesday July 27th. struck soundings in 80 faths in the mouth of the “English Channel”

28th. at 6 PM saw a sail to Windward— at ½ past 7 being dark lost sight of the chace, at 11 PM saw a sail on the lee beam, gave chase— at ½ past 2 boarded chase, she proved to be a swedish Galliot 3 days from Liver pool bound to Schawrtsburg<sup>4</sup> in the Baltic— Keeping a sharp Lookout for English man—!

29th. at 1PM captured “Sloop” *Fortitude* “Capt. Waters Wife & infant child” from Liverpool to London cargo salt crew 6 excluding Captn.— took out prisoners & sunk her—same day at ½ past 2 PM boarded Sweedish Brig *Volus* from Stockholm to ostend— same day at ½ past 9 PM captured Brig “*Venus*” capt. Kenneday—from Bordeaux to Glasgow cargo Wines brandy & some few silks mounting 2 Guns—crew including officers & some passengers 17 in number— these passengers were officers in Lord Wellingtons army on their return Home little expecting in such a place to receive their parole of honor from the “rebel Yankees”— one Man an american negro entered on board the *Peacock*— while removing the prisoners the prize ran athwart our bows & carried away our flying Jib Boom & spritsail yard— soon rigged out spare ones & sunk the prize—

30th. captured Brig “*Idiona*,” Maxwell from Liverpool to Lisbon with salt crew 13, sent her into Liverpool as a cartel—

31st. Boarded Dutch Galliot “*Hleda*” from Cork to Lisbon same Day at ½ past 9 PM made “Mizzen Head”<sup>5</sup> the southernmost part of “Erin the Land where Paddies Grow.” The whole time whilst in the Channel we had a heavy Gale of wind & very thick weather most unfortunately for us—

[August]

August 1st. off the river Shannon captured Sloop “*Leith Packet*” Captn Watson from Teneriffe to Dublin cargo wine crew 8 in number— took out some wine & sunk her—



- 3rd. at ¼ past 5 made “Achile Head”<sup>6</sup> same day at ½ past 8 captured Sloop “*William & Ann*” Captn. McFee from Glasgow to Limerick with coal crew 5 in no sunk her—
- 4th. made “Tillen Head” & captured Sloop “*Peggy & Jane*” Captn. Duncan from Liverpool to Limerick with coal & crockery crew 6 in no took out some crockery for ships use & destroyed her— same day at 8 AM made “Barra Head”
- 5th. at 5PM made the Island of St. Kilda—Ossian
- 6th. Boarded Prussian ship “*La Insatiable*” from Dantzic<sup>7</sup> to Liverpool three other ships in sight of same destination— sent 6 prisoners in the ship boarded— at 6th. AM same day made the Island of “Westra” one of the Orkneys. stormy weather—
- 7th. farther North than ever before, 61°. 32’—
- 8th. made Sudoros Island” & “Monk Rock” two of the “Ferro Islands the Latter (Monk Rock) in Lat 61°.18’ & Long 6°.47’ W—<sup>8</sup> From the time we entered the channel to the 12th. we have experienced rough & stormy weather—
- 14th. Captured The Barque “*William*” Captain Whitaway from St. Andrews to Greenock cargo Lumber crew 18 in no mounting 2 Guns—Burnt Her—
- 15th. Captured Ship “*Sir Edward Pelew*” Captn. Kelly of 12 Guns from Quebec to Greenock cargo Lumber crew 19 in no threw her guns over board & sent her in as a cartel— For this ship we beat to quarters—
- 19th. saw a sail on weather beam at ½ past 6, gave chace but at 8 being dark lost sight of her—
- 20th. at ½ past 6 made Cape “Ortegal”—Bay of Biscay
- 21st. at ¼ past 7 AM boarded Swedish Brig from Elsineur<sup>9</sup> to Lisbon— at ½ past 4 AM saw a sail to leeward— ¼ before 5 saw a sail on weather beam at 5 saw another sail ahead as good luck would have it we gave chace to the one ahead at ½ past 9 near the chace shortened sail, she looking rather wicked at 10 Beat to quarters & cleared away for action ½ past 10 boarded chace proved to be English Brig “*Bellona*” Langlois, from Cette<sup>10</sup> in the Middeterrean to Hamburg of 6 guns crew 15 in no cargo Wine Brandy Olives & Verdigrease<sup>11</sup> took out some articles Verdigrease & &c— three Men entered on board of us one American [Burnt Her]<sup>12</sup> one Dutchman! [*illegible*] & one Italian [*illegible*]<sup>13</sup>— same day made Cape “Turrianna”—<sup>14</sup>
- 22nd. at 1 PM Cape Turrianna Bore South distant 8 Leagues—
- 23rd. Boarded Russian Galliot “*Fortuna*” from Vigo to Riga informed us of some Turkish cruisers on the coast, put on board of her—Captn. & Mate of the *Bellona*—
- 24th. at ¼ past 8 Boarded spanish Brig for Barcelona to Vigo—at ¼ before 11 saw a sail to Leeward gave chace at ¼ before 12 beat to quarters at Mid-night boarded chace proved to be another prize the Brig *Triton* Captn. Harvey from St. Johns to Lisbon cargo fish crew 7 in number sunk her— same day at ¼ before Meridian Boarded French Brig *Le Neptune* bearing the ancient French colors (White) from Marquize<sup>15</sup> to Havre De Grace— put on board captn. Mate & 2 hands of *Triton*—
- 25th. Boarded a Danish Ship from Trieste to Statine<sup>16</sup> on the Baltic—

- 26th. at 3 PM Boarded Spanish Brig from Havanna to Tarragona— at ½ past 7 Boarded Spanish Ship from Havanna to Malaga—  
 29th. at ¼ before Meridian made Land Coast of Africa in Lat.: 31°. 3' N—  
 30th. 31st. & 1st. September running down the coast in search of water—

[*September*]

- 1st. at ½ past 7 saw a light on shore—(off Cape Nun)— this coast is very Barren scarce a shrub or tree to be seen—  
 2nd. made the most Eastern of the Canary Isles viz Lanzorette Lubor & Fuerta Ventura<sup>17</sup> ran in towards the port of Naos (Puerto De Naos) in hopes to get water, but there being no prospect of obtaining a sufficiency, We ran down towards Fuerta Ventura— in the port of Naos lay three English Merchantmen who looked rather Blue on seeing the “Yankee Gridiron” flying so near them— but they were protected from capture by the neutrality of the port— at this place we learnt from an American Captain that the two vessels we saw June 5 shortly after leaving Savannah were two English Frigates bound off Savannah to blockade the port— as good luck would have it “they came the day after the fair”— He informed us that the *Epervier* was fitting for sea— At Puerto De Naos We landed all the prisoners we had on Board— this is a Mountainous Island, but the valleys produce grapes &c &c  
 3rd. while running for Fuerta Ventura captured Brig “*Duck*” of 2 Guns Captn. Stevenson from Porto Cabras (the port we intend to make.) to Teneriffe<sup>18</sup> cargo Barilla crew 13 in no including the English consul resident at Porto Cabras—Sunk her— same day at 8 AM came to anchor in Porto Cabras in ¼ less 8 fathoms clay bottom & furled sails— sent an officer ashore to ascertain whether we could get Water at his return he reported that water could not be obtained under several days it having to be brought from cisterns in the mountains on camels at this place we landed prisoners crew of *Duck* the town is small, houses built of stone, all white washed, the inhabitants are very poor religion (as throughout these islands) Roman Catholic—  
 4th. weighed anchor at 6 PM & stood down towards the Cape De Verds—  
 5th. made Cape Bajador, Lat 26°.12' Long 14.27 W  
 6th. at ½ past 5 AM saw a sail nearly ahead gave chase— at ¼ before 8 coming up with the chase fast & believing her by her appearance to be an American Privateer made our private signal— but t’was not answered— at 9 brought to & boarded her, she proved to be a spaniard from Malago to Rio Janeiro  
 10th. made the Island of St. Nicolas one of the Cape Verds— From the canaries to the Cape Verds We have experienced a pleasant N East trade wind  
 10th. ran down between the islands St. Lucia & Chaon<sup>19</sup> mistaking the first for st Antonio or st. Anthonys & the other for st. Vincents—  
 11th. Beating up towards St. Vincents— one moment calm, the next a squall—  
 12th. we reached “our desired haven” & came to anchor in the Harbour of Great Port Island of St. Vincents in ¼ less 7 faths & furled sails— & sent a boat ashore to see if we could get water— the boat returned with the glad tidings of “fresh water plenty tho’ a little brackish”— “Lt Henley”<sup>20</sup>

from 13th. to 19th. employed in filling up our Water— The Island of St. Vincents is mountainous & very barren— the town is composed of about a dozen negro huts, the principal inhabitants being all Black— in the town is Roman chapel which in comparison with the thatched huts around it is a stylish structure—

The Governor (the only white man on the island) is a tall man, upwards of 70— He lives in the same dirty simplicity as His Sable Subjects do— He visited our ship with his suite (two negroes) dressed in his holiday apparel— St. Antonio is also very mountainous tho' in some parts is fruitful—

19th. weighed anchor & put to sea & stood to the Westward— Weather extremely Hot—

[ *October* ]

6th. United States Sloop *Peacock*—at sea— This day made Land coast of Surinam, (South America) Lat. 6°.11'—Long—53°.39'—off the river Morein dividing Cayenne from Surinam—<sup>21</sup> the Land is low & sandy on the sea shore but from the great number of trees &c &c growing to a great height tis probable the Land in the interior is fertile—

8th. off River Surinam—

10th. at ¼ past 9 AM Mr. Denizen Baldwin, (Masters Mate) departed this life, after a short but severe illness—He died of a Bilious fever—

on the 11th. at ½ past Meridian committed His remains to the Deep—!

“Come cheering Hope! celestial cherub come!  
Say! that His virtues soar beyond the tomb!  
Say! that with Mercy in æthereal guise  
His white robed spirit climbs yon opening skies”!

memento mori !———<sup>22</sup>

11th. at ¼ past 2 PM made the Island of Barbadoes at 6 PM the North Extremity of the Island Bore SWbyW Distant 6 Leagues—

12th. at ½ past 6 AM saw a sail nearly ahead—gave chase— 11 ½ brought to the chase she proved to be the English Ship “*Mary*” Captn. Gibson from Point Petre (Guadaloupe)<sup>23</sup> to Halifax cargo Sugar Coffee Rum & Molasses— crew 18 in number. Mounting two Guns— sunk her—

18th. boarded Swedish Ship from Gottenburg bound to Amelia. put Captn. Gibson (late of the *Mary*) on Board & dismissed her<sup>24</sup>

22nd. at 2.30 PM saw a sail on lee bow—gave chase & after a chase of 18 hours Boarded the American Privateer *Hollins*<sup>25</sup> Captn. Stocket on a cruize out 8 days, having thrown overboard 2 long Guns & sprung his top Gallant Yard in the chase— gave him a spare yard & got some news papers from him— pleased by the account of a grand victory on Lake Champlain by Com: McDonnough—

25th. Heavy Gale of Wind—Hove to—

28th. at 4 AM got soundings of 40 faths on our coast— at 7 made the Land— at 10 Cape Henlopen Light House Bore West dist 20 miles— at 12. Cape

May WbyS<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>S— 29th. running along the coast towards Sandy Hook—light breezes—

29th. Arrivg & anchored off the City of New York near the US. Frigate *President*  
Com: Decatur— went ashore & found all friends well—<sup>26</sup>

D, DLC, Journal of William T. Rodgers. The editors have arranged the journal contents to facilitate finding specific dates.

1. The “4th of June frolic” refers to George III’s birthday.
2. Andorra, Spain.
3. Interlineation in the margin reads: “Flores & Corvo discovered in 1460—by the Portugese.”
4. Unidentified.
5. Mizen Head is located in County Cork. It is not the most southerly point on the Irish mainland; nevertheless, it has long been treated as such.
6. Achill Head on Achill Island, Ireland.
7. Danzig, present-day Gdansk, Poland.
8. Munkurin Rock (translated Monk Rock) is the southernmost point of the Faroe Islands; Suðuroy Island is nearby.
9. Elsinore, Denmark.
10. The commune of Sete in southern France, known as Cette until the early 20th century.
11. Presumably verdigris, the common name for a green pigment obtained through the application of acetic acid to copper plates.
12. “Burnt Her” is an interlineation.
13. Names were added as interlineations, but are illegible.
14. Probably Cabo Toriñana, Spain.
15. Possibly Marquise, France, though it is not on the seacoast.
16. Possibly the Polish city of Szczecin (former German city of Stettin).
17. The easternmost islands in the Canary Islands group are Isla de Alagranza, Isla Graciosa, Lanzarote, and Fuerteventura.
18. Tenerife, one of the Canary Islands.
19. Presumably Canouan, one of the Grenadines Islands.
20. Samuel Henley held the lieutenant’s rank since 24 July 1813. He was ordered to *Peacock* at New York as a second lieutenant on 14 October 1813.
21. The Maroni River forms the border between French Guiana and Suriname.
22. This is the last stanza of a poem entitled “Lines on the Death of Commodore Barry” by Michael Fortune and written in 1803. Memento mori means “a remembrance of death.”
23. That is, Pointe-à-Pitre.
24. The following was written as an interlineation: “this Ship informed us of the burning of Washington & the attack on Baltimore.”
25. The privateer *Hollins* was a schooner out of Baltimore.
26. This phrase is written vertically in the left margin: “147 days out from Savannah.”

MASTER COMMANDANT LEWIS WARRINGTON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U. S. Sloop *Peacock*. Newyork. October 30th. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you of the *Peacock’s* arrival at this place, after a cruise of 147 days during which all your remaining orders of the 28th. Feby. Ulto.<sup>1</sup> have been executed except, that which related to the Naze<sup>2</sup> and coast of Norway & which was omitted in consequence of that whole coast being under a strict blockade by a combined squadron of English & Sweedish Ships— although the *Peacock’s* success has not been so great, as we had sanguinely expected; it is

a pleasing reflection, that our disappointment, has been only occasioned by the uncommonly severe weather, (with constant gales from South west to North west) which we experienced, from the time of striking soundings in the Irish channel, untill we left the Shetland Isles and which had the double effect, off keeping in all their trade, and compelling us to be constantly beating off a lee shore— We were four days between Cape Clear & waterford, in which time we made but three captures, the last of which, as she was of little value we made a cartel of— On the North & west coasts of Ireland we met with but little better success as the bad weather still continued— From the Shetlands we run for the Ferro Isles<sup>3</sup> and then returned in sounding along the Irish coast, crossed the mouth of the channel & Bay of Biscay and made Cape Ortegale between wh[*ich*] and the rock of Lisbon, we cruised 7 days, seeing in that time, but 12 sail, nine of which we spoke and found but two of them English— From thence we [*went?*] along the Portuguese coast, crossed the mouth of the Mediterranean and run within a degree and an half of the Mederias<sup>4</sup> for the purpose of falling in with their West India & Teneriffe<sup>5</sup> trade— On 1st of September we made the Canaries, and attempted in vain to procure water at Feutaventura & Lanzarota,<sup>6</sup> at the latter of which places we landed some prisoners. As a supply of water was now indispensably requisite, I determined to run for the Cape De Verd's,<sup>7</sup> at one of which (St. Vincent's) after a week's work in digging and cleaning out wells, we obtained the requisite quantity, and then proceeded at an easy rate to the Wd. steering alternately to the SW & NW, to prolong our stay as much as possible, between the Longitudes of 20 & 40 west, the track of all their East India African & South American trade not a single vessel was however seen in all our run, and on the 6th. of October we made the coast of Guiana, at the mouth of the Marioni<sup>8</sup> river, The next day we were off Surinam, from whence we run for Barbadoes, which we made on the 9th. and continued cruising to windward of Dereada<sup>9</sup> & Barbuda for a few days, and then steer'd for our own Coast which we made on the 28th. at 7 a.m. a little to the westward of Cape Henlopen

It gives me much pleasure to inform you that from the time of our leaving Newyork in march last untill our return we have lost but one man (Mr. Denizen Baldwin M. Mate) a promising Officer) and that our crew is in fine health. I trust that you will not think we have unnecessarily curtail'd our cruise, when I inform you we have but 15 days provision on board at short allowance I enclose a correct list of our captures<sup>10</sup> I am respectfully

L Warrington

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 71 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Warrington meant 26 February 1814. See above.
2. The Naze is a headland on the Norwegian coast.
3. Faroe Islands.
4. Madeira is an archipelago comprising four islands off the northwest coast of Africa.
5. Tenerife is one of the Canary Islands.
6. That is, Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, islands within the Canary Islands group.
7. Cape Verde Islands.
8. Maroni River.
9. Presumably La Désirade, part of the Guadeloupe island group.
10. No list of captures was included with this correspondence.

## Final Cruise of the U.S. Brig *Siren*

The brig *Siren* began the war attached to the New Orleans Station under the command of Joseph Bainbridge.<sup>1</sup> Following *Siren*'s transfer to Boston in June of 1813, the brig received a new commander—Master Commandant George Parker, who had served as first lieutenant in *Constitution* during its victorious engagement with H.M. frigate *Java*. Parker's assignment to *Siren* was a homecoming of sorts, for he had served as the brig's acting sailing master during the close of the Barbary War.<sup>2</sup> The fact that *Siren* required not only an extensive overhaul, but an entirely new crew may have muted Parker's enthusiasm for his new command. A number of complications, including Parker's own declining health, delayed *Siren*'s departure from Boston until 29 January 1814.<sup>3</sup>

Secretary Jones envisioned *Siren* conducting a marauding campaign against British commerce in distant seas. He directed Parker to sail for the northwest coast of Africa, whence he was to steer south, ranging along the continent's western coastline. After doubling the Cape of Good Hope, Parker was to take up station off the Mascarene Islands in the Indian Ocean, from which vantage point *Siren* might prey upon Britain's homeward-bound India trade. The Navy Secretary left it to Parker's discretion whether to continue his war on enemy trade by sailing eastward into the Pacific or by circling back into the Atlantic via the Cape of Good Hope. Jones's instructions forbade Parker "from giving or receiving" challenges from Royal Navy warships. The destruction of British commerce, he declared, was the sole object of *Siren*'s cruise for it was there that the enemy was "indeed vulnerable."<sup>4</sup>

But the great objective of *Siren*'s cruise went unrealized. George Parker succumbed to illness and died before the American brig even reached the African coast. Parker's second-in-command, Lieutenant Nathaniel D. Nicholson, continued to execute *Siren*'s mission, but experienced little success, taking only two prizes over the next three months. By July, a severe provisions shortage prompted Nicholson to end *Siren*'s cruise and shape a return course for the United States. *Siren* had scarcely begun her homeward transit before being overhauled on 12 July by the 74-gun ship *Medway*. Nicholson and his men spent half a year interred in a prison at Cape Town, South Africa, before beginning their long voyage home. By the time *Siren*'s men arrived in New York, the war had been over for six months.

1. On *Siren*'s service on the New Orleans Station and transfer to Charlestown Navy Yard, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 641–42.

2. For Parker's appointment to *Siren*, see Jones to Parker, 31 July 1813, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, p. 24 (T829, Roll No. 382). For his prior service in *Siren*, see Knox, *Barbary Wars*, Vol. 6, p. 38.

3. On *Siren*'s need for repairs, see Joseph Bainbridge to Jones, 15 and 24 June 1813, DNA, RG45, MC, 1813, Nos. 73 and 75 (M147, Roll No. 5); The majority of *Siren*'s crew were transferred to Chauncey's command on Lake Ontario. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 494 and 508. Several of the brig's officers would follow Joseph Bainbridge to his new command, the sloop of war *Frolic*. The remainder of *Siren*'s officers and crew were attached to the brig *Rattlesnake*. See Jones to William Bainbridge, 25 June 1813, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 1, p. 446–47 (M441, Roll No. 1). *Siren*'s cruise was also delayed owing to the late delivery of her guns. See, for example, William Bainbridge to Jones, 18 January 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 44 (M125, Roll No. 34).

4. For Parker's cruising orders, see Jones to Parker, 8 December 1814, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 294–96. The quoted text appears on p. 296.



Siren

COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard, Charlestown, Mss:  
30th. January 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that the U S. Brig *Siren*, which has been detained 10 or 12 days on account of the severe illness of her commander, sailed yesterday.—<sup>1</sup>

I regret the necessity of placing so mixt an armament on board of her; but my confidence in her commander, officers and Crew, is so great, that I feel assured that she will be competent to contend with any equal force she may meet with.—

The *Siren* is in fine order and moved swiftly. The 42 pd. Carronades on board of her, will be very formidable guns against a single deck vessel.— I have the honor to be, Sir, with the highest respect, yr obt. servt.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge

P.S. Doct. Edgar, whom you ordered to report himself to Captain Parker has not gone in the *Siren*. I presume he will state to you the reasons why he did not. His orders were to report himself direct to Captain Parker and not through me as Commanding Officer of this station.—<sup>2</sup>

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 84 (M125, No. 34). The word “Postscript,” which appears at the bottom of the first page under Bainbridge’s signature, is not reproduced here.

1. *Siren*’s commander, George Parker, reported his vessel being underway on 29 January. See Parker to Jones, 29 January 1814, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 33½ (M147, Roll No. 5).

2. Richard C. Edgar was commissioned a surgeon’s mate on 23 January 1809, and promoted to surgeon on 24 July 1813. He was serving as *Chesapeake*’s surgeon at the time of its capture by H.M.S. *Shannon* on 1 June 1813, in which action he was wounded. He returned to Boston six weeks later in the ship *Frederick Augustus* along with 62 of *Chesapeake*’s wounded. On 13 January 1814, Secretary Jones ordered Edgar to *Siren* as the brig’s surgeon, but illness prevented his serving in that capacity. Parker gave Edgar permission to remain on shore to recover his health, receiving William Swift as *Siren*’s surgeon in his stead. The Maryland-born Edgar’s final wartime posting was surgeon in the frigate *United States*. On Edgar’s promotion and orders to *Siren* and *United States*, see Jones to Edgar, 8 August 1813, 3 January 1814, and 4 June 1814 in DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, pp. 29, 96, and 182 (T829, Roll No. 382). For Edgar’s arrival in Boston in *Frederick Augustus*, see *Middlesex Gazette* (Middletown, CT), 15 July 1813. On Edgar’s poor health, see Edgar to Jones, 20 February 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 77 and enclosure (M148, Roll No. 13).



MASTER COMMANDANT GEORGE PARKER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Salem Harbour  
U.S. Brig *Siren* Feby 1st. 1814

Sir,

I have the Honor to inform you that this Vessel under my Command, returned to this harbour, last evening—owing to a heavy gale commencing from the Southward & Eastward, shortly after my leaving Boston, from which circumstance it was deemed impracticable to beat out of the Bay.—<sup>1</sup>

I am at present in a delicate state of health, but hope to be enabled to proceed to sea as soon as the weather will permit.<sup>2</sup> With high respect, your Ob Serv't.

Geo Parker

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 38 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. The *Essex Register* reported that *Siren* arrived in Salem Harbor on the evening of 30 January. See *Essex Register* (Salem, Massachusetts), 2 February 1814. William Bainbridge informed Secretary Jones that Parker had put into Salem harbor “on account of a severe indisposition.” See Bainbridge to Jones, 18 February 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 122 (M125, Roll No. 34).

2. According to the *Newburyport Herald and Country Gazette*, *Siren* departed Salem on 17 February in company with the privateer *Grand Turk*. Two days later, the American warship and the privateer parted ways. See *Newburyport (Massachusetts) Herald and Country Gazette*, 22 February 1814, and, Leech, *Voice from the Main Deck*, pp. 120–21. Bainbridge also reported *Siren*'s departure on this date, noting that Parker had “perfectly recovered” from his indisposition.

NEWS ACCOUNT OF *SIREN*'S OPERATIONS IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

*Liverpool*, (Eng.) Aug. 11—[1814]

The *Jane*, Anderson, from Africa, arrived at this port, sailed from the river Gaboon<sup>1</sup> on the 28th April, in co. with the *Neptune* of London; on the 2d May, made the Island of St. Thomas's<sup>2</sup> to the windward; at 4 P.M. on the 3d saw a strange sail to leeward of the Island, to which gave chase, and on nearing her was convinced she was an enemy's vessel of war, from the number of blue lights which she shew in the night—gave up the pursuit, and came to anchor under the fort of St. Thomas's; at this time the strange sail, which on nearing proved to be the U.S. brig *Syren*, carrying 20 guns, and 147 men, out 75 days from Boston, commanded by Lieut. Nicholson, (late Parker) anchored along side the *Jane*.—<sup>3</sup> On the 6th May the *Syren* set sail and cruised off the Island to the 24th, in expectation of the *Jane* and *Neptune* coming out; during which time she captured the ships *Barton*, Hasler, and *Adventure*, Dugale, of this port, and burnt them. On the

23d, they saw a brig burning to windward of the Island.<sup>4</sup> On the 5th June, having strengthened their ships with the captured crews, and the *Syren* out of sight, set sail in co. with *Neptune*.

Printed, *American Advocate and Kennebec Advertiser* (Hallowell, Maine), 26 November 1814.

1. The Gabon Estuary.

2. Modern-day Saõ Tomé.

3. *Siren's* pursuit of *Jane* is described in Leech, *Voice from the Main Deck*, pp. 124–25. Leech attributed *Jane's* escape to the “Yankee cunning” of its commander and to the merchantman’s superior sailing.

4. *Siren's* capture and destruction of *Barton* and *Adventure* is detailed in Leech, pp. 125–27, and, Nicholson to Crowninshield, 22 August 1815, below.

CAPTAIN AUGUSTUS BRINE, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL CHARLES TYLER, R.N.

Admiralty-Office, November 19, 1814.

*Copy of a Letter from Captain Brine, of His Majesty's Ship Medway, addressed to Vice-Admiral Tyler, and transmitted by that Officer, to John Wilson Croker, Esq.*

*His Majesty's ship Medway, at Sea,  
July 12, 1814.*

SIR

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you, that cruising in the execution of your orders, I this day at seven A.M. fell in with and captured, after a chase of eleven hours, nearly on a wind, the United States brig of war *Syren*, commanded by Lieutenant N. J. Nicholson, who succeeded to the command by the death of her Captain (Parker) at sea. The *Syren* is pierced for 18 guns, had sixteen mounted, viz. two forty-two and twelve twenty-four-pounder carronades, with two long nine pounders, and had a complement of one hundred and thirty seven men: all her guns, boats, anchors, cables, and spars, were thrown overboard during the pursuit. The *Syren* had received a most complete repair previous to her sailing, and is newly coppered. I have, &c.

AUG. BRINE.<sup>1</sup>

Printed, *London Gazette*, 19 November 1814. Addressed: “Vice-Admiral Tyler, Commander in Chief, &c. &c. &c.”

1. For a brief summary of Brine’s career, see his obituary published in *Gentleman’s Magazine*, New Series, Vol. 15 (July 1840), p. 97. American artist John Singleton Copley painted Brine’s portrait as a 13-year-old midshipman; this work is now owned by the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. See Caldwell and Roque, *American Paintings*, pp. 105–6.

LIEUTENANT NATHANIEL D. NICHOLSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

At Sea H,M,S. *Grampus*  
Lat 24° N Long. 36° „W.<sup>1</sup>  
May 29th.1815.

Sir,

I Have only time to inform you, that the U S Brig *Siren* Under my Command Was captured by H M Ship *Medway* of 74 Guns on the 12 July Last. in the Lat of 6°. 5' S. Long. 18°. 20 W.<sup>2</sup> After a Chase of 11 Hours. That Captain George Parker died on the 11th. March 1814 Near the Western Island.<sup>3</sup> Previous to the Capture of the *Siren* I had cruised in the Gulf of Guinea & made two Valuable Captures which were destroy'd. This is the first Public letter I have been sufferd to forward to America since my capture Myself with the other Officers have been in the Country near the Cape of Good Hope Prisoners for Six Months previous to our leaving the Cape, from which place we were not sufferd to move. The Crew have been much scattered in different Vessels but I am in hopes of getting them all back to America. I Have not time to make any farther Communication in consequence of the Vessel's being ready to Proceed that takes this. Expecting that I am now bound to England to take passage to America I Have the Honor to be Sir yr Ob Servt.

N, D, Nicholson

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 87 (M148, Roll No. 14). The docketing states that this letter was received on 4 August 1815.

1. Approximately 728 nautical miles northwest of Santo Antão, Cape Verde Islands.

2. Approximately 259 nautical miles northwest of Ascension Island.

3. Likely a reference to the Azores, also known as the Western Islands, or Madeira, which lay on *Siren's* intended course of sailing. When Parker died, *Siren* had reached the coordinates 34° 10' north latitude and 34° 34' west longitude, which would place that ship approximately 391 nautical miles southwest of Faial Island, Azores, and 869 nautical miles west of Madeira.

LIEUTENANT NATHANIEL D. NICHOLSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

New York August 22nd, 1815

Sir

I have the Honour to inform you of my arrival here from the Cape Good Hope, by the way of England with part of the Officers & Crew of the late U.S. Brig *Siren*.

As circumstances, of which you have already been informed have prevented my making Known to you, the particulars of the Cruise & Capture of the *Siren*. I now beg leave to refer you to the Statement which Accompanies this. with respect I have the Honour to be Sir Yr. Obt. Hbl. Servt.

N, D, Nicholson

LS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 110 (M148, Roll No. 15).

[Enclosure]

New York August 22nd. 1815

Sir,

On Friday March 11th. 1814 Lattd. 34.10 N. Longde. 34., 34 W. Departed this life of a fever our ever to be lamented Commander George Parker Esqr.

From a perusal of the order<sup>1</sup> under which the *Siren* sailed it was deemed expedient to proceed through the Canary Islands, to Cape Blanco, on the Coast of Africa, where we arrived on the 27th. March without falling in with any of the Enemy's Vessels, From thence to proceed along the Coast to the southward, to the river Senegal at the entrance of which arrived on the evening of the 30th. & discovered two Vessels at Anchor, one a Brig & the other a Sloop— the former making signals, from which circumstance, I was lead to believe her a British Armed Vessel, & prepared to Attack her at 7 P.M on going within half pistol shot under her stern she shew English Colours & fired a few small Arms,<sup>2</sup> which was instantly returned accompanied by a broad side which silenced her; but a Fort on shore Opening upon us & to whose fire we were much exposed, I was compelled to haul off as the shot from our Carron ades would not reach them, On the following Morning stood in & discovered the Brig & Sloop lying under the Guns, & completely protected by a strong fort, which commenced fireing as soon as we came within long Gun shot, which compelled us again to haul off & abandon the Idea of Capturing the Vessels: particularly as we were so near in as to turn up the bottom with our rudder.—

From thence I proceeded along the coast to the southward to the river Gambia & to Grand Cape Mount,<sup>3</sup> where I gained information of several Men of War & Merchant Men being on the coast to the Eastward, & in the Gulf of Guinea. Accordingly I continued to run down the Coast, to Cape Coast Castle,<sup>4</sup> where I fell in with a large Sloop of War<sup>5</sup> & Brig which chased, & in all probability would have captured us had we not fortunately escaped in a squall; the Sloop of War succeeded in getting within Gun shot in our wake, the chase commenced at 5 P.M. & ended at Midnight on the 26th April—

From thence proceeded to the Island st. Thomas Gulf of Guinea where we arrived on the 6th. May & Obtained Water &c and learnt from an Enemy's Merchant ship<sup>6</sup> that we had chased in, that a fleet were to assemble at & would leave that Island under protection of the *Spitfire* Sloop of War, I therefore continued in sight of the Island 'till the 24th. during which time I made two Valuable Captures, Viz. Ship *Barton* of Liverpool 400 tons 8 Guns with a Cargo of Ivory, Bees Wax, Gums, & Oil; and the Brig *Adventure* of Liverpool also; with similar Cargo removed the Ivory to the *Siren* Burnt the Vessels & remaining part of the Cargoes & put the prisoners on shore at st. Thomas', these vessels were Valued at about 35,000 Pounds sterling,<sup>7</sup> at this time we had not a sufficiency of provisions to carry us home & as the Brig became very Open in her upper works, owing to the extreme heat of the climate, I therefore proceeded to the Harbour of Angola in the Lattd. 8°, 50. S. Longde. 14°, 00 East<sup>8</sup> where the bends were Caulked & I Obtained a small quantity of provisions: & on the 29th. June left that place & proceeded to the Westward as far as the Island of Assension, in hopes of falling in with some of the Enemy's India Ships but without success, As we were now

reduced & had been for some time to the Very short allowance of 10 Ounces of provisions a day per Man, I was under the Necessity of Shaping my Course for the United States—

On the 12th. July at 5,,30 A.M. in the Lattd. 6,, 5 S. Longde. 18°, 20 W. a sail was discovered bearing W.N.W. Distance about 8 leagues Wind south to S.S.E. & blowing fresh, all sail made in chase, on our Nearing her discovered she was a large Ship on a Wind on the Larboard tack apparently in chase haul'd our Wind on the starboard Tack & passed about 3 leagues to Windward of her, at 8,,15 tack'd to the southward & Westward to try our sailing with her & found She out sailed us & evidently a Man of War at 8,,40 tack'd to the Eastward & made all sail on a Wind from her at 9,,30 she tack'd & made sail for us her lower Yards above the Horizon, at Meridian her hull to be seen off deck, threw the lee Anchors & Guns Overboard; but the ship still coming up fast it was the Opinion of myself & brother Officers that the weather Guns & in fact every thing that was on the upper deck should be thrown Overboard (particularly as the *Siren* had a sufficiency in her hold to Keep her on her legs.) which was accordingly done, & the Gun Rails Cut down but without the disired effect for at 5 P.M the Enemy came within Gun shot & commenced firing from his lower deck at 5,,30 finding we were within Point Blank distance & no possability of escaping the Colours of the *Siren* were struck to His Britannic Majesty's Ship *Medway* of 74 Guns, after a chase of 12 Hours—

Conscious of an Honourable acquittal,, I have to request you will Order a Court Martial or Court of Inquiry on my Conduct<sup>9</sup> I Have the Honour to be Sir with Respect Your Obt. Servt.

N. D. Nicholson

The Honble. Secry. }  
of the Navy of the }  
United States. }

LS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 111 (M148, Roll No. 15). This report was enclosed in Nicholson to Crowninshield, 22 August 1815, *ibid.*, No. 110, but numbered as a separate letter. For another copy of this letter see the record of the court of inquiry that investigated *Siren's* capture in DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 220 (M273, Roll No. 8).

1. For *Siren's* cruising orders, see Jones to Parker, 8 December 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 294–96.

2. According to *Siren* crewman Samuel Leech, the American brig delivered its broadside without being fired upon. “We approached her [the English vessel] and hailed. Her officer returned an insolent reply, which so exasperated our captain [Nicholson] that he passed the word to fire into her, but recalled it almost immediately. The countermand was too late; for in a moment, everything being ready for action we poured a whole broadside into our unfortunate foe.” Leech, *Voice from the Main Deck*, p. 124.

3. Promontory at the northwestern extremity of Liberia Bay.

4. Site of a commercial fort on the Gold Coast of West Africa, now modern-day Cape Coast, Ghana.

5. H.M. fireship *Spitfire*. Kevin McCranie describes *Spitfire* as sloop-rigged. See *Utmost Gallantry*, p. 209. For a summary of *Spitfire's* operational history, see Winfield, *British Warships*, p. 378.

6. The Liverpool merchantman *Jane*. See “News Account of *Siren's* Operations in the Gulf of Guinea,” 11 August 1814, pp. 127–28.

7. For additional details on these captures, see *ibid.*, and, Leech, *Voice from the Main Deck*, pp. 125–27.

8. Based on these coordinates, modern-day Luanda, Angola.

9. On 2 September 1815, a court of inquiry convened on board the U.S. sloop of war *Hornet* at New York and absolved Nicholson and his crew of all blame in the loss of *Siren*. See DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 220 (M273, Roll No. 8). Nicholson solicited the publication of the court's opinion to counter "reports in circulation prejudicial to . . . [his] reputation as an Officer and Seaman, relative to the loss of" *Siren*. See Nicholson to Crowninshield, 22 September 1815, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 160 (M148, Roll No. 15).

## British Attack *Alligator*

*Responding to the Navy Department's charge to enforce the embargo, Captain John H. Dent in early January 1814 ordered his flotilla to fan out along South Carolina's coast to the North and South Edisto Rivers, Port Royal, Georgetown, and St. Helena Island. While on patrol, the schooner Alligator, formerly gunboat No. 166, commanded by Sailing Master Russell Bessett, successfully beat off an attack by British barges on 29 January. This assault on Alligator set the tempo for the new year, as Dent cited this cutting-out attempt by the British as a warning for all of his officers to remain vigilant.<sup>1</sup>*

*1. For further documentation on South Carolina's coastal defense operations, see the John H. Dent Letter Book held by the South Caroliniana Library at the University of South Carolina, and Tucker, Jeffersonian Gunboat Navy, pp. 138–53.*

### SAILING MASTER RUSSELL BESSETT TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

(Copy)

U.S. Schooner *Alligator* Wappoo 31st Jany. 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you, that the U. S. Schooner *Alligator* under my command was attacked on the evening of the 29th inst, (lying to an anchor in Stono river at the point of coles's Island) by six boats from an Enemy's squadron then off the mouth of the river, and succeeded in beating them off after a warm Action of thirty minutes, I have to regret on this occasion the loss of two killed and two wounded, one of the latter the pilot Mr. Robert Hatch severely; this brave man fell at the helm, exhorting those around him to take good aim at the enemy. I hope his good conduct will entitle him to your notice. It is impossible to ascertain what loss the enemy sustained, but from suddenly ceasing their fire, from the two large launches, and the other boats joining them immediately, I am induced to believe they suffered severely, as the Schooner grounded, and they did not renew the action. The sails and rigging of the Schooner are much cut, but no damage sustained in the Hull. I cannot conclude without tendering my sincere thanks to the gallant officers and men, you did me the honor to place under my command for their meritorious conduct which prevented the Schooner from falling into the hands of an enemy of more than treble our number  
With great respect &c

R Bassett

## List of Killed &amp; Wounded.

Killed	{	Joseph Bates.	seaman
		William Fields	do
Wounded.	{	Mr. R. Hatch	pilot dangerously
		James McGee,	O.S. Severly

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 86, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34). This enclosure is found preceding its cover letter, Dent to Jones, 31 January 1814, *ibid.*

LOGBOOK OF *ALLIGATOR*

Extract from the log Book.  
Jany. 30th 1814

Pleasant weather wind. S.W. at 1. PM. anchored at the of Coles's Island— at 4 PM the Frigate & Brigs close in with the breakers, when after laying too some time, made sail and stood off to the southward, I was of opinion from that moment, that they would attempt to cut us out in the night.— every preparation was accordingly made to receive them, at 30 minutes past seven PM. they were discovered six in number under cover of the marsh with muffled oars, when within speaking distance were hailed and receiving no answer, a musket was fired, which they returned with a shower of musketry and grape, accompanied with three cheers, a broadside was returned, the cable instantly cut, and sail made on the vessel there being at this time a light Air from the Southward & westward, the enemys boats were then distant about 30 yards, when a heavy fire was opened from our battery and small arms, and Kept up by the enemy for twenty minutes, when they were compelled to drop astern in great disorder, about this time the schooner grounded on a shoal (the pilot being wounded in the early part of the Action) and were not seen after.

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 86, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34). This enclosure is found preceding its cover letter, Dent to Jones, 31 January 1814, *ibid.*

ACTING COMMANDER GEORGE R. PECHELL, R.N., TO  
ADMIRAL SIR JOHN B. WARREN, R.N.

Copy

H.M. Sloop *Recruit*  
11th day of Feby. 1814—

Sir,

Having been separated from the Senior Officer for three days prior to leaving the Coast of Carolina by a Gale of Wind, it remains for me to inform you that on

the 29th. Jany., H: M: Sloop under my Command, by Signal from the *Morgiana* chased into Stona Inlet near Charleston one of the United States Schooners of War,<sup>1</sup> the boats of both Sloops were immediately sent in to endeavour to bring her out; but the Enemy, being convinced of the result, declined maintaining his position, and immediately on their near approach, discharged his Broad-side, cut his Cable, and was in an instant under all sail; the Boats, tho' under a very harrassing fire, still continued to pursue for Miles up different Creeks, when finding that they were led a considerable distance up the Country, and the small boats not being able to keep pace, the undertaking was obliged to be abandoned. The first Lieutt. and one man belonging to the *Morgiana* were the only two that were wounded in this affair. I have the honor to be Sir, Your very humble Servant

Signed G. R. Pechell, Comr.<sup>2</sup>

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fol. 273.

1. *Alligator*.

2. George R. Pechell's commission date for commander in the Royal Navy was 30 May 1814.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston 21st Feby 1814

Sir

The *Alligator* has been refitted, and will sail in the morning to cruize on the coast and Inlets, between Stono & Port Royal; the enemy continues on the coast, but have not committed any depredations, or sent their boats in since the attack on the *Alligator*. One of their large cutters engaged in that action has been picked up, on North Edisto, very much injured. I have sent for her to be brought here. also an officer, and one seaman have been found and buried, the former with his arm shot off, and a musket shot wound. I have increased the *Alligator's* complement to fifty men, which I hope will meet your approbation. A Surgeon's mate is absolutely necessary for this vessel, and I have ordered Mr Rogers<sup>1</sup> the mate of the *Nonsuch* to join her, untill one is ordered to her, or the *Nonsuch* going to sea. the surgeon of the station can do the port duty. I Have the Honor to be With great respect Your most obt Svt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 127 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. Wilmot F. Rogers was commissioned a surgeon's mate, dating from 24 July 1813.



## *Fulton I: An Experiment in Harbor Defense*

*The Secretary of the Navy's mail teemed with letters from private citizens extolling their inventions that they thought would assist the military in defeating the British during the War of 1812. Robert Fulton, a pioneer in steamboat technology, was one of the more famous correspondents. His persistent lobbying in late 1813 and early 1814 spurred Secretary Jones, at the behest of many of his naval officers, to propose legislation to fund construction of the first steam-powered warship. Even after Congress appropriated funds, Jones hesitated to commit the department's resources to this venture. He knew, for example, that there were a limited number of qualified shipbuilders. However, Jones acquiesced to pressure from New York's residents, who suffered financially from the stranglehold of the British blockade. By late May, the Navy Department had made arrangements to support the New York Committee for Harbour and Coast Defence, who were to act as navy agents in expediting construction. This private-public venture worked persistently from keel-laying on 20 June to launch on 29 October 1814.*

*Captain David Porter joined the enterprise as naval superintendent in early September, but outfitting delays postponed the ship's anticipated sailing until the spring of 1815. While Fulton labored feverously to complete his ship in the fall and winter of 1814/15, the British blockading squadron kept the Admiralty apprised of the status of Fulton I. Station commander Rear Admiral Henry Hotham considered the vessel a potentially serious threat and recommended a British response. Meanwhile, Fulton succumbed to a sudden illness, which resulted from pneumonia and his peripatetic activity to complete his steam battery and to promote another invention, a semi-submersible boat, the Mute. The engineer died on 24 February 1815, a week after peace was declared. Fulton I never assisted in ending the war and had an ignominious end, either "in ordinary" or as a receiving ship, until destroyed by an onboard explosion in 1829.<sup>1</sup>*

1. For more on Fulton and his experiments, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 210–12; Chapelle, "Fulton's 'Steam Battery'"; Tyler, "Fulton's Steam Frigate"; and Hutcheon, Robert Fulton.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM LOWNDES

The Hono. William Lowndes  
Chairman of the Naval  
Committee of the U.S

Navy Department  
Feby. 2nd. 1814

Sir/

The enclosed paper from Mr. Fulton and the Committee appointed by the Citizens of New York,<sup>1</sup> for the purpose of patronizing an invention of Robert Fulton, Esqr. will explain to you the construction and properties of a Steam Vessel of War, proposed to be built for the purpose of driving from, or destroying the enemies ships of the line in our Waters and near our Shores. The detailed description, which those documents furnish, may be farther illustrated by the inspection of a Drawing and Model of the Vessel, deposited at the Navy Department; and the Certificate of Captains Decatur, Evans, Jones, Perry, Biddle, and Warrington,<sup>2</sup> as to the Practical effect and Utility of the invention, leaves little room for doubt, Indeed it can scarcely be Considered as an experiment, because



*Robert Fulton*

all the principals, which enter into its construction, are perfectly demonstrated and reduced to practice, And only require Combination to produce the desired effect with Certainty.—

It is well ascertained that, even at the distance of the closest Naval Action, and with the heaviest charge of powder that a Gun will bear, a shot will not pass through a mass of solid timber five or Six feet thick. consequently a Vessel so constructed will be Shot proof, and, her Battery being completely under cover, which will also be proof against boarders, however great the Number or desperate the charge; without taking into View, the New and insuperable obsticals, which this engine may oppose to the assailants.—

The propelling power of steam is an Agent, with which all are now so familiar, in Navigation that it is matter of surprize how Scepticism could have continued so long. The force of the propelling power to the resistance of the body propelled, is susceptible of Accute calculation, Hence, by the combination of these principles, we possess; a body of any given Magnitude; a governing and a locomotive power protected from the possibility injury equal to the required velocity, a solidity impenetrable to the weapons of the enemy; a crew of 250 men rendered superior to an opposing force of 600; all the advantages of exchanging hot shot for cold; and an exemption from the Various casualties by which other Vessels of War are disabled or destroyed. I, have, therefore, no hesitation in recommending the adoption of Mr. Fultons plan, and if practicable, it is very desireable to accomplish the object in the Manner suggested by the Committee, so as to avoid the inconveniance of a detailed and public developement of the subject; but if a different course shall become Necessary, you will have the goodness to present the memorial of the Committee, which is also enclosed I am very respectfully your Obedt. Servt.

W. Jones

P.S I preferred Sending the Originals to detaining them for Copies, but will thank you to have them returned to the Department in order that copies may be Substituted: except the Memorials of Which only one was enclosed to me by the Committee.—

I will thank you to communicate the enclosed papers and information to the Hono. Chairman of the Naval Committee, of the Senate<sup>3</sup> to whom for the reason Mentioned, I have it not in my Power to transmit Duplicates except of this letter.—

LB, DNA, RG45, Letters to Congress, No. 2, 4 January 1811–14 March 1818, pp. 209–10 (T829, Roll No. 336).

1. The inventor Robert Fulton invited a group of businessmen and naval officers to his home in New York City on 24 December 1813 to publicize his floating, steam-powered battery. Eager to defend the port of New York, some of these men organized the Committee for Coast and Harbour Defence, headed initially by Major General Henry Dearborn. Henry Rutgers assumed that position in June 1814. The enclosed paper from Fulton and this New York committee was not found with this correspondence. For more on the first steam warship, see Tyler, "Fulton's Steam Frigate," pp. 253–74.

2. Jones neglected to include Captain Jacob Lewis, commander of the New York Flotilla, in this listing.

3. John Gaillard.

[Enclosure]

New London January third eighteen hundred and fourteen

We the undersigned have this day examined the model and plans of a vessel of war submitted to us by Robert Fulton, to carry twenty four Twenty four or Thirty two pounders, and use red hot Shot, to be propeled by steam at the speed of from four to five miles an hour, without the Aid of wind or tide

The properties of which vessel are, That without Masts or sails she can move with sufficient Speed, That her machinery being guarded she cannot be Cripple'd, That her sides are so thick as to be impenetrable to every kind of shot, And in a calm or light breeze she can take choice of position or distance from an enemy, Considering the speed which the Application of steam has already given to heavy floating bodies, We have full confidence that should such a Vessel move only four miles an hour, She could under the favorable circumstances which may always be gained over enemies vessels in our ports, harbours, bays and Sounds, be rendered more formidable to an enemy, than any kind of engine hitherto invented, And in such case she would be equal to the distruction of one or more Seventyfour's or of compelling her or them to depart from our waters. We therefore give it as our decided opinion that it is among the best interests of the United States to carry this plan into immediate execution.

Stephen Decatur

Ja Jones

J: Biddle

New York January 16'. 1814 We the Subscribers having examined the Model of the above described Vessel of War to be propell'd by Steam, do fully Concur in the above Opinions of the Practicability and Utility of the same

Sam<sup>l</sup> Evans

O. H. Perry

J Lewis

L. Warrington

DS, DNA, RG46, 13th Congress, SEN 13A-D1, Box 9.

### ROBERT FULTON TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New York Feby 16th. 1814

Sir

Your communication of the 2d. Feby<sup>l</sup> has given much pleasure to the Gentlemen of the committee, it is particularly gratifying to them, that you have taken so broad a view of the subject and see the importance of this new engine of war in the same light which they view it.—

I observe that Mr. Gaillard has brought forward a Bill in the Senate to authorize the President to build floating batteries, under this name, I hope, the steam vessel of war is meant, if so, and the Bill passes, you will have the goodness to

inform me,<sup>2</sup> if you have 24 long 32 or 24 pounders, which can be appropriated to her, if not and they must be made by Mr. Foxhall, they should be commenced so soon as the necessary funds are procured.—<sup>3</sup> If I begin the work in this month, I have little doubt of having it completely finished in July.—

Whether peace returns, or war continues this engine should be constructed; to prove its powers in war, will secure better term in making peace, to prove them in peace will cause like vessels to be constructed in the Baltic and on the French coast in the British Chanel,— in which Narrow seas in the calm months of June, July and August, their check on the existing Vessels of War, and possibly the annihilation of them, will secure us from future depredations.— In my opinion this might be the result of the invention, if it be admitted good for our Bays and Sounds, it is good for the Narrow seas to the extent here contemplated, and if so, all we ask must from necessity be granted, free Commerce, as in 1763 free bottoms, free goods, Canada and Florida, combine with our Union, and war disappear from our coasts. To a Gentleman of your mind, I may thus freely open mine, without the fear of being considered visionary, hence, you will contemplate, Sir, these immense objects, growing out of one step forward in useful science, and be its warmest friend.— I am, Sir, Respectfully Your Most Obt. Srt.

Robert Fulton

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 23 (M124, Roll No. 61).

1. There are no letters from Secretary Jones to Fulton or the members of the New York defense committee for 2 February 1814 in the Navy's correspondence.

2. On 9 February 1814, Jones sent John Gaillard, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, a proposed bill for "a floating battery" with a recommendation for a \$250,000 appropriation. On 9 March 1814, Congress authorized \$500,000 for "one or more floating batteries." *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 3, p. 104.

3. Fulton is referring to Georgetown cannon foundry owner Henry Foxall. Jones suggested the Navy Department could send cannon from Philadelphia, but urged instead that Fulton write the War Department about using cannon already in New York to save on the expense. Jones to Fulton, 21 February 1814, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 122 (M209, Roll No. 4).

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO ROBERT FULTON

Robt. Fulton Esqr  
New York

Navy Department  
May 6th 1814

Sir

I had the honor of receiving your favour of the 19th Ult.,<sup>1</sup> and very desirous, but unable to answer its object in the affirmative, I was willing to avail myself of whatever favourable circumstances, a short time might produce, to justify the immediate construction of the vessel in contemplation— I regret that a deliberate view of our naval plans & operations; which cannot be dispensed with, and which are of great magnitude & extent, particularly on all the Lakes, precludes the adoption of the plan at this time, because the present resources of this Department will be absorbed by other branches of the Naval service.—

I was desirous of possessing an approximate estimate of the cost of the Engine, and all the Machinery connected with it, which would have enabled me to calculate the cost of the Vessel & armament completely equipped—

The estimate of every thing, excepting the propelling apparatus, is perfectly simple and may be attained nearby—

I Understand that the cost of Steam Engines and machinery of various power, is in proportion to the squares of the diameters of the Cylinders; if this axiom is correct, all that is required, is the cost of any one Engine; but of this I am not possessed. The estimate however which you have made of the aggregate cost of the Vessel, completely equipped for the service—I cannot reconcile to any idea I have of the cost of a Vessel of the proposed dimensions and Description; without masts, Rigging, sails, and all the multiplied objects of Vast expense, which enter into the equipment of, and constitute so great a part of the cost of a Ship of War

The Hull of one of our new 44s, built of the best materials, upwards of 1500 tons Naval tonnage, including all the materials of wood, of Iron, of Copper, except the Sheathing, of Lead, and paints, with the workmanship in all those branches, finished complete and delivered afloat, cost by contract; but about 95.000 dollars—

The form of your model appears well adapted to the purpose, except the depth, which might be considerably reduced, by extending the horizontal dimensions of the Vessel in proportion to the diminution of the displacement by the reduction of the depth, and as the pressure of water is as its altitude, and equal column near the surface is seperated with less power, than at a greater depth. Indeed the draught of water may readily be reduced to six feet, provided the space necessary for the Boiler—and Cylinder would be sufficient—

The height of your Vessel above the surface, greatly exceeds that which is necessary for the elevation of the Battery, or the working of the guns; the wheel might work through the upper deck & still be protected from the shot of the Enemy—

I conceive a serious inconvenience will arise from the thickness of the sides being greater than the length of the longest Gun, from the breast of the Carriage; consequently the concussion of the explosion will be within the embrasure & must by repeated discharges destroy the Breast-work.—

you will pardon these suggestions, they are merely offered, to be obviated by the fertility of your genius, and that in the event of the future construction of this Vessel, we may render her form & properties as perfect as possible—

The Keels I conceive to be an unnecessary appendage increasing the draught of water without use. If strength is necessary, that can be attained by stout Keelsons inside, and if lateral resistance is the object, the Vertical plane formed by the interior sides of the Vessel, or still better, sliding Keels, will answer that end— The principles & practice of Naval Architecture, having been a favourite study & pursuit, may apologize for these criticisms upon a subject, on which you have bestowed so much thought; but it is the province of genius to elicit perfection from the objections offered to its suggestions I am very respectfully your Obt. Servt

Wm. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 158–60 (M209, Roll No. 4).

1. Jones mistakenly wrote “19th Ulto,” which would mean 19 April. He meant 19 March 1814. See Fulton to Jones, 19 March 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 116 1/2 (M124, Roll No. 61).

MAJOR GENERAL HENRY DEARBORN, U.S.A., TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Newyork May 15th. 1814

Dear Sir,

The great anxiety excited here amongst all orders of Citizans, by an intimation that the proposed Steam, man of War, is not to be built, must be my Apology for troubling you with some observations on the subject. the decided opinnions of several of the Naval Commanders heretofore expressed, together with the recent observations of Commodre. Decator & Capt Jones, at a meeting of a Committee of the Society which proposed this new mode of defence, has very much increased the anxious wishes of the best informed Citizans, for having one of those Engines of defence immediatly constructed. In a free conversation yesterday with Commodre. Decator & Capt. Jones, I was rather surprised to hear such strong & explisit observations from each of them in favour of the immense utility of such Vessels. the former observed that he doubted whether there would be as much risk in Ships of War passing all the Batteries in this harbour, as there would be from one such vessel as is proposed, after a Squadron should arrive in the harbour. the latter observed that three such vessels he would readily ingage to clear the Chesapeak of the whole British Squadron now in it. and that he would prefer such a command to any other that could be given him. such observations, from such men, could not fail of producing a strong effect on the Gentlemen present. I judge of others by myself. I had early formed a very favourable opinnion of such vessels, which the conversation alluded to, has not only confirmed, but renderdered quite sanguine. and I most ardently hope that it will be found practicable to furnish the necessary means for ha[ving] at least one such vessel built. I think Mr. Browns estimate for the Hull too high.<sup>1</sup> I am persuaded it may be constructed for much money, but of that you are a better Judge, than I can pretend to be.— I should think it advisable to have an estimate from a Philadelphia Ship Carpenter.— with respectfull esteem I am Sir your Obedt. Humbl. Servant

H. Dearborn

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 37 (M124, Roll No. 63).

1. A reference to the shipbuilders Noah and Adam Brown, who projected the cost for the ship to be \$69,800.

## ROBERT FULTON TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New York May 18th. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor of your letter of 6th. Inst. and return you my thanks for the useful remarks you have been pleased to make; should you decide to build the Vessel, I shall be happy to receive your friendly communications to render her as perfect as possible, when 320,000 \$ was mentioned by the Committee in their letter of January, It was not supposed by them that one vessel would cost so much, but that an appropriation should be made to the amount, out of which one Vessel should be constructed with all reasonable economy; Congress has been more liberal than they contemplated, and knowing your love for useful science; their and my, whole hopes rest on you; I may add that as far as I am capable of judging, the hopes of many of our most celebrated Naval officers, also of the inhabitants of New York, and all enlightened Americans rest on you for a full and fair experiment of this new engine of war; To ascertain as near as possible her cost I inclose the estimate of Adam & Noah Brown for her hull

My estimate for her Engine and Machinery

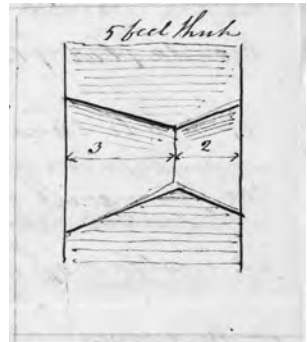
69,800\$

78,000.

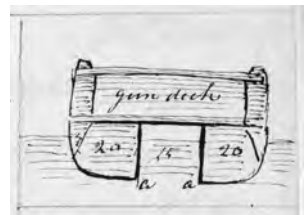
147,800\$

You can best judge of the expence of coppering her and her armament, which, if 35,000, will make her total cost 182,800, but as you have the Guns and copper, it will not require this expenditure in money.—

What you observe of the keels is correct; for steam Vessels never make leeway, and it certainly is important to have her as shallow a draught of water as possible, but if I have calculated her total weight correctly and displacement of tons of salt water she will draw from 8 to 9 feet; On conversing yesterday with Commodore Decatur and Captn. Jones, they are of opinion that her sides above the water line, five feet thick, will be sufficient, because having the power of motion in every direction, she can take any position or range, of from 600 to 1000 yards, where all her red hot shot would strike, yet the shot from the enemy could not pass through her sides at such a range; At 5 feet thick the embrasures could be made thus:

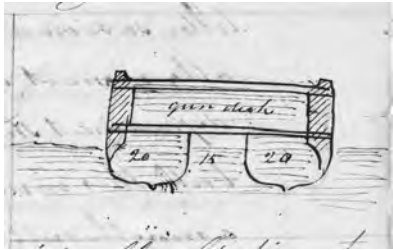


The outside cone, lined with sheet Iron, one quarter of an inch thick; as the whole vessel turns easy by means of the steam engine and by that method can place her broad side to bear at right angles with her Guns, the guns do not require much room to traverse, Those officers are also of opinion that instead of making her inner sides perpendicular, as in the model thus:

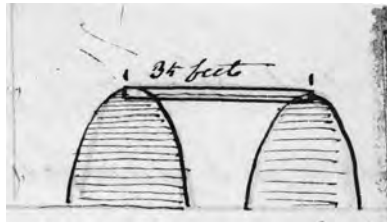




which may render it difficult to make the corners a a tight, it would be better to have her two vessels like my steam ferry boats thus:

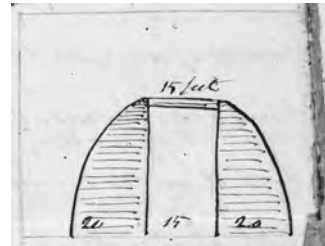


this mode is also preferred by the ship carpenter. I shall be happy to have your opinion on this part of the combination; there is I think one considerable objection to it, which is, that the braces which unite the two Sterns thus:



must be 35 feet long exposing a very broad flat floor to the shock of rising waves, Whereas if made thus:

the brace will only be 15 feet long and 15 instead of 35 feet of floor exposed to the waves. The straight sides, I also think better calculated to support the Machinery. I am, Sir, Very respectfully Your most Obedient.



Robert Fulton

May I hope for the favor of an answer to this letter so soon as time will permit; now is the favorable moment, and your administration of the navy department should have the honor of bringing into birth this invention, if built in 4 months 35.000\$ a month will be sufficient. Cannot that be economised off gun Boats or something else? for treasury notes I can get the mony here

Estimate for a Steam Engine of 120 horses power and the machinery for a Steam Vessel of War.

Boilers.

Two boilers of Copper, one quarter of an inch thick, each 22 feet long 9 feet diameter, will weigh 16000 lbs; the two will weigh 32000 lb; such copper will cost at Paul Reveeres works at Boston 73 cents a pound, the carriage to New York, workmanship, Screws bolts, &, flanges, will make them amount to one dollar a pound, or 32000\$

Furnace grates, Chimenies, water floor under the furnace, covering, guage cocks, brass fastenings, and fixtures; 3000

Engine.

Cylinder 4 feet diameter 5 foot Stroke; Nozels; Steampipes, Condencer, engine bed, handgear, Brass air pump; Bucket and piston rod of brass, bottom valve, blow valve, and all Valves of brass, frame work, bolts and braces all fixed and Secured in the Vessel

15000

Dollars— 50,000

Dollars

Brought forward

50,000

Machinery.

Beams of castiron, crank wheels, pinions, fly wheel, Shackle bars, Water wheel 16 feet diameter 14 feet on the face, its collar at the crank end of forged Iron, 11 Inches diameter, the whole a combination of great Strength and Security, Journals, journal beds, screw bolts, braces, fastenings, stops, and fixtures in their places

20,000

Communications.

Condenser, force and waste pipes, Forcing, feed, and bilge water pumps to work with the engine, All brass or copper, with their valves cocks, Stops, fixtures, and fastenings

3000

Forcing pump.

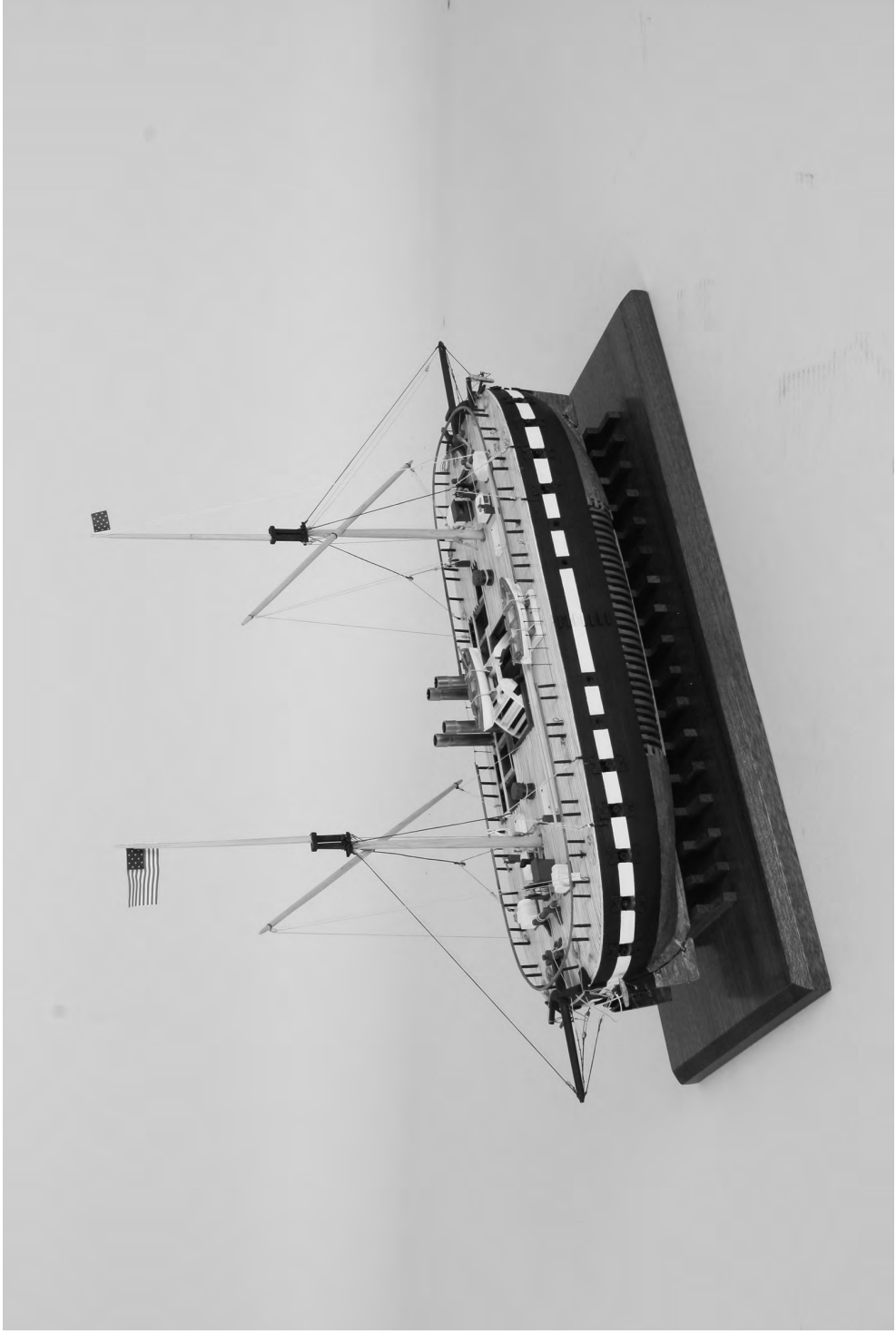
To work by the engine, capable of throwing 12 tons of water 100 feet in a minute, its beams, air vessel, tubes, leaders, and its Valves all of Brass

5000

Total.— 78.000 dollars

In consequence of working in salt water the boilers, air pump, bucket, Valves, screws and bolts, and all communications must be of Copper or Brass; which make steam Engines for vessels that work in salt water more than 50 per cent dearer than engines of the same power placed on land, with Iron boilers air pump Valves &c &c. Yet the usual estimate for an engine is 500 dollars for each horse power, which will bring an engine of 120 horses to 60,000\$, Independent of the propeling machinery. From the experience which I have in constructing Steam boats my opinion is the 78000\$ will be about the sum required, it may be 4 or 5 thousand dollars more or less; for in so new a work it is impossible to foresee exact expences; but whatever the expences may be, they shall be accounted for by bills and Vouchers which can be Examined by the committee or any person appointed from the navy department. But the plan and mode of construction must be confided to me, in all my works on Steam Vessels no one interferes with my combinations for the moving powers. I am Sir Respectfully your most Obedient

Rob<sup>t</sup> Fulton



Demologos

[Enclosure]

Mr. Robert Fulton

New York May 16. 1814

Sir

I had carefully examined the model of your intended Steam Vessel of War, previous to its being sent to Washington, and have since minutely examined your drawings on which I give you the following estimate:—

To furnish the Materials of the best kind, and build her in the best manner with copper Bolts and Spikes in all parts as high as she is to be coppered, finish her Gun—and upper Decks, pierce her port holes, build and complete her wooden walls or sides, will cost 69,800 Dollars. This does not include coppering her or any thing but the carpenters work, Wood, Iron, & copper for her hull. I am, Sir, Your most Obedient St.

A &amp; N Brown

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 45 1/2, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 63).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MAJOR GENERAL HENRY DEARBORN, U.S.A.

Major Genl. Henry Dearborn  
President of the Committee  
For Coast and Harbour defence  
New York

Navy Department  
May 23. 1814

Dear Sir

I have received your Letter of the 15th. and one on the same subject at the same time from Mr. Fulton, with estimates &c. of the probable Cost of the Contemplated Steam vessel of War, and notwithstanding the strong motives for declining the immediate Construction of the vessel as mentioned in my letter to you of the 6th. current, the force of your observations and my earnest disposition to accomplish the object, I have determined to make every effort to find resources for that purpose without interfering with the expenditures which are indispensable.—

The Committee will therefore please to Commence the Construction of a Floating Battery upon the plan and principle proposed by Mr. Fulton, and to Act as the Agents of this Department for that special purpose.—<sup>1</sup>

The character of the Gentlemen of the Committee for Coast and Harbour defence, is an abundant pledge for the judicious and economical manner in which the work will be executed and they please to Enter into such Contracts and Engagements in behalf of this Department, as the nature of the business may require and the Committee are hereby empowered to require of the Navy Store keeper, or of the Commandant of the Navy Yard, such stores or articles as may be on hand from time to time and applicable to the construction and equipment of the intended vessel.—

In the course of a day or two, I shall write Mr. Fulton in answer to his letter of the 15th.—<sup>2</sup>

In the mean time I prefer the form of the bottom of the model sent by him to this Department, to that of the double Boat, which has been suggested to him, and shall state reasons which appear to me conclusive.—

Knowing the skill, enterprize and fidelity of Mssrs. Browns, I think they will execute the work in a masterly manner with great dispatch.—I am very respectfully Dear Sir, your obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 170–71 (M209, Roll No. 4).

1. Since early 1814, New York's Committee for Coast and Harbour Defence had lobbied Jones to build a steam-powered floating battery. The committee's president and secretary renewed their efforts after Congress passed enabling legislation. At first, Jones decided "to postpone the execution, of the law," because of other "circumstances," but by 23 May he succumbed to the calls for coastal defense. Henry Dearborn and Thomas Morris to Jones, 19 April 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 51 1/2 (M124, Roll No. 63) and Jones to Dearborn and Morris, 6 May 1814, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 157 (M209, Roll No. 4).

2. Jones probably meant Fulton's letter of 18 May 1814, above.

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER

Capt. David Porter }  
U.S. Navy }  
Present }

Navy Department  
Sepr. 8th. 1814

Sir,

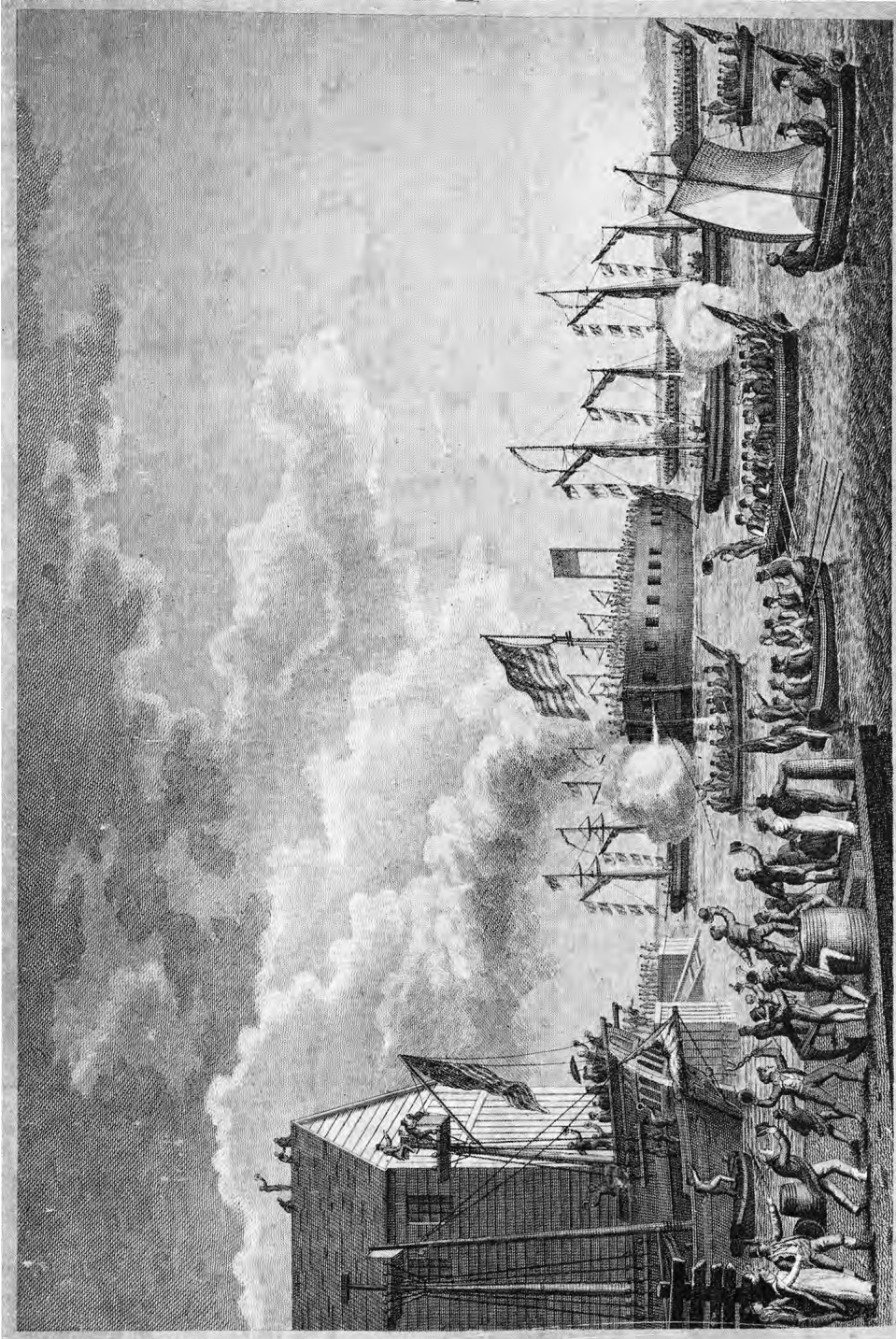
You will proceed to New York and take the command of the Steam Vessel of War now building at that place under the direction of the committee for coast and Harbour defence, for the Navy of the United States, and expedite her equipment by all the means in your power.—

You will please observe that this vessel even with the best economy will be very costly— that she is for a local and temporary purpose, and from her construction cannot be durable. Every part of her equipment will therefore be of the most plain and economical kind, & I rely upon your prudence and good management to limit the actual expenditure to that which may be required by absolute necessity.—<sup>1</sup> I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 414–15 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. The New York Committee for Coast and Harbour Defence, under Major General Henry Dearborn until Colonel Henry Rutgers succeeded him in early June, oversaw the construction of Fulton's steam battery during the summer of 1814. Jones welcomed this public/private relationship because it freed valuable manpower resources. By early September, however, David Porter needed employment and the vessel was entering its outfitting stage.



LAUNCH OF THE STEAM FRIGATE FULTON, AT NEW YORK, 29<sup>TH</sup> OCT., 1814.

*397 The long and 57 feet wide, will draw 20 feet of water. It is 120 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 57 feet high. It is built of copper plates, and is the first of the kind ever built.*

Engraved by J. B. Kneller, from a drawing by J. B. Kneller. Published by J. B. Kneller, No. 10, Broadway, New York.

## CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New York Oct. 29th. 1814

Sir/

I have the pleasure to inform you that the U.S. *Fulton the first*, was this morning safely launched— No one has yet ventured to suggest an improvement that could be made in this vessel, and (to use the words of the projector) “I would not alter her were it in my power to do so,” she promises fair to meet our most sanguine expectations, and I do not despair of being able to navigate in her from one extreme of our coast to the other— Her buoyancy astonishes every one, she now draws only eight feet three inches water, and her draft will be only ten feet with all her guns Machinery stores and crew on board; The ease with which she can now be towed with a single steam boat, renders it certain that her velocity will be sufficiently great to answer every purpose, and the manner it is intended to secure her Machinery from the enemies shot leaves no apprehension for its safety—

I shall use every exertion to prepare her for immediate service, her guns will soon be mounted, and I am assured by Mr. Fulton that her Machinery will be in operation in about six weeks. I have the Honor to be with great respect Your Obdt. Servt.

D Porter

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 78 (M125, Roll No. 40).

REAR ADMIRAL HENRY HOTHAM, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER*Superb*, at Halifax. 3rd. December 1814.

Sir,

Having considered the nature of the floating Battery to be moved by the effect of Steam which the Enemy has constructed at New York to oppose His Majesty's Ships in Long Island Sound (of which I did myself the honor to send you a description in my letter No. 11,<sup>1</sup> for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty) it has appeared that the best mode of assailing her will be by endeavours to set her on fire by hot Shot and Cascades; I have therefore applied to Rear Admiral Griffith, and Commissioner Wodehouse,<sup>2</sup> to have two Vessels fitted for that purpose, which they propose to have done in such manner as the means of the naval yard at this Port, and the Season of the year will admit; and I have provided the *Superb* with Carcases to fire from her Main Deck Guns, and with implements for using Shot heated in the Galley and Forge; but as these means may not be fully adapted to the purpose, I beg leave to request in the absence of Sir Alexander Cochrane the Commander in Chief, you will submit to their Lordships the expediency of Vessels being fitted in England and sent to this Station early in the Spring for that Service; and I would venture to suggest that they should be a discription of Vessels similar to the Gun Brigs, fitted with Furnaces, and of sufficient

strength to carry two Guns of either 32 pounder or 24 pounder Caliber, on Pivots amidships with the means of giving them any direction, and the Bulwarks to let down if necessary; the Vessels to be no larger than may be capable of navigating the Atlantic with safety, with the Guns in the Hold, and of affording accommodation to their Crews and they should be particularly provided with the means of rowing fast in Calms, as it will be at those times the Steam Battery will be most formidable; and it is expected she can receive a velocity of 5 or 6 miles perhour.

The Vessels to oppose her should be well found in Anchors and Cables as they will generally be at anchor; and two light Guns for ordinary occasions might be found useful. I have the honor to be, Sir your most obedient humble Servant

(Signed) Henry Hotham  
Rear Admiral

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fols. 152–53. This letter was enclosed in Hotham to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, 3 December 1814, *ibid.*, fol. 150.

1. For letter No. 11, Hotham to Croker, 19 November 1814, and enclosures, see *ibid.*, fols. 142–49. Hotham speculated that *Fulton I* would become a “formidable weapon in Harbor Warfare.”

2. Rear Admiral Edward Griffith and Philip Wodehouse (Commissioner of the Royal Navy dockyard, Halifax).

#### ROBERT FULTON TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Trenton January 16th 1815

Sir

While you were in New York I had not an opportunity to communicate the principal Objects In which I am engaged for harbor and coast defence and for an essay to destroy the British fleet in Kingston harbor; each of which will I hope be found worthy of your particular protection and support; I will briefly mention them and give their details or progress in any further communication you may require

First as to the Steam frigate building at New York. Of [5]00,000 \$ appropriated to build two 165,000 has been received by the Committee 50.000 \$ has been requested to complete her, the committee has made the requisition, and as dispatch is of importance you will have the goodness to order it to be remitted. 20 Guns which were on board of her have been taken out to put in the gun boats to replace guns taken from the boats for lake Ontario, Will you have the goodness to order them to be returned with 10 more 32 pounders to make up her number of 30 for the gun deck Also 2 Long 24 pounders for the spar deck. If no delay be occasioned for want of funds or Castings She will be fit for action on the first of March then the only probable chance to prove her power and Value will be to raise the blockade at New London Get out our frigates and bring them to New York, My plan for this operation I will have the honor to submit to you hereafter and in sufficient time for your deliberation; As it is probable Capt Porter will not be here to command her,<sup>1</sup> which I must regret for he is well calculated for such enterprise; I must beg of you to do me the favor to consult me on the proper person to command her: this I hope will not be considered too great a liberty when



you reflect that these engines are new in their manner of working, on which I as inventor and Engineer must give much instruction to her commander and perhaps accompany him, They also differ from the ordinary Nautical operations of Government, in a Material point: that as inventor I have a natural and Legal right in them, in honor a deep interest in their success, hitherto I have Volunteered my services to government without command, commission or pay, and as yet only request the favor to be consulted on such points connected with my invention and enterprise as may by our mutual judgement conduce most to the public good. A tried man of the highest character should command her.

Of the Steam frigate building at Baltimore her hull is there commenced Much of her machinery must be made at my works at New York for which you will have the Goodness to order from 15 to 20 thousand dollars from Baltimore to be placed in New York Subject to my order as I may require it. Any procrastination will delay the work,

Of My last invention of a Bullet proof boat, or *Mute*<sup>2</sup> I have ordered the model from Phila. to your office and I some days since Sent the officers certificates of her probable Utility to Mr Homans. The President will Give you his opinion and my plan for rendering this new engine of use particularly on lake Ontario, where whatever number of ships of war you build, they cannot enter into Kingston harbor to attack the enemy, with the *Mutes* I think you can, To prove the movements of this Vessel and make her a tender to the steam frigate it was ordered by the President that one should be constructed immediately at New York. 15,000\$ are wanted for that purpose,

I beg of you Sir to be assured that I am prepared to Use every exertion Mental and corporeal in my power to promote the public interest, may I hope for your warm cooperation— I have the honor to be Respectfully your most Obedient

Robert Fulton

Mr. Crowninshield

I return to New York in two days I do not wish that the model of the *Mute* Should be left in the office exposed to any one. when you have examined it please to order it locked in its case and send it with the key to me by the first careful person who will take charge of it in returning to New York or commodore Lewis or Genl Swartwout<sup>3</sup> who will keep it inside the stage

There is no provision by law for officers and men in United States Vessel and employ, destroying Enemy's Vessels of war I left a sketch of one in the possession of Mr Tate<sup>4</sup> chairman of the marine committee which I hope will meet your approbation and merit your Support Men must have encouragement to hardy deeds of Valor and it is the cheapest mode for driving the enemy from our waters

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 61 (M124, Roll No. 68).

1. For David Porter's appointment to command one of the commerce-raiding flying squadrons, see Jones to Porter, 16 November 1814, pp. 635–37.

2. Fulton's last invention was a bullet-proof, silent, partially submersible vessel that he aptly named *Mute*. For more on this submarine, see Colden, *Life of Robert Fulton*, pp. 233–35.

3. Commodore Jacob Lewis and Brigadier General Robert Swartwout.

4. Fulton probably wrote Charles Tait, who had recently replaced John Gaillard as chairman of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs. The inventor advocated paying prize money to crews who destroyed, as well as captured, enemy vessels of war.

## Anatomy of Defeat: The Court of Inquiry into the Loss of U.S.S. *Chesapeake*

Through the first six months of the war, the Royal Navy had to endure a string of humiliating defeats in single-ship actions against the upstart American navy's heavy frigates.<sup>1</sup> Admiralty officials attempted to explain away these losses by arguing that the American 44-gun frigates were more like line-of-battle ships than true fifth rates, making them an overmatch for their British opponents. Had these contests been fought on more equal terms, it was contended, the Royal Navy would certainly have prevailed. The defeat of U.S.S. *Chesapeake* by H.M.S. *Shannon* on 1 June 1813 in the waters off Boston Harbor lent credence to this argument, as both frigates were relatively equal in terms of size and firepower.<sup>2</sup>

But that is where the parity between these two warships ended. In terms of leadership, discipline, and fighting spirit, *Shannon* had a decided advantage over its Yankee counterpart. Captain Philip Broke had commanded the 38-gun *Leda*-class frigate since its commissioning in 1806. His was a veteran, combat-tested crew whom Broke had trained to a high state of proficiency in the art of naval gunnery.<sup>3</sup> *Chesapeake*, on the other hand, had only recently come back into service, having been laid up and out of commission at the beginning of the war. On the eve of the battle, the ship's company had spent less than four months together at sea and had yet to fight an engagement against the enemy.<sup>4</sup> More importantly, a new set of officers had been assigned to take over the ship, including the incoming captain, James Lawrence, who joined *Chesapeake* only twelve days before the rencontre with *Shannon*. Officers and replacement crew were still joining the ship the day it sailed out to meet the British foe. These circumstances did not foreordain *Chesapeake*'s defeat, but they did lengthen the odds of its victory.

The full details of *Chesapeake*'s loss remained unknown until February of 1814, when a naval court of inquiry heard testimony on the frigate's capture from recently paroled crewmen.<sup>5</sup> Two excerpts from that court's record are reproduced below. The first is the testimony of *Chesapeake*'s surviving senior officer, Lieutenant George Budd, which offers the fullest and most illuminating narrative of the day of battle, including references to a disgruntled crew who evinced no enthusiasm for taking on *Shannon*. The second is the opinion of the court on the causes of the *Chesapeake*'s loss and on the performance of its officers and crew in battle. Absent from this opinion is any judgment on Lawrence's decision to seek battle when the wording of his orders<sup>6</sup> and the combat readiness of his command dictated otherwise. In the court's judgment, the fault for *Chesapeake*'s capture lay elsewhere, not with the "brave commander" who "gallantly carried [his ship] into action."

1. *Constitution vs. Guerriere*, 19 August 1812; *United States vs. Macedonian*, 25 October 1812; and *Constitution vs. Java*, 29 December 1812. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 1, pp. 237–46, 548–53, and 639–49.

2. On the *Chesapeake-Shannon* action, see *ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 126–34, and Pullen, *Shannon and the Chesapeake*.

3. On Broke and his career, see Padfield, *Broke & the Shannon*; Voelcker, *Broke of the Shannon*; and Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, Vol. 2, pp. 367–81.

4. On 7 August 1812, Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton ordered Captain Samuel Evans to *Chesapeake*, of which he assumed command on 7 September. *Chesapeake* departed on its only wartime cruise on 17 December 1812, returning 16 weeks later on 9 April 1813. James Lawrence assumed command of the frigate on 20 May.

5. The court of inquiry investigating the loss of *Chesapeake* was held on board U.S.S. *Constitution* at the Charlestown Navy Yard 2–8 February 1814. The court's members included Commodore William Bainbridge acting as president, Captains Isaac Hull and Samuel Evans, and Judge Advocate George Sullivan.

6. Lawrence's orders, originally issued to Samuel Evans, directed him to "proceed to sea as soon as the weather and the force and position of the enemy will permit." They did not encourage or give him license to seek battle. See Jones to Evans, 6 May 1813, and Jones to Lawrence, 6 May 1813, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 19–22, and 22–23 (T829, Roll No. 453). By year's end, Secretary Jones began inserting qualifying language in his cruising orders forbidding ship commanders from giving or accepting challenges. See for example, Jones to Parker, 8 December 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 294–96.



*Chesapeake vs. Shannon, 1 June 1813*

## SUMMARY OF THE TESTIMONY OF LIEUTENANT GEORGE BUDD

United States Navy-yard.  
Charlestown, Massachusetts— [3 February 1814]

Thursday the third Day of February AD 1814. The Court met according to adjournment; and proceeded to the examination of Witnesses.

George Budd 3rd. Lieutenant was called. He testified that on the first Day of June last, being Officer of the Deck between 8 & 9 of Clock A.M. on board the United States Frigate *Chesapeake*, then lying at her moorings in Presidents Road, Boston Harbour, he discovered a sail in the Offing, and sent a midshipman to inform Capt Lawrence that there was a large sail in sight; which Witness supposed was a Frigate. Capt Lawrence came on Deck, enquired where the sail was, and went up the main-rigging to look out. When he came down, he said it was a Frigate and a large one, and ordered all hands called to unmoor the Ship They were called; and soon after Captain Lawrence ordered them to be mustered aft to the quarter-deck. They came,—Captain Lawrence addressed them—told them a Frigate was in sight; and it was his intention to go out and bring her to action. A number of the men appeared dissatisfied. Joseph Russell the boatswain's mate, Henry Thompson gunner's mate, spoke successively to Capt Lawrence—said they had not received their prize-money for the last cruise; and they wanted it to pay their Debts. Capt. Lawrence directed the Witness to send the men down, by two or three at a time, for their prize-money: and the men proceeded to unmoor the Ship.<sup>1</sup> At this time a lighter and a number of bum-boats were along side the *Chesapeake* and a number of women on board. These were ordered into the boats; and as they went the men appeared still more dissatisfied. Between eleven and twelve of Clock AM. the Ship was got under way & stood out to sea. Nothing material occurred till the crew were called to quarters about five of Clock PM. The Witness then went to his station in command of the first Division on the gun-deck; was employed in getting his division ready, when Capt. Lawrence came down and enquired of the Witness what shot were in the guns; was informed a round shot and a grape, and he ordered a cannister and bar shot to be put in besides. This was done. Afterwards Witness reported to Capt Lawrence that the anchors interfered with the working of the bow-guns and he ordered them to be got up higher. Witness afterwards reported that some of his division were intoxicated; and one, named Eliphalet Carr, from that cause useless. The *Chesapeake* was then about a mile from the enemy. Witness sent Carr away from the division; and nothing material occurred until the *Chesapeake* ranged up along side of the enemy. This was three quarters past five of Clock P.M. & Capt Lawrence hailed down the hatch-ways, ordering the witness to fire when the guns of his division could be made to [be]ar upon the enemy. Witness did so; and the action became general. As the *Chesapeake* ranged up the en[em]y-Frigate was lying to and the *Chesapeake* having [much] head-way was luffed to to deaden her way and pre[ven]t her from shooting too far a-head of the Enemy. No further orders were received by the Witness from the [Qu]arter-Deck, respecting the fire from his division; and Witness continued firing while the guns of his divisio[n] [c]ould be brought to bear, until Midshipman Curtis came down with orders from Capt Lawrence to call [the] boarders. The Witness, being a boarder, left

his division, and as he passed the other divisions, called out 'b[oa]rders away' and proceeded to the Spar-deck. He found the men in great confusion there, running about in different directions. He saw no commissioned officer on the quarter deck. The persons there were strangers, except a few of the *Chesapeake's* brace-men; who still remained. The Witness perceived that the *Chesapeake* had fallen a-board the enemy; that her sails were a-back; and gave orders to fill away the head-yards, and get a-board the fore-tack in order to clear the ship from the enemy. The head yards were filled; but the fore-tack was not got a-board—The enemy-boarders passed forward by the starboard gang-way and prevented it. The *Chesapeake* [illegible] head—the enemy's anchor being hooked into her larboard quarter-port. Great confusion prevailed among the men. Witness was in the starboard gang-way and called them aft to him; but they jumped down the hatchways without regarding the order. At this time few of the *Chesapeake's* boarders had come up. Witness went forward by the Starboard gang-way to collect and rally the men—endeavoured several times to rally them; but without success. More boarders came from the enemy-frigate, and the enemy being now much superior in number on the spar-deck, obtained compleat possession of the upper Deck Witness was then wounded and knocked down the fore-hatch—to the gun-deck. When witness recovered, he perceived there were only a few of the *Chesapeake's* men on the gun-deck; and these were going down below. Till then Witness had not given up the hope of saving the Ship. The ship was taken possession of by the enemy; and witness went to the Cock-pit. Witness saw Capt Lawrence there.— He asked what officer was on deck— The witness replied none. Capt Lawrence demanded why witness was below; and witness told him the Ship was carried.— During the action Joseph Russell in the first Division deserted his quarters. The signal for the boarders was usually given by a bugle-horn. The bugle was not however sounded and Witness believes that this circumstance occasioned the confusion. Why the horn was not sounded is unknown to the witness; but from the representation of Midshipman Curtis.

When the witness left the gun-deck there was no lieutenant on the gun-deck, and witness saw no commissioned Officer on the spar-deck, except Lieutenant Broome— Witness is not certain that he saw even Lieutt. Broome— The *Chesapeake* was not formally surrendered, the colours were hauled down by the enemy. The Ship was defended after the colours were down—some guns even were fired.

The officers behaved well during the action so far as the Witness observed except midshipman Forrest, who left his quarters and went below. The conduct of the officers after the action so far as they came under the observation of the witness was correct excepting Midshipmen Forrest and Fleshman: Forrest was often intoxicated in Halifax, as Witness was informed; and Fleshman, having [bro]ken a former parole, altered his name and wa[s] paroled by the name of Brown. The Petty-Officers and men after the action behaved well except Henry Simpson gunner's mate & Nichols Fountain master at arms. These enlisted the British service at Halifax. Several seaman entered also the British service. Those known to the witness are Henry Ensign, Peter John, Andrew Sampson, Peter Langreen, Magness Sparing, Joseph Galla, Martin Anderson, Francis Paris, John White, boy, Thomas Arthur, Charles Reynolds, John Peirce 2nd., Andrew Denham, Thomas J[on]es, Charles Goodman, Joseph Antonia, Christopher Stevens,

Charles Bowden, Charles Westerbury and Joseph Smith— George Williams, a seaman, delivered himself up as a British Subject: George Cordell a [s]eaman deserted, after committing several thefts; William Lockwood, seaman, refused to obey the orders of the Captain's cle[ark] after the engagement.—John Joyce seaman was intoxicated during the action and went to the cockpit, pretending to be wounded when he was not.— William Wainwright seaman, was taken by force; and sent by the enemy on board the *Valiant*, ship of war, at Halifax. William Withington seaman was claimed by the enemy as a British subject, and sent on board a man of war. James Parker, seaman, who was born at Salem, Massachusetts, was claimed by Lord Townsend as a British subject and sent to England in the Frigate *Eolus*. Other seaman declared they would die in prison rather than enter into the enemy's service.

The enemy-frigate. was H.B. Majesty's ship the *Shannon*, commanded by Commodore Broke. Witness does not know her force but from the representation of others. She was very much injured in the action, receiving many shot in her hull & being much cut in her standing rigging. The *Chesapeake* was considerably cut between the first and third ports on the larboard side; but was not injured below her quarters, except by one or two shot. The *Chesapeake* made no water; but the *Shannon* had hands at the pumps continually. Witness was informed by an officer of the *Shannon*, she was in a sinking condition— The gunner and Carpenter of the *Chesapeake* were put in confinement at Halifax, as the British and American agent informed the Witness, and detained there, as hostages. Lieutenant Cox told Witness at Halifax that he went to the Cockpit with Capt L. & that Captain L was displeas'd & ordered him to his quarters.

D, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 4, No. 158 (M273, Roll No. 6). Bracketed text supplied from a typescript of this document in the Navy Department Library microfilm collection, Mic 73-A.

1. On 4 February, Purser Thomas J. Chew testified: "Before the Ship got underway from President Roads the witness understood that the men were mutinous aft; and soon after some came down with a midshipman, who said that Capt Lawrence ordered their prize money to be paid to them. A number of others came down, and all who wished, received money or checks for their prize-money and were satisfied. None used any mutinous or disrespectful language in the hearing of the witness. Joseph Russell the boatswain's mate, came down, received his money and appeared satisfied." Ibid.

OPINION OF THE COURT OF INQUIRY INTO  
THE LOSS OF THE FRIGATE *CHESAPEAKE*

[Extract]

[Charlestown Navy Yard, 8 February 1814]

. . . . The Court met according to adjournment; and having maturely considered all the evidence which could be obtained respecting the cause of the surrender of the United [Sta]tes Frigate *Chesapeake* and other matters concerning which they were charged to enquire, delivered the[ir] opinion as follows:

The Court are unanimously of opinion tha[t] the *Chesapeake* was gallantly carried into action by her late brave commander; and no doubt rests with the Court from comparison of the injury respectively sustained by the Frigates that The fire of the *Chesapeake*, was much superior to that of the *Shannon*;— The *Shannon* being much cut in her spars and rigging and receiving many shot in and below her water line was reduced almost to a sinking condition, after only a few minutes cannonading from the *Chesapeake*, while the *Chesapeake* was comparatively uninjured. And the Court have no doubt if the *Chesapeake* had not accidentally fallen aboard the *Shannon* and the *Shannon*'s anchor got foul in the after quarter port of the *Chesapeake*, the *Shannon* must have very soon surrendered or sunk.

It appears to the Court that as the Ships were getting foul, Capt Lawrence ordered the boarders to be called; but the bugle-man William Brown, stationed to call the boarders by sounding a bugle, had deserted his quarters and when discovered and ordered to call, was unable from fright to sound his horn; that midshipmen went below immediately to pass the word for the boarders; but these not being called in the way they had been usually exercised, few came upon the upper deck. Confusion prevailed; a greater part of the men deserted their quarters and ran below. It appears also to the Court that when the *Shannon* got foul of the *Chesapeake*, Capt Lawrence, his first lieutenant, the sailing master, and lieutenant of marines were all killed or mortally wounded and thereby the upper deck of the *Chesapeake* was left without any commanding officer, and with only one or two young midshipmen. It also appears to the court that previously to the Ship's getting foul many of the *Chesapeake*'s spar-deck division had been killed and wounded, and the number stationed on that deck thereby considerably reduced, that these, being left without a commissioned officer or even a warrant officer except one or two inexperienced midshipmen, and not being supported by the boarders from the gun-deck, almost universally deserted their quarters. And the enemy availing himself of this defenceless state of the *Chesapeake*'s upper deck, boarded and obtained possession of the Ship with very little opposition.

From this view of the engagement and careful examination of the evidence, the Court are unanimously of opinion that the capture of the late United States Frigate *Chesapeake* was occasioned by the following causes; the almost unexampled early fall of Capt Lawrence and all the principal officers; the Bugleman's desertion of his quarters and inability to sound his horn; for the court are of opinion if the horn had been sounded when first ordered, the men being then at their quarters the boarders would have promptly repaired to the spar-deck, probably have prevented the enemy from boarding—certainly have repelled them, and might have returned the boarding with success: and the failure of the boarders on both decks to rally on the spar deck after the enemy had boarded, which might have been done successfully, it is believed, from the cautious manner in which the enemy came on board.

The Court cannot however perceive in this almost unexampled concurrence of disastrous circumstances, that the national flag has suffered any dishonour from the capture of the United States Frigate *Chesapeake* by the superior force of the British Frigate *Shannon* of fifty two carriage guns and three hundred and ninety six men. Nor do this court apprehend that the result of this engagement will in the least discourage our brave seamen from meeting the enemy hereafter on equal terms.

The Court being also charged to enquire into the conduct of the Officers and men during and after the engagement and thereupon having strictly examined and maturely considered the evidence as recorded, do find the following causes of complaint:

First. Against Lieutenant Cox, that being stationed in command of the second Division on the main Deck, he left his division during the action; while his men were at their quarters, and went upon the upper Deck: that when there, and the enemy boarding or on the point of boarding, he left the deck to assist Capt Lawrence below, went down with him from the spar deck to the berth Deck did not return to his division; but went forward on the gun-deck: that while there and the men were retreating below he commanded them to go to their duty without enforcing his Commands. But as a Court of enquiry allows an accused person no opportunity of vindicating his conduct, the members of the Court trust that their opinion on the conduct of lieutenant Cox may not be deemed conclusive against him, without trial by Court-martial

Second[d.] Against Midshipman Forres[t;] [that he] left his quarters during the action & did not return to them: and now assigns no reason for his conduct satisfactory to this Court

Third. Against Midshipman Fleshman; that he behaved in an unofficerlike manner at Halifax; assuming a false name at the office of the Commissary of Prisoners, when obtaining his parole; and was paroled by the name William Brown:

Fourth. Against the Crew generally that they deserted their quarters and ran below after the ships were foul, and the enemy boarded. But it appearing that they behaved well at their quarters before, and fired on the enemy with great rapidity and precision, the court ascribe their misconduct to the confusion naturally incident to the early loss of their officers, and the omission of the call for boarders in the accustomed manner. Yet this court is very far from [exculpating] those, who are thus criminal. It is unable to designate by name all the individuals who thus abandoned their duty; because most of the officers had recently joined the ship—some only a few days preceeding the engagement: and of course could not distinguish the men. The Court therefore respectfully submit to higher authority the expediency of withholding the wages of the crew. The persons whom the Court are able to designate by name, as deserters from their stations are: William Brown, bugleman, Joseph Russell captain of the second gun, Peter Frost and John Joyce seaman. The Court further find that the following persons entered the British service at Halifax. viz. Henry Ensign, Peter John, Andrew Simpson, Peter Langreen, Magnus Sparing, Joseph Galla, Marten Anderson, Francis Paris, John White, boy, Thomas Arthur, Charles Reynolds, John Peirce junior, Andrew Denham, Thomas Jones, Charles Goodman, Joseph Antonia, Christopher Stevens, Charles Bowden, Charles Westerbury, Joseph Smith, George Williams and George Cordell: The Court further find and report that William Wainwright, William Worthington and James Parker, the last of whom was born at Salem, Massachusetts, were claimed by the enemy as British subjects and sent on board the enemy's ships of war.

This Court respectfully beg leave to superadd that unbiased by any illiberal feelings towards the enemy they feel it their duty to state that the conduct of the enemy after boarding and carrying the *Chesapeake* was a most unwarrantable abuse of power after success—



The court is aware that in carrying a Ship by boarding the full extent of the command of an officer cannot be readily exercised; and that improper violence may unavoidably ensue. When this happens in the moment of contention, a magnanimous conquered foe will not complain. But the fact has been clearly established before this Court, that the enemy met with little opposition on the upper deck and none on the gun-deck. Yet after they had carried the ship they fired from the gun deck down the hatchways upon the berth deck and killed and wounded several of the *Chesapeake's* crew who had retreated there, were unarmed and incapable of making any opposition; that some balls were fired even into the Cockpit and what excites the utmost abhorrence this outrage was committed in the presence of a British officer standing at the hatchway.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge Prest.

This Sheet and the preceeding comprise a true record of the Proceedings of the Court of Enquiry—pursuant to the Precept hereto prefixed

Geo Sullivan  
Judge Advocate

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 4, No. 158 (M273, Roll No. 6).

## The New York Flotilla—A Manning Tug of War

*Master Commandant Jacob Lewis marshalled all available resources during 1813 to recruit men for the New York Flotilla and mold them into “amphibious Soldiers.”<sup>1</sup> Lewis relished commanding a squadron of gunboats for coastal defense: “I am perfectly satisfied to Command what has been always despised by the Navy, and thus I make it useful, I ask nothing more than the smiles of my Country—and the approbation of my Government.”<sup>2</sup> During 1814 Lewis recognized that Secretary of the Navy William Jones did not hold his expansive vision and instead raided his flotillamen for frigate and Lakes duty.*

1. Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*. Vol. 2, p. 40.

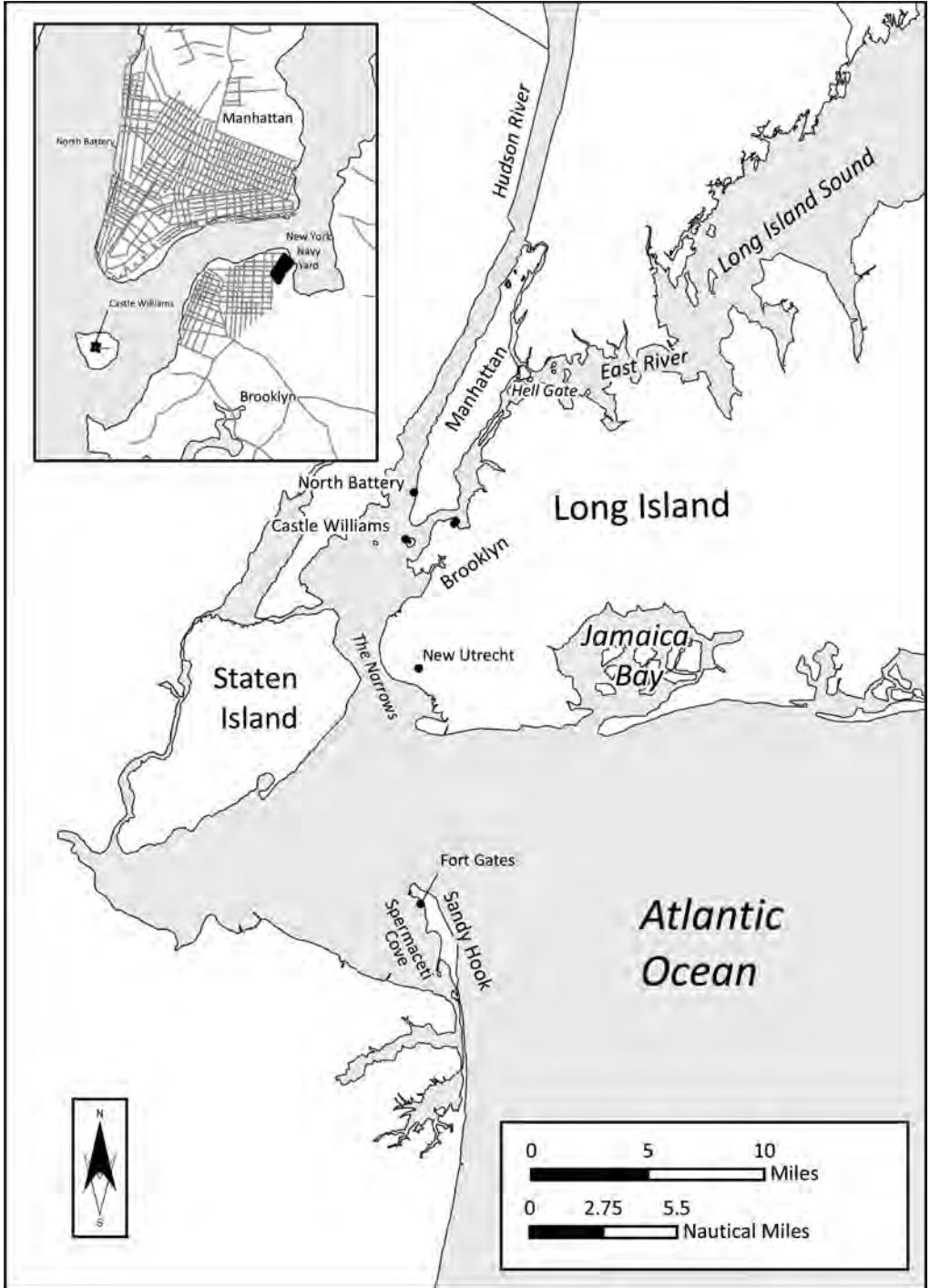
2. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

### CAPTAIN SAMUEL EVANS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

US Navy Yard New York Febuary 8 1814

Sir

I am under the necessity of informing You that I am apprehensive there will be some difficulty in procuring a crew for the *John Adams*, in time to meet your wishes— on the receipt of your letter of the 4th. inst<sup>1</sup> I immediately dispatched Sailing master Percival<sup>2</sup> (who in the absence of Commodore Lewis is Senior officer of the Flotilla) to the Hook,<sup>3</sup> with directions to bring up as many men from the Boats Stationed there as would volunteer for the service, and instructed



Map 6. New York Harbor

Captain Angus to procure from the Boats here as many as he could likewise, I have not as yet received the report of Mr. Percival, but from six or eight Boats that are here Captain Angus has only been enabled to obtain six men and them not of the best— on receiving this report I mustered them from all the Boats up, on board the *John Adams*, and endeavoured to prevail on some of them to make the voyage, without success, I even went so far, as to offer to discharge the best of those who alledged their time of service was nearly expired from the Flotilla, and give them a bounty of Twenty Dollars to reenter the service for two years and make the voyage in the ship. But their uniform answer was, “we entered for Harbour service in the Flotilla and we wish to serve our time out in it without making any other engagement,”.

Under these circumstances I have ordered a rendezvous opened for the ship, and directed the officer to give the same Bounty and advance that is given for the Lakes, I hope this measure will meet your approbation for I have resorted to it to save time in the event of Mr. Percivals not being able to obtain men from the Boats below, and under the impression that if the men are not eventually wanting for the ship, they can be transferred to the Lake service,

I am of opinion that if we are obliged to enter a crew for the ship even with the enducement I have offered It will at least take ten days or two weeks to obtain them, I am not certain [*two illegible words struck through*] a crew Could be obtained for her in two or three days by giving them the ordinary Wages and entering them for the voyage only, I think there are numbers of Riggers and others unemployed who would enter for this service, when they would on no condition enter for the service in general, but as it is so far from our usual way of entering for the service I barely suggest the probable practibility of it. . . . —

Captn. Angus informs me that there are a number of men in the Flotilla at Philadelphia who would be very glad to make the voyage with him, . . . .<sup>4</sup>

Immediately on receiving Mr. Percivals report from the Boats below I will inform you of the result of his mission

I enclose you Lieutt. Thompsons<sup>5</sup> answer to me on the subject of joining the *John Adams*. . . .

The Letter you mention to have enclosed me for the Commanding officer of the Flotilla was not received I Have the honor to be very Respectfully Sir Your Obt sert.

Sam<sup>l</sup> Evans

N B. we have received information to day that the heavy Anchor will not be ready to leave the furnace in Conneticut untill Saturday next and I shall consequently put the one we have of 74 cwt on board the ship

S Evans<sup>6</sup>

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 98 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. Jones provided Evans with details of the peace mission to Gothenburg. Evans was to outfit *John Adams* with 110 officers and crew under Master Commandant Samuel Angus. Jones to Evans, 4 February 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 208–9 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. Sailing Master John Percival's warrant dated from 6 March 1809. He had been serving at New York since 1812. After his service with the New York Flotilla, he was attached to *Peacock* on 5 March 1814. He was appointed an acting lieutenant on 18 November 1814 and lieutenant on 9 December 1814.

3. Sandy Hook, New Jersey.

4. For more about Samuel Angus's command of the Delaware Flotilla, see Dudey, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2.

5. Charles C. B. Thompson held a lieutenant's commission from 15 February 1809. After his service in New York, Thompson was ordered to New Orleans on 22 July 1814. Lieutenant Thompson's letter to Captain Evans was not found.

6. Captain Samuel Evans commanded U.S.S. *Chesapeake* until assuming command of the New York Navy Yard on 6 May 1813.

MASTER COMMANDANT JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir

I have furnished the *John Adams* with men and she is now ready for Sea—

I have at Come. Chauncey's request deliverd for Lake servise seven Guns From on board the Flotilla—

I am again call'd on by Capt. Evans To deliver a greater number—but after perusing the enclosed letter a Copy of one recd. by Mr. Bullus<sup>1</sup> on the subject of replacing the Guns In Question—I am really detered from delivering them without your orders to do so—

Ilest the Enemy should get information and take advantage of the dismantled state of the Flotilla and bring upon me disgrace and Censure— the Enemy are again before the Port— I have the honor to be with the highest Consideration and respect yr. very Obt. Servt.

J Lewis

New Yk. 23d Feby. 1814

P.S.

Since writing the above I have received information of the Enemy having landed and destroy'd two Coasting Vessels In South river about 3 miles from the High lands,

J L

this is a bolder act than I have yet witness'd

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 45 (M124, Roll No. 61).

1. Lewis is referring to Philadelphia Navy Agent George Harrison's 17 February 1814 letter to New York Navy Agent John Bullus, in which Harrison states he is sending the requested 32-pounder cannon to Bullus for use on the Lakes. Harrison to Bullus, 17 February 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 45, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 61). Lewis was hoping that Jones would not require him to furnish more guns for the Lakes. The following letter shows that Jones did intend to supply the armament needs on the Lakes by reducing the number of armed vessels in the New York Flotilla.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
 MASTER COMMANDANT JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Jacob Lewis Esqr.  
 Comm'dg. the U.S. flotilla New York

Navy Department  
 March 10th. 1814

Sir,

The Guns delivered from the Guns Boats in ordinary for the service on the Lakes are not to be replaced by those from Philada. Those boats will remain without armament until further orders and more favourable circumstances.

It appears you have 31: Gun Boats in service completely equipped which is deemed adequate to the service, and if the Guns for the Lake should be delayed by the state of the Roads you will deliver to the Agent<sup>1</sup> 6. of the Guns from the Boats in service, and upon an emergency they can certainly be replaced from some of the Batterys, untill a convenient opportunity offers to replace them from the southward.

You are fully impressed with the importance of hastening every thing for the Lake service as every thing depends upon the early equipment of the force in that quarter. I therefore rely with confidence upon your zeal and exertions to forward that service. I am respectfully &c

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 238 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. New York Navy Agent John Bullus.

MASTER COMMANDANT JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE,  
 TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that I have succeeded in obtaining the release of the prisoners detained on board the *Belvedera*, the Garrison at Fort Gates<sup>1</sup> having revolted renders my situation at this post very precarious—however—I have protected ever since Its existance, & I trust I shall Continue to do so—but I must beg leave to observe that my force is Extremely diminished, instead of the thirty one boats which you have been informed I have Compleat, I have not half the number, and there are two passages to protect at a distance of forty miles from Each other— a great portion of my mens times are out, the pick of them I put on board the *J. Adams & Peacock*— the truth is that forty boats in new York is not Equal to fifteen (nay) Ten in the Delaware on account of the advance position of the one and the Circumstance of the Long Island sound being so accessible to the Enemy—

one day the Enemy are at Hell Gate,<sup>2</sup> the next day the[y] make a divurti[o]n at the Hook, in this manner, numbers must be devided I am recruiting as fast as possible and drilin[g] as fast as I recruit— my numbers are very small at

present—vastly inferior to what is required, I am induced to state facts lest an event should take place and I should become ansurable for not having done so— The Millitary Post at Sandy Hook is always In a bad state for any purpose & with it my salvation in a measure depends, I wish four Companies of Sea Fencebles Could be placed In Fort Gates— with a post of four hundrud at the high lands— I would with the Sea fenceble force feel as tho this post was tenable against an attack— as it is I am always appre[h]ensive of being disgraced— one day Volunteers have the post another—Mutineers—& so it has been during my Command— by the time they are learned how to fire a Gun they have uniformly been relieved— In great haste—I have sent Ten ring leaders—of the mutineers to the City—I hope to be Shott— nothing is so much required among the Soldiers as a little Shoting—and that without delay I am Sir with high Consd. & respt. Yr. vry Obt. Srt.

J Lewis

Spermecetea Cove  
24th. March 1814

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 2 (M124, Roll No. 62).

1. Fort Gates, located at Sandy Hook, New Jersey, was a temporary wooden fort occupied by the U.S. Army and New Jersey and New York militia.

2. Hell Gate is a narrow tidal strait in the East River off New York City.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Jacob Lewis Esq.  
Comm'dg. U.S. Flotilla  
New York

}

Navy Department  
April 18th. 1814

Sir,

I am compelled again to advert to the plenary powers you assume without the sanction or Knowledge of the Department.—

I find by the requisitions from Boston that you have a rendezvous there for recruiting men for the New York Flotilla, thus coming in competition with the recruiting service for the Lakes, contrary to my expectation & intentions.

You will therefore withdraw your officer from Boston and confine your rendezvous exclusively to New York, and until I receive a correct muster Roll of all the officers and men under your command you will not recruit another man except those whose time may expire.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 283 (M149, Roll No. 11).

MASTER COMMANDANT JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir

I lose no time in acknowledging the honor of having received your particular instruction of the 18th., which I assure you will be promptly Complied with,

also your instructions of the same date relative to the recruiting servise; about which I must beg leave to make some remarks, It was In Consequence of an order received from you to me when I had the honor of Visiting you at Washington, that I opened a re[n]dezvous; you gave this orders at the same moment you requested me to man the *John Adams* from the Flotilla, not being limited as to place I was Governed by the hitherto Custom of the servise, and the Example of other officers in the servise, which appeared to be to recruit wherever men could be found, I saw re[n]dezvous opened in different parts of the City of New York for the Lake servise, for the *Congress* Frigate—and for all servise but I did not know of my rendezvous being open'd, at the place where I opened one, which was at Marblehead, where I thought I should be out of the way of all competition— I did not open any at Boston as you have been informed; Marblehead is the place of my Nativity—I am known to all the inhabitants, therefore they are willing to serve under my Command, they will not go into the servise under the Command of a stranger, I am Confident that there is not one man among the whole number that I have recruited in that Town, that could be induced to go into the Lake servise;

another great (and in fact) primary object for opening a re[n]dezvous at M. Head, was the curcumstance of having discharged nearly one hundred men whose Term of servise had expired. and Nearly all whom belonged to that Town, at the Time of receiving their discharge—they all promised to Join the Flotilla in the spring.— they have been faithful to their promise they have with the exception of very few all returned— it is of these men I have principley recruited—

I trust Sir, that the within statement of facts—will be satisfactory as to my motives, and that the charge of assumision of plenery power will not stand prefer'd against me—

If I have done wrong according to your expectations and intensions I am Extreemly Sorry. I could not have devined them, for be Assured Sir, I study to avoid your Censure, and receive your approbation as much as in my power lies—

And it is the ardent desire I feel to please, Together the Zeal I feel for the servise, that has too often placed me in a situation to be mortified— I have the honor to Assure you of my Consr. & respt.

J Lewis

Sandy Hook  
25t. Apl. 1814

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE<sup>1</sup>

Jacob Lewis Esqr. Comm'dt. U.S. Flotilla New York	}	Navy Department April 29th. 1814
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Sir,

I have before me your Letter of the 25th. current, explanative of your recruiting orders.— When you were authorized to recruit for the Flotilla, I had no idea of a Rendezvous, beyond the district of your command because the men are recruited for the Special defence of that district and for a short period.— In no instance within my knowledge, have men been recruited for the Flotilla service specially, out of the district in which they serve; hence the recruiting for the Chesapeake & Delaware Flotillas, has been confined to those places, and the reason is as obvious as proper.

No officer will have cause for mortification, who will keep himself within the bounds of his proper authority, and comply with the essential articles of the regulations, for the government of his conduct.—

And I will take this occasion to say, that many occurrences in the course of your Command, have passed without animadversion, from a conviction of your good intentions, which would have warranted particular notice; I allude, Sir, to the appointment and dismissal of officers, even of the Rank of Sailing Masters, without the sanction or knowledge of the Department.— You must know, Sir, that no officer acting as a Warrant officer, within the United States, can be recognised as such, unless sanctioned by the Department; yet how many have you appointed, without even reporting the appointments to the Department?

Instead of regular Muster Rolls at least every second month, showing every officer and man under your command, the time and terms of entry &c, this important part of duty is almost entirely neglected.—

This you will in future transmit monthly, together with a general report of the state and condition of the flotilla.—

I wish to know the express terms on which you recruit the men for the Flotilla, in order to know, to what extent their services may be required.— And I wish you to understand explicitly, that the force under your Command, is not intended for the exclusive defence of New York Harbour, It must also protect the Sound, as far as may be practicable, otherwise I shall be under the necessity of detaching a part for that purpose. I am &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 304 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Jacob Lewis's promotion to captain in the Flotilla Service dated from 26 April 1814.



CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.G.B. 47.— April 30. 1814.

Sir:—

The roll of the U.S. Flotilla under my command, is making out, and will be transmitted to you with all possible despatch.—

In the mean time I deem it my duty to repeat to you the information which I had already transmitted to the Dept.— (which is) that on or about the middle of June next nearly four hundred men's times will expire;— and to further observe, that it is impossible to recruit men as fast as their times of service daily expire.—

If it could be thought expedient to connect the Sea fencible force with the Flotilla, (agreeably to the original intention) it would strengthen it prodigiously.—

There are about seventy seamen in the corps at this post, under the command of a Captain and a Boatswain:— it is found impracticable to amalgamate them with Army Soldiers;— they are in every respect a non Descript force—and are so called in the instructions from the War Dept. to the capt of said corps.

It had been tried to mix them with the Garrison at Fort Richmond<sup>1</sup> at the Narrows and in a very short time, two of them were shot dead by the soldiers— one of them Killed on the spot.— they have since been moved to a Tavern at New Utrecht<sup>2</sup> a little below the Narrows;— I have solicited Genl. Dearborn<sup>3</sup> to place them at the Blockhouse at Spermaceti cove, the most important post on the Hook— The number would be equal to it's defence and are only sufficient for the occupation of such a post;— and (being all sailors) would assimilate with the Flotilla men;— and being so near, could render very essential services, in manning the Galleys, on an emergency and thus afford great assistance to the Flotilla;— for whenever I am obliged to man the Barges (which very frequently happens) I am compelled to weaken the Gun boats.— The General However declines placing them there.— notwithstanding that the block house alluded to commands the position of the Flotilla, and should consequently be rendered as safe as possible from any sudden occupation of it by the Enemy.— During the time the Militia and volunteers were stationed in it, I had occasion to be very much displeased with their conduct, and felt apprehensive that the Enemy would surprise and possess themselves of it:— after several times expressing my dissatisfaction and apprehension to the General—He proposed that I should take it under my charge;— as it was not inconvenient, then, to do so, I cheerfully accepted.— But the reason which then existed, for taking this step, does not now exist, in the same degree— The troops which at present are posted at Sandy Hook, altho' all new recruits, are regulars, and will in a few months be good soldiers.— I have requested the General to send a detachment of these men from Fort Gates to occupy the Block house (He having declined sending the Sea fencibles)— His answer was he would send fifteen men and one officer to occupy it— should the Enemy find out that there are only this insignificant number of men at the post,

to defend it, and man one Thirty two pounder and Two twelves (and as to means of information, the Fishermen will afford them in abundance) They will certainly possess themselves of it, unless they relinquish the attempt thro' a want of their wonted enterprize, or for want of proper authority to make it.—

My motive for being thus prolix is to give you a knowledge of the state of things here, and to prevent if possible a repetition of military blunders and disgrace;— an opprobrium always thrown on the Executive by the opposition.— I have the honor to assure you of my high Constr. & respt.

J Lewis

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 132 (M124, Roll No. 62).

1. Fort Richmond was a semi-circular water battery on Staten Island, situated to secure the Narrows, the entrance from the Atlantic Ocean into the Hudson River.

2. New Utrecht, Brooklyn, New York.

3. Major General Henry Dearborn.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Capt. Jacob Lewis  
Com'dg. U.S. Flotilla New-York }  
}

Navy Department  
June 4th. 1814

Sir,

Commodore Decatur has represented to me that of the men whose times will expire in the course of this month in the Flotilla under your command, there are some who are willing to volunteer for the *President* and that he is in want of about 50 or 60 which you are willing to transfer to that Ship,— While it is extremely desirable that She should not be detained for a few I have no desire to strip the Flotilla for that purpose, but if you can without inconvenience to the Flotilla service let him have the number required and thus get clear of the competition of his Rendezvous, I shall be gratified.—<sup>1</sup>

The times of a number of your men will expire this month and you will use your best exertions to reshipe them and to recruit as many more as will make an aggregate of Six hundred officers and men for your Command.—

If they will enter for the Naval Service generally you will allow them the usual pay and twenty dollars Bounty and you may enter them for the Flotilla service for six months for the usual pay without Bounty, or for the same service for eighteen months with the usual pay & ten dollars Bounty to seamen, and in proportion to ordinary seamen &ca. I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 330 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Commodore Stephen Decatur would not set sail from New York for another six months. See pp. 693–711 for *President's* last cruise.

## *Ferret Sinks*

*The scarcity of vessels on the Charleston Station early in 1814 challenged its commander, Captain John H. Dent, to accelerate the building of new barges. Alligator underwent several weeks of repairs after its late January 1814 engagement with the enemy. In early February, the schooner Ferret sank after a sudden gale. Although the subsequent court of inquiry found “no blame imputed” to Lieutenant Kearny, it did mildly criticize him for not keeping his vessel fully equipped. That reprimand did not deter Kearny from serving a long, successful tenure in the Navy.*

LIEUTENANT LAWRENCE KEARNY TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

Charleston 10th Feby 1814

Sir

When I had the honor to communicate to you the loss of the U. S. Schooner *Ferret* under my command, I was not able to state to you the circumstances attending it, and I hereby embrace the opportunity.<sup>1</sup>

Being at Port Royal on the 29th January, I had the honor to receive, (by Capt Henly)<sup>2</sup> your orders, in compliance of which I set out for this place for provisions, stopping at St Helena sound to supply the *Alligator*, also to get from her the Pilot<sup>3</sup> (who attended both vessels alternatively) to fetch me to this place— my not finding either the *Alligator* or a Pilot, I proceeded to sea early the next day with the intention of taking a Pilot off Charleston bar, but, falling in with two cruisers off Stono, I was obliged to put into that Inlet to evade them. The weather being such as not to allow me to get out next day, I proceeded up Stono River for the purpose of making my way inland, but found I could not pass through Wappoo Cut, there not being a sufficiency of water when I again returned to the inlet.

On the 2nd of February I proceeded down Stono Inlet, but finding the sea very heavy on the bar in consequence of the Easterly gales, that prevailed for two or three days, and the tide at the same time being low the wind light, I conceived it most prudent to anchor untill a more favorable time should offer— While at anchor between the North & South Breakers, the wind shifted suddenly to the westward, and blew a gale which obliged me to let go a second Anchor, and send every thing down from aloft, that would in the least effect her; the wind continuing to blow heavy, the ebb tide and night approaching, I consulted with my officers respecting the propriety of attempting to ride it out thro the night, as the holding ground was bad there was little probability of her holding on after the ebb should make, which in the channel where we then lay runs very hard. It being thought most prudent to shift our birth, I got under way with the intention of either getting further up the Inlet in better anchorage or run the risk of getting her out to sea— when beating up, and in the act of going about, I had the misfortune to touch ground aft, and by the heavy sea running was hove into Shoaler water, when she soon lost her rudder and bilged; the masts were then cut away, and her deck cleared of every article of weight, after finding her partly full of water, and all hopes of saving the vessel vain, I commenced getting the men on shore— the sick and such as were least able to assist themselves being first sent off. the boats were not able to return for a long

time in consequence of the heavy breakers around the vessel— at low water the sea abated a little and afforded us all an opportunity of reaching the shore in safety, though without having saved any property either public or private. We were all received with much hospitality at the plantation of Mr. Darby; next morning, the 3rd. I proceeded to the wreck, but was not able to save anything of consequence, the sea breaking heavy over, and about it. from the 3rd to the 5th I employed the crew, at saving what of the public stores they could— part of them have arrived & been deposited in the Public Store at this place. The barges sent to my assistance, are now employed in saving from the wreck, what articles they can come at. To the good conduct, and great exertions of all the officers and men, must be attributed the happy circumstance of there being no lives lost. I Have the Honor to be very respectfully Your Most obt Svt

Lawrence Kearny

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 114, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34). Enclosed in Dent to Jones, 14 February 1814, *ibid.*

1. Kearny to Dent, 3 February 1814, ScU, John H. Dent Letter Book, 1813–1814.
2. Master Commandant John D. Henley.
3. Robert Hatch.

#### ARTICLES SAVED FROM U.S.S. *FERRET*

List of Articles Saved from the wreck of the late U. S. Schooner *Ferret* Lieut Lawrence Kearney. commander.

1. 9 inch Cable
1. 5 do Hawser
- 28½ fathoms. 7 in Cable
- 1 gaft Topsail
- 1 Staysail
- 1 main sail
- 1 nine pound Carronnade
- 1 six pound. do
- 1 Gun Carriage
- 1 pair gang way staunchions
- 2 pair signal Halliards
- 1 Ensign, Jack & pendant
- 1 log & Reel.
- 11 Trucks for Guns. 16 Blocks
- 2 pr Shrouds. 31—9 pd. Shot.
- 3 Sponges. 1 Worm & ladle
- 4 signal lanthorns. 2 side do—
- 4 Water Casks. 2 marlin spikes
- 1 sett of signals
- 2 boats & Oars

Charleston 10th Feby 1814

Lawrence Kearny

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 114, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34).  
Enclosed in Dent to Jones, 14 February 1814, *ibid.*, No. 114.

COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE LOSS OF *FERRET*

[Extract]

on board the Schooner *Carolina*  
in the Harbour of Charleston the 11th: April 1814.

At a Court of Enquiry held on board the Schooner *Carolina*—by Virtue of an Order from the Secretary of the Navy—to enquire into the Causes of the loss of the United States Schooner *Ferret*<sup>1</sup>— dated the 25 february 1814.<sup>2</sup>

Present

Captain John H. Dent. President  
John D. Henley Master Commandant  
E. R. Davis Lieutenant.<sup>3</sup>

John S. Cogdell Judge Advocate.

. . . .The Examination being closed the Court adjourned—until tomorrow at 10 OClock A.M.

12th. April 1814.

At a Court of Enquiry held according to adjournment—Present  
Capt. John H. Dent President  
John D. Henley—Master Commandant  
E. R. Davis Lieut.

John S. Cogdell Judge Advocate.

The Proceedings being read over: the Court proceeded to give their opinion as directed by the Order aforesaid.—

Opinion of the Court.

after mature deliberation, and an attentive consideration of the Evidence—the Court are of Opinion, that no censure can be attached to Lieut. Lawrence Kearney—Officers, & Crew for the loss of the United States Schooner “*Ferret*” and that her loss is attributable to her having missed stays—at which time she grounded and that every exertion was made to save her stores &c:— XX<sup>4</sup> the Court however think Lieut. Kearney was incorrect in not advising the Commanding officer on the station of his want of provision—and waiting his answer—before he attempted to depart from Wappo Cut.

J H Dent—president

John S. Cogdell  
Judge Advocate

XX

The “enemys ship & brig” had been obliged to leave the coast in the gale, and it was deemed best to make for Charleston as soon as the “Ferret” could get out, & before the Enemy returned to their station—L. Kearny

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 5, No. 160 (M273, Roll No. 7).

1. *Ferret*.

2. Jones to Dent, 25 February 1814, DNA, SNL, RG45, Vol. 11, p. 225 (M149, Roll No. 11).

3. A lieutenant dating from 10 January 1813, Enos R. Davis served at Charleston, South Carolina, from 24 May 1813 until his departure for Wilmington, North Carolina, on 17 December 1814.

4. This statement was added in by Lieutenant Kearny.

## *Constitution* Sails Under a New Commander

*When Charles Stewart assumed command of Constitution in June 1813, the possibility of a summertime cruise against the enemy appeared unpromising. Although most of the frigate’s major repairs had been completed by month’s end, “Old Ironsides” still required a complete outfit of provisions, naval stores, and supplies. A more serious problem was the frigate’s lack of manpower. Many of the veterans who had served under Hull and Bainbridge had been drafted for service on the Northern Lakes, thereby depleting the ship’s rolls, a situation further exacerbated by a high rate of desertion that summer. In addition, the Navy Department transferred a number of Constitution’s officers to other vessels in the fleet.<sup>1</sup> Finally, an active British blockading squadron limited opportunities for any American warship attempting to sortie from Boston Harbor in the summer and fall of 1813.*

*It was not until the second week of December that Stewart had completed his crew and readied his ship for operations. William Jones’s cruising orders to Stewart directed him to sail to the coast of Cayenne (French Guiana), follow a northern trek through the Windward and Leeward Islands, and then choose between continuing operations in the West Indies or cruising in European waters.<sup>2</sup> The Navy Secretary admonished Constitution’s commander to eschew single-ship actions in favor of attacks on the British merchant marine. The following documents detail Charles Stewart’s first wartime cruise in “Old Ironsides,” one that came to a premature close.*

1. For a brief discussion of these issues, see Martin, *Most Fortunate Ship*, pp. 181–83.

2. For Stewart’s cruising orders, see Jones to Stewart, 19 September 1813, pp. 1077–79. *Constitution* sailed from Boston on the afternoon of 30 December 1813. See *Boston Gazette*, 3 January 1814. *Constitution’s* logbook recorded the date of its sailing in sea time as 31 December. See DNA, RG24, *Logbooks and Journals of U.S.S. Constitution*, Vol. 4, 31 December 1813 (M1030, Roll No. 1).

LIEUTENANT EDWARD L. STEPHENS, R.N., TO  
ADMIRAL SIR JOHN B. WARREN, R.N.

Copy

Barbadoes, 17th Feby. 1814—

Sir,

I have the unhappy task of relating to you the Capture of His Majesty's Schooner *Pictou* by the United States Frigate *Constitution*; On the night of the 13th. Instant in Latte. 11°–02", Longe. 54° 40"<sup>1</sup> at 11 oClock a Sail was discovered to Windward which I perceived to be a Ship of War and bore up to speak the *Lovely Ann* under my Convoy, followed almost immediately by the stranger; as soon as the *Lovely Ann* had made sail, I made sail myself, having made the Private Signal which was not answered— By half past one I could scarcely see either the *Lovely Ann* or the Ship of War, I then shortened sail, keeping so far ahead that I at times only could see the *Lovely Ann* following us; At three oClock we lost sight of both Ships, before daylight I brought too, and at daylight saw the *Lovely Ann* far astern and the Man of War much nearer on our Weather Quarter; from her appearance and not answering our signals I was soon convinced she was an Enemy's Frigate, and as she was coming very fast up with us (after I had again made all sail from her) she being so far to Windward as to enable her to carry her Fore Topmast Studing Sail, I tacked with the hope of crossing her, which unfortunately I could not effect; my only chance then became to put directly before the Wind, which I did and ran until the Enemy's Frigate, within Musquet Shot, had materially damaged our Sails and Rigging, and was on the Point of pouring her Broadside into us, when I yielded to the necessity of saving the Lives of my Officers and Crew, whose conduct on the occasion excites my warmest gratitude, by striking my colours.—

On going onboard the *Constitution* I learned the *Lovely Ann* was Captured by her between two and three o'Clock.

I have to express the obligation of my Officers and self for the polite attention paid us onboard the American Frigate, and Captn. Stewart having given us our Parole, I have to acquaint you of our arrival here in the *Lovely Ann*, which Ship was given up to us for that purpose. I have the honor to be Sir, Your very humble And Obedient servant

Signed E: L: Stephens Lieut. & Com

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 397–98. A copy of Stephens's letter, dated 15 February 1814, is included in the minutes of the court-martial investigating *Pictou*'s capture. The court convened on 3 August 1814 on board H.M.S. *La Hogue* in Halifax Harbor. Stephens and his crew were absolved of blame in the loss of *Pictou*. See UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/5444, "Minutes of Court Martial on Lieutt. Stephens of the *Pictou* capt'd. by the American Ship *Constitution*.—held 8th. Augt. 1814."

1. Approximately 307 nautical miles southeast of Barbados.



*Charles Stewart*



## CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

United States Frigate *Constitution*  
Salem Harbour April 4. 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that we arrived at this place last evening, having been closely chased by two Ships of war of the Enemy,<sup>1</sup> which prevented our reaching Boston; the chase being before the wind and the breeze light obliged us to lighten our ship, and some articles of no great value were thrown overboard.

I regret that our cruise has been so unsuccessful, and that we captured but four of the Enemy's vessels (as per list inclosed) although we chased every thing that we saw until yesterday. We closely pressed his Majesty's brig of war *Musquito*, off Surinam, where she escaped us by running in the mud and our draught of water would not permit a further pursuit. A packet, to windward of Barbadoes, escaped us in the night favoured by a change of wind. We also chased a frigate<sup>2</sup> through the Mona passage, which escaped us by the wind changing in her favour and leaving us becalmed. The animation displayed by the Officers and Crew, at so near a prospect of adding another laurel, Constitutionally, to the Naval wreath, leaves no doubt of the honour[able] result had we been fortunate enough to bring her to action.

We cruised some time in the Gulf passage, to intercept any thing there might be passing from the leeward Islands; we also scoured along the Coast of Georgia and South Carolina, but found no blockading cruisers there; we endeavoured to have communication with Charleston, and draw supplies from thence, but the weather was so thick we could not see the land in seven fathoms water off the bar. From that coast we returned to Boston Bay, cruising round Bermuda to the Southward and Westward, Southward and Eastward, and Northward & Eastward.

Our supplies would have enabled us to keep the sea a month longer, but our keeping out that time would have rendered our getting into the United States precarious, which, if disappointed in, we should not have been enabled afterwards to have reached a foreign port; added to this, scorbutic symptoms began to make their appearance,<sup>3</sup> and we had certain information from Bermuda that most of the Ships were in provisioning and preparing for the Spring blockade:— I therefore considered the safe return of the ship to the United States more important than a lengthened cruise, and that her being blockaded in the United States for the Summer would be preferred to a like blockade in a foreign port, as the Officers and Crew could [be] usefully employed in such other manner as Government might deem best.

The Ship leaks considerably, which I believe is principally in her seams.

Inclosed I hand you the periods of the departure of the Convoys, this Summer, from the windward Islands, but the convoying force will be such as to leave little in the power of a single ship.<sup>4</sup> The first fleet will perhaps be the most valuable that has for many years left the West Indies. I have the honor to be, Sir, Very Respectfully Your obedient Servant

Ch<sup>s</sup>. Stewart

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 117 (M125, Roll No. 35). Bracketed text is supplied from another copy of this letter in DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 5, No. 163 (M273, Roll No. 7).

1. H.M. frigates *Junon* and *Tenedos*.
2. Identified as H.M. frigate *Pique*, Hon. Captain Anthony Maitland commanding, in the 11 April edition of the *Boston Gazette*.
3. Lieutenant Henry E. Ballard, *Constitution's* first lieutenant, informed Stewart of the appearance of scurvy aboard ship on 21 March. See *Constitution* logbooks, 21 March 1814.
4. Enclosure not found.

[Enclosure]

List of Vessels captured by United States frigate *Constitution* Charles Stewart Esqr. Commander

Ship *Lovely Ann* of London, 12 guns, 16 men. Cargo flour, fish, and lumber bound to Surinam ordered to Barbadoes as a Cartel after throwing part of her cargo and her armament overboard

His Britannic Majesty's Schooner *Pictou* 13 guns 57 men. Burnt.

Schooner *Phoenix* cargo lumber from Demerara to Barbadoes with despatches. Sunk.

Brig *Catherine* from Grenada, to St. Thomas. ballast. Sunk<sup>1</sup>

D, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 117, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. *Constitution* captured *Lovely Ann* and *Pictou* on 14 February, *Phoenix* on 17 February, and *Catherine* on 19 February.

CAPTAIN CLOTWORTHY UPTON, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N.

*Junon*, Off Cape Ann  
4th. April 1814

Sir,

Under the impression, that an occasion may offer, for forwarding a letter, which may not afford time for writing, I lose no time in detailing to you, that on the 30th. I learnt from a fisherman the *Congress* and *Wasp* were Still at Portsmouth; At about ½ past 7 A.M. of the 3rd. inst. a large Ship was discovered in the N.W. and the land about Cape Ann, bearing W by N at the Same time; The *Junon* and *Tenedos* being pressed in with the land, the Stranger was easily made out to be a large Frigate, under a full Sail, running along shore to the Westward, and there did appear to be a prospect of cutting her off, from the adjacent Harbours untill about 10 AM. when, being between the Ports of Cape Ann and Salem, he was observed to be lightning the Ship by various means, and either from that Circumstance, or a more favourable tide close in shore, he left both ships fast; he was ~~observed~~ however So much pressed, particularly

by the *Tenedos*, (whose Station had given him the lead) that although he had passed Salem, evidently intending to push for Boston, he Shortly after Noon, rounded the Halfway Rock, and ran into Marblehead, where (from his not tending for Some time after he appeared to have anchored) I imagine he grounded within in Fort, and I am the more inclined to this opinion, as he made Signal for a Pilot Shortly after furling Sails, and towards evening moved under his Topsails and Staysails, by an Inner Channel, to the Harbor of Salem. I do not think he is quite at ease there, for I understand the Water is but Shoal in that Harbour.

With Southerly or Easterly Winds he Cannot move, but as these winds oblige us to Keep an offing, and his Distance from Boston a very few leagues, he would be enabled to effect his object, before we could regain a position off Salem whenever a Northerly or Westerly Wind may occur.”

There appears to be Some probability, this may be the *Congress*, and if so, that she was going to Boston for Men; fishermen having stated her to be 80 Short, Some days previous. Yet, her entrance length, prevents my implicitly yielding to that opinion, for *Tenedos*, appeared to us to bear Such a proportion in length to her, as the *Rattler* would to *Tenedos*. She was painted with a Single yellow streak, black Stern, and her intire hue So perfectly Strait, that when her Hull first rose above the Horizon, I could scarce persuade myself She was more than a Corvette. She had sliding Staymasts, was long getting them up, as well, as in her other Maneuvres. Her Hull, for So large a Ship, appeared particularly low; if she be not *Congress*, I know no other Ship which will answer the Description except *President*; that she is an American, I have no doubt, for she wore those Colours at anchor, and shewed them a few minutes off Cape Ann.

I have taken one Man and the Gear out of a fishing Boat promising to give up both, when the Master should bring me out the Frigates name, to which he made no objection, the weather however has not admitted our going in with the Harbour.

The Customs are so very rigid with the fishermen, intelligence is not readily obtained, for they avoid us; I have therefore threatned to destroy those Boats which should attempt to run from us. Through them, I have learnt, the *America*, a large Ship Privateer, got into Portsmouth on or about the 29th.; and that with permission to catch fish, Some trifling coasting Trade is also admitted. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your very obedient humble Servant

Signed C Upton, Capt.

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fols. 5–6. Endorsed in Griffith’s hand opposite the dateline followed by a right brace: “a Copy—/Edw. Griffith/Rr. Adml.” Addressed flush left below signature line: “Rear Admiral Griffith.” For another copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 288–89.

REPORT OF *CONSTITUTION*'S ESCAPE INTO MARBLEHEAD HARBOR

[Salem, Massachusetts, 5 April 1814]

*FRIGATE CONSTITUTION.*

On Sunday last,<sup>1</sup> about 1 o'clock, the U.S. frigate *Constitution*, Capt. Stewart, arrived at Marblehead, having been chased in by several British cruisers: she immediately anchored above fort Sewall, in a posture of defence, her exposed situation rendering her liable to an attack, should she remain there long. In order to the protection of the frigate and the town, a number of heavy cannon were sent over from Salem,<sup>2</sup> and Major General Hovey issued an order for the Marblehead battalion of artillery to hold itself in readiness to act. Commodore Bainbridge, to whom an express had been sent, dispatched assistance from the navy yard in Charlestown, and the company of New-England Guards began their march from Boston, to afford such aid as might be required of them. But towards evening the *Constitution* weighed anchor, and came round into this harbour,<sup>3</sup> where she is considered in a state of security. The *Constitution*'s cruise has been about three months, some particulars of which have been published; in the Mona passage, she chased a frigate without being able to come up with her. Her crew is in fine condition, and her safe return is hailed with joy.

Printed, *Salem* (Massachusetts) *Gazette*, 5 April 1814.

1. 3 April 1814.

2. Described as 18-pounder "travelling cannon" by Unitarian minister and Salem resident William Bentley. See his diary entry for 3 April 1814 in Bentley, *Diary*, p. 246.

3. Salem harbor.

CAPTAIN CLOTWORTHY UPTON, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N.

*Junon*, Off Salem, 7th. April 1814. 4 P.M.

Sir,

The State of the Weather had induced me to detain the *Rifleman* until this time, when I have reconnoitred Salem, and having taken a Man from a fishing Boat, and examined him here, while the others were examined in their Boats, no doubt remains, the Ship we chased in, and which is Still there is the *Constitution*; Such is the universal report at Cape Ann Harbor, and this Boat picked up a Cask of flour having that Ships name on it;— many valuable articles have also been picked up, besides Spars and empty Shot Boxes: She is reported to have Started her Water, to have grounded in Marblehead and is passing from thence to Salem, and it is Said cannot move but at the most favorable moment, and with the very best of Pilots.

This *Constitution* here, and *Congress* and the *Wasp* at Portsmouth will divide our attention, but I should feel myself risking one or both of His Majesty's Ships too much, were I to Seperate them. I feel however we cannot by any possibility

prevent the *Constitution* getting to Boston, and as the Ships at Portsmouth are nearest ready for Sea, Shall give them a preference in my Conduct.

While writing the fisher Boat from which I took a man on Sunday, has Come alongside, he has brought the three Papers, which Captn. Pearce will deliver to you, that of the 5th. places it beyond doubt that the *Constitution* is the Ship. I can now only express an earnest wish, that it may Soon be within our power, by an increase of force, to blockade both Ports. I have the honor to be, Sir Your very obedient & humble Servant

Signed/ C. Upton Captain

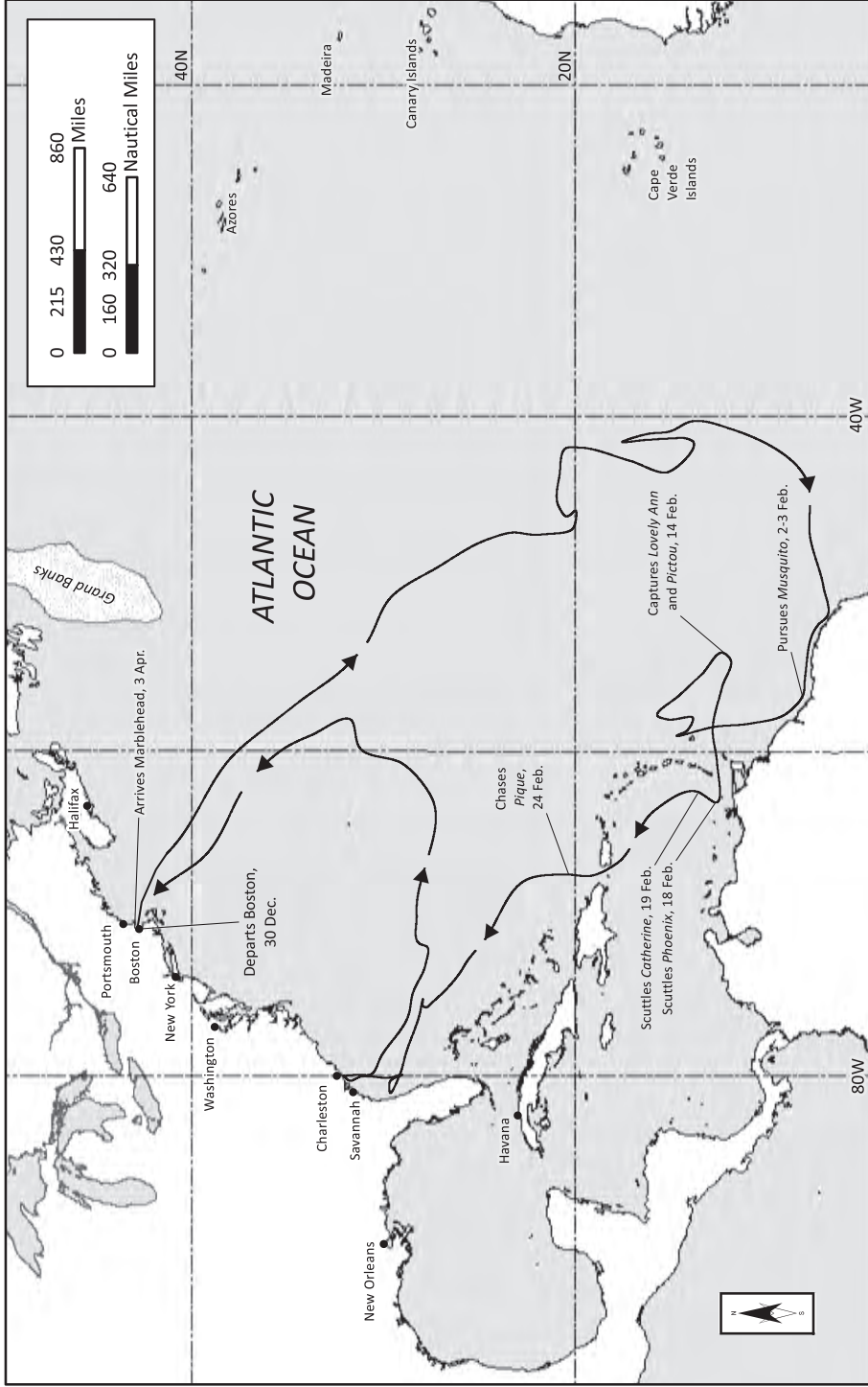
Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fol. 4. Endorsed in Griffith's hand opposite the dateline: "a Copy/Edw. Griffith/Rr. Adml." For another copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 291.

#### ACCOUNT OF *CONSTITUTION'S* CRUISE

[*Boston, 11 April 1814*]

#### GENERAL MISCELLANY.

Since our last, we have obtained the following verbal particulars of the cruise of the U. S. frigate *Constitution*:— On the 4th day of Jan. (4 days after leaving Boston,) the *Constitution* passed, in the night, a line of battle ship, under easy sail, standing to the Southward— she immediately hauled her wind, and escaped without being observed. 10 days after, spoke a Portuguese ship<sup>1</sup> from Bahia for Lisbon, and was informed that a British squadron was cruising off St. Salvadore, consisting of 3 frigates and a brig. From that time to Feb. 1, (17 days) when she had reached about the lat of 7, N lon 55, W. she *never saw a sail*. Feb. 2, she chased a large brig of war,<sup>2</sup> off the river of Maravine,<sup>3</sup> (Surrinam) which escaped by running into shoal water, the *Constitution* having pursued into 5 fathoms. Next day,<sup>4</sup> off Barbadoes, chased another brig of war, which escaped by hugging the shore.— Feb 14, in the night, captured the British ship *Lovely-Ann*, from Bermuda for Surinam, under convoy of H B M sch *Pictou*, Lieut Stephens, (of — guns, and 60 men,) which had separated from her when the *Constitution* hove in sight, *blue light* signals having been made to her from the sch. of a vessel being in chase.— Took out her crew, went in pursuit of the *Pictou*, (not then in sight) and in a few hours captured her, and after taking out the prisoners, &c. destroyed her— the *Lovely-Ann* being in ballast,<sup>5</sup> was given up to the prisoners, and sent to Barbadoes, with Midshipman Whipple in her, to get receipts for them from the commanding officer at that place.<sup>6</sup> On the 18th Feb.<sup>7</sup> the *Constitution* captured the British sch *Phœnix*. Capt. Tynes, from Demerara for Barbadoes, with passengers—took out what cargo she had, (some small packages of goods, &c) and sunk her— Same day, saw the Island of Grenada. Next day,<sup>8</sup> captured the English brig *Catharine*, Smith, from Grenada for St. Thomas, in ballast. and scuttled her. Three days after,<sup>9</sup> made the Island of St. Croix. Feb. 23. off Porto Rico, boarded a Swedish sch from Aux Cayes for St. Barts, and put the prisoners on board of her.<sup>10</sup>



Map 7. Track of Constitution's cruise as recorded in its log book, 30 December 1813–3 April 1814

On the same day,<sup>11</sup> on the South side of Porto Rico, the *Constitution* gave chase to two sail—ascertaining one to be a merchant brig, (and so close in with the land as to render it impossible to overhaul her,) she hauled off, and went in chase of the other vessel, which was discovered, soon after, to be a large ship— about 5 o'clock, P. M. the strange sail hauled her wind to the Southward, when she was plainly made to be a frigate, as her ports could all be counted— The *Constitution* was immediately cleared for action—the strange frigate rounded to, hoisted *three* English colours; and fired a gun to windward— the wind at this moment died all away, and left the two ships entirely becalmed— just at dusk a fresh breeze, sprung up, which gave the enemy's frigate the weather gage, when, (to the utter astonishment and mortification of the *Constitution's* gallant officers and crew,) she bore away and made sail *from* the American frigate, which crowded all sail in pursuit, as soon as the breeze reached her.<sup>12</sup> Night coming on, and it being very dark. she made her escape through the Mona Passage, and was not to be seen the next morning.— [She was the *PIQUE*, a fine fast sailing frigate. commanded by the *Hon.* Capt. Maitland.] On the 1st of March, in lat 26, 24, the *Constitution* boarded the Swedish ship *Maria Helena*, from Boston for Havana. Same day, spoke a neutral brig, but blowing a gale, could ascertain nothing March 7, in lat 29, boarded the Russian ship *Independence*, 4 days from Amelia for Havana— March 13, anchored off Charleston, and next day got under way, and stood to the S E. On the 16th, in about lat 31, boarded the Swedish brig *Emden*, Wixcox, from Bermuda for Amelia.—<sup>13</sup> 19th. lat 29, boarded the Russian ship *Nicholas Adolphus*, 38 days from Cadiz for Amelia—the *N. A.* had seen no cruisers.— Same day, spoke a Spanish sch from Matanzas for Bermuda. Saw nothing for 11 days after. April 1 sounded in the N E part of Georges'. Next day, made Seguin Light, distant 4 lea.— 3d, (nearly abreast of Portsmouth, and wind fair for Boston,) tacked ship, and stood off and on nearly all night.<sup>14</sup> Next morning at day break, discovered several small sail in shore.— At 7, (light breeze from N E.) when off Cape Ann, discovered two large sail<sup>15</sup> to the S. E. standing for her, and coming up very fast, with a breeze. They were soon made out to be frigates, and the *Constitution* escaped from them by the greatest exertions, and arrived at Marblehead safe, after throwing overboard all her provision, and such other heavy articles as could be got at, starting her water, rum, &c. and clearing the deck of every moveable.

Jan. 3, Wm. Vine fell overboard from the *Constitution*, and was drowned.—<sup>16</sup> Feb. 2, Alexander Gerrish died.<sup>17</sup> March 8, John Lamson, do. (in consequence of a broken leg)— 14th, John Goss, do. (by a fall from the mizen-topsail yard on a gun.) All seamen—the only men she lost during the cruise.<sup>18</sup>

Printed, *Boston Gazette*, 11 April 1814.

1. Portuguese ship *Adrianna* mounting 20 guns with a crew of 80 men. See *Constitution* logbooks, 15 January 1814.

2. Although this event took place on the afternoon of 1 February, *Constitution's* logbook records it in sea time under the date 2 February. The log describes the chase as schooner-rigged. *Ibid.*, 2 February 1814.

3. Marowijne or Maroni River.

4. On 3 February, *Constitution* sighted and chased a British brig of war. See *Constitution* logbooks, 3 February 1814.

5. *Lovely Anne* carried a cargo of flour, lumber, and fish, which was discharged into the sea before that ship was sent into Barbados as a cartel. *Ibid.*, 14 February 1814.

6. Midshipman Pardon M. Whipple arrived at Barbados in *Lovely Ann* on 16 February. British officials there refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of Captain Stewart's cartel agreement with the crews of *Pictou* and *Lovely Ann*, ordering the prisoners set at liberty. Whipple himself was detained by island authorities for more than five months before being permitted to return to the United States. See Whipple to Stewart, 10 August 1814, enclosed in Stewart to Jones, 15 August 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 102 (M125, Roll No. 38). Whipple was appointed a midshipman on 23 November 1812; his warrant was antedated to 18 June.

7. This capture took place on 17 February. The logbook records it in sea time under the date 18 February. See *Constitution* logbooks, 17–18 February 1814.

8. 19 February 1814. *Ibid.*, 19 February 1814.

9. *Constitution* made the island of St. Croix at 6 p.m. on 21 February. The logbook records it in sea time under the date 22 February. *Ibid.*, 22 February 1814.

10. This event happened on the afternoon of 22 February. The logbook records it in sea time under the date 23 February 1814. *Ibid.*, 23 February 1814.

11. The morning of 23 February. *Ibid.*, 23 February 1814.

12. Though *Constitution's* pursuit of the enemy chase occurred on the afternoon and evening of 23 February, it is recorded in the frigate's logbooks under the date 24 February. *Ibid.*, 24 February 1814.

13. *Constitution* boarded *Emden*, Wilcox master, on the evening of 15 March. The logbook records this event in sea time under the date 16 March. *Ibid.*, 16 March 1814. *Emden* was carrying a cargo of naval stores to the Royal Dockyards at Bermuda. Stewart detained *Emden's* papers with the intention of overhauling its cargo the following morning, but the brig escaped during a nighttime storm. Stewart forwarded *Emden's* papers to Secretary Jones, who then forwarded them to the State Department. See Stewart to Jones, 5 April 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 122 (M125, Roll No. 35), and U.S. Department of State, *Miscellaneous Letters Received*, pp. 265–66. The spelling of the Swedish brig's name is rendered as *Emden* in this volume.

14. That is, the early morning hours of 3 April.

15. H.M. frigates *Junon* and *Tenedos*.

16. The logbook records William Vine's death in sea time under the date 4 January. The ship's muster and pay rolls also give this as his death date. See *Constitution* logbooks, 4 January 1814, and, DNA, RG45, *Constitution* muster and pay rolls, Vol. 2, 1800–1814, p. 154, entry number 1810. Hereafter cited as *Constitution* rolls.

17. Alexander Gerrish died on 25 February, not 2 February. *Constitution* logbooks, 25 February 1814, and, *Constitution* rolls, p. 153, entry 1770.

18. Two additional casualties did occur on this cruise. The first was Quarter Gunner Thomas Coursey, who died of typhus on the evening of 15 January. The ship's log records this event in sea time under the date 16 January. *Ibid.*, 16 January 1814. The ship's rolls also give this as his death date. See *Constitution* rolls, p. 139, entry number 1016. The second casualty was Boatswain's Mate (later Quartermaster) Richard Ormerod, who accidentally shot himself in the thigh during small-arms drill on 30 January. He died later that year at Charlestown naval hospital, perhaps from complications relating to his gunshot wound. *Constitution* logbooks, 30 January 1814. See also, *Constitution* rolls, p. 145, entry number 1525.

## ACCOUNT OF A PUBLIC DINNER AND BALL HELD FOR CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART AND THE OFFICERS OF *CONSTITUTION*

[Salem, Massachusetts, 9 April 1814]

### PUBLIC DINNER AND BALL

To Capt. STEWART and the officers of the *Constitution*.

Immediately on the arrival of our favorite *Constitution* in our harbor, a large number of our most respectable citizens associated together for the purpose of giving a Public Dinner & Ball<sup>1</sup> to Capt STEWART & his Officers. in testimony of the high sense they entertained of their devotion to the cause of their country,



and their nautical skill as it was particularly displayed in sight of our citizens, by escaping a very superior force of the enemy on Sunday last.<sup>2</sup>

The entertainment and Ball were got up in a masterly style. MADISON HALL (Franklin Place) in which it was given, was most appropriately & beautifully decorated for the occasion, and certainly reflects great honor on those gentlemen who had the management of the decorations.

At the head of the Hall was placed a row of Naval Pillars, each of which bore the names, in capitals of gold, of our most distinguished commanders, Hull, Decatur, Rodgers, Porter, Bainbridge, Lawrence, Perry, Allen and Stewart. In the centre of the columns was a superb Saloon, the canopy of which was formed of the colours of the Frigate *Constitution*, under which she fought and captured the British Frigates *Guerriere* and *Java*. Under this saloon the circular tables met, at the head of which sat Col. LEE,<sup>3</sup> the President of the day, and Capt STEWART. At the foot of the Hall, from the ceiling on each side the Orchestra, were suspended eighteen circles of laurel meeting in the centre, over which in large golden letters appeared, ‘*The Union of the States.*’ Immediately in the front of the orchestra, and inclosed by the circles representing the states, was a most superb original painting of the old philosopher teaching his children the difference between breaking one stick singly, and a bundle bound together. This piece was from the elegant pencil of Miss *Crowninshield*.<sup>4</sup> The sides of the Hall were superbly decorated with original paintings of our Naval Victories, encircled with laurels. The tables were laid in an elegant style, & the Dinner was served with good judgment.

A number of patriotic and truly excellent and appropriate Songs, by a few gentlemen of the company, enlivened the scene, and the toasts were drunk with unusual glee. In the evening at the Ball, was an engaging display of beauty, and all hearts united in giving a hearty welcome to those Heroes, whose deeds have crowned their country’s name with inextinguishable lustre.

#### TOASTS.

The PRESIDENT of the U. States—Skilfully discerning and liberally patronizing merit, may he realize, that rewards, richly earned, honor both him that gives and who receives.

*President’s March.*<sup>5</sup>

The Secretary of the Navy—Defending the rank and reputation of the heroic band whom he directs, with the same devotion with which they exalted our flag, he shall receive our warmest gratitude.

*Col Orne’s March*<sup>6</sup>

The NAVY—It has taught us that us that to respect ourselves, we must respect the NAVY.

*‘Hearts of Oak.’*<sup>7</sup>

Commodore RODGERS—He has demonstrated the fallacy of British arrogance, “that not a sail without permission spreads.”

*Rodger’s March.*<sup>8</sup>

The frigate CONSTITUTION—The pride and boast of our country—whether with her breath of flame she consumes the ships of the enemy, or by her skilful step eludes his fleets.

*Seige of Tripoli.*<sup>9</sup>

The *Junon* and her consorts—May they find at every attack a *Craney Island*.<sup>10</sup>  
*The Retreat*.<sup>11</sup>

Our SEAMAN—

“The curse of our country shall wither the slave, That would barter their rights on the shore of the wave.”

*Yankee doodle*<sup>12</sup>

Commerce—

The ocean is free, & the proud swelling main Shall sweep from its bosom who its rights would enchain.

“*America, Commerce and Freedom*”<sup>13</sup>

The *Philadelphia*<sup>14</sup>—The beams of glory which ascended at her destruction, shall light to immortality the fame of the heroic authors of this sacrifice.

*Air in Brazen Monk*<sup>15</sup>

Our Returning Frigates—May every beacon prove a harbor, every height a battery, and every house an asylum, to receive, defend and welcome our returning heroes.

“*Welcome home again.*”<sup>16</sup>

Our Flag—May they who have nailed it to the mast, never look to it in vain for protection.

*Hail Col[umbia]*:<sup>17</sup>

Our NAVAL VICTORS—*Decatur, Hull, Perry, Jones, Bainbridge*, and their gallant associates— They have encircled the brows of their country with inextinguishable lustre, and sealed the immortality of their fame.

*Neptune’s Frolic*<sup>18</sup>

The memory of *Lawrence, Allen, Burrows, Aylwin, and Bush*—<sup>19</sup>

“*Ne’er gallant spirits tower’d more high, Nor nobler shall in battle die.*”

*German Hymn*<sup>20</sup>

The *Nineteenth of August*<sup>21</sup>—The day that gave our flag its first triumph over the victor of the ocean, shall receive the highest honors from every friend of his country

*Hull’s Victory*<sup>22</sup>

The *Tenth of September*<sup>23</sup>—The day on which our brave tars took their *second* lesson—to conquer in *fleets*.

*Perry’s Victory*<sup>24</sup>

The ARMY—May it emulate the glory of the Navy, and be as terrible to the armies of the enemy, as our ships are to his fleets.

*Washington’s March*<sup>25</sup>

The memory of the heroic PIKE, and the brave COVINGTON—<sup>26</sup>

The sun of glory sets not with the brave, but shines eternal o’er the hero’s grave.

*Dirge*<sup>27</sup>

The *Union of the States*—Patriotism shall stifle the wretch that would breath disunion, and blast the hands that would sever the bonds of our country.

*Rise Columbia*<sup>28</sup>

*After Capt. Stewart had retired.*

The scientific commander, Captain STEWART—The same skill that saved one frigate from a squadron—will ensure victory when any single ship of the enemy will hazard the combat.

## VOLUNTEERS.

By Capt STEWART. The citizens of Salem—First in enterprizes of peace—First in honorable war—First in defence of the *Constitution*.

By Judge STORY.<sup>29</sup> The venerable *John Adams*—Whose first wish was the liberty of his country—whose second was the establishment of its NAVY.

By COL EUSTIS.<sup>30</sup> Com CHAUNCEY—May *he* soon say, ‘We have met the enemy and they are ours.’

By Capt HENDERSON.<sup>31</sup> The memory of Brigadier General PIKE—He was honorable in life—Glorious in death

By Lieut HOFFMAN.<sup>32</sup> The Barbary powers—May the next tribute we pay them be in Yankee thunder.

Printed, *Essex Register* (Salem, Massachusetts), 9 Apr. 1814.

1. This event was held on 8 April 1814. For another contemporary description of this naval celebration, see Bentley, *Diary*, p. 248.

2. Sunday, 3 April.

3. Probably Colonel William Raymond Lee, collector of customs for the ports of Salem and Marblehead, Massachusetts. See Lee, *Lee of the Revolution*, p. 22.

4. Probably Hannah Crowninshield (1798–1834), daughter of Benjamin W. Crowninshield, William Jones’s successor as Secretary of the Navy. Hannah was a pupil of Neapolitan artist Michele Felice Cornè and became known as a portraitist and draftsman. She married one of *Constitution*’s officers, James Armstrong, on 29 April 1819. See Bentley, *Diary*, p. 583. Hannah also contributed decorations to the funeral service of *Chesapeake* officers James Lawrence and Charles Ludlow. See “Salem Social Life,” p. 113.

5. Both Philip Phile and Philip Roth have been credited with composing this march, the first printed versions of which appeared in 1794. It furnished the score for Joseph Hopkinson’s “Hail Columbia.”

6. Boston music publisher Gottlieb Graupner sold undated sheet music for this march under the title “Coln. Orn’s March.”

7. Dr. William Boyce composed the music and David Garrick the lyrics for “Heart of Oak,” which was first performed on New Year’s Eve of 1760. It is the official march of the Royal Navy. In 1768, John Dickinson provided American lyrics to Boyce’s tune published under the title “Liberty Song.”

8. Unidentified.

9. “The Siege of Tripoli: An Historical Naval Sonata for the Piano Forte, op. 4,” composed by Benjamin Carr, ca. 1804–5.

10. A reference to the defeat of British forces at the Battle of Craney Island, Virginia, on 22 June 1813. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 359–61.

11. Philadelphia music publisher George Willig issued *The Compleat Tutor; for the Fife* ca. 1805, which contains this tune. This instructional booklet is likely a reprint of an earlier 18th-century work.

12. Song that traces its origins to the French and Indian War. It was sung by British soldiers to mock the unmilitary appearance and bearing of their colonial brethren in arms. During the Revolution, Americans embraced the song as their own and it became the nation’s first, great patriotic tune.

13. Susannah Haswell Rowson composed the lyrics that Alexander Reinagle set to music in this 1794 song. Reinagle added the song to the score of his ballet pantomime, “The Sailor’s Landlady.”

14. A reference to the destruction of the captured U.S. frigate *Philadelphia* in Tripoli harbor during a daring night raid led by Stephen Decatur on 16 February 1804.

15. Unidentified.

16. Unidentified.

17. Joseph Hopkinson, son of Declaration of Independence signer Francis Hopkinson, wrote the lyrics to this song in 1798, setting them to the melody of “The President’s March.”

18. Unidentified.

19. Captain James Lawrence, mortally wounded in the capture of U.S. frigate *Chesapeake*, 1 June 1813; Master Commandant William Henry Allen, mortally wounded in the capture of U.S. brig *Argus*, 14 August 1813; Lieutenant William Ward Burrows, Jr., mortally wounded in the capture of H.M. brig *Boxer*, 5 September 1813; Lieutenant John Cushing Aylwin, mortally wounded in the capture of H.M.

frigate *Java*, 29 December 1812; First Lieutenant William Sharp Bush, U.S.M.C., killed in the capture of H.M. frigate *Guerriere*, 19 August 1812.

20. Unidentified.

21. A reference to 19 August 1812, the date of Isaac Hull's victory over H.M. frigate *Guerriere*.

22. "Hull's Victory: A New Patriotic Song," composed by John Bray, lyrics by Joseph Hutton, ca. 1812–13.

23. A reference to 10 September 1813, the date of Oliver H. Perry's victory over the British fleet on Lake Erie.

24. "Perry's Victory: A New Patriotic Song," composed by Joseph Hutton, ca. 1813.

25. Identified by some as the earliest version of "The President's March." Described by others as a different song altogether, sometimes referred to as "General Washington's March," or "General Washington's March to Trenton."

26. Brigadier General Zebulon Montgomery Pike, U.S.A., mortally wounded 27 April 1813 in the capture of York, Upper Canada; and Brigadier General Leonard Wailes Covington, U.S.A., mortally wounded at the Battle of Crysler's Farm, Upper Canada, 11 November 1813.

27. Unidentified.

28. Lyrics to this patriotic tune were composed in 1794 by Robert Treat Paine, Jr., and set to the tune of "Rule Britannia."

29. Associate Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story.

30. Possibly Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Abraham Eustis who participated with Chauncey in joint operations on Lake Ontario in 1813, including the attack on York, Upper Canada. Eustis was raised in Massachusetts and attended Harvard and Bowdoin Colleges.

31. Captain Archibald Henderson, U.S.M.C., commander of *Constitution's* Marines.

32. Lieutenant Beekman V. Hoffman, *Constitution's* second lieutenant.

## The Warrior's Return

*John Rodgers was singularly unlucky as the wartime commander of President. His first three cruises in the powerful 44-gun frigate had yielded neither a rich haul of captured enemy merchantmen nor the glorious laurels of a ship-to-ship victory. His fourth and final cruise in President would prove similarly disappointing, netting only two prizes in 75 days of active operations. Despite these meagre results, newspapers throughout the country hailed President's safe homecoming to New York in February 1814, praising Rodgers as a shrewd and skillful ship commander, who repeatedly set the British blockade at defiance. The Maryland-born captain was portrayed as the victim of bad fortune, barren seas, and a cowardly enemy who chose to flee when battle was offered. In the days following his return, John Rodgers experienced public acclaim, commemoration in song, and the offer of a new command.<sup>1</sup>*

1. On President's four wartime cruises under Rodgers, see McCranie, Utmost Gallantry, and Schroeder, Commodore John Rodgers. For documents relating to President's cruises in 1812 and 1813, see Dudley, Naval War of 1812, Vol. 1, pp. 153–60, 262–66, and 535–36; and Vol. 2, pp. 104–5 and 250–55.

### COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U, S, Frigate *President*  
Sanda Hook Bay Feby. 19th. 1814

Sir,

I have to acquaint you that I arrived at my present anchorage last evening at 5 O'clock, after a cruise of 75 days, and now have the honour to detail to you the particulars.—

In pursuance of your directions<sup>1</sup> I sailed from Providence the 5th. of December; and altho I expected to have run the gauntlet through the enemy's squadron, that was reported to be cruising between Block Island and Gayhead for the purpose of intercepting the *President*, I had the good luck to avoid them.— The day after leaving Providence, I recaptured the American Schooner *Comet*, of and bound to New York, with a cargo of Cotton, from Savannah, which had been captured by the *Ramilies* and *Loire*, and in their possession about 48 hours:— In a few hours after recapturing the *Comet*, a sail<sup>2</sup> was discovered to the Eastward, which I felt inclined to avoid, from the circumstance of the weather being hazy, and knowing that I was in the neighborhood of an enemy's squadron; from an advantage of wind, she was enabled, however, to gain our lee beam at a distance of 3 or 4 miles, owing to which, I was induced to Shorten sail, with the intention of offering her battle in the morning, Should nothing else be in Sight, and she not be a Ship of the line. The weather becoming something more obscure at 2 O'clock, prevented our seeing her until daylight, when She Stood from us to the N E, altho the *President* was hove too, to let her come up.— From this date until the 25th., we did not see a single sail except the *Recovery* (a brig belonging, and bound to Penobscot, from St. Bartholemew in ballast) until after reaching the Longitude 35° and Latitude 19°<sup>3</sup> (being carried that far eastward by a severe S W gale, accompanied by Such a heavy Sea, as to render heaving too impracticable without infinite risk) when two large sails were discovered Standing to the northward, and to which I gave chase; believing, as well from the Situation in which they were first discovered as the manifest disposition they afterwards shew to avoid a seperation, that one was a Frigate and the other an Indiaman under her convoy: in this, I was mistaken, for on a nearer approach I could [discover] the headmost [w]as a frigate with [seven ports] abaft her gangway, and the other a Ship of equal or little inferior force; on discovering their decided Superiority, and supposing them to be enemy's ships, I endeavoured during the succeeding night to seperate them by Steering different courses and occasionally Shewing a light; but was unable to succeed, for the headmost at one time was so near that she fired a shot over us, whilst her consort was but a few hundred yards astern of her:— I now directed our course to be altered, made sail, and continued the remainder of the night to shew them a light occasionally, but to no effect, as at daylight they were discovered to be in a situation to unite their force.— After this, I shaped a course to reach a position to windward of Barbadoes, on a parallel of Longitude with Cayenne, and did not meet another vessel 'till the 30th, when falling in with a portaguise brig, and receiving information that she had been boarded 36 hours before by two British Store Ships bound to the West Indies with 300 troops on board, I crowded Sail to the westward in the hope of overtaking them; in this, I was again dissappointed, and after a pursuit of four days, hauled further Southward to gain the latitude of Barbadoes; and in that Situation on the 5th of January, captured the British merchant Ship *Wanderer* of 7 Guns and 16 men from London, bound to Jamaica, partly loaded with plantation Stores, and after taking from her such light articles as were of most value, Sunk her— In the same position on the 7th, I fell in with the British Merchant Ship *Prince George*, in the character of a cartel with prisoners, which, with four other British Vessels, had been captured by two French 44 gun Frigates, the *Medusa* and *Nymph*, the same ships I had fallen in with 14 days before. on board of the *Prince George* I sent

the prisoners captured in the *Wanderer* to Barbadoes on Parole.<sup>4</sup> On the 9th of January, while still to windward of Barbadoes, I captured the Ship *Edward* of 6 Guns and 8 men, from London bound to Laguirra in Ballast; which vessel I also sunk.— Having learnt from the master of the *Edward* as well as those of the *Wanderer* and *Prince George*, that they had been separated in the Bay of Biscay from their convoy, consisting of the *Queen* 74, two frigates and two sloops of war,<sup>5</sup> I was induced, owing to a belief that the convoy was still to the eastward, to remain to windward of Barbadoes until the 16th January, when finding they must have passed, I changed my ground and ran off Cayenne, and from thence down the coast of Surinam, Berbiche, and Demerrara, through between Tobago and Grenada; thence through the Caribbean Sea, along the South side of Portorico, thro' the Mona passage, down the north side of Jamaica and other leeward Islands, without meeting a single vessel of the Enemy, or any other than 4 Spanish Drogers and one Swedish Ship, untill I got near the Manilla reef; near which, after capturing and sinking the British Schooner *Jonathan* loaded with Rum and Dry Goods, (the most valuable part of which I took on board) I hauled over for the Florida Shore and struck soundings off St. Augustine, and from thence run on soundings as far as Charleston, passing within 4 or 5 miles of Columbia Island, and as near to Savannah as the weather and depth of water would allow, without meeting a single vessel except a Spanish Ship from the Havannah bound to Spain; but steering for Savannah in consequence of having sprung a leak. Arriving off Charleston (which was on the 11th Inst.) I stretched close in with the Bar, and made the private Signal of the day to two Schooners lying in Rebellion Roads, and which, from their appearance, I believed to be Public Vessels.— After remaining all day off the Bar with colors hoisted and the before mentioned signal displayed without being able to communicate with the Schooners, I stood to the Northward, and at 7 O'Clock the next morning, discovered and chased a Ship<sup>6</sup> to the Southward, which after pursuing 8 or 9 miles, led me to a second sail, (a brig under her topsails with top-gallant masts housed and flying Jib boom rigged in) and from thence to the discovery of a third Sail, represented from the Masthead to be a large frigate; on discovering the Third Sail, added to the manœuvres of the first and Second, I was induced to believe them part of an enemys squadron and accordingly hauled up and stood for the former, to ascertain her character, and after making her from the deck, perceived She was a Frigate as reported. I now tacked and Shortened sail believing that towards night, I might be enabled to cut off the Ship (which was either a Small Frigate or large sloop of War) and Brig, from the third or largest Sail, at this time 9 or 10 miles to windward; in this, however, I was not able to effect my purpose, owing to the weather sail (between Sunset and dark) bearing down for the others; Judging now from their manœuvres that after dark they would chase, I stood to the Eastward under Short Sail; believing that in the morning I might find them in some disorder: at daylight, however, owing to the hazyness of the weather, they were not to be seen, Consequently, I wore and Stood back to the Westward to make them again, and in a few minutes discovered two, (one on the lee & the other on the weather bow) to which I gave chase, but after chasing them about half an hour the weather becoming more clear, and two large Ships Suddenly making their appearance, (one on the Weather & the other on the lee beam) I changed my course to the Eastward; when the four immediately crowded Sail in pursuit; but owing to the

weather, assisted by the enemy's manner of chacing, I was enabled to get clear of them without difficulty in a few hours.— From this, I pursued a course on soundings (except in doubling Cape Hatteras) to 18 fathom water off the Delaware, where, in a fog, I fell in with a large Vessel,<sup>7</sup> apparently a man of war; Shortened sail to topsails and cleared Ship for Action; but she suddenly disappearing and in a few minutes She or some other Vessel near, being heard to fire Signal guns, I stood on to the northward, from a belief I was near another Squadron. From the Delaware I saw nothing untill I made Sanda Hook when I again fell in with another of the enemys Squadrons, and by some unaccountable cause was permitted to enter this Bay, altho in the presence of a decidedly Superior force, after having been obliged to remain outside 7 hours and a half waiting for the tide. With great respect I have the honour to be, sir your Obdt. hume. Svt.

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 125 (M125, Roll No. 34). Text in brackets supplied from a printed version of this letter in the *Daily National Intelligencer*; 26 February 1814.

1. See Jones to Rodgers, 4 October 1813, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 254–55.

2. Identified as the 74-gun ship of the line *San Domingo*, Admiral Sir John B. Warren's flagship, in McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, pp. 162–63.

3. Approximately 156 nautical miles northwest of Madeira.

4. According to the testimony of Captain Bayley, master of *Prince George*, Rodgers planned to burn the cartel rather than let it proceed on its way to Barbados, in retribution for British interference with cartels carrying American prisoners. After an extended conversation with Bayley, Rodgers altered his decision and allowed *Prince George* to continue on to its destination. For a contemporary report of this incident, which includes a copy of a Rodgers' letter of 6 January 1814 to Bayley, see *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 30 March 1814.

5. A 200-ship convoy under the charge of *Queen* and her consorts sailed from England on 27 November 1813. It was scattered by a violent storm after being underway for five days. See McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, pp. 163–64.

6. Identified as H.M. brig-sloop *Morgiana* in McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, p. 165.

7. Identified as H.M. frigate *Narcissus* in McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, p. 166.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM AN OFFICER IN *PRESIDENT* TO  
A FRIEND IN PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Feb. 22 [1814], inside the Light, Sandy Hook, [New Jersey]<sup>1</sup>

Situations in which we have been placed this cruise, will, I think, add lustre to the well established character of Com. Rodgers.

After passing the light, saw several sail, one large sail to the windward—backed our maintopsail and cleared ship for action. The strange sail came down within gun shot; hauled the wind on the larboard tack. We continued with our maintopsail to the mast three hours, and seeing no probability of the 74 gun ship's bearing down to engage the *President*, gave her a shot to windward and hoisted our colours—when she bore up for us reluctantly—when within half gun shot, backed his maintopsail. At this moment all hands were called to muster aft; and the Commodore said a few but impressive words; though it was unnecessary—for

what other stimulant could true Americans want, than fighting gloriously in sight of their native shore, where hundreds were assembled to witness the engagement? Wore ship to engage, but at this moment the cutter being discovered off, backed again to take in the pilot; and, the British 74 (strange as it must appear) making sail to the southward and eastward, orders were given to haul aboard the fore and main tacks, to run in, there being then in sight from our deck a frigate and gun brig.

The commander of the 74 had it in his power, for 5 hours, to bring us at any moment to an engagement; our maintopsail to the mast during that time.<sup>2</sup>

Printed, *Daily National Intelligencer*, 10 March 1814.

1. This dateline reproduces the text of the editor's note preceding this letter, which was originally set in italics.

2. Rodgers misidentified the ship that declined his challenge as a 74-gun ship of the line. It was actually the 38-gun frigate *Loire*. The New York *Columbian* reported the British ship to be the 74-gun ship *Plantagenet*. It published excerpts from *President's* logbook accompanied by the testimony of one of the frigate's lieutenant's to prove that the purportedly more powerful British warship had avoided combat with its weaker American adversary. See the item headed "The *President* and *Plantagenet*" in *The Columbian*, 9 March 1814. See also McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, pp. 166–67.

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Navy Department  
feb. 26th. 1814

Sir

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19 Curnt. announcing your safe arrival at Sandy Hook Bay and detailing the events of your cruise, which though less successful than might have been expected from the route you have pursued in the midst of the Colonies and usual track of the commerce of the enemy exhibits another proof of the exaggerated power and fictitious omnipresence of the British flag. It also demonstrates that our enemy is not insensible to the wholesome lessons of experience and that if he has not the magnanimity to cherish and avow the respect due to a brave and liberal foe he is not callous to the dictates of prudence. I await your report of the state and condition of the *President*<sup>1</sup> and offer for your selection the alternatives, of refitting the *President* as soon as possible for another cruise—the command of the new 44, the *Guerriere* building and to be launched at Philada. in all next month or the superintendence and command of the 74 building at Philada. and to be launched in all the current year. The *Java* 44, building at Baltimore and to launch the middle of April is also at your service.<sup>2</sup> Be pleased to report to me the merits and qualifications of the Officers under your Command<sup>3</sup>

Captain Morris of the *Adams* has written to the Depmt. in cypher and refers me to the "Telegraphic Dictionary as published under the direction of commodore Rogers"<sup>4</sup>

The only Dictionary in the Depmt. of the kind referred to was printed at Brooklyn by Thomas Kirk in 1812 and from two decyphered letters by you octobr. 4 & 7th.



found in the book I supposed to be the one referred to, but which affords no solution of his letter. Enclosed is a copy of Captain Morris's letter from which you will be able to ascertain the key and will please furnish the Dictionary if in your possession I am respectfully Your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

LS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box III:22. For the letter book copy of this letter, see DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 226 (M149, Roll 11).

1. See Rodgers to Jones, 5 March 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 18 and enclosure (M125, Roll No. 35).

2. Rodgers decided to resign command of *President* in favor of *Guerriere*. See pp. 234–39.

3. See Rodgers to Jones, 10 March 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 91, and enclosure (M124, Roll No. 61).

4. See the penultimate paragraph of Morris to Jones, 16 January 1814, p. 66 and note 2.

## PUBLIC DINNER IN HONOR OF COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 1814. [*New York*]<sup>1</sup>

On Monday the 7th inst. a Public Dinner was given at Tammany-Hall, by the citizens of New-York, to this brave and distinguished commander, in testimony of the great respect which they entertain for his personal character, and their high sense of his valour, patriotism, zeal, and devotion, in the service of his country. So great was the desire manifested on this occasion, to join in this tribute of applause to so gallant and meritorious an officer, and to mingle the patriotic and grateful emotions of their hearts with those of their fellow-citizens, that, on the day appointed for the Dinner, it was found impossible to accommodate all who applied for tickets—and upwards of fifty gentlemen were compelled to forego the gratification of partaking in the entertainment. The guests invited, and who favoured the company with their attendance, besides the gallant Commodore, were Captains Evans and Trenchard of the U.S. navy, Commodore Lewis, and the Lieutenants, Surgeon, Chaplain, and Purser, of the frigate *President*. The company consisted of upwards of three hundred, among whom were observed, an unusual number of American Shipmasters, who were happy to embrace this occasion to testify their high opinion of the nautical skill, and their perfect confidence in the valour and patriotism of this intrepid vindicator of the maritime rights of their country.

The Hall was decorated with appropriate emblems, and a variety of colours, tastefully suspended from the ceiling, and hung round the pillars, reminded the company, that the American flag is at once, the banner of freedom, of glory, and of protection.

About 5 o'clock, the company sat down to a plentiful dinner, provided by Mess. *Martling & Cozzens*, the Keepers of Tammany-Hall, who, on this, as well as on former similar occasions, have done themselves the highest credit. The table was covered with every variety, which the season affords, well dressed, and served up in style of much elegance and taste. WALTER BOWNE, Esq. officiated as President, and Mess. *Frederick Jenkins*, *William H. Ireland*, *Whitehead Fish*, *Augustus Wright*, and *Alderman Buckmaster* as Vice Presidents.

The greatest order and hilarity prevailed—every heart glowed with enthusiastic love of country, and with admiration and esteem for the brave defender of her rights, in honour of whom the festival was given. At the conclusion of the repast, the Toasts were drank, accompanied with appropriate airs, by an excellent band, stationed in the orchestra, and interspersed with naval and other patriotic Songs, from several gentlemen of the company:

1. *Our Country*—its rights and honour maintained through every difficulty, and at every hazard. 6 cheers.

2. *The People*—the only legitimate source of authority; their happiness the only end of government; their continued confidence and approbation the best test of the virtue and wisdom of rulers. 9 cheers.

3. *The President of the United States*—unbiassed by foreign partialities; the sole aim of his official conduct has been the good of his country. 9 cheers.

4. *The Governor of the state of New York*<sup>2</sup>—the firm and zealous supporter of his country's cause. 6 cheers.

5. *The War*—may the God of battles inspire us with the spirit of our fathers; so may this second struggle for Independence be glorious, and successful as the first. 12 cheers.

6. *The Navy*—the main pillar of our glory, and the sure pledge of our future greatness and security. 12 cheers.

7. *The Army*—may they be distinguished by devotion to their country, and by discipline and valour in the field. 6 cheers.

8. *The brave who have fallen in battle*—the hero's grave is the bed of honour, watered with the tears, and hallowed by the blessings of a nation.

9. *The mission to Gottenburg*.—while with one hand we extend the olive branch, let us with the other grasp the sword; alike prepared, to hail with rapture an honourable peace, or to pursue, with constancy and vigour, a necessary war. 9 cheers.

10. *The Patriot*—whose heart beats for the interest and honour of his country; who rejoices in her triumphs, and mourns at her disasters; by whatever name the accident of party may distinguish him, that man is an American, and our brother. 9 cheers.

11. *The memory of Washington*—forever first in the grateful recollection of that country which was always first in the affections of his heart.

12. *The Congress of 1776*—who declared, and the Congress of 1812, who asserted our Independence; sires and sons worthy of each other. 12 cheers.

13. *Commerce*—may it look for encouragement and prosperity to the just rights and independence of our country; not to the selfish views and concessions of foreign nations. 6 cheers.

14. *Our Maritime Rights*—sacred as the soil of our country, let neither the one nor the other be violated with impunity. 9 cheers.

15. *The Union of the States*—let this bond of all that is dear and honourable to us as a nation, and as men, be preserved inviolate, and let the madman who would dissolve it, be marked as the worst enemy of his country. 12 cheers.

16. *Harrison, Shelby, and their gallant associates*. 12 cheers.

17. *The brave Militia of the South and West*—may their deeds of valour prove to their brethren of the North and East what men, animated by love of country, can perform. 12 cheers.

18. *Our Fair Countrywomen*—in prosperity our ornament; in adversity our solace. After which, Commodore Rodgers gave, *Peace*—if it can be obtained without the sacrifice of national honour, or the abandonment of maritime rights; otherwise, war, until peace shall be secured, without the sacrifice of either. 18 cheers.

After the Commodore had retired, the President gave, *Commodore Rodgers*—The zealous patriot, and the brave commander—he has three times traversed the ocean, and thus proved, that the flag of his country is its own protection. 18 cheers.

During the evening, a great many volunteer toasts were given, all breathing the purest sentiments of patriotism, and characteristic of the most animated spirit, in vindication of the rights and honour of our country: and we regret, that it is not possible, within the limits of our paper, to insert the whole of them. The following have been selected:

By Mr. Frederick Jenkins, 1st vice president. *Our Eastern Brethren*—Strayed Sheep from the American Flock—may they soon be sensible of their wanderings, and return, with gladness, to the fold of their country.

By Mr. Ireland, 2d vice president. *Party Spirit*—While the sword is drawn in support of national rights, may this daemon of America be buried in love of country, and political discord cease.

By Mr. W. Fish, 3d vice president. *The Flag of our Nation*—The emblem of our independence—whilst it is a sufficient guarantee of our safety, it is a sure passport to all who sail under it.

By Dr. Bullus. *The Memory of General Pike*.

By Captain Bool. *The brave Seamen of the United States*—Heaven has made them free—our sacred constitution guards their rights: accursed be that policy which would sacrifice them to British insolence and tyranny.

By Mr. Rodman. *The Emperor Alexander*<sup>3</sup>—The friend of America—he has nobly testified to the justice of our cause; may we soon behold him reviving the just and rational principles of the armed neutrality, and firmly vindicating the freedom of the seas.

By Mr. McDonald. *The Sage of Monticello*—The author of the declaration of independence.

By Dr. Walker. *Washington's Legacy*—Antidote to the poison of American Jacobinism.

By Mr. Robert White. *Civil and religious liberty to all the world*.

Printed, *National Advocate* (New York), 9 March 1814. The following text appears above this article: “Communicated for the *National Advocate*. / PUBLIC DINNER, IN HONOUR OF COMMODORE RODGERS.”

1. This dateline reproduces the text and typography appearing in the banner head immediately above this article.

2. Governor Daniel D. Tompkins.

3. Tsar Alexander I of Russia.

SONG PERFORMED AT THE PUBLIC DINNER HONORING  
COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

NEW-YORK:

WEDNESDAY EVENING, MARCH 9, 1814.<sup>1</sup>

[The following lines, hastily committed to paper on that day,<sup>2</sup> were sung by one of the company during the entertainment:]

THE WARRIOR'S RETURN.

*An impromptu on the return of commodore Rodgers to New-York, in the frigate President, after offering battle to a British ship of the line.*

TUNE—AMERICAN STAR.

O, strike up the harp to the warrior returning,  
From the tolls and the tempests of ocean's rough wave—  
The hearts of his brethren, with gratitude burning,  
Shall beat to the numbers which welcome the brave.

Then here's to the heroes, high-sounding in story,  
Who've gallantly *met*, and have conquer'd the foe;  
And RODGERS, brave RODGERS, coeval in glory,  
Who's "ready, and steady," to give him a blow.

O'er the furthest seas his broad banners were waving;  
Like an eagle in air, *thrice* he swept o'er the flood,  
The fleets of proud Britain with vigilance braving;  
And his deeds—who shall say they're not noble and good?

The wounds he receiv'd,<sup>3</sup> for his country contending,  
The hardships endur'd—shall they e'er be forgot?  
The slanderous tongues, 'gainst his fair fame offending,  
And the hands that deface—may they wither and rot!

For freemen will cherish the rough sons of Ocean,  
Who've no party plea when a foe may assail—  
But undauntedly fly to the scene of commotion,  
To fight for their rights, till they die or prevail.

In the bosom of RODGERS, did fear ever mingle,  
With the mild dove of PEACE or the *Eagle* of WAR?  
Dare the enemy meet, with force equal and single?  
No! but flies from the roar of his thunder afar!

Columbians! *one cause*, and *one soul*, and *one spirit*,  
Inspires all your sons who contend on the wave;  
And prejudice ne'er shall eclipse real merit,  
Nor fortune forever coquette with the brave!

Then join the glad song, worth and valor commending,  
 Fan the flame which in each patriot bosom should burn,  
 And all honest hearts, in true sympathy blending,  
 Unite in a toast to *the warrior's return!*

Printed, *The Columbian* (New York), 9 March 1814.

1. This dateline reproduces the text and typography appearing under the banner head “THE COLUMBIAN” on page 2 of this newspaper.

2. That is, 7 March, the date of the public dinner honoring John Rodgers.

3. Likely a reference to the fractured leg Rodgers sustained during *President's* pursuit of H.M. frigate *Belvidera* on 23 June 1812. The injury occurred when the cannon Rodgers was sighting burst, killing and wounding 16 crewmen. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 1, pp. 155 and 156–57.

## *Rattlesnake and Enterprise Go Hunting*

*Rattlesnake and Enterprise were the first American cruisers to put to sea in 1814, departing Portsmouth, New Hampshire, only ten days into the New Year. The commanders of these two brigs, John O. Creighton and James Renshaw, were two of the Navy's longer-serving officers, having both entered the Navy in 1800. Both men had suffered professional humiliation earlier in their careers—Renshaw as a member of the frigate Philadelphia's crew taken prisoner by the Tripolitans in 1803; Creighton as an officer in Chesapeake, when the American frigate was fired upon and boarded by H.M.S. Leopard in 1807.<sup>1</sup> Though they had entered the service less than one month apart, Creighton had been elevated to master commandant's rank in 1813, while Renshaw had been passed over for promotion in favor of more junior officers, a circumstance that remained a source of disgruntlement for that officer.<sup>2</sup>*

*Secretary Jones had attached Enterprise to Creighton's command to enable the lightly built Rattlesnake to outgun “any one of the Enemy's heavy Brigs of War” it might chance upon during its cruise.<sup>3</sup> But it was an unwise pairing, for Enterprise was a dull sailer and had difficulty keeping company with its swifter consort. Indeed, the two brigs became separated on several occasions when chased by enemy ships of superior force. During one such pursuit, Renshaw was forced to jettison his entire battery of guns. The maneuver enabled the lightened Enterprise to make good its escape, but for the remainder of the war it remained an unarmed, inactive cruiser.*

*Rattlesnake's and Enterprise's mission had been twofold: to hunt and destroy the enemy's shipping and to bring into port captured seamen to exchange for American prisoners of war.<sup>4</sup> Although the results of their two-month cruise were modest (4 prizes and 70 prisoners), Secretary Jones was pleased enough with Creighton's performance to offer him command of the new sloop of war Argus building at Washington. With Enterprise idled until it received repairs and a fresh battery of guns, Jones transferred its commander and crew to Rattlesnake with orders to prepare the brig for another cruise.<sup>5</sup>*

1. Philadelphia ran aground in Tripoli harbor on 31 October 1803. The crew was taken prisoner and held in captivity until 4 June 1805. A U.S. promise to pay a \$64,000 ransom secured the captives' release. Renshaw is listed as one of the frigate's midshipmen in Knox, *Barbary Wars*, Vol. III, p. 183.

Leopard overhauled Chesapeake on 22 June 1807, shortly after the American frigate sailed from Hampton Roads, Virginia. Creighton was one of six of the ship's lieutenants, who wrote to the Navy Department requesting the arrest and trial of Commodore James Barron, the senior officer in Chesapeake, for his supine response to Leopard's attack. See Knox, *Barbary Wars, Certain Officers of U.S. frigate Chesapeake to Secretary of the Navy*, 23 June 1807, Vol. VI, pp. 540–41. For a dark portrait of Creighton as a naval disciplinarian, see McKee, *Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession*, pp. 230–32.

2. Renshaw and his brother Richard had both complained to William Jones that James's seniority entitled him to promotion—a line of argument that drew rebuke from the Navy Secretary. See Jones to Renshaw, 15 September 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 209–10.

3. Jones to Creighton, 22 December 1813, *ibid.*, p. 296.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 297. For an analysis of *Rattlesnake* and *Enterprise*'s cruise, see McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, pp. 197–201.

5. On Renshaw's cruise in *Rattlesnake*, see pp. 440–49.

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN O. CREIGHTON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U s Brig *Rattle snake*  
at sea 21st. Feby. 1814

sir

Having this moment brought to an American privateer after a long and anxious chase of thirteen hours, I avail myself of the opportunity she affords of giving You the earliest information of the Vessels under my command— I have sent in two Neutrals<sup>1</sup> which I trust You will approve of, when I have time to make Known to You particulars respecting them, the first a Brig had on board a British officer and nine men which I now have in charge— Off Cape Francois on the 7th ins I fell in captured and destroy'd an English Brig with a Cargo of coffee—<sup>2</sup> we have been chased by a frigate and line of Battle ship both of whi[c]h the *Rattle snake* avoided by her super[ior] sailing, and the *Enterprize* by her usu[a]l good fortune.<sup>3</sup> in the first instance we separated but joind company agai[n] five days after— I pray You sir to pardon my not being more communicative, as the commander of the privateer is extremely anxious to mak[e] sail in pursuit of a large convoy in all 100 sail that left Havanna eight days since— I hope to give a good account of them myself. I have the honor to be with high consideration and respect Your obedt. st.

Jno: Orde Creighton

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 62 (M147, Roll No. 5). Bracketed text supplied from a printed version of this letter published in the *Daily National Intelligencer*, 11 March 1814.

1. The Spanish brig *Isabella* captured on 18 January and the Swedish brig *Sincerity*, taken two days later. See the list of vessels captured and spoken to by *Rattlesnake* and *Enterprise* enclosed in Creighton to Jones, 9 March 1814, below. *Isabella* arrived at Wilmington, North Carolina, on 10 February, commanded by *Rattlesnake*'s captain of the maintop. For additional documentation on this prize ship, see Cochran to Jones, 12 February 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 123 (M124, Roll No. 60); Jones to Cochran, 19 February 1814, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 118–19 (M209, Roll No. 4); Jones to Commanding Officer of the Prize Brig *Isabella*, 19 February 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 220–21 (M149, Roll No. 11); and Creighton to Jones, 14 March 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 84 (M147, Roll No. 5).

2. The British brig *Rambler*. See list of vessels captured and spoken to by *Rattlesnake* and *Enterprise* enclosed in Creighton to Jones, 9 March 1814, below.

3. These enemy warships are identified as the frigate *Leonidas* and 74-gun ship of the line *Barham*, in McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, p. 198.

## MIDSHIPMAN JOHN H. AULICK TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Wilmington, N.C,  
March 7th. 1814

Sir

I have the honour to inform you that I arrived at this place last evening in the prize Schooner *Mars*, late an English Privateer of Nassau, N.P, Captured off Cape Florida on the 22d Ultimo. by the U, States Brigs *Rattlesnake* & *Enterprize*— The *Mars* is an American built vessel, copper bottomed and copper fastened, and sails remarkably well— She is about one hundred and twenty tons burthen, and mounts twelve guns viz: 2 twelve pound carronades, 6 short nines, 2 long sixes, and 2 long fours, and has 2 twelve pound carronades with carriages in her hold— She is well supplied with small arms and ammunition, and when full maned carried eighty men, but when captured there were but about forty five on board, chiefly all blacks— the white men, supposing us to be English cruizers, took the boat and pulled on shore before we came up with them, to avoid impressment.

It appeared to have been the object of Capt. Creighton to have kept the *Mars* in company with the Brigs the remainder of the cruize—but while we were employed removing the baggage of the prisoners a strange sail hove in sight to windward, the Brigs immediately gave chase, and I being but very weakly maned was unable to make sail with expedition, and night coming on, I was unfortunately seperated with but 5 men and an Officer, two of the men have been sick ever since they are on board, and I this morning sent them to the hospital— I shall wait your instructions for the disposition of the others— All the papers of the *Mars* are in the possession of Capt. Creighton—

Under the impression that it may be satisfactory to the Department to Know the principal events that have occurred on board the Brigs up to the period of my seperation from them, I take the liberty to state so far as my memory will serve (my Journal as well as my trunks being on board the Brig) that about four days after recapturing the *Isabella* we boarded a Swedish Ship,<sup>1</sup> and finding British property to a considerable amount on board, we put a Midshipman on board and ordered her for Savannah, Geo.,— About the 5th. Feby. the North side of St. Domingo, we Captured an English Brig<sup>2</sup> from Cape Francois bound to St. Thomas loaded with Coffee, which we burnt— about the 8. Feby. Cape St. Nicholas in sight, we were chased by a large Frigate,<sup>3</sup> which caused a seperation of the Brigs. we lost sight of the chase that night— about the 12th. off St. Jago De Cuba we were chased by a Ship of the Line,<sup>4</sup> from which we escaped in the night— About the 15th. off Cape Corientes<sup>5</sup> fell in with the *Rattlesnake*— About the 20th. spoke an American privateer<sup>6</sup> which gave us information of a large English Convoy seen lying too off the Havannah eight days previous— we made all sail in persuit of the convoy—when on the 22d. we fell in with the *Mars*, and the same day captured a small English Schooner<sup>7</sup> from Nassau, N P, loaded with salt, which we were about to destroy when the signal to chase was made, it had however not been done when I lost sight of them—

The crews of both Brigs had been quite healthy—never more than 5 or 6 on the sick list of either. I have the honour to be very respectfully Sir, Your Obt. Servt.

J. H. Aulick  
Mids. U.S. Navy

P.S. The Brigs must undoubtedly make some port ere long as the *Enterprise* had only 25 day water on board, at half Gallon a man— Res[*pectful*]ly.

JHA

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 95 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. The Swedish brig *Sincerity*, taken two days after the capture of *Isabella*. See the list of vessels captured and spoken to by *Rattlesnake* and *Enterprise* enclosed in Creighton to Jones, 9 March 1814, below.
2. The British brig *Rambler*, captured on 7 February. Ibid.
3. The British frigate *Leonidas*, which chased the two American brigs on 8 February. See McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, p. 198
4. The 74-gun ship of the line *Barham*, which chased *Rattlesnake* on 9 March and *Enterprise* on 10 March. Ibid.
5. Cape or Cabo Corrientes, the second-westernmost point on the island of Cuba.
6. The privateer *Rapid* of Charleston, South Carolina. See the list referenced in note 1.
7. The British schooner *Eliza*. Ibid.

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN O. CREIGHTON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Wilmington [N.C.] March 9th. 1814

Sir

I have the honor to announce to you the Arrival of the U.S. Brigs *Rattlesnake* and *Enterprise*, under my command, after a cruise of eight weeks, the *Enterprise* joined me yesterday, having seperated on the 25th. Ulto. to avoid capture, both vessels being closely pursued by a frigate or razeed.

By the enclosed report from Lieut. Renshaw you will perceive the chase continued 70 hours, during which time he was under the necessity of lightning his vessel by throwing over board his guns, cutting away his anchors, and starting his water. This is the third time we have been chased by superior force, and in every instance the good fortune of the *Enterprise* has been wonderfully manifest.

In obedience to your instructions of the 2nd. January, after leaving the U. States, I passed to the eastward of Bermuda, and having reached the Latitude of 18.° 56' N. and Longitude of 62.° 28' W.,<sup>1</sup> I bore up and on the 29th. January made the Island of Anegada and Virgin Gorda, hence by St. Thomas down the north sides of Porto Rico and St. Domingo, through the windward passage, along the North side of Jamaica, round the west end of Cuba, through the Florida passage and so to this place.

In the windward passage we were chased by a frigate<sup>2</sup> and narrowly escaped capture. For the preservation of one and perhaps both vessels I was under the



necessity of separating, but was joined again by the *Enterprise* off Cape Antonio on the 14th. February, conformably to previous arrangement

On the 10th. of February we were again chased by a line of battle ship, but out-sailed her with great ease. the same vessel, which we learnt to be the *Bedford* 74,<sup>3</sup> pursued the *Enterprise*, when on her way to join me off Cape Antonio, for nine hours, the latter escaped by a manœuvre at night.

I should have continued to cruise on the ground you recommended, but was continually taken from the station by vessels it became my duty to pursue, as well as the prospect of falling in with a convoy that had passed the Havanna about eight or ten days previous to my appearing off that place.

I have the honor to enclose you a list of vessels captured and spoken during the cruise, among the former you will perceive the private armed schooner *Mars* of 14 Guns and 75 Men, this capture affords me the more satisfaction, as she belonged to that nest of Pirates commonly called Providence Privateers. She is a fine vessel built in Baltimore, well calculated for public service should Government require a vessel of her class.— Another privateer was in company with her, but night had so far advanced it was impossible for me to prevent her escape. The *Mars* having taken us at first for English Brigs between 20 and 30 of her men took to her boats and landed on the Florida shore to avoid impressment, notwithstanding this she ranged up along side of the *Enterprise* with tompions out and training her guns. Lt. Renshaw ignorant of the circumstance of any of her men having left her, gave her a broadside, which kill'd two and wounded two others of her crew: Lt. Renshaw's conduct was perfectly correct, it was the indiscreet and ridiculous parade of the commande[r] of the Privateer that caused this unnecessary bloodshed. At the same time the *Mars* struck, we took possession of the Schooner *Eliza* from Nassau New Providence bound to Pensacola, laden with salt in passing the prize I hailed Lieut. Gamble who had her in charge, and directed him to Scuttle the vessel, and cut away her masts take to the boat he had along side and join the *Enterprise* then in pistol shot of him The wind and Current having set us close in with the Florida Shore, I was under the necessity of working to windward and directed the *Enterprise* to do the same as soon as possible. a light was shown from the *Rattlesnake*, rockets thrown and false fires occasionally burnt during the night to point out our situation to the other vessels. At 2 A.M. the *Enterprise* joined me and at day light the *Mars*, but from the extreme darkness of the night the *Eliza* was lost sight of about 8 in the evening and has not been seen since. All the following day was spent in search of her, but without success. At noon by observation I found we had drifted a degree and a half to the northward of the place where we made the capture. From the state of the weather immediately after I spoke the *Eliza* it became necessary for all the other vessels to work off shore, and Lt. Gamble must have been sensible of the necessity of doing the same with the vessel under his charge, & not complying with my orders to destroy her.— as he had six men and plenty of water and provisions I hourly look for him at this place, or expect to hear of his arrival at Savannah.<sup>4</sup> After removing the prisoners from the *Mars*, I intended to have turned to windward again and remain a few days off the Cat Keys. But at 4 P.M. discovered a Ship which we gave chase to, and which ultimately led us through the passage, it being now out of my power to get to windward, I shaped a course to the Northward and Eastward with a strong gale from the Southward and Westward, in hopes of meeting with some Stragglng vessels of the

convoy, and having proceeded as far in this direction, as I thought my instructions would authorize, without seeing a single Sail, I altered my course to the Westward.

The *Rattlesnake* has been under her topsails the greater part of the cruise, except when in chase, or avoiding superior force.

Lieut. Renshaw has rendered me every assistance, and has discharged his duty with zeal and ability. The *Enterprise* is as gallant a little vessel as ever floated, at the same time one of the dullest in point of sailing, She has escaped capture to be sure, but altogether by good fortune and the great exertions of her officers and men. I assure you sir she has caused me much anxiety & uneasiness from that particular alone. On board both Brigs are about 70 prisoners, among them is a Midshipman and Nine Men belonging to the Frigate *Belvidera*. The *Rattlesnake* will require some repairs, but all I believe can be done by our own Carpenters, her main Mast head is badly sprung, and will have to be fished, and the upper part of her stem has worked loose, in consequence of the shortness of the scarf, and the very careless manner in which it was bolted, but rest assured sir, she shall be ready for sea with all possible dispatch

I am happy to add, the Officers and Men of both Brigs have enjoyed the highest health, not a single death having taken place on board either vessel. I regret being obliged to return so soon but as it became necessary, I trust it will meet your approbation.— I have the Honor to be with the highest consideration and Respect Your Obedt. and Very humble servant

Jno: Orde Creighton

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 79 (M147, Roll No. 5). Bracketed text is supplied from a printed version of this letter published in the 22 March 1814 edition of the *Daily National Intelligencer*. The complimentary close is in Creighton's own hand.

1. Approximately 44 nautical miles northeast of the island of Anguilla.

2. Identified as the frigate *Leonidas* in McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, p. 198.

3. Identified as the 74-gun ship of the line *Barham* in *ibid*.

4. Lieutenant Peter Gamble and his five-man prize crew escaped to the Florida shore in *Eliza's* long boat after the schooner ran aground and began to founder. The American castaways were rescued from their predicament by the Swedish brig *Neptunus*, which carried them to Havana, Cuba. From Havana, Gamble and his men made their way to New York in the letter-of-marque schooner *Boxer*, arriving on 31 March. See Gamble to Jones, 1 April 1814, below, and, a news item that appeared in the 5 April 1814 edition of the *Daily National Intelligencer*, under the heading "New-York, April 1."

[Enclosure]

January 18th. 1814

Latt. 27°. 4' N. Long. 57°. 34 W<sup>1</sup>

Captured the Spanish Brig *Isabella*— sent in and arrived. ~~having~~ being in possession of the Enemy

January 20th.

Latt. 26°. 55' N Long. 57°. 34 W<sup>2</sup>

Captured the Sweedish Ship *Sincerity* of Stockholm bound to Amelia— sent in having English Merchandize— Arrived

Feby. 2nd.

Porto Rico bearing S. by E. Dist. 3 Leagues Boarded a Spanish Sloop & Schooner from St. Juan Bound to Leeward— permitted them to proceed—

Feby. 3rd.

Porto Rico bearing S.W. Dist 8 Leagues Boarded a Spanish Schooner from Maracaybo bound to St. Johns Porto Rico with a cargo of Logwood & Cotton permitted to proceed.—

Feby. 7th.

Latt. 21° „ 44' N. Long. 84° „ 44' W.<sup>3</sup>

Captured the English Brig *Rambler* from Cape Francois bound to St. Thomas with coffee. Burnt her—

February 10th.

Latt. 19° . 36' N. Long 79° . 31' W<sup>4</sup>

Boarded the Spanish Schooner *Penelope* from Providence bound to Jamaica Permitted her to proceed—

February 11th.

Latt. 20° . 30' N. Long 80° . 13' W<sup>5</sup>

Boarded the American Schooner *Louisianna* from New Orleans bound to St. Jago de Cuba with Passengers— Permitted her to proceed

February 19th.

Latt 24° „ 15' North Long. 83° . 0' West<sup>6</sup>

Boarded a Swedish Brig from Martinico bound to Havanna— Permitted her to proceed

February 20th.

Latt. 23° . 55' Long. 82° 5' West<sup>7</sup>

Boarded a Spanish Ship from Havanna bound to Boston (16 Hours out) permitted her to proceed

February 22nd

Latt. 25° 35' Long. 80° 10' W.<sup>8</sup>

Boarded the American Privateer *Rapid* from Charleston on a Cruise—

Feby. 23d

Latt 27° . 05' N Long 81° 12 W

Cape Florida bearing West by South Dist. 5 Leagues Captured the English Schooners *Mars* & *Eliza* the former from New Providence on a cruise. the latter from Nassau to Pensacola with salt

Feby. 25th.

Latt. 31° 50' N. Long. 79

Signed Jno: Orde Creighton  
Commander

DS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 79, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5). Docketed on reverse on signature page: "A List of Vessels/Captured & Spoken by/ the U.s Brigs *Rattlesnake*/ & *Enterprise*. A printed version of this list was published in the 22 March 1814 edition of the *Daily National Intelligencer*. For eight of the 11 dates entered on this list, Creighton provided only latitude and longitude to fix the position of his command. These coordinates were used to calculate the approximate location of the American cruisers.

1. Approximately 487 nautical miles southeast of Bermuda.
2. Approximately 495 nautical miles southeast of Bermuda.
3. Just off Corrientes Bay, at the western extremity of Cuba.
4. Approximately 29 nautical miles east of Little Cayman Island, one of the Cayman Islands group.
5. Approximately 75 nautical miles south of Casilda Bay, Cuba.
6. Approximately 75 nautical miles north-northwest of Havana, Cuba.
7. Approximately 48 nautical miles north-northeast of Havana, Cuba.
8. Approximately 13 nautical miles south of Miami Beach, Florida, at the entrance of Biscayne Bay.

[Enclosure]

U.,S., Brig *Enterprise*  
Cape Fear River No. Ca. 7 March [1814]

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you with the arrival at this anchorage of the U.,S., Brig *Enterprise* under my command. The enemy's frigate that caused the separation of the two Brigs *Rattlesnake* & *Enterprise* on the morning of the 25th. Ultimo., continued in chace of the latter vessel for upwards of 70 hours; during which time she was repeatedly within 2½ miles; and on the morning of the 27th. in a calm, observed the enemy making preparations for the hoisting out of her boats. To a light breeze springing up at this time from the S.,W., which brought the *Enterprise* to windward, alone; is to be attributed our escape of this day; the frigate being within gun shott at the time. In the early part of the chace; by the advice & wishes of all my officers, as the only alternative left us; the Sheet Anchor, and 15 of our guns were thrown overboard to lighten the Brig. Be assured sir, that this painful measure was not resorted to, untill almost every prospect of escape had left us, and the evident benefits arising from what little we had lightened her by the pumping out of the salt water. In the chace I made the private signal of the day, as also No. 828 from Signal Book to the stranger which were not answered—I have the honor to be most respectfully sir, Your Obt. Servt.

James Renshaw

Capt. John O, Creighton  
Commg. U.,S., Brig *Rattlesnake*

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 79, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5). Addressed on envelope: "Capt. John O, Creighton/Commg. U.,S., Brig *Rattlesnake*/Cape Fear River/No. Ca."

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
 MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN O. CREIGHTON

John Orde Creighton Esqr. }  
 Commg. U.S. Brig *Rattlesnake*, }  
 Wilmington N.C. }

Navy Department  
 March 20th. 1814.

Sir,

Your letters of the 9th. and 14th. current have been duly received.<sup>1</sup>

I am most perfectly satisfied with your conduct, and sensible of your ability and zeal to promote the interests and honour of your Country. The very superior sailing of the *Rattlesnake* is a source of great satisfaction. You will refit, and proceed to Sea, as soon as possible; steering to the Eastward, until you have reached the Meridian of Bermuda, and the parallel of 30° N. near which you will cruise a fortnight or three weeks, more or less according to the success you may meet with;— thence, shape a course to pass about 30 leagues North of Corvo and Flores; thence for a line drawn from Cape Clear to the coast of Cornwall, near which you will cruise, approaching either coast, as circumstances may dictate, but watching the coasting trade to and from either channel near the Land's End. This trade is immensely valuable; and its destruction, even to the extent of the capacity of the *Rattlesnake*, under favorable circumstances, would produce a great effect.

It is not to be presumed, that you can remain very long on this ground without a very close pursuit, and you will regulate your stay accordingly. From thence you will pass round the West to the North of Ireland, and cruise so as to intercept the trade from the North Sea to the Irish Channel;— thence for the Fair Island passage, between the Orkney and Shetland Islands, cruising over, occasionally towards the Naze of Norway and back; should you want water, you can get it at Bergen, or any of the Ports of Norway; into which you may also have a chance to run some of your prizes.

You cannot expect to remain long undisturbed here; and as soon as you are closely pursued, a change of position will be necessary; you may then retrace your ground, and when your wants shall compel you to seek a port, that of L'Orient, on the coast of Brittany, or that of Brest, may be entered with more facility than any other. Should you refit in a foreign Port, or be deterred, by circumstances, from entering one, you will, in either case, prolong your cruise in such situations as may promise the greatest success; and when you are compelled to return to the United States, endeavour to enter the Delaware, and if obstructed there, steer for New York.

On all other points, not comprehended in this letter, you will be governed by the former instructions from this Department, dated the 22nd. December last.<sup>2</sup> With the extraordinary qualities of the *Rattlesnake*, and the favor of the approaching season, you have a right to expect a brilliant and prosperous cruise, of which I will not deny myself the pleasure of anticipating.

You will please acknowledge the receipt of this, and direct your Purser, on the eve of your departure, to transmit a correct Muster Roll of the Officers and Crew. I am, respectfully, Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 114–16 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. Creighton's letter of 9 March is printed above. His letter of 14 March requested advice on whether the black crewmen taken in the British privateer *Mars* should be considered property to be libeled in admiralty court along with the captured warship or treated as prisoners of war. Creighton also reported on the poor state of *Enterprise's* standing rigging. See Creighton to Jones, 14 March 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 84 (M147, Roll No. 5).

2. See Jones to Creighton, 22 December 1813, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 296–97.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN O. CREIGHTON

John O. Creighton Esqr.  
Commg. U.S. Brig *Rattlesnake* }  
Wilmington N.C.

Navy Department  
March 20th. 1814.

Sir,

Referring to mine, of this date, for the government of your future cruise in the U.S. Brig *Rattlesnake*, I have now to offer to you an alternative, for the exclusive determination of your own views and wishes— that is, the command of the U.S. New Sloop *Argus*, and now fitting here, and a finer vessel never floated. In doing this, you must take the chance of the Blockade; in all other respects it is a most eligible command. If you accept, you will transfer the command, and my instructions for the cruise of the *Rattlesnake*, to Lieutenant Renshaw. The transfer of the Midshipmen, from the Flotilla to the *Rattlesnake*, or to the *Enterprise*, is approved.

I observe what you say, in respect to the state of the Masts, Rigging, &c. of the *Enterprise*; and wish to be more particularly informed on that subject, as her very dull sailing forbids exposing her to the hazards of a cruise in her present rig.

When a Schooner she certainly sailed fast; and her model clearly indicates that as her proper rig. The fleetest Schooner out of Baltimore, would be, comparatively dull, rigged as a Brig. Their construction is peculiarly adapted to the rig of a Schooner, and to nothing else. If, therefore, her materials are in a state to render the comparative expense of converting her into a Schooner advisable, I would, immediately, direct it to be done.

On the subject of the Blacks, taken in the *Mars*, I shall write to you tomorrow or next day.<sup>1</sup> I am, respectfully, Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 116–17 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. Jones ordered Creighton to turn over the blacks taken in *Mars*, as well as all other prisoners he had captured, to the deputy marshal, who had instructions from the commissary general of prisoners on how to dispose of the men. See Jones to Creighton, 1 April 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 261 (M149, Roll No. 11).

## LIEUTENANT PETER GAMBLE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New York 1 April 1814

Sir

I have the honor to report to you my arrival at this place with five of the *Enterprizes* crew in the letter of Marque Schooner *Boxer* eight days from the Havannah— on the evening of the 22 Ulto.<sup>1</sup> I was ordered to take charge of the prize Schooner *Eliza* and soon after received possetive orders from Capt. Creighton to cut away the Masts & Scuttle the vessel and return to the *Enterprize*—which order I immediately attempted to put in execution, before I could get the masts cut away the vessel struck, the Brigs *RattleSnake* & *Enterprize* then out of sight and a heavy surf constantly breaking over the vessel, the small boat in which I boarded stove along side rendered it utterly impossible for me to clear the Shore after some difficulty I got the prizes long boat clear, put my men in and made for the shore—and landed about twenty miles to the Northward of Cape Florida where I remained two days in anxious expectations of discovering the Brigs but in this I was disappointed, having fited Sails for the boat I determined on making the best of my way to St. Marys and got under way on the 24th with the wind from the S.W. on the evening of the 25 the wind shifted to the NW & blew fresh and a heavy surf running in shore obliged me to stand off. the next Morning found my self out of sight of land the wind continuing fresh at NW discovered a ship which I was soon enabled to make out a clump Merchantman thinking it very probable that she was a nutral, and shoud she prove an Enemys vessel, I thought my chance of taking possession of her, at least tolerable and as my boat was very leaky left me but one alternative that of boarding her, which I did about 2 PM She proved the Sweedish Ship *Neptunis* from Amelia bound to the Havannah where I arrived on the 12 Ulto.—<sup>2</sup>

Should it not interfere with your arrangements Sir may I Solicit the indulgence of being attache[d] to the Frigate *President* or some other Frigate that will probably go to sea soon—<sup>3</sup> I will with much pleasure wait Yr. Orders, Sir— With great respect I have the honor to be Sir Your Most Obedient serva[nt]

Peter Gamble

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 2 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Gamble meant 22 February.

2. Brief details of the trials of Gamble and his men appear in the 5 April 1814 edition of the *Daily National Intelligence*, under the heading “*New-York, April 1.*”

3. On 4 May, Secretary Jones ordered Gamble to Thomas Macdonough’s command on Lake Champlain. He was killed in action in *Saratoga* during the Battle of Plattsburgh Bay on 11 September 1814. See Jones to Gamble, 4 May 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1815–23 Nov. 1814, p. 169, and, Macdonough to Jones, 13 Sept. 1814, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 615.

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN O. CREIGHTON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U s Brig *Rattle snake*  
Wilmington [N.C.] April 2.'d 1814

sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your two letters dated 20th in:—<sup>1</sup> The manner in which You have been pleased to express your Approbation of my conduct during the late cruise of the *Rattle snake*, and *Enterprize* is truly grateful to my feelings.—

The *Rattle snake* is preparing for sea with all possible dispatch, and will be able to sail from this place in ten days or a fortnight, she has now almost every thing in, except her main mast which I regret to say is not yet prepared Seven trees have been cut and all proved defective. we now have succeeded in procuring one that I trust will answer— Your Kind offer of the *Argus* I accept with much pleasure. the *Rattle snake* is of that class of vessels only calculated for the destruction of the Enemies commerce, and I freely give her up for the command of a ship on board of which I shall not always be obliged to fly before the foe—

I think the *Enterprize* will answer better in her present rig than if she were altered to a schooner. I recol[le]ct her when tender to the *President* in 1800 cruising in the West indias, and was several years in company with her in the Mediterranean on both these stations she never was considered fast; that is comparatively speaking— in short sir Knowing her as well as I do I can only recommend her for a Hospital or Prison ship, in the character of either she would prove most beneficial and save to the Gouverment a monstrous expence, indeed I, think apartments might be so fitted as to render her suitable for both— At present the sick are boarded at 75, cents pr. day— The prisoners are also at board, and where they can desert if they please, I am informed they are disposed of in the same manner at beaufort. —

I have just discovered that on board of one of the Gun boats now in this river, are a number of Black men taken (by the American privateer *saratoga*) on board an English privateer. these men have been regularly rated, and mustered as part of the crew of Gun boat 147. such extraordinary conduct I felt satisfied would never meet with Your approbation and shall therefore order them to one of the Brigs until I, am instructed by you how to act— The *Rattle snake* will require another Lieut. and ten or twelve men, the latter can be taken from the *Enterprize*, and for the former I recommend in the most earnest manner Mr. Thos. M: Newell sailing master—or Midn. Aulick The former being a man of Judgement & experience would be very useful in the *Rattle snake* on her intended cruise— as soon as the latter vessel is ready for sea I shall transfer her to Lieut. Renshaw as well as your instructions for her cruise— if it does not interfere with your arrangements I should feel highly pleased to have Lieut. Norris at present 1s. Lieut. of the *Rattle snake* to be first of the *Argus*. I shall also be extremely obliged to you sir if You will allow me to transfer to the *Argus*, her Boatswain—Gunner



and sailmaker whose places can be fill'd by the same Officers from the *Enterprise*. I have the Honor to be most respectly. Your Obedt. Humble servt.

Jno: Orde Creighton

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 97 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Creighton meant the 20th ultimo, or 20 March.

## A Marine on Trial

*In February 1814, civil-military relations in Portsmouth became strained when a Marine sentinel standing guard at the Navy Yard accidentally shot and killed a town resident. Local authorities quickly demanded that the Marine, Aaron Smith, be remanded to their custody and tried for murder before a state tribunal. Believing Smith ought to answer for his deed before a military court, as the shooting occurred on Navy Yard property, Hull delayed turning Smith over to the civil magistrate until he had received legal advice from Secretary Jones on the matter. The discovery that the property on which the yard was situated<sup>1</sup> had not been properly ceded to the United States government resulted in Smith's case being tried in a state rather than a federal court. Three months after the shooting, justices of the Massachusetts State Supreme Court rendered a verdict in the murder trial of Aaron Smith.*

*1. The navy yard was sited on Fernald Island (now part of Sevey's Island) in the District of Maine. The town of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, lay opposite the yard on the south shore of the Piscataqua River.*

### NEWS REPORT OF THE FATAL SHOOTING OF A PORTSMOUTH CITIZEN BY A U.S. MARINE

Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 22 February 1814

#### *MELANCHOLLY OCCURRANCE.*

On Sunday afternoon last<sup>1</sup> a boat in passing the navy yard, was fired upon by one of the centinels and Mr. Joseph Gavett, of this town was unfortunately killed. Several other persons were in the boat. We understand the reason assigned by the centinel for firing, was that he suspected them of giving a wrong answer when hailed.—<sup>2</sup> A coroner's inquest sat upon the corpse yesterday and brought in their verdict "*wilful murder.*" The centinel is now in confinement, and as his conduct will undergo a legal investigation, we forbear making any comments, on this very reprehensible affair.

Printed, *New Hampshire Gazette* (Portsmouth), 22 February 1814.

1. Sunday, 20 February 1814.

2. According to another news account of this incident "the soldier fired without cause or provocation." The newspaper also added that "Mr. Gavet has left a wife and 7 children." *Eastern Argus* (Portland, Maine), 24 February 1814.

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard Portsmouth N.H.  
24th February 1814

Sir,

It becomes my duty to report to you a most unfortunate affair that happened a few days since at the Navy Yard at this place during my absence from it.— It appears that for some time past, boats with liquor on board have been in the habit of Supplying the Crew of the *Congress* (who have lately been paid off) with rum in spite of the vigilance of the officers of that ship and those attached to the Yard. Orders were therefore given to the Centinel near the Wharf and Ship to prevent all boats from coming to, or leaving the Wharf without being passed by an officer, but notwithstanding this order the boat made an attempt to leave the wharf with three men in her. She was hailed by the Centinel and direct[ed] [to] Stop, but would not; she was not again hailed, but still persisted in going off; the Centinel therefore fired and unfortunately killed one of the men, a Citizen of Portsmouth (N.H.)

The Marine is now in confinement, and has been demanded by the Civil Authority, but being at a loss what to do I have delay'd giving him up until I could get your orders on the subject, it being a new case, and not being able to get such advice here as I could wish. I will therefore thank you to let me know your wishes as early as possible, as I shall be obliged to make a return on the precept, or give up the man in fifteen days, that being the time named to hear from you.

That the man ought to be brought before some tribunal, there can be no question, but whether Civil or Military, I am at a loss to know. The act was committed on shore, but it being an Island ceded to the United States, I am at a loss whether the State has a right to demand the man. I shall therefore endeavo[ur] to keep him until I know your wishes on the Subject I have the honour to be With great respect Sir Your Obedient Servant

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 136 (M125, Roll No. 34). Bracketed text supplied by the letter book copy of this letter. See NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 1, pp. 250–51.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Captain Isaac Hull  
Commandant of the U. States  
Navy Yard Portsmouth N.H. }  
}

Navy Department  
March 5th. 1814

Sir,

Your letter of the 24th. of last month was received and the case which it states immediately submitted to the Attorney General of the United States for his opinion as to the course to be pursued. I enclose you his answer herewith by which

you will be governed. You will on receipt of this letter address a note to the district Judge of the United States at Portsmouth informing him that you hold the man subject to be delivered up at any moment under process from him or other competent magistrate acting under the authority of the United States. You will therefore protect the Marine against any demand issuing from the authority of the State. I am respectfully Your Obdt. Servt.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 1 (M441, Roll No. 1).

[Enclosure]

The Hon. William Jones }  
Secretary of the Navy }

Washington March 4th. 1814

Sir

I had the honor to receive your letter of yesterday's date,<sup>1</sup> enclosing a letter to you from Captain Hull with a request that I would give my opinion as to the proper mode of proceeding in the case stated in the letter. On the facts as set forth by Captain Hull, I think that the Marine who is charged with the homicide in question, should not be surrendered to the State Authority; but should be handed over to the Judiciary of the United States as having by law the proper cognizance of the case I return Captain Hull's letter and have the honor to be, with great respect, Sir, your ob'dt. Ser'vt.

(Signed) Richard Rush  
Attorney General

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 1, enclosure (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. See Jones to Rush, 3 March 1814, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 128 (M209, Roll No. 4).

### CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Portsmouth 12th March 1814

Sir,

I have been honored with your letter of the 5th instant and with the Attorney General's opinion relative to the unfortunate marine, and have this moment sent a Copy of the Opinion to the District Judge of Massachusetts<sup>1</sup> as the Island on which the Navy Yard is placed belongs to that State and not to New Hampshire, I have informed the Judge that the man will be given up at any moment he might apply for him, agreeably to that opinion and your orders. Several men belonging to the *Congress* will be detained as Witnesses before the Court when the trial comes on I shall endeavour to replace them from the Yard when she is ready for sea. I have the honour to be With very great respect Sir, Your Ob. Servant

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 38 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. David Sewall, Judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Maine. For Hull's cover letter to Sewall, enclosing Richard Rush's opinion, see Hull to Sewall, 12 March 1814, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society, MS 439, Vol. 1 pp. 260–61.

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Portsmouth (N.H.) 13th March 1814

Sir,

I had the honour yesterday to inform you that I had addressed a note to the District Judge, relative to the unfortunate Marine.

I now have the [*honour*]<sup>1</sup> to forward you a copy of his answer by which it appears that he has doubts whether the case can come before him, unless the Island where the Navy Yard is situated has been regularly ceded to the United States, by the State of Massachusetts, which I believe has not been the case. I shall make the enquiry this morning, but am at present under the impression that nothing more than a Deed has been given from the man who sold it, without even consulting the Legislature, or asking their consent; if so the Island is still within the jurisdiction of the State of Massachusetts, and the case only cognizable before the Supreme Judicial Court of Masstts.— I expect the man will again be demanded to day, but I shall endeavour to keep him until your further pleasure is known, if I can do so without its having the appearance of opposing the Civil Authority

I shall therefore hope to get an answer to this letter as early as possible, that I may know how to act. I have the honour to be With great respect sir, Your Obedt. servt.

Isaac Hull

Since writing this letter a demand has been made for the Marine but the Officer suffers him to remain until I hear from you or until Tuesday fortnight—

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 41 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. This dropped word appears in the letter book copy of this correspondence. See Hull to Jones, 13 March 1814, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval Historical Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 1, p. 262.

[Enclosure]

(Copy.)

York 11th [*12th*] of March 1814<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

I have this moment been honored by your communication. The rumours which have reached me of the unhappy affair mentioned have led me to believe the offence to be either cognizable by a Military Tribunal, or the territorial

authority of the State in which the homicide was committed. The Criterion, as it relates to the Civil Authority seems to be, that the place where the offence is committed must be under the sole and exclusive jurisdiction of the United States[.] Until this matter shall be ascertained, I must have serious doubts of the jurisdiction of the District Court of Maine, or its having legal cognizance of the offence, in case the homicide shall appear to have been committed in the District of Maine, I cannot therefore at present esteem it my duty to interfere in the business.

Should the District Attorney, when appointed (the office at present being vacant by the Death of Mr. Lee)<sup>2</sup> lay the matter before a Grand Jury for Maine district, and they should find a bill of Indictment, it must then come regularly before the Court. The Supreme Judicial Court of Masstts. will set in York County, before the next District Court in Maine. The Prisoner now held in Custody, in case he cannot be detained where he is, may be sent by any Magistrate for the County of York to the Jail in York, which place will be the regular place of confinement, whether he shall take a trial in the Supreme Judicial Court, or in the District Court. I am with due Consideration Your humble Servant

Signed David Sewall

P.S. I should like to have information of the Tenure, by which the place where this misfortune happened is held by the United States. The Copy of the purchase deed, and the act of Massa. respecting it, if any there was.—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 41, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. This letter was misdated, either by Sewall or the copyist. As Sewall was responding to Hull's letter of 12 March, this letter should bear the same date.

2. Silas Lee's successor as U.S. attorney for the district of Maine was William P. Preble, with whom Hull corresponded regarding the trial of Marine Aaron Smith. See Hull to Preble, 19 May 1814, below.

### CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth N.H. 27 Mar. 1814

Sir,

I have had the honour to receive your letter of the 13th<sup>1</sup> relative to the Marine, and had anticipated your wishes—

I [A]<sup>2</sup> few days after I wrote you, he was again demanded and knowing that the Island had not been ceded to the United States, I consented to his going before a Justice of the peace for examination. This became necessary in order that the Witnesses might be detained some of whom were travellers. I took with me all the Witnesses from the *Congress*, and on examination every thing appeared so clear that the man did his duty, that he was admitted to bail. I therefore became his Security in the Sum of One thousand Dollars, and took him on the Island where he now is, and has every comfort.

I shall attend particularly to his defence and feel under no apprehensions for his safety— I shall be obliged to detain five or six of the *Congress*' men as witnesses, having no other testimony in his favour— I have the honour to be With great respect Sir, Your Ob. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 78 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Hull means Jones's letter of 19 March. See Jones to Hull, 19 March 1814, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 19–20 (M441, Roll No. 1).

2. Bracketed text provides opening wording for his paragraph as it appears in the letter book copy of this letter. See Hull to Jones, 27 March 1814, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2.

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO  
U.S. ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF MAINE WILLIAM P. PREBLE

[*Portsmouth, N.H.*] 19th May [1814]

Sir,

My time has been so taken up with the defence of the place and attending the duty of the Yard that I have neglected writing you, as I intended on the subject of the unfortunate Marine.

When I received your last letter I called on Mr. Cutts<sup>1</sup> and found him not willing to undertake the defence of the man with you, but said he would do all he could towards arranging the testimony and forward all the necessary papers to you, at the same time recommended my employing Mr. Mellen<sup>2</sup> of Portland. In consequence I wrote to Mr. M and was informed in answer that he would attend to the case with you.

I intended at the time to have informed you of this circumstance but for reasons above stated it slip'd my memory. I hope however as you are well acquainted with Mr. M. you will with him do all you can for the poor fellow, for if any thing happens [*to*] him we may as well turn our guard from the Island.

If it is possible to dispence with my attendance on the court I shall be glad for I dare not leave the station a moment, and I know of no use I can be to him as I was absent at the time the affair took place. Mr. Blake and the other witnesses will be with you at any moment they are required. I have the honor &c

LB, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2. Addressed flush left below complimentary close: "Hon W. P. Preble."

1. Probably Richard Cutts, congressman from the 14th District of Massachusetts, 1801–13, and U.S. superintendent general of military supplies, 1813–17.

2. See Hull to Prentiss Mellen, 6 May 1814, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval Historical Society, MS 439, Vol. 2. Mellen later served as the first chief justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court.

## NEWS REPORT OF MARINE AARON SMITH'S TRIAL FOR MURDER

*Portsmouth, (N.H.) May 21 [1814].*

**TRIAL FOR MURDER.**

At the Supreme Judicial Court now sitting at York, in the State of Massachusetts, AARON SMITH, a soldier in the army of the United States, was indicted for the murder of JOSEPH GAVETT, of this town. The trial of Smith commenced yesterday morning before the Hon. Judges Sewall, Thatcher<sup>1</sup> and Dewey.<sup>2</sup> The hon. Prentiss Mellen and John Holmes<sup>3</sup> were counsel for the prisoner, and the Attorney General, Morton,<sup>4</sup> for the State. It appeared in evidence that Gavett was shot on the 12th of February<sup>5</sup> last by the prisoner—that the prisoner was a centinel on guard at the Navy Yard, near this town, and that there is a standing order at the navy yard, that “no boat shall be suffered to land at, or depart from, the navy yard, without the permission of a commissioned officer, unless a commissioned officer is in the boat.” Gavett, the deceased, with two other persons, landed at the eastern side of the Island in a clandestine manner, without permission, and after remaining an hour or more left the Island without permission. The centinel saw the boat at the time of her landing and departing, but the boat was not within hailing distance from his post. As soon as the boat came within hailing distance, he hailed the boat, and several times ordered her to return to the place which she left. The people in the boat continued to row from the Island, and before the centinel fired, some one in the boat cried out “pull away, let him fire and be damned.”—The centinel then fired, and the ball struck Gavett, and a few minutes afterwards he expired. The Court was unanimously of opinion, that during this time of war and threatened invasion, the order was legal and proper. The Jury, after the evidence had been summed up by the Chief Justice, retired, and in a few minutes returned into Court with a verdict of NOT GUILTY.

Printed, *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 26 May 1814.

1. George Thatcher, associate justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, 1801–24.
2. Daniel Dewey, associate justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, 1814–15.
3. John Holmes held elected office at the state and federal level for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. He served as one of the first two senators from the state of Maine.
4. Perez Morton, attorney general of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1810–32.
5. The shooting took place on 20 February 1814.

## John Bullus—Navy Agent on a Tight Budget

*Secretary Jones needed someone with the skills of a managerial wizard on the New York Station to ensure that the war effort ran smoothly. Geographically, New York's location established it as the distribution center for deploying assets to other navy yards and the Lakes. New York Navy Agent John Bullus confronted the monthly drumbeat of multiple requisitions to pay for anchors, rations, gunpowder, timber, gun locks, pistols, etc. The Navy Department categorized expenses at the New York Navy Yard under these headings: provisions, medicine, ordnance, ship construction and repairs, Navy and Marine Corps*

*pay, and contingent expenses. In addition, the Navy expected Bullus to inspect and certify the workmanship or condition of purchases. During the course of the last year of the war, Bullus's overarching duty was to furnish the Lakes station with its supplies, while also providing materials such as ordnance, copper sheathing, nails, and shot to the navy yards at Portsmouth, Philadelphia, and Charlestown. As money in the budget tightened, Secretary Jones criticized Bullus for overspending and not scrutinizing his contracts more closely. As the financial crisis loomed in the fall of 1814, Jones ordered his navy agents to improvise by paying bills incrementally.*

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO NAVY AGENT JOHN BULLUS

John Bullus Esqr  
Navy Agent New York—

Navy Department  
Feby. 28th 1814

Sir

Your letter enclosing a requisition for Cabbin furniture for the US Ship *John Adams* is Received

The *John Adams* is provided in the most ample & expensive manner with Cabbin furniture &c. for a cruise of 18 months, all of which I understood to have been left by Captain Crane<sup>1</sup> on board the Ship

I must be satisfied on that subject before I can sanction one cent of expence on that Account I am Respectfully your Obt. Servant

Wm. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 126 (M209, Roll No. 4).

1. William M. Crane received his master commandant's and captain's commissions on 4 March 1813 and 22 November 1814, respectively. For more on *John Adams's* diplomatic mission, see pp. 88–99.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO NAVY AGENT JOHN BULLUS

John Bullus Esqr.  
Navy Agent New York

Navy Department  
May 23d. 1814

Sir

I have ascertained to my perfect satisfaction that at the time of the purchase of the Powder of Bullus, Decatur & Rucker, say in March last,<sup>1</sup> at 72 cents per Pound— as good Powder as any manufactured in the United States could have been had in Philada. at 50. cents per pound, and that, in the course of that month, a considerable quantity was delivered there under Contract at 50. Cents per pound, entered into at a time when Saltpetre was considerably higher than at the time of delivery.— The cost of transportation to New York does not exceed one cent per pound.



From these data you will know how to correct the prices charged by you for the several parcels of Powder procured for the service of the Lakes and I request that the correction may be speedily made.—

I have also in like manner ascertained the price of inspected Whiskey in Philada. during the month of December last, and find the average price to have been 92. cents per Gallon, while I find 20. Hhds<sup>2</sup> purchased by you for the Flotilla service charged at 144. cents per gallon.—

It is in vain to say that the New York market is subject to greater “fluctuation and speculation” than any other.— You are not Confined to the New York market, and it was your business to have known the vast difference between the prices in New York and Philada. and to have availed the service of the advantage.—

You will until otherwise ordered, make no Contract or purchase of material consequence until you have advised the Department of the object and amount of the requisition, and of the terms on which the Articles can be obtained.—

If this is promptly done, no inconvenience can arise to the service by the delay of five or Six days, and much may be saved by selecting the most favorable market. I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 86–87 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. In 1812, John Anthony Rucker was a business partner with John Bullus and Stephen Decatur in a company that manufactured powder for the government. Jones may be referring to the purchase of 50 to 60 tons of 24-pounder cannon shot intended for the Lakes. Jones to Bullus, 2 March 1814, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 127 (M209, Roll No. 4).

2. An abbreviation for hogshead, a large cask.

#### CIRCULAR FROM SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO NAVY AGENTS

James Beatty Esqr.  
Navy Agent Baltimore  
George Harrison Esqr.  
Navy Agent Philadelphia  
John Bullus Esqr.  
Navy Agent New York  
Amos Binney Esqr.  
Navy Agent Boston  
Henry S. Langdon Esqr.  
Navy Agent Portsmouth N.H

Navy Department  
June 17th. 1814

Sir,

Although the appropriations for the support of the Navy are ample, yet the expenditures pressed so heavily in the fore part of the year, particularly on

account of the great expenditure on the Lakes, that the drafts on the Treasury are unseasonably heavy.

Therefore in the course of your expenditures, if you can put off, with convenience and without pressing them a proportion of Treasury Notes, it will be a public convenience and serve to equalize the payments. I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 106 (M441, Roll No. 1).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO NAVY AGENT JOHN BULLUS

John Bullus Esqr. }  
Navy Agent New York }

Navy Department  
August 9th. 1814

Sir

Having within a few days received your two heavy requisitions, the greater part of which is for Bills drawn upon you from the Lakes.— I hope they have not been accepted because it is by no means proper or necessary that the Bills drawn for public supplies or services, at short sight should pass through the ordeal of Bank punctilio and be exposed to notarial denunciation at the stroke of the clock.—

The government of the U.S can have nothing to reproach itself with on the score of good faith, though it should for a moment suffer a protest of the acceptance of its Agent, yet as this may furnish its Enemies with a ground of cavil, you will not accept any Bill in future other than by a verbal assurance that it will be paid at maturity.—

I expect to make the remittance for your requisitions in due time.—

Cannot Mr. Eckford<sup>1</sup> receive Treasury notes for the amount of his Bills— these could be remitted immediately.—

Nothing but the heavy expenditures on the Lakes coming upon the Treasury all at once, could have excited a moments solicitude on the subject.— I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 164 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Henry Eckford.

## CIRCULAR FROM SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO NAVY AGENTS

Circular

To Saml. Storer, Portland, Me.	James Beatty, Baltimore
Henry S. Langdon, Portsth. N.H.	John H. Fawn, Norfolk.
Amos Binney, Boston.	Joshua. Potts, Wilmg. N.C.
Constant Taber, Newport.	John. Robertson, Charleston, S.C.
Joseph Hull, Middletown.	A. S. Bulloch, Savannah.
John Bullus, New York.	J. K. Smith, New Orleans
George Harrison, Philada.	James Morrison, Lexington. K.

Navy Department,  
 Septr. 15th. 1814.

Sir,

Out of the aggregate funds remaining in your hands, at any time, should there not be sufficient to meet the entire demands of the service, you will, specially and in preference, reserve a sufficiency to supply the current demands for the following objects, in the order in which they stand, until provision shall be made for the whole.— viz.—

1st. Recruiting Service and Transportation.

2nd. Pay of the Navy, in part, if not the whole.

3d. Provisions, in part, if the purchase is considerable, the Seller ought not to expect prompt payment.—

4th. Other supplies of the most immediate necessity, which, from the nature of the article and usage of the market, may require prompt payment, apportioning the payments as equitably as may be, and withholding the largest proportion from the largest claimants.—

In all other respects you will dispose of the funds in your hands, in such manner as may, in your judgment, be best adopted to satisfy the claimants and sustain the credit of the Department; stipulating, whenever it may be practicable, to pay, at least, a moiety, if not the whole, in Treasury Notes, particularly where the amount is considerable.—

In every requisition, made by you, on this Department, state the amount which you can dispose of in Treasury Notes.

You will not render negotiable any bills that may be drawn on you, on time, but state that it will be paid at maturity; nor will make any advance of money on any contract or engagement, without the special authority of this Department.

I rely, with confidence, upon your zealous efforts to promote the objects of this instruction. Very respectfully, &c.

W. Jones.

N.B. Treasury notes can only be paid at par, according to Law.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 184–85 (M441, Roll No. 1).

CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF WAR MONROE

Sir

In order that you should know on what ground the Navy Agent<sup>1</sup> Stands in this City I herewith have the honor to enclose to you a Copy of a Certificate handed to him by the Navy officers— with the highest respct. & Esteem I have the honor To be yr. very Obt. Servt.

J Lewis

N York Feby 13th. 1815.

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 52 (M124, Roll No. 69).

1. John Bullus.

[Enclosure]

The Subscribing Officers of the Navy of the United States, understanding that Mr. John Bullus Navy Agent at New York, considers the pecuniary compensation allowed to him by Law is inadequate for the duties which he has to perform, and as from our situation we have had an opportunity of judging of the services rendered by Mr. Bullus, we would respectfully state, That though Mr. Bullus's appointment is for the Port of New York, yet contracts for the Navy service are made by him to a large amount not only in New York, but also in the States of Connecticut and Massachusetts.— Upon him also has devolved the transaction of the business respecting Lakes Ontario, and Champlain, and in part for Lake Erie, not only in making the purchases for the public Service, but also in attending to their transportation from this place to the Lakes— duties so various and so laborious that when correctly performed must wholly prevent the person performing them from attending to the ordinary pursuits of business.—

We would further state that we have witnessed in Mr. Bullus on all occasions a zeal, a promptitude and intelligence that have in our opinion greatly advanced the public service,—

Considering therefore the duties which he performs, and the great responsibility he necessarily incurs, we are of opinion that an additional allowance is justly due to him from the Public for those extra services.—

January 1815.—

Signed,	Isaac Chauncey,	L Warrington
	O H Perry	Stephen Decatur
	Isaac Hull	D. Porter.—
	J, Lewis	

Copy, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 52, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 69). Monroe wrote the following comment on the letters: "I am well acquainted with Dr. Bullus, and believe him to be an honest, diligent and capable public officer— Ja<sup>s</sup> Monroe Feby 15. 1815."

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
NAVY AGENT JOHN BULLUS

John Bullus Esqr. }  
Navy Agent New York }

Navy Department  
Feb'y 15th. 1815

Sir

In reply to your letter of the 11th. Inst.<sup>1</sup> I observe that you have engaged the Powder for the Lake service at Sixty cents per lb; this appears to be in direct violation of the instructions of this Department under date of May 23d. 1814; and at this present time, when the best powder is offered to be delivered at New York for fifty six cents per lb and the manufacturing company of Levering & Co.<sup>2</sup> at Baltimore, engage to deliver at forty eight cents per lb.— the difference in the above prices & those you have purchased at, ought not to be lost by the Department after the order above mentioned. I am very respectfully &c.

B W Crowninshield

LB, DNA, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 288 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Not found.

2. Probably the Bellona Gunpowder Manufactory. Adam Levering was the company's agent.

## *Wasp* Delivers a Stinging Blow to John Bull

*The first 14 months of the war proved frustrating for Johnston Blakeley. Although he commanded one of a handful of the Navy's sailing vessels, the brig Enterprise, his station commanders at New Orleans and later St. Marys refused to permit him to cruise for even a single day.<sup>1</sup> Like so many others of his brother officers, Blakeley hungered for the opportunity to distinguish himself in action against the enemy. The North Carolina officer's luck changed when, on 6 August 1813, Secretary Jones ordered him to superintend the construction of an 18-gun sloop of war at Newburyport, Massachusetts. Designed along the lines of the brig Argus by naval constructor William Doughty, Blakeley's new command, U.S.S. Wasp, united the qualities of speed and maneuverability with close-in firepower.*

*In January of 1814, with Wasp's construction finished, Blakeley requested and received permission to relocate his ship to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where he completed its crew and outfit.<sup>2</sup> While many of the crew entered on Wasp's rolls were green,<sup>3</sup> Blakeley was blessed to have a number of combat veterans among his senior officers. First Lieutenant James Reilly and Third Lieutenant Bawry had each served in Constitution during "Old Ironsides's" engagements with Guerriere and Java. Second Lieutenant Thomas G. Tillinghast was a member of the brig Enterprise's crew during its victory over the British brig Boxer.<sup>4</sup> Such experienced leadership no doubt contributed to Wasp's combat success in 1814.*

*Wasp departed on its maiden cruise on 1 May 1814. Nearly ten weeks later the American warship would enter the French port of L'Orient (Lorient) having taken seven merchant prizes and defeated the British brig-sloop Reindeer in a bloody combat that culminated with each opponent attempting to secure victory by boarding the other.*

1. See Blakeley to Jones, 8 April 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 88–89.

2. Blakeley cited three reasons for removing Wasp from its berth at Newburyport: the impossibility of Wasp's clearing the harbor bar once the sloop had taken on its guns; the likelihood of being icebound over the winter months; and the ease with which sailors deserted Wasp while it lay at a wharf near the heart of town. Blakeley's

letters on this subject were enclosed in *Bainbridge to Jones*, 21 December 1813, DNA, RG45, CL, 1813, Vol. 8, No. 90 (M125, Roll No. 33), and *Bainbridge to Jones*, 18 January 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 44 (M125, Roll No. 34).

3. For the difficulties Blakeley experienced in completing his crew, see *Hull to Jones*, 12 March 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 40 (M125, Roll No. 35); *Hull to Jones*, 25 March 1814, *ibid.*, No. 73; and *Hull to Jones*, 6 April 1814, *ibid.*, No. 125.

4. Brief profiles of *Wasp*'s officers may be found in *Duffy, Blakeley and the Wasp*, pp. 123–36.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY

Johnston Blakeley Esqr.  
Commanding U.S. Ship *Wasp*, }  
Portsmouth N.H.

Navy Department  
March 3d. 1814

Sir,

Commodore Bainbridge, having announced the arrival of the *Guns* for the *Wasp* at Boston,<sup>1</sup> and that they would be immediately forwarded on to Portsmouth, I presume you will be ready to proceed on a Cruise, by the time you may receive this. You will, therefore, as soon as the U. States Ship *Wasp*, under your command, is in complete and efficient order for a cruise, proceed to Sea, and steering to the Eastward, pass about a degree to the Southward of the tail of the Grand Bank, then, under easy sail, shaping a course for a point about 30 or 40 leagues N.W. of Corvo and Flores,<sup>2</sup> which having attained, cruise in this position ten or twelve days, according to the state of the Winds and Weather thence for the parallel of, and about 60 leagues West of Ushant.<sup>3</sup> Near this Meridian, and between the parallels of Ushant and Scilly,<sup>4</sup> you will cruise thirty days, more or less, according to the weather and prospects of success; thence for Cape Clear<sup>5</sup> between which, and the English Coast, you will, according to circumstances, cruise a fortnight or three weeks; or until you have reason to apprehend being too closely pursued by the enemy when it will be proper to take a circuit of 5 or 6 degrees to the Westward, and thence Southward, until you bring Cape Finisterre<sup>6</sup> to bear S.E. about 50 leagues. Near this position cruise about 20 to 25 days, as success or information may dictate thence to the Southward as far as Cape St. Vincent,<sup>7</sup> ranging the coast from 20 to 30 leagues distant, and cruising eight or ten days; this may bring you to the 1st. or 10th. of August, when you will run to the Northward, and passing the West coast of Ireland shape your course for the Shetland Isles, which you may reach in time to intercept the British Archangel fleet, homeward bound. You will not remain longer on this ground than the 10th. of September; when, if you shall be in want of Water and provisions, you will endeavour to reach the coast of France, and get into L'Orient, which is a convenient port for refitting; and of easier ingress and egress than perhaps any other. Should you refit in France you will make all possible despatch; and, in leaving that Coast for another cruise, as the autumnal Season will be advanced, you will seek a milder climate, steering for the Island of Madeira, and in its vicinity cruise three or four Weeks. Thence for the coast of Cayenne, Berbice, and Demarara,<sup>8</sup> and through the Bay of Honduras. Thence to the Mouth of the Mississippi, Pensacola, and through the Gulph to St. Mary's Georgia, where you will touch for information and refreshments.

If from the Shetland Isles you do not proceed to France, you will return home, in such route as you may deem best adapted to the annoyance of the trade of the enemy, and endeavour to get into the Delaware or New York.

If the qualities of the *Wasp* are such as I feel confident they will prove to be, you cannot fail to make a brilliant and productive cruise. Your own sound judgment and observations will sufficiently demonstrate to you, how extremely precarious and injurious, is the attempt to send in a prize, unless taken very near a friendly port, and under the most favorable circumstances. A failure of success places our unfortunate Seamen in the hands of the enemy; diminishes your means of achieving honour to yourself, and glory to your Country; curtails your cruise, and subjects you to the unequal attack of a foe, nominally your equal, but fully manned. Hence, it is evident, that policy, interest, and duty, combine to dictate the destruction of all captures, with the above exceptions. It is a great object with the enemy to capture and detain in prison our Seamen; and this can only be counteracted by capturing and bringing into port an equal number; this is an object of great National importance; the releasing, at Sea on Parole, though practiced by all civilized Nations, is utterly disregarded by our enemy.

You will perceive, by the route I have designated, and the time indicated at each cruising Station, that my object is, to avoid remaining too long at any one station; that, by a timely change of position, the vigilance of the enemy may be eluded.

The President of the United States, persuaded that the gallantry of our Naval Officers, resting upon a rock of glory, cannot be shaken by the ostentatious vanity of a boasting, but mortified enemy; and from motives of obvious policy, as well as solid objections to the practice, has given it to me in charge, to prohibit, in the strictest manner, the giving or accepting of a challenge, to fight Ship to Ship; which injunctions you will strictly observe.

Before sailing you will direct your Purser<sup>9</sup> to forward to this Department, a correct Muster Roll of the Officers and Crew of the *Wasp*.

Wishing you a prosperous and honourable Cruise, I am, very respectfully, Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 106–8 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. On 18 February 1814, Bainbridge reported the arrival of 16 of *Wasp's* 32-pound carronades at Charlestown Navy Yard. The sloop's remaining guns arrived at that yard four days later. See Bainbridge to Jones, 18 February 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 122 (M125, Roll No. 34), and, Bainbridge to Jones, 23 February 1814, *ibid.*, No. 134.

2. Approximately 90 to 120 nautical miles northwest of Corvo and Flores, the two western-most islands of the Azores archipelago.

3. Approximately 180 nautical miles west of Ushant, or Île d'Ouessant, an island off the coast of Brittany, France.

4. Scilly Islands, a group of 140 islands off Land's End, the southwest coast of England. A line drawn between these islands and Ushant marks the western entrance to the English Channel.

5. Southernmost point of Clear Island, which lies off the coast of County Cork, Ireland.

6. Rock-bound peninsula on the west coast of Galicia, Spain.

7. Headland at the southwestern-most point of Portugal.

8. French colony of Cayenne, Dutch colony of Berbice, and the British colony of Demerara, all on the northeast coast of South America. The first is now part of modern-day French Guyana, while the latter two are part of Guyana.

9. Purser Lewis Fairchild, commissioned a purser 29 September 1813. He was appointed purser of the *Wasp* on 7 October that same year.

LIEUTENANT THOMAS CHAMBERS, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL WILLIAM DOMETT, R.N.

Plymouth  
7th July 1814

By the unfortunate and much to be lamented death of Captain Manners; who fell in action with the United States Ship "*Wasp*," the painful task has devolved upon me of detailing to you, the particulars of that event; and capture of His Majesty's late Brig "*Reindeer*"

On the 28th. June at 4 Am, in Latitude 48°,,30' N, Longitude 11°,,0 W,<sup>1</sup> a sail was discovered bearing WSW; to which chase was immediately given, and at 10 making her out to be a Ship of War standing to the westward, with a light breeze at NNE, the private signal was made with a Gun; which not being answered, every exertion by sweeping was made to come up with her; 1,,10 the chase tack'd. and stood towards the "*Reindeer*," hoisting three American Ensigns; we then made her out to be a large Corvette, mounting 22 Guns; tack'd. and took 1st. reef in the Topsails, and cleared for Action; 2,,30 tack'd. and stood towards the Enemy, who not being able to Weather us, tack'd. again to the Westward, We then set stay-sails and flying Jib, being within Musquet Shot on her Weather Quarter; she still endeavoring to cross to windward, which she could not effect; 3,,5 being within hail commenced firing our bow Gun, it being the only one that could bear; 3,,10 the Enemy luffed and gave us his broadside, with Musquetry, and hove in stays; We passing under her bows rakeing her; her Jib boom just clearing our Main rigging; our helm being put up, laid her onboard our Small bower Anchor hooking her larboard Quarter— 3,,20 from the immense superiority of our opponent, and our Men falling fast, endeavored to board, but were repulsed in the attempt; and I received a severe wound in the hip, which did not prevent my remaining on deck until from loss of Blood I fainted; 3,,25 the Captain and Purser<sup>2</sup> fell, covered with wounds; the Master<sup>3</sup> at the same time received three severe wounds in the thigh, and arm and every Officer on deck except Mr. Richard Collins (Clerk) either killed or Wounded, and the decks strewed with our gallant Men; 3,,30 the Colors were struck, the Enemy then boarded and took possession; she proved to be the United States Ship of War "*Wasp*," mounting 20 thirty two pounders Carronades, and 2 long twelves; 509 Tuns Burthen— they acknowledged to have had 175 Men at Quarters, at the commencement of the Action.—

The *Reindeer* mounting 16 twenty four pounders carronades and 2 long sixes, and was short of Complement the Second Lieutenant and 7 Men, having only 118 on board, among which were 19 Boys

Our loss has been very severe, in addition to the Brave, and Gallant, Captain Manners, (who fell while leading on the Boarders) we had 26 killed and 40 Wounded, a list of which I beg leave to annex;<sup>4</sup> the following day the *Reindeer*, having lost her foremast and Main Topmast was Burnt

I feel it my duty to add that nothing could surpass the gallantry, and good conduct, displayed by every Officer, Seamen, and Marine, onboard, during a contest with an Enemy of such superior force; and I trust it will appear, that the honor of the British Flag was nobly supported

The Enemy evidently wished to conceal the extent of their loss, as their officers differed much in their reports—however I Know of 9 being killed and 19 Severely



Wounded;<sup>5</sup> she is much cut up in her Hull and rigging, and her Foremast severely wounded, by a 24 pound shot passing through it, about 8 feet above the deck

I am happy to say that every attention was paid to the wounded while onboard the *Wasp*.— I have the Honor to be Sir Your Most Obedient Humble Servant.—

Thos. Chambers Senior Lieutt.

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/5444.

1. Approximately 259 nautical miles west of Brest, France.
2. John Thomas Barton.
3. Richard Johns.
4. The annexed list records 67 total casualties, 27 killed and 40 wounded. One of the wounded, Private John Watley, had injuries that later proved mortal.
5. *Wasp's* casualties numbered 26 killed and wounded. See below, p. 228, note 8, for additional details on American casualties in this engagement.

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *Wasp*.  
L'Orient, 8th July 1814

Sir

On tuesday the 28th Ulto. being then in Lat 48° „36' N: and longitude 11° „15' W.<sup>1</sup> we fell in with, engaged, and after an action of nineteen minutes captured His Britannic Majesty's Sloop of war the *Reindeer*, William Manners Esqr. Commander. Annexed are the minutes of our proceeding on that day, prior to, and during the continuance of the Action.

Where all did their duty and each appeared anxious to excel, it is very difficult to discriminate. It is however only rendering them their merited due, when it is declared of Lieuts. Reily<sup>2</sup> and Baury<sup>3</sup> 1st. and 3d. of this vessel, and whose names will be found among those of the conquerors of the *Guerriere* and the *Java*,<sup>4</sup> and of Mr. Tillinghast<sup>5</sup> 2nd. Lieut. who was greatly instrumental in the capture of the *Boxer*,<sup>6</sup> that their conduct and courage on this occasion fulfilled the highest expectation and gratified every wish— Sailing Master Carr<sup>7</sup> is also entitled to great credit for the zeal and ability with which he discharged his various duties.

The cool and patient conduct of every officer and man while exposed to the fire of the shifting gun of the enemy and without an opportunity of returning it, could alone be equaled by the animation and ardor exhibited when actually engaged, or by the promptitude and firmness with which every attempt of the enemy to board, was met and successfully repelled. Such conduct may be seen, but cannot well be described.

The *Reindeer* mounted sixteen 24 pd. carronades, two long six or nine pounders, and a shifting 12 pound carronade with a complement on board of One hundred and eighteen men; Her crew were said to be the pride of Plymouth.

Our loss in men has been severe, owing in part to the proximity of the two vessels and the extreme smoothness of the sea, but chiefly in repelling boarders. That of the enemy however was infinitely more so as will be seen by the list of killed and wounded on both sides.<sup>8</sup>



*Wasp vs. Reindeer: "Commencement of Action on the Reindeer."*



*Wasp vs. Reindeer: "Wasp with Gib Boom in the Reindeer's Lee Rigging"*



*Wasp vs. Reindeer: "Vessels Are alongside Each Other"*



Wasp vs. Reindeer: "Hull of the Wasp in the Act of Sinking Reindeer"

Six round shot struck our hull and many grape which did not penetrate far. The foremast received a 24 pd. shot which passed thro its centre, and our rigging and sails were a good deal injured.

The *Reindeer* was literally cut to pieces, in a line with her ports; her upper works, boats and spare spars were one complete wreck. A breeze springing up next afternoon her foremast went by the board.

Having received all the prisoners, on board, which from the number of the wounded occupied much time, together with their baggage; The *Reindeer* was on the evening of the 29th set on fire and in a few hours blew up.<sup>9</sup> I have the honour to be Very respectfully Yr. Mot. Obdt. Servt

J, Blakeley

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 45 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. Approximately 245 nautical miles due west of Ushant (Île d'Ouessant).

2. James Reilly, appointed a midshipman on 1 January 1808, and promoted to lieutenant on 24 July 1813. He was detached from *Constitution* to serve in *Wasp* on 28 September 1813.

3. Frederic Baury was appointed a midshipman on 19 June 1809 with a warrant bearing the date of 18 June 1809. Baury was promoted to acting lieutenant on 30 September 1813 and detached from *Constitution* to serve in *Wasp* on 6 October 1813. A year after *Wasp's* disappearance, he was promoted to lieutenant.

4. For short essays and documents on *Constitution's* victories over *Guerriere* and *Java*, see Brodine, Crawford, and Hughes, *Interpreting Old Ironsides*, pp. 23–28, 98–106.

5. Thomas G. Tillinghast, appointed a midshipman on 1 January 1808. He was promoted to lieutenant on 24 July 1813 and ordered from *Enterprise* to *Wasp* on 30 September of that year.

6. For documents relating to the capture of *Boxer* by U.S. brig *Enterprise*, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 232–42.

7. James E. Carr was appointed a sailing master on 12 August 1807 with a warrant bearing the date of 4 August. Carr was ordered to the Charlestown Station on 2 September 1813 for assignment to *Wasp*.

8. Only the casualty list for *Reindeer* was found bound with Blakeley's letter. It agrees in number with the total casualties reported by the British, that is, 67 killed and wounded. Two of the men described as mortally wounded on Blakeley's list, Ordinary Seaman Archibald Adams and Seaman William Caldwell, appear as killed on Chambers's list. A contemporary printed version of Blakeley's enclosure, giving *Wasp's* casualties, records American losses as 5 killed and 21 wounded, 4 mortally. An additional 3 men on *Wasp's* wounded list, Midshipmen Harry S. Langdon and Frank Toscan, and Seaman Henry Herbert, died of their wounds after the American warship reached L'Orient, France. For Blakeley's comments on the deaths of Langdon and Toscan, see Blakeley to Jones, 27 August 1814, pp. 492–93. Printed versions of the casualty lists for both *Reindeer* and *Wasp* may be found in ASP: *Naval Affairs*, Vol. 1, pp. 316–18.

9. For a modern narrative of this engagement, see McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, pp. 231–33.

[Enclosure]

Minutes of the action between the U.S.S. *Wasp*, and H.B.M.S. *Reindeer*, on 28th June 1814 Lat. 48° 36' N: Long. 11° 15' W:

At 4 A.M. light breezes and cloudy; at ¼ after 4 discovered two sails, two points before the lee beam, kept away in chase, shortly after discovered one sail on the weather beam altered the course and hauled by the wind in chase of the sail to windward. At 8 the sail to windward bore E.N:E. wind very light, at 10 the strange sail bearing E by N: hoisted an English ensign and pendant, and displayed a signal at the main (blue and yellow, diagonally.) Meridian light airs and cloudy, at ¼ past 12 P.M. the enemy shewed a blue and white flag, diagonally, at the fore and fired a gun, 1h. 15m. called all hands to quarters and prepared for action, 1h. 22m. believing we could weather the enemy tacked ship, and stood for him, 1h. 50m. the enemy tacked ship and stood from us, 1h. 56m. hoisted our colours

and fired a gun to windward, which was answered by the enemy with another to windward, 2h. 20m. the enemy still standing from us, set the royals, 2h. 25m. set the flying jib, 2h. 29m. set the upper staysails, 2h. 32m. the enemy having tacked for us took in the staysails, 2h. 47m. furled the royals, 2h. 51m. seeing that the enemy would be able to weather us—tacked ship, 3h. 3m. the enemy hoisted his flying jib, brailed up our mizzen 3h. 15m. the enemy on our weather quarter, distant about sixty yards fired his shifting gun, a 12 pound carronade at us loaded with round and grape shot, from his top gallant fore castle, 3h. 17m. fired the same gun a second time, 3h. 19m. fired it a third time 3h. 21m. fired a fourth time, 3h. 24m. a fifth shot all from the same gun. Finding the enemy did not get sufficiently on the beam to enable us to bring our guns to bear, put the helm a lee and at 26 minutes after three commenced the action with the after carronade on the starboard side and fired in succession, 3h. 35m. hauled up the mainsail, 3h. 40m. the enemy having his larboard bow in contact with our larboard quarter endeavoured to board us but was repulsed in every attempt, at 3h. 44m. orders were given to board in turn, which were promptly executed when all resistance immediately ceased and at 3h. 45m. the enemy hauled down his flag.

J. Blakeley

DS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 45, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 64). This is the second of two enclosures providing the minutes of the engagement between *Wasp* and *Reindeer*. The first is unsigned.

LIEUTENANT THOMAS CHAMBERS, R.N., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY

His Majesty's late Sloop *Reindeer*  
At Sea June 29th 1814

Sir

Chances of War having put you in possession of His Majesty's late Sloop "*Reindeer*," whose crew having been nearly all killed or wounded, I am impelled by motives of humanity to request that you will take into consideration the deplorable state of the latter, who cannot possibly receive that attention and care necessary for their recovery at Sea, and being near the coast of His Britannic Majesty, could they possibly be conveyed immediately to an Hospital, it may be the means of saving a number of their lives; and therefore think myself justified by making application to you, for the preservation thereof, that you will allow the said Sloop, now a prize, which I am informed you intend to destroy, to proceed with the prisoners to some port in Great Britain; and I hereby pledge myself to represent to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the humane motives which have actuated you, to consent to the *Reindeer's* becoming a Cartel; and furthermore pledge myself to represent to their Lordships, the engagement I have here entered into, to endeavour to procure the return of the said Vessel to the "United States," & in failure thereof, that she shall no more be sent to sea, and I furthermore pledge my Honor as a British officer,

for myself and my remaining crew, not to bear arms against the "United States" until regularly exchanged.

I hope the motive of humanity which have induced me to make this application will operate effectually; and induce to consent to the preservation of many valuable lives. I have the Honour to be With Respect Sir Your Most Obedt. Srvt

(Signed) Tho: Chambers Lieut

Copy, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 52 (M124, Roll No. 65).

LIEUTENANT THOMAS CHAMBERS, R.N., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY

United States Ship of War  
*Wasp* At Sea 1st. July 1814

Sir

Informed that I am not included in the number of wounded prisoners you intend sending to England, I beg leave to request you will take my situation being severely wounded into consideration and permit me to make one of that number under such obligations as you may think necessary to effectuate my being exchanged for an officer of equal rank or in failure thereof on the recovery of my wounds, to return to the United States of America as prisoner of War I have no hesitation in saying I feel a conviction the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty will ratify any engagement you may require of me in behalf of myself and such of the crew as your humanity induces you to send to England. I have the Honor to be With Respect Your Most Obedt. Humble Servt.

(Signed) Tho. Chambers Lieut

Copy, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 51 (M124, Roll No. 65).

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY TO  
LIEUTENANT THOMAS CHAMBERS, R.N.

U.S.S.W. *Wasp* at Sea  
1st. July 1814

Sir

Your letter of this days date has been received. Your situation and the pledge offered therein has induced my consent to your return to England by the present opportunity, the same reason will operate, with regard to Mr. Richard Johns the Master. I have the honour to be Very respectfully Yr. Mot. Obedt. Servt

(Signed) J. Blakeley  
Commanding U.S.S.W. *Wasp*

Copy, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 50 (M124, Roll No. 65).



MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *Wasp*,  
L'Orient, 8th July 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to announce to you the arrival of this ship today at this place. By the pilot who carried us out of Portsmouth N.H. I had the satisfaction to make you acquainted with our having left that place and again had the pleasure of addressing you by the French National Brig *Olive*,<sup>1</sup> and which was the first vessel we had spoken since our departure from the United States. From the time of our sailing I continued to follow the route pointed out in your instructions, until our arrival at this place, during which we have been so fortunate as to make several captures; a list of which will accompany this—<sup>2</sup> These with their cargoes were wholly destroyed, with one exception. This was the Galliot, *Henrietta* which was permitted to return with the prisoners, thirty-eight in number after throwing over-board the greater part of her Cargo leaving only a sufficiency to ballast her. When arrived on our cruizing ground I found it impossible to maintain anything like a station and was led, in chase, farther up the English-channel than was intended. After arriving on soundings the number of neutrals which are now passing, kept us almost constantly in pursuit. It gives me much pleasure to state to you the very healthy condition of the crew of the *Wasp* during the cruise. Sometimes without one on the sick list and at no time any who remained there more than a few days. Great praise is due to Dr. Clark<sup>3</sup> for his skill and attention at all times; but particularly after the action with the *Reindeer*, his unwearied assiduity to the necessities of the wounded was highly conspicuous.

The ship is at present under quarantine, but we expect to be released from it tomorrow when the wounded, will be sent to the hospital,<sup>4</sup> and every exertion made to prepare the *Wasp* for sea. I have the honour to be Very respectfully Yr. Mot Obdt. Servt

J, Blakeley

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 44 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. See Blakeley to Jones, 20 May 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 56 (M124, Roll No. 63). *Wasp's* position on the date of its encounter with *Olive* was 38° N, 44° W, which is approximately 1,253 nautical miles east-southeast of Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

2. Enclosure not found. A printed version is supplied in its place below.

3. William Montague Clarke was commissioned a surgeon's mate on 25 November 1809 and promoted to surgeon on 24 July 1813. He was detached from the corvette *John Adams* to serve in *Wasp* on 25 October 1813.

4. On 9 July, 13 wounded were sent ashore to the L'Orient hospital. See DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 9 July 1814.

[Enclosure]

*A List of British vessels captured by the U.S. ship Wasp, J. Blakeley, Esq. commander, between*

1814. Date.	Name of the			How rigged.	Number of		
	Vessel.	Master.	Owner.		Men	British tons.	Guns.
June 2,	<i>Neptune,</i>	John Mordiew, <sup>1</sup>	John Derryhouse, Gilbert Henderson, John Whitting, and Major Dawson,	Barque,	13	207	—
" 13,	<i>William,</i>	Daniel Rankin,	Wm. Jas. & Daniel Rankin,	Brig,	6	91 $\frac{7}{8}$	—
" 18,	<i>Pallas,</i>	D. L. Cargill,	David L. Cargill,	Brig,	8	131 $\frac{8}{8}$	2 long 6 pounds,
" 23,	<i>Henrietta,</i>	John Thompson,	Robt. Montgomery & Robt. Greenlaw,	Galiot, <sup>2</sup>	11	171 $\frac{50}{8}$	—
" 26,	<i>Orange Boven,</i> <sup>3</sup>	Stephen Redbrook,	Wm. Banks, Thos. Thatcher, & Wm. A. Moore,	Ship,	17	325	2 long 9's and six 6 pounders, <sup>4</sup>
" 28,	<i>Reindeer,</i>	Wm. Manners, Esq.	His Britan. Majesty,	Brig,	118	382 $\frac{14}{8}$	2 long 6 pounders, 16 twenty-four lb. carronades, 1 twelve do. do., and 2 brass four pounders,
July 4,	<i>Regulator,</i>	Robert Filders,	John Anderson and James Rosson,	Brig,	8	112 $\frac{70}{8}$	—
" 6,	<i>Jenny,</i>	T. Spearpoint,	Thos. Spearpoint,	Schr.	10	151 $\frac{15}{8}$	—

May 1st and July 6th, 1814.

Lading.	Where belonging.	Where from.	No. days out.	Where bound	Latitude when taken	Longitude.	How disposed of.
Sundries,	Liverpool,	Cork,	12	Halifax,	47° 5' N.	30° 52' W.	Burnt.
Barley,	Dumbarton,	Limerick,	6	Lisbon,	49° 21' N.	12° 20' W.	Burnt.
Skins, almonds, &c.	Arbroath,	Mogadore,	16	London,	49° 34' N.	7° 00' W.	Scuttled.
Provisions,	Belfast,	Belfast,	6	Guadaloupe,	48° 12' N.	12° 5' W.	Given up to prisoners.
Sugar and coffee,	Bermuda,	Bermuda,	29	London,	48° 8' N.	10° 8' W.	Scuttled.
—	—	Plymouth,	6	On a Cruise,	48° 36' N.	11° 15' W.	Burnt.
Port wine,	Liverpool,	Oporto,	12	London,	47° 32' N.	13° 57' W.	Burnt.
Sweet oil,	Plymouth,	Leghorn,	30	St. Petersb'g	47° 36' N.	10° 20' W.	Scuttled.

ASP, *Naval Affairs*, Vol. 1, p. 319. *Wasp's* list of captures is recorded as an enclosure in the docketing of Blakeley's letter above. As the original of this document was not found, a contemporary printed version was submitted.

1. Spelled John Mordue in DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 3 June 1814.
2. Described as ketch-rigged in *ibid.*, 23 June 1814.
3. Described as British letter of marque in *ibid.*, 27 June 1814.
4. Armament given as eight 6-pounders in *ibid.*, 27 June 1814.

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U. S. S. *Wasp*,  
L'Orient, 10th July 1814

Sir,

After the capture of His Britannic Majesty's Sloop of War the *Reindeer*. It was my wish to have continued the cruize as directed by you. I was however necessitated to relinquish this desire after a few days, from a consideration for the wounded of our crew, whose wounds had at this season become offensive, and aggravated by the number of prisoners on board at the time, being seventyseven in number. Fearing from the crowded state of the *Wasp*, that some valuable lives might be lost if retained on board, I was compelled, though with reluctance to make the first neutral port. Those belonging to the *Reindeer*, who were dangerously wounded were put on board a Portuguese brig bound to England three days after the action, and from the winds which prevailed arrived probably in two or three days after their departure. Their Surgeon,<sup>1</sup> the Capt. Clerk, with the Captains and officers servants, and the crew of the *Orange Boven* were put on board the same vessel to attend upon them. Since our arrival at this place we have experienced every civility from the public authorities, our quarantine was only for a few hours and our wounded fourteen in number, were carried yesterday to the hospital where they are very comfortably situated. Our foremast although badly wounded can be repaired, and will be taken on shore as soon so possible. All the other damages sustained can be repaired by ourselves. I have the honour to be Very respectfully Yr. Mot. Obdt. Servt.

J, Blakeley

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 47 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. Richard Collins.

## *President* Receives a New Commander

Following John Rodgers's return to New York in *President*, Secretary of the Navy Jones offered the frigate commander the alternative of preparing his ship for another cruise or transferring his flag to another command.<sup>1</sup> Jones gave Rodgers the choice of three new powerful warships under construction at various yards, including a 74-gun ship of the line. The commodore chose command of the 44-gun frigate *Guerriere*, then building at Philadelphia. But shortly after making this choice, Rodgers experienced a change of heart, and he asked Jones's permission to retain his old ship. Unfortunately for Rodgers, Jones had already offered the vacant *President* to Stephen Decatur, who was eager to exchange his own blockaded frigate, *United States*, for one capable of getting to sea. Although Rodgers's seniority entitled him to *President*'s command, he deferred to Decatur's wishes and so both officers transferred their flags, and their crews, to new ships. The month-long process by which Stephen Decatur assumed *President*'s helm is documented below.

1. See Jones to Rodgers, 26 February 1814, pp. 190–91.

## COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U S Frigate *President*  
Navy Yard, New York, March 5t 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th Ultó.<sup>1</sup>

After contemplating the extent and nature of my late cruise, you will readily conclude, that I cannot feel otherwise than disappointed; for, altho I excited the enemies fears, I did not do him that injury I had anticipated. The same object still engrosses my mind, however, and as I have now acquired his most cordial hatred, I feel a double desire to afford him still greater cause for not liking me.

I beg you, Sir, to accept my best acknowledgments for the favourable point of view in which you have been pleased to consider my services, and that I am equally sensible of your disposition to render me justice, by the choice which you have been so good as to offer one of the several Ships mentioned in your letter. I will not now, Sir, disguise from you my wishes; permit me therefore to say, that as my object is to get to sea again as soon as possible, I would, from the character I have had of the *Guerriere*, prefer that Ship, provided it is not at variance with your arrangements, to permit me to turn my present crew over to her; otherwise, as the 74 can not be got to sea these 12 months to come I would rather remain in the good old *President*. Some people are of opinion that there will be infinite difficulty in getting that Ship to sea from the Delaware, I do not think so however, otherwise I would not of choice, desire the command of her.

The *President* is now undergoing a Survey, and will report to you her State and Condition as early as possible. The repairs will not exceed, I hope, such as I mentioned in my letter of the 20t Ultó.<sup>2</sup>

The copy of the letter (in Cypher) from Capt. Morris, I do not understand, as the numbers of the words expressed in figures do not correspond to those of the Telegraphic Dictionary, printed by Thos. Kirk, and which is the only one I have any knowledge of. How the mistake has arisen, I am unable to determine, as the dictionary you are in possession of is the only one I have seen

A report respecting the merits and qualifications of the Officers under my command, I will forward as early as possible.—<sup>3</sup> With great respect, I have the honour to be, sir, Your Obedt. huml. svt.

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 17 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. See Jones to Rodgers, 26 February 1814, pp. 190–91.

2. See Rodgers to Jones, 20 February 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 126 (M125, Roll No. 34).

3. See Rodgers to Jones, 10 March 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 91, and enclosure (M124, Roll No. 61).

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

John Rodgers Esqr.  
Comm'dg. U.S.F. *President*  
New York.

}

Navy Department  
March 12th 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 5th. Instant. It would gratify me to meet your wishes in Respect to transferring your Crew to the new Frigate *Guerriere* at Philadelphia; but I am not at this moment prepared to decide, as it will depend upon the result of certain arrangements, which may probably be ascertained in the course of a fortnight or three weeks.

When you have made the preparatory arrangements for expediting the repairs & equipment of the *President*. You will at your personal convenience afford me the pleasure of seeing you at Head Quarters.— I am respectfully &c

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 239 (M149, Roll No. 11).

## COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *United States*— near  
New London. March 18. 1814.

Sir.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your dispatch of the 12th. Instant—<sup>1</sup> A Pilot was immediately sent to sound the river to the head of navigation and I shall be able to reply to your first inquiry by the next mail—

The Season is so far advanced that there is little hope of our getting to Sea— The Enemy squadron consisting of *La Hogue*, *Statira* and *Borer* remain anchored as I last advised you across the channel & about two cables length apart—<sup>2</sup> The only chance for us to avoid them depends on the successful use of Torpedoes<sup>3</sup> and the severe weather which usually accompanies the equinox— I beg you to be assured Sir that no opportunity, unattended by hazards which I could not be excused for encountering, will present itself without the utmost endeavours on our part to improve it—

Should we however be disappointed in these expectations the proposed transfer of myself, officers and Crew to the "*President*" will be in the highest degree acceptable—

I am sir with great consideration & respect your very humble servant—

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 51 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. In this letter Jones stated his intention of transferring Decatur and the crew to the frigate *President*, as long as this move accorded with the latter's wishes. See Jones to Decatur, 12 March 1814, pp. 87–88.

2. On 10 March, Decatur wrote: "For sometime past the blockading squadron has been composed of two 74—s a frigate & a Brig and were anchored directly across the harbours mouth, about a Cables length apart, and extending from Reef to Reef on each side of the Channel." Decatur to Jones, 10 March 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 30 (M125, Roll No. 35).

3. By 1814, a number of Americans were promoting the use of underwater explosives in the naval war against the British. Robert Fulton's 1810 book, *Torpedo War, and Submarine Explosions* (New York: William Elliot) outlined his tests of submerged and semi-submerged torpedoes. Congress's March 1813 "Torpedo Act" encouraged private citizens to use "torpedoes, submarine instruments, or any other destructive machine whatever" to destroy any British armed vessel of war and receive a financial reward. These early topedoes or mines took several forms: an explosive charge attached to the end of a long pole and extending from a rowboat, and an "anchored torpedo" that was similar to a modern moored mine. Hutcheon, *Robert Fulton*, pp. 111, 113. *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 2, p. 816. For an early attempt to destroy British warships, inspired by the "Torpedo Act," see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 160–64.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Commodore S. Decatur,  
U.S. Ship *United States*,  
New London. }

Navy Department  
April 4th. 1814.

Sir,

When I made to you the Offer of the *President* Frigate, it was in consequence of an intimation from Commodore Rodgers, founded on an overture, from the Department that he would take the command of the U.S. Ship *Guerriere* at Philadelphia, to which Ship I would have transferred the Officers and Crew of the *President*. He has, since, indicated a wish rather to continue in the *President*; but understanding what I had said to you, on the subject, he will still acquiesce in your decision, to take either the *President* or the *Guerriere*. The latter will launch in the course of two or three weeks, and can be equipped with reasonable expedition.

The *President*, I understand, will be eight weeks, at least, under repair.

I do not know whether you are acquainted with the character of the *Guerriere*, but you may be assured, that, except her sisters now building, she has no equal. Be pleased to signify your determination as soon as possible.

On receipt of this, you will proceed to dismantle and lay up the U.S. Ships, *United States* and *Macedonian*, at the Head of the navigation, placing the most important and valuable part of their stores, in secure ware-houses, beyond the reach of the enemy, where every thing, of every description, may be preserved in perfect order for each Ship, under the care of a responsible Officer. I am respectfully Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones:

## COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *United States*  
April 9th. 1814

Sir

The Ships are now moving up the river, I shall proceed to dismantle them, with all possible dispatch.— I beg leave to inform you that I give a decided preference to the Frigate *President*, the well known rapidity of the *Presidents* sailing places her in my estimation above all others; in addition to this advantage, I think her opportunity for proceeding to sea is much better than the *Guerriers*.—

From the description I have had of the *Guerrier* she will be unquestionably one of the finest as well as stoutest [*t*] Frigates in the world.— but altho I think her admirably calculated to annoy the enemy, I do not think her a ship to give reputation to an officer.— she will be over matched by a seventy four, & no frigate could lay along side of her— I should be sorry to interfere with Commo. Rodgers in any way, but having been so long blockaded, I dread being again placed in such an unpleasant situation.—

Commo. Rodgers having left the decision to me, I have in justice to myself to request that I may be ordered to the *President*. I have the honor to be with great respect sir, your obt. st.

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 134 (M125, Roll No. 35).

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Commo. John Rodgers }  
U.S. Navy. }  
Havre de Grace }

Navy Department  
April 16. 1814

Sir,

By the mail of yesterday I received Capt. Decatur's answer, and he adheres to his acceptance of the command of the U.S. Ship *President* which I had offered to him in consequence of your selecting the *Guerriere* out of those I had offered to your choice.—

You will therefore as soon as may be convenient to you, proceed to Philadelphia and take the Command of the *Guerriere*, now nearly, if not quite, ready to Launch at which I should wish you to be present.—

You will find her preparations considerably advanced. Her masts are the most backward, but I have advice of the Mast Pieces having arrived some time since at French Town and I have no doubt are now in Philada. The residue of her Guns will be on in due time.

I could have had her equipments in greater forwardness, but was desirous of having the superintendance of her commander.—

The rigging is now making and the Hollands duck for her sails will be on from the eastward in a short time.—



Her Boats will be put in hand immediately.— In short, Sir, with your presence, the whole of her equipments will rapidly advance and may be soon completed.—

Commodore Decatur is now engaged dismantling and laying up his Ship, when the whole of his Officers & Crew will be transferred to the *President*, and those of the latter to the *Guerriere*.—

While the *Guerriere* is equipping, your crew with the exception of such as you may employ for that purpose, will be attached to the Flotilla on the Delaware, under the command of your first, or such other officer as you shall designate, who will receive from yourself all orders relative to that command.— I am, respectfully &c.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 279 (M149, Roll No. 11).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Commo. Stephen Decatur }  
 U.S. Ship *U. States*. }  
 New=London }

Navy Department  
 April 16. 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 9th. Currt. and have advised Commodore Rodgers of your determination.—

You will therefore as soon as your arrangements in your present Command are completed, transfer your officers & Crew to the U.S. Ship *President* now under repair at New York and take the command of that ship.

The upper deck armament of the *President* having been taken for the Lake service and also 100. tons of Kentledge, you will replace those articles from the U.S. Ship *United States*.—

Mr. Bullus will inform you whether it will be necessary to send the entire 100. tons of Kentledge from New London for the *President*, as I am not certain that the whole of that quantity has been taken from that Ship.—

As I have directed commodore Rodgers to leave every article belonging to the *President* on board that Ship with a detailed Inventory of the entire stores in each Department to be checked by your officers on taking charge, You will pursue the same course with those now belonging to the *United States*, for which the officer remaining in charge of that Ship will give receipts and be held accountable to her future Commander.—\*

On taking charge of the *President* you will accellerate her repairs & equipments with all the dispatch and economy in your power.—

In your outfit of the *President* it may be well to draw from the Ships laid up at New London as much of the perishable Stores on board those Ships as may be required for your cruise, and indeed it will be better to draw from thence any other description of Stores, than to purchase what may be required.— I am respectfully &c

W Jones.

\*With the exception of those authorized to be drawn by the last paragraph

## What a Captain Took to Sea

*George Parker put to sea in Siren a sick man. The nature of his disorder is unknown, but it had delayed his departure from Boston for several weeks until he was sufficiently recovered to sail on 29 January. Siren had scarcely been underway for 24 hours before Parker's relapse prompted a temporary return to port at Salem, Massachusetts. Underway again on 17 February, Parker survived a mere 22 days more before succumbing to illness.<sup>1</sup>*

*The funeral service held for George Parker was described as follows in the memoir of one of Siren's crewmen: "His wasted body was placed in a coffin, with shot to sink it. After the service had been read, the plank on which the coffin rested was elevated and it slipped into the great deep. The yards were braced round, and we were underway again, when, to our surprise and grief, we saw the coffin floating on the waves. The reason was, the carpenter had bored holes in the top and bottom; he should have made them only in the top."<sup>2</sup>*

*Sometime after Parker's demise an inventory was taken of the personal effects he left behind in Siren. This list of clothing, books, sidearms, and other items provides an idea of the types of things Navy captains carried to sea on a cruise. The document below survives in Navy Department records because it was produced as evidence in the court-martial of Siren's purser Thomas Waine, who was charged, among other things, with fraud for taking some of George Parker's property—a charge of which he succeeded in clearing himself.<sup>3</sup>*

1. On Parker's poor health, see pp. 124, 126, 129, and 130.

2. See Leech, *Voice from the Main Deck*, p. 121.

3. For the record of Thomas Waine's court-martial, see DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 221 (M273, Roll No. 8).

### INVENTORY OF MASTER COMMANDANT GEORGE PARKER'S SHIPBOARD POSSESSIONS

[U.S. Brig *Siren*, ca. 11 March 1814]<sup>1</sup>

Inventory of the clothing, wearing apparel &c. of Capt. George Parker deceased, late Commander U S. Brig <i>Siren</i>			
18	—Fine linen Shirts	1	Pair linen Sheats— —
10	—Sea shirts. cotton—	2	Black handkerchiefs
2	—pair of silk Stockings	3	flag do. 1 red comforter
14	—pair Nankeen <sup>2</sup> Pantaloons	1	pair suspenders— —
1	—pair of Buff Kerseymere <sup>3</sup> do	2	pair shoes 4 pair boots
1	—do. white Stockinette. <sup>4</sup> do.	1	Cocked hat, 2 silk do.
3	—pair thin white—do—	1	leather. 1 Straw & 1 fur hat
1	—pair of mixed do—	2	gold epaulets— — —
8	—white & coloured vests	1	Sword, & 1 dirk— —
4	—flannel Shirts— —	1	Small pocket compass.
2	—guernsey frocks— <sup>5</sup>	1	clothes brush.
3	—pair flannel drawers	1	Writing desk—
4	—do. cotton drawers	1	Feather bed & pillow.
1	—flannel coat. 1 blue cloth vest	1	Counterpane & blanket
8	pair white cotton socks.	2	Pair yarn Stockings
10	pair yarn do—	1	Hamilton Moore <sup>6</sup>

2	blue cloth frock coats—		Dixons voyage— <sup>7</sup>
4	blue coats—1 short Jacket.	2	volumes Halams Gazetteer <sup>8</sup>
1	great coat	1	Pocket sextant.
2	pairs blue Stockinette Pantaloons		Recd. the above Articles from Lieut. N. D. Nicholson } Nathl. Adams <sup>9</sup> Excepting the sextant
2	pair blue Trowsers		
1	pair blue Pantaloons		

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 221 (M273, Roll No. 8).

1. Lacking evidence as to when Lieutenant Nicholson drafted this inventory, the editors have assigned it the date of George Parker's death.

2. A durable brownish-yellow cotton fabric originally loomed by hand in Nanking, China.

3. A fine twilled woolen cloth.

4. A soft, loosely knitted stretch fabric.

5. A seaman's knitted woolen sweater, similar to a jersey, which originated in the Channel Island of the same name.

6. John Hamilton Moore's *The Practical Navigator and Seaman's New Daily Assistant. Being a complete System of Practical Navigation . . .* (London: W. and J. Richardson, 1772). Subsequently published in multiple editions.

7. George Dixon's, *A Voyage Round the World; but More Particularly to the North-West Coast of America: Performed in 1785, 1786, 1787, and 1788 . . .* (London: George Goulding, 1789).

8. Unidentified.

9. Master's Mate Nathaniel Adams. According to testimony given by Lieutenant William L. Gordon at Wayne's court-martial, Adams was George Parker's brother-in-law.

## Clemency for a Deserter

*The wartime Navy dealt harshly with deserters. Sailors and Marines found guilty of this breach of regulations typically received floggings of 50 to 100 lashes with a cat-o'-nine-tails. But in some cases naval courts meted out more severe punishments, including the death penalty. Naval administrators and officers believed that such harsh penalties discouraged a crime that contributed significantly to a service-wide shortage of manpower.<sup>1</sup> However, as the following documents reveal, sometimes a deserter's circumstances merited a rare grant of clemency.*

*1. On the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary tool in the early sailing Navy, see McKee, Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession, pp. 233–54. Naval commanders usually posted advertisements in local newspapers offering rewards for the apprehension of deserted sailors. For an example of one such ad for a Newport Station deserter, see the 4 June 1814 edition of the Newport (Rhode Island) Mercury.*

CAPTAIN OLIVER H. PERRY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Newport March 15th 1814

Sir

Joseph Hennis deserted about three years since from the U.S. Brig *Argus*, his father (late sheriff of this County) has called on me and offered to give him up,

and has requested me to intercede with you to have him received without punishment; he promises that he shall serve the period for which he enlisted faithfully— very little can be said in favour of the son, but the father & friends hold a respectable standing in society. I beg Sir your instructions on this subject— I have the honor to be Sir your Obt. Servt.

O, H, Perry

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 45 (M125, Roll No. 35).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN OLIVER H. PERRY

Oliver H. Perry Esqr.  
Comm'dg. Naval Officer  
Newport R.I.

Navy Department  
March 23d. 1814

Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 15th. Current, I will observe that a voluntary surrender may certainly plead strongly in favour of a deserter, who is conscious of his offence— General policy would dictate a vigorous course with this Offender, but in consequence of his surrender, promise of future fidelity, & respectability of his connections, let him be received without punishment. I am respectfully &c

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 254 (M149, Roll No. 11).

## *United States and Macedonian* Retire from the War

*Royal Navy warships had kept Commodore Stephen Decatur's squadron under close blockade in Connecticut's Thames River since 1 June 1813.<sup>1</sup> Decatur had hoped to escape this containment under the cover of the seasonal storms that typically battered New England's coasts during the winter months. However, such an opportunity never presented itself in the first months of the New Year, so that by mid-March Decatur despaired of breaking the enemy's blockade. Having accepted Secretary Jones's offer to transfer his officers and crew to President,<sup>2</sup> Decatur oversaw the dismantling and laying up of United States and Macedonian at a protected anchorage in the Thames River. The forwarding of Macedonian's crew and United States' spar deck battery to Lake Ontario reflect the high priority the Navy Department placed on supporting American naval operations in that theater.*

1. *On the British pursuit of Decatur's squadron on 1 June 1813, see Dudley, Naval War of 1812, Vol. 2, pp. 134–39.*

2. *For related documents, see pp. 234–39.*

## COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *United States*—near  
New London March 20. 1814

sir.

I have the honour to inform you that since my last of the 18th. Instant<sup>1</sup> the Pilots have completed the soundings of the River from this anchorage, to the head of navigation— They have ascertained the depth of water to be sufficient for the removal of these ships to within about two miles of Chelsea or Norwich=landing and about thirteen from the Harbours=mouth where I shall consider them as perfectly safe from assault by the Enemy's ships— The only attack to be apprehended, will be from the Enemy's boats, and against such surprise the ships may be rendered perfectly secure, by anchoring a few Gun Boats across the channel from Winthrops Point to the Groton shore which is the narrowest pass in the River and commanded by the Forts. There are but two Gun Boats here at present, but when it can be done wit[h] safety, four of those at Newport, might be ordered round here and perhaps be quite as usefully employed as they now are— Six boat[s] I think will be sufficient—

Should we fail in the expectation of an opportunity to get to sea or to go to New=York by the first of the ensuing month and it should be resolved to dismantle and lay up this ship and the *Macedonian* I shall wish to be instructed, whether their stores and their sails shall remain on board or be landed and stored at Norwich— I think myself it will be better to land and store them— I take the liberty too sir to suggest, although I am persuaded it will occur to your mind, that as there are many articles of great value, particularly exposed to embezzlement it will be necessary that some officer of respectability and responsibility should be left in charge— I would also recommend that a Lieutenant of Marines with a detachment of twenty five men be left in each ship, together with ten seamen—

The blockading squadron now consists of *La Hogue*, *Statira*, another frigate unknown to me, and the *Borer*—and an Express brought me intelligence from Stonington the last evening, that a Squadron of seven sail, several of which were discovered to be line-of-battle ships, is in the offing—

I am satisfied the dismantling of these ships will induce the Enemy to be less rigorous in the blockade of this Port and Will enable the *Hornet* to get out unmolested— and perhaps they may be led to think, the further employment of these ships so entirely abandoned, that an opportunity may be afforded for their refitment and escape to New York at least I am sir with the utmost respect your most obedient & very humble servant

Sigd. Spn. Decatur

P.S. Two additional ships of the enemy have just joined the Blockading force off this port

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 54 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. See Decatur to Jones, 18 March 1814, p. 237.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Commodore Stephen Decatur,  
 Commg. U.S. Squadron  
 New London. }

Navy Department  
 April 6th. 1814.

Sir,

My letter to you of the 4th. instant,<sup>1</sup> directed the dismantling and laying up, in ordinary, the United States' Ships *United States* and *Macedonian*.

The vigorous exertions of the enemy, to gain the ascendancy on Lake Ontario, as well in the magnitude of his force, as in the selection of his best Officers and Seamen, must be met by corresponding measures on our part; which, from the delays incident to the Recruiting Service, and want of discipline, cannot be derived from that source.

I have, therefore, ordered the Commander, Officers, and Crew, of the *Macedonian*, to proceed, forthwith, to Sackett's Harbour, agreeably to the enclosed order to Captain Jones, which you will deliver to him; and accelerate their departure, by all the means in your power. Such Officer as Capt. Jones may designate to remain, in charge of the *Macedonian*, together with such Warrant and Petty Officers as shall be just sufficient for the preservation of the Ship when dismantled, you will authorize. It is intended that Captain Jones, his Officers, and Crew, shall return to the *Macedonian*, when circumstances more propitious to her employment shall occur. I am, very respectfully, Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 265–66 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. See Jones to Decatur, 4 April 1814, p. 237.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN JACOB JONES

Captain Jacob Jones,  
 Commg. U.S. Ship *Macedonian*,  
 New London. }

Navy Department  
 April 6th. 1814.

Sir,

Having given to Commodore Decatur, the necessary orders for dismantling and laying up of the United States' Ships, *United States* and *Macedonian*; of the disposition of which, as well as the future destination of the *Macedonian*, her Officers, and Crew, Commodore Decatur will inform you. I have now to direct, that you proceed, with all possible despatch, together with the Officers and crew of the *Macedonian* to Sackett's Harbour, and report yourself to the Commanding Officer, on that Station.

The high confidence reposed in Yourself, Officers, and Crew as well by the President, as by this Department, has induced this Order, under circumstances no less imperious than important; and it is hoped, by a vigorous exertion on the part of our gallant Navy, in that quarter, that their services will terminate,

gloriously, with the season, when your return to the *Macedonian*, will enable you to reap fresh laurels on the Ocean.

From the day of your departure the pay of the Seamen will be increased to 15 dollars per Month; and the Ordinary Seamen, from the present rate, (6 to 10 Dollars,) to 7 a [*to*] 12 dollars per Month. Congress has now, under consideration, a Bill, to authorize an increase of pay to the Officers, also, while engaged in that service.<sup>1</sup>

You will please write to Commodore Chauncey, immediately, of the day on which you expect to set out. I am, respectfully, Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 266–67 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. The bill passed on 18 April. See Jones to Chauncey, 18 April 1814, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 402.

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Commo. Stephen Decatur  
U.S. Ship *U States*  
New London

}

Navy Department  
April 7th. 1814

Sir,

The Urgency of the occasion and the fear of delay or disappointment, renders it necessary to transport the Spar Deck Guns of the U States. Ship *U. States* to Sackett's Harbour. You will therefore deliver to the order of John Bullus Esq. Navy Agent New York the whole of the 42 pounders Carronades belonging to that Ship, together with such fixed ammunition for those guns as he may require and all the Carriages, Beds, implements, Breechings, tackles &c. belonging to the Carronades. I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones:

NB a copy of this was sent to Com Chauncey same day.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 273 (M149, Roll No. 11).

## Dent Distributes His Force

*The year 1814 commenced for the Charleston Station with the schooners Alligator, Carolina, Ferret, and Nonsuch, along with gunboats and barges, protecting its coastline. By March, Captain Dent had lost Ferret to a storm, but had inherited the brig Enterprise, whose sailing qualities and disarmed state rendered it only useful for harbor duty. By July, Secretary Jones had reassigned Carolina to New Orleans. Recognizing that recruiting and retaining seamen was one of his most challenging responsibilities, Dent lobbied the Navy Department to allow short cruises. He theorized that in order to retain men beyond their current enlistment, he needed to offer them the potential for garnering*

*prize money. Jones, however, saw only risk in cruises. Dent resigned himself to dividing his force into two divisions that covered the sea lanes between Port Royal and Bulls Bay. Dent continued to espouse a two-tier strategy—coastal defense and commerce raiding off the South Carolina coast.*

### CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston 21st March 1814

Sir

If it meets your approbation, I am desirous that the Schooners *Carolina* and *Nonsuch* should take a short cruize in company, they are well manned, in good order, and well adapted to destroy the enemy's trade in the West Indies. Their officers & crews have manifested much anxiety for a cruize, and the superior force of the Enemy on the coast will not justify me in sending them out under your orders for keeping in soundings within the limits of the state. The term of service of the crew of the *Nonsuch* will expire in june, and if permitted to cruize the greater part no doubt would re-enter. I must also beg that the General & Private signals may be sent me, as no communication or assistance can be rendered any of our vessels coming off this port, for instance Commodore Rodgers<sup>1</sup> was off here one day with the private signal hoisted and could not be answered. I Have the Honor to be With great respect yr. obt Servt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 59 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Commodore John Rodgers.

### GENERAL ORDERS FOR GUARDING REBELLION ROADS

Charleston 25th May 1814

General Orders.

The following orders established for the vessel commanding the Guard in Rebellion Roads are to be carried into execution.

1st. Strict attention must be paid to the General orders issued from the Department relative to the intercourse with the Enemy's vessels off the coasts or Harbours of the United States.

2nd. All Flags of Truce from the Enemy approaching the Harbour are to be received by an officer near the bar and the flag not permitted to come within the Harbour on the receipt of the communication the boat bearing the flag is to be dismissed. When an Enemy's vessel appears off the harbour with a flag of Truce hoisted it is to be answered by the Guard vessel Sq hoisting a white flag at the fore & kept flying during the communication.



3rd. Two Galleys or Barges are to be kept (when the weather will admit) near the Bar so as to observe the motions of the Enemy—at night they are to anchor near the Buoy on Cumming's point.

4th. When the Enemy is in sight from the Bar the fishing smacks and Boats, are not to be suffered to go beyond the bar to fish, if when out and a suspicious vessel appears in the offing the Barge on guard near the bar is to fire a Gun as a signal for the fishing boats to come in, all those who do not pay attention to this signal and suffer themselves to be Boarded by the Enemy are to be detained alongside the Guard ship and reported.

5th. No officer from the Guard ship or Barges are to be suffered to leave the vessel without an order in writing from me for so doing which permission is not in any case entered beyond sun set

6 Guard Reports (agreeably to the forms forwarded) are to be sent me, every morning as soon after 8. AM. as possible.

7 All vessels entering or Depa[r]ting from the port are to be boarded & examined by the Guard ship, if they have not proper clearances from the custom House they are not to be permitted to proceed. all inland coasters do not clear at the custom House.

J H Dent

LB, ScU, John H. Dent Letter Book, 1813–1814.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN D. HENLEY

(Copy)

Charleston 1st June 1814

Sir

I have received information that three enemy's privateers have sailed from New Providence supposed destined to cruize on this coast to intercept the coasting trade. I have therefore to direct that you proceed to sea with the U. S. Schrs. *Carolina* & *Nonsuch* under your command and cruize on the coast between the latitudes of Savannah and Cape Fear, (NC), and within in the Gulph stream; you are not to seperate, if practicable to prevent it, but should you do so in chace, or being Chaced, you will easily fall in with each other, within your cruizing ground, your cruize is to be three weeks from the day of your departure, when you will return to this port. should you find it blockaded by a superior fire, and not able to get in, you will enter any of the Inlets to the southward. If you find an enemy's squadron blockading the coast you will cruize without & near the Gulph stream, so as to intercept any prizes bound to Bermuda or New Providence. You will occasionally during your cruize if practicable come off this bar, for any additional instructions I may have for you I am respectfully yr. obt Svt

J H Dent

Capt John D Henley U.S. Schr. *Carolina*

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 125, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 37). Dent enclosed this letter, along with a similar letter addressed to *Nonsuch's* commander, Lieutenant Lawrence Kearny, with his 2 July 1814 letter to Secretary Jones. See below.

LIEUTENANT LAWRENCE KEARNY TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

U.S. Schr. *Nonsuch* Charleston Harbour  
June. 12th. 1814

Sir—

I have the honour to inform you of my arrival at this port with the U.S. Schr. *Nonsuch* under my Command During my absence I have had the misfortune to be chased by the Enemy which terminated in the loss of Eleven of my guns For the particulars I refer you to the following extract from the log book of this Vessel, which I herewith have the honour to enclose which you must observe that the loss of the guns became necessary from the peculiarity of our situation—<sup>1</sup> The great exertion and perseverance of all the officers & men entitle them to much credit— The capture of the Vessel would have been inevitable with a less determined crew Their exertion increased with their difficulties & the saving of the Vessel from capture must be attributed to their particular good conduct when she was exposed to the broad side of the Enemy within grape shot distance

In justice to the character of the *Nonsuch* as a Sailer I beg leave to state that she has been tried since under my command with fast sailing Vessels particularly the last cruise—she sailed with the fleetest pilot Boat belonging to this place and beat her with the greatest ease— She also sailed Eight hours in company with the Privateer *Invincible* said to be a remarkable fast Vessel, when the *Nonsuch* again proved her superiority and I feel confident that the chase would never have come up with her as near as she did, had she not been particularly favored with variable winds— The chase proved to be a remarkable fast sailer and from her appearance & the description I have just had of the *Esther* Frigate from good authority I believe her to have been the same, which vessel is a Fir built Ship, said to be the fleetest Ship on the American Station. Her Officers told my informant, that they could come up with any Privateer out of the U.S.

I am happy to inform you that apparently very bad judgement in firing not a shot struck the *Nonsuch* I have the honour to be Your Most Obt. Huml. Servt.

Lawrence Kearny

LS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 157 (M148, Roll No. 13). Apparently Dent forwarded this letter to Secretary Jones, as it is addressed to Dent, but found in Jones's correspondence files. Numerous words were not discernible because correspondence was bound together.

1. The copy of the logbook entry was not included here.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

Capt. John H Dent  
Com'dg. Naval officer  
Charleston S. Ca. }

Navy Department  
June 23d. 1814

Sir.

I approve of the manner in which you have rearmed the *Nonsuch*, but have to regret the loss of her guns.—

I disapprove of the extended cruize that vessel had taken, as the force allotted to your Station is intended for the protection of the coast & Harbors of Carolina.— that object is abandoned when the cruize is extended beyond the limits of your command.— Moreover a vessel of her Class is much more likely to meet with disaster than to render any essential service on a cruize when the coast is lined with superior cruisers.— You will therefore Sir in future limit the cruize of the vessels under your command to Ten leagues<sup>1</sup> from the Land between St Marys Bar and cape Fear.

If the 18 pdr. carronades are to be had, you will mount them onboard the *Carolina*, in lieu of as many of her 12 pdr. carronades, and prepare her for a cruize, for which instructions will be forwarded from this Department immediately.— You will make up the deficiency of her crew so as to make the aggregate number, Officers included Ninety five, and if necessary you will give a bounty of from 10 to 20 dollars for each recruit.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 356 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. A league is a distance of 3 nautical miles or 3.452 statute miles.

## CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston. 2nd July. 1814

I have had the honor to receive your letters of the 23rd. ultimo.<sup>1</sup>

I enclose for your information a copy of my orders to Capt Henley & Lieut Kearney<sup>2</sup> by which you will observe they were confined to the limits specified in your orders of the 9th. April 1813.<sup>3</sup>

I have implicitly Sir confined myself to those limits, in my orders to the officers commanding the schooners. Lt Kearney during his former short cruize went as far as St Mary's and the coast of Florida, having received information of an Enemy's privateer in that neighborhood, not falling in with, he returned immediately to his station—which deviation from orders for the good of the service I considered commendable and made no report thereof. You may rest assured Sir that no officer in the service is more desirous to adhere implicitly to orders than myself. in two instances only have I directed officers to do the duty in a station not authorized by the department, which I considered for the immediate good

of the service not having any of the grades required to fill those stations and reported the same immediately for your approbation.

It appears that the 18 pound carronnades offered the Agent at Savannah,<sup>4</sup> proves to be 9 pr. therefore the *Carolina* will proceed with her present guns which are well fitted. This vessel is in every respect ready to proceed to sea immediately. I have ordered a survey on the main sail, jibb & fore topsail said by Capt Henley to be thin, and shall govern myself by the report. I Have the Honor to be With great respect Yr obt Svt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 125 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. See above for Jones's 23 June 1814 letter concerning extended cruises. Jones's other letter to Dent of that date related to convening a court-martial.

2. See above for Dent's 1 June 1814 letter to Henley. His orders to Kearny of the same date were similar.

3. Jones's orders in April 1813 to Dent were: "The Schooners *Nonsuch*, *Carolina*, and *Ferret*, & the Gunboat at Beaufort, are to be employed for the protection of the Coast and harbours of South Carolina, and are not to go off soundings, or leave that coast, without orders from this Department." Jones to Dent, 9 April 1813, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 10, p. 342 (M149, Roll No. 10).

4. Archibald S. Bulloch.

#### CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston 3rd Augt. 1814

Sir

I have thought it expedient for the better performance of the duty, and to have the Flotilla service well disciplined and kept in good order to meet the enemy, to divide it into two divisions; and have appointed Lieuts Bessett and Laughton<sup>1</sup> to command them. When you take into consideration the character, and qualifications of the Masters appointed for this service, their total ignorance & etiquette there of, you will approve the plan. Lieuts Bessett & Laughton are active, indefatigable officers; and I expect much from their knowledge, and attention to this duty. The first division under the orders of Lieut Bessett, consists of the *Alligator*, Gallies *Nos. 1, 3,* & Barge *No. 8* to cruize in the sounds & inlets from this to Port Royal. The second division under the orders of Lt Laughton consists of Gallies *Nos. 2, 4, 5* & Barge *No. 8* to cruize from this to Bulls Bay. The other two barges attached to the Schooner & Brig for guard duty I Have the Honor to be With great Respect Yr Obt Svt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 58 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Russell Bessett was still an acting lieutenant in August 1814. He died on 3 September 1814, succumbing to a fever he contracted while laboring to salvage the schooner *Alligator*. See pp. 394–97 for the loss and recovery of that vessel. William Laughton was commissioned a lieutenant on 9 December 1814.

## The New York Flotilla—Operations

*In the summer of 1813, Secretary of the Navy Jones envisioned an active role for Jacob Lewis's New York Flotilla. Jones ordered that squadron to operate "close under the Connecticut shore" and to "make a powerful diversion in favour of our squadron, if not drive the enemy from his position." The New York Flotilla did not assist Stephen Decatur's ships to escape the British blockade of the Thames River in Connecticut. But after one year of war, Jones's orders to his flotilla commander demonstrated the secretary's aggressive naval policy: "We must endeavour to meet the enemy in force whenever he shall attempt to assail us, and not wait to be attacked and destroyed in detail."<sup>1</sup>*

*Winter weather curtailed Lewis's activities at the beginning of 1814, restricting the undertakings of his gunboats, but as conditions improved, Lewis established a routine for his squadron of patrolling in the waters off New York, with stops at the navy yard, Sandy Hook, and his flotilla base at Spermaceti Cove. The gunboats provided protection for the merchant vessels plying Long Island Sound, who were easy prey for the marauding barges from the British blockading squadron.*

*The following documents provide a snapshot of the flotilla's movements during the last year of the war.*

*1. Jones to Lewis, 9 July 1813, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 10–11 (M149, Roll No. 11).*

### MASTER COMMANDANT JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir/

I have to inform you that the Enemy are before the Port two only in sight,<sup>1</sup> the Garrison of Fort Gates mutinied this morning at 8 o'Clock, what the result will be I can't possibly devine, but I am very apprehensive that some thing serious will grow out of it—the fact is—that this important post has been for some time commanded by a Captain who has not seen servise, and who really Knows very little of men & things, no person more superarogant or supercillious—there is no other officer here, all the Coll. or Majors are Either absent on Courts Marshall Duty or on recruiting servise Genl. Porter<sup>2</sup> regrets extreemly the Circumstance and is perfectly aware of the Consequences, my force is very much diminished by time of servises having Expired—and having maned out the *J Adams* & partly the *Peacock*—but I will defend it as long as I can—(I mean the Fort). the Garrison Consists of about 600 men as it's not attached to my province to report on army affairs you will Consider this as private—I have the hon to assr. you of my high Cons. & respt.

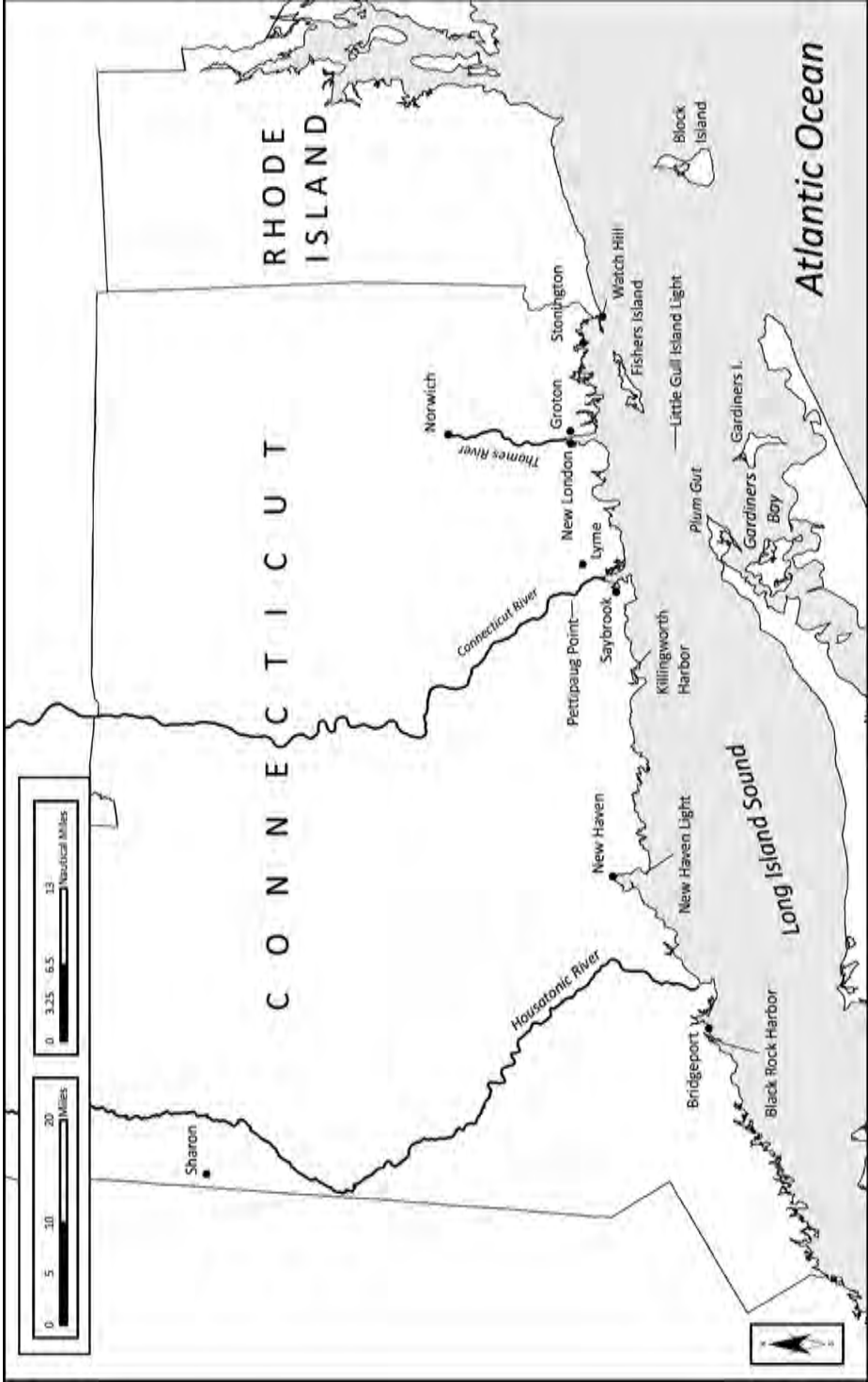
Spermecetea Cove  
23 march 1814

J Lewis  
Com: N.Y. Flotilla

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 1 (M124, Roll No. 62).

1. Earlier in the month, Lewis reported to Jones that his flotillamen had rescued a schooner loaded with coal that British barges had commandeered. Lewis to Jones, 8 March 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 83 (M124, Roll No. 61).

2. Possibly Brigadier General Peter B. Porter, New York State Militia.



Map 8. Long Island Sound—Connecticut

LOGBOOK OF U.S. GUNBOAT *No. 6*, SAILING MASTER JAMES ROGERS

[Extract]

[May 1814]

Tuesday 24th	<p>This day Commences with light Breezes from the westward at 1 A.M by signal got Underway from Black rock;<sup>1</sup> at 7 A.M. came too off new Haven under the Kedge at 9 a.m. by signal all the fleet underway at 1 P.M came to anchor off Falkner Island;<sup>2</sup> at 2 P.M got underway Ships in sight supposed to be the Enemy at 6 P.M came to anchor off seabrook light<sup>3</sup> In two. faths. water; directly afterwards all the galleys manned &amp; armed &amp; proceeded towards New London by signal from <i>No. 47</i>. all the fleet underway &amp; proceeded abreast the light house &amp; came to anchor in a line abreast; Recd. orders to have all hands at quarters during the Night got springs on the cable by orders lent 97. three men to man her Galley Complied with orders Recd. observed signals Viz this day, 362 for <i>No. 6</i> 375 Gl.<sup>4</sup> 470 Gl. 173_358 Gl. 470 P. 470 Gl. these 24 Hours ends with Clear weather wind to the westward</p>
Wednesd. 25th	<p>This day Commences with Clear weather wind to the westward Enemy in sight to the Eastward at 6 A.M the Galleys Returned, Recd. Information that there was 7 sail off the Port off New London at Meridian Lowerd Gaffs &amp; sent down Top Gallant Yard, at 2 P.M got under way the Enemy in sight off New London; at 4 P.M. Came to anchor. the Enemy commenced firing, consisting off a cut down 74 &amp; a sloop of war, by signal got underway. &amp; stood Near New London Light, signal Commenced the action at half past 4 P.M. observed signal 59. at 5 P.M the Enemy shot firing over &amp; short of us. observed at half past 7. P.M. after close action that there was three feet water in the hold occasioned by a shot recd. near the magazine, finding It impossible to keep her from sinking bore away. &amp; run on shore near the light house Shifted the shot to Leward &amp; run out both guns, so as to stop the Leak, at 11 PM got off the shore &amp; freed her, one half the people to Quarters during the night these 24 Hours ends with clear weather wind to the Westward</p>

Thursday 26th	This day commences with Light Breezes from the Westward, at 6 a.m being calm weighed Anchor out sweeps & Stood out for the Enemy Consisting of 1 Frigate. 1 Sloop of war & a tender Commodore Lewis <sup>5</sup> came on Board Immediately afterwards made signal 36— Seeing there was a breeze springing Up & 4 or 5 Large sails in sight to windward of the Enemy weighed anchor & stood back, Came to Anchor off the light house sent the galley ashore & repaired her. at 6 P.M got under Way & stood out shaped our course for Seabrook at 9 P.M. Came to Anchor off Rope Ferry <sup>6</sup> people kept to Quarters during the Night this day ends with Clear weather wind verry Light from the Westward
Friday 27th	This day commences with thick foggy weather, Calm, at 6 A.M got underway manned the Sweeps at Meridean <i>No. 47</i> got aground off sea Brook; manned the Galley & went to assist her. five sail of the Enemy in sight got her off & proceded for New haven; at 4 P.M the enemys ships gained on us & was forced to Run Into Killingsworth Harbour <sup>7</sup> the pilot not being verry Skillful run <i>No. 47.</i> ashore, being close astern we run on Boar[ <i>d</i> ] of her, but done little damage directly afterwards heavy squalls from the Westward. sent down yards & gaffs at 7 P.m got afloat & warped out the Harbour the Enemy ships having stood to the Eastward distant about 8 miles got underway at 8 P.m & manned the Sweeps observed the Enemy make sail after us. these 24 Hours Ends with Clear weather fresh Breezes from the N. & Westward—.
Saturday 28th	This commences with fresh Breezes from the Westward beating off Fishers Island all hands to the Sweeps during the Night, at daylight the Enemy still in chase distant about 6 miles at 7 AM came to anchor opposite new Haven Light at 10 A.M. got underway. the Enemy having stood to the Eastwd. Came to Anchor again; on the opposite shore; wind being fair Up Anchor & set sail & proceded for New York, Came to Anchor within 2 miles of fisher Hart Island <sup>8</sup> observed Signals viz 470— Gl. 478 Gl. Remaining part light from the Westwd.
Sunday 29	These 24 Hours commences with clear weather Wind to the Westward at 4 AM. got under way & proceded for New York all the fleet In Company sent on Board <i>No. 47.</i> a requisition for Ammunition &c. Came to anchor in New York at the North Battery <sup>9</sup> at 11 A.M. 4 Men on Liberty, Recd. orders from S.M. Rogers to let no Boats come along side remaining part pleasant wind N.E

D, DNA, RG24, Logbook of U.S. Gunboat *No. 6*, 23 August 1813–3 November 1815 (M1030a, Roll No. 2).

1. Black Rock Harbor, Bridgeport, Connecticut, Long Island Sound.
2. Also spelled Faulkner Island, Connecticut, Long Island Sound.
3. Not identified.
4. "Gl." is the abbreviation for general signal.
5. Captain Jacob Lewis.
6. Not identified.



7. Killingworth Harbor, Connecticut.
8. Hart or Hart's Island, New York, Long Island Sound.
9. Not identified.

CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that on the 19th. I discover'd the Enemy In pursuit of a Brig under American Colours—standing for Sandy Hook,—I order'd a detachment of Eleven Gun Boats to proceed to sea and pass between the chase & the Enemy—by which means to bring him to Action and give opportunity to the chase to Escape, all which was effected, the Enemy after receiving my fire bore away—and the Brig in question enter'd the harbour, proved to be the Brig *Regent* from France with a very valuable Cargo—

on May the 25th—I engaged the Enemy before New London, and open'd a passage for forty sail of Coasting Vessels, the Action lasted three hours, in which the Flotilla suffer'd very little *No. 6*<sup>1</sup> recd a Shott under water and others through the sails—we have reason to believe that the Enemy suffer'd very great injury as he appeared unwilling to renew the Action the following morning, my object was accomplished—which was to force a passage for the Convoy—there are before New London three Seventy fours—four Frigates and Several small Vessels—

the latter doing great injury from their disguised Character and superior sailing I have the honor to assure you of my high respect

J Lewis  
C. U.S. Flotilla

Nyk. 29th May 1814

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 73 (M124, Roll No. 63)

1. Sailing Master James Rogers commanded gunboat *No. 6*. Rogers held his warrant from 6 April 1810 and had served in the New York Flotilla from 7 July 1813.

CAPTAIN GEORGE BURDETT, R.N.,<sup>1</sup> TO  
CAPTAIN THE HONORABLE THOMAS B. CAPEL, R.N.<sup>2</sup>

His Majestys Ship *Maidstone* at Anchor off New London  
30th. May 1814

Sir/

I have the honor to inform you that on the Morning of the 25th. Inst, Eleven armed Vessels apparantly as I could make them out thro' the haze, were discovered at anchor off Saybrook Bar,<sup>3</sup> at Forty five Minutes past Four PM it was reported to me that Thirty nine Sail were standing down to us along Shore, I soon observed it was the Enemy's Flotilla from New York, with a Convoy of Coasters under their

protection, and I determined upon attacking them, if, I saw they would afford me any prospect of Success, by standing out from Bartletts Reef<sup>f</sup> or the Ledges which lay a little to the Westward of New London. For this purpose I weighed, and made the *Sylphs* Signal to do the same, and we stood in Shore as near as I judged prudent tacked, and endeavoured to draw them out, but finding the wind very light and a strong Ebb Tide running I ordered the helm to be put up, run in, and anchored as near as I could without risking giving the Enemy too great an advantage over me, and made the *Sylphs* Signal to take her Station astern of me, The Enemy's Flotilla consisting of Four large Ketches, mounting two long Two and thirty Pounders each, on Pivots Nine Schooners, with a long Twenty four Pounder each, and Thirteen long Gallies with a Gun fitted on each Bow, towing astern of them, formed their line, and took their distance within long range of me and close in Shore, when a heavy fire was opened upon His Majestys Ships from their whole line, and we returned the Salute, their Convoy passing in Shore of them at the same time most of which had Guns and fired as they passed. the Enemy keeping under weigh and choosing their distance. I soon found from their superior weight of Metal, any material impression upon them was impracticable: after dark the firing on both sides ceased after a cannonading of Three Hours & ten Minutes; at Day-dawn & a perfect Calm I found the Enemy's Flotilla at an anchor in line much in the same position I had left them in the preceding Evening. I weighed the Anchor, formed again ahead of the *Sylph* with the assistance of my Boats, got our Springs in readiness, made the Signal to prepare for Battle, The American Flotilla then hove up their Anchors with the exception of one Ketch which we observed hauled on Shore on the Sand under the Lighthouse off New London, swept out to us, and again took their distance in line, anchored, and I observed them loading their Guns. in this situation we remained for about three quarters of an hour when I observed the Ketch which had been hauled on Shore stand out to them, make Signals, when they all weighed immediately and swept into New London

It now becomes a pleasing part of my duty Sir to acquaint you that not an Officer or Man in His Majestys Ship under my command or the *Sylph* has been touched; the cool determined Bravery of every Officer & Man in both Ships was most conspicuous from Captain Kinsman<sup>5</sup> commanding that Ship I received every possible assistance and to Lieutenant Bowen<sup>6</sup> first Lieutenant of His Majestys Ship under my command I am much indebted for the active and able assistance he afforded me and, I must here take permission to state the very determined Gallantry I observed of Lieutenant Liddon<sup>7</sup> third Officer, who in a Sloop I had the day before armed with a long Nine Pounder with a Cutters Crew nearly succeeded in cutting off the headmost of the Convoy, and I have reason to believe the Gallantry displayed by this Officer frustrated the Enemies plan of attack upon the *Maidstone*, during the action I found it necessary to furl Sails and I could not help admiring the Ships company in the execution of this duty, it was done with the same order as if they had been at exercise I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient Servant

Geo Burdett Captain

To The Honble. T B Capel  
Hm ship *La Hogue*

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 137–38.

1. In 1813, Captain George Burdett, R.N., commanded the 36-gun frigate *Maidstone* in operations in the Chesapeake Bay.
2. Captain the Honorable Thomas Bladen Capel, R.N., commanded the frigate *Belvidera* in the Chesapeake in 1813 and now led the blockading squadron off New London.
3. Saybrook Bar, at the mouth of the Connecticut River.
4. Bartlett's Reef, off Waterford, Connecticut.
5. Commander John K. Kinsman, R.N.
6. Lieutenant Bowen has not been identified.
7. Lieutenant Matthew Liddon, R.N., had served under Captain Burdett of *Maidstone* since 6 November 1811. He switched to *La Hogue* under Captain the Honorable Thomas Bladen Capel on 11 August 1814.

CAPTAIN CHARLES PAGET, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

*Superb* Gardners Bay<sup>1</sup> June 4th. 1814

Sir

On my anchoring here two days ago I received from the Honble. Capt. Capel The accompanying reports which I take the most sincere pleasure in transmitting to you because they reflect the highest honor upon the conduct of Captains Burdett & Kinsman of the *Maidstone* & *Sylph*, who upon the occasion alluded to so nobly supported the Honor of the British flag

Captain Capel from unavoidable circumstances of calms & adverse tides was prevented rendering assistance in *La Hogue*, but his anxious & zealous mind was constantly employed in tracking the whole of the operations & he has declared to me that he never in his life observed conduct on any occasion more conspicuously firm Judicious & Gallant than was evinced by Captains Burdett & Kinsman in the management of their Ships in repulsing the formidable attack made upon them by The Enemy flotilla of Gun Boats, & That for nearly Three hours & a half he was in admiration at the animated fire Kept upon them by the *Maidstone*. The *Sylphs* carronades not Knowing her Shot Sufficiently for to operate effectually—only occasionally fired—but however Captn. Kinsman deserves great credit for the precision with which he preserved his position in support of the *Maidstone*

Captain Capel did not fail to proceed with his Ship the moment he could get her thro The Gates & he has since in Conjunction with the *Belvidera* *Maidstone* & *Sylph* pushed up in pursuit of the Enemy flotilla as high as New Haven but from unavoidable circumstances which facilitatd their retreat the Ships could not get up with them & they are since returned to New York no doubt much damaged & shook by their Expedition

I send herewith a report of survey which has been held upon the Foremast of the *Maidstone* which being So desperately wounded as to make the mast ineffective. I propose soon sending her to Halifax & I hope it wil be in Your power to Send another Ship to relieve her. which I propose the *Endymion* should do whenever She arrives. at least til your further pleasure is known—I have the Honer to be Sir Your very Obedient Humble Servt.

Charles Paget<sup>2</sup>

PS. The *Belvidera* being with Captn. Capel was occasioned by That Ship having been obliged to come here for a Supply of Provisions from off her Station at Sandy Hook—which were furnish'd her by *La Hogue*.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 147–48.

1. Gardiners Bay, Long Island, New York.

2. For a sketch of Paget's naval service, see Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, Vol. 1, Part 2, pp. 854–56.

CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir

I have to inform you that I dispatched two Gun Boats down Sound with a Torpedo Boat, constructed To proceed under water,— and to contain thirteen persons, who are employ'd to propel it by a spiral wheel—

The Gun boats have returned after leaving the Torpedo near Gardners Bay— its remarkable that not one of the Enemies ships have enter'd the Sound since the action with The Frigate & twenty Gun Ship—off New London,<sup>1</sup> I am induced to belive from the effect of hot shot on the enemy in that affair that if Come. Barney had furnaces, the Enemy could not blockade him—<sup>2</sup> with Consideration & respect yr. Obt. Sert.

J Lewis

27th. June 1814

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 17 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. Lewis is referring to the 25 May 1814 engagement off New London. See above, Lewis to Jones, 29 May 1814, and Burdett to Capel, 30 May 1814.

2. Commodore Joshua Barney, commander of the Chesapeake Bay Flotilla, was also faced with a British naval blockade. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vols. 2–3. Jones's interest in innovative technology prompted the Navy Secretary to query Lewis further about the construction of these furnaces. Jones to Lewis, 29 June 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 361 (M149, Roll No. 11).

CAPTAIN CHARLES PAGET, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

*Superb* at Anchor off Fishers Island<sup>1</sup> July 3d. 1814.—

Sir/

I am sure you will receive pleasure in reading the accompanying account from Captn. Burdett of H. M. S. *Maidstone* who has promptly availed himself of the opportunity which was offerd to him. of Effectually destroying the famous Vessel which has been by so much pains and ingenuity Constructed at New York upon a principal of Mechanism which with several Torpedoes attach'd to her was to

enable those employed in this diabolical mode of Warfare to approach His Majestys Ships at Night unobserved.—

I refer you to Captain Burdetts Statement of the transaction & I have the Honor to be Sir Your Very Obedt. humble Servt.

Charles Paget

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fol. 71.

1. Fishers Island, New York, is located at the eastern end of Long Island Sound.

[Enclosure]

CAPTAIN GEORGE BURDETT, R.N., TO CAPTAIN CHARLES PAGET, R.N.

Copy

His Majestys Ship *Maidstone*  
Off New London 29th June 1814.

Sir/

On Saturday last the 25th inst late in the Evening, I received Information that the wonderful Turtle Boat which has been so long constructing at New York by the celebrated Mr. Fultton,<sup>1</sup> for the purpose of destroying His Majestys Ships at this Anchorage by Torpedoes, had left that place on the Monday on her way down to the Squadron, but that providentially in the NW Gale of thursday she had been driven on Shore upon Long Island about twelve Miles to the Westward of Plumb Gut<sup>2</sup> and had one Man drowned in her.

I determined if possible to destroy her there and proceeded at daylight, Sunday morning with this Ship round the Gull Light,<sup>3</sup> and ordered Captain Kinsman to proceed in the *Sylph*, with all my Boats manned and Armed thro' the Plumb Island Gut, in case of its falling Calm they might tow the *Sylph* to the Spot

I have now Sir the satisfaction to acquaint you a very favourable breeze brought both of His Majestys Ships to the situation. I wished so anxiously to arrive at, and upon rounding a Point of Land I discovered this newly invented Machine lying in a Small Sandy Bay in the Wash of the Beech with a vast concourse of People assembled around it (a considerable part of whom were armed Militia) who took their Station behind the Banks to the Right and left of the Turtle Boat, which lay on the Beach resembling a great whale, the *Maidstone* & *Sylph* took their Stations in like manner to the Eastward & Westward of her, Anchored within Point blank Shot and Springs on their Cables, scoured the Beech and I then made the Signal for all the Boats to push off and Land in the Centre where the Vessel lay. A brisk Fire of Musquetry was opened upon our Boats as they proceeded to the Shore, but upon our Marines and Seamen forming on the Bank and a smart fire from our Ships the Militia soon fled in all directions and our force was judiciously placed by Lieut. Fenkler of the Royal Marines of HM Ship under my Command, while Lieut. Bowen first of the *Maidstone* to whom I had confided the destruction of the Turtle, by a plan previously laid proceeded to blow her up, and in half an hour I had the gratifying Spectacle of seeing her explode with a heavy Crash

when the Smoke cleared away there was not a vestage of her to be seen but the Splinters she was about Thirty feet long and sixteen wide cased over outside with Iron and Musquet proof, with a Small Scuttle in the Center to admit one Man at a time, she was worked from the inside by winches similar to those of our chain Pumps and I am informed twelve Men worked her.

Lieutenant Bowen succeeded in bringing off a considerable Part of her equipment which had been hauled up in the Woods, and are of a very ingenious construction. To Lieut. Bowen I am again indebted for the very ski[ll]ful manner in which he perform'd this most desirable piece of Service, which probably has saved the lives of many Gallant and Valuable Subjects of His Majesty in this treacherous mode of Warfare and to Lieut. Nazer<sup>4</sup> second, who assisted him all the Officers Petty Officers, Seamen, and Marines behaved with the same Gallantry and steadiness which I have so often before had occasion to notice, and Lieut. Bowen speaks in the same terms of Lieut. Burt,<sup>5</sup> second of the *Sylph* and the Petty Officers and Men of that Ship who landed with him. I have the Honor to be Sir Your Most Obedt. Servt.

Geo. Burdett Captain

To The Honble Chas. Paget  
Captain HM Ship *Superb*.

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fols. 63–64.

1. The British mistook this "Turtle boat" for Robert Fulton's steam frigate, which was under construction in New York. Hutcheon, *Robert Fulton*, p. 123.

2. Plumb Gut, one of three entrances to Eastern Long Island Sound.

3. Little Gull Island Light situated on Little Gull Island, off Fisher's Island.

4. Lieutenant Kelly Nazer, R.N.

5. Possibly Lieutenant George Burt, R.N.

CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir/

I have to report to you the disagreeable accident which happen'd To Gun Boat *No 8*. under my Command, on the 29th. July. at 4 ock PM she was struck with a violent gust of wind parted the Cable—and drifted on Shore, the moment the Keel took the ground. She over Set and five of the Crew perished—

the Vessel and guns—have since been recoverd the main mast was Cut away—I have the honor to be with respect your very Obt. Servt.

J Lewis

Spermecete Cove  
Augt. 2d. 1814

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 105 (M124, Roll No. 64).

## British Activity off St. Marys Coast

*The St. Marys Station under Commodore Hugh G. Campbell settled into a familiar pattern during the first six months of 1814. A Royal Navy squadron hovered off the Georgia coast and its boats and British privateers harassed coastal shipping. Meanwhile, an American force convoyed merchant vessels and captured ships violating the embargo laws. A constant plea for cruisers that could actively pursue enemy vessels echoed throughout Campbell's correspondence with the Navy Department.<sup>1</sup>*

1. For more on the St. Marys Station, see Tucker, *Jeffersonian Gunboat Navy*, pp. 145–53.

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 26th March 1814

Sir

Since my last Respects to you on this Subject<sup>1</sup> I have the satisfaction to report for your information the following vessels detained by the Flotilla under my command—

Schooner *Louisa* under Spanish colours from Halifax, Cargo Dry goods—

Schooner *Carlshaud*, Swedish colours, Reports from St Bartholomews, cargo oil, hoes, & nails—

Brig *Emden* Swedish Colours from Bermuda in Ballast

Brig *orion* Swedish colours, from Bermuda in Ballast

Brig *Aurora* Swedish Colours, Reported from St Barts. but proves to belong to Antigua. last from St Kitts, Cargo Rum & Dry Goods—

Sloop *Good Intent*, from amelia, american, cargo Turks Island salt and dry Goods, bound to Savannah as reported, but on a Smuggling voyage—

Sloop *Nancy* of Seybrook, from Amelia cargo Bahama Salt

These vessels from Bermuda are all manned with Americans who acknowledge themselves natives of Massachusetts— They Sailed from different ports in that State and cleared as customary for St Bartholomews, but It appears they were all drawn into Bermuda as if by magic—

The *sancho Panza* in my last report and under Similar circumstances, has been condemned

They are all American Built, vessels and It appears notorious they belong to some of the northern ports—not a regular Swedish paper among them, yet our Judge of the district court, from some cause or other appears more Liberally disposed towards them, than opinions in General think he ought to be I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir your obedient servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, PHi, Uelma Clark Smith Collection, William Jones Papers.

1. See Campbell to Jones, 14 January 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 30 and enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34).

## COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 7th May 1814

Sir,

A Squadron of British cruisers have been hovering off this place Since the 30th ult., consisting of the *Majestic Razzee*, *Morgianna* Sloop, and a Brig

Their remaining off here so Long without interruption to the American waters induces me to believe that their intention is to remain off this part of the coast until the Jamaica fleet passes these Latitudes

You will observe by the Proclamation<sup>1</sup> of Admiral Cochrane that they intent to Establish a post on some part of the Southern States—

It is reported by a vessel direct from Nassau to Amelia, that Black Troops were ordered to be in readiness to Embark at that Island for Some part of our coast— This I Give as a report and think it probable— I have the Honor to be With Great Respect Sir your very obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 34 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. See Cochrane's proclamation of 2 April 1814, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 60. This proclamation supported British enticement of American slaves to emigrate.

## COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St. Marys. May 14 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that the British force that appeerd off this place on the 30t Ult—and continued untill the 6t Inst.—has not appeerd since that date

Since my last report respecting Captures—we have detained the Brig *Eliza* from Plymouth England, and the brig *Norige* from Turks Islands both vessels under Sweedish colours— they are Lib[*e*]led and will soon be decided on— The *adams* has left Savannah on a cruize—<sup>1</sup> the *Peacock* yet remains in port— one of the Barges is nearly ready for coppering— the Frame of the other is in hand— I have the Honor to be with the great Respect Sir your Obedient Servant

Hugh G. Campbell

PS— I wish much for two or three Midshipmen in place of those you have been pleased to order from this Station— Midshipman Baldwin<sup>2</sup> has Gone on to Savannah, to Join the *Peacock* Branch Miller<sup>3</sup> has not appeerd

H G C



LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 65 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. *Adams* departed Savannah on her second cruise of 1814 on 8 May. On *Adams's* brief sojourn off Georgia and the events of her second cruise, see pp. 336–46, and Morris, *Autobiography*, p. 73.

2. William Baldwin was appointed a midshipman on 31 March 1812 with his warrant antedated to 1 January of that year. He was ordered to the St. Marys Station on 29 January 1813.

3. Branch Miller was appointed a midshipman and assigned to the St. Marys Station on 9 March 1814. His warrant was dated 8 March 1814.

## COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 21st May 1814

Sir

Since my last respects to you<sup>1</sup> the Enemy have reappeared, consisting of a Razez, Supposed to be the *Majestic* and *Morgiana* Sloop of war—

They Continued at anchor close in with the Bar on the 18th & 19th until the two lookout boats Stood out to reconnoitre them— on their approach the large Ship Got under way and Stood off under easy Sail— The Sloop of war following her Example, until the Gun Boats Got up within Long Gun shot and Fired at them— The Sloop of war then Gave chase, but the boats evaded the persuit and returned to their anchorage,— They have not been seen Since the Evening of the 19th—

All accounts agree that they meditate an Establishment on some part of the Southern coast, but with what degree of certainty I am a stranger—

In such an Event we should feel perfectly secure with the two schooners you were pleased to observe in a former letter<sup>2</sup> were intended for this Station, however Small— Could they be found to draw not more than 9 feet Water with all their Stores on board—in that case, in the Event of this Bar being Blockaded Enter any of the inlets south of Wassaw & come on Inland— an 18 pounder on a Pivott and Six small Guns, for defending themselves against Boats will be quite sufficient— I am honored with your orders relative to Mr. Sinclair & Rothwell,<sup>3</sup> which Shall meet due attention— I have the honor to be with Great Respect Sir Your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 87 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. See Campbell to Jones, 14 May 1814, above.

2. Jones to Campbell, 17 March 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 243 (M149, Roll No. 11).

3. See Jones to Campbell, 7 May 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 308 (M149, Roll No. 11). The Navy Department appointed Nathaniel W. Rothwell a purser on 22 October 1812 and ordered him to St. Marys, Georgia. His appointment was officially confirmed by the Senate on 2 March 1813. William Sinclair held his purser's commission from 26 March 1814. A misunderstanding between Rothwell and Sinclair over the purser's position at St. Marys was resolved with Rothwell staying in Georgia, and Sinclair eventually ordered to Charleston, South Carolina, as purser there.

## COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Marys 17th June 1814

Sir,

Since the departure of the British Ships of war from this coast on the 19th ult., no particular circumstance occurred until the 10th inst., when a Privateer Schooner from Nassau, appeared off St Andrews Inlet, sent in her boats and captured a coasting Schooner from this place bound to Savannah (inland) which was recaptured by Sailing master John B Grayson,<sup>1</sup> in Gun vessel *no. 158*, who fortunately hove in Sight while the Enemy were in the act of taking possession—on his approach they abandoned their prize and rowed off for their vessel, which lay at anchor in the offing— They were pursued by the Gun vessel, but escaped, by the wind being unfavorable to the persuers and their advantage in rowing— When they Gained the Privateer, She Got under way and stood off to sea, nor was she again heard of until the 15th when information arrived of her boats having entered doboy or little St. Simons Sound on the 13th and Captured three coasting vessels with cotton from Savannah bound to amelia—

By this you will readily perceive Sir, The impossibility of Guarding Effectually the inlets on this Station—Seven in number Exclusive of this entrance and Tibee Inlet—Being obliged to have two boats constantly Stationed, near the Bar (St Mary's) to examine the trade carried on at amelia, which has been Great and daily encreasing and one at savannah occasionally as duty requires—

The Boats Stationed at the different inlets require in General two days to pass from one to the other inland while a vessel can run the distance along the coast in two or three hours Generally Speaking—Could I have commanded the Services of a cruizing vessel of any description from a Schooner of 8 Guns and upwards, I feel confident the Privateer could have been Captured— we are daily detaining vessels of all nations, but they go so well covered as to render difficult any discovery of Enemies property I have the honor to be with Great Respect Sir Your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

June 18th.— P S. This days mail brought us the news of the above p[ri]viteer and all her prizes have arrived at Savannah—taken by a private armed schooner out of that place— H, G, C

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 71 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. John R. Grayson's sailing master's warrant dated from 10 February 1809.

## Jacob Lewis and Prisoner Exchanges

*Although the commander of the New York Flotilla did not frequently deal with the enemy, occasionally he received missives from the British squadron, such as the following exchange about effecting a prisoner exchange. The fact that Lewis and his Royal Navy counterpart, Captain Richard Byron, had met earlier in the war under tolerable circumstances*

*exemplifies the occasional humaneness of this war. Among his other duties, Lewis served as the Navy Department's frontline spokesman.*

CAPTAIN RICHARD BYRON, R.N., TO ADMIRAL SIR JOHN B. WARREN, R.N.

HMS. *Belvidera* 27th March 1814 off Sandy Hook—

Sir John

I beg leave to acquaint you, early on the 7th Inst. the *Endymion* was discover'd in chace of a large Schooner,<sup>1</sup> which was Tacking in Shoal Water on the Long Island Shore—the *Rattler* joind the *Belvidera* in chace, and so soon as we got into four Fathoms Water—the Boats from the three Ships, were sent to attack the American Privateer, under the Command of Lieutt. John Sykes<sup>2</sup> of this Ship—the Crew immediately attemptd. to gain the Beach, which thirty seven effectd., the remainder thirty three, with several English Subjects were brought on bd. the *Belvidera*, having been Prisoners on bd. the *Mars*—American Privateer I sent orders to Lt. Sykes to burn the Privateer which soon blew up. this Vessel having been much press'd in Chace had thrown fourteen Guns overboard, having only their Long Gun. a 24 Pr. remaining was 288 Tons Burthen. I have the Honour to be, Sir John—with Great Respt. Yr. most Obedt. Humble Servt.

R Byron Capt.

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fol. 2.

1. American privateer schooner *Mars*.

2. Lieutenant John Sykes, R.N., was commissioned a commander on 2 November 1814.

CAPTAIN RICHARD BYRON, R.N., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE

H.M.S *Belvidera* 10th. March 1814

My Dear Sir,

Mr. Jenkins Purser of the Private armed schooner *Mars*, is requested by me to wait upon you—respecting the immediate exchange of part that vessels crew for an equal number british seaman— I have desired him to mention to you a white Flag shewn at the telegraph<sup>1</sup> will be considerd. by me that this exchange is agreeable to you. I have not forgot the handsome manner the english Masters of vessels—spoke of the kind treatment they recievd. from you—and allow me to express to you—how very glad we all where on board the *Belvidera* to hear of your very honourable appointment my dear Sir yours with much respect

(Signd.) R Byron

Copy, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 121 (M124, Roll No. 61). This letter and the following were enclosed in Master Commandant Jacob Lewis's 21 March 1814 letter to Secretary Jones, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 120 (M124, Roll No. 61).

1. Probably a reference to the Highlands, New Jersey, visual telegraph established to provide information about British activities off the coast.

MASTER COMMANDANT JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
CAPTAIN RICHARD BYRON, R.N.

Sir.

I received by the hand of Purser Jenkins the polite letter which you did me the honor to address me on the subject of an exchange of prisoners; I lose no time in replying thereto, altho' in doing so, I am sorry to state that it is not in my power to make it comport with your object;— The subject of exchange I have no controul over; There are no prisoners of war in this City; the nearest Port at which they are placed is Providence, Rhode Island; however, I will make your proposal known to the Comy. Genl. for prisoners,<sup>1</sup> who resides at Washington & request of him to be authorised to retain out of the first prisoners of war that may arrive at this port, the number of twenty six, to be sent on board his Majesty's ship *Belvidera*, in exchange for the same number of American prisoners which are now detained by you, & should the Genl. think it expedient to comply with my request, I shall embrace the first opportunity & send a flag to advise you of so pleasing a result; beleive me that this occasion is highly gratifying & pleasing to me in as much as it gives me an opportunity of ~~expressing~~ assuring you of my great consideration & respect, as well as of expressing my thanks for the Gentleman like treatment I recd. from the offi[c]ers under Command during my Captivity—on board the *Belvidera*<sup>2</sup>

J Lewis

New York March 19th. 1814—

Copy, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 122 (M124, Roll No. 61).

1. John Mason.

2. *Belvidera*, captained by Richard Byron, captured the American privateer *Bunker Hill*, captained by Jacob Lewis, in the summer of 1812.

## A Work of “Beauty & Strength”: The 74-Gun Ship of the Line *Washington*

*The first line-of-battle ship built for an American navy was laid down in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1777. Christened America, and constructed under the supervision of Continental Navy Captain John Paul Jones, this mighty vessel slid down the ways at John Langdon's shipyard on 5 November 1782.<sup>1</sup> Three decades later, another American ship of the line was under construction at Portsmouth, this time under the supervision of*

*U.S. Navy Captain Isaac Hull. That officer began work on the new ship—to be named Washington—in April of 1813, soon after assuming his duties as commander of the Portsmouth Station. Critical shortages of live oak timber retarded progress on the ship through much of the year, sometimes bringing work on the ship to a complete halt.<sup>2</sup>*

*Despite these delays, Hull was quite pleased with how the 74 was taking shape, reporting early in the New Year: “The work is well done, and I do not feel willing to allow that we shall be outdone in point of beauty & Strength even by the Charlestown Ship.”<sup>3</sup> Regrettably for Hull, a more intractable problem than timber shortages arose in the spring of 1814 to hamper completion of his 74. On 26 April, Secretary Jones ordered a postponement of all contracts and purchases for fitting out the Portsmouth ship of the line. Thereafter, construction on the 74 advanced haltingly through the early months of summer. Ultimately, it was the threat of British invasion that accelerated final preparations for the ship’s launching. On 1 October 1814, Washington slipped safely into the waters of the Piscataqua River.*

1. One of three ships of the line authorized by the Continental Congress in 1776, America never served as part of the Continental Navy. On 3 September 1782, three months before America’s launch, Congress presented the new warship to King Louis XVI of France, in gratitude for his nation’s support of the revolutionary cause. American Ships of the Line, p. 11.

2. For a detailed treatment of Washington’s construction at Portsmouth, see McKee, “Captain Isaac Hull,” pp. 16–99.

3. Hull to Jones, 1 March 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 2 (M125, Roll No. 35).

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard Portsmouth N.H.  
2d April 1814

Sir,

I am yet without an answer to two letters<sup>1</sup> I have had to address you on the subject of contracting for materials necessary for the equipment of the 74 now building here. I have not felt authorised to make these Contracts as they will be of large amount unless I have a special order from you for that purpose or a general order to make such contracts as may be necessary for her being fitted for sea.

The season is now fast passing away and if the Ship is to be launched this summer these materials ought to be collecting. The copper is to be made and transported by land to this place; the Cordage ought to lay some time in the Yarns before they are laid up. The Sails will take a long time in making and many other articles will require much time to get them together—

I understand all these Contracts are made in Boston and that most of the articles are in a state of forwardness; if so, that ship will be ready months before the one here and I should feel mortified to disappoint your expectations and bring on myself censure for not having got forward fast as my brother Offices— I have the honour to be With great respect Sir, Your Ob. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 111 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Hull to Jones, 12 January 1814, and, 23 February 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, Nos. 27 and 135 (M125, Roll No. 34).

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull  
Comm'dg. Naval Officer }  
Portsmouth N H

Navy Department  
April 26. 1814

Sir,

In answer to your solicitations<sup>1</sup> for orders to Contract for the various equipments which remain to be provided for the 74: building under your direction, I have to request that you will postpone any further Contracts or purchases on that account until further orders, as it has become necessary to reduce the expenditure as much as possible in the Eastern Section of the Union, owing to the obstacles opposed to the fiscal operations of the Government in that quarter, and to the artificial obstruction to the credit & circulation of the paper of the Government as well as of the Banks of the middle States, and as the inconvenience attending the transportation of Specie from the latter to the former to meet the expenditures in that quarter, would not derive an equivalent advantage by the immediate preparation of all the equipments for the 74; a temporary suspension is deemed necessary until the current of exchange shall resume its circulation.—

In the mean time you will progress with the finishing of the Hull so as to get the Ship afloat as soon as may be with advantage.—

You will also complete the Masts, Spars, Gun-Carriages, Water Casks and Blocks.—

Como: Bainbridge has the dimensions of the whole, and can furnish you with Copies.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 300–301 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. In addition to the letters printed and referenced above, see Hull to Jones, 25 April 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 180 (M125, Roll No. 35).

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 5th May 1814

Sir,

I have had the honour to receive your letter dated April \_\_\_\_,<sup>1</sup> and shall, agreeably to your wishes suspend all contracts and purchases on account of the 74 building under my superintendance (except such as are absolutely necessary to put her in a state for launching) until I get your further orders. The Water Casks are in a state of great forwardness, and will be the best I have ever seen as the timber is perfectly seasoned. The Blocks and Gun Carriages are making, and the Timber for the Spars contracted for, and the Mastmaker has commenced making

them. Timber is also collected for making Masts for the different classes of Frigates in pursuance of your orders of last fall, three masts and some of the smaller spars are nearly finished—

Should any thing take place that may induce you to let this Ships remain on the Stocks may I be permitted to suggest the idea of having her remain without caulking and without the decks being laid but otherwise completely finished. In that state She will (by being kept dry, and having a constant current of air passing through her) receive very great benefit, and can be put in a State to be launched in six weeks if required. The launching ways and every other preparation can be made for that purpose.

The Gun Deck beams and knees of the Ship are green, and there can be no calculating the advantage she will derive from laying on the Stocks until they get a chance to season which they will do very fast under cover as they now are. I had no idea of the benefit of a Ship house in building Ships. There is no question in my mind but it will pay for itself more than double, in building this Ship, and should circumstances make it necessary to let her remain on the Stocks there is no doubt but she will be a much better Ship ten years hence than she now is.

I should be much pleased to know whether you wish to let the Ship be finished in the manner before stated, or whether I shall make the contract for the Copper (which is a very heavy article) and engage the Caulkers, and fit the Ship in every respect for launching

The Canvass is here for the Sails but if they are not wanting immediately it would be a great injury to have them made up, as the twine will soon rot and injure the Canvass.

When I am informed of your wishes on that subject I shall take measures accordingly— I have the honour to be With very great respect Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 21 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. Jones to Hull, 26 April 1814, above.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Isaac Hull Esqr.  
Comm'dt. U.S. Navy Yard  
Portsmouth N H

}

Navy Department  
May 21. 1814

Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 5th. instant, it may be observed, that it is not the intention of the Government to delay the finishing of the Ship building under your superintendance, longer than circumstances shall impose the necessity.—

I am sensible of the great advantage which the Ship would derive from laying on the Stocks, in the manner you suggest; and with that view I would delay the caulking as long as possible.

The Copper for her is now in Store, in New York 30. 32 & 34 ounces and it will be forwarded in due time.

The making of the sails had better be postponed for the present. I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 84 (M441, Roll No. 1).

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth N H 24 June 1814

Sir,

The Ship building at this Yard is now in such a state of forwardness as to make it necessary for the Caulkers to commence caulking provided it is your intention that she shall be launched as soon as we can get her ready.

The Spar deck is now Kneeing off and the upper Gun deck Planking, so that by the time we can caulk her, she will be otherwise ready for launch.

Mr. Howe<sup>1</sup> has undertaken to furnish the rope on the conditions mentioned in your letter and will commence laying up what Yarns he has in this place immediately into the Topmast rigging and such other sized rope as can be used in other Ships should any thing take place to induce the government to let the 74 remain on the stocks.

I see no possible way of getting her materials together, except by land and that will be very tedious and expensive. The Coast is now so closely blockaded by the Enemy, that a Coaster cannot pass without great risque. As the guns are at Washington the copper at New York, and many other heavy articles, that will be necessary to the outfits of the Ship are to be collected from Boston and other places at a great distance, I should be much pleased to know whether under these circumstances the Ship is to be launched as soon as ready and if not, how far I shall proceed towards finishing her. With the hands we now have, She can be launched in all September— I have the honour to be with great respect Sir,  
Your Obt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 100 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. Joseph N. Howe of Boston. At Hull's encouragement, Howe had purchased hemp to make rope yarn for rigging the 74 at Portsmouth. Although Secretary Jones had halted the letting of contracts for such naval stores, he acceded to the purchase of the rope yarn as long as Howe was willing to accept deferred payment for his work. See Hull to Jones, 26 May 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 104 (M125, Roll No. 36); Jones to Hull, 3 June 1814, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 97–98 (M441, Roll No. 1); and Hull's letters of 9 and 12 June 1814 to Howe in NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval Historical Society, MS 439, Vol. 2.



## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull }  
 U.S. Navy }  
 Portsmouth }

Navy Department  
 June 30. 1814

Sir,

Your letter of the 24th. is received.— owing to the difficulties which obstruct the transportation of the heavy Stores for the “Seventy Four,” as well as other coincident inducements, I decide upon continuing her on the blocks under cover, until a more favorable state of things shall take place; but I wish her hull to be completed, in all respects, as far as it can be done, without caulking.—

It is true, that, were she launched and removed up the river, she would be in greater safety than at the Navy Yard, but, as she cannot be launched until October, all the danger will have been incurred, for they will not attempt it during the boisterous season.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 115 (M441, Roll No. 1).

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
 Portsmouth 5th Aug. 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that the Plank Shear is now on the Ship building at this Yard, and we are filling in between the Ports on the Quarter deck. The rail will probably be on in all next week, when we shall discharge all our Carpenters except such as are wanting on the Rudder, Capstern,<sup>1</sup> Channels &c. unless you should determine on launching her as soon as she can be got ready; in which case we shall put all hands on the launching ways. The Timber is now in dock, and the necessary piers sunk for laying them. The Ship would no doubt be safer from the Enemy, if removed up the river, but whether that precaution against an attack is necessary, I submit to you; I still think we shall have one before the summer is out.

I shall wait your orders not only for launching her, but for furnishing every thing of importance necessary to her outfits— I have the honour to be with great respect Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 66 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Rendered as “capstan” in the letter book copy of this letter.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull }  
 U.S. Navy }  
 Portsmouth N.H. }

Navy Department  
 August 11. 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 5th. on the subject of launching and placing the 74 in safely up the river.

The very strong force with which we are menaced justifies this measure of precaution, and you will finish all the work necessary for that purpose, and launch her as soon as possible.— I have ordered Mr. Bullus to send on the copper without delay: viz.

34 oz 569.

32 oz 1336.

28 oz 1338.

Estimated quantity required ~~3243~~: Sheets; or more, as the contents of the cases may accord, and 4000 lbs of Sheathing nails.—

He will forward to you a duplicate of the bill of lading in order that you may send an Officer to meet and hurry it on.— Your other letter, of the same date, is before me.— Lieutenant Chauncey has been, some time since, ordered provisionally, from Lake Ontario to report himself to you. Should he not appear soon, another will be ordered. I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 170 (M441, Roll No. 1).

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
 Portsmouth 16th Sep. 1814

Sir,

We are now progressing fast with the caulking of the 74 at this Yard, and the bilge ways, launching ways, and every thing necessary to her being launched is in such a state of forwardness, as to allow me to hope that she can be got off by Saturday the 24th instant, or the Monday following if no accident happens.

As the time fixed for launching will not allow me more time than to hear from you, I should be much pleased, if by return of mail you will give me the name of the Ship, and such instructions, as to her being laid up, or fitted out, as you may deem necessary. I am myself much at a loss to determine whether she will be safer from an attack by the Enemy moored under fours<sup>1</sup> near the Navy Yard, with what few guns and men we can get on board her, with fort Sullivan and the fort on Pierce's Island to defend, or up the river where she must defend herself against any force that may follow her up. If left at the Yard and the enemy get possession of those forts which are only manned with militia

that never before saw a great gun, we must inevitably fall, and on the other hand if she is taken up the river the risque in getting her there is great and when there, if the enemy should get possession of the place, I see nothing to prevent their taking their own time to come up and overpower us by superior force. Indeed let us do what we may, I cannot but consider our situation a dangerous one—

There is now about one thousand militia in the neighborhood, some of them armed, and some not. These men are ordered out by the Governour of New Hampshire,<sup>2</sup> of course, will not cross the river into the state of Massachusetts; consequently we shall have no force to oppose the Enemy on that side of the river unless the Governour of Massachusetts thinks proper to call out the Militia and I have doubts whether he will— I some day since wrote to General Dearborn, stating to him that it was my opinion that if the Enemy made an attack on this place it would be by landing at York, and that One thousand men ought to be stationed there, not only for the defence of this place but the neighboring towns, to which, immense wealth had been removed from this and other places; but his answer to me was, that His Excellency Governour Strong did not think proper to comply with his requisitions. I then stated my opinion to the Major General, who, I understood had authority to call out the Militia in that district; what he will do I cannot say, but little, however is expected from him.

I have placed Lieut Wadsworth with fifty seamen and one hundred & twenty militia in fort Sullivan and now making it as strong as the means we have will allow us. I have also erected two batteries on the back of the Island; one has an 18 Pr. on a Swivel carriage, the other one 18 and two long nines on Ship's carriages. These and the Guns on the other parts of the Island require more men than we can muster, and not a man will volunteer to come on the Island. I hope therefore the *Adams'* crew will be suffered to remain here untill the season is so far advanced as to prevent the Enemy from keeping on the coast. I am aware that application will be made for these men for the Boston Station, but hope & trust they will not be sent there, for I cannot believe there is half the danger at that place, that there is here.<sup>3</sup> That Ship is in the midst of from 10 to 15 thousand men, the *Constitution's* Crew to defend her, and in a situation to defend herself and in a harbour difficult of access. While here we have no assistance from ships, the 74 not in a state to defend herself, and in a harbour easy of access, and not so many men, counting every body, as the *Constitution* has now on board— I have the honour to be with great respect Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 58 (M125, Roll No. 39). Bracketed text is supplied from the letter book copy of this letter. See NH*i*, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval Historical Society, MS 439, Vol. 2.

1. Four-pounder guns.

2. John Taylor Gilman, a member of Federalist party.

3. On William Bainbridge's efforts to assert his seniority over Hull in order to transfer a portion of *Adams'* crew to his command at Boston, see pp. 546, note 2 and 575–78.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull,  
 Commanding Naval Officer, }  
 Portsmouth, N.H.

Navy Department,  
 Sept. 22nd. 1814.

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 16th. and am pleased to find the Ship will be launched at so early a day.

She is to be called the *Washington*. I submit it to your discretion & judgment, either to remove her up the river, or provide the best defence you can near the yard.—

The crew of the *Adams* and her Officers will remain under your command until further orders from this Department.

Nothing but my excessive and incessant occupation has prevented my writing to Captn. Morris which I shall do in a day or two.—

Please to present my respects to him.— I am, respectfully, &c.

W Jones.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 190 (M441, Roll No. 1).

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
 Portsmouth 2d Oct. 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that the *Washington* was yesterday launched without the slightest injury or accident and I am proud to say she is worthy of the name she bears. I have the honour to be with great respect Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

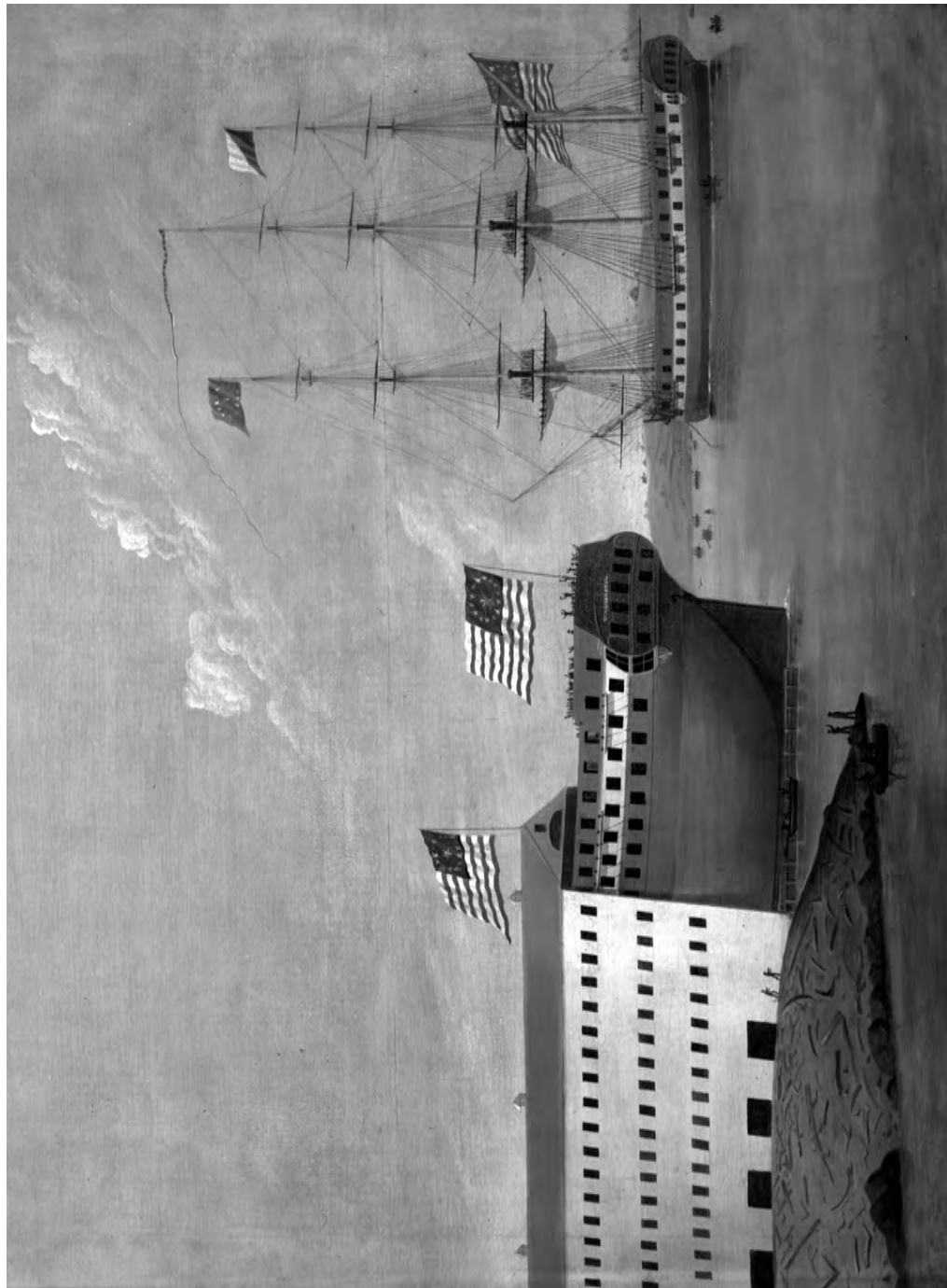
LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 2 (M125, Roll No. 40).

NEWS ACCOUNT OF THE LAUNCH OF THE SHIP OF THE LINE *WASHINGTON*

*Portsmouth, Oct. 8. [1814]*

## LAUNCH.

On Saturday last<sup>1</sup> was launched from the Navy Yard in this harbour the United States' Ship *WASHINGTON*, 74 guns. At sunrise the flags were displayed on the public buildings at the Yard, and the Forts, and on the armed vessels in the harbour, two of which were beautifully decorated with the colours of the European nations. Half past twelve o'clock was the time appointed for the launch, an hour previous to which all preparations had ceased, and at the moment assigned she



*Launch of Washington, 1 October 1814*

started from the stocks and glided with the utmost majesty and grandeur into that element of which we trust she will be the pride and boast. The launch is said by connoisseurs to have been one of the most elegant and perfect ever witnessed. The notice given of the launch, which was not published till the morning of Saturday, and which was from prudential motives kept back till that time, did not draw from the vicinity so great a concourse as would otherwise have assembled, and many were deprived of a sight from the promptness with which she was forced into the sea. A federal salute<sup>2</sup> greeted the *Washington* from the navy yard, which was answered from fort Constitution, and the armed ships *Harpy* and *America* lying in the harbour; she was likewise cheered by the numerous spectators, who with pride hailed the second line of battle ship launched in our harbour, an honor which has not been attained by any other in the union. An elegant collation was provided for the workmen employed in building this superb ship, which is spoken of by naval gentlemen to be inferiour to none ever built. Great credit is due to the industry of Captain HULL, in the structure and superintendence of the *Washington*, whose keel was laid but 18 months since, and whose launch at this time could scarcely have been predicted.

Printed, *National Advocate* (New York), 13 October 1814. This article is a reprint of an earlier, less legible column published in the 8 October edition of the *Portsmouth* (New Hampshire) *Oracle*.

1. October 1, 1814.
2. A 13-gun salute.

## Preparing Schooner *Roanoke* for Coastal Defense

*In order to monitor the activities of the several North Carolina coastal outposts under his purview, Thomas N. Gautier had received the Navy Department's approval to increase the size of his force. His efforts to acquire, repair, and outfit the schooner Roanoke, formerly the Blount, delineate the time-consuming problems facing a station commander.*

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER

Lieut. Thos. N Gautier,  
Wilmington N.C.

Navy Department  
April 9. 1814.

Sir,

The Secretary of State<sup>1</sup> has ordered the Collector of the Customs at Washington N.C. T. H. Blount Esq.<sup>2</sup> to deliver over to the order of this Department, a certain Felucca rigged vessel called the *Blount*, now at that place together with all the materials and appurtenances belonging to her.— You will therefore apply to

the collector in Virtue of this order and receive from him the said Felucca with every thing appertaining to her for the Naval service of the U States.— She is I understand well calculated for the Waters of North Carolina and will be a valuable addition to your force.— Whatever equipment she may require you can procure at Norfolk, and you will take care that nothing superfluous is required.— I am, respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 274 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Secretary of State James Monroe.
2. Thomas H. Blount.

ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Washington NC May 23d. 1814

Sir

I have the honor to report myself arrived at this place I have waited on the Collector<sup>1</sup> for the delivery of the *Blount* she has one long eighteen pounder half mounted & two Carronades of same Calibre on the beach a few shott, Cutlass, pikes, & Bases two Latteen Sails mutilated & in bad order 1 Jib & 1 hawzer some remnants of rigging & about 15 tons ballast I shall take a correct inventory she has no Boats no powder & is destitute of every thing Mr. Blount has in possession a quantity of muskets belonging to the U States sold by Gillispie the enclosed memorandum of Mr. Blounts will show that he is disposed to deliver them to me if ordered would you be pleased Sir to allow me the liberty to give her two fore & aft sails in lieu of the ill contrived sails she has now as she is utterly unmanagable in her present state to heave her in stays the same spars will answer & the alteration will be at much less expense than it would be to fitt her as intended In your orders of the 9th. April with which you honor me I am I at a loss & am diffident to act without further orders in shipping her crew & appointing her commander her complement I submit for your determination & mention forty, officers included

I shall get Caulkers at work as soon as possible & expedite every thing with the strictest delligence & an eye to economy & if I find much difficulty shall proceed to Elizabeth City to receive my supplies from Norfolk I have the honor to be with very great respect your most Obedt. Sert

T N Gautier

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 97 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Thomas H. Blount.

ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

May the 30th. 1814 Washington NC.

Sir

The very miserable order the *Feluche*<sup>1</sup> is in the total want of many article the abominable work put on her the burlesque manner in which every apartment is tacked together cut up with hatches not length on her deck sufficient to receive the Gun the hatches to be taken up circles to lay down & being dubious Sir you have not been apprized of her real situation & that I might incur your blame for delay & expence which I wish to avoid is the reason of this report & not raise difficulties which do not exist or demurring against the orders you have honored with

I shall as soon as I get her Caulked & her sails in any way to hang together proceed with her to Elizabeth to receive her Stores & to do such other work & alterations as you may please to allow me I have the honor to report the arrivall of SM. Manson in *N 7* at Beaufort

No. *147* SM Evans & *N 146* SM Wolfendon are also arrivd on the occracoke Station I had ordered seven men belonging to *N 167* to be brought round from Wilmington who are now on board the *Blount* in whom I can confide & which will save material expence in her outfitt may I be allowed to ask after you have ordered a commander for her if I have to remain until she is compleated I have the honor to be with very great respect your very Obedt. Sevt.

T N Gautier

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 121 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Gautier is describing the felucca *Blount*, which the Navy Department had recently acquired.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER

Lieut. Thos. N. Gautier  
Washington N.C.

Navy Department  
June 6. 1814

Sir,

Your letter, of the 23d. ultimo<sup>1</sup> is received.— The vessel, late the *Blount*, now in the service of the Navy of the United States, is called the *Roanoke*.—

I approve of altering her into a Schooner, as you suggest, and you will observe the Strictest economy in equipping her.—

Sailing Master Benjamin D. Coakley<sup>2</sup> is ordered to report himself for the command of this vessel, and you will enter a crew for her of from 35 to 40 in number, officers included.—

Mr. Blount is requested to deliver to you the musquets mentioned in his memorandum, but you will not receive them unless at fair and reasonable valuation,



according to their actual condition at the time, in case Mr. Blount should be held responsible.—

If articles are high, or any difficulty occurs in the equipment, it will be better to proceed and procure your supplies from Norfolk. I am respectfully &c

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 332 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. See above for Gautier's letter of 23 May. Jones had not received Gautier's letter of 30 May when he wrote this.

2. Benjamin D. Coakley was warranted a sailing master on 6 June 1814, the date of this letter.

ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

12th. June 1814 Washington NC

Sir

I have the honor of reporting to you that I shall leave this in the *Blount* for Elizabeth City on the 20th. to receive her further equipments which are impossible to procure here one of her 18 pounders Carronades is useless

I have 18 Knees put in the vessell & 162 bolts rivetted that came thro the bends & clamp for Sir strange as it may appear she had not a single Knee or bolt rivetted or Keyed

I have with our own force fitted her sails from the mutilated stuff with the assistance of one bolt duck I shall as soon as I receive her stores from Norfolk proceed to Wilmington with her & fitt her as I may be ordered she will draw 8 inches more than any of the Boats except *Number 167*. the *Blount* is copperd to light water mark from the garbord strake her keel, stern post, stem, is not copperd we have copper at Wilmington belonging to *N 167* is it your pleasure that I should use it for the *Blount*—

13th. June

I last night had the honor of receiving your orders<sup>1</sup> with a warrant for S. M. B. D. Coakly which I deliverd & this day has taken the oath required he appears from his manners & his standing in society a Gentleman.

I shall recieve the musketts from Mr. Blount & estimate the prime ones at \$12 & others a[t] \$5 I shall execute your orders with the strictest economy & beg your acquiesance to my intentions as detailed on the former part of this letter I shall be at Elizabeth City to receive your orders with great respect I have the honor to be your most Obedt. Sert.

T N Gautier

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 155 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Jones's response to the news of the *Blount's* "abominable" state was one of "regret" and an admonition "to make such alterations and repairs only as are absolutely necessary." See Jones to Gautier, 8 June 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 334 (M149, Roll No. 11).

ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Smith Ville N.C June 30th 1814

Sir

I have the honour of reporting the safe arrival hence of the US Schooner *Roanoke* S M Coakly Comdg. this day & to detail the Causes of my not proceeding to Elizabeth City with her. I saild from Washington with intention to proceed there but owing to the wind settling at North East & the tide rising 18 inches afforded me an oppertunity of getting thro the Sound which at this Season is all important—. I availd myself of it & ordered the Schooner to this place, & Sent S M Woolfenden with the smallest Gun Boat to Elizabeth City for the stores I had indented for. As soon as the Schooner completes her complement of men I intend with her & *No. 167* mounting 1–32 pounder, two, nines & two Sixes occasionally to visit the different stations, agreeable to your orders, Hoping to merit your approbation. I have the Honour to remain Sir, Most Respectfully your Obdt. Servant

T N Gautier

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 185 (M148, Roll No. 13).

## Enemy Raiders on the Connecticut River

*In the spring of 1814, the Royal Navy launched an aggressive campaign of wide-ranging strikes against U.S. coastal communities that would demonstrate its impressive mastery of amphibious warfare. A prominent feature of this type of warfare was the cutting-out expedition, an operation in which armed boats belonging to British cruisers and blockading vessels entered American harbors to “cut out” ships lying at anchor. Often carried out under the cover of darkness, these daring boat raids relied on celerity, surprise, and well-disciplined execution by sailors and marines to achieve success. Nowhere was the Royal Navy’s prowess at this kind of operation more brilliantly displayed than during an April attack on the riverside settlement of Pettipaug Point, Connecticut, which resulted in the capture and destruction of 27 vessels, including a letter of marque and five privateers.<sup>1</sup> The success of the Pettipaug raid earned its commanding officer, Richard Coote, promotion to post captain and appointment to a new command, H.M. sloop of war Peacock.<sup>2</sup> It also provided a stark illustration of the inability of state and national authorities to protect their citizenry living along a vulnerable, maritime frontier.*

1. A number of the destroyed vessels were under construction or awaiting launch. Two descriptive lists of these vessels, one British and one American, are printed below. For a book-length treatment of the Pettipaug raid, see Roberts, *British Raid on Essex*.

2. Peacock was the former U.S. sloop of war *Wasp*, captured by H.M.S. *Poitiers* on 18 October 1812. Coote perished in August 1814, when Peacock foundered in a storm off the southern U.S. coast with the loss of all hands. On Coote’s promotion and loss in Peacock, see James, *Naval History of Great Britain [1822–24 ed.]*, Vol. 5, pp. 506 and 508.

CAPTAIN THE HONORABLE THOMAS B. CAPEL, R.N., TO  
CAPTAIN JOHN TALBOT, R.N.

Copy,

His Majesty's Ship *La Hogue*  
Off New London 13th. April 1814—

Sir,

I have the great satisfaction in transmitting to you a letter I received from Captain Coote of His Majesty's Sloop *Borer*; under whose directions I placed a division of Boats from His Majesty's Ships named in the Margin,<sup>1</sup> for the purpose of destroying a number of large Privateers and letters of Marque, building and equipping in the Connecticut river, and which Service, by the judicious arrangements of that Officer aided by the exemplary good Conduct, steadiness and gallantry of every Officer and Man employed with him has been attended with complete success.—

The Zeal, Activity and abilities of Captain Coote, have been most conspicuous on all occasions connected with the Blockade and is well Known to every Officer under whom he has served on this part of the station, and I am most highly gratified in assuring you that in the present interprize, he has fully justified the confidence I placed in him.

I am informed from undoubted authority that a Force of more than a thousand Troops and Militia men aided by detachment of Seamen and Marines from the Enemy's Squadron in New London, lined the banks of the river, and were in Boats to oppose his return, and by the Enemy's summons to surrender, they must have been themselves convinced of their overwhelming force, but nothing could intimidate him and his Gallant Associates, his cool decision, in waiting 'till dark, before he returned; his judicious arrangements then in dropping the Boats silently down the Stream (without rowing) baffled all the vegilince of the Enemy, and he passed thro' the heaviest of their fire; his men giving three cheers.—

I request of you to recommend Captain Coote to the notice of the Commander in Chief, and make Known to him in the most favourable terms, the good order, regularity, gallantry and discipline with which every individual employed on this Service conducted himself, underneath I subjoin a statement of our force employed on this occasion. I am Sir Your most obedient Servant

signed/ Thomas Bladen Capel—Captain  
& Senior Officer Off New London—

To/John Talbot Esqr.  
Captain of His Majesty's Ship *Victorious*—

P.S. The Enemy's loss in shipping amounts to upwards of Five Thousand Tons & Vessels, capable of carrying more than one hundred and thirty Guns, and is estimated by them at least Two Hundred thousand Dollars—

British Force

<u>Ships Names</u>	—	—	—	—	<u>No. of Boats</u>	—	—	—	—	<u>No. of Men</u>
<i>La Hogue</i>	—	—	—	—	Three	—	—	—	—	68
<i>Maidstone</i>	—	—	—	—	One	—	—	—	—	30
<i>Endymion</i>	—	—	—	—	One	—	—	—	—	31
<i>Borer</i>	—	—	—	—	<u>One</u>	—	—	—	—	<u>7</u>
					<u>6</u>					<u>136</u>

J. B. C.

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 69–70. For a duplicate of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 272–73. Endorsed opposite the dateline in John Talbot's hand: "John Talbot."

1. The following ships are listed in a column in the left-hand margin: *La Hogue*, *Maidstone*, *Endymion*, and *Borer*.

[Enclosure]

Copy/

His Majestys Sloop *Borer*  
Off Saybrook 9th. April

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you that in obedience to your order of the 7th. instant, directing me to take charge of a detachment of Boats belonging to the Squadron under your command for the purpose of taking or destroying a number of Vessels building and equipping as Privateers and letters of Marque in Connecticut river, I proceeded in His Majestys Sloop under my command on the evening of that day to put those Orders in execution, and I have now the pleasure of informing you that thro' the steady and indefatigable exertions of the Officers and Men who you did me the honor of placing under my orders, the Service has been accomplished in a more effectual way than my most sanguine hopes could have led me to expect.

The *Borer* anchored off Saybrook bar at  $\frac{1}{4}$  before 10, and the Boats, consisting of a Barge, Pinnace and Gig, under Lieuts Pyne, Parry and Acting Lieut Fisher from *La Hogue*, a Barge from the *Maidstone* under Lieut. Liddon, a Barge from the *Endymion* under Lieut Fanshaw, and the *Borer's* Gig, with the Seaman and Marines selected for the expedition under the respective Officers immediately proceeded up the river.

The wind being Northerly, and a very rapid outset of the current (notwithstanding its being a flood tide) prevented us from making so swift a progress as we desired, but even this difficulty tended in the end to render our operations more deliberate, the first object being that of destroying a Battery on the West side of the Entrance, a division landed for that purpose, and met with no opposition in entering the Fort from which it was found the Guns had been removed.—

The distance from the entrance of the river to Petty Pogue where the Vessels lay is only 6 Miles, we did not arrive at that place 'till  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 3 on the morning of the

8th., on approaching it we found the town alarmed, the Militia all on the alert, and apparently disposed with the assistance of one 4lb. Gun to oppose our landing, however, after the discharge of the Boats Guns, and a volley of Musquetry from our Marines, they prudently ceased firing and gave us no further interruption.—

The Marines were formed immediately on landing and under the skilfull direction of Lieut Lloyd of that Corps, took up such a position as to command the principal street, and to cover the Seamen while employed in their respective duties.

The Vessels alongside the wharfs were then warped out into the Stream, and those on the stocks and aground near the town were instantly burnt.

As the day opened many others were seen on slips and at Moorings higher up the river, and those were as promptly set fire to, by a small detachment under Lieuts Pyne and Fanshaw to whom we are greatly indebted for the serious damage the Enemy has sustained in this respect.

Several Stores were found to contain large quantities of Cables, Cordage, sails and Spirits, which were either destroyed or removed to the *young Anaconda* Brig and *Eagle* Schooner, each ready for Sea and which I at first deemed practicable to bring out, and the object of the expedition being fully accomplished by every Vessel within 3 Miles of the Town being either destroyed or in our possession, the party were at 10 oClock embarked with the most perfect Order and regularity in presence of a very numerous population, not an exception to the character of discipline and sobriety having arisen tho' surrounded by temptations and even urged by the inhabitants to indulge in liquor—

At 11 AM we weighed with the Brig *Anaconda* and *Eagle* Schooner and proceeded with them and the Boats some distance down the river, the wind however blowing strong, directly up, and the channel being extremely narrow, the former grounded with a falling tide, and I soon perceived from the preparations which were making to annoy us on all sides, that it would be expedient to destroy both these Vessels, the party were all accordingly removed to the *Eagle*, and before we lost sight of the Brig we had the satisfaction of seeing her burnt to the Waters edge. I then determined to defer our retreat 'till after dark as tho' at the Schooners present Anchorage, we were exposed to a fire of Musquetry from a wood within half Musquet shot, by far the greatest preparations were making on the banks of a still narrower part of the river which we had got to pass, I here received a communication from the Military Officer Commanding in that district of which I have the honor to enclose herewith a copy—<sup>1</sup>

My reply was verbal, and merely expressed my surprize at such a summons, assuring the bearer, that, tho' sensible of their humane intentions, we set their power to detain us at defiance.

Every arrangement being made for effecting our retreat, at 7 oClock the *Eagle* was set on fire and the Boats formed in regular Order, Commenced dropping down the river; here a brisk fire was opened from the wood which had partially annoyed us during the day, but where they had prudently concealed their Cannon till darkness rendered it impossible for us to get possession of them, this encounter I am sorry to say deprived us of the lives of two valuable Marines, and wounded one Seaman in the *Maidstones* Boat, but did not in any degree disturb the regularity of our movements.

The most formidable preparations were made near the turn of Lyme and on the opposite bank of the river which is there not more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a Mile wide, here they were provided with several pieces of Cannon, and from my own observation confirmed by Major Ely's statements, I feel confident that their Military force amounted to many hundred Men.—

By waiting 'till the night became dark, and by then allowing the Boats to drop silently down the stream, we got nearly abreast of this part of the passage unobserved.—

Every precaution within the compass of their Military skill had here been taken to arrest our progress; large fires were light on each side to shew the situation of the Boats, and Vessels filled with Armed Men were anchored in the river, all these commenced a brisk but ill directed fire at the same instant, and from the short space which separated the parties, I have reason to suppose it must have proved much more destruction to their friends than to their enemies, for tho I believe no boat escaped without receiving more or less shot, by a degree of good fortune, which I can only ascribe to providential care, on our side there was only one Man wounded;— at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 8 we were abreast of the lowest Fort, and that which we had found dismantled on the preceeding evening, guns however had been provided for the fort also during the day, and here they made final and equally ineffectual effort to detain us.

The Boats passed in triumph leaving our enemies to lament their acknowledgement of being provided with a force which they had the leisure of a whole day to collect in one of the most populous parts of America; from which they thought it impossible for us to escape.—

Having thus, Sir, detailed the particulars in performing a Service, which from the secrecy with which it was decided on, the clear and judicious instructions with which I was furnished, and the effective means with which you put in my power to execute your orders, I felt the fullest confidence of succeeding in. I should neither do justice to my own feelings or to the characters of the brave Officers and Men who acted under me was I not to express in the strongest terms the high sense I entertain of their individual merit.—

The Zeal and exertions of Lieut Pyne were conspicuous on every occasion, and some of the Vessels which he handsomely undertook to destroy were lying more than a Mile above the town, he was the principal instrument employed in using the destructive torch and successfully accomplished every enterprize which he undertook

The Zeal, Activity and judgment of Lieut W. E. Parry, M. Liddon and A. Fanshawe were displayed in executing every arrangement of which they had the charge, the two former after getting possession of the *Anaconda* and *Eagle*, loaded them with stores from the shore, and got them ready for Sea in the Course of a few hours, the latter destroyed several Vessels and a quantity of Naval Stores in the town, and together with Acting Lieut Fisher from *La Hogue* whose conduct was highly conspicuous, evinced all the steadiness which might be expected from much older officers.—

To Lieut Lloyd of the Marines and to Lieuts Tinkler, Atkinson and Buston who acted under his orders, the service is greatly indebted for their steady and soldierlike conduct, the whole surrounding country was literally kept in awe, by the vigilance and discipline which was observed among the small party. Messrs. Smith, Bodwall, Dunstar, & Hopner, Mids of *La Hogue*, Mr. La Neve of the *Maidstone*, Mr. Heyland of the *Endymion*, and Mr. Elliott of the *Borer* all proved themselves worthy of the confidence which was placed in them and together with them I beg leave strongly to recommend Mr. Bowden Assistant Surgeon of the *Endymion* who handsomely Volunteered to accompany the expedition and was extremely useful.

In fact was the merit of every Seaman and Soldier employed individually recorded it would not do more than justice to the good conduct and discipline which was observed among them, for when it is considered that this service was performed in open daylight, and almost in the heart of the Enemy's Country within a few miles of New London, where there is so large a Naval and Military force stationed, I think, Sir, it will appear evident to you that nothing less than such coolness, bravery and discipline as I have represented in those Officers and Men, could have so completely effected the object which we had in view.

Lieuts Ferrant of this Brig who it was necessary to leave onboard as Commanding officer, was truly desirous of being more actively useful, and could his Services in that capacity have been dispensed with, I have no doubt but his Zeal and valor would have been strongly exemplified.

Herewith I have the honor to enclose a list of the Killed and Wounded,<sup>2</sup> together with a statement of the Names, and descriptions of the Vessels destroyed in Connecticut river, which I find has hitherto been the general nest of that class of Vessels which are calculated to annoy our commerce—I have the honor to be Sir with every sentiment of respect Your very humble Servant—

Signed Richard Coote  
Commander—

To/The Honble T. B. Capel  
Captain H M Ship *La Hogue*  
& Senior Officer Off New London—

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 71–74. Endorsed in John Talbot's hand opposite the dateline: "John Talbot." For another copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 274–77.

1. See, Major Marsh Ely, Connecticut State Militia, to Commanding Officer of the Marine Landing Force, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 64. It is published in Roberts, *Raid on Essex*, pp. 135–36.

2. Not printed here. Coote's expeditionary force suffered four casualties, including one killed and three wounded. See *ibid.*, fol. 67. For another copy of this document, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 283.

[Enclosure]

List of Vessels destroyed in Connecticut River [on] the 9th. of April by the Boats

Vessels Name	How rigged	Tonnage	Description of Vessel	No. of Guns Pierc'd for
{ <i>Young Anaconda</i>	Brig	300	Built for a Privateer	18
{ <i>Connecticut</i>	Schooner	325	Do. Do.	18
{ <i>Eagle</i>	Schooner	250	Do. Do.	16
{ Not Named	Schooner	180	Building for a Privateer	16
{ Do. Do.	Schooner	150	Do. Do.	14
{ Do. Do.	Sloop	90	Intended for a Packet	"
{ Do. Do.	Brig	250	Merchantman	"
{ <i>Factor</i>	Schooner	180	Do.	"
{ <i>Osage</i>	Ship	400	Intended for East India Trade	20
{ <i>Atalante</i>	Ship	380	Apparently intended for Do.	—
{ <i>Superior</i>	Ship	320	Intended for a letter of Marque	16
{ <i>Guardian</i>	Ship	320	Same description	16
Name Unknown	Ship	250	Merchantman	—
Do. Do.	Ship	300	Do.	
<i>Felix</i>	Brig	240	Do.	
<i>Cleopatra</i>	Brig	220	Do.	
Name Unknown	Brig	150	Do.	
{ <i>Hatton</i>	Schooner	200	Do.	
{ <i>Emblem</i>	Schooner	180	Do.	
{ <i>Emerald</i>	Sloop	55	Cargo of Wood	
{ <i>Markata</i>	Sloop	50	Ballast	
{ <i>Nancy</i>	Sloop	25	Ditto	
{ <i>Mars</i>	Sloop	50	Ditto	
{ <i>Comet</i>	Sloop	25	Ditto	
{ <i>Thetis</i>	Sloop	80	Ditto	
Name Unknown	Sloop	70	Ditto	
Do. Do.	Sloop	70	Ditto	
Total—			5090 tons	Total— 134 <sup>1</sup>



of His Majestys Ships *La Hogue, Maidstone, Endymion, Borer:*

State & Condition.	Remarks
Completely fitted	Lying at the town & Capable of being sent to sea immediately
ditto ditto	
ditto ditto	
ready for Launching	On the Stocks:
Plank'd up & frame laid	
Ready for Launching	
Do. Do.	Lying at a wharf a Mile above the town at the Same place
Do. Do.	
Do. Do.	
Quite new Masted & hous'd over	Lying at moorings above the town
Masts & Spars on board	
Quite New & housed over	
Masted & housed over	Ditto Ditto
Masted Spars onboard	Ditto Ditto
Do. Do.	Ditto Ditto
Do. Do.	Ditto Ditto
Do. Do.	Ditto Ditto
Completely rigged & fitted	Ditto Ditto
Completely rigged	Ditto Ditto
Lower Masts in	Lying below the Town
ready for Sailing	Do. Do.
Do. Do.	Do. Do.
Do. Do.	Do. Do.
Do. Do.	Do. Do.
Do. Do.	Do. Do.
Do. Do.	Do. Do.
Do. Do.	Do. Do.
Do. Do.	Do. Do.
Do. Do.	Do. Do.

A Number of Boats, Cables, Cordage, Sails, Moulds Shipwrights Tools & Working sheds destroyed—

Richd. Coote Commr.

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 66. For another copy of this document, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 280.

1. This total ignores the three sets of ditto marks appearing under the number 14 in this column. If the gun ports for these vessels are factored in, the revised total is 176.

MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM WILLIAMS, CONNECTICUT STATE MILITIA, TO  
GOVERNOR JOHN C. SMITH

New London April 9th 1814

Sir

The Enemy in several Barges carrying about 200 Men appeared yesterday Morning at daylight in front of Pettipaug just above Saybrook to which place they had been attracted by a number of vessels there laid up for security. A company of marines formed & exercised in the principal Street of the village as I understand & gave assurances to the Inhabitants that they should not be disturbed nor should their dwellings be injured as the sole object of the Expedition was the destruction of the navigation there collected. Their promises were faithfully executed both in the protection of the Inhabitants & their houses as well as in the compleat destruction of about twenty sail of vessels which with the property on board of them are valued at \$100.000 & upwards. This loss has fallen upon Citizens of the State of New York as well as Inhabitants of this State. What adds to my Regret is that the British continued in front of Pettipaug & five or six miles within the mouth of Connecticut River from day light yesterday morning untill after sunset last Evening without receiving any annoyance from us. The Stage which arrived here at about 11 O'clock AM of the 8th brought the first Intelligence of the sufferings of our fellow Citizens. It was supposed by the Officers of the United States as well as myself that their work was probably completed & that they had descended the River before the Stage reached here & had arrived at their vessels two of which were anchored just without the Bar to further the object of the Expedition. Soon after the arrival of the stage one of the Gentlemen from Lyme came in for assistance & Capt. French of the artillery with his field piece was immediately despatched to their Relief. Commodore Decatur ordered a Body of Marines from his Squadron & Genl. Burbeck a detachment from Fort Trumbull to aid in capturing the Enemy. A number of Officers & Citizens volunteered their services & all haste was made by taking up carriages & horses to reach Lyme ferry as soon as practicable.— Col Kingsbury Captains Jones & Biddle with Genl. Isham & myself arrived at the scene of action just before sunset & the artillery from this Town together with that from Lyme & Saybrook was placed in the most advantageous position to cut off the retreat of the barges which at this time were along side a schooner at anchor about half way between Lyme & Pettipaug & without the reach of artillery from either side. On board of this Schooner the whole british force well armed was prepared for effectual Resistance. Owing to the lateness of the hour when aid was requested many of the marines & the detachment from Fort Trumbull did not arrive untill Sun set & before a sufficient number of men properly armed could be collected & the necessary arrangements made it became dark. The British seized the first moments afterwards & silently took to their Barges.— The Rapidity of the current at this season of the year would soon have carried them beyond our Reach without the aid of oars & so favored were they by the night that not a person knew when they passed. I cannot sufficiently express the deep mortification which I feel that such an attack should be made upon us & under such circumstances & that the assailants have escaped unpunished

This Expedition together with the Report that Admiral Cochrane who is to command on the American station has a Body of Troops under him make it my Duty to state to your Excellency the unprepared condition of this quarter to receive the Enemy should any future attack be made. Responsible as my station is, I feel that in the hour of peril much censure may be attached to me unless something more is accomplished than merely to order in the militia. They ought to come prepared for the emergency but we have neither powder Balls nor fixed ammunition & I need not name to your Excellency that the militia are generally very deficient in arms upon which any reliance can be placed for service. I have therefore to request that some early provision be made as to all the subjects above mentioned & upon which I had just before written your Excellency when the Affair at Saybrook detained my Letter and [-] added new force to the propriety of [my] Request I remain with Respect Your Excellency's Obt. Servt

W<sup>m</sup> Williams

LS, CtHi, John Cotton Smith Papers. Addressed flush left below the signature line: "His Excellency John Cotton Smith Esqr./Shaaren." For another printed version of this letter, see *Connecticut Historical Society Collections*, Vol. 26, pp. 226–29.

SELECTMEN OF SAYBROOK, CONNECTICUT, TO  
GOVERNOR JOHN C. SMITH

Say Brook April 12th, 1814,

Sir,

In pursuance of a Vote of this Town, in legal Town meeting assembled—The undersigned Select Men of sd. Town, and in behalf thereof;— take the liberty to State to your Excellency,— that on the Morning of the 8th. Instant, the Inhabitants of Pettipauge Point, (Seven miles from the light house), were surprized by a detachment of the Enemy, from the Squadron in the Sound; consisting of between 2 & 3 hundred Seamen and Marines; commanded by Cap Coote, of the Brig *Borer*;

So few of the Inhabitants had any notice of their approach; and so sudden was their landing, that the marines were in many of the House[s], before the Inhabitants were out of their beds— After having destroyed nearly all the Shipping in Port. they retired on board a Schoon[er], which they hauled off into the Stream below the Point, and remained there untill Dusk, when they were routed by Leut. Bull with a field piece; in which they lost two men killed, and one wounded— they then took to their Barges and escaped in the dark; not however without being briskly fired on by the Militia on either Side [of] the river.— The number of Vessels burnt by them was twenty one, beside several Boats; those remaining are two new Vessels on Stocks—One Schooner and a Small Sloop. The property destroyed is estimated to have been worth, one hundred forty thousand Dollars. This very serious misfortune, is as we conceive, to be attributed, to that total neglect, which the Government has manifested towards this Town and Port, the

winter past— Had there been a Guard of Fifty or even Twenty Men at Saybrook; this Event we verily believe would not have happened; and had there been a Supply of Amunition, esp[eci]ally for the Field Pieces—though that would not have prevented the landing, yet would certainly have enabled us to have routed them from Pettipauge before night—: and in such Case, they must have suffered severe loss if not a total Capture— They escaped under cover of Darkness— There being no Cannon Ammunition at Pettipauge, and but few Cartridges at the Platform— It was very late before a few could be got to serve the piece, which routed them as above stated—

Your Excellency must be sensible that the Inhabitants of this Town feel Indignant at the General Government—: for declaring a war of Offence, & then leaving a Section of the Country so important, as the Mouth of Connecticut River, and it[s] Neighborhood—: wholly unprotected, without the means of defence, and under the very Guns of a large Squadron of the Enemy— To that Government they have applied in vain; Their repeated applications have been treated with total neglect. From that, they expect no relief— It is true that at present there is but little in this Port, to tempt new incurs[i]ons of the Enemy—but if the embargo should be removed many,—and if not—some vessels will collect in this Port—and as this instance of suc[c]ess will Inspire them with boldness and assurance—: It is but reasonable to suppose, that we shall frequently be disturbed by them, and it is prudent that we should be in readiness to repel them —

The Inhabitants of this Town, therefore, look up to the State Government, thro its cheif Magistrate; for that protection & assistance which they need—: and which they had a right to expect from the Government of the United States;— but for which they have anxiously looked in vain—, And they do hope that no motive of Economy, will prevent a trifling expenditure, for so important an object; or [operate] even as a procrastination.

In behalf of this Town. therefore. and at its particular request, we pray your Excellency would be pleased to place a respectable guard. near the Mouth of the river. to keep ward & watch. with power to stop. examine and detain, if necessary, all vessels boats &c navigating said River.— We also pray that a Magazine of Ammunition may be established in the neighborhood. well supplied with Suitable Items. for Ordnance, and Muskets, and such other things as may be thought needful by the Wisdom of your Excellency.— Please Pardon the liberty we take in praying speciff[i]c relief— The anxiety and Solicitudude of the Inhabitants are our apology—

John Ayre	}	Select Men of Saybrook
Geo. W. Jewett		
Jonathan Warner		

LS, CtHi, John Cotton Smith Papers. Addressed flush left below the dateline: “To his Excellency/John Cotten Smith Govr. &c—.” Bracketed text in roman supplied from a printed version of this letter in *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society*, Vol. 26, pp. 235–37.

## NEWS REPORT ON THE BRITISH RAID ON PETTIPAUG, CONNECTICUT

NEW-LONDON:

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 1814.

DISASTER OF PETTIPAGUE.  
—

It is with grief and mortification, we perform the task of announcing to our readers, that on Friday morning last, four of the enemy's barges and two launches commanded by Capt. Coote of the brig *Borer*, with 200 men, proceeded up Connecticut river to Pettipague-Point, and destroyed upwards of twenty sail of vessels, without sustaining, probably, the loss of a single man.

We have ascertained on the unfortunate spot, the following facts.— The boats first landed at the fort at Saybrook, where they found neither men nor cannon; from thence they proceeded directly to Pettipague-Point, landed at 4 o'clock in the morning, and were paraded in the principal street before the least alarm was given. The inhabitants were, it may well be supposed, in great consternation; but Capt. Coote informed them that he was in sufficient force to effect the object of the expedition, which was to burn the vessels, and that if his party were not fired upon, no harm should fall upon the persons of the inhabitants, or the property unconnected with the vessels, and a mutual understanding of that purport was agreed to. The enemy immediately after commenced the act of burning the vessels. Such as exposed the buildings on the wharves they hauled into the stream. A party of 14 men in the mean time were sent a quarter of a mile above the point, who put fire to several vessels which were on the stocks. At 10 o'clock they left the shore entirely, & took possession of a brig and a schooner, which were built for privateers; these they attempted to beat down the river, but the brig getting on shore they burnt her, and the schooner was so light as to be unmanageable. They continued in her and the boats alongside, until about dusk, when Lieut. Bray with a field piece from Killingworth, commenced firing on them. After the second shot they left the schooner and took shelter under a small island opposite the point; and at half past 8 o'clock, it being very dark made their escape from the river.

Their conduct towards the inhabitants was unexceptionable, excepting that some clothes and plate were taken by a person supposed to an AMERICAN, who it was conjectured acted as a pilot and guide; and had frequently been there with fish for sale. This wretch, without orders, destroyed a large new cable by cutting it with an axe,

Notwithstanding the enemy were on shore at 4 o'clock in the morning, it was half past 12 P.M. before the express arrived here with the information, altho' a report of the fact was brought by the stage, at 11. Every exertion was immediately made to send a force sufficient for the object; a body of marines from the squadron, a company of infantry from Fort Trumbull, and a part of Capt. French's militia company of artillery with a field piece, and a considerable number of volunteers were soon in motion. A part of the marines and volunteers in carriages, and Capt. French with his detachment and field piece, arrived at the River at 4 o'clock, at which time a respectable body of militia, infantry and artillery, occupied the banks on both sides, in the momentary

expectation that the enemy would attempt to descend. It was, however, soon perceived that it was not their intention to attempt going out before dark; and that the only chance of taking or destroying them was by a joint attack by land and water. Timely measures for this purpose were prevented by the want of water craft, a misfortune which could not be remedied in the very short period required. A strong freshet, an ebb tide, and thick mist, enabled the enemy to escape down the river unheard, and unseen, except by a very few who commenced a fire, which was followed at random by many who discerned no object to direct their aim.

The troops from the garrison, and marines on foot did not arrive until after nightfall.

Thus ended an expedition achieved with the smallest loss to the enemy, and greatest in magnitude of damage that has occurred on the seaboard since the commencement of the war.

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*List of vessels destroyed by the enemy.*

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Ships—*Guardian*, 380 tons, Hayden and Starkey, owners, of Pettipague; *Osage*, 346, Horatio Alden & co. Hartford; *Atlanta*, 280, E. Hayden, and others, Pettipague; *Superior*, 290, A. & J. Pratt, and others, ditto.—Brigs; *Cleopatra*, 180, J. Hill, and others, ditto; *Amazon*, 180, Middletown; (New Privateer,) 350, W. C. Hall, and others, ditto; *Felix*, 200, J. & E. Lyman, N. York.—Schooners, *Emblem*, 150, J. Hill, and others, Pettipague; *Black Prince*, 318, Richard Hayden, and others, ditto; (on Stocks,) 130, Hayden and Starkey do. and Hall and Goodman, N. York; (On Stocks,) 150, H. Hayden and Brother, Pettipague.—Sloops, *Mahala*, 50, Hayden Starkey, & Tucker, ditto *Comet*, 30, ditto, ditto; —, 70, Middletown; —, 50, Middletown; *Emerald* 40, J. Platts, and others, Pettipague; *Thetis*, 75, J. Pratt, and others, ditto; *Roxana*, 50, S. Peck & Barber, N. London; (on Stocks,) 80, R. Hayden, and others, Pettipague. Also a sloop from Long Island, name unknown, and several pleasure boats. A brig and schooner on the stocks above the point were on fire and extinguished. The enemy had stowed in the hold of the privateer schooner which they left, a considerable quantity of cordage and sails. Before leaving her, they put fire in her hold, and cut her masts half off.—The fire was extinguished before it had done much damage.

Seven hogsheds of rum were stove in a store, the property of Wm. C. Hall. The loss sustained is estimated at various sums. It may amount to \$100,000, or upwards.

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The village of Pettipague-Point forms a part of the town of Saybrook, and contains about 50 dwelling houses. It is situated on the west side of Connecticut river, 6 miles from light-house, and 19 from New-London.<sup>1</sup>

Printed, *Connecticut Gazette* (New Haven), 13 April 1814.

1. In 1820, Pettipaug Point was renamed the Essex Borough of Saybrook. In 1852, the Connecticut General Assembly approved the establishment of Essex as a separate town.

GOVERNOR JOHN C. SMITH TO  
 MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM WILLIAMS, CONNECTICUT STATE MILITIA

Sharon 15. April 1814—

Sir

Your communication dated the 9th. mailed the 11th. instant was received yesterday evening— I deeply lament the disaster at Pettipaug, and the astonishing fa[c]ility with which the enemy accomplished his object. Apprehending such an enterprize would be attempted I apprized the General Government in two several despatches dated the 16th. Decr. & 5th. February last of the necessity of stationing troops at Fort Fenwick and united my solicitations with those of the citizens of Saybrook that measures should be taken for that purpose without delay— Receiving no assurances that a request so reasonable would be granted, I consulted the Council as to the expediency of placing a guard at the fort under the authority of the State. But that honourable body were unanimously of opinion that as it was not expected the State had the means of defending its navigation such a procedure could not be justified— And whoever considers the paramount duty of the National Govemt. and its competency to afford the desired protection will not be disposed to doubt the correctness of this decision—

You do not state the number of arms nor the quantity of ammunition you require for your section of the coast— Of course I am not enabled to be precise in my orders to the Q. M. General— I have however directed him to make immediate deposits of those articles at such points on the coast east of N. Haven & in such quantities as on inquiry may be necessary and to furnish every description of ordnance within the same limits with new supplies of ammunition— It would be advisable for you to hold a communication with him as to the probable wants in your command— I am Sir with much regard your obt. & hum. sert.

J. C. S—

Copy, CtHi, John Cotton Smith Papers. For another printed version of this document, see *Connecticut Historical Society Collections*, Vol. 27, pp. 4–5.

GOVERNOR JOHN C. SMITH TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

State of Connecticut  
 Sharon 20. April 1814—

Sir

The late operations of the enemy at Saybrook and the disposition clearly manifested by the hostile squadron in the sound to infest with their armed barges our harbours, and destroy our vessels, if not to commit ravages upon shore, render it extremely desireable that some efficient system of protection should be adopted. In the probable absence of other means I would respectfully

and earnestly suggest for the consideration of the President, the expediency of stationing a suitable number of Gun boats at the most exposed points on the sound westward of New London— As a harbour defence, especially in waters like these inaccessible to large ships of war, they would answer it is believed a very valuable purpose— A proportion of the flotilla now in the harbour of New York, employed say at Saybrook, New Haven & Bridgeport, would contribute essentially to the safety of the coast and prevent those frequent alarms which are at once highly vexatious to the neighbouring militia, and expensive to the government— The great consternation which now prevails along the whole maritime frontier of the state gives peculiar urgency to the present application— I have the honour to be very respectfully Sir your obedient & humble servant

John Cotton Smith—

Copy, CtHi, John Cotton Smith Papers. For another printed version of this letter, see *Connecticut Historical Society Collections*, Vol. 27, p. 20.

GOVERNOR JOHN C. SMITH TO  
SELECTMEN OF SAYBROOK, CONNECTICUT

Sharon 22. April 1814

Gentlemen,

Your communication under date of the 12th. post marked the 14th. instant did not reach me until last night— An order is now forwarded to the Adj. Genl. in compliance with your request— The detachment will be made in the first instance from the 7th. regiment for a short period of service. It will probably be succeeded by a different arrangement— Altho the Council whom I consulted in February advised not to place a guard at Saybrook under the authority of the state, yet several circumstances, and particularly the new character likely to be given to the war should it be protracted, I consider as changing the ground of that opinion.

You are sensible Gentlemen that my repeated applications to the Genl. government in your behalf were wholly unsuccessful. Deeply therefore as your misfortunes are to be lamented you can be at no loss to attribute them to their proper cause— I have the honor to be respectfully Gentlemen your ob. & hm. sert.

J. C. S —

Copy, CtHi, John Cotton Smith Papers. Addressed flush left below signature line: "G. W. Jewett Esqr. & the other/Selectment of Saybrook." For another printed version of this letter, see *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society*, Vol. 27, pp. 23–24.



INHABITANTS OF SAYBROOK, CONNECTICUT, TO  
GOVERNOR JOHN C. SMITH

His Excellency John Cotton Smith Esqr. Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the State of Connecticut.

The Undersigned, Inhabitants of Say Brook and other Towns on Connecticut River, would respectfully represent.

That the War in which the United States are engaged is with a nation possessing most extensive means of annoying our Sea-coast, and Say Brook, a frontier Town. Long Island Sound on the South, Connecticut River on the east, is particularly exposed to invasion by the Enemy, who may have access in deep water on two sides—and is one of those vulnerable points which in time of War, requires to be garrisoned—its importance to the State, is second to none save New Haven and New London.

That its present situation in regard to the Enemy, whose force in Long Island Sound is frequently increased, is extremely embarrassing and unpleasant—and appears to be growing more so than hitherto, because they have made themselves acquainted with our weakness.

That it seems reasonable, since they have visited Pettipague. to apprehend a repetition of hostile invasions—and we have no guarantee that conflagration and plunder on the Land will not ensue.

That since the repeal of the Embargo Law, the harbour of Say Brook, has become the resort of many coasting vessels daily—and this craft will of course invite the attention of the Enemy.

That under existing circumstances, a great many of the Inhabitants are deterred from pursuing their accustomed avocations, particularly ship building, lest in the present defenceless state of the place, their vessels should be burnt on the stocks.

That in the opinion of the Undersigned, the importance of Connecticut River, requires something permanent should be established during the War—for it may be justly remarked, that scarcely a day passes without the appearance of the Enemy in Ships or Boats near this place—twice since their visit to Pettipague, they have been in the River by day-light, drove several vessels ashore—took one in the River not 50 Rods from Fort Fenwick, and two others near the light-house—whereas the presence of a small force well appointed and provided, would prevent the Enemy from taking vessels in the River.

That the loss of property at Pettipague may be fairly estimated to exceed 150,000 dollars—a serious loss to the Town, which many years of prosperity will not retrieve—and this destruction of property bespeaks in language stronger than any other, the necessity of guarding against a similar incursion.

That it appears to the Undersigned, that the large amount of floating property owned by Citizens of this State, which passes in and out of the River, is worthy [*of*] the ample protection of Government. we apprehend that in general its magnitude is not duly appreciated.

That in the opinion of the Undersigned, a Company of artillery with Field-pieces would be the most efficient defence which could be immediately furnished—and in addition, several heavier guns on the fort, would render the situation tolerably secure, provided there should be a sufficient number of Men stationed for the purpose. we place confidence in the detachment now on duty,

but their numbers and means of defence are unequal to the object.— indeed untill the Fort is put in order, no Guns can be essentially useful, except on travelling Carriages—

That your petitioners look with confidence to your Excellency for that protection which a very small expence would give to an important River and harbour— and at the same time afford security to the Citizens of the Town of Say Brook

May 1814 —

W<sup>m</sup> Hart<sup>1</sup>

LS, CtHi, John Cotton Smith Papers. For another printed version of this letter, see *Connecticut Historical Society Collections*, Vol. 27, pp. 40–43.

1. An additional 89 signatures, printed in double columns, follow William Hart's.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO GOVERNOR JOHN C. SMITH

His Excellency  
John Cotton Smith  
Governor of the State of Connecticut

Navy Department  
May 11th. 1814

Sir

I have had the honor to receive & communicate to the President, your Excellencys. letter of the 20th. April, and have to assure you, that such means as can be applied by this Department, to the defence of the points you mention, shall be cheerfully directed; but your Excellency must be aware, that our vast extent of Coast, Vulnerable at almost every league, requires such an extent of force, particularly in men, as cannot be commanded; but in a degree, to afford efficient protection, comparatively to a very few points, and if that force is seperated into small detachments of one, two or three Gun Boats, it is constantly exposed to be assailed by a superior force, & cut up in detail

The Commandant of the Flotilla at New York is especially instructed, to afford all the protection to the shores of the Sound, that may be found practicable with the force under his command—<sup>1</sup> I have the honor to be Very respectfully Your Obt. Servt.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 164–65 (M209, Roll No. 4).

1. Captain Jacob Lewis commanded the New York Flotilla. Regarding the operational boundaries of his command, Jones instructed Lewis as follows: "I wish you to understand explicitly, that the force under your Command, is not intended for the exclusive defence of the New York Harbour, It must also protect the Sound; as far as may be practicable, otherwise I shall be under the necessity of detaching a part for that purpose." See Jones to Lewis, 29 April 1814, p. 166.

## Families Living in New York Flotilla Gunboats

*On 8 March 1814, Secretary of the Navy Jones wrote to Master Commandant Jacob Lewis to express his concern over an issue with some of the sailing masters of the New York Flotilla. Jones had received information indicating that warrant officers were abusing their command's close proximity to home, and housing their wives and children aboard the already cramped gunboats. The Secretary was shocked by the news and ordered that any future instances were to be "prohibited."<sup>1</sup> However, for sailing masters of the New York Flotilla, "prohibited" seems to have left some room for interpretation.*

1. Jones to Lewis, 8 March 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 236 (M149, Roll No. 11).

### MASTER COMMANDANT JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir

I am under the di[s]agreeable necessity of reporting to you the Conduct of Sailing Master Brum—<sup>1</sup> I mean the person to whom you lately granted a warrant—and probably was induced to do so, from the same recommendation which induced me to take him into the Flotilla on Trial, which was Mr. Oliver Wolcots—<sup>2</sup>

During the whole time that this officer has served In the Flotilla under my Command—his Conduct has been unofficer like,—frequently absent from his Vessel—Tyrannical in the extreme—Neglectful of his duty—and disobedient to orders—

with respect to the latter his conduct has been so flagrant so manifestly gross that Charity—is at a loss for an apology for him;

Immediately on receiving your order forbidding Sailing Masters having their wives and families on board the Flotilla—I published an order to that effect In the Flotilla Office—a Copy of which I order'd read to all the officers on Board the Flotilla—Mr. Brum Present, notwithstanding— the precaution I took In thus promulgating the order, on visiting the Boat of Mr. B. for the purpose of Examining her Condition—to my surprise I found Mr. B's family on board— this was several weeks after the promulgation of the order—

I again order'd him forthwith to send his family out of the Vessel. this order he has not obey'd. twenty four hours have elapsed since it was pronounced—and three Gun Boats have been dispatched for the City. in succession,—I have again order'd him together with his family out of the Boat and to report himself to the Commandant of the Navy Yard— delicacy towards his family prevented my taking him with a Guard—or even to arrest him in their presents—

Be assured Sir this officer is unworthy of the readiness you have shown to further his Views by granting him a warrant—

In fine his Conduct is subversive of all order and subordination,—

I must also remark—that for the accomodation of his family, he turned a sick officer out of the Cabbin whose note I herewith enclose on the subject—

I would call a Court Marshall on him but really to try these people for every offence that ought to induce it—would require a Court of permanent siting— I have the honor to assure you of my high Consideration & Respect

J Lewis  
Comg. U.S. Flotilla

*No. 47 Spermecitae Cove 11th. Apl. 1814.*

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 60 (M124, Roll No. 62).

1. Philip Brum's sailing master warrant dated from 15 February 1814.
2. Former Secretary of the Treasury Oliver Wolcott, Jr.

[Enclosure]

MASTERS MATE SAMUEL SHEPLEY TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JACOB LEWIS

U. S. G. Boat *No. 45*

Sperm Cove April 2d. 1814

Sir

I have been transfer'd from *No. 93* to *No. 45* where I am at present verry ill con-dem'd as an Officer having merely a stow room to live in and anxiously weight your pleasure/or redress Sir with great esteem I am your Obt. St.

Sam<sup>l</sup> Shepley M.M.

Jacob Lewis Esqr.  
Comg. U.S. Flotilla on N. York Station

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 61 (M124, Roll No. 62). The following note from Jacob Lewis was written at the bottom of the letter: "This is the officers note who on accot. of his Illness has since sent to the City—JL."

SAILING MASTER PHILIP BRUM TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir

I had the honr. on the 26th. inst. of receiving a letter from the Navy Department, dated April 18th. 1814<sup>1</sup> in which I have your Command, to state, in the month of march last, or [*an*] order was received by sailing master James Rogers,<sup>2</sup> Commanding Officer of the Flotilla (in the Absence of commodore Lewis) Prohibiting all Sailing masters from having thair wives on Board, The Officer at the same time. Observed., that the order was not by him considered Official, not bearing the Signature of the comodore, that it was not Requisite to send our wives to Town, Privious to further orders

On the 8th. inst. I recd. an order (& the first) to send my wife to Town she being sick & the weather bad no Vessel At that time Going up, did not Depart untill the 11th. inst. on the 10th. I recd. an order to Give up the command of the Gun Boat & report myself to the commandant of the Navy yard<sup>3</sup> which order was Emideately Comply'd with—

The report I have Reason to think originated from malice, as I was not suffered to Speak on the Subject If sir the foregoing Statement is thought worthy of credit, I hope soon to Recive your order to Repair on Board one of the. U.S. frigates,<sup>4</sup> I am sir Respectfully your Obedient Svt.

P Brum

Dated at N york April 27th. 1814

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 43 (M148, Roll No.13).

1. Jones was livid and wrote to Brum demanding that he remove his wife from the vessel under his command or face summary discharge. Jones to Brum, 18 April 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 283 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. James Rogers held a sailing master warrant from 6 April 1810 and had served with the New York Flotilla since 7 July 1813. When Rogers found Brum's wife on board Brum's gunboat, he immediately informed Brum of the order barring families on board vessels and reported the entire episode to Lewis. Rogers to Lewis, 24 April 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 116 (M124, Roll. No. 62).

3. Captain Samuel Evans.

4. On 30 April 1814, Jones ordered Brum to Vergennes, Vermont, on Lake Champlain. Brum left New York on 7 May. Brum to Jones, 7 May 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 68 (M124, Roll No. 63). At Champlain, Brum left a more lasting legacy. He was in charge of the anchor springs on *Saratoga* at Plattsburgh Bay during the Battle of Lake Champlain. At a key point in the battle, with all of *Saratoga's* guns on the starboard side disabled and the ship susceptible and dead in the wind, "Mr. Brum, the master, bethought him of the hawser that had led to the larboard quarter. It was got forward under the bows, and passed aft to the starboard quarter, when the ship's stern was immediately sprung to the westward, so as to bring all her larboard guns to bear on the English ship [*Confiance*] with fatal effect." Cooper, *History of the Navy*, p. 317. For more information and documents on the battle, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 607–17.

SAILING MASTER JAMES ROGERS TO  
CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE

US Gunboat *No. 6* Sperm. Cove<sup>1</sup>  
May the 3d. 1814

Sir

As there is a Standing order against any Officer absenting himself from his post also an order from the Navy Department to prevent any Officer from having his Wife on board I. am Induced to state to you that unless Mrs. Rogers can be Indulged to visit me I. Shall unavoidably Suffer great Inconveniency—my little family require my serious attention I. therefore Solicit the favor of Mrs. Roger's coming to see me if there was any house on Shore near here were I. could place her I. Should ask permission to see her on Shore. the Rigid Discipline of the Flotilla and ~~and~~ the Necessity of evry officer being at his post as the Enemy

are generally in force before this place, makes it impracticable for me to expect Indulgence to visit her at New York— With the expectation Sir you will grant my Request I. Remain with Respect your obt. Sert.

James Rogers S.M.

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 5 (M124, Roll No. 63). This letter was forwarded to Secretary of the Navy Jones by Captain Jacob Lewis, who requested Jones's guidance on how to respond. Lewis to Jones, 4 May 1814, DNA, RG45 MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 4 (M124, Roll No. 63).

1. Spermaceti Cove, New Jersey, near the southern end of Sandy Hook.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Jacob Lewis Esq.  
Comm'dg. U.S. Flotilla  
New York. }

Navy Department  
May 9th. 1814

Sir,

I have received yours of the 4th. instant,<sup>1</sup> covering that from Sailing Master Rogers.

The order of the Department prohibiting the family of any officer of the Flotilla from remaining on board, is imperative, and cannot be relaxed; and whatever proper order, conformably to rules and usages of the Service, you may find necessary for the maintenance of discipline must also be enforced.—

The Service is not to be made subservient to domestic convenience; and if the Regulations interfere with the domestic arrangements of Mr. Rogers, or any other officer, he has his alternative.—

If any farther discontent is evinced on this subject, the Department will apply the alternative.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 309 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. See Lewis to Jones, 4 May 1814, DNA, RG45 MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 4 (M124, Roll No. 63). Lewis had forwarded to Secretary Jones the 3 May 1814 letter he had received from Rogers.

## An Error in Judgment

*While Bostonians rejoiced at the safe return of Constitution, their favorite frigate, such sentiments were not shared by Navy officials hundreds of miles away in Washington. Angered that Stewart had wasted a precious opportunity to strike at enemy shipping by cutting short his cruise, Secretary Jones ordered that officer to explain his actions before a court of inquiry. Jones appointed William Bainbridge and Oliver H. Perry to hear testimony in the case, which was convened on 3 May.*

*Though Bainbridge, because of his seniority and availability, was the obvious choice to preside over Stewart's court, the selection may have made both men uneasy. There had been friction between the two over Constitution's preparations for sea in the summer and fall of 1813, which may have resulted in some mutual animosity. Moreover, because Bainbridge had overseen Constitution's overhaul in 1813, and because the poor condition of that ship was one reason Stewart cited for the early termination of his cruise, the possibility loomed that the former might be embarrassed during the course of his investigation into the latter's conduct. It is revealing that before convening Stewart's court, Bainbridge wrote to William Jones suggesting that his friend, Captain John Smith, be given command of Constitution, because of Stewart's legal indisposition.<sup>1</sup>*

*As the following documents reveal, the hazards of naval command were not always to be found at sea.*

1. See Bainbridge to Jones, 28 April 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 195 (M125, Roll No. 35).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART

Capt. Charles Stewart  
 Commdg. U.S. Ship  
*Constitution* Salem Mass. }

Navy Department  
 April 19th. 1814

Sir.

Your letter of the 4th. current<sup>1</sup> has been received, and with an earnest disposition to discover, I do not perceive in the reasons and motives assigned a satisfactory cause for the premature termination of the cruise of the U.S. Ship *Constitution* under your command.— After a long protracted and expensive outfit and with a capacity to carry more provisions & stores than that, on any other ship in the Service ever has done, and every thing that could contribute to the sustenance and health of the Crew during a long cruise, the importance of which was inculcated in the strongest terms in the instructions<sup>2</sup> to you from this Department, I cannot but be disappointed in witnessing the unexpected return in three months, of a Ship and crew which had so highly excited the public expectation and confidence.—

Your Supplies you say, Sir, would have enabled you to keep the sea a month longer— this however is allowing only four months provisions at the time of your departure.—

A timely reduction of one fourth the full allowance which is always assented to with cheerfulness would have enabled you to extend your cruise another month.—

You must have derived considerable Supplies from the Captures made, as I observe the Cargo of the *Lovely-Ann* consisted of Flour, Fish and Lumber, part of which was thrown overboard.— Had you remained two or three days off Savannah you could have obtained a plenty of Rice and other provisions, and have replenished your water.— The policy of returning to be Blockaded during the Summer in preference to continuing the cruise or running the risk of being Blockaded in a foreign port assigned by you as a motive for your return, I cannot comprehend.— The Blockade of the ports of France had you

resorted thither, is by no means so strict as that of our own, nor are the Ships of the enemy on that coast so well manned or qualified to lay alongside the *Constitution* as those on our own coast. Indeed there are not many of the 74's such as are employed there, half manned as they are, that would have willingly encountered you.—

At Brest or L'orient, you could have replenished your stores and been at sea in five days.—

The appearance of scorbutic symptoms is at all times calculated to excite apprehension, but it is evident these symptoms must have been very light and considered by you as merely collateral among those causes which induced your return.— The existance however of those symptoms in so short a time and in a mild dry climate is matter of astonishment, and indicative of a want of attention in those who are more immediately charged with the superintendance of the police of the Ship, and of the provisions and culinary department.—

Whether the number of your crew exceeded the usual complement sanctioned by the Department, I cannot say as no muster roll of your crew on the eve of your departure was transmitted to this Depmt. though required by the positive injunction of the XXIX article of the rules &c for the Government of the Navy,<sup>3</sup> and by the Special order of the Department.

It is due to yourself, Sir, as well as to the public that an enquiry should be made into the causes which have produced these comments, & I have every feeling personally and officially, to desire that it may result in satisfactory explanation. I am very respectfully &c.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 292–93 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. See pp. 175–76.

2. For Stewart's cruising instructions, see Jones to Stewart, 19 September 1813, pp. 1077–79.

3. For the text of this article, see Brodine, Crawford, and Hughes, *Interpreting Old Ironsides*, p. 116.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

Commo. Wm. Bainbridge }  
Charlestown Mass. }

Navy Department  
April 21st. 1814

Sir,

The United States Ship *Constitution* under the command of Captain Charles Stewart, having under gone a thorough repair and reequipment of the most perfect & ample kind, with a capacity for, and, it is believed an actual supply of provisions and stores for at least six months, for her proper complement, with due economy and prudent management, and under instructions (copy of which is enclosed) to prolong the cruise to the utmost possible extent, sailed on the 30th. of December last, and returned to Salem on the 3d. current, having cruised the short period of Ninety two days.—

The letter of Captain Stewart, dated at Salem, the 4th. current, (copy of which is enclosed) giving an account of his cruise and assigning motives for



his premature return, does not in the view of this Department, afford any substantial or justifiable, ground for his determination, and as it is of the utmost importance to the character of the Navy, and the preservation of that high confidence and predilection manifested by the public, that the energy and effect which have been so gloriously demonstrated to the world, by our gallant Navy, should not even be suspected of relaxation from its wonted vigor, it is due to the Navy, to Captain Stewart individually and to the public, that a just and strict enquiry be made into the preparations for and causes of the premature termination of, the late cruise of the United States Ship *Constitution*.—

You will therefore, Sir, together with Captain Hull, or Captain Perry,\*<sup>1</sup> form a court of Enquiry, to enquire into the conduct of Captain Stewart in relation to the equipment and preparation for the cruise of the *Constitution*, and into the causes of its premature termination, to the injury of the service and contrary to the spirit and tenor of his instructions.—

You will particularly Enquire, Whether all the space properly appropriated to the stowage of water and provisions was fully and advantageously occupied for that purpose.—

Whether the provisions were in perfect order, and in such vessels and packages, as the regulations, usage & practice of the Navy authorise; or whether any other unauthorized mode had been adopted by Captain Stewart.—

For what length of time the provisions and water on board, on the 30th. of December last, were sufficient to sustain, at full allowance, a crew, equal in number to that which had been employed on board the said Ship on either of the two preceding cruises; and, also, for what further time a seasonable reduction of allowance, with a view to prolong the cruise, such as has been usual and practicable in the service, would have extended the supply.—

Whether the aggregate number of persons on board at the time of departure, exceeded the usual number, or the number employed on board that Ship on the two preceding cruises.—

Whether the quantity of any particular species of provisions or Stores, on board, at the time of departure, exceeded, in a material degree, that which has been the general usage and practice of the service.—

How much longer the provisions and Stores, actually on board on the day of the arrival of the *Constitution*, or on the day previous to the chase by the Enemy, in Boston Bay, would have enabled Captain Stewart to have continued his cruise.—

What were the description and quantity of the several articles thrown overboard during the chase, and were they such as could be dispensed with, with the least injury to the service, and their ejection calculated to produce the desired effect.—

What were the actual state and condition of the provisions, particularly of the salted provisions, at the time of the arrival of the Ship.

Whether symptoms of the scurvy had appeared on board, at what period, in what degree; and whether the cause of those symptoms can be traced to any defect in the provisions, or the preparation thereof; or to want of attention in those whose duty it is particularly to guard against the approaches of that disease by those attentions, and precautions which skill & experience have devised: and,

generally, into such other matters as may be involved in the object of this Enquiry, and report to this Department the facts, and the opinion of the court thereon.—

A copy of my letter of the 19th. current, in answer to that from Captain Stewart of the 4th: current, is also enclosed.— I am very respectfully &c

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 294–95 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. A caret appears in the text at this point to insert the following marginalia: “As may be most convenient to the service on which they command.”

### CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

United States frigate *Constitution*  
Boston. April 29. 1814

Sir

I have received on the 27th your letter of the 19th inst. and regret exceedingly to perceive your disappointment in the premature return of this ship to Port; your displeasure on that account gives me great concern as my greatest desire is to merit the confidence of government.

That part of my letter of the 4th. inst which appears [o]bscure, may have originated through mistake in the copy, I therefore beg leave to explain in this.

The information we obtained induced us to believe that Boston Bay was clear of the Enemy's Cruisers, and that a favorable opportunity presented for coming into Port to replace what would be required, and get out again in time to follow the Enemys Convoys, agreeable to the information I sent you;— “if our so doing eventuated in a blockade it would be preferable to a like blockade in a foreign Port, as the Government would be enabled to command the services of the Officers and Crew;”— by this I did not wish to convey the idea that the Ship could not get out again, but to be understood that I considered her equally liable to a blockade in Europe as she was here. Where several causes operate on the mind to induce a decision, it is very difficult to excite the same impressions and views (by description) in others, as was felt at the time by ourselves, I trust upon this accoun[t] in your disposition to indulgence.

With respect to scorbutic symptoms I do not think they were induced by a want of care and cleanliness; those symptoms sometimes make their appearance in port, from a continued confinement to a Hulk or Ship of War, which those who shipped early last Summer were subject to.

The special order of the Department relative to a Muster Roll was complied with, the Purser<sup>1</sup> having a few days previous to our departure forwarded one to the Accountant.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps in sending it to him he did not give it a proper direction. The Role was correct at that time but some slight changes may have taken place previou[s] to our sailing.

To approach this Coast with a Ship like the *Constitution* after the mild season sets in, with our principal ports closely watched by a superior force of the Enemy

I should not consider prudent with less than one months supplies on board, that in case we were chased off we should not suffer for want thereof and thus be enabled to effect our object.

I desire, Sir, to thank you for the generous and friendly conclusion of your letter and earnestly hope my views and explanations will be satisfactory. I have the honor to be, Very Respectfully, Sir, Your Obedient Servant.

Ch<sup>s</sup> Stewart

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 199 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Robert Pottinger was *Constitution's* purser at this time. At the commencement of the war, he was serving in the brig *Siren* on the New Orleans Station under William Bainbridge's younger brother Joseph. Shortly after *Siren's* arrival in Boston in June 1813, Commodore Bainbridge ordered Pottinger transferred to *Constitution* to serve as the frigate's purser.

2. Accountant of the Navy Department Thomas Turner.

COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF  
CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART (STEWART'S NARRATIVE)

[Extract]

[*Charlestown Navy Yard, ca. 3 May 1814*]

Statement or Narrative of Capt. Stewart.<sup>1</sup>

1st. Some of our Supplies, according to my judgment, would not have justified our cruising beyond the period we were out more than one month or six weeks, and at the same time leave left on board a sufficient quantity to ensure our reaching a port to replenish from the place we might be in at the expiration of that period. The mild season would then have set in, and rendered our getting into the United States or a port in France more difficult owing to a stricter blockade by the Enemy.

2d. Scorbutic symptoms having made their appearance among the crew, became a consideration, as it must be allowed that when that disease appears it tends to weaken the force of a ship. I do not think this disease was in any measure to be attributed to a want of care and attention in the Officers, or a want of cleanliness or exercise in the men, but from what I have heard, and my own observations on that disease, I am led to believe it originates from other causes than are generally assigned, perhaps some changes that take place in the blood or system not hitherto observed. I take the liberty of attaching to this a note.

3d. Having derived information from a vessel (we boarded on the coast of Georgia) direct from Bermuda, which led us to believe the coast was not so strictly watched by the Enemy's cruisers, and the season having come best calculated to ensure our arriving with the least hazard, which was forcibly pointed out by the Honorable Secretary's instructions of the 19th September; I deemed her safe return to port a consideration more important to the service, than cruising an inconsiderable length of time longer, and thereby increasing the hazard in getting

in after the season permitted a closer blockade of our ports. These instructions were exceedingly well calculated at the time they were given to meet the season recommended us to return in (should our necessities require); some delay, however, arising in completing the crew, and the vigilance of the Enemy in watching the *Constitution* (which they were the better enabled to do from the unusual mildness of the season) prevented our putting to sea in conformity with expectations.

4th. Some of the principal sails of the *Constitution* were so far worn that the ship did not derive those advantages from her canvass which are essential to a cruising frigate.— All the Courses (two suits) which had been in her on her former cruise became nearly worn out and would require in a very short time to be indispensably replaced with new ones. Those sails were thought sufficient at the time by myself and Commodore Bainbridge, who was perfectly acquainted with their condition and in whose judgment I have every confidence but in the quality of the canvass we may have been mistaken, or they must have worn much faster than anticipated, owing to light winds.

5th The Mainmast of the *Constitution* on the 27th of March appeared to me very defective; whether this was owing to decay in the materials, some hidden cause (such as a spring in the spindle), the manner in which it was combined, or whether a slight wound received on the neck in the action with the *Java* from a shot, or a strain from heavy pitching on the 19th March when in chase of a Spanish schooner, I cannot say, but most likely the latter. I am informed by Commodore Bainbridge that it stood very well during his cruise, and no defect appeared when the ship was hove down by it last Summer, nor in the first part of the last cruise when the ship was as hard pressed as at any time since.

While, pursuing the object of our instructions, on the 28th. of March (by our position) I felt myself called on to decide whether we should continue out under the foregoing disadvantages, or return while the season was most propitious and a port near us as favourable to our object and necessities as any other we could resort to. The reasons here assigned had not sufficient weight to determine me to return although I considered them strong; the defects, however, of so important a Spar as the Mainmast, combined with these reasons, decided me, for in proportion to its deficiencies the precious ship entrusted to my care was put to the greater hazard.

If the commencement of our cruise had been along the coast of Europe, we should have had, in all probability, an opportunity of touching at some of the neutral ports, or islands, where we could have replenished some articles of store and procured refreshments without being much delayed and hazarding a blockade; but if disappointed in getting them our store would not have been so far exhausted as to prevent a continuance of the cruise.

That part of my letter of the 4th April to the Honorable Secretary of the Navy (a copy of which is laid before you and is not comprehended from its obscurity), was not intended as a reason for terminating the cruise, but merely to show that under equal risk of a blockade my preference was given to a port in the United States for the consideration stated in that letter.

The Honorable Secretary of the Navy in his letter to me of 19th. April, a copy of which is laid before the Court, implies that only one months stores were on board the *Constitution* at the termination of the cruise; because I stated to him in my letter of the 4th that “the state of our supplies would have enabled us to

keep the sea a month longer." I should not think it prudent to approach a coast so generally blockaded and watched by the Enemy in the mild season with less than one months supplies, for should we be disappointed getting in by being chased off from one port, we should not be deprived of the means which would enable us to try another, and thus ultimately effect the object.—" A timely reduction of one fourth the full allowance, which is thought would be assented to with cheerfulness—" was not found to be the case, for on the second muster<sup>2</sup> after our departure it was proposed to the *Constitution's* crew to reduce the allowance of bread and spirits only, one or two rations in a mess of eight; to this they did not consent, but on the contrary, showed a disposition to find fault with the allowance of water, on that head I satisfied them by promising that when we got into warm latitudes, where they would require it the more, to allow them their grog water in addition.<sup>3</sup>

When the *Lovely Ann* was captured, the time was not favourable to take much from that vessel, the day was consumed shifting the prisoners and their baggage, and getting out the smaller articles that could be removed with most facility.

One of our objects in going to the coast of South Carolina and Georgia, was, to obtain and convey intelligence, to get refreshments, and if possible to receive supplies of water, but the weather while there was unfavorable to our views, and when we left the coast it was under strong indications of an easterly gale.

The blockade of the ports of France may not be so strict as those of the United States, but as there are many more and much larger ships for the Enemy to watch there, than here, I foresaw greater probability of meeting with heavier ships of the Enemy in that quarter. Whether those ships are "not so well manned or qualified to lay alongside the *Constitution* as those on our own coast" I do not know, but it would appear to me the contrary. On that coast their seventy fours have ships of equal and superior classes that they may be obliged to contend with, and therefore would not be fitted in a less efficient manner than those on this coast where there is nothing larger than frigates. That the seventy four gun ships on this coast are much weaker than there, I think probable, for the Enemy is aware that none of our frigates would seek an action with their seventy fours, and in consequence, can readily spare some of their best men to strengthen the frigates and smaller cruisers.

I think it probable, that at Brest or L'Orient, supplies could be procured with facility. For the above reasons, however, they would have been the last ports I should have deemed it expedient to resort to, and should have selected a port in Spain, Portugal, or the islands, in preference, for we would not have met a blockading force going into those ports, and great despatch might have prevented our meeting one on coming out.

The foregoing reasons decided me, Gentlemen, to return with the *Constitution* to Port, on which occasion I exercised the best of my judgment according to my reason and abilities and trust they will be found satisfactory. In my letter of the 4th. April to the Honble. Secretary of the Navy I had not stated all the reasons which weighed in my mind to induce a return of the ship to port, but such as I thought would have been deemed judicious and satisfactory, this not being the case, I now present them fully to your view.

Ch<sup>s</sup>. Stewart

Note referred to.—

It appears to me that Scurvy in Seamen is more generally produced from warm and dry than from wet arid cold weather; warm weather induces indolence and relaxation in the disposition to action and exertion. Where exertion and activity are required in warm weather, rapid and frequent changes take place in the blood; scarcity of water, or not a free use of it, under a course of salt provisions, prevents the necessary perspiration and produces a want of elasticity in the flesh and swellings with ulceration ensues.

The Ship *Canton* of Baltimore upon her return from China, in the month of February, came on the coast of Virginia, was blown off, and ultimately abandoned by the officers and crew, as I have understood, from the ravages committed by that disease; on the greater part of the voyage she must have had warm weather.

The crews of the frigates *President*, *United States*, and *Congress*, on their first cruise after the commencement of the present war, were much reduced by Scurvy although the time did not exceed eighty days in the warm months.<sup>4</sup>

On my passage from Gibraltar to Calcutta, scorbutic symptoms to a considerable degree made their appearance in several of the crew, although the passage was only about ninety days; there was no want of vegetables and crout<sup>5</sup> during the time and the weather was pleasant and warm. On our passage to Philadelphia, we had a good deal of wet cold and boisterous weather and no vegetables; the passage continued one hundred and thirty seven days and yet no symptoms of Scurvy were apparant.

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 5, Case No. 163 (M273, Roll No. 7). Addressed in Stewart's hand: "The Honbe./Court of Enquiry/Charlestown N. Y."

1. Stewart provided a shorter, second statement to the court summarizing the main points of his defense. This four-page document is bound after the first folio page of his inquiry record.

2. Muster held on 9 January 1814.

3. When *Constitution's* crew refused to give their assent to a reduction in rations, Stewart proposed paying his men in cash for their undrawn rations. But to this proposal, Stewart recorded in his journal, "the crew remained silent." For a brief analysis of this encounter, see McKee, *Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession*, pp. 258–59. The quoted text appears on p. 258.

4. On the occurrence of scurvy in Rodgers's squadron, see Rodgers to Hamilton, 4 September 1812, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 1, p. 451.

5. That is sauerkraut, the consumption of which served as an effective antiscorbutic.

### COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART (COURT'S JUDGMENT)

[Extract]

[Charlestown Navy Yard, 9 May 1814]

The Court having closed the examination of the Witnesses and having deliberately considered the same as also the narrative and statement laid before it by Captain Stewart do state the following as the result of its enquiry.

It does appear from the evidence before the Court that Capt Stewart in the equipment and preparation of the Frigate *Constitution* for her last cruise did not neglect his duty.

It does appear to the Court that all the space properly appropriated to the stowage of water and provisions was fully and advantageously occupied for that purpose except the space under the fore-orlop being taken up with tanks for beef which the Court does not think was properly or advantageously occupied.

It does appear to the Court that the provisions were in perfect order and were stowed in the usual packages of the navy except the beef which was stowed in two large tanks. This Court cannot say that this mode is unauthorized by the rules and regulations of the Navy as these do not specify the particular kind of packages for the stowage of provisions; but is decidedly of opinion that it was very injudicious in Capt Stewart to have made an experiment on so large a quantity of so important an article.

It does appear to the Court that the Frigate *Constitution* when she sailed from Boston on the 30th of December last had a sufficient quantity of provisions on board to have sustained her crew on full allowance for six months and that the quantity on the reduction frequently practised in the navy would have lasted between seven and eight months. But it has been proven to the Court that Capt. Stewart did propose to his crew a reduction of their allowance; to which they did not show a willingness to consent at that time. Afterwards on the first of February the greater proportion of the messes consented to a stoppage of one ration of bread and two rations of beef in each mess; and the remainder consented to a stoppage of only one ration of bread and beef in a mess. Therefore in the opinion of the Court the calculation for the duration of the provisions ought to be made on full allowance. As the reduction of the greater part of the component parts of the ration was not assented to, it would have become necessary to have resorted to port on their being expended. On this calculation of full allowance it appears to the Court that the Frigate *Constitution* had on board the Day previous to being chased provisions to have sustained her crew for three months. But she had not water for more, than two months at the usual allowance.

It does appear to the Court that the total number of persons on board did not exceed the usual number employed on board the ship on the two preceeding cruises. But for the aggregate comparison the Court refers to the lists annexed to these proceedings.

It appears to the Court that the articles of stores on board at the time of the preparation did not exceed the general usage and practice of the service; but that the quantity of bread and beef was considerably greater, than Frigates are generally able to carry. The Court cannot consider this extra-quantity as the object intended by the directions for the enquiry—but they merely state the fact.

It appears to the Court that the following articles were thrown over-board during the chase viz—60½ barrels of Beef 51 bbls pork 16 bbls Flour 334 lbs Cheese 367 lbs butter 14 Kegs 510 galls peas or beans (2 tierces & 13 bbls) 480 Galls rice 131 molasses 62 vinegar 1907½ spirit 128 sour crout (4 barrells) 56 boxes spermaceti candles 3 barrels sugar 2 kegs tobacco, belonging to R Pottinger—<sup>1</sup>

In answer to the latter part of this order of enquiry the Court has to observe that when a vessel is pursued by a superiour force, with which it would be improper to contend, it is, in the opinion of this Court, the duty of the Commander to use

his utmost exertions according to his judgment to avoid the danger in the best way, he possibly can. And as the safety of his ship ought to be his primary object, he should not for small considerations add to a possibility of hazard. The Court presuming that no Commanding officer in the American Navy would wantonly destroy public property must be of opinion that the articles which were thrown over board were ejected from the best motives; And it may happen that articles may appear to have been unnecessarily ejected when judging from representation at a distance, which yet may have been properly thrown over upon judgment at the time.

It does appear to the Court that at the time of the arrival of the Ship the provisions were in good order except the salted Beef in the tanks, which it appears from the evidence before the Court and more particularly from a survey held on it during the setting of the Court, was not as good during the cruise, as beef usually served out on board the U States Frigates, and that a considerable quantity is now very bad.<sup>2</sup>

It does appear to the court that five of the crew were affected with the scurvy, and that those symptoms did not proceed from a want of proper attention to the cleanliness of the Ship and crew or of due attention to the culinary materials, or to the fault or neglect of any one on board.

The Court being directed to enquire into the causes of the premature termination of the cruise, and being ordered to express an opinion thereon, observes that from an examination of the evidence and documents contained in these proceedings it appears, that Captain Stewart at the time of his return to port had provisions on board to sustain his crew at full allowance for three months and water for about two months on the usual allowance. Therefore in the opinion of the Court Captain Stewart might have remained, in obedience to his sailing orders and instructions, some time longer at sea. And the reasons assigned by Capt Stewart in his narrative and statements before the Court do not appear to this Court to comprise a sufficient cause for his return at the time he did. Yet the Court believes that Capt Stewart considered these reasons sufficient to justify his return; and if he has erred it is the opinion of the Court that it was an error of judgment. It has been clearly established before the Court that at the time Captain Stewart was off the southern part of the coast of the United States the weather was very unfavourable to a communication with the shore.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge  
President

Geo Sullivan  
Judge Advocate—

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 5, Case No. 163 (M273, Roll No. 7).

1. Purser Robert Pottinger.

2. A number of *Constitution's* officers testified that the greater part of the ship's beef was unfit to eat by the end of the frigate's cruise. Ship's Steward Sampson Shaw was unable to complete a survey of the beef stored in the tanks because the stench of the rotting meat was too foul to bear. He stated that the meat's odor was so putrid it snuffed out his candle after only half a minute's exposure.



## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

Commo. Wm. Bainbridge }  
 Comm'dg. Naval Officer }  
 Charlestown Mass }

Navy Department  
 May 20th. 1814

Sir

I have received your Letter accompanying the proceedings of the Court of Enquiry relative to the late cruize of the U.S. Ship *Constitution*, and have given to the facts and opinions therein stated the consideration due to the importance of the subject.—

The character, knowledge, and zeal for the service which distinguish the Members of that Court, insure a strict scrutiny and just conclusions.—

I regret that the result implicates the judgement of Captain Stewart to a degree which has certainly proved injurious to the service, on his late cruize; but as duty alone induced the order for the enquiry, which involved no doubt of the purity of his motives, and as it is the disposition of this Department to observe the strictest delicacy where duty does not demand a rigorous course, no further proceedings will be had in this case.—

It may be observed however that error in judgement may in many cases prove as fatal as wilful error, and will in extreme cases as effectually incapacitate.—

By the ensuing mail will be forwarded the instructions to Captain Stewart for the cruise of the *Constitution* under his Command.— Of these determinations you will please inform Captain Stewart.

You will order the Tanks taken down and the provisions contained therein or such part thereof as may be fit for Naval use, repacked into barrels.— Of the residue you will dispose of as the survey may dictate.—

The same unfortunate error was committed on board the *Constellation*, and to save the provisions contained in the Tanks, the whole was repacked into barrels; of this, I was not informed until long after the fact:— Had I known Captain Stewart's intention to construct Tanks on board the *Constitution* I should have directly forbidden it; for it appears to me to require but little reasoning on the subject to demonstrate the absurdity of the plan, and the intrepid responsibility which would hazard an innovation so important without the sanction of the highest authority.—

You will not suffer the Crew of the *Constitution* to exceed the aggregate number estimated by yourself and Captain Morris, under the direction of this Department, for Ships of that class.—<sup>1</sup>

Captain Stewart with his full complement of Five Lieutenants assumed the authority of appointing Midshipman Tayloe<sup>2</sup> an acting Lieutenant.— This act is considered by the Department as altogether irregular, but as Mr. Tayloe could not doubt the legitimacy of the appointment I am unwilling to subject him to the mortification of returning to his regular grade, & you will please hand him the enclosed letter confirmatory of his appointment as an acting Lieutenant attached to the *Constitution*.— I am respectfully &c

W Jones.

1. At Secretary Jones's direction, Bainbridge and Morris had prepared tables detailing the requirements for manning, equipping, and supplying "the several classes of vessels" in the U.S. Navy. See Jones to Morris, 20 September 1813, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 97 (M149, Roll No. 11), and, Morris, *Autobiography*, p. 71.

2. John Tayloe was warranted a midshipman on 15 November 1809. He was promoted to lieutenant on 9 December 1814.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART

Charles Stewart Esqr.  
 Captain Commanding the U S Ship  
*Constitution*, Charlestown Ms. }

Navy Department  
 May 21st. 1814.

Sir

The Court of enquiry into the Causes of the premature return of the United States Ship *Constitution* under your Command, has transmitted to this Department, the proceedings of said Court, with a statement of facts, and the opinion of the Court thereon, a Copy of which is herewith enclosed for your information.—

It would have afforded me personal gratification, to have seen in those proceedings, a justification of the measures which you adopted in the preparation for and prosecution of that Cruize; but as the purity of your motives has never been questioned, although an injurious error in judgement is clearly established, no further proceedings will be had thereon, nor recollection of the case retained by this Department.—

You will receive by the Mail which conveys this, your Sailing orders and instructions,<sup>1</sup> for the Cruize of the United States Ship *Constitution* under your Command.— I am very respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, p. 140 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. See pp. 358–59.

## What Do You Do with a Drunken Sailor?

*Alcohol abuse was the most pernicious behavioral problem in the early sailing Navy. It bedeviled both officers and ratings alike, promoting destructive behavior and compromising discipline ashore and afloat service-wide. Enlisted men found guilty of drunkenness were subject to corporal punishment. Officers brought before courts-martial for intemperance were either censured or dismissed from the service. Sometimes officers with drinking problems avoided dismissal temporarily by pledging to reform their behavior. Such was the case of Midshipman William Burley, Jr., who was turned out of Wasp for drunkenness and placed in Isaac Hull's charge on the promise of future sobriety.<sup>1</sup> The following documents reveal the outcome of Hull's efforts to reclaim Burley's career.*

1. For an insightful discussion of alcohol abuse in the early officer corps, see McKee, *Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession*, pp. 447–57.

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 23d April 1814

Sir,

I have the honour herewith to enclose you a letter from Captain Blakeley covering charges against Midshipmen Burley & Clough,<sup>1</sup> by which you will see that their Conduct has been such as to make it necessary for me to remove them from the *Wasp*. I have ordered Midshipman Henry S. Langdon and Frank Toscan to take their places—

Midshn. Burley is a young man of family, well educated, and has no other habit that will prevent his making a promising Officer; I have therefore consented, with your permission, to give him a farther trial in the Yard. He promises much and I have reason to hope that he will yet be an honour to the service. I shall watch him closely and shall inform you immediately if his habits are not changed. Midn. Clough will never make an Officer or a gentleman, his manners and habits are coarse and vulgar, and his associates of the lowest class; I have therefore informed him that his services were no longer wanting until your pleasure was known.

The *Wasp* has at length her complement within four or five, but I have been obliged to take every man from the Yard, that was subject to be transferred to make out her crew. She will sail the first wind and will have a tolerable crew.

We get but few men for the *Congress*; her crew therefore is about the same as when I last wrote you, as some men have been discharged, whose terms of service had expired— I have the honour to be With great respect Sir Your Ob. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 168 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. William Burley, Jr., and Ebenezer Clough, Jr., were both appointed midshipmen on 23 December 1813, with their warrants antedated to 9 November. They were ordered to report for duty to Commodore Bainbridge, who assigned them to the sloop of war *Wasp*. For a short biographical sketch of the Harvard-educated Burley, see McKee, *Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession*, pp.459–61.

[Enclosure]

U.S.S.W. *Wasp*  
Portsmouth N H. 21st April 1814

Sir

Enclosed are two reports, one from acting Lieut. Baury, respecting the conduct of Midshipman William Burley, the other of Sailing Master Carr, upon that of Midshipman Ebenezer Clough. I would observe that this is not the first offence of a similar kind of Mr. Burley and for which he had been admonished and advised by me and upon his promise of amendment had

been permitted to return to duty— With regard to the conduct of Mr. Clough, the report of Mr. Carr requires no comment. As our situation at present will not permit the assembling a court martial permit me to request of you the removal of those two officers from the *Wasp* and if in your power, will thank you to replace them with two other midshipmen. I am Very respectfully Yr Mot. Obdt. Servt

J. Blakeley

Isaac Hull Esqr.  
Commanding Naval Officer on the Eastern Station

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 168, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 35).

[Enclosure]

U.S. Ship *Wasp*  
Apl. 17th. 1814

Sir

I feel myself under the necessity of reporting Midshipman William Burley for Drunkenness & neglect of Duty on the evening of the 16th Inst.— I am Sir with Sentiments of Respect Your Obt. Servt.

Baury<sup>1</sup>

To J. Blakeley Esqr.  
Commanding the U.S. Ship *Wasp*

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 168, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Frederick Baury was appointed a midshipman on 19 June 1809 with his warrant antedated to 18 May. On 30 September, he was appointed to an acting lieutenant and ordered to report to Commodore Bainbridge who assigned him to *Wasp*. He was promoted to lieutenant on 9 December 1814, before the disappearance of *Wasp* at sea was confirmed.

[Enclosure]

U.S. Ship *Wasp* April 19. 1814

Sir/

I Report Midshipman Ebenezer Clough, who was sent on shore in Charge of the 3rd. Cutter with six Men, for the Officers at Portsmouth, at 8 P.M or thereabout, I came down to the Wharf where the boat lay, and found the Officer so drunk that he could not stand— I jumped in the boat & order'd him to follow me, the boat being shov'd off, I enquir'd if the Officer was in her? the men answer'd, that he was leaning against a Post on shore, finding him incapable to get in the boat, I sent the men on shore & brought him on board— he fell asleep several times in the boat, while rowing to the Ship, several of the boats

Crew appear'd to be, intoxicated at the same time, & at the same time there was a number of Citizens on the Wharf,— I have the Honour to be, Sir Your Obdt. servt.

James E Carr<sup>1</sup>

Johnston Blakeley Esqr.  
Commr. U.S. Ship *Wasp*—

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 168, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. James E. Carr was warranted a sailing master on 4 August 1807. On 2 September 1813, he was ordered to report to Commodore Bainbridge, who assigned him to *Wasp*.

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard Portsmouth N H  
27th April 1814

Sir,

I had the honor a few days since to forward you a report relative to the conduct of Midshipman Burley, and informed you that I should give him one more trial in hopes that it was yet possible to save him. He has had that trial, and by the enclosed report of Sailg. Master Stoodly you will see that there is no hope. I shall therefore (if he hold a warrant) take it from him, and forward it [to] the Department. I have the honour to be With great respect Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 190 (M125, Roll No. 35).

[Enclosure]  
Comre. Isaac Hull

Sir

I regret that I am under the necessity of reporting to you the conduct of Mr. Berley, but to refrain any longer would be criminal on my part, Without entering into particulars it will be only necessary to state, that he has been in a state of inebriation for three days, nor is there any hopes at present of his reform, he appears to have no command over himselfe and to have given himselfe intirely up to Bacchus Very Respectfully Your Obt. Servt.

Nath<sup>1</sup> Stoodly<sup>1</sup>

U.S G Boat *No. 79*  
Portsmouth April 28th. 1814

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 190, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Nathaniel Stoodly had been serving as an acting sailing master at Portsmouth. On 14 August 1813, Secretary Jones issued him a warrant confirming his rank as sailing master.

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard Portsmouth N.H  
28th April 1814

Sir,

I have this moment received your letter of the 22d instant,<sup>1</sup> and have delivered the order to Lieutenant Drury. He will leave here tomorrow as therein directed—

Enclosed I have the honour to return you the Warrant of Midshipman Burley. There are no hopes of his being reclaimed. I have the honour to be With great respect Sir Your Obedt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 193 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Jones to Hull, 22 April 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 297 (M149, Roll No. 11).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull }  
Portsmouth N.H. }

Navy Department  
April 30. 1814

Sir,

You will please to deliver the enclosed letter<sup>1</sup> to Ebenezer Clough, late Midshipman dismissed.—

Midshipman Burley's offence appears to have been as flagrant as that of Clough's, and from Capt. Blakeley's charges, to have been repeated after frequent admonitions.—

They would both have been disgraced, had they been arraigned before a Court Marital.— Burley's respectable family and liberal education are but an aggravation of his offence.— However, Sir, as you appear to think he may be reclaimed, I am willing to try the experiment, but unless a Speedy and thorough reformation shall take place, you will report him to this Department, in order that the service may be freed from his vicious example. I am, Sir, respectfully &c.

W Jones.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 60 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Jones to Clough, 30 April 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, p. 167 (T829, Roll No. 382).

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 7th May 1814

Sir,

I have had the honour to receive your letter of the 30th ultimo relative to Midshipmen Burley and Clough. Your letter to the latter has been forwarded to him at Boston; and the results of my endeavours to save the former, I had the honour to forward you a few days since, and now have to acknowledge my thanks to you for indulging me in making the attempt to reclaim him—<sup>1</sup> I have the honour to be With great respect Sir, Your Obt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 36 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. On receiving Hull's letter of 27 April enclosing Burley's warrant, Jones issued a letter dismissing the wayward midshipman from the service. See Jones to Burley, 7 May 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 Nov. 1815, p. 170 (T829, Roll No. 382).

[Enclosure]

Isaac Hull Esqe.

New Castle [*N.H.*], April [*May*], 6, 1814<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

When I promised an alteration in my conduct, I meant strictly to have observed it. I did not mean to deceive you by promising what I did not intend to perform. The reflection on the disgrace of it, and the consequent ruin that will ensue, have made me suffer so severely; that I can confidently assure you, Sir, should you permit [*me*] to return to duty, a similar indiscretion will not again occur. I am not so lost to a sense of shame, nor so destitute of honourable feeling as to reiterate assertions I did not conceive to be strictly true. It would be ungrateful in me not to acknowledge my having been warned of the consequences of persisting in such a course of conduct by some of my superiour officers. To know that I have been treated with unusual lenity and to reflect, that I have abused the confidence reposed in me, adds keenness to the stings of remorse Bitterly do I regret, that my friends should suffer from my folly & shameful conduct, that, is to me the most painful consideration. I shall be ashamed to look my parents & my sisters in the face. I can neither return home, nor write to them. And I have not the means of stopping here. My situation is to the last degree desperate. Upon your generosity to excuse me permit me sir, to rely. I am sensible strict justice would condemn me. I pretend not to offer an apology, or palliation for faults so shameful. I know I can controul myself, governed as I shall be by the resolution of desperation. I will observe the most rigid temperance. Excuse me, Sir, for troubling you with this application, but I am fully aware of the consequences of an unsuccessful result. Altho' I deserve punishment I cannot bear to return to the bosom of my acquaintance, & become "a mark" to the world" for scorn to point her slow & moving finger at; or what

is worse, an object of its pity. I should prefer exile, or death. With great respect,  
sir, your very humble and obliged servant

William Burley jr

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 36, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. Burley misdated this letter.

## New England Blockaded

*News of the American declaration of war did not reach London until 30 July 1812, six weeks after the event. The following day, the Privy Council ordered the detention of all American ships in British ports.<sup>1</sup> By October, when the impossibility of a peaceful settlement with the United States became apparent, the Council authorized the commissioning of privateers and letters of marque to seize American shipping on the high seas.<sup>2</sup> Before year's end, the British government adopted its next punitive measure against America's seaborne trade by announcing a blockade of the Chesapeake Bay and Delaware River. Three additional proclamations promulgated in 1813 placed the entire U.S. coast under declared blockade, except for that of New England.<sup>3</sup>*

*Because New England was hostile to "Mr. Madison's War" and because the region remained a source of essential foodstuffs and goods for the Canadian provinces, British officials exempted its maritime communities (save Boston) from formal blockade. This policy of benign neglect came to an end when Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane assumed command of the North American Station in April 1814. Wishing to eliminate any economic advantage the United States gained from the neutral and licensed trade operating out of Yankee ports, Cochrane extended the blockade to include New England on 25 April. As the following documents reveal, the economic pain of this measure was felt both north and south of the U.S.-Canadian border.<sup>4</sup>*

1. See *British and Foreign State Papers, 1812–1814, Vol. 1, Part 2, p. 1345.*

2. For the text of this Order in Council, issued on 13 October 1812, see *ibid.*, pp. 1346–48.

3. The British ministry announced the blockade on 26 December 1812 and Admiral Sir John B. Warren issued a proclamation to this effect on 6 February 1813. Warren extended this blockade in three successive proclamations on 26 May, 1 September, and 16 November 1813. For the text of these documents, see *ibid.*, pp. 1360–65.

4. For two contrasting analyses of the British blockade, see Dudley, *Splintering the Wooden Wall*, and Arthur, *How Britain Won the War of 1812.*

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 29

Asia, Bermuda  
25th. April 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that obtaining a knowledge of the Enemy having received



his supplies for the equipment of his Navy (which since the Blockade of the Southern and Western Ports have been established at New York and the Ports in the Eastern States) by the Neutral Trade carried on with the Northern States of America, and of the executive Government having in a great measure failed in obtaining Supplies for carrying on the War and principally depending upon the Revenue collected upon Cargos of Neutrals trading with the Eastern Ports, will be obliged, in a short time from motives of necessity to take off the present Embargo, and will more fully appear by the enclosed Copy of a Report taken from a Philadelphia paper of the 7th. Instant;<sup>1</sup> and as their Line of Battle Ships, Frigates and Sloops, building in the now blockaded Ports are in great forwardness, joined to a number of Privateers that have been fitted and are now refitting for Sea— I have judged it of national importance to extend the Blockade to all the other Ports to the Eastward of Long Island, not hitherto under blockade, which I shall take care to enforce de facto by placing a sufficient number of Ships before those Ports.

I enclose a Copy of the Order of Blockade and a Copy of my Arrangement for effecting the same. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane  
Vice Admiral and  
Commander in Chief

P.S. I have communicated information of this Blockade to the Ministers of Foreign Powers in Amity with Great Britain, residing at Washington also to the Colonies of His Majesty and those of his Allies in the West Indies.

A. C.

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 40–41.

1. This report, reproduced below, may have been copied from the 7 April 1814 edition of Philadelphia's *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*.

[Enclosure]

The Committee of Foreign relations, to whom was referred the Message of the President of the 31st. March<sup>1</sup> submits to the House the following—

### Report

Taking into consideration the great importance of the measures recommended, the Committee think it a duty which they owe to the House and the Nation, to state the grounds on which their report is founded. Uniting with the executive in all the policy of these measures they wish to explain the reasons which have produced that union—

Of the past it is unnecessary to take a review, the attention of the Committee is drawn with more solicitude to the future—

Previous to the late changes in Europe the bearing of our restrictive measures was for the most part confined to our Enemies, the obstruction to our commercial

intercourse with the friendly powers of the World being in a manner insuperable. At present a prospect exists of an extended commercial Intercourse with them, highly important to both parties, and which it may be presumed they will find an equal interest and disposition to promote. Denmark, all Germany, and Holland, heretofore under the double restraint of internal regulation and external blockades and depredations from a Commerce with the United States, appears by late events to be liberated therefrom.

Like changes equally favorable to the Commerce of this Country appear to be taking place in Italy and the more extreme parts of the Mediterranean. With respect to Spain and Portugal, in the commerce with whom the United States have great Interest, it may be expected, that commerce may be carried on without the aid heretofore afforded to the Enemy. Should peace take place between France and her Enemies, including Great Britain the Commerce of the United States with France will fall under the same remarks—

The considerations of an internal nature which urge a repeal of these Acts, at this time, are not less forcible, than those which have been already stated— Among these are the following[.] The Committee are persuaded that it will considerably augment the public revenue, and thereby maintain the public Credit; that it will enhance the price and promote the circulation of our produce, in lieu of Specie, which has of late, become so much the object of Speculations tending to embarrass the Government.

Monday 4th. April

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 42–43.

1. In this message, Madison recommended the repeal of both the embargo and non-importation laws. See Madison to Congress, 31 March 1814, in Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 7, p. 400. Earlier in the month, Secretary of the Navy Jones had pressed Madison to take this very step. See Jones to Madison, 9 and 17 March 1814, *ibid.*, pp. 355–58 and 373–74.

[Enclosure]

Distribution of His Majestys Ships and Vessels for the Blockade of the Eastern ports of the United States.

	Ships	Guns
New York	<i>Saturn</i>	razee
	<i>Belvidera</i>	38
	two Sloops	
Long Island Sound to Nantucket	<i>Superb</i>	74
	<i>La Hogue</i>	74
	<i>Maidstone</i>	36
	<i>Endymion</i>	38
	<i>Nimrod</i>	18
	<i>Sylph</i>	18
Nantucket to the boundary	<i>Bulwark</i>	74
	<i>Ramillies</i>	74

Line of New	<i>Nymph</i>	38
Brunswick	<i>Junon</i>	38
	<i>Tenedos</i>	38
	with four Sloops of War.—	
	—Another frigate to be added in a few days	

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane

DS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 44.

[Enclosure]

BY *the Honorable Sir ALEXANDER COCHRANE, Knight of the Bath, Vice Admiral of the Red Squadron of his Majesty's Fleet, and Commander in Chief of his Majesty's Ships and Vessels employed and to be employed in the River St. Lawrence, and along the Coast of Nova Scotia, the Islands of Anticosti, Madelaine, St. John and Cape Breton, the Bay of Fundy, and at and about Bermuda or Somers' Islands, the Bahama Islands, and the Gulph of Mexico, to the Tropic of Cancer, &c. &c. &c.*

#### A PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS Admiral the Right Honorable Sir JOHN BORLASE WARREN did, by the virtue of the Power and Authority to him given, by his Proclamation bearing date at Halifax the sixteenth day of November 1813, declare that not only the Ports and Harbors of the *Chesapeake, Delaware, New York, Charleston, Port Royal, Savannah*, and the *River Mississippi*, in the United States of America, were and still continued in a state of Blockade, but also all that part of *Long Island Sound*, being the Sea Coast lying within *Montuck-Point* and the Point of land opposite thereto, commonly called *Black Point*; together with all the Ports, Harbors, Creeks, and Entrances of the *North and East Rivers of New York*, as well as all other the Ports, Creeks and Bays along the Sea Coast of *Long Island* and the State of *New York*, and all the Ports, Harbors, Rivers and Creeks lying and being on the Sea Coasts of the States of *East and West Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Lower Countries on the Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia*, and all the Entrances from the Sea into the said *River Mississippi*, were blockaded:— And whereas since the institution of the said Blockade, the Enemy availing himself of the supplies which have been furnished by means of Neutral Communication to those Ports and Places of the said United States which were left open and unrestricted, hath already fitted out numerous Vessels of War, and is now engaged in constructing and setting forth several Ships of the Line, as well as Frigates and other armed Vessels, for the purpose of prosecuting the War with Great Britain, and frustrating the object of the said Blockade:—

I DO, therefore, by virtue of the Power and Authority in me vested, declare, in addition to the said Ports and Places blockaded as aforesaid, all the remaining Ports, Harbors, Bays, Creeks, Rivers, Inlets, Outlets, Islands and Sea Coasts of the said United States of America, from the Point of Land commonly called *Black Point* to the Northern and Eastern Boundaries between the said *United States* and the *British Province of New Brunswick in America*, to be in a state of strict and rigorous Blockade. And I do further declare that I have stationed off the Ports and

Places, herein before mentioned, a Naval Force adequate to maintain the said Blockade in the most rigorous and effective manner. And I do hereby require the respective Flag Officers, Captains, Commanders and Commanding Officers of his Majesty's Ships and Vessels employed and to be employed on the *North American Station*, and all others whom it may concern, to pay the strictest regard and attention to the execution of this Proclamation. And I do caution and forbid the Ships and Vessels of all and every Nation in Peace and Amity with the Crown of Great Britain, from entering or attempting to enter, or from coming out or attempting to come out of any of the said Ports, Harbors, Bays, Creeks, Inlets, Outlets, Islands, and Sea Coasts, after due Notification of the said Blockade, under any pretence whatsoever: And that no person may hereafter plead ignorance of this Proclamation, I have caused the same to be published.

GIVEN under my hand at BERMUDA, the 25th Day of APRIL, 1814.

ALEXANDER COCHRANE.

TO

*The Respective Flag Officers, Captains, Commanders, and Commanding Officers of his Majesty's Ships and Vessels, employed and to be employed on the North American Station, and all whom it may concern.*

BY COMMAND OF THE VICE ADMIRAL,  
WILLIAM BALHETCHET, *Secretary*.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

Printed, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 45. Docketed on reverse: "Order of Blockade."

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Halifax 14th. May 1814

Sir/

Great apprehensions being entertained by the Merchants of this place that their interest will be very materially affected by the Proclamation lately issued by your Excellency declaring All the Ports &c. of the United States to be in a state of rigorous Blockade, I have the honor to transmit the Copy of a Petition which has by them been submitted to me on this occasion, And have to request that you will do me the favor to inform me as speedily as possible whether Vessels licensed by me to carry Articles enumerated in the Prince Regents<sup>1</sup> Orders in Council & in the manner therein specified, will under the existing Circumstances be permitted to enter any, & if so, which of the Ports of the United States.— I have further to remark that if some indulgence of this kind be not granted, I fear our Army in the Canadas will suffer very much from the want of flour.— I have the honor to be, Sir/ Your most obedt. humble Servt.

J. C. Sherbrooke.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 98–99.

1. George Augustus Frederick served as prince regent of the United Kingdom during the period of the incapacitation of his father, George III, by mental illness.

[Enclosure]

To His Excellency Sir John Coape Sherbrooke Knight of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief in and over His Majesty's Province of Nova Scotia, and its Dependencies, and to the Honorable His Majesty's Council.—

The Petition of the Subscribers, Merchants and Inhabitants of Halifax in the Province of Nova Scotia. Humbly Sheweth

That your Petitioners being extensively engaged in the British, and West India trade have, for some time past, derived great advantage from the sale of British Merchandize, and West India produce, for exportation to the United States. That the British Government deeming it adviseable to encourage such Trade, His Royal Highness the Prince Regent on the 13th. day of October 1812 (the same day that War was declared against the United States,) by an order in Council, issued under the Authority of an Act of Parliament, did authorize the Lieut. Governor of this Province, to grant Licences to export, in any Ship or vessel, (not belonging to France or the Subjects thereof) to any Port belonging to the United States of America from which British Ships are excluded, any goods, wares or merchandize being the growth produce or manufacture of the United Kingdom of Great Britain or Ireland, or any of the British Colonies Plantations or Settlements in the West Indies, upon proof being made that such articles had been legally imported into the Port of Halifax in British vessels, and also to grant Licences to import certain enumerated Articles in any Ship or vessel except as aforesaid from the United States of America into this Province notwithstanding the present hostilities, no exception of Blockaded Ports being made in the said order.

That your Petitioners since the commencement of Hostilities, have derived great advantage from an intercourse with the United States, under such Licences, to which Country they have exported large quantities of British Merchandize, and West India produce, and received in Return Flour, Bread, Naval Stores and Specie, That in the full expectation of such trade being allowed in future under Licences, and not contemplating the event of a total blockade of the Coast of America, they ordered very large quantities of British Merchandize (entirely calculated for the American Market) to be shipped from England, the arrival of which they expect dailey, Your Petitioners further beg leave to state, that His Royal Highness the Prince Regent to facilitate the sale and disposal of Prize Goods brought into this Port by His Majesty's Cruizers, was pleased by his orders in Council of the 2d. day of November last to authorize and empower the Lieutenant Governor of this Province, to grant Licences to export Prize Goods to the Ports of the United States, without any exception of Blockaded Ports, altho at the time of passing such order a great part of the American Coast was known to be in a state of strict and rigorous blockade. That from all these circumstances your Petitioners being induced to beleive that the trade would be continued under Licences during the War have made their commercial arrangements accordingly.

That they have lately seen the Proclamation issued by Sir Alexander Cochrane Commander in Chief on the North American Station establishing a strict & rigorous blockade of the whole coast of the United States of America, and beg leave to state, that if such blockade shall operate to exclude British Goods under Licences from being imported into the United States, the most ruinous consequences will result to them, and their commercial designs formed on the firm belief that those Licences would still be respected, and that it was the policy and intention of His Majesty's Govern[*m*]ent to encourage such trade, will be entirely defeated.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your Excellency and Honors will take this subject, of so much importance to their private interests, as well as to the trade of Great Britain into your most serious consideration, and that you will endeavor to devise some method of preventing the very serious evil which will undoubtedly arise, if your Excellency's Licences shall not have any effect in protecting the Trade hitherto carried on with the United States And as in duty bound they will ever Pray

Halifax 12th. May 1814.

(Signed—)  
Chs. Hill & Co.<sup>1</sup>

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 100–101.

1. Only the first of the 70 signatures on this petition is reproduced here.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Halifax 18th. May 1814.

Sir/

I was yesterday honoured with your Excellencys letter of the 25th. Ultimo Covering the Copy of a Proclamation you had issued declaring the whole of the Ports of the United States to be in a state of strict & rigorous Blockade.—

The Memorial addressed to me a few days ago by the Merchants of Halifax on this subject (a Copy of which I sent to Rear Adml. Griffith with my request that he would forward it to your Excellency) will have fully explained to you in what manner the measure you have adopted is likely to affect the Commercial interests of this Province.— In addition to the representations made by them It becomes my duty to inform you that the Forces employed in the Canadas (And I have reason to believe a great part of the population of those Provinces) are very much in want of Flour And I had hoped that on the repeal of the American Embargo Law I should have been enabled thro' the medium of Licences to have supplied them with that & other necessary Articles enumerated in the Prince Regents Orders in Council from the United States.— This the Proclamation your Excellency has lately issued will prevent, unless its effects can in some way be modified, Or that some other method can be devised for supplying the Canadas with Flour.— As this is a matter of a very considerable importance at this moment I have taken the

liberty of drawing your Excellency's attention to it And have the honor to be with great respect Sir/ your most Obedient & Very humble Servant

J. C. Sherbrooke.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 106–7.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE

Bermuda 30th. May 1814.

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's Letter of the 14th. instant, transmitting to me a Copy of a Petition which has been submitted to your Excellency by the Merchants of Halifax, stating the great apprehensions they entertain of their Interests being very materially affected by the Proclamation I issued on the 25th. ulto. declaring all the Ports &ca. of the United States to be in a state of rigorous blockade: and in compliance with your Excellency's request, that I will inform you as speedily as possible whether vessels licensed by your Excellency to carry Articles enumerated in the Prince Regent's Orders in Council, and in the manner therein specified will, under the existing circumstances be permitted to enter any, and if so which of the Ports of the United States, I lose no time in communicating to your Excellency that it will at all times give me pain when obliged by my Official Situation to act in any way contrary to the wishes of the merchants of Nova Scotia, whose prosperity I have most sincerely at heart, and I trust that the course I found myself obliged to pursue, by extending the Blockade over the northern Ports of the United States, however much it may affect the Interest of a few, must ultimately tend to the future safety and advantage of British America at large.

When the order of Council was framed bearing date the 13th. of October 1812, there was not that extension of Commerce, which now happily prevails with the Ports of Europe, every means was resorted to, for the purpose of forcing, the introduction of British manufactures into the foreign markets, The Governmen[t] of the United States being over confident in their own internal resources imposed a General Embargo, with other restrictions on Commerce: after a short time finding themselves deceived in their expectations, and failing in their loans to enable them to prosecute the war have thought proper to repeal those Laws, and to grant a full greater extension to Trade than what was permitted previous to their restrictive System. Your Excellency will perceive that they do not disguise their reasons for so doing, they publicly avow that it is to collect a revenue, all means having failed in raising money by loans and otherwise. As it is obvious that this Revenue is intended to enable them to carry on the war against Canada, it must therefore be equally clear that it is the Interest of Great Britain to prevent by every possible means, their deriving that advantage, which they must do, if their Ports of the Northern States are left open to the neutral Trade. The views of the executive Government of the United States

are not limited to the Canadas, if they fall new Brunswick and Nova Scotia must soon follow, it therefore becomes the Interest of all those attached to the mother Country, to make a partial sacrifice of a temporary advantage to ensure their future security: and I have every confidence in the patriotism of the Gentlemen who signed the memorial to Your Excellency, that upon due consideration, they will view the institution of a General Blockade as a salutary measure, calculated to distress the Enemy, and for the permanent security of the British Colonies. When Government committed to my Predecessor the power to place the ports of the United States in a state of strict Blockade, this must have been one of the objects they had in contemplation. The neutral Powers would have a just reason to complain if their vessels were prevented from entering the Blockaded Ports when a licensed British Trade was permitted from the British Colonies, this would be a measure novel in the extreme, and in opposition to any System hitherto observed in like cases. That Your Excellency may be aware how far it is from being approved by His Majesty's Government, I send you a Copy of a letter written by Command of the Lords of the Council to the Secretary of the Admiralty, requesting in consequence of permission having been given Rear Admiral Cockburn for a vessel to pass a blockaded Port, that directions be given to all officers Commanding Blockading Squadrons on no account to grant such permission. On these grounds my present opinion is, that no licensed Trade can be carried on with the Ports of the United States. In order to prevent as much as possible any loss that might arise to merchants shipping Cargoes in England for the United States upon the ground of the discontinuance of the Embargo, I dispatched a vessel of War express to England, the day after I ordered the Blockade, and the information of my having resorted to this measure must have reached England, before any positive assurance could have been communicated, that the restrictive System had been abolished.

I trust Your Excellency's fear of the army in Canada wanting Flour will be removed, at present there does not appear any deficiency, several vessels have been brought in here, laden with that article, and the Commissary is not purchasing although it has been offered to him, at a much cheaper rate, than he could have bought it for some months past, the spirit of risk which has evinced itself among the American trading Vessels to run at all hazards, leads me to hope the captured Cargoes, will be fully adequate to every demand of the Army in Canada independent of what I presume has been sent from England.<sup>1</sup> I have the honor to be &c.

A. Cochrane

LB, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 68–70.

1. In a second letter dated 30 May, Cochrane responded directly to Sherbrooke's letter of 18 May (reproduced above) expressing concern that the blockade would result in flour shortages for the British army. "I have not the least apprehension the army in British North America will experience any want of Flour from my adopting this measure," Cochrane wrote. He reassured Sherbrooke that "His Majesty's Government . . . [would] doubtless, take precaution[s] to remove any ill consequences which might arise from this General Blockade." See Cochrane to Sherbrooke, 30 May 1814, *ibid.*, p. 67.



## PRESIDENT MADISON'S PROCLAMATION ON THE BRITISH BLOCKADE

[Washington, DC, 29 June 1814]

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.  
A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas it is manifest that the blockade, which has been proclaimed by the enemy, of the whole Atlantic coast of the United States, nearly two thousand miles in extent, and abounding in ports, harbors and navigable inlets, cannot be carried into effect by any adequate force actually stationed for the purpose; and it is rendered a matter of certainty and notoriety, by the multiplied and daily arrivals and departures of the public and private armed vessels of the United States, and of other vessels, that no such adequate force has been so stationed: And whereas a blockade thus destitute of the character of a regular and legal blockade, as defined and recognized by the established law of nations, whatever other purposes it may be made to answer, forms no lawful prohibition or obstacle to such neutral and friendly vessels as may choose to visit and trade with the United States; And whereas it accords with the interest and the amicable views of the United States, to favor and promote, as far as may be, the free and mutually beneficial commercial intercourse of all friendly nations disposed to engage therein, and, with that view, to afford to their vessels destined to the United States, a more positive and satisfactory security against all interruptions, molestations, or vexations whatever, from the cruizers of the United States: Now be it known, That I, James Madison, President of the United States of America, do, by this my Proclamation, strictly order and instruct all the public armed vessels of the United States, and all private armed vessels commissioned as privateers, or with letters of marque and reprisal, not to interrupt, detain, or otherwise molest or vex, any vessels whatever belonging to neutral powers, or the subjects or citizens thereof, which vessels shall be actually bound and proceeding to any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States; but, on the contrary, to render to all such vessels all the aid and kind offices which they may need or require.

Given under my hand and the seal of the United States, at the city of Washington, the twenty-ninth day of June, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fourteen, and of the independence of the U. States, the thirty-eighth.

JAMES MADISON.

*By the President,*JAMES MONROE,  
*Secretary of State.*

Printed, *Daily National Intelligencer*, 30 June 1814. The draft manuscript copy of this document is reproduced in Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 7, pp. 597–98.

## Exit William Jones

*In his two-year tenure as Secretary of the Navy, William Jones brought energy, direction, and a strategic vision to the guidance of American naval affairs.<sup>1</sup> Despite significant bureaucratic, financial, and political constraints, he had overseen the rapid expansion of the Navy, directed offensive operations on the oceans and the nation's inland seas, and initiated administrative reforms to improve the organization and running of the Navy Department. By the spring of 1814, growing personal financial difficulties compelled Jones to relinquish his management of the department. He departed office on 1 December, leaving behind a record of solid accomplishment, but without a successor to assume the reins of command in the department's affairs.<sup>2</sup>*

1. Madison offered Jones the appointment of Navy Secretary on 12 January 1813; Jones accepted two days later. See Madison to Jones, 12 January 1813, and, Jones to Madison, 14 January 1814, Madison, Papers, Vol. 6, pp. 570–72, and, 582–83. Jones arrived in Washington to take up his new post on 23 January. See Jones to Eleanor Jones, 23 January 1813, Dudley, Naval War of 1812, Vol. 2, pp. 34–35.

2. For documents on Madison's search for a new Secretary of the Navy, see pp. 711–17.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON

Dear Sir

Circumstances over which I have no controul having coerced a determination on my part to retire from the honorable station in which your confidence and good will had placed me, it is proper that I should apprise you of my intention in anticipation of that event though I shall not intimate my design to others. I shall endeavour to remain at my post if possible until the next meeting of Congress unless it shall accord with your convenience and views sooner to appoint a successor.

In the mean time I shall sedulously employ every hour which can be abstracted from the current duties of the Deptmt. during a period of great activity and responsibility in preparing and arranging the various matters required by the resolutions of Congress and of the Committees, as well as to facilitate the future business of the Department as much as may be in my power.

Having never deprecated responsibility for honest measures on any other ground than my inability to fulfil the public expectations, I trust you will believe me when I declare that nothing but the purest attachment to the independence honor and welfare of our happy country and its inestimable institutions, for the maintenance of which we are engaged in a war more just and ineventable than even that of our glorious revolution, could have prevailed upon me to accept the appointment with which you have honored me.

Every motive of private interest convenience prudence and settled social habits, urged me to remain in private life; but the same indignant feelings which impelled me, not to the "tented field," but to the frozen untented heights of Princeton, Pluckamin, and Morristown,<sup>1</sup> when but just turned of fifteen prompted the acceptance of my present situation, with the hope of doing some good until an honorable peace should again bless our land; beyond which I never contemplated to remain in office; and I will not now deny myself the pleasure of anticipating that epoch within the limited period I have prescribed to myself.

Accept sir the honest assurance of my sincere respect and warm personal regard, the influence of which persuades me that my personal welfare may not be indifferent to you and that I may venture without intrusion to make a candid exposition of my situation which will prove to you the inevitable necessity for the determination I have formed.

I am poor, Sir—nay more I am embarrassed by the result of my mercantile affairs which the untoward events of the last five years have reversed from a state of approximate independence to an inability to meet my obligations, but by time industry and the favorable conversion of the property I possess. I am no speculator—my labours have been directed to the honest pursuit of regular commerce.

Early in the year 1808 I return[*ed*] from India with a fine new ship which cost \$47,000. one half of which I owned and with merchandize on my own account amounting to \$120,000. three fourths of which being in Indigo imported for European consumption was of course useless during the Embargo, and on the repeal of that measure the rigours of the continental system and the belligerent depredations were such as to preclude exportation on such terms as prudence could justify.

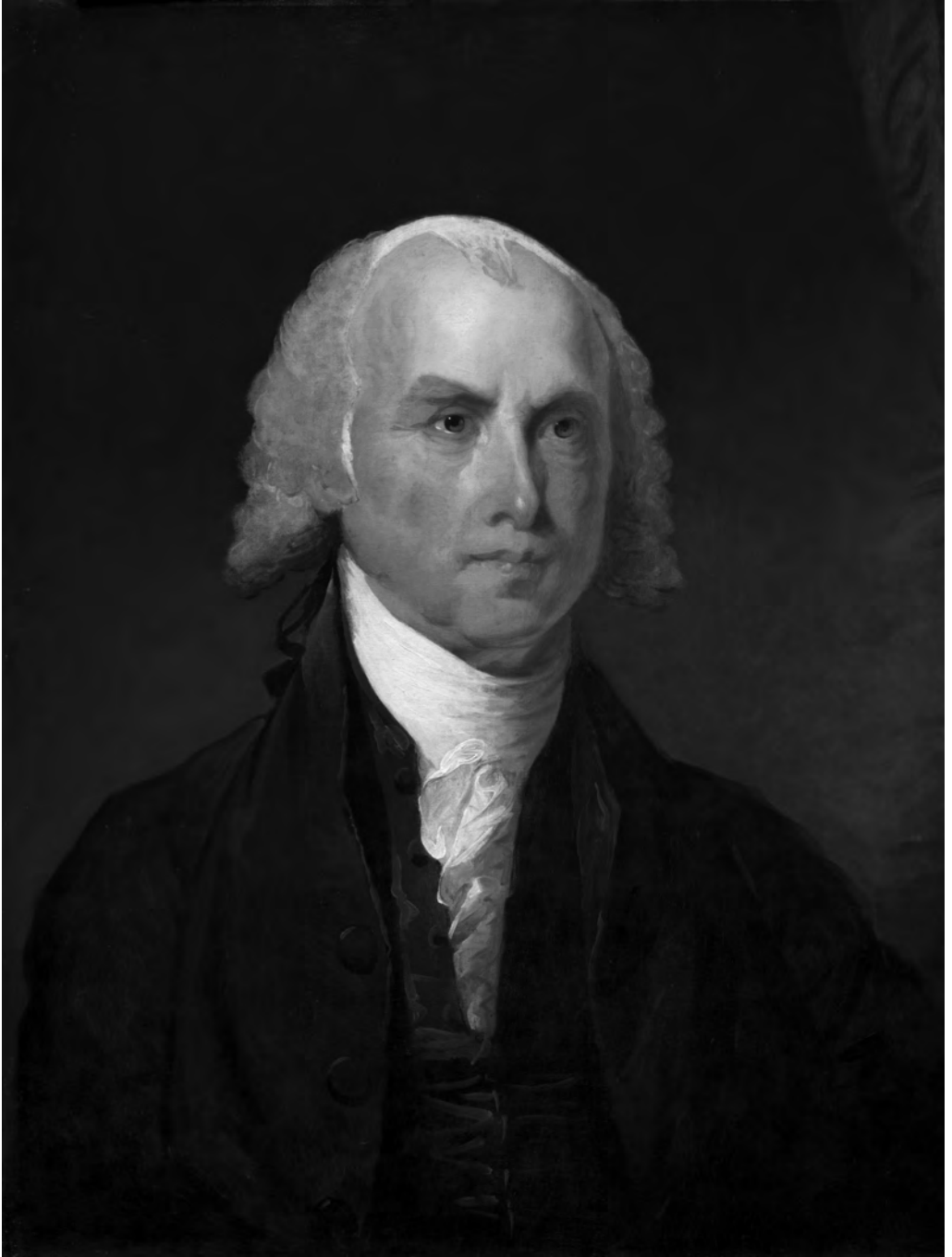
Thus this property remained at a heavy expense until June 1811. when I shipped it to Archangel whence it was transported 800 miles by land to St Petersburg where the menaced invasion by the French suspended all sales and finally compelled my agent to fly for safety with my property to Vienna!! Here a dilatory and unprofitable sale wound up by unforeseen losses of exchange and intolerable charges, produced an unfortunate result which was ascertained but a few months since. In the meantime my fine ship was sold for one half her cost. Thus have I suffered more by the restrictive system than any person within my knowledge; yet will I never regret the zeal and fidelity with which I have supported that system so long as the state of the world gave effect to its operations. The pecuniary sacrifice I shall have made during my official existence though under present circumstances of great and inconvenient magnitude to me, I shall never regret, if my services shall have been useful to my country and satisfactory to you—a consummation which with very moderate talents and heart ill at ease, I can scarcely flatter myself.

What course I shall pursue, whether commerce manufactures or other objects of private industry is uncertain, yet I trust with a reputation unsullied and the general good will of the community where I am known, to maintain whatever private standing I may have acquired. You will pardon this egotism and believe that in whatever situation I may be placed, my grateful sense of your kind confidence and earnest prayers for your happiness shall not cease.

W Jones  
April 25. 1814.

ALS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series, Roll No. 16. This letter is also printed in Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 7, pp. 437–39.

1. A reference to the Battle of Princeton fought on 3 January 1777; Pluckemin, New Jersey, site of a two-day encampment of Washington's Continental Army; and Morristown, New Jersey, site of the American army's winter quarters in 1777. See Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 7, p. 439, note 2.



*James Madison*

## PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Dear Sir,

I have before me your letter of yesterday. At the communication it makes I can not but feel the sincerest regret; which is much heightened by the considerations which produced it. The nature of these forbids any effort to divert you from your purpose, especially as it is qualified by the interval in carrying it into effect. All that I ought to hope is that if a continuance of the war should call for services so difficult to be found some removal of the pressure of unfavorable circumstances may justify you in prolonging yours. Whatever may happen I can not let the present occasion pass without expressing the gratification I have experienced in the entire fulfilment of my expectations, large as they were, from your talents & exertions, and from all those personal qualities which harmonize official & sweeten social intercourse. To these assurances permit me to add my best wishes for your success in every thing that may conduce to your prosperity & happiness

J. M  
April.. [26] 1814

AC, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1, Roll No. 16. For another printed version of this letter, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 7, pp. 439–40.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON

Private

Dear Sir

The determination which I was compelled to form and communicate to you on the 25th of April last<sup>1</sup> has acquired irresistible confirmation by all the circumstances attending my private affairs since that period. The enclosed letter<sup>2</sup> (received yesterday) is submitted to your inspection to show that the only remaining hope I had of alleviation has vanished. The first paragraph of the letter from Ghent may give later information than any you have from that place. It is now obligatory on me to meet and make some compromise with those who hold or are bound for my obligations and by my personal exertions to make the best disposition of the property I hold trusting to better times and future industry for that relief which my labours and my principles I trust have merited.

I therefore respectfully enclose the tender of my resignation of the office of Secretary of the Navy the acceptance of which you will if you shall deem it expedient postpone until the first day of December next unless you shall sooner please to designate my successor. Mere abstract poverty is nothing—but sensibly alive to those principles of integrity and punctuality which have guided my whole life, the inability to meet my engagements and to avert the inconvenience & possible loss which may accrue to those who are immediately liable for my obligations is painful in the extreme. My own afflictions are rendered still more poignant by

the contemplation of the savage warfare now waging against our beloved country, and my inability to serve her under the irresistible embarrassments of my private affairs. Accept Sir the warm assurances of my sincere respect & regard and best wishes for your health & happiness

W Jones  
Sept. 11th. 1814

ALS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1, Roll No. 16. For another printed version of this letter, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, pp. 203–4.

1. See Jones to Madison, 25 April 1814.
2. Enclosure not found. The letter referred to was likely penned by John Ecky of Philadelphia. See Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, p. 204, note 1.

[Enclosure]

Navy Department  
Sept. 11th. 1814

Dear Sir

The circumstances connected with my private affairs which induced me to explain to you on the 25th. April last the necessity I should be under of resigning the honorable trust which I hold, shortly after the ensuing meeting of Congress, having acquired irresistible strength by the lapse of time, I now respectfully tender to you my resignation of the office of Secretary of the Navy, the acceptance of which is subject to your decision at any time between this and the first day of December next. With earnest solicitude for the Independence and happiness of our beloved country— for the honor and prosperity of your administration, and for your personal health and felicity. I am very respectfully and Sincerely your  
obdt Servt

W Jones

ALS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1, Roll No. 16. For another printed version of this letter, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, pp. 204–5.

## Jacob Lewis Polices Privateers

*Naval officers such as Jacob Lewis, the commander of the New York Flotilla, often got involved in non-naval issues because the lines between civilian and military jurisdiction were often muddled. Lewis intervened in a mutinous situation onboard a privateer in New York harbor only to learn that the laws governing private armed vessels differed from naval laws. Secretary Jones often requested legal advice from Attorney General Richard Rush.*

CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir

I have to inform you that a serious mutiny took place In this Harbour, on board the private armed Schooner *Harrison* of Baltimore, The Crew had risen upon thire offi[c]ers and endeavoured to run away with the Vessel, also beat the offi[c]ers and threatened thire lives—

The Commander call'd on me for assistance I order'd SM. Jones<sup>1</sup> with twelve armed men, to go on board and endeavor to suppress the mutiny the Crew resisted and after several attempts to get possession of the Vessel he was obliged to return without [being<sup>2</sup>] able to Execute the order, one of the ri[n]gleaders snapped a musket pointed at SM. Jones [breast<sup>2</sup>], finding the mutiny so serious I hawled 47.<sup>2</sup> within twenty yards of the Vessel In a few moments two more of the flotilla were on thire way from the Hook<sup>3</sup> with all the voters on board for the Election they Came to my assistance,

I was soon enabled to reduce the mutiny without bloodshed I took out the ring leaders & restored the Command of the Vessel to the Capt.—

these men are Confined on board 47 I have applied to Capt. Evans to recieve them & he declines—<sup>4</sup>

The Charges and Specifications are made out with the View of bringing them to Trial by Court Marshall enclosed you have a Copy of my application [to] Capt. Evans also Copy of his answer—<sup>5</sup>

There is no possibility of keeping these men on board 47— I believe three of them ought & will be hanged if they are brought to trial, unless some examples are made in such Cases we shall hear of frequent serious Consequences on board private armed Vessels— the ringleader[s] appear to be Irishmen & Englishmen—

I shall wait axiously for your instructions for my Govt. I have the honor To assure of my high Consr. & Respt.

J Lewis

47. New Yk. 30th. Apl. 1814

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 130 (M124, Roll No. 62).

1. Possibly Sailing Master Daniel Jones, who had served at New York since he received his warrant on 8 May 1812.

2. New York Flotilla gunboat *No. 47*.

3. Sandy Hook.

4. Samuel Evans to Jacob Lewis, 28 April 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 124 (M124, Roll No. 62).

5. Lewis's letter to Evans was not found. See above footnote 4 for Evans's response.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Commo. Jacob Lewis  
U.S. Flotilla New York

Navy Department  
May 7th. 1814

Sir

Your letter, of the 30th. ulto. and the enclosures accompanying it, are received.—

This Department can take no cognizance, nor incur any expense on account of persons charged with the Commission of offences on board private armed vessels of the United States, until the charges and specifications are regularly exhibited to it with a request for a Court Martial by those against whom the offences have been committed.— It was therefore a work of supererogation to incur the expense and charge of the offenders until such proceedings had taken place.—

Your exertions in subduing the mutinous were exceedingly well-timed and proper, but it would have been better to have secured them on board the Privateer<sup>1</sup> under the charge of the Commander until the regular course had been pursued. Indeed the law has made no provision whatever for the sustenance and expense of prisoners of this description.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 308–9 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Private armed schooner *Harrison*.

CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Sir/

I had the honor to write you<sup>1</sup> on the subject of prisoners taken in mutiny from on board a private Armed Vessel<sup>2</sup>—having no place provided for their Security untill Trial—and not receiving any Instructions from you on the Subject<sup>3</sup>—I am Compell'd to release them, three of whom merited hanging— I have the honor to be most respectfully yr. Obt. Serv

J Lewis

N York  
9th May 1814

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 17 (M124, Roll No. 63).

1. Lewis to Jones, 30 April 1814, above.
2. Private armed schooner *Harrison*.
3. Lewis had not yet received Jones's letter of 7 May 1814, above.



## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD RUSH

Richard Rush Esqr. }  
 Attorney General of the U.S. }

Navy Department  
 May 23d. 1814

Sir,

Offences are very frequently Committed on board Private armed vessels within the jurisdiction of the United States which if committed onboard the public Ships of War of the United States would be tried and punished by a Court Martial, but as the 15 sec. of the Act of 26 June, contains a proviso “that all offenders who shall be accused of such crimes as are cognizable by a Court Martial shall be confined on board the vessel in which such offence is alleged to have been committed until her arrival at some port in the United States, or their territories; or until she shall meet with one or more of the public armed Vessels of the United States abroad, the officers of which shall be sufficient to make a Court Martial for the trial of the accused &c” it appears to me that the jurisdiction given to Naval Courts Martial by the Act of aforesaid, is limited to the trial of Offences committed on board private armed Vessels of the United States abroad.—

The frequent applications to this Department for Courts Martial for the trial of offences committed on board Private armed vessels in the Ports and Harbours of the United States, renders it extremely important that the true intent and meaning of the Act should be clearly understood by the Department, and the more so as many of the applications appear to be of a vexatious or vindictive nature, and in the cases hitherto brought before a Court martial, the charges have not been substantiated though the persons arraigned have in some cases suffered a painful imprisonment.— My veneration for the civil authority and the rights of our citizens, will plead my apology for requesting your opinion on this subject.

Some of the cases appear to be founded upon a breach of Contract— the crew refusing to proceed on the voyage, affirming that they are not bound, and the commander charging them with mutiny and disobedience of orders.— I question whether a Court martial is the proper tribunal to determine the validity of a Contract.— I am very respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 169–70 (M209, Roll No. 4).

## ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD RUSH TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Office of the Attorney general of the U. States. May 24. 1814.

Sir,

In answer to your letter of yesterday’s date I have the honor to state it as my opinion,

That, under the true meaning of the 15th section of the act of congress of the 26th of June 1812, the punishment by court martial of offences committed on

board of letters of marque is contemplated only when such offences happen out of the jurisdiction of the U. States. The reason for the distinction may probably have been, that, unless the authority of the court martial had been recognized for offences committed on board of these vessels when abroad no punishment could have followed them, it being matter of great doubt how far the common code of the United States extends to the high seas; but for all such offences as may take place on board of them while they are within the jurisdictional limits of the U.S States or their territories, the ordinary courts of law of the country are competent to afford redress. The jurisdiction of the military tribunals is not to be stretched by implication.

I am further of opinion, in answer to your second question, that a court martial can take no cognizance of the validity of a contract. I have the honor to be, very respectfully, Sir, your most obt. Sert.

Richard Rush.

ALS, DNA, RG45, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from the Attorney General of the United States Containing Legal Opinions and Advice, 1807–1825, No. 13 (M1029, Roll No. 1).

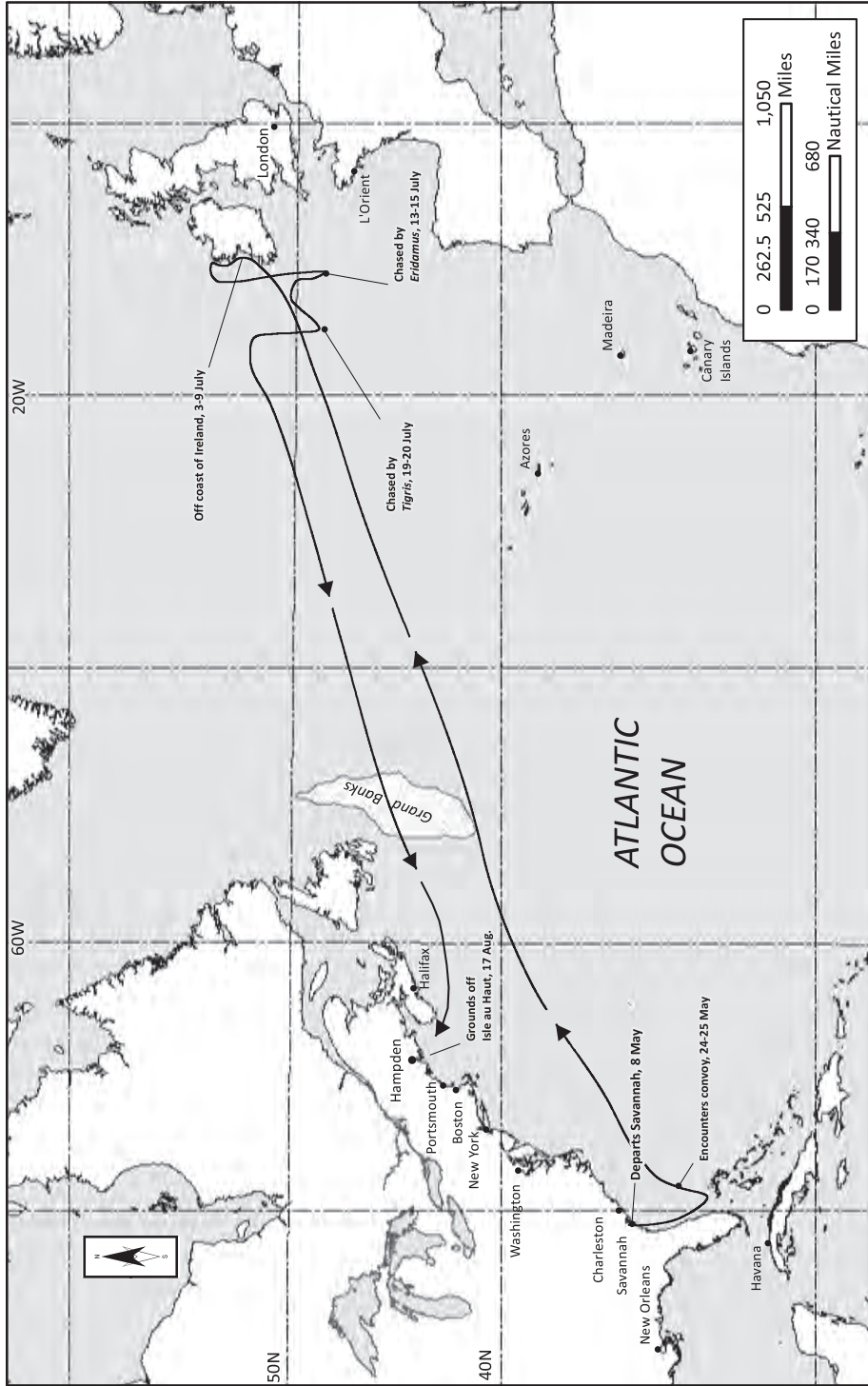
## A Cruise without Profit or Fame: *Adams Sails Again*

*Adams's first wartime cruise came to a close with the corvette's arrival off Tybee lighthouse, near the mouth of the Savannah River, on 29 April 1814. The results of the American warship's inaugural outing were disappointing. In three months at sea, Adams had managed to snare just four ships, only two of which were destroyed—hardly the telling blow Navy Secretary Jones had envisioned Adams delivering against the enemy's commerce.*

*Anxious to leave an anchorage that exposed Adams to enemy attack and eager to wage a more destructive campaign against Britannia's oceanic trade, Charles Morris hastily re-provisioned his ship and put to sea again on 8 May. But Morris's second cruise in Adams was no more successful than his first. Just two prizes were taken on the corvette's outbound passage to the western coast of Ireland. After 11 luckless weeks at sea, critical shortages of food and water, coupled with an outbreak of scurvy among his crew, compelled Morris to shape a return course for home. The decision, Morris later recalled, left all hands "greatly disappointed for . . . we were about to return from a second cruise, without either profit or fame, for which even the consciousness of honest endeavor to render service afforded us little satisfaction."<sup>1</sup>*

*After reaching soundings off the coast of Maine, Adams nearly came to a fatal end when it ran aground on a rocky island just north of Penobscot Bay. But Morris and his well-disciplined crew managed to avert disaster, refloating Adams and sailing their damaged ship up the Penobscot River to Hampden, Maine, for repairs.*

1. Morris, *Autobiography*, pp. 74–75.



Map 9. Second cruise of Adams, 8 May–18 August 1814

## CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U S.S. *Adams* off Tybee  
May 5th 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that by the very great exertions of the officers and crew of this ship, she is now ready to proceed on another cruise as soon as the wind comes fair—

The distance from which every article was obtained—, 20 miles, ~~has~~ delayed us considerably—

The Agent<sup>1</sup> has been uncommonly attentive but after every exertion, and taking from the prize Brig<sup>2</sup> all her provisions, we have only ninety days provisions on board—

The time necessary to receive any communication from the Department, the exposed situation of this ship at her Present Anchorage, and the belief that the Department desire the active employment of our small force, are my reasons for proceeding on another cruise without your Particular direction— A sense of duty alone induces me to remain in this ship without a pressing application for removal, for I assure you sir she is not a desirable command—

The following are the outlines of the cruise I propose to make unless prevented by some accident— To remain near the outlet of the Gulf between Cape Cainaverel and Maranilla<sup>3</sup> till after the passage of the Jamaica fleet which will pass between the 15th. & 25th. From thence along the southern edge of the Bank of Newfoundland, and then to the west coasts of England Ireland and Scotland— Here I hope to procure provisions, and as my success on that particular will govern my subsequent movements, I have formed no present plan for them— I shall however endeavor to return to some northern port—

As this varies but little from a cruise formerly approved by you I hope it may yet meet your approbation— Very respectfully your Obd. Servt.

C: Morris.

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 17 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. Archibald S. Bulloch.

2. H.M. brig-sloop *Epervier* captured by U.S. sloop of war *Peacock* on 29 April 1814. For documents relating to this engagement, see pp. 105, 107–9, and 111–14.

3. Matanilla Shoal, the Bahamas.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS

Captain Charles Morris }  
U S Ship *Adams* }  
Savannah }

Navy Department  
May 9th. 1814.—

Sir

I have received your letters of the 29th. and 30th. Ulto.,<sup>1</sup> and though I do not expect this will find you, I take the bare chance of its doing so.

Your account of the Ship is less favorable than I had hoped to have received, but I trust she makes up in velocity in light winds or free from the wind, what she may be deficient close hauled against a head sea; and as the approaching season will favour her best qualities, you will replenish your stores as fully and perfectly as possible, and run immediately for a cruising ground to the eastward of the Grand Bank, so as to avoid the fogs, and cruise in the latitude of Cape North (which the Ships bound to Quebec and Newfoundland run for) as long as your resources will last.—

On this ground you will meet with transports and dry Goods Ships an extraordinary number of which are expected out this Season— not a moment however must be lost in gaining this ground, as the months of may and June, is the time to intercept those Ships, particularly the transports with troops.

When you return to the United States (and you will return from absolute necessity alone) you will endeavour to enter New York or the Delaware in preference to a port further East.

Wishing you an honorable and prosperous Cruise I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, p. 137 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. See pp. 69–70.

#### CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Hampden Augt. 22nd 1814  
U S.S. *Adams*.

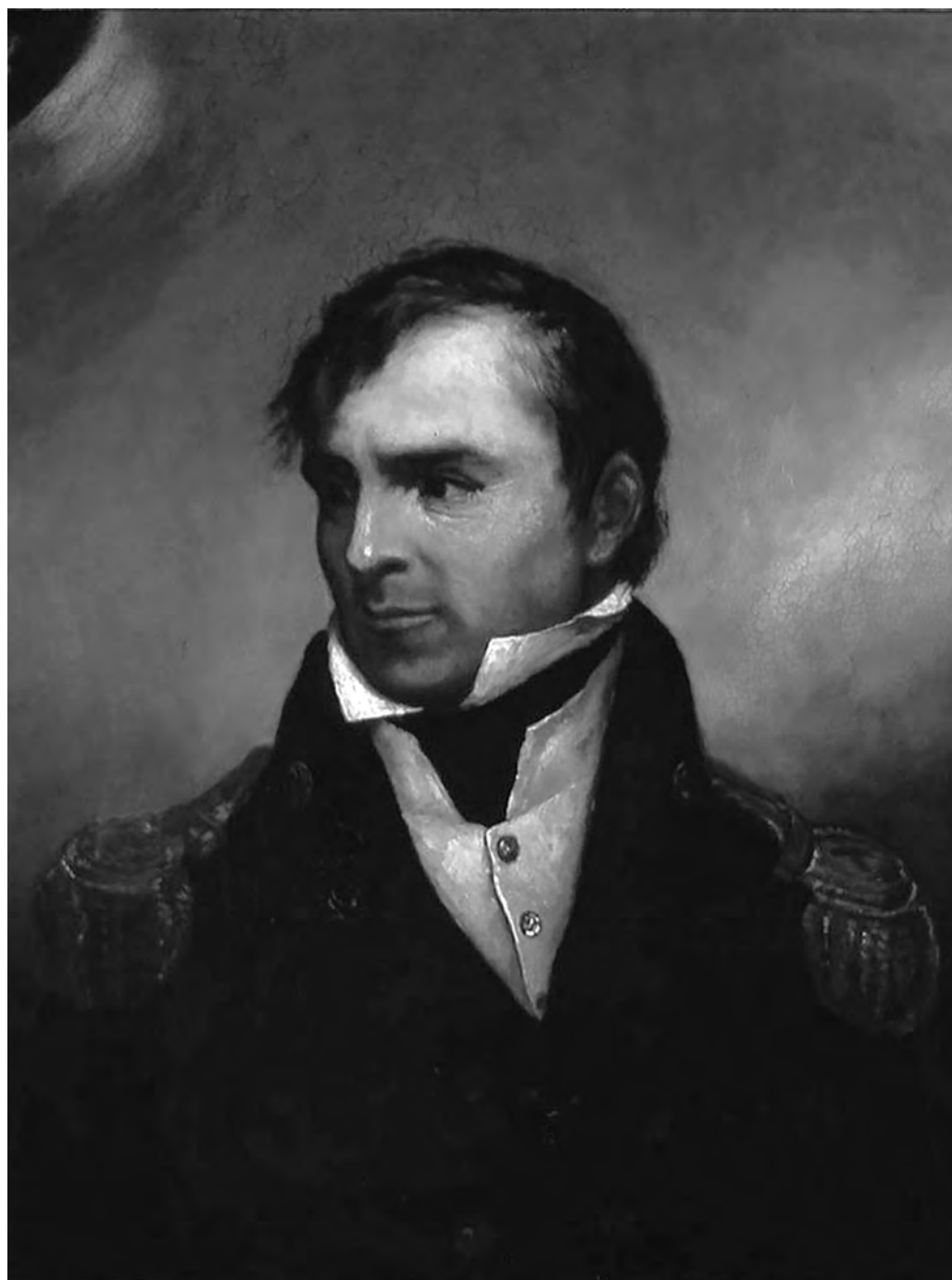
Sir

I have the honor to inform you of our arrival at this place. And to enclose for the information of the Department an account of our late cruize and a particular Statement of the unfortunate accident that terminated it.<sup>1</sup> As this is of a nature to impair the confidence of the Department and the Public in my vigilance or skill unless the circumstances which attended it are fully Known; I have to request you will order a court of enquiry upon the subject if consistent with the interest of the service. Very respecty. &c. your Obt. Servant

C: Morris.

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 23 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. These enclosures were separated from Morris's cover letter and bound separately as letters 124 and 125 in this volume. See below.



*Charles Morris*

[Enclosure]

CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Hambden (D. Maine) Augt. 22nd 1814

U S S. *Adams*.

Sir

after leaving Savannah we proceeded to the Northwd. of the matanilla reef where we remained waiting for the Jamaica Convoy till the 22nd. of May when we learned from a neutral vessel they had passed us the preceding night. We then made sail to the Northward, and on the 24th. got Sight of the Convoy from which we were chased by two ships of war.<sup>1</sup> Saw them again the next morning but the weather being pleasant and the wind fair they kept in very close order. and their Convoying force being too strong for us to injure them, except in case of separation, we bore up to the Eastwd. intending to cruise a few days upon the Banks. On the 9th June met with Islands of Ice and very thick weather in Lat, 41°. 40'.— The fog continuing for several days and the thermometer indicating the vicinity of Ice, very frequently, we stood to the Southwd. and Eastwd. untill we were clear of it June 24th. in Lat. 46°. captured and destroyed the British Brig *Hunter* 10 Guns. 20 men. with a cargo of fish from Newfoundland to Corunna.— June 28th in Lat 48°. Captured and destroyed the British Brig *Mary* from France to Newfoundland with salt. On the 3rd. July, made the Blasquit Islands on the west coast of Ireland. on the 4th chased two vessels into the mouth of the Shannon, but the wind being strong from the westward and a heavy Sea, we were obliged to haul out of the Bay— Stood to the Northwd. and cruised off Broadhaven till the 9th but the weather was so thick that we saw not a single vessel. We then returned to the Southwd. and Eastwd. In Lat 49°. Long. 10°.<sup>2</sup> while in chase of a large merchant ship discovered a Frigate<sup>3</sup> under our lee bow from which we were obliged to tack. She continued in chase of us through the day and by his superior sailing had closed nearly within gunshot by sunset. At 8 P.M. cut away our anchors and hove two boat guns overboard. It falling calm during the night got our boats ahead to tow. by daylight had left the Frigate five miles astern. The chase was however continued till 10 OClock the next night. when by altering our course we lost sight of him. returning again to the Southwd. on the morning of the 19th. in Lat 49°. 20'. discovered a Frigate<sup>4</sup> under our lee bow, tacked and made sail from him. Two hours after discovered another ship of war<sup>5</sup> on our weather beam in chase of us. By noon we had lost sight of the first in the haze. the other Continued the chase at about 4 miles distance till the evening of the 20th when in Lat 56° we lost sight of him by changing our course. Although every possible precaution had been taken to guard against the Scurvy. we had nothing Sufficiently powerful to counteract the effect of continued wet, foggy and Cold weather which had prevailed for fifty days. So many of the men were now affected with it and their number so rapidly increasing as to render our immediate return to Port indispensable.<sup>6</sup> Every diligence was accordingly used in getting to the westwd. keeping in the track of the Newfoundland trade. July 28th. Captured and destroyed English Schr. *Favourite* with salt for Newfoundland. Aug. 7th Captured the British ship *Paris*, from Quebec to London with a cargo of lumber and a few skins. took out a part of the skins and destroyed her. On the 16th. Augt. captured and destroyed the English Schr. *Maria* with a cargo of lumber from St. Andrews

N.B. bound to Newfoundland. At 4 A.M on the 17th August the weather being very thick and foggy. the ship ran on shore upon the Isle of Haute,<sup>7</sup> but after landing the sick, Prisoners, and a few stores we succeeded in getting her off and bringing her to this place. The extent of the injury she has received cannot yet be ascertained but it is feared she will require considerable repairs as she makes about 9 feet water an hour— Our sick have not yet joined us but are comfortably situated at Cambden under charge of the Purser<sup>8</sup> and Surgeons Mate—,<sup>9</sup> very Respectfully Your Obd. Servt.

C: Morris

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 124 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Identified as the 74-gun ship of the line *Barham* and 38-gun frigate *Statira* in McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, p. 225.

2. Approximately 154 nautical miles west-southwest of the Isles of Scilly, which mark the northern entrance of the English Channel.

3. Identified as the 36-gun frigate *Eridanus* in McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, p. 227.

4. Identity unknown. *Ibid.*, pp. 227 and 324, note 22.

5. Identified as the 36-gun frigate *Tigris* in *ibid.*, p. 227.

6. Morris records in his autobiography that the incidence of scurvy had become general throughout *Adams's* crew by 25 July, resulting in "several deaths" and rendering 30 of the ship's company "unfit for duty." By 16 August, the number of men on the corvette's sick list "had increased to fifty-eight, many of which were dangerous cases of scurvy." See Morris, *Autobiography*, pp. 74, 75.

7. Isle au Haut, Maine, which lies at the eastern entrance of Penobscot Bay.

8. William S. Rogers. He was commissioned a purser on 26 February 1813.

9. Thomas Williamson. He was appointed a surgeon's mate in *Adams* on 13 May 1813, during a recess of the Senate. Upon the Senate's confirmation of his appointment, Williamson received a commission dated 24 July 1813.

[Enclosure]

CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Hampden August 22nd. 1814.

U S.S. *Adams*

Sir

On the 16th. at noon our Latitude by D. R<sup>1</sup> and two double altitudes<sup>2</sup> was 42°. 20'. and the Longe. determined by morning and evening observations of a chronometer which had four times proved correct within 10 miles during our preceeding and present cruise was 66°. 54'<sup>3</sup> the wind was fresh from S.S.W and the Sea smooth. In the afternoon two vessels were discovered in chase, but at such a distance that we could not ascertain their force.— The weather became very foggy at night and the wind remaining fresh from the same quarter. I determined to push for some part of Massachusetts Bay near Portsmouth and steered the proper Course for that purpose— Deeming it extremely probably we should meet some of the Enemies vessels during the night our Prisoners were confined in the Hold and our crew remained at Quarters. We sailed from 10 to 11 Knots an hour till 2 A.M. when as I expected to be, we were in 72 fathoms water our estimated distance from Cape Ann 60 miles. At 4 A.M while in the act of preparing for sounding again, the Lookouts forward announced breakers ahead, and in a



moment after the ship struck upon a Rock going  $10\frac{1}{2}$  Knots, believing it impossible she could bear such a shock, the prisoners were first released from their Confinement below that they might have a chance to save their lives in common with ourselves upon the Rocky shore which was now visible about 30 Yds distant. On sounding the pumps no unusual quantity of water was at first discovered, and all sails were laid aback in hope of forcing the ship off. It was however discovered in a few minutes she was leaking so fast, that it was deemed proper to remain on the Rock until Day light, We accordingly furled the light sails and clewed up Courses and topsails, Day soon enabled us to distinguish objects through the fog at 2 or 300 yards distance, and to ascertain the hopelessness of saving the ship— Her cutwater was entirely destroyed below the 9 foot mark, the depth of water under her fore foot between 5 and 6 feet, forward of the Starboard main chains 12 feet—astern 7 Fathoms into which the ship from the situation of her bows was depressed below her stern ports. The wind fresh and a considerable number of rocks just to leeward and considerable surf; From the small portion of land that was visible it was generally believed to be the Nubble of Cape Neddock<sup>4</sup> not far from Portsmouth. Hoisted out our boats, sent the small ones to seek a place where a landing might be most safely effected— In the mean time engaged getting our sick into the larger boats with their bedding, clothes, & provisions ready for landing. the boats soon returned having fortunately discovered a small chasm in the Rock capable of admitting a boat and a ravine connected with it in which the sick might be sheltered in some degree from the weather. Having secured the safety of the sick, it was determined from motives of Humanity, to send the prisoners next with every thing belonging to them, and with sails, tarpaulins and medicines for the further comfort of the sick. A Surgeon's mate<sup>5</sup> was also sent and the charge of the whole committed to the Purser Mr. Rogers. Knowing it to be near low water when the ship struck, I determined to make every effort with the remaining portion of our crew, to get her off when the tide should rise though with little hope that she could be kept long above water as we had ascertained the leak to be about 9 feet an hour. Our only kedge had been early laid out on our weather quarter to Keep her as nearly in the same position as possible, and our only heavy anchor was near let go from the waist to prevent her swinging into very deep water should she go off. and to keep her from the Rocks and reefs to leeward should she float. At 10 A.M it became evident that the tide would lift her off— furled the topsails and light square sails. Carried the Kedge out from the bow two cable lengths off shore, and Continued to send such articles out of the ship, as we could most conveniently spare in case of floating. After some heavy strains at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 10 the surf lifted her off and she swung to her Anchor. Manned all the pumps and found we could gain upon her. The flood tide being mainly done it was necessary to get underway instantly to reap the advantages of its weather current. the Rocks astern and to leeward not being half the ships length distant Hove up canted her off shore with the Kedge and head Sails, set the courses and all fore and aft sails and fortunately passed from 10 to 50 yds. to windward of the Rocks and reefs which extended about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the land, By the utmost exertions we kept the ship free and by four O'clock got her under topsails and clear from the land, All hands were employed at the pumps and Sails during the night in the hope of being able to reach Portland the next day, At Daylight the weather was clear and you may

judge our surprize at discovering ourselves near the Island of Mount Desart,<sup>6</sup> This discovery excited the greatest anxiety for the fate of our companions many of the Islands in the vicinity were uninhabited, we were ignorant on which they were and they were probably exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather. while suffering the pain of that dreadful disease the scurvy. I soon fell in with two fishing boats both of which I dispatched in search of them, And then used every possible diligence to get into Penobscot Bay which we fortunately effected during the night and I had the happiness to hear the next morning that our sick companions had all been safely conveyed to Cambden with the exception of one who had expired. My first intention was to have stopped at Castine but was induced to proceed to this place as one much better calculated for a vessel in our situation— The extent of the injury which she has received cannot yet be known our pumps are continually in motion, I have procured a light ship and shall take every thing out of her and then lay her on shore as the only means of ascertaining her damages at this place— I cannot conclude this communication without recommending in the strongest terms the uncommon good conduct of the officers Seamen and Marines of this ship on this Occasion. Never were my orders executed with more promptitude or less confusion. Their coolness during the time the ship was upon and among the rocks, could only be surpassed by their cheerful endurance of unremitted and the most fatiguing labor, since, Nothing but the former could have rescued her from her perilous situation, and but for the latter she would have been rescued in vain. very respectfully I have the honor to be Sir yr. Obt. Servt.

C Morris

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 125 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Abbreviation for dead reckoning, a method for determining a ship's position without making astronomical observations. It is calculated by taking into account a vessel's "estimated speed, distance covered, and the courses steered by the compass, with corrections for known current, leeway, etc." King, *Sea of Words*, p. 146.

2. A method of determining latitude by observing two altitudes of the sun with a measured time interval occurring between observations. For a contemporary description of this navigational method, see Bowditch, *Practical Navigator*, pp. 155–61.

3. Approximately 216 nautical miles due east of Boston Light.

4. Nubble Island, Maine, site of the present-day Cape Neddick Lighthouse.

5. Thomas Williamson.

6. Mount Desert Island, Maine, which lies approximately 14 nautical miles northeast of Isle au Haut, the site of *Adams's* grounding.

#### CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U S.S. *Adams*. Hampden  
August 29th. 1814.

Sir,

In my letter of the 20th.<sup>1</sup> I mentioned my intention of laying the Ship on shore to ascertain and repair her damages— But I find that the information given me

respecting the flow of the tide was erroneous, and that instead of 18 & 20 feet which would have allowed me to lay blocks on which to place the Ship that 12 is the greatest rise we can expect in ordinary tides— I have therefore determined upon heaving her out and am making the necessary preparations. we shall be considerably delayed as our purchase falls must be made at Wiscasset or Portland, and our blocks made here by our Carpenters— There are no Composition sheaves nearer than Boston but I hope to find large wooden ones which may answer the purpose The falls will be made of the size of our breechings and will serve to make us a set which are required— The Ship into which I have struck my stores, ballast, &c is what I propose heaving down by, after bringing her as low in the water as possible with our water casks filled, and all our equipments except the Guns with which I have formed a small battery upon the wharf for our protection—

We cannot yet ascertain the precise injury which the Ship received but I am induced to hope from the internal appearance of the leak, that her keel and stern are not so much injured but they may be repaired without taking out any part of them—unless the injury extends very near the garboard streak. I presume pieces well bolted will be sufficiently secure— I presume her Hoodings are started for two or three feet on the stern, as the leak is upon the sides of the apron— And from her appearance when upon the rock I am induced to hope no part of her bottom is injured abaft her foremast—

Our actual loss of Stores, &c consist in a few small spars thrown overboard to clear away our boats and in some water casks which were landed and plundered by the inhabitants of the neighboring islands— The expense of transporting her sick and the articles left behind will fall short of \$500—

Unless we find the injury much greater than we expect, and should meet with some unforeseen accident or detention. I hope to have the ship ready for sea again in two months which will be as soon as the health of the crew will be properly re-established— By my request, Mr. Storer the agent at Portland is at this place for the purpose of appointing some person to act in his stead that the Department may not be troubled with the settlement of accounts with other persons than their regular Agents.— Sheet copper, copper nails, our purchase falls, & some Bolt rope, will I trust be the only articles of consequence which may not be procured on reasonable terms upon this river— Those articles must come from the Westward— I regret to state that the ground tier of our powder was wet while she was upon the rocks, but think, we have sufficient remaining to proceed on a cruise if none can be obtained without great expense— As our Ship is now clear of every article of her stores. I shall have time to erect a small battery on a commanding position near the ship which with the natural advantages the river afford[s] for the use of Musquetry from both shores for twenty miles will render our position perfectly secure from the enemy unless they employ a larger force than I think they would hazard for the destruction of a single ship— very respectfully your Obed. Servant

C: Morris.

P.S. I forward a letter<sup>2</sup> found in one of the prizes—although I presume it contains no information of the Enemy's force which you do not already possess. yet as it

appears to have been written by a person of information I presume it might be acceptable.

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 43 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Morris meant 22 August. See preceding letter.
2. Enclosure not found.

## John Rodgers Takes Command of the Delaware Flotilla

*The Delaware Flotilla, a small force of block sloops and gunboats under the direction of Commodore Alexander Murray, defended the river passage from Philadelphia to the waters of Delaware Bay. In the fall of 1813, the flotilla was enlarged by the purchase of six barges and two galleys from the city of Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> The limitations of the flotilla's fighting capabilities were exposed when it engaged an enemy sloop of war that had run aground off Cape May, New Jersey. Not only did the British succeed in beating off their attackers, they captured one of the flotilla's gunboats as well, driving the American defenders back upriver.<sup>2</sup>*

*In the spring of 1814, Secretary Jones placed the flotilla under the leadership of Commodore John Rodgers, then in Philadelphia to oversee the launch and fitting out of his new command, the 44-gun frigate *Guerriere*. Lacking sufficient recruits to fully man the flotilla, Rodgers completed the crews of his Delaware River force with officers and sailors from *Guerriere*. The *Guerrieres* provided the flotilla with a welcome infusion of highly disciplined seamen and veteran leadership. In July, Rodgers's force demonstrated its combat versatility by making a nighttime march overland from New Castle, Delaware, to Elkton, Maryland, in less than four hours to help repel a British attack. Six weeks later, Rodgers and his flotillamen would be on the march again to defend the nation's capital and the city of Baltimore.<sup>3</sup> The Maryland-born commodore remained in command of the Delaware Flotilla until 26 December, when the Navy Department transferred its charge to Bernard Henry.<sup>4</sup>*

1. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 231–32.

2. See *ibid.*, pp. 199–204, and, Angus to Jones, 29 July 1813, published in the 4 August 1813 edition of the *Daily National Intelligencer*.

3. That is, the *Guerrieres* temporarily assigned to the flotilla. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 199, 200–201, 300, and 316.

4. See Homans to Henry, 26 December 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 496–98, and, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 Nov. 1815, p. 258 (T829, Roll No. 382).

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE ALEXANDER MURRAY

Commo: A Murray }  
Philadelphia }

Navy Department  
May 7th: 1814

Sir,

The difficulty, if not impracticability of recruiting men for the service of the Delaware flotilla, has induced this Department to order Commodore Rodgers to

employ his officers & crew in the flotilla, whilst the *Guerriere* is equipping, and the Command of the Flotilla is, therefore vested in Commodore Rodgers until the *Guerriere* is ready for Sea.—

You will therefore transfer that command to him, with such information as the good of the service may require.— I am respectfully &c

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 306 (M149, Roll No. 11).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Navy Department,  
May 7. 1814.

Sir,

Commodore Murray is directed to transfer the Command of the Delaware Flotilla to you, with such information, relative to the state of that force, as the good of the service may require; and it is the particular wish of this Department that the strictest economy may be observed in the management of the Flotilla; The present number of vessels, say block-Sloops, Galleys, Gun boats and Barges, now in actual service, being deemed amply sufficient for that service; You will please to prohibit those under your command in the Flotilla from making any alterations, repairs, or requisitions, unless absolutely necessary and with your previous authority. Such repairs and equipments as may be in dispensable will be done at the Navy Yard.

For the current service of the Flotilla, you will make your requisitions either upon Mr. Harrison, the Navy Agent at Philadelphia, or Mr. Riddle, the Agent at New Castle, as may be most convenient and advantageous to the service.—

When you take the Command of the Flotilla, you will deliver the enclosed order<sup>1</sup> to Lieutenant Mitchell, who is now attached to the Flotilla.— I am, very respectfully, Your ob. Servt.

W Jones

Commo. Jno. Rodgers, }  
Philadelphia. }

LS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box III:22. For the letter book copy of this letter, see DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 306 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. On 7 May, Jones issued orders transferring Lieutenant Francis J. Mitchell to Commodore Thomas Macdonough's squadron on Lake Champlain. See Jones to Mitchell, 7 May 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, p. 171 (T829, Roll No. 382).

## COMMODORE ALEXANDER MURRAY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Phila. May 9th. 1814

Sir/

In consequence of the arrival here of the Crew of the *President* brought down the Delaware by the Flotilla from Trenton, I find that we shall be so crowded, that for their better accommodation, it will be better for the time they are here, or until the Frigate is ready for them to put one more G. boat in commission there will then be two Block sloops, the *Northern Liberty* Galley the Schrs. *Corporation & Helen* & nine G. boats with the Barges, ready for service

It is not our wish to intermix the *Presidents* Crew with those of the Flotilla, & they will be placed under their respective officers, & in two divisions

I beg leave to observe to you, that if it meets your concurrence, that should there be danger of an attack by the Enemy on any of the head Waters of the Chesapeake, & the services of the Flotilla not required on the Delaware, that Come. Rodgers or myself, might have it at our discretion to march with the men across the Peninsula to repel them.

I should have more confidence in 500 Sailors upon such an occasion than in all the Militia that could be collected in that district, & we can be in readiness at a moments notice I have the Honor to be your Mo. Obt.

A Murray

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 44 (M125, Roll No. 36).

## COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO LIEUTENANT CHARLES W. MORGAN

Phila. May 15. 1814

Sir

You having Reported Gun Boats *No 119. 132. 127. [1]23. 122. 128. 127* and Block Sloop *Buffalo*, Ready for Service, You are directed to proceed with the same to New Castle; where you will meet Lieut Mitchell with Gun Boats *Nos. 116 & 135.* Block Sloop *Camel*; Galley's *No[r]thern Liberty* and *Corporation*; Schooner *Corporation* [a]nd Barge *No 6.*—

After Meeting Lieut Mitchell [a]nd delivering the Accompanying Order<sup>1</sup> you are to consider yourself [c]harged with the Command of the Flotilla, and to be governed [b]y the enclosed Order. The Vessels Maned by the Men [b]elonging exclusively to the Flotilla Service are to be De[n]ominated the 2nd. Division, and Commanded by the next [s]enior Officer to yourself—

The Schooner *Helena* now here I shall send to New Castle as soon as practicable, After [she] arrives you will use her as a Receiving Vessel for the Accommodation of the Sick, and Convenience of the Officers and Men Attached to the Barges, two more of which I shall send down as soon as they can be prepared. Respectfully Yo. Obt Servt

Signed Jno Rodgers

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 65 1/2 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. Likely Rodgers to Morgan, 15 May 1814, printed below.

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Phila. May 17th. 1814

Sir

Lieut Morgan, Second of the *Guerriere*, left here the day before Yesterday in compliance with the Orders, of which the Enclosed are copies—

Finding that Eight Gun Boats would not accomodate all the Officers and Men attached to the Flotilla and those of the *Guerriere* too, I was under the necessity of employing a Ninth— I am now preparing the remainder of the Barges which will be ready for Service in a day or two— After the remaining Barges are dispatched I intend going to New Castle for a day or two, for the purpose of Organizing the whole more effectually— With great Respect I have the honor to be Sir Yr—Obt Servt

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 73 (M125, Roll No. 36).

[Enclosure]

Sir

By Authority of the Command with which I am invested You are hereby Appointed for the present to Command the Flotilla on this Station; and consequently to Organize the same without a moments delay for the protection of this Bay and River, and such other Service as exigencies may require.—

In the Organization of the Flotilla, You are to keep the petty Officers and Seamen of the *Guerriere* and those Shipped for the Gun Boat Service, as distinct as many be practicable, particularly as they are to be Victualled and Supplied with Slops by the different pursers— Namely the purser of the *Guerriere* and purser of the Flotilla System, Strict Economy and Uniform Discipline being as indispensable to the Good management of a Fleet of Gun Boats, as to the like management of a Fleet of the largest Vessels, You will readily perceive the Necessity of oblidging the Commanders of the Several Vessels to Keep a regular Account of the Receipt and expenditure of all Stores as they will be held Accountable for any Misapplication, loss, or damage of the Same. You are to have the Cannon and small Arms exercised every day when the Weather will permit—to Form lines of Battle and Retreat by all practicable Modes; Such as Anchoring Sailing, and Rowing— to permit no Alteration to be made in any Vessel except by my Special Permission, Neither Stores of any Kind to be Sent from one Boat to Another, except on particular emergencies, and then the like only by a Written Order from Yours[e]lf. The Flotilla must never be exposed to an Attack by the Enemy disadvantageous to Yourself, Neither to bad Weather

unnecessarily when you can make a Harbour, and it will be necessary whatever part of the Bay you may be in, always to Anchor in such Order as will best Concentrate your force, and at the same time prevent Surprize and Repel Attack. Every means within your power must be used for the preservation of the Health of all under your Command, Consequently never to permit any person to be exposed if it [c]an be avoided, neither to suffer any to be treated with unnecessary severity; and you must preremtorily forbid the drinking of River Water in an unfermented State. Weekly Returns are to be made to you of all expenditures, and you are to Report to me at the end of every four Weeks the State and Condition of the Several Vessels of the Flotilla, Specifying any deficiencies that may exist. An Officer is to be Stationed at Lewistown and another at Cape May for the purpose of conveying to you by express every necessary intelligence in the event of the Enemy's coming into the Bay, or making his appearance off the Capes.—

New Castle is to be your Rendezvous, but in the event of the Enemy's making his Appearance off the Capes You are to move to such part of the Bay as will best enable you to Receive the earliest intelligence of his movements, to keep him in Check and prevent depredations on the Vessels trading in the Bay, as well as injury to the Inhabitants Residing Contiguous to the same. Mr. Riddle is our Agent at New Castle but no Requisition can be made on him without my approbation except in Cases of emergency, in which I must be informed of the same as soon as possible. You will keep me informed of your movements as occasion may require, and in the event of the Enemy's coming into the Bay, You are to dispatch to this place with the Intelligence such Vessel as can be best for this Service. Each Vessel of the Flotilla is at all times to be supplied with 50 Rounds of powder and Round Shot, 20 Rounds of Grape & Cannister and at least 200 pistol and 400 Musket Ball Cartridges, for your further government I must at present refer you to the Printd Regulations of the Navy. No Officer is to be permitted to sleep on Shore,— Guard is to be Rowed alternately from 8 OClock in the Morning to 8 OClock the succeeding Morning by the Boats of the several Vessels of the Flotilla. Respectfully Yr Obt Servt

Signed Jno Rodgers  
Phila. May 15th. 1814

Lt Charles W. Morgan.

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 73, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 36).

#### COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Phila. May 28th 1814

Sir

I returned the day before yesterday from New Castle, whence I had been for the purpose of visiting and Organizing the Delaware Flotilla consisting of Gun-Boats *No. 116. 119. 122. 123. 127. 128. 129. 132 & 135*, Barges *No. 1. 2. 3. 5 & 6*, Gallies *Northern Liberty & Corporation* and Schooner *Helen*—



The Schooner *Helen* I have directed to be used as a Hospital Vessel for the accommodation of the Sick, and Galley *Corporation* as a Recieving Vessel for the accommodation of the Barges Crews. The reason of employing the *Corporation* in this way is, because it would take at least Sixty Officers and Men to Man her effectually and even with that number she would be less formidable than either of the Block Sloops owing to the principle on which her two Long Guns are Mounted— The before mentioned Vessels are now in complete Order for Service; and I flatter myself the Enemy will not commit any depredations in the Bay with impunity.—

The different Items intended for the Equipment of the *Guerriere* are collecting and Making so as to effect her completion for Sea as early as possible Her Masts & Spars, Boats, Cordage Water Casks Sails, Blocks, Kentledge Shot &c are now making and She will be Launched between the 5th & 10th. of Next Month, but it is as yet impossible to say with any precision when she will be ready for Sea

The Carronades Casting by Mr Dorsey near Baltimore will be here I expect very soon as I sent an Officer Five days since to prove and superintend their Transportation to this place

The whole of the 33—24 pounders Casting by Col. Hughes will be ready for proving I am informed in about Five Weeks from this date

Upwards of 50 of the *Presidents* Crew have been discharged since her Arrival— their term of Service having Expired, and as the term of upwards of 30 more will expire in less than two months,— I shall on Monday next commence Recruiting to make up the necessary compliment for the *Guerriere*.— I flatter myself with being able to Reship a number of the best of those who have been and are about to be discharged— With great Respect I have the Honor to be  
Sir Yr Obt Servt

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 109 (M125, Roll No. 36).

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Phila. July 14th 1814.

Sir

In consequence of information recd. from Genl. Foreman at a late hour on the 11th Inst. that four of the Enemy's Barges had been repulsed by a party of Militia at Elkton, but that they were expected to return the succeeding Night in greater force, I was induced to order Lt Morgan of the Navy to March 250 of the Officers and Seamen attached to the Flotilla, to his assistance for the defence of that place and the adjacent Country.— The above Officers & Sailors were embarked in a few minutes, and you will not think them inactive, when I informe you, that in three Hours & Forty Seven Minutes, the whole Detachment completely Armed, reached the Court House at Elkton Carr[y]ing, with them two heavy pieces of Traveling Artillery, notwithstanding the Roads were excessively bad and the Night very dark and Rainy.— Disappointed in meeting

the Enemy and his not evincing any disposition to return—Lt Morgan with the Detachment of Sailors, (Masters Mate Stockton and Twelve Seaman left with a Field Piece to co-operate with Capt Gale excepted) returned yesterday to the Flotilla by my orders; their place being supplied by Capt Gale and Lt Hall with some Marines from the Navy Yard, added to Lieut Kughn and the detachment of Marines of the *Guerrier*[e] all of whom reached Elkton early yesterday afternoon

On Lieut Morgan's leaving the Flotilla with the detachment of Sailors, I ordered Lt Gamble attending the Equipment of the *Guerriere*, to proceed to New Castle with the Seamen and Marines to supply their place. On Lt Morgan's return to the Flotilla; Lt Gamble with the Seamen whom he brought with him, returned to Philadelphia;— and it is with much satisfaction I inform you, that the alacrity and zeal with which all these changes were made, does infinite credit to the Officers, Seamen & Marines, concerned in the same.—

Capt Gale with the Detachment of Marines after proceeding as far as Cecil Furnace, will return aga[in] to Phila. (by the way of New Castle) should there be no immediate necessity for his being longer absent.—

I am now about to organize a Corps, consisting of One Hundred Seamen, who can be Transported across in four Hours at any time, with the assistance that is promised me, by the Proprietors of the New Castle Line of Stages

Permit me Sir to suggest, whether it might not be well, to employ the Marines of the *Guerriere* in the protection of the Furnace at Cecil, until the Ship is ready to receive them; or at least until the Guns, Casting there for her, are finished— With great Respect I have the Honor to be Sir, Yr Obt Servt

Jn° Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 164 (M125, Roll No. 37). The text in brackets is supplied from a printed copy of this letter appearing in the 19 July 1814 edition of the *Daily National Intelligencer*.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Navy Dep'tm't,  
July 28. 1814.

Sir,

Your letter of the 14th, has remained unanswered by casualty, though the proceedings therein reported are duly appreciated and highly approved.—

Your arrangements were very judicious, and executed with a zeal and promptitude highly honorable to the Officers and men concerned and to the service, as well in real utility, at the moment, as in the future effect it may have upon the enemy, who, I dare say, had not anticipated resistance from that source.

The organization you have made, with a view to future operations upon the head waters of the Chesapeak, are highly approved.—

I approve of your suggestion, and think the Marines of the *Guerriere* would be well employed at Cecil furnace, for the protection of that work, until the Guns of the *Guerriere* are completed, as they would answer not only that purpose, but would be ready to act in the vicinity, or to join the Flotilla, as occasion should require.—

Have you observed, or do you know of any species of small craft, of fleet construction, on, or near Elk River, that could be armed and fitted, with little expense, and kept in readiness for your force to operate in, upon an emergency?— I am, respectfully, Your Ob. Servt.

W Jones

Com. Rodgers,  
Phila.

LS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box III:23. For the letter book copy of this letter, see DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 390 (M149, Roll No. 11).

## *Hornet* Blockaded in Thames River

*In 1814, the British continued to blockade Commodore Stephen Decatur's three-ship squadron, composed of United States, Macedonian, and Hornet, in the Thames River, Connecticut.<sup>1</sup> As months passed and the squadron remained shut up in that river, Hornet's commander, James Biddle, openly expressed his frustration with Decatur's lack of initiative and his orders to Biddle to remain in the Thames to protect the dismantled United States and Macedonian. A dispute over a personnel reassignment further poisoned Biddle's relationship with Decatur.<sup>2</sup>*

*Despite his unhappiness, Biddle did not neglect his duty. When a British fleet attacked Stonington, Connecticut, in August 1814, Biddle acted decisively.<sup>3</sup> Convinced that the attack on Stonington was a feint to draw resources away from New London and the protection of the dismantled frigates and Hornet, Biddle worked to get local militiamen to serve temporarily aboard the ships. Although bureaucratic red tape thwarted this plan, Biddle did persuade local officials to make protection of the flotilla a priority. In the end, the British did not move against the American ships, but Biddle's resourcefulness during the crisis was notable.*

*As the winter of 1814 approached, Biddle began agitating anew with the Secretary of the Navy for permission to run the blockade. His delight when the Secretary agreed that Hornet should make such an attempt turned to disgust when Biddle learned that Decatur would command the breakout squadron.<sup>4</sup>*

1. Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 134–39.

2. Jones agreed with Biddle that Decatur had overstepped his authority, but was not willing to censor the commodore. Jones to Biddle, 27 May 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 324 (M149, Roll No. 11).

3. For documents on the British attack on Stonington, see pp. 507–18.

4. For Decatur's cruising orders, see pp. 661–67. For more on Biddle's displeasure with Decatur's command, see Long, *Sailor-Diplomat*, p. 49.

MASTER COMMANDANT JAMES BIDDLE TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *Hornet* May 7th. 1814 New London harbour

Sir

I have the honor to enclose to you a Copy of an order this day received from Commodore Decatur; which order commands me to continue in this River for the protection of the frigates *United States* and *Macedonian*—At the time I assumed the command of this ship in New York, the *United States* and *Macedonian* were lying in that harbour ready for Sea, and waiting only an opportunity to elude the blockading Squadron of the Enemy. The *Hornet* was nearly in readiness, & I hastened her equipment with the view to join these frigates, as I thought it most advisable, and consequently my duty, to take advantage of the company of these Ships until I had cleared the Coast, which was then lined with Enemy's Cruizers. I did join Company, and the unhappy result of the attempt to get to Sea is well known.<sup>1</sup> If, Sir, I erred in judgment in joining Come. Decatur for the purpose of having a better chance of avoiding the Enemy's frigates, immediatly on the coast, at a time when this ship was so deep as to sail very heavily, I trust you will be of opinion that her Officers and Crew have already suffered severely & sufficiently for such error— It is I think the only error with which I can be chargeable, as the late Captain Laurence, under whose command I then was, recommended to me to endeavour to get to sea thro' the Sound rather than by the way of Sandy hook. No part of the censure of having sought shelter, when pursued by an Enemy, in a harbor so easily blockaded as this is, can be attached to me, since while in the presence of an Enemy, it was my duty to obey the Signals, and to follow the movements of Commodore Decatur, altho' I had not been placed by You under his immediate command.

Under these circumstances, I trust you will not permit that the misfortune of having joined Commodore Decatur shall be visited upon the officers of this ship until the End of the War by Employing them in as irksome and unthankful Service; a Service which utterly destroys all their hopes of being useful to their Country, or of acquiring credit to themselves. The Officers of this ship possess a sensibility to their reputation, and a Zeal for their Country not inferior to the Officers of the *United States* or the *Macedonian*, and I am sure I may confidently appeal to your justice against the injurious arrangement of Commodore Decatur. I feel the more confidence on this subject because your letter to Commodore Decatur calculated that when the frigates should be dismantled, an opportunity would be afforded to this ship to get to Sea. I have the honor to be with great Respect Sir Your mo: Ob: St:

J Biddle

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 122 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 134–39.

[Enclosure]

May 7th. 1814

Sir,

Until you shall receive contrary orders from the navy Department You will consider the Frigates *United States*, & *Macedonian* as under your protection.—

You will therefore place the *Hornet* in the position best calculated to ensure this object— I have the honor to be your Obt. St.

J. Decatur

Capt. J. Biddle

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 122, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5).

MASTER COMMANDANT JAMES BIDDLE TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *Hornet* Aug. 12. 1814 New London River

Sir

As the large force which the Enemy have collected in this neighborhood, and the attack on Stonington will excite apprehensions for the safety of the dismantled ships, I have thought it my duty to acquaint you that as yet we have not been attacked. It is inconceivable that the Enemy can have in view no operations other than to destroy Stonington—<sup>1</sup> Their object, I should think, must be to draw all the militia thither, and then suddenly to attack Newport or New London— I have requested General Cushing<sup>2</sup> to leave about two hundred Militia distributed between the two Frigates. They are not yet on board, but will probably before night. The Militia have turned out very promptly and in great numbers, and the General has sent me word that the Militia are between the Enemy and our Ships, and will retreat, in the event of being obliged to retreat towards the Ships. As the attack on Stonington may possibly be only a diversion, and the facility of water conveyance may enable him<sup>3</sup> to land at a distance from the place where the Militia are collected, I shall prefer that the Militia be actually on board I have the honor to be With great Respect Sir Your mo. ob: St:

J Biddle

It is not yet ascertained whether the Enemy have troops on board—

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814 Vol. 2, No. 16 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. On the British naval bombardment of Stonington, Connecticut, see pp. 507–18.

2. Brigadier General Thomas H. Cushing was commander of Military District Number 2, consisting of the states of Connecticut and Rhode Island.

3. That is, the British.

MASTER COMMANDANT JAMES BIDDLE TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *Hornet* Octr. 15. 1814 New London River

Sir

As the season for operations against this Squadron is rapidly passing away, and that of blustering weather which will favour our eluding the Enemy in this vicinity, is approaching, permit me to call your attention to this Ship—<sup>1</sup> My feelings have been deeply mortified at the inactive and inglorious situation, in which for many months I have been placed; and in those feelings all officers have largely participated— We have been supported throughout a long and irksome Summer by the consideration that the approach of Winter would release us from our confinement in this River— My opinion is that it would be most advisable to place this Ship in light sailing trim, and take a favorable opportunity for running to New York, from whence at this season of the year, we can readily get to sea— I should be extremely gratified to have your orders to do so— The protection of this Ship [*illegible*] I think be now safely withdrawn from the dismantled frigates—<sup>2</sup> I have the honor to be with great Respect Sir  
Your mo: Ob: St:

J Biddle

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 69 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Biddle's frustration with the blockade was palpable. He had written a similar letter a year before. Biddle to Jones, 8 October 1813, DNA, RG45, MC, 1813, No. 139 (M147, Roll No. 5).

2. On 19 October, Jones ordered Captain John Shaw to New London to command *United States* and prepare to defend it as well as *Macedonian*. Jones to Shaw, 19 October 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 442 (M149, Roll No. 11). On the same day, Jones ordered Biddle to proceed to New York with *Hornet*. Jones to Biddle, 19 October 1814, DNA, RG45, CLS, p. 188 (T829, Roll No. 453). On 18 November, *Hornet* left New London and arrived just outside of the entrance to New York harbor on the next day. Biddle to Jones, 19 November 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 82 (M147, Roll No. 5).

MASTER COMMANDANT JAMES BIDDLE TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Philada. Decr. 10. 1814

Sir

Since the arrival of the *Hornet* under my command at New York, She has been placed under the orders of Come. Decatur, & it is intended She shall go to Sea & cruize in Company with the frigate *President*—

When I consider the feelings which have been excited toward Come. Decatur in consequence of his conduct to me at New London, and when I also consider that Come. Decatur is fully apprised of my feelings on the occasion and that I remonstrated with the Navy Department, I cannot but be fearful that there may

not exist between us the harmony & cordiality so desirable among Officers associated together on Service— For this reason I should be extremely gratified to be relieved from under the orders of Come. Decatur, and I should be happy to be transferred to the command of Commodore Rodgers.

The circumstance too that the *Hornet* is to continue at Sea in Company with the frigate *President*, I cannot but view as extremely unfortunate to me, in as much as the prospect of rendering Service and of gaining reputation is thereby greatly diminished—

I leave here to day for New York, and shall be very much pleased by your taking my situation into early consideration<sup>1</sup> I have the honor to be with great Respect  
Your mo: Ob: St:

J Biddle

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 93 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Biddle was not reassigned and remained part of the squadron commanded by Commodore Decatur. However, Biddle did not cruise under Decatur because *President* ran aground while attempting to elude, unsuccessfully, the British blockaders. For more on *President*'s abortive 1815 cruise, see pp. 693–711. Personnel issues such as Biddle's were not addressed during December 1814 and early January 1815 while the Secretary of the Navy's position was vacant.

## “He Snatched Victory from Two Vessels with One”<sup>1</sup>

*Charles Stewart emerged from his court of inquiry retaining the confidence of the Navy Department and the command of Constitution. Although Secretary Jones had issued Stewart's cruising orders in May, recruiting troubles and a vigilant British blockade kept his frigate idled in Boston Harbor until year's end. During this time the ship's company contributed to the defense of the harbor, including helping with the construction of fortifications on Noddle's Island.*<sup>2</sup>

*On 17 December 1814, Constitution eluded the British blockading force and embarked on its final wartime cruise. A week out of Boston, the frigate took the merchant brig Lord Nelson. On 16 February 1815, Constitution snapped up another prize, Susannah.<sup>3</sup> Then, on 20 February, Stewart and the Constitutions fought one of the most memorable ship engagements of the war. In a brilliant display of seamanship, tactics, and gunnery, the American frigate outfought two ships whose combined firepower outweighed its own. Less than a month later, skillful American seamanship was on display again when Constitution escaped being bottled up and captured in the harbor of Port Praia by a superior squadron of British warships.<sup>4</sup>*

*Constitution arrived home to the full-throated cheers of New Yorkers on 15 May. By month's end “Old Ironsides” had returned to Boston, the city of its birth, and more public accolades. The swift and powerful warship entered a new era of peacetime service boasting the best combat record of any ship in the 1812 fleet. The following documents cover the last six months of Constitution's blue-water campaigns in the War of 1812.*

1. English translation of the Latin motto, “Una Victoriam Eripuit Ratibus Binis,” inscribed on the upper reverse of the gold medal Congress awarded to Charles Stewart for the capture of *Cyane* and *Levant*. See *Loubat, Medallie History, Vol. 1, pp. 245–48, and Vol. 2, plate 48.*

2. Reference to Constitution crewmen working on the fortifications on Noddle's Island is made in the court-martial records of Midshipmen Joseph Cross and Edmund M. Russell in DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 5, No. 176 (M273, Roll No. 7). See also Bainbridge to Benjamin Weld, 7 July 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 137 (M125, Roll No. 37).

3. For the case files containing the prize papers for Lord Nelson and Susannah, see DNA, RG21, Prize and Related Records for the War of 1812 for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, 1812-1816, Case Files 72 and 105 (M928, Roll Nos. 4 and 7 respectively).

4. For scholarly accounts of Constitution's final wartime cruise, see Dudley, "Old Ironsides" Last Battle, pp. 55-85; McCranie, Utmost Gallantry, pp. 258-68; and Martin, Most Fortunate Ship, pp. 191-207.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART

Charles Stewart Esqr.  
 Captain Commanding the U. S.  
 Ship *Constitution* Boston Harbor

Navy Department  
 May 21st. 1814.

Sir

Presuming that the United States Ship *Constitution* under your command, is again ready for Sea, you will take your departure as soon after the receipt of this, as the state of the winds and weather, and the position of the enemy may enable you, observing that the main object of your cruise renders it extremely important, to gain the position herein first designated at as early a day as possible.

With this view you will make as direct a course as may be for Cape Race, passing to the Northward or Southward of Sable Island, as the Winds and Weather may admit, & falling into the track of Vessels from Cape Race to the Gulph of St. Lawrence & Halifax as soon as possible.—

Having passed in view (if convenient) of Cape Race, you will cross the Grand Bank clear of the fogs, and take a position near its eastern edge, about the parallel of 47° north, where you will cruize until the 10th or 15th. of July.— This is the track of the transport and ordinance Store Ships, as well as of the private trade from Great Britain to Canada and Nova Scotia, and the usual season at which they pass this position, is from the 20th May to the middle of July.— You will thus perceive Sir, the immense importance of this stage of your Cruize, and it is impossible to conceive a more important and grateful service to your Country, than the destruction of the ordinance Store Ships, and the capture of Transports with Troops destined for the annoyance of our frontier.—

There is undoubtedly a difficulty in disposing of the latter, as an attempt to conduct them to our Ports, could scarcely be crowned with success.— The principal object will be to delay and divert them from their course.— Perhaps to the Azores where they might be landed on parole, and the Ships together with all superfluous provisions and Stores destroyed.—

This would lead them so far from their destination, as to deprive the enemy of their services for the season at least. In this event it would be well to retain the Staff & Commissioned Officers, as well to exchange against our own, as to increase the delay and embarrassment of the troops in pursuing their original destination.— These considerations must be governed by circumstances under the exercise of your best judgement. It is said that an unusual number of Ships laden with British Manufactures, are destined for Quebec and Halifax this season and will probably sail in the same fleets with the public Vessels.— When the



period assigned to the first part of your enterprize has passed, You will take a position about 50 or 60 leagues NW of Corvo and Flores, with a view to intercept the trade of the enemy homeward bound from the West Indies.— Here you may pass a fortnight or three Weeks, according to your prospects of success—thence in a direct course for the Shetland Islands, which point you may probably reach about the 25th. August, to the eastward of and between which and the Orkneys, you may meet with the British fleet returning from Archangel.— Thence you will shape a Course for the United States, in such route as in your judgement may best promote the objects of your Cruize, regulating your progress according to the state of your supplies, and endeavouring to enter New York in preference to any other Port, if the state of the Blockade shall not render it impracticable.—

The constant state of alarm and apprehension in which the enemy is kept by our Cruisers, public and private in the West Indies, and the extreme precautions which he has adopted in that quarter for the protection of his Commerce, however vexatious and expensive to him, it leaves but little prospect of success for our public Ships in that route, which you will therefore avoid on your return home.—

The climate through which you will pass being moist and cool, will enable you to economise your water, and I hope such partial Supplies of green fish and their provisions as you may chance to capture, will enable you to extend your Cruize until the boisterous Season shall favor your entry into a port of the United States.

You will consider the general instructions contained in my letter to you of the 19th. September last<sup>1</sup> (with the exception of that which prescribes the route of, and is distinctly applicable to your late Cruize) as comprised within the instructions for the Cruize herein designated.—

with my best wishes for your personal Wellfare, and the honorable result of your cruize. I am very respectfully Sir Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 138–40 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. Jones to Stewart, 19 September 1813, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 66–69 (T829, Roll No. 453).

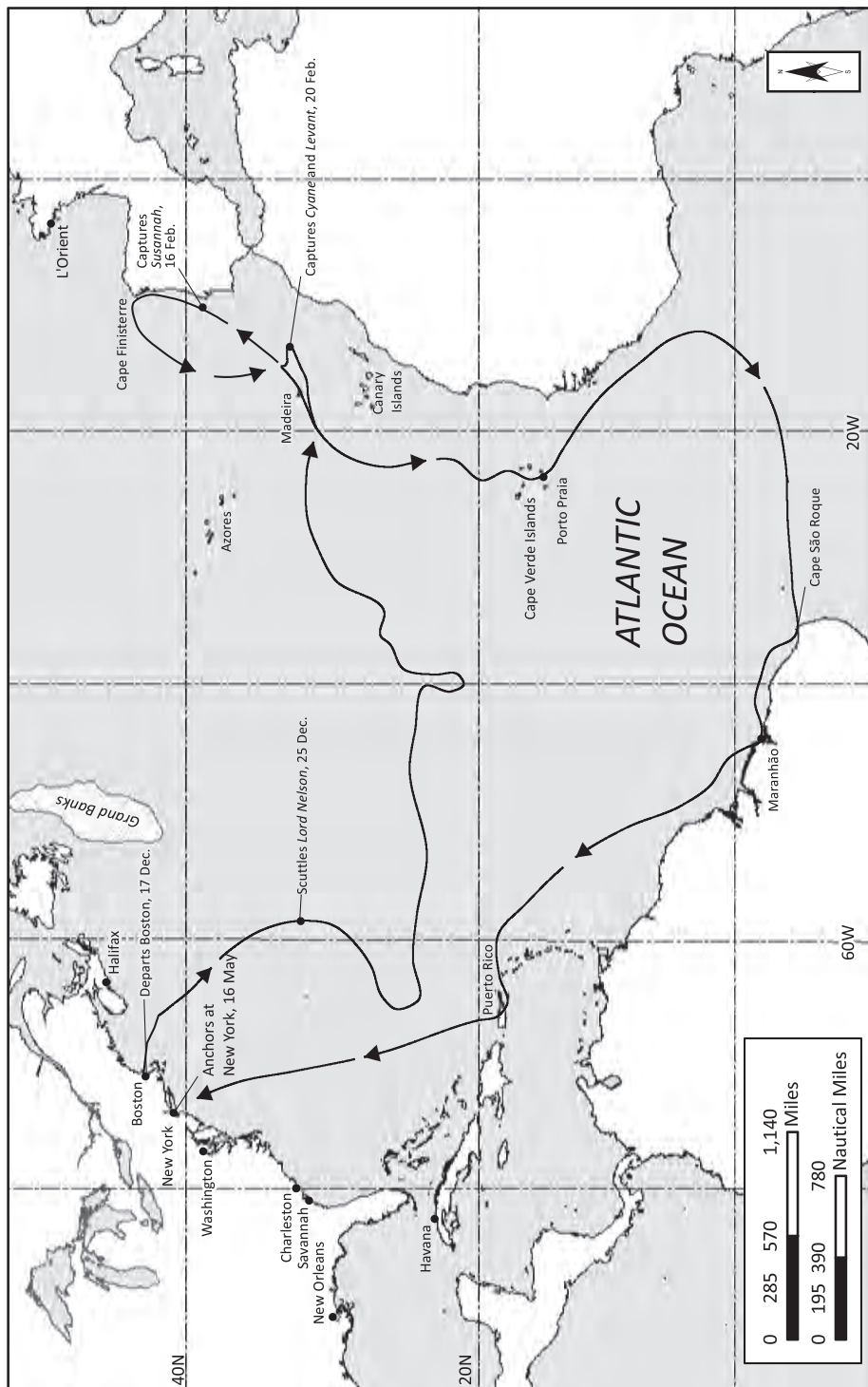
#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART

Captain Charles Stewart }  
 Commanding U S Ship }  
*Constitution* Boston }

Navy Department  
 November 29th, 1814

Sir

The season having arrived in which the Blockade of our Eastern Coast must of necessity be relaxed, and the United States Ship *Constitution* under your command being in sufficient order and preparation for a cruize, you will put to Sea with the first favourable opportunity, and shape your course to the eastward of Bermuda, taking a position calculated to intercept the transports and Store ships of the enemy from Europe destined to that Island, alternately between that position and the latitude 25° N in a direction from Bermuda to Antigua, you will



Map 10. Track of Constitution's cruise as recorded in its log book, 17 December 1814–16 May 1815

cruise about three weeks, more or less, according to the prospects of advantage to be derived from a continuance on that ground, or from a change of position.

From thence you will proceed in the most favourable track to the vicinity of Cape Finnester, and after cruising a week or ten days about 25 to 30 leagues west of that Cape you will range along the coast of Spain & Portugal about the same distance, under easy sail, untill you reach Cape St. Vincent, off which you will cruise eight or ten days, thence to the vicinity of Madaira where you will cruise three or four weeks, with a view to intercept the British trade outward bound to the East or West Indies; regulating your stay upon this ground according to your prospects of success, and the state of your supplies, allowing a sufficiency to last you while retracing your steps along the Coast of Spain & Portugal, and thence to Lorient or Brest, where you may without delay replenish your water and provisions, and according to the information you may there obtain, proceed again upon a Cruise in the track of the British homeward bound West Indian trade, about 10° West of Ushant, and from thence in such route as in your judgment may promise the best success continuing your cruise as long as your resources will admit and finally you shall be under the necessity of returning to the United States you will endeavour to enter the port of New York in preference to any other.

Having on former occasions urged the superior policy and advantage of destroying the captures you may make, in preference to the hazardous attempt to send them in unless in the vicinity of a friendly port, and only in the case of very valuable and fleet sailing prizes, I need not now dwell upon that subject.—

Daily experience and the grievous complaints of the merchants of Great Britain sufficiently attest the efficacy of the system. Should you touch at any friendly port for succours, you will observe the strictest economy, and put to Sea again with the least possible delay— the general instructions you have from time to time received from the Department, and your own experience will supercede the necessity of further details; and in the event of any casualty or occurrence which in your judgment may render a deviation from these instructions indispensable to the public interest, you will act accordingly; still adhering as near as may be to their general spirit and intention—

You will please acknowledge the receipt of this and forward to the Departmt. on the eve of your departure, a correct Muster Roll of the Officers & Crew under your command. I am &c.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 217–18 (T829, Roll No. 453).

CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

United States Frigate *Constitution*  
May [15], 1815.<sup>1</sup>

Sir

On the 20th. of Febuary last, the Island of Madera bearing about WSW distant 60 Leagues we fell in with his Britanic Majesties two Ships of war, the *Cyane* and

*Levant*, and brought them to action about 6 OC. in the evening, both of which (after a spirited engagement of forty minuets) surrendered to the Ship under my command.

Considering the advantages, derived by the enemy, from a divided and more active force, as also their superiority in the weight and number of their guns, I deem the speedy and decisive result of this action the strongest assurance which can be given to Government, that all under my Command did their duty, and gallantly supported the reputation of American seamen.—

Inclosed you will receive the minuets of the action, and a list of the Killed and wounded onboard this Ship, also Inclosed you will receive for your information, a statement of the actual force of the Enemy and the number Killed and wounded onboard their ships as near as could be ascertained. I have the honor to remain Very Respectfully Sir Your Most Obdt. Servt.

Ch<sup>s</sup>. Stewart

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 93 (M125, Roll No. 44).

1. *Constitution* anchored off Sandy Hook on 15 May 1815. The ship's logbook records that Stewart's dispatch was sent off to New York City via the customs boat that day.

[Enclosure]

Minutes of the Action between the U.S. frigate *Constitution*, and H.M. Ships *Cyane* and *Levant*, on the 20th February 1815:—

Commences with light breezes from the Ed. and cloudy weather— At 1 discovered a sail two points on the larboard bow— hauled up and made sail in chace— At  $\frac{1}{4}$  past 1 made the sail to be a ship— At  $\frac{3}{4}$  past 1 discovered another sail ahead—made them out a[t] 2 p.m. to be both ships, standing close hauled, with their starboard tacks on board. At 4 p.m. the weathermost ship made signals, and bore up for her consort, then about ten miles to leeward,— we bore up after her, and set, lower, topmast, top gallant, and royal studding sails in chace— At  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 4 carried away our main royal mast—took in the sails and got another prepared. At 5 pm. commenced firing on the chace from our two larboard bow guns—our shot falling short, ceased firing— At  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 5, finding it impossible to prevent their junction, cleared ship for action, then about 4 miles from the 2 ships— At 40 minutes after 5, they passed within hail of each other, and hauled by the wind on the starboard tact, hauled up their courses, and prepared to receive us— At 45 minutes past 5, they made all sail close hauled by the wind, in hopes of getting to windward of us— At 55 minutes past 5, finding themselves disappointed in their object, and we were closing with them fast, they shortened sail, and formed on a line of wind, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  half a cables length from each other. At 6 pm having them under command of our battery, hoisted our colours, which was answered by both ships hoisting English Ensigns. At 5 minutes past 6 ranged up on the starboard side of the sternmost ship, about 300 yards distant and commenced the action by broadsides, both ships returning our fire with great spirit for about 15 minutes,— then the fire of the enemy beginning to slacken, and the great column of smoake collected under our lee, induced us to cease our fire to ascertain their

positions and conditions.— in about 3 minutes, the smoake clearing away, we found ourselves abreast of the headmost ship, the sternmost ship luffing up for our larboard-quarter.,— we poured a brodside into the headmost ship, and then braced aback our main and mizen Topsails, and backed astern under cover of the smoake, abreast the sternmost ship, when the action was continued with spirit and considerable effect, until 35 minutes past 6, when the enemy's fire again slackened, and we discovered the headmost bearing up,— filled our Topsails— shot ahead, and gave her two stern rakes— we then discovered the sternmost ship wearing also— wore ship immediately after her, and gave her a stern rake, she luffing too on our starboard bows, and giving us her larboard broadside— we ranged up on her larboard quarter, within hail, and was about to give her our starboard broadside, when she struck her colours, fired a lee gun, and yielded. At 50 minutes past 6, took possession of H.M Ship *Cyane*, captain Gordon Falcon, mounting 34 guns. At 8 pm filled away after her consort, which was still in sight to leeward— At ½ past 8 found her standing towards us, with her starboard tacks, close hauled, with top-gallant sails set, and colours flying— at 50 minutes past 8 ranged close along to windward of her, on opposite tacks, and exchanged broadsides—wore immidiately under her stern and raked her with a broadside, she then crowded all sail, and endeavoured to escape by running— hauled on board our tacks, set Spanker and flying jib in chace— At ½ past 9 commenced firing on her from our starboard bow chaser.— gave her several shot, which cut her spars and rigging considerably— At 10 pm finding they could not escape, fired a gun, struck her colours, and yielded— We immediately took possession of H.M. Ship *Levant*, Honorable captain George Douglas, mounting 21 guns. At 1 a.m. [21 February] the damages of our rigging was repaired, sails shifted, and the ship in fighting condition.

D, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 93, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 44). For a similar version of these minutes as recorded in *Constitution's* logbook, see Brodine, Crawford, and Hughes, *Interpreting Old Ironsides*, pp. 108–9.

[Enclosure]

*List of killed and wounded on board the United States' frigate Constitution, of 44 guns, (mounting thirty-two 24 prs. and twenty 32lbs. carronades) on the 20th February, 1815, in action with his Britannic majesty's ships Cyane and Levant.*

KILLED—John Fullington, ordinary seaman; Antonio Farrow, marine; William Harral, ditto.

WOUNDED—David Quill, quarter master; James Jackson, seaman, severely; Tobias Fernald, seaman, (since dead);<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Thomas, ditto, severely; Benjamin Venderford, do. slightly; Vincent Marks, ditto, severely; John Lancy, ordinary ditto, (since dead);<sup>2</sup> Thomas Fessenden, ditto, (since dead); Benjamin Norckross,<sup>3</sup> sergeant marines, severely; Patrick Cain, marine, severely; William Holmes, ditto, severely; Andrew Chambers, ditto, slightly. —Killed 3, wounded 12—Total 15.<sup>4</sup>

Printed, *Niles' Weekly Register*, 27 May 1815, pp. 218–19. As the original of this document was not found, a contemporary printed version was substituted.

1. The following recounts Tobias Fernald's wounding and death: "*Tobias Farnell*, of Portsmouth, had his arm shattered by a ball; after the Surgeon had amputated it, when he had taken up the arteries, and before the dressing was completed, the cheers on deck were heard for the surrender of the *Cyane*, the brave fellow twitched the bleeding stump from the Surgeon, and waved it, joining the cheers! He is since dead—" *Boston Gazette*, 1 June 1815.

2. The final minutes of Lancy's life were reported as follows: "*John Lancey*, of Cape Ann, was brought below one thigh shattered to pieces, and the other severely wounded; the Surgeon said to him, 'My brave fellow you are mortally wounded'— 'Yes sir, I know it. I only want to hear that the other ship has struck,'— Soon after the cheers were given for the surrender of the *Levant*, he raised his head, echoed the cheer, and expired a minute after." *Ibid.*

3. One of three variant spellings of Benjamin Norcross's surname. His last name also appears in official records as Norcrose.

4. *Constitution's* logbook records 4 killed and 12 wounded in the engagement.

[Enclosure]

*Statement of the actual force of his Britannic majesty's ships Levant, capt. the honorable George Douglass commander; and Cyane, capt. Gordon Falcon commander, with the number killed and wounded on board each ship, on the 20th February, 1815, as near as could be ascertained, while engaged with the U.S. frigate Constitution.*

#### LEVANT.

18 thirty-two pounders, carronades,  
 1 twelve pounder, ditto,  
 2 nine pounders, long guns,  
 21 guns, 156 officers, seamen and marines.  
 Prisoners 133 officers, seamen and marines.  
 Killed 23; wounded 16—total killed and wounded 39.

#### CYANE.

22 thirty-two pounders, carronades,  
 10 eighteen pounders, ditto,  
 2 twelve pounders, long guns,  
 34 guns, 180 officers, seamen and marines.  
 2 brass swivels.  
 Prisoners 168, officers, seamen and marines.  
 Killed 12; wounded 26—total killed and wounded 38.

Printed, *Niles' Weekly Register*, 27 May 1815, p. 219. As the original of this document was not found, a contemporary printed version was substituted.



*Constitution vs. Cyane and Levant, 20 February 1815*

JOURNAL OF ACTING CHAPLAIN ASSHETON Y. HUMPHREYS<sup>1</sup>

[U.S. Frigate Constitution, 20 February 1815]

[Extract]

. . . . Throughout the night standing to the Northward and westward under short sail on the starboard tack; continued on this tack without seeing any thing untill 1h.10m. P.M. on Monday when a sail was cried from the mast head as being on the weather bow, hauled up for her under all sail, shortly after another sail was descried on the lee bow and word from aloft that the ship to windward had bore up for us. As we were now in the direct track for craft bound from the mediterranean to Madiera &c felt assured that none but men of war would manoeuvre in this way and were not mistaken. At 2.30 P.M. the ship standing for us displayed signals which not being answered she squared away to the westward to join her consort setting all studdg sails and making a great display of bunting, which she enforced with a number of guns. Set every rag in chase, the wind rather lulling. At a few minutes before three commenced firing from the forward guns on gun deck, the shot falling short ceased firing; at 3.15 opened again from the forward guns the shot just reaching At 3.45 carried away the main royal mast which enabled the chase to distance our fire. Set Carpenters to work to make a new royal mast which they completed about 5. At 5.30 the breeze freshening a little. The ship to leeward tacking to the Southward under all sail. At 6 the weather ship passed under the stern of the other and spoke with her took in all light sail and both of them hauled up their mainsails and hauled too on the starboard tack in line. At 6.10 ranged ahead of the sternmast which we found to be a frigate built ship, bringing her on the quarter, and her consort on the bow distant about two hundred yards, and opened our broadside which was returned with great quickness and spirit and some degree of precision; continued exchanging broadsides until the whole were enveloped in smoke upon the clearing away of which perceived we had got abreast of the headmost ship, manned both sides in case it should be necessary to ware ship, and backed the main and mizen topsails and dropped into out first station, the ship on the bow backing her topsails also; broke the men off from the starboard battery and renewed the action from the larboard; after a few broadsides the ship on the bow perceived the error she had committed in getting stern board, & filled away with the intention of tuffing tacking athwart our bows, the ship on the quarter at the same moment falling off perfectly unmanageable; filled away in pursuit of the former and compelled him to put his helm up at about one hundred yards distant pouring several raking broadsides into him he made all sail before the wind which we did not think proper to reduce knowing his crippled situation would enable us to overhaul him after securing his consort, wore round and ranged alongside the latter when she hoisted a light and fired a gun to leeward and upon being hailed to that effect replied she had surrendered. Sent a boat on board and took possession of His Majesty's Ship *Cyane* Capt Gordon Falcon mounting 34 guns 32 pound carronades—having received her Commander and Officers on board with the greater part of her crew ordered her to keep company and filled away in chase of the other gentleman and in a short time discovered him on the weather bow



standing for us. In a few minutes he luffed to and fired his broadsides which was duly repaid, he then tacked ship and made all sail by the wind receiving a rake from our starboard broadside; set the Royals and soon gained his wake and opened upon him from the gun deck chase guns with great effect and in a few minutes after she hoisted a light and hove too. Ranged alongside sent a boat on board and took possession of His majesty's ship *Levant* Capt Douglass of 18 32 pound carronades and 2 long 12 pounders. The whole of this business occupied about three hours, only forty five minutes of which were taken up in compelling both ships to yield to our superior gunnery.— The *Cyane* when she struck had five feet water in the hold and otherwise very much cut up, her masts tottering and nothing but the smoothness of the sea preventing them from going over the side— The *Levant* in a condition somewhat better, her spars having generally escaped, but her hull pretty well drilled and her deck a perfect slaughter house, in fact so hardly had she been dealt with on deck that her men by the acknowledgement of their Officers twice went below from their quarters. The *Constitution* lost not a spar but the fore topgallant yard, and was in better order if possible to have to have fought a similar action than when the late one commenced. The loss on the part of the two ships was upwards of forty killed and nearly double that number wounded, the *Constitution* had four killed and eleven wounded. Two or three hours sufficed to place the three ships in a condition to make sail and by four o'clock on the morning of Tuesday Feby 21st. they were standing to the westward. . . .

AD, InU, Journal of Assheton Y. Humphreys, 17 December 1814–26 March 1815. For a printed version of this journal excerpt, see Martin, *Constitution's Finest Fight*, pp. 27–30.

1. Assheton Y. Humphreys served as captain's clerk to Charles Stewart first in *Constellation*, then in *Constitution*. Stewart appointed him *Constitution's* acting chaplain on 1 June 1814. After the engagement with *Cyane* and *Levant*, he was assigned to the latter ship's prize crew and was himself taken prisoner when *Levant* was recaptured on 11 March 1815. Humphreys's naval service is summarized in Martin, *Constitution's Finest Fight*, pp. 1–4 and 57–58.

CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART: GENERAL ORDERS TO  
CREW OF *CONSTITUTION*

U.S. frigate *Constitution*  
February 23. 1815

Captain Stewart takes the first opportunity of returning his thanks to the Officers, Seamen, Ordinary Seamen and Marines, of this Ship, for their gallantry, order and discipline, displayed by all under his command on the night of the 20th. instant, while engaged with his Majesty's late Ships the *Cyane* & *Levant*, and congratulates them on the glorious result of their exertions; a result which could not have been produced against so superior a force, commanded by distinguished Officers, without the energy and order so conspicuously exhibited by all on that occasion. We were not only outnumbered in guns and weight of metal by the Enemy, but had also to contend with a more active class of vessels and a

divided force, which gave to them every advantage. Be assured that the laurels you have acquired for yourselves will never fade, and that the share of glory you have given to your country will be hailed by your fellow citizens with the greatest satisfaction, and posterity in beholding the trophies gained by your gallant predecessors in victory shall view with grateful sensations the two which you have added to their number.

You will accept his thanks for the promptness with which you repaired the damages and secured the three ships, and he assures you that it will not be least among your merits, when 'tis known, that in one hour after a contest so severe, your own ship was ready to fight another action and your prizes enabled to make sail.

The excellent example hitherto shown by our Naval Victors in their respect towards the persons and property of a subdued Enemy, he trusts will not be deviated from by any under his command, surely, there are none among you who can be desirous of tarnishing so much your well earned glory, as to hesitate between the choice of being scornfully pointed at as plunderer or to perceive the finger of satisfaction selecting you as a hero. If, therefore, any of you have unwarily possessed yourselves, improperly, of either public or private property he commands you to give it immediately to the Commanding Officer. You surely cannot wish to bring disgrace on your Commander or your Officers whom you have so gallantly supported.

It is much to be regretted that on occasions like the present, the Commander is not permitted to see, with own eyes the distinguished merits of each officer, that he might thank them individually for their exertions, but as all must have done their duty well to produce such decisive effect he begs they will receive his thanks collectively. He tenders to the Officers commanding the Gundeck, forecandle and Quarter deck divisions, his thanks for the steady and incessant fir[e] kept up by their batteries, the vivacity of which nothing could surpass. To Capt. Henderson and Lieut. Freeman,<sup>1</sup> commanding the Marines he owes his grateful thanks for the lively and well directed fire kept up by the detachment under their command; he thanks Mr. Hixon<sup>2</sup> and the Officers stationed on the forecandle and tops for their steady attention to orders and the promptness with which they replaced every thing important that was shot away. To Mr. Pottinger and the Officers superintending the Magazines and Passages he gives his thanks for the facility with which every essential was furnished the batteries from their departments;— to Doctor Kearney and his assistants in the Cockpit he feels great obligations for their humanity and skill in relieving and [a]ssisting the wounded. Capt. Stewart begs Lieut. Ballard<sup>3</sup> to accept his thanks for the prompt assistance he gave him in all the operations and manouvres of the ship, for the alacrity with which every order was attended to, and the promptness with which they were executed, and he assures him that the gallantry and good conduct displayed by him on that occasion will make a lasting impression on his gratitude. To Mr. Humphreys commanding the flag-guard, and the Officers attached to him as aids, he gives his thanks, and assures them that he is highly satisfied with their gallantry and support.

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 135, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 44). Bracketed text supplied from a printed version of this letter published in *ASP: Naval Affairs*, Vol. 1, p. 407.

1. William H. Freeman was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps on 17 August 1812. He was promoted to first lieutenant on 18 June 1814.

2. Samuel C. Hixon was warranted a sailing master on 30 April 1814.

3. Henry E. Ballard was promoted to lieutenant on 26 April 1810. In May of 1814, he requested a transfer from *Constitution* to the command of William Bainbridge, who wanted Ballard to serve as his first lieutenant in the 74-gun ship of the line *Independence*, then under construction at the Charlestown Navy Yard. Secretary Jones approved the transfer on 8 May, but seven months later Bainbridge transferred Ballard back to *Constitution* at the request of Charles Stewart, who sought the return of his veteran first lieutenant before "Old Ironsides" departed on its cruise. See Bainbridge to Jones, 3 May 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 9 (M125, Roll No. 36); Ballard to Jones, 3 May 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 60 (M148, Roll No. 13); and Bainbridge to Secretary of the Navy, 12 December 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 108 and enclosure (M125, Roll No. 41).

CAPTAIN GEORGE DOUGLAS, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

United States Frigate *Constitution*  
at Sea 22nd. February 1815.—

Sir,

It is with extreme regret I have to acquaint you for the information of their Lordships of the Capture of His Majesty's Ships *Levant* and *Cyane* on the night of the 20th. Inst., by the United States Frigate *Constitution*, in Latitude 33° 17' N. and Longitude 13°. 10' W.— His Majesty's Ships sailed in Company from Gibraltar Bay where they had been refitting on the 16th. of February and from Tangier Bay on the 17th. with the wind at S.E. shaping a course for Madeira, a Swedish Brig was the only Vessel seen until the afternoon of the 20th. February, the *Cyane* then about ten miles on the weather Beam looking out, at about 1H. 30' she made the Signal for a strange sail N.W. the *Levant* was immediately hauld close upon a wind on the Starboard tack, at 1H. 45' PM. a sail was seen on the weather beam standing apparently on a wind on the Larboard Tack, and closing with the *Cyane*, about 3 PM. observed the *Cyane* bear up, and the stranger bear up after her, about 3H. 15', having brought both Ships abaft the beam the *Levant* was tacked, to close with them, answered the Signal No. 377 from the *Cyane*, and cleared for Action, at 4 PM. tack'd again, and at 4H. 15' spoke His Majesty's Ship *Cyane*, when Captain Falcon informed me he had every reason to believe the stranger was an American Frigate, but owing to the very hazey state of the weather, it was impossible at that time to make out her exact force, the stranger still coming down upon us, and His Majesty's Ships continuing close to each other, and running free under easy sail, with the intention if possible, of forcing a night Action, at 5H.10 the Stranger hoisted American Colours, and appeared to be a Frigate of the largest class, the Colours of His Majesty's Ships being hoisted at the same time, at 5.15 PM. the action commenced with the three Ships, the *Levant* taking a position upon the Enemy's larboard bow, and the *Cyane* a little abaft his larboard Beam, which was kept up with great spirit on all sides, until about 6.40 PM. when finding that the whole of the runing rigging, and greater part of the standing rigging were shot away, and the Masts and yards considerably injured,— I put the Ship before the wind in order to get her in a governable state, and stop up the shot holes, more effectually, having by this time received several between wind and water, and the

Ship leaking considerably, as the smoke cleared away I observed that the *Cyane*, in attempting to get before the wind also, had in consequence of all her running rigging being shot away, unavoidably come too, on the larboard Tack with all sails aback, and the Ship apparently unmanageable by which means we were unfortunately separated, the enemy at this time appeared to have suffered but little, in consequence of his being to windward during the action, and Keeping at too great a distance, to allow our Carronades to do full execution. Before it was in my power to haul the *Levant* to the wind, I observed the Enemy range up close to the *Cyane*, and pass her without any guns being fired, but it being night I could not discover whether the Colours of the *Cyane* were still flying or not, at 8.15 PM the *Levant* being again ready for Action the Ship was hauled to the wind, and tack'd to close with the Enemy, at that time standing towards us, and at 9.10 PM finding it was out of my power to weather him, pass'd close under his lee and gave him our Starboard Broadships, as long as the guns would bear, receiving at the same time a most heavy and destructive fire from the Enemy both in the rigging and Hull, at 9.30 PM finding that the *Cyane* had undoubtedly been obliged to strike her colours, the *Levant* was again put before the wind with the hopes of saving the Ship, receiving several heavy raking Broadships in wearing from the enemy, who were in chace of us, every effort was now made to make all sail, but owing to the crippled state the Ship was again in, the whole of the lower and running rigging, the Wheel, Main topgallant yard, Mizzen Topmast and Starboard foretopmast Studdingsail boom being shot away, the lower Masts much wounded and the sail shot and torn to peices, caused an unavoidable delay, the enemy keeping up a constant fire with his bow Guns, during the chace, and coming fast up with us, at 10.20 PM. seeing that the enemy was ranging up on our larboard quarter with the intention of giving us his broadside, and having consulted the opinion of the Officers who agreed with me that any further resistance would only be an useless sacrifice of more lives, at 10.40 the Colours were hauld down and the Ship taken possession of by the United States Frigate *Constitution*, mounting 52 Guns, and a Complement of 472 Men,— Although I was aware of the superiority of the Enemy's force, I nevertheless conceived it my duty to bring him to action, with the hopes of at least disabling him and preventing his intercepting, two valuable Convoys which sailed from Gibraltar on the same day with the *Levant*, which I knew to be in our neighbourhood, this object was fortunately accomplished,— Although it was my misfortune to be obliged to strike my Colours to the *Constitution*, I cannot omit mentioning in the highest terms Lieutenants John Henderson 2nd. and Wm. Jones, acting, also Mr. James Stannes, Acting Master and Lieutenant Wm. Meheuse, Royal Marines, and the Petty Officers, Seamen, and Marines of His Majesty's late Ship *Levant* for their very gallant behaviour, during a most unequal contest, and constant fatigue of five hours and a half, likewise to Captain Falcon of His Majesty's Ship *Cyane* for the very able support I received from that Ship during the action until the unfortunate, but unavoidable separation of the two Ships, a copy of whose letter I enclose, from that period, until the surrender of the *Cyane*,— I likewise enclose a list of the names of the killed and wounded on board the two Ships.—<sup>1</sup> The *Levant* at the Commencement of the action being eleven short of Complement, and the *Cyane* thirteen.—\* I have the Honor to remain, Sir, Your most Obedient Humble Servant.

George Douglas Captain

\*NB. It has never been my power to ascertain the exact loss of the *Constitution*, but as far as I could learn she had from four to six killed and about twelve Wounded, three of whom died during the time I was on board the Ship.— The *Constitution* likewise suffered considerably in her rigging, and sails, with a number of shot in her hull, which it is to be regretted owing to the distance, had not the desired effect, several struck her between wind and water in consequence of which the pumps were frequently at work.

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/1740, fol. 261. A copy of Douglas's letter may be found in the record of his court-martial in UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/5449.

1. Douglas listed *Levant's* casualties as 6 killed and 18 wounded. Falcon listed *Cyane's* casualties as 4 killed and 20 wounded.

CAPTAIN GORDON T. FALCON, R.N., TO  
CAPTAIN GEORGE DOUGLAS, R.N.

United States Ship of War  
*Constitution* 22nd. February 1815.

Sir

As the distance of the *Levant* on the night of 20th. inst. must have prevented your seeing the state and situation of the *Cyane* or knowing the circumstances that led to her capture, I take the earliest opportunity of laying before you the particulars of that unfortunate event.—

During the greater part of the action the situation of the two Ships was such as to afford you an opportunity of perceiving every occurrence, it therefore appears unnecessary for me to say more, than that it was my constant endeavour to close with the Enemy, finding we were too far distant for Carronades, at the same time exposed to the full effect of his long guns, & obtain a position on his quarter, in this however I was only partially successful, as the situation and superior sailing of the enemy's Ship enabled him to Keep the *Cyane* generally on his broadside, consequently exposed to a heavy fire, from which in the early part of the action the Ship suffered very much in the rigging and latterly in the hull.—

At about 40 minutes after 6 I was informed the *Levant* had bore up, and upon observing her situation as well as I could through the smoke &c., I imagined from what I could discover, it was your intention to ware, in consequence I immediately did so, in performing which I had the mortification to find that not a brace or a bowline, except the larboard fore brace, were left, but observing the *Levant* was exposed to a heavy raking fire, the *Cyane* was brought to the wind on the larboard tack, unfortunately with all the sails aback, with the intention of covering the former, in which situation the action was maintained so long as a gun would bear, the smoke under the lee preventing my discovering for some time that the *Levant* was continuing before the wind, on seeing which I endeavoured to follow her, but owing to the situation of the sails and crippled state of the rigging it was

not in my power to get the Ship before the wind,— A short cessation of firing having taken place I embraced the opportunity of reeving fresh braces &c. in the hope of getting the Ship again under Command, but before this could be accomplished the enemy having wore, again opened his fire on the *Cyane*, and closing, took a position within hail on the larboard quarter, which it was impossible to prevent, and equally so under such circumstances, to refit the Ship, having nearly the whole of the standing and all the running rigging cut, the sails very much shot and torn,— all the lower Masts severely wounded, particularly the Main and Mizzen masts, both of which were tottering Fore yard, Fore and Mizzen topmasts, Gaff and Driver boom, Main topgallant yard and fore topgallant mast, shot away or severely wounded,— a number of shot in the hull eight or nine between wind and water,— six guns dismounted or otherwise disabled by shot, drawing of bolts &c.— with a considerable reduction from our strength in killed and wounded,— In this state the *Cyane* was when the Enemy's Ship took the position already mentioned,— the *Levant* nearly two miles to leeward and still going before the wind, therefore not in a situation to afford support, without which I could have no reasonable prospect of making any impression on so very superior a force as I was then singly opposed to, even had the *Cyane* been perfectly effective, which to all appearance the Enemy still was;— Thus situated it was with much concern I foresaw the surrender of His Majesty's Ship as an event to which I should be obliged to submit— not relying however on my own judgment I consulted my Officers and finding they were of opinion that the situation and crippled state of the Ship prevented any prospect of success against a force considerably more than double our own, or even of effecting our escape from a Ship so much superior in sailing— conceiving under such circumstances that farther resistance would be attended only with a loss of lives equally unavailing and unnecessary—and feeling confident that every thing in my power had been attempted against the Enemy though without the desired effect—and imagining the *Levant* to be at such a distance as to insure her escape should you consider such a step proper, I, on a due consideration of these circumstances, felt it my painful duty to direct the colours to be struck, which was done at 7 O'clock, and the Ship soon after taken possession of by the United States Ship of War *Constitution*.—

Having thus endeavoured to give you a particular statement of the circumstances relating to the unfortunate capture of His Majesty's late Ship, under my Command, I proceed to a more pleasing duty, that of making known to you the Bravery, and good conduct of the Commissioned, Warrant, and Petty Officers, Ships Company and Royal Marines under my Command, and of assuring you that during this unequal contest their exertions were such as merit my warmest approbation, affording me the strongest assurance that had the *Cyane* been fortunate enough to have met a more equal force, or even on the present occasion, along with the *Levant*, to have succeeded in bringing the Enemy to closer action, the result would have been very different;— From Lieut. Alexr. McKenzie 1st. Lieut. who was slightly wounded, I received every assistance, and beg in the strongest manner to recommend him to the notice and protection of their Lordships;— I feel at the same time much pleasure in naming Lieut. Henry Jellicoe 2nd. Lieut., Mr. George Smith, acting Master, and Lieut. Peter Meares, Royal Marines, each of whom in their respective situations conducted themselves much to their own credit and my satisfaction,— I likewise take this opportunity of bringing to their

Lordships notice Messrs. John Lingard and J. W. H. Handley, Masters Mates and Mr. Joseph Walker, Midshipmen, they having all passed for Lieutenants, and deserving of every credit, the two first are severely wounded, particularly Mr. John Lingard, who has served nearly five years with myself and whose conduct upon all former occasions, as well as the present, entitles him to my warmest recommendation, as a most promising young Officer.

I have the honor to enclose a return of the killed and wounded<sup>1</sup> which it is a satisfaction to remark is short of what might have been expected, some of the latter are severe I am happy however to be able to state that they are under the care of Mr. [Tegetmeir], Surgeon of the *Cyane*, all doing well.— The *Cyane* went into action thirteen short of Complement and four unable to attend at their quarters from sickness.

Trusting that the above statement may prove satisfactory, and confidently hoping that the *Cyanes* conduct in the action may be entitled to your approbation, and favourable report.— I have the honor to remain Sir, Your most Obedient Servant.

Gordon Falcon Captain

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/1740.

1. Falcon listed *Cyane's* casualties as 4 killed and 20 wounded.

#### REMARKS ON BOARD H.M.S. *CYANE*, 20 FEBRUARY 1815

Remarks, &ca. on board the *Cyane*,  
Monday 20th. February 1815.

PM. moderate Breezes from E.N.E and hazy weather, all sail set steering WNW at 1, exercised great Guns and small arms;— 1.20 a strange sail to the Northward—made compas signal NW to the *Levant*. at the time hull down to WSW in studding sails and hauled to wind[ward] on the starboard tack in chace, the stranger appearing to be a square rigged vessel steering to the So.ward with a fore royal set, but no main the weather continued hazy, and could at times see the chace only very indistinctly;— ship head from North to NNW. moderate Breezes from ENE to NE. with some swell:— at  $\frac{1}{4}$  p[ast] 2 made the chace out to be a ship and shortly after a ship of war, and at about  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 2 to be a Frigate: made the private signal which not being answered, at  $\frac{3}{4}$  past 2, bore up to close the *Levant*, then on a wind on the starboard tack to leeward hull down, the stranger bearing NE. by N distance 5. or 6 miles.— observed her to shape a course after us, and to make all sail,— cleared Ship for action— made Signals No. 3. 11. and 377 to the *Levant* with Guns; observed a flag at the main on board the *Levant* which could not on account of the haze be distinguished. soon after bearing up, the Stranger hoisted the flags white pierced red, over half red half blue at the fore;— found she was gaining fast upon us, made all possible sail; observed him to carry away his main royal mast, shortly after he fired his chace Guns, the shot falling far distant of the ship;— trimmed sails as necessary, making the most direct course to close the *Levant*, then working to windward made all sail: at  $\frac{3}{4}$

past 4 shortened sail to topsails, top-gallant sails and foresails; spoke the *Levant* and informed Captain Douglas that we had every reason to suppose the ship to windward was an American frigate, but that I had not been able to ascertain her force as she had kept nearly always end on to us; when finding it was his intention to engage her, the Ships Companies cheered; hauled to the wind and set the mainsail keeping about  $\frac{1}{2}$  Cables length astern of the *Levant*; the Stranger hauled up a little likewise and set his Mainsail and spanker:— found we could not gain the wind of him, again spoke the *Levant*, when both ships bore up together with the view of prolonging the commencement of the action till night: the Stranger s[ill] continuing to close us fast, and finding we could not succeed in delaying the action so long as wished for, at 5.10 hauled to the Wind, on the starboard tack and up mainsail:— the stranger hoisting American colours and hauling up likewise discovered to us his force viz. 15 Guns on the main deck, 8 on the quarter deck, and 4 on the forecastle of a side:— hoisted the Colours; at 5.20 the enemy being about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a mile, or rather more distant, and a point abaft the beam of the *Cyane* tried the range of his shot, and immediately afterwards commenced action; both Ships returning his fire the *Levant* holding an advantageous position on the bow, the *Cyane* a little abaft the beam of the Enemy's braced sharp up, and endeavoured to close the Enemy's quarter, observing our Shot to frequently to fall short, whilst he held a decided superiority in his long guns; cutting our rigging and sails to pieces:— at about 6 shivered the main-topsail and allowed the Enemy to draw a little ahead, when we again filled and endeavoured to luff upon his quarter, upon discovering which he threw all aback, and again brought the *Cyane* on his beam; found we had neared him a little as his Musquet Balls began to fall on board, at the same time we were suffering very much in the Hull and rigging, his fire being greatly superior, and ours rather slacker in consequence of some of the Guns being disabled:— at about 40 minutes past 6 the *Levant* appear'd to be keeping away, and imagining it might be with the intention of wearing, wore immediately:— found we had not a brace or bowline left, except the larboard fore brace, but the *Levant* being at this time exposed to heavy raking fire, the Enemy having filled across her, the *Cyane* was brought to the Wind on the Larboard tack, with everything aback, for the purpose of covering the *Levant*, renewed the action and continued it so long as the Guns would bear; lost sight for some time of the *Levant* in the smoke;— shortly afterwards the firing ceased for a short time, discovered the Enemy's Ship had wore and was standing for the *Cyane*, and soon after commenced firing her Starboard Guns; turned the hands up to refit rigging, rove new braces, &ca. the Enemy again ceased firing; upon the clearg. up of the smoke found the *Levant* was running to leeward; attempted to get the ship before the Wind to close her, which, owing to the crippled state of the rigging and situation of the sails lying flat aback, and Driver &c entangled in the Wreck of rigging, [&] about the Mizzen mast as not to be able to get it down; Jib sheets & flying Jib Hallyards shot away, could not be accomplished, before the Enemy had closed us, and taken a position on our larboard quarter, within hail:— the ship at this time totally unmanageable with most of the standing and all the running rigging shot away, sails much shot and torn, all the lower masts, and several of the yards severely wounded particularly the main and mizen and fore and mizen topmasts (the latter fell soon after) and fore topgallant mast,



foreyard, cross Jack and main topgallant yards; spanker boom and gaff:— a number of shot in the Hull, nine or ten between wind and water, five guns disabled by Enemy's shot, drawing of Bolts from the side and starting of Chocks, &ca., starboard clue of fore topsail shot away and topsail sheets:— the Enemy holding a position in which the Ship was exposed to his broadside with not more than 3 or 4 Guns to bear upon him, the *Levant* at this time nearly two miles directly to leeward, and still going before the wind, and the Enemy to all appearance having sustained but little damage, and in full command of the Ship:— Thus situated without an opportunity of refitting the rigging so as to get the Ship under command, further resistance was considered as useless against such a superior force, a light was therefore shewn, and at 7 o'Clock the colours were struck: Shortly afterwards an officer came on board when it was found we were captured by the United States Ship of War *Constitution* Captain Charles Stewart, mounting 52 Guns, long 24 Pounders, and 32 Pounders, Carronades with a Complement at the Commencement of the action of 472 Men: At the time of quitting the *Cyane*, the *Levant* was still going to Leeward.

Signed. Gordon Falcon  
Captain.

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/5449.

MINUTES OF THE CHASE OF *CONSTITUTION* AND ITS PRIZES FROM  
PRAIA HARBOR BY A BRITISH SQUADRON

[11 March 1815, Port Praia, São Tiago Island]

Minutes of the Chace of the US frigate *Constitution* by an English Squadron of 3 ships, from out the harbour of Port Praya, island of St Iaga:— Sunday March 12th. 1815<sup>1</sup> sea. a/c

Commences with fresh breezes and thick foggy weather— At 5 minutes past 12, discovered a large ship through the fog. standing in for Port Praya;— At 8 minutes past 12, discovered two other large ships astern of her, also standing in for the port. From their general appearance, supposed them to be one of the enemy's Squadrons, and from the little respect hitherto, paid by them to Neutral waters, I deemed it most prudent to put to sea. The signal was made to the *Cyane* and *Levant*, to get under weigh— At 12 after meridian, with our Topsails set, we cut our cable and got under weigh, (when the Portuguese opened a fire on us from several of their batteries on shore,) the prize ships following our motions, and stood out of the harbour of Port Praya, close under East Point, passing the enemy's Squadron about gun shot to windward of them,— crossed our top-gallant yards, and set Foresail, Mainsail, Spanker, Flying Jib, and Top-gallant Sails,. The enemy seeing us under weigh,— tacked ship, and made all sail in chace of us,. As far as we could judge of their rates, from the thickness of the weather, supposed them two ships of the line, and one frigate. At ½ past meridian cut away the boats towing astern:— 1st. cutter and gig. At 1 pm found our sailing about equal with the ship on our lee quarter, but the frigate luffing

up, gaining our wake, and rather dropping astern of us, finding the *Cyane* dropping fast astern, and to leeward, & the frigate gaining on her fast, I found it impossible to save her if she continued on the same course, without having the *Constitution* brought to action by their whole force, I made the signal at 10 minutes past 1 p.m. to her to tack ship, which was complied with. This manouver, I conceived, would detach one of the enemy's ships in pursuit of her, while at the same time, from her position, she would be enabled to reach the anchorage at Port Praya, before the detached ship could come up with her, but if they did not tack after her, it would afford her an opportunity to double their rear, and make her escape before the wind. They all continued in full chace of the *Levant*, and this ship: The ship on our lee quarter, firing by divisions, broadsides—her shot falling short of us. At 3 pm by our having dropped the *Levant* considerably, her situation became (from the position of the enemy's frigate,) similar to the *Cyane*, it became necessary to separate also from the *Levant*, or risk this ship being brought to action to cover her. I made the signal at 5 minutes past 3 for her to tack, which was complied with. At 12 minutes past 3 the whole of the enemy's squadron tacked in pursuit of the *Levant*, and gave up the pursuit of this ship. This sacrifice of the *Levant* became necessary for the preservation of the *Constitution*. Sailing Master Hixon, Midshipman Varnum,<sup>2</sup> 1 Boatswains mate, and 12 men, were absent on duty in the 5th. cutter to bring the cartel brig under our stern.—

D, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 93, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 44). For a similar version of these minutes as recorded in *Constitution's* logbook, see Brodine, Crawford, and Hughes, *Interpreting Old Ironsides*, pp. 109–10.

1. These minutes were dated according to sea time.

2. Frederick Varnum was appointed a midshipman on 2 November 1812, with his warrant antedated to 18 June 1812. William Bainbridge ordered Varnum to *Constitution* in early May 1814. See Bainbridge to Jones, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 32 (M125, Roll No. 36).

LIEUTENANT BEEKMAN V. HOFFMAN TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

His Britanic Majestys late Ship *Cyane*  
New York April 10th. 1815

Sir

I have the honor to inform you, that on the Evening of the 20th. of February last, while Cruising off Madeira, the United States Frigate *Constitution*, fell in with his Britanic Majestys Ships, *Cyane*—and *Levant*.— which she Captured after an Action of 50 minutes.—

The *Cyane* is a Frigate built Ship, mounting 34 Carriage Guns (vizt.) 22,, 32 lb. Cannonades on the Main Deck. 8,, 18 lb. Cannonades on the Quarter Deck 2,, 18 lb.— Cannonades and 2 long nines, on the Forecastle, and from the best

information I could obtain carrying a Complement of 175 Men. Commanded by Gordon Falcon Esqr. The *Levant* mounting 21 Carriage Guns (vizt.) 18,, 24 lb. Cannonades 2 long nines, and a Shifting 12 pounder—on the Topgallant Fore-castle with a Complement of 150 men, Commanded by the Honble. George Douglas Both Ships suffered severely in their Spars Rigging and Sails.— The *Constitution* received but trifling Injury.— having only 4 men killed and 10 Wounded As to the loss of the Enemy I cannot possibly.— ascertain, but should presume it was very severe.—

On the 9th. of March the *Constitution* with her two Prizes in Company, Anchored off the Isle of May.— (one of the Cape De Verd Islands) On the 10th. at 5,, AM Got underway and made Sail for St. Jago's where we anchored at 10,,45 AM.— On the 12th. at ½ past meridian discovered 3 Sail in the offing.— at 1,,10 made them to be Frigates.— at which time the *Constitution* made Signal to get Underway.— At 1,,20 Cut our Cable and made Sail to the Southward and Eastward close on a wind.— At 1,,30 the Forts on Shore commenced firing on us.— At 2 the *Constitution* made Signal to Tack, which I did to the Northwd. and Westward.— At 2,,5 the Sternmost Frigate commenced Firing on us, and hoisted English Colours, distant about two miles,, At 2,,20 lost sight of the *Constitution*.— and *Levant*, who were standing on a Wind to the Southward and Eastward, The Frigates in Chase.— At 2,,35 lost sight of the Enemy.— At 3 heard a heavy Cannonading, which continued at intervals until ½ past 4.— At Sundown Shaped my course for the United States.— For the further particulars of our Cruise, I beg to refer you to Captain Stewarts Official Account on his Arrival to the United States.—

I cannot conclude my Letter without particularly recommending to your Notice Midshipman Joseph Cross.—<sup>1</sup> for whose unremitting Attention and Exertion I feel myself greatly indebted, and he is a young Man who I think would do honor to a Commission

And to Midshipman James Delany,<sup>2</sup> and James F Curtis.—<sup>3</sup> and the few Men I have under my Command words would be insufficient to express my.— gratitude towards them./ . Very Respectively I have the Honor to be Your Obedt. Servant,

B V Hoffman

LS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 157 (M148, Roll No. 14).

1. Midshipman Joseph Cross was appointed a midshipman on 13 August 1812, with his warrant antedated to 9 June 1811. He was ordered to *Constitution* on 6 April 1812.

2. Midshipman James W. Delany was appointed a midshipman on 4 December 1811, with his warrant antedated to 1 September 1811. He was ordered to *Constitution* on 22 May 1812. Delany was tried and acquitted of a charge of drunkenness by a court-martial on 2 October 1813. See DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 4, No. 149 (M273, Roll No. 6), and, Brodine, Crawford and Hughes, *Interpreting Old Ironsides*, p. 21.

3. Midshipman James F. Curtis was appointed a midshipman on 8 November 1812, with his warrant antedated to 18 June 1812.

LIEUTENANT HENRY E. BALLARD TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Baltimore May 2. 1815.

Sir

I have the honour to make known to you my arrival at this place with a part of the Officers and crew of U.S. frigate *Constitution*, captured in a prize, the *Levant*, in the harbour of Porto Praya the island of St. Jago, by a Squadron of His Britannic Majesty's Ships, consisting of the *Leander* Sir George Collier, the *Newcastle*, Lord George Stewart, and the *Acasta* Capt. Kerr;— for the particulars of my recapture I beg leave to refer you to the inclosed extract from the Log Book of the *Levant*.

Having caused the destruction of my own papers as well as those of the Officers with me, I can only say to you relative to the *Constitution* that after leaving the Port of Boston she severally cruised off the islands of Bermuda and Madeira, in the Bay of Biscay, and for some time in sight of the Rock of Lisbon, without having met with but two of the Enemy's vessels, one of which was destroyed the other ordered in; and that, on the evening of the 20th. February, the island of Madeira bearing W.S.W. distant 70 leagues, fell in with, engaged, and after a close action of 40 minutes captured H.B. Majesty's Ships *Cyane* Capt. Gordon Falcon, and *Levant* Honble. Captain Douglass.

It would, Sir be deemed presumption in me to attempt to give you particular details respecting the nature of this action; I shall therefore, only remark generally that every Officer, Seaman and Marine on board did their duty I cannot, however, deny myself the pleasure that this opportun[ity] affords me of noticing the brilliant management of Captain Charles Stewart, through whose unerring judgment every attempt of an ingenious Enemy to gain a raking position was frustrated. I have the honour to be, Very Respectfully, Sir, Your obedient Servant.

Henry E. Ballard

LS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 10 (M148, Roll No. 14).

[Enclosure]

The *Cyane* mounted on her main deck twenty two 32 lb. Carronades; on her Upper deck, ten 18 lb. Carronades, two long 9's, and on 12 lb. Carronade on a travelling carriage, with a complement of 175 men.

The *Levant* mounted eighteen 32 lb. Carronades, two long 9's, and one 12 lb. Carronade, with 138 men on board.

The *Constitution* had 4 killed and 9 wounded

*Cyane* . . . 7 killed . 17 wounded

*Levant* . . . 9 killed . 17 wounded

D, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 10, enclosure (M148, Roll No. 14).

[Enclosure]

Extract from the Log Book of Ship *Levant*.

Harbour of Porto Praya, Saturday, March 11. 1815. These twenty four hours commence with moderate breezes and thick hazy weather. All hands employed in refitting ship; the topgallant yards on deck and sails unbent to repair. At 0 h. 25 m. P.M. discovered three large ships bearing S.W. by W. distant four or five miles.— Wind N.E.— Signal from *Constitution* to get under weigh— Cut and made sail on a wind [on] the larboard tack, crossed topgallant and main royal yards and set [the] sails. At 1 h. the Enemy evidently falling astern and to leeward of [the] *Constitution*, but gaining fast on the *Cyane* and *Levant*— at 1.30 [the] *Cyane* tacked by signal from the *Constitution*.— at 2 lost sight of [the] *Cyane*— at 2.30. the headmost ship, the *New Castle*, four points on [the lee] bow distant 3 miles; the *Acasta* two points on the lee bow distant [2½] miles, and the *Leander* on the lee quarter 2½ miles distant; tacked by signal from the *Constitution*, the Enemy's squadron immediately tacking in chase. At 3 lost sight of the *Constitution*, same time made the highland to the S.E. of the harbour— at 3.30. finding it impossible to escape by keeping by the wind from our very great inferiority of sailing, the *Acast[a]* having gained to windward of our wake and the other ships neared us very much, it was determined to bear up for the harbour, distant 4 or 5 miles on the lee bow, the neutrality of which we were all under the strongest belief the Enemy would not violate— 3.35 kept away one point and set the staysails, when the *Leander*; Sir George Collier, opened his fire, the shot passing over us and falling on the neutral shore. At 3.50 the *Newcastle* Lord George Stewart, and *Acasta* Captain Kerr, opened their fire upon us cutting away much of our rigging and upper sails, which circumstance gave them the advantage of keeping off and luffing too so as to bring their broadsides [to] bear without materially altering their position. At 4 anchored in four fathoms water within 150 yards of the shore and under a very st[rong] battery. At 4.5. the *Acasta* took a position on our quarter, distant half a cables length, from which she kept up a constant fire from [her] bow guns. Finding that the Enemy, regardless of our situation, co[n]tinued their fire from all their ships, the officers were called together, when it was determined that longer to receive their fire without being able to return a single gun was only to expose the lives of men rendered valuable to their country both by their long and faithful services and by their recent exploits. At 4.15 the colours were hauled down, notwithstanding which the *Leander* and *Newcastle* both passed near, wore ship, and in waring wantonly fired their broadsides into us, the *Acasta* Captain Kerr still keeping up his fire from his bow guns untill the colours were hoisted half up and hauled down again as a signal that we had surrendered. At 4.30. a boat with an Officer from the *Acasta* came on board and said he was ordered to take charge of the Ship in his Majesty's name. On Lieut Ballards remonstrating at their firing [af]ter he had struck, the reply was that they had only obeyed the signal [of] their Commodore. During the time of our approach to the harbour, [as] well as when getting under way previously from it, we were fired upon [from] a battery which the prisoners whom we had landed in the morning [had] taken possession of, and from which we understand the Portuguese [made] no exertions to dislodge them; although very many of the shot fired [by] the squadron, passed over or

through us and fell into their town, several of them passing through the houses comprising the residence of the Governor.

D, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 10, enclosure (M148, Roll No. 14). Bracketed text supplied from a printed version of this letter published in *Niles' Weekly Register*, 13 May 1815, pp. 191–92.

### PUBLIC ACCLAIM FOR "OLD IRONSIDES"

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

Our National Ship, the *Constitution*, is once more arrived.

Let us keep "*Old Iron Sides*" at home. She has, literally, become a *Nation's* Ship, and should be preserved. Not as a "sheer hulk, in ordinary" (for she is no *ordinary* vessel); but, in honorable pomp, as a glorious Monument of her own, and our other Naval Victories.

She has "*done her duty*"; and we can therefore *afford* to preserve her from future dangers.

Let a dry dock, such as are used in Holland, and other parts of Europe, be constructed for her reception, at the Metropolis of the United States. Let a suitable and appropriate building be erected over her, to secure her from the weather; and other measures used to preserve her from decay; that our children, and children's children, may view this stately monument of our Naval Triumphs.

The decks of this noble Ship have witnessed peculiarly striking instances of superiority and success over her enemies. — When in battle, the skill and courage of her officers and crew, have invariably brought her victory: and when pursued by a superior force (frequently happening) the superior seamanship of her different commanders has completely baffled the efforts of her foe, and preserved her for new and splendid triumphs!

"She has done her duty"; she has done ENOUGH!

Let us preserve her as a precious model and example for future imitations of her illustrious performances!

Printed, *Daily National Intelligencer*, 23 May 1815.

### ACCOUNT OF *CONSTITUTION'S* ARRIVAL AT BOSTON

[*Boston, 1 June 1815*]

#### FRIGATE *CONSTITUTION*.

On Saturday<sup>1</sup> the U.S. frigate *Constitution*, C. Stewart, Esq. Commander, arrived in the outer harbor from New-York: on Monday<sup>2</sup> came into and anchored in the inner harbor. On passing Fort Independence, where the gallant General Miller<sup>3</sup> commands, she fired a national salute, which was immediately returned; and on anchoring, this glorious Yankee vessel was welcomed to her native place by



*Congressional Gold Medal awarded to Charles Stewart*

federal salutes from the *Washington Artillery*, and a company of citizens. Capt. Stewart then left the ship in his barge, accompanied by several others belonging to the squadron, under a salute; and was received at Long wharf, by his assembled fellow citizens, with repeated huzzas, and other hearty demonstrations of gratitude and respect. The officers of that Boston brigade being that day on duty, proceeded in a body to the place of landing, and through their commander Gen. Welles,<sup>4</sup> paid their respects and congratulations to their gallant and meritorious fellow countryman. An escort composed of the *Independent Boston Fusileers* and *Winslow Blues*, under Capt. Fairbanks,<sup>5</sup> conducted Capt. Stewart, and the other officers of the ship, to the Exchange Coffee House, amidst the repeated cheers of citizens of both sexes, who filled the streets, wharves, and vessels, and occupied the houses. The procession was closed by a large number of citizens. A repast was provided at the Coffee House, (where Capt. Stewart received the congratulations of a great number of citizens and strangers) during which a full band of music played national airs and marches; and the ships, wharves, and State-street, were beautifully decorated with the colors of all nations.

We are assured, the gallant crew of Old Iron Sides received the notice of orders to return to Boston, with expressions of great joy; and several who were at liberty on shore, repaired on board to return in her to her native home.

Printed, *Boston Gazette*, 1 June 1815.

1. Saturday, 27 May 1815.

2. Monday, 29 May 1815.

3. Brevet Brigadier General James Miller. Congress voted Miller a gold medal on 3 November 1814, in recognition of his distinguished conduct during the battles of Chippawa (5 July 1814), Niagara (25 July 1814), and Erie (17 September 1814). See Loubat, *Medallic History*, Vol. 1, p. 223, and Vol. 2, plate 42.

4. Brigadier General Arnold Welles, commanding officer of the Third Brigade, First Infantry Division, of the Massachusetts State Militia. See *Massachusetts Register*, pp. 123 and 135. For correspondence exchanged between Welles and Commodore William Bainbridge regarding the defense of the Charlestown Navy Yard in April 1814, see DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, Nos. 158 and 159 (M125, Roll No. 35).

5. Gerry Fairbanks, captain in the First Regiment, Third Brigade, First Infantry Division, of the Massachusetts State Militia. See *Massachusetts Register*, p. 135. The 31 May 1814 edition of the *Boston Daily Advertiser* reported the Boston Fusileers, a militia unit, being paraded by Captain Fairbanks.

CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

U.S. frigate *Constitution*  
Boston Harbour June 3. 1815

Sir

I cannot permit the occasion to pass without recommending to your notice Lieutenants Ballard and Hoffman; the latter has distinguished himself in all the various services of the frigate *Constitution* since the commencement of the late war with Great Britain, and has thrice assisted to lower the Naval flag of that nation. Their patriotism is unquestionable, their valour undaunted, and in the execution of their duties uniformly attentive and correct they are at all times to



be relied on. Although Fortune to the former has not afforded so many distinguished occasions he has never ceased to court them, and in the last cruise of the *Constitution* his services were volunteered from the Ship *Independence* preferring the hazards attendant on cruising to ease and inactivity on shore. If, after twenty years sea service, I am permitted to judge of merit in others, I must in justice to our Naval Service, state to you, that Lieutenant Ballard's superior as an Officer, never stepped the quarter deck of any ship; this combined with his activity and energy marks him to be (when opportunity offers) one of our Country's best ornaments. The practice of Naval Service having established no promotion by seniority below the rank of Master Commandant, which leaves it open to Government to meet with suitable advances the meritorious, thereby engaging all the energies of the young Officers in the cause of their Country to rise preeminently by their merit, and not progressively by their seniority, I deem this a suitable case to be presented to your view, satisfied that I am only meeting the wishes of the Department. The Enemy, who seldom allows superiority or merit where they can possibly withhold it, in the expression of their opinions afford a sure criterion to test the character of those whom we command, I therefore take the liberty of recounting to you the voluntary expressions of the Honble Capt. Douglass and of Capt. Falcon with respect to Lieut. Ballard. It was on the occasion of our retreat from Port Praya;— they observed “the style with which Lieut Ballard got the *Levant* under way with the small number of men he had on board surpasses any thing we have seen; and the activity and exertions we have seen him make use of since we have been on board the *Constitution*, added to his mode of carrying on duty, shows him to be one of the best officers we have seen on board ship, and had you fallen in the action we should have had but little prospects of success while such an Officer remained to succeed in the command.” I therefore do hope, Sir, that these officers will be honoured with all due notice from the Navy Department— I have the honor to be, Very Respectfully, Sir, Your most Obedient Servant

Ch<sup>s</sup>. Stewart

LS, NcD, Letters, 1815–1816.

## Stephen Decatur Takes Command of *President*

*Having received command of President in mid-April,<sup>1</sup> Stephen Decatur began the process of preparing for a cruise, transferring men from United States, recruiting additional seamen to fill President's complement, replacing armament transferred to the Lakes service, making repairs, refitting, and securing stores. Delays, including preparations for an anticipated British attack on New York, postponed the Secretary's issuing Decatur his sailing orders until the end of June. The contents of those orders reflected the changed character of the war. With Britain's war against Napoleonic France over, and the prospect of massive British reinforcements crossing the Atlantic to prosecute the war in North America, U.S. naval strategy was focused on intercepting as many of the British transports and supply ships as possible.*

1. For the decisions that led to Decatur's assignment to *President*, see pp. 234–39.

## COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New York May 28th. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that we completed the coppering of the *President* the day before yesterday.— On heaving her out, we discovered her copper (except on the bows where it was worn by her cables, & on her false keel in consequence of her having grounded) very good, we have of course only removed that which was imperfect, the whole of which was from the fore part of the fore chains to the stem.

The masts will be finished by next Wednesday, & were it not for our deficiency in men, I should hope to be at sea in a very short time— I have had a rendezvous open at this place, but have not yet met with much success. I have also dispatched an officer to Philadelphia but am not very sanguine that we shall do much better there— It is probable we shall be sixty men short— In the course of the ensuing month, many of the men belonging to the Gun Boats term of service will expire, they have expressed a desire to volunteer for the *President* & Captn. Lewis<sup>1</sup> has informed me, should it meet your approbation, that he will make such transfer with pleasure— I hope Sir to receive your sanction to this arrangement

The *President* being one Lieut. short, & the *Hornet* having one more commissioned officer than is usual for vessels of her class, & deeming it prudent that each of the vessels that was to transport our guns, stores & crew, from New London to New York, should have a Lieut. on board— I made a requisition on the *Hornet* for one of her officers, leaving it with Captn. Biddle<sup>2</sup> to designate which officer should go; he sent Lieut. Shubrick,<sup>3</sup> whom I shall be glad to have considered by the department as attached to the *President*. I should have informed you of this arrangement at the moment had not Captn. Biddle insinuated that I was using my authority improperly, & threatening to appeal to the department— under those circumstances I preferred that his statement should go to the Department alone & uncombated, in the hope that whatever Captn. Biddle might think on this subject, you Sir would do justice to my motives.— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir your Obt. St.

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 120 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. Captain Jacob Lewis, Flotilla Service.

2. Captain James Biddle.

3. Jones approved the transfer of Lieutenant John T. Shubrick to *President*.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Como. Stephen Decatur  
Com'dg. U.S. Ship *President*  
New York. }

Navy Department  
June 3d. 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 28th. Inst. and am pleased to find from your information that the Copper of the *President* is in such good condition.— I had suggested to Come. Rodgers a hope, (founded on the time the Copper had run,) that on examination it would prove less defective than he apprehended.—

Very desirous to facilitate your departure I approve of the transfer of the men whose times you say will expire in the course of the present month and who with Captain Lewis' approbation are ready to volunteer for the *President*.—

Agreeably to your request Lieutenant Shubrick will report himself to you for duty on board the *President*.—

The instructions for your cruise will be forwarded immediately, and as one of its most important objects can be accomplished only by your prompt departure, I hope this will find you nearly ready for sea, and you will please by return of mail to state the probable time of your departure and also the force of the enemy which you understand to be off the Hook.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 329 (M149, Roll No. 11).

## COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.F. *President* June 7th. 1814

Sir,

I have been honored with your communication of 3d. Instt. the Gun Boats are now absent, immediately on their return I shall avail myself of the privilege you have been pleased to grant me.— The masts of the *President* owing to the backwardness of the Blacksmiths will not be finished until the last of this week, the *President* will I hope be ready for sea in about three weeks from this. The day before yesterday there was a Seventy four & two Frigates of the enemy<sup>1</sup> before this port the seventy four has not been absent she makes her appearance daily but cruises wide from the bar— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir your ob st

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 25 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. *Superb*, *Belvidera*, and *Maidstone*.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Captain Stephen Decatur }  
 Commanding the U S Ship }  
*President*, New York }

Navy Department  
 June 29th. 1814.

Sir,

When the United States Ship *President* under your command, is in efficient order for a Cruise, you will embrace the first favorable opportunity to elude the vigilance of the blockading Squadron, and proceed to take a position on a Meridian, just to the eastward of the Grand Bank, clear of the fogs, and between the parallels of 42 and 45 degrees; with a view to intercept the Store Ships and Transports of the enemy expected from Europe.—

This service, in the present menacing aspect of our Affairs, is of the highest importance; and should the information you may receive, or other circumstances, in your judgment, dictate a change of position for the better attainment of this end, you will exercise your discretion, keeping constantly in view the main object of your cruise; which you will continue so long as your supplies and resources shall enable you.—

Our enemy entirely released from the pressure of the European War, may be expected greatly to augment his Naval and Military forces, on our Coast and frontiers; and the vindictive Spirit with which we are menaced, calls for, as it certainly will excite, all the vigilance and energy of the public force.—

Should you succeed in capturing Transports with troops, some embarrassment may arise, as to the disposition to be made of the Captives.—Could they be landed in the United States, it would add greatly to our resources in Exchange; but much hazard would attend that course, and as the enemy has refused, to recognise any Cartels granted at Sea, it only remains to divert them from their destination, as far and as long as possible.— With this view I would suggest landing them on some of the Azores, with their provisions, and destroying the Transports.—It would be well to retain all the Commissioned Officers of any importance;—this would increase the difficulty of the enemy, and keep the troops from our Shores, at least for the season.—

In the event of the Capture of Ordnance Storeships, the supply would, undoubtedly, be very acceptable in our Country, were not the hazard of falling again into the hands of the enemy too great, to warrant the hope of safe arrival. Your judgement, in this case, must determine either to destroy, or man them, as you shall think preferable.

The casualties and fluctuations of these extraordinary times, render more detailed instructions inexpedient; and the entire confidence reposed in your energy, judgement and discretion, supersedes their necessity.

On your return to the United States, it is very desirable on many accounts, that you should reach the Port of New York in preference to any other.

You will be pleased to acknowledge the receipt of this Letter, and to forward a complete muster Roll of the Officers and Crew, on the eve of your departure, wishing you a prosperous and honorable cruise.—<sup>1</sup> I am very respectfully Your Obedt Servt.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 161–62 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. On 6 August, Jones instructed Decatur to postpone *President's* cruise until further orders. DNA, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 399. Those further orders, relating to the defense of New York, came on 8 August. See Jones to Decatur, 8 August 1814, pp. 485–86, below.

## Congress “in Irons”

*On 14 December 1813, the frigate Congress arrived at Portsmouth Harbor, after spending nearly eight months at sea.<sup>1</sup> The frigate's outing had been an unprofitable one, netting only four prizes. Despite these meager results, Secretary Jones ordered Congress prepared for another cruise without delay. However, due to the damaged state of its hull and rigging, and the loss of many of its crewman through discharge, the frigate's return to sea was postponed. While Isaac Hull oversaw the expeditious completion of Congress's repairs, his recruiting officers failed to secure the men required to complete its crew. Unwilling to let the remainder of Congress's crew lie idle at Portsmouth, Secretary Jones ordered the entire ship's company transferred to Isaac Chauncey's command on Lake Ontario.*

*The receipt of these orders caused Hull great anguish as he had counted on the presence of Congress and its crew to defend his weakly held station. He promptly wrote the Navy Secretary to remind him of Portsmouth's exposed situation and of his dire need for additional men to protect it. Jones's brusque reply articulates well the Navy Department's manpower dilemma in 1814 and the hard choices this circumstance imposed on naval administrators. The following documents capture this transitional moment in Congress's wartime career—from an active cruiser awaiting orders to a laid-up vessel with a skeleton crew. For the remainder of the war, the frigate remained “in irons.”*

1. For a short narrative of Congress's cruise, see McCranie, *Utmost Gallantry*, pp. 117–18, 127–30. On the frigate's arrival at Portsmouth, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 300–301.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull  
Comm'dg. Naval officer }  
Portsmouth N H

Navy Department  
May 31. 1814

Sir,

Circumstances of the greatest urgency require that the whole of the Officers, Seamen ordinary Seamen & Marines (that is the entire crew) of the U.S. Ship *Congress*, should be ordered to the Squadron on Lake Ontario with the utmost possible dispatch.—You will therefore, Sir, immediately take measures to provide the most expeditious means of transporting them across the Country to Albany where similar provision will be made to carry them on to Sackett's Harbour.—It was hoped that the recruiting service with the increased pay & Bounty would have so far succeeded as to have rendered it unnecessary to resort to this Step, but it has failed and no alternative remains.—

The moment is critical, the enemy are making great exertions to increase their force on that Lake, victory is ours if we are prompt and vigorous, and I therefore

calculate upon the zeal and energy of every officer and man to reach Sackett's Harbor in the shortest possible time where a New frigate the counterpart of the *Congress* will be ready to receive them.—

The Officers, Seamen, and ordinary Seamen will be entitled to the encreased pay for the Lake service from the date of this order and during their continuance on that service.—<sup>1</sup>

It is confidently expected that the issue of the present Naval Contest on the Lakes will not only add to the Naval and National glory, but that it will be so decisive as to supersede the necessity of renewing it, and thus restore to our Atlantic Squadrons the whole of our gallant Officers & Seamen.— Captain Smith will at his option either proceed with his crew to the Lake, or accept of the U.S. Ship *Java* at Baltimore as offered to him in my last letter—

You will lay the *Congress* up in ordinary with every thing complete for service and you will take especial care that every article now belonging to the Ship shall be preserved for her future cruise, except such as may be of a perishable nature, and you will recruit as many Seamen for that Ship as may be practicable.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 327–28 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. On 18 April 1814, Congress authorized a 25 percent pay increase to Navy and Marine Corps personnel serving on hardship stations, such as Lakes Ontario and Erie. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 399 and 401.

### CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 7th June 1814

Sir,

I last evening had the honour to receive your letter of the 31st. ultimo, and shall take immediate measures to carry the orders therein contained into effect.

The Guns of the *Congress* are now landing at the Navy Yard, and a part of her crew will leave here in the morning; the remainder will follow as soon as the ship is laid up in a place of safety. I have determined to send her up the river three or four miles and moor her with all her Stores on board for the present and as fast as men can be recruited send them on board; indeed if men cannot be got for two years I shall get about fifty on any terms I can to take care of the ship and her stores.

We have for some time past been in hourly expectation of an attack by the Enemy, and our force with the crew of the *Congress* was not adequate to the defence of the place, therefore by their being removed we are left weakened; indeed; the forts are not manned and the militia cannot be depended on by us, particularly as the Navy Yard is situated. The Governour of N. Hampshir[e] has

ordered out Five hundred men but has taken car[e] to order that they shall not serve under any officer of the United States nor be ordered to any fort or station occupied by, or under the jurisdiction of the United States, so that nothing can be expected from them at the Navy Yard, not only on account of its being contrary to the orders of the Governour but on account of its being out of the state of New Hampshire.

I must therefore most earnestly request that some regular troops may be ordered to this station, as soon as possible.

Capt. Walbach has taken charge of the Forts at the mouth of the harbour but has not as yet any more force than was there before he came It is true he has orders to recruit but that will take more time than we ought to spare; for if an attack is intended it will be made soon.— I shall do all in my power for the security of the harbour, but without more men I fear our efforts will fail— I have the honour to be with great respect Sir, Your obedient Servant

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 28 (M125, Roll No. 37).

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO LIEUTENANT WILLIAM H. COCKE

[*Portsmouth, N.H.*] 8th June [1814]

Sir,

You will be pleased to take charge of a draft of men from the *Congress* and proceed with them to Sackett's harbour Lake Ontario and report yourself to the Commanding Officer<sup>1</sup> at that place.

You will require of the Navy Agent at this place as much money as will be necessary for you ex[p]ences to Albany, but in the event of his not being able to furnish it, you will call on the Navy Agent at Boston who I presume will furnish what you may want. You will be particular careful that none of the men under your charge are suffered to desert and not less so that they conduct themselves toward the Citizens on the road as becomes men that have been accustomed to good order.

You will be held accountable for all monies received, and a correct account of your expences will be necessary to an easy settlement of your accounts. Wishing you health & honour I am &c<sup>2</sup>

LB, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2. Addressed flush left below signature line: "Lieut Wm. H. Cocke."

1. Commodore Isaac Chauncey.

2. Similar orders of 7 and 9 June were issued to Lieutenants Robert M. Rose and John Porter respectively. See NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Vol. 2 (16 March 1814–17 March 1815).

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 8th June 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I have this moment returned from the *Congress* about four miles up the river where she lies with all her Stores on board and, I hope out of danger

Four Stages left town this morning with forty four of her crew; as many more will follow tomorrow and if we can get Stages they will all be off this week

I shall detain one of the Officers to take charge of the Ship; I have not yet made a selection but I think the Master the most proper person—

I shall do all I can to procure men for her, but I fear it will take a long time to get even enough to take care of her in ordinary. I have the honour to be, with great respect Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 30 (M125, Roll No. 37).

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 9th June 1814

Sir,

Since the crew of the *Congress* is ordered to the Lakes I cannot but call your attention again to the defence of this harbour. Our force is now so small that I fear the consequences should the Enemy attack us in any considerable force.

I am told that each of the ships at New London have on board One hundred men and that there is stationed at the Forts One thousand regular Troops, if so, this place bears no comparison, in point of strength, to that, and being well acquainted there I have no hesitation in saying that this place is much more exposed than that is, and the public property, the town and the private shipping here is of more than ten times the value of what it is at New London, and much more exposed.

I am aware that you have been informed that this place is by nature strong, that ships cannot be managed on account of the tides &c.— I yesterday got the *Congress* under way at the Yard and run her up under all sail past the town and anchored about four miles up the river. Surely if our Ships can be managed those of the Enemy can, and should they choose to come with two or three 74s and as many frigates, I have no hesitation in saying that (with our present force) they can enter the harbour, and accomplish any object they may have in view, notwithstanding what may have been said by others on that Subject— I have the honour to be with great respect Sir Your Obt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 45 (M125, Roll No. 37).



CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SAILING MASTER NATHANIEL STOODLY<sup>1</sup>[*Portsmouth, N.H.*] 15th June [1814]<sup>2</sup>

Sir,

The Officers and Ship's Company of the Frigate *Congress* having been ordered to the Lakes, I have to direct that you take charge of that Ship as she now lies in ordinary with all her Stores and provisions on board.

You will give receipts to the different Officers for all the stores in the different departments and will be held accountable for them consequently no article of provisions or stores can be suffered to be taken out of her or made use of for any purpose except for the few men left on board unless you have a written order from me, and receipts taken from the person sent for them

You will be particularly careful that the Ship with her stores and provisions are kept in the best possible manner. Ship to be washed out side and the Upper deck night and morning, and when the sun is out, the awnings must be kept spread fore and aft and the wind sails kept up to air the hold and Storerooms below which must be frequently examined and should and should any stores or provision be found injured by remaining on board report must be made to me that they may be removed. The Cables must be particularly attended to and service put on to them from the bitts as far out-board as it can be done and another anchor ready for letting go at a moments warning.

A regular watch must be kept by day and by night and the deck must not be left at any time without an officer, in short it is expected that the same regulations are attended and the same order observed as is usual on board the U.S. Ships when in commission consequently you will be held accountable for the conduct of every officer and man on board, and will immediately report to me all such as do not conduct themselves as Officers and Seaman ought to do. I am with great regard &c.

LB, NH*i*, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2. Addressed flush left below signature line: "Sailg. Master Stoodly."

1. William Bainbridge appointed Nathaniel Stoodly an acting sailing master on the Portsmouth Station on 28 June 1812. Stoodly was warrented a sailing master on 14 August 1813. He resigned from the naval service on 6 April 1822.

2. The year in brackets has been substituted here in place of the word "omitted," which appears at the end of the dateline.

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth, 16th June 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Lieutenant Nicholson left here this morning with the remainder of the Officers and Crew of the *Congress* (between eighty and ninety)— They would have left, some days sooner but we found it

impossible to get Stages and Waggons to carry them particularly from Boston to Albany. Some of the first draft that went on, were detained at Boston several days for want of Stages.

The Ship is now left in charge of Sailing Master Stoodly a very correct and trusty Officer.<sup>1</sup> Her Stores are all on board except flour and beans, as these articles are perishable I shall direct the Agent to sell them. I should be much pleased to have your directions relative to the Stores and Provisions that are on board, whether they must remain there, or be taken into stores in town. We have no room for them on the Island—

Mr. Stoodly has on board on [e] Master's mate, one Midshipman, and from fifteen to twenty men, and we are endeavouring to recruit for the Ship, but are not very successful— I have the honour to be with great respect Sir, Your Ob. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 68 (M125, Roll No. 37). Bracketed text is supplied from the letter book copy of this letter. See NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2.

1. Hull later requested a replacement officer for Stoodly, as the sailing master's services were more urgently needed at the navy yard. He also solicited the services of "an experienced Lieutenant" to oversee management of the station's gunboats, noting: "They are now commanded by acting Masters who have never seen service, consequently they require some one to keep them in order whilst on guard and other duty away from the Yard." See Hull to Jones, 5 August 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 65 (M125, Roll No. 38).

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull                    }  
U.S.N. Portsmouth N. H.        }

Navy Department  
June 17. 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter, of the 9th. instant. You are mis-informed as to the defence of the Ships at New=London: they have not one third of the number of men on board that you mention, nor do I believe the military force is one half that you suppose, though in the actual presence of a very strong blockading Squadron, and the means of defence vastly inferior to those at Portsmouth.—

The Secretary of War has been regularly informed of all you have said on the subject, and has taken such measures as he presumed the occasion calls for.

As to the crew of the *Congress* they formed no part of the defence of Portsmouth, for, could she have recruited 50 additional men, she would have been at sea long since.

I am sure you do not expect that places much less tenable than Portsmouth are to be abandoned in order to defend Portsmouth.—

Your own observation and experience must prove to you the difficulty of recruiting men, and if you cannot get them in the very quarter of the union where they most abound, where are they to come from? The want of Seamen has, as you have seen, compelled the Department to strip from Ships that were ready for sea to man those on the Lakes.— Are we to strip the remainder in order to

defend those that are building in the Atlantic ports?— if so, policy and economy would dictate the burning of the latter, in order to remove the temptation, rather than to defend them at an expense far transcending their value.—

You must see, Sir, that this Department can give you no other additional means of defence than such as you may derive from recruiting. The war Department will, I presume, send such as can be spared from other branches of the service, but if the people of a populous place, with such powerful means of defence, natural and artificial will not defend themselves I see nothing to prevent the force you have mentioned from burning the Town, and everything in its vicinity.— I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 107–8 (M441, Roll No. 1). A printed version of this document is in Allen, *Papers of Isaac Hull*, 35–36.

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SAILING MASTER JOSEPH P. SAWYER<sup>1</sup>

[*Portsmouth, N.H.*] 20th. June [1814]

Sir,

On receipt of this you will cause a Rendezvous to be opened at Portland or such other Eastern port as you may think best for the purpose of shipping men for the U.S. Frigate *Congress* now at this place. The men are to be entered for two years and two months pay will be allow'd on good security being given.

You will be particularly careful not to enter any but able-bodied men and native Americans, and that they are free from all old complaints such as sore legs, coughs &c. &c. so frequently found among seamen recruited for the service of the Navy. You will send the men as fast as recruited, to this place; and in charge of some trusty person who will be accountable for their being delivered safe & the passages with all the necessary expences will be paid. You are allowed Two Dollars for each man recruited which is in lieu of all expences except the transportation.

You will be on the books of this station from the date of this order. You will make requisitions on the Navy Agent for such money as you may want for the recruiting service, for which you will be held accountable.

You will inform me immediately what your prospects are of shipping men and from time to time keep me informed of your proceedings. I am, Sir Your Obedt. Servt.<sup>2</sup>

LB, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Vol. 2 (16 March 1814–17 March 1815). Addressed flush left below signature line: “S Master Joseph P. Sawyer/Portland.”

1. Joseph P. Sawyer was warranted a sailing master on 18 July 1812. Isaac Hull discharged Sawyer from the Portsmouth Station on 7 May 1813. Navy Department records state that Sawyer was “to have preference if again required—.” See DNA, RG 24, Abstracts of Service Records of Naval Officers, Vol. E, April 1813–December 1817 (M330, Roll No. 3).

2. For similar orders, see Hull to Midshipman Andrew Fitzhugh, 9 June 1814, and Hull to Sailing Master Zerubabel Kemp, 12 July 1814, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2.

## *Alligator's* Loss and Salvage

*Tragedy befell the schooner Alligator and its captain, Russell Bessett, in 1814. That vessel weathered a late January skirmish with the British, a grounding, refloating, and repairs. It spent the next four months protecting the South Carolina coast until misfortune struck again. In late June, a severe storm, possibly a tornado, sank the schooner, with a loss of 23 of 39 crewmen. Bessett's tireless efforts to recover and reprovision Alligator no doubt contributed to that officer's succumbing to a brief illness. Both ship and commander received the highest praise from Captain Dent.*

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO ACTING LIEUTENANT RUSSELL BESSETT

Charleston 1st June 1814

Sir

The *Alligator* under your command being ready for sea I have to direct that you proceed to sea the first favorable wind. you are to cruize on the coast and within the Inlets between this and port Royal for the protection of the coasting & Inland Trade you are not to lose sight of the coast if practicable to prevent, you will also govern yourself by your former instructions as regards the protection of the Inlets. the detachment of Gallies and barges cruizing to the Southward, when in company or the State of the Enemy on the coast makes it requisite for you to keep them with you, or to give them instructions for the good of the Service you will do so. Should the enemy send any expedition in, or land on any of the Islands or Coast you will send a boat express with information as early as possible to me, You are at liberty to enter as many men for your vessel as to increase her complement to 50[.] Landsmen are as good for the service you are on as seamen very respectfully yr obt Svt

J H Dent

Lt R. Bessett  
U.S. Schr. *Alligator*

LB, ScU, John H. Dent Letter Book, 1813–1814.

ACTING LIEUTENANT RUSSELL BESSETT TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

(Copy)

St. Helena Island. July 2nd 1814

Sir

The painfull task of informing you; the particulars of the loss of the U.S. Schooner *Alligator*, I am now able to undertake. On the 1st July<sup>1</sup> at 3. P.M. while at anchor in Port Royal Sound, with lower yards down, and top gallant masts housed, a heavy dark cloud rose in the west, and coming rapidly by us; the squall when within about half a mile had the appearance of a water spout, or whirlwind— supposing from its appearance, it would upset, or destroy us, I thought

the only way to save the vessel would be to run her on shore, as it was first quarter flood, the cable was cut, and the head of the jib hoisted, when before the wind she was struck by a most tremendous blast, but no injury was done, it then cleared up, the small bower was let go, & the vessel brought up, in ten minutes she was struck by another still more violent gust, and instantly upset—the cable was again cut, in hopes that she would drive on shore, but all to no purpose, she sunk in four fathoms, at low water; some of the men attempted to gain the shore by swimming, but dreadful to relate only four succeeded, twenty three were drowned Among the number I have to lament the loss of two promising young officers, Midshipmen Brailsford & Rogerson.<sup>2</sup> Nineteen have been found and interred on this island. Mesrs. Brailsford & Rogerson were interred, in the church yard by the gentlemen of St Helena. Annexed is a list of the names of those, who have been found, and those who are still missing I Have the Honor to be with great respect yr obt Svt

R Bessett

Twelve including myself, were saved on the head of the topmast. RB.

John H Dent Esqr  
Comg naval officer Charleston, S.C.

Drowned.	Mishipn.	Saved	
Joseph Brailsford –		Russell Bessett.	Lt. Comdt.
Robert. Rogerson –	do	John M Ball	M Mate
Thos. F Johnston	Carpt. Mate	Elias J Salters	Volunteer.
Presly B. Hathaway	Gunners Mate	James Gillespie	B Mate
Oliver Salvadore	Qr.Master	John White.	Seaman.
Nicholas F Rennie	Purser’s Stewd.	Joseph Lewis –	do
William Ishum. –	Seaman.	Henry McGruder –	Boatswain
William Steel –	do	John Robertson –	Seaman.
Joseph Crosby –	do	Saml. Guttry –	do
Joseph Moulder –	do	John Davis –	do
Thos. Harvey. –	do	Hyman Perry.	Qr. Gunner
John Nieson –	do	Wm. Ray –	M. at arms
John P. Rea – O.	do	John Rodden	Boy–
Philip Fraser –	Cook	John Cook –	O. S.
John Martinburg –	Boy.	Charles. Mercer	Seaman.
Jeffery Graves –	O.S.	George Selby –	O. S.
Jerry Stout –	do		
Saml. Johnson –	do		
William Scarlet –	do		
Mich Rush –	do		
Polydore Thompson –	Boy		
Cesar Howard	Seaman		
Danl. Thompson –	do		

R Bessett Lt Com U.S Schr. *Alligator*

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, found between No. 126 and No. 127 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. In his report to Secretary Jones, Captain Dent stated that the date of *Alligator's* grounding was 30 June. Sea time would be 3 P.M. on 1 July, whereas land time would be 30 June.

2. Joseph Brailsford was warranted a midshipman on 15 November 1809. Robert Rogerson had served as a midshipman from 1 January 1812.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston 5th July 1814

Sir

The loss of the *Alligator* proves but too true. It appears she was upset at Anchor, with her yards and topmasts on deck, in Port Royal river on the 30th. ultimo. Lieut Bessett & fourteen men are saved. twenty four including Midshipmen Brailsford & Rogerson are missing.

Lt Bessett informs me the schooner lies in four fathoms water about 120 fathoms from the shore and may be got up without much difficulty. I have obtained the loan of an army Transport, with the diving Bell, and such blocks, cables, & rigging, as will be required, and dispatched them to his assistance yesterday. I have ordered S. M. Lord<sup>1</sup> with the division of gallies to remain with Lt Bessett to assist in raising the *Alligator*; Lt Bessett's official report of the melancholy disaster has not been received. I Have the Honor to be With great respect yr obt Svt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 132 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. Archibald B. Lord was a sailing master from 18 July 1812 until 5 August 1815.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston 1st Sept 1814

Sir

Your letter of the 17th inst<sup>1</sup> I have had the honor to receive. I have accordingly reduced the complement of the *Enterprise* to fifty including officers. the residue have been turned over to the *Alligator*, every economy has been used in getting up and refitting this vessel. I conceive from her strength, construction and easy draught of water (6 feet) of more service and importance, than any other on this station, where all the inland trade in passing the sounds have been heretofore convoyed and protected by her: the inhabitants residing on the Islands to the Southward have felt in some degree safe from this vessel being in their neighborhood, and have manifested great satisfaction at her restoration to service. When a few more men can be obtained she will join the Gallies now in St. Helena Sound, where I hope the enemy's boats will be kept out of our waters. I

have to assure you Sir, that I have and shall keep every officer and man on the alert, and I am happy to inform you no depredations have been made within my command, except when the division of the Flotilla had left St Helena for provisions & supplies. In order to prevent a similar occurrence, I have obtained the loan of an Army transport, to carry provisions monthly to them. The enemy has occasionally been seen (since my last report) near the coast, but has manifested no disposition to land or enter our waters. I Have the Honor to be With great respect Yr Obt Svt.

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 1 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Dent meant 17 ultimo (August). Jones concurred with Dent's assessment that *Enterprise* was a "dull sailer" and should not cruise on the coast where it risked being captured. The brig was best suited for harbor guard duty. Jones to Dent, 17 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 408 (M149, Roll No. 11).

### CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston 5th Sept 1814

Sir

It is with extreme regret, I have to acquaint you, that Lt Bessett died, on Saturday<sup>1</sup> after a few days illness, of a fever contracted while at the southward in the barges,

The loss of this officer at a time when the enemy are daily committing depredations in our inland waters is seriously felt. He was a young officer of great merit, possessing, enterprize, energy and attention to his duty. he had gained the confidence and esteem of the citizens, where he was stationed, together with his thorough knowledge of that intricate navigation, and points of co-operation established with the different Military associations, make the loss of his services more severely felt. I have ordered Lt Haddaway,<sup>2</sup> to the command of the *Alligator*. I Have the Honor to be with great respect yr obt Svt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 20 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. 3 September 1814.

2. Edward Haddaway served as acting lieutenant from 26 June 1813 until the Navy Department promoted him to lieutenant on 9 December 1814.

## Launching the First 74

*On 18 August 1813, workers at the Charlestown Navy Yard laid the keel for a new 74-gun ship of the line, one of three such vessels authorized by Congress earlier that year. Ten months later, this wooden "Goliath"—to be named Independence—was ready for*

launching, well ahead of its two sister ships *Washington* and *Franklin*.<sup>1</sup> To accomplish this feat, William Bainbridge, *Independence*'s commander, had to overcome timber shortages, alterations in the ship's hull design, and troubled relations with the 74's master builders.<sup>2</sup>

On 20 June 1814, the first attempt to launch *Independence* came to an anticlimactic conclusion when the vessel halted midway down the shipping ways. But two days later, to the cheers of thousands of area residents, the mightiest addition to the republic's navy entered its natural element. Following the launch, Bainbridge feted the mechanics, carpenters, and other workers, who had labored so diligently to complete the 74's construction. Regretfully for Bainbridge, delays in arming, fitting out, and manning his new command eliminated any hope of testing *Independence* in combat against a British 74 before war's end.<sup>3</sup>

1. *Washington* was launched on 1 October 1814 at the Portsmouth Navy Yard, see pp. 274–76. *Franklin* was launched in Philadelphia on 21 August 1815.

2. On Bainbridge's challenges superintending the construction of *Independence*, see Long, *Ready to Hazard*, pp. 173–75. On alterations in the 74's design, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 265–69.

3. For a brief history of *Independence*'s career, see Cannery, *Sailing Warships*, pp. 90–93.

#### COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

(Private) Navy Yard Charlestown  
2d June 1814

My dear Sir

Will you be pleased to inform me, whether an expenditure (in La[u]nch-  
ing the Seventy four at this Yard) of a few hundred dollars in entertainment  
for the Mechanics who have work'd on the ship would be allowed by The Navy  
Department—I think it would have a good effect on the future employment of  
those men—who certainly have worked Cheap, and done their work most faith-  
fully. Pray when may I expect the Guns for the Ship—I am exceedingly anxious  
to give John Bull an opportunity of trying the strength of an American Seventy  
four—How gratified I should be to see you here at the La[u]nch— With best  
regards to Mrs. Jones—I am very sincerely Yours

W<sup>m</sup> Bainbridge

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 4 (M125, Roll No. 37).

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

Como. Wm. Bainbridge }  
Com'dt. U.S. Navy Yard }  
Charlestown Mass }

Navy Department  
June 13. 1814

Sir,

Having asked of the President to name the 74's now building in the U.S. he has  
been pleased to select as one of the names the *Independence*, and as you expressed



a wish to have the Ship building under your command called by that name, it will be so entered on the records of the Department. I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 105 (M441, Roll No. 1).

ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE LAUNCH OF *INDEPENDENCE*

Boston, 20 June 1814

*Launch of the 74.*

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A SEAT ONLY.

THOSE Ladies and Gentlemen who are desirous of being spectators to the Launch of the 74, are informed that they can obtain the most commodious and comfortable seats and handsomest prospect of the vessel and Launch, free of any interception, for 25 cents each grown person, children half price. Seats may be had at the ten-foot building, a store and dwelling (a few rods west of the Navy Yard, in Charlestown) in front of which a flag staff has been erected, on which a colour will continue to fly every day until the 74 is launched.

Tickets may be had at said store where a continuation of provision for the best of liquors, wines, cordials, refreshment. &c. &c. will be made. The said Seats are enclosed by a fence so as to make them perfectly independent from any intrusion as well as being completely covered with an awning.

N.B. Eight or ten Gentlemen and Ladies can be provided, with suitable Meals, Coffee, Chocolate, Teas, or otherwise, if timely notice is given.

june 20

Printed, *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 20 June 1814.

NEWS REPORT OF THE LAUNCH OF *INDEPENDENCE*

[Extract]

Boston, 20 June 1814

On Saturday, agreeably to arrangements, the very superior and elegant U.S. ship of Seventy-Four guns, (on Sunday, struggling in her birth, christened “The *INDEPENDENCE*”) was prepared for launching, and started about 11 o’clock, nearly eighty feet on her ways.

The surrounding hills and wharves were clothed with population; and the adjacent houses, stores, and vessels, were crowded with tenants. The country had precipitated itself upon the town. Every spectator was anxious to see her safely glide into her destined element, on which, it is fondly anticipated that unborn

generations will glory in her achievements. She moved steadily and majestically when she was started; but the extreme humidity of the weather, many days prior to the launch, rendered her cradle and ways unsusceptible of the tallow applied to them; it also rendered the timber in some degree soft, and thereby in a great degree increased the immense power of friction. These causes alone suspended her progress. The disappointment was universal; but this proud ship, firm as a rock, stood erect in her cradle, and seemed, like her predecessor, the *Constitution*, to intimate to the beholders, that she was not easily to be moved, and would never bow to the thunder of the enemy. On Sunday, the indefatigable Commodore made a second and unavailing attempt by numerous purchases, estimated in power, equal to 1500 horse draughts, to force the ship upon the deep, where she is destined to vindicate the honors of her name. Owing to the judicious regulation of the Commodore, in keeping spectators from the yard, and at a proper distance no accident occurred on Saturday; but on Sunday, a Mr. Champney, master-joiner, and a valuable man, was killed, and another man, badly hurt, by the break of one of the purchase falls, in the attempt to start her.<sup>1</sup>

Since the keel of the *INDEPENDENCE* was laid, she has been inspected by numerous connoisseurs, who concur, in pronouncing her, in materials, workmanship, stability and beauty, the finest ship, of her class, ever constructed. She is in as perfect safety as when she was started; and it is contemplated to re-block her and take out her bulge [*bilge*] ways and re-oil them, after which she will, without doubt, instinctively find her home.

Thanks to our naval heroes, whose perseverance, skill and gallantry have awakened the country to a sense of its true policy. The navy was once considered as the illegitimate bantling of federalism; it is now the favorite foundling of the nation. God speed its growth!

Printed, *Boston Gazette*, 20 June 1814. This report appeared under the heading: "*COMMUNICATION.*"

1. Shortly after William Champney's fatal accident, a public subscription pledged \$3,000 for the relief of his widow and family. *American Advocate and Kennebec Advertiser* (Hallowell, Maine), 25 June 1814.

#### NEWS REPORT OF THE LAUNCH OF *INDEPENDENCE*

##### *LAUNCH OF THE 74.*

BOSTON, June 23.—Yesterday was launched at the Navy Yaard, in Charlestown, the *Independence*, a 74 gun-ship, built in that Yard, under the direction of Com. BAINBRIDGE. She passed into the Charles with great majesty, and was received by the loud acclamations of many thousands who were assembled to witness her passing from the cradle to her destined element of usefulness.

A Federal salute was fired from the *Constitution* and from the Navy-Yard. After the launch, and when the people were retiring, the bells in the North (Christ's Church) chimed several national airs, such as Yankee Doodle, Washington's March, &c.

After the Launch, nearly 300 persons, who had been employed as mechanicks, &c. in the building assembled in the Rigging Loft, and partook of a sumptuous entertainment. Their toasts were animating to all true Americans.

TOASTS.

The President of the United States.— His signature to no peace, but an honorable one.

Com. Bainbridge—He who conquered the enemy of the “*Constitution*,” will not fail to maintain the honor of the American flag in the “*Independence*.”

The U.S. ship *Independence*—Independent of all single ships, that Neptune has enrolled on his naval register.

The American Eagle—the fire of his eye has covered the British Lion.

The Commodore during the repast, entered the loft, amid reiterated cheers, and thus addressed the mechanics. “You have done your duty; your work speaks for itself; get her afloat, and you will have my grateful thanks.” He then gave as a toast:—

“The Mechanics of our country—May they be prosperous and always happy.”

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The true act of heroism and magnanimity is to encounter difficulties.— Commodore Bainbridge was disappointed in the Launch of Saturday, and he underwent a greater deprivation of feeling, than any of the spectators present: but like many of them he did not despair. He knew the majesty of the strength of the Golia[*t*]h he had in charge, and deliberately weighed its magnitude, and the charge, entrusted to him. He resolved on conquest, and the watery Gods of Charles bear testimony to his triumph and skill, by which they are enabled to bear on their proud waves, the majestic 74 of Massachusetts.

Printed, *Rhode-Island Republican* (Newport), 29 June 1814. The news item appears under the heading “MISCELLANY.”

COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard, Charlestown, Mss.  
June 23. 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that the U.S. Ship *Independence* was safely lau[n]ched yesterday.

The force of the enemy in Boston Bay creates just cause of alarm; and I regret to say that for the want of Troops in the U.S. Forts in this Harbour, the public vessels and property here, are very much exposed to the enemy, who might, with proper spirit of enterprize, do us most serious injury in our present unprotected situation.

If a detachment of Marines could be ordered from New York or further south, to the Seventy four under my command, their services would be highly useful. Permit me, Sir, earnestly to solicit their being ordered here without delay, and also another Sea Lieutenant.—



*William Bainbridge*

The *Independence* is a very fine ship— In a few days I shall transmit to you the plans of her Inboard works, which I think are most judiciously arranged.— I have the honor to be, sir, with sentiments of the highest respect, your mo. ob. servt.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 95 (M125, Roll No. 37).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

Como. W. Bainbridge }  
Charlestown Mass }

Navy Department  
June 30. 1814

Sir.

Your letter of the 23d. is received.— I am pleased to learn that the *Independence* is safely borne upon her Element. Of her excellent qualities I entertain not the least doubt. I only regret the serious obstacles which oppose the transportation of her armament.—

I would with pleasure, order the guard of Marines were it practicable, but until the recruiting Service progresses it will be impossible.— All our stations are so bare as scarcely to afford the necessary centinels.—

Another Sea Lieutenant you can have.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 114 (M441, Roll No. 1).

## British Attack on Neutral Shipping in Narragansett Bay

*Oliver Hazard Perry resumed his direction of the Newport Station in the fall of 1813. Elevated to captain's rank in recognition of his exploits on Lake Erie, the Navy's latest hero anticipated receiving a new warship to command in the new year.<sup>1</sup> Until that time, Perry had charge of the gunboat flotilla protecting Rhode Island waters. Over the first months of 1814, a steady transfer of vessels and men from Newport to other stations left Perry ill-prepared to counter the Royal Navy's escalating campaign of raids along the New England coast.<sup>2</sup>*

*In late May, Perry and his flotillamen joined local militia forces to protect a neutral (Swedish-flagged) merchantman, then aground, from attack by an enemy boarding party. The attackers were driven off but not before burning the grounded vessel and inflicting several casualties on the American defenders, including two of Perry's men. The British after-action report states Perry participated in this affair, a point on which the hero of Lake Erie remained silent.*

1. Secretary Jones informed Perry that he would command at Newport "until a Ship, suitable to your rank, shall be at the disposal of the Department." Jones to Perry, 29 September 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 102-3 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. Perry complained to Jones that his station had been so "frequently culled" of its best sailors that he was left with "an inferior description of Seamen." Perry to Jones, 3 June 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 7 (M125, Roll No. 37).

CAPTAIN CHARLES PAGET, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

His Majesty's Ship *Superb*  
Gardner's Bay 4th. June 1814

Sir

I have great pleasure in forwarding the accompanying Letter from Captain Mitchell, late of His Majesty's Sloop *Nimrod*, giving an account of a very gallant & Successful attack by the boats of that Sloop on a Brig under Swedish Colours, which run on shore, & was defended by the Militia & the Seamen of the Gun boats under the Command of the American Commodore O H Perry I have the honor to be Sir Your most Obedient humble Servant

Charles Paget Captain

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fol. 55. For a copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 433.

[Enclosure]

H M Sloop *Nimrod*  
off Marthas Vineyard  
the 31st May 1814

Sir/

His Majestys Sloop under my Command this morning, set fire to a large Brig under Swedish Colors in the Eastern River of Rhode Island which had fired on our Boats last Night.

The Brig cut her Cable and ran on shore on our approach within Pistol shot of the beach, a Boat was immediately sent under the orders of Lieut. Hammond first of this Sloop to get her off if practicable otherwise to burn her, the latter was effected against one of the hottest fires from Round Grape and Musquetry I ever beheld, a Prisoner now on board belonging to the American Navy<sup>1</sup> who we found in the Brig says there were 300 Militia & 125 Men belonging to the Gun Boats to protect her under the order of Commodore O. H. Perry who had slept on board her the preceding Night with 80 Men

I cannot refrain from expressing my admiration of the distinguished gallantry of Lieut. Hammond and the Men under his Command who persisted in effecting their object notwithstanding the powerful obstacles brought to oppose them,

It affords me great pleasure to say there was not a Man hurt on the occasion altho' the Boat was cover'd with showers of Grape & Musquetry & struck in several places, I have the honor to be Sir Your Obedt. humbl. Servt.

N: Mitchell<sup>2</sup> Commr.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fols. 53–54. Addressed: “To the/Honble Chas. Paget/Capt. H M Sloop/*Superb* & Senior Officer/off Block Island.” For a copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 435–36.

1. Likely Ordinary Seaman Thomas Scar, who Perry reported as missing after the action with *Nimrod's* boarding party.

2. Mitchell was posted a captain seven days after the destruction of *Little Francis*. See Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, Supplement, Part 3, p. 325.

### CAPTAIN OLIVER H. PERRY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Newport May 31st. 1814

Sir

Last evening I recd. information that a Swedish Brig was chased into the East passage by the Boats of an English vessel of war,— I immediately sent Mr. Taylor, with a small detachment of Seamen, and a six pounder to her assistance they were accompanied by a company of militia

This morning the British Brig *Nimrod* stood close in shore, and anchored near the Swedish vessel, which had been run on shore, after driving the people out of her, under cover of their guns they succeeded in boarding, and setting fire to her,— The Militia collecting in considerable numbers, with two 12 pdrs, and two gunboats making their appearance, the Enemy precipitately left her anchorage and stood out— I regret to state, that one of the Militia was Killed and that Isaac Basset O,S. belonging to the flotilla lost a leg,— Thomas Scar O,S, of the flotilla is missing,—<sup>1</sup>

The Brig has been got off and most of her cargo will be saved. I have the honor to be Sir, with great Respect Your Obdt. Srvt.,

O. H. Perry

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 124 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. Likely the U.S. sailor taken prisoner by *Nimrod's* boarding party.

### ACCOUNT OF H.M. BRIG *NIMROD'S* BURNING OF SWEDISH BRIG *LITTLE FRANCIS*

[*Newport, Rhode Island, 4 June 1814*]

On Monday evening last, the Swedish Brig *Little Francis*, Capt. Briggs, 22 days from St. Barts. was chased on Smith's Beach, on the east side of this Island, by



*Oliver Hazard Perry*



the British brig *Nimrod*. The next morning, the *Nimrod* came to anchor about one mile from the shore, and sent her barge, with a number of men, to set fire to the brig, which they effectually accomplished, without having a man either killed or wounded. She then made sail and stood to the southward.— Every exertion was made by the militia of Middletown, the third company of Militia from this town, commanded by Capt. PIERCE, and a detachment of Seamen from the U.S. Flotilla, (who repaired to the beach as soon as the alarm was given) to prevent the Brig from being fired, but having no large cannon with them, their efforts were ineffectual— The *Nimrod* fired near 200 cannon-balls, one of which, we regret to state, killed Mr. *John Smith*, of Middletown, (a very worthy young man) and took off the leg of *Isaac Bassett*, a seamen, belonging to the Flotilla.

The *Little Francis* was set fire to in three different places, but by great exertions the fire was extinguished, after her stern was burnt to the water's edge, and a great part of the cargo destroyed— The brig has since been got off, and was towed into this harbor on Thursday last by the Revenue Cutter *Vigilant*, Capt. Cahoon.— She sailed from St Barts. May 7th, and did not learn of the blockade, until she received a pilot in the Vineyard Sound.— She had on board a cargo of 115 hhds. and 18 tierces Molasses, 7 hhds. and 33 barrels Sugar.— Only 50 hhds. Molasses, and a few barrels of Sugar, will be saved.<sup>1</sup>



We hope the late affair in the East passage will teach us the necessity of being always prepared to defend property forced upon our shores, as it has the strongest claim to our protection. It is our duty and our interest, as we regard our own safety, to be prepared to meet the enemy upon all occasions.— No reliance ought to be placed on his forbearance.

Printed, *Newport* (Rhode Island) *Mercury*, 4 June 1814.

1. The salvaged cargo of molasses was auctioned off on 8 June. The sails, cables, anchors, and other naval stores recovered from the *Little Francis* wreck were sold at auction on 1 July. See *Newport* (Rhode Island) *Mercury*, 4 June 1814, and, the *Rhode-Island Republican*, 23 June 1814.

#### PENSION CERTIFICATE FOR ORDINARY SEAMAN ISAAC BASSETT

Isaac Bassett of Newport R. I. Ordinary Seaman under the Command of Capt. Oliver H. Perry of the U.S. Navy, sustained the loss of his left leg, in an engagement with the British Government Brig *Nimrod*, on the 15th day of May 1814,<sup>1</sup> and———*having been disabled in the service of the UNITED STATES, whilst acting in the line of his duty, is entitled to receive five Dollars———per month from the Commissioner of Loans of the state of Rhode Island———payable half yearly, on the first day of January, and first day of July, in every year during his life, or the continuance of such disability, to commence the twenty ninth day of January 1816. The same will be paid to the said Isaac Bassett———in person, or on his legal power of attorney, but no payment will be made on a power of attorney unless the said Isaac Bassett———shall send to the Commissioner of Loans of the said state, the certificate of a Justice of the Peace of the county wherein he resides, that he the said Isaac*

Bassett—————*appeared before the said Justice, in the month next preceding that in which the payment is to made, and that his disability still continued.*

*GIVEN under my hand and the seal of the Navy Department,  
this first—————day of July—————1816.<sup>2</sup>*

B W Crowninshield

Registered,

Benjamin Homans  
*Secretary to the Board of Commissioners of the  
Navy Pension Fund.*

DS, DNA, RG15, Pension Application Files, War of 1812 Service Case Files, Pension Application File No. illegible.

1. The actual date should be 31 May 1814.

2. The following notation appears along the left margin of this document: "The pension to the within named Isaac Bassett will be paid from the 1st. July 1831, at the Branch Bank of the U States at New York." It is dated "Navy Department/Augt. 17th. 1831." After moving to New York from Rhode Island, Bassett had to file paperwork to receive his pension payments in his new state of residence.

## Manpower Shortages at St. Marys Station

*Problems with recruiting, desertions, and illness continued to plague the St. Marys Station in the second half of 1814. Commodore Campbell implored the Navy Department to increase the recruitment bounty and send a recruiter to Augusta to entice landsmen to join the service. The Georgia Station commander further entreated his sailors to continue in service when their terms of duty ended, solicited privateersmen to join the Navy, and appealed to the Spanish authorities in Florida to work jointly to end desertions. By year's end, Campbell spoke harshly of the lack of patriotism among American sailors.*

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 11th June 1814

Sir

I regret to inform you that the recruiting Service proves very dull Especially Since the Embargo has been raised<sup>1</sup>

The expiration of the time for which men have Shipped is daily occurring which with occasional desertions render it impossible to Keep the full Compliment of men allowed to Gun Boats on this Station in consequence of which I have found It Expedient to order men Shipped for any time above Six months, likewise dispatched Sailing Master Newell<sup>2</sup> to Augusta in this State to procure able bodied Landsmen— His General knowledge of the Country, and knowledge the people have of him, will I flatter myself insure Success— he is likewise of that opinion— Several letters have passed between the commandant<sup>3</sup> of Amelia and

myself relative to deserters, but all to no purpose— I only claim Such as desert from our boats in Spanish waters, particularly at Fernandina where they have occasional calls

This I demanded as a right in return for the privilege, they have of taking out warrants and commanding the constables of this town to apprehend deserters from their vessels in our waters— I contemplate having a personal interview with him on that Subject and endeavor if possible to bring about a better understanding between us— By an interested Letter that fell into my hands a few days past, taken from a Russian vessel that Recd. it from the *majestic* Razee, addressed to Bermuda, I find that Ship and others are obliged to be in Halifax in all this month— It was a letter from an officer on board to his father in Bermuda on family affairs— The Enemy has not appeared off this place Since the 19th ult— and by a vessel that arrived at amelia a few days past, I find that the *Majestic* has captured the *Domonick* (late British), from Charleston bound to France I have the honor to be with Great Respect Sir, your obedient Servant

Hugh G. Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 50 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. The Embargo Act of 17 December 1813, which prohibited American vessels from all foreign trade, was repealed on 14 April 1814.

2. Thomas M. Newell received a sailing master warrant dated 11 September 1813. He was promoted to lieutenant on 9 December 1814.

3. Don Justo Lopez was the commandant of Amelia Island.

#### COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 30th July 1814

Sir,

I beg leave to remark that the Recruiting Service for the Flotilla on this Station is dull indeed, nor do I see a prospect of procuring men without the indulgence of Government, in Granting a bounty of Twenty dollars, which, with two months pay advance will I presume have the desired Effect— We are daily discharging more or less men, as their time for which they Shipped Expires, and without a stimulous is Given to the recruiting Service,<sup>1</sup> we shall soon be destitute of men to do the ordinary duty required of us, much less repel a force that may be brought against us, all of which is Respectfully Submitted— I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir, your obedient Servant

Hugh G. Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 51 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Secretary Jones responded quickly to Campbell's request and authorized "a bounty of Twenty dollars for Seamen & Ten dollars to Ordinary Seamen, if entered for two years service." Jones to Campbell, 11 August 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 402 (M149, Roll No. 11).

## COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 20th August 1814

Sir

I beg leave to represent the unfortunate Situation in which I am placed as regards the recruiting Service— I have not an officer to Send beyond Savannah on that duty— Mr. Newell who I Sent to Augusta returned without Success—he is now at Savannah on that Service— Mr. Brownjohn<sup>1</sup> has been removed to this place in consequence of Mr. Foster<sup>2</sup> being ordered to Norfolk— Lieuts. Gibbs and Edwards<sup>3</sup> have never been of the least use to me /or the Service Since under my command— The former is so much deranged in body and mind as to render him incapable of duty in any way whatever, the latter is Laboring under a deep decline that likewise disqualifies him from doing duty nor can I demand it of them in their present condition— Savannah like the last season wears the appearance of a grave yard— Not a mail that does not give information of Deaths or sickness among the officers and crews of the *Troup* also those vessels that I am under the necessity of sending there to receive recruits— *No. 153* Comanded by Mr. Rudder<sup>4</sup> left that place on the 13th and on the 17th lay at Thunderbolt with himself and 18 of his crew confined with the fever—

I cannot conclude without my repeating my request for a Sailing Master and two Midshipman for this Station I have the honor to be with Great Respect Sir your obedient Servant

Hugh G. Campbell

LS, DNA, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 119 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Mr. Brownjohn has not been identified.

2. Sailing Master Winslow Foster was ordered to Norfolk from St. Marys on 20 July 1814. He was discharged by Norfolk's commander, Captain John Cassin. For more about Foster's misconduct at St. Marys, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 302–6.

3. Both Acting Lieutenants John W. Gibbs and Richard G. Edwards were furloughed for health reasons while serving on the St. Marys Station. They both received their lieutenants' commissions on 9 December 1814.

4. Sailing Master William Rudder's warrant was dated 1 March 1814.

## COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St. Marys. Sepr. 3—1814

Sir

since writing my other letters<sup>1</sup> the Mail has arrived—and brought me the Pleasing Intelligence of a prospect of success In recruiting at Savannah in consequence of the arrival of a Cartel from Jamaica Having on-board 160 men— at the same time have to acquaint you with the death of Mr. [*Legane/Legures?*]<sup>2</sup> Acting Sailing Master on Board the *Troup*—which renders Expedient a supply of an additional sailing Maste[r]

Should we succeed in recruiting a sufficient number of men for the Gun boats & Barges, I shall be under the necessity of Employing acting Masters and Mates untill to officer them untill your pleasure is Known— I mentioned in a former letter the situation of Lieutenant Edwards & Gibbs— May I beg to be indulged with a Lieutenant in place of them to assist the service at Savannah— The loss of Mr. [*Legane/Legures?*] and having fourteen sick out of the small number of twenty Eight or thirty on board the *troup* renders the situation of that vessel helpless indeed— Nor can men be prevaild upon to Enter for her— we have at this place Eighteen on the sick list which obliges me to Keep one Gun boat in port untill her men recover— Have the Honor to be With Much Respect Sir your very obedient Servant

H G Campbell

LS, DNA, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 9 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Campbell sent two other letters dated 3 September to Secretary Jones.
2. This sailing master has not been identified.

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 2d Decr. 1814

Sir,

Captain Reed<sup>1</sup> of the Private Armed vessel *General Armstrong*, late of New York, arrived here a few days past with one hundred & nineteen American seamen from Fayal— It appears that the *armstrong* lay at anchor in Fayal Rhode and under the Guns of that town, when she was attacked by a number of Boats from the *Plantagenet* 74 a Frigate and Brig of war,<sup>2</sup> which were defeated with considerable loss— In a few hours after the *Armstrong* was again attacked in which the Enemy were Gallantly repulsed but on the third attempt the boats were accompanied by a Brig of 18 Guns which were likewise gallantly opposed for a considerable time when Captain Reed found he was likely to be over powered, ordered a Gun fired down the Hatchway, Sank his vessel and made good a landing with his crew— Captain Reed has gone on to Washington with dispatches from the American Consul<sup>3</sup> relative to the action—<sup>4</sup>

Although I have great pleasure in communicating to you the gallant conduct of capt. Reed, I view with no small mortification the conduct of sailors in General— Out of one hundred and nineteen that landed we could prevail on but four to Enter the service— It is much to be regretted that sailors in time of war are not subject to be drafted as the Militia— The want of such a regulation is too sincerely felt by commanders on these southern stations I have the honor to be with Great Respect Sir your obedient Servant

Hugh Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 72 (M125, Roll No. 41).

1. U.S. privateer Captain Samuel Chester Reid.
2. H.M. frigate *Rota* and H.M. brig-sloop *Carnation*.
3. John B. Dabney.
4. For more on the *General Armstrong*, see pp. 611–13.

## A “Splendid Spectacle” on the Delaware: The Launch of *Guerriere*

*The U.S. Navy launched four new warships from Atlantic ports in 1814: the 74-gun ship of the line Washington, at Portsmouth, New Hampshire; the 74-gun ship of the line Independence, at Boston the 44-gun frigate Guerriere, at Philadelphia; and the 44-gun frigate Java at Baltimore.<sup>1</sup> The launches of these powerful vessels provided occasions for the public to watch and cheer the addition of new ships to the American fleet. These special events were well publicized beforehand and drew large crowds of spectators from the hosting port towns and surrounding areas.<sup>2</sup> Twenty thousand onlookers, for example, gathered in Baltimore to watch Java’s launch,<sup>3</sup> while an audience of 30,000 assembled to view Guerriere slide down the ways into the Delaware River.*

*Despite the importance of these launches, the letters of the officers superintending the building of these new warships are curiously silent on the particulars of the day. John Rodgers, for example, described Guerriere’s launch in just 26 words. Isaac Hull was less descriptive, offering a mere 16 words on Washington’s launch. Not to be outdone in economy of prose, William Bainbridge informed Secretary Jones of Independence’s launch in a spare eight-word sentence.<sup>4</sup> Fortunately for the historical record, local newspapers devoted considerable ink to covering and publicizing the launch of each of these warships. Their reportage captures, as no naval officer’s letter could, the excitement, civic pride, and sheer spectacle that accompanied these public occasions.*

1. For documents on the launches of Washington and Independence, see pp. 274–76 and 398–403. On Java’s launch, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 174, 175; Spence to Jones, 2 August 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 13 (M147, Roll No. 5); and the 1 and 2 August 1814 editions of the *Baltimore Patriot & Evening Advertiser*.

2. Isaac Hull withheld providing public notice of Washington’s launch until the day of the event, owing to fears that such news would draw down a British attack upon Portsmouth. See “*News Account of the Launch of the Ship of the Line Washington*,” pp. 274–76.

3. On the crowds at Java’s launch, see *The Columbian* (New York), 4 August 1814, and at Guerriere’s, see below.

4. See Rodgers to Jones, 21 June 1814, below; Hull to Jones, 2 October 1814, p. 274; and Bainbridge to Jones, 23 June 1814, pp. 401–3.

### ADVERTISEMENT FOR VIEWING THE LAUNCH OF *GUERRIERE*

Philadelphia, 18 June 1814

#### LAUNCH of the FRIGATE *GUERRIERE*.

*The sloop Caroline, Captain ANDERSON, Will leave Smith’s wharf, (opposite the Red Storer, between Arch and Race streets,) on Monday, the 20th instant, precisely*

at two o'clock in the afternoon, to take a situation as near the said Frigate, as may be convenient and safe.

☞ Persons desirous of viewing said Launch, will be accommodated with Seats under the Awning at fifty cents each.

TICKETS may be had by applying on board, on Friday and Saturday in the afternoon, and Monday in the forenoon.

june 17

Printed, *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 18 June 1814.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR VIEWING THE LAUNCH OF *GUERRIERE*

Philadelphia, 18 June 1814

*LAUNCH of the FRIGATE*  
GUERRIERE.

THE Steam-Boat *Eagle*, will leave Beck's wharf, second below Market street, on Monday next,<sup>1</sup> at half past two o'clock, and take a safe situation near to the Ship yard, so that the company on board, may have a fair view of the Launch—they will be accommodated with seats under awnings, at one dollar each.

June 17

Printed, *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 18 June 1814.

1. Monday, 20 June 1814.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR VIEWING THE LAUNCH OF *GUERRIERE*

Philadelphia, 18 June 1814

Launch of the *Guerriere*.

THE subscriber, informs his friends and the public in general, that he has erected substantial scaffolds, with seats, at a convenient distance, being the second wharf above the Frigate, for the accommodation of those who wish to witness this interesting spectacle. Tickets for admission to be had until Monday morning 9 o'clock, unless sooner disposed of, by applying to

june 18

*Jacob Keen,*  
Point Pleasant.

Printed, *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 18 June 1814.

## COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Phila. June 21st. 1814

Sir

I have to inform you that the Frigate *Guerriere* was Launched yesterday without any accident whatever and is now safe moored at the Navy Yard Wharf

Her draft of Water, with her Bowsprit in, is Eleven feet, two inches forward and Sixteen feet six inches aft With great Respect I have the honor to be Sir Yr Obt Servt

Jn Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 88 (M125, Roll No. 37).

NEWS REPORT ON THE LAUNCH OF *GUERRIERE*

LAUNCH  
OF THE  
*FRIGATE GUERRIERE*

On Monday afternoon, at a few minutes after four o'clock, the Frigate, which is to perpetuate by her name the first Naval Victory which has been achieved by the arms of our Country, since the commencement of the present war, majestically glided into her native element. The splendid spectacle was beheld by at least 30,000 persons, who regarded with amazement this stupendous fabric of the ingenuity of man, and accompanied her movement by shouts which rent the air, and by heart-felt wishes for her glory and success. The Wharves, from Kensington to Southwark—the house-tops of the vicinity—the opposite Jersey shore—and every spot which commanded a view of the ship, was covered with spectators: whilst the river, covered with vessels, steam boats, shallops, pleasure boats & batteauxs, all systematically arranged in two lines, to permit the Frigate to pass between them—exhibited from the multiplicity of their passengers, a splendid and enchanting scene. Bands of Music, upon the water & on board the frigate, heightened the gaiety of the moment, and discharges of cannon, expressed in louder notes the exhilaration which prevailed. From the instant that the Ship was placed at her liberty, an universal satisfaction was proclaimed. All anxiety was relieved, and the magnificent *Warrior*, slowly and cautiously sliding along her cradle, until she had reached the spot where a sufficient depth of water, rendered her secure from grounding, made a deep and joyful plunge! and bidding a last adieu to the land upon which she had received her fair and warlike form, she rushed upon the bosom of the flood, where the Tritons waiting to conduct her to their great master, (Neptune) sportively greeted her arrival. After coming to an anchor for a short time, to afford an opportunity for the surrounding vessels to clear the way, she was towed down to the Navy-Yard, below the City, where she will be rigged and prepared for her future service.



It is gratifying to those, who have been since the Administration of WASHINGTON, the uniform advocates of a NAVY, to behold with what exultation, those who formerly condemned, reprobated & reviled, now pay homage to that leading feature of Federal policy. Men, who formerly would have danced around the flames of a burning Frigate, and rejoiced from the inmost recesses of their hearts, [at] the annihilation even of the very name of a navy, are now seen equally infatuated in its praises, and zealous in its support.— But why? Because the poor despised remnant of good Old Times, has *fought* itself into favour.

Where would have been our national character, our warlike renown, had it not been for some eight or nine ships, and as many heroes, (Federalists too, however harsh that may sound to some ears,) who faithfully adhered to them? Why, it would have been buried under the walls of Detroit, or Niagara—evaporated in the smoke of some abortive expedition—immersed in the waters of the St. Lawrence, or ground to atoms in the mill of Laclede. There are reasons then why those who are enveloped with the cloak of disgrace, should wish to be covered with the mantle of honour. And yet, these patriots who are now sharing in the glory which the Federalists, *in spite of them*, have acquired for the country, have not the magnanimity to acknowledge their change of sentiment, and to confess the obligations under which they been placed, by a party, which has been unceasingly denounced as favorable to the British and which has unceasingly proved its attachment to the country, by defeating the enemy in almost every instance where he has been encountered. I like those *Traitors* to their country, who display their treachery—by being always prepared to defend their native land—to oppose sword in hand an invading foe—and who conquer their enemy wherever they meet him. But, on other hand, I like not those *Friends* to their country, who manifest their patriotism, by calling aloud for war, when they will not fight—and who will deliberately advise others to encounter the cold and diseases of Canada, but will keep themselves snug at home. These are your *Life, Fortune, and Honour* Gentlemen, of whom “*twelve thousand*” assembled one day in the State House Yard, but who like the “attributes of qualities,” which they pledged to support the war, now when [those] “requisites” are “required,” are to be found “neither here nor there.”

ARISTIDES.

*Tuesday, June 21. 1814*

Printed, *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 22 June 1814.

#### NEWS REPORT ON THE LAUNCH OF *GUERRIERE*

Philadelphia, 22 June [1814]<sup>1</sup>

#### *The LAUNCH of the GUERRIERE.*

A circumstance occurred on this occasion, which was well nigh being attended with very serious consequence, and excited the greatest apprehensions and

terror to hundreds who were witnesses of the danger. After the *Guerriere* was off, and had progressed a considerable distance into the river, she suddenly turned with the current, passed very near some of the vessels which were moored in the stream, and before she could be brought up by her anchor, she came in contact with a shallop that lay directly in her course, which forced her, broadsideways, to the distance of one hundred feet, without the possibility of extricating herself from the perilous situation. Each moment the fears of the spectators were excited, expecting the shallop would go down; but happily, the frigate was stopped in her progress, the danger vanished, and no other harm was sustained than carrying away the frigate's ensign, which got entangled in the shallop's rigging aloft. One man in the concussion, fell overboard from the shallop but was recovered.

About 5 o'clock, the *Guerriere* dropped down by the town, to the Navy-Yard, in Southwark, affording to the citizens who did not see the launch, an opportunity of admiring one of the finest vessels that ever floated on the Delaware. The wharves and shipping, on this occasion also, were literally crowded.

Printed, *Baltimore Patriot and Evening Advertiser*, 23 June 1814.

1. This is the dateline under which this news item appeared.

## The British Invade Maine— The Capture of Eastport

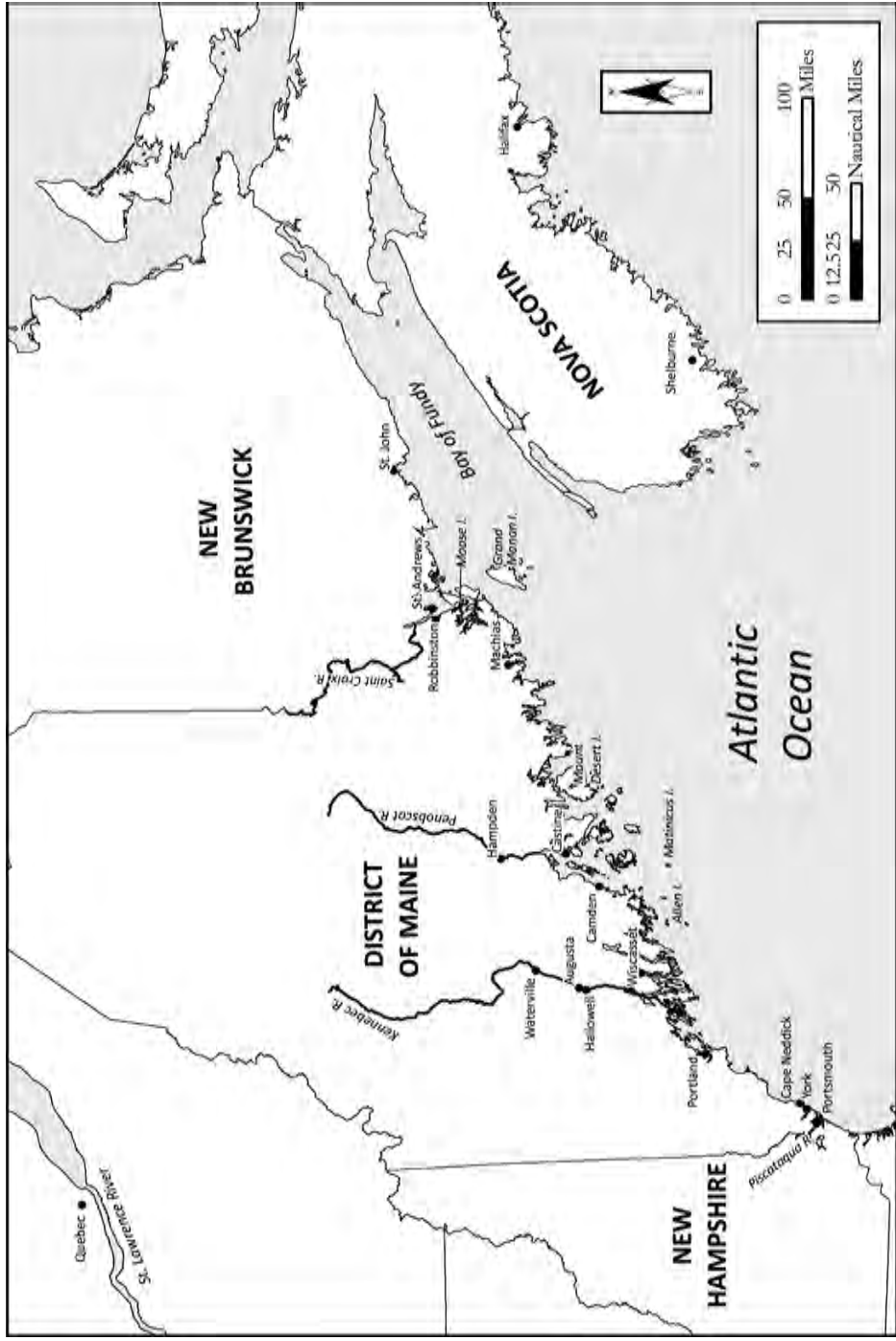
*Of the four major offensives the British launched against the American homeland in 1814, only one—the campaign to secure northern Maine—aimed at the permanent occupation of U.S. territory.<sup>1</sup> In April of that year, British war planners set in motion a military operation whose objective was to reestablish the Canadian-Maine border southward, to the banks of the Penobscot River. Once secured, this new boundary line would provide “an uninterrupted and defensible line of communication” between the provinces of New Brunswick and Quebec and the United States.<sup>2</sup>*

*The first phase of this invasion involved the capture of the town of Eastport, located on Moose Island at the entrance of Passamaquoddy Bay, just below the Canadian border. The British conquest was a bloodless one, with the U.S. garrison at nearby Fort Sullivan surrendering without firing a shot. The town and surrounding area were immediately absorbed into the Canadian province of New Brunswick. Those United States citizens willing to swear allegiance to the British crown were permitted to stay; those who did not were compelled to leave their homes and businesses behind. Eastport remained under British occupation until 30 June 1818, more than three years after the ratification of the Treaty of Ghent.<sup>3</sup>*

1. The targets of the three other offensives were Washington and Baltimore; Plattsburgh, New York; and New Orleans. For a concise treatment of British operations to secure Maine, see Stanley, *War of 1812*, pp. 357–78.

2. Stanley, “British Operations on the Penobscot,” p. 168. On the role of the New Brunswick legislature in promoting the invasion of Maine, see Stanley, *War of 1812*, pp. 363–65.

3. On the four-year British occupation of Eastport, see Kilby, *Eastport and Passamaquoddy*, pp. 175–219.



Map 11. New Hampshire and District of Maine seaboard

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE

Bermuda 19th. June 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose your Excy. a Letter that came under cover to me from the Admiralty<sup>1</sup> which I presume contains directions to take possession of the Islands held by the United States in the [*blank*]

I have recommended to Genl. Horsford<sup>2</sup> to send off the 102nd. Regt. without a moments delay, the 2 Transports that we have here will take about 400 & the *Ramillies* the remainder I have sent on the *Alban* Schooner, with this letter to apprise your Excy. in order that the necessary preparations may be made at Halifax I will direct Sir Thos. Hardy<sup>3</sup> to call at [*blank*] upon the pretence of being in want of Water for the Troops until their arrival at Quebec Your Excy. may therefore either suffer them to remain there or order them to Halifax as you may judge best which this early information will enable you to provide for— Lieut. Hare who commands the *Pictou* is perfectly acquainted with the Local Situation of, [*blank*] without any suspicion of our intention he has given me the enclosed birds Eye view of the Islands,<sup>4</sup> he is an Officer to be relied upon & may be able to give your Excy. much useful information— I shall direct one of the Bomb Ships<sup>5</sup> to attend the expedition, as she may be of service, after which she can return to me— I have the honor to be &c

(Signed) A. Cochrane—

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fol. 5. Addressed opposite signature line: "To His Excy./Lt. Genl. Sir J. C./Sherbrooke &c."

1. See Croker to Cochrane, 29 April 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 83.

2. See Cochrane to Horsford, 19 June 1814, *ibid.*, MS 2346, fol. 5.

3. See Cochrane to Hardy, 22 June 1814, *ibid.*, fol. 6.

4. Enclosure not found.

5. H.M. bomb vessel *Terror*.

[Enclosure]

Copy  
Secret

Downing Street [*London*] 28th April 1814

Sir

I have the honour to acquaint you that the necessary Shipping has been appropriated and is now on the point of sailing from this Country to the Bermudas, in order to convoy the 102nd. Regiment from thence to Halifax. This Corps has been placed under your orders for the purpose of enabling you to occupy and maintain possessions of, the Islands in the Bay of Passamaquoddy, and I am to signify to you the pleasure of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent that you

should make the necessary arrangements in circuit with the officer commanding His Majesty's Naval Force for carrying into effect His Royal Highness's intentions upon this subject as soon as you shall receive the Reinforcement before mentioned—I have the honor to be &c

Signed Bathurst

Lt. General Sir J. C. Sherbrooke K B  
&c. &c. &c.<sup>1</sup>

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 85. For another copy of this letter, see *ibid.*, MS 2343, fol. 45.

1. This address line appeared at the foot of the first page.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Halifax 8th. July 1814

Sir,

I was not honoured with Your Excellency's letter of the 19th. Ultimo Covering a Dispatch from Earl Bathurst for me until the 30th.— As you were made acquainted with Its Contents I feel myself much indebted to You for having recommended Majr. Genl. Horsford to send off the 102nd. Regt. without delay As this will tend to expedite Our movements very much.—

Since the receipt of your Excellency's Communication no time has been lost in embarking a detachment of Artillery with such Ordnance & Stores as have been deemed necessary to accomplish the end proposed And the Transports having these on Board sailed from hence under Convoy of H.M.s.Ship *Martin* on Tuesday last the 5th. Inst. for the Rendezvous which you had appointed.— As I have since learnt that Sir Thos. Hardy arrived on the Coast the same day there is little doubt that the *Martin* with her Convoy has joined him And that the Expedition has before this time sailed for its ultimate destination.—

Rear Admiral Griffith (to whose ready assistance I am much indebted) fixed upon Captn. Senhouse for this Service, that Officer having been stationed for a length of time in the Bay of Fundy and is perfectly acquainted with every part of it.—

I have the honor to be with great respect, Sir, Your Excellency's most Obedient Humble Servant

J. C. Sherbrooke.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 201–2.

CAPTAIN SIR THOMAS M. HARDY, R.N., AND  
LIEUTENANT COLONEL ANDREW PILKINGTON, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
THE COMMANDANT<sup>1</sup> OF MOOSE ISLAND

Copy

On board His Majestys Ship  
*Ramillies*, off Moose Island,  
July 11th. 1814

Sir,

We are perfectly apprized of the Weakness of the Fort and Garrison under your Command, and your Inability to defend Moose Island, against the Ships and Troops of His Britannick majesty, placed under our directions, We are induced from the humane consideration of avoiding the Effusion of Blood, and from a regard to you, and the Inhabitants of the Island, to prevent if in our power the distresses and Calamities which will befall them in case of resistance— We therefore allow you five Minutes from the time this Summons is delivered to decide an answer.

In the event of your not agreeing to Capitulate on liberal terms, we shall deeply lament being compelled to resort to those coercive measures which may cause destruction to the Town of Eastport, but which will ultimately insure us possession of the Island. We have the honor to be Sir, your most obedient humble servants

Signed T M Hardy Captain  
of His Maj Ship *Ramillies*  
Andrew Pilkington Lt. Colonel  
Commg.

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 203. Enclosed in Hardy to Cochrane, 12 July 1814, *ibid.*, fols. 212–13. Endorsed on upper left corner of first page: “T. M. Hardy.” For other copies of this document, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 384, and, Adm. 1/507, fol. 18. A printed version is reproduced in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 301–2.

1. Major Perley Putnam, 40th Regiment, U.S.A.

MAJOR PERLEY PUTNAM, U.S.A., TO  
CAPTAIN SIR THOMAS M. HARDY, R.N., AND LIEUTENANT COLONEL  
ANDREW PILKINGTON, BRITISH ARMY

Copy.

Fort Sullivan July 11th. 1814

Gentlemen,

Conformably to your demand, I have Surrendered Fort Sullivan with all the public property.— This I have done to stop the Effusion of Blood and in consideration of your Superior force. I am Gentlemen with respect Your very obedt. Servant

Signed P Putnam  
Major Commanding

P.S. I hope Gentlemen every respect will be paid to the defenceless Inhabitants of this Island, and the private property of the Officers.

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 205. Endorsed near top left edge of first page: "T. M. Hardy." For other copies of this document, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 385, and, Adm. 1/507, fol. 19. It is also reproduced in Wood, *Select British Documents*. Vol. 3, pp. 304–5.

CAPTAIN SIR THOMAS M. HARDY, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

*Ramillies*, Eastport,  
Moose Island, 12th July 1814.

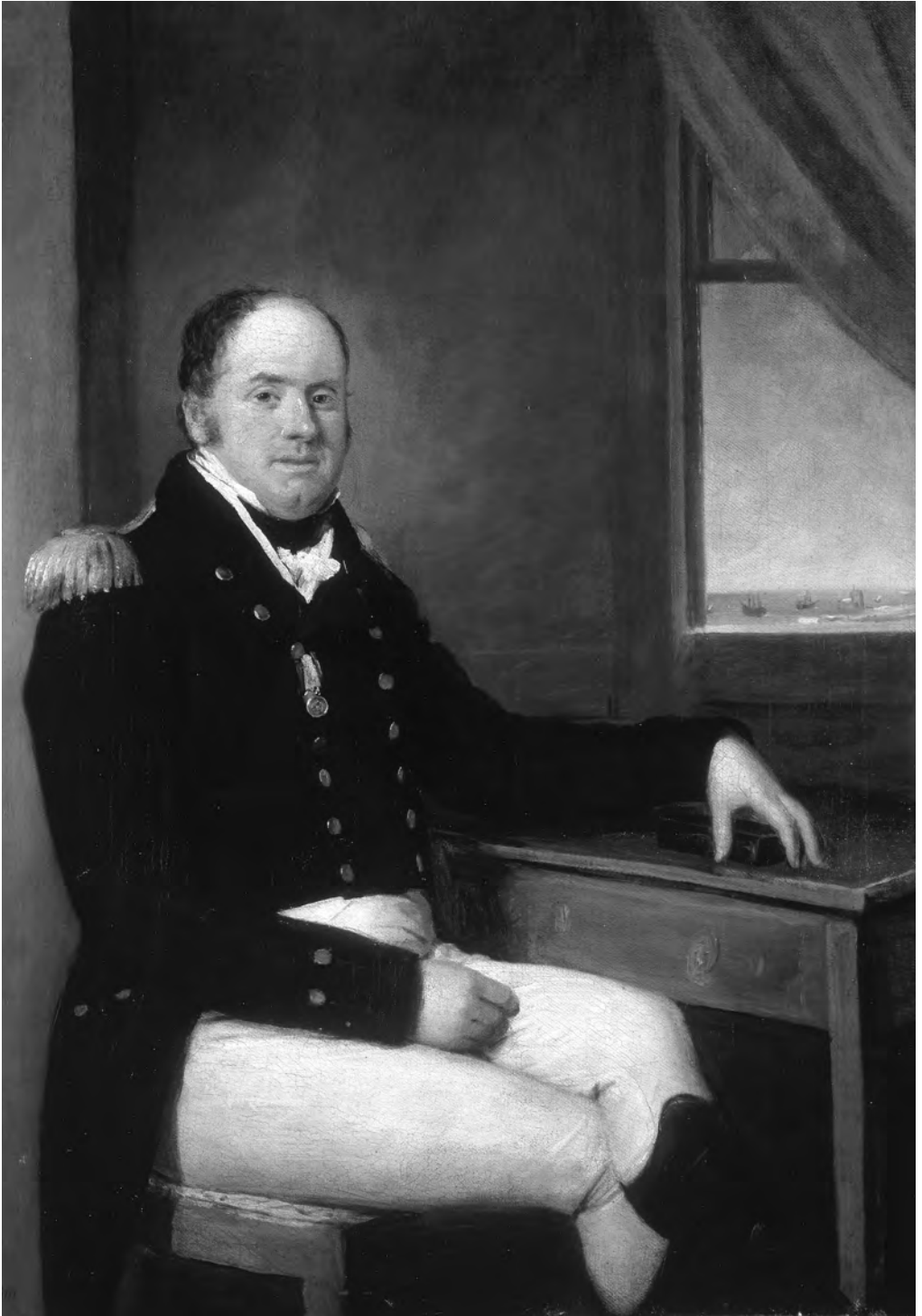
Sir,

In pursuance of your orders dated the 22d. ultimo,<sup>1</sup> I proceeded to Shelburne with His Majesty's Ship under my Command, in Company with the *Terror* Bomb and two Transports having on board the 102d. Regiment, where we arrived on the 6th Instant, and on the following Evening the *Martin* joined us with two Transports from Halifax.— The former Ship having brought Lieutenant Colonel Pilkington, who had received instructions from His Excellency Sir John Sherbrooke K: B: to Command the Land forces destined for the reduction of the Islands in Passamaquoddy Bay, and the next day we sailed for this Port.— On the morning of the 11th. we were joined by the *Borer* off the Grand Manan Island, and by sending her through the Quoddy Passage, Captain Rawlins anchored near the Ferry Passage of Moose Island, which completely cut off the retreat of the Enemy to the Continent.— Every preparation being made for landing the Troops, and favored by a Fresh Breeze, the *Martin* was sent a head with Lieutenant Oats Aid-du-Camp to Lieutenant Colonel Pilkington, with the enclosed Summons,<sup>2</sup> and who landed just as the Squadron made its appearance round the Island of Campo Bella.— Major Putnam who Commanded the United States Troops thought proper to refuse the terms proposed.— The Ships were then anchored and the Troops immediately landed.— On the arrival of the Lieutenant Colonel in the Rear of the Fort with the Light Company of the 102d. Regiment the Commandant produced his Acceptance of the terms offered him<sup>3</sup>

Too much praise cannot be given to Lieutenant Colonel Pilkington for the judicious manner, in which all his arrangements were made, and had there been a serious resistance, I feel confident of Success from the high state of discipline of the Troops under his Command, and the zeal and anxiety of every individual to meet the Enemy.—

I am particularly indebted to Captain Senhouse of the *Martin* for his advice, and arrangements for the disembarkation, as well as for his great exertions in joining me.—

Captain Sheridan placed the *Terror* in a most advantageous position had her Services been required.— I derived great advantage from the local knowledge of Lieutenant Hare of the *Pictou* Schooner, who served as a Volunteer on this Occasion.—



*Sir Thomas Masterman Hardy*



And I beg to express my warmest approbation of the Conduct of the Officers, Seamen and Royal Marines of the Squadron for their exertions.— Also for the cordiality and unanimity evinced by them in the performance of this Service.— And to recommend to your patronage, Lieutenant Truscott (Son of the late Admiral) First Lieutenant of the *Ramillies*, a very deserving and excellent Officer, and who would I have no doubt particularly distinguished himself had the Enemy given us the opportunity.

Returns of the Ordnance Stores and Prisoners of War found on the Island are enclosed.<sup>4</sup>

The Occupation of these Islands so situated, between the Enemy's Shore, and that of New Brunswick may be considered of infinite importance.— and from the excellent anchorage, with the rise and fall of the Tide, Moose Island, the principal one, is well calculated for a depot, for the annoyance of the Enemy.— I have the honor to be Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

T. M. Hardy Captain

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 212–13. For other copies of this document, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 379–80, and Adm. 1/507, fols. 16–17.

1. Cochrane to Hardy, 22 June 1814, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fol. 6.

2. Hardy and Pilkington to Commandant of Moose Island, 11 July 1814, above.

3. For the articles of capitulation, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 207. Another copy is in CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 384, pp. 148–50. This document is also printed in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 305–7.

4. For the return of ordnance and stores captured at Fort Sullivan, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 210. Another copy is in CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 384, p. 143. It is also printed in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, p. 307. For the return of American prisoners captured at Fort Sullivan, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 209.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ANDREW PILKINGTON, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE

Copy

Moose Island  
Passamaquoddy Bay  
July 12— 1814

Sir

Having sailed from Halifax on the 5th. Inst. accompanied by Lieutt. Colonel Nicolls of the Royal Engineers and a Detachment of the Royal Artillery under the command of Captain Dunn, I have the Honor to acquaint Your Excellency that we arrived at Shelburne, the place of Rendezvous, on the evening of the 7th. Inst. where I found Captn. Sir Thomas Hardy in H:M: Ship *Ramillies*, with 2 transports having on board the 102nd. Regt. under the command of Lt. Colonel Herries, had arrived the day before.— I did not fail to lay before Sir Thomas Hardy my Instructions, and to consult with him the best means of carrying them into execution.—

As we concurred in Opinion that the success of the Enterprize with which we were entrusted, would very materially depend upon our reaching the point of Attack previous to the Enemy being apprized of our intentions, that Officer with

his accustomed alacrity and decision directed the Ships of War and Transports to get under weigh Early on the following morning, and we yesterday about three oClock P:M: anchored near the Town of Eastport.—

On our approach to this Island, Lieutt. Oates (Your Excellencys Aide de Camp, whom you had permitted to accompany me on this service) was detached in a boat bearing a flag of truce, with a Summons, (copy of which is transmitted) addressed to the Officer Commanding, requiring that Moose Island should be surrendered to His Britannic Majesty— This proposal was not accepted: In consequence of which, the Troops which were already in the Boats, pulled off under the superintendance of Captain Senhouse Royal Navy, whose arrangements were so judicious as to ensure a successful Issue.— But previous to reaching the Shore, the Colours of the Enemy on Fort Sullivan were hauled down; and on our landing, the Capitulation was agreed to, of which the Copy is enclosed.—<sup>1</sup>

We found in the Fort a Detacht. of the 40th. Regiment of American Infantry consisting of 6 Officers and about 80 men, under the command of Major Putnam, who surrendered themselves Prisoners of War.—<sup>2</sup>

This Fort is situated on an Eminence, commanding the Entrance to the Anchorage, and within it is a Blockhouse, and also four long Eighteen Pounders, One Eighteen Pound Carronade, and four Field pieces.—<sup>3</sup>

The extent of the Island is about four Miles in length, and two in breadth; and in a great state of cultivation.— The Militia amount to about 250 and the Population is calculated at 1500.—

We have also occupied Allens, and Frederick Islands, so that the whole of the Islands in this Bay are now subject to the British Flag.—

It is very satisfactory to me to add that this Service has been Effected without any loss or casualty, among the Troops employed in it.—

To Captain Sir Thomas Hardy I consider myself under the greatest obligations; having experienced every possible cooperation, with an Offer to disembark from his Squadron, any proportion of Seamen or Marines, which I considered necessary.—

I beg to acknowledge my thanks to You, in allowing Your Aide de Camp, Lieutt. Oates, to accompany me upon this Service He has been of great assistance to me, and will have the Honor of delivering this despatch.— He has also in his possession the Colours & Standard found in Fort Sullivan.— I have the Honor to be Sir Your faithful & obedient Servant

signed/ A. Pilkington  
Lt. Coll. Dy. Adj. Genl.

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 384, pp. 144–47. Addressed flush left at foot of first page: "His Excellency/Lieutt. Genl. Sir J: C: Sherbrooke K.B./Commanding the Forces/in Nova Scotia & its Dependencies." Endorsed flush left below signature line: "a true Copy/T F Addison/Mil: Secy." This document is also reproduced in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 301–3.

1. See Hardy to Cochrane, 12 July 1814, note 3, above.

2. See *ibid.*, note 4.

3. *Ibid.*

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE TO  
GOVERNOR GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST

Confidential

Halifax 12 July 1814

Sir,

After the receipt of Earl Bathursts letter of the 28th. April, conveying to me the commands of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, which I have already reported to Your Excellency, I lost no time in putting in force the necessary preparations here, for completing the intended Expedition: And accordingly having directed two transports to be fitted out, with the requisite proportion of Ordnance, Engineer, & Commissariat Stores, & embarked a Captain Subaltern & 56 men of the Royal Artillery, a subaltern of Royal Engineers & 7 Sappers & Miners— they sailed on the 5th. Inst., under convoy of H.M. Ship *Martin*; & as I hear Sir Thomas Hardy who was directed to cooperate with the expedition, was on that day off Shelburne, in H.M. Ship *Ramillies*, with the Transports with the 102nd. Regt., I hope they formed a junction, & proceeded to their destination.

As I conceived the success of the enterprize to depend very much on the local knowledge of the Officer who should superintend it, I appointed Lt. Col. Pilkington, who was very desirous to offer his services, to the command; & I have given him instructions how to proceed— But I am anxious that no construction unfavorable to the Commanding Officer, or other Officers of the 102nd. Regt., should be put upon this circumstance; as they would I have no reason to doubt, have carried on the service very satisfactorily, & with credit to themselves— but as Strangers to the local situation of the place, they would have wanted that particular information, which a long residence in this country has enabled Lt. Colonel Pilkington to acquire.

The commands of the Prince Regent being to maintain as well as to take possession of the Islands in Passamaquoddy Bay I have directed Moose Island, which is the Commanding Post, & the only one where I understand troops are stationed, to be put into a respectable state of defence as soon as it is in our possession; and for this purpose I have accepted the offer of Lt. Colonel Nicolls Commanding Royal Engineer to accompany the expedition, as he has been upon the Spot, & is well acquainted with its situation & capacities.

I have therefore authorized him to throw up such works as he may deem necessary to protect it against the attempts which will most probably be made by the Enemy to regain the place.—

I have to add that I have appointed Captain Addison my Military Secretary, to act as Assistant Adjutant General without pay or allowance, to carry on the duties of the Deputy Adjutant General, department, during Lt. Colonel Pilkington's absence, which I trust Your Excellency will approve— I have the honor to be Sir Your Excellency's most obedient humble Servant

J. C. Sherbrooke }  
Lt. Genl }



*Henry Dearborn*

MAJOR GENERAL HENRY DEARBORN, U.S.A., TO  
SECRETARY OF WAR ARMSTRONGMilitary District No. 1  
Head Qrts. Boston July 25th. 1814

Sir.

I have been favoured with your Letters of the 19th and 20th. Instant,<sup>1</sup> I had anticipated the direction in relation to calling on the Govr. of New Hampshire for two or three Companies of Militia, The urgent application of Capt. Hull<sup>2</sup> and Majr. Walback induced me to request Govr. Gilman to Order out two full Companies, I have not received an answer but presume the request will be complied with. I have this morning received official accounts of the surrender of our little Garrison at Eastport copies of the principle papers are inclosed,<sup>3</sup> the Detachment at Robinstown has escaped and arrived at Machias, by a deficiency in the Qr. Masters Department the powder &c ordered by land to Machias has not arrived Mr. Eustis gave what he thought the necessary directions for its transportation, but there being no Officer of the department in the District of Maine his direction failed of the intended effect, another effort will be made by water from Portland to furnish a small supply I presume it has been the object of the Enemy to secure the possession of Moose Island (Eastport) with a view of holding eventually, as they have heretofore claimed it as belonging to the Province of New Brunswick, but without any shaddow of right. I suspect it has been taken possession of at this time with an expectation of peace, I do not think it advisable at present to take any measures for repossessing Eastport. the almost impracticability of transporting the necessary munitions of war to that place or even to Machias would render any Military opperation expensive and uncertain unless Covered by a Naval force which cannot now be calculated on, it is suggested that the Enemy were fitting out an expedition from Moose Island, destination unknown perhaps for Machias or Penobscot or both. With due respect I am Sir your Obt. & humble Servt.

H, Dearborn—

LS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, D-29 (8) (M221, Roll No. 61).

1. Armstrong's letter of 20 July enclosed a report from Captain Isaac Hull regarding the defenseless state of Portsmouth. See Armstrong to Dearborn, 20 July 1814, DNA, RG107, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War Relating to Military Affairs, p. 260 (M6, Roll No. 7). For Armstrong's letter to Dearborn of 19 July, see *ibid.*, p. 256.

2. See Hull to Dearborn, 16 July 1814, pp. 40–41.

3. Only one of four enclosures is reproduced here, that of Major Perley Putnam, of 12 July 1814, below.

[Enclosure]

Eastport July 12th, 1814      /Copy/

Sir/

It is with deep regret that I have to acquaint you of the surrender of Fort Sullivan and the Troops under my command to Sir Thomas Hardy commanding a Squadron of Eight sail, and Lieut Col. Andrew Pilkington, commanding His Majesty's land Forces of the 102d., Regiment—

On Monday the 11th., instant, at 3, o'clock P.M., seven sail of the Enemy hove in sight, standing into the Harbour of Eastport and a Brigg soon after, was seen coming through the narrows, above the Town, and took a position in the rear of the Island, and thus effectually cut off our retreat—

The headmost Ship passed the Garrison with the usual salute, and immediately put off a Flag of truce for the Shore, at twenty five minutes past 3 the Officer who bore the Flag arrived in the rear of the Garrison, and was met by Capt. Varnum who was appointed to receive him—

The Officer informed Captain Varnum, that he had a letter from Sir Thomas Hardy to deliver to the commanding Officer of Moose Island. I was immediately informed of the circumstance, and received the letter which was a summons for surrender of Moose Island /a copy of which is herewith transmitted. After I had received the letter, the Officer handed me the Articles of Capitulation, a Copy of which is also enclosed—<sup>1</sup>

I answered the Officer who bore the Flag, that when Sir Thomas Hardy saw my colors struck he would consider the Garrison surrendered.

By this time several of the most respectable Citizens of the Island, waited on me and solicited me to make no defence as the destruction of the Town would be inevitable in case of resistance

I immediately called a Council of War of my Officers, and it was unanimously agreed that a defence of the place was impracticable against so overwhelming a Force—

The Ships had now taken their position, and were observed to be full of Troops, and one Ship had come to about half a mile above the Fort, under cover of a point of land, and was seen to be landing Troops—

The *Ramillies* lay directly in Front of the battery, and within half cannon shot.—

Under these circumstances Sir, the American Flag was struck, without opposition I am Sir, with high consideration and respect, Your Obt. Servt.

Signed/ Perley Putnam  
Majr. 40th., Regt. Infy.

Major Genl. Dearborn }  
Comg. District No. 1 }  
Boston }

P S,/ The force brought against me was as follows viz the *Ramillies*, 74 Guns, *Martin* 18, *Borer* 18, *Manly* 18, *Salem* 30 Guns *Terror*— Bombship, *Phoenix* Transport, *Essex* Do. *Mary* Do.—

The 102 Regiment of Infantry, and two Companies of Artillery have landed, with about sixty pieces of Ordnance, and a large number of Artificers, under the direction of a Colonel of Engineers—<sup>2</sup>

My whole Force did not exceed 50 effective men when I surrendered,.

Signed/ P, P,

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, D-29 (8), enclosure (M221, Roll No. 61).

1. Not reproduced here. See p. 423, note 3, for other references to this document.
2. Lieutenant Colonel Gustavus Nicholls, Royal Engineers.

BRITISH OATH OF ALLEGIANCE ADMINISTERED TO  
AMERICAN RESIDENTS OF PASSAMAQUODDY BAY

*ROYAL PROCLAMATION.*

By Capt. Sir Thomas Hardy, Bart. commanding the Naval Forces, and Lt. Col. Andrew Pilkington, commanding the Land Forces of his Britannic Majesty, in the Bay of Passamaquoddy.

WHEREAS, his Royal Highness the Prince Regent of the United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, has been pleased to signify his pleasure, that the *Islands* in the Bay of Passamaquoddy should be occupied in the name of his Britannic Majesty, and the said Islands having been surrendered to the forces under orders by Vice Admiral the Hon. Sir Alexander Cochrane, K B and his Excellency Lieut. Gen. Sir Jno. Sherbrooke, K B:—

This is to give notice to all whom it may concern, that the Municipal Laws established by the American Government, for the peace and tranquility of these Islands, are to remain in force until further orders.

All persons at present in these Islands are to appear before us on Saturday next, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, on the ground near the school-house, and declare their intentions whether they will take the oath of allegiance to his B. Majesty; and all persons not disposed to take said oath, will be required to depart from the Islands in the course of seven days from the date hereof, unless special permission is granted to them to remain for a longer period.

FORM OF OATH.

I, ——, do swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to his B M king George the third, of the United Kingdoms of Great Britain & Ireland, his heirs and successors, and, that I will not directly nor indirectly serve or carry arms, against them or their allies by sea or land—*So help me God.*

God Save the King.

Eastport, July 14 1814.

## Defending Boston Harbor

*The citizens of Boston had their own ideas about how best to keep their port town safe from enemy incursion. Some residents preferred relying on more traditional defense measures, such as the use of naval militia (sea fencibles) and harbor fortifications. Others proposed more drastic actions such as blocking the harbor's navigational channel with sunken ships and redeploying Navy warships outside the Charlestown Navy Yard—both steps that, if taken, would have jeopardized the conduct of American naval operations out of Boston. When approached by the town's civil and military leadership for assistance, William Bainbridge had to balance the needs of the Boston community with the responsibilities of his own command.*

COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard, Charlestown,  
July 7. 1814.

Sir,

From the enclosed copy of a letter you will learn, that it is in contemplation by the Town of Boston to sink Hulks to block up this harbour, which in my opinion is a serious consideration, and may materially affect the Naval interest of the United States at this place. In consequence of which, I respectfully solicit your answer to the following question, vizt.

Should an attempt be made to sink in the harbour of Boston, the contemplated hulks, which will deprive the Government of the United States of the advantages of this Port, must the Naval force in this place attempt to prevent it? I have the honor to be, Sir, with sentiments of the highest respect, your very Obt. Servant,

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 137 (M125, Roll No. 37).

[Enclosure]

Navy Yard, Charlestown,  
July 7. 1814

Apprehensive that my conversation with you & Mr. Bulfinch the other day on the subject of sinking Hulks as an auxiliary defence of the harbour of Boston, may have been mistaken or misunderstood I state to you in writing the opinion I then expressed & still entertain.

To place cannon on Noddle's Island,<sup>1</sup> on North Battery & Long Wharf, and on Dorchester Flat with temporary breast works & furnaces for red hot shot, with some men to exercise the Cannon, & to have a few hundred of the militia on Governor's Island to assist in repelling an attack on Fort Warren,— would, to almost a moral certainty, secure the harbour & town of Boston against an attack by the Enemy. But it being suggested by yourself & Mr. Bulfinch, that



the mere preparation of Hulks, even if not intended to be used, might have an advantageous tendency, I acquiesced in the opinion on the presumption that the intention of not using them would be kept a profound secret; and expressed a belief that the knowledge of such preparation would operate to prevent an attack.

I certainly did, however, and do now repeat, that I would not give an opinion in favor of, or authorize the sinking of them to block up the harbour against ourselves as well as the Enemy. In addition to which I have to add, that I doubt the right of any persons or community to destroy a harbour in these U. States without the mutual consent of the General & State Government.

Justly impressed with the important trust committed to my care, I also feel sincerely for the valuable towns of Boston & Charlestown in their present Situations, and am ready to co-operate to the extent of my abilities for the protection of all; and I should have the fullest confidence in security were the conduct suggested in this letter to be adopted.

To Captn Magee, my aid, I beg leave to refer you for further explanation of my opinion on this subject: He is fully acquainted with my ideas on the practicability of defence. I am, Sir, &c

(Signed) Wm. Bainbridge

To Benj. Weld, Esqr.  
Chairman of the Marine Committee Boston

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 137, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. There is a reference to *Constitution* crewmen working on the fortifications on Noddle's Island in the court-martial records of Midshipmen Joseph Cross and Edmund M. Russell in DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 5, No. 176 (M273, Roll No. 7).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

Como. W. Bainbridge }  
Com'dg. Naval Officer }  
Charlestown Mass }

Navy Department  
July 16th. 1814

Sir.

The question proposed in your letter of the 6th. instant<sup>1</sup> involves considerations of some delicacy in respect to the constitutional powers of the general government, and those retained by the States.—

It is difficult to imagine a case so absurd, as the right of a State, much less a corporate body, to block up a Harbour of the United States, in which their Naval arsenals are established, and their fleets prepared to seek the Enemy.—

The right of exclusive jurisdiction, within the dock Yards and Arsenals of the United States, which they possess would become a mere nullity, if at the will of a State corporation, the Navy of the U.S. is denied free ingress & egress; for if the corporate right exists at all, it would go to the full extent, of shutting up the



*“Boston: From the Ship House West End of the Navy Yard”*

entire Navy of the U. States, in any harbour, in which it might have assembled, preparatory to the most important expedition; and thus the select men of a town by blocking up its harbour, would effectually blockade our own fleet, and relieve that of the Enemy, from the sluggish duty of blockade, to pursue a more active hostility.—

The powers of the general government, as far as its means extend embrace the protection of the Waters and Harbours of the United States, and of its disposition to afford such protection, there can be no doubt, particularly in respect to those important harbours, where its Naval arsenals are established, and its fleets constructed and equipped.—

After all due allowance for local apprehension, of danger from the Enemy, which from the extreme sensibility of that feeling, is likely to be carried to excess, measures adopted under the influence of such excitement, are frequently less judicious, than those which originate, in a dispassionate view, of the various means which present themselves.—

Those which you have proposed to the Town of Boston, as a substitute for the ruinous measure contemplated by its Marine Committee, appear to me to be well adapted to the occasion and fully adequate to the end.—

You will therefore persevere in temperate expostulation and the President trusts the committee will ultimately see the superior advantages of your plan of defence and the manifest objections to the course they propose to pursue.—

If notwithstanding such expostulation, the committee shall adhere to their purpose, you will report the nature and extent of the projected obstruction, and the probable time of its execution. I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 134–36 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Jones means Bainbridge's letter of 7 July.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

Como. W. Bainbridge  
Com'dg. Naval Officer.  
Charlestown Mass

}

Navy Department  
August 3rd. 1814

Sir

As your local information will enable you to appreciate the effect of the measure proposed in the enquiry, from the commissioner of the Revenue herewith enclosed,<sup>1</sup> you will please to examine and give me your opinion of the expediency of adopting that measure.—

The reason upon which the superintendant of Light Houses at Boston, has founded his recommendation, is that the vessels of the enemy derive great advantage in their predatory movements, from the Lights, whilst during the Blockade very little advantage is derived by our own vessels.—<sup>2</sup> I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 155 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Neither this enclosure, nor the original letter from which it was copied, has been found.
2. Isaac Hull proposed extinguishing the light from the Portsmouth harbor lighthouse to deprive potential British raiders of its use. Hull to Joseph Whipple, 14 April 1814, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2 (16 March 1814–17 March 1815).

COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard, Charlestown, Mss  
August 14. 1814

Sir,

In answer to your letter of the 3d. instant, I have to reply,— That I am decidedly of opinion that the Enemy derives more advantage in their predatory warfare from the Light Houses along this part of our coast, than our own vessels would by continuing the Lights; and I see but one objection to the extinguishing of them, which is, the high probability of the enemys destroying the Light Houses, in revenge, when they would no longer be serviceable to them, and which they could readily do without the least opposition, except what might be made at Portland. Therefore, in my opinion, it becomes a consideration whether the loss of the Light Houses would be an equivalent to the advantage the enemy derives from them.

If the war should continue any length of time, and the present system of the enemy be persisted in, I should think it best to extinguish the Lights, even at the hazard of the Light Houses. But if peace should take place within a short period of time, the advantage to the enemy, particularly in the present season of short nights, would not be an equivalent for the loss of those Houses; which would take time to replace and which an active commerce would immediately require.

If the Keepers of the Light Houses were enjoined, under strict secrecy, to occasionally extinguish the Lights in dark blowing weather, the enemy might suffer more than by a total & constant extinguishment: For expecting to see the light and not knowing the fact, they would naturally unwarily expose themselves; and the renewal of the lights the following nights would probably induce them to attribute it to accident or the darkness of the weather; and as the Lights would at other times be of service to them, they would probably on that account not destroy the houses.

The foregoing, Sir, I have the honor of stating to you as my own reflections on the subject, and as we have scarcely any commerce afloat, I cannot conceive that the people in this part of our country would be against extinguishing those Lights, which are expensive to the United States and advantageous to the enemy. But for the preceding reasons stated by me, I still think it a matter of some consideration, and on which the President of the United States & his cabinet can best decide.— I have the honor to be, Sir, with the highest respect, Your Obt. Servt.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 95 (M125, Roll No. 38).

LETTER TO THE EDITORS OF THE *BOSTON GAZETTE*[*Boston, 12 September 1814*]

## BOSTON SEA FENCIBLES.

MESSERS EDITORS,

IT was with unusual sentiments of pride and delight, I attended to the manoeuvres of the Sea Fencibles on Friday last. It was the general opinion that a more warlike body never paraded our streets; and when we consider how little the duty of sailors calls for the regularity of “rank and file,” and the evolutions of soldiers, it will be matter of surprise that this respectable body, in so short a time, should qualify themselves to rival the regularity and precision of our trained bands. Their target firing upon the heights of Dorchester, was executed with a correctness that was truly astonishing, if we consider, at the same time, the defective nature of several of their pieces—the bores of which, worn by long use, or corroded by time, were so badly fitted by the shot, as caused a windage, considered by European Gunners as insurmountable obstacles to correct firing. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, which I understand will be soon remedied, the target, at the distance of a mile and half, was pierced several times, and not a shot was thrown that would not have hulled a sloop of war. As a sailor myself, I beheld this “soul cheering” corps with peculiar feelings of pride, and the sigh of despondency which, since this fool hardy war, I have so often heaved for their and my misfortunes, was exchanged on beholding them, for the tear of enthusiasm.—The Tars of America, have experienced the truth of the old adage, that foolish and noisy friends are more injurious than avowed enemies—for while our own government has well nigh succeeded in starving us by their fondness, the public enemy has afforded us opportunities of plucking laurels which can never wither, but with that *Constitution*, which they are calculated to strengthen. The Boston Sea Fencibles will, I have now doubt, concur in proving, with the rest of their fellow Tars, how much more capable *they* are of protecting themselves, than those who have *pretended* to defend them—than those, who so far from being able to assert the “rights of sailors,” are compelled, *disgracefully compelled*, to call upon those very sailors to defend their capital from capture and disgrace.—But the thunder of Barney’s cannon will, I hope, carry to the bosoms of their pretended champions a conviction, that sailors can defend not only their our “rights,” but the rights of their country, when set upon their own element, and afloat upon that timber, which now (O shame where is thy blush!) stands in the wilderness, sighing for its own inactivity, and the imbecile blindness of its impotent possessors. [*Signed*] *An unfortunate victim to democratic friendship,*

A RAGGED SAILOR.

Printed, *Boston Gazette*, 12 September 1814.

COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard Charlestown, Mss.  
Septemr. 13. 1814

Sir,

The invasion of this state by the Enemy and his formidable force along our Coast, have created great apprehensions here, and the subject of sinking Hulks in the channel of this Harbour, has again been revived. The Hulks are prepared, and will be sunk on a formidable force of the Enemy Entering this harbour.

The weak state of the United States Forts, for want of men, would probably enable the Enemy to pass them; and if they did, the naval property here, could not be effectually defended with the small force under my command,— but you may rest assured that that force will do its utmost.—

It is the general opinion here, that the Hulks are so constructed, that there can be no doubt of their being raised. The Commercial interest of Boston, would not, under any other impressions, permit the Sinking of them. The preparation of them, I think, will have a favourable effect, and I am of opinion that if they should be sunk so as to prevent an enemy entering the harbour, they would not, in the event of not being raised, prevent our vessels of war leaving this harbour, though it might, perhaps be attended with some difficulty.

The temper of the people at present is Such, that an opposition, by expostulation, to sinking them would have no other tendency than irritation, and that kind of collision, which at present for the common defence, it is best to avoid.

In these trying times of our Country, much must be left to discretion of officers in seperate commands, and I trust that the exercise of mine, will always meet the approbation of the Government, under which I have the honor of Serving. I have the honor to be, Sir, with the highest respect, Your mot. obt. St.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge

P.S. Please answer the foregoing by return of mail.—

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 50 (M125, Roll No. 39).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

Commorde W. Bainbridge, }  
Commanding Naval Officer, }  
Boston. }

Navy Department,  
Sept. 20th. 1814.

Sir,

I have duly received your letter of the 13th instant, relative to the Hulks, which it is in contemplation to sink in the Harbour of Boston, in the event of a formidable force of the enemy appears off that place.—

The explanations you have given of the effects, which may be produced, lessen the objections to the measure; and as it may probably prove effectual, you will make no opposition to its execution.

I have the most perfect reliance, that all that can be done, with the force under your command, in any event, will be done, and I trust that force, with the other means of defence, will be found sufficient. I am, respectfully,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 188 (M441, Roll No. 1).

BRIGADIER GENERAL HENRY A. S. DEARBORN, MASSACHUSETTS STATE  
MILITIA, TO THE CITIZENS OF BOSTON

[*Boston*] *Fort Independence, Sept. 26, 1814.*

*HARBOR DEFENCE.*

Brigadier General H. A. S. DEARBORN,<sup>1</sup> commanding Forts Warren and Independence, would be greatly obliged to any of his fellow citizens of the town of Boston and its vicinity, who will gratuitously assist, by personal labour, in erecting the batteries and other works which are deemed necessary for the successful defence of those Forts and the capital of our State.— It has been necessary, hitherto, to detail so many of the troops which have been placed at his disposal for this indispensable object, that he finds it impossible to perfect them in the drill. He, therefore, earnestly invokes the patriotism of his countrymen, and does not doubt but corresponding sentiments will animate to an united effort in the common cause.

Gen. DEARBORN will be happy if those who decide to aid in this undertaking, will repair to either fort at such times, and in such detachments, as they may find most convenient, and hopes that each individual will bring a spade, shovel, pickaxe, hoe or wheelbarrow. He would, however, prefer that they reach the place selected to work on by half past eight in the morning, and he must request that they will be provided with the necessary refreshments. It would be impossible for him, however he may be disposed, to make arrangements in this behalf.— The call is upon patriotism and love of country.— Temporary inconveniences and personal sacrifices to an inconsiderable extent have become necessary to prevent a great public calamity.

☞ The Printers of newspapers published in Boston and Dedham will greatly oblige General Dearborn by inserting the above.

Printed, *Independent Chronicle* (Boston), 29 September 1814.

1. Henry Alexander Scammell Dearborn was U.S. collector of customs for the ports of Boston and Charlestown, a post he assumed in place of his father, Major General Henry Dearborn. A close friend of William Bainbridge, Dearborn wrote a biography of that officer, which remained unpublished until 1931. After the War of 1812, Dearborn represented Massachusetts in numerous elective offices at the local, state, and federal levels.

## COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard, Charlestown,  
Septemr. 27. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor of enclosing to you a copy of a letter which I have this day written to Brigadeer General Henry A. S. Dearborn on the subject of changing the position in this harbour of the Naval force under my command.

As there has been much unwarrantable-speculation and interference as to the disposition I have made of that force in this harbour, and as it may probably even be represented to you, I therefore take the liberty of troubling you with the perusal of the enclosed.

I trust I have too much decision of character to yield my own opinion in the line of my official duty, to that which either panic or folly may dictate. Permit me, Sir, most earnestly to solicit that guns and men may be given me to leave this Port. I have the honor to be, Sir, with the highest respect, Your obt. Sert.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 105 (M125, Roll No. 39).

[Enclosure]

Copy

Navy Yard, Charlestown,  
Septemr. 27. 1814

My esteemed friend,

I have received yours of this date, and in reply have to Say, that nothing can possibly induce me to move the Ships under my command, in their present-armed and unmanned situation. I have placed them where my talents and cool reflection have decided, in my mind, as the most judicious situation that can be chosen; and however I may respect the opinions of others, and especially those of my particular friends, I should deem myself unworthy the honor of the command I hold, if I could swerve from the decision which my professional talents and zeal for the service, and a devotion to my country, have actuated me to make.

As to the Hulks, I am of opinion that they will be a considerable obstacle to enterprize; but their present number is most assuredly not sufficient to block up the channel: and if a sufficient number were sunk, that barrier might be broken through, and my ships fall a sacrifice without annoying the Enemy beyond a few minutes firing. In the event of being laid alongside by the Enemy, must not all the Forts cease firing, or the horrid spectacle ensue of American forts sinking their own vessels which folly had thus placed? If the Hulks are to be an impregnable barrier to the Enemy's force passing them, then why any occasion of exposing the Ships? Much better to recommend the Officers and few men belonging to them, to go into the Forts and there assist to annoy the Enemy.



I regret to see so persevering a disposition in Boston to interfere with an independent command, and to overrule measures which impartial & competent talents would, in my firm belief, decide as the very best to be adopted under present exigencies. I sincerely feel every disposition to aid in the defence not only of the public, but the private property in the harbour and town of Boston, and will cordially co-operate in all measures wherein a sacrifice of my own opinion & reputation is not required; but when that is the condition, I would sacrifice life ten thousand times sooner than yield.—

The *Constitution* is short of her complement fifty men. The *Independence* has, including 34 Negroes, 15 Boys, & 20 on the sick and confined list, Two hundred & fifteen Souls. The *Constitution* has part of her guns on board the *Independence*, which latter vessel is not one third armed. The enemy, if he passes the Fort, would not only be enabled to lay alongside a full armed and manned frigate & a completely armed & manned seventy four, but would double & treble the numbers. Situated as my ships are, where the enemy can come best on one side, we can defend them better with fewer guns and less men, than we could possibly do in any other situation in this harbour. With the force under my command, in its present state, although very deficient in men and guns, I yet trust the enemy would pay dear in an attempt to get it. But should they succeed in compelling a destructio[n] of the Ships, they most assuredly cannot take them out of this harbour under an English flag, though in any other Situation in the harbour they might do that— And where is the American citizen who would wish to behold such a sight!

I do contend, upon uncontrovertible grounds, that they can render greater assistance, in protecting the town of Boston, in their present Situation, than they could possibly in any other in the harbour. I am also preparing my Ship for Sea [duty?] for I trust it is intended to send her on that element, and not to keep her a block Ship for any harbour. I pray to God she may soon be ready to leave this Fort.

The Mortar & Shells, which you have requested, shall be sent down to you tomorrow. I cheerfully loan them to you, believing they would be of more importance under your command, than to be kept here, where I have no men to Station at them or even in the Battery, although I have made every exertion to obtain volunteers. I am prepared, as far as my means can possibly be expected to act, to receive the enemy, and have the fullest confidence that the naval force under my command will do its duty.—

An Iron Furnace will cost about 100\$:— they are, in my opinion, the best furnaces for heating shot. I am very truly and Sincerely Your friend &c

(Signed) W. Bainbridge

Brigadier General Henry A. S. Dearborn  
Commanding Fort Independence  
Boston Harbor.

## A Snakebit Captain: James Renshaw and the Capture of *Rattlesnake*

James Renshaw had not been a popular commander with the officers of *Enterprise*. Within a short time of his assuming command of the little brig, his subordinates, citing differences with their captain, had petitioned the Navy Department for transfer off the ship.<sup>1</sup> Upon receiving these complaints, Secretary Jones had directed Isaac Hull to investigate the “grounds of the dispute between . . . Renshaw & his Officers.”<sup>2</sup> But before Hull could make a full enquiry, *Enterprise* and *Rattlesnake* had sailed from Portsmouth. Yet Hull had learned enough to report that Renshaw’s conduct was “not at all times as correct as it ought to be” in a Navy commander, adding “perhaps a cruise or two will give him a more correct idea of service than he now possesses.”<sup>3</sup>

Whether Renshaw returned from his disappointing cruise in *Enterprise* with a more clear-eyed view of naval service is unknown. However, like his officers, he was eager to leave the slow-sailing brig, which needed repairs, replacement men, and a fresh battery of guns to replace those Renshaw had jettisoned into the sea while fleeing the enemy. His application to the Navy Department for a leave of absence, however, went unanswered.<sup>4</sup> Instead Secretary Jones ordered Renshaw to transfer *Enterprise*’s remaining crew to *Rattlesnake* and to prepare for a transatlantic cruise.<sup>5</sup>

*Rattlesnake* cleared the North Carolina coast on 2 May 1814, setting a course for the brig’s first hunting ground, the mouth of the Irish Sea. The unlucky Renshaw never reached these waters for an enemy frigate’s pursuit of *Rattlesnake* near the Azores led the American commander, once again, to heave his ship’s guns overboard in order to outsail his pursuer. The loss of all but two of *Rattlesnake*’s guns coupled with a shortage of water and provisions prompted Renshaw to end his cruise and steer for home. One final misfortune, capture by the enemy, was the result of navigational errors that placed *Rattlesnake* off a hostile coast rather than a friendly one. A naval court acquitted Renshaw of negligence in the loss of *Rattlesnake*, but criticized his poor judgment and decision making. These criticisms likely reflect Renshaw’s inexperience as a ship commander, for despite his long naval service, *Enterprise* and *Rattlesnake* had been his first seagoing commands.

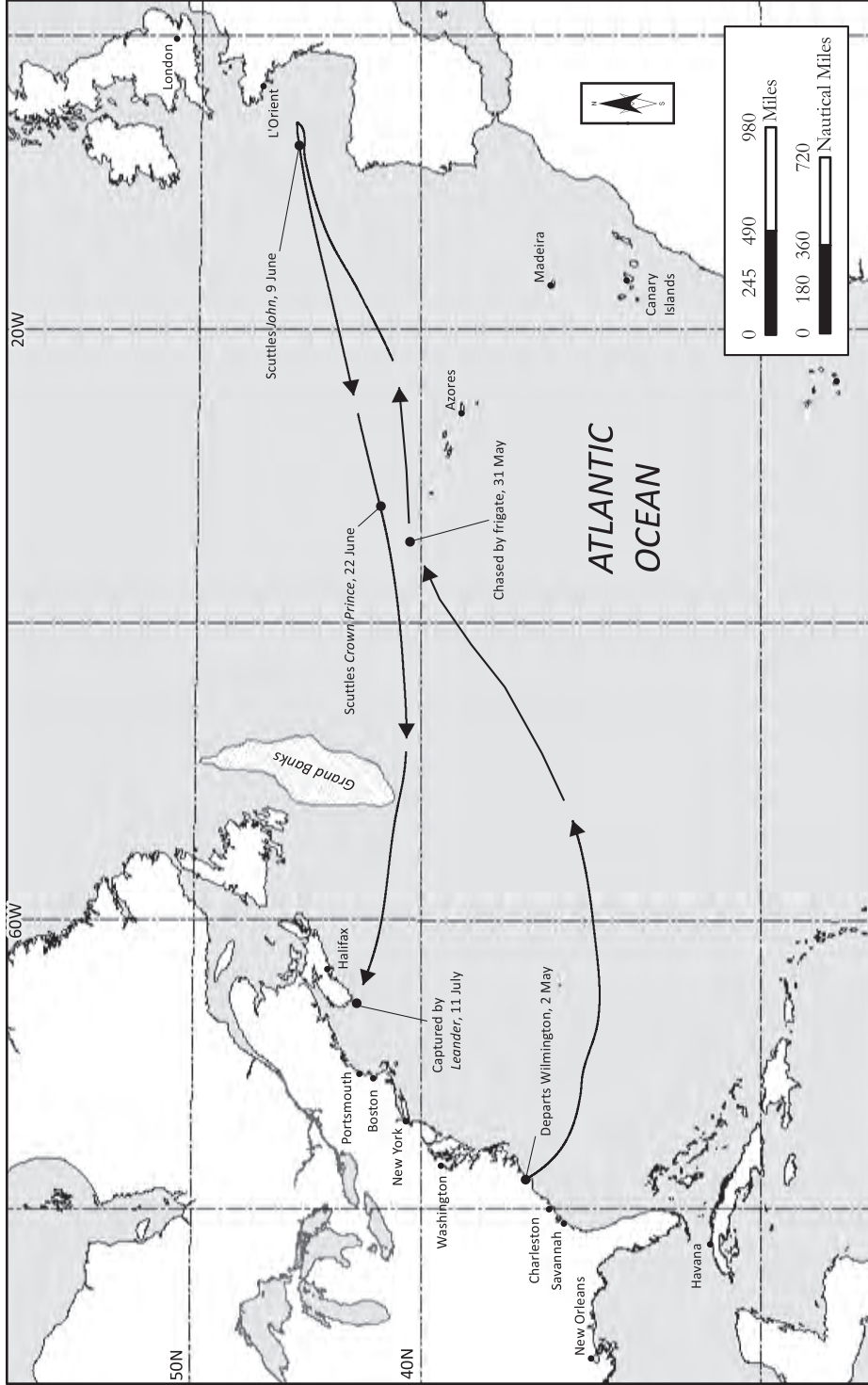
1. See Rapp, et al. to Jones, 22 November 1813, DNA, RG45, BC, 1813, Vol. 4, No. 110 (M148, Roll No. 12).

2. Jones to Hull, 5 January 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 183 (M149, Roll No. 11). Jones further observed: “The request of Officers, to be removed, is altogether inadmissible.— Young Officers must learn to bend their passions and feelings to the public good. Changes and transfers of Officers from personal motives are too common in our service.— If Lieutenant Renshaw is obnoxious to the charges in this letter, I trust he will, upon your remonstrance, correct his deportment, and, in the opposite case, I expect the same Officer-like conduct on the part of the complainants.—”

3. Hull to Jones, 13 January 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 29 (M125, Roll No. 34).

4. On 10 March 1814, Renshaw wrote three letters to Secretary Jones requesting a leave of absence. See DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, Nos. 106, 107, and 127 (M148, Roll No. 13).

5. The instructions for *Rattlesnake*’s cruise were first issued to John Creighton, who delivered them to Renshaw when he assumed command of the brig. See Jones to Creighton, 20 March 1814, pp. 203–4.



Map 12. Rattlesnake's 2 May-11 July 1814 cruise

CAPTAIN SIR GEORGE COLLIER, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N.

Copy

His Majesty's Ship *Leander*  
11th. July 1814

Sir

I do myself the honor to acquaint you, that this Morning, while proceeding in the execution of your Orders and off Cape Sable, a suspicious Sail was seen to the S, E from the Mast head to which, Chace was given by His Majesty's Ship under my Command, and that after a run of a few hours to the Eastward, (the Stranger trying the *Leander*, on various points of Sailing) I had the Good fortune to come up with, and capture, the American Sloop of War, *Rattlesnake*, Captain Renshaw, pierced for 20 Guns, and having a Complement of 131 Men on board,

The *Rattlesnake* was on her return to Port from a long Cruize in the British Seas, and had Captured only two Vessels as per Margin.<sup>1</sup>

I have great pleasure in reporting this Capture, as the *Rattlesnake* is reputed one of the fastest sailing Cruizers from the American States, and appears to have been chased by eight different British Men of War during her present cruize, in some of which, most of her Guns had been thrown overboard, and the remainder this Morning, in her endeavours to escape from the superior Sailing of the *Leander*;

She is nearly new and admirably adapted for His Majesty's Service either as a Sloop of War, or as a Packet I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedt. humble Servt.

(Signed) Geo Collier—Captain

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 387. Endorsed flush left opposite the dateline: "Edw. Griffith—R: Adml.—." Enclosed in Edward Griffith to John W. Croker, 19 July 1814, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 377.

1. *John* of Liverpool and *Crown Prince* of Poole.

LIEUTENANT JAMES RENSHAW TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Preston near Halifax. 18th. July 1814

Sir

I avail myself of the earliest opportunity I could with propriety embrace of communicating the particulars of the *Rattle=Snakes* cruise, that terminated in her capture on the 11th. Inst. near Shelburne light by the Enemy's Ship *Leander* of 58 Guns Captain Sir George Collier.—

On getting to sea the 2d. of May last from Cape Fear River, we steered to the Eastward till reaching the meredian of Bermuda, and parallel of 30° north near which we cruised ten days unsuccessfully; from thence continuing a course to the Eastward to pass 30 Leagues north of Corvo & Flores, not meeting a vessel in this track, untill the morning of the 31st. of May in Lat 40°. 34" N. Long 34°. 24 W. a

sail was descried in the S. East, and soon after, discovered her to be a ship (with the appearance of a cruiser) standing to the Eastward, at 6 made her out to be a Frigate she hawling up in chase; the wind had been blowing fresh during the night from the N. West and by this time had nearly encreased to a gale from the same point. with a heavy sea running, which so overpowered the *Rattlesnake*, that in the short space of three hours the chaser gained our wake within gun shot, notwithstanding every exertion had been made in trimming ship, and lightning, by pumping out the salt water— At 10 having succeeded in getting the *Rattlesnake* before the wind (her best sailing) the Frigate commenced a fire from her bow guns, throwing her shot ahead of us, at  $\frac{1}{4}$  past 10 the chaser still gaining on us, it became my painful duty to execute the decision in consultation with the Officers, by h[e]aving 8. 24lb. Carronades and 4 long 9 guns thrown overboard, the good effects of which was so immediately evident, that in 30 minutes we were out of the reach of her guns and at 10 P.M. lost sight of her, after a chase of 17 hours, in the early part of which the private signals of the day was made; the stranger shew, and remained under French Colours— Be assured, sir. we felt most sensibly the loss of our Guns at this early period of the cruise, but to relinquish so desirable a one as that ordered for the *Rattle-Snake*, was still more painful, and with the fond hope of obtaining an Armament in France that would authorize its prosecution, we shaped a course for L'Orient and had reached within one days sail of that port, when falling in with a Swedish ship from Liverpool for the Havana, we received the first advices of the unexpected change of affairs on the Continent; events so unpropitious to our views in entering a port. that I did not conceive myself authorised under any circumstances to attempt it at this time,<sup>1</sup> our provisions and water being half exhausted and no probability of getting a supply of the former by entering a port in Norway compell'd me to abandon any further attempt in the prosecution of the cruise and direct my attention to the most favourable track for our return to the U. States, learning however that we were in the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean convoy bound in charge of the *Red-Wing* Sloop of War and a gun Brig, we crouded sail to the S. West in pursuit of them and succeeded the following morning (9th. June) in capturing the Brig *John* from Liverpool for Oporto, with an immense valuable cargo of bale goods, after taking out the prisoners and a part of the Cargo to the amount of \$40,000 or upwards, destroyed her and continued the pursuit of the others, which we made a few hours after sailing in close order, and I regret to add I did not succeed in capturing any of them, being chased off as often as we attempted to close and on the evening of the 11th. gave up the pursuit, shaping a course to the westward to cross the Southern edge of the Grand Banks of N.F. near which and along the Coast of Nova Scotia to Cape Sable I intended cruising a short time, from thence for the Delaware, reducing the allowance of provisions & water to one half, to enable me to accomplish this service, that afforded a prospect notwithstanding our harmless state, of rendering a service to our Country in the destruction of a valuable part of the enemy's commerce— Between the 12th. and 17th. of June we were chased by four different Frigates steering to the Westward; on the 23d. in Lat. 42.° 17 N. Long 32°. 49'. we captured the English Brig *Crown Prince* (formerly the *Marmion* of New York) from Oberon N F for Alicant with a full cargo of Fish, that was destroyed after taking out the Prisoners, her provisions and water, on the 25th. I Came up with and passed within gunn shot of a Sloop of War and

merchant ship under Dutch colours steering to the Westwd.; the armament of the *Rattle=Snake* being reduced to two guns, will I trust plead my apology for not giving you a more particular account of these ships, together with a brig supposed to be an American privateer that I chased unsuccessfully on the Eastern edge of the grand bank on the 6th. July were the only vessels seen since the capture of the *Crown Prince*, untill the morning of the 11th. at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 3 A M in Lat.  $43^{\circ} 5^{\circ}$ .<sup>2</sup> N. Long  $66^{\circ}$  W. by account, a sail was descried in the WNW. that I stood towards untill making her out to be a ship and a cruiser standing to the Westward, with the wind from the S.S.E., the *Rattle=Snakes* best sailing being free, we immediately bore up and run N.N.W. to avoid the stranger that was now in pursuit of us, At  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 6 discovered land, bearing N b W. and soon after, Shelburn Light House, At 7 A.M. hauled up E.N.E. to clear the land, from which time the chaser commenced gaining on us, and at 9 OClock every exertion having been made, to escape capture, the two remaining guns, shot, spare spars, rigging, anchors, small arms and signals, together with the greater part of the goods taken from the Brig *John*, being thrown overboard, the Frigate within musket shot & having received two 24lb. shot in our hull, the enemy in the act of firing her first division of guns into us, the *Rattle-Snake* was surrendered with the advice of the Officers, and soon after taken possession of by an Officer from the Frigate *Leander*, Capt. Sir Geo. Collier—

The generous treatment & attention myself, Officers and crew experienced whilst prisoners on board the *Leander* from Sir George Collier and his Officers claims our warmest thanks— The Purser, Surgeon and clerk of the *Rattle=Snake*<sup>3</sup> not being considered as Prisoners are now on board the Cartel Ship *Perseverance* bound for the U States, the crew are confined at Mellville Island prison, myself and Officers paroled at Preston within 5 miles of Halifax I hope, Sir, You will be pleased to effect such arrangements as will soon restore us to the service of our Country again—

The enclosed copies of letters with a list of vessels captured and boarded on the cruise are most respectfully submitted, the former will I trust shew the motives, that influenced, an attempt in the prosecution of the cruise after the loss of our guns— With sentiments of high respect I Remain yr. obt. servt.—

James Renshaw

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 22 (M148, Roll No. 13). Another copy of this letter is in DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 204 (M273, Roll No. 8).

1. A reference to the abdication of Napoleon, a circumstance that may have made it less likely for Renshaw to receive ready assistance from French authorities in rearming and reprovisioning *Rattlesnake*.

2. A “degree” symbol is erroneously written here. It should be a “minute” symbol.

3. Purser Joseph Wilson, Jr., Surgeon Robert C. Randolph, and Captain’s Clerk Samuel B. Ewing. All three are mentioned in documents below and in the list of *Rattlesnake*’s crew Renshaw forwarded to the Navy Department before putting to sea. See DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 38, enclosure (M148, Roll No 13). Randolph was commissioned a surgeon’s mate on 1 May 1810 and promoted to surgeon on 15 April 1814.

[Enclosure]

U S Brig *Rattlesnake* At Sea  
Latte. 41° 24" N. Longe. 30°, 36" W. June 1st 1814

Gentlemen

The unavoidable causes leading to the throwing overboard twelve of our guns, renders your opinion as to the propriety of an immediate return to the United States, or the making a Port in France for an armament, and then the prosecution of the original cruise ordered for the *Rattlesnake* of much importance to me; I do not hesitate to add that there is a probability of rendering our country much service ere our return, and I should be most happy to find you all agree with me in making a Port in France. I am gentlemen respectfully Your Obt. Sert.

(Sign'd) James Renshaw

Lieut. Henry B Rapp	}
" Thos. T Webb	
" Jno H Aulick	
Sailing Mastr. Chamberlain	
Surgeon Randolph	
Purser Wilson	

A true Copy. Saml. B Ewing Witness

Copy, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 127 (M148, Roll No. 13). Docketed on reverse: "Letter from capt. Renshaw, dated/at Sea June 1. 1814 to his Officers/ requesting their opinion as to the/propriety of returning to the U.S./or making a port in France—/with the Answer of his Officers." This document was one of three enclosures James Renshaw included in his letter to Secretary Jones of 18 July 1814. It was bound in chronological order with other correspondence of the BC series rather than with Renshaw's covering letter. Another copy of this letter in DNA, RG125, CM Vol. 6, No. 204 (M273, Roll No. 8).

[Enclosure]

U S Brig *Rattlesnake*, At Sea }  
June 1st 1814 }

Sir

We had the honor of receiving yours of this date, requesting our opinions as to the propriety of an immediate return to the U States, or the making a port in France to prosecute our original cruise: We all agree with you, that the making a French Port is the most advisable. Very respectfully Your Obt. Servts.

(Sign'd) Henry B Rapp  
Thos. T Webb  
Jno H Aulick  
Saml. P Chamberlain  
Robt. C Randolph  
Joseph Wilson Junr.

Capt. James Renshaw  
Present

A true Copy  
Saml. B Ewing Witness

Copy, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 127 (M148, Roll No. 13). Docketed on reverse: "Copies of Letters." This document was one of three enclosures James Renshaw included in his letter to Secretary Jones of 18 July 1814. It was bound in chronological order with other correspondence of the BC series rather than with Renshaw's cover letter. Another copy of this letter in DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 204 (M273, Roll No. 8).

[Enclosure]

[*Preston near Halifax, 18 July 1814*]<sup>1</sup>

Memorandum of Vessels Boarded & Captured by the U S Brig *Rattlesnake*, James Renshaw Esqr. Commander.

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May 7th Latte. 33° „ 08" N. Longe. 74° „ 22" W. English Brig *Robert* from St. Johns N B prize to the American private Armed Vessel *Ulter*; Robert Thomson, prize Master.

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May 9th Latte. 31° „ 58" N. Longe. 72° „ 07" W. Spanish Ship *St. Theresa* Devesta, Master, from Havanna for Excelsedad, Spain.

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May 10th Latte. 31° „ 27" N. Longe. 71° „ 16" W. Spanish Brig *Don Francis*, Royal Master, from Havanna for Teneriffe.

---

May 14th Latte. 30° „ 04" N. Longe. 67° „ 31" W. American Schooner *Greyhound* from Washington No. Ca. for St. Bartholomews.

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May 21st 30° „ 11" N. Longe. 61° „ 49" W. Swedish Barque *Gretna Christiana* Milander Master, from Bermuda for St. Bartholomews in Ballast out 3 days.

---

June 9th Latte. 46° „ 50" N. Longe. 6° „ 50" W. Russian Brig *Gross Whittgenstein* Asmen Mann, Master from St. Petersburg via Cowes for the Havanna out 4 days.

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June 9th Latte. 46° „ 50" N. Longe. 6° „ 50" W. Swedish Ship *Nordou* from Stockholm for Lisbon.

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June 10th Latte. 46° „ 38" N. Longe. 7 „ 25 W. English Brig *John*, John James Geddes, Master from Liverpool for Oporto, Cargo Bale Goods. Destroyed.

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June 10th Latte. 46° „ 38" N. Longe. 7° „ 25" W. Swedish Brig *Blockmart* from Amsterdam for Lisbon.

---

June 11th Latte. 46° „ 22" N. Longe. 8° „ 00" Swedish Brig *Straton* from Bremen for Gibraltar.

---

June 17th Latte. 44° „ 10" N. Longe. 20° „ 24" W. Spanish Brig *Triumphant*, Don Francis Tassier, Master, from Teneriffe bound to Hamburg, 18 days out, Cargo Wine.

---

June 22d Latte. 42° „ 7" N. Longe. 32° „ 49" W. English Hermaphrodite Brig *Crown Prince*, William Street Master, from Odeon, Newfoundland bound to Alicant, Cargo Fish, Destroyed.

---

D, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 127 (M148, Roll No. 13). Docketed on reverse: "Memorandum of Vessels Captured and Boarded," and, "Memo. of vessels boarded &/captured by the U.S. Brig/*Rattlesnake*, Jas Renshaw Es[qr]/commander." This document was one of three enclosures James Renshaw included in his letter to Secretary Jones of 18 July 1814. It was bound in chronological order with other correspondence of the BC series rather than with Renshaw's cover letter. Another copy of this document is in DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 204 (M273, Roll No. 8).

1. This memorandum was given the date of Renshaw's cover letter.

PURSER JOSEPH WILSON, JR., TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Boston July 29th 1814

Sir

I have the honour of making known to you the following circumstances relative to the cruise & capture of the late U S Brig *Rattle Snake* by order of James Renshaw Esquire Commander—

May 31st Latitude 40° N Longitude 33° W fell in with a Frigate & very narrowly escaped, by throwing over all the guns except two long nines June 9th Latitude 47° N Longitude 8° W—received information by a Russian Brig from England of the revolution in France & Destroy'd English Brig *John* Laden with English goods— June 22nd Latitude 42° N Longitude 33° W Destroy'd English Brig *Crown Prince* Laden with Fish— July 11th. at day light wind South— discovered a Frigate on the weather & Cape Sable on the lee bow the Frigate proved to be the *Leander* to which Ship the *Rattlesnake* was surrenderd at 8. AM. after every exertion had been made to escape. The *Rattle snake* arrived in Halifax on the 13th & the *Leander* on the 14th inst. the surgeon Capt. Clerk & myself were ordered on board the U S Cartel ship *Perseverance* in which vessel we arrived at Providence last Evening The remaining Officers who were sent to Preston on Parole have due them on account of Pay nearly two thousand dollars & are quite destitute of supplies for their support— Mr. Mitchell the U S Agent for Prisoners informed me he had no funds & that a bill on the United States could not be negociated but at a loss of twenty five per Cent— thus Situated Capt Renshaw order'd me to make known to you, Sir, their situation & await at this place your orders with regard to the manner in which they may be supplied.<sup>1</sup> I have the honour to be very Respectfully, Sir Your Obt. Servt.

Joseph Wilson Junior  
Purser

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 48 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. The Navy Department provided no guidance to Wilson on how to supply his imprisoned shipmates. On 18 August, Secretary Jones ordered him to Washington to serve as purser of the sloop of war *Argus*, then under construction at the Washington Navy Yard. See Jones to Wilson, 18 August 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, p. 208 (T829, Roll No. 382).

OPINION OF THE COURT OF INQUIRY INTO  
THE LOSS OF U.S. BRIG *RATTLESNAKE*

[*U.S. Frigate Constellation, New York*], April, 21st, 1815—

Opinion—

The Court,<sup>1</sup> after mature deliberation on all the evidence produced before them relative to the causes of the loss by capture of the late United States brig *Rattlesnake*, James Renshaw, Esquire, Commander, are of opinion that the reasons given by Captain Renshaw for having abandoned his intention to go into a port of France; after throwing over board his armament, are insufficient.

They are also of opinion that the quantity of provisions he had on board did not justify his shaping his course for the United States, as he might have been enabled, by continuing his cruise to have procured an armament from some captured vessel.

It appears to the Court that Captain Renshaw committed an error in his reckoning, in running for the American coast, of nearly five degrees of longitude.

Whilst the Court feel themselves bound to pronounce the above opinion on the conduct pursued by Captain Renshaw, they are also clearly of the opinion that the *Rattlesnake* was not lost through intention or negligence on his part; and that he appears to have conducted himself during both the chaces with the courage becoming an officer and a gentleman, and with perfect coolness and self possession.

It appears to the Court that the officers and men of the ship's company did their utmost to preserve her, and after the loss thereof, behaved themselves agreeably to the discipline of the Navy—

A Murray. Prest.

Henry Wheaton  
Judge Advocate.

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 204 (M273, Roll No. 8).

1. The following served as members of the court: Commodore Alexander Murray, President; Captain Samuel Evans; Captain Jesse Duncan Elliott; and Henry Wheaton, Judge Advocate. The court conducted its proceedings from 18 to 21 April 1815.

## Collaborating with the Enemy

*On 13 June 1814, boats from H.M.S. Superb and its consort, the brig-sloop Nimrod, entered Wareham Harbor and set ablaze a cotton factory along with 17 ships. The raid outraged local citizenry, who reported the invaders had violated a flag of truce by destroying private property and making hostages of several townsmen to secure their escape. The discovery that two resident mariners had piloted the attack boats to Wareham in exchange for money further enflamed public opinion against the enemy.*

*If Superb's and Nimrod's raiders got away, their American collaborators did not. Acting on intelligence from area authorities, Captain Oliver H. Perry dispatched one of his gunboat commanders to apprehend the traitorous pilots, who were soon taken into custody. As the testimony collected for their trials illustrates, the Royal Navy's talent for exploiting human avarice contributed to their successful operations on the American maritime frontier.*

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

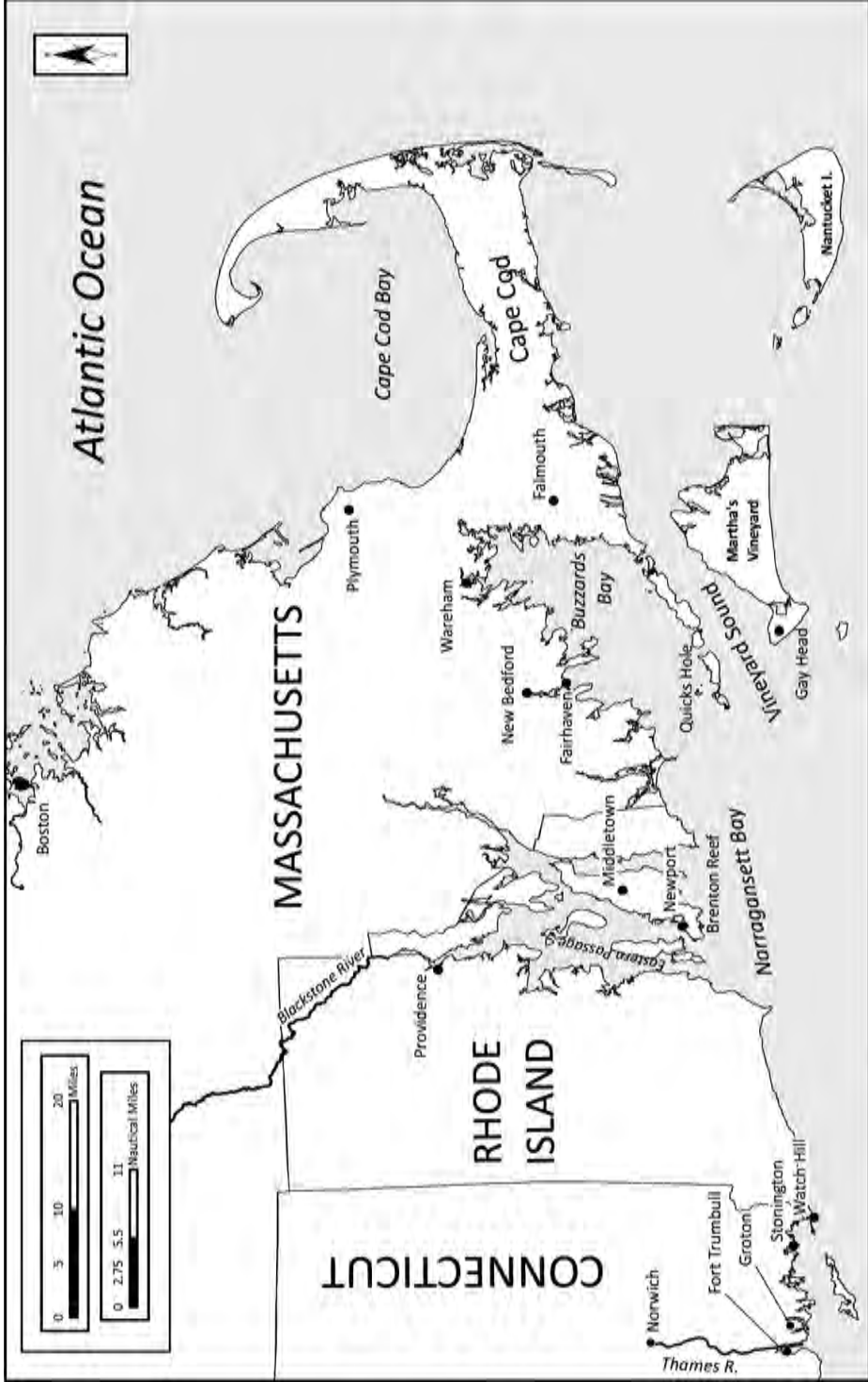
No. 63

Bermuda 18th. July 1814.

Sir,

I am happy in again having an opportunity of calling their Lordships attention to the zeal and activity of the Officers of His Majesty's Squadron stationed off New London, under the Orders of The Honorable Captain Paget

The enclosed Copy of a Letter from him will acquaint my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty of a very gallant and judicious service performed by a Division of Boats of the *Superb* and *Nimrod* under the command of Lieutenant Garland of



Map 13. Long Island Sound—Massachusetts

the *Superb* whose ability is most conspicuously displayed in the masterly strategy he resorted to for bringing off the whole of his Force unhurt in the face of a numerous Militia after having destroyed upwards of Twenty five hundred Tons of Shipping and a valuable Cotton Mill belonging to the Enemy, situated at some distance up the Country.— I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedt. humble Servant

Alexr. Cochrane  
Vice Admiral [&]  
Commander in [Chief]

P.S. I enclose also a List of the Shipping destroyed and the Names of the Officers employed upon the occasion.—<sup>1</sup>

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 455.

1. See *ibid.*, fol. 458. The original version of this list signed by Paget is reproduced below.

[Enclosure]

*Superb* Martha's Vinyard Sound June 14th. 1814.

Sir.

Having receivd intelligence that a fine Ship and Brig Just built. the former for a Letter of Marque—the other for a Privateer were with several other vessels lying at a Place called Wareham, at the head of Buzzards Bay, I proceeded hence & detachd the *Nimrod* thro' Quick's Hole, with the Boats of This Ship and two from the Sloop to destroy them under the direction of Lieut. James Garland first of the *Superb*, and I am happy to add that the Service was perfectly performed without any loss on our part, Tho' it was atcheivd under critical circumstances— The Extreme intricacy of the navigation rendered it too hazardous to attempt the Enterprize without the assistance of daylight, which however necessarily Exposed the Boats upon their return down the narrow stream to a fire of Musquetry from the numerous militia which had collected from the vicinity on the first alarm being given— But the foresight & prompt resolution of Lieut. Garland completely Succeeded in obviating the danger That was thus to be apprehended, for having first destroyd all the vessels & the valuable Cotton Manufactory— He<sup>1</sup> then ascertained the principal people of the place and Secured them as hostages for a Truce, till the Boats were Conducted back out of the reach of difficulty, The influence that these persons had over the militia that collected & threatened a cross fire upon the Boats from both banks of the river, has fully proved by their abstaining to molest them, and of course The Hostages were afterwards relanded at the first convenient Spot.

The Cotton manufactory had been lately built at great Expencc. was full of Stores and belonged to a Company of Sixty merchants of Boston

I herewith send a List of Vessels &c destroyd as well as one with the Officers names Employd on this occasion— nor can I in Justice omit to report to you, the Steady & Exemplary Conduct of the Seamen & Marines, who tho' Exposed to incessant temptations of Liquor &c did not in any Single instance fail to Spurn

the offers made to them, and strictly to hold sacred private property. I have the  
Honor to be Sir Your very Obedient Humble Servant

Charles Paget

The Honble. Sir Alexander Cochrane K B  
Commander in Chief  
&c &c &c

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 168–69. The original  
of Paget's letter is printed here. For the copy that was enclosed with Cochrane's  
cover letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 456–57.

1. According to a marginal note in the copy of Paget's letter that was forwarded to the Admiralty,  
it was Lieutenant William Finlaison, of H.M. brig *Nimrod*, not Garland, who went ashore to treat with  
the Wareham citizenry. The text of this note reads: "note—He never went ashore but sent Lieut. Fin-  
laison of the *Nimrod* by whom the whole of this delicate business was arranged." See UK-KeNA, Adm.  
1/506, fol. 456. For a biographical sketch of Finlaison's naval career, see O'Byrne, *Naval Biographical  
Dictionary*, p. 357.

[Enclosure]

List of Vessells destroyed at Wareham, head of Buzzards Bay, by the Boats of His  
Majestys Ship *Superb*, and *Nimrod* Brig. the 13th. June 1814.—————

		Tons	
<i>Fair Trader</i>	Ship——	444	} quite New. built for a letter of Marque & Pierced for 18. 12 Prs.
<i>Independant.</i> ——	Brig——	300	
<i>Fanny</i> ——	Schooner——	250	} Belonging to Falmouth New Vessels.
<i>Elizabeth</i> ——	Do.——	230	
<i>Nancy</i> ——	Do.——	230	
<i>Wilmington</i> ——	Sloop——	150	Built in 1809.
<i>Industry</i> ——	Schooner	136——	" —1809
<i>Argus</i> ——	Do.——	136——	" —1812
<i>Wm. Richmond.</i> ——	Brig——	135——	" —1808
<i>New States.</i> ——	Schooner——	96——	" —1800
<i>Paragon</i> ——	Sloop——	70——	" —1811
Name unknown——	" ——	70——	" ready for launching
<i>William.</i> ——	" ——	60	Built in 1801
<i>Thomas.</i> ——	" ——	60——	not Known
<i>Wm. Lucy</i> ——	" ——	50	New. never at Sea
<i>Experiment</i> ——	" ——	60	not Known
<i>Friendship.</i> ——	" ——	45——	Built in 1805.
		<u>2522</u>	Tons

A Cotton Manufactory entirely destroyed the Value of which with the Cotton it contained at the time estimated by the Principal Inhabitants at half a Million of Dollars.—

Names of Officers in the Boats of His Majestys Ship *Superb* & *Nimrod* Brig at the destroying the American Vessels & Cotton Manufactory at Wareham 13th. June 1814.

*Superb*

Lieut. Jas. Garland  
 Captn. Lambert R.M  
 Lieut. Beauchant R.M.A.  
 Mr. Shipton.—Mate  
     Barclay—     "  
     Troughton Mid  
     Marshall—   "  
     Gore—        "  
     Lamston—    "  
     Dawson—     "

*Nimrod*

Lieut. Finlayson  
 R. Russell. Mate.

Charles Paget  
Captain

DS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fols. 57–59. Docketed: "Report of the Vessels destroyed/at Wareham by *Superb*,/13 June 1814." A copy of this list is in UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 458.

NEWS REPORT OF THE BRITISH BARGE ATTACK ON  
 WAREHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

NEW-BEDFORD:  
 FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 1814.

WAR'S ALARMS!

On Monday morning last, the inhabitants of this place were alarmed by the appearance of 7 or 8 British barges, apparently approaching the town. It being hazy, they were not perceived until within a short distance of the Fort.— Alarm guns were immediately fired from the Fort, and the citizens made some preparations to receive them. Whether these measures deterred them from their object, we know not;— they however proceeded eastward, and it was expected they would land at Matepoiset harbour, (Rochester)— A party of militia from this town marched thither to the assistance of the inhabitants, but the barges passed

that place without shewing any disposition to land.— Six of the barges proceeded to Wareham, and set fire to the shipping in the harbour,— the particulars of which are given below.

On Monday afternoon; a meeting of the inhabitants of this town was called, to consult and adopt measures of safety and defence.— Guards are stationed at different points during the night, to give an alarm in case of the approach of the enemy;— all the shipping is moving up the river; and some of the inhabitants are sending their household furniture and other valuable effects out of town.

About one o'clock on Monday night; an alarm was fired from the Fort; as it was said a barge was approaching the harbour. We have seen a man who was coming from the Vineyard about the same time, who says he saw distinctly two barges, one or two miles this side Black Rock, making off.

---

WAREHAM, JUNE 14, 1814.

*To the Editor of the New-Bedford Mercury.*

SIR— Yesterday morning we were informed of the approach of the enemy, and at about 11 o'clock A.M. they landed at the village called the Narrows with a flag. There were six barges, containing two hundred and twenty men. They demanded (before the proper authority could arrive) all the public property; and declared, that in case they were molested, every house, within their reach should be consumed. We were not prepared to make any opposition, and promised not to. To prevent a violation on our part, they detained a number of men and boys as prisoners for their security; declaring that if any of their men were injured, they should be put to immediate death. Having stationed sentries back of the village, they proceeded to fire the vessels and Cotton Manufactory.— Twelve vessels were fired, five of which were totally destroyed; the remainder were extinguished after the enemy departed— The Cotton Manufactory was also extinguished. Damage estimated at *Twenty five Thousand Dollars*. It is supposed that the enemy came from the *Nimrod* brig, and *Superb* 74.

BENJA. BOURNE. *Selectmen of*  
BENJA. FEARING *Wareham*

Printed, *New-Bedford* (Massachusetts) *Mercury*, 17 June 1814.

CAPTAIN OLIVER H. PERRY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Newport June 22d. 1814—

Sir

Herewith you will receive a deposition giving an account of the most infamous conduct on the part of some of our countrymen—

I have forwarded a copy of this deposition to the District Attorney of Massachusetts,—<sup>1</sup> and have sent an officer<sup>2</sup> direct to Wareham, to have those traitors



apprehended if they are to be found—every exertion will be made on my part to bring them to punishment. I have the honor to be Sir Very Respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

O. H. Perry

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 89 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. U.S. District Attorney of Massachusetts George Blake.

2. Philip V. Topham, who was warranted a sailing master on 27 July 1813.

[Enclosure]

I John Dunkin of Newport County of Newport Mariner on solemn Oath do testify and say that on Wednesday the eighth Day of June instant I sailed from Newport in the Sloop *Nancy* of and belonging to Providence commanded by Parker Clarke, on the same day was captured by the British Brig of War *Nimrod* not far from Watch Hill— Captain Clarke ransomed the sloop for the sum of Two hundred Dollars and left me on board the Brig as an hostage until he could return with the Money— on Saturday Night following the *Superb* a seventy four Gun Ship and the Brig *Nimrod* came to anchor near Brentons Reef— the Captain of the *Superb* ordered the Captain of the *Nimrod* to go with him to the Vine Yard Sound in order to go into New Bedford the following Night— the Ship and Brig accordingly got under way the 12th. Instant and proceeded to the Vine Yard Sound— the Ship just before Night came to Anchor opposite to Quiscotte hole—<sup>1</sup> the Brig kept under way—laying too until they got the boats out of the Ship I then saw a Pilot Boat, which came along side the Brig having three Men on board and who of their own accord, without any application whatever, asked if they wanted a Pilot on board the Brig— the Captain replied—Yes—we want four or five as we are going on an Expedition tonight and you shall be satisfied handsomely— they accordingly came on board—and one of them named Robinson, whom I personally knew observing me—went immediately aft and spoke to the Lieutenant—when he the Lieutenant called the Serjeant of Marines and ordered him to take me below— this was about a quarter of an hour before Sunset— they then concluded to make sail— the Wind having died away, the barges took the Brig in Tow—the Marines and part of the Crew of the *Superb* being on board— just after Dusk I came again upon Deck and saw the whole of the Movements these Pilots were very busy the whole Time in giving Directions and piloting the Brig in, near to the Light house in New-Bedford— about two oClock in the Morning of the 13th. they manned the Barges eight in Number and left the Brig about half past two oClock—and the three Men—one of whom was named Robinson—another Slocum—a married Man—he is the Son of a Mr. Slocum who lives on the Island called Nushawinna—<sup>2</sup> the third Man I did not know all went off in the Barges— the Conversation on board—and orders as I understood given them were—first to take the Fort—spike up the Guns—take the Gunboats—the *Saratoga* Privateer and her prize—and to burn all the shipping in the harbor and if molested in the execution of these Orders to burn the Town— being belated and having lost their Way by reason of the Fog it was after daylight before they got near the Fort—when hearing the Drum beating and Horn blowing they gave up the Attack supposing they were giving the Alarm— the

barges then came back and one of the them landed and took a Man from his house to Pilot them into Wareham— he said when he came on board that he was no Pilot and knew nothing about it— they told him he should Pilot them or they would shoot him— he was very much affrighted— they kept this Man on board— Robinson and Slocum went off in their Boat—and Robinson returned with two other Men whom I supposed to be Pilots belonging to Wareham— Robinson and the two Men who came off with him shifted their Dress—putting on some of the Cloaths of the Marines—and smutted their faces and went off in the Barges which went into Wareham and destroyed the Vessels and set Fire to the Factory— they altered their Dress by direction of the Captain of the *Nimrod*, as he observed to them they would not then be known— whilst the Barges were on shore they took an old Man off to Pilot them into another Place for fear the others were not sufficiently acquainted—when one of the Men seeing him as he was coming—observed—that is my Father and I do not wish to see him— they then covered him up with Pea Jackets— they set the old Man on shore—and the rest came on board—and on the Night of Monday the 13th they were all set on shore—and I saw the first Lieutenant put the Money into their hands for Pilotage as I suppose but how much I cannot say— they said on board the Brig they meant to make another Attempt on New Bedford—and unless there was a Peace in less than two Months—when the Squadron should be reinforced, they should come into Newport— they furthermore said they intended to attack Stonington<sup>3</sup> and offered me a hundred Dollars on Thursday last to pilot a Barge into the Harbor of Stonington—and likewise an hundred Dollars for every Vessel which I should bring out— I told them I was wholly unacquainted with the Harbor— Robinson & Slocum I well know—that is by sight—having no particular Acquaintance with them—and the two Men who came off from Wareham I could at once identify was I to see them

Sign'd John Dunkin<sup>4</sup>

I hereby certify that the above is a correct Copy of a statement and affidavit made before me on the 20th June 1814—by John Dunkin—the original in my Office on which the said John Dunkin is recognized in the Sum of Five hundred Dollars to make his appearance at Circuit Courts in Boston 20th October next and in Providence 15th November next to give evidence on any Prosecutions which may be commenced on the above information

Robert Rogers Jus[*tice*] P[*l*]ace

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 89, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. Probably Quick's Hole, a channel that connects Vineyard Sound and Buzzards Bay. Nashawena Island borders it on the south and Pasque Island on the north. It is referenced in Paget to Cochrane, 14 June 1814, above.

2. Nashawena Island, second largest of the Elizabeth Islands, Massachusetts.

3. The Royal Navy did target Stonington, Connecticut, later that summer. See pp. 507–18.

4. Referred to as John Duncan in another deposition, which is printed below.

## CAPTAIN OLIVER H. PERRY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Newport June 24th. 1814

Sir

I have great pleasure in informing you that Sailg. Master Topham (the Officer I sent from this place has by his activity succeeded, in causing three of the Traitors I mentioned in my letter of 22d. Inst. to be apprehended, and committed to Prison— Exertions are making to take the others that they may meet the reward; they so richly deserve I send you another deposition Sir, that you may have further information as to the depravity of those wretched men— I have the honor to be Sir Very Respectfully Your Obed. Servt.

O. H. Perry

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 97 (M125, Roll No. 37).

[Enclosure]

Substance of the Testimony of the witnesses in the Case of the United States against James Miller and Moses Bumpus both of Wareham in the County of Plymouth Mariners for Treason, before Lemuel Williams, James Washburn and William LeBaron Esquires, June 22. 1814

John Duncan testified that on Sunday the twelfth and Monday the thirteenth of June instant, he was on board the British Brig *Nimrod*—That James Miller and Moses Bumpus were also on board—That he saw them go into the British Barges to pilot them into New Bedford or Fairhaven—That the expedition against New Bedford failed & the barges returned with Miller & Bumpus— On monday the 13th. an expedition was fitted out against Wareham from the *Nimrod* and a seventy four— Miller & Bumpus were to pilot the barges into Wareham— They expressed a wish to the Capt. of the *Nimrod* to change their dress. Accordingly they went below, & returned in a short time with each a marines coat on, & their faces were blacked— Witness saw them get into the boats after being called by the Commanding Officer of the expedition— They appeared cheerful & fond of the business— Miller smiled— After returning from Wareham Miller said he saw a man there, he knew, & wished the sailors to cover him with something & it was done— Bumpus was also covered by the sailors, to prevent Wareham people from seeing & knowing him— Bumpus said he put on his face, fresh stuff when going into Wareham— Witness saw the Lieut. of the *Nimrod* hand a bag to each of the defendants, supposed & believed to contain money— Had no doubt they contained money— Afterwards heard the Capt. of the *Nimrod* ask his Lieut. if the men were satisfied with the money— was answered in the affirmative When Defendants received the bags they thanked the Officer that gave them & said they were satisfied— Defendants said they were captured in a Sloop belonging to wareham, Wm. Barrows, Master Witness discovered no reluctance in defendants in piloting the barges into Wareham & believed they did it voluntarily— Miller told the Capt. of the *Nimrod* that one side of the Fort at Fairhaven was made of boards.— Defendants said they did not wish to be seen & known by the Wareham people— They suggested this before getting into the barges to go to wareham—

Samuel Bessee belongs on West Island in New Bedford, moved there a short time since, from Wareham; Married in Wareham and testified that he was taken by a number of men and carried on board the *Nimrod* on Monday the thirteenth June— Spoke with James Miller who was also on board— Saw Miller get into one of the barges to pilot them into Wareham, having previously put on a red Shirt & a red Cap— When Miller returned from Wareham, his face was blacked— Witness did not notice Bumpus untill the barges returned from Wareham— Then saw him in his usual dress— Defendants left the Brig, before witness— Saw no money handed to Defendants; but it might have been given them without his knowledge— Miller told witness that the British Lieut. Threatened to carry him to Halifax, if he refused to pilot the barges to Wareham— British Officer got into one of the barges & called for the Pilot & Miller stepped in— Miller acted cheerfully & lively— Defendants named to witness what had been done in Wareham after they returned— Witness heard the Commanding Officer of the barges say that Miller was a Clear Devil— Did not hear the defendants express any regret at the loss of property in Wareham— Bumpus appeared somewhat dejected after his return— Witness could not say that the Commanding Officer of the barges was intoxicated—

Taken by A Bassett—

The Justices ordered Miller & Bumpus to be committed for trial— They will be tried before the Circuit Court of United States which sits at Boston Oct. 15—1814—<sup>1</sup>

A Bassett

DS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 97, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. The *Newport Mercury* reported the arrest of Miller and Bumpus for treason, observing: "From the facts which have come to our knowledge respecting these villians, we have no doubt of their guilt.— We hope that the detection of these men will serve to deter others (if there are any so abandoned) from all treasonable intercourse with the enemy." *Newport (Rhode Island) Mercury*, 25 June 1814.

CITIZENS OF WAREHAM, MASSACHUSETTS, TO  
CAPTAIN OLIVER H. PERRY

Wareham June 24 1814

To the Hon Commodore Perry

Sir

The following is a correct Statement when the British landed at this place with their Barges the 13 of this inst June. We the undersigned do testify and say That on the 13th of this inst June about Eleven Oclock A M we saw the British with Six Barges approaching this village with a White flag hoisted in one of them, at which time our flag was not hoisted. but Thomas Young was carrying it down the Street towards the lower wharf where it was afterwards hoisted We the undersigned

do further testify and say that on the landing of the Commanding Officer from the Barge where our flag was hoisted he the Commanding Officer did agree that if he was not fired on by the Inhabitants, he would not destroy any private property belonging to the Inhabitants, but he would destroy Public Property and property which did not belong to the town and requested one of us to point out the Falmouth property or vessels which we agreed to do, and one of us went into the Barge with the second in command and then they took down their flag of truce and proceeded to set fire to the Falmouth Vessels They then landed a part of their men and in violation of their agreement proceeded to set fire to private property by setting fire to a vessel on the Stocks and five others which were at anchor and a Plymouth vessel They were reminded of their agreement, and that they had taken advantage of us by false promises But they threatened to set fire to the village, and put the inhabitants to the sword if any resistance was made or any attempts made to put out the fires for they did not care about any promises they had made; also they landed a party of men and set fire to a cotton factory They then returned to their Barges and took twelve of the Inhabitants with them on board of their Barges and said if they were fired upon by the Inhabitants they would put them to death Then the Commanding Officer ordered the flag of truce to be hoisted and the Second in command Swore it was a damned shame and disgrace to any nation to enter a village under a flag of truce and commit the greatest outrage and depredations possible and then to return under a flag of truce but on orders being again given by the Commanding Officer the flag of truce was hoisted Our men were landed about three mile[s] below the village and the Barges proceeded on board the Brigantine *Nimrod* then lying in the Bay

Signed { David Nye junr.  
 Abner Basset  
 Isaac Perkins  
 Josiah Everett  
 Noble Everett  
 Wm. Barrows  
 Perez Briggs  
 Wm. Tearing

P S This thing is Known only by the undersigned, no other person Being present, that is, that the British fired three muskets under the flag of truce before the agreement

Signed { Abner Basset  
 David Nye Jun

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 115, enclosure (M125, Roll No.37). Perry forwarded this letter to Jones on 30 June 1814. It was published in the 6 July issue of the *Daily National Intelligencer*.

## Nantucket Declares Neutrality

*The people of Nantucket lived a precarious existence during the first two years of the war. Separated from the mainland by a 30-mile stretch of ocean, Nantucketers depended on open sea lanes for their safety and well-being. Indeed, the island's residents were entirely dependent on the mainland for vital supplies of food and fuel, without which they could not survive.<sup>1</sup> Because the New England coast remained free of the British blockade through the winter of 1813, Nantucket received enough shipments of wood and food to sustain its populace into the spring of 1814. The extension of the enemy's blockade to New England in April of 1814, immediately placed Nantucket's survival in jeopardy. When federal and state authorities proved unable to protect or relieve the distressed islanders, Nantucket's leaders reached out to the British to provide for their community's security. The initial stages of this summer-long negotiation are documented below.<sup>2</sup>*

1. On Nantucket's reliance on imported foodstuffs and fuel, see Gardner to Madison, 4 January 1814, Madison, Papers, Vol. 7, p. 169.

2. For a concise, scholarly treatment on Nantucket's declaration of neutrality, see Horsman, "Nantucket's Peace Treaty." On Nantucket in the War of 1812, see Macy, History of Nantucket, chapters 8–10, and Starbuck, History of Nantucket, chapter 7.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL HENRY HOTHAM, R.N.

No. 6.

Bermuda 26th. July 1814

Sir,

I send you herewith Copies of Letters<sup>1</sup> received by Captn. Barrie of H M S *Dragon* from Select Men of Nantucket representing the Inhabitants of that Island to be in a State of Starvation. The request that they may be permitted to carry on their Fishery cannot be complied with, but if they are actually in the distressed state they represent, permissions may be granted them to import from the Continent Supplies of Food provided they will declare themselves neutral & deliver up all such Artillery, Arms & Ammunition as may be on the Island & Submit to H M Ships getting from them whatever Refreshments the Island will afford. You will be pleased to cause enquiry to be made into the truth of the enclosed Statements & agreeably to what is before mentioned act as you may deem circumstances to require— I have the honor to be &ca

(Signed) A. Cochrane

LB, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 133–34.

1. Letters not found.

REAR ADMIRAL HENRY HOTHAM, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No. 14.

*Superb*, in Gardiner's  
Bay, 29th. August 1814.

Sir,

Five days after my arrival on this Station, I directed Captain Carteret of the *Pomone*, agreeably to the Instructions I received from you, bearing date the 28th. Ultimo,<sup>1</sup> to communicate with the Island of Nantucket; and after having ascertained the truth of the representation the Inhabitants had made of their distressed situation, in the petitions you had received and transmitted to me, to inform them of the relief you had authorized me to afford them; but he reported on the 20th. he had not found it practicable to approach the Island sufficiently near on the Southern side to communicate with it; and no Pilot could be obtained to carry the *Pomone* to the Anchorage off the Town on the North side; and he delivered to me a Duplicate of a petition dated the 11th. Instant (the original of which the Inhabitants had transmitted to you) and a letter they had written to him on learning one of His Majesty's Ships was in their neighbourhood; both praying for immediate relief from their difficulties of subsisting:<sup>2</sup>

I therefore gave Captain Newton of the *Nimrod* an Order on the 21st. Instant (of which the enclosure marked **A** is a Copy) and wrote to the Magistrates and Select men, to propose they should depute a committeé to repair onboard the *Superb*, to conclude the terms of neutrality I was directed to demand of them.

The *Nimrod* was conducted in safety to the Town, thro' Martha's Vineyard Sound, and on the 27th. returned to this Bay, with a Committeé (on board a Vessel of their Island) who subscribed to a Declaration I have the honor herewith to submit to you marked **C**; and Captain Newton having in the report of his proceedings (of which the paper marked **B** is a Copy)<sup>3</sup> verified the statements the Inhabitants had made of the condition of the Island I delivered to the Committeé Twenty one passports for their Vessels to import Provisions and Fuel from the Continent of the United States; the nature of which is shewn by the enclosures marked **D**<sup>4</sup> and **E**<sup>5</sup>; and a paper similar to that marked **F**.

Of the number of Vessels I have granted passports for, three are to bring Provisions from the Delaware, three from New York, and fifteen of the smaller to carry Fuel from Buzzards Bay; and altho' the numbers may appear large, they are not greater than I believe to be absolutely necessary to supply the population of an Island furnishing no earthly necessary of life, consisting of Seven thousand Inhabitants, with a stock of Provisions and Fuel for the Winter; and do not amount to near the number the Committee requested: but as they wished to send Vessels to the Chesapeake, and the Carolinas, and to different and distant parts of the United States, I did not conceive your Instructions to me, were intended to go to that extent; and as the Blockade was an objection, I have confined the liberties granted to them at present to the limits of my own Station: but shall hope to receive your further Orders on the Subject.

I believe the Island of Nantucket is difficult of approach on all sides in severe frosts, by reason of the ice, and that it is necessary a sufficient stock of Provisions should be collected before the Winter sets in: as Fish will be a principal article of

subsistence, I have permitted them to employ themselves in taking such as can be so applied, and caught on the Shoals surrounding their Island.—

And as they have represented, with every appearance of truth, that, they have no funds wherewith to purchase their provisions, nor any means of making payment for them, if they are not allowed the advantages of the Whale fishery, they also carry on in the shallow water and in the neighbourhood of the Island, I have told them you could not permit it when you gave me my Instructions; but that I would submit the case to your further consideration; and as Fish Oil pays (as I am informed) no duties in the United States, I have allowed them to dispose of what they have now on the Island, the property of Individuals, and of some Spermaceti Candles, to enable them to obtain Provisions; which I hope you may approve; and which circumstances may possibly induce you to extend the indulgencies you have granted them, to that point. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

Henry Hotham  
Commodore

Note. The Inhabitants of Nantucket do not expect the priviledge of sending Ships on the whale fishery in distant Seas.

H. H.

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fols. 39–42.

1. The original of this letter has not been found. Cochrane's letter book copy of this correspondence is dated 26 July.

2. Carteret's letter to Hotham of 20 August 1814 enclosing the Nantucketers' petition and letter is in Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2). For a short biography of Philip Carteret, later Sir Philip Carteret Silvester, see Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, Supplement, Part 1, pp. 66–78.

3. Enclosure not found. The original of Newton's letter is printed below.

4. Enclosure D is a copy of a passport for the sloop *Amey*. UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fols. 33–34.

5. Enclosure E is a copy of a passport for the sloop *Sally*. *Ibid.*, fols. 35–36.

[Enclosure]

*Superb*, off Gardiner's  
Island, 21st. August 1814.

Sir,

The Commander in Chief having transmitted to me petitions, Captain Barrie of his Majesty's Ship *Dragon* had received and forwarded to him, from Select men of Nantucket, representing the Inhabitants of that Island to be in a state of Starvation (copies of which I enclose for your information) and instructed me to cause enquiry to be made into the truth of the Statements they contain, and to act therein as I may deem circumstances to require; I herewith send you also the copy of a paper received by Captain Carteret of His Majesty's Ship *Pomone* from them, and have to desire you will proceed in the Sloop under your command,



to the road before the Town of Nantucket, thro' Martha's Vineyard Sound, if you should find the navigation practicable and safe, with the assistance of the pilot I send you, and another you will endeavour to procure from the Vineyard; and enquire into the truth of the Statements the people of Nantucket have made: and if you should find them actually in the distressed situation they represent, you will acquaint the Magistrates, and Select men, I am instructed by the Commander in Chief, to grant them permission to import from the Continent supplies of Provisions and Fuel, provided they will declare the Island and themselves neutral in the war which exists between Great Britain and America, and surrender all such Artillery, Arms; and Ammunition; as well as all Government property, which may be on the Island; and furnish to any of His Majesty's Ships or vessels which may arrive there, such refreshments as it will afford, without distressing the Inhabitants, on receiving payment for the same: but you will at the same time distinctly give them to understand, that they cannot be allowed to carry on their Fishery, nor any other description of Trade but that which consists of the Necessaries of life.

In the event of their consenting to these terms, you will effectually destroy all such Artillery, Arms, and Ammunition, which may be delivered up, as you cannot receive on board the *Nimrod*; and put Seals on the Government property; informing the Magistrates if they are broken before directions shall be received for its disposal, the Contract with the Inhabitants of the Island will be Cancelled.

And having so done, you will re-join me without loss of time on my Rendezvous; bringing with you a deputation of Magistrates, or Select men, in a Vessel of their own, to conclude with me a Treaty to the above effect; desiring them to bring me the names and descriptions of the vessels they wish to be furnished with Passports, which must consist of a limited and small number.

In the execution of this Service, you will pay the utmost attention in discriminating public from private property, and in preventing any injury being done to that which belongs to the Inhabitants; and if you should find them amicably disposed, you will observe a friendly conduct towards them. I have the honor to be Sir, your most obedient humble Servant

"Signed" Henry Hotham  
Commodore.

P.S. You will deliver the enclosed Letter to the Magistrates of the Island of Nantucket.

Captain Newton  
His Majesty's Sloop *Nimrod*.<sup>1</sup>

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fols. 18–21. Endorsed in Hotham's hand opposite the dateline: "Copy/Henry Hotham/Commodore." Docketed: "A./21 Aug."

1. The address lines for the enclosures appear on the first page of each letter.

[Enclosure]

H M Sloop *Nimrod*  
Gardners Bay 27th Augt. 1814

Sir

In Obedience to your Order dated the 21<sup>t</sup> Inst., I proceeded in H M Sloop *Nimrod* under my Command, to the Island of Nantucket, for the purpose of enquiring into the truth of the statements made by the Select Men & Magistrates of the distress of the people at that place;

On a strict investigation, I find the situation of the Inhabitants, to exceed any statements which had been made, & the Island altogether a scene of the most piteable distress, there not being a sufficiency of Provisions & Wood to exceed a fortnights consumption or a probability of their obtaining any from the Continent occasioned by the activity of His Majestys Cruizers; and it is my opinion, that unless the means of their procuring supplies is afforded them prior to the commencement of the Winter Months, it may be productive of the most melancholy consequences, particularly to the poorer classes, in the articles of Fuel & Flour, which from the severity of the Weather, they will at that season, be unable to obtain;

I have not been able to find any Arms. Ammunition, or public property of any description on the Island, (excepting a few Galls. of Oil for the Light-Houses) & the Select Men have assured me on their Honours their is none; I have every reason to conclude their statement perfectly correct;

A deputation from the Select Men & Magistrates have accompanied H M Sloop *Nimrod*, in a Vessel belonging to the Island; in obedience to your Order; I have the honor to be Sir, Your Obedt. humble. Servt.

Vinct. Newton Commr.

To the Honble Henry Hotham  
Commodore &c c— off New London

LS, Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2). For other copies of this letter see, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fols. 256–57, and, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fols. 29–30.

[Enclosure]

Declaration of the undersigned Committeé appointed by a legal Town meeting held at the Island of Nantucket, on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. day of August 1814, to wait on Commodore The Honble. Henry Hotham, Commanding His Britannic Majesty's Ships & Vessels employed on the Coast of North America, between Nantucket and the Delaware, to stipulate for the relief of the said Island.—

1<sup>st</sup>.

The Island of Nantucket is hereby declared Neutral; the Inhabitants will take no part whatever collectively or severally in the present War between Great Britain and the United States of America.

2nd.

we pledge ourselves that there are no arms, Artillery, ammunition, nor Warlike Stores; nor Government property of any kind on the Island, except the two Light Houses, and a scanty supply of Oil for the Season, which we request may remain unmolested.

3rd.

Such refreshments as the Island may be able to afford, without distressing the Inhabitants, will be as free for the use of His Majesty's Ships, as at other friendly places.

Given under our hands on board His Britannic Majesty's Ship *Superb*, in Gardiners Bay, the 28th. day of August 1814.

Joseph Chase  
Zenas Coffin  
Josiah Barker  
Aaron Mitchell

DS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fols. 31–32. Docketed: "C/28 Aug." and, in another hand, "Declaration of/the Committee from the/ Island of Nantucket." For other copies of this document, see Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2), and, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fol. 258.

[Enclosure]

Seal<sup>1</sup>

By The Honble. Henry Hotham Commodore, Commanding His Majesty's Ships and Vessels employed on the Coast of North America, between Nantucket and the Delaware.

The Island of Nantucket having this day been declared Neutral, by a Deputation appointed at a legal Town meeting held on the 23rd. Instant,<sup>2</sup> to wait on me, to stipulate for the relief of the Inhabitants; who engage they shall take no part whatever in the War between Great Britain and the United Sates of America; and that such refreshments as it can afford without distressing themselves, shall be as free for the use of His Majesty's Ships, as at other friendly places: and having by the direction of Vice Admiral The Honble. Sir Alexander Cochrane K.B. Commander in Chief &c. &c. &c. in consideration thereof, granted them permission to import Provisions, Live Stock, Fuel, and other Necessaries of life, from the Continent of the United States, and furnish certain Vessels with Passports to perform such Voyages, unmolested by the Ships and Vessels of His Majesty, and by the private armed Vessels of His Subjects; these are to require and direct, that no Hostilities, nor depredations, be committed by those which may arrive at, or communicate with, that Island.

Given under my hand and Seal, on board His Majesty's Ship *Superb*, off New London 28th. August 1814.

"Signed" Henry Hotham.

To, The Commanders of His Majesty's Ships  
and Vessels, and of the Private Armed Vessels of His Subjects.

By Command of the Commodore

“Signed” John Irving.

DS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fols. 37–38. Docketed: “E./28 Aug.” For a published version of this document, see Macy, *History of Nantucket*, pp. 190–91.

1. A circle encloses this text.

2. For the minutes of this 23 August town meeting, see Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2). The four-member deputation appointed to meet with Admiral Hotham included Joseph Chase, Zenas Coffin, Josiah Barker, and Aaron Mitchell.

REAR ADMIRAL HENRY HOTHAM, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Private

*Superb*, Gardner's Bay  
August 29th. 1814.

My dear Sir,

The inhabitants of Nantucket are greater objects for your liberality & compassion than I was aware of; and as the population of that Island is greater, and it's productions less, than was understood, so the means necessary to supply their numbers, amounting to Seven Thousand, becomes a more extensive business than possibly you contemplated: I have granted them all the indulgences I think you intended to vest me with authority for doing; but they do not amount to their requests; however as they will answer the present necessities of the people they are satisfied till further directions can be received from you, for their more complete relief from all difficulties; and if you should think proper to do any more for them, perhaps you will have the goodness to favor me with your commands as soon as convenient.

I am not aware in what manner the Island can be made useful to us during the war, in return for the advantages it will now receive at our hands, if it be not made a channel for smuggling British manufactures into the United States; which may be both profitable to our merchants, and the Islanders, without benefiting the enemy's revenue.

I am informed fish Oil & Spermaceti pays no duty in America if procured by citizens; therefore perhaps you will allow the people of Nantucket to Whale in the neighbourhood of their Island to give them the means of purchasing their supplies; as they tell me they take whales on and near the shoals & banks, where our ships do not pass: but your orders being direct not to allow the fishery of course I have refused it till I hear further from you.

Captain Newton found the navigation from the Vineyard Sound to the Town on Nantucket, less difficult than was expected; and as the *Nimrod* is the first Vessel of

H. Majesty which has anchored there since the American rebellion, an acquaintance with those channels may be useful: As American privateers & their prizes pass them sometimes, and English privateers of Nova Scotia (which in most cases conduct themselves like Pirates) land & commit depredations on Nantucket, I think those waters would be a very proper station for one of our small sloops of war, or Gun brigs; & if I had one I would place her there, if you approved of it, which I should presume you would.

I believe Mr. Stewart will lodge his family on Nantucket; they are still on Plumb Island.

Knowing you will be anxious to receive the stores & equipments Pigot is carrying you, (who you will be much surprized to see in the *Diomedé*; but which exchange into her, does him so much honor that I hope you will be able to reward him for making it, by giving him one of your best frigates very soon) that I confine my communications by him solely to the subject of Nantucket, wishing to forward him as quick as possible; & having written on all other subjects necessary for your information by the *Wolverine* three days ago.

I send you my latest papers; which inform me you were entering the Potowmac, or Patuxent; in which, & in all your operations, I beg leave to offer you my best wishes for your complete success, and for your health; being, My dear Sir, your much obliged & faithful humble Servant

Henry Hotham

The Whaling I have spoken of relates only to that they can carry on by boats from the Island; and is not meant to extend to distant fishing by Ships.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2327, fols. 85–86. Docketed opposite dateline: “[–] Hotham/29 Aug/14.”

#### NEWS REPORT OF NANTUCKET’S DECLARATION OF NEUTRALITY

Boston, 30 December 1814

#### NANTUCKET NEUTRAL!

*Extract of a letter from Nantucket, dated Aug 22, to a gentleman in this town.*

Since I wrote you on the 20th the whole Island has been in an uproar. The British brig *Nimrod*, Capt. Newton, came up and anchored just outside the bar yesterday afternoon— a lieutenant came on shore with 16 men in a barge, with some kind of mission to the Selectmen; they tarried till near dark and returned.— We knew nothing of the nature of this proceeding till this forenoon— The Selectmen and two or three of the principle inhabitants, went down in 2 boats with flags, at about 10 o’clock. In about an hour they returned with Capt. Newton and several of his officers— the Capt. went up into the hall of the upper office, where about 150 inhabitants were assembled, and delivered to the Moderator of the Meeting a paper containing sundry proposals. Previous to his arrival, however, a letter was

read in the hall, which was brought by the *Nimrod*, from Com. Hotham, dated yesterday, off Gardner's Island, on board H.M.S. *Superb*— this letter stated that the Vice-Admiral (Cochrane) had received the communications of the magistrates of Nantucket, requesting relief, and representing the inhabitants to be in a state of starvation, and that he had sent the *Nimrod* to inquire into the truth of the statement.— The paper handed by the Capt. contained proposals to this effect, viz.— The inhabitants of the Island shall declare themselves neutral, and continue so, during the war. They will be allowed to import from the continent, fuel and provisions, in a small and limited number of vessels, which are to be licensed by the British Commodore. All Government property, if any, shall be given up, or destroyed—such as artillery, arms, ammunition, &c. [there is none here.] The inhabitants will not be allowed to carry on “their fishery”— (I presume he meant the *whale* fishery)— they may *export* as well as import—such articles however as will not pay a duty to Government— oil and candles, I presume, pay no duty. Should any of his Majesty's vessels arrive here, they are to be allowed to take whatever provisions and supplies they may want, not distressing the inhabitants therefore, paying for the same. A deputation of the magistrates or selectmen are to proceed hence to the Commodore in Gardner's Bay, to-morrow, if possible, to conclude the treaty.

There is to be a town-meeting this evening. *All* the inhabitants are rejoiced at the prospect which this arrangement affords them—particularly the Democrats—who are the *first* to beg favours from that very enemy whom they have insulted and abused. Capt. Newton is quite a gentleman— He has been treated as such, by all those who bear the same character themselves. He stayed on shore nearly all this day, riding out of town, &c. He dined on shore, with several of his officers.

This evening, at 6 o'clock, the inhabitants met in the open street near the Town House, that building being too small for their accommodation. The proposals of the British Commodore being read, they passed the following resolutions, *nem. con.*<sup>1</sup> 1. We will not bear arms against His Britannic Majesty, during the present war.— 2. We will deliver up all public property on the Island.— 3. We will not oppose any British vessels who may arrive here for provisions, &c. such as may be spared without distressing the inhabitants—paying for the same. (This vote was originally expressed thus, by *recommendation* of a *Democrat*: “We will supply the British vessels of war with such provisions as they may demand,” which being *opposed* by a *Federalist*, was *modified* as it now stands.)— 4. A committee of four of the Selectmen and Magistrates, shall proceed forthwith to the British Commodore, to ratify the agreement.— 5. This Committee shall consist of Joseph Chase, Zenas Coffin, Josiah Barker, and Aaron Mitchell, (2 demo's and 2 feds.)<sup>2</sup>

The Inhabitants of this Island, by this measure, are inconceivably relieved— They will soon be supplied with abundance of provisions, fuel, &c. by means of those vessels which will be licenced for the purpose. Those who have not paid the Direct Tax, will get clear of the same—for the U.S. jurisdiction over this Island, *ceases*, I presume, during its *Neutrality*. Vessels will be going direct to Boston. There will not be any obstructions to the navigation of this Island, while the Deputation is away—the *Nimrod* being ordered to convoy the vessel conveying them, (the packet sloop *Experiment*,) to Gardner's Bay. It is expected they will be absent about a week.

23d, evening.— I have just returned from on board the *Nimrod*, where I have been treated with great politeness and hospitality. We were saluted and cheered as we left her. About 70 vessels have applied for licenses! It is not likely they will all be granted.

Printed, *New-England Palladium* (Boston), 30 August 1814.

1. An abbreviation for the Latin phrase *nemine contradicente*, meaning “no one contradicting.”

2. Attendees at this town meeting passed six more resolutions in addition to the four cited here. For a list of the recorded votes, see Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2).

## A Call for “Severe Retribution”

*In May of 1814, a U.S. raiding party landed on the north shores of Lake Erie and put the town of Dover to the torch, along with a number of neighboring factories and mills.<sup>1</sup> When the governor general of Canada, Sir George Prevost, learned of this “wanton destruction of private property,” he wrote Admiral Alexander Cochrane requesting that a similar treatment be visited upon American seaboard communities.<sup>2</sup> On 18 June, Cochrane issued a secret memorandum to his commanding officers directing them to “destroy & lay waste” assailable “towns and Districts” on the enemy’s coast.<sup>3</sup> The destruction of two more Canadian towns on the Niagara frontier in late July prompted Prevost to renew his call to Cochrane “for a severe retribution” against the Americans. On the eve of embarking on the campaign that would result in the capture of Washington and the destruction of its public buildings, Cochrane justified his retaliatory policy in an exchange of correspondence with Secretary of State Monroe.*

1. For documents on the American attack on Dover and nearby Long Point, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 483–90.

2. In this letter, Prevost asked Cochrane to “assist in inflicting that measure of retaliation which shall deter the Enemy from a repetition of similar outrages.” See Prevost to Cochrane, 2 June 1814, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 462. This letter is also printed in Cruikshank, *Niagara Frontier*, Vol. 2, p. 402.

3. See Cochrane to Commanding Officers of the North American Station, 18 July 1814, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 140.

GOVERNOR GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Head Quarters  
Montreal 3d. Augt. 1814

Sir,

Since writing to you on the 2d. June last<sup>1</sup> communicating the wanton destruction by the Enemy of private property on the North Shores of Lake Erie, a repetition of similar disgraceful outrages has taken place on the Niagara Frontier.

The Enemy crossed the Niagara River with 6000 men on the 3d. July, & having immediately afterwards got possession of Fort Erie, advanced towards Chippewa where Major General Riall had collected about 1500 troops exclusive of militia &

Indians— with this small force he on the 5th. anticipated the attack which the Enemy had intended to make on his position on the following day, and after a severe contest of several hours was obliged in consequence of the great inferiority in his numbers to retire to the lines at Chippewa with great loss— two days afterwards his position being turned, he retreated to Fort George, & the American Army advanced & established itself at Queenstown— In this situation it remained for nearly three weeks, occasionally making a demonstration of attacking the Forts, but evidently waiting for the cooperation of the Fleet from Sacketts harbour— during this time the possession by the Enemy of Queenstown, & St. Davids, with a Force far superior to any that we could oppose to it, enabled them to follow up with impunity the same disgraceful mode of warfare to which they have hitherto so frequently resorted— the wanton destruction of private property; the Villages of Queenston & St. Davids were committed to the Flames & totally consumed.—<sup>2</sup> Lt. Genl. Drummond arrived at Fort George on the 24th., & the Enemy despairing of any cooperation from their fleet, began on the following day to retire from Queenstown

Major Genl. Riall being immediately pushed forward with the advance to harrass them on their retreat, was attacked by their whole force on the Evening of that day, & Genl. Drummond shortly afterwards coming up with the remainder of our disposeable Troops on that Frontier, a general action ensued, which terminated at midnight by the total discomfiture of the Enemy. I have not yet received the official details of this action but the enclosed<sup>3</sup> will give you the substance of the information which has reached me respecting it— you will observe by it that the Enemy in the last moments of retiring added another act of wanton outrage to those before committed by the destruction of the Mills of Messrs. Clerke & Sheet the most useful & valuable in the Country, and the loss of which will be long and severely felt by the peaceable & unoffending Inhabitants who were accustomed to resort to them with their grain—

These events so dishonorable to the American Character & so little merited by the forbearance I have hitherto practiced, I deem it my duty to bring under your consideration, as affording ample grounds of justification for any conflagrations which may have taken place on the Coast, and as calling loudly for a severe retribution which I trust when opportunities shall offer you will not fail to inflict— I have received your private letter of the 24th. May—<sup>4</sup> Majr. Genl. Powers Brigade consisting of four Regiments have arrived from France, & I understand that more Troops from thence convoyed by the *York* & *Vengeur* having Genl. Kempt & Robinson on board are in the River, I have the honor to be Sir Your obedt. Servant

George Prevost

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 221–24. For a duplicate, see, *ibid.*, fols. 219–20.

1. See note 2 of headnote, above.

2. On 18 July 1814, New York State militia under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Isaac W. Stone burned the town of St. Davids. This action led to the summary dismissal of Stone and three other militia officers the following day. See Cruikshank, *Niagara Frontier*, Vol. 1, p. 74.

3. Not found.

4. Not found.



VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
SECRETARY OF STATE MONROE

His Britannic Majestys Ship  
the *Tonnant* in the Patuxent River  
18th. August 1814.—

Sir,

Having been called upon the Governor General of the Canadas to aid him in carrying into effect measures of retaliation against the Inhabitants of the United States, for the wanton destruction committed by their Army in upper Canada; it has become imperiously my duty, conformably with the notice of the Governor Generals application, to issue to the Naval Force under my command an order to destroy and lay waste such Towns and Districts upon the Coast as may be found assailable.

I had hoped that this contest would have terminated without my being obliged to resort to Severities that are contrary to the usage of civilized Warfare, and as it has been with extreme reluctance and concern that I have found myself compelled to adopt this system of devastation, I shall be equally gratified if the conduct of the Executive of the United States will authorize my staying such proceedings, by making reparation to the suffering Inhabitants of Upper Canada: thereby manifesting that if the destructive measures pursued by their Army were ever sanctioned, they will no longer be permitted by the Government. I have the honor to be Sir, With much consideration Your most obedient and very humble Servant

sigd. Alexr. Cochrane  
Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief of  
H.B. Majesty's Ships & Vessels upon the North American Station

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 596–97. This letter was enclosed in Cochrane to Croker, 31 Aug. 1814, *ibid.*, fol. 595. For another copy of this letter, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, p. 160.

SECRETARY OF STATE MONROE TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Dept. of State  
Sepr. 6. 1814.

Sir,

I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 18th. of August, stating that having been called on by the Governor General of the Canadas, to aid him in carrying into effect measures of retaliation against the inhabitants of the United States for the wanton desolation committed by their army in Upper Canada, it has become your duty conformably with the nature of the Governor General's application, to issue to the naval force under your command, an order to destroy and lay waste such towns and districts upon the coast as may be found assailable



*James Monroe*

It is seen with the greatest surprise, that this system of devastation which has been practised by the British forces, as manifestly contrary to the usage of civilised warfare is placed by you on the ground of retaliation. No sooner were the United States compelled to resort to war against Great Britain, than they resolved to wage it in a manner most consonant to the principles of humanity, and to those friendly relations which it was desirable to preserve between the two Nations, after the restoration of peace. They perceived however with the deepest regret that a spirit alike just and humane, was neither cherished nor acted on by your Government. Such an assertion would not be hasarded, if it was not supported by facts, the proof of which has perhaps, already carried the same conviction to other Nations that it has to the people of these states. Without dwelling on the deplorable cruelties committed by the savages in the British ranks & in British pay on american prisoners at the River Raisin,<sup>1</sup> which to this day have never been disavowed or atoned for, I refer as more immediately connected with the subject of your letter, to the wanton desolation that was committed at Havre de grace and at George town early in the Spring 1813.<sup>2</sup> These villages were burnt and ravaged by the naval forces of Great Britain, to the ruin of their unarmed inhabitants, who saw with astonishment, that they derived no protection to their property from the laws of war. During the same season, scenes of invasion and pillage, carried on under the same authority, were witnessed all along the waters of the Chesapeake to an extent inflicting the most serious private distress, and under circumstances that justified the suspicion that revenge and cupidity, rather than the manly motives that should dictate the hostility of a high minded foe, led to their perpetration. The late destruction of the houses of the Government in this City is another act which comes necessarily into view. In the wars of modern Europe no examples of the kind even among Nations the most hostile to each other can be traced. In the course of ten years past, the capitals of the principal powers of the Continent of Europe have been conquered and occupied alternately, by the victorious armies of each other, and no instance of such wanton and unjustifiable destruction has been seen. We must go back to distant and barbarous ages, to find a parallel for the acts of which I complain.

Altho' these acts of desolation, invited if they did not impose on the Government the necessity of retaliation, yet in no instance has it been authorised. The burning of the village of Newark in Upper Canada, posterior to the early outrages above enumerated, was not executed on that principle. The village of Newark adjoined Fort George and its destruction was justified by the officer who ordered it, on the ground, that it became necessary in the military operations there.<sup>3</sup> The act however was disavowed by the Government. The burning which took place at Long point was unauthorised by the Government, and the conduct of the officer<sup>4</sup> subjected to the investigation of a military tribunal. For the burning at St. David's committed by stragglers, the Officer<sup>5</sup> who commanded in that quarter was dismissed without a trial, for not preventing it.

I am commanded by the President distinctly to state that it as little comports, with any orders which have been issued to the military and naval commanders of the United States, as it does with the established and known humanity of the american Nation to pursue a system which it appears you have adopted. This Government owes it to itself, to the principles which it has ever held sacred, to disavow as justly chargeable to it, any such wanton, cruel, & unjustifiable

warfare whatever unauthorised irregularity may have been committed by any of its troops, it would have been ready, acting on these principles of sacred and eternal obligation, to disavow and as far as might be practicable to repair. But in the plan of desolating warfare which your letter so explicitly makes known, and which is attempted to be excused on a plea so utterly groundless, the President perceives a spirit of deep rooted hostility, which, without the evidence of such facts, he could not have believed, existed, or would have been carried, to such an extremity.

For the reparation of injuries of whatever nature they may be, not sanctioned by the law of Nations which the military or naval force of either power may have committed, against the other, this Government will always be ready to enter into reciprocal arrangements. It is presumed that your Government will neither expect, nor propose, any, which are not reciprocal.

Should your Government adhere to a system of desolation so contrary to the views and practice of the United States, so revolting to humanity and repugnant to the sentiment and usages of the civilised world, whilst it will be seen with the deepest regret it must and will be met with a determination and constancy becoming a free people, contending in a just cause, for their essential rights, and their dearest interests. I have the honor to be, with great consideration, Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Ja<sup>s</sup> Monroe

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2337, fols. 137–40. For a copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fols. 213–17.

1. A reference to the massacre of wounded American soldiers by British-allied Indians, following the Battle of the River Raisin, also known as the Battle of Frenchtown, on 22 February 1814. Once news of the massacre was publicized, “Remember the Raisin” became a popular wartime rallying cry.

2. For documents relating to the British raids on Havre de Grace and Georgetown, Maryland, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 341–46.

3. The town of Newark lay on the Canadian side of the Niagara River near Fort Niagara. Brigadier General George McClure of the New York State Militia ordered the town burned when his forces evacuated Fort Niagara on 10 December 1813. See McClure to Armstrong, 10 December 1814, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 623–24.

4. Colonel John B. Campbell, U.S.A.

5. Lieutenant Colonel Isaac W. Stone, New York State Militia.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
SECRETARY OF STATE MONROE

Copy

His Britannick Majs. Ship  
*Tonnant* in the Patuxent  
19th. September 1814.

Sir,

I had the honor to receive your Letter of the 6th. instant this morning in reply to the one which I addressed to you from the Patuxent.

As I have no authority from my Government to enter upon any kind of discussion relative to the points contained in your Letter I have only to regret that

their does not appear to be any hope that I shall be authorized to recall my general order—which has been farther sanctioned by subsequent request from Lieutenant General Sir George Prevost.— A Copy of your Letter will this day be forwarded by me to England,<sup>1</sup> and until I receive instructions from my Government, the measur[es] which I have adopted must be persisted in, unless remuneration be made to the Inhabitants of the Canada[s] for the injuries they have sustained from the outrage[s] committed by the Troops of the United States. I have the honor to be Sir your most obedient humble Servant

(signed) A Cochrane  
 Vice Admiral and Comm[ander] in Chief of H B M's Shi[ps]  
 & vessels upon the North [American] Station

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fols. 211–12. Endorsed in Cochrane's own hand opposite the dateline: "Alexr. Cochrane." Addressed at foot of first page: "The Honorable/James Monroe/Secretary of State—/&c.— &c.— &c.—." Bracketed text, except in the signature line, was supplied from the letter book copy of this letter in UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 168–69.

1. This letter was enclosed in Cochrane to Croker, 20 September 1814, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fol. 210.

## The Trials of Lieutenant William S. Cox

*Once the naval court charged with investigating the loss of U.S.S. Chesapeake had concluded its business, the court's president, William Bainbridge, forwarded its findings to Secretary of the Navy Jones.<sup>1</sup> After reviewing the court's opinion, Jones resolved to order a court-martial to try the eight Chesapeake crewmen whose conduct the court had singled out for criticism.<sup>2</sup> Chief among these was William Sitgreaves Cox, Chesapeake's acting third lieutenant at the time of the action with Shannon. Jones drafted four charges upon which Cox was to be tried: cowardice; disobedience of orders; desertion from his quarters and neglect of duty; and unofficerlike conduct. The first three of these charges were the most serious, as conviction on any one of them carried a possible death penalty.<sup>3</sup>*

*The court-martial trying Cox and his fellow Chesapeakes convened on 15 April in New London, Connecticut, on board the frigate United States, with Commodore Stephen Decatur serving as the presiding officer. The court spent six days examining into Cox's conduct on the day of Chesapeake's capture before rendering its judgment. While the court absolved Cox of the more serious charges of cowardice, disobedience of orders, and desertion from his quarters, it did find him guilty of neglect of duty and unofficerlike conduct, sentencing "him to be cashiered with a perpetual incapacity to serve in the Navy of the United States—."<sup>4</sup> President James Madison approved the court's sentence, officially terminating Cox's service in the Navy.<sup>5</sup>*

*Following Cox's dismissal from the Navy, influential family friends organized to have the court-martial's decision overturned and Cox restored to the Navy. These supporters first approached members of Cox's court-martial board for assistance in their campaign. Although a number were sympathetic to their former comrade's plight, none was willing to advocate a position officially at odds with the decision of the court.<sup>6</sup> Cox's advocates also appealed to President Madison, in hopes that the commander in chief would reverse*

his decision and permit their friend to serve once again in the Navy. Despite the political prominence of many of Cox's backers, Madison let his decision stand. One hundred and thirty-eight years later, Cox received vindication of a sort when the House Armed Services Committee passed a resolution restoring him to his former rank.<sup>7</sup>

1. For the opinion of the court of inquiry, see pp. 156–59. For Bainbridge's cover letter enclosing the court's proceedings, see Bainbridge to Jones, 14 February 1814, DNA, RG45, CL 1814, Vol. 1, No. 112 (MI25, Roll No. 34).

2. On March 17, Jones issued three sets of orders relating to the court-martial. First, orders for the arrest of the eight Chesapeake crewmembers; second, the precept for convening the court-martial; and third, orders appointing the officers of the court. These appear in succession in RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 246–53 (M149, Roll No. 11). The other seven Chesapeakes on trial are listed in Jones's court-martial precept, referenced above, and are identified on p. 248.

3. These charges would have been infractions of Articles 3–6 of "An Act for the Better Government of the Navy of the United States." For the text of these articles, see Brodine, Crawford, and Hughes, *Interpreting Old Ironsides*, p. 114.

4. The court-martial conducted its proceedings from 15 April to 5 May. It considered Cox's case from 16–20 April and again on 26 April. In addition to Decatur, the court's officers included Captain Jacob Jones; Master Commandant James Biddle; Lieutenants George W. Rodgers, William Carter, Jr., John T. Shubrick, Benjamin W. Booth, Alexander Claxton, David Conner, John Gallagher, John D. Sloat, and Matthew C. Perry; and Judge Advocate Thomas O. Selfridge. For that body's judgment of Cox, see DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 5, No. 161 (M273, Roll No. 7). The court's opinion was published in the 16 June 1814 edition of the *Daily National Intelligencer*.

5. Article 41 of "An Act for the Better Government of the Navy of the United States" required the president to approve sentences dismissing commissioned officers from the Navy before they would go into effect. See Brodine, Crawford, and Hughes, *Interpreting Old Ironsides*, p. 118. Jones forwarded Cox's case to Madison for final decision on 14 May. Madison approved the court's ruling in early June. See Jones to Madison, 14 May 1814, and Madison to Jones, 24 May 1814, in *Madison, Papers*, Vol. 7, pp. 478–79 and 514–15.

6. In addition to the exchange of correspondence between Stephen Decatur and Thomas Cadwalader printed below, see letters from court members Lieutenants William Carter, Jr., John T. Shubrick, and Alexander Claxton to John Cox, William's older brother, dated 25 July, 28 July and 1 August 1814 respectively, NDL, *Early Naval Records Collection* ("ZB Files"), *Biographical Files*, William S. Cox File.

7. On the efforts of Cox's descendants to exonerate his name, see Mosier, "The Oidium of Defeat," pp. 14–15, and, *Minnesota History*, "Cashiered Lieutenant," pp. 348–50. For a biography of Cox penned by his grandson, see Pope, William Sitgreaves Cox.

## THOMAS CADWALADER TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Philadelphia, 7 August 1814.

Dear Sir:

Since the sentence of the Court Martial on Mr. William Cox was promulgated, I have reflected much upon the situation, and have endeavored to devise a plan which might afford him an opportunity, before the war closes, of removing the disadvantages under which he now labors. He was exculpated from the most weighty of the charges preferred against him, and his want of conduct is certainly in some degree palliated by the extraordinary combination of circumstances which unexpectedly imposed upon him duties and responsibilities to which, from his youth and experience, he felt himself unequal.

Tho' these considerations have their influence with private individuals and with society at large, I am perfectly well aware they ought not to have directed the decisions of a Court bound by principles strictly military, whose members felt that an example was necessary in this case to uphold the high character of the navy.

Mr. Markoe<sup>1</sup> having informed me that in a late conversation you expressed a willingness to lend your countenance to any arrangement likely to prove beneficial to Mr. Cox, I beg leave to enquire whether there is any situation on board of your ship in which you would be disposed to receive him without reference to the Navy Department. Should there not be a good probability of the *President* getting to sea shortly, I would make a similar application to my friend Capt. Jones,<sup>2</sup> as a contest on Lake Ontario appears certain, and it is all-important to Mr. Cox to be placed where he might have the best prospect of meeting the enemy, and of evincing the firmness which, from the character given of him by his friends, I have no doubt he possesses. Should he be fortunate enough to meet with such an opportunity, and should his conduct be favorably noticed by his Commander, an application to the President, might then be made with some chance of success; and, at all events, he would no longer labor under the weight of mortification which now oppresses him. I beg you to favor me with your opinion of this plan and with any suggestions by which it may be altered or improved.

Trusting to your goodness of heart to excuse the freedom of this application, I beg you to believe me, with the highest respect and esteem, dear sir, Your very ob. servant,

Thos. Cadwalader.

Typescript, NDL, Early Naval Records Collection ("ZB Files"), Biographical Files, William S. Cox File. Addressed opposite signature line: "Commodore Stephen Decatur." The following notation appears at the bottom of the typescript: "Original in possession of John Lyman Cox of Phila. Copied from memorial to President Roosevelt, Nov. 1940."

1. Likely John Markoe, who was married to Hitty Cox, half-sister of William S. See Cox, *Cox Family in America*, pp. 133, 135.

2. Captain Jacob Jones, who had served as a member of Cox's court-martial. As commander of U.S.S. *Wasp*, Jones captured the brig sloop *Frolic* on 18 October 1812. He later commanded the frigate *Macedonian* before being transferred to Isaac Chauncey's Lake Ontario Squadron. For Jones's transfer orders, see Jones to Jones, 6 April 1814, pp. 244–45.

#### COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO THOMAS CADWALADER

New York, 17 August 1814.

Dear Sir:

Your very friendly letter in behalf of Mr. Cox, I have before me.

Mr. Markoe has correctly stated to you, that I expressed a willingness to lend my countenance to any arrangement likely to prove beneficial to that unfortunate young officer, and I have no hesitation in repeating to you the same assurance. But it must be understood now, as I intended it should be in conversation with Mr. Markoe, that his plan, whatever it may be, can receive my assistance only through the influence I may have with some mutual friends

To any such, who may feel a lively interest in the fate of Mr. Cox, and who may be dispos'd to recommend his memorial to the President, the only answer to the incapacity made by the Court Martial, I will cheerfully afford all the advice and support which my individual friendship can inspire. But on many accounts, and a delicate regard for the feelings of my Brother Officers, is not the least of the reasons which actuate me, you must be convinced how impossible it is, to give my personal sanction to revoke or mitigate the sentence of a Court Martial, of which I was President, and which I am therefore bound to respect and obey.

The plan you have suggested, to restore Mr. Cox to the service, it does not appear to me to be possible at this time to carry into effect, nor indeed at any time, whilst the present sentence of the Court Martial remains in effect, as it must by law do, until the President's pleasure to remit it, is signified. And, therefore if my Ship offer'd any situation at present which Mr. Cox would desire (which whoever is not the case), the want of this Executive authority would not allow me to bestow it upon him, whatever my individual wishes might do. And so must it be with Cap. Jones, and indeed every other Commander in the Navy.

In fine my friend, I do not discern a possible plan which can restore Mr. Cox to the Navy, but by the will of the President, nor is there any by which this can be done, but by an immediate memorial to him signed by the numerous and respectable friends of the memorialist, who will recite the peculiar circumstances of the late disorder, and make assurances of his future good conduct and patriotism.

I assure you I have felt the warmest sympathy for the situation of this young officer, and would forego no exertion to palliate his sufferings consistent with my public duties, and if in the mode I suggest, or any other, your friendship will point out, I can be of service to Mr. Cox, without appearing in his behalf personally, you have only to name it, to claim my immediate attention.

I add with undissembled frankness, that if Mr. Cox should have the good fortune to succeed in any course which may be adopted to restore him to the naval service, and he shall at any time be order'd under my command, I will receive him with the most profound forgetfulness of the past, and with every disposition accelerate his prosperity and happiness. With great respect, I am Sincerely,

Stephen Decatur

P.S. I have no doubt that it will be in my power to obtain many signatures to Mr. Cox's memorial, which would have weight with the President, and I mention this to you, that you may, if you please forward me, a copy of the Petition for that purpose, after he has presented it to all his friends.

Typescript, NDL, Early Naval Records Collection ("ZB Files"), Biographical Files, William S. Cox File. Addressed opposite signature line: "Thomas Cadwalader, Esq.,/Philadelphia." The following notation appears at the bottom of the typescript: "Original in possession of John Lyman Cox of Phila. Copied from memorial to President Roosevelt, Nov. 1940."





*William S. Cox*

MEMORIAL OF WILLIAM TILGHMAN AND OTHERS TO  
PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON

[Philadelphia, 1 December 1814]

To his Excellency James Madison, President of the United States of America, The memorial of the Undersigned is most respectfully addressed.

Your memorialists, convinced that your Excellency's high situation affords no privilege more grateful to your feelings than the extension of forgiveness to the condemned & relief to the unfortunate, venture to address your Excellency on a subject which has excited their warmest sympathy & which they doubt not has been the cause of painful sensations to your Excellency. Your memorialists allude to the truly distressing situation of Mr. William S. Cox, late a lieutenant in the Naval service, now bearing arms as a private<sup>1</sup> in the ranks against the same enemy in one unfortunate conflict with whom it has been his fate to lose his fair fame.

Your memorialists Could not with indifference behold even a total Stranger deprived by one unfortunate error of his title to participate in the glory which the unparalleled victories of our navy reflect upon all who hold commissions in the Service. They would feel regret for his misfortune & pity for his Sufferings; & when this stroke has fallen upon a youth in the very outset of life, by the greater number of your memorialists personally well known & highly esteemed, your Excellency will not be surprized that they should experience more than common pain at his fall, & more that common anxiety for his future prospects.

But while your Memorialists look with confident hope to your Excellency for the balm which alone can heal this unfortunate young Officer's wounded spirit, they are well aware that your Excellency must adhere to the dictates of Justice & cannot temper it with mercy, unless such Motives are exhibited to your Excellency's Consideration as would authorize an act, which they doubt not would give as much pleasure to your Excellency as to your Memorialists. And it is their full belief that the circumstances of the case submitted to your Excellency's consideration do present abundant reasons for the mitigation of a sentence, which, though rendered necessary by the high & honorable, and before the unfortunate loss of the *Chesapeake* Frigate untarnished reputation of the Navy, bears with intolerable pressure upon the feelings of the sufferer & his friends.

Your Memorialists beg leave to direct for a moment your Excellency's attention to the charges exhibited again the late Lieutenant & to his acquittal upon those which were of the most serious nature. These charges were four in number 1 Cowardice. 2. Disobedience of Orders. 3. Desertion from his quarters & neglect of duty. 4. Unofficer-like Conduct.

On the 1st. & 2nd. Charges Mr. Cox was acquitted. Your Memorialists do not therefore intercede in favor of a man who has forfeited his character for bravery. Mr. Cox's reputation in this respect is still unblemished. The honorable Court who tried him, composed of men whose brows were wreathed with hard earned & brilliant laurels, would not have spared him whose courage failed him when his Country most needed its highest efforts. Their acquittal must remove all doubt upon this point & your Memorialists unhesitatingly express their conviction of

his firmness. They are persuaded, should your Excellency afford him the opportunity which they solicit for him, that he will wipe out and amid danger & peril the spot which now defaces his name & character.

Neither was the late Lieutenant disobedient to orders, a fault always unpardonable in an Officer. It was his prompt obedience to the dying Command of the lamented Lawrence which has involved him in the fate he so bitterly deploras.<sup>2</sup> The debt of gratitude he owed was great & he has paid it at an expence far greater than that of life. In bearing from the scene of slaughter the disabled body of his Patron he has forfeited his fame; a heavy punishment for yielding to the pleadings of humanity & friendship.—

Of “Deserter from his quarters” the honorable Court have also acquitted him; but they found him guilty of “Neglect of duty & Unofficer-like Conduct.” And here your Memorialists are aware that your Excellency must hesitate. They venture however to pray your Excellency’s attention to the specifications under this head & to the palliating circumstances of the case.— Your Excellency will recollect the technical terms of the conviction under the above charges. “Guilty of “Neglect of Duty,” in not doing his utmost to aid in capturing the *Shannon* by animating & encouraging in his own example the inferior Officers & men to fight courageously, & in denying the use of coercive means to prevent the desertion of his men from their quarters, & in not compelling those who had deserted to return to their duty.”—<sup>3</sup> It is indeed true that this young Officer hesitated to bathe his sword in the blood of his countrymen so many of whom had already been cut down by the balls of the enemy; & your Memorialists freely confess that, cruel as this task would have been, it was the duty of an Officer to perform it. In the justice of the sentence the Court Martial on this & on every other point they with the whole American People repose unlimited confidence. But, when they consult their feelings as men, it does not excite their surprize that an Officer so very young in years, so young in rank, and Midshipman acting for the first time in the capacity of Lieutenant, for the first time in an Engagement, & that engagement then unexampled in its sanguinary & destructive character, should have shrank from a duty which might not have shaken one more habituated to command & on whom experience had impressed the necessity of sometimes sacrificing a part for the preservation of the whole. At that unfortunate moment too the success of the effort would have been doubtful; for the desertion of his men was instantaneous & their disappearance below too rapid to be arrested.

On the charge of “Unofficer-like Conduct” the Honourable Court found the late Lieutenant guilty “in that while the enemy was boarding or attempting to board the Frigate *Chesapeake*, the prisoner accompanied his disabled Commander James Lawrence Esqr. from the Quarter Deck where his presence & command were essential to animate & direct the *Chesapeake’s* crew in repelling the boarders of the Enemy” & “sentenced him to be cashiered with a perpetual incapacity to serve in the Navy of the United States.”— It is necessary to recur to the history of this young Officer’s Naval life to account for the force of those feelings which possessed such an uncontrollable influence on his conduct; feelings which were not dishonorable, not cowardly; but feelings of love, of gratitude, of strong attachment, which had Lawrence lived, would at his side have led the Lieutenant to victory & to honor; but which, when Lawrence fell, impelled him to that course which has terminated in his disgrace.

Mr. Cox entered the naval service of his Country at an early period of life. It was the profession of his choice. It was his warmest wish to serve his Country on the Ocean. For this he abandoned his home, a family that loved him & luxuries that courted his acceptance. It was his fortune to sail first & ever after with the regretted Lawrence. His pride of our Navy distinguished Mr. Cox; and admired his zeal, loved & trusted him. To him he at different times confided important charges, & never had occasion to repent his confidence. He was to Mr. Cox a Commander, a friend, a father; & he received in return from the youthful Officer the most devoted attachment & the most unfeigned respect.<sup>4</sup> Just before the *Chesapeake* sailed from the harbour of Boston, Capt. Lawrence, as is well know to your Excellency gave a further proof of his confidence in Mr. Cox by appointing him an acting Lieutenant on board his Ship; & with gratified pride & flattering hopes of distinction the Lieutenant no doubt left the shore. But the Crew were weakened; strangers to the Officers who had just joined the Ship, relaxed in discipline, warm from the Revels of a Sea-Port town; & they went to meet an enemy whose men were picked, hardened by months of duty, disciplined, prepared for battle.— The result of the rencontre has been the subject of grief to the Nation. In this unequal & sanguinary conflict, it was the singular & cruel fortune of Mr. Cox, after having fought at his division until his guns had ceased to bear, & flown to the quarter deck to continue the contest, there to receive in his arms his falling Commander & obeying the strong impulse of affectionate gratitude to carry him below & on his return to find that in that short moment the Ship was irrevocably lost. It was perhaps unprecedented in Naval history, that a youth whose grade in service was only that of a midshipman though acting as Lieutt. should be left in command after an action of 15 minutes. It supposes the loss of many more superior Officers than the fortune of war usually destroys in one engagement; And your Memorialists are not astonished that, thrown unexpectedly by an extraordinary concurrence of events into this difficult & responsible situation, so young an Officer should for an instant have lost sight of that path which might even have escaped the discernment of an Older & more experienced man. It cannot surprize your Excellency that a Midshipman should have caught his Commander in his arms & obeyed his dying order to carry him below, although he might have been at that moment the oldest surviving Officer on deck.

Your Memorialists therefore hope that your Excellency will not discover among the errors of this young Officer any so unpardonably great as to place him beyond the pale of mercy. To your Excellency alone can he look for an opportunity to recover his lost fame. In your kindness center all his hopes of future usefulness to his Country, of honor to himself, of pride to his family and friends. The fate is hard to which your Excellency will doom him if the prayer of your Memorialists is denied. Nor do your Memorialists conceive that such an interference would invalidate the force of the example made by the sentence of the Court-Martial, or reflect upon its proceedings. The Court decided as honourable men should have done; & their sentence as just but deadly to the sufferer. It is the peculiar privilege, the highest & most invaluable prerogative of your Excellency's exalted station not to alter but to remit a sentence. Emphatically your Excellency alone can forgive. And this is the prayer of your Memorialists. Confident of the bravery & high sense of honor of the individual for whom they intercede, they entreat your Excellency to give to him the opportunity for which he burns of brightening the

clouded surface of his character. His errors were those of youth & inexperience. The heart that could beat so feelingly for the loss of a beloved Commander, cannot be insensible to the calls of ambition, or wanting in ardor to avenge it's Country's wrongs. In reentering upon his professional career, his exertions will be stimulated by the soreness of wounded pride still smarting under the reproach of former failure, & his thirst of future distinction will be redoubled by the hope of drowning in it the remembrance of the past. He wishes to be placed in perilous service; to embrace the most desperate means of retrieving what he has lost; & your Memorialists confidently believe that his future conduct, if restored to such situation in the Navy as your Excellency may deem proper, will be honorable to himself, & gratifying to your Excellency, to whom he will then Owe all that can be valuable in life.<sup>5</sup>

Philada. 1 December 1814

W<sup>m</sup>. Tilghman.<sup>6</sup>

Hor: Binney.—

John Sergeant.

Jos. Hopkinson

Thomas Parke

Manuel Eyre

C. Wistar—

Dan<sup>l</sup>. W Cox

And<sup>w</sup>. Bayard

Cha<sup>s</sup> Pleasants

Benj<sup>m</sup>. Smith Barton

Cha<sup>s</sup> Biddle

William Waln

Ri<sup>d</sup>. Dale

Geo Latimer

Thomas Leiper

Tho<sup>s</sup>. Cadwalader

Geo Harrison

Tho<sup>s</sup> M Willing

Henry Nixon

Joseph Curwen

Tho<sup>s</sup>. W Francis.

W: Rawle.

Benjamin Chew

Edw Burd

William Read

Benj<sup>n</sup>. Morgan

DS, NDL, Collection of Paymaster Horatio Bridge, 1791–1845, Box 2: Memorials Petitions & Letters. Docketed: “Wm S. Cox to Pres. Madison. A plea for/Clemency in a case of conduct unbecoming.”

1. Cox served as a private in Captain Thomas F. Pleasant's Company, 1st Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, commanded by Colonel Clement C. Biddle. *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, Vol. 2, p. 378, and, *Pennsylvania Archives*, Sixth Series, Vol. 8, p. 532.

2. At the court of inquiry investigating *Chesapeake's* capture, Cox testified that the wounded Lawrence requested his aid in being carried below the spar, or uppermost, deck of the ship. He affirmed this claim again at his court-martial. Although Cox insisted that he bore Lawrence down only one deck level before returning to the fight, Lieutenant George Budd testified that Cox shared privately that he had carried their fallen commander down to the cockpit—three deck levels below the spar deck, where British boarders battled with *Chesapeake's* crew for control of the frigate.

3. Midshipman Delozier Higginbotham testified at both courts that Cox directed him not to cut down crewmen who had abandoned their quarters to flee below decks.

4. At his court-martial, Cox spoke of his high regard and affection for Lawrence: “I knew Capt. Lawrence intimately and loved him as a Man. I had, as the Court knows, sailed with him before in the *Argus* and the *Hornet*. In the service of my Country I had never sailed under any other commander. He recommended me to promotion and it was thro' his means and the opinion he entertained of my merit that I obtained my rank and Commission as a Lieutenant. My regard for him was reciprocated and I was proud of it, and I assisted him in this instance from feelings of gratitude, which, long and habitually exercised towards him, had become powerful and rapid as instinct.” DNA, RG125, CM, Vol.

5, No. 161 (M273, Roll No. 7). A printed version of Cox's defense statement is published in Pope, *William Sitgreaves Cox*, pp. 173–85.

5. An undated copy of this memorial, but with different signatories, is reproduced in Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, pp. 124–28. Among the signatories were Nicholas Fish, DeWitt Clinton, Daniel D. Tompkins, and Washington Irving.

6. The signatories of this memorial were among Philadelphia's leading citizens. William Tilghman served as chief justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania from 1806 to 1827. Richard Dale was a former captain in the Continental and U.S. Navies. George Latimer was a merchant and former member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. Thomas Cadwalader was a lawyer and militia officer who rose to the rank of brigadier general in 1814 and major general in 1824. George Harrison was the U.S. Navy agent at Philadelphia. Horace Binney was an attorney who served Pennsylvania in the House of Representatives during the 23rd Congress. Thomas Willing was a former member of the Continental Congress and first president of the Bank of the United States. John Sergeant, an attorney, served several terms in the U.S. House of Representatives between 1815 and 1841. Henry Nixon was president of the Bank of North America from 1822 to 1840. Joseph Hopkinson served two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1815 to 1819. Edward Burd, was a lawyer and former prothonotary of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Benjamin Chew, Jr. and Benjamin R. Morgan were also lawyers. Thomas Leiper, Joseph Curwen, Manuel Eyre, Jr., Charles Wistar, William Read, Daniel W. Coxe, Charles Pleasants, and William Waln were prominent merchants. Thomas W. Francis was a ranking officer in the 2nd Troop of the Philadelphia City Cavalry. Andrew Bayard was a member of the city's Select Council. Both Thomas Parke and Benjamin Smith Barton were physicians, the latter was also a noted botanist. Charles Biddle served as vice president of Pennsylvania's Supreme Executive Council (the equivalent of lieutenant governor), and was the father of Navy Captain James Biddle.

## Commodore Stephen Decatur and the Defense of New York City

*Ominous movements of British land and sea forces during the summer of 1814 made New Yorkers anxious for the security of their city. An army of 10,000 red-coated soldiers assembled north of the border of New York State, preparing to invade along the western shore of Lake Champlain, supported by a naval force fitting out below the lake's mouth. By advancing south through the Hudson River Valley, the invaders could threaten the city from the landward side. At the same time, a British fleet gathered off the Atlantic coast, menacing the city from the sea. Seeking a leader of skill, drive, and daring, the Common Council asked Commodore Stephen Decatur to organize the city's defense. The councilors, expressing confidence in the commodore's "skill and judgment," committed the city to provide whatever he needed to execute his defensive plans.<sup>1</sup>*

*Appearances led Secretary of the Navy William Jones likewise to expect an attack on the city of New York. Jones, like the Common Council, looked to Decatur to give unity to the preparations for the metropolis's defense, entrusting to him command of all naval forces in New York Harbor. These forces consisted of frigate President, sloop of war Alert, and 37 gunboats, 29 in service and 8 in ordinary, under the command of Captain Jacob Lewis, all manned by some 5,000 sailors and sea fencibles. A steam battery being built by Robert Fulton was not yet ready for service.<sup>2</sup>*

*In late summer, the danger to New York diminished. The feared invasion from the north halted and turned back at Plattsburgh, New York, on 11 September when the U.S. squadron on Lake Champlain decisively defeated the British squadron that was supposed to protect the British army's supply lines. In August, the British fleet moved from the Atlantic into Chesapeake Bay, where it raided communities up and down the waterway. Its raids culminated in the capture of Washington and burning of the capitol on 24 August. British*

*intentions, following their failure to deliver a similar fate to Baltimore, Maryland—having been stopped at the Battle of North Point on 13 September—were unclear to America’s leaders. Considering Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a likely new target for the enemy, Navy Secretary Jones ordered Decatur to prepare to bring President’s crew there if the call came. In reply, Decatur assured the secretary that his men were training to fight as foot soldiers should the need arise.*

1. Allison, Stephen Decatur, pp. 145–47.
2. Tucker, Stephen Decatur, p. 139.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Como. Stephen Decatur }  
 Comm’dg. Naval officer }  
 New-York }

Navy Department  
 August 8th. 1814

Sir,

The powerful force with which our Country is menaced by the enemy, whether it shall be realized or not, calls for the utmost vigilance and exertions to meet the eventual attack, at such points as may present the greatest attractions, by the importance of the position, and value of the objects exposed to his power and cupidity.—

In this point of view New York is decidedly the most prominent; and although its defences are very formidable, and its citizens alert and full of Public spirit, yet it must be admitted the temptations to a powerful foe are very great.—

These considerations evince the necessity of an efficient organization of all our Naval resources and force, in the Harbour of New York, under one head: You are, therefore, charged with the Naval defence of the Harbour and City of New York and will accordingly take upon you the command of the whole of the United States Naval Force, of whatever description, now in that Harbour, whether in service or in ordinary.—

The internal government and command of the Navy Yard will remain with the present commandant<sup>1</sup> as heretofore except that he will be bound by your Requisitions, for service, or work to be performed in the Yard, and for such Stores and Munitions of War as may be under his charge, and not otherwise appropriated by this Department.—

As the combined and harmonious efforts of all are necessary to constitute the best defence, you will freely concert with the U.S. Military commander,<sup>2</sup> the Governor of the State<sup>3</sup> and the Corporate Authorities, all such measures as may require the joint operations of the various Forces, and heartily cooperate in the execution thereof, according to your own judgment and discretion.—

Whilst it is desired to render the Naval Means as efficient as possible, I deem it expedient to apprise you, that the magnitude and extent of the Naval Force and expenditure, from Maine to New-Orleans, and from Champlain to Michigan, have rendered it absolutely necessary to avoid every expense, that is not indispensable to the Public interest and safety; and I repose with confidence, in your

prudence and judgment, in the direction and controul of that which may fall within your command.—

Enclosed are the orders to Captains Evans and Lewis, required by this arrangement.—<sup>4</sup> I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 395–96 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Captain Samuel Evans
2. Major General Morgan Lewis, U.S.A.
3. Daniel D. Tompkins.
4. Jones to Lewis, 9 August 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 396 (M149, Roll No. 11), and, Jones to Evans, 9 August 1814, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 165 (M441, Roll No. 1).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Como. Stephen Decatur }  
Com'dg, Naval Officer }  
New York }

Navy Department  
Sepr. 19th. 1814

Sir,

In the event of the invasion of the Delaware, or information to that effect upon which you can rely, and no immediate danger menacing New York at the time, you are authorized to proceed with the officers and crew of the U.S. Ship *President* to Philadelphia for the defence of that city and of the Delaware while such immediate danger shall exist, leaving Captain Porter<sup>1</sup> in command at New York during your absence or at your discretion you may remain in New York and charge either Captain Porter or Lieut. Babbit<sup>2</sup> with the command of the detachment.—

It is intended to reciprocate this principle of defence and Commodore Rodgers<sup>3</sup> under like circumstances will detach the officers and crew of the *Guerriere* to New York for the defence of that place in the event of its invasion.—

It will be well to make previous arrangements for the transportation of the detachment with the utmost celerity should the necessity occur.— I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 420–21 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Captain David Porter.
2. Lieutenant Fitz Henry Babbit.
3. Commodore John Rodgers.





*Stephen Decatur*

## COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U. S. S. *President*. New York.  
26 Sep 1814.

Sir,

Yours of the—inst.<sup>1</sup> directing in case of any demonstration of the Enemy to make an attack upon Philadelphia, that I shall proceed with the officers & crew of this Ship to that place, I have the honor to acknowledge, and shall obey with alacrity, whensoever I am informed of the probability of such an event.—

It offers me great satisfaction to inform you, that the whole Ships Company have for some weeks past been employed in military exercises, under the command of Capt. Wainwright,<sup>2</sup> of the Marine Corps (who I appointed for that purpose) and that their improvement has been such as to give the strongest assurances of their ability and good conduct, whensoever their service may be required on land.

The Crew constitutes a swell Brigade, and every man shews the greatest cheerfulness and zeal in learning the various duties of his new service – Capt. Wainwright has been considered as Brigade Major, and has performed the duties of such, with great ability and satisfaction, and as his future attentions will be of increased advantage to me, I have to request you will confirm the employment I have assigned him, & instruct him accordingly.<sup>3</sup>— Respectfully yr. Ob Servt.

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 104 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. The dash is in the original. See Jones to Decatur, 19 September 1814, immediately above.

2. Captain Robert D. Wainwright, U.S.M.C.

3. Jones approved Wainwright's assignment. Jones to Decatur, 30 September 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 436 (M149, Roll No. 11).

## *Wasp* Stings Again—Then Disappears

*Johnston Blakeley had many pressing concerns to address once Wasp arrived at L'Orient. Prisoners had to be disposed of, the wounded required care ashore, his ship needed repairs and refitting, and new hands had to be shipped to replace the recently fallen. As the commanding officer of a national warship in a foreign port, Blakeley also had to be concerned with conducting Wasp's activities so as not to offend local authorities or violate international law. In managing these tasks and affairs, Blakeley enjoyed the capable assistance of William H. Crawford, the American minister to France.*

*With Crawford's advice and financial support, Blakeley had Wasp ready for sea again in just over seven weeks, departing L'Orient on 27 August. Morale in the ship was high. One officer reported, "our officers and crew, [are] young and ambitious—they fight with more cheerfulness than they do any other duty."<sup>1</sup> Just five days after getting underway, Wasp fought its second battle with a Royal Navy warship, the brig-sloop Avon. So destructive was Wasp's gunfire during this night action that in 45 minutes Avon was put in a sinking state.*

*Blakeley and his crew were denied the satisfaction of even knowing the name of the ship that had struck to them, as they were driven off by the fire of an approaching British vessel before they could receive Avon's surrender. Wasp's last capture was the brig Atalanta on 22 September. Blakeley sent this valuable prize on to the United States under the command of Midshipman David Geisinger and a crew of nine officers and sailors. Except for one brief sighting 18 days later, Johnston Blakeley and the sloop of war Wasp were never seen again. The following documents trace the final weeks of Wasp's one and only cruise, including its last documented encounter with another vessel.*

1. See *Extract of a Letter from an Officer in Wasp, 23 September 1814, below.*

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY TO  
U.S. MINISTER TO FRANCE WILLIAM H. CRAWFORD

U.S.S. *Wasp*,  
Lorient 9th August 1814

Sir

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 31st. Ulto,<sup>1</sup> and request you to accept my sincere thanks for the advice and information contained in it. The safety of this ship, if it were the only object, would prevent the attempt of an immediate return to the United States; but as I hope and look forward, to be able to effect something more than her mere preservation, I shall continue the cruise until the month of December— I am a little anxious about our departure from this place as I am informed there are three or four cruisers off here, who are seen every day from the tower. The force of the vessels is variously represented. I shall avail myself of the first favourable opportunity to sail, after we are ready, which will be in three or four days. We have met with more delay in obtaining bread than was expected, it is promised to be ready on Saturday (13th)<sup>2</sup> We are getting every thing ready as fast as possible. We have entered fourteen Americans at this place<sup>3</sup> and I would take six or eight more if they could be had, but those now here, to the number of forty I think, are unwilling to enter until they get some prize money which they claim from the *True Blooded Yankee*.<sup>4</sup>

An unpleasant affair has lately taken place here and which has produced the correspondence which I have the honour to enclose you.<sup>5</sup> I did not feel it, as coming within the sphere of my duty to enter into a consideration of the principle involved in this question or even to point out to the Prefe[c]t, the sophistry contained in his communication, I have barely contented myself with stating the facts, or grounds upon which the demand for the man was made, and which also in my opinion justified my refusal to deliver up such of his effects as remained on board.

On Sunday 31st. Ulto. Peter Pero, or as he now calls himself Pierre Perrotte, obtained permission with several men of this crew to go on shore and remain until Monday morning. on the Tuesday afternoon following, he was met in Lorient, by Mr. Reilly, the first lieutenant of this ship and ordered on board which he refused to obey, saying he was on French ground and did not intend joining the vessel again. Mr. Reilly attempted to take him on board, when Pero was rescued



*William Harris Crawford*

by two companions of his when a guard coming up took Pero into the guard house. A demand for him was immediately made by Mr. Ross, at the request of Mr. Reilly when the correspondence now forwarded to you, ensued.<sup>6</sup>

I would very willingly have discharged Pero of my own accord but the fact of his being in debt left me not at liberty to do so; but I never could consent to discharge any man from under my command, at the demand of a foreign power.<sup>7</sup> The correspondence will afford you every information in my possession. I feel confident the stand I have been compelled to take will meet your sanction.

Yesterday I received two more letters from the Prefe[c]t, both under the same cover, which with my answer are enclosed.<sup>8</sup> Solicitous as I am to avoid doing any thing which could give even the shadow of offence to the French Government I could not avoid feeling hurt at their contents. The one relating to the English merchantman, was the least offensive, as he possibly might think it his duty, thus formally to communicate the act of his government, which however is as rule common to all neutrals— But the second requiring to know of me how long I intended to stay and my motive for remaining, was I think not authorized by his duty; this I believe, it was never practised by the American Government towards French national vessels, I am more desirous than any one else possibly can be, to go to sea, yet as we are in port, neither my duty nor my inclination will permit me to leave this, until I prepare this vessel for service in the best manner my means will afford— We may have a fight in less than twenty four hours, after getting out and we may not fall in with any thing to interrupt our cruise, for months. I would be prepared for each and every contingency before we depart from Lorient.

I assure you Sir it is with great reluctance, I intrude on your time and patience, but as you are able to judge of the propriety of these proceedings I have felt it a duty to lay every thing before you.

As we may possibly be prevented by the enemy from leaving this immediately I would feel much obliged to you, if you could prevent any more communications from the French Authorities being directed to me, or if not able to prevent them, will thank you for such instructions as will enable me, while endeavouring to avoid giving offence at the same time to support the dignity of the flag under which I have the honour to hold a command.

With grateful acknowledgements for your attention to our situation and good wishes towards myself officers and crew I have the honour to be Very respectfully Yr. Mot. Obdt. Servt.

J, Blakeley

P.S. It is with regret I have to inform you of the death of the two Midshipmen, Messrs. Langdon and Toscan,<sup>9</sup> occasioned by the wounds received in the action with the *Reindeer*, one man<sup>10</sup> is also dead.

J. B

LS, PHi, Simon Gratz Autograph Collection. Addressed flush left below the post-script: "His Excellency/William H. Crawford/Minister Plenipotentiary/near the French Government."

1. Letter not found.
2. *Wasp* received eight barrels of bread and six barrels of flour on the promised day. DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 13 August 1814.
3. Between the time of *Wasp's* arrival at L'Orient and the date of this letter, 13 men were entered on the American sloop of war's rolls. *Ibid.*, 20, 23, 25, 26, 27 July, and 2, 7 August 1814.
4. An American privateer brig owned and outfitted by a Rhode Islander named Preble, who resided at Paris during the war. Reputed to be a swift sailer, *True Blooded Yankee* operated out of French ports with American crews. For a brief history of this vessel's privateering career, see Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, pp. 275–77.
5. Correspondence not found.
6. Peter Pero was given shore liberty on 31 July along with 69 fellow crewmen. He and Seaman Berent Johnson deserted the following day. On 18 August, Johnson was taken up and jailed; four days later he was returned to the ship. DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 31 July and 1, 22 August 1814.
7. Two men, Seamen William Simmon and John Bennet, were discharged from *Wasp* because they were French nationals. *Ibid.*, 6 August 1814.
8. Correspondence not found.
9. The son of former Continental Navy agent and prominent New Hampshire politician Henry Langdon, Henry Sherburne Langdon was appointed a midshipman on 5 October 1812 with a warrant bearing the date of 18 June. After receiving instruction in navigation at Chaplain Andrew Hunter's naval school, he was ordered to the corvette *Adams*, in which he served through 1813. After a brief furlough due to illness, he returned to duty under Isaac Hull at the Portsmouth Navy Yard. Frank Toscan, a Portsmouth native like Langdon, was appointed a midshipman on 6 November 1812 with a warrant dated 18 June. In May of 1813, he was attached to the gunboat flotilla at Portland. In April of the following year, Hull ordered Toscan, along with Langdon, to serve in *Wasp* in place of two midshipmen who had been removed from that vessel for disciplinary reasons. Toscan and Langdon died of their battle wounds ashore in a hospital at L'Orient, the former on 16 July and the latter on 1 August. For Blakeley's high praise of these two midshipmen, see his letter of 27 August to Secretary Jones, below. See also Isaac Hull to Jones, 23 April 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 168 (M125, Roll No. 35); DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 16 July and 1 August 1814; and Duffy, *Blakeley and the Wasp*, pp. 165–67.
10. Seaman Henry Herbert, who died of his wounds in the French hospital in L'Orient on 20 July 1814. DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 20 July 1814.

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *Wasp*, at Sea off  
Belle Isle, 27th August 1814

Sir

Immediately on the arrival of this Ship at the port of Lorient I had the honour of addressing you and rendering an account of our cruise.

After we were liberated from quarantine a cartel was employed to carry the remainder of the crew of the *Rein Deer* to England together with the crews of the *Regulator* and the *Jenny* captured subsequent to *Rein Deer*.

It having been the first instance of prisoners brought into France since the change of its relations; upon the best reflection I was capable of, I was induced to try the experiment as it would have a tendency to settle the practice on future occasions. What has been the result I have not learned. Their Parole was forwarded to the Minister for the United States at Paris.

It is with sincere sorrow I have to announce to you the decease of Midshipmen Henry L. Langdon and Frank Toscan. They were wounded in the rencontre with the *Rein Deer* and all our efforts to save them after our arrival proved

unavailing. It was their first essay, and altho wounded remained at their posts until the contest terminated. The constancy and courage with which they bore their suffering, leaves to their country the melancholy though proud reflection of what they might have been had Providence ordained otherwise. Every respect due to worth, was shown to their memory.

It is with regret that I have to inform you of the delays we have experienced at this place, but had they been of shorter duration we could not possibly have sailed, as one continued westerly wind has prevailed from the hour of arrival up to the present day.

The course pointed out in your instructions having been interrupted, I shall endeavour to fulfil your further intentions as far as may possibly be in my power.

With great satisfaction I add that every aid and information in the power of Mr. Crawford has been promptly afforded, and that I feel under many obligations to him for his attention and assistance.

We are now off this place with a fair wind, and favourable prospect. I have the honour to be Very respectfully Yr Mot. Obdt Servt

(Signed) J. Blakeley

Copy, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 49 (M124, Roll No. 65).

COMMANDER JAMES ARBUTHNOT, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL HERBERT SAWYER, R.N.

His Majesty's Sloop *Castilian*  
At Sea the 1st. September 1814  
Lattde. 47" 50 N, Longde. 10" 34 W<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

I beg leave to acquaint you for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that at day light this morning (*Castilian* in Company with the *Avon*) I discovered an Enemys Schooner in the rear of the *Kangaroo's* Convoy, to which I immediately gave chase, the *Tartarus* which then appeared — joining in it.— At 4 PM a large sail was discovered on the weather beam standing directly for us. At this period the *Castilian* from her superiority of sailing free had increased her distance considerably and the weather being hazy, she did not see my recall, nor did they hear the report of the many Guns I fired The Stranger closing with us fast, I kept away, and set the Weather studding Sails in hopes of nearing the *Castilian*, or *Tartarus*, the latter of which I had only lost sight of, at 3 P.M. At 7.30 PM the Stranger had approached within hail, and being unable to get a satisfactory answer, I had not a doubt left of her being an Enemys Corvette. At 8.30 he fired a Shot over us, which was instantly returned with a broadside; he then bore up, and endeavoured to rake us, but was prevented. The action then became general within half Pistol Shot, and continued without intermission until 10.30 PM. when having seven feet water in the hold, the magazine drowned, Tiller, Fore Yard, Main boom & every Shroud Shot away and the other standing and the running rigging cut to pieces, the Brig quite unmanageable, and the leak gaining fast on

the Pumps with Forty Killed and wounded, and five of the Starboard Guns dismounted and conceiving farther resistance only would cause a useless Sacrifice of Lives, I was under the painful necessity of ordering the Colours to be struck to the American Corvette *Wasp*, the Main Mast almost immediately after going over the side. It is with pleasure I have to express (although unsuccessful) my entire approbation of the steady and gallant conduct of all the Officers, Seamen, and Marines of His Majesty's Sloop under my Command. engaged in this unequal contest, where all behaved well it is difficult to discriminate, yet I feel it a duty incumbent on me to mention the name of the late First Lieutenant Prendergrast,<sup>2</sup> who I regret to say died the following day, of his wounds. In him the Service has lost an excellent good Officer. Lieutenant Harvey<sup>3</sup> conducted himself much to my Satisfaction and from his able assistance I received every support. I have to thank Mr. Fairweather the Purser for handsomely volunteering his Services on deck.

On the firing ceasing and the smoke clearing away a Sail was discovered astern fast approaching which proved to be the *Castilian*, the Enemy made Sail, not attempting to take possession, and was closely pursued by the *Castilian*, but finding the Brig sinking fast I was obliged by Signal Guns of distress to recall her, at the moment she opened her broadside on the Enemy. I feel greatly indebted to Captain Lloyd<sup>4</sup> of the *Castilian* for his Activity in rejoining me, and sending his boats for the removal of all the Wounded, and remaining part of the Crew. At 1.30 AM the *Avon* Sunk, the last boat with people being then between the vessels on her way onboard. Under the circumstances herein mentioned, I hope their Lordships will consider that His Majestys Sloop was defended as long as possible

I enclose a list<sup>5</sup> of the Killed and Wounded and beg leave to recommend Mr. William Crichton, Acting Surgeon, from whose care and attention, assisted by Mr. George Roe Surgeon of the *Castilian* I am happy to say they are doing well. I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant,

(signed) James Arbuthnot Commander

PS/I had omitted to mention that being short of Officers, I gave Mr. Thomas Evans the Pilot, an order to act as Master of the *Avon*, dating it at 8 PM, his conduct during the Action meritted my highest approbation.

H Sawyer

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/5446, Proceedings of the court-martial of Captain James Arbuthnot and the crew of *Avon*, held at Plymouth, Rear Admiral Josias Rowley, President, 1 October 1815.<sup>6</sup>

1. Approximately 245 nautical miles west-southwest of Brest, France.

2. Lieutenant John Prendergast, R.N.

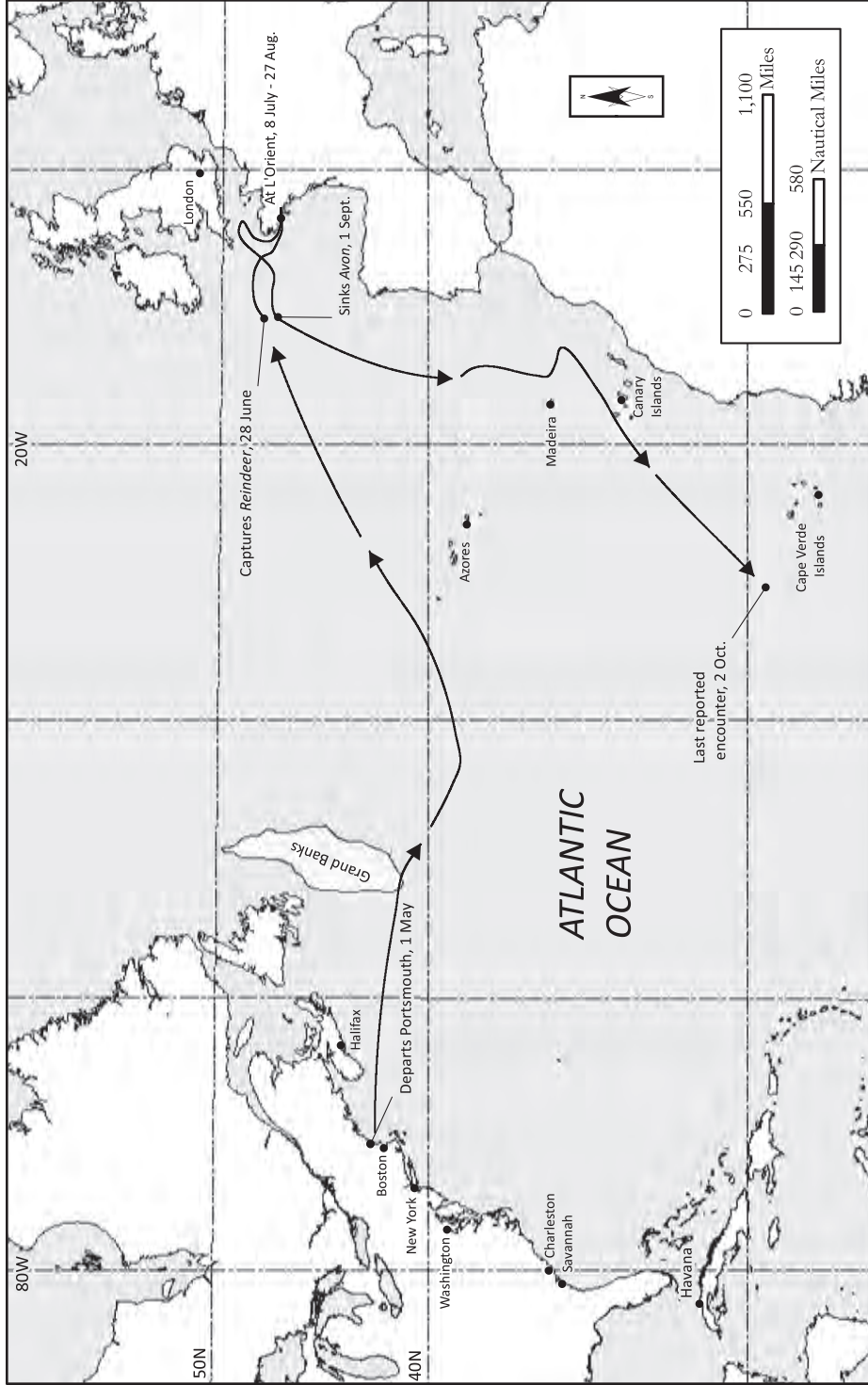
3. Lieutenant John Harvey, R.N. See, Allen, *Battles of the British Navy*, Vol. 2, p. 465.

4. Lieutenant George Lloyd, R.N. Lloyd was promoted to commander on 8 November 1815.

5. List not reproduced. The tally included 7 killed and 33 wounded, including 1 mortally.

6. The court honorably acquitted Arbuthnot, his officers, and crew of all blame in the loss of *Avon*.





Map 14. Wasp's 1 May–2 October 1814 cruise

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *Wasp*, at Sea, 11th Sept. 1814  
Latt 40°. 00 N: Long 16°, 00 W:<sup>1</sup>

Sir

After a protracted and tedious stay at Lorient, I had at last the pleasure of leaving that place on Saturday 27th August. on 30th captured the British brig *Lettice*, Henry Cockbain, master<sup>2</sup> and 31st August the British brig *Bon Accord*, Adam Durno master.<sup>3</sup> In the morning of the 1st. September, discovered a convoy of ten sail to leeward in charge of the *Armada* 74 and a Bomb Ship, stood for them and succeeded in cutting out the British brig *Mary*, John D. Allen, master,<sup>4</sup> laden with brass cannon taken from the Spaniards, iron cannon and military stores, from Gibraltar to England, removed the prisoners, set her on fire and endeavoured to capture another of the convoy but was chased off by the *Armada*.<sup>5</sup> on the evening of the same day, at ½ past 6 while going free, discovered four vessels nearly at the same time, two on the starboard and two on the larboard bow, hauled up for the one most on the starboard bow, being the farthest to windward. At 7 the chase (a Brig)<sup>6</sup> commenced making signals with flags which could not be distinguished for want of light and soon after made various ones with lanterns, rockets and guns. At 26 minutes after 9 having the chase, under our lee bow, the 12 pound carronade was directed to be fired into him, which he returned. Ran under his lee to prevent his escaping and at 29 minutes after 9 commenced the action. At 10 ocl. believing the enemy to be silenced, orders were given to cease firing, when I hailed and asked if he had surrendered no answer being given to this and his fire having recommenced, it was again returned.— At 12 minutes after 10 the enemy having suffered greatly and having made no return to our two last broadsides, I hailed him the second time to know if he had surrendered, when he answered in the affirmative. The guns were then ordered to be secured and the boat lowered to take possession. In the act of lowering the boat, a second brig<sup>7</sup> was discovered, a little distance astern and standing for us, sent the crew to their quarters, prepared every thing for another action and awaited his coming up, at 36 minutes after 10 discovered two more sails astern standing towards us I now felt myself compelled to forego the satisfaction of destroying the prize Our braces having been cut away we Kept off the wind until others could be rove, and with the expectation of drawing the second brig from his companion, but in this last we were disappointed. The second brig continued to approach us until she came close to our stern, when she hauled by the wind, fired her broadside which cut our rigging and sails considerably, and shot away a lower main cross tree and then retraced her steps to join her consorts. When we were necessitated to abandon the prize, he appeared in every respect a total wreck.<sup>8</sup> He continued for some time firing guns of distress until probably relieved by the two last vessels who made their appearance. The second brig could have engaged us if he had thought proper, as he neared us fast, but contented himself with firing a broadside and immediately returned to his companions.

It is with real satisfaction I have again the pleasure of bearing testimony to the merits of Lieuts. Reilly, Tillinghast, Baury, and Sailing master Carr, and to the good conduct of every officer and Man on board the *Wasp*. Their divisions and departments were attended and supplied with the utmost regularity and abundance which with the good order maintained together with the vivacity and precision of their fire reflects on them the greatest credit. Our loss is two Killed, and one slightly wounded with a wad. The hull received four round shot and the fore mast many grape shot. Our rigging and sails suffered a good deal; Every damage has been repaired the day after, with the exception of our sails.

Of the vessel with whom we were engaged, nothing positive can be said, with regard to her name or force. While hailing him previous to his being fired into, it was blowing fresh (then going ten Knots) and the name was not distinctly understood. of her force the four shot which struck us are all thirty two pounds in weight, being a pound and three quarters heavier than any belonging to this vessel. From this circumstance, the number of men in her tops, her general appearance and great length, she is believed to be one of the largest brigs in the British Navy. I have the honour to be Very respectfully Yr. Mot. Obdt. Servt

J. Blakeley

P.S. I am told the Enemy after his surrender asked for assistance and said he was sinking—<sup>9</sup> The probability of this is confirmed by his firing single guns for some time after his capture,

The action took place in Latt. 47°, 30' N: Long. 11° 00 W:<sup>10</sup>

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 84 (M124, Roll No. 65).

1. Approximately 328 nautical miles west-northwest of Lisbon, Portugal.

2. For more details on this prize, see *Captures Made by Wasp, 27 August–22 September 1814*, below. According to Midshipman Geisinger's journal, "the British Brig *Lattice*," was captured at 10:30 P.M. on 30 August 1814. He recorded this event in sea time. See DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 31 August 1814.

3. For more details on this prize, see *Captures Made by Wasp, 27 August–22 September 1814*, below. *Wasp* overhauled *Bon Accord* at 5:30 P.M. on 31 August, scuttling the brig three hours later. Midshipman Geisinger recorded this event in his journal in sea time. See DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 1 September 1814.

4. For more details on this prize, see *Captures Made by Wasp, 27 August–22 September 1814*, below. *Wasp* captured *Mary* at 9:40 A.M. on 1 September. The prize was set on fire within a half hour after capture. See DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 1 September 1814.

5. The 74-gun ship of the line *Armada*, Captain Charles Grant, R.N., commanding.

6. The 18-gun brig-sloop *Avon*, Commander James Arbuthnot, R.N., commanding.

7. The 18-gun brig-sloop *Castilian*, Lieutenant George Lloyd, R.N., commanding. Lloyd was promoted to commander on 8 November 1815.

8. In the opinion of one eyewitness, *Avon* "must have suffered a great deal in her manning as we could distinctly hear the groans and screams of the wounded." See "Extract of a letter from another officer on board *Wasp*, to a gentleman in Savannah," *Commercial Advertiser* (New York), 16 November 1814.

9. According to one of *Wasp's* officers, a voice from *Avon's* deck—presumably its commander James Arbuthnot—declared that his ship "was in a sinking state." See "Extract of a letter from an officer on board *Wasp*, to his friend in Boston," *Boston Patriot*, 19 November 1814.

10. Approximately 267 nautical miles west-southwest of Brest, France.

[Enclosure]

Minutes of the action between the U.S.S. *Wasp*, J. Blakeley Esqr. Commander and His Britannic Majesty's Sloop of War \_\_\_\_\_ on 1st. September 1814. Lat. 47°.,30 N: Long. 11° W:

At 7 o'clock, called all hands to quarters and prepared for action, 7h. 26m. hoisted American Jack at the fore and Pendant at the Main, 7h. 30m. Set the mainsail, 7h. 34m. perceived the chase making signals with lights &c. 7h. 45m. set the mizzen and hoisted an American Ensign at the Peak, 7h. 48m. hoisted a light at the Peak, and brailled up the mizen, 7h. 54m. set the mizen to come up with the chase, 8h. 3m. the chase hauled down his lights, 8h. 7m. burned a blue light on the forecastle, 8h. 17m. set the flying Jib, 8h. 34m. hauled down the light at the Peak, 8h. 38m. the chase fired a gun from his stern port, 8h., 55m. hauled up the mainsail, 9h. 15m. set the mainsail, 9h. 18m. the chase fired a gun to leeward, 9h. 20m. being then on the weather quarter of the chase he hailed and enquired "what ship is that" not answered, but asked "what brig is that" he replied His Majesty's Brig,— blowing fresh the name was not distinctly understood, He again hailed and asked "what ship is that" when he was told to heave to and he would be informed, he repeated his question and was answered to the same effect, Mr. Carr was then sent forward to order him to heave to, which he declined doing, at 9h. 25m the enemy set his fore topmast studdingsail, at 26 minutes after 9 fired the 12 pound carronade to make him heave to; when the enemy commenced action by firing his larboard guns. We then kept away, ran under his lee, at 29 minutes after 9 commenced the action. At 10 o'clock ordered the men to cease firing and hailed the enemy to know if he had surrendered, no answer was returned to this, he resumed his fire and we continued ours, 10h. 10m. manned our starboard guns and fired 4 or 5 of them, when orders were again given to cease firing, 10h. 12m. hailed the enemy "have you surrendered" when they answered in the affirmative— We were on the eve of taking possession when a Sail was descried close on board of us— orders were then given to clear the ship for action, which was promptly executed, we were on the point of wearing to engage the second which we perceived to be a brig of war, when at 26 minutes after 10 discovered two more sails, one astern, the other one point on our lee quarter standing for us. orders were then given to stand from the strange sails. The first sail seen, approached within pistol shot, fired a broadside and cut away one of our lower main cross trees and did other damage, and immediately stood for the other two sails last discovered, continued on a course—.

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 84, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 65).

[Enclosure]

*List of killed and wounded on board the United States' sloop of war, Wasp, Johnston Blakeley, esquire, commander, in the action with his Britannic majesty's sloop of war—, on the 1st September, 1814.*

Killed—Joseph Martin, boatswain;<sup>1</sup> Henry Staples, qr. gunner.

Wounded—James Snellings, seaman, clavicle or collar bone fractured by a wad.

<i>Recapitulation</i> —Killed	2
Wounded	$\frac{1}{1}$
Total	3

(Signed)

WM. M. CLARKE, *Surgeon*.

Printed, *Niles' Weekly Register*, 26 November 1814, p. 192. *Wasp's* "List of Killed & wounded" is one of two enclosures recorded in the docketing on Blakeley's letter. As the original of this document was not found, a contemporary printed version was substituted.

1. Joseph Martin was warranted a boatswain on 2 February 1799. For details of his naval career, see Duffy, *Blakeley and the Wasp*, p. 188.

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *Wasp*, Porto Santo West 30 Miles<sup>1</sup>  
22d. September 1814

Sir

I have the honour to inform you that I yesterday captured the British Brig *Atalanta* with a cargo said and appearing to be French property. Altho there is not a doubt in my own mind of the cargo being really English property yet possessing only presumptive proof I did not feel authorized to destroy vessel and cargo the course pursued with all others, I therefore am constrained to send her to the United States. The *Atalanta* was formerly the American schooner *Siro* and sails remarkably fast and with care may be carried in.<sup>2</sup>

Since I had the honour of addressing you on 11th Inst.<sup>3</sup> we have captured the British Brigs *Three Brothers* and *Bacchus*.<sup>4</sup> I have the honour to be Very respectfully  
Yr Mot. Obdt. Servt

J. Blakeley

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 101 (M124, Roll No. 65).

1. The coordinates of 32° 22' north latitude and 13° 44' west longitude entered on the dateline of Blakeley's letter of this same date to David Geisinger, place the island of Porto Santo approximately 138 nautical miles west northwest of *Wasp's* position, not 30 miles west.

2. For more details on this prize, see *Captures Made by Wasp*, 27 August–22 September 1814, below. See also DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 21 September 1814, and, Geisinger to Jones, 4 November 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 3 (M148, Roll No. 13). On the career of the Baltimore-built letter of marque schooner *Siro*, consult Garitee, *Republic's Private Navy*, p. 280, and Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. 475.

3. See Blakeley to Jones, 11 September 1814, above.

4. *Wasp* captured *Three Brothers* at 4 P.M. on 12 September. The American warship kept its prize in tow until 1:30 P.M. the following day, when Blakeley ordered it scuttled. *Wasp* overhauled *Bacchus* at 8:30 A.M. on 14 September. The brig was scuttled later that day at 2:15 P.M. For more details on these two prizes, see *Captures Made by Wasp*, 27 August–22 September 1814, below. See also DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 13–15 September 1814.



*Johnston Blakeley*

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHNSTON BLAKELEY TO  
MIDSHIPMAN DAVID GEISINGER

U.S.S. *Wasp*, at Sea, 22d Sepr 1814  
Lat 32°.20' N. Long. 13°.44' W.<sup>1</sup>

Sir

You will herewith take charge of the British Brig *Atalanta*, captured by this ship and proceed to the United States of America with all possible expedition. It is my orders that you in the first place endeavour to get into Savannah (Georgia), should however a force be off that port you will try for Charleston S.C., if frustrated in this attempt use your exertions to enter Wilmington N.C. Should you also fail here you must endeavour to make any other port in the United States. Believing as I do that the route pointed out to you is the one most likely to insure success I have done so, but yet almost every thing must be left to your own discretion.

It is my positive orders that you keep a look out on the top gallant yard from day light until dark and that during the night a strict and careful look out be kept, and that immediately on any sail being discovered no matter what her appearance may be, that you avoid her by all the means in your power. The time of your arrival is of little interest compared with your getting in safely. The vessel is, undoubtedly British and but very few suspicions are entertained of her cargo being of the same character. Upon your arrival in any port of the United States you will deposit in the hands of the district attorney for the United States all the papers entrusted to your care belonging to the *Atalanta* and give him every information you may possess relative to her.

Accompanying this is a letter which I wish you to deliver to the gentleman<sup>2</sup> named below accordingly as you may arrive who I am sure will give you every assistance.

From the sailing of the vessel entrusted to your charge there can be but little fear of your safe arrival if proper caution and diligence be observed, Speak nothing, avoid every thing and bear in mind that a safe arrival is the only consideration. time and place are secondary matters. Wishing you as I firmly believe you will have a speedy and a safe passage and relying confidently on your care and attention. I am Respectfully Yr. Obdt. Servt.

J. Blakeley  
commanding USS *Wasp*

P.S. Immediately on your arrival you will report your arrival it to the Honble. the Secretary of the Navy, and place yourself, Mr. Bonneville<sup>3</sup> and crew under the orders of the officer of the Navy nearest to you.<sup>4</sup>

J.B.

LS, MdAN.

1. These coordinates place *Wasp* approximately 138 nautical miles east-southeast of Porto Santo Island.

2. Possibly Abner Woodruff, who Blakeley asked to serve as *Wasp's* prize agent in charge of the disposal of *Atalanta*. See Hazan Kimball to Abner Woodruff, 5 November 1814, DNA, RG45, Subject File, Box 740.

3. Midshipman Thomas Nicholas Bonneville was appointed a midshipman on 10 April 1812 with a warrant bearing the date of 1 January. He proved to be a particularly ill-disciplined and disruptive member of *Wasp's* wardroom. "Scarcely a day has passed," reported Blakeley, "without a report of him from some officer." Unable "to reclaim" Bonneville to his duty, an exasperated Blakeley ordered the wayward midshipman home in *Atalanta*. See Blakeley to Jones, 22 September 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 102 (M124, Roll No. 65). For more on Bonneville's background, see Duffy, *Blakeley and the Wasp*, pp. 162–65.

4. Geisinger reported his arrival at Savannah, Georgia, to Secretary Jones on 4 November 1814. Geisinger to Jones, 4 November 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 3 (M148, Roll No. 13). The names of the ten officers and sailors who served as *Atalanta's* prize crew are listed in DLC, David Geisinger Journal, 23 September 1814.

#### EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM AN OFFICER IN *WASP*

United States' sloop *Wasp*, at Sea,  
September 23, 1814.

"There are but few disappointments in life without their attendant benefits, and but few pains unaccompanied by pleasure.

"Yesterday I fully believed and expected to have been deprived of the pleasure of writing a single line by this opportunity, other than our public service; but a disappointment has detained the *Atalanta* longer than was expected, and I am indebted to that circumstance for the time I now indulge in writing to friends.

Capt. Blakely, I believe, sends official accounts up to this date, doubtless for publication—to his letters, therefore, I refer you for nice and correct particulars regarding our cruise—several of my messmates send particular statements, extracts from which will no doubt be published, and will reach you through the common channel of news.<sup>1</sup>

The *Wasp* has been one of the most successful cruisers out of the United States. She has been the favorite of Fortune, and we offer thanksgiving to divine Providence for its support and protection.

She has been three months and five days at sea, with a complement of 172 men, whose ages average only twenty three years—the greatest part so *green*, that is, so unaccustomed to the sea, that they were sea-sick for a week. In that time however she has destroyed twelve British merchant vessels and their cargoes, the whole value of which, I presume was not less than *two hundred thousand pound sterling*—the thirteenth merchantman we are now dispatching for the United States—she is the first we have attempted to send in, but being an uncommon fast sailer, we have great hopes of her safe arrival; and, for my part, with judicious management I have no doubt of it—she is a very beautiful brig of 254 tons, coppered to the bends and copper fastened, and has a very valuable cargo on board, consisting of brandy, wines, cambrics,<sup>2</sup> &c. She was from Liverpool to Bordeaux, thence to Pensacola

Besides these merchant vessels, we have whipped two of his Britannic Majesty's sloops of war, and, comparatively speaking, have lost nothing.—Our first engagement was with the *Reindeer* of 21 guns which we whipped in 19 minutes: our loss was four killed and 22 wounded—the enemy's loss 25 killed and 42 wounded; the greater part considered mortal.<sup>3</sup> The *Reindeer* was completely shattered to pieces—we fought her in a perfect calm, but her foremast fell over the side the



moment a light breeze sprung up Our principal (and in fact *only*) damage was a shot in our foremast, which obliged us to go into port to get it properly fished.

Our second engagement took place between 9 and 10 at night. and lasted 46 minutes, when the enemy, we believe, sunk. We lost but two men killed and one slightly wounded. Mr. Stewart<sup>1</sup> was on board of us at the time, and will inform you of particulars

The *Wasp* is a beautiful ship, and the finest sea-boat, I believe, in the world: our officers and crew young & ambitious—they fight with more cheerfulness than they do any other duty. Captain Blakely is a brave and discreet officer—as cool and collected in action as at table.

The *Atalanta* is this moment ordered to proceed; and Mr. Stewart waits my elbow for this—Adieu.

Printed, *American Mercury* (Hartford, Connecticut), 22 November 1814.

1. American newspapers published at least three other letters penned by *Wasp*'s officers on this date. See extract of a letter from Midshipman William B. Randolph, 23 September 1814, below; "Extract of a letter from an officer on board *Wasp* to his friend in Boston," *Boston Patriot*, 19 November 1814; and "Extract of a letter from another officer on board *Wasp* to a gentleman in Savannah," *Commercial Advertiser* (New York), 16 November 1814.

2. A lightweight, closely woven white linen or cotton fabric.

3. On casualty figures for *Wasp*'s engagement with *Reindeer*, see p. 228, note 8.

4. Robert R. Stewart of Philadelphia, who sailed as a passenger in *Wasp* on its departure from L'Orient. He returned to the United States by way of the prize ship *Atalanta* and carried Blakeley's official dispatches to Washington. Stewart later moved to Trinidad, Cuba, where he served as an American consul. See Geisinger to Jones, 4 November 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 3 (M148, Roll No. 13), and Clay, *Papers*, Vol. 5, pp. 97 and 191.

#### EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MIDSHIPMAN WILLIAM B. RANDOLPH<sup>1</sup>

United States Sloop of War *Wasp*, }  
off Madeira, Sept. 23, 1814. }

"By our prize the *Atalanta*, I give you a short statement of our success on the 21st inst. At meridian, the man at the mast head called out a sail on the weather beam, standing before the wind—at half past M. made out the sail to be a brig—cleared for action—the sail hoisted English colours, we hoisted an English ensign and pendant. The sail stood off—gave chase, overtook her at 5 p.m. and boarded her—she proved to be the *Atalanta*, from Bordeaux, bound to Pensacola, cargo, brandy, wine, silks, and various other articles. Should she get in I shall do well, as this is the fifth prize we have taken.

"I will now give you an account of our two battles. On the 28th of June, at 4 a.m. discovered a sail on our weather beam, wind being very light, could not make out what she was until 9 a.m.—then found her to be a brig with all sail set, standing down for us. The wind being light we waited for her, and at 15 minutes before 3, in stone's throw, with 3 hearty cheers we commenced the action, the enemy having given us five guns. Keep cool, my lads, look along the side sights and don't fire too high, were our Captain's orders. We obeyed them—in 19 minutes the enemy was a wreck—she wore round our bows, and fell on board our larboard

quarter, when she attempted to board—we drove them back, and boarded her. It must appear almost incredible, that the *Reindeer*, an 18 gun sloop of war, of our own rate, could be taken in so short a time, with the loss of 30 killed, and 40 wounded—our loss was 5 killed, and 19 wounded.

“On the 1st of September, at day-light, we discovered 13 sail, under convoy of the *Amada* 74<sup>2</sup>—stood for them, and being to windward, came up with the windward vessels very fast—at 7 overhauled a sloop with a brig in tow—she cast off the brig and steered for the 74—tacked and stood after us for two hours, but finding we out sailed her, she gave up the chase and returned to her convoy. At 5 p.m. discovered 3 sail, one on our weather bow, and 2 to leeward—gave chase to the one to windward, and at half past 7, came up with her. Signals by blue lights, sky rockets and lanterns were made on both sides, but did not answer each other.— We hailed, what brig is that? They hailed, what ship is that? The Captain called out, to heave to, and I will send my boat on board.” The enemy answered, “I’ll see you damned.” Our Captain observed, she is one of His Majesty’s brigs, and we shall soon know. We fired our gun on the forecastle, which she immediately returned off her poop—bore away under her lee and commenced the action. In 46 minutes after the engagement commenced, she struck, being a complete wreck—hailed and asked what brig it was? It is the opinion of many they said she is the *Borer*.\* Just as we were in the act of lowering the boat down, we saw a sail close in our weather quarter, and soon after discovered her to be one of the three sail we saw before sunset—prepared ship for action, when the enemy luffed up and gave us his broadside, and stood for the brig we had just flogged, who was firing signal guns of distress—it is our opinion that she must have gone down, and had not the third man of war have come up, we should have taken another one. A fight like this at night is the most awful sight—to see our ship, appeared to be a stream of fire for 46 minutes; during that time, the shot expended appears almost incredible. Our loss was very trifling. Our boatswain and quarter gunner were the only two killed, and two slightly wounded. The *Wasp* was not the least injured in her hull. As to this last brig’s force, she is rather superior to us—his shot were weighed—two were picked out of our ship, and were 1¾ lbs. heavier than ours. With respect to myself I am hearty and well.

\*The British account states her to be the *Avon*.

Printed, *Salem (Massachusetts) Gazette*, 29 November 1814. This letter was printed under the banner: “BY THE MAILS./ VIRG. RICHMOND, NOV. 19./ Extract of a letter from Randolph, Midshipman, dated.”

1. William Byrd Randolph was appointed a midshipman on 14 April 1812 with his warrant antedated to 1 January. He was ordered to the frigate *Chesapeake* on 18 August 1812, in which he served until its capture by H.M.S. *Shannon* on 1 June 1813. Upon his exchange as a prisoner of war, Randolph was directed to report for duty to Commodore William Bainbridge, who attached him to *Wasp*. See Jones to Randolph, 18 December 1813, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, p. 89 (T829, Roll No. 382), and, Bainbridge to Jones, 5 January 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 12 and enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34). For Randolph’s background and early naval service, see Duffy, *Blakeley and the Wasp*, p. 167.

2. The 74-gun ship of the line *Armada*.

CAPTURES MADE BY *WASP*, 27 AUGUST–22 SEPTEMBER 1814

[Washington, D.C., 23 November 1814]

August 30, brig *Letlice*, Hy. Cockbain master, Joseph Tickell owner, 7 men, 90 tons, laden with barley, belonging to Workingham, from Bayonne, 18 days out, bound to Liverpool, taken in lat. 48 deg. N. long. 7 deg. 44 min. W.<sup>1</sup> scuttled her.

August 31, brig *Bon Accord*, Adam Durno master, John Saunders, Jas. Mitchell and Jas. Johnston owners, 7 men, 131 58-94 tons, laden with wool and wine, belonging to Aberdeen, from Seville, 21 days out, bound to London, taken in lat. 48 deg. 5 min. N. long. 8 deg. 50 m. W.<sup>2</sup> scuttled her.

Sept. 1, brig *Mary*, John D. Allan master, 10 men, 151 tons, 2 12 pound caronades, laden with ordnance and military stores, belonging to *Scarborough*,<sup>3</sup> from Gibraltar, 28 days out, bound to Plymouth, taken in lat. 48. N. long. 10 deg. W.<sup>4</sup> burnt her.

Sept. 12th, brig *Three Brothers*, Thos. Clark master, John Clark owner, 7 men, 114 43-94 tons, 2 3-pounders, laden with wine and barrilla, belonging to Whitby, from Lanazrote, 16 days out, bound to London, taken in lat. 38 deg. 2 min. N. long. 14 deg. 58 min. W.<sup>5</sup> scuttled her.

Sept. 14th, brig *Bacchus*, Wm. Stickens master, Richard W. Sleat and Thos. Read owners, 11 men, 169 29-94 tons, 2 4-pounders, laden with fish, belonging to Poole, from Newfoundland, 24 days out, bound to Gibraltar, taken in lat. 37 deg. 22 m. N. long. 14 deg. 33 min. W.<sup>6</sup> scuttled her.

Sept. 21st, brig *Atalanta*. Robert Jackson master, George Salkeld, Thomas Barclay, and George Barclay owners, 19 men, 252 tons, 2 long nine-pounders and 6 9-pound gunnades, laden with wine, brandy and silks, belonging to Liverpool, from Bordeaux, 9 days out, bound to Pensacola, taken in lat. 33 deg. 12 min. N. long. 14 deg. 56 min. W.<sup>7</sup> sent her to the U. States.

Printed, *Daily National Intelligencer*, 23 November 1814. The entries for these six captures were published as two separate, consecutive-running lists. The first three ships were grouped under the heading “A list of British vessels captured by the U.S.S. *Wasp*, J. Blakeley, Esq. Commander, between 27th August and 10th September, 1814.” The remaining three were grouped under a like heading for the period 11–22 September. For clarity’s sake, the headings have been eliminated.

1. Approximately 131 nautical miles west southwest of Brest.
2. Approximately 174 nautical miles west southwest of Brest.
3. Probably H.M.S. *Scarborough*, a 74-gun ship of the line.
4. Approximately 221 nautical miles west southwest of Brest.
5. Approximately 278 nautical miles west southwest of Lisbon, Portugal.
6. Approximately 269 nautical miles west southwest of Lisbon, Portugal.
7. Approximately 95 nautical miles northeast of Caniçal, Madeira.

JOURNAL KEPT ON BOARD THE SWEDISH BRIG *ADONIS*

[22 August–9 October 1814]

*Extracts from the Journal kept on board the Swedish brig Adonis,<sup>1</sup> during a voyage from Rio de Janeiro, towards Falmouth, in the year 1814.*

August 22—Left Rio de Janeiro. Stephen Decatur McKnight, and James Lyman, passengers for England.<sup>2</sup>

Oct. 9—In lat. 18° 35' north, long. 30° 10' west,<sup>3</sup> sea account, at 8 o'clock in the morning discovered a strange sail giving chase to us, and fired several guns; she gaining very fast. At half past 10 o'clock hove to, and was boarded by an officer dressed in an English doctor's uniform, the vessel also hoisted English ensign. The officer proceeded to examine my ship's papers, &c. &c., likewise the letter-bags, and took from one of them a letter to the victualling office, London. Finding I had two American officers as passengers, he immediately left the ship, and went on board the sloop of war; he shortly after returned, took the American gentlemen with him, and went a second time on board the sloop. In about half an hour he returned again with Messrs. McKnight and Lyman, and they informed me that the vessel was the United States sloop of war, the *Wasp*, commanded by Captain Bleaky, or Blake, last from France, where she had refitted; had lately sunk the *Reindeer*, English sloop of war, and another vessel<sup>4</sup> which sunk without their being able to save a single person, or learn the vessel's name—that Messrs. McKnight and Lyman had now determined to leave me and go on board the *Wasp*—paid me their passage in dollars at 5s. 9d. and having taken their luggage on board the *Wasp*, they made sail to the southward.<sup>5</sup> Shortly after they had left, I found that Lieut. McKnight had left his writing desk behind; and I immediately made signal for the *Wasp* to return, and stood towards her; they, observing my signals, stood back, came along side, and sent their boat aboard for the writing desk, after which they sent me a log-line and some other presents, and made all sail in direction for the line; and, I have reason to suppose, for the convoy that passed on Thursday previous.

Printed, Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 558–59.

1. *Adonis*'s master was John Gabriel Mollen, who later served as Swedish vice consul at Dartmouth, England. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 556–58.

2. Lieutenant Stephen Decatur McKnight and Midshipman James R. Lyman of U.S.S. *Essex*. The American frigate was captured at Valparaiso, Chile, on 28 March 1814 by Royal Navy warships *Phoebe* and *Cherub*. Both officers were en route to England to give affidavits in the condemnation of *Essex* in British admiralty court. McKnight was the nephew of Commodore Stephen Decatur, who initiated a State Department inquiry into the disappearance of his relation. See *ibid.*, pp. 555–56, 562–67; and U.S. Department of State, *Miscellaneous Letters Received*, p. 106.

3. These coordinates place *Adonis* and *Wasp* approximately 301 miles west northwest of Ponta do Sol, Santo Antão, the westernmost island of the Cape Verde archipelago.

4. H.M. brig-sloop *Avon*.

5. A southwestward track would have put *Wasp* on a course for Cayenne, Berbice, and Demerara, on the northeast coast of South America, a cruising ground recommended to Blakeley by Secretary Jones. See above, pp. 220–21.

## The British Attack on Stonington, Connecticut

*Upon receiving intelligence that the townspeople of Stonington, Connecticut, were aiding in the use of torpedoes against the British squadron stationed off New London, Rear Admiral Henry Hotham designated the residents of that community for special chastisement. Hotham's desire to punish Stonington accorded with Vice Admiral Cochrane's recently issued directive "to destroy & lay waste such Towns and Districts upon the [American] Coast" assailable by the fleet.<sup>1</sup> Hotham assigned Sir Thomas M. Hardy to carry out the Stonington assault. The *Trafalgar* hero and his four-ship squadron anchored in the waters off Stonington on the afternoon of 9 August. Hardy soon found that the Connecticut port was no easy conquest. Over the next four days, local and state militia forces put up a spirited defense, turning back successive enemy boat attacks while enduring a daily barrage of rockets, cannon, and mortar shells. Discouraged by the stubborn American resistance, Hardy withdrew his squadron on 12 August, leaving many of Stonington's buildings damaged but the spirits of its citizens intact.<sup>2</sup>*

1. See Cochrane to Commanding Officers of the North American Station, 18 July 1814, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 140. For Cochrane's justification of this retaliatory policy offered to Secretary of State Monroe, see pp. 471 and 474–75.

2. For a modern treatment of this event, see De Kay, *Battle of Stonington*. For additional published documents, see Murdoch, "The Stonington Raid."

REAR ADMIRAL HENRY HOTHAM, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No 6.

*Superb*, off Gardiner's  
Island, 13th. August 1814.

Sir,

His Majesty's Ship *Ramillies* and the *Terror* Bomb having joined me at this Anchorage on the 7th. Instant, and being informed by the Officers who had commanded here, that the Town of Stonington has been conspicuous for preparing and harboring Torpedoes, and giving assistance to the insidious attempt of the Enemy at the destruction of His Majesty's Ships employed off New London, it appeared to be more deserving of the visitation prescribed in your Order of the 18th. Ultimo,<sup>1</sup> than any other place on this part of the Coast assailable by a Naval Force; and I was glad to avail myself of the ability and local experience of Captain Sir Thomas Hardy, and of the suitable means which the *Terror* afforded, of commencing the operation of those instructions, on the Town of Stonington (in the state of Connecticut): and for those objects I ventured to detain the *Ramillies* and the Bomb Ship, to carry it into effect; seeing they had completed the Service they had been employed on, and had no other duty to perform but to re-join your Flag; which I hope you may approve.—

I therefore directed Sir Thomas Hardy on the 8th. Instant, to take the direction of such an attack on that Town, with the Ships & Vessels named in margin,<sup>2</sup> with a view of destroying it by their fire, as he might find practicable, conformably to your Order alluded to; and enclosed I have the honor to transmit to you an extract of his report of the execution of it, with a return of the Casualties onboard the *Dispatch* on the occasion.—<sup>3</sup>



The YANKEY TORPEDO.

E. & J. Tegg

The destruction of the Town has not been as complete as could have been wished; but the damage has been great, and sufficient to answer the ends of distressing and harrasing the Enemy: and altho' I lament there should have been any loss of men in His Majesty's Ships, I am happy to report no other than the *Dispatch* suffered any, nor received any injury. I have the honor to be Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

Henry Hotham  
Commodore

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fols. 24–25. A signed duplicate of this letter is in UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fols. 5–6.

1. Cochrane to Commanding Officers of the North American Station, 18 July 1814, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 140.

2. Listed in a column in the left-hand margin: 74-gun ship of the line *Ramillies*, frigate *Pactolus*, brig-sloop *Dispatch*, and bomb ship *Terror*.

3. The extract of Hardy's report and the return of *Terror's* casualties follow on fols. 26–28. The original of Hardy's report is reproduced below.

[Enclosure]

*Ramillies* off Stonington,  
12th. August 1814.

Sir,

Agreeable to your Orders of the 8th. Instant, I proceeded with His Majesty's Ships named in the Margin<sup>1</sup> to make an attack on the Town of Stonington, and on the Evening of the 9th.—many Shells and Rockets were thrown into it,—without any apperent effect— The next morning I directed the Captains of the *Pactolus* and *Dispatch* to Anchor as near as possible to the Town,— in endeavouring to do so the former Ship took the Ground for a short time, and was thereby prevented supporting the *Dispatch* most gallantly Anchored within pistol Shot of the Battery, from which the Enemy kept up a fire so well directed from Two, 18 pounders I judged it right to recall her— I am sorry to add, not until she had suffered the loss of 2 Men killed, and 12 wounded—and I beg most strongly to express my approbation of Captain Galloway's Conduct, as well as that of his Officers and Crew, (more particularly described in his letter to me inclosed herewith.)—

on the Evening of the 11th.—I directed Captain Sherridan to throw a few more Shells and Carcases into the Town, which not setting the Houses on fire as expected, I this morning anchored the *Ramillies*, and *Pactolus* as near as we could place them to the Shore, from the Shallowness of the Water, and both Ships fired several broad sides at the Town, which was very much damaged, altho' from the Houses being constructed of Wood, none were seen to fall— The Enemy, on commencing our fire, withdrew the Guns from the Battery and retired outside the Town, where, were assembled 3000 Militia, under the Command of General Isham, I therefore did not think proper to contain any further operations against this place, but shall proceed in further execution of your Orders—

I feel particularly obliged to Captain the Honble F Aylmer for his zeal and assistance on this Service; and also to Captain Sherridan and his Officers for the Steady—manner in which the Mortars were fired.— I have the honor to be Sir, Your most obedient humble servant

T. M. Hardy Captain

To Rear Admiral

The Honble Henry Hotham & & &.

LS, Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2). For other copies of this document, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fols. 26–27, and, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fols. 6–7.

1. Listed in a column in the left-hand margin: *Ramillies*, *Pactolus*, *Dispatch*, and *Terror*.

[Enclosure]

His Majestys Sloop *Dispatch*  
off Stonington 10th. August 1814

Sir

I have the Honor to enclose for your information, a return of the Killed and Wounded,<sup>1</sup> on board His Majestys Sloop *Dispatch* under my command, this morning at the attack of Stonington; you being an eye witness during the time we were engaged render it unnecessary for me to make any observations, but feel it my duty to particularly mention the determined spirit that animated the Officers and Crew of the *Dispatch*, who really felt disappointed when ordered to cease firing, which was painful to myself while I saw the Enemy's flag flying, but the considerations of saving brave mens lives for more important Services, compelled me to haul off, our rigging, Sails, and Yards are considerably cut up two Guns disabled with many shot in our Hull, one in the water line; the Enemy had but few guns, with a good Breast work, and we within Musket Shot, they soon found the range to do most effectual execution, two shot were in many Guns, accompanied with grape

I must now Sir in justice to the Officers beg leave to particularly mention Mr. Barker, 1st. Lieutenant, and Acting Lieut. Hopkins. they Volunteered to land with the Crew and burn the town; the Steady and cool Conduct of Mr. Black, Master, who particularly attended to the Veering and hauling off the Spring, with this general Studious attention to his profession, induces me to strongly recommend him to a larger rate, he having passed for one, Mr. Duncan, Masters Mate, will make a most gallant Officer, he unfortunately has not Served his time for promotion

I have said more than the circumstance probably require, but when Gallant conduct comes under my eye, I feel it my duty to mention it to my Superiors I have the Honor to be Sir Your Most Obedient humble Servant

J<sup>s</sup> Galloway  
Commander

To Sir Thomas M Hardy, Bart  
Captain of H M ship *Ramillies*  
&— &— &—

LS, Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2).

1. Not reproduced here. Galloway's casualty report listed 2 killed and 12 wounded, 3 dangerously so. For other copies of this document, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fol. 28, and, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fol. 8.



MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM WILLIAMS, CONNECTICUT STATE MILITIA, TO  
GOVERNOR JOHN C. SMITH

NEW LONDON 15 Aug. 1814

*Sir*

I was honored with your Excellencys Letter<sup>1</sup> in reply to mine of the 10th. inst,<sup>2</sup> by return of the Express. on the morning of the 12th. and I am happy that my conduct meets your approbation

I last evening in consequence of a farther requisition from Gen Cushing a Copy of which is enclosed,<sup>3</sup> ordered into service the Thirty third Regiment, to be stationed at niantic River Rope Ferry Bridge— The Thirtieth Regt. is now stationed at Stonington. The Eighth at Packers Ferry, Mystic River. The Twentieth at Groton and the Third at this place— It is hoped that by this arrangement, we shall be able to prevent those incursions, which the Enemy seems disposed to make and at the same time such is the position of the Troops, that a respectable force could soon be collected at any point if necessary. The several Regiments being at short distances from each other. I have also ordered out the Cavalry required by Gen Cushing

I enclose to your Excellency the Copy of a Communication received from Cap Biddle to which I beg your Excellencys attention— it may be expedient to station the number of men therein mentioned in or near the Frigates—<sup>4</sup>

The attack mentioned in my letter of the 10th. continued untill about 10 Oclock of that morning during which period, many congreve Rockets and Shells were thrown, which mostly went over the town. at the same time a heavy cannonading was kept up by the Gun Brig<sup>5</sup> with 32 pound Carronades and within three fourths of a mile of the shore by which many of the Buildings were much injured, and a few men slightly wounded, but no lives lost, except of two horses— When the Ships first appeared off Stonington, An Officer landed with a message from Sir Thos. Hardy commanding, saying, That he gave them one Hour to remove their Wives & children after which he should destroy the Town— there were two Eighteens and one Six pounder, at the point, which were manned by some Volunteers, supported by the militia when they assembled— these Guns were so well served, that the Gun Brig received considerable injury in her hull and rigging, two Guns are said to have been dismounted and many men to have been killed or wounded— she was compelled to haul off, when the first action ceased— when the Vessel mentioned in my last as a Frigate,<sup>6</sup> and the *Ramilies* Seventy four, both approached nearer the Town— In the course of the day two of the Citizens unauthorised by Gen Isham went with a Flag on board the *Ramilies*, and returned with a writing from Sir Thomas, saying, That as the Inhabitants said they never had been concerned in Torpedoes, and never would be, and as they promised that Mrs. Stewart & family (the wife of the late Consul at New London) should be brought off to him by 9 Oclock AM. of the next day he would spare the town altho' his orders were to destroy it— To this no reply was given. at 9 A M of the 11th. another message was received, giving untill 12 Oclock on that day, to bring off Mrs. Stewart and family or the firing should recommence and at about 2 P M of the 11th. the attack was renewed from the whole squadron, which had been joined by another Gun Brig and continued untill some time in the Evening, with

no greater effect than before— The Vessels lay so far off that the Guns on the point could not reach them One or two houses were fired by the Rockets thrown from the Boats and the Shells from the Bomb ketch called in my last a sloop of war— but were immediately extinguished, and in the course of the 12th. and 13th. The Ships hauled off from before Stonington, and moved to the Westward, and are now at anchor at the Entrance of Fishers Island sound— What the object of the Enemy could have been in the affair it is difficult to conjecture— it is said by some to have been stated by Sir Thomas to be intended to deter us from using Torpedoes—but none are known to have ever proceeded from Stonington. Mrs. Stewart could not have been the object, as permission, for her departure has been asked from the department of State, and is not yet refused. But as the force on the Station has not diminished, perhaps rather increased since my last as we now count Ten Vessels of war, four or five smaller Vessels supposed to be prizes— it is to be feared, that a harassing petty war is intended to be kept up along our shore—even if no expedition of greater consequence is undertaken— Captn. Hotham now commands Three at least of the Vessels which came out last are from Bermuda—

It is truly surprising, that so little injury has been done by so powerful a squadron and that no lives should have been lost when so many were much exposed—as the Breastworks to the Batteries were very slight, and the shot and shells were flying in every direction— from the result we shall derive a proper Confidence in the means of defence which our own exertions can afford us and Our Enemy will learn a proper respect for our Courage and resolution I have the honor to be with great respect Your Excellencys very obedt. Servant

WM WILLIAMS Majr. General

Printed, *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society*, Vol. 31, pp. 190–92.

1. Smith to Williams, 11 August 1814, *ibid.*, Vol. 27, pp. 194–95.

2. Williams to Smith, 10 August 1814, *ibid.*, pp. 192–93.

3. Thomas H. Cushing to Williams, 14 August 1814, *ibid.*, Vol. 31, p. 193.

4. Biddle to Williams, 14 August 1814, *ibid.*, pp. 192–93. In this letter, Master Commandant James Biddle asked Williams to provide 200 militiamen to be stationed as a guard aboard the dismantled frigates *United States* and *Macedonian*, then lying in the Thames River above New London.

5. H.M. brig-sloop *Dispatch*.

6. H.M. frigate *Pactolus*.

## NEWS ACCOUNT OF THE BRITISH ATTACK ON STONINGTON, CONNECTICUT

NEW-LONDON:

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 1814.

RECORD OF THE EXTRAORDINARY

### Attack on Stonington.

On Tuesday on the 9th instant, at 5 P.M. the *Ramilies* 74, *Pactolus* 38, a bomb ship,<sup>1</sup> and the *Dispatch* a 22 gun-brig arrived off Stonington, and a flag was sent on shore with the following Note:

*On board his Majesty's ship  
Ramilies, off Stonington,  
Aug. 9, 1814.* }

TO THE MAGISTRATES OF STONINGTON

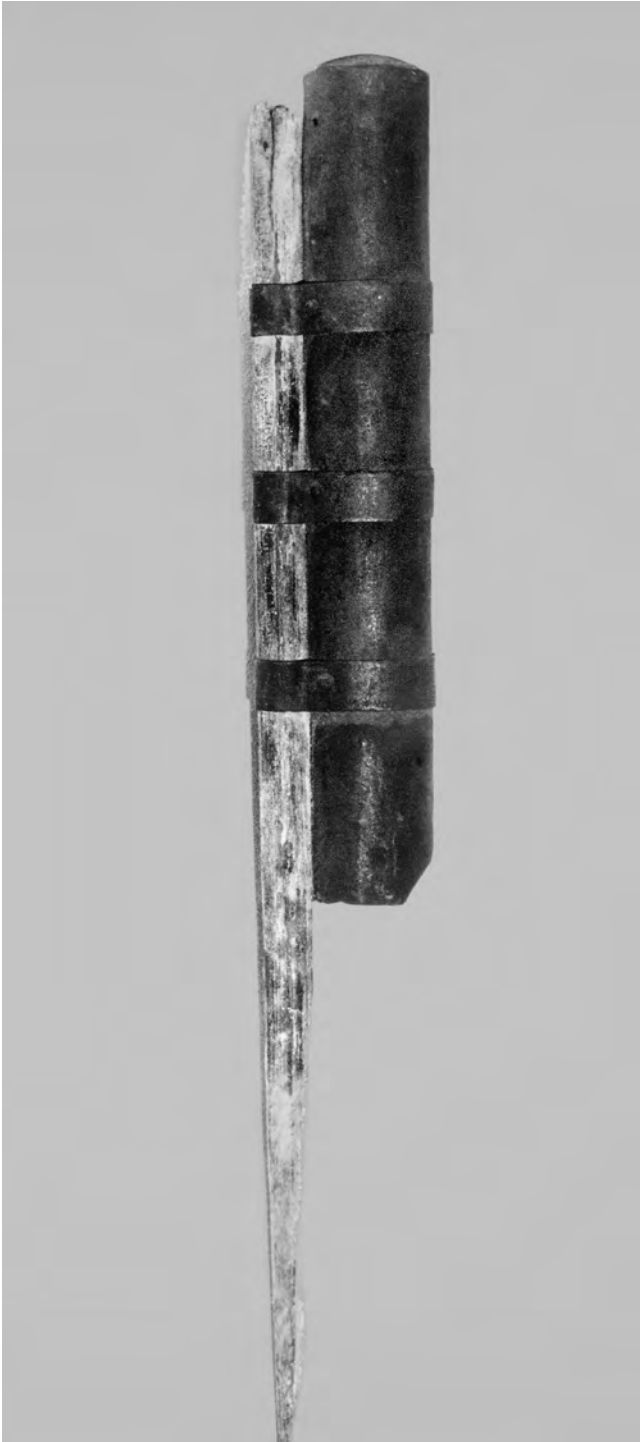
*GENTLEMEN*—One hour is allowed you from the receipt of this communication, for the removal of the unoffending inhabitants.

T. M. HARDY.<sup>2</sup>

This notification was received by two magistrates, and lieut. Hough of the drafted militia, who went off to meet the flag. The officer was asked whether a flag would not be received on board.— He said no arrangements could be made. They inquired whether Com. Hardy had determined to destroy the town.— He replied that such were his orders from the Admiral, and that it would be done most effectually.

When the gentlemen reached the shore a crowd waited with great anxiety for the news; which being stated, consternation flew through the town.— An express was dispatched to General Cushing at New-London. A number of volunteers hastened to collect ammunition; others ran to the battery, (which consisted of two 18 pounders and a 4-pounder, on field carriages, with a slight breast-work 4 feet high.) The sick and the aged were removed with haste; the women and children with loud cries were seen running in every direction. Some of the most valuable articles were hastily got off by hand, and others placed in the gardens and lots or thrown into wells, to save them from impending conflagration. The sixty minutes expired, but the dreaded moment did not bring the attack. Nelson's favorite hero and friend, was seized with the compunctions of magnanimity: he remembered what antient Britons were; he remembered that something was due to the character of Sir Thomas M. Hardy. Three hours in fact elapsed, when at 8 in the evening the attack was commenced by the discharge of shells from the bomb ship: several barges and launches had taken their stations in different points, from whence they threw congreve rockets, and carcasses. This mode of attack was continued incessantly till midnight; and the fire was returned occasionally from the battery as the light of the rockets gave opportunity, with any chance of success. The few drafted militia, which have been some time stationed there, under command of Lieut. Hough, were placed in the best directions to give an alarm in case a landing should be attempted. During the night the volunteers and militia had assembled in considerable numbers; and the non-combatant inhabitants had generally removed to the neighboring farm-houses, in the momentary expectation of seeing their abandoned dwellings in flames. It was a night of inexpressible anguish to many a widow and orphan, to many aged and infirm, whose little pitance they were now apparently to lose forever.— But Providence directed otherwise: this compact little village of 100 buildings had been for 4 hours covered with flames of fire and bomb-shells, and not a single building was consumed nor a person injured.

At the dawn of day on the 10th, the approach of the enemy was announced by a discharge of Congreve Rockets, from several barges and a launch which had taken their station on the east side of the town, and out of reach of the battery— Several volunteers with small arms and the 4 pounder, hastened across



*Congreve rocket*

the point, supposing the enemy were attempting a landing. Col Randall, of the 13th regt. who, at the time was moving towards the battery with a detachment of Militia, ordered them to assist the volunteers in drawing over one of the 18 pounders to the extreme end of the point; the fire of which in a few minutes compelled the barges to seek safety in flight. During this time the brig was working up towards the Point, and soon after sun-rise came to anchor, short of half a mile from the battery, (or more correctly the breast work.) Our ammunition being soon exhausted the guns were spiked, and the men who fought them, being only about 15 or 20, retired, leaving them behind for want of strength to drag them off—

The brig now continued deliberately to pour her 32 pound shot and grape into the Village, without our having the power of returning a shot, for an hour,— and the Bomb-Ketch occasionally threw in shells.— A fresh supply of ammunition being obtained the 18 pounder was withdrawn from the breast work, the vent drilled and the piece taken back again, when such an animated and well directed fire was kept up, that at 8 o'clock the brig slipped her cable and hauled off, with her pumps going, having received several shots below her water line, and considerable damage in her spars, &c.— During this action between the 18 pounder and the brig, Mr. Frederick Denison was slightly wounded in the knee by a fragment of a rock,<sup>3</sup> and Mr. John Miner, badly burnt in his face by the premature discharge of the gun. The flag which was nailed to the mast was pierced with seven shot holes, the breast work somewhat injured and 6 or 8 of the dwelling houses in the vicinity essentially injured.— At this time a considerable body of militia had arrived, and Brig. Gen. Isham, had taken the command; the inhabitants had recovered from the consternation of the first moments; and were deliberately moving off their furniture and goods. At 1 o'clock the *Ramilies* and *Pactolus* had taken stations about two & an half miles from the town; when resistance appearing hopeless, the Magistrates as a last resort applied to the General for permission to send a flag off, being impressed with the opinion that there must exist some latent cause of a peculiar nature to induce a commander who had heretofore distinguished himself for a scrupulous regard to the claims of honorable warfare, to induce him to commit an act so repugnant to sound policy, so abhorrent to his nature, so flagrant an outrage on humanity. The General, we understand, would not sanction, nor did he absolutely prohibit a flag being sent. They therefore on their own responsibility, sent on board the *Ramilies*, Isaac Williams, and Wm. Lord, esquires, with the following letter.

(COPY)

*Stonington, August 10, 1814.*

TO SIR THOMAS M. HARDY.

*Sir*—Agreeable to notice received from you yesterday, this town is now cleared of “unoffending inhabitants,” and they feeling anxious about the fate of their village, are desirous to know from you, your determination respecting it. Yours, &c.

AMOS DENISON, Burgess,  
WM. LORD, Magistrate.

The deputation proceeded on board the *Ramilies*, and shortly after an officer informed the boatmen that they might return to the shore, as the gentlemen would be landed in a boat from the ship; and that Capt. Hardy declared that no further hostilities would be committed against the town. After remaining on board an hour, or more, the deputation were conveyed in a flag from the ship, which was met by one from the shore. They brought with them a very singular and extraordinary communication. An exact copy cannot at present be obtained, as official etiquette will not permit it: but having read it when it was received on shore, as far as memory will serve us it was as follows.<sup>4</sup>

*On board H.M. ship Ramilies, }  
off Stonington, Aug. 10, 1814, }*

GENTLEMEN—You having given assurances that no Torpedoes have been fitted out from Stonington; and you having engaged to exert your influence to prevent any from being fitted out, or receiving any aid from your town: If you send or board this ship by to-morrow morning at 8 o'clock, Mrs. Stewart, wife of James Stewart, Esq. late H.M. Consul at New-London, and their children, I engage that no further hostilities shall be committed against Stonington; otherwise I shall proceed to destroy it effectually.— For which purpose I possess ample means.

T. M. HARDY, Capt.

This letter was received indignantly. No answer was given. It was a fact well known that no Torpedoes have been fitted at Stonington, and that the inhabitants are unfriendly to the system; but neither individuals nor the town have power to prevent their resorting to that place. The condition *sine qua non*, is truly *tragi-farcical*. Neither the town of Stonington or the state of Connecticut, had any legal power to comply with it, which Capt. Hardy well knew. And if Stonington-Point with its rocky foundations had been in danger of being blown up, scarcely a voice would have been raised to have saved it upon such disgraceful terms. The first duty of a citizen we are taught in Connecticut is to obey the laws. Mrs. Stewart is under the protection of the Government of the U. States, and the petition of her husband for a permission for her departure is in the hands of the proper authority, who will undoubtedly decide correctly in the case.

Our countrymen at a distance, from the importance Capt. Hardy has attached to the circumstance of Mrs. Stewart's being sent off to the British squadron, may possibly apprehend that she has received insult, or signified some fears for the personal safety of herself and children. So far from this being the fact, no lady ever experienced greater civilities from the citizens; as no one has better deserved them. And her feelings during the proceedings at Stonington, demanded the sympathy of her friends.

By terms offered by Capt. Hardy, it was impossible to discover whether he was most doubtful of his ability to accomplish the destruction of the town, or desirous of a pretext to save it. He assured the gentlemen who accompanied the flag, that this was the most unpleasant expedition he had ever undertaken.

The truce on the part of the enemy having expired at 8 o'clock on Thursday morning, a flag was soon after observed at the battery to be coming on shore, and

there not being sufficient time to give information of the fact at head-quarters and receive instructions; it was determined by the officer then commanding to send a boat off to receive the communication. Mr. Faxon, of Stonington, took charge of the boat, met the flag and offered to convey the dispatch agreeable to its directions.— The British officer, Lieut. Claxton, questioned his authority to receive it. Enquired whether Mrs. Stewart would be sent off; and said he should go on shore. Mr. Faxon replied, that he knew nothing of Mrs. Stewart, and that if he attempted to proceed for the shore he would undoubtedly be fired on. He continued his course, when a centinel was directed to fire forward of the boat, but the ball passed through the after sail. They immediately put about and steered for the ship; the Lieut. swearing revenge for what he termed an insult to a flag.

An explanation of the circumstance was immediately transmitted by Gen Isham to Capt. Hardy, which he received as satisfactory.<sup>5</sup>

At the moment a flag had started for the *Ramilies* from the civil authority of the town; which was received on board By which was sent the following letter.

*Stonington—Boro.’ Aug. 14 [11], 1814.*<sup>6</sup>

*To Thos. M. Hardy Esq. Com. of H.B.M. ship Ramilies.*

Sir,

Since the flag went into New—London, for Mrs. Stewart, and family, Gen. Cushing who commands at New—London, has written, we are informed, to the Secretary at war on the subject, and it is our opinion that the request will be complied with. But whatever may be the result of the communication from Gen. Cushing, you will be satisfied it is not in our power to enter into any arrangement with you respecting her From yours &c.

Isaac Williams,	}	Magistrates
Wm. Lord,		
Alex. G Smith,		
Joseph Smith,		Warden
Geo. Hubbard,	}	Burg’s
Amos Denison,		

To this Letter Capt. Hardy replied verbally, *that he should allow till 12 o’clock for Mrs. Stewart to be brought on board.* At this time the principal part of three Regiments of militia had arrived, and the town was perfectly secure against a landing.

At 3 o’clock the bomb—ship re—commenced throwing shells into the town; and being out of reach of our cannon, the General withdrew the militia, excepting a guard of 50 men, who were ordered to patrol the streets for the extinguishment of fire, should any happen. The bombardment continued till evening.

On Friday morning the bomb—ship renewed her operations a little before sun-rise, while the *Ramilies* and *Pactolus* were warping in. At 8 o’clock the frigate opened her fire, and was soon followed by the *Ramilies*. At this time the cannon were ordered to be moved to the north end of the town, where they would have been serviceable if an attempt had been made to land under cover of the ships. This was a very hazardous service as the party would be entirely exposed to the

fire of the enemy. Volunteers in sufficient numbers instantly offered their services; among them were upwards of 20 of the Norwich artillery. The command of the party was entrusted to Lieut. Lathrop, of that corps.— They marched to the battery and brought off the pieces without the smallest accident; exhibiting all the steadiness which characterises veteran soldiers.

This tremendous cannonade and bombardment continued till nearly noon, when it ceased; and at about 4 o'clock the ships hauled off to their former anchorage.

During the succeeding night a large force was kept on guard, in the expectation and hope that a landing would be attempted. The militia during this afflicting scene discovered the very best disposition, and were eager to take revenge of the enemy or to sacrifice their lives in the contest.

It may be considered miraculous that during the several attacks, whilst many were exposed to this terrible and protracted bombardment and cannonade, not a person was killed, and but 5 or 6 wounded, and those slightly. Among the wounded is Lieut. Hough of the drafted militia.

On Saturday morning the enemy relinquished the hope of *burning* the town, weighed anchor, and proceeded up Fisher's Island sound.

The volunteers who so gloriously fought in the battery deserve the thanks of their county. No men could have done better. Their example will have the happiest influence.

About 40 buildings are more or less injured, eight or ten essentially so; and two or three may be considered as ruined. The damage was principally done by the brig. Many shells did not explode, several were extinguished. The Congreve Rockets which were frightful at first, soon lost their terrors, and effected little.

The inhabitants, fearing another attack, have not returned to their dwellings; and their desolate situation calls loudly upon the philanthropys of their fellow-citizens. If a Brief should be granted for collections in the churches of the State, we trust very essential aid will be furnished. Nineteen twentieths of the inhabitants, it is said, have no other property than their buildings.

A Nantucket man has been on board the British fleet to redeem his boat and learnt that the *Despatch* had 2 men killed and 12 wounded; her loss was undoubtedly much greater. The force in Fisher's Island Sound yesterday, we understand consisted of the *Superb*, *Ramilies*, *Pactolus*, *Sylph*, *Dispatch*, *Nimrod* & *Terror* Bomb ship.

Printed, *Connecticut Gazette* (New London), 17 August 1814.

1. H.M. bomb *Terror*.

2. The original of this letter is preserved in the Beinecke Rare Book Room of Yale University Library and is reproduced in De Kay, *Battle of Stonington*, p. 150. Its text reads: "Not wishing to destroy the unoffending Inhabitants residing in the Town of Stonington, one hour is granted them from the receipt of this to remove out of the Town." According to this letter's dateline, Hardy composed his message aboard the frigate *Pactolus* at 5:30 P.M.

3. Denison died from his wound on 1 November 1814. See Trumbull, *Defence of Stonington*, pp. 49–50.

4. The text of this letter agrees in substance, if not precise wording, with the original which is reproduced in De Kay, *Battle of Stonington*, p. 173.

5. For Hardy's letter accepting Brigadier General Jirah Isham's explanatory note, see Hardy to Isham, 11 August 1814, in Trumbull, *Defence of Stonington*, p. 57.

6. The correct date is 11 August 1814.



## Wilmington Station Loses Gunboat No. 146

*Besides confronting the inevitable problems associated with inclement weather, seamen also faced man-made concerns. Wilmington's gunboat No. 146 blew up because of the carelessness of one of its crew. The loss of this vessel deprived the station of an asset, but the tragic loss of 9 out of a crew of 29 was particularly calamitous. Naval recruiters found mariners drawn more to privateering than the Navy. This freak accident only compounded an already severe manpower shortage.*

ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Shell Castle Occracoke NC. August 25th. 1814

Sir

I have the honor to report to you my arrival at this place I find SM Evans had used every exertion assisted by SM Wolfenden & the remainder of his Crew in saving what materials was possible I am afraid her Guns are buried in the Sand her bow is raised to a Lighter & if the weather will allow of it shall have another alongside sweep her & endeavour to lift her & save what we can enclosed I have the honor of submitting SM Wolfendons report with a list of articles saved I am sorry to mention thirty three sick on board the *Roanoke* & *N 167* I shall bring the Guns for the Fort from Washington Edenton & stores from Elizabeth & return with the *Roanoke* to Wilmington & as I may be detained longer here than I expect it may be the 14th. Sept. before I leave Elizabeth City there is still at Elizabeth a prize Baltimore built Schooner which will be Sold in about a month which would be suitable for our Coast & Harbours will mount 1 long 18—six—sixes quarters for 80 men she will sell cheap I have the honor to be with Respect your most Obedient Sert.

T N Gautier

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 86 (M148, Roll No. 13). Gautier included the following three documents as enclosures with his letter.

[Enclosure]

A list of articles saved from on board of the U.S Gun Boat No. 146

2. Anchors	fore Gaft.—
1. Boy rope & boys	One fore Sheet—
Part of the braces & bowlines	fore Sail—
Boom Gauy	part. of One hawser—
part of the back stays	Eight. Iron Stentions
20. Blocks of Different sizes	part of the Jib stay
Boat Sails—	Two Jibs—
1 Boat hook—	One. Lightning Road
1. Breaker	One. ladle for the big Gun

1. Cable plat. part of One Cable	One Martingle Seven Mast Hoopes
2. Coils of small rigging part of Three fore Shrouds part of fore peek Halyards fore Yard with part of the rigging fore throat halyards fore Topmast rigging part of the flying Jib Stay part of the fore T.G. stay foot. ropes of the flying Jib	One. Main Sail Several peaces of small rigging One Topsail Yard Rigging Two Water Casks— One. Waist Cloath One Spunge One Traveler— One Kedge— part of Towline

Shell Castle N.C.  
John Wolfendon S.M.  
August. 26th 1814—

D, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 86, enclosure (M148, Roll No. 13). The information in the bottom dateline was rendered sideways and in a different hand.

[Enclosure]

SAILING MASTER JOHN WOLFENDON TO  
ACTING LIEUTENANT THOMAS N. GAUTIER

T. N. Gautier Esqr. Lieut. Comdt.

Shell Castle—August 23d. 1814

Sir

I have to report to you the most deplorable & disastrous occurrence on the 23d. Inst. about half 1 OClock P.M. I came on shore to dine in company with S.M. Evans the boat under my command *146* being at anchor about 150 yards off this place fifteen Minutes after my landing a most tremendous explosion occurd. on board and the vessel immediately disappeared—

I learned from the survivors that the second masters mate<sup>1</sup> was on the quarter deck a little before apparently endeavouring to draw the ball from a musket by striking the muzzle on the deck, which we have every reason to believe went off & as it was directly over the Magazine we have no doubt communicated fire thereto thus occasioning the loss of the vessel & the following officers & crew— I have also to state that James Benson Seaman is badly wounded & Calvin Howard slightly, both of whom were sent to Newbern as our physician Doctr. Boyd<sup>2</sup> was attending the sick on board *No. 7* at Beaufort yrs. respty.

John Wolfendon. S.m.

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 86, enclosure (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. William Redgraves.  
2. Dr. Boyd was not identified.

[Enclosure]

A List of the lost, the whole crew consisting of twenty nine—

William Redgraves 2d. Ms. Mate  
 Aquilla Hill Purser's Steward  
 Henry Cross— Cook  
 Elijah Sykes Seaman  
 Ephraim Coleman Do.  
 George France Do.  
 Joshua Harvey Landsman  
 Morris Stringer Ord. Seaman  
 John Lewards Boy—

D, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 86, enclosure (M148, Roll No. 13).

## Securing the New Canadian Border: Penobscot Operations

*On 26 August 1814, an armada of 19 British warships and transports carrying roughly 2,500 troops set sail from Halifax harbor, launching the second phase of Great Britain's Maine campaign. The first target of this expeditionary force was the town of Machias, which the British suspected of being used to mount a Yankee counterattack on recently captured Moose Island.<sup>1</sup> Its second objective was the Penobscot River, which the British intended to claim as the new boundary line separating Maine from the Maritime Provinces. The intended order of these assaults was reversed, however, when the expedition's commanders, Lieutenant Governor Sir John C. Sherbrooke and Rear Admiral Edward Griffith, learned that an enemy warship, the U.S. corvette Adams, was lying in the Penobscot River off Hampden. As a result, the two men decided to bypass Machias in favor of an immediate strike against American settlements along the Penobscot estuary.*

*Arriving in Penobscot Bay on 1 September, British forces quickly secured the town of Castine, whose armed defenders offered only token resistance before fleeing upriver. Two days later, a detachment of British ships and soldiers sent up the Penobscot routed American forces at Hampden, compelling Charles Morris, the captain of Adams, to set fire to his ship rather than see it fall prize to the enemy.<sup>2</sup> During the brief occupation of Hampden that followed, many of the town's citizens were roughly handled by the enemy invaders, who plundered and destroyed their property. Such conduct contradicted British promises of protection to Americans who behaved peaceably and swore loyalty to the Crown.<sup>3</sup>*

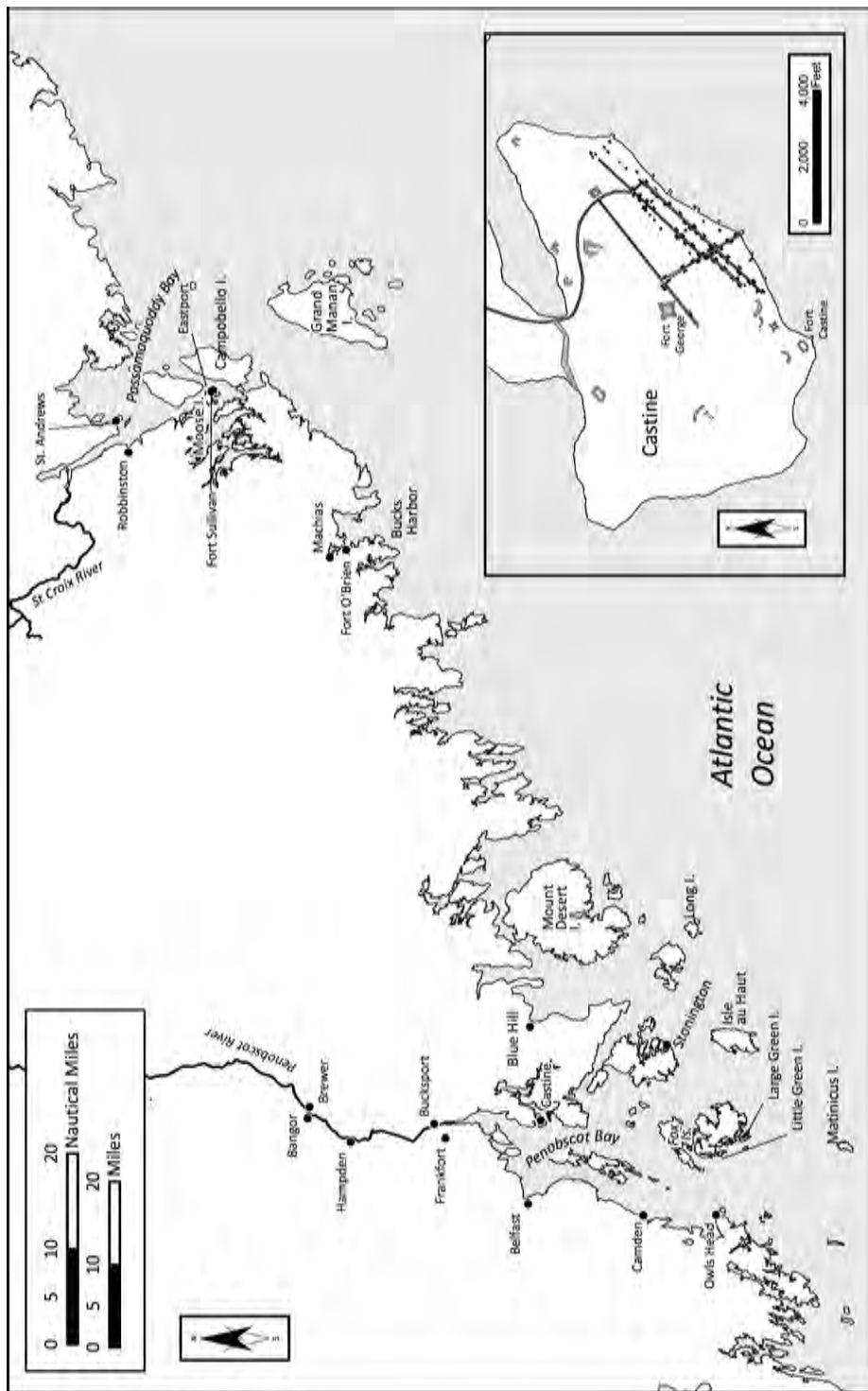
*Just as they had with Maine's Passamaquoddy Islands, the British declared suzerainty over the lands north of the Penobscot River, incorporating them into the Canadian province of New Brunswick. Only the remaining American outpost of Machias remained to be secured.<sup>4</sup>*

1. For the capture of Eastport on Moose Island, see pp. 417–29.

2. For Morris's account of the destruction of Adams, see pp. 543 and 547–49.

3. For a narrative of the Penobscot operations, see Stanley, "British Operations on the Penobscot," and, Stanley, War of 1812, pp. 369–78.

4. For the capture of Machias, see pp. 568–74.



Map 15. District of Maine, area of British operations

REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No. 40.

*Centurion* Halifax  
23rd. August 1814

Sir.

The *Dragon* was on the point of sailing Yesterday to join you when I received a proposal from His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor<sup>1</sup> to form an expedition for an attack on Penobscot; the packet which had arrived from England the day before having brought him instructions to employ the two Regiments ordered to him from the Mediterranean “in such manner as he might judge most effectual towards making the Enemy feel the pressure of the War”; and as the Troops are all ready to embark, and it is of the first Consequence to the Success of the expedition, that the attack should be made before the Enemy can gain information of its even sailing from hence, I have ventured to detain the *Dragon* for the purpose of accompanying it, as I had no other Ship in Port ready, and the assistance of her boats is absolutely necessary to enable us to land a sufficient Number of Troops at one time, to maintain themselves. As His Excellency the Lieutenant General<sup>2</sup> has decided on taking Command of the expedition himself, I have felt myself Called upon to accompany him, and we propose embarking, and sailing, in the *Dragon* the day after to Morrow. The *Borer* takes Orders to Rear Admiral Milne to join me off the Martimicus Islands in the *Bulwark*, bringing with him the *Spencer*, and the *Alban* and *Pictou* Schooners, and leaving the Frigates to keep up the Blockade of the Enemy’s Ports.

The Lieutenant General informs me that he will embark about 2400 troops. With such limited means I have given it as my opinion that he could not attempt any place to the Southward and Westward of the penobscot as the Country becomes more populous towards Boston; and from all the information we have been able to collect, the defences of the principal ports are too strong to afford any prospect of succeeding in an attempt upon them.

I have appointed Captain Finley to the temporary Command of the *Centurion*, and have ordered the *Rover*, in charge of her first Lieutenant, to proceed to you with the dispatches & letters which came by the Packet, and have the Honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant,

Edw: Griffith

The *Armide* and *Endymion* have arrived here with the American Ship Letter of Marque *Invincible*. 300 tons—16 Guns & 70 men, laden with Rice.— The *Tenedos* has recaptured and sent in a brig from this port to the West Indies, which the above Ship had taken.

E. G.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fols. 67–68.

1. Sir John Coape Sherbrooke, lieutenant governor of Nova Scotia.
2. Sherbrooke held the rank of lieutenant general in the British army.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE TO  
GOVERNOR GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST

Halifax 24 August 1814

Sir

Referring to the extract from Earl Bathursts letter to me of the 15th. July which I did myself the honor of transmitting to Your Excellency by Capt. Bagwell, & perceiving how many difficulties would attend any attempt to carry the plan originally proposed by His Lordship for occupying that part of the District of Maine which at present intercepts the communication between New Brunswick & Canada into effect, & as report says that the Enemy have a Depot at Macchias, which they are employed in augmenting probably with an intention of annoying us at Moose Island I have resolved upon immediately occupying the Penobscot with the troops lately arrived here under General Gosselin

And as it will be of consequence to get possession, or to destroy Macchias, I propose sending Col. Douglas with the 90th. Regt. & the 2 Rifle Companies of the 7th. Battalion of the 60th. to execute that service — so that if our efforts are crowned with success we shall occupy the whole of the country between the Penobscot & the Bay of Fundy, & the inhabitants of New Brunswick will be relieved from any dread of an attack from that quarter. —

As all the Staff Officers belonging to the Regt. & Qr. Master Generals Departments, which arrived with the 29th. and 62nd. Regts. except one belonged to the latter Corps I have directed them to do duty with their Regt. And as an officer of the Quarter Master General's Department will be wanted to attend the Expedition, I have allowed Captain Owen of the 73rd. Regt. to embark with the appointment which Your Excellency will observe by the Return I had the honor to forward, he held at the time he sailed with Major General Gosselin.

And as Colonel Douglas will be in want of a Staff Officer I have at his request allowed Capt. Pears of the 64th. Regt. to be attached to him as Major of Brigade, & to receive the pay & allowances as such, so long as he shall be employed in that situation, which will I hope meet Your Excellency's approbation.

I propose embarking with the Troops & superintending the execution of this service in person: And if I find the Post at the entrance of the Penobscot as important as it has been represented to me to be, I shall put it into a respectable state of defence & leave a Garrison there capable of maintaining it until I can receive farther orders on the subject— I have the honor to be Sir Your Excellency's most obedient humble Servant

J. C. Sherbrooke  
Lt. Genl.

CAPTAIN ROBERT BARRIE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N.

Copy.

His Maj Sloop *Sylph*  
off Bangor in the Penobscot  
3rd. September 1814.

Sir.

Having received on board the Ships named in the margin<sup>1</sup> a detachment of twenty men of the Royal Artillery, with one 5½ inch Howitzer, commanded by Lieutenant Garston;— a party of Eighty Marines commanded by Captain Carter of the *Dragon*; the flank Companies of the 29th., 62nd. and 98th. Regts. under the Commands of Captains Gell and Coker, Majors Riddle, Keith and Crosdaile, and Captain McPherson; also a rifle Company of the 7th. Battalion of the 60th. Regiment Commanded by Captain Ward, and the whole under the Orders of Lieutt. Colonel John of the 60th. Regiment;— I proceeded agreeable to your Order, with the utmost dispatch up the Penobscot. Light variable Winds, a most intricate Channel of which we were perfectly ignorant, and thick foggy Weather prevented my arriving off Frankfort before 2 P.M. of the 2nd. Instant. Here Colonel John and myself thought it adviseable to send a Message to the Inhabitants, and having received their Answer, we pushed on towards Hamden where we received intelligence that the Enemy had strongly fortified himself. On our way up several Troops were observed on the East Side of the River making for Brewer. These were driven into the Woods without any loss on our Side by a party under the Orders of Major Crosdaile, and the Guns from the Boats. The Enemy had one killed and several wounded.

At 5 P.M. of the 2nd. Instant we arrived off Ball's head Cove, distant three miles from Hamden. Colonel John and myself landed on the South Side of the Cove to reconnoitre the Ground, and obtain intelligence. Having gained the hills we discovered the Enemy's Piquet advantageously posted near the Highway heading to Hamden on the North side of the Cove. We immediately determined to land one hundred and fifty men under Major Riddall to drive in the Picquets and take up their Ground. This Object was obtained by 7 o'Clock, and notwithstanding every difficulty the whole of the troops were landed on the North side of the Cove by 10 o'Clock; but it was found impossible to land the Artillery at the same place. The Troops bivouac'd on the ground taken possession of by Major Riddall— It rained incessantly during the night.

At day break this morning the fog cleared away for about a quarter of an hour, which enabled us to reconnoitre the Enemy's position by water and I found a landing place for the Artillery about ⅔ of a mile from Ball's-head. Off this place the troops halted 'till the Artillery were mounted and by Six the whole advanced towards Hamden. The boats under the immediate Command of Lieutenant Pedler, the first of the *Dragon*, agreeable to a previous arrangement with Colonel John, advanced in line with the Right Flank of the Army. The *Peruvian*, *Sylph*, *Dragon's* Tender, and *Harmony* Transport, were kept a little in the Rear in reserve.

Our information stated the Enemy's force at 1400 men & He had chosen a most excellent position.— On a high hill about a quarter of a mile to the Southward

of the *Adams* Frigate he had mounted Eight 18 prs.. This fort was calculated to Command both the high way by which our troops had to advance and the River. On the wharf close to the *Adams* he had mounted fifteen 18. pounders, which completely commanded the River, which at this Place is not above three Cables length wide, and the land on each side is high and well wooded. A Rocket boat under my immediate direction but manœuvred by Mr. Ginter, Gunner, and Mr. Small, Mid, of the *Dragon* was advanced about a quarter of a mile ahead of the line of boats. So soon as the boats got within Gun Shot, the Enemy opened his fire upon them from the Hill and Wharf which was warmly returned. Our Rockets were generally well directed and evidently threw the Enemy into Confusion. Mean time our troops stormed the Hill with the utmost Gallantry. Before the Boats got within good Grape Shot of the wharf battery the Enemy set fire to the *Adams* and he ran from his Guns the moment our Troops carried the Hill<sup>2</sup>

I joined the Army about ten minutes after this Event. Colonel John and myself immediately determined to leave a sufficient force in possession of the Hill, and to pursue the Enemy who was then in Sight of the Bangor Road flying at full Speed. The Boats and Ships pushed up the River preserving their original position with the Army. The Enemy was too nimble for us and most of them escaped into the woods on our left.

On approaching Bangor the Inhabitants who had opposed us at Hamden threw off their Military Character and as Majistrates, Select men &c. made an unconditional Surrender of the Town. Here the pursuit stopped. About two hours afterwards Brigadier General Blake came into the Town to deliver himself as a prisoner. The General and other prisoners amounting to One hundred and ninety one were admitted to their Parole.

Enclosed I have the honor to forward to you lists of the Vessels we have captured or destroyed and other necessary reports. I am happy to inform you our loss consists only of one Seaman belonging to the *Dragon* killed: Captain Gell of the 29th. and seven Privates wounded. one rank and file missing.

I cannot close my report without expressing my highest admiration of the very gallant Conduct of Col. John the Officers and Soldiers under his command, for exclusive of the battery before mentioned they had difficulties to contend with on their left which did not fall under my observation as the Enemy's field pieces in that direction were masked. The utmost cordiality existed between the two Services and I shall ever feel obliged to Colonel John for his ready Co-operation in every thing that was proposed. The Officers and men bore the privations inseperable from our Confined means of Accommodation with a Cheerfulness that entitles them to my warmest thanks.

Though the Enemy abandoned His batteries before the Ships could be brought to act against them, yet I am not the less obliged to Captains Kippen and Dickens of the *Peruvian* and *Sylph*, Acting Lieutenant Pearson who commanded the *Dragon's* Tender, Lieutt. Woodin of *Dragon* and Mr. Barnett, Master of the *Harmony*. Their Zeal and indefatigable exertions in bringing up their Vessels thro the most intricate Navigation were eminently conspicuous. Coll. John speaks highly in praise of the Conduct of Captain Carter and the detachment of Royal Marines under his Orders; and also of the Seamen attached to the Artillery under the Command of Lieutenant Simmonds, Motley and Slate, and JW. Spurling, Master of the *Bulwark*.



I have on other occasions of service found it a pleasing part of my duty to commend the services of Lieutt. Pedler, first of the *Dragon*. In this Instance he commanded the boat part of the expedition most fully to my satisfaction. He was ably seconded by Lieut. Perceval of the *Tenedos*, & Ormond of the *Endymion* and Mr. Ansell, Master's Mate of the *Dragon*. This last Gentleman has passed his examination nearly five Years and is an active Officer, well worthy of your patronage; but in particularizing him I do not mean to detract from the other petty Officers and Seamen employed in the boats, for they all most zealously performed their duty, and are equally entitled to my warmest acknowledgments—I am also most particularly indebted to the active and zealous exertions of Lieutenant Carnagie a Volunteer on this occasion.

I can form no estimate of the Enemy's absolute loss. From different Stragglers I learn that, exclusive of killed and missing, upwards of thirty lay wounded in the woods. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Serv

Robt. Barrie, Capt. of H M S. *Dragon*,  
and Senr. Offr. of H.M. Royal naval force employed up the Penobscot river

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fols. 72–75. Endorsed opposite dateline in Griffith's own hand, "Edw: Griffith." For other copies of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fols. 133–36, and, Adm. 1/508, fols. 28–33. A printed version is published in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 323–27.

1. H.M.S. *Peruvian*, H.M.S. *Sylph*, H.M.S. *Dragon*'s tender, and the transport *Harmony*.
2. For Charles Morris's after-action report on the attack on Hampden and the destruction of *Adams*, see pp. 547–49.

[Enclosure]  
A Copy

List of the Vessels captured and Destroyed in the Penobscot, and of those left on the Stocks as near as can be ascertained

Two Ships	}	Captured and brought away.
One Brig		
Six Schooners		
Three Sloops		

at Hamden,

The *Adams*, Frigate of the United States of twenty Six 18 Pounders and two Ships one of them Armed, burnt by the Enemy

At Bangor.

One Ship, One Brig, Three Schooners and one Sloop burnt by us.  
Lost since in our possession One Copper Bottomed Brig, pierced for 18 Guns and the *Decateur* Privateer pierced for Sixteen Guns.  
N.B. The powder and Wine captured at Hamden were put on board these Vessels.

Left on the Stocks at Bangor, Two Ships, Two Brigs, and two Schooners  
 Do. at Brewer. One Ship, One Brig and one Schooner.  
 Do. at Arrington, One Ship and one Schooner.  
 Left at Hamden One Ship, 1 Brig & 2 Schrs. also 1 Brig and 1 Schooners on the  
 Stocks.  
 Left at Frankfort on the Stocks One Ship, One Schooners, and some small Craft

Signed/ Robt. Barrie

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fol. 78. For other copies of this document, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fol. 137, and, Adm. 1/508, fol. 43. A printed version is published in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 327–28.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL HENRY JOHN, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
 LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE

Copy

Bangor on the Penobscot River  
 September 3rd 1814

Sir

In compliance with your Excellency's orders of the 1st Inst. I sailed from Castine with the Detachment of Royal Artillery the Flank Companies of the 29th. 62nd. & 98th. Regiments & one Rifle Company of the 7th. Battn. 60th. Regiment which composed the force your Excellency did me the honor to place under my Command, for the purpose of cooperating with Captain Barrie of the Royal Navy in an expedition up this River.

On the Morning of the 2nd. having proceeded above the Town of Frankfort, we discovered some of the enemy on their March towards Hampden by the Eastern Shore, which induced me to order Brevet Major Croasdaile with a Detachment of the 98th. & some Riflemen of the 60th. Regt. under Lieutt. Wallace, to land and intercept them; which was accomplished, & that Detachment of the Enemy, (as I have since learned,) were prevented from joining the Main Body assembled at Hampden. On this occasion the Enemy had one man killed & some wounded. Major Croasdaile reembarked without any loss. We arrived off Bald Head Cove three miles distant from Hampden, about 5 O'Clock that evening: when Captain Barrie agreed with me in determining to land the Troops immediately. Having discovered that the Enemy's Picquets were advantageously posted on the North side of the Cove, I directed Bt. Major Riddle, with the Grenadiers of the 62nd., & Captn. Ward with the Rifle Company of the 60th. to dislodge them, & take up that ground; which duty was performed under Major Riddle's directions, in a most compleat & satisfactory manner by about 7 OClock, & before 10 at night, the whole of the Troops, including eighty Marines under Captain Carter, (whom Capt. Barrie had done me the honor to attach to my Command,) were landed & bivouacked for the night, during which it rained incessantly. We got under Arms at 5 O'Clock this Morning: the Rifle Company forming the Advance, under Captn. Ward: Bt. Major Keith with the Light Company of the 62nd. bringing up the Rear, & the detachment of Marines under Captain Carter moving upon

my Flanks: while Captain Barrie with the Ships & Gun boats under his Command advanced at the same time up the river on my Right towards Hampden. In addition to the detachment of Royal Artillery under Lieutt. Garston, Captain Barrie had landed one 6 pounder, a 6½ Inch howitzer, & a rocket apparatus, with a detachment of Sailors under Lieutenants Symonds, Botely, & Slade, & Mr. Sparling Master of His Majesty's Ship *Bulwark*.

The fog was so thick it was impossible to form a correct idea of the features of the Country, or to reconnoitre the enemy, whose Numbers were reported to be 1400, under the Command of Brigadier General Blake.

Between 7 & 8 O'clock our Skirmishers in advance were so sharply engaged with the enemy, as to induce me to send forward one half the Light Company of the 29th. Regt. under Captain Coakes, to their support. The Column had not advanced much farther before I discovered the Enemy drawn out in lines occupying a very strong & advantageous position in front of the Town of Hampden; his left flanked by a high hill commanding the road & river, on which were mounted several heavy pieces of Cannon: his right extending considerably beyond our left, resting upon a strong point d'appui; with an eighteen pounder & some light field pieces in advance of his Centre, so pointed, as compleatly to rake the road, & a narrow bridge at the foot of a hill, by which we were obliged to advance upon his position. As soon as he perceived our Column approaching, he opened a very heavy & continued fire of grape & musketry upon us We however soon crossed the bridge, deployed, & charged up the hill to get possession of his Guns, one of which we found had already fallen into the hands of Captain Ward's Riflemen in advance— The enemy's fire now began to slacken, & we pushed on rapidly, and succeeded in driving him at all points from his position: while Capt. Coakes with the Light Company of the 29th. had gained possession of the hill on his left, from whence it was discovered that the *Adams* Frigate was on fire, and that the enemy had deserted the Battery which defended her.

We were now in compleat possession of the enemy's position above, and Captain Barrie with the Gun boats had secured that below the hill. Upon this occasion twenty five pieces of Cannon fell into the hands of the Naval and Military force, (a return of which I enclose.)<sup>1</sup>

After which Captain Barrie and myself determined on pursuing the Enemy towards Bangor, which place we reached without opposition, & here two brass three pounders & three stand of Colours fell into our possession. Brigadier General Blake also in this Town surrendered himself a prisoner, & with other Prisoners to the Number of 121 were admitted to their paroles. Eighty prisoners taken at Hampden are in our Custody. The loss sustained by the enemy I have not had it in my power correctly to ascertain. report states it to be from 30 to 40, in killed wounded and missing.

Our own loss I am happy to add is but small, viz. 1 rank & file killed—1 Captain 7 rank & file wounded, 1 rank & file missing.<sup>2</sup>

Captain Gell of the 29th. was wounded when leading the Column, which deprived me of his active & useful assistance,— but I am happy to add he is recovering.

I cannot close this Dispatch with out mentioning in the highest terms all the Troops placed under my Command: they have merited My highest praise for their Zeal & gallantry, which were conspicuous in the extreme.

I feel most particularly indebted to Bt. Major Riddle of the 62nd. Regt. second in Command: to Bt. Major Keith of the same Regt. Bt. Major Croasdaile and Captain Mc.Pheron of the 98th. Captains Gell & Coakes of the 29th., & Captain Ward of the 7th. Battn. 60th. Regt.

The Royal Artillery was directed in the most judicious manner by Lieutt. Garston, from whom I derived the ablest support.

I cannot speak too highly of Captain Carter & the Officers of Marines immediately under his directions: he moved them in the ablest manner to the annoyance of the Enemy, and so as to merit my fullest Approval.

Nothing could exceed the Zeal & Perseverance of Lieutenants Symonds Botely & Slade & Mr. Spurling of the Royal Navy, with the detachment of Seamen under their Command.

From Captain Barrie I have received the ablest assistance & support; & it is to his masterly arrangement of the plan that I feel indebted for its success. Nothing could be more cordial than the cooperation of the Naval and Military forces on this service, in every instance.

Captain Carnegie of the Royal Navy who most handsomely volunteered his services with this expedition, was in action with the Troops at Hampden, & I feel most particularly indebted to him for his exertions & the assistance he afforded me on this occasion.

I am also greatly indebted to Lt. Du Chatelet of the 7th. Battn. 60th. Regt. who acted as Major of Brigade to the Troops, in which capacity he rendered me very essential Service. I have the honor to be Sir Your Excellencys most obedient humble Servant.

(Signed) Henry John—  
Lt. Colonel Commg.

A true Copy  
John Bazalgette A,D,C,

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 684, pp. 231–37. Another printed version of this document is published in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 314–18.

1. See Crawford to Sherbrooke, 19 September 1814, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 684, pp. 252–53, which contains an itemized list of the captured ordnance and stores. A printed version is published in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 318–19.

2. For a return of British casualties at Hampden, see CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 684, p. 254. A printed version is published in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, p. 319.

CAPTAIN ROBERT BARRIE, R.N., AND LIEUTENANT COLONEL HENRY JOHN,  
BRITISH ARMY, TO THE HAMPDEN COMMITTEE

[*Hampden, Maine, c. 5 September 1814*]

The wreck of the Ship, *Adams*, together with everything belonging to her, which has been taken out of her, or plundered from her, excepting the spars, is hereby assigned to the Hampden Committee, Viz.

John Crosby  
 John Godfrey  
 Enoch Brown  
 Martin Kinsley

Jedediah Herrick  
 Andrew Grant  
 Simeon Stetson  
 Jonathan Knowles  
 and  
 James Patten

To be by them desposed of for the benefit of the Sufferers of that town; and all persons having possession of any part of said property are hereby required forthwith to deliver it over to some one of the aforesd. Committee

(Signed)

Robert Barrey Capt. of H.M.S. *Dragon* and Senior  
 Officer of the advanced naval force on the Penobscot  
 H. John L[ie]ut. Colo. and Senior Officer of the  
 advanced military force on the Penobscot

Hancock [-] On the third day of October 1814 Personally appeared Jedediah Herrick Esqr. and made oath, that he had carefully compared the above copy with the original Assignement, and that it is a true and correct copy of the original.

Before me  
 Enoch Brown  
 Justice of the Peace within & for  
 the County of Hancock

Copy, DNA, RG45, AF 7 (M625, Roll No. 77).

BRITISH PROCLAMATION TO  
 THE INHABITANTS OF THE UPPER DISTRICT OF MAINE

[*Castine, c. 5 September 1814*]

A PROCLAMATION.

*By Lt. Gen. JOHN C. SHERBROOK, K. B. commanding a body of his Britannic Majesty's land forces, and EDWARD GRIFFITH Esq Rear Admiral of the White, commanding a squadron of his Majesty's ships, now arrived in the Penobscot*

WHEREAS it is the intention of the British commanders to take possession of the country lying between the Penobscot river and the Passamaquoddy bay; the peaceable inhabitants of that District are hereby informed, that if they remain quietly at home and carry on their usual occupations, every protection will be offered them so long as they comply with such regulations as may be established for their conduct and guidance, by the authority of the British commanders.

All persons taken in arms, or employed in carrying intelligence to the enemy, or assisting him in any way, shall be treated accordingly. Such of the inhabitants as may wish to avail themselves of the terms offered in the preceding part of this Proclamation, will be required to give up their arms, and to demean themselves in a quiet and peaceable manner;— and those who may be willing to supply the British with fresh provisions, &c, will be regularly paid for the articles furnished, and shall receive every encouragement and protection in so doing.

*Signed by command,*

CHARLES MARTY,  
*Naval Secretary.*

*Signed,*

T. F. ADDISON,  
*Military Secretary.*

Printed, *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 8 September 1814.

BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN BLAKE, MASSACHUSETTS STATE MILITIA, TO  
GOVERNOR CALEB STRONG

BANGOR, 7th SEPTEMBER, 1814.

*May it please your Excellency,*

Having received information from the Collector of Castine, and from Capt. Morris, of the U. States Corvette *Adams*, lying at Hampton, five miles below this place, that a squadron of the enemy under Sir John Sherbrook, had arrived at Castine on the evening of the 31st of August, and had taken possession of the fort and town on the 1st September. Captain Morris expecting an immediate attack on his ship, sent an express to me for assistance. I therefore assembled about 500 Militia at Hampden on the 2d inst. to co-operate with him; he having mounted several of his ship's guns upon an elevated piece of ground on the bank of Penobscot river, near his ship, with most of his men. Early on the morning of the 3d inst. the enemy's fleet, consisting of the *Sylph* of 20 guns, a brig of 18 guns, a transport, tender, and several barges and 750 troops arrived. The expedition was commanded by Commodore Barrie, of the *Dragon 74*, and Lieut. Col. John, of the 60th Regiment. These were some of their best troops from Lord Wellington's army.

They landed a short distance below our position, and advanced immediately upon us. At this time my left wing extended nearly to Capt. Morris' right, and my right wing extended near the County road, where I had three field pieces in such a position as to rake their column, they having to pass a small bridge to approach me. On each flank I had a company of light infantry to prevent their flank from surrounding me. Immediately after my line was formed, they began the attack by throwing shells from their barges, and then attacked my left flank with 100 of their riflemen; their fire was returned by Capt. Emery, with his company of light infantry, who acquitted themselves honorably. The Artillery and flanks were warmly engaged for about ten minutes, when to my surprise,

I found my centre giving way. Having made every exertion to rally them without effect, and being left on the field with only eight or ten men, I then ordered three officers to a bridge about a quarter of a mile towards Bangor for the purpose of forming my men again for a second attack; but in vain—my men forded the stream below, and Capt. Morris, after having blown up the *Adams*, retreated from his battery with his men, who were mostly invalids. At this time, the enemy being much superior in number, proceeded towards Bangor, at the same time the fleet proceeded up the river, where, in conjunction, they took possession of Bangor without further resistance. I am now under the disagreeable necessity of stating to your Excellency, that I was compelled to deliver myself and men as prisoners of war, to prevent the destruction of the town, but were paroled on condition of not serving again until exchanged. I have, however, the satisfaction to inform you, that several of my officers and men acquitted themselves with honor to themselves and country. Those I observed were Major Herrick, of the Cavalry; Capt. Hammond, of the Artillery, from whose Company was reduced by a draft and filled to about thirty by the Rangers, commanded by Lieut. Fisk, distinguished themselves by a firm stand and correct firing; and to them I owe much, as nearly all the destruction of the enemy on land was made by that Company, and an 18 pounder stationed on their left and commanded by Lieut. Lewis of the United States troops, who with Lieuts. Farnsworth and Webster, and about 30 United States' troops, distinguished themselves. Capt. Dow, of a light infantry company of the 2d Regt. performed his duty like a soldier.— Capt. Blake and two Capt. Websters, particularly distinguished themselves. Ensign Frieze who bore the standard, and Mr. Francis Carr, Jun. my volunteer aid, distinguished themselves particularly.— and also Ensign Call, and particularly Sergeant Bent, and several other officers and men. The enemy kept possession of Bangor about 30 hours, having compelled the inhabitants to give bonds of \$30,000 to deliver the shipping then on the stocks at Castine, in 60 days, and after committing much depredation on the stores and houses, and having burnt one ship, 2 brigs, 4 schs. and 1 sloop (one ship and a store at Hampden were destroyed by the explosion on the *Adams*) they proceeded to Hampden on the 4th with the remainder of the shipping.

The excesses committed at Hampden are almost inconceivable. They left several of the guns of the *Adams* with their horns broken off, and proceeded down the river on the 5th with about 60 of the inhabitants prisoners and many horses. By the best information I can obtain, the enemy had from 10 to 15 killed and wounded by the land forces, and it is reported that Capt. Morris' guns completely destroyed one barge and killed and wounded several men. My loss one killed and four or five wounded. I was informed by com. Barrie, that sir John Sherbrook had issued a proclamation declaring the Penobscot river the boundary line between the United States and the British territory. In justice to Lt. Col. Henry John, commanding the land forces, I would state that he made unremitting exertions in Bangor to protect private property from the depredations of the soldiery.

I understand the land forces of the enemy amount to 3000 men, now at Frankfort and Castine and the vicinity. I also understand that 600 men were sent from Castine to Buckstown on the 5th inst. on hearing their forces were defeated at Hampden. Mr. Whipple the bearer of this despatch can give you

more particular information,\* and has other information of particular importance. I expect his expenses will be defrayed by the state. I am, with respect, Your Excellency's most obt. servt.

JNO. BLAKE, Brig. Gen.

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\*He having heard the conversation between me and the commander of the British forces.  
A true Copy.

Attest, S. F. M'CLARY, *Clerk of the Senate.*

The above is a true copy of the one delivered me by S. F. M'CLARY.

Attest, JOHN EMERY, Jr.

Printed, *Boston Patriot*, 16 December 1815.

REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No. 41

His Majesty's Ship *Endymion*  
Off Castine, Entrance of the  
Penobscot river 9th. Sepr. 1814.

Sir.

My letter No. 40 of the 23rd. of August,<sup>1</sup> from Halifax, by the *Rover*, will have made you acquainted with my intention of accompanying the expedition then about to proceed under the Command of His Excellency Sir John Sherbrooke K.B, for this Place. I have now the Honor to inform you that I put to sea on the 26th. Ultimo, with the Ships and Sloop named in the margin,<sup>2</sup> and ten Sail of Transports having the Troops onboard, and arrived off the Metimicus Islands on the morning of the 31st., where I was joined by the *Bulwark*, *Tenedos*, *Rifleman*, *Peruvian* and *Pictou*. From Captain Pearce of the *Rifleman* I learnt that the United States Frigate *Adams*, had, a few days before, got into Penobscot, but not considering herself in safety there, had gone on to Hamden, a place twenty seven miles higher up the River, where her Guns had been landed, and a position was fortifying for her protection.

Towards Evening the Wind being fair and the weather favorable, the fleet made Sail up the Penobscot Bay, Captain Parker in the *Tenedos* leading. We passed between the Metimicas and Green Islands about midnight, and steering through the Channel formed by the Fox Islands and Owls Head, ran up to the Eastward of Long Island, and found ourselves at Day light in the morning in Sight of the Fort and Town of Castine. As we approached some Show of resistance was made, and a few Shot were fired; but the Fort was soon after abandoned and blown up. At about Eight A M, the men of War and Transports were anchored a little to the Northward of the Peninsula of Castine, and the Smaller Vessels taking a Station nearer in for covering the landing, the Troops were put onshore and took possession of the Town and Works without opposition.



The General wishing to occupy a post at Belfast on the Western Side of the Bay (through which the high road from Boston runs) for the purpose of cutting off all Communication with that Side of the Country, the *Bacchante* and *Rifleman* were detached with the Troops destined for this Service, and quiet possession was taken, and held, of that Town, as long as was thought necessary.

Arrangements were immediately made for attacking the Frigate at Hamden, and the General having proffered every military assistance, Six hundred picked men, under the Command of Lieutenant Colonel John of the 60th. Regiment, were embarked the same afternoon, onboard His Majesty's Sloops *Peruvian* and *Sylph*, and a small Transport. To this force were added the Marines of the *Dragon*, and as many armed boats from the Squadron as were thought necessary for disembarking the Troops and covering their landing;— And the whole, placed under the Command of Captain Barrie of the *Dragon*, and the Lieut. Colonel, made Sail up the River at Six o'Clock that Evening.

I have the honor to enclose Captain Barrie's account of his Proceedings<sup>3</sup> and taking into consideration the Enemy's force and formidable strength of his position too much praise cannot be given him— the Officers and men under his Command for the Judgement, Decision and Gallantry with which this little Enterprize has been achieved.

So soon as accounts were received from Captain Barrie that the *Adams* was destroyed, and the force assembled for her protection dispersed, the troops stationed at Belfast were embarked, and arrangements made for sending them to take possession of Machias, the only place occupied by the Enemy's troops, between this and Passamaquoddy Bay. I directed Captain Parker of H: M: Ship *Tenedos* to receive onboard Lieutt. Colonel Pilkington, Deputy Adjutant General who is appointed to command, and a small detachment of Artillery and Riflemen, and to take under his Command the *Bacchante*, *Rifleman*, and *Pictou* Schr., and proceed to the attack of that place.<sup>4</sup> He sailed on the 6th. Instant, and most likely by this time the Troops are in Possession of it. After destroying the defences they are directed to return here.

The Inhabitants of several Townships East of this have sent deputations here to tender their Submission to the British Authority; and such of them as could give reasonable Security that their Arms would be used only for the protection of their own persons and property, have been allowed to retain them. This indulgence was absolutely necessary in order to secure the quiet and unoffending, against Violence and Outrage from their less peaceable neighbours; and for the maintenance of the peace and tranquillity of the Country. All property on shore, bona fide belonging to the Inhabitants of the Country in our possession has been respected. All public property, and all property afloat has been confiscated:

Sir John Sherbrooke conceiving it to be of importance that the Government should be informed without delay of our Successes here, has requested that a Vessel of War may take his dispatches to England.<sup>5</sup> I have in Compliance with his wish appropriated the *Martin* for that Service, and Captain Senhouse will take a Copy of this Letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty.

Rear Admiral Milne in the *Bulwark* will be left here with the *Peruvian*; and I propose returning to Halifax without delay in the *Endymion* I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant,

Edw: Griffith

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fols. 69–71. For other copies of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fols. 131–32, and, Adm. 1/508, fols. 37–40. A printed version is published in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 320–22.

1. Printed above.
2. H.M.S. *Dragon*, H.M.S. *Endymion*, H.M.S. *Bacchante*, and H.M.S. *Sylph*.
3. See Barrie to Griffith, 3 September 1814, above.
4. For documents on the British capture of Machias, see pp. 568–74.
5. The editors of the *London Gazette* published Sherbrooke's dispatches in a special supplement dated 8 October 1814. They included much of the correspondence reproduced here, which Sherbrooke enclosed in a letter to Bathurst dated 18 September 1814.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE TO  
GOVERNOR GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST

Halifax September 23rd. 1814

Sir,

Referring to my letter of the 24th. Ultimo, I have now the honor to report to your Excellency that Rear Admiral Griffith and myself sailed with the force therein mention'd on the 26th. of the same month, and on the 30th. we fell in with the *Riflemen* Sloop of War when Captain Pearse inform'd us that the United States frigate *Adams* had got into the Penobscot but from the apprehension of being attacked by our Cruisers if she remained in the harbor she had run up the river as high as Hamden, where her guns were landed and mounted on Shore for her protection.

This information induced me to postpone attacking Machias for the present and to take the 98th. Regiment and the two rifle Companies of the 60th Regt. on to the Penobscot, where we arrived very early on the morning of the 1st. Inst.

The fort of Castine which is situated upon a peninsula on the Eastern side of the Penobscot near the entrance of that river was summoned a little after Sun rise but the american officer refused to surrender it, and immediately opened a fire from four twenty four pounders upon a small schooner that had been sent with Lieutt. Colonel Nicolls, Commanding Royal Engineer to reconnoitre the work.—

Arrangements were immediately made for disembarking the Troops but before a landing could be effected the Enemy blew up his magazine and escaped up the Majebaguadous river carrying off in the boats with him two field pieces.

As we had no means of ascertaining what force the Americans had on this peninsula, I landed a detachment of Royal Artillery with two rifle Companies of the 60th. Regiment, and the 98th. Regt. under Colonel Douglas in the rear of it with orders to secure the Isthmus and to take possession of the heights which command the Town but I soon learned that there were no regulars at Castine, except the party which had blown up the Magazine and escaped and that the Militia which had assembled there had dispersed immediately on our landing.—

Rear Admiral Griffith and myself next turned our attention to obtaining possession of the *Adams*, or if that could not be done to destroy her.



*Sir John Coape Sherbrooke*

The arrangement for this Service having been made the Admiral entrusted the execution of it to Captn. Barrie R.N. and as the cooperation of a landforce was necessary I directed Lt. Col. John with a detachment of Royal Artillery the flank Companies of the 29th. 62nd. and 98th. Regts. and one rifle company of the 60th. to accompany and cooperate with Captn. Barrie on this occasion, but as Hamden is 27 miles above Castine, it appeared to me a necessary measure of precaution first to occupy a port on the Western bank which might afford support if necessary to the forces going up the river and at the same time prevent the armed population which is very numerous to the Southward and Westward from annoying the British in their operations against the *Adams*.—

Upon enquiry I found that Belfast, which is upon the high road leading from Hamden to Boston and which perfectly commands the Bridge was likely to answer both these purposes, and I consequently directed M: General Gosselin to occupy that place with the 29th. Regt. and to maintain it till further orders. As soon as this was accomplished and the tide served R. Adml. Griffith directed Captn. Barrie to proceed to his destination, and the remainder of the Troops were landed that evening at Castine.

Understanding that a strong party of Militia from the neighboring Townships had assembled about four miles from Castine on the road leading to Blue hill, I marched out a strong patrole on the morning of the 2nd. before day break. on arriving at the place I was inform'd that the Militia of the Country had assembled there on the alarm guns being fired at the fort at Castine upon our first appearance but that the main body had since dispersed and return'd to their respective homes. Some stragglers were however left who fired upon our advanced guard a few of whom were made prisoners.

No intelligence having reached us on Saturday night from Captn. Barrie I marched on Sunday morning the 4th. Inst at 3 oclock with 700 men and two light field pieces upon Buckston. for the purpose of learning what progress he had made and with the view of affording him assistance if required. This place is about eighteen miles higher up the Penobscot than Castine and on the Eastern bank of the river. Rear Admiral Griffith accompanied me on this occasion and as we had reason to believe that the light guns which had been taken from Castine were secreted in the neighbourhood of Buckston. we threaten'd to burn the Town unless they were deliver'd up, and the two brass three pounders on travelling carriages were in consequence brought to us in the course of the day, and are now in our possession.

At Buckstown we receiv'd very satisfactory accounts of the Success which had attended the force employed up the river.—

We learned that Capt. Barrie had proceeded from Hamden up to Bangor and the Admiral sent an officer in a boat from Buckstown to communicate with him, when finding there was no necessity for the Troops remaining longer at Buckston they march'd back to Castine the next day. Having ascertain'd that the object of the expedition up the Penobscot had been attained it was no longer necessary for me to occupy Belfast. I therefore on the evening of the 6th. directed M: Genl. Gosselin to embark the Troops and to join me at Castine.

Machias being the only place now remaining where the Enemy had a Port between the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Bay, I ordered Lt. Col. Pilkington to proceed with a detachment of Royal Artillery and the 29th. Regt. to occupy it,

and as Naval assistance was required, R. Adml. Griffith directed Capt. Parker with the *Tenedos* frigate to cooperate with Lt. Col. Pilkington on this occasion.— On the morning of the 9th. Captn. Barrie with Lt. Col. John and the Troops which had been employed with him returned to Castine. It appears the Enemy blew up the *Adams* on his strong position at Hamden being attacked, but all his Artillery two Stands of Colors and a Standard with several merchant vessels fell into our hands. This I am happy to say was accomplish'd with very little loss on our part and the only officer wounded in this affair was Captn. Gell of the 29th. Grenadiers as your Excellency will perceive by the return herewith enclosed.

I have the honor to transmit a copy of the report made to me by Lt. Col. John on this occasion, in which your Excellency will be pleased to observe that the Lt. Colonel speaks very highly of the gallantry and good conduct displayed by the troops upon this expedition under very trying circumstances, and I beg to call your Excellency's attention to the names of those Officers upon whom Lt. Coll. John particularly bestows praise. The enterprise and intrepidity manifested by Lt. Col. John, and the discipline and gallantry displayed by the Troops under his command reflect great honor upon them and demand my warmest acknowledgements, and will I trust meet with your Excellency's approbation.

As the villages on the banks of the river and along the Sea coast are so thinly scattered that our Troops if they occupied them could not support each other I determined on concentrating our force and taking up a strong position on the peninsula where Castine stands this being a very commanding Situation seperated from the main land by a narrow isthmus.— I have consequently directed Lt. Col. Nicolls the Commandg. Royal Engineer to strengthen this post with some additional field works and to provide cover for the troops during the Winter. At Castine I have appointed Lt. Eaton, 62nd. Regt. to act as Town Adjutant, which appointment will I hope meet your Excellency's approbation.

It being necessary for me to return to Halifax with as little delay as possible I have left M: Genl. Gosselin with a detachment of Artillery, the 29th. and 62nd. Regts. with orders to keep possession of it unless the Enemy should bring such an overwhelming force against him as shall render it quite untenable and any further attempt at defence useless in which case he is to embark his garrison on board the Transports that will be left there for that purpose & return to Halifax. The remainder of the Troops under Coll. Douglas I now expect here every hour.—

I have received from Lt. Col. Pilkington a private communication acquainting me that he had landed some distance from Machias and after a very difficult night's march had taken possession of the fort without loss early the next morning.— Twenty five pieces of ordnance of different calibres fell into our hands on this occasion more than half of which the Enemy had rendered unserviceable. As soon as Lt. Coll. Pilkington's official report reaches me I shall forward a copy of it to your Excellency.—

The Admiral and myself called at Machias on our return where it was my intention to have established a post, but as he was of opinion on looking at the river that the Troops if left there could not be withdrawn by water during bad weather, and finding that no support could be afforded them either from Castine or Moose Island on account of the distance I changed by determination in this respect, and blew up the work there. But in order to maintain military possession

of the district I sent over a Subalterns party to Robinstown from St. Andrews which in case of necessity can be withdrawn at any time.

Finding myself so near the Bay of Passamaquoddy when I was at Machias, I visited the Posts at Moose Island and St. Andrews taking St. John in my way back to Halifax where I arriv'd on the 21st. Inst.—

I have much pleasure in adding that the most perfect unanimity and good understanding has prevailed between the Naval and Military branches of the Service during the whole progress of this expedition.

I feel it my duty to express in the strongest terms the great obligations I am under to R. Adml. Griffith for his judicious advice and ready cooperation on every occasion and my thanks are likewise due to all the Captains of the Ships employed for the assistance they have so willingly afforded the Troops, and from which the happiest results have been experienced.

I have reason to be well satisfied with the gallantry and good conduct of all the Troops, and have to offer my thanks to M: General Gosselin, Colonel Douglas, and the Commanding Officers of Corps for the alacrity shewn by them, and the strict discipline which has been maintained. To the heads of departments, and to the officers of the general, and of my personal Staff, I am much indebted for the Zealous manner in which they have discharged their respective duties.—

Major Addison my Military Secretary who was with me during the whole of these operations has gone in the *Martin* Sloop of War direct to England with my dispatches for Earl Bathurst announcing the proceedings of the force under my command since they left Halifax and reporting my intentions to strengthen and maintain the peninsula of Castine until I shall be honor'd with further orders respecting it. I have also entrusted to his care the Colors and Standard taken from the Enemy to be delivered to Earl Bathurst.

My reason for sending this officer (whom I could ill spare) to England is that I think him very capable of giving every information to His Majesty's Ministers, which they may require respecting the Penobscot, and during Majr. Addisons absence I have appointed Capt. Bazalgette 99th. Regt. to act as my Military Secretary.

As Earl Bathursts dispatch of the 15th. July, left it discretionary with me, how to employ the force at Halifax, I trust your Excellency will approve of my having superintended in person the execution of those operations which have been undertaken in consequence, that the manner in which I have employed that force will appear to your Excellency, as likely to be most beneficial to us, and annoying to the enemy, and that what I have done will meet your approbation. I have the honor to be, with great respect, Sir, Your Excellency's, most obedient Humble Servant

J. C. Sherbooke }  
Lt. Genl.— }

N B. Returns of Killed, Wounded and missing and of Artillery and ordnance Stores taken are enclosed.—

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 684, pp. 238–51.

## DEPOSITION OF SIMEON STETSON OF HAMPDEN, MAINE

I Simeon Stetson of Hampden of lawful age, Testify and say, That on the 3d. day of Sept. 1814 a British force under the Command of Comodore Barrey, made an attack upon the Town of Hampden, and succeeded in repelling all the Military and Naval force that could be brought against them. That they had uninterrupted possession of the town for three days, during that time the Town was given up to plunder and the most wanton distruction of private as well as publick property, and not only the soldiers but the Officers were engaged in this Nefareous Traffic. that they destroyed private property to the amount of forty or fifty Thousand Dollars, That many of the families of the town are striped of every article of property. the consequences of which will be felt for many years of prosperity should those days ever return<sup>1</sup>

That the United States Ship *Adams* at that time was at Hampden Capt. Morris burnt the Ship and that the British Commander took possession of the wreck, that he striped it of every thing he could get hold of or that was worth carrying away with him. The town choose a Committe together with the Select Men of the town to wate upon the British Commander at Castine to obtain the Release of between sixty and seventy of its inhabitants whom they had carreyed away as prisoners of war, and if possible to obtain some compensation for the property so Cruelly taken from them. They attended that service, and after much Solisitation and delay they obtaind a parole for there prisoners. upon condition of the Militia of the town surrendering up there armes, and the town Ransoming there shipping at twelve Thousand Dollars, And the Commander in reply to our request for compensation for property plundered from the town by his Armeysaid the Town was taken by Storm. that he had a wright by the Usages of War to plunder and take from a Town so taken every article of property. that he should make no compensation. But observed that he had captured the United States Ship *Adams* and had left at Hampden the remains of her wreck, where he would assigne to the Committe of Hampden for them to collect and dispose of. for the relief of the sufferers of the town

I am one of the said Committe, and have attended ~~to~~ the personnally to the Collecting and secureing the remain[*in*]g articles from said wreck— we have been at a great expence in draging some of the things from the bottom of the River, collecting, and secureing the property

That in my oppinion after paying off all the expences which we have been at in thus Collecting and secureing the property. there will be but a small ballance remaining Should they be disposed of at the best advantage

Simeon Stetson

Hancock [–] On the fifth day of October A—D, 1814 Personally appeared Simeon Stetson Esqr. and made solemn oath, that the Deposition above written by him subscribed is just, and true

Before me  
 Enoch Brown Justice of the Peace  
 within & for the County of Hancock

DS, DNA, RG45, AF 7 (M625, Roll No. 77).

1. For a newspaper account of the plundering of Hampden, see “*Extract of a letter dated Bangor, September 24, 1814,*” *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 13 October 1814.

## Adams Aflame

With Adams severely damaged after grounding on *Isle au Haut*, Charles Morris had little choice but to put into the Penobscot River to repair his injured vessel. Having received intelligence that the British intended to attack Castine, where an American fort guarded the river's entrance, Morris sought a safe anchorage at which to repair Adams.<sup>1</sup> He chose the town of Hampden, thirty miles upriver from Castine on the western shore of the Penobscot. On the afternoon of 1 September, Morris received word that the feared British invasion force had arrived off Castine.

Morris coordinated the defense of Hampden and Adams with Brigadier General John Blake of the Massachusetts State Militia, stationing the corvette's men and guns ashore to defend the land and river approaches to the town. At daylight on 3 September, a combined force of 700 regulars, Royal Marines, and Royal Artillerymen, supported by armed boats and warships from the British squadron, assaulted Hampden.<sup>2</sup> Morris and his crewmen offered a spirited resistance to the enemy's forces but were obliged to withdraw when the local militia guarding their rear took flight. The American captain set Adams ablaze before abandoning it to the oncoming foe, bringing a painful, disappointing close to his first seagoing command.

Over the next week, Morris and his men made a 200-mile overland retreat to Portsmouth, New Hampshire—a journey that was fraught with much hardship and privation.<sup>3</sup> Following a court of inquiry, which absolved him of any blame in the loss of Adams, Morris assumed command of the frigate *Congress*, then lying at Portsmouth.<sup>4</sup> His hope to make a wartime cruise in *Congress* went unfulfilled as he could never muster more than a partial crew before peace was declared.

1. Morris makes no mention of an expected attack in his official correspondence prior to 1 September. In his autobiography, he writes: "Information having reached us that an attack upon Castine was apprehended, we proceeded up the river to Hampden, as a place of great safety. . . ." Morris, *Autobiography*, p. 79. One source of this information may have been the *New-Brunswick Courier*, a Canadian newspaper that reported on the likelihood of such an attack over two weeks before it occurred. See Stanley, *War of 1812*, p. 370.

2. For documents treating British operations in the Penobscot, including the captures of Castine, Hampden, and Bangor, see pp. 521–41.

3. For Morris's narrative of this retreat, see Morris, *Autobiography*, pp. 81–82.

4. The court of enquiry investigating Adams's loss was held at Portsmouth Navy Yard on 11 October 1814. See RG125, CM, Vol. 5, No. 175 (M273, Roll No. 7). Owing to his poor health, Captain John Smith resigned command of *Congress* to Morris. See Smith to Jones, 17 November 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, bound after No. 2 (M125, Roll No. 41), Morris to Jones, 17 November 1814, *ibid.*, No. 3., and, Jones to Morris, 23 November 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 462 (M149, Roll No. 11). For Morris's cruising orders in *Congress*, see Jones to Morris, 30 November 1814, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 219–20 (T829, Roll No. 453).

### CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Adams [*Hampden*, Maine] Sept. 1st. 1814

Sir

I have this moment received an express from Castine announcing fifteen sail of the Enemy's vessels ascending this river within two miles of that place— I presume I shall be compelled to lay my ship on shore against a wharf to relieve the men from the pumps that they may attend to the construction and management of Batteries for her defence Respectfully your Obd. Sevt.

C Morris.

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 2 (M125, Roll No. 39).



## CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

“Waterville on the Kennebeck  
Sept 6. 1814”

“Dear Sir,

“I have the misfortune to inform you that we were compelled to destroy the *Adams* on Saturday last<sup>1</sup> at Hamden, and to retreat through the woods across the country to this place with the loss of every thing but the clothes we happened to have upon us. We were obliged to disperse in every direction, to obtain subsistence in the woods, which has prevented the possibility of ascertaining if any have been captured, but think the number, excepting the sick, is very small—(I shall give directions for them to rendezvous at Portsmouth on the 20th inst) and shall proceed to that place immediately accompanied by the officers.

We were driven from our position by their troops, before their water force came within gunshot— The Millitia made but a feable stand, dispersing at the first fire. The number of the enemy’s troops unknown but I believe about 800— Their water force, a Sloop of War, Brig, Transport & two Barges.<sup>2</sup> Be assured that the measures adopted by us, were all that our situation would authorise, our only choice was retreat or captivity—all that we could preserve was our Flag. Hoping soon to be with you. I remain yrs” very sincerely

(Signed) C. Morris

P.S. Only three officers are missing & they are I beleive safe on another route.

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 37, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 39). Bainbridge’s letter to Jones enclosing Morris’s correspondence was dated 10 September 1814. Notation at top of page reads: “Copy of a Letter from Capt. Morris/ to Commo. Bainbridge, dated.” Addressed at foot of page, opposite signature line: “Commo. Bainbridge/Boston.”

1. On 3 September.

2. In addition to armed boats from the squadron, the attacking naval force consisted of H. M. brig-sloops *Peruvian* and *Sylph*, the transport *Harmony*, and the tender to the ship of the line *Dragon*.

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth Sept. 8th. 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that this days mail from the Eastward has brought the distressing intelligence that the *Adams* Frigate has been blown up by Captain Morris, and that his crew are now on their way to this place. I have not heard the particulars, but the report is that Capt. Morris was the last that left the Ship, and that he was lost in attempting to swim on shore.<sup>1</sup>

I still have hopes however that this report is unfounded, as the enclosed letter from Mr. Storer, Navy Agent at Portland does not mention his loss.— I had, previous to this news, dispatched a letter to Capt. M. directing him in the event of the loss of the *Adams*, to come on with his crew, with all possible dispatch to this place. They are now on their way, and when they arrive I shall detain them here for the defence of this harbour, and must earnestly ask of you to let them remain until the season is so far passed as to prevent the enemy from operating on the coast. They will be of great service and I hope may yet enable us to make a stand. Be assured, notwithstanding all that has been said to you about the security of this harbour, and the difficulty of taking the place, it is not safe, and so sensible are the inhabitants now of it, that they are moving off in all directions; and to their shame be it known they have not fixed ammunition sufficient to defend themselves with, for one half hours close action. The enclosed letter received from the Governour will shew you the state they are in for want of Powder, Shot, grape &c.<sup>2</sup> I shall do all I can to furnish them, but we have not many articles that will suit them.

General Dearborn has ordered out twelve hundd. men. They will be here in six or eight days, but probably without being half armed, or if they have arms not more than one to ten will be likely to have the same calibre, consequently will require different balls to suit them.

The stores from the *Congress* are now going up the river, as are also those of the 74, that are not wanted immediately. I consider them much safer there than at the yard. I shall not keep any thing here except what is absolutely necessary. I regret that we shall not be able to launch the Ship so soon as I expected;<sup>3</sup> we have sent in all directions for Carpenters and Caulkers, but they do not come in so fast as I hoped they would. I presume one reason is they do not like the idea of working on an Island, where there is no chance of retreating— With the greatest respect I have the honour to be, Sir Your Obedient Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 30 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. False reports of Morris's death were widely publicized in early newspaper accounts of the attack on Hampden. See, for example, the 9 September 1814 issue of the *Salem* (Massachusetts) *Gazette* that reported, "Our Navy has lost one of its brightest ornaments. The gallant MORRIS is no more."

2. Enclosure not printed. In this letter to Hull of 6 September 1814, New Hampshire Governor John T. Gilman asked for the loan of "powder, balls, & grape Shott" for the state's militia forces.

3. The ship of the line *Washington* was launched on 1 October 1814. See pp. 274–76.

[Enclosure]

Portland Sept. 6. 1814—

Sir—

Since I wrote you on the 4th Instant<sup>1</sup> I have received the painfull Intellegence— by some of the *Adams* Crew—who arrived here this afternoon that the ship was burnt by Capt. Moris after defending her in the best manner he could and ordering the Crew to make there escape from falling into the hands of the Enemy—if

Possible—these men are on their way to report themselves to you under the care of Mr. Noble—who I refer you to for particulars— I have expressly requested Midn. Abbot who came in Town this morning to proceed on immediately and forward all the men as he mig[*h*]t meet them untill he should meet the Officers, then to render every Assistance in getting the men on to you as soon as possible— these men say Capt. Morris was the last who left the Ship—being determined to have her well fired— The express I sent the Night before last—with possitive orders to delever my letter to Capt. Morris at Hampden—on meeting those men a few Miles beyond Augusta—who informed him the Ship was destroyed Immedately returned with the letter without pro[cee]ding According to Instructions and arrived last Night, was the Cause of my despatching Mr. Abbot— I Am Respectfully Sir, Your Obedient Servt.

Sam<sup>l</sup> Storer  
N[*avy*]. Agent

Isaac Hull

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 30, enclosure (M125, Roll 39).

1. Letter not found.

#### CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 9th Sept. 1814

Sir,

I yesterday had the unpleasant task to inform you of the loss of the Frigate *Adams*, and that a report prevailed in this place that Captain Morris was either drowned or blown up with the ship. I now have the pleasure to inform you that Captain Morris with all his officers and crew are well and on their way to this place, except six of the Crew; three marines are missing, supposed to be taken or killed, and three seamen were left sick, so much so, that the[y] could not be removed. Captain Morris will be here to day and will no doubt as soon as possible give you an account of his proceedings.<sup>1</sup>

The Militia of the country where his ship lay had collected in considerable force, indeed enough to have saved the ship, by beating off the Enemy, but the moment they came in sight, the militia left him to a man, which obliged him to fire and abandon her, and make their escape by swimming or fording a creek.

I have provided quarters for the Officers and crew and I most earnestly hope that you will let them remain here until the season for operating on the coast has passed.<sup>2</sup> I consider our situation here a critical one, and all the force we can collect will not, I fear, save us if the Enemy came with any considerable numbers, and we have a right to suppose they will.

I am now convinced the attack if made will be by landing troops at York, and marching to the back of the Island, where they can get within musket shot of the

buildings on the Island, and be under cover from our guns, in a position like this, the rockets (tho' machines that we ought not to be alarmed at in most situations) would in this annoy us.— I am doing all I can to get the Ship afloat; if I can do it, and get the guns of the *Congress* and Gunboats on board her, I shall feel much more secure—I have the honour to be, with great respect Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

Isaac Hull

Several of the crew of the *Adams* have arrived but worn down in Travelling—

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 36 (M125, Roll No. 39). Bracketed text is supplied from the letter book copy of this letter. See Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2 (16 March 1814–17 March 1815).

1. Morris sent Secretary Jones a brief report on *Adams's* loss on 8 September. See Morris to Jones, 8 September 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 32 (M125, Roll No. 39). For his detailed report to the Navy Secretary on this subject, see Morris to Jones, 20 September 1814, below.

2. Commodore Bainbridge asserted his seniority in rank over Hull in order to transfer a portion of *Adams's* crew to the Charlestown Navy Yard to aid in its defense. Secretary Jones later countermanded Bainbridge's order and directed the return of the *Adams* sailors to Portsmouth. For correspondence on this subject, see pp. 576–78.

#### NEWS REPORT OF THE RETREAT OF *ADAMS'S* CREW

*HALLOWELL: [District of Maine]*  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1814<sup>1</sup>

The officers and crew of the *Adams*, nearly to a man, have already passed this place for Portsmouth, where we understand they are ordered to rendezvous. Capt. MORRIS, for whose fate, from the first report of the affair at Hamden, a great solicitude prevailed, arrived on Tuesday evening<sup>2</sup> in good health. His fellow citizens, feeling a general and instantaneous impulse, crowded to his quarters, desirous of paying their respects to so gallant an officer; and he was immediately welcomed by a salute of Artillery. The pleasing deportment and frankness of this gentleman, peculiar to the American sailor, joined with his known courage and professional skill, has left a highly favorable and lasting impression on those who were so fortunate as to be near him, during a short evening he tarried in the village.

From the officers we learn, that the plan of defence, if not shamefully abandoned by the militia, must have resulted in the defeat if not entire capture of the British detachment. By the disgraceful retreat of the former, Capt. Morris and his men were left entirely exposed, and their retreat in a great measure cut off; as by the time he was informed the militia had fled, the British was in possession of the Bridge. Fortunately for this brave man and his associates, it was low tide, and the creek fordable about waste high; through this they plunged and reached the opposite bank in safety, leaving every article except what was upon them. Capt. Morris fearing what might happen, had taken the precaution to place combustibles in his ship in order to burn her; and finding all further defence useless,

directed the fire to be communicated and she was immediately enveloped in flames. With her was also consumed a Store in which the goods captured during the cruise were deposited.

Printed, *American Advocate and Kennebec Advertiser* (Hallowell, Maine), 10 September 1814.

1. This dateline reproduces the text as it appears under the column heading “*AMERICAN ADVOCATE*.”

2. Tuesday, 6 September 1814.

### CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Boston September 20th. 1814

Sir

I have the honor to forward a detailed report of the circumstances attending the destruction of the U.S. Ship *Adams* at Hampden on the 3rd Instant.

On the first instant at noon I recieved intelligence by express that the enemy with a force of sixteen sail were off the harbor of Castine 30 miles below us— This intelligence was immediately forwarded to Brig. Genl. Blake, with a request, that he would direct such force as could be collected to repair immediately to Hampden— As our ship prepared for heaving down was in no situation to recieve her armament, Our attention was immediately directed to the occupation of such positions on shore as would best enable us to protect her— By great and unremitted exertions, and the prompt assistance of a[ll] the inhabitants in our immediate vicinity, during the 1st and 2[nd] instants nine pieces were transported to a commanding eminence near the ship, one to the place selected by Genl. Bla[ke] for his line of battle, fourteen upon a wharf command[ing] the river below, and one at a point covering the communication between our hill and wharf batteries— temporary pla[t]forms of loose plank were laid, and such other arrangement[s] made as would enable us to dispute the passage of a nav[al] force. Want of time prevented our improving all the advantages of our position, and we were compelled to leave our rear and flanks to the defence of the militia in cas[e] of attack by land troops. Favoured by a fresh breeze t[he] Enemy had advanced to within 3 miles of our position at sunset on the 2nd with the *Sylph* mounting 22 & *Peruvian* 18 Gu[ns] & one transport, one tender and ten Barges manned with seam[en] from the *Bulwark* and *Dragon* under command of Comre. Barrie,— Troops were landed under command of Col John opposite their shipping without any opposition, their numbers unknown but supposed to be about 350—. To oppose th[ese] troops, about 370 militia were then collected assisted by Lt Lewis of the U.S. Artillery who by a forced march had arr[ived] from Castine with his detachment of 28 men.— Many of the militia were without arms and most of them without any ammunition and as our own numbers were barely sufficient to man our batteries, I ordered the ships’ muskets to be distributed among the militia and further ordered them to be supplied with ammunition.— Our sick were sent across a creek with orders for such as were able, to secure

themselves in the woods in case of our defeat— These arrangements were not concluded until late on the evening of the 2nd.— As the wind was fair for the Enemy's approach and the night dark, rainy and favourable for his attempting a surprize, our men were compelled notwithstanding previous fatigue to remain at their batteries— At Day light on the 3rd I received Intelligence from Genl. Blake that he had been reinforced by three companies, and that the Enemy were then advancing upon him— A thick fog concealed their early movements, and their advance of Barges and Rocket Boats were not discovered until about 7 O'Clock— Believing from their movements that they intended a Simultaneous attack by Land and Water, I placed the hill battery under the direction of my first Lieut. Wadsworth assisted by Lieut. Madison and Mr. Rogers the Purser, and directed Lieut. Watson to place his small detachment of 20 marines in a position to watch the movements of the enemy's main body, assist in covering our flank, and finally to cover our retreat in case that became necessary— I had but just joined the wharf battery under the direction of Lieut's. Parker and Beatty and Sailing Master M'Culloh—when the enemy's Infantry commenced their attack upon [t]he militia— The launches still held their position beyond [t]he reach of our fire, ready to improve any advantage [t]heir troops might obtain.— A few minutes only had elapsed when Lieut. Wadsworth informed me that our troops were [re]treating and immediately after, that they were dispersed and flying in ~~all directions~~ great Confusion— We had now [n]o alternative but precipitate retreat or captivity—Our rear and flanks entirely exposed without other means of defence on that [si]de than our pikes and Cutlasses— The only bridge across [the] creek above us, nearer the enemy than ourselves and the [cr]eek only fordable at low water with the tide then rising— I therefore ordered Lieut. Wadsworth to spike his guns, and [re]tire across the bridge, which was done in perfect order [th]e marines under Lieut. Watson covering their rear— Orders were given at the Same time to fire the Ship, Spike the Guns of the lower battery and join our companions across the creek, before these orders were fully executed the enemy appeared on the hill from which our men had just retired and were exposed to their fire for a short time wh[ile] completing them— retreating in front of them for about 500 yards we discovered it impossible to gain the bridge, forded the creek, ascended the opposite bank and joined our companions without recieving the slightest injur[y] from the ill directed fire of the enemy— We continued our retreat towar[ds] Bangor where we formed and retired upon a road leading to the Kennebec by a circuitous route of 65 miles.— Percieving it impossible to subsist our men in a body through a cou[n]try almost destitute of Inhabitants, they were ordered to repair to Portland as speedily as they might [be] able— The entire loss of all personal effects rendered us dependent on the generosity of the inhabitants between the Pen[ob]scot and Kennebec for subsistence.— Who most cheerfully a[nd] liberally supplied our wants to the utmost extent of their limited means— Our warmest thanks are also due to the inhabitants of Waterville, Augusta and Hallowell fo[r] their liberality and attention.— Our loss was but one m[a]rine and one seaman made prisoners— That of the E[ne]my was estimated at 8 or 10 killed and from 40 to 50 wou[n]ded, principally by the eighteen pounder under charge of L[t.] Lewis of the U.S. Artillery—.

The character of my first Lieut. Wadsworth was alr[ea]dy too well established to require the additional evidence he gave of richly deserving the entire

confidence of the Department and his country— His brother officers of the Navy and marines, equally zealous and attentive, are equally entitled to my thanks and their country's approbation— The bravery of the Seamen and marines is unquestioned,—their uncommon good conduct upon their march—Those feelings which induced [t]hem to rally round their flag at a distance of 200 miles from the place of their dispersion, without one instance of desertion, entitle them to particular approbation, and render them an example which their brother tars may ever be proud to emulate— very respectfully yr. Obt. Servt.

C: Morris

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 72 (M125, Roll No. 39). Bracketed text supplied by a printed version of this letter published in the 30 September 1814 issue of the *Daily National Intelligencer*.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS

Capt. Charles Morris }  
U.S. Navy }  
Portsmouth N.H. }

Navy Department  
Sept. 29th. 1814

Sir,

The late disaster and consequent derangement of the Department, may account for my not sooner answering your letters announcing your arrival and narrating the events of your cruise, which you will have seen published.—

That relating to your subsequent disaster and final destruction of the *Adams*, will probably appear in the *Intelligencer* of tomorrow.—<sup>1</sup>

Under all these circumstances of misfortune, the confidence of the Department, and I doubt not of your country remains unshaken, and it will give to me great pleasure to afford you an early opportunity of active service in which the best success can no more than reward your merits & services.— I am very respectfully &c.

W: Jones:

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 430 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. See *Daily National Intelligencer*, 30 September 1814.

## A Native Son Comes to Philadelphia's Defense

*With the arrival of a large British expeditionary force in the Chesapeake in August of 1814, and the nation's capital threatened, Philadelphians correctly surmised that William Penn's city was the likely target of future British operations. To ready their city against the expected enemy assault, the citizens of Philadelphia appointed a committee to organize their town's defenses. One of the first acts of the newly chosen committeemen was to lobby the President and his cabinet for defensive assistance. The committee's*

*representatives arrived in Washington only two days after the occupying British army had departed. Although Madison and his cabinet assured the committeemen of their desire to help Philadelphia, they could offer little immediate support as long as British forces continued to menace the region, in particular the city of Baltimore. The efforts of Secretary Jones to aid his native city in the wake of the attacks on Washington and Baltimore are the focus of the documents below.*

REPORT TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE FOR THE  
DEFENCE OF PHILADELPHIA

Philadelphia Septemr. 2d 1814

The Committee appointed on the night of 27th. August to proceed to the Department of War and to confer with the Secretary of War and to confer on the subject of the defence of this District, and also to confer with the Secretary of the Navy, &ca. &ca.

Report,

That they left Philadelphia at 12 OClock the night of their appointment, and arrived at Baltimore, at 11 OClock the next night,<sup>1</sup> where they held a conference of about 2 hours, with Commodore Rodgers, who stated that he then had an organized force of fourteen hundred Men, divided into two Regiments, the first commanded by Capt. Porter, the other by Capt. Perry—that he would afford all the aid in his power for the defence of our City and district—that, under present circumstances, he could bring only part of his forces to our assistance, unless the Committee could obtain discretionary orders for him, from the Secretary of the Navy; in which case he would do all in his power, with his force, to protect us from the Enemy, & would act with all practicable despatch— The Commodore further declared, that he should be pleased, at all times, to co-operate with the General Committee.

Your Committee left Baltimore about 4 OClock, on monday morning, and arrived at Washington, about 2 OClock, P.M., passing over the field of battle, and beholding with poignant mortification, the effects of want of foresight and fit organization of the measures of defence, for that district.

During the afternoon, your Committee waited upon the President, the Secretary of War (then John Armstrong) the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Navy, & the Attorney General, who had then all returned to the City of Washington, but without any fixed residence— They all conversed freely on our business, appeared to be convinced of its' importance, and declared their readiness to grant us all the protection in their power, consistent with their resources & the claims of other quarters of the Union.

On Tuesday morning, we addressed letters to the Secretary of War & Secretary of the Navy, copies of which you have herewith, No. 1 & 2, &, proceeding to deliver the letters, we found that Mr. Armstrong had departed, at an early honor, for New York, and Mr. Monroe was acting as Secretary of War, to whom we gave our communication No. 1.

During the afternoon, we again waited on Mr. Monroe. He informed us that our communication was then before the President, that he did not think it



practicable to give us a written answer that Evening, as the heads of the different Departments were scattered, without their papers to refer to; & arrangements being in preparation, in consequence of the Enemy's being then at Alexandria, that other business of importance required their immediate care: but that the President was well aware of our situation, and had every disposition to comply with our wishes & expectations—that our communication should receive the earliest attention, & an answer be forwarded to Philadelphia, to prevent our being delayed at Washington—

We waited upon the Secretary of the Navy, & conversed freely with him, upon the objects of our appointment— He told us that Commodore Rodgers was ordered to Washington, with a detachment of his forces, for a particular object, which would be terminated in a few days, when he should return to the command of our District, and would be instructed to act agreeably to the wish expressed by us—that he would also send, by post, to Philadelphia, a written answer to our communication, and would do all in his power, should he be compelled by the President, to aid the objects embraced, in our letter to the Secretary of War, which was read to him— We also received, from the Secretary of the Navy, an order for the cannon mentioned in our letter to him— Mr. Rush, the Attorney General, also engaged to use his influence to the same effect.

The subject of discharging the men employed upon the Seventy four, now building in this port, would be taken into consideration, and orders, in relation thereto, would be issued—

Upon the whole, your Committee confidently trusts, that the answers expected from the two Departments will be satisfactory to the General Committee

(signed) Manl. Eyre  
Tho. Cadwalader

. . . Copies of papers referred to in the above report . . .

No. 2—

(Copy)

To the honble. Wm. Jones,  
Secretary of Navy

George Town D.C. 30th. Augt. 1814

Dear Sir

As a Committee from the grand Committee of Defence for the City & County of Philadelphia, we are authorized to call on you for such aid in resisting any attack of the Enemy as will be consistent with the duties of your Department to grant. Considering the aid of our naval resources and the personal services of the Navy Officers, Seamen and Marines will be most essentially necessary for the protection of the Ships & public property in Philadelphia and it's vicinity as well as for the safety and defence of the City of Philadelphia and the Bay and river Delaware— We hope the Crews of the Flotilla will at no time be so far weakened as to endanger its' safety and leave that avenue to the City unprotected. As Commodore Rodgers has now a very respectable force under his command, we are desirous that you should give him immediate instructions to employ the whole or any part, of that force, at his discretion for the defence of the City of Philadelphia

and its approaches, should the Enemy's force at any time in that quarter require it— Having the fullest confidence in the abilities, courage & discretion of Commodore Rodgers we rely upon his using his force at those points where it is most essential for the good of our Country— We therefore wish his instructions to be as general as you can make them consistent with the public welfare— Should Commodore Rodgers's services be required by you at this time distant from the Delaware, the important interest we represent calls upon us to ask of you the immediate appointment of Captain Porter to the command of our District, still calculating upon the aid of Commodore Rodgers and his force, under the discretionary orders above referred to— We thank you for the offer of the public ordnance under your controul and will accept of the four guns now lying in Baltimore of the description you mentioned, and we shall make use of them if the occasion requires it— We assure you, on behalf of the General Committee that we shall be pleased to co-operate most cordially with you in repelling within our military district every invasion of the Enemy With respect, &ca.

(Signed) Manuel Eyre  
Thos. Cadwalader

LB, PHi, Philadelphia Committee of Defense Letter Books, Vol. 1, pp. 49–51, 54–55. Quotation marks appear at the beginning and end of each line, which are not reproduced here. For another printed version of this report, see *Committee of Defence of Philadelphia*, pp. 63–66, 69–70.

1. Sunday, 28 August.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MANUEL EYRE AND THOMAS CADWALADER

Manuel Eyre  
&  
Thos Cadwalader } Esqrs

Navy Department  
Sepr. 7th 1814.

sub Committee of the Committee of Defence  
for the City & County of Philadelphia

Gentlemen

My incessant occupation with the preparations and measures adopted under the hope of destroying or annoying the Enemy's Squadron in the Potomac, and the derangement of the Department by the late disaster may account for the delay in answering your letter of the 30th Ultó.— Commodore Rodgers has returned to Baltimore with the whole of his force and will immediately proceed to his Station on the Delaware, The Instructions from this Department to Com. Rodgers in relation to the defence of your District will be as comprehensive and discretionary as the nature of the Service and due attention to the protection of neighbouring districts will admit; but a powerful force of the Enemy being constantly in the Chesapeake within a few hours sail of Baltimore which may be attacked when least expected, it is not considered expedient or safe to authorize the withdrawing of

the local Naval force allotted for the special protection of that place without the previous sanction of this Department, where it is presumed the movements & designs of the Enemy in the Chesapeake may be better known than at Philadelphia. The intricacy and hazard of the navigation of the Delaware particularly at this season will not admit of the approach of a formidable hostile force with such rapidity as to preclude the knowledge of this Department and the execution of its orders to the force at Baltimore— You may however rest assured of the Vigilant attention of this Departmt. and the prompt application of the means it may have at command for the protection of your district whenever the approach of the Enemy shall endanger its safety I am Very Respectfully Your Obt Servt.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 214–15 (M209, Roll No. 4). For a printed copy of this letter, see *Committee of Defence of Philadelphia*, pp. 119–20.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
GEORGE LATIMER, JOHN SERGEANT, AND JOSEPH REED

Navy Department  
Sept. 10th. 1814

Sirs

I have been honored with your letter of the 7th. Inst. enclosing a Copy of a resolution of the general Committee of Defence, to which you request my answer—

The U.S. Ship *Guerriere* is now equipping for service with all possible dispatch under the direction of her Commander Commodore Rodgers, who is also charged with the command of the Flotilla on the Delaware with ample authority to employ the whole Naval force under his Command, in such manner as shall appear to him best calculated to defend the important interests on the Banks of that River, and from the known skill & indefatigable attention of that excellent Officer, no doubt can exist of the best position being selected for the *Guerriere*.—

You will recollect that the Crew of that ship constitutes the principal part of the force of the flotilla, which it would be improper to withdraw until that of the Enemy shall compel the Flotilla to return & force a junction with the *Guerriere* whenever she may be placed—

Feeling a deep and anxious solicitude for the safety and prosperity of my native City permit me to suggest as the most probable Channel of invasion, the road from Chester to Philadelphia, a march of but five hours, through an open country free from obstruction either natural or artificial, except the Schuylkill; from the margin of which, the City may be destroyed, or an army passed over on pontoons in a few hours, covered by its own artillery from the commanding heights on the west bank of that River. Would it not be prudent to construct field works on the most commanding and tenable positions on the Chester road, and to prepare an extensive train of heavy Artillery (18 & 24 pounders) & large Howitzers) on travelling carriages to defend these positions, or others should to Enemy pursue a different route—

I consider a system of heavy Ordnance well supplied with fixed ammunition & prepared for rapid transportation as among our most potent means of defence. I by no means intend to divert attention from the defence of Fort Miflin— the Enemy may approach in both directions at the same time—

The Season is so far advanced that he will dread the intricate navigation & rapid tide of the Delaware Bay during the boisterous interval between the Autumnal & Vernal Equinoxes— Would it not be well to employ that interval in the effectual obstruction of the Channel by Chevauxdefrize, below & within the range of the Guns of the Battery on the Pea Patch, which together with the flotilla would prevent their removal—

The Chevauxdefrize employed for that purpose near Mud fort and opposite Billingsport during our Revolutionary War proved very affectual until their defence was abandoned. At the latter place the Chevauxdefrize in Mid Channel was 44 feet from the horn to the base.—

The desolating purposes officially avowed by the Enemy & the probable continuance of the War until his Vengeance shall be satiated or his temerity punished by the United energies of a free people admonish us to prepare for the Worst while we have yet time to preserve from destruction our flourishing & beautiful Cities

Such Ordnance as can be dispensed with from the actual service of the Navy will be loaned to the Committee with pleasure upon condition to return them when required, unless lost or destroyed in the Service—

The Motive I trust will furnish a sufficient appology for these suggestions; & I beg you to be assured that every cooperation within the power of this Department & compatible with a just distribution of the limited means under its direction will be chearfully afforded I am very Respectfully Your obt Servt

Messrs	{	George Latimer John Sergeant Joseph Read	}	Committee of Correspondence of the General Committee of defence for the City of Philada.
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W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 215–17 (M209, Roll No. 4).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
GEORGE LATIMER, JOHN SERGEANT, AND JOSEPH REED

Geo Latimer	}	Esqrs Corresponding	Navy Department Sept 18th 1814
Jno Sergeant			
Joseph Reed			
Committee of Defence for the City & County of Phila.			

Gentlemen

I have been honored with your letter of the 14th Inst. enclosing Copy of two Resolutions of the General Committee, of Defence instructing their Committee of Correspondence to address the Secretary of the Navy on the subject of those resolutions.<sup>1</sup> The Object of the first resolution I have provided for by instructing

the Navy Agent to deliver to the Order of the Committee, fifty repeating Muskets, with a due proportion of ammunition for the same, upon their engagement to return the muskets when required, these arms having been constructed for the special service of the Navy. I take this opportunity to observe, that all the munitions of War now in the Arsenals of the Navy Department are actually required for the use of the Navy on the Several Stations and could not be replaced in due time to meet the exigencies of the Service, if otherwise disposed of except some Cannon which may be loaned upon the conditions stated in my former letter; that the Department of War is abundantly supplied with all the munitions of War appropriated by law for the purposes contemplated by the Committee and to that Department application will properly be made for all military supplies.—

With respect to the 2nd. Resolution, I beg leave to assure the [Members] of the Committee of my high respect for their opinions, and judgment, for the laudable zeal which they manifest and of my earnest desire to cooperate in all things compatible with the duty & high responsibility of the Station which I have the honor to hold; but as the Committee can have but a partial view of the urgency of the service on other Stations and of the consequences of delaying the movement, of the Public force I submit it to their candour whether their remonstrance against the lawful and proper exercise of the Executive authority, in the Command and distribution of the Naval force, and of the interpositions of their influence, with an Officer of the Navy to suspend the execution of a positive order which his sense of duty could not permit him to do, is such, as, upon reconsideration, they can approve I am very respectfully Your Ob. Servt.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 222–23 (M209, Roll No. 4).

1. Letter not found, but the enclosed resolutions are printed in *Committee of Defence of Philadelphia*. The first resolution called on Secretary Jones to “give an order to Joseph G. Chambers to furnish repeating guns to a corps he” had organized to defend the city. The second resolution requested that Commodore Murray be ordered to detain sailors recruited in the city for service on the Lakes. See *Committee of Defence of Philadelphia*, pp. 137–38.

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Navy Department  
Sept. 19th. 1814

Sir

You will without delay repair to your Command on the Delaware with the Officers seamen and marines which you brought with you from that station to Baltimore

The Naval command at Baltimore will of course devolve on Captain Perry who although he has written to the Depmt. that he should avail himself of the previous permission granted him to proceed to New Port R I on his private concerns will defer the execution of his intention for a short time until the

aspect of things on the Chesapeake shall be more settled. You cannot be too expeditious in your movement to the Delaware as considerable alarm prevails in consequence of a reported force in its vicinity and your flotilla on that river is so weak that no material defence could be made in your absence. In the event of the invasion of the Delaware or of its shores from whatever quarter by a strong force, you will order the Commanding Officer at Baltimore to join you with three hundred and fifty Officers and seamen without delay unless Baltimore should at the same time be actually menaced by a strong force in its immediate vicinity; and in the event of the invasion of the Patapsco by a strong force while the Delaware shall be free from invasion you will repair to Balto. with a like force for the relief of that place.

Should you have occasion to draw the detachment from Baltimore the residue of that force remaining there will be of the flotilla allotted for the local defence of the Waters of the Chesapeake which force having been enlisted under particular circumstances you will place what may remain there, under the command of its local Officers until the force withdrawn shall be again concentrated at Baltimore. The passage from Baltimore to the head of the Bay is I presume free from obstruction by the enemy which will enable you to transport your force with convenience and celerity.

It is possible that the attitude of the enemy may be such as to render it at times doubtful whether to concentrate your force on the Delaware or at Baltimore. In this case an intermediate position may be found expedient and Elkton may be as convenient as any other for that purpose Very respectfully Your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

LS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers. MSS38125, Box III:23. For the letter book copy of this correspondence, see DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 418–19 (M149, Roll No. 11).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Navy Department  
Sept. 22d. 1814

Sir

I enclose a copy of my letter to Com Decatur<sup>1</sup> relative to the reciprocal concentration of the Officers and Crews of the U S. Ships *President* and *Guerriere* at Philadelphia or New York in the event of either place being invaded while the other is not, and you will please to receive as an instruction that part of the letter which relates to yourself

It is morally impossible by the most equitable efficient and liberal principle of defence for our Cities, to satisfy the good people of each, as with a policy as extraordinary as it may be disastrous, they appear to look not beyond their own immediate defence. Your temporary absence from the Delaware I understand has given rise to much uneasiness and free censure of the Department, although the salvation of Philada. in a great degree has been owing to the concentration of

the Naval force at Baltimore and now I have to encounter the displeasure of the good people of the latter place who appear to be much excited by your return to the Delaware. It is certainly true that Philada. may be invaded with more facility and rapidity than is generally understood as a fleet may in twenty four hours enter the Capes of Delaware and debark a large army at Chester— yet as there has been no appearance of a force off the Delaware and Baltimore had been and may again be attacked by an increased force in as many hours and as the enemy is still in force in the Chesapeake I must request you to keep a vigilant eye toward Baltimore and fly to its relief in the prospect of danger. I am respectfully Your Obed. Serv.

W Jones

LS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers. MSS38125, Box III:23. For the letter book copy of this correspondence, see DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 422 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. See Jones to Decatur, 19 September 1814, p. 486.

#### COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New Castle [*Delaware*] Sept 25th 1814

Sir

Your Letter of the 22nd. Inst, accompanying a Copy of that of the 19th to Commo. Decatur I this moment recd.—

I am now convinced that the people of Phila. have not had any serious cause of alarm except it be that which emanated from the fear, that if Baltimore fell, it must follow— such therefore as disapprove your arrangements, are not only Blind to their own interest, but as weak and illiberal as they are blind.—

My Officers and Men are much fagged, as on our return from Havre de Grace to this place, the rain fell in Torrents, which was not only in itself very disagreeable, but made the roads so excessively bad as to retard our progress considerably— added to which, owing to the violence of the Wind from North East for two days past, the Flotilla was unable to get here until this morning, altho' it was no further down than reedy Island.—

I am now making preparations to proceed back to Balto. and which I shall do, should the Enemy menace that place, and not at the same time offer any serious cause of Alarm here— In the meantime, permit me to inform you that I shall keep an Eye towards New York, but which by the bye, I do not think he will trouble this season at any rate unless he should receive within the next Three Weeks a reinforcement of Troops equal at least to the number he now has in the Chesapeake.—

After making the necessary arrangements for marching at a moments notice with the same number of Seamen and Marines with which I was at Baltimore, I shall go up to Phila. in the morning for the purpose of seeing the Committee of Safety, to inform myself of the means of defence already collected, and suggesting to them the necessity of some Obstructions being placed at the Pea patch

to retard the Enemy's advance and give time for the collection of a competent force for the defence of the City— An Obstruction may be placed there without any permanent injury to the Navigation With great respect I have the honor to be Sir Yr. Obt. Servt.

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 100 (M125, Roll No. 39).

## St. Marys or Savannah: Which to Defend?

*News of the British occupation of Washington on 24–25 August 1814 had probably reached Commodore Campbell by early September and caused a flurry of activity among the Georgian populace and the naval force stationed there. Campbell wrote Secretary Jones three substantive letters on 3 September, describing the state of his station. Throughout the war, Campbell had concentrated his force at St. Marys. By the end of September 1814, with increasing pressure from the British and limited resources, he concluded that Savannah was both more defensible and strategic. Jones readily agreed, but, by November, Campbell had completely reconsidered and recommended not establishing his station at Savannah. Unfortunately, Jones did not receive Campbell's 11 November letter, requesting to stay at St. Marys, until the last weeks of his administration, and never responded. The acting secretary, Benjamin Homans, further delayed replying until 29 December—after Campbell had left for Savannah. This lack of communication resulted in Campbell's force being in Savannah in January 1815 when the British chose to invade the southern part of the state.*

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Marys 3d September 1814

Sir,

I regret to inform you that the Enemy continue to Harrass this coast and Inland Navigation

Since My last respects on that head, they have succeeded in taking three Coasting vessels from ossebaw Sound—<sup>1</sup> On the 24th ult a Brig and Schooner passed Sappello Sound<sup>2</sup> standing to the Northward—they were observed by Sailing Master John Hulburd<sup>3</sup> in Gun vessel *No. 168*, who immediately proceeded Inland to St Catherines where other Gun vessels Lay which the Enemy perceived and continued their Course further North— The Gun vessels likewise Moved northwardly, Inland, but unfortunately on their arrival at ossebaw observed three vessels in charge of 6 Boats crossing the Bar— They persued and hove a few Shot at the Boats and probably would have Succeeded in recapturing Some of the vessels, had not the near approach of a two decker a Frigate, Brig and Schooner obliged them to discontinue the Pursuit— This Success of the Enemy is rendered Easy by the facility with which they pass from one Inlet to



another, while a Gun vessel requires two Tides at least inland, and Frequently Two days—nor is this the only advantage the Enemy has, they frequently lay off one Inlet and dispatch their Boats to another, while they divert the Gun vessels to remain Stationary I have the honor to be with Great Respect Sir your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 6 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Ossabaw Sound.
2. Sapelo Sound.
3. John Hulburd's sailing master's warrant dated from 11 February 1809. He commanded gunboat *No. 168* throughout the War of 1812.

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Marys 3d September 1814

Sir,

Finding it impossible to Give protection to the whole of the Inland Navigation, or Guard the Inlets Effectually against the depredations of the Enemy, I have deemed it Expedient to order the Gun vessels to sail in Company, not less than four in number and the whole while the Enemy appear in Such force; the weak State of their crews, and the number of Boats the Enemy can Send against them renders this order essentially necessary—

I have ordered Convoy to the inland Trade at stated periods, by which means vessels may be protected and am Sorry to say, this is all that can be effected in our present Situation— nor can that be of Long duration if the Enemy carry into Effect, what recent reports from Bermuda say they intend which is to take possession of one or more of the Sea Islands between this and Savannah, as soon as the Hurricane months are over which would Effectually cut off all communication between this place and Savannah— Were the Enemy Stationary [,] measures might be taken to annoy them, but their present mode of warfare prevents us from Effecting that object— They were Seen off St andrews Sound on the Morning of the 31st ult, the wind Strong at the NE, which has continued Boisterous Ever Since and obliged them to take an offing but no doubt will return when the weather moderates— I understand there are four vessels ordered to this Station for the purpose of destroying the Inland trade &c— I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 7 (M125, Roll No. 39).

## COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 21 September 1814

Sir

I feel Some what at a loss how to act in regard to this place and Savannah with the small Force I have at command— The Inhabitants of both consider themselves Entitled to the protection of the Gun vessels— I have given the constituted authorities of this place, my reasons, why the Gun vessels Should concentrate at Savannah—viz—First— Savannah being the principal Town in the State and most wealthy, I consider it Entitled to my first consideration, and am of opinion that Government considers it in that light— Second— The Great probability that St Marys will not have a Sufficient force in time to defend it— Third— Should the British possess themselves of any of the Sea Islands, all communication between this and Savannah would be cut off, which would not only deprive us of Supplies, but Should the British have the force which we have reason to believe they will bring against us, our Flotilla may meet the fate of Barney's<sup>1</sup>— This place is assailable at three points by water,—namely, St Marys River on which stands a fort<sup>2</sup> of Eight Guns with about 150 men— Kings Bay about 5 miles in the rear of this fort, where the Enemy may land and cut off the retreat of the Garrison, and Bells River, which leads from the Harbour of Amelia along the Florida Shore and Enters the St Marys River above this Town— The latter I conceive they would not hesitate to do, when we consider the liberty already taken by them in west Florida— I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir, your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 80 (M125, Roll No. 39). A duplicate copy contained a postscript not found in the original: "PS. I have heard nothing of the Enemy since my last Respects, Except the appearance of the *Primrose* Brig off this Bar for two or three days." DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 78 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Campbell is referring to Commodore Joshua Barney's flotilla of barges that succumbed to a British squadron in the Chesapeake Bay in August 1814. For more on this subject, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3.

2. American battery at Point Peter.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL

Hugh G. Campbell Esqr.  
Com'dg. Naval Officer St Mary's Ga.

Navy Department  
Octo. 4th. 1814

Sir,

I have your letter of the 21st. Septemr. before me; the reasoning you have offered, in favor of concentrating your force near Savannah, is correct, and you will pursue that course accordingly.—

Besides the reasons you have offered, it will reduce your command to one station, instead of two, and save a great expense; moreover should the Enemy attack you in the South you can defend the Waters, between the point of attack and Savannah, and retire upon the latter place when overpowered but as you justly observe, if the enemy should take a position, between Savannah & St Mary's, whilst you were at the latter place, not only your supplies would be cut off, but your force would ultimately fall.— The facility of communicating with the Department, and procuring reinforcements, and supplies, will also be greater at Savannah.— As it is altogether irregular that contracts & purchases of supplies, should be made by any other, than the Navy Agents, you will in future make all your requisitions on Mr. Bulloch.<sup>1</sup>— respectfully &c.

W: Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 438 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Archibald S. Bulloch.

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St. Marys Oct 15—1814

Sir—

It may not be improper to give you some Information relative to the Inland trade Between Amelia and savannah— I have it from Good Authority that the Gun boats have for the last Three Months protected near six Millions of Property through the inland Navigation, Exclusive of other service— Two convoys have past within the last three weeks valued upwards of a Million, another will be ready at Amelia in a few days and one at savannah said to be Equal in value to the last— This trade You will be pleased to observe cannot fail to place in the Treasury a handsome Revenue, and I have only to regret that my means for its Protection, is so deficient, as you will observe By My return of Gun boats &ca. with their Armament. up to the 31d. Augt.—these Marshes and rivers destroy our Men in the summer season beyond Calculation. Numbers have died and we have now forty one on the Doctors list Exclusive of these at savannah

The Enemy has not appeared since the Capture of the Gun Boat *160*— Presume they have gone off Charleston— I find they have ordered to destroy the trade inland, which they may do by sending a larger force than has appeared unless we are so fortunate as to recruit the number of men now requird— I have the Honor to be with Great Respect Sir your very obed. sert.

Hugh G Campbell

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 40 (M125, Roll No. 40).

## COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 11th November 1814

Sir,

My duty as an officer required of me, to give you my opinion as regards our Situation here in case of Savannah being invaded by the Enemy and the propriety of a removal to that place—

I now conceive it a further duty incumbent on me to make you acquainted with the disadvantages attending Such procedure— This Frontier being an Eligible point of observation during the war, suitable for a lookout on the actions of our oposite neighbours, likewise the Enemy whose interest is daily increasing at Amelia, and Should the War continue, without a force attached to these Waters, this part of the country will soon present to their view, an extensive field for fraudulent practices in which the inhabitants of this frontier are ready and willing to participate— The trade to Amelia is immense—upwards of 50 Sail of Square rigged vessels are now in that port, under Swedish, Russian and Spanish Colors, two thirds of which are considered British property— We have now a ship in Admiralty under Swedish colors valued at 70,000 Do[llars] and there are Several at Amelia equally Suspicious which with other objects of that nature must be abandoned on our leaving this station, and open a channel for Every description of fraud— Drepravity in man I have seen through life, but amelia and this place are Examples I never before witnessed— the fact is, villany being the principal requisite to Effect the purposes of traders to Amelia, has rendered the assistance of a considerable proportion of this community Essentially necessary I have the Honor to be With Great Respect Sir Your very Obedient Svt

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 121 (M125, Roll No. 40).

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES<sup>1</sup>

St Mary's 2d Decr 1814

Sir

While in the act of leaving this place with the Flotilla and stores for Savannah, I received information of 6 Boats of the Enemy being about 4 Leagues from this place in the act of carrying off a schooner they had Captured— A sufficient force was immediately dispatched in persuit and succeeded in recapturing the schooner— The Enemy on seeing our boats approach, abandoned their prize and returned to their Ships— The schooner proves to be the *Lady of the Lake*, of Charleston, from this place bound to Savannah—

Previous to their capturing the schooner they Committed great depredations on the property of Mr. Debinion on Jakel Island,<sup>2</sup> taking from him 35 Negroes and between 5 and 6,000 dollars in specie, plundered the house and fired at one of his sons, while endeavoring to Escape with two infants of the family—

The *Lacedemonian* Frigate, *Primrose* and *Dotterell* Brigs are said to be the vessels from which the Boats came—I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 68 (M125, Roll No. 41).

1. Campbell had not learned that William Jones had resigned on 1 December 1814.
2. Christophe Poulain DuBignon (1739–1825) was a French aristocrat and cotton planter who owned Jekyll Island during the War of 1812.

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 4th. December 1814

Sir,

The Inland trade between this and Savannah has for a considerable time past been greatly annoyed by the Enemy, who in their Boats commit great depredations on traders that venture without the gun vessels— Fourteen sail have been taken within this fortnight from savannah charleston and amelia, that run without convoy— This they do and go off at leisure, convinced as they are, that we have nothing capable of overtaking them, it being impossible for the gun Boats to pass through an intricate navigation to meet them, occasioned by meeting tides and meandering of those rivers, that in many reaches subject vessels to adverse Tides and winds, which has fully and satisfactorily convinced me, that the only mode of meeting the Enemy on their terms is to have boats of similar construction to theirs—say barges rowing two oars, about 7 feet wide, clinker built and of light materials, planked with white ceeder, cyprus or 1/2 inch oak— with such boats the Enemy could be persued to advantage, but at present they know the superiority in rowing and go off with impunity— The two new Barges lately built of the six you intended for this station, proves too heavy for persuit— they are well constructed for defence, but never will they overtake the Enemy in boats of the construction they now have— For such boats as above mentioned with the gun Boats to back them, would make the Enemy soon cautious and give great security to the trade and waters on this station— The necessity of having such boats must appear obvious to you, when you are informed that there are between this and savannah 17 meeting tides and many of the reaches not of sufficient width for two vessels to pass abreast and in four parts of the Navigation vessels can only pass through at high water—

Thus it appears evident that a convoy or even gun Boats if found by the Enemy in these narrow passes would be liable to be cut off in detail, when such boats as mentioned would be able to pass in either direction and afford the necessary assistance— These boats can be built in one month or six weeks at furthest, at I presume half the expence the six barges would have cost, their price being \$1200, exclusive of Iron work, armament and sails— Experience of no short duration has brought to my conviction the necessity of such boats, without which the Enemy will continue his depredations with impunity— I most humbly

submit these remarks to your consideration and flatter myself they will meet your approbation, and feel satisfied that should you be pleased to adopt the plan the public good would be benefitted and a greater field opened for officers to distinguish themselves— I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir Your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 81 (M125, Roll No. 41).

ACTING SECRETARY OF THE NAVY BENJAMIN HOMANS TO  
COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL

Como. H. G. Campbell  
Comm'g Naval Officer St. Mary's Ga.

Navy Department  
Decr. 29th. 1814

Sir/

Your letter of the 11th. Ulto. was received at a time when the late Secretary of the Navy was too much engaged in more important business to reply to it.—<sup>1</sup> I have since submitted the subject to the President and further representations having been made, as to the necessity of retaining the force and Station at St. Mary's; you will consider the orders of the 4th. of October last, authorizing you to remove the naval force to Savannah as suspended, and you will continue to make the best disposition of that force for defence and protection of the coast and trade, and to repel the aggressions of the Enemy.<sup>2</sup> I am respectfully &c.

B. H. (ASN)

LB, DNA, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 495 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Secretary of the Navy Jones spent much of November 1814 writing cruising orders and preparing to leave the Navy Department.

2. Campbell had left St. Marys for Savannah on 12 December 1814, over two weeks before Acting Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Homans had written him to remain at St. Marys. Campbell's last letter to the department from St. Marys was dated 8 December.

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Savannah 2d. January 1814 [*1815*]

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that I left St Mary's on the 12th ultimo, with the whole force under my command, and 36 Sail of coasters, chiefly laden with dry goods all of which have arrived at this place— The coast was clear of an Enemy during our passage, but the day after our arrival a Frigate and Brig appeared to

the southward of this and captured a schooner in Ossabaw Sound from charleston bound to amelia with cotton— They are the same vessels that have long infested this coast, the *Lacedemonian* of 28 Guns on her Gun Deck, mounting 51 with the *Primrose* or *Dotterell* Brig— I presume sir, you have received my several letters<sup>1</sup> relative to the trade between charleston this place and amelia likewise of the unprotected state in which the country about St Mary's is left in consequence of the Flotilla having been removed from that place— A country of 130 miles open to the depredations of the Enemy and illicit trade from amelia, at which place there are at present several vessels known to be British under neutral Flags— Nothing but the invasion of this place by the Enemy can render the Gun vessels of any great use here and with great deference to you, I beg leave to suggest the propriety of their returning to that place, when the present alarm of invasion subsides, which now appears to me futile, but at all events to return on the approach of warm weather, it being evident that their remaining here during the summer will deprive us of one half of our men— They can do this at no additional expence as they can take with them a supply for three months at a time and return alternately for provisions and stores as occasion may require and at the same time, giving protection to the Trade— I have the honor to be with Great Respect Sir your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

PS.— Your order to give up the men Shipd. for the *Eperverer*<sup>2</sup> received

H.G.C

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 7 (M125, Roll No. 34). Because Campbell dated this letter 1814 instead of 1815, it was bound into the January–February 1814 letter book instead of the 1815 volume.

1. Campbell wrote the department over a dozen letters from September to December 1814. See DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vols. 6–8 (M149, Roll Nos. 39–41). The Georgia Station was not a priority for Secretary Jones during the last months of his tenure or for his clerk, Benjamin Homans, who served as the acting secretary until Benjamin Crowninshield assumed control in mid-January 1815.

2. *Epervier*.

## Gunboat No. 160 Defends Georgian Coast

*The normal routine for the Georgian flotilla in 1814 consisted of convoying merchant vessels between Savannah and St. Marys and patrolling the inlets along the coast. Commodore Campbell stationed some of his squadron off Amelia Island to board suspicious vessels and check for illegal cargo and deserters. British privateers and a Royal Navy contingent cruised off the coast capturing vessels who ventured out without a convoy. As the British presence increased during the year, convoys became more susceptible to attack. The succeeding documents follow the encounters experienced by gunboat No. 160 and the perils facing men serving in flotillas.*

## COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

St Mary's 12th September 1814—

Sir,

I beg leave to report the British Privateer Schooner *Fortune of War*, Captured on the 9th Inst. off Sappello Bar, by Gun vessel *No. 160*, and *151* in company,—commanded by Thomas M Pendelton,<sup>1</sup> Mounts 2 Six pounders with a crew consisting of 35 in number—three weeks from Bermuda, without having made any captures—

She surrendered after receiving Two Shot from the Gun vessel and having one man Killed, Previous to the capture of the Privateer, the Gun vessels had taken one of her Boats and 13 men that had landed on Sappello— I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, Vol. 6, No. 45 (M125, Roll No. 39). For a duplicate of this letter, see *ibid.*, No. 42.

1. Thomas Paine (Payne) held a sailing master warrant dating from 10 October 1812. He accepted it on 5 March 1813, at which time he began serving at St. Marys. In 1813, he commanded gunboat *No. 151* before switching to *No. 160*. Thomas M. Pendleton is not listed in the Navy Register and probably served as an acting sailing master while commanding gunboat *No. 151*.

## COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

(Duplicate)

St Mary's 8th October 1814,

Sir

I have the misfortune to inform you of the loss of Gun vessel *No. 160*, commanded by Thomas Paine Jr., Sailing Master,— She was from Savannah with convoy and about 8 Leagues from this place when taken— The Enemy had 10 Boats of different descriptions and a sloop fitted out as a tender full of men— They were manned from the Frigate *Lacedemonian* and other vessels names unknown, having on board about 200 men— They Entered St Andrews Sound on the night of the 5th Inst. and came up with the Gun vessel about 3 oclock on the morning of the Sixth, and carried her by boarding, after a distant cannonade and discharge of Musketry for about 20 Minutes— Four of the convoy were likewise captured, two of which they destroyed in consequence of their Running on shore— Mr. Paine had but 30 Souls on board of which 16 only were fit for duty, the Residue on the Sick list— The Enemy landed all the sick and wounded Except Mr. Paine (15 in number) on a Sand Bank near the Bar of St Andrews Sound, a Situation from which they could not Extricate themselves but at the Risk of their lives and one of them was drowned in the attempt— Those that could not swim were obliged to remain on the Bank, and must have been drowned had not timely relief been Given them by a few inhabitants lately from this place who had Settled on cumberland by taking them off at a moment, when a Minute more would have



terminated their Existence— They all declare they could not have lived but a few moments Longer— Eleven of these unfortunate men have arrived at this place— By their statement of the action I have reason to believe every man did his duty on board the Gun vessel—yet Strange to tell we had but 3 men wounded, Mr. Paine included who fell at the commencement of the action— The Enemy's loss as far as I can learn is about 20 Killed and wounded of the latter is a Lieutenant with the loss of his arm and Two Midshipmen with the loss of a hand Each—

The Enemy was in Sight yesterday— there orders are I understand to destroy the inland trade between this and Savannah I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir your obedient Servant

Hugh G. Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 13 (M125, Roll No. 40). Only this duplicate version was found in the Navy Department's files.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL JACKSON, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

His Majesty's Ship *Lacedemonian*,  
At Sea, 10th. October 1814—

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that having received Intelligence of an Enemies Convoy of Thirty or Forty Sail under the protection of three Gun Vessels<sup>1</sup> being then on their passage from Savannah to St. Marys I instantly made all Sail to the Southd. in hopes of intercepting them before they reached their place of destination

The next day the 5th. Inst. they were discovered passing through St. Andrews Sound between Cumberland and Jeykell Islands, as soon as the Boats could be got ready, I put them under the Orders of Mr. Maw First Lieutenant<sup>2</sup> accompanied by the following Officers Lieuts. Taylor, Bagot, and Howes of the Marines, Mr. Miller Surgeon, Mr. Moore Boatswain, Messrs. Warren & Brunton Masts. Mates, Midshipmen Messrs. Chichester, Benfield, [Banfield] Griffith, Stephens, Chevallier, Hedges, Crispo, Duncan of the *Primrose*, and King of the *Peacock*, after rowing about 25 Miles the Boats came up with the rear of the Convoy, and about Midnight one of the Gun Vessels opened a heavy fire on the Boats—which was instantly Boarded and Carried in a most Gallant manner by The First Lieutenant in the Barge, and by the other Boats as fast as they could arrive up, she proved to be one of the First Class of Gun Boats *No. 160* mounting a long 32 Pr. two Medium 9 Prs. and two Cohorns with a Complement of 30 or 40 Men Commanded by Mr. Paine Master in the Navy who was dangerously wounded, The Enemy's loss was one killed, four Wounded and several driven overboard— our loss was four wounded as Pr. Margin,<sup>3</sup> this Vessel protected the rear of the Convoy and by her it was ascertained that the others were too far advanced towards St. Marys to be attacked with any probability of success, which we all have to lament, as I am convinced could the Boats have reached them—That the whole would have been Taken or Destroyed—

The Boats succeeded in bringing out one Gun Boat, and four Merchant Vessels, one of which they were obliged to Burn having grounded— The first Lieut. speaks in the highest terms of every Officer & Man employed upon this Service, particularly Mr. Miller Surgeon, who was with him in the Barge, and Gallantly supported him in Boarding— I now feel it my duty Sir to state that Lieut. Maw performed this Service with that Judgment and Gallantry which has distinguished Him upon former and similar occasions— I have the Honor, to be Sir, Your very Obedient Humble Servant.

Sam<sup>l</sup> Jackson Captain

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fols. 133–34. For a copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 210–11.

1. Commodore Campbell did not mention any other gunboats in his 8 October 1814 report to Secretary Jones. See above.

2. Lieutenant Richard S. Maw, R.N.

3. According to the American account, there were no deaths and three wounded. The British report did not mention landing the American sick and wounded on a sandbar, stranding them until rescued by nearby residents. See Campbell to Jones, 8 October 1814, above. The notation in the margin of the British report reads: "Lt. Howes (RM)/Wounded not dangerously/Mr. Chichester Mid/Wounded not dangerously/Hy. Hill Coxn./Lost an Arm/Jno. Stewart Seaman/Wounded not dangerously."

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Savannah 29th March 1815

Sir

I have the satisfaction to inform you that Sailing Master, Thomas Paine, late Commanding U States Gun vessel *no 160*, has, with Midshipman Coltineaux<sup>1</sup> and four men, arrived at this place, from Nassau New Providence

It is not without extreme regret I inform you, that Mr. Payne is rendered a Cripple for life— I have the honor to be with Great Respect Sir your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 124 (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. Hercules Cottineau was appointed a midshipman on 4 February 1814 with his warrant antedated to 9 November 1813.

## Maine Secured: The Capture of Machias

*With American defenders of the Penobscot River vanquished, and the region's citizenry cowed into submission, the British directed the final thrust of their Maine campaign against the town of Machias. In the early days of the American Revolution, the people*

*of Machias had struck one of the first blows in the cause of liberty by boarding and capturing the armed cutter H.M.S. Margareta. In the summer of 1814, the British sought to occupy the town and neutralize this remaining threat to their control of northern Maine. On the evening of 10 September, two British army transports, supported by three Royal Navy warships, landed a force of regulars and artillerymen to advance upon Fort O'Brien, the stronghold guarding the approach to Machias. The garrison fled the advancing enemy in such haste that they abandoned not only the fort's military stores and ordnance, but their regimental colors as well. Following this precipitous retreat, local civil and military officials promptly vowed to not bear arms against their new rulers in exchange for a British pledge to respect private property. The British campaign to occupy Maine was complete.*

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ANDREW PILKINGTON, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA SIR JOHN C. SHERBROOKE

Machias September 14th. 1814

Sir,

I have the Honor to acquaint your Excellency that I sailed from Penobscot Bay with the Brigade you was pleased to place under my Command, consisting of a Detachment of Royal Artillery with a Howitzer; the Battalion Companies of the 29th. Regt. & a Party of the 7th. Battn. of the 60th. Regt. on the Morning of the 9th. Inst. and arrived at Bucks Harbour about Ten Miles from this Place on the following Evening—

As the Enemy fired several Alarm Guns on our approaching the Anchorage, it was evident he was apprehensive of an Attack; I therefore deemed it expedient to disembark the Troops with as little Delay as possible, & Captn. Hyde Parker Commanding the Naval Force, appointed Captn. Stanfell to superintend this Duty, and it was executed by that Officer with the utmost Promptitude, & Precision.

Upon reaching the Shore I ascertained that there was only a Pathway through the Woods by which we could advance & take Fort O'Brien & the Battery in Reverse; & as the Guns of these Works commanded the Passage of the River upon which the Town is situated, I decided upon possessing ourselves of them if practicable during the Night.

We moved forward at Ten O'Clock P.M. and after a most tedious and harassing March only arrived near to the Fort at Break of Day, although the Distance does not exceed five Miles.

The advanced Guard which consisted of two Companies of the 29th. Regt. & a Detachment of riflemen of the 60th. Regt. under Major Tod of the former Corps, immediately drove in the Enemy's Piquet, and upon pursuing him closely, found the Fort had been evacuated leaving their Colours about five Minutes before we entered it— Within it, and the Battery there are 2-24 Pounders, 3-18 Pounders, several dismounted Guns, & a Blockhouse.— The Party which escaped amounted to about 70 men of the 40 Regt. of American Infantry & 30 of the imbodyed Militia. The Retreat was so rapid, that I was not enabled to take many Prisoners— I understand there were a few Wounded, but they secreted themselves in the Woods.—

Having secured the Fort we lost no Time in advancing upon Machias, which was taken without any Resistance, and also two Field Pieces.—

The Boats of the Squadron under the Command of Lt. Bouchier of the Rl. Navy, and the Royal Marines under Lieut. Welchman, were detached to the Eastern Side of the River, & were of essential Service in taking two Field Pieces in that Quarter.

Understanding that the Militia were not assembled to any Extent in the Vicinity of the Town, I was making the requisite Arrangements to advance into the interior of the Country; when I received a Letter from Brigr. General Brewer Commanding the District, (a Copy of which is herewith enclosed)<sup>1</sup> wherein he engages that the Militia Forces within the County of Washington shall not bear Arms, or in any Way serve against His Britannic Majesty during the present War— A similar offer having been made by the civil Officers, & principal Citizens of the County, a Cessation of Arms was agreed upon;<sup>2</sup> & the County of Washington has passed under the Dominion of His Britannic Majesty.

I beg Leave to congratulate you upon the Importance of this Accession of Territory which has been wrested from the Enemy.— It embraces about one Hundred Miles of Sea Coast, & includes that intermediate Tract of Country which separates the Province of New Brunswick from Lower Canada.

We have taken 26 Pieces of Ordnance (serviceable & unserviceable) with a Proportion of Arms & Ammunition, Returns of which are enclosed;<sup>3</sup> and I have the pleasing Satisfaction to add that this Service has been effected without the Loss of a Man on our Part.

I cannot refrain from expressing in the strongest Manner the admirable Steadiness & good Conduct of the 29th. Regt. under Major Hodge. The Advance under Major Tod are also entitled to my warmest Thanks—

A Detachment of 30 Seamen from H.M.S. *Bacchante* under Mr. Bruce Masters Mate were attached to the Rl. Artillery under the Command of Lieut. Daniel of that Corps, for the Purpose of dragging the Howitzer, as no other Means could be procured to bring it forward; and to their unwearied Exertions, & the judicious Arrangements of Lieut. Daniel, I am indebted for having a 5½ Inch Howitzer conveyed through a Country the most difficult of Access I ever witnessed—

To Captn. Parker of H.M.S. *Tenedos* who commanded the Squadron which co-operated with me upon this Occasion, I feel every Obligation; & I can assure you the most cordial Understanding has subsisted between the two Branches of the Service.— I have the Honor, to be, Sir, your faithful, and most Obedt. Servant

A Pilkington  
Lt. Col. Dy. Adjt. Genl.

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 685, pp. 278–83. This letter was enclosed in Sherbrooke to Prevost, 27 September 1814, *ibid.*, pp. 284–85a.

1. See Brewer and Campbell to Pilkington and Parker, 13 September 1814, below.

2. See Cooper et al. to Pilkington, 12 September 1814, below.

3. See CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, "C" Ser., Vol. 685, pp. 273–273a. It is published in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 333–34.

[Enclosure]

Copy.

To Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Pilkington Commanding the Land Forces and Captain Hyde Parker Commanding the Naval Force of His Britannic Majesty now at Machias—

Gentlemen,

The Forces under your Command having Captured the Forts in the — „ — neighbourhood of Machias and taken possession of the Territory adjacent within the County of Washington, and the situation of the Country being such between the Penobscot River and Passamaquoddy Bay as to preclude the hope that an adequate force can be furnished by the United States for it's Protection— We propose a Capitulation and offer for ourselves and in behalf of the Officers and Soldiers of the Brigade within the County of Washington to give our Parole of Honour that we will not directly or indirectly bear Arms, or in any way serve against His Britannic Majesty King George the third King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, his Successors and Allies during the present War between Great Britain and the United States: Upon Condition we have your assurance that while we remain in this situation and consider ourselves under the British Government until further orders, we shall have the safe and full enjoyment of our private Property and be protected in the exercise of our usual occupations.

(signed) John Brewer Brigadier Genl.  
2nd. Brigade 10th. Division for the  
Officers and Soldiers of the 3d. Regt. in said Brigade  
James Campbell Lt. Colo. Comdg.  
1st. Regt. 2nd. Brigade 10th Division  
for himself Officers and Soldiers in said Regiment

These Terms have been granted, and approved of by us.

Signed

Hyde Parker  
Capt. H M S *Tenedos*  
Machias 13th. Sept. 1814—

A: Pilkington  
Lt. Colo. Commandg.

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 685, pp. 276–77a. For additional copies of this document, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fol. 307 and Adm. 1/508, fol. 36, and UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fol. 81. This document was also published in Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 331–32.

[Enclosure]

Whereas the British Forces under the Command of Lt. Col. Andrew Pilkington Commanding the Land Force, & Capt. Hyde Parker Comd. the Naval Force, have

taken Possession of Machias and the adjacent Territory in the County of Washington in the Name of His Britannic Majesty King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; we the Subscribers, civil Officers and Citizens of said County, do give our Parole of Honour that we will not directly or indirectly bear Arms, or in any way serve against His Britannic Majesty George the 3rd. King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, his Successors, and Allies, during the present War between Great Britain and the United States— Given under our Hands at Machias this 12th Day of September 1814—

(Signed)

Stephen Jones

Gideon O'Brien

John Collins

Josh. Genno

Eben. Inglee

Jacob Longfellow

Jonathan Marstons

Jonathan Longfellow

Ephraim Whitney

George S. Smith

John Cooper Sheriff of Washington County

Stephen Smith

Harrison Thatcher

Parker Cleck

William E. Smith

Joseph Stuart

Maps Proster

Jeremiah O'Brien

Daniel Elliott

(A True Copy)

A Pilkington

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 685, p. 275.

[Enclosure]

Whereas the undersigned have taken possession of Machias and the Territory adjacent in the County of Washington in the name of His Britannic Majesty King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and whereas the Officers Civil and Military in said County have for themselves and those under their Command together with the Inhabitants of said County given their Parole of Honor not to bear Arms or in any way to Serve against His Britannic Majesty his Successors and Allies during the present War between Great Britain and the United States, We do hereby promise to the Officers and Inhabitants as aforesaid the full enjoyment of their private property and protection in their usual occupations they considering themselves under the Government of His Britannic Majesty until further orders.— Given under our hands at Machias this 12th. Sept. 1814

Hyde Parker

Capt of H.M. Ship *Tenedos*

A Pilkington

Lt. Col. Comg.

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 685, p. 274–274a.

CAPTAIN HYDE PARKER, R.N., TO REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Tenedos* Machias Bay  
September 14th. 1814—

Sir,

I beg leave to inform you, that in pursuance of your orders I arrived at this anchorage on the evening of the 10 Inst. in Company with His Majestys Ships, *Bacchante*, *Rifleman*, *Pictou* and two transports having on board a small Detachment of the Royal Artillery and a part of the 29th. and 60th. Regiments under the Command of Lieutenant Colonel Pilkington.

The Troops with thirty Seamen from the *Bacchante* attached to the Artillery—(for the purpose of dragging a Howitzer) were immediately landed without opposition in Bucks Harbour, distant about five miles below the Fort of Machias; the river being too shallow to allow the Ships anchoring nearer.

The boats of the Squadron having on board the Marines under the Command of Lieutenant Bouchier first of this Ship, and Lieutenant Hood of the *Bacchante*, were sent at midnight up the river to accompany the march of the Troops ready to Act as occasion might require.

The Troops entered the Fort Just before day break after a most fatiguing march through the woods. The Enemy having set fire to the Barracks fled with the greatest precipitation. Lieutenant Colonel Pilkington continued his march on to the Town of Machias situated [five] miles above the Fort, up the river, [and] took possession of it at seven in the morning, without opposition.

I feel much indebted to Captain Stanfell of His Majestys Ship *Bacchante*, for his assistance in superintending the Disembarkation of the Troops. Although the Officers in the Command of the Boats had not an opportunity of distinguishing themselves, I beg leave to recommend to the notice [of] the Commander in Chief Lieutenant Thomas Bouchier—first Lieutenant of this Ship for his Zeal and exertions on this occasion. Lieutenant Colonel Pilkington speaks in very high terms of the good conduct of Mr. Charles Bruce Mate, and Mr. Francis Brown Midshipman, who commanded the Thirty Seamen from the *Bacchante* attached to the Artillery.

I enclose for your information a Copy of a Capitulation<sup>1</sup> entered into between General Brewer Commanding the Militia of the District and Lieutt. Colonel Pilkington, by which the County of Washington becomes subject to His Britannic Majesty.

I am happy to say that in the execution of this service the utmost Cordiality has existed between the two services— Acting with such an Officer as Lieutenant Colonel Pilkington it could not be otherwise. I have the Honor to remain Sir, Your Humble Servant

signed Hyde Parker

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fols. 305–6. Endorsed opposite dateline: “Copy./ Edw. Griffith.” This letter was enclosed in Griffith to Croker, 27 September 1814, *ibid.*, fol. 304. For another copy of this letter see *ibid.*, Adm. 1/508, fols. 34–35.

1. See UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fol. 307. This document is printed above on p. 571, as an enclosure to Pilkington to Sherbrooke, 14 September 1814.

## NEWS REPORT ON THE CAPTURE OF U.S. FORT AT MACHIAS

Portland: Monday, October 17, 1814.

*THE FORT AT MACHIAS—Again.*

Since our last publication we have been favor-[*ed*] by an interview with the late commandant of the fort at Machias, from whom we learn, verbally, that some particulars in our last statement was incorrect. The distance from Buck's harbour to Machias was there represented to be from 12 to 14 miles—whereas it is but 4 miles from the fort. The number of U.S. troops amounted only to 50 men, and 10 militia, who had never reported themselves to the commandant, neither were they under any command. The precipitate retreat of the U.S. troops should be accounted for by their having awaited the near approach of the enemy, in order to ascertain their numbers, and thereby decide upon the propriety of making any defence. The number of cattle in the fort was only 70 head.

Our information with regard to the number of guns destroyed was also incorrect. Instead of 20 24-pounders, there were but 10, 7 of which Lieut. Morse destroyed and the other 3 fell into the hands of the enemy. The morning of the day on which the guns were destroyed, Lieut. Morse was informed by express, that the enemy with a force of 1200 men were on their march from Castine to demand the surrender of the post he commanded. Had this intelligence been true, as was generally believed, there would not have been time either to remove or bury the guns—which ought to exonerate Lieut. M. from any blame on that score. On leaving the fort, the U.S. troops set fire to the soldier's barracks, which were entirely consumed.

The only defence which they were capable of making, was from the Block-house, and it was reserved for that purpose, until the near approach of the enemy precluded the possibility of destroying it.

It is true that the destruction of the guns gave dissatisfaction to the inhabitants at Machias; and as the event proved, there was time to have removed the heavy ordnance; still there were 4 field pieces, mounted on carriages, in the keeping of the militia, which were not removed, but fell into the hands of the enemy.

The gentleman who gave us the account last week respecting the number of cattle in the fort, says he obtained his information from Mr Turner, the owner of the cattle, who said there were two droves—50 in one and 60 in the other.

The same motive which induced us to broach this subject in the first instance—TO ESTABLISH THE TRUTH—induces us to make this further correction.

Lieut. Manning, whom the *Argus* has been puffing for several weeks past, takes it in high dudgeon that he should be accused of being the commander of the fort at Machias, and has AUTHORISED us to say that any intimation of the kind is an ABSOLUTE LIE! As we have never accused him of possessing such a command, the lie cannot rest with us. Let those see to it whom it concerns.

Printed, *Portland Gazette and Maine Advertiser*, 17 October 1814. The text for the dateline was supplied from the heading of the column in which this article appeared.



## Seniority Asserted—Prerogative Defined

*As the war moved into its final year, the Navy Department's greatest operational challenge was securing enough sailors and Marines to properly man its yards, stations, and expanding fleet of warships. With Navy and Marine recruiters unable to secure large numbers of willing volunteers, the department resorted to drafting men from one ship or station to another, thereby shifting personnel to priority commands where the manpower needs were greatest. Such transfers were the prerogative of the Navy Secretary alone and not to be exercised by officers unless so authorized by the department.*

*In the summer and fall of 1814, when the fear of British invasion was greatest in New England, William Bainbridge ordered Isaac Hull and John O. Creighton, who were junior to him in rank, to transfer men from the Portsmouth and Newport Stations to his command in Boston.<sup>1</sup> Secretary Jones's response to these unsanctioned transfers defined the limits of a station commander's authority.*

*1. In early December of 1813, Hull had transferred ten sailors each from Rattlesnake and Enterprise to Constitution, upon the order of Captain Charles Stewart, his senior in rank. The transfer left the two brigs shorthanded and delayed their sailing. Stewart's actions drew an angry response from Secretary Jones, who wrote: "I regret that Captain Stewart, in the plenitude of an assumed, unauthorized, and unreasonable power, should have presumed to travel out of his command, and take the men out of the Rattlesnake and Enterprize. Had I not good reason to believe, that the Constitution has sailed, I would, instantly order twenty of her best men to replace those on board the Brigs." See Hull to Jones, 7 December 1813, DNA, RG45, CL, 1813, Vol. 8, No. 23 (M125, Roll No. 33), and, Jones to Hull, 22 December 1813, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 178–79 (M149, Roll No. 11).*

### CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

[Portsmouth, N.H.] Sep. 15th [1814]

Dear Sir,

I am informed by Captain Morris that he has an order from you to send thirty of his crew on to Boston to join the *Independence*. I regret very much that you should have found it necessary at this time to order them from this station not only on account of the very defenceless state of our harbour but on account of the impression it will have on the minds of the citizens at large on seeing a part of the only force they have any confidence in, taken from them particularly to be sent to a place much more tenable than Portsmouth. The *Congress* is lying here with only twenty eight men on board, the 74 on the stocks and not in a state to be defended that the *Independence* is, the harbour easy of access and not one thousand boys (Militia) to defend the place. I am sure when you consider all these things, and draw a comparison between my situation and yours at Boston you will reconsider the order and let the men remain. A great part of them have not yet arrived having leave of absence from Captain Morris until the 20th and very many that have come on are so worn down with fatigue that they can scarcely stand of course will not be fit for duty for some days. I pray you to be assured that I make this request knowing our situation to be a very critical and dangerous one and that the men are absolutely wanting, and with a wish to detain even a boy that

imperious necessity does not call for. Certainly my friend you cannot but think your situation much more tenable than this, when I assure you our situation is precisely as I have stated it to be; and you are in the midst of from ten to fifteen thousand men, well armed, in a harbour difficult of access with large ships, and with your ship in a state to defend herself, and the *Constitution* with more men on board of her than we have on this station including officers and men, to assist you and your force so disposed of as to act all at one point. Here every thing is different, as I have stated to you, the *Congress* without men, the 74 on the eve of launching, and an Island to defend where men cannot be brought to act with each other.

Will you then take another view of my situation and let these men remain at any rate until they all come in, or until we can learn what has become of the force that threatens us to the Eastward. I shall most cheerfully, join you with all my force, should you require it first, and feel assured that you will not let me want for your aid, if in your power to give it; but my friend I am ashamed of all around me, and blush for my degraded country; all is going, and God only knows what can save it from ruin, unless by the hand of him, we can raise the people. Let me hear from you, and for God's sake leave the men. Yours respectfully & truly

LB, NHi, Isaac Hull Letter Books, Naval History Society Collection, MS 439, Vol. 2. Addressed flush left below signature line: "Commo. William Bainbridge"

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull  
com'dg. Naval Officer }  
Portsmouth N.H.

Navy Department  
Sept. 26th. 1814

Sir,

The Officers & Crew of the U.S. late Ship *Adams* were strictly within the station designated by this Department for your command and to which the authority of no officer commanding another station can extend, and this you will take for your government.—

Should a Senior Officer not commanding a distinct station arrive within that now under your command he will of course command except in the Navy Yard.—

I have ordered the thirty men of the *Adams* which commodore Bainbridge withdrew, to be returned to Portsmouth where the whole will remain agreeably to my order of the 22d.— I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones—

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 192 (M441, Roll No. 1).

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

Como. W. Bainbridge }  
 com'dg. Naval Officer }  
 Boston }

Navy Department  
 Sepr. 26th. 1814

Sir,

Captain Hull in a letter of the 21st. Inst.<sup>1</sup> informs me that you had ordered thirty of the crew of the U.S. late corvette *Adams* from Portsmouth to the Station under your command.— There must be some mistake in this business, as they were beyond the reach of your command which is precisely and distinctly defined.

If however such an order would have been issued and executed, you will immediately correct the error, by returning those men to Portsmouth again.— I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 191 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Hull to Jones, 21 September 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 84 (M125, Roll No. 39). In a one-sentence postscript to this letter, Hull wrote: "Commodore Bainbridge has ordered thirty of the Crew of the *Adams* from this station, and fifty are in Fort Sullivan."

## COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard, Charlestown,  
 Octor. 1. 1814

Sir,

I have received your order of the 26 ulto. and in obedience thereto, however injurious it may prove to the service, I instantly comply with it.

The unprotected state of the U.S. Ship *Independence*, in the present threatening crisis, for the want of men, induced me to direct Captn. Morris, although without the limits of my command, to send me of his crew, who by unforeseen circumstances had become disposeable, about thirty out of 230, the remainder being left with Captain Hull. I declare, Sir, upon my honor, had Captain Morris's vessel been destroyed within the limits of my command, I should have liberally divided them with Capt. Hull, without deeming it necessary to trouble the Navy Department on the subject, although I am under the fullest conviction of belief, that they are as necessary for the public interest at this station as at Portsmouth.

The Navy Yard & Seventy four here, to say the least, are as valuable to the United States as those at Portsmouth, and in my opinion more assailable by water. At the latter place there must, I presume, be between 4 & 500 Sailors; at the former, after making a draught from the Flotilla at New Port of 44 negroes & ordinary seamen, there are about 170—more than one hundred of whose terms of service have expired, and whom I have refused to discharge until I receive their shipping articles from the Accountant of the Navy; but their discharge must of course be

given in a few days. I shall then be left with about sixty very inferior men, and not a man can I recruit for want of funds in the hands of the Navy Agent.

As I am deprived of men to man the guns, borrowed from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I shall deem it proper to return them; for I cannot subject the Flag under my command, to the chan[ce] of disgrace by retaining guns without having men to station at them. I have the honor to be, Sir, with great respect,  
Your obt. servt.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 115 (M125, Roll No. 39).

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN O. CREIGHTON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New Port R.I.  
Oct. 6th. 1814

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your letter of the 27th. Sept.<sup>1</sup> the copy You required and one of the order[s] You gave me to decend the Potomac are enclosed.<sup>2</sup>

The Enemy has made his Appearance in considerable force Off the Harbour, the number & Class of vessels are named in the margin—<sup>3</sup> He no doubt has something in view, perhaps This place or New London is the object of attack— should it be the former I cannot promise much from the Flotilla, they are so badly manned that I can only think of their security instead of rendering assistance in the defence of the Harbour— Comre. Bainbridge has refused to return those men he ordered from this place, and says that he considers me as acting within the “limits of his command”— this I am confident sir you never contemplate[d] and I had previously given Comr. B an extract of your instructions to me<sup>4</sup>

I beg leave to observe that should this not be considered a seperate stat[ion] the greatest inconvenience must result to the public service, it will be impossible for Comre. Bainbridge to give his personal attendence at every point of his extensive command and it will be quite as much so for me to discharge my duty as I wou[ld] wish when my powers are so limited.

This Harbour is much exposed & should the Enemy take possession of it, nearly 100 pieces of cannon will fall into his hands, and that of larger calibre with all the munitions of war which are to a great amount, If therefore it is not convenient for the Gouvernment to strengthen this part of the state, would it not be preferable to remove the ordinance & stores beyond the Enemies reach than suffer him to take possession of it—which two Frigates can do whenever it suits their convenience— With every Consideration of respect I have the Honor to be  
Your Obedt. st.

Jno: Orde Creighton

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 58 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Jones to Creighton, 27 September 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 430 (M149, Roll No. 11). This letter directed Creighton to provide the Navy Department with copies of orders issued to him on 24 August.

2. Enclosures not found.

3. Creighton observed one ship of the line, four frigates, one 20-gun ship, and three brigs.

4. These orders articulated Creighton's authority over his command thusly: "you will not answer the draught of any Senior Officer, upon the men under your command without the special order this Department.— but upon any sudden emergency in the vicinity of your command, you may if you shall deem it safe and expedient detach any part of our force to the assistance of the Officer commanding at any such place, recalling your force as soon as the emergency shall have passed.—" Jones to Creighton, 10 September 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 416 (M149, Roll No. 11).

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN O. CREIGHTON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New Port R.I  
Novr. 4th. 1814

Sir

In my letter to you of the 6th Ultimo I stated that Comre. Bainbridge had drawn from this station a number of Men which so weakened the Flotilla as would oblige me in case of an attack on this place to remove the Gun vessels up the river for security— the men are still retained in Boston so that I can only keep four boats partly manned, the other three I have stationed near Bristol to watch the Eastern & Western passage's with men enough to take care of them in bad weather.— Another difficulty Sir exists— Comre. Bainbridge insists that I am Under his command—and in Your instructions to me You direct me to make my reports to the Navy Dept. "and not to answer the draught of any Senior Officer for Men on this Station"— will You have the goodness sir to acquaint me whether I am to Consider this as a Seperate Station, and not within the limits of Comre. Bainbridge's Command, for unless it is distinct, permit me to say the Greatest inconvenience must result from it— I also mentioned how Very useful the Revenue Cutter would be could I use her at my discretion, I am frequently much mortified at beholding these little Piccaroons close in with the Harbor without the means of driving them off. I have the honor to be very respectfully: Your Obedt. and very humble Servt.

Jno: Orde Creighton

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 72 (M147, Roll No. 5).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE

Como. Wm. Bainbridge }  
Com'dg. Naval. Officer }  
Charlestown Massts. }

Navy Department  
Nov. 11. 1814

Sir,

For the more convenient and advantageous distribution of Command, Captain John Orde Creighton has been appointed to command the Naval force in the

Waters of Rhode Island.— Your command will therefore comprehend the Naval force within the waters of Massachusetts.— I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 452 (M149, Roll No. 11).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN O. CREIGHTON

Capt. Jno. Orde Creighton  
Com'dg. U.S. Naval force  
Newport R.I.

Navy Department  
Novr. 11th. 1814

Sir,

Commodore Bainbridge has been informed of your appointment to the command of the Naval force in the Waters of Rhode Island and that his command comprehends only the force within the Waters of Massachusetts.— I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones

P:S: Como. B. has promised to return the men he withdrew from your command.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 453 (M149, Roll No. 11).

COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN O. CREIGHTON

Navy Yard, Charlestown Mss  
Nov. 22 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 19th. instant,<sup>1</sup> whereas you inform me that all the men I drafted from the Newport Station, have returned except the following absentees, Wm. Henry, John Anderson, Jos Hunt, John Dole, & John Baptiste. Consequently, there must be at Newport under your command, the following named persons, vizt. Joseph Dawson, William Jennings, Robert Craft, Charles Pratt, John Craft, John Francisco, Philip Brown, William Jackson, Prince Allen, Frederick Manners, Peter Johnson, John Lewis, Geo. Perkins, James Price, Justin Jacobs, John Smith, Daniel Coffin, John Topping, Henry Mundowne, John Gurney, Richard Rogers, Oliver Howlan, Geo. W. Thurber, James Stiles, John Smart, Thos. Cogswell, John King, John Thompson, James Carpenter; and as they deserted from this station under my command, I have for the good of the service, to require that you confine the whole of them to answer before a Court Martial on the charge of Desertion; and I have this day written to the Secretary of the Navy requesting a Court Martial to be ordered for their trials.<sup>2</sup>

I should conceive it a dereliction of every principle of Subordination, if seamen in our naval service could with impunity leave a station to which they may be drafted and return to the station whence they were drafted, without the permission or Knowledge of the Officers under whom they act, and whom they are bound to obey even under the penalty of life.— I trust you are too correct an officer to countenance in the least degree such insubordination which would tend to the destruction of all discipline. The Newport station whence these seamen were drafted, was within the limits of my command, particularly specified in letters from the Secretary of the Navy, and continued so until the orders of the Secretary of the Navy dated the 11th. instant The seamen alluded to, therefore, were taken within my own command; and I have reported the draught more than once to the Secretary of the Navy, who has not yet ordered one of them to be returned. But as I had made the draft for particular purposes for the public service, and that occasion having ceased, I returned the men with the exception of those who had deserted, and John Baptiste & John Anderson who are under confinement for a Court Martial, and John D[oles] drowned, & Josh. Hunt, boy, retained.

But if the Newport Station had never been attached to my command, there can be no doubt that a junior Officer to myself must obey orders that may originate from me on public service, notwithstanding they might militate with any prior orders he might have received;— for example, Suppose I am cruising and you sail under orders from the Navy Department to any particular positively expressed destination; on meeting you, I give you orders to execute other service. You certainly would not decline an obedience to my orders and you are exonerated from the nonfulfilment of your orders from the Navy Department, and I assume the responsibility for directing you from your intended Course.

I had recently an application in practise of this doctrine, in the case of the *Adams'* crew. Captain Hull was very desirous of retaining the whole of them at Portsmouth, but on my order he sent me the number required, although quite contrary to his wishes, & while in the Expectation of an attack. But he knew the right and the authority of my orders as his Senior Officer, and did not hesitate to comply. What a chaos would be produced in discipline, were it not so: for instance, a Captain gives a sailor an order to do a certain piece of work, and a Lieutenant shortly comes afterwards and orders him to do it contrary to the Captain's orders. Must not the seaman obey the last order? It would be absurd that the Lieutenant should bring an order from the Captain to cause the seaman legally to obey him. All that the Seaman is to enquire, is whether the Lieutenant is his Superior in rank?

I wrote to you on the subject of the deserters at Newport, on the 29th. ult: and 1 & 2d instants, to neither of which have I received any reply, although positive orders for their confinement were given.

You may think me too prolix in this communication; but really the esteem I have for you has actuated me to be so. I am, with sentiments of regard, respectfully yours,

(Signed) Wm. Bainbridge

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 25 (M125, Roll No. 41). Addressed flush left at foot of signature page: "Captn. Jno Orde Creighton,/Commanding Naval Officer/Newport/R Island."

1. Letter not found.

2. Bainbridge to Jones, 22 November 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 24 (M125, Roll No. 41).

## Defense Plans, Station Activity, and Disaffection

*The British burning of the public buildings in Washington in late August 1814<sup>1</sup> prompted coastal cities like Charleston, South Carolina, to reassess the threat of a British landing and attack. Captain John H. Dent worked with his army counterpart, Major General Thomas Pinckney, to plan a defensive strategy if the British squadron turned southward after leaving the Chesapeake Bay. Dent equipped and trained his men to fight on shore. Once the initial scare passed, the Charleston Station returned to the mundane duty of enforcing the embargo laws and convoying inland trade. During the fall of 1814, Dent routinely advised the Navy Department about disciplinary problems, his constant efforts to use his force most efficiently, and the severity of the manpower shortages. He received only occasional responses from Secretary Jones before the latter's resignation on 1 December, no doubt because the Navy Secretary lacked time for disgruntled officers in the waning days of his administration. Acting Secretary Benjamin Homans delayed answering many substantive matters during the interim period in December and January before Secretary Benjamin W. Crowninshield took office in mid-January.*

*Dent's frustration with serving as an administrator on a backwater station during the entire war reached a breaking point in late 1814. His multiple requests since 1813 for re-assignment to a cruising command being rejected or ignored, Dent elevated his 22 December 1814 letter threatening resignation by sending it to President Madison. However, circumstances on the South Carolina coast changed quickly in early 1815. British activity increased, directly involving Dent in end-of-war skirmishes to defend his station. Meanwhile, Crowninshield, just a few weeks after assuming the Navy Secretary post, vigorously reacted to the enemy's menacing coastal operations and, after reading Dent's letter for reassignment, scathingly demanded that "every man will do his duty." By early February, Secretary Crowninshield had tempered his rhetoric toward Dent, approved his coastal strategy, and offered him recruiting incentives to attract more sailors.*

1. For more about the British invasion, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 205–28.

### CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston 21st Sept. 1814

Sir

The late operations of the enemy to the north, have at length roused the citizens of this city, to a sense of their unprotected and defenceless state. Committees of defence have been formed, and resolutions passed for fortifying the different approaches; yesterday the[y] were commenced on the neck of land in



the rear, to extend from one river to the other, on stono river there will also be erected strong works to check the enemy's shipping, as the most probable point from which Troops will be disembarked. There is a perfect understanding and a plan of Co-operation formed between the Military & Navy, and I shall with the force under my command use every exertion for the defence and protection of this city. I have loaned General Pinckney,<sup>1</sup> for the new works ten 9 pd. cannon, and have obtained from him the loan of a sufficient number of muskets to enable me to arm & equip every man on the station to act on shore, should it be necessary, and have directed the commanding officers of the vessels & divisions, to train them to the use of small arms & frequently to take them on shore to accustom them to march.

The *Alligator* sailed on Monday<sup>2</sup> for St Helena, and to co-operate with the Troops stationed at Beaufort. I have directed Lt. Haddaway to Keep with him a Barge— The division of the Flotilla stationed there, are at present on their way from Savannah with a large convoy, after performing this service, I shall station them in Stono river for the protection of the works about to be erected there. This distribution, I hope may meet your approbation. the enemy has not been seen for some days near the Bar. I Have the Honor to be With great respect yr obt. Svt.

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 85 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Major General Thomas Pinckney.

2. Monday, 19 September 1814.

#### CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Charleston 7th Novr. 1814

Sir

Barge *No 12* Sailing Master Crofts,<sup>1</sup> on Tuesday last,<sup>2</sup> stood out from the Bar, to reconnoitre two suspicious Schooners then in the offing, it then blowing heavy from the N.N E. and increased with the ebb tide prevented his regaining the port. I am sorry to inform you in attempting to make a harbour in Stono in the night, the Barge was lost on Folly Island, the crew, armament &c are saved. A Frigate and Schooner were close in with the Bar all yesterday. I Have the Honor to be With great respect yr obt Svt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 110 (M125, Roll No. 40).

1. George Croft was warranted a sailing master on 17 August 1814.

2. Tuesday, 1 November 1814.

## CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON

Charleston Decr. 22nd. 1814

Sir

Strongly impressed with a sense of unmerited neglect, since the Declaration of the present war, that I appeal to you sir, as chief Magistrate of my country for redress, to strengthening my appeal I enclose the copy's of several Letters addressed to the late Secretary of the Navy on that subject, to which I received no answer.<sup>1</sup> The command which I at present hold (of a few half maned Galley's and Barges) is neither desirable or honorable, I have to request, that I may be employed more advantageously to my country, and compatable to my rank and former services; another strong inducement for my wishing active service and removal from this station, is that the climate does not agree with my constitution, which was much impaired the last season. I feel satisfied Sir, that you will consider my appeal and remonstrance just, and that you will direct me placed in a situation where I may participate in the Glorious achievements of my Brother Officers. I am not tenacious of the discription or class of vessel or station, I may be ordered to, but willing if a frigate cannot be had, to command a Division of the Schooners ordered to be equipped for the anoyance of the Enemy's commerce—<sup>2</sup> should my request be considered unjust, however reluctant I am to leave a service I am devoted to, and spent the greater part of my life in, I must beg you to consider this my resignation, as I cannot consent to be at my age<sup>3</sup> put on the superanuated list— I have the honor to be sir with great consideration and respect Yr. Obdt. Servt.

J H Dent  
Captain US Navy

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 130 (M125, Roll No. 41).

1. Secretary Jones left office on 1 December 1814. His successor, Benjamin W. Crowninshield, responded on 28 January 1815. For copies of Dent's letters of 5 April, 8 June, and 7 July 1813, and 11 January 1814, see DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, between No. 117 and No. 118 (M125, Roll No. 35). These earlier letters were not filed with this 22 December letter.

2. Here, Dent is referring to the commerce-raiding squadrons David Porter and Oliver H. Perry were assembling.

3. Dent was 32 when he wrote this.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

Capt. John Dent  
Commg Naval Officer Charleston So. Ca.

Navy Department  
Jany 28th. 1815.

Sir,

Your letter to the President of the United States; under date of the 22d. December has been duly considered and referred by him to this Department.—

It is conceived that no injustice was intentionally done to your claims under the administration of the late Secretary of the Navy, and the great pressure of

important public business may have occasioned the delay of a reply to your former letters soliciting more active service; while the Department was not aware of any dissatisfaction on your part; as to the command you were placed in, previous to the War, and the limited number of our Cruising Ships could not afford commands to all the officers entitled to them.—

At a moment when the Enemy threatens the Coast with actual invasion, with a powerful force, it is expected that every man will do his duty; and when an officers services are most wanted, it will not comport with his honor & reputation, to decline the service upon slight causes of supposed neglect.— with a view to your continued exertions in the service of your Country, and at a time when they may be essentially useful, the order of this date is issued; to prepare all the Naval force under your command on the station, for the most efficient operations against the Enemy, and to cooperate with the commanding General of the District,<sup>1</sup> in defending the Coast and Harbours from depredations and invasion.— I am very respectfully &C.

B. W. Crowninshield

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 19 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Major General Thomas Pinckney.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

Capt. John Dent  
Commanding Naval Officer Charleston So. Ca.

Navy Department  
Jany 28th. 1815.

Sir,

You will immediately place the Naval force under your command in the most efficient state for Service, and man the Vessels and Gun Boats by recruiting or otherwise, so as to make the best possible defence against any attack of the Enemy, and you will cooperate with the Military Commander in every way, which the exigency of the case may require, and in which a harmony of concert and cooperation may be necessary; confiding in your Patriotism and Zeal for the best disposition of your force to effect this, object, and to defend the Country against invasion, I am respectfully &C.

B. W. Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 18 (M149, Roll No. 12).

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Charleston (S. C.) 28. January 1815

Sir

I have the honor to acquaint you that on Wednesday evening,<sup>1</sup> an express was received by the commanding General, from Major Robinson<sup>2</sup> Commanding a

detachment of State Troops on John's Island stating that the Enemy had landed on that Island, from North Edisto, with a force not known— I immediately left this with four Galleys and a Barge in order to co-operate, and in the event of a retreat to assist in transporting the Troops, also to protect the works erecting on Stono which are unfinished and much exposed. On my arrival at John's Island, I was informed the Enemy had reembarked after destroying a Small Battery of two Guns (erected on the point of Simonds Island<sup>3</sup> as an alarm post) and burning some huts in its neighbourhood. From the most correct information I could obtain, the Enemy landed from a Ship, Brig, & Schooner about One Hundred & fifty men, their principle object I believe to ascertain the soundings of the Bar and roadstead, as the ship remains to an anchor very near it.

On Tuesday an Army Transport with Ordinance Munitions of War &c left this for Savannah under convoy of a Galley and Two Barges conceiving her protection not adequate, as she must pass directly in sight of the Enemy, I directed her to return untill their force and situation could be ascertained Genl. Pinkney feeling much interested for the safety of this vessel, and knowing the importance of her lading to the operations of the Army near Savannah I have directed Lieut. Commdt. Kearny to take the command of all the Flotilla he can man and see her safe to Savannah.

The want of men to man the Flotilla is seriously felt on this Station, as the operations of the Army and safety of the Seaboard depends on a co-operation not a man can be procured here, the want of funds to pay off those whose term of service expired within the last three months, have given such a character to the service, that I am affraid will not be easily eradicated. Of the three hundred discharged but few remain here, the greatest part have entered in Privateers and Merchantmen. The Brig *Enterprise* & Schr. *Nonsuch*, have not a man. The few whose term of service had not expired, I drafted on board the Flotilla in order to have their services I have the honor to be Sir very respectfully yr. Obdt. Servt.

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 84 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Wednesday, 25 January 1815.

2. Major General Thomas Pinckney.

3. Simonds Island, a coastal island southwest of Charleston.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Charleston S. C. January 31st. 1815

Sir

I had the honor in my Letter of the 28th. to inform you that from the information received by the commanding General<sup>1</sup> of the situation of the Enemy near North Edisto and the great alarm of the Inhabitants to visit that place. On my arrival at the Camp on John's Island, I sent an express to Lieut. Kearny Commg. the Flotilla (then on his way with the Army Transport to Savannah) to meet me with the Flotilla in North Edisto River.

From light Winds and contrary tides, Lt. Kearney did not arrive there untill  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 2 p.m. on Sunday,<sup>2</sup> when I was informed the Enemy were watering with their Barges and about 80 men on the opposite Island— I immediately directed the three Barges to be manned with Volunteers, and ordered Lt. Kearney to proceed out side and endeavour to cut them off. While a body of Volunteers & militia by order of the Genl. were landed on the Island. A little after 3 the Barges moved, and on turning the point were discovered by the frigate (laying to an Anchor about 4 miles from the land) when she fired several guns, and made the signal of recal to her boats, and immediately got under way, and opened a heavy fire on our Barges, the Wind about this time changed from the Westwd. to the East, and very light, enabled our Barges to cut off the Tender, which was discovered working out of a small Bay with two Barges, the Enemy's Barges after putting men on board the Tender, moved directly to windward & ahead of our Barges to the frigate, after a close running fight of one hour & a half, and in the act of boarding, I had the satisfaction to see the Tender surrender. The exertions of the frigate to save the Tender were great, and when she saw her two Boats leave her, she opened a heavy fire on them, and obliged them to pursue our Barges, with a third that left the ship about the same time. After the surrender of the Tender the frigate recalled her Boats and soon after ceased firing. Lieut. Kearney, the Officers & men engaged on this enterprize behaved themselves in a manner that does honor to their Country and themselves— Although they had to continue so long under the fire of the frigate, nothing could divert them from their object. As the frigate had cut off their retreat to North Edisto, Lt. Kearney was obliged to proceed to South Edisto with his prize since which I have not heard any thing from him. The detachment of Militia proceeded to the place where the Enemy were Watering and found their launch aground and abandoned the crew having gone on board the Tender. She was filled with water casks, and had mounted a Carronade 6 Brass Swivels with muskets, Pistols &c. She was got off at high water, and I expect her round with the prize. I have the honor to be Sir very respectfully yr. obdt. Servt.

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 93 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Major General Thomas Pinckney.

2. Sunday, 29 January 1815.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

John H. Dent Esqr.  
Commanding Naval Officer Charleston So. Ca.

Navy Department  
Feb'y 4th. 1815.—

Sir,

Your letters of the 28th Ulto.<sup>1</sup> are received, and your conduct approved in the arrangements you have made, and the disposition of your force for the defence of the Coast and protection of the transport service.—

I refer you to my letter of the same date, on this subject, and rely upon your continued exertions for the good of the service.—

You will endeavour to recruit men for the usual term of service; for which you are authorized to give fifteen Dollars per Month to Seamen, thirty Dollars bounty, and an advance not exceeding three Months pay, and less when practicable, according to circumstances; to Ordinary Seamen, from ten to twelve Dollars per Month, twenty Dollars bounty, and an advance in the same manner as to Seamen; to Landsmen (and Boys not under fourteen years of Age,) from six to ten Dollars per Month, from twelve to fifteen Dollars bounty, and an advance as above; and should you not succeed you will inform this Department what further encouragement will be necessary to obtain the men wanted on your Station. In cases of emergency, cannot Volunteer Officers and Seamen be found in Charleston, to man the *Enterprise*, and assist in the general defence of the Port.—

You will make your Requisitions on the Navy Agent<sup>2</sup> for the recruiting Service, and use your best exertions to ensure Success.— I am, respectfully &C.

B. W. Crowninshield

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 24 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Dent sent Jones one letter dated 28 January 1815. See above.
2. John Robertson.

#### CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Charleston (S. C.) 16 Februy. 1815

Sir

I have the honor to acquaint you, that on Friday last,<sup>1</sup> I received information, that four Barges, from an Enemy's Frigate, lying to an anchor off Cape Roman, were within the Waters of the Cape, and had captured several coasters. I immediately obtained the loan of 80 Volunteer Militia from the lines, and sailed with Two Galleys, five Barges, and the Launch taken from the *Hebrus*, to endeavor to recapture the coasters and Barges; I arrived in Bull's Bay on Sunday morning, but the weather did not admit of crossing the Bay untill Monday afternoon, when I sailed with the Barges. At 1 P.M. discovered a large Schooner in the offing, standing in shore, gave chase, At 3 I discovered the chase to be an Enemy's Tender of large dimentions, and that she was endeavoring to cut off the Barges, At 4 within gun shot the chase grounded on a reef, fired a shot when she surrendered — Made the Launch's Signal to take possession, and gave chase to a Boat, which put off from the Schooner, to the Frigate in the offing, the Barges not being able to cross the reef, the Boat I am affraid escaped, altho my gig was sent in chase, and the weather prevented her joining the Flotilla.) Made a harbor with the Barges, the wind blowing heavy from the Eastwards, with the appearance of a gale, About 9 P.M. Lt. Kearney returned with two Midshipmen and Thirteen Seamen & Marines

Prisoners taken from the Schooner *Brant* a Tender to the *Severn* Frigate, She had mounted an 18 pd. with small arms, and was a very fine Vessel well adapted to cut off the coasting trade.— I am sorry to add it blew a heavy gale through the night, and in the morning the Schooner was entirely lost. eight men escaped in the Boat, and I am affraid perished as it blew very heavy through the night, and they were on a sea then surrounded with breakers I have the Honor to be Sir with great respect yr Obt. Servt

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 130 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Friday, 10 February 1815.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Charleston S. C. 18th. February 1815

Sir

I have the pleasure to inform you, my Gig returned to town last evening, having captured after a long chase, the Enemy's Boat, that left the Tender after the surrender—. they made a harbour during the gale near Bull's Island. Much credit is due to Midshipman Le Compte<sup>1</sup> and the six men forming the Gig's crew, for their exertions and perseverance during so long a chase and blowing so heavy—

I find the Galley's built for this station useless from their construction, being so low, and incumbered with a large coach House fore and aft, that it is impossible to row them against tide, and the least sea they are in danger of swamping. If you will permit me to have them deck'd, their long gun placed on a circle amidships, and the house destroyed, I am satisfied they will answer every purpose, and be able to live in the sounds and roads.— I have taken upon myself to have one altered and properly fitted, which I hope will meet your approbation, when I assure you in the present situation, they must wait in some safe creek for the Enemy, instead of cruizing for them,— they should also be coppered as the season is approaching, when the worms are very destructive, and the loss of time, expence and impossibility of graving<sup>2</sup> them properly, (from their flat construction) will amount to more than the copper. I have the Honor to be, with great Respect Sir, Yr. Obt. Servt.

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 138 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Samuel Lecompt was warranted a midshipman on 4 June 1812. He had been serving at Charleston, South Carolina, since 1 September 1813.

2. Graving a vessel is to clean its bottom.

## The British Invade Georgia

Sir Alexander Cochrane received official approval for his plan to capture New Orleans the third week of September.<sup>1</sup> Eager to follow up the reversal of British military fortunes at Baltimore, the vice admiral promptly set his campaign plans in motion. Cochrane's first proposals for seizing New Orleans called for the occupation of American-held Mobile followed by an amphibious assault on the Crescent City via Lake Pontchartrain.<sup>2</sup> By September, he had enlarged his plan to include a strike at the Georgia coast, timed to coincide with his own operations against New Orleans.<sup>3</sup> This added refinement, Cochrane believed, would disrupt any attempt by U.S. officials to provide military succor to Louisiana's defenders from the state of Georgia.

To direct this diversionary operation, Cochrane chose his second-in-command, Rear Admiral George Cockburn, an officer whose ardent desire to wage a punitive war against the Americans rivalled his own. Cockburn's orders called for him to occupy Cumberland Island, near the Georgia–East Florida border, which he was then to use as a base of operations for harassing attacks on the region's coastal communities. In addition, he was ordered to continue Cochrane's policy of offering refuge to blacks seeking to escape bondage by their American masters. Finally, Cockburn was to support attacks on the Georgia backcountry led by Major Edward Nicolls of the Royal Marines and his British-armed and -trained Indians.<sup>4</sup>

Cockburn's invasion of Georgia delivered a devastating blow to the area's local economy and its defenders. In those terms, it may be judged an unqualified military success. However, as part of Cochrane's larger strategy to capture New Orleans, it must be deemed a failure since British operations off Cumberland Island did not get underway until 10 January 1815—two days after the battle for New Orleans had been decided in favor of the Americans. The greatest impact of Cockburn's Georgia operations was felt by the hundreds of blacks who fled slavery to discover a new life as British citizens. Attempts by their masters to seek financial restitution for their lost "property" through mediation with the British would continue for years after the restoration of peace.<sup>5</sup>

1. See Cochrane to Melville, 17 September 1814, pp. 852–53.

2. See Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, pp. 838–40.

3. See Cochrane to Bathurst, 2 September, 1814, pp. 1088–89.

4. On Nicolls's mission to the Indians, see pp. 859–70, 928–33, and 935.

5. For a detailed study on the British occupation of Cumberland Island and its aftermath, see Bullard, *Black Liberation*. See also Morris, *Cockburn and the British Navy*, pp. 114–20.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

Most Secret }  
& Confidential }

Tonnant, 23rd. Sept. /14—  
Lynhaven Bay

My dear Admiral/

Upon opening this letter retire, lest any person should see it—

His Majs. Govt. have resolved upon the conquest of New Orleans, Louisiana &c—<sup>1</sup> Lord Hill is to be at Barbadoes by the first of November with seven thousand men— they are to form a junction with the Troops from here on the 20th.



of that month at Negril Point W. end of Jamaica— from thence they proceed to Mobile— I intend to be at Guadeloupe before the 1st. of Novr. to meet Lord Hill— I hope to leave Halifax by the 8th. or 10th. of next month— You may therefore calculate upon my receiving any dispatches you may send to Guadeloupe if they arrive there during the first week of Novr.— After that at Negril Point or Mobile—I will write to you more fully from Halifax— I need not say how necessary it is that the utmost secrecy must be observed as the Americans may send re-inforcements to that Country if it gets wind— I am &ca

(Signed) A. Cochrane.

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fols. 12–13.

1. Lord Melville wrote Cochrane on 29 July, informing him of the British government's decision to support a campaign to capture New Orleans. Cochrane received and replied to this letter on 17 September. For the text of both these letters, see pp. 840–41 and 852–53.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

Secret.

*Tonnant*, at Halifax 1st. Octr. /14

Sir,

I intend to leave this place about the 8th. of this month, & will proceed direct to Guadeloupe. As the Expedition will leave Jamaica about the 20th. of Novr. it will be of most material consequence to draw off the Enemy's attention previous to the above period by an attack upon their frontier contiguous to Florida and taking possession of Cumberland Island as a place of Shelter for the Negroes that wish to join from thence to carry on such further offensive operations as you may see necessary or practicable with the force that may be under your Command— The conduct of the Inhabitants of Savanah requires a severe retaliation— You will therefore use your best endeavors to make them feel the effects of their late disgraceful conduct to a flag of truce sent in by the *Lacedemonian*—<sup>1</sup> I enclose for your further information an extract of a letter from Lt. Genl. Sir George Prevost,<sup>2</sup> in which his request that retaliatory measures may be carried on against the Coast of the United States is again renewed, which I have to desire you will see carried into effect.—

Your appearance upon the Coast of Georgia from the 10th. to the 20th. of Novr. will oblige the Executive of that State to recall their Troops from the Indian territory for the protection of the Coast by which means our Indian allies will be left at liberty to join our Army upon its landing in the vicinity of New Orleans— Any Ships that may arrive from England you will take under your Orders.<sup>3</sup> You will inform me once a fortnight by one of the small Vessels of your proceedings— The most expeditious route will be by the Hole in the Wall<sup>4</sup> or New Providence Channel— You may also carry on a correspondence with me by way of Pensacola for which an arrangement may be made at Amelia Island— the expense of which I will direct to be paid or you will charge it in your contingent Account— Such

Guns, Carronades, or Ammunition as you may require you will take with you from Bermuda, Entrenching tools are left with the Senior Officer in the Chesapeake. I have &ca

(Signed) A. Cochrane.

LB, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fols. 13–14.

1. Military forces at Savannah interfered with a flag of truce being sent ashore from H.M.S. *Lacedaemonian*. See Cochrane to Monroe, 23 September 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, p. 170.

2. For the full text of this letter, see Prevost to Cochrane, 3 August 1814, pp. 469–70. Cochrane sent this letter under separate cover. See Cochrane to Cockburn, 1 October 1814, *ibid.*, MS 2349, pp. 183–84. Another copy is in DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 14, pp. 430–31 (Roll No. 9).

3. For a list of the ships Cochrane placed under Cockburn's command, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 336–37.

4. Landmark located at the extreme southeastern tip of Great Abaco Island, Bahamas.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

No. 30

Bayous des Pecheurs near  
New Orleans 27th. Decr. 1814

Sir

The Military Force which was intended to have joined you upon the Coast of Georgia, having arrived here where it is found necessary for the present to employ it, you will carry into execution the Orders you have received from me so far as the means you have at hand will admit of; making your first object the taking post upon Cumberland Island, and the securing of yourself so as to make incursions into the Enemys Country from thence

The *Rota* has conveyed to you instructions to endeavor and interrupt the Trade carried on from Amelia Island with the produce of the United States, which is decided to be illegal and Vessels thus trading may be safely detained and sent in for adjudication

The Admiralty having approved of the formation of the 3rd. Battalion of Royal and Colonial Marines and of the Refugee Negroes who may enlist for it being paid a Bounty of Sixteen Dollars each you will endeavor to raise men for this Corps, paying those who are embodied the remaining Eight Dollars of their Bounty.— Should any of the Refugees wish rather to enter for the Naval Service you are at liberty to receive them and pay them a Bounty of Eight Dollars—

As Captain Truscott now in the *Goree* is appointed by the Admiralty to command the *Manly* (which is to convey this to you and follow your Orders) in the event of his joining you will be pleased to put Acting Captain Lock into any vacancy which there may be, or which may occur in the Squadron under your Orders I have &c

(Signed) Alexr. Cochrane Vice Admiral and  
and Commander in Chief

P.S. By my former Letters you will have been informed that a Detachment of the 2nd. West India Regiment was to join you from Providence which I hope will be instrumental in raising Recruits from the Refugees

By my Letters from England I am inclined to believe that a Land Force will be sent out to join you from home early in the Spring

(Signed) A. C.

LB, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 14, pp. 495–97 (Roll No. 9). For another copy of this letter, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 229–30.

REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No. 7

Head Quarters Cumberland  
Island the 26th. January 1815

Sir

The *Rota* being on the Point of proceeding to Jamaica affords me the first Opportunity which has offerd of reporting to You that I sailed from Bermuda on the 19th. November last in extreme bad Weather, which with little Variation continued from that Period, to about a Fortnight back, since which it has set in tolerably fine.<sup>1</sup>

The same Day I left Bermuda I dispatched the *Portia* to see a Merchant Brig safe into Providence and then to join Captain Jackson and to inform him that I was on my Way to the Chesapeake from whence I should as quickly as possible join him off Charleston with such Force as I could muster— The *Portia* I am sorry however to say never arrived with this Intimation, and there is I fear now too much Reason to believe that she must have foundered.

I arrived with this Ship, the *Orlando* and *Canso* in the Chesapeake on the 30th. November, but instead of finding the Ships and Marines ready to accompany me to the Southward as I had expected, the latter were on Shore on an Expedition up the Rappahannock<sup>2</sup> as high as Tappahannock of which they had taken Possession, and the former distributed about, and all in Want of Water— I however lost no Time after securing the Tobacco Flour &c taken in the Rappahannock to reembark the Troops, to collect the Ships, to procure for them sufficient Water to carry them to the Southward, and get them down the Bay to Sea, which owing to continued hard Frost and heavy Gales took until the 18th. of December to effect, I had preceded the Troops Ships to the Offing, leaving Captain Barrie to bring them out to me, but so thick and bad was the Weather on the 18th. that they missed me, which I did not at the moment consider of any Consequence as I had given the necessary Directions for their Guidance in the Event of such an Accident, I proceeded therefore with the *Albion* and *Hebrus* for Charleston (the first Rendezvous) but such was the excessive bad and contrary Weather I met, that notwithstanding every possible Exertion, and tearing the Ship to Pieces by the Sail I caused to be carried on her, it was not until the 8th. January that



*Sir George Cockburn*

I was enabled to reach it, (a Distance not more than 48 Hours run) the *Hebrus* parted from me in a Gale, which was so severe as to oblige her to bear up before it, and these Gales prevented the *Dragon* and Troop Ships from ever getting off Charleston; Captain Jackson not having received the Intimation I sent him by the *Portia* (as I have before remarked) and hearing of the Troop Ships being to the Southward pushed on to join them, and therefore when I got to Charleston I was completely alone and not knowing of any of the beforementioned Circumstances, was in hourly Expectation of being joined by some or other of the Ships, and therefore of course was extremely loath to leave Charleston open, having however remained close in with it until the Evening of the 12th. without seeing anything but a Ship which I ran on Shore on the Bar and which was totally lost, I determined to take the Advantage of a favorable Wind and run the Coast down to the Southward, when arriving off this Place I found every Ship assembled here with the *Rota* (which had come from Providence with two Companies of the 2d. West India Regiment) and Captain Somerville being the Senior Officer had taken all of them under his Orders, and in Obedience to the Instructions which he had brought for me from You (which in Consequence of his not falling in with me and being short of water he opened) he had began Operations and made a landing on Cumberland Island— I had directed the Ships to meet me in the first Instance off Charleston, conceiving it possible that the Force with me might do something against that Place or Savannah, if the Information I might receive from Captain Jackson should afford me a Hope of finding the Enemy at both or either of these Places at all off his Guard, and feeling how much more difficult any Operations against them would be after the Occupation of Cumberland Island would have assured him of my being in his Neighbourhood, and consequently have induced him to collect all his means and exert all his Efforts to defend Places of so much Importance to him.

On my Arrival here however on the 14th. finding the Troops had actually landed, and had already advanced upon St. Marys, there remained no Alternative but to follow up this Blow, and to endeavour to draw the greatest Advantages from it which I could; I lost no Time therefore in proceeding myself to Head Quarters to take Command of our Combined Forces, and I immediately dispatched the *Severn* to Blockade Charleston and the *Hebrus* to Blockade Savannah.

I kept Possession of the Town of St. Marys 'till the great Quantities of Cotton and other Goods we found there were all shipped on Board the different Vessels which were laying there; and having learnt that the *Countess of Harcourt* Indiaman which had been taken into St. Marys last Year and had been moved for her Security between 20 and 30 miles higher up the River I dispatched some Armed Boats in search of her, and they brought her down together with another Ship they found in the River loaded with Timber— Everything worth bringing away, as well as the Guns from the Fort at Point Peter being shipped by the 23d., and all the beforementioned Vessels ready for moving down, I evacuated that Day the Town of St. Marys, and after blowing up the Fort retired with every thing to Cumberland Island, which I am now fortifying, and which I have little or no Doubt of being able to hold so long as you may wish it, and from it after we are a little better settled I propose to begin further Depredations on the Enemys Coast, his inland Navigation and Trade is of Course entirely at an End.

The Official Report of the landing here previous to my Arrival and of the advance to and Capture of St. Marys I shall forward direct to You in a separate Despatch,<sup>3</sup> so soon as I can spare a small Vessel for the Purpose of carrying it and have received the detailed Account from Captain Barrie who was placed by Captain Somerville in Command of the Forces who were landed.

I did not burn the Town of St. Marys, as owing to the Smallness of the Force with me, and the Length of Time I foresaw I should be obliged to occupy it, for the Purpose of collecting and removing so many Articles, it appeared advisable to give out that the Preservation of the Houses should solely depend on the military Force in the Neighbourhood not approaching us, the Houses however were merely left, everything having been taken from it, and the Place entirely ruined I have the Honor to be Sir Your most obedient and Very faithful humble Servant

G Cockburn Rear Admiral

P.S. I forgot to mention that the *Albion* on her Way here recaptured the *St. Andrew* from London, and found & brought here with her the *Trollhatten* a Swedish Ship laden with Steel Iron &ca which had been entirely deserted by her Crew—

G. C

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 82–87. For another copy of this letter see, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 10 (Roll No. 6).

1. Bad weather and a shortage of skilled workmen hampered Cockburn's efforts to make repairs to *Albion* and other vessels attached to his command. These and other factors prevented his synchronizing his operations with those of Cochrane's at New Orleans. See Cockburn to Cochrane, 24 October 1814, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 332–35.

2. For documentation on this operation, see *ibid.*, pp. 340–44.

3. See Cockburn to Cochrane, 27 January 1814, and enclosures, below.

REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Private

Head Quarters Cumberland Island  
26 Jany. 1815

Dear Sir,

I have to thank you for your private Letters by *Rota*, *Manly* & *Statira*, dated 20 Novr. 29 Decr. & the 8 Curt.,<sup>1</sup> the Contents of the latter has grieved me more than I can express to you, and the more so as the reverse it mentions was so little expected especially after the good Accounts brought to me by the *Manly*.— I learnt however from Captain Swaine that another Regiment had just arrived to reinforce you as he was getting under way, and that your Bomb Ships & Flotilla were proceeding up the Mississippi to assist in Bombarding the Town, & Works around it,<sup>2</sup> I therefore still entertain Hopes you will at last get hold of the Place,

to repay you in some measure for the last misfortune,<sup>3</sup> though the tenor of your note no longer allows me to be very Sanguine

As you seem to be anxious to secure the destruction of the Enemy's Southern inland Navigation in this Neighborhood & to destroy the Smuggling Commerce which has been lately carried on by means of Amelia Island, I am glad that my public Letter<sup>4</sup> which accompanies this will assure you that this Object is now completely effected, by our having removed every thing from St. Mary's & occupied Cumberland Island, I have not left a Boat in St. Mary's River, at the Entrance of which the *Primrose* is anchored, I have also the Bombs,<sup>5</sup> the *Manly* & Schooners<sup>6</sup> inside between Cumberland Island & the Main and if the Flotilla from Savannah ventures to approach this way I have little or no doubt of giving you a good account of them, as soon as I have put our Prizes & Prize goods a little to rights & have thrown up the necessary Entrenchments on the Island, I shall move again into the Enemy's Country to collect Cotton &c. and to occasion him further Annoyance, but I fear I am too Weak to attempt any thing serious against Savannah now, Colonel Williams of the 1st. Batn. of Marines brought only 63 Men (Rank & File) with him, Malcolm has with him in his Batn. about 300 Rank & File, & the rest of my Force are Blacks (about 450) and the People belonging to the Ships; with this Motley Gang I cannot hope to do much but whenever you can spare me any Troops I have no fears of taking Savannah though of course the longer we are before we proceed against it the stronger they will be & the more capable of defence, they have now there & in the Neighborhood, about 6000 men

My public Letter will give you some Idea of the Weather we have experienced on the Coast this Winter, I could not have believed it possible to have met with such so far to the Southward, but though the continuance of these Gales threw us back in commencing our Operations, it may perhaps on the whole be fortunate, as had we Anchored here earlier it is more than probable some of our Ships would have been lost, and now I understand there is but little likelihood of our having any more very severe Gales—

Sir Thos. Cochrane has come to me here in Lieu of *Niemen*<sup>7</sup> he is now Commanding at the North end of the Island I have sent to inform him that an opportunity (though rather a round about one) offers for writing to you— I am endeavoring to procure somebody to carry you a Telegraphic Dispatch over Land, I don't know whether I shall succeed, if this reaches you first it will be a proof I have failed the endeavor—

I hope *Statira* will be in time to catch General Power at Bermuda, I think it most probable that she will, as the Wind has continued fair for her ever since she sailed which was on the 22d.. there is plenty of Provisions at Bermuda and I have desired two Transports to be immediately loaded for you & sent with the *Statira* or any other Ship which may be there on her way to join you, if you get the Provisions you expect from Jamaica these Transports will probably be no inconvenience to you, and if you do not receive that which you are now looking for, they will carry you a very seasonable supply.<sup>8</sup>

I have not heard of the Arrival of Lady Cochrane & Family or the *Iphigenea* I forwarded however your Letters for Bermuda by the *Statira*

I beg to thank you for the Confirmation you have granted to Mr. Beattie— there are many Vacancies for Lieutenants constantly occurring, if you would inform me

of any Admiralty Midshipmen (amongst the Ships on this part of the Station) whose turns may be near at hand I could place them in these Vacancies as they fall— I have the honor to be My dear Sir Your very faithful humble Servant

G. Cockburn

Captain Ross has joined this Ship quite recovered.

ALS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2575, fols. 5–8.

1. Not found. In a letter dated 8 January 1815 that is recorded in Cochrane's general letter book, the vice admiral informed Cockburn of the British defeat at the Battle of New Orleans. See *ibid.*, MS 2349, p. 238.

2. Royal Navy warships made an unsuccessful attempt to force a passage of the Mississippi below New Orleans on 9–17 January 1815. See pp. 1034–36.

3. Likely a reference to the failed British assault on Baltimore. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 272–304.

4. See Cockburn to Cochrane, 26 January 1815, above.

5. Bomb vessels *Devastation* and *Terror*.

6. Schooners *Canso* and *Whiting*.

7. A possible inference here is that H.M. frigate *Surprise*, commanded by Captain Sir Thomas J. Cochrane, was attached to Cockburn's command in lieu of H.M. frigate *Niemen*. Sir Thomas Cochrane was the eldest son of Sir Alexander Cochrane. For a summary of the younger Cochrane's career, see O'Byrne, *Naval Dictionary*, pp. 203–4.

8. On 8 January, Cochrane ordered Cockburn to transport Major General Sir Manley Power, troops of the 27th Regiment of Foot, and provisions from Bermuda to New Orleans. See Cochrane to Cockburn, 8 January 1815, and, Cochrane to Power, 8 January 1815, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 238–39.

REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Duplicate  
No. 9

Head Quarters Cumberland  
Island the 27 January 1815

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that extraordinary bad and adverse weather having prevented the Ships with the Marines and the Bomb Ships from collecting on the Rendezvous I had appointed, it was not until the 14th. I joined them here, and I then found that Captain Somerville of the *Rota* having fallen in with them in this neighbourhood and the whole being in much want of water added to the other Reasons as set forth in his Letter had determined him to take possession of Cumberland Island which Service he therefore entrusted to that able and indefatigable Officer Captain Barrie of the *Dragon*, placing under his Orders for this purpose the Detachments of the three Battalions of Marines and the Flank Companies of the 2nd. West India Regiment under the immediate Command of Lieutt. Colonel Williams of the 1st. Battalion Royal Marines, the Boats of the Squadron and the *Canso* and *Whiting* Schooners— The Island was accordingly taken possession of on the 10th. without opposition and on the 13th. our Forces crossed over to the Main and took possession of the Enemies Fort on Point Peter having had a successful skirmish with him by the way and the Town of St. Marys



was also occupied as quickly afterwards as the Boats could reach it without further resistance— I have the honor herewith to transmit the particular details of these Transactions as reported by Captains Somerville, and Barrie and Lieutt. Colonel Williams and I beg to draw your favorable notice to the Officers therein particularly mentioned.<sup>1</sup>

On my arrival at St. Marys I found that a considerable quantity of American produce had been collected there on account of the facility which the situation of the Place offered for passing it over into the Floridas, and by means of the Port of Amelia Island for evading the General Blockade of the American Ports, and I also learnt that some valuable Shipping had been moved from 20 to 30 Miles higher up the St. Marys River, with the view of placing them beyond our re[*a*]ch— I therefore determined to hold St. Marys until the whole of this Produce could be embarked and the River properly examined; for this latter purpose therefore I dispatched Captain Ross of the *Albion* with a Squadron of Armed Boats directing him to bring down whatever Vessels he might find in the higher parts of it— The Shipment of the Articles found in St. Marys was also immediately commenced in Vessels which had been there taken— These objects (notwithstanding the most indefatigable exertions of all) occupied us until the 23rd. Instant when every article which could be removed being shipped and Captain Ross having returned bringing down the River with him a large Ship loaded with Timber and the *Countess Harcourt* (formerly an East India Ship which had been captured by an American Privateer) I caused the Troops to be reembarked and the whole to be dropt down below the Fort of Point Peter from which the Guns, Carriages, Ordnance, Stores &c. deemed fit to bring away were quickly embarked and the Fort then blown up, and the Barracks and every thing appertaining to it burnt and totally destroyed under the Superintendency of Captain Harrison of the Marine Artillery and Captain Phillott of the *Primrose*, we afterwards quietly removed to this Island on which I again disembarked the Troops, and of which I propose retaining possession in conformity with the Instructions I have had the honor to receive from you on that Head—

The Enemys Troops during the foregoing operations were collecting at Jefferson about 23 Miles from us on the Savannah Road but they did not shew nearer to us in any Force though occasional Skirmishing Parties hovered about us and kept us on the Alert.

In closing Sir this detail I have much pleasure in the fresh opportunity it affords me of assuring you of the good conduct of all those serving under me and I feel particularly indebted on this occasion to Captain Somerville who (although his Ill health prevented his being actively employed on Shore) commanded the whole until I joined, To Captain Barrie whose Active Zeal and Abilities I have so often profitted by and who on this occasion Commanded on Shore until my arrival; To Captains Ross Jackson, Alexander, Sheridan, Badcock and Phillott of the Navy whose cheerful exertions have been unceasing and most useful to me.

To Lieutt. Colonel Williams the Senior officer of the Marines and Troops acting with me my warmest acknowledgements are likewise due for the readiness he evinced on every occasion to meet my wishes and to afford the most cordial Cooperation of the Forces under his Guidance, in which he is most cheerfully seconded by Lieutt. Colonel Malcolm and the other officers of that Corps, as

well as by those of the Flank Companies of the 2nd. West India Regiment whom I consider myself most fortunate in having also with me.

I feel it incumbent on me also to mention to you that I have derived great advantage from the Local Knowledge and Active Zeal of Lieutenant Fitzgerald (late of the fortieth Regiment) whom you sent in the *Rota* to act with this Division and to whom I have given a temporary Appointment to Command a Company of New raised Coloured Refugees.

A Return of Ordnance Stores &ca. taken and Destroyed at St. Marys and Point Peter as well as a List of the Killed and wounded are amongst the Documents herewith transmitted<sup>2</sup> I have the honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most Obedient humble Servant

G Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 89–92. For other copies of this letter see, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fols. 182–85, and, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 10, pp. 36–40 (Roll No. 7).

1. See Somerville to Cockburn, 14 January 1815; Barrie to Somerville, 14 January 1815; and Williams to Barrie, 14 January 1815, below.

2. Originals not found. Copies of the returns of ordnance and stores captured and destroyed at St. Marys and Point Peter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fols. 173–74, and, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 14, p. 488 (Roll No. 9). A copy of the casualties return is in DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 14, p. 489 (Roll No. 9).

[Enclosure]  
(Copy)

His Majesty's Ship *Rota* off  
Cumberland Island the 14th. Jany. 1815

Sir/

In obedience to an Order from the Commander in Chief, I am to acquaint you, that I sailed from Port Royal Jamaica on the 28th. of November last, for the purpose of taking on board the Ship I command, the two flank Companies of the 2nd. West India Regiment, to be placed under your Orders.— On the 13th. of December following, I arrived at New Providence, and embarked them on the next day, when I proceeded to this place agreeable to Orders I had received, and arrived here on the 18th. Ultimo, where I remained until the 10th. Instant, when not finding you at the appointed Rendezvous, and being joined by the Ships named in the Margin,<sup>1</sup> with detachments from the 1st. 2nd. and 3rd. Battalion of Royal Marines under similar orders to myself, and the Troops becoming Sick and Ships short of Water, determined me to take possession of Cumberland Island with the Force I had, for the purpose of obtaining the necessary supplies and comforts;— Accordingly I placed under the Orders of Captain Barrie of the *Dragon*, all the strength that could be spared, and embarked them on the 10th. Instant in the Boats of the Squadron Armed, and protected by the *Canso* and *Whiting* Schooners, who after gaining possession of Cumberland Island without any resistance, proceeded to the attack of the Battery at Point Peter, which was carried in ten minutes with very little loss; for the particulars of which I beg to refer you to Captain Barrie's report herewith enclosed.

The Town of St. Mary's after the surrender of the Fort at Point Peter, was taken possession of by Captain Nourse of the *Severn*, where was found some Merchandize and the remainder of the Force under Captain Barrie arrived there immediately afterwards; I trust my proceedings therein will meet your approbation; I have the Honor to be Sir Your most obedient Humble Servant

(Signed) P. Somerville Captain

To/  
Rear Admiral Cockburn  
&c &c &c

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fol. 93. The address line appears on the first page of this letter. For other copies of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fols. 166–67, and, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 14, pp. 482–83 (Roll No. 9).

1. The following ships are listed in a column in the left-hand margin: *Dragon, Lacedaemonian, Severn, Hebrus, Regulus, Brune, Ceylon, Primrose, Terror, Devastation, Canso, and Whiting.*

[Enclosure]  
Duplicate

Head Quarters St. Mary's  
Georgia 14th. Jany. 1815

Sir

In obedience to the directions I had the honour to receive from you on the evening of the 9th instant, I took Lieutt. Coll. Williams and the Detachments of the 1st. 2nd. and 3rd. Battalions of Royal Marines, the Flank Companies of the 2nd. West India Regiment and the Marines from the different Ships under my orders, and at daybreak of the 10th. embarked them in the Boats of His Majesty's Ships named in the margin<sup>1</sup> and the *Canso* and *Whiting* Schooners and proceeded to Cumberland Island.

The Schooners grounded several times in crossing the Bar, however, by the indefatigable exertions of their Commanders, Lieutt. Croke, and Lieutt. Little, assisted by the Boats, they were anchored off the North End of the Island by 5 P.M. and a landing was effected without opposition, but receiving information that a late hurricane had rendered the Road to Parker's Landing almost impassable, I directed part of the Troops to be reembarked in the Boats and proceed to that place by water, where they were landed, and halted for the night, early next morning we proceeded to Sand's landing; at this Port I directed Lieutt. Coll. Williams to station a shori[n]g Party, and the rest marched to Dungeness where I have established my Head Quarters, the Boats were employed in bringing round the remainder of the Troops and their Baggage from the North End, and not being yet able to find a passage for the Schooners, they are left to guard the North End, and provision the Troops stationed at this Port.

Finding Cumberland Island could afford us but a very scanty supply of Provisions and Vegetables, I determined to attack the Enemy's Fort at Point Petre which would put us in command of the Town of St. Mary's and the passage of the

river; having arranged with Lieutt. Coll. Williams the plan of attack, I directed him to march with all the Troops not required to keep possession of the Island to Sand's landing at which place they were embarked during the night, and by daybreak of the 13th. I landed them without opposition on the Main at Johnson's Landing, distant from Point Petre about six miles. I had previously formed the Boats into three Divisions under the command of Captains Nourse and Jackson, and Lieutt. Alexander of the *Dragon*; Captain Ross of the *Albion* having very gallantly volunteered his Services accompanied them. Captn. Nourse was directed to move the Boats in line on the left wing of the Troops, a simultaneous attack on the Fort by the Boats and Troops being intended.

The Road is extremely narrow and swampy, add to this, the Enemy, being fully aware of our intention, had cut down the trees wherever they would block up the road, so that it was impossible to get any sort of Artillery along, and the Seamen under the immediate direction of Captn. Badcock of the *Brune* assisted by Messrs. Smales and Brown Midshipman of the *Dragon* were obliged to carry the Rockets on their Backs.

When the Troops had marched about half way, the Skirmishers and Advance were fired on by a party of the Enemy about 120 strong completely ambushed in the Jungle on each side of the Road, which in this place was not eight feet wide: a smart fire was kept up on both sides for about ten minutes, when the Enemy ran, and his knowledge of the Country enabled most of them to escape; we had one rank and file killed and three wounded; we made four Prisoners, but the Enemy's Loss in killed and wounded I have not been able to ascertain; from a Serjt. Major of their Rifle Corps I learn that they had a Captain and Lieutenant severely wounded and between fifteen and twenty rank and file killed or wounded.<sup>2</sup>

As I was in the advance I had an opportunity of witnessing the good conduct of all our Troops, and it is with great pleasure I take advantage of this opportunity to recommend to your notice the gallant, steady, and soldier like conduct of the Light Division commanded by Captain Lord of the 2nd. West India Regiment, consisting of the Light Company of the 2nd. W.I.R., a company of the Skirmishers of the 2nd. Battalion of Royal Marines under the command of Lieutt. Frazer and a company of the new raised Colonial Corps under Lieuts. Agasig and Mores. Mr. Fitzgerald, a Volunteer who acted as a guide we are much indebted to for his local knowledge and gallantry in leading the Advance.

The party of the Enemy fallen in with being very easily driven from their apparently impenetrable ambush, the Troops marched without further opposition to the attack of the Fort; I was agreeably surprized to observe the English Colours already flying, the Garrison having fled on the approach of Captn. Nourse after firing only three guns at his Boats.

Captain Nourse leaving Captain Ross in possession of the Fort immediately pushed forward to St. Mary's which made no opposition and in the evening the Troops were marched into the Town. A party under the command of Captain Willes being left to retain possession of the Fort at Point Petre which is admirably situated to keep full command of the entrance of the River and is also difficult to attack from the land side, except at low water.

The Fort has six Guns pointed towards the Sea, two 24s., and four 18s., two 6 lb Field Peices were directed to flank the Causeway on the Land side and two 12 Prs. not mounted on Carriages.

At St. Mary's we have found some Cotton and Tobacco and Vessels enough to receive the same, which will be shipped with all convenient dispatch; meantime I will thank you to send the *Devastation* and *Terror* in, which will enable us to hold this Town against any Force the Enemy can bring against it.

I cannot conclude this narrative of our proceedings without assuring you of the good conduct of all employed.

I have received the most effective assistance from Captain Nourse, Captain Jackson, and Lieutt. Alexander of the *Dragon* (the senior Lieutenant employed) who commanded the Divisions of Boats, and also from Captain Ross who was a Volunteer on every Service.

To the gallant, zealous, and soldier like conduct of Lieutt. Coll. Williams and the Officers and Troops under his command I shall ever feel particularly indebted.

Enclosed I forward a letter to my address which I have received from the Lieutt. Colonel for your information, and I beg to assure you the encomium he passes is richly deserved by the Officers alluded to.

Captain Badcock and Messrs. Brown and Smales and the Seamen under his orders deserve my warmest thanks for their indefatigable exertions in bringing up the Rockets.

I must not omit to mention the Soldier like conduct of Captn. Carter R,M, of the *Dragon* (the senior Captain employed) who with Lieutt. Hawkins R,M, ably brought up the Rear

I am extremely obliged to Mr. Stephen Yarwood Purser of His Majesty's Ship *Dragon* under my command, who volunteered his Services as my Secretary, and has been very useful to me on this and several other occasions and has been actively employed in the Commissariat.

Lieutt. Stephens R,M, is left in command of the Party in possession of Cumberland Island, and Captain Jackson will proceed to Amelia Island on the Service you pointed out.

Enclosed you will have a return of the Guns and Ordnance Stores<sup>3</sup> that have hitherto been discovered, and I trust this narrative with the letter written by Captain Ross will enable you to furnish Rear Admiral Cockburn with every particular of our evolutions since you did me the honour to place the Troops and Boats under my command. I have the honour to be Sir your faithful and obedient Servant

Robt Barrie— { Captain and  
Commg. Officer  
at St. Marys

To P. Somerville Esq.  
Captain of H M Ship *Rota*  
and Senior Officer off Cumberland Island

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 95–98. The pages of this letter were bound out of order. For other copies of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fols. 168–72, and, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 14, pp. 483–88 (Roll No. 9).

1. The following ships are listed in a column in the left-hand margin: *Rota, Dragon, Lacedaemonian, Severn, Hebrus, Regulus, Brune, Ceylon, Primrose, Terror, and Devastation.*

2. Captain Abraham A. Massias of the 1st Regiment of U.S. Riflemen reported 14 American casualties in the defense of Point Peter on 13 January 1815: 1 killed, 4 wounded, and 9 missing. See Massias to Floyd, 13 January 1814, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, M-211 (8), (M221, Roll No. 64). This letter was published in the 14 February 1815 edition of *Niles' Weekly Register*.

3. See Cockburn to Cochrane, 27 January 1814, note 2, above.

[Enclosure]  
(Copy)

St. Marys Georgia  
the 14. January 1815.

Sir,

A descent upon the Coast of Georgia having been deemed expedient by the Senior Naval Officer of H,M, Squadron there, and arrangements made for the disembarkation of the Troops.

I have the honor to acquaint you for his Information, that on the evening of the 10th. Instt., I landed upon the North End of Cumberland Island with the Skeleton of the 1st. Battalion of R.M. part of the 2nd. Battalion under the Command of Captain Cole (in the absence of Lieutt. Coll. Malcolm not yet arrived) a detachment of the 3rd. Battalion of Royal and Colonial Marines, under the Command of Captain Clements, the Flank Companies of the 2 West India Regiment Commanded by Captain Bradley, and detachments of Royal Marines from H,M,S, and Vessels under the Command of Captain Carter and on the following day took up a position at Dungeness ten Miles to the Southward of the Place of debarkation.

The plan of an attack upon the Enemys Battery at Point Peter having been agreed upon, the Troops Crossed Cumberland Island very early in the Morning of the 13th. Instant with a Force consisting of about six hundred men, and landed without opposition at Kings Bay, four Miles in the rear of that Battery.

The road which led to Point Peter passed through a thick wood, into which having advanced about two Miles, the Light Troops under the Command of Captain Lord of the 2nd. West India Regiment were opposed by a Rifle company, and a detachment of the 43rd. United States Infantry Commanded by Major Massias.—after a smart Skirmish of about fifteen minutes the Enemy was compelled to retire with some loss.

The retreat and dispersion of the Detachment facilitated the advance of the Troops to the attack of Point Petre, but the approach of a division of Boats by St. Marys River, which you had directed to co-operate with the Troops, induced the Enemy to strike the Colours in the Battery, and to retreat by St. Marys taking the road to Savannah.

Leaving a detachment of One Hundred and Fifty Men at Point Peter under the Command of Captain Wills of the 1st. Battalion R.M., the remainder of the Troops proceeded to St. Marys about three Miles further and entered the Town at 10 o'Clock at Night, where the division of Boats had arrived early in the afternoon.

The steady conduct of the light Troops afforded me much satisfaction, and my thanks are due to Captain Lord of the Light Infantry Company of the 2nd. West India Regt. to Lieutt. Frazer of the 2nd. Battn. R M (who led the advanced

division) and to Lieutt. Agassig of the 3rd. Battn. of Royal and Colonial Marines: And I beg leave to notice the conduct of Lieutenant Fitzgerald, an Officer on the half pay, who volunteered his Services with the light Troops.

Much praise is likewise due to Lieutt. Pasco R M of the light division, who altho' he was seized with severe illness on the March, persevered in his duty until he was compelled from fatigue to be carried to the Rear

Lieutt. and Adjutant Mitten having been appointed to do the duty of Brigade Major, and Lieutt. and Quarter Master Griffith of the 1st. Battn. R.M. that of Deputy Asst. Quarter Master General; I beg leave to notice their zeal and Intelligence in their several Departments. I have the Honor to be Sir Your Most Obedient Humble Servant

(signed) Rd. Williams Lt. Coll.  
commanding the Brigade

P.S. The loss of the Enemy is not correctly ascertained, but the Captain Commanding the detachment of the 43rd. United States Infantry and one Subaltern were severely wounded. The Serjeant Major of the Rifle Company and one Private are wounded and Prisoners together with three others.

To, Robert Barrie Esqre.  
Captain H.M, Ship *Dragon*  
&ca.— &ca.— &ca.—

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 99–101. The address line appears at the bottom of the first page of this letter. For other copies of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fols. 163–65, and, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 14, pp. 489–91 (Roll No. 9).

REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

(Duplicate)  
No. 22

Head Quarters Cumberland  
Island 11th. February 1815

Sir

By my Letters of the 26th. and 27th. Ultimo, numbered 7 and 9 of this Year,<sup>1</sup> I had the honor to report to you the transactions in this neighborhood to those dates, and I have only now further to inform you that on the 28th. I detached Captain Ramsay of the *Regulus*, with the Vessels named in the Margin,<sup>2</sup> and a Squadron of Armed Boats to take possession of St. Simons and the neighboring Islands, which by Letters I have since received from him,<sup>3</sup> I learn he was permitted to do without opposition, but he has not yet returned to me, as the quantity of Merchandize found upon those Islands and the number of Refugees who have joined him has induced him to prolong his stay, to enable him to bring the whole away with him.—The remainder of the Force on this Island has been fully occupied in constructing the Works necessary for its defence, loading different Vessels with Prize Goods, and Watering and Victualling the Squadron,

which objects it was absolutely necessary to attend to, prior to undertaking any thing further against the Enemy, or more dividing the small Force under my Orders.—

The day before yesterday a Schooner under Swedish Colours arrived here after a short passage from Portsmouth, having on board an English Gentleman who produced to me a London Newspaper (the *Courier*.) dated the 27th. December containing Accounts (therein stated to be Official.) that Peace between Great Britain and the United States had been concluded between the Plenipotentiaries at Ghent on the 24th. December last, subject to the Ratifications of the Prince Regent and the President of the United States, and that it had been ratified by the Prince Regent on the 27th., of course until this is Officially made known to me with due Notification of the President having also ratified it, I shall continue to act as if no such intimation had been made to me, I think it right however that no time should be lost by me in letting you know of this Arrival and this Intelligence, as it is very possible it may have some influence with you with regard to Operations you may be at this moment arranging, and the *St. Lawrence* having just arrived from Bermuda furnishes me with an opportunity of communicating directly with you, which I have been some time anxiously looking for in vain, as I failed in my endeavors to procure a Person to go to you by Land, and none of the small Vessels you expected to have joined me from England or elsewhere have yet made their appearance.— The *Pandora* which Captain Clavell sent to me from the Chesapeake I have been forced to send off Savannah in consequence of the misfortune which has befallen the *Hebrus* in her endeavors to procure Water, as detailed in the Letter and Inclosure herewith transmitted.<sup>4</sup> The *Dotterel* which brought to me the other day the *Rolla* (Victualler,) was in such a bad state that it became necessary I should send her to Bermuda with the Convoy of Prizes, the *Manly* and *Canso* are still with Captain Ramsay at St. Simons &c., the *Whiting* is required by Sir Thomas Cochrane to secure the Northern inner approach to this Island, and the *Primrose* being the only remaining Vessel of War of easy draft of Water under my Orders, was too necessary to my operations to allow of my detaching her, the *St. Lawrence* therefore has arrived very opportunely for this purpose, and though by Letters she brought me from Commodore Evans he intimated to me that the *Florida* was to sail for this place immediately after the *St. Lawrence* with a number of Dispatches for you (as by the Secret Rendezvous you had left with him he considered it probable you would be very shortly in this neighborhood,) yet as when the *Florida* appears she will in herself furnish me with an additional means of communicating with you and as I consider I shall probably have (about the time she may be expected here,) to notify to you more officially the particulars respecting this reported Treaty, and as to its ratification or rejection by the President; I have determined to send off the *St. Lawrence* at once with this dispatch, and the several others I have here waiting for an opportunity of forwarding to you, and on the Arrival of the *Florida* I shall detain her only until I can send you some certain intimation, as to the Peace, taking care however previous to dispatching her in quest of you to take Copies of any of the Official Letters she may be charged with, that appear of material importance.—

I have not as yet heard any thing of Major Nicholls or the Indians being in this neighborhood, I have however a Person ready to detach up the Altamaha



to gain intelligence respecting them.—<sup>5</sup> Our Operations in this Neighborhood have already created the greatest consternation in Georgia, all Commerce is of course (as I have before observed to you,) at an end, Martial Law is proclaimed throughout the State, and almost all the Inhabitants not Military have fled from it, there are about Six Thousand Men in Savannah and they have much improved the works about [it, but if the Peace goes off and I could be spared one good Regiment in addition to what I have, I think I could attempt it, with Good Prospect of Success, more especially if the Indians do make their Appearance by and by

My last Letters from Bermuda by the *St. Lawrence* afford me the satisfaction of being able to add that the fears I entertained respecting the fate of the *Portia* were groundless that Vessel having returned into Port with a valuable Prize she had Captured, in consequence of having suffered much from the extreme bad Weather which has been so generally experienced this season, and she was at Ireland waiting her turn for Repairs I have &c

signed/ G. Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 119–21. The last page of this letter is missing. The bracketed text was supplied from the letter book copy of this letter in DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 10, pp. 45–49 (Roll No. 7).

1. See above.

2. The following ships are listed in a column in the left-hand margin: *Regulus*, *Manly*, and *Canso*.

3. See Ramsay to Cockburn, 31 January 1815, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 14, pp. 510–12 (Roll No. 9).

4. There is an asterisk here with the following note in the left-hand margin: “Enclosures sent by *St. Lawrence* Copies neglected to be taken.”

5. Cochrane had written Cockburn to expect the support of Major Edward Nicolls and a force of British-armed Indians in disrupting American defenses in Georgia. See Cochrane to Cockburn, 27 December 1814, pp. 592–93.

COMMANDER ROBERT RAMSAY, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

(Copy)

His Majesty's Ship *Regulus* off  
Cumberland Island 16th. February 1815

Sir/

I have the honor to report to you that on the Morning of the 28th. Ultimo, I proceeded in execution of the Instructions you had been pleased to give me, with the small Vessels, Armed Boats, and Royal Marines you had placed under my Orders.—<sup>1</sup> The next day the Wind being adverse and blowing fresh, was dedicated to Warring the *Manly* and *Canso* along the Creek towards Cumberland Sound, but as they grounded the evening of that day, on the shoalest part of the Channel, I determined to push forward with the Boats alone, leaving Orders for the Brig and Schooner to use every possible means of joining me early at St. Simons.

Before day, the Morning of the 30th. Ultimo, I proceeded accordingly with the Armed Boats and the detachment of Royal Marines under my Orders,

through the Creeks towards St. Simons Island, and about 2 P.M. that day effected a landing without opposition at a range of Buildings near the Light house at the South end of the Island.— Having procured a Guide and fully relying on the Information I had previously received, and the observations made on Disembarking the Troops, I directed Captain Cole who commanded them, to march on Frederica whilst I proceeded with the Armed Boats up the Creek, between St. Simons and the Main towards that Town, leaving the *Albions* Launch at the point where the Troops disembarked to secure their retreat if necessary.— Captain Cole marched forward with the utmost dispatch, and without opposition arrived at Frederica just before the Boats, when the place was immediately taken possession of and secured by the Troops, the Seamen remaining in the Boats to secure the Warf and Navigation of the Creek or River between the Island and the Main.

The next Morning having received information that the Enemy had a considerable force at Darien, a short distance from the North end of the Island, every precaution was adopted by the disposition of the Launches and detachments of Troops to prevent surprize, or repel an Attack, and a strong position taken at the Light house to secure a retreat, if overpowered by Numbers.

On the 5th. Instant I was joined by His Majesty's Sloop *Manly* which I ordered in advance of Frederica, and on the 10th. the *Canso* arrived off the Light house.— Great numbers of Negroes had then joined our standard, and I was occupied from our arrival until the 13th. in collecting and shipping the Merchandize found upon the Island and disposing of the Negroes amongst the different Vessels, when every thing worth removing being embarked, and the Enemy not having shewn himself in the Neighborhood, I evacuated St. Simons, and have returned agreeably to your directions, to Cumberland Island, with the Detachment you did me the honor to place under Command for this Service

I have much pleasure in acquainting you, that the Zeal, Activity, and good conduct of the Officers, Seamen and Marines, composing the Detachment have been uniform, and gave me the highest satisfaction.— To Captain Lock of the *Manly*, I am much indebted for his assistance after he joined me, also to Acting Lieutenant Grant of the *Regulus*, and Clark of the *Devastation*.— To Captain Cole of the Royal Marines, whose zeal as an Officer has long been known to me, I am much indebted for his cheerful co-operation and prompt execution of all Duties depending on him. I have the honor to be Sir your most obedient Humble Servant

(signed) R. Ramsay Commander

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 113–14. This letter was enclosed in Cockburn to Cochrane, 17 February 1815, *ibid.*, fols. 111–12.

1. See Cockburn to Ramsay, 28 January 1815, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 16, pp. 384–85 (Roll No. 10).

REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No. 26

Head Quarters Cumberland  
Island 27th. February 1815

Sir

I have the Honor herewith to transmit the Copy of a Report I have received from Captain Phillot of His Majestys Sloop *Primrose*, whom I sent with a Division of Armed Boats (having a Proportion of Light Troops under Captain Lord of the 2d. West India Regiment embarked in each) up the St. Marys River, for the Purpose of endeavouring to surprize a small Detachment of the Enemy I had received Intelligence of in that Neighbourhood, and to reconnoitre the upper Parts of the River by which I hoped to open some Communication with Major Nicolls and the Friendly Force acting with him.

The Attack however made on our Boats from the Neutral Side of the River being of Course entirely unlooked for, and placing them so unexpectedly between two (ambushed) Fires where the River was becoming narrower every Reach induced Captain Phillot (very properly) not to hesitate in ordering their immediate Return, the Manner in which this was effected and the galling Cross Fire of the Enemy kept in Check by them, affords in my Opinion the strongest Proof of the Coolness and Gallantry displayed by the Officers and Men on this Occasion, and fully entitles them to my best Acknowledgements and Recommendation to your favorable Notice, particularly Captains Phillot and Bartholemew (who were both wounded whilst standing in their Boats giving Directions which they nevertheless continued to do until the firing ceased) and Captain Lord of the 2d. West India Regiment who commanded the Troops embarked— Mr. Jonathan Hayward Peele a Midn. of the *Albion* who is wounded in two Places has also been particularly mentiond to me by Captain Phillott for the Gallantry he displayed during this Affair, but it is not Sir without very real Regret I have to add that the Wounds of Mr James Everingham (another most promising young Officer belonging to the *Albion* who had just completed his Time) have proved mortal since his Return, the Wounds however of the other Officers I am happy to say though severe are not likely to be attended with any Danger, and I may therefore hope to have very shortly again the Benefit of their further Assistance. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and most obedient humble Servant

G. Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 135–36.

[Enclosure]  
(Copy)

His Majestys Sloop *Primrose*  
St. Marys River 26th. Feby. 1815

Sir,

I beg leave to acquaint you that I proceeded with the Detachment of Boats you did me the honor to place under my Command on the evening of the 23rd. of February about Fifty miles up the St. Marys river; when finding the distance too great to perform the Service I was ordered on before daylight, I anchored the Boats on the turn of the Ebb tide.

At Daylight we weighed and pulled to within a Mile and a half of the Mills, when we were most unexpectedly attacked from the Spanish side of the River, which was instantly returned by the Marines, Gun Boats, and Rocket Boat, and after a quarter of an Hours continuation they were silenced tho' not without considerable loss on our side; as the alarm was now given to close to the position we intended to attack, and finding enemies to encounter we did not expect, in a River which in several parts is not more than Fifty yards across, and a number of Commanding heights and houses in our rear, to which the Boats must be greatly exposed; I took the advantage of the Ebb tide to return; but before we had got the Boats round, firing was again opened from both sides of the river which was gallantly returned and silenced the Enemy however following us and firing at intervals for nearly Twenty miles down the river.

I have now much pleasure in acquainting you of the gallant, and determined manner in which the party behaved on this occasion, nothing could surpass the well directed fire of the Marines and Gun Boats on the Enemys fire, themselves not visible being covered by a thick wood, as also the steady cool and persevering manner in which the Boats crews behaved tho' they had been pulling nearly ten hours. To Captain Bartholomew leading the division of Boats, I am particularly indebted for his gallant and able assistance tho' wounded, also to Captain Lord and Lieutt. De la Housay of the 2nd. West India Regiment, and to Lieutenant Fraser of the light Company of the Royal Marines, also to Lieutenant Saml. Grandy of this Ship Commanding the Launches. Enclosed is a list of the Killed and wounded—(3 Killed 15 wounded) the wounded principally with Buck Shot.

The names of the Officers wounded  
Captains Phillott of the *Primrose*  
Captain Bartholomew of the *Erebus*  
Lt. Fraser of the Royal Marines  
Mr. Jas Everingham Mid of *Albion* } Dangerously  
Mr. J. H. Peel Mid of *Albion*

I have the honor to be Sir your most Obedient Humble Servant

(signed) C. G. R. Phillott

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 137–38. Endorsed opposite the dateline in Cockburn's hand: "G Cockburn."

## Yankee Privateers Prove their Mettle

*Typically, American privateer captains did not seek battle with other armed vessels. They chose to avoid it. Such contests offered little opportunity for profit while setting at risk the very well being of their own ship and crew. Yet there were times when Yankee privateersmen could not avoid combat with the British foe. In three such encounters, detailed below, the men serving in the “republic’s private navy” demonstrated a fighting prowess equal to their brethren in the U.S. Navy.<sup>1</sup>*

*1. Jerome R. Garitee’s outstanding study of Baltimore privateers during the War of 1812 offers short narratives of each of the engagements documented below. See Republic’s Private Navy, pp. xii–xv. For a recent study of North American privateers in the War of 1812, see Kert, Privateering.*

CAPTAIN ROBERT LLOYD, R.N., TO REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM BROWN, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Plantagenet*  
Fayal Roads 28th. September 1814

Sir./

I beg leave to inform you, that on the Evening of the 26th. Instant, I put into this port for refreshments, previous to my return to Jamaica.— In shore was discovered a Suspicious vessel at Anchor;— I ordered Captain Bentham of the *Carnation* to watch her movements, and sent the Pinnace and Cutter of this Ship to assist him on that service, but on his perceiving her under weigh, he sent Lieut. Fausset in the pinnace about 8 o’Clock to observe her proceedings.—

On his approaching the Schooner, he was ordered to keep off, or they would fire into him, upon which the boat was immediately backed off, but to his astonishment he received a broadside of round, grape and musquetry, which did considerable damage; he then requested them repeatedly to leave off firing, as he was not come to molest them, but the enemy still continued his destructive fire until they had Killed two, and wounded Seven men without a musquet being returned by the Boat.—

This conduct, in violating the neutra[lity] of this Port, I conceived, left me no alternative but that of destroying her.— I therefore repeatedly ordere[d] Captn. Bentham to tow the Brig in, and take that step immediately.— All the Boats of this Ship and [the] *Rota*, were sent under his Orders to tow him alongs[ide] or assist him in the attack as circumstances migh[t] require; but from continued light baffling wind[s] and a lee tide, he was not able as he informed [me,] with his utmost exertions, to put my orders in execution, which I now most sincerely lament.—

Finding the Privateer was warpi[ng] under the Forts very fast, Captain Bentham judged it prudent to lose no time, and about 12 ordered the Boats to make the attack.—A more gallant and determined one never was made, led on by Lieuten[ant] Matterface of H M. Ship *Rota*, & Bowerbunk of this [ship]<sup>1</sup> and every officer and man displayed the greatest courag[e] in face of a heavy discharge of great guns & musquet[ry.—] But from her side being on the rocks, (which was [not] known at the time) and every American in Fayal exclusive of part of the Crew, being armed & concea[led] in these rocks, which were immediately



LITH & PUB BY N. CURRIER

152 NASSAU STREET N. Y.

**THE AMERICAN PRIVATEER "GENERAL ARMSTRONG" CAPT. SAM. G. BIRD.**

*In the Harbor of Fozz (Cass) Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> 1814. Repelling the attack of 14 boats containing 400 men from the British Ships "Plantago" 74, "Rolo" 44, and "Vernation" 18 Guns. The "General Armstrong" was 246 tons burthen (carried 6 Nine pounders and a Long Tom 62 pounder); armed ships and a crew of 200 men. The British loss was 120 killed and 180 wounded. Americans lost 2 killed and 7 wounded.*

over the Privateer, it unfortunately happened when these bra[ve] men gained the deck, they were under the painfull necessity of returning to their Boats, from the ve[ry] destructive fire kept up by those above them, fr[om] the shore, who were in complete security, and I am grieved to say not before many lives were lost, exclusive of the wounded.—

Never were there any officers or men that behaved with more bravery coolness resolution, & as heroes, they are to be lamented as a great loss, to their King, their Country, and their friends—

Sometime after a favourable breeze sprung up, and Captn. Bentham soon anchored the Brig close to the Privateer, and in a short time she was a perfect wreck & then burnt.— She proved to be the noted American Privateer *General Armstrong* pierced for 18, but mounting only Eight long 9's and One long 42 pr. Guns, about 360 Tons burthen, with a Complement of 90 men, out 16 days from New York, had taken nothing, fitted out and bound on a Nine Months cruize, one of the fastest sailings vessels out of America, & is said to have taken & destroyed British property to the Amount of a million Dollars on her former cruizes—

I am happy to say the *Carnation* had not a man hurt, altho' the Privateer kept up a brisk fire on her approach, when the Brig could not get a gun to bear.— Painful as it is to my feelings to announce the loss of so many brave men. I beg leave to inclose a list of the Killed & wounded on board the Ship, I have the honor to command, as well as those of His Majestys Ship *Rota*;—<sup>2</sup> I sincerely hope that my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty as well as yourself will be satisfied with my conduct, under the circumstances of so many of my brave crew being murdered in the most flagrant man[ner,] without the shadow of a pretence, by the Privatee[r] firing on them in a neutral port, and when the con[duct] on the part of my Boats did not evince any thing like hostility.—

For your further information, I beg le[ave] to transmit you, a Copy of my letter to Captn. Bentham with his answer,<sup>3</sup> as well as of the Governor of Fayal[s] letters to me with my answers thereto—<sup>4</sup> The American[s] had endeavoured according to their custom, to impo[se] upon him a belief, that it was the Boat that f[irst] commenced hostilities, but he has since informed the British consul, that had he known the real circumstances of the case, he would in the event [of] the Privateer's being refused to be surrendered, have ordered the Guns of the Fort to be opened [on] her, to assist the Boats in the Attack.—

I am informed by Captn. Read of His Majestys Sloop *Calyпсо*; that the *Grampus* American privateer in July last, broke the neutrality of Flores by destroying the *Doris* Transport while at Ancho[r] at that place.— I have the honor to be Sir your most Obt. very Humble servt.

Rob<sup>t</sup> Lloyd Captain

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 453–54. Bracketed text and punctuation is supplied from a copy of this letter in *ibid.*, Adm. 1/2081.

1. This text is conjectured. It is one of 14 words not reproduced in the copy referenced in the source note.

2. Not printed. The *Rota* suffered 70 casualties, including 21 killed and 46 wounded, 3 mortally. The *Plantagenet* incurred 50 casualties, including 11 killed and 39 wounded, 1 mortally. See UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 463–65.

3. Lloyd to Bentham, 28 September 1814, and, Bentham to Lloyd, 29 September 1814, *ibid.*, fols. 466–67.

4. Lloyd and the Governor of Fayal exchanged letters on 26 September and again on 1 October 1814. See *ibid.*, fols. 459–60.

CAPTAIN HENRY HOPE, R.N., TO REAR ADMIRAL HENRY HOTHAM, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Endymion*  
off Nantucket Oct. 11th. 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor of informing you that yesterday returning to my Station a Ship and Schooner were discovered to the Westward of Nantucket nearly becalmed under the low land endeavouring to pass between that Island and the Southern Shoals— From the offing we continued to close them until Evening, the wind then entirely left us as it had previously done with the vessels in shore, who had made no progress whatever,

I sent all the Boats under the Command of Lieutenants Hawkins, Ormond, and Fanshawe, in approaching the Ship an alarm was fired, the Boats had been previously rowing up under a shoal and had not felt the effects of a rapid tide which they almost instantaneously became exposed to, the second Barge in taking the Station assigned by Lieutenant Hawkins on the Schooner's Starboard Bow, having her Larboard oars shot away unfortunately was swept by the stream a thwart the first Barge, thereby all the Boats became entangled, and it is with extreme concern I acquaint you that the attack was in consequence at this moment only partially made. Notwithstanding this disadvantage at the first onset every exertion that Human skill and determined bravery could devise was resorted to, to renew the contest, and they succeeded in again getting along side, but not in the position intended, their failure therefore is to be ascribed in the first instance to the velocity of the tide, the height of the Vessel's side, not having Channel plates to assist the Men in getting on her Deck, and her very superior force, (a Schooner of the largest dimensions, the *Prince of Neufchatel*, Three Hundred and Twenty Tons, Eighteen Guns long nine and Twelve pounders, with a complement of one Hundred and Forty Men of all Nations, Commanded by Monsr. Jean Ordronaux) The Boats painters being now shot away they again fell astern without ever being able to repeat the attack and with great difficulty regained the Ship, with the exception of the Second Barge which I have every reason to believe Sunk alongside the Schooner—

In transmitting this report I cannot but deplore the unhappy issue of the enterprize, it would be great injustice to the Officers and Men in the Boats, if I omitted to say that their bravery and coolness is deserving of every praise. I therefore Sir beg to impress you with the belief that in no instance could either Officers and Men have conducted themselves with greater determination than on the present occasion— I lament exceedingly the Death of Lieutenant Hawkins and Mr. Dalzell Midshipman who fell early in the Action, with many others, Seaman and marines.



Enclosed you will receive a return of the Killed and Wounded.<sup>1</sup> The Ship in Company with the Privateer is the *Douglas* West Indiaman, homeward bound, which the Enemy were obliged to abandon and is now on Shore and bilged off the East end of the Island I have the Honour to be Sir Your most Obedient Humble Servant

H Hope.

P.S. Since closing my letter Lieutenant Ormond has returned to the Ship— The Second Barge was sunk alongside the Schooner, and Lieutenant Ormond with Messrs. Boyter Mildmay, Matthews, and McLean, with the surviving Crew, were picked up by the Enemy and landed at Nantucket on their Parole.<sup>2</sup>

HH

From Lieutenant Ormond I learn that much as we have suffered on this occasion, the Enemy's loss was still greater— Fifteen only of her Crew having escaped the well directed and destructive fire of our Boats<sup>3</sup>

H: H

ALS, Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2). For a copy of this letter and enclosed casualty list, see, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/507, fols. 424–29.

1. Not printed. The casualty return lists 62 killed and wounded, 17 of whom were killed outright during the action.

2. Thirty-three officers, seamen, and marines were taken prisoner. *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 20 October 1814.

3. The 20 October edition of *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* reported the following casualties in *Prince of Neufchatel*: "The *Prince of Neufchatel* had only 38 men, including officers, at quarters at the commencement of the action, and had on board 37 prisoners. After the action it was ascertained, that six of her crew were killed, (as well as Mr. Charles Hilburn, of Nantucket, a pilot, taken out of a fishing vessel) 15 men severely wounded, 9 slightly, and 8 unhurt."

LIEUTENANT JAMES E. GORDON, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

(copy) Rpt sent with }  
order for Ct. martial }

On board the American Private Armed  
Brig *Chasseur* off Mantanzas Feby. 27th 1815

Sir/

It is with the deepest sorrow and most painful regret I acquaint you that His Majestys late Schooner *St. Lawrence* was captured on the 26 February, by the American private armed Brig *Chasseur*, after an action of half an hour, about 10 leagues to the Northward of the Havana,— the circumstance which led to this unfortunate and to me truly distressing event are as follows.

In the execution of orders from Admiral Cockburn to proceed to Mobile with dispatches, we made the high land of Matanzas on the morning of the 26th., and

shortly afterwards discover'd two sail under the Cuba shore one of which from her Foreign Canvas, and otherwise suspicious appearance I concluded to be an enemys Cruiser— impressed with this belief at any other time, both duty and inclination would have prompted me to close and examine her, especially as I observed she was in the act of boarding a Brig, but in the present instance, the importance of the dispatches with which I was charged, suggested the propriety of preserving our Course, which was accordingly continued under every sail our spars would spread— at 11 oClock the stranger abandoned the Brig and stood for the *St. Lawrence*, and it was not long before we observed her superiority of sailing was sufficiently decided to enable her to bring us to an Engagement if she thought proper.— at one oClock finding her still persevere in chase and unable to answer the private Signal, I ordered the Guns to be cleared; and shortly afterwards seeing that an Action was inevitable, I gave directions for the Sails to be reduced, and the Schooner brought to the Wind in order to preserve the Weather gage. In the performance of this duty we had the misfortune to lose our foretopmast, an accident in our present circumstance exceedingly unfavorable as it rendered the Main Topsail useless, and reduced the Vessel to her Courses, which gave the Enemy a most decided advantage in working, and also enabled him to maintain a position sufficiently near to command our exposed deck with a numerous musketry. The Wreck of the Topmast being seperated from forward and the Schooner ballanced with her remaining Sails, I ordered her to be steered large until the Enemy arrived within pistol shot of our lee quarter when the Helm was put quickly a starboard and a raking fire opened from our larboard Guns, the enemy apparantly luffing to lay us onboard which was prevented by the *St. Lawrence* rounding too, and resuming her possition to Windward— mutual cheering now took place and a close and destructive fire was opened from both sides at the distance of forty yards, and continued about 8 minutes, when the Brig in consequence of fresh way shot something ahead; on perceiving this I ordered the Helm to be suddenly weathered and wore the Schooner within a few yards of his Stern, raking him with our starboard Guns and afterwards engaging him closely to leeward.— The fire from our Carronades was at this time quick and heavy, the Enemy's very slack from his great Guns, but warm and powerful from his Musquetry

Hitherto we had been successful in frustrating his attempts to lay us onboard, which was manifestly his intention from the commencement of the engagement, but I had now the mortification to find that our head sails were down and the Vessel no longer governable, I now also found that my Officers and Men exposed to the aim of about 80 Musquets were falling fast, although fighting their Guns on their knees, The Enemys, Grape Musquetry, and even his Buck Shot, passing every where through our Covering plank which was nothing more than three feet in height, of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch fir board, which they on the other hand were defended by a deep and solid bulwark impregnable to every thing but cannon shot our fire was however continued as our Guns bore while we mustered remaining strength to shew them in the ports, and for some time after they could not be run out, while the Enemy laid us alongside and further resistance appeared an unjustifiable waste of lives.— In this situation with every sail down, every rope cut, and the vessel lying a shattered unmanageable wreck; six of my best hands dead, myself, every officer, and fifteen more Wounded, without a remaining shadow

of hope, or any apparent possibility of longer resistance being of farther avail, I was reduced to the painful necessity of sinking my dispatches and ordering the Colors to be struck—an order which occasions regret as often as it recurs to my memory, although I humbly hope it was not given while human exertion on the part of the survivors would have contributed in any further degree either to have extricated or saved the vessel.

When carried onboard the Enemy I found her to be the *Chasseur* of Baltimore commanded by Captain Thomas Boyle whose endeavours to protect my men and my officers effects from plunder and render us otherwise comfortable was such as merits our gratitude. The *Chasseur* is pierced for 22 but mounts only 14 Guns long twelves and short nine's with a complement according to the account of her Officers of 153 men, but by information from other sources 170, out of which she had manned 3 Prizes whose crews I am told amounted to 35 men, she is said to be the finest Vessel with two masts out of the United States, registering upwards of Four hundred Tuns English measurement, is 116 feet on deck and much superior to any of our 18 Guns Brigs.—Their reports of their loss and also of their numbers are exceedingly contradictory, they however acknowledge 6 killed and 8 wounded. The Prisoners onboard say 9 were killed & 15 Wounded— Her rigging and sails are extremely shattered but her Hull is not materially injured as we fired chiefly grape Shot.

The *St. Lawrence* entered the action with 52 persons onboard including her officers, 6 passengers and as many boys, the whole of which was 12 short of her established Complement, of those 5 were killed, 1 drowned & 18 wounded, two of which are since dead, and another not likely to live The others are chiefly severe wounds but I hope every thing from the good judgement and particular attention of Mr. Kay Surgeon— among the killed were Mr. Chas. Cole Gunner of the *Calliope* who behaved during the action with great spirit and was particularly useful, I regret the circumstances the more as I believe he has left a Wife and family.

I would not be doing justice to the exertions of the remainder, if I omitted in this place to say that they were such as merited a better issue, and I must speak in particular of the active and able support I received from Mr. Sharp the Master who notwithstanding a severe wound continued on deck till the close of the Action— I must also state that the conduct of Mr. Walter who was likewise severely wounded was truly praiseworthy, and such as merited by fullest approbation.

This morning the Schooners mainmast has fallen by the Board which I imagine will induce the Enemy to destroy her as it seems impossible that all can reach an American Port in her present state

Underneath I have added a List of our killed & wounded<sup>1</sup> and Have the honor to be Sir Your most Obedient servt.

Signed, J. E. Gordon.<sup>2</sup>

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fols. 177–78.

1. Not printed. It follows on *ibid.*, fol. 179.

2. For a short biographical sketch of Gordon, see O'Bryne, *Naval Biographical Dictionary*, p. 410.

## Command Change and Demobilization in North Carolina

*The year 1814 commenced auspiciously for Thomas N. Gautier. After appointing Gautier an acting lieutenant in August 1813, Secretary Jones granted his station commander's December 1813 request to wear the uniform of a lieutenant.<sup>1</sup> His strong leadership of the Wilmington Station during 1813 earned him the title "commanding naval officer"—no longer under the nominal command of Charleston's Captain John H. Dent. But accusations of abuse of power tainted him throughout 1814 and finally led to his resignation in November and replacement by Master Commandant Robert Henley. In February 1814, Sailing Master James Taylor had preferred charges of fraud against Gautier, alleging that his superior employed African-American slaves from British prizes in his station convoys and pocketed their pay. Gautier's counter-charge of drunkenness against Taylor led to the latter's dismissal on 3 February 1814. Taylor's persistence in clearing his own name and proving Gautier's malfeasance resulted in his own reinstatement on 31 December 1814<sup>2</sup> and Gautier's replacement.*

1. *Gautier to Jones, 17 December 1813, DNA, RG45, BC, 1813, Vol. 4, No. 162 (M148, Roll No. 12); Jones to Gautier, 31 December 1813, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 181 (M149, Roll No. 11).*

2. *James Taylor's sailing master warrant dated from 19 April 1813. He immediately took command of a Bermuda-bound cartel before being posted to Wilmington on 21 June 1813. He remained at that station throughout the war except for the period when he was dismissed from the Navy—February to December 1814. Gautier probably raised Taylor's ire with his characterization of him as unfit to command because of his excessive drinking. Secretary Jones swiftly discharged Taylor on 3 February 1814. Gautier to Jones, 25 January 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 40 (M148, Roll No. 13) and Jones to Taylor, 3 February 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, p. 111 (T829, Roll No. 382). For Taylor's charges against Gautier, see Taylor to Jones, 14 February 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 7 (M124, Roll No. 61). For Taylor's reinstatement, effective 31 December 1814, see Jones to Taylor, 31 December 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, p. 263 (T829, Roll No. 382).*

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT HENLEY

Robert Henley Esqr.<sup>1</sup>  
Master commandant U.S. Navy  
Present

Navy Department  
Octo. 3d. 1814

Sir,

As soon as your health is sufficiently recruited you will proceed to Wilmington North Carolina, and take the Command of the U.S. Flotilla, for the defence of the Coast and Waters of the State of North Carolina.—

Acting Lieut. Gautier, now commanding there, will report to you a detailed statement of the force and of its distribution, and the Navy Agent, Joshua Potts Esqr., a very worthy gentleman and faithful Agent, will communicate to you the state of the Public supplies and other general information connected with the establishment.— It is very desirable that you should reach the station in three or four weeks, for as the season advances the enemy will probably become more active in the southern quarter.— I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 437–38 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Master Commandant Robert Henley had served at the Battle of Lake Champlain as commander of *Eagle*. For Henley's after-action reports, see the Appendix for Henley to Macdonough, 12 September 1814 and Henley to Crowninshield, 16 September 1814, pp. 1089–90.

MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT HENLEY TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Wilmington, North Carolina November 9th. 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you my arrival at this place on yesterday, and that I have to day entered upon the Duties of my Command.—

I have had the satisfaction to observe the most willing Disposition in my predecessor, acting Lieut. Gautier, to afford me every assistance and Information in his Power: he informs me that he has offered his Resignation;<sup>1</sup> but upon further reflection is willing to continue in the Navy; and, as I am persuaded that his Experience and Intelligence would render him essentially useful to me and beneficial to the Service, & request that he may be continued on the List of Lieutenants—I have the honor to be, Sir, with high Respect, your obedient Servt.

Ro: Henley

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 75 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Gautier's letter of resignation is not in the Navy Department's correspondence because Secretary Jones returned it to him. See Jones to Henley, 25 November 1814, below.

JAMES TAYLOR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Washington City Novr. 19th. 1814—

Sir

The above orders<sup>1</sup> were issued, the day after Mr. Gautier sent me the letter from you of my dismissal from the Service—<sup>2</sup> the first five names which occur on the above list, were Negroe prisoners, captured from the Enemy, by the PAS.<sup>3</sup> *Saratoga*, and with many more of the same class and description, had been allotted to the Gun-Boats by Gautier— Altho.' Captn. Adderton<sup>4</sup> of the *Saratoga* had, from the peculiar situation of that species of Captured property, asked but for safe keeping, of them & willing to pay the U S. for their Rations— They had been attached by Gautier, to my boat; but he had receved my unequivacal Opinion, on the impropriety to give it no harsher term—there were thirteen in toto of the same description—by which he expected to draw by his Cupidity, the wages of which the above may be considered as a Medium—

Charles Mullen who next follows was almost intirely employed by him, as a Black Smith on Shore for his own particular & private purposes—unconnected with the Flotilla, Isaac Sullivan was —and is, (if yet living,) a Wretched Negroe Slave in rapid Consumption—one of Gautiers 8 or 10 cooks, and Hospitalled with Jean Black,<sup>5</sup> until her establishment was destroyed—from the day of his being borne on the books of the Flotilla, until that period— I have the Honor to be Sir Respectfully, Yr. Obt. Servt.

James Taylor

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 7 (M124, Roll No. 67).

1. See the following enclosure.
2. Jones to Taylor, 3 February 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, p. 111 (T829, Roll No. 382).
3. "Private Armed Ship."
4. Thomas Aderton/Adderton had three very successful cruises with the privateer *Saratoga*.
5. Taylor alleged that Gautier recruited sick men for the flotilla and then sent them to a hospital run by one of Gautier's slaves, Jean Black, but actually by his wife, Mrs. A. B. Gautier. Taylor accused Gautier of overcharging the Navy for the seamen's care. James Taylor specifications against Thomas N. Gautier, 14 February 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 7, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 61).

[Enclosure]

Wilmington No. Carolina Febry. 10th. 1814

Sir

You will recive on board vizt.

John Lewis ordinary Seaman	a. 8\$	∅	month
Edwd. Thompson do. do.	—8"	"	"
John Bashell do. do.	—8"	"	"
William Bashell Landsman	—6"	"	"
Felise Alderton Boy	—5"	"	"

The Armourar Charles Mullen attached to the Flotilla you will bear on your books, as such— Isaac Sullivan, Cook you will let work at the Shop, any more at the Hospital Convalescent, belonging to, and absent boats, you will when, they are well enough, recive on board as Supernumeraries— To so old an Officer, as yourself, I must only say, be active in the discharge of your duty, and exact, the same from all under your command— Respectfully—

(signed) T N Gautier

S.M. Evans<sup>1</sup> USGB. No. 147—

Copy, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 7, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 67).

1. Sailing Master George Evans.

JAMES TAYLOR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Washington November 19th 1814

Sir—

With the Respect due to you, I have the Honor to request a personal interview; aware as I am of the preciousness of your time, I can offer no other reasons for the request, than those of my objects being important

They are intended Sir to substantiate proofs, of dark deep, and daring infamy in Thomas N Gautier the Officer of the Wilmington Station, against whom, I exhibited charges to you in February last,<sup>1</sup> and they have further in view, again to solicit the cause, why I was dismissed the service, at a period when every nerve, and every talent, was essential to the Country's defence.

I can only believe Sir, Misrepresentation of a malignant mind, filled to the utmost with calumny, to obviate an investigation into his conduct produced the result.

I request Sir that the enclosed, marked A<sup>2</sup> may be considered as commencing the substantiating of the charges I have above alluded to; and that you will Honor me with the information, if the conduct of T N Gautier, as Commt. on the No. Caa. Station is to be enquired into; And if I am to consider myself in service or not.

I forbear Sir to encroach on your time further in this address, than but to observe, that my services and my sacrifices entitle me at least, to an opportunity of vindication, lest a prompt and decided dismissal acquires by my silence an admission of its rectitude, and dooms the Father of two Sons (devoted to their Country) to ignominy, and that Father already the victim of his Political Opponents; for his devotedness to the Cause. Very Respectfully I have the Honor to be Sir yr. Obt. Servt.

James Taylor

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 8 (M124, Roll No. 67).

1. For Taylor's charges against Gautier, see Taylor to Jones, 14 February 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 7 (M124, Roll No. 61).

2. No enclosures were found with this letter.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT HENLEY

Robert Henley Esqr. }  
M. C. U.S. Navy }  
Commanding at. Wilmington NC }

Navy Dep'm't.  
Nov: 25th. 1814

Sir,

Acting Lieut. Gautier forwarded to the Department his resignation accompanied by his letter of appointment &c which in consequence of your letter received the same day I enclosed to you by the return mail.—<sup>1</sup>

I have since however seen his resignation announced in the public papers; and unwilling to divert him from his purpose, I now accept that which he tendered to the Department and enclose the official notice thereof which you will please deliver to him.—<sup>2</sup> I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 464 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Jones received Gautier's letter of resignation and his warrant, as well as Henley's letter of 9 November on 17 November. Jones decided not to accept Gautier's resignation and returned his papers via Henley on that same day. Jones to Henley, 17 November 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 456 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. Once Jones learned that Gautier had publicized his resignation in the press, the Secretary decided against asking him to stay. Jones's terse reply to Gautier was: "Your resignation is accepted." Jones to Gautier, 25 November 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, p. 236 (T829, Roll No. 382).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT HENLEY

Robert Henley Esqr.  
Comm'g Naval Officer  
Wilmington N. Ca.

Navy Department  
March 9th. 1815.

Sir

You will immediately proceed to dismantle all the Gun Boats, and Barges under your Command, and deliver to the Navy Agent<sup>1</sup> their Armament, Equipments, and Stores of every kind, to be carefully Stored by him on the most economical terms.—You will take his receipt for the articles deposited, and transmit it to this Department.— The Gun Boats will be laid up in Ordinary in the most convenient and suitable place for their preservation; and the Barges &c. be placed under cover, to protect them from the effects of the Sun and Weather.—

You will also furnish a List of the other small Vessels on the Station under your Command, accompanied by a particular description of their Rig, Qualities, Dimensions, and Tonnage; and the state of their Hulls, Rigging, Sails, and Equipments, in order that those may be retained in Service which are best calculated for Despatch Vessel Transportation &c.—

Please to make a Report of the whole, to this Department, as soon as practicable. I am very respectfully &c.

B. W Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 53 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Joshua Potts.



MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT HENLEY TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Wilmington N Carolina April 7th. 1815

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that your order of the 9th of March<sup>1</sup> was duly received and has been obeyed. The discharge of the crews of the Flotilla has been considered as implied in said order, and I have had the less hesitation on the subject, as the time for which they shipped has nearly expired, and consequently they could not with advantage to the service be transferred.— I enclose the Navy Agents<sup>2</sup> receipt for the Armament, Equipments &c. of the Gun Boats; and also a list and description of all the vessels composing the Flotilla, by which you will perceive that none of them are fit for despatch Vessels or Transports.<sup>3</sup>

I have charged Lieut. Davis<sup>4</sup> with the care of the Flotilla and appointed Sailing Master Blaney,<sup>5</sup> a Masters mate, and two men to assist him in that service. I have the honor to be with great respect your Obdt. Servt.

Ro: Henley

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 85 (M147, Roll No. 6).

1. See above.

2. Joshua Potts.

3. The receipt and list mentioned here were not enclosed with this letter.

4. Lieutenant Enos R. Davis.

5. William Blaney's discharge from the Navy on 15 April 1815 did not leave him much time to assist Lieutenant Davis with the demobilization of the flotilla. On 2 May, Crowninshield ordered Davis to deliver all the stores to the Navy agent and to report to New York for a new assignment, thus disestablishing the station. Crowninshield to Davis, 2 May 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 116 (M149, Roll No. 12).

## The Pursuit of *Constitution*

*British blockaders kept a close watch on Constitution during the fall and early winter of 1814. Rear Admiral Edward Griffith, who had charge of Royal Navy vessels stationed off Boston, had issued standing orders directing the pursuit of Constitution in the event it succeeded in breaking the blockade and getting to sea. Griffith's instructions outlined the track pursuing cruisers were to follow in quest of the American frigate. Presciently, they included the island of Faial, where Constitution and its prize ships, Cyane and Levant, arrived on the morning of 10 March 1815, anchoring in Port Praia harbor. Early the following afternoon, a three-ship enemy squadron appeared off the harbor. The British had caught up with their quarry.<sup>1</sup>*

1. On the British hunt for *Constitution*, see *McCranie*, *Utmost Gallantry*, pp. 258–62, and 266–68.

REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N., TO  
CAPTAIN SIR GEORGE R. COLLIER, R.N.

/Copy/

By Edward Griffith Esqr. Rear Admiral of the White  
Commanding a Detachment of His Majesty's Ships & Vessels  
on the North American Station

You are hereby required & directed to take the *Acasta* & *Arab* under your Orders, & as the Season of the year is approaching when it may be unsafe to cruize so near the Enemy's Coast, as the Ships on the Boston Bay Station may have hitherto done, you will cruize, from Cape Cod to Cash's Ledges<sup>1</sup> for the purpose of intercepting the Enemy's Frigate *Constitution* laying ready for Sea in Boston Harbour, as also any other Vessels bound to or from that Port, or the Ports of Salem or Portsmouth; taking such Positions according to circumstances of Wind & Weather, as you may think most likely to afford a chance of falling in with the *Constitution* should she put to Sea.

Whenever the Wind & weather will permit, you are to reconnoitre the Port of Boston, & as opportunity offers, send me an account of your proceedings, & any intelligence you may gain, endeavouring from time to time to ascertain the state of equipment of the Ship of the Line at Boston.—<sup>2</sup> In settled weather you will keep in shore for the purpose of more closely watching the *Constitution*, & of intercepting the Enemy's Coasting Trade—

A Ship of the Line & Frigate will be stationed from Cape Sable to St. George's shoal and a Frigate or two to watch the S.E. passage between Nantucket South Breaker & the said Shoal.—

Should the *Constitution* put to Sea & escape His Majesty's Ships, you are immediately, to dispatch the *Arab* or whatever Sloop of War or small Vessel may be with you, to the Commander in Chief<sup>3</sup> with the information, directing her Commander to communicate with the Commanding Officer off New London in her way & you will yourself endeavour to communicate with the Ship of the Line cruising as aforesaid between Cape Sable & St. George's Shoal; provided you can do so without much delay. Not gaining information as to the Enemy's destination on which reliance should be placed, you are to proceed with the *Leander*, and *Acasta* as expeditiously as possible in a line for the Western Islands,<sup>4</sup> thence on to Madeira touching at Fayal & St. Michaels to communicate the sailing of the *Constitution* to the British Consuls at those Places: having completed the Water of the two Ships at Madeira, you will put to Sea & cruize in the Neighbourhood of that Island for a few days, and not gaining any information of the Enemy's Frigate you are to proceed off the Canary Islands, from thence to the Island of Barbadoes, and cruize in the pallel of that Island & in the Longitude of 50° West for a fortnight. Not gaining any intelligence of the *Constitution*, at the expiration of that time put into Barbadoes, complete your Water & Provisions & return without delay to this Port taking the Coast of Carolina in your way.

Should either the *Leander* or *Acasta* from any cause whatever not be in a state to proceed in execution of these orders, you will communicate them to the Captain or Captains of any of His Majesty's Ships under my Orders, & they are hereby required & directed to co-operate with you, & adopt such measures as may be most adviseable for carrying them into execution, the object of them being, that

in the event of the *Constitution* escaping to Sea two Frigates should proceed on the route herein described, in quest of her.

On the receipt hereof, you will consider yourself as no longer under the Orders of the Senior Officer in Boston Bay Given under my hand at Halifax 4th. October 1814

/Signed/ Edwd. Griffith

Copy, Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2). This letter was enclosed in Stuart to Hotham, 23 December 1814, *ibid.* Addressed flush left opposite the signature line: “To/Captain,/Sir Geo: R. Collier Bart/HMS *Leander*.” For another copy of this document, see UKENL, Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fols. 161–63. An extract of these orders is in UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/1688.

1. An underwater mountain range in the Gulf of Maine, lying approximately 70 nautical miles east of Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

2. U.S. ship of the line *Independence*.

3. Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

4. The Azores.

CAPTAIN SIR GEORGE R. COLLIER, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N.

His Majesty’s Ship *Leander*  
24th. December 1814.  
Lat 42°. 19' Long 67°. 18<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

Having this forenoon joined Company with His Majesty’s Ships *Newcastle* and *Acasta*, I received information from Lord George Stuart, that the Enemy’s Frigates *Constitution* & *Congress*, were at Sea, & that the Inhabitants of Province Town Cape Cod, had also asserted that a third man of War was out; I have therefore felt myself authorized to take both Ships under my Orders, to go in quest of the Enemy who, I consider, are likely to form a junction at Sea on some appointed Rendezvous; and that I shall immediately put in execution the Orders<sup>2</sup> under which Lord George Stewart was acting, to whose letters<sup>3</sup> already written, I beg leave to refer you. I have the honor to be Sir, your most obedient humble Servant

(Signed) George R. Collier  
Captain

Copy, Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2). This letter was enclosed in Collier to Hotham, 24 December 1814, *ibid.* Addressed flush left at the bottom of the first page: “To/Edward Griffiths Esqr./Rear Admiral of the White/&c.—&c.—&c.” For another copy of this letter, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fol. 168.

1. Approximately 130 nautical miles east of Provincetown, Massachusetts.

2. See Griffith to Collier, 4 October 1814, above.

3. See Stuart to Griffith, 23 December 1814, Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2), and, Stuart to Jane, 23 December 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fol. 155, which bears Griffith's endorsement.

COMMANDER HENRY JANE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL HENRY HOTHAM, R.N.

His Majesty's Sloop *Arab*  
at Sea. 25th. December 1814.

Sir

I have the honor to inform you, that the Enemy's Frigate *Constitution* proceeded to sea on the 17th. instant, and from information that the *Acasta* obtained since leaving Cape Cod Bay on the 23rd. it appears that the *Congress* left Portsmouth at the same time: in consequence thereof I received orders from Captain Lord George Stuart of His Majesty's Ship *Newcastle* to proceed to you with despatches, further directing that in the event of my falling in with any of His Majesty's Ships, to require them to proceed with the same, His Majesty's Sloop under my command having only Provisions and Water on board for one Week: and in conformity thereto I have directed Lieutenant Hare of his Majesty's Schooner *Pictou* to proceed to New London with the Despatches bearing your address, and I have received from him those directed to Rear Admiral Griffith which I intend to proceed with, to Halifax.

Since receiving the before mentioned orders from Lord George Stuart I fell in with the *Leander* and was informed by Sir George R. Collier that he had taken the *Newcastle* and *Acasta* under his orders, and shortly after all three made sail to the Eastward.

I beg leave to enclose a Copy of my orders from Lord George Stuart. I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedt. humble [Svt.]

Henry Jane Captain

LS, Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2). Addressed flush left on first page: "The Honorable Henry Hotham/Rear Admiral of the White/&c. &c. &c. New London." Endorsed in upper left corner of first page: "By *Pictou* 28th. Decr." For another copy of this document, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2332, fol. 160.

[Enclosure]

You are hereby Directed to proceed without Loss of Time in H M Sloop *Arab* under your command, with the accompanying Despatch to Rear Admiral Hotham, off New London. If you have an opportunity of delivering it to any other of H M Ships You are to direct them to proceed with it, and make the best of your way to Halifax Delivering the Letters addressed to Rear Admiral Griffith

You will communicate to any of H M Ships you may fall in with that the Enemy's Frigate *Constitution* is at Sea

Given under my hand  
on board H M Ship *Newcastle* Cape Cod  
this 23d Day of Deceme. 1814

Signd. G Stewart Captain

Copy, Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters (Ref U DDHO/7/2). Addressed flush left below signature line: "To Henry Jane Esqre./Commander of/H M Sloop *Arab*." Endorsed in upper left corner: "Copy/Henry Jane."

REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

Duplicate

*Centurion* Halifax  
10th. January 1815,—

Sir,

I embrace the opportunity offered by a Merchant Vessel sailing from hence for Greenock, of acquainting You, for the information of the Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty, that His Majesty's Sloop *Arab* arrived here on the 1st. instant from Boston Bay, with Letters<sup>1</sup> from Lord George Stuart, Captain of His Majesty's Ship *Newcastle*, reporting the sailing from Boston on the 17th. ulto. during a Gale of Wind from the Westward, of the American frigate *Constitution*.

With the information which His Lordship had received from Captain Jane of the *Arab*, who had reconnoitered that Port on the 22d., that Sloop was about to be dispatched to Rear Admiral Hotham, when Lord George in a note to Capt. Jane desires he will make known, "*Acasta* has just telegraphed, that he had heard the *Congress* sailed from Portsmouth, at the same time as *Constitution*."—<sup>2</sup>

On the 24th. the *Leander* joined Company with the *Newcastle* and Captain Jane brings me a verbal message from Sir George Collier—purporting that he had taken those Ships under his orders, and was going in pursuit of the enemy.—<sup>3</sup>

Where Captain Kerr of the *Acasta* obtained the information which he communicated to Lord George Stuart respecting the *Congress*, I have not learnt, but it proved not to be correct; for the crew of the Privateer recently captured by the *Junon*, which sailed from Portsmouth on the 1st. Inst. reports her to have been there when they left that Port; and that she was not ready for Sea.— It is therefore to be regretted, that Sir George Collier should, upon such vague information, have taken so large a force off the Station, thereby depriving me of the Means of keeping up, even the semblance of a Blockade of the Enemy's Ports

Unless diverted from it by Intelligence he may receive, Sir George Collier's route will be, (in conformity to instructions from the Commander in Chief<sup>4</sup>) by the Western Islands,— to the Madeira & Canary Islands; from thence on

towards—Barbadoes, cruising for a fortnight, fifty Leagues to Windward of that Island, and after having completed the Water and Provisions of the Ships at Barbados he is to return to Halifax; first making the Coast of Carolina; and ranging along the American Coast from thence.

It appears, the *Newcastle* and *Acasta* had put into Cape Cod Bay, and were at Anchor there when the *Constitution* sailed from Boston. Lord George Stuart's Letters<sup>5</sup> do not satisfactorily account for the taking up this Anchorage, which no Ship appointed to watch the Port of Boston, should ever resort to, but in case of Necessity, as it is out of sight and to Leeward (with the prevailing Winds) of that Port.—

Making for that Anchorage on the Night of the 12th. Ultimo., the *Newcastle* unfortunately ran aground, on the Wellfleet Shoal, but was got off the next day, and without Damage, it being a mud Bottom when she grounded. After the Ship floated, one of her boats, left, as it would appear, without an Officer, to collect the Spars that had been put into the Water, for the purpose of making a raft, on which to take out a Bower Anchor, was taken away by ten out of twelve of the crew, who deserted to the Enemy.— The two Men not concerned in this atrocious act, after endeavouring to dissuade their Comrades from their Purpose, escaped from the shore, and returned to their Ship. I shall not fail on the *Newcastles* arrival here, to find some Means of rewarding these Men's true Loyalty and Good Conduct. Lord George Stuart also reports the Loss of a Midshipman and ten other Men whilst in Cape Cod Bay,— one killed and nine captured—in an attempt to recover a Boat that had driven on shore from the Ship, when aground, and failing in that object, to bring off some vessels lying in the town of Orleans.—

I forbear to remark on Lord George Stuart remaining from the 12th. to the 22d. ultimo. in Cape Cod Bay, or on his proceeding there, as his Lordship may have had reasons for continuing at that Anchorage, which his Letters do not explain; but a great want of caution in the employment of his Boats, is too obvious to escape Notice.

The *Bulwark*, *Junon* and *Bacchante* were at Sea, and should have been near the track of the Enemy's Frigate on her way out of Boston Bay.— I am Sir Your most obedient Humble Servant

Edw: Griffith.

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 78–80. This letter was docketed as received on 25 February.

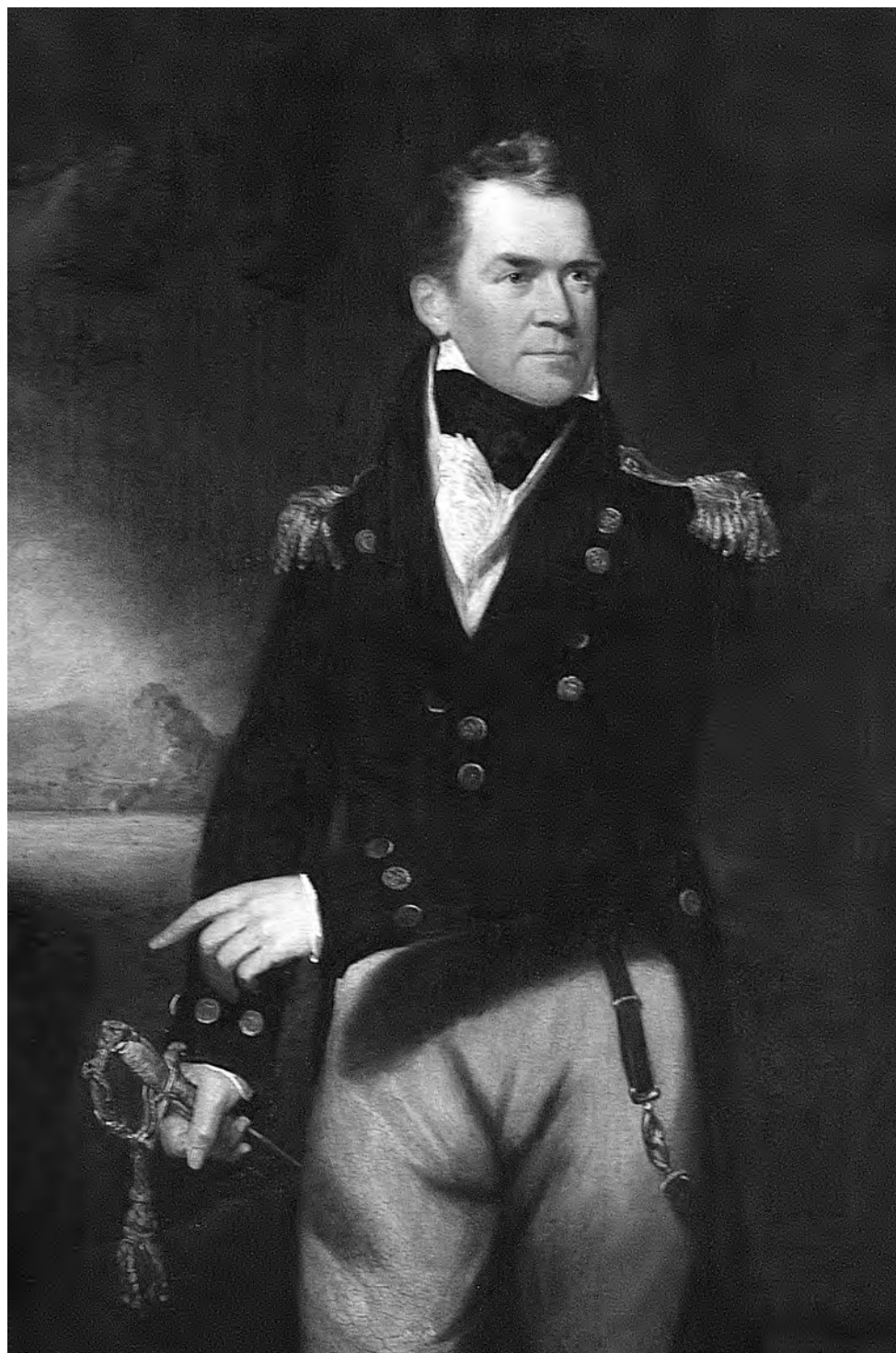
1. See Stuart to Griffith, 23 December 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fol. 157.

2. See Stuart to Jane, 23 December 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fol. 155.

3. See Collier to Griffith, 24 December 1814, above.

4. Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N. The route described is that outlined in Griffith to Collier, 4 October 1814, above.

5. See Stuart to Griffith, 22 December 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2335, fols. 153–54. The mishaps Stuart experienced after arriving in Cape Cod Bay form the substance of this letter and are recapitulated by Griffith in the next paragraph.



*Sir George Ralph Collier*

CAPTAIN SIR GEORGE R. COLLIER, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N.

(Copy)

His Majesty's Ship *Leander*  
off the Island of Teneriffe  
25th. February 1815

Sir/

I think it proper to inform you that while compleating the Water of His Majesty's Ships under my Orders at Madeira on the 19th. Inst. an Enemy's Cruizer made her appearance off the East end of the Island when the Squadron weighed as soon as possible:— His Majesty's Ship *Conway* also got under weigh, & went in pursuit:— it being Sunday, I was obliged to leave some Water Casks behind, nor could I judge it proper to wait for the supply of Wine:— the Cruizer which proved a Schooner Privateer escaped from the circumstance of partial Winds, & not being seen from *Newcastle* or *Acasta* the headmost Ships at sunset, I bore up after dark, & on the 21st. anchored at Santa Cruz, Teneriffe;— the difficulty of getting clear of the anchorage kept me till the 24th. when the *Newcastle* & *Acasta* in the Offing were joined by the *Conway*:— Captain Tancock brought me this morning the accompanying report, containing information of a Frigate answering the description of the *Constitution* having boarded a Russian Ship on the 20th. to the N.E. of Madeira & nearly on the Spot in which I had been cruizing for some days previous:— As I cannot entirely discredit the report, & as I consider from the course she was seen to steer that her Captain's intention is to procure refreshments at some of the Eastern Islands of this Cluster, or probably unite there as a point of rendezvous for the *Congress*, or some other of her consorts, I shall immediately proceed to reconnoitre the anchorages of Forte-Ventura & Lancerote<sup>1</sup> & then passing round between the Salvages<sup>2</sup> & Madeira, & not hearing any thing of her, proceed in a Southerly direction to the Cape de Verds, off which it is possible, unless she has heard of a Squadron being in the neighbourhood, she may be found I have the honor to be &c.—&c.—&c.

(Signed) Geo: R. Collier Capt:

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fols. 199–200. Endorsed opposite dateline in Collier's hand: "George: R: Collier." For another copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fols. 293–94.

1. Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, two of the Canary Islands.

2. The Savage or Selvagens Islands, lying approximately 150 nautical miles south of Madeira and 90 nautical miles north of the Canary Islands.



CAPTAIN SIR GEORGE R. COLLIER, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL EDWARD GRIFFITH, R.N.

His Majesty's Ship *Leander*  
12th. March 1815

Sir/

In conformity with the intention expressed in my letter of the 25th. Ult<sup>o</sup>.<sup>1</sup> I have now to inform you that I endeavoured to reconnoitre the Eastern side of the Islands Forte Ventura & Lancerote;<sup>2</sup> but the state of the winds & weather making it impossible that the *Constitution* should be at the Anchorage of those Islands, induced me to keep away to the Northward; & passing between the Salvages<sup>3</sup> & Madeira & speaking several Spanish Ships who had seen nothing of any Frigate, I again shaped my course to the Southward with the intention of looking in at the anchorage on the West side of the Islands of Sal & Mayo:—<sup>4</sup> my reasons for this deviation from the route pointed out in your Instructions<sup>5</sup> were founded on the conjecture that if the report of the Russian Ship were true; the course (SE.) steered by the Ship she had spoken indicated a seeming intention of keeping the Coast of Africa & its neighbouring Islands on board:— on the 8th. the weather was in addition to being very hazy, so thick from the fine sand with which the air was impregnated, that a quantity was collected from the sails & rigging, & this circumstance assisted so materially that the land was not possible to have been seen more than a mile off:— our Meridional & other observations were of course so defective that tho' I took the precaution of not passing the parallel of Latitude in the night, I found myself on the Eastern side of these Islands, I therefore determined on endeavouring to make the Island of St. Iago:— Unfortunately, nearly the same thick weather continued till the 11th. Inst. when judging myself in the parallel of St. Iago, a due West course was shaped but under very moderate sail being fearful of overrunning the Port:— about twelve, a moderately good observation made the Ship's place a few miles to the Southward of the Island, foreseeing this a short time before 12. the Ships were brought to the Wind, & shortly the land was made on the Weather bow, perhaps about five miles off, & soon after I was disappointed by observing it stretch away to the ENE. a proof that we were to leeward of Porto Praya:— almost immediately after this while answering the *Newcastle's* Signal (then to Windward) of a strange Sail N.N.E. my mortification was encreased to the highest degree by observing three Ships, apparently Frigates, in the act of making sail from the anchorage of Porto Praya, & hauling by the wind on the Larboard Tack without waiting to cross Top Gallant Yards: All sail was instantly made by the Squadron which only fetched in with the land 4 or 5 miles to leeward of the Port, the Strangers going with a more favorable wind from the land on the opposite tack. The Private Signal not being answered by the Sternmost Ships, convinced me they were Enemies, & on these two we were gaining considerably.— At this time the opinion of every Officer & Man on board was, that the whole were three American Frigates, & it was with feelings of deep regret that I afterwards found the headmost only was American and that the other two were His Majesty's late Ships *Cyane* & *Levant* captured by the *Constitution*; each Ship had boats in tow which were cut away, & the *Cyane* finding this Ship & the *Acasta* weathering on her fast, tacked & stood in for the

Roads of Porto Praya: as I did not consider her quite out of Neutral protection & as she must evidently reach the Port before she could be under my Guns, I did not think it proper to call off the *Acasta* from the pursuit of the other Ship which I then considered thro' the haze to be the *Congress*, but which proved the *Levant*, & the *Newcastle* was too far to leeward to give any hope of her closing: about 3 o'clock altho' this Ship & the *Acasta* were closing fast with the second Ship (the *Levant*) I had the mortification to observe that the headmost Ship not only outsailed all the Squadron & weathered upon this Ship & still more so upon the *Newcastle*, but that from her being favored by the breeze was all but out of sight:— at this time the *Levant* tacked, when I immediately hove about to cut her off from the Port, & considering it probable that the Ship which had first tacked might be in readiness to support her Consort, I ordered the *Acasta's* Signal to be made to tack, which before I observed had been made generally, was put in execution by both Ships;— a Signal was then made by hoisting the Optional Flag to the *Newcastle*, but she was now too far to leeward to distinguish it, & the headmost Frigate being no longer in sight from this Ship, I gave up the further pursuit in the conviction that from the state of the Weather & the advance of the evening, it was not practicable to gain or keep sight of the chase which has since proved to have been the *Constitution*:— at a little after three I opened a distant fire upon the Ship pushing for the Roads under American Colours, which gradually increased until about 50 minutes after three when finding I had not room to tack from being so close to the Rocks, I was obliged to wear & direct the *Acasta* to open her fire, which she did, when the Enemy letting go his Anchor hauled down his Colours & possession was taken by the *Acasta*; the *Cyane* had, I learnt, bore up under all sail as soon as she heard the firing & was last seen standing to the WSW.<sup>6</sup>

I have been, Sir, thus minute in my detail that yourself & the Commander in Chief<sup>7</sup> may be put in early possession of every circumstance attending the escape of the *Constitution*; and I must now Sir, solicit your favorable indulgence while I shall endeavour to explain the circumstances of my having been led perhaps to infringe in some degree upon the rights of Neutrality.

Had I found these Ships at an anchor in the Roads of Porto Praya, it is probable, my ideas of Neutrality would have induced me merely to act on the system of close Blockade, but Sir, when these Ships gave up that protection & came out under the idea that we were three Indiamen of the late Convoy, they could hardly claim the right, or expect its observance when necessity impelled either to seek it as a point of refuge;— but the fire on the Prize was opened at some miles distance from the Roads, & under the circumstances of smoke & our rate of sailing it was hardly possible to expect an attentive observance to such forms:— it was in truth the Enemy who led to the Breach of Neutrality if it shall be so considered, rather than myself, by persevering when under my fire to avail himself of such a protection;— & in a military point, it has always been considered that the first Belligerent who trespasses in actual Warfare on the Neutral State, is the first to break the neutrality which can hardly be prevented from being followed up by the other:— the delicacy which I observed with respect to the first Ship which sought this protection will free me from any imputation of wanton conduct, and the candid statement I have given, will, I hope tend to convince you that I acted throughout from the best intentions & those most likely in my own opinion as well as my Brother Officers' present for the good of His Majesty's Service

I must not state, Sir, that an explanation I have just given His Excellency Don Antonio de Continho the Governor, appears to him perfectly satisfactory, & which he has promised to detail to his Court.

I must remark that an English Brig laying in the Roads, was got under weigh by order of Captain Stewart, but when first upon by the Forts she was abandoned; I believe she was intended as a Cartel.

Distant as my prospect may be of again gaining sight of the *Constitution* & *Cyane*, my exertions shall not at all relax, & from our superior sailing going free, I may then indulge the hope of a fortunate result.<sup>8</sup>

I take leave to enclose the copy of a Letter<sup>9</sup> from Lieutenant H Jellico of the *Cyane* briefly stating the Capture of the two Ships alluded to: about 60 of the *Constitution*'s Crew were found on board the *Levant* & a large proportion of the Crews of the British Ships, but the two Captains had gone off to the *Constitution* a few minutes before she cut from her Anchor. I have the honor to be Sir, your most obedient & humble Servant.

George: R. Collier  
Capt.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2339, fols. 189–94. For additional copies of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fols. 250–54 and 283–88.

1. See Collier to Griffith, 25 February 1815, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fols. 293–94.

2. Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, two of the Canary Islands.

3. The Savage or Selvagens Islands, lying approximately 150 nautical miles south of Madeira and 90 nautical miles north of the Canary Islands.

4. Sal and Maio, two of the Cape Verde Islands

5. See Griffith to Collier, 4 October 1814, above.

6. For the American account of the chase of *Constitution* and her prizes, see pp. 375–80.

7. Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

8. Nine years after *Constitution*'s escape from Port Praia, William James published the first edition of his *Naval History of Great Britain*, in which he severely criticized Collier for failing to snare the American frigate and its prizes. Shortly after the appearance of this work, Collier committed suicide. Naval colleagues attributed their friend's suicide to a temporary madness brought on by James's attack on Collier's character. For James's assessment of Collier's conduct at Port Praia, see James, *Naval History of Great Britain* (1822–24 ed.), Vol. 5, pp. 547–50. On James's *Naval History* as a contributing factor in Collier's suicide, see the testimony given at a coroner's inquest published in *Annual Register*, pp. 37–41. For a contemporary summary of Collier's career, see Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, Vol. 2, Part 2, pp. 518–40. For a modern treatment of Collier's role in suppressing the slave trade, see Wills, "Royal Navy's Anti-Slavery Cause," pp. 123–46.

9. See Jellicoe to Collier, 12 March 1815, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fol. 255. Henry Jellicoe was the second lieutenant of *Cyane*.

## The Short Life of Porter's and Perry's Flying Squadrons

*David Porter was impatient for an active command in October 1814. The loss of Essex to a British squadron off Valparaiso in March had occurred over six months earlier. The British paroled the Essex survivors, and Porter and his men sailed for the United States on 27 April, arriving in New York in early July to cheering crowds. Porter occupied his time in the summer with a court of inquiry into that engagement and with an impromptu*

assault on an enemy naval squadron departing down the Potomac.<sup>1</sup> Not having a seagoing command with which to reward Porter, Secretary Jones directed him to superintend the construction of the steam vessel *Fulton I* at New York. However, a spring 1815 operational date was an eternity for this sailor. Borrowing from Joshua Barney's 1813 proposal to create a defensive squadron to protect the Chesapeake Bay from British marauding, Porter devised a plan for small, privateer-like cruisers to harass British shipping in the West Indies and off America's southern coast.

Porter's goal of a winter cruise was ambitious. Congressional authorization of legislation within a month of his proposal augured well for the project. A severe financial crisis in the fall of 1814, however, dampened shipbuilders' interest in selling vessels to a cash-strapped government. Porter's persistent efforts in buying, outfitting, and manning a squadron of five brigs and schooners,<sup>2</sup> as well as coordinating similar efforts with Oliver H. Perry for a second squadron, were ultimately stymied by inclement weather and the coming of peace. The prospect of serving in Porter's "mosquito fleet" generated wide interest among many lower-ranking officers who lacked a blue-water command and the glory it offered.

1. For more on the Essex engagement, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 724–44. For a document relating to the naval battery that Porter erected near Alexandria after the British assault of that city in August 1814, see *ibid.*, pp. 251–55.

2. Each of the ships' names was a variation on a theme. Brigs *Firefly* and *Flambeau* and schooners *Spark*, *Spitfire*, and *Torch* symbolized the fire they would inflict on the enemy.

### CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Philadelphia Octr. 14th 1814

Sir/

A desire of rendering myself useful to my country, and a detestation of idleness at this time induces me to address you— Officers by merely doing their duty generally give satisfaction to their government, but I must attempt more to be satisfied with myself— I hope sir you will excuse this letter and ascribe it to that zeal which is always urging me to enterprize—

I see the difficulty of getting our Frigates to sea, I am aware of the great risque they would run when on the Ocean, and am sensible that the odds is too much against us to attempt any thing now in that way— I therefore do not solicit such a command as my rank might induce me to expect under different circumstances, I only request the means and permission to carry destruction to the enemies commerce—

The Steam Frigate cannot be useful until next spring,<sup>1</sup> her officers and crew cannot of course be employed on board her to any advantage, and many of the officers and men of the Flotillas will be similarly situated during the winter season— The enemy has much commerce in the Carribean Seas which with a few small vessels properly employed may be greatly annoyed, their military Expeditions to our Southern Sea board may be greatly incommoded by having their supplies cut off, and it is not improbable that by making sudden incursions on their Islands we might retort some of the injuries they have made us experience— Without laying down any regular plan of operations I can only say that I believe much may be done this approaching month with by a small force employed with enterprize and prudence—

My Object in writing this letter is to request of you permission to purchase, or hire, and equip for the United States four or five cheap fast Sailing Schooners, to mount two or three twelve or 18 pounders long guns, with a compliment of from 40 to 60 men each, to be enlisted or drafted from the Flotillas, and allow me to proceed to cruize against the commerce of the enemy in the West Indies to return early in this Spring—

I wish no extravagance in the equipment of those vessels, I only want Guns Amunition men provisions and a Fire Brand It is not my wish to send prizes into port, and if we should be taken the loss to the government will be trifeling compared to the injury I hope to do the Enemy— My Object in wishing so many vessels is to spread our force as much as possible to increase our chances, to baffle all attempts of the enemy to trace and pursue us, and to have a force sufficient when united, to get at defiance one of the Enemies small vessels of war— Those schooners would find convenient harbours about the Coast of N Orleans, S Carolina, and Georgia, they would be enabled to watch and harass the Enemies convoys, and they would be likely to do great injury without exciting much attention.

Should you consent to my executing this or a similar plan, I beg that no one but myself may know the destination of the expedition, and in your orders on this subject I beg you will enclose me such a letter as will enable me to receive from the Agents of the Department the necessary assistance without their being apprized of the object of the Armament—

There are now at the Wharves of Baltimore Philadelphia and N York an Abundance of vessels of a Suitable description which could be procured on reasonable terms ready equiped— I have the Honor to be sir With great respect Your Obdt. Servt.

D Porter

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 37 (M125, Roll No. 40).

1. On 8 September 1814, Secretary Jones ordered Porter to oversee the construction at New York of the steam frigate *Fulton I*. Jones to Porter, 8 September 1814, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 414–15. For more on the steam frigate, see pp. 135–51.

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER

Capt. David Porter }  
U.S. Navy, Chester, Pena. }

Navy Department  
Novr. 16th. 1814

Sir,

Your private letter of the 12th. Inst.<sup>1</sup> came to hand at the moment I was about to address you on the same subject, having on receipt of your public letter<sup>2</sup> to the same effect, determined with the approbation of the President to avail the public of your valuable services in the way you had proffered them, the moment the bill should pass into a law which it did yesterday.<sup>3</sup> As the efficacy of the measure would be greatly impaired by delaying the enterprize until vessel could be built, it is desirable to purchase at once such suitable vessels as may be procured

upon reasonable terms, but it is of all things the most essential that we should have unquestionable evidence of the superior sailing and appropriate qualities of those we do purchase.— There is however one important fact which it is proper I should explain to you, that is the momentary embarrassment of the Treasury not more from the deficiency of resources than the utter impossibility of transmitting its monies from one district to another owing to the chain of Bank credit and of payments in specie being wholly suspended.— This however will be but a temporary impediment, as measures will undoubtedly soon be perfected which will place the public credit on a solid basis and restore to the government its wonted punctuality and facility.—

It will therefore only be practicable to purchase those vessels on a credit of ninety days at which time payment will be punctually made.—

The Vessels intended to be purchased for the service are Schooners or Brigs (the former in preference) of from 200 to 350 tons of the fleetest construction and highest reputation.—

The law provides that they shall carry not less than eight nor more than sixteen guns.— The best armament will undoubtedly be one or two long 18 pounders amidships on a pivot, and eight or ten 18 or 24 pounder Carronades or Gun-nades according to the capacity of the vessel, avoiding all armament on the extremities.— The crews are to be from 70 to 100 officers & men, according to the size and agreeable to the annexed lists. It will be very convenient should the vessels be already properly armed, but if that should not be the case we have long 18s. at Philada. and 18 & 24 pounder Carronades at this place in sufficient numbers, which may be immediately forwarded. It may not be practicable to purchase the whole twenty authorized by law at once, indeed it may not be politick, as so great a demand would enhance the cost and the difficulty of procuring them, and the competition in manning so many at the same time, might embarrass and retard the whole.—

It is also of importance to procure them in situations from whence they may elude the Blockade & procure Seamen with the greatest facility.— It is therefore intended to purchase ten such vessels at once, on terms as reasonable as possible taking care that no undue advantage is taken in the price on account of the terms of payment, as no one can justly doubt the fulfilment of the conditions.— Five of these vessels will be placed under your command, and Five under the command of Captain Perry to cruize in separate Squadrons.— Captain Perry will immediately join you, and together you will proceed to search for such suitable vessels, and in conjunction with the agent of the Station where they may be found, You will purchase them on the best possible terms payable at ninety days, and proceed to equip and fit them out for a cruize without delay, reporting to me the particulars of each vessel in order that the squadrons may be divided as Equally as may be.— The officers will be ordered as soon as possible.— Any that you may recognize who can be ordered with convenience will be attended to.— It will be extremely desirable that one of the Lieutenants or the Sailing master of each, should be a Schooner Sailor for the vessels of that description.— I am very respectfully &c

W. Jones

List of officers and crew for those of the largest class	List of officers & crew for those of the 2d. Class
1. Lieutenant Commandant	1
1. Lieutenant	1
1. Master	1
1. Purser	1
1. Surgeons mate	1
2. Masters Mates	2
4. Midshipmen	2
1. Boatswain	1
1. Boatswains mate	1
1. Gunner	1
1. Carpenter	1
1. Sail maker	1
1. Armourer	1
1. Captains Clerk	1
1. Steward	1
1. Cook	1
30 Seamen	25
<u>50</u> Ordinary do. & Boys	<u>32</u>
<u>100.</u> total	<u>75.</u>

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 456–58 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. This document has not been found.

2. See above, Porter to Jones, 14 October 1814.

3. Jones liked the proposal and wrote a letter to Tait, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, with the details for introducing legislation. The 15 November 1814 law appropriated \$600,000 for the purchase or construction and equipping of up to 20 vessels having between 8 and 16 guns. Jones to Charles Tait, 22 October 1814, DNA, RG45, Letters to Congress, No. 2, 4 January 1811–14 March 1818, pp. 289–90 (T829, Roll No. 336) and *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 3, p. 144.

### CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Chester Novr. 19th 1814

Sir/

I have had the honor to receive your instructions of the 16th which shall be strictly attended to—

The highly flattering manner in which you have been pleased to confide to me the command of a squadron of small vessels, is extremely gratifying to my feelings, and I shall endeavour so to conduct myself as to leave no course for you to regret the many favours you have at different times done me the honor to confer on me—

I feel myself uncommonly favoured by being allowed to make a selection of such officers as can be spared without inconvenience to other services, to join me in the expedition— It would be difficult for me at this moment to

suggest to you a sufficient number of unemployed officers to make up the compliment for all the vessels to be commanded by me, I shall therefore for the present name to you only such as I should wish to have placed in command, and in doing this I have selected only those to whom such a command would be highly acceptable, and who are to my knowledge well qualified for the situation—

To Wit/

Lts. to Command	Stephen Cassin Thos. Gamble Wm. Carter Junr. Wm. Finch Raymond H T <sup>1</sup> Perry
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Some of those officers are on the Lakes, and as it will require some time for them to come on, I beg (should the selection please you) that they may be ordered to join me as early as convenient— If they proceed to N York or Philadelphia they will hear of me<sup>2</sup>

I presume it is your intention that the officers and men belonging to the *Fulton* should join me, and on this presumption I shall take the liberty of using their services, and shall forward you a list of the names of the former—

I beg sir that my surgeon may be permitted to accompany me, this is an officer you have not mentioned in your list, but permit me to suggest to you the necessity of having one in each Squadron—

Permit me also to request you to issue orders for the commanders of Navy yards to supply me with such articles as may be necessary for the outfitts of the squadron, and particularly for guns and their equipments;— There are A number of long 24 pounders on board the old gun Boats in ordinary, and at the Navy yards of N York and Philadelphia, those guns will answer the purpose as well, if not better, than those of smaller Calibre, and, as their carriages are compleat and sound, it would save a great expense by using them instead of transporting them from other places and it would be attended with the additional advantage of hastening our equipment. I have the Honor to be with great Respect your Obdt. Servt.

D Porter

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 15 (M125, Roll No. 41).

1. Porter wrote "T" instead of "J."

2. All except Thomas Gamble (lieutenant, 27 April 1810) were either serving on the Lakes or had been recently. Raymond Henry Jones Perry (lieutenant, 5 March 1813) was Oliver Hazard Perry's younger brother. Stephen Cassin was a master commandant (11 September 1814); William Carter, Jr., was a lieutenant (28 April 1810), as was William Finch (4 January 1813). For the officers who were actually assigned to Porter's and Perry's squadrons, see Jones to Porter, 30 November 1814, below.



## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER

Capt. David Porter }  
 U. S. Navy }  
 Philadelphia }

Navy Department  
 November 30th 1814

Sir,

Having already given to you the necessary instructions for procuring, arming equipping and manning the five vessels destined for your command you will as soon as the Squadron shall be ready for for Sea proceed upon a Cruise in the West Indies, where you will employ your force, either collectively or seperately, in annoying and destroying the Commerce of the enemy which the nature of your force, seconded by your judgment and enterprize will I trust enable you to execute, as well in his harbours, as at Sea, and upon a scale so extensive, as to make him participate deeply in the evils which he has inflicted on our prosperity.—

Although the barbarous policy and practice of our enemy spare neither the Cottage, nor the Capitol, the Government of the United States alive to the dictates of justice, and morality, cannot be driven by the savage example, from the ground of public law, and civilization which has governed all its actions; nor will it retaliate the system of devastation, though justified, and tempted, by continued acts of atrocity openly avowed, and authorized, by the British Commanders.—

The facility with which you may replenish your provisions, in our Southern ports particularly at New Orleans will enable you to renew, and continue your enterprize, indefinitely, until it may be necessary to seek out a port to refit, and none will be found so convenient of access as the Delaware or New York.—

Knowing your sentiments in respect to the policy of destroying, in preference to manning prizes, unless under very peculiar circumstances, I need add nothing on that Subject; and you are also aware of the importance of landing as many prisoners as possible, in the United States, in order to meet the unjust balance against us, produced by the want of good faith, in the enemy, to recognize Cartels and paroles granted at Sea by our Commanders, from motives of convenience, and liberality towards his captured subjects.—

As a distinct Purser to each Vessel will multiply accounts and requisitions, unnecessarily, one or two pursers may answer for your Squadron, with a trusty pursers Steward on board each vessel, with whom a Statement of the accounts, of the Crew of each vessel, will be regularly deposited by the Purser to guard against seperation or other casualty.—

The wages of your Petty Officers, Seamen, and ordinary Seamen will be those at present established, and from the popularity of the service, and of the Commanders, I have no doubt of your obtaining the whole number without delay.— In procuring the vessels regard should be had to the situation, so as to guard against detention by the Ice. In my former letter, I directed a particular description, of each vessel, to be forwarded to the Department, in order to be distributed as equally as possible, between Captn. Perry and yourself. If however you can settle this by agreement, I have no objection.

The Officers ordered to report themselves to you as Commandants for the vessels under your command, are, Master Commandant Stephen Cassin, Lieutenants Thomas Gamble, Wolcott Chauncey, and John B. Nicholson.

Those for Capn. Perry, are, Lieutenants Read, Elton, Dallas, and Kennedy. These have been selected for the first ten Vessels, they are excellent officers, and I have no doubt will give perfect satisfaction. I have ordered Acting Lieut John T Wade to report himself to you, I know him well, he is a prime Seaman and a good Officer.—

You will on the eve of your departure, transmit regular muster Rolls, of the Crews of each Vessel under your Command.— Wishing you a prosperous and honorable Cruise— I am respectfully Your Obed't Servant

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 220–21 (T829, Roll No. 453).

CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New York 2d Decr. 1814

Sir,

I had engaged several small fast sailing vessels for the United States at fair prices but when I proposed the terms of payment a draft on the Department at 90 days. one merchant only would accept it. They want cash or something immediately convertible into cash, they say drafts on Government cannot be disposed of here without great loss and they imply a want of confidence which I fear will greatly retard the purchases unless I am enabled to pay them in some other way— were a small amount of cash and Treasury notes placed at my disposal I should be able to remove all difficulties and make much more advantageous bargains. If 30,000\$ in Cash and 30,000\$ in Treasury notes were placed in one of the Banks here to my orders. I feel confident I should have it in my power to get the Squadron to Sea with Expedition and without farther trouble to the Department, and if this is not done the vessels I fear cannot be procured but by employing to build them some of the Carpenters who have confidence in the Government, If you think this last mode preferable I will set about it immediately and in the mean time we can go on purchasing when suitable vessels offer and the terms of payment are accepted. If merchants see that we can build and builders know that we can purchase a competition will take place which will favour the views of the Department, I think Sir, by proper management I should accomplish the Equipment of Ten vessels as soon as the five now ordered and with your consent I will immediately commence building. I should be happy to have your instructions on this head as early as convenient, I have the honor to be very respectfully your Obt. Sevt.

D Porter

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 71 (M125, Roll No. 41).

## ACTING SECRETARY OF THE NAVY HOMANS TO CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER

Captain David Porter }  
 U.S. Navy }  
 New York }

Navy Department  
 Decemr. 7 1814

Sir,

The Honorable Wm. Jones late Secretary of the navy having resigned on the first instant the duty devolves on me to reply to your letters of the 29th Ult. and 2d Inst.—<sup>1</sup>

I submitted your letters to the President, and have taken the advice of the late Secretary on the subject; Enclosed you have an order on Capt. Evans Commandant of the Navy Yard, for the 10–18 pdrs. long Guns which your require,<sup>2</sup> there are no 24s. that can be spared, as they will all be wanted for the Lake service. The fifty 18 pdr. Carronades will be forwarded immediately from this place, and will be at Brunswic in twenty days from tomorrow.

The sum of \$30,000 in Treasury Notes can be placed at your disposal in New York in a few days, but the Cash part is entirely out of the question; if you cannot succeed in making the purchase of vessels with the above \$30,000, and a Credit of 60 or 90 days for the balance, the only alternative will be to build on the best terms you can obtain, as suggested in your letter of the 2d inst— In pursuing this course, you will be able to profit of the competition between the owners of Vessels, and the builders you engage with, so as to make the terms of purchase within the means of payment proposed.<sup>3</sup> I am with great respect Sir. Your Obedt. Serv't.

Benjamin Homans  
 Acting by order of the President

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 473–74 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Porter to Jones, 29 November 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 56 (M125, Roll No. 41).

2. Homans to Samuel Evans, 7 December 1814, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 245 (M441, Roll No. 1).

3. Between 14 and 28 December 1814, Porter contracted with several owners to purchase the following vessels: brig *Spark* (formerly brig *Warrington*) for \$17,389.56; schooner *Spitfire* (formerly schooner *Grampus*) for \$30,000; brig *Firefly* (formerly brig *Volant*) for \$17,435; brig *Flambeau* (formerly brig *Leader*) for \$12,000; and schooner *Torch* (formerly schooner *Argonaut*) for \$13,000. See Porter to the Secretary of the Navy, 14, 21, 24, 26, and 28 December 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, pp. 112, 128, 135, 138, and 142 (M125, Roll No. 41).

CAPTAIN OLIVER H. PERRY TO  
 SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

New york January 9th. 1815

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that I have not succeeded in my attempt to procure the vessels directed by the Department, by purchase— I did not think it advisable to enter into competition with individual enterprize, and as the spirit of privateering is very great to the Eastd.—every vessel that would possibly

answer has been engaged for that service— The only mode of executing my orders that remained, was, to build but here and there difficulty occurred— The depreciation of public credit— James DeWolfe Esquire of R.I. offered to advance the necessary money to build one, at a credit of 90 days—this offer I accepted— several gentlemen of Providence R.I. offer to build two provided they can receive an assurance of being paid in the currency of that place, or in Treasury notes at the current price— but as the difficulty of transmitting its money is still felt by the Treasury. I have thought it better to submit the latter proposition for your decision

I have contracted for two vessels of 350 Tons to be built at Middletown (Cont.) for about 26,000\$— Hull, sails, rigging &c. complete.<sup>1</sup> This is cheaper than they can be built at any other place— The only difficulty here, is the risque of their being blockaded, but Come. Porter joins me in the opinion, that the enemy will not consider them of sufficient importance to place a vessel expressly for the purpose, and if they should, that the gunboats or steam frigate could easily relieve them— Three are already contracted for, and the propositions for two more accompany this

I beg leave respectfully to suggest to you Sir, the purchase of the fine Ship belonging to the Messrs. Browns of this City— She can be got ready for Sea, as soon as the vessels I am building, and the price (46,000\$,) is so low that it appears to me an excellent opportunity to add a superb Ship to our navy on extraordinary reasonable terms— No vessel could possibly gain more credit for the Country in a contest with the enemy she being a corvette of such large dimensions, as to make her nearly equal to some frigates— It will also be recollected, that this will be serving two men (Messrs. Brown's) who have made great exertions and sacrifices for their Country— I forbear to say more on this subject but there are many more powerful reasons in favor of this purchase.<sup>2</sup> I am with great Respect Sir Your Obedt. Hum. Servt.

O. H. Perry

ALS, DNA, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 26 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Perry allocated \$51,999.99 for both vessels to be paid for in three installments over the next sixty days. Perry to Crowninshield, 12 January 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 38 (M125, Roll No. 42).

2. Secretary Crowninshield agreed with Perry that building new vessels rather than buying existing ones was preferable because the government would not be competing with the private sector for limited resources. Crowninshield also approved three of Perry's contracts to build vessels, but two more at Providence were dependent on funds from the Treasury Department. Crowninshield to Perry, 17 January 1815, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 13 (M149, Roll No. 12).

[Enclosure]	
Hull including	} 14,000
Iron & Iron bills	
with composition	1,800
Sails Rigging	} <u>21,200</u>
Copper &c. &c	
	37,000

Dimensions  
 85 feet Keel  
 28½ feet Beam  
 14 feet hold

The above proportions are from several gentlemen of Providence R, I, as mentioned in my letter.

O H Perry

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 26, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 42).

CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER TO THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

New York 10th January 1815

Sir,

I have agreeable to your instructions done myself the honor to send you a list of the officers attached to the vessels under my command—

You will perceive that on board the vessel to be commanded by myself I have ordered two Lieutenants and an acting Sailing master, and on board the one to be commanded by Captain Cassin I have ordered one Lieutenant and two masters. my motives for so doing were founded on our rank in the service, and my reasons for ordering two masters to the same vessel was from the circumstance of having attached to her one sailing master, before the other arrived, who had been ordered by the Department expressly for Captain Cassin— believing that it would be equally beneficial to the service for them both to join Captain Cassin. I indulged that meritorious officer in the officers of his choice—

You will see by the enclosed list that I have appointed an acting Surgeons mate, and that one more is wanting for the *Spitfire*. I shall have an opportunity of making a choice from a number of applicants, all highly respectable, and as I appoint my acting officers only for one cruize, whenever it shall terminate they will be no longer a burthen to the service—

One Lieutenant and one Sailing master are wanting for the *Torch*, and two midshipman for the *Spitfire*, but when those already ordered shall have arrived our compliment will be complete.<sup>1</sup>

I have placed Mr. F B Gamble on board the *Flambeau*. I had understood that this officer was in daily expectation of promotion, and I believed that if his expectations should be confirmed, his inexperience would render it necessary for him to do duty for some time in a subordinate station before he would be qualified to take on himself the duties of first Lieutenant—<sup>2</sup> I have the honor to be Very respectfully Your ob Sev't.

D Porter.

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 33 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Porter's minimum complement of officers was not in place until 4 February 1815. Porter to Crowninshield, 4 February 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 105 (M125, Roll No. 42).

2. Francis B. Gamble's lieutenant's rank dated from 9 December 1814.

[Enclosure]

List of officers attached to the U S Vessel of War *Fire Fly*—<sup>1</sup>

David Porter—	Captain Comdg.—the Squadron
Edward Barnwall Ege.	Lieutenant
Paul Zantzing	Lieutenant
Richard K Hoffman	Surgeon
John R Shaw—	Purser of the <i>Fire Fly</i> } <i>Spark and Flambeau</i> }
Wm. H Crosdale	acting Sailing Master
Wm C Wetmore—	Midshipman
Thos. W Wyman F	Midshipman
John Rudd	Midshipman
John S Meehan	acting Midshipman
William Pennock	acting Midshipman

List of officers attached to U S Vessel of War *Spitfire*—<sup>2</sup>

Stephen Cassin—F.	Captain
Elie A. F. Valette F.	Lieutenant
John Kitts	Sailing Master
Joseph Willitson	Sailing Master
Jott S Pain	Midshipman
Mathew Keogh	Midshipman

List of officers attached to the U S Vessel of War *Spark*<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Gamble	Lt. Commandant
Wm. H Cocke—	Lieutenant
Wm. Lee Junr.	Acting Sailing Master
Alexander M Montgomery	Surgeons Mate
S Bradish—	Masters Mate
D G Farragate—	Midshipman
H W Ogden—	ordered to the <i>Independence</i> <sup>4</sup>
John Bingham Junr.	Midshipman
Authur Bainbridge	Actg— midshipman
Charles Divens—	Actg midshipman
	Clerk

List of Officers attached to the U S Vessel of War *Torch*—<sup>5</sup>

Wolcott Chauncey	Lieut. Commandant
Alexr. P Darragh	Purser of the <i>Torch</i> and <i>Spitfire</i>
John Young	Surgeons Mate
Lt. David Geisinger,	ordered to Captn. Porter, Jan'y 20. 1815 <sup>6</sup>
Samuel Dussenbury.	Masters Mate
Henry Grey—	Midshipman
G W Isaacs—	Midshipman
Wm. H Mott—	Midshipman
Wm. Chainey	Midshipman

List of officers attached to U S Vessel of War *Flambeau*—<sup>7</sup>

John B Nicolson	Lt. Commandant
Henry S Newcomb—	Lieutenant
F B Gamble————	
James Terry—	Acting Sailing Master
Moses Rirden	Acting Surgeons Mate
Wm. Waterman	Masters Mate
James H W Ray	Midshipman
Robert Carson—	Midshipman
Wm. Miller—	Acting Midshipman
David Lyle—	Acting Midshipman
Wm. Pierce—	Masters Mate
Wm. L Watkins	Clerk

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 33, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. List of officers attached to U.S.S. *Firefly*: David Porter (captain, 2 July 1812); Edward Barnewall (lieutenant, 22 July 1814); Paul Zantzing (lieutenant, 9 December 1814); Richard K. Hoffman (surgeon, 16 July 1814); John R. Shaw (purser, 28 February 1813); William H. Crosdale (acting sailing master); William C. Wetmore (midshipman, 18 June 1812); Thomas W. Wyman (midshipman, 17 December 1810); John Rudd (midshipman, 30 November 1814); John S. Meehan (acting midshipman); William H. Pennock (acting midshipman).

2. List of officers attached to U.S.S. *Spitfire*: Stephen Cassin (master commandant, 11 September 1814); Elie A. F. Valette (lieutenant, 9 December 1814); John Kitts (sailing master, 15 May 1813); Joseph Williston/Willitson (sailing master, 26 November 1814); Jott S. Pain (Josiah/J.S. Paine) (midshipman, 9 November 1813); Mathew (Matthew) Keogh (midshipman, 6 December 1814).

3. List of officers attached to U.S.S. *Spark*: Thomas Gamble (lieutenant, 27 April 1810); William H. Cocke (lieutenant, 24 July 1813); William Lee (acting sailing master); Alexander M. Montgomery (surgeon's mate, 16 July 1814); S. Bradish (master's mate); David G. Farragut (midshipman, 17 December 1810); Henry W. Ogden (midshipman, 1 September 1811); John Bingham, Jr. (acting midshipman); Arthur Bainbridge (acting midshipman); Charles Divers (clerk).

4. The interlineation "ordered to the *Independence*" was written after this letter was sent. Both Farragut and Ogden were ordered to that ship on 10 April 1815.

5. List of officers attached to U.S.S. *Torch*: Wolcott Chauncey (lieutenant, 7 June 1810); Alexander P. Darragh (purser, 25 April 1812); John Young (surgeon's mate, 9 July 1812); David Geisinger (lieutenant, 9 December 1814); Samuel Dussenbury/Duzenbury/Dusenberry (master's mate/acting midshipman, 16 July 1814); Henry Gray (midshipman, 1 January 1812); G. W. Isaacs (midshipman, 1 January 1812); William H. Mott (midshipman, 1 January 1812); William Chainey (perhaps an acting midshipman; not listed in the Navy Register).

6. This interlineation, "Lt. David Geisinger, ordered to Capt. Porter, Jan'y 20. 1815," was written in a different hand.

7. List of officers attached to U.S.S. *Flambeau*: John B. Nicolson (lieutenant, 19 May 1812); Henry S. Newcomb (lieutenant, 24 July 1813); Francis B. Gamble (lieutenant, 9 December 1814); James Terry (acting sailing master, 16 July 1814); Moses Ruden (acting surgeon's mate); William Waterman (master's mate); James W. H. Ray (midshipman, 1 September 1811); Robert Carson (midshipman, 1 February 1814); William Miller (acting midshipman); David Lyle (acting midshipman); William Pierce (master's mate); William L. Watkins (clerk).

## CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

New York Feby. 8th 1815

Sir,

I have this day been honored with your letter of the 4th—<sup>1</sup>

My great anxiety to get the vessels of my Squadron to Sea, has caused every effort in my power to complete their crews, and equipments, and I have been well assisted by their Commanders and other Officers. The inclemency of the Season however and the allmost total impossibility of crossing the East River from the quantity of ice floating in it, has caused laterly considerable delay as it prevented our Carpenters and other artificers from passing over, and has thrown us back considerably, should the weather continue as favorable as it now is, I think I shall be enabled to Sail in a fortnight. I have had many difficulties to Struggle against in procuring and equipping this Squadron. Such as the want of faith in public credit, want of workmen from the great numbers which have been sent to the Lakes, want of almost every kind of naval Stores from the same cause—difficulty in procuring Seamen from the high wages given for the Lake service, and from the great competition between the numerous recruiting officers there being at this time no less than ten rendezvous open for Seamen for the Public Service here, and others for private armed vessels, added to which I had in the commencement but little assistance. I had many alterations to make in the vessels, many of their Sails were to be made, all my water casks, Gun Carriages after the arrival of the Guns, all my Cables, Shot, and Boats, and even my Kentledge was to be cast. I have at length however the extreme satisfaction of seeing them nearly ready, and from their general appearance and promise, best Judges pronounce my Squadron to be as perfect, considering the class of vessels of which it is composed, as any that can ever sail from the United States, I have experienced Schooner Sailors in each vessel in the capacity of acting masters, and before my departure I purpose devoting a few days to a trial of their Sailing in order to ascertain their best trim, We shall not meet with any further delay for the want of Seamen, as I have a sufficiency to man them, and I find I can with safety take on board five months Provisions without danger of impeding their Sailing. This is I presume as long as the Government would wish me to keep the Sea without renewing my Stock—

I had the honor to address a letter to your predecessor in Office, suggesting a plan for the anoyance of the Enemies Commerce in the West Indies, and for interrupting his supplies and reinforcements in the event of his making an attack on our Southern Sea Board, this plan was proposed before the passage of the law for building the small vessels, and was approved of by him. The plan proposed in that letter with his instructions of Novr. 30th. I purpose taking as my Guide, governing myself from time to time from circumstances,<sup>2</sup>

To render our operations and the execution of my plans the more certain, I purposed Sailing together from this place, and seperating after we were clear of Bermuda, to rendezvous on a given day to windward and in sight of Barbadoes, Trinidad, Tobago, under the Lee of Barbuda or some other convenient place then to run through the group, which, (from the number of Ships sent to New



Orleans) is now destitute of Maritime protection, running into their open roadsteads and destroying their Shipping—

I then purpose going to St. Bartholomews to fill our water, and if circumstances should suit continue to harass them to windward—

If I should find a force too Strong for me I shall seperate, run down to Leeward, rendezvous at some of the convenient Keys, and commence my operations about Turks Island, Jamaica, and the Bahamas. perhaps I may interrupt their Portobello, Bay of Honduras, and Gulf of Mexico trade; take a position off the Tortugas Shoals, lurk about the uninhabited Keys off Cape Florida, dog their convoys, or take a position off Point Negril, to intercept their plunder from the Floridas or from the Mississipe should they unfortunately possess themselves of the latter place, from thence proceed off St. Marys, go into Charleston and recruit my provisions—

My reasons for keeping together until clear of Bermuda, is to lessen the chance of Capture from the Enemies Large Cruizers; to be enable to escape a single Ship of Superior force by running off on different courses, and to be in a situation to attack one equal to our United forces—

The Commanders will all be supplied with Sealed Instructions Numbered, to be opened agreeable to their numbers, according to Signal or circumstances; with the most positive orders to destroy them in the event of Capture; by this means I hope to keep my destination and plans secret; and in order to set even conjecture at defiance, I have furnished each vessel with charts for every part of the atlantic ocean. I hope though small my means, to cause such havoc among the commerce of the Enemy as will make him feel very sensibly the evils of war— I must acknowledge however I should have felt better satisfied with my command had I been permitted to purchase and equip the Sloop of War building by the Messrs. Brown's,—<sup>3</sup> I have the honor to be With great respect  
Your Obt. Sert.

D Porter

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 112 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Crowninshield wrote Porter on 4 February 1815 to emphasize the importance of his squadron getting to sea quickly. In addition, he suggested that Porter decrease the complement of each ship by ten men so that the ships would sit higher in the water and be able to cruise for a longer period of time. He also asked for a description of Porter's intended "cruising grounds." Crowninshield to Porter, 4 February 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 25 (M149, Roll No. 12).

2. See above, Porter to Jones, 14 October 1814, and, Jones to Porter, 30 November 1814.

3. Porter wrote to Acting Secretary Benjamin Homans on 10 December 1814, about purchasing a large sloop of war being constructed by Adam and Noah Brown at New York. Porter believed that his rank merited a larger ship than those permitted by the act of 15 November 1814. Homans responded on 14 December that the ship Porter wanted was one third larger than the law authorizing the purchase of vessels permitted. To further allay Porter's sensibility, Homans noted that commanding a squadron was more prestigious than commanding a frigate. Porter to Homans, 10 December 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 94 (M125, Roll No. 41); and Homans to Porter, 14 December 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 481 (M149, Roll No. 11).

CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

New York February 12. 1815

Sir

yesterday the British sloop of war *Favourite* arrived below with a messenger, as 'tis said, bearing a treaty of Peace between the United States and Great Britain, which was signed on the 24th. of December.

My Squadron can be got to sea as soon as the ice will permit them to go out; every expense has been gone into; and if they are now laid up it will be a dead loss to the government, without having rendered any service— Allow me, Sir, to suggest to you the propriety and advantages which would result by pushing up the Mediteranean and intercepting the commerce and cruisers of Algiers— In forty days from the time I receive the order I can be before that place— My crews are all new enlistments; they have received the bounty and advance and are considerably in debt to the government: they are entered for six months, and a cruise of that length will enable us to do that Enemy much injury—<sup>1</sup> I have the honor to be with great respect your obt. Servt.

D Porter

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 121 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Between October 1814 and February 1815, Porter had turned his concept for a “mosquito fleet” into five warships that eventually formed half of the first of two squadrons that the United States deployed in the spring and summer of 1815 to the Mediterranean to retaliate against Algiers’s long-standing depredations of American merchantmen. That first squadron triumphed, but its commodore was Stephen Decatur, not David Porter. For more on this next chapter of Porter’s flying squadron, see Long, *Nothing Too Daring*, pp. 172–73, and Tucker, *Stephen Decatur*, pp. 154–68.

## Financial Hardship at War’s End

*The collapse of government finances in the fall of 1814 gradually brought work at the Portsmouth Navy Yard to a halt. Without monies to man and fit out Congress and Washington for cruising operations, the preparations of these two warships for sea temporarily ceased. While this delay discouraged Isaac Hull, he felt greater distress over his inability to pay the officers and enlisted men then at Portsmouth. The cash-strapped commandant had only treasury notes with which to discharge his payroll obligations, and these traded considerably below their face value. In effect, to receive payment of wages in treasury notes was to accept a pay cut. The hardships this situation wrought at the Portsmouth Station are described in the following documents.*

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
 Portsmouth 2d Nov. 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to enclose you a list of the names of men on this Station whose term of service will expire in November and December.<sup>1</sup>

There will be a considerable sum of money required to pay them off as their terms expire and I cannot but earnestly request that you will be pleased to order a remittance for that purpose, as the service is suffering very much on this station on account of our being obliged to discharge men without being able to pay them. Several have been discharged, and their accounts furnished them signed which accounts they have been obliged to sell at a discount of from thirty to fifty Per cent— Many of our best men have disposed of their accounts in that way.— I also have to ask for a remittance for the officers on this Station. They have several months pay due them, and it is a fact that they have not money to pay for their washing, or to get the necessary winter Cloathing, and they have been so long promising payment to those that have heretofore trusted them, that they refuse to give them credit any longer— The Officers and Crew of the *Adams* came here with the loss of every thing except what they stood in; it will therefore require considerable to make them comfortable for the winter, and we cannot get credit for the most trifling article without paying from 15 to 20 Per cent. more than the same article could be purchased for with Cash. I have the honour to be, with greatest respect, Sir Your Obedient Servant

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 91 (M125, Roll No. 40).

1. The names of 57 enlisted men are enrolled on two separate lists, the first bearing the signature of the Portsmouth Station's purser, Nathaniel Lyde, and the second that of *Adams's* purser, William S. Rogers.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull }  
 Portsmouth N.H. }

Navy Department  
 Novr. 10th. 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 2nd. instant, and am sensible the service must be suffering from the want of funds to meet the public engagements, but I am particularly distressed at the effects which you describe in respect to the Seamen whose terms have expired, and who, it seems, have sold their pay tickets at from Thirty to fifty  $\phi$ cent discount.— Would it not be better to withhold their accounts from them, whenever it may be practicable without injustice, for a short time, rather than suffer so great a fraud to take place?—

The state of the Treasury and the suspension of specie payments by the Banks & the consequent impossibility of transmitting the public monies from place to place, have put it out of my power to place the Agents in funds in due time.— Arrangements are however in train and I trust in a short time, I shall be enabled to remit as usual.— In the meantime this state of things has cost me excessive anxiety.— I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 229–30 (M441, Roll No. 1).

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 25th Nov. 1814

Sir,

There is a number of men on this Station that were recruited for six months and one year whose terms of service have nearly expired. These men are from the neighboring towns, and have families to provide for;— to discharge them without Paying them would be hard indeed, and as Treasury notes cannot be passed without a loss of 20 Per cent; to pay them off therefore in these notes would be subjecting them to a loss that they cannot afford to bear. May I therefore request that some arrangement may be made as early as possible to enable me to pay them the small sums that remain due them, without their being subject to a deduction from their pay. I have discharged several of the acting Masters & Master's Mates, and paid them in Treasury notes as they can better bear the loss than the Seamen. The establishment will be reduced, and the expences made much less by discharging still more of the officers and such of the men as have only one or two months to stay as their services are not now wanting and they will leave us before the Spring. The moment I am enabled to pay them I shall discharge as many as the establishment will allow of. I have the honour to be with great respect Sir, Your Ob. Servt.

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 45 (M125, Roll No. 41).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull }  
Portsmouth N H }

Navy Department  
Decr. 1st. 1814

Sir,

I have your letter of the 25th. before me, and very much regret my inability to place funds in the hands of the Agent for the purpose you mention; but I trust

the difficulty will ere long be removed— No effort has been wanting on the part of this Department, but the delay has been inevitable. I am very respectfully &c.

W. Jones—

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 243 (M441, Roll No. 1).

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 3d Dec. 1814

Sir,

I have the honour to enclose you a list of the officers Seamen, Ordinary Seamen, Marines & boys transferred from the late frigate *Adams* to the Frigate *Congress*.<sup>1</sup> Many of these men are in the Hospital and will not be able to proceed to sea in the Ship; the term of service of many others is about to expire; indeed all of them will have Served two years from the time they Signed the articles by the last of January next, but if they were Shipped for two years from the time the ship sailed on a cruise there terms will not be out until March next.

The term of service of many of the men belonging to the Yard and Gun boats has nearly expired, and there are many that have from two to three months to serve, that might now be discharged, and the expence of the establishment made much less. If they stay until their times are out, the Season is now such that they will be but of little use to us, and before the Spring opens they must be discharged. If it is possible to have funds sent on for the discharge of these men, it would be a great relief to those who have families to support and much would be saved to the Government. I need not inform you the distress the families of these poor men experience, by our not being able to pay them, particularly those that have left to their wives half pay allotments. The Agents have for a long time refused to pay them and as we have not been able to make advances to that description of men their families are left destitute. It would indeed be of the first importance to pay these men, and the Carpenters who have been at work these three months past, if it could possibly be done. Many of them have left us to travel from sixty to one hundred miles without a dollar to pay their way. I have myself advanced to them Three hundred Dollars ~~in paying to~~ each five & ten Dollars to pay their expences home, and you will readily conceive the feelings of these men when they are informed that they must be discharged, and return to their families without taking with them the means of providing for a long winter. I have the honor to be, Very respectfully Sir, Your Obt. Servant

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 79 (M125, Roll No. 41).

1. There are 207 names enrolled on this list, which is signed by *Adams's* purser, William S. Rogers.

## CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Navy Yard  
Portsmouth 17th Feby. 1815

Sir,

I have the honour to forward you a list<sup>1</sup> of the Officers, Seamen, Ordinary Seamen and Boys attached to this Station under my command, by which you will be informed that the term of Service of a great number of them expires in this month, and nearly the whole of them will be entitled to their discharge in all the month of March.

As these men are from Salem & marblehead and most of them have large families that are in great want even of the necessaries of life, on account of the Agent's not having it in his power to pay them their monthly allotments, I cannot urge in too strong terms the necessity of having funds sent on to pay them as their times expire—

The men lately discharged from the *Congress* have many of them sold their accounts for fifty to seventy five Per cent discount; others are paying their board and waiting in hopes to get the amount due them.

As you are well acquainted with the characters and habits of the Seamen from Marblehead, and well know how much the Navy is indebted to that little town for steady good men, I am sure you will pardon me for taking such an interest in their behalf.

I should be much pleased to be informed as early as may be, your wishes relative to this establishment how far I am to proceed with the outfits of the Ship *Washington* &c. &c. I have the honour to be, with great respect Sir, Your Obedient Servant

Isaac Hull

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 132 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Enclosure not found.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

Capt. Isaac Hull  
comm'g Naval Officer }  
Portsmouth (NH)

Navy Department  
Feb 24th. 1815

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 17th. current enclosing a list of the Officers & men attached to the station under your command: since the date of your letter remittances have been made to the Navy Agent<sup>1</sup> sufficient to pay the men off as their time expires—and you will endeavour to reenter as many of them as shall be disposed for the service.—

You will please to proceed in the completing & equipping the U.S. Ship *Washington*, and prepare her for service soon as possible—the Guns will be sent on by water as soon as the navigation shall be free.— I am respectfully &c.

B W Crowninshield

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 296 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Henry S. Langdon.

## One Final Chance for Victory's Laurels: John Rodgers Prepares *Guerriere* for Sea

*In his last month in office as Secretary of the Navy, William Jones issued orders that contemplated sending 16 U.S. warships to sea in active cruising operations against the enemy's commerce.<sup>1</sup> These instructions, had they been successfully executed, would have positioned Navy cruisers in waters around the globe, including the West Indies, the eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Java and China Seas. In the event, only three ships—Constitution, Hornet, and Peacock—managed to realize Secretary Jones's ambitious vision. With the exception of President, which was captured attempting to break the British blockade, the other planned cruises never got underway, being collectively undone by a lack of money and manpower.<sup>2</sup>*

*The newly constructed frigate Guerriere, commanded by Commodore John Rodgers, fell into this latter category. Although the frigate was launched on 20 June 1814, work on it was disrupted by the recall of Rodgers and his crew to Washington in late August to repel the British invasion of the Chesapeake. By mid-November, when planning for his cruise was underway, Rodgers anticipated having Guerriere prepared for sea before Christmas. But chronic shortages in men and moneys ultimately kept Rodgers port-bound, denying him one final chance at combat victory. Though his was a cruise not taken, Rodgers's experience is illustrative of the larger fiscal and manning crisis that, by war's end, had severely eroded the Navy's operational capabilities.*

1. The 16 included the frigates President, Constitution, Congress, and Guerriere; the sloops of war Hornet and Peacock; and the ten schooners intended for a flying squadron commanded by David Porter and Oliver H. Perry.

2. For documents relating to the cruises of Constitution, Hornet, and Peacock, and the capture of President, see pp. 357–83, 734–49, 717–33, and 693–711, respectively.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Commodore John Rodgers  
Philadelphia

Navy Department  
Novemr. 6th. 1814.—

Sir

With a view to the departure of the U S Ship *Guerriere* under your command, on a cruize, as soon as she can be prepared, you will please to communicate to me your ideas of a Cruize adapted to the Season and to the circumstances of the

War, and with a particular view to the greatest possible annoyance of the trade, and destruction of the property of the enemy.—

The tempestuous weather in the northern Oceans, particularly near the English and Irish Channels, in the Winter Season, forbids a Cruize in that quarter I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servant

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, p. 205 (T829, Roll No. 453).

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Phila. Novr. 14th. 1814

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 6th. Inst. and in compliance with its purport beg leave to say that I should suppose, with such a Frigate as the *Guerriere* and a fast sailing small Vessel or two, or even singly, the Enemy's trade during the Winter Season might be injured to the greatest extent with the least probable risk in a track between the Rock of Lisbon and Cape St Vincents and from the latter place to Cape Spartel, keeping in such directions between these places as to intercept the Enemys whole trade as well to and from Lisbon and Cadiz as to and from the Mediterranean. I am the more inclined to believe that this would be a good position for such force as we are aware of the Enemy's Commerce being very considerable with those places at all seasons of the year, added to which it is no small consideration that this is a part of the Atlantic where he has received little or no annoyance either from our public or private cruisers since the commencement of the War.

Equal if not preferable to this, is a situation between Jamaica and Porto Bello and the River Chagris on the Spanish Main where the Enemy has since the War carried on a very extensive and lucrative trade with the Spaniards without interruption, as I have it from good authority that every 60 to 90 days a convoy from 6 to 12 vessels (laden with dry Goods principally on British account, but under the Spanish Flag) sails from Kingston to these Ports; and that the principal returns, which never amount to less than half a Million of Dollars, and frequently more than double that sum, are made in specie and transported to Jamaica by the Men of War which are charged with the protection of this Trade. I understand the manner of conducting this part of the business is that the Convoy after calling at Porto Bello proceeds to the River Chagris where the Goods are landed and sent over to Panama by Land— The Men of War after seeing the Convoy to Cagris, remain about it and Porto Bello 8 or 10 days to give time at these places for the collection of the sums due for the cargoes of the Vessels of the preceding Convoy which after receiving, they proceed back to Kingston with.—

If the Government has it in contemplation to retaliate in kind for the devastating Warfare which the Enemy is now carrying on, such a Force, I presume might without any extraordinary risk make a cruise among the West India Islands and destroy the Towns of Nevis and Basstere, the former in the Island of the same name and the latter in St. Kitts.—



At present my most predominant propensity is to annoy and injure the Enemy: consequently should be glad to undertake a cruize which has for its object either of the three situations which I have mentioned.—

In the event of a cruise off Cape St Vincents if I should presume there would not at present be much difficulty in getting into Breast, L'Orient or Rochefort, to replenish the articles of Water and Provisions— if however it is intended that the vessels shall return to the U. States for this purpose, returning by the Route of Madeira and the other Canary Islands, down the trades to the Latd. of Cayenne and from thence to windward of Barbadoes, I conceive would afford the greatest probable scope for falling in with the Enemy's commerce.—

I am sorry to say that the *Guerriere* is not so near being Equiped as I had anticipated, for owing to the Navy Agent not being possessed of funds for the last six Weeks past not so many Mechanics have been employed as otherwise would have been— added to which I regret to observe that the Public Credit has been at such a stand during that time as to have produced considerable delay for want of Iron to complete the Iron Work and which, those who furnished it heretofore refused to do because the Agent was about 3,000\$ in arrears to them—

She can however be got ready for sea in five Weeks provided the Agent is possessed of the means and instructed to furnish the articles required by the Requisition as soon as possible.— With great respect I have the honor to be Sir, Yr. Obt. Servt.

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 130 (M125, Roll No. 40).

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Navy Department,  
November 30th. 1814.

Sir,

In the hope that the *Guerriere* may get to sea before the navigation of the Delaware shall be closed by the ice, you will endeavour to accomplish that object, by all the means in your power.

As the basis of the cruise you are to perform, you will adopt either, or parts of either, of the plans proposed in your letter of the 14th., in answer to mine of the 6th. instant, and continuing your cruise, as long as your original supplies, and acquired resources may admit, you will finally return to New York, in preference to any other port.

You are authorized to purchase, through the Agent, and attach to your command, a fast sailing Schooner, or Brig, of from 200 to 250 tons, which you will arm, with one or two pivot Guns, and ten or twelve carronades or Gunnades, of which there is a set of 18 pounders in Baltimore, which you are hereby authorized to require. The purchase must be made, payable in three months, as provision will be made for the appropriation by that time.—

I know that you are sufficiently impressed with the importance of destroying all captures, instead of attempting to send them into port, as the most effectual

means of annoying and distressing the commerce of the enemy.— There may be some exceptions to this rule, which your own judgment will correctly regulate; and you are also apprized of the value of prisoners, landed in the United States, in order to compel the exchange of our gallant seamen, whom the enemy desires to immure in his loathsome prisons during the War.

The Government of the United States, always alive to the principles of civilization and of humanity, from which it cannot be driven, by the barbarous atrocities committed, on our defenceless towns, and villages, abhors the example set by the enemy, and desires nothing more than a vigorous, enterprising warfare, regulated by the settled principles and practice of Nations, who are governed by public law, and morality, instead of envy, hatred, and cupidity.

On the eve of your departure, you will forward to this Department a correct Muster Roll of all the Officers and persons under your command. Wishing you a prosperous and honourable cruise, I am, respectfully, Your Obt. Servt.

W Jones

Commodore John Rodgers  
U.S. Ship *Guerriere*  
Philada.

LS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers. MSS38125, Box III:23.

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

Phila. Decr. 10th. 1814

Sir

On the 30th Ult, the late Secretary of the Navy issued an order to purchase a fast Sailing Vessel of 200 or 250 Tons to accompany the *Guerriere* in the Cruise which he at the same time assigned me.— The *Guerriere* I flatter myself, will be ready in three weeks or by the last of this month, but there is no Vessel here of the discription he mentions for sale.— I give you this information in order that you may determine whether or not it might be expedient to order in the place of such Vessel, one of the Sloops of War to accompany me.— With great respect I have the honor to be Sir, Yr Obt servt

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 91 (M125, Roll No. 41).

ACTING SECRETARY OF THE NAVY HOMANS TO  
COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Navy Department  
Decemr. 14th. 1814.

Sir

It is peculiarly unfortunate in point of time, that you cannot procure at Philadelphia, a suitable Vessel to be placed under your Command in Company with the frigate *Guerriere*, on the intended Cruise.— The alternative is the more difficult, as there is no U S Vessel in Port, to be substituted for the one in view. the *Hornet* and *Peacock* have both received Sailing orders for a Cruise under Commodore Decatur, the object of which cannot be accomplished with a less Command; had the U S Ship *Wasp* arrived, the difficulty would be removed.—

If a proper Vessel can be purchased in New York within the limits of the Law, authorizing the Navy Department to procure or build twenty Vessels, of not more than Sixteen Guns, it may be worth your attention to ascertain the immediate prospect of getting such an one, in time to join you, the authority to purchase being still vested in you.

The *Epervier* is fitting for sea at Savannah, but cannot be repaired and equipped in time to join your Command.—

In these circumstances, your own good judgement must decide assuring you of the most perfect confidence therein, I have no doubt of the approbation and sanction of the President of the U S to such measures as you may adopt for the good of the service I am very respectfully Your Obedient Servant

Benjamin Homans  
Acting Secretary of the Navy

Commodore John Rodgers  
U S frigate *Guerriere*  
Philadelphia

LS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers. MSS38125, Box III:23.

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO  
ACTING SECRETARY OF THE NAVY HOMANS

U,S, Frigate *Guerriere*  
Phia Decemb 20th. 1814

Sir

I have received yr letter of the 14th. Inst.— It would be gratifying to me to have the accompaniment of a small Vessel on my next cruise, and particularly of one commanded by an officer of so much zeal as I know Lieut. Nicholson to be, did not my own reflections but too forcibly tell me that such a vessel as the one authorised to be purchased by the late secretary's letter is of a class which I ought not to view in any other light than as calculated to diminish the respectability of

the service, by destroying that Esprit de Corps and high discipline, for which it now is conspicuous

In fine Sir, I have no confidence in the Kind of Vessels authorised to be equipped by the late act of Congress; not so much however on account of the vessels themselves, as of the want of skill in a large portion of officers who (in the present state of the service) must necessarily be appointed to them; as well as of the terms (if I am correctly informed) on which their crews are to be shipped

The employment of four or five such vessels, at a moment like the present, with officers particularly selected for the occasion might be attended with benefit to ourselves and injury to the Enemy;— but it will be found, and to our cost I fear, that ere the lapse of twelve months, the present policy is a mistaken one;— and that altho we may annoy the enemies trade to some extent, that in the end we shall nevertheless be found the greatest sufferers; and of this opinion I am not the only individual in the service

From what I have heard I expect the vessel to which the accompanying papers relate is as fit, if not fitter for the service than any (since the selection of Capt porter) that can be procured at N York; I therefore at present only wait your further instructions, & in the event of purchase shall immediately give Lieut. Nicholson orders to commence her equipment— should it not be deemed expedient to purchase her I shall not be disappointed

I hope I may not be thought presumtuous in giving my opinion, unsolicited, thus freely as I assure you that whether correct or otherwise I am actuated by motives having for their object the good of the service alone With great respect I have the honor to be Sir Yr. Ob. Svt.

Jn° Rodgers

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 125 (M125, Roll No. 41).

ACTING SECRETARY OF THE NAVY HOMANS TO  
COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Navy Department  
Decemr. 24th. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to reply to your letter of the 20th. current, covering proposals & indents relative to the Brig *Escape*.—

If Messrs. Savage & Dugan will accept of twenty thousand Dollars in Treasury Notes (as a preliminary). which is the only payment at present in the power of the Department to make, You will please to have the Vessel & Materials examined by Lieutenant Nicholson or by other competent judges, and if approved, and the Construction & capacity of the Vessel shall be found adequate to the service in which she is to be employed— You will then, Sir, make the purchase; you will of course consider the probability of equipping & manning this Vessel for Sea in time to join you, and certainly not to cause any delay in the departure of the *Guerriere*, of this you will be the sole judge, as well as of the qualities of the Vessel for the purposes originally suggested by you.— of these qualities, fleetness of Sailing

is the most important; as a Vessel not able to keep Company with the *Guerriere* would be worse than useless. I am very respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

Benjamin Homans  
Acting Secretary of the Navy

Como. John Rodgers  
U.S. Ship *Guerriere*  
Philadelphia

LS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers. MSS38125, Box III:23.

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO  
ACTING SECRETARY OF THE NAVY HOMANS

U.S. Ship *Guerriere*  
Philada. Dec. 25. 1814

Sir

The *Guirriere* will be ready for sea, I presume about the 15th. of next month, but being still Sixty men short of her complement & little or no prospect of procuring them so long as the small vessels, (which are now giving Twenty Dolls. bounty to their men & shipping them only for Six months) continue to afford such advantages over the larger vessels.

I mention the above in the hope that you may deem it expedient to order my complement to be made up from the *John Adams*, the ships laid up at New London, or some other of the public vessels in ord'y.

Permit me to add Sir that I should be glad to have Lt. Mc.Cumber, now on Lake Ontario, as my Second Lieutenant, you will observe that two of my Lieutenants (Gamble and Newcomb) have been lately ordered to other vessels.

The warrant for Mid'n. Coulter, I have rec,d. and delivered the same to him,

I think the *Guirriere* will be the finest Frigate I ever saw— With great respect I have the honor to be Sir

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 137 (M125, Roll No. 41).

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO  
ACTING SECRETARY OF THE NAVY HOMANS

U.S. Frigate *Guerriere*  
Philada. Dec. 31st. 1814

Sir

I duly recd. your letter of the 24th. Inst. & should have replied to it ere this, had not the indecision of the owners of the Brig *Escape*, prevented me the opportunity.—

After adhering for three days to their original demands of \$21,000. they have at length, agreed to take \$20,000 in treasury notes.— The *Escape* (agreeably to your instructions) therefore now belongs to the U. States, & I shall tomorrow, give Lieutt. Nicholson, orders to fit her for sea, with all possible dispatch, in the hope that she may be ready in Four weeks from this date.

The late Secty. of the Navy informed me that there were a number of 18 lb. Gunnades or Carronades at Baltimore, which would answer for her armament; will you be pleased Sir, to order, Twelve of them to be sent to this place; I would prefer the Carronades if there are that number of them; Three waggons will carry the whole, as they only weigh 900 lbs each; These, with one 32 Poundr. on a pivot, (several of which are in the Navy Yard here) will make her a formidable vessel of her class.—

Forty seamen & Forty ordy. men, with Three Junior Lieutts., One Sailing master, Two masters mates, Four Midshipmen, One Surgeons mate, One Boatswain, One Gunner, One Carpenter, Two Quarter masters, Three Quarter Gunners, One master at arms, & One Ships steward, will be a sufficient Crew for this vessel, & I will thank you Sir, to inform me as early as possible, on what terms her Crew are to be shipped.

Of the Officers, I can furnish from this Ship, the Four Midshipmen, as I have as many as Six, more than my Complement, & I will attach Lieutt. Odenheimer to her, provided it meets your approbation, as I find he is Junior by warrant to Midn. Salters, & Stringham of this Ship, added to which, his warrant as Midn. is of the same date as of some others, among whom is Midn. Stockton that in October last I interceded with the late Secty., to make one of my Junior Lieutts., & this too— on no other account than, for reason that I consider him a young man, of by far more than ordinary promise.

Mr. Odenheimer appears sensible of the delicate situation in which he would be placed, by being appointed to command many of the young men whom I have mentioned, & for this reason, informs me, that he would be satisfied to be attached to the command of Lt. Nicholson.

This vessel affords an opportunity of appointing Mid'n. Salters & Stockton, actg. Lieutts., & I hope Sir, that it may not be found necessary to appoint others from a different station in preference, particularly to Stockton, to whom I know no young man in the service, that I would prefer as an actg. Lieutt.

In answer to your letter of the 27th. Inst. respecting Lieutt. Odenheimer, permit me to say that he had my sanction for applying to you to be ordered to this Ship, I was not aware at the time however, that he was Junior by warrant, to the Mid'n. already mentioned With great Respect I am Sir—Your Ob't. Servt.

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

## Sailing Orders for U.S. Frigate *President*

By November 1814, events had rendered Secretary of the Navy Jones's 29 June sailing orders for U.S. frigate *President*,<sup>1</sup> which Jones had suspended on 6 August, moot. With the British army under Sir George Prevost withdrawn back across the Canadian border and the threat of invasion from that quarter removed, and the British invasion of the Chesapeake ended, as well as the arrival of winter weather in the North Atlantic, it no longer served a useful purpose to have the frigate cruising off the Grand Banks to intercept British store ships and transports coming from Europe.

During the month of November, Jones and Commodore Stephen Decatur, *President*'s commander, exchanged ideas about what the warship's new assignment should be. Those ideas shared a common characteristic. Both men would send the frigate into waters far from the seat of war, regions in which British seaborne commerce would be vulnerable, attack unexpected, and the likelihood of encountering British warships diminished. In the course of the month, the cruise of a frigate became the cruise of a squadron and the composition of the squadron altered. To ensure sufficient provisions for an extended commerce-destroying cruise in distant seas, Decatur proposed an innovative solution, which, in modified form, Jones incorporated in the orders he issued as the month drew to a close.

1. See Jones to Commodore Stephen Decatur, 29 June 1814, pp. 386–87.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Commodore Stephen Decatur }  
New York }

Navy Department  
Novemr 8th. 1814.

Sir

With a view to the departure of the US Ship *President*, under your command, on a Cruize in all the present Month, you will please communicate to us your ideas of a Cruize adapted to the Season, and circumstances of the war, and with a particular view to the greatest possible annoyance, and destruction of the enemy's trade

You will please hand to Captain Warrington, the enclosed sailing orders,<sup>1</sup> of which also, I wish to know your opinion. The tempestuous weather in the northern Ocean, particularly near the English and Irish Channels in the winter season, forbids a Cruize in that quarter. I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servant

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, p. 206 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. For Lewis Warrington's sailing orders, see Jones to Warrington, 8 November 1814, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 206–7.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Stephen Decatur Esqr.  
 Commanding Naval Officer  
 New York

Navy Department  
 Novemr. 17th. 1814.—

Sir

On the 8th instant, I asked you to communicate to me your ideas of a Cruise for the United States Ship *President*, under your command.—

I will now suggest to you that plan, from which, I think you would derive more honour and advantage, and your Country more reputation, than any other that has occurred to my mind, after much reflection, aided by a pretty intimate knowledge of the Navigation of those Seas, in which it is proposed to cruise, and of the trade, resource and force of the enemy in that quarter. I contemplate to place under your command the United States Ships *President* and *Constitution*, now ready for Sea, and a smart Schooner or Brig, to proceed, without delay, upon a Cruise in the China and Java Seas.—

Captain Stewart might be instructed to proceed, with all possible dispatch, to the Island of Tristan da Cuna, where the Squadron would rendezvous, replenish its water, and procure some refreshments; thence proceed for the Straits of Sunda, by the passage between Madagascar and the Isle of Bourbon, into the little or NW Monsoon, which would greatly shorten your passage to the Straits of Sunda, through which you would pass, with a fresh Northwester, keeping on the Sumatra side, and through the Straits of Gaspar, to Pulo Aore and Pulo Condore, (where you may procure refreshments;) between which and the Islands of Sapata and Pulo Cicer de Mere, you would intercept all the trade from and to China.—<sup>1</sup>

Here you would obtain information, by your frequent Captures of Country Ships, of the time the East India Company's fleet would sail from China, and of the force of the enemy in those Seas; by which you would determine, whether to continue cruising between the mouth of the Straits of Singapore, and the South Coast of Cochin China, until the change of the Monsoon; or to proceed, through the China Sea, along the Coast of Cochin China to Macow.—

In the latter case, the enemy would take the alarm, and your efforts might be reduced to a mere Blockade; but in the positions first mentioned, you could not fail to intercept nearly the whole of the immensely valuable trade of the enemy, as well that of the E I. Company,<sup>2</sup> as of the Country trade.—

For your information I enclose a private letter, I have just received from Canton,<sup>3</sup> which will convey to you some idea of the importance of the object, and of the facility with which a great blow might have been, and still in all probability, may be struck, by the Capture of the whole China fleet. Were it not for the alarm it would give, at so early a period, you might look into Batavia Roads, on your way through the Java Sea, and capture everything there, which would probably be to an immense amount, collected from the Moluccas and elsewhere.

The Coast of Cochin China is full of fine Harbours, where abundance of Rice, Sugar, and refreshments of all kinds may be readily obtained, together with Cordage, Masts, Spars, Naval Stores &c.— I have a manuscript translation of the hydrographic account of the Coast and Harbours of Cochin China, and of its trade and



resources, by Monsieur D'Ayot, who commanded a Squadron in the service of the King of Cochin China, during five years;<sup>4</sup>— this I shall have copied for you.—

As it will be a Cruise of time and vast importance, I have deemed it expedient, to give you previous notice, with a view to your personal convenience; but as I shall resign the office, which I have now the honor to hold, on the first of the ensuing month, you will please to signify to me, by return of mail, whether the Command will be acceptable to you; in order that I may make the necessary arrangements while I remain in office. I am very respectfully Your Obedt. Servant

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 210–12 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. Lying between Belitung and Bangka Islands, Indonesia, Gaspar Strait connects the Java Sea and the South China Sea. Pulo Aur (or Aur Island) is an island near the eastern entrance to the Strait of Malacca. Pulo Condore is the English name for Côn Sơn, Vietnam, an island off Vietnam's south coast, south of the Mekong Delta. Pulo Zapata and Pulo Cesir de Mer are islands lying east of the Mekong Delta, northeast of Côn Sơn.

2. That is, the East India Company.

3. Not found.

4. Jean-Baptiste-Marie Dayot, *lieutenant de vaisseau auxiliaire* in the French Navy, was among the French adventurers who helped Nguyễn Ánh (later Emperor Gia Long) establish the Nguyễn Dynasty in Vietnam after the Tây Sơn rebellion. Dayot served Nguyễn Ánh from 1790 to 1795, organizing his naval force and fighting in several naval battles. With his brother, Félix, Dayot produced numerous hydrographic charts of the Vietnamese coast, many of which would be published by the French *Dépôt des cartes et plans de la marine* in *Neptune du Grand Océan et de l'archipel d'Asie* in 1817. André Salles, *Un Mandarin Breton au service du roi de Cochinchine* (Rennes: Portes du large, and Biscarosse: Nouvelle Association des Amis du Vieux Hué, 2006), pp. 199–200; Georges Taboulet, *La Geste française en Indochine: Histoire par les textes de la France en Indochine des origines à 1914*, 2 vols. (Paris: Adrien-Maieuve, 1955), 1, pp. 249–50.

## COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New York 17 Novemr. 1814

Sir

In conformity to your wishes I have examined the instructions to Capn. Warrington.<sup>1</sup> The cruise you have designed for the *Peacock* is one in my opinion which cannot fail to be very destructive to the commerce of the Enemy. The entrance and exit through the Gut,<sup>2</sup> will require great prudence and judgment, both of which I think Capn. Warrington possesses. The numerous harbours into which the *Peacock* can enter, will afford her great security against a superior force.—

Two cruizes have presented themselves to me, either of which being promising, I should like to execute.— First. As it is now too late in the season to expect that any troop or transport ships of the Enemy will be bound either to Quebec or Halifax, I propose to lay to the Eastward of Bermuda in a situation to intercept such of the Enemy as may be bound there, or to England, from the Westward Islands. From thence Keeping the track of the outward bound vessels to Madeira— thence coasting it all along Spain, Portugal, & France, to Ushant; and thence in the same manner back again to the Gut of Gibraltar, from whence, if from information it shall be deemed adviseable, to push into the Mediterranean.—

The other cruize I would suggest with a view to destroy the most valuable part of the Enemy's trade, and some of their cruizers is to dash at once into the Bay of Bengal. The only objection to this cruize, would be the possibility of not being able to procure a sufficiency of provisions; but I think with what we could procure from captures, we could make out to get to some port in the Brazils, where we could replenish. The difficulty would be obviated entirely by sending one of the Schooners at present in the contemplation of the Government, as a Tender to the *President*, having but few men and loaded with provisions.—

I suggest both these plans to you, as embracing a cruize, in either of which I think the *President* might be employed to the great detriment of the Enemy.

They are submitted to you, with a wish that you will give the subject an early consideration, & favor me with the necessary instructions.—

In any case, it may be well to leave much to depend upon intelligence received at Sea, which is frequently of a nature sufficiently important to make a departure from any given course, expedient and proper. I request particularly to be informed in which character I am to consider the Algerines at Sea?<sup>3</sup> With great Respect Yr. Ob Servt

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 2 (M125, Roll No. 41).

1. For Lewis Warrington's sailing orders, see Jones to Warrington, 8 November 1814, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 206–7.

2. That is, the Strait of Gibraltar.

3. Hoping to profit from the United States' hostilities with the United Kingdom, the dey of Algiers authorized attacks on American seaborne commerce in the summer of 1812. However, owing to the interruption of trade caused by the War of 1812, Algerine cruisers captured only one American merchantman during this period, the brig *Edwin* out of Salem, Massachusetts.

#### COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New York 18 Nov 1814

Sir.

I have given the subject of the *Presidents* cruise much reflection and have finally made up my mind in favor of the second plan propos'd to you in mine of yesterday.—

Every view in which the subject presents itself, satisfies me that a cruise in the Bay of Bengal, along the coast of Sumatra & in the Streights of Malacca would turn to the greatest advantage.

You are better acquainted with that coast, and have better information of the value & course of the Enemy's coasting & regular trade in that quarter than I have, but all I have convers'd with, who have had opportunities of knowing well, assure me of the immense importance of the commerce of those Seas.—

And as it has not been disturbed by any of our cruizers this war, it is not likely the *President* will find it protected by any Superior force.—

The difficulty suggested with respect to provisions, can be no longer in the way, if the Government approve of the cruise – a fast sailing vessel, can be obtained here to take provisions for that purpose, at the ordinary peace freights.—

The Officers & crew of the Ship, will engage such a vessel, if the Government will allow a reasonable compensation for the Cargo, carried out for the Ships use.-

The object of the present is to suggest this plan to you, and to ask what freight in such a case the Govt. are willing to allow for whatever the Tender may carry, for the use of the Ship.—

An early answer, by return mail if possible, is important. Respectfully, Yr Ob St

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 10 (M125, Roll No. 41).

COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New York Novr. 23d. 1814

Sir,

I have been honored with your communication of the 17. & its enclosing the projected cruise therein contained, cannot fail (barring accident) in my opinion of producing all the effects that the government could wish.— You will perceive Sir, from my communication to you on the same subject, that such a cruise would be highly gratifying to me, subject however to such deviation, as circumstances might justify; for instance after forming a junction at the point proposed, if it should be about the period that the China fleet is expected to pass the Cape of Good Hope I should think it adviseable to cruise off that cape a short time, in the hope of intercepting them.— I communicated to you a manner in which we could be sure of obtaining a supply of provisions, I beg to know as early as possible your decision on that head, If you will grant a reasonable freight, as I have before stated, the officers & crew of the ship will fit out a suitable vessel to cruise as a privateer, after the delivery of her cargo— I have the honor to be your obt. St.

Stephen Decatur

P.S. I very much regret to learn that you have determined to retire from the department. I cannot help thinking that the permanency of the establishment depends upon the judicious management of it for the next few years.

S Dr.

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 30 (M125, Roll No. 41).

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Commodore Stephen Decatur }  
 Commanding Naval Officer }  
 New York }

Navy Department  
 23d Novr. 1814

Sir,

In my letter of the 17th. Inst. communicating the project of a Cruise in the China Seas for the squadron under your command I proposed that the U.S. Ship *Constitution* Capt. Stewart should join you at Tristran da Cuna but as the *Hornet* has fortunately reached New York,<sup>1</sup> I propose to substitute that vessel and the *Peacock* in lieu of the *Constitution*, which I believe in all respects will answer a better purpose and avoid the uncertainty of meeting at a distant rendezvous.—

To these I would add a fast sailing Brig or Schooner with a light armament as a store vessel to carry almost exclusively salted provisions, which will be the only want to be apprehended in those Seas—

You may therefore make your arrangements accordingly, and engage a suitable vessel as a store Ship which may be converted into a Cruizer in the progress of your expedition.— Let me hear from you by the return mail on this subject<sup>2</sup> I am respectfully Your Ob Sert.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, p. 213 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. After overseeing the dismantling of *United States* and *Macedonian* in the Thames River above New London, Connecticut, Master Commandant James Biddle brought U.S. sloop of war *Hornet* through the British blockade to New York.

2. In his response, Decatur stated his preference for attaching *Peacock* and *Hornet*, rather than *Constitution*, to his squadron. Decatur to Jones, 27 November 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 49 (M125, Roll No. 41).

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Commodore Stephen Decatur }  
 U.S. Ship *President* }  
 New York }

Navy Department  
 November 29th 1814

Sir,

With the United States Ships *President*, *Peacock* and *Hornet*, and the Brig or Schooner which you are authorized to procure as a light armed Store Ship under your command<sup>1</sup>; you will as soon as possible proceed upon a Cruize in the Java and China Seas; according to the general outline contained in my letter to you of the 17th. Inst.

And in the event of any occurrences which shall in your judgment, render a modification or qualified deviation, from the plan proposed assential to the public interest, you will exercise a sound discretion, adhering as near as may be to the spirit and intention of the original design.—

As the great object of the enterprize, is, the annoyance & destruction of the commerce of the enemy you will hazard as little as possible, the capture of any part of your crew, by manning of prizes, unless in the vicinity of friendly ports, with a clear prospect of safe arrival, and of recovering your men in a reasonable time.—

The continuance of your Cruise must depend upon circumstances, which cannot now be anticipated and will be regulated according to your best judgment as well as the route which you may pursue when you determine to return home.

There is however one object, which you may possibly embrace with facility, and with vast advantages to our territorial and commercial interests, I mean the recapture of our Post and settlement at the mouth of Columbia river, on the N.W. Coast of America, now in possession of the enemy.—

This you might accomplish, by taking that route, and returning home round Cape Horn. You would probably find at that place a large collection of Sea Otter Skins and other valuable furs.— It would be of great importance to the United States to be in possession of that settlement at the period when peace shall take place.— Perhaps it may be well to have a confidential conversation with John Jacob Astor Esq. of New York, on this subject, before your departure.—<sup>2</sup>

I would recommend to you, to engage two good Blacksmiths with their tools and implements, the material for a forge to be created on board, an [d] an assortment of Iron and Steel.—

These with your Carpenters would render you superior to any ordinary casualty.—

Be pleased to forward to the Department, a correct Muster Roll of the Crews of the vessels under your command, on the eve of your departure; which I would advise you by all means to hasten lest some event should occur, to defeat the project.—

Wishing you a prosperous and honorable cruise— I am very respectfully Your  
Obd. Sert

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 216–17 (T829, Roll No. 453).

1. Decatur would have the merchant schooner *Tom Bowline* purchased at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. It joined his squadron at New York as a store ship, with Acting Sailing Master John Carlton in command.

2. Jones's plan to send U.S. frigate *John Adams* to support Fort Astoria, John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Trading Company post on the Columbia River in Oregon Territory, in 1813, had come to naught when the warship's crew was sent to man ships on Lake Ontario. Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 103–4 and 155–56. When the British warship *Raccoon* arrived in December 1813, ready to seize the fort for the king, its officers found the British North West Company in possession. The local agents of Astor's Pacific Fur Trading Company, being short of supplies and despairing of relief, had sold the fort.

## A Steam Frigate for the Delaware River

*On 9 March 1814, Congress appropriated \$500,000 for construction of one or more floating batteries especially designed "to repel, or destroy any" enemy ships approaching "the shores" or entering "the waters of the United States."<sup>1</sup> This legislation enabled the Navy Department to pursue the construction of its first steam-powered warship, or floating*

battery, Fulton I, launched on 29 October.<sup>2</sup> While the construction of Fulton I absorbed only one third of the funds appropriated for these unique ships, no further vessels of this kind could be built owing to the exhaustion of government funds and credit. Navy Secretary William Jones overcame this fiscal hurdle by obtaining loans to fund two additional floating steam batteries in exchange for government stock bearing 6 percent interest. In this way, he underwrote the cost of building a steam-powered warship for the city of Baltimore. Eager to see such a craft added to the naval forces defending his native city, Secretary Jones made a similar proposal to the General Committee for the Defence of Philadelphia, which that body quickly embraced. Plans to build this vessel were immediately abandoned with the restoration of Anglo-American peace in February 1815.

1. See "An Act authorizing the President of the United States to cause to be built, equipped and employed, one or more floating batteries for the defence of the waters of the United States," Statutes at Large, Vol. 3, p. 104.

2. For more on the construction and launch of Fulton I, see pp. 135–51.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO NAVY AGENT GEORGE HARRISON

Navy Department Nov 8. 1814

Sir,

The annexed is a copy of my letter of this day,<sup>1</sup> to the Committee of vigilance and Safety of the city of Baltimore in answer to an earnest application from that Committee for a steam floating Battery, such as the one just launched at New York, to be constructed and equipped at Baltimore.

My earnest solicitude for the Security of the Shores of the Delaware and of the City of Philadelphia in particular prompts me to offer the same means of protection to the wealth industry and population of that flourishing city, provided the conditions are Speedily accepted. There is not a moment to be lost and as the Sum appropriated will cover only one more Such Battery, you will make the overture through such channels as you may deem expedient and let me know the result without delay. Having examined the subject maturely, divested of its theoretic attractions, I am most perfectly satisfied of the Substantial advantages it has over every other Species of force for harbour defence, and particularly in the economy in Seamen of all others the most important to us. A single vessel of this kind, together with the defences and obstructions now I understand in operation at the Pea Patch would render the Delaware perfectly Secure & Supersede the immense expenditure loss and anxiety which the inhabitants of its shores must otherwise Sustain. I am, respectfully Your obt. Servt.

signed W Jones

George Harrison, Esqr.  
Navy Agent  
Philadelphia

LB, PHi, Philadelphia Committee of Defense Letter Books, Vol. 2, p. 84. For another printed version of this letter, see *Committee of Defence of Philadelphia*, pp. 266–67.

1. See Jones to Edward Johnson, 8 November 1814, which follows on p. 85 of the letter book. For a printed version, see *Committee of Defence of Philadelphia*, pp. 267–68.

REPORT TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF DEFENCE FOR PHILADELPHIA

Philada. November 18th. 1814 }  
 3½ o'clock P M— }

The Committee appointed on the letter from the Secretary of the Navy to the Navy Agent dated 8th. Novr. instant and by the latter communicated to the General Committee of defence,

Report,

That in their opinion the offer of the Secretary of the Navy causing the Sum of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to be appropriated for building a steam frigate for the defence of the river Delaware on condition of raising the money on the credit of the United States ought to be accepted and measures ought to be taken to build and equip the said frigate with all possible dispatch. The Committee in consequence of the urgent request of the Secretary to have an immediate answer, wrote to him on the 12th. instant—a copy of which letter is hereto annexed.

Philada. Novr. 12. 1814

Sir,

Your letter to the navy agent of the 8th. instant having been communicated to the General Committee of defence, last evening, it was referred to us to make report thereon at the next meeting, which will be on the 18th. inst.

As you had the goodness to offer the aid of your department in procuring a steam battery similar to the one lately constructed in New York, and are pleased to add “There is not a moment to be lost & the sum appropriated will cover only one more such battery” we are induced to inform you, that our determination is to report in favor of the proposition, and the General Committee will, no doubt, exert themselves to obtain the means, so that there may be no delay in carrying the plan into execution. We have the honor to be, &c.,

Signed James Josiah }  
 Henry Hawkins } Committee  
 Jona. Williams }

The Honorable }  
 William Jones, Secy. of the Navy }

. . . Resolved, that the Committee of defence of the Delaware and General Williams be a committee to enquire at what place and in what time a steam frigate can be built, and on what terms, and report.

Resolved, that this Committee accept the offer of the Secretary of the navy communicated to them by Mr. George Harrison, and will advance such sum of money, not exceeding one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, as may be necessary for the purpose of constructing a steam floating battery to be employed in the defence of the shores of the Delaware and the City of Philadelphia—the moneys to be reimbursed in such manner as may be agreed between the Secretary of the navy and the Committee,

Resolved, that the Committee of Correspondence be a Committee to communicate to the Secretary of the Navy the above resolution and to arrange with him the manner and terms of reimbursement.

LB, PHi, Philadelphia Committee of Defense Letter Books, Vol. 2, pp. 92–94. For another printed version of this report, see *Committee of Defence of Philadelphia*, pp. 276–78.

GEORGE LATIMER AND JOHN SERGEANT TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Philada. Novr. 19. 1814

Sir

We have the honor to enclose to you copies of two resolutions of the Committee of defence, on the Subject of a steam floating battery.<sup>1</sup>

You will perceive that the Committee have agreed to advance the Sum that may be necessary for this object as Soon as the terms of reimbursement shall be arranged, and have authorised us to make the arrangement. You will be good enough to inform us whether the arrangement is to be made with the Navy Department, or with the Treasury, and if with the former, which of the modes proposed in your letter to the Committee at Baltimore will be most acceptable.

We are desirous to have the matter arranged as soon as may be convenient, that there may be no delay in commencing the work, which the Committee concur with you in considering to be of very great importance We are respectfully Sir, your most ob.

signed Geo: Latimer } Committee of  
John Sergeant } Correspondence,

LB, PHi, Philadelphia Committee of Defense Letter Books, Vol. 2, pp. 99–100. For another printed version of this letter, see *Committee of Defence of Philadelphia*, pp. 284–85.

1. Resolutions passed at the 18 November meeting of the General Committee for the Defense of Philadelphia, printed above.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
GEORGE LATIMER AND JOHN SERGEANT

Geo. Latimer }  
& } Esqrs  
John Sergeant }  
Philadelphia }

Navy Department  
Novr. 23d 1814.

Sirs

Last evening I received your letter of the 19th Inst. covering Copies of two Resolutions, of the Committee of Defence, on the Subject of a Steam Floating



Battery— I am authorized by the Secretary of the Treasury to Say that he will accept the proposed Loan on the best terms for the lenders, which he may allow for the three million Loan now advertised— Should this proposition meet the approbation of the Committee; you will be pleased to place one hundred & fifty thousand dollars to the Credit of the Treasurer of the United States, for the purposes of this agreement, in order that I may without loss of time, give the necessary instructions for the Commencement of the work. I am very respectfully Your Ob. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 247–48 (M209, Roll No. 4).

GEORGE LATIMER, JOHN SERGEANT, AND JOSEPH REED TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Philada. Nov. 26. 1814.

Sir,

We have the honor to inclose to you copies of two resolutions adopted yesterday by the Committee of Defence. The money will be deposited in the Bank of Pennsylvania, in the course of a few days, to the credit of the Treasurer of the United States, when we shall take care to advise you, and to transmit the proper voucher to the Secretary of the Treasury,<sup>1</sup> We are, very respectfully Sir, Yr. Mo Obt.

Geo Latimer	} Commee.	
John Sergeant.		of
Jos: Reed		Correspondence.

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 32 (M124, Roll No. 67).

1. Alexander J. Dallas.

[Enclosure]

At a Meeting of the Committee of defence for the City of Philadelphia, &c.

Resolved, That the Treasurer of this Committee<sup>1</sup> be instructed to place the Sum of one hundred and fifty thousand Dollars in the Bank of Pennsylvania to the Credit of the Treasurer of the United States<sup>2</sup> upon the terms and for the purposes mentioned in the letter this day received from the Secretary of the Navy.

Resolved, That the Committee of Correspondence be instructed to forward a copy of the above resolution to the Secretary of the Navy, and inform him that the Money will be forthwith deposited in Bank.

extract from the minutes  
Cha Biddle  
Chairman

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 32, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 67). For another printed version of this letter, see *Committee of Defence of Philadelphia*, pp. 283–84.

1. George Latimer, appointed treasurer of the General Committee for the Defense of Philadelphia on 26 August 1814. See *Committee of Defence of Philadelphia*, p. 20.
2. Thomas T. Tucker.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
GEORGE LATIMER, JOHN SERGEANT, AND JOSEPH REED

Geo Latimer } Jno Sergeant } Joseph Reed }	Esqrs.	Navy Department Novr. 30th 1814
Committee of Correspondence for Comee. of Defence &c. Philadelphia		

Sirs

I have received your letter of the 26th Inst. covering two Resolutions of the Committee of Defence for the City of Philadelphia, directing the Treasurer of the Committee to place the sum of One hundred and fifty thousand dollars, in the Bank of Pennsylvania to the credit of the Treasurer of the United States, upon the terms & for the purposes mentioned in my letter to you, dated the 23d Inst. & have now the honour to enclose Copy of my Instructions of this day to George Harrison Esqr. Navy Agent in conformity with the agreement entered into with the Committee for the purposes stated in the aforesaid letter— I have the honor to be Very respectfully your Ob. Servt.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 250 (M209, Roll No. 4). For another printed version of this letter, see *Committee of the Defence of Philadelphia*, p. 296.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
NAVY AGENT GEORGE HARRISON

George Harrison Esqr. } Navy Agent } Philada. }	}	Navy Department Novr. 30th. 1814
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Sir,

The committee of defence for the city of Philadelphia have agreed with this Dep't. to loan to the United States One hundred & fifty thousand dollars, to be applied to the construction and equipment of a Steam floating Battery for the defence of the River Delaware, similar to that which has been recently constructed for the United States at the City of New York.—

You will therefore advise the Dep't. as soon as the sum shall have been so placed in any Bank in the City of Philada. in order that a warrant may be drawn in your favor for the amount and for the purposes aforesaid; and inviting to your and Manuel Eyre, Henry Hawkins & James Josiah Esqr. you will immediately enter into the necessary Contracts and engagements for materials & equipments, and for the building of a Steam floating Battery in all respects similar to that in New York called Fulton the first, built by Messr. Brown's and designed and superintended by Mr. Fulton; with whom it will be proper to enter into a correspondence in order to procure the necessary draughts, plans and instructions, as well for constructing the vessel as the Steam Engine and Machinery.— As every thing depends upon the correct construction and apportionment of the power to the body to be propelled, Mr. Fultons aid in this branch of the business will be indispensable.

The vessel may be built either in the Navy Yard by the builders of the Franklin, (whose Salary in that case must be paid out of this Special fund.) or elsewhere, as yourself and your colleagues shall deem most advantageous.— In respect to this object: time is very precious, and particularly as it respects the construction of the Engine & machinery.—

One of the Builders should proceed with a letter from you immediately to New York in order to procure the draughts, plans, & estimates for materials, and to examine critically and minutely the entire construction of the Fulton the first.— The best economy & management will be indispensable. otherwise the fund and the appropriation will fall short.— I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 241–42 (M441, Roll No. 1). For another printed version of this letter, see *Committee of the Defence of Philadelphia*, pp. 296–98.

## Efforts at Naval Reform

*Mismanagement and inefficiency in the administration of the Navy concerned Congress early in the war. In December 1812 and January 1813, succeeding chairs of the House naval committee requested reform ideas of several of the Navy's officers and the Secretary of the Navy.<sup>1</sup> As the war proceeded and congressional concern grew, Congress focused on four principal ideas for reforming the Navy: reorganizing the department; creating admirals; providing for naval rank by brevet; and establishing a naval school. In the process, Congress solicited the recommendations of the Secretary of the Navy as well as those of the service's top-ranking officers. The responses afford insight into the thinking of the Navy's civilian and uniformed leaders.*

*Of the four ideas for reforming the Navy, that of reorganizing the Department of the Navy was the only one that resulted in the passage of legislation during the War of 1812. In response to a Senate resolution of 18 March 1814 requiring the Secretary of the Navy to devise a system for the better organization of his department and to report at the commencement of the next session of Congress. On 15 November, William Jones submitted a draft bill for establishing a board of naval inspectors.<sup>2</sup> After the Senate had communicated this draft to the House, the House naval committee solicited the ideas of the Navy's captains on the*

Secretary of the Navy's proposal. Over the next four weeks, Captains Bainbridge, Stewart, Hull, Decatur, Evans, Morris, Shaw and Tingey replied, with Captains Perry, Porter, and Warrington concurring in Decatur's response.<sup>3</sup>

The majority of the captains shared the conviction that the board should consist of only three members, all of whom should be post captains. Several thought the naval officer with the greatest seniority should preside. A couple recommended that the Secretary of the Navy, himself, preside. Evans proposed clothing the board with the Secretary of the Navy's authority and abolishing that office. The consensus among the officers was that the act should not designate the division of responsibilities among the members, but leave that to the board itself to decide. Similarly, they agreed that the board should adopt its own rules and regulations for its procedures. Four of the respondents stated their concurrence in the value of a chief naval constructor; three stated that the appointment of a paymaster was unnecessary or premature; and one endorsed the appointment of a paymaster as beneficial. Stewart's response, perhaps the most original and reproduced below,<sup>4</sup> is the only one to comment on Jones's suggestion of registering and classing seamen for a potential naval draft.

In addition to his formal response to the plan for reorganizing the Department of the Navy submitted by the Secretary of the Navy, Stewart sent an outline of his own plan, with a cover letter containing explanations of the reasons behind some of his proposals.<sup>5</sup>

On 21 January 1815, the House passed a bill to establish a board of commissioners of the Navy, with provisions much less complex than those of Jones's draft bill. The Senate passed the bill with amendments on 4 February and, on the same day, the House concurred in the Senate's amendments. Three days later, President Madison signed the bill and it became law. The board, whose original membership consisted of Captains John Rodgers, Isaac Hull, and David Porter, with Rodgers, having the greatest seniority, in the chair, first convened in May.<sup>6</sup> The board would continue to advise and assist the Secretary until 1842, when a system of specialized bureaus and bureau chiefs replaced it.<sup>7</sup>

On 18 February 1814, the House of Representatives required its naval committee to inquire into the advisability of providing for the appointment of admirals. By 7 November, the Senate instructed its naval committee to look into the matter of appointing "naval officers above the grade of captain," and providing for the conferring of naval rank by brevet in consideration for meritorious service. A week later, responding to an inquiry from the Senate committee, Secretary of the Navy William Jones laid out his reasons for endorsing both the creation of rear admirals and providing for brevets in the Navy.<sup>8</sup> On 19 November, Captain Isaac Hull answered a similar inquiry from Congressman David Daggett with the following:

*It has long been my opinion that at least three Admirals ought to be made and that some arrangement ought to be made to prevent every Midshipman that has command of a Gunboat or separate Station taking on himself the name of Commodore. If the Government wish a grade between a Captain and an Admiral let them either do away the Commodores altogether and substitute Brevet rank, or give out commissions for Commodores and attach to that grade of Officers, pay and emoluments accordingly. . . . If we are to have a Navy (which I almost despair of) we ought to have Admirals<sup>9</sup>*

The Senate naval committee reported on 28 November, concurring with Jones's recommendation for rear admirals but rejecting the providing for naval rank by brevet as unnecessary: "It having been the practice of the Government to confer actual rank without regard to seniority, in reward of brilliant achievements or meritorious service." On 14 December, the Senate adopted a bill authorizing admirals and forwarded it to the House, where it died

with the end of the 13th Congress.<sup>10</sup> The Navy would see its first admirals only in the midst of the Civil War.

In his report on reorganizing the naval establishment, Jones advocated for a naval academy, a recommendation that Evans and Tingey endorsed. In contrast, Stewart believed, “the best school for the instruction of youth in the profession is the deck of a ship.” The idea of a naval academy made little progress in the 13th Congress. The Senate engaged its naval committee to investigate the expediency of a naval school on 5 January 1815 and relieved the committee of that task on 3 March.<sup>11</sup> Nearly 30 years would pass before the establishment of the United States Naval Academy.

1. See Lieutenant Charles Morris to Congressman Langdon Cheves, and Secretary of the Navy William Jones to Congressman Burwell Bassett, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 20–24 and 24–26.

2. *Annals of Congress*, 13th Cong., 2nd sess., 697; *Secretary of the Navy Jones to the President of the Senate*, 15 November 1814, below.

3. *Annals of Congress*, 13th Cong., 3rd sess., 1049–61.

4. *Captain Charles Stewart to Congressman William Reed*, 26 November 1814, below.

5. *Captain Charles Stewart: Plan for the Reorganization of the Navy Department*, and *Captain Charles Stewart to Congressman William Reed*, 27 November 1814, both below.

6. On John Rodgers’s appointment as president to the Navy Board of Commissioners, see pp. 752–60.

7. *Annals of Congress*, 13th Cong., 3rd sess., 1085, 1122–23; *An Act to alter and amend the several acts for establishing a Navy Department, by adding thereto a board of commissioners*, below.

8. U.S., *House Journal*, 1813, 13th Cong., 2nd sess., 18 February 1814; *Annals of Congress*, 13th Cong., 3rd sess., 324; *Secretary of the Navy Jones to Senator Charles Tait*, 15 November 1814, below.

9. NHi, *Isaac Hull Letter Books*, *Naval History Society Collection*, MS 439, Vol. 2.

10. *Annals of Congress*, 13th Cong., 3rd sess., 39, 113–15, 127; *A Bill to Authorize Appointment of Admirals in the United States Navy*.

11. *Ibid.*, 150, 293.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE<sup>1</sup>

The Honorable  
The President of the Senate

Navy Department  
Novr 15th, 1814

Sir

In obedience to the resolution of the senate passed on the 18th of March last directing the secretary of the Navy to devise & digest a system for the better organization of the Department of the Navy of the United States, I have now the honour to report with such prefatory observations, as appear to me pertinent to the occasion—

It has been affirmed & cannot be denied that imperfections exist in the Civil Administration of the Naval Establishment; hence it has been inferred that a radical change of System can alone remedy the evils—

Legislative wisdom will readily discriminate between the constituent principles upon which the present Establishment is predicated, & has thus far prospered & the defects which result from the absence of an intelligent, practical, auxiliary agency, qualified, to digest arrange & enforce a proper System of detailed Regulations, calculated to ensure the judicious & faithful application of Publick monies, a strict accountability in the expenditures of supplies & a rigid execution of the duties enjoined, on all the Officers & Agents, connected with the Establishment—

Profusion, Waste & abuse are the inherent offspring of all extensive Institutions, and if we occasionally, perceive these evils in some degree in the Naval Establishment of the United States we are not thence to infer their absence from similar establishments in other countries, where Naval Science & experience may be presumed to have provided greater safeguards, & more numerous, skillful, and vigilant agencies—

But Regulations however correct & adequate to the end become nugatory or worse, unless the authority and the means are coextensive & competent to enforce the execution or punish the Violation thereof— this may account for the non existence of many wholesome regulations in the Civil Administration of the Navy of the United States, & for the imperfect execution of those which exist. Breaches of the latter too frequently escape with impunity from the impossibility of the Head of the Department taking cognizance of all the multifarious concerns of the Establishment. it is problematical, however, whether the excess may not be more injurious than the deficiency of regulation[;] in the former case responsibility may be lost in the maze & mass of detail & multiplied agency, whilst in the latter, general instruction, & sound discretion not unfrequently ensure greater success & responsibility—

That the duties enjoined, or which necessarily devolve upon the Secretary of the Navy particularly during a period of active & diversified hostility, are beyond the powers of any Individual to discharge to the best advantage, cannot be doubted; though, by great labour & assiduity, with adequate professional qualifications, he may, possibly, execute, the general & most essential branches of duty with tolerable success.—

In the progress of reform, whilst we pay due respect to that System, the Establishment of which has attained the greatest celebrity, more, it is believed, from its magnitude & power, than from the excellence of its Civil Administration, we ought not to lose sight of its palpable & acknowledged defects, nor of those features in our own System, to which in no trivial degree the exalted reputation of our Infant Navy may be attributed—

That our Navy is not excelled in any thing which constitutes efficiency, perfect equipment, and general good qualities, it is believed will be admitted. That our Seamen are better paid and accommodated, is no less true— That all the imported and many of the domestic articles of equipment & of consumption in the service are exceedingly enhanced,— That the Wages of mechanical labour is more than double that which is paid by Great Britain— that our expenditure is greatly increased by the interruption to navigable transportation & the great extent of the local service is equally obvious. Yet, under all these circumstances, it is demonstrable that upon a comparison of an equal quantity of tonnage, and number of Guns & Men, or in proportion to the number of men alone, our naval expenditure is considerably less than that for the Navy of Great Britain, “in which “one hundred & fifty five thousand men are employed, at an expense of more than twenty Millions of pounds sterling annually”<sup>2</sup>

The local Service is, from its scattered irregular, and irresponsible nature, much more expensive, and wasteful, than that of the regular Navy, the more perfect organization of which and responsibility of command, ensure a more faithful superintendence & accountability; hence the current expenditure of the service, would be an extravagant criterion by which to estimate that of a Regular

Establishment under a judicious system. The Force employed in local service, is extended throughout a line of Stations from Louisiana to Maine, & from Champlain to Huron, consequently it is so weak as readily to be penetrated, at almost any point on our Maritime frontier, by the concentration of a small hostile force; and it is expensive in proportion to its diffusion. Independently of the deleterious nature of this service upon the health & habits of those employed in it, we are from the present necessity of this System deprived of the Services of a body of Officers & Seamen Sufficient to man thirteen Ships of the Line, such as the *Independence*, *Washington*, and *Franklin*, Seventy Fours—

When we contemplate the effect which such a force would have, when acting in conjunction upon our own Coast & waters or in Squadron, pursuing the commercial Fleets of the Enemy upon the ocean, or in the Harbours of his Colonies, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that our waters would be freed from invasion, our Coast from blockade, his military & Naval resources intercepted to such a degree as to paralyze his efforts on this Continent; supersede the necessity of a vast military Establishment coextensive with our Maritime, Canadian & Indian frontiers, and our Citizens from those harassing, irregular & inconvenient calls of Militia which the predatory enterprises of the Enemy so frequently produce. In short, according to my conceptions this cheap & efficient National defence should be adopted as soon as our circumstances will admit, and cherished by a well digested energetic & liberal system, steadily progressing with the population, commerce, and resources of the nation—

The Nature, construction & equipment of the ships which constitute a Navy, form the basis of its efficiency, durability & economy, and the most important branch in the Civil Administration of its affairs— With a view to the reform & extension of the naval Establishment of the United States, these objects ought to command the first place in our attention, combined with such an organization of the Civil Department, as shall promise the best results.— The defects, in this part of the British system have been the theme of criticism and reprehension for many years past. The most minute, laborious, and able investigation has, from time to time, taken place, under the direction & scrutiny of the Parliament, yet nothing approximating to radical amendment has been adopted, and the Advocates of reform either from the subtle ramifications of the evil, or the agency of some sinister influence appear to despair of success—

According to the most intelligent Writers, supported by well established facts, the deterioration of the British navy, owing to the injudicious selection & combination of incongruous materials, in the construction & the abortive method of preserving, is very alarming; & the diversity in the form, dimensions, and proportions, not only of the several rates, but the numerous distinct classes of the same rate, as well in their Hulls, as in their masts, sails and Equipment, and in a still greater degree in their qualities for combined action, demonstrates the prevalence of caprice & prejudice, instead of science & system; “When Lord Nelson was off Cadiz with seventeen or eighteen Sail of the Line, he had no less than seven different classes of Seventy four Gun Ships, each requiring different masts, sails, yards &c, so that if one Ship was disabled, the others could not supply her with appropriate Stores”—<sup>3</sup>

The consequences resulting from this defective organization & want of System are strongly illustrated in the fact related by a recent professional writer of

rank & talents, that “out of five hundred & thirty eight ships &c in the British Navy, now at Sea, there are only Sixty nine which are in reality, superior in the discharge of metal or force, or blows; but inferior in sailing to some of the American Frigates: & that there are but eighteen which unless in smooth Water are equal to contend with the United States, leaving 451 out of 538 which are admitted to be incompetent to engage single handed with an American Frigate”<sup>4</sup>— These facts are encouraging & serve to show, that although the numerical force of the Enemy in Ships, and men appears to be overwhelming; yet if the aggregate number of Officers, Seamen & Marines, which the United States; may even now, engage for the Public Service, was concentrated in eighteen or twenty Ships of the Line, such as have been recently built, it would place all the Ships alluded to in the quotation just recited except the eighteen, Hors de combat; nor could our Enemy protect his commerce and Colonies, and combine, such a force as would counteract the power & offensive enterprize of an American Squadron, so truly formidable.— With such a force, it will be perceived that his host of Frigates and smaller Vessels would be struck out of the account or added to the list of our Navy, if they came in contact. (These views, it is true are prospective; but with a Stable, judicious, and liberal system, the result would be realized at no remote period.—

Having noticed these exceptions to the Civil Administration of the British Navy, it is but just to observe that the organization of the military part of their system is much more perfect.—

The Regulations & Instructions for the service at sea adopted by Order in Council and published in one Quarto Volume in 1808 are those which now prevail<sup>5</sup>— They are excellent and afford much matter worthy of incorporation into our System, with such modification as the peculiar circumstances of the Service may require.—

Of the French Naval System, the Department of construction is universally admitted to be the most perfect in existence, and is well worthy of imitation— The Military part of the System, however, is less perfect, in practice, and not as well adapted to the habits & usages of American Seamen, as that of the British—

The character of the Navy of any Nation, will be determined by its commercial and navigating enterprize. That of America had surpassed every other, until the unexampled prosperity & rapid extention of its commerce excited the Envy, jealousy, and hostility of those who could not meet it in fair, equal, & friendly competition. The same energy, skill, vigilance & intrepidity, which distinguished the Commercial Navigators of the United States, characterize the Officers, & Seamen of the Navy.

The same superiority of construction, which gave to its commercial Marine the celerity, and security, for which it is distinguished, may be seen in the American Navy, which is truly indigenous and distinct from every other. The independent Character of the nation is manifestly visible in the genius of its Navy. The Classes of our Ships, their form, construction, armament, and equipment, have been tested by experience, and found to have been happily adapted to our circumstances, compelling the Enemy either to employ Ships of the Line, against Frigates, or to construct a new Class of Ships. – Their efficiency and perfection have extorted the praise of the Enemy. The Author before quoted, says “The Caronades I saw on board the United States Brig *Argus*, were better mounted, and



the vessel more complete than those in the British Navy; & She was uncommonly well manœuvred<sup>6</sup>—

Our ships are excellent, & all in good condition, The Classes are few & so uniform that without inconvenience, the Masts, Spars, & Equipments, of any one of a class, will serve indifferently for any other of the same class; All the New Ships, of each rate, are of the same class, and are absolutely similar in all their equipments, and in the dimensions and proportions of their Hulls, Masts, Spars &c. This strict similarity, should be carefully preserved, upon every principle of convenience, economy, & efficiency—

Timber, which forms an object of much solicitude, in Great Britain, deserves the particular attention of the Department, the organization of which will doubtlessly be made to combine the necessary talents & means to provide for every branch of the Service, by a seasonable, diligent and judicious collection, in secure & convenient Depots, of all the materials, which enter into the construction & equipment of Ships of War—

When it is considered, that one Seventy Four Gun Ship requires two thousand large oak trees, equal to the estimated produce of fifty seven acres, the importance of securing for Public use all that valuable species of Oak which is found only on the Southern Seaboard, is sufficiently obvious—

Dock Yards, Founderies, Smitheries & Armories in safe & eligible situations are indispensable appendages of so important & growing an Establishment.

These always collect the best Workmen and as private interest cannot interfere with the execution, the Materials and Workmanship are better & the Work is performed with more certainty and regularity, than by contract with private individuals, whose works, in some cases, may be so remote from the Seat of demand, that the transportation may cost more than the Article—

There is another branch of the Service which appears to me to merit the Serious deliberation of the Legislature, with regard to the establishment of some regular System, by which the Voluntary enlistments for the Navy may derive occasional reinforcement from the Services of those Seamen who pursuing their own private occupations, are exempt, by their itinerant habits, from Public service of any kind. In my view there would be nothing incompatible with the free Spirit of our Institutions, or with the rights of individuals if Registers, with a particular descriptive record were kept in the Several Districts, of all the Seamen, belonging to the United States, & provision made by Law, for classing & calling into the Public Service in succession for reasonable stated periods, such portions or classes as the Public Service might require, and if any individual so called should be absent, at the time, the next in succession, should perform the tour of duty of the Absentee, who should on his return be liable to serve his original tour, & his substitute be exempt from his succeeding regular tour of duty—

In the Military Service, Should the ranks not be filled by Recruits, the deficiency of regular force may be made up by drafts of militia to assemble at a given time & place; not so in the Naval Service; it depends exclusively upon voluntary enlistments upon which there is no reliance for any given object, at any time or place. hence the most important expeditions, may utterly fail, though every possible exertion shall have been made to carry them into effect.

If we examine with due attention, the nature, extent & importance of the objects involved in the administration of Naval affairs, & contemplate in the

history of ages past, the unsuccessful though indefatigable labours of Legislation, Science & genius, to perfect the system, we may learn to appreciate with more accuracy, & cherish with liberality the life of study, observation & experience required to arrive even at moderate attainments in a science, which though familiar in the estimation of all is the most complicate, critical & interesting that has ever engaged the attention or influenced the destinies of Nations—

My sole object is to invite the attention & liberality of the National Councils, to the requisite talents & qualifications for Cherishing & rearing to maturity the Vigorous plant around which are entwined the affections & confidence of the Country.—

All these objects appear to me to be intimately connected with the revision of the Civil Administration of our Naval Affairs, the Executive Branch of which should be conducted by persons of enlarged Views, collectively combining all the practical knowledge & professional intelligence which these important, diversified, and comprehensive subjects, obviously require—

We have a good foundation upon which to raise a durable superstructure; & concluding that that system cannot be radically wrong which has produced such favourable results, I should be unwilling to hazard by an entire innovation, the benefits we have derived and may still derive by retaining the present organization of the Navy Department and providing by law for an intelligent, practical & efficient auxiliary Agency such as experience has suggested.

With this view I have the honor to submit with great deference the following System for the organization of the Department of the Navy of the United States, distinguishing, for the sake of perspicuity, in the form of a bill, those objects which appear to require legislative provision, from those for which executive regulation may prescribe with more convenience and advantage; the outline of which only is given, as the ground work may be filled up to greater benefit—when the collected experience & talents which it contemplates, shall have deliberated upon the subject—

—An Act for the better Organization of the Navy Department—

Be it enacted &c— That the office, Duties & powers of the Secretary of the Navy, & of the Accountant, agents, & other officers of the Department of the Navy; be & remain as now by Law established; except as hereinafter modified, altered or transferred to any other office or offices created by this act—

Sec- 2nd. That the President, of the United States, be & he is hereby authorized to designate three officers of the Navy & with the advice & consent of the Senate, to appoint two other judicious persons skilled in Naval affairs to be Inspectors of the Navy who together shall constitute a Board of Inspectors of the Navy, three members whereof shall be necessary to form a quorum; and the business shall be transacted in such central & convenient place for the Superintendence of the affairs of the Navy, as the President of the United States shall direct who shall also have power to designate the presiding member & to appoint the Secretary of the said Board whose duty it shall be to keep regular & correct records of all the transactions of the Board, & to transmit attested copies of all such proceedings to the Secretary of the Navy for the inspection & revision of the President of the United States, as soon as may be after the adjournment of the Meeting, at

which any such proceedings shall have taken place; and the said Board shall have power to establish such rules & Regulations, for its own proceedings & to employ such number of clerks & assistants as well for the transacting of the business of the Board, as for that of the several Inspectors, & to procure such books, maps, charts, plans, drawings, models, & Stationary, as the public interest may require, & the President of the United States approve—

Sec- 3rd— That it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Navy, to arrange & class under distinct & appropriate heads as equally as may be & such duties & details as may be found impracticable for the officers of the Department of the Navy as now organized to execute with advantage to the Public, & with the approbation of the President of the United States to assign to each Inspector of the Navy the special charge & execution of one of the classes so arranged; for the faithful performance of which trust the said Inspectors shall severally be held responsible, under the instructions & subject to the revision of the Board of Inspectors to which a statement of all the transactions of each Inspector, shall be submitted, for revision, at each stated Meeting, and an abstract thereof transmitted, monthly to the Secretary of the Navy, with such remarks thereon as the Nature of the case may require; and it shall also be the duty of the Secretary of the Navy to prepare a System of general Regulations, defining & prescribing the respective powers & duties of the Board of Inspectors of the Navy, & of the Several Inspectors, which rules when approved by the President of the United States, shall be respected & obeyed, until altered or revoked, by the same authority; and the said General Regulations, thus prepared & approved, shall be laid before Congress at their next Session—

Sec- 4th That the President of the United States be, & he is hereby authorized alone to appoint a person, skilled in the Science & practice of Naval Architecture, to the office of Naval Constructor, & also to appoint two assistant Naval Constructors; and it shall be the duty of the Secretary to prepare such rules & regulations for conducting the business of the Constructor's department, as shall appear necessary & proper, which when approved by the President of the United States, shall be respected & obeyed, until revoked by the same authority; and the Naval Constructor shall be allowed one Clerk to assist in transacting the business of his Department.—

Sec- 5th That the President of the United States be, & he is hereby Authorized with the consent & advice of the Senate, to appoint a Paymaster of the Navy, who shall perform the duties of his office agreeably to the direction of the President of the United States, for the time being; & before he enters upon the duties of the same, Shall give bonds, with good & sufficient sureties, in such Sums as the President of the United States shall direct, for the faithful discharge of his said office & shall take an oath to execute the duties thereof with fidelity—

Sec. 6th- That all letters & packets to and from the Inspectors & Paymaster of the Navy, which relate to their official duties, shall be free from Postage—

Sec. 7th That each Inspector of the Navy, shall be entitled to the pay & rations of a Captain commanding a Squadron on Separate Service, and also to the sum of twelve hundred dollars per annum in lieu, of house rent, fuel, forage &c; and the Salary of the Naval Constructor shall be three thousand dollars per annum; each of the assistant constructors, fifteen hundred per annum; the Paymaster of the Navy, two thousand dollars, per annum; the Secretary of the Board of Inspectors, two thousand dollars per annum; & the Clerks & assistants, authorized by this act,

Shall receive such reasonable compensation for their services, as the President of the United States shall direct.

I would also respectfully suggest the expediency of providing by Law, for the Establishment of a Naval Academy, with suitable Professors, for the instruction of the Officers of the Navy, in those branches of the Mathematicks and experimental Philosophy, and in the science and practice of Gunnery, theory of Naval Architecture, & art of mechanical drawing which are necessary to the accomplishment of the naval officer—

In order to illustrate the principles & operations of the proposed organization of the Navy Department, the following outline of powers & duties which it is contemplated to assign to the Board of Inspectors, & to the several Inspectors, is respectfully submitted.

#### Powers & Duties of the Board

The Board should have the general superintendence & direction of the Affairs of the Navy, under the Instructions from & Powers delegated by, the President of the United States & authority over all the officers, Agents & persons employed under the Navy Department; report to the Secretary of the Navy, from time to time all such matters & things as may, in the opinion of the Board, tend to promote the efficiency & economy of the Establishment; &, upon the requisition of the Secretary of the Navy, furnish all the estimates of expenditure which the several branches of the Service may require & such other information & statements as he may deem necessary.—

The Board should have the power of making contracts, & purchases, either directly or through the Navy Agents, whose power, in this respect, should be limited to small sums, & to objects, the procuring of which may not admit of delay; in all other cases, the previous sanction, either of the Secretary of the Navy, of the Board of Inspectors, or of some officer authorized by the Board, should be indispensable.—

The Naval Stations, within the United States should be designated by convenient boundaries; and an officer of rank, trust, & confidence, should reside in each who should under the instructions of the Board, superintend & control the affairs of the Navy within his District, and report to the Board from time to time. All requisitions of Commanding Officers, Pursers, & other persons, upon the Agents, should be checked & receive the Sanction of the Board, or of the resident officer authorized by the Board, before they are complied with—

Payments and advances should be made as heretofore through the Navy Agents, (except those for pay of the Navy;) and the Sanction of the Secretary of the Navy, of the Board, or of the officer authorized by the Board, should precede all payments & advances, except for limited & urgent demands—

The Board should establish, general regulations for the conduct of its members, in the discharge of the special & important trusts, severally assigned to them, by the Secretary of the Navy; and should digest & report to the Department, distinct regulations for the following objects:—

1st. Uniform regulations, establishing the several classes of Ships & Vessels in the Navy of the United States; with tables of dimensions, proportions, number, quantity, quality, nature & description, of masts, spars, rigging, anchors, cables,

armament, & equipments, of all kinds; & of the quantity, quality, & description of Provisions, and stores, of every species, for a given period for each class—

2nd- Regulations, for receiving, preserving, issuing, & strictly accounting, for the expenditure of materials & Stores of all kinds, & in every department of the Service, within the United States—

3d- Regulations for Surveying & authenticating the actual State & condition of all the Ships & Vessels of the Navy, & of all the Materials & Stores of every species, reported to be decayed, damaged, or defective; and for directing the repair, conversion, sale or other disposition of the same, as the nature of the case may require.—

4th- A more perfect system of general regulations for the Naval Service, at Sea & on the Lakes.—

5th- General Regulations for the Flotilla or force employed in harbour defence, adapted to the peculiar nature of that Service—

6th- Uniform Regulations for the Navy Yards, Arsenals, & Depots of Stores & Materials—

7th- Regulations for the cruising Ships & Vessels of the Navy, while in Port; for the Recruiting Service; and for the Officers of the Navy, while on Shore, on duty or on furlough; in order to ascertain the actual state & local situation of all the Officers—

8th- A System of detailed Regulations for the Naval Hospitals & Medical Department of the Navy, within the United States.—

9th- An entire & new System of Regulations for the conduct of Purser in the Navy, accurately defining their duties, securing a more strict accountability, limiting their emoluments, by a fixed & reasonable standard; and protecting the Seamen of the Navy from the undue advantages which may be practised, with impunity, under the present System.—

10th- Regulations, for ascertaining by examination, the moral character, & professional qualifications of all the Officers of the Navy, below the grade of a Master Commandant, classing them in the scale of their several merits; & of the pretensions of those who may be selected for promotion, as well as of the Candidates for Warrant Appointments in the Navy,

all which Regulations, when approved by the President of the United States, should be established & obeyed until revoked by the same authority.—

The Duties & Details of the Service, proposed to be assigned to the several Inspectors of the Navy, may be classed as follows—

1st Class. Comprehending the general correspondence of the Board & preparation of all the Reports, Estimates & Statements, required by the Department; and the communication of such propositions & information to the Secretary of the Navy, as the Board may deem interesting; and also, the general charge & direction of the Flotilla Service on the New Orleans Station—

2nd. Class. Comprehending the General Military correspondence with all the Officers of the Navy; the roll of the Officers of the Navy & Record of their Services, merits & qualifications, to be kept on the files of the Board; orders for Courts of Inquiry and Courts Martial, & the preparation of all the Documents & Statements connected with these objects; also the general charge & direction of the Flotilla Service on the Southern Station, viz. Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, & Norfolk.—

3d. Class. Comprehending the direction of ordnance & transportation; the general superintendence of the Foundries, Laboratories, Armories, & other Works connected with the Naval Ordnance Department; and the inspection & proof of arms ammunition &c.— The direction of the transportation of all persons, stores, and provisions of the Navy, by land and water; & the general charge & direction of the Flotilla Service in the Patapsco & Delaware, & at New York.—

4th. Class—Comprehending the Victualling & sustenance including Pursers, Medical, & Hospital Stores; also, the general charge & direction of the Flotilla Service, on all the Naval Stations from New York eastward, & on Lake Champlain—

5th Class- Comprehending the supply of Hemp, yarns, cordage, Sail Duck, Iron & other Metals, Anchors, & all other Equipments & Materials required for the Service, except those which are included in the foregoing Classes, & in the Constructor's Department; and also the general Charge & direction of the Service on Lake Ontario & the Upper Lakes—

The Superintendence & direction of these five classes of objects would be distributed among the five Inspectors—

The Department of Construction, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, and of the Board of Inspectors, would prepare all the Draughts, plans & instructions for the building of all the Vessels of the Navy, construct the models, & when approved, direct & superintend under the control of the Board of Inspectors, the building & repairing, of the Ships, Vessels, boats, the formation of masts, spars, &c- & the contracting for or procuring all the materials of wood & of copper, in pigs, bolts & sheets, necessary for the supply of the Navy;— construct from the lines, in the mould loft, all the moulds requisite for moulding & bevelling the timber, in the Forest, under the direction of skilful persons to be employed, by the Constructor for that purpose, & superintend the Construction of the Wharves, Ships, Workshops, & engines, required in building & repairing Ships of War—

It is a copious subject, in which it is difficult to combine brevity with perspicuity—

My aim has been to provide a practical efficient & economical System, with as much individual & collective responsibility as may be attainable; & I feel a persuasion that the result would not greatly disappoint the estimates I have formed; the wisdom of the Senate will better appreciate its merits— I have the honor to be with the highest respect Sir Your ob: Servt

Wm. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, Letters to Congress, No. 2, 4 January 1811–14 March 1818, pp. 300–320 (T829, Roll No. 336).

1. At the time of this letter's writing, Vice President Elbridge Gerry served as president of the U.S. Senate. In Gerry's absence, Senator John C. Gaillard of South Carolina presided over the Senate as president pro tempore.

2. The source of this quotation has not been identified.

3. Richard Pering, "A Brief Inquiry into the Causes of Premature Decay in our Wooden Bulwarks," *The Quarterly Review* (London), 1813, p. 31.

4. William Layman, *Precursor to an Exposé on Forest Trees and Timber* ([London]: Asperne, 1813), p. 14.

5. *Regulations and Instructions Relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea, Established by His Majesty in Council* (London, 1808).

6. Layman, *Precursor to an Exposé on Forest Trees and Timber*, p. 14.

## CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART TO CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM REED

UNITED STATES' FRIGATE *CONSTITUTION*,*Boston Harbor, November 26, 1814.*

SIR: I received the honor of your circular letter of the 17th instant,<sup>1</sup> enclosing a report of the honorable Secretary of the Navy to the honorable Senate of the United States, relating to the organization of the Navy Department.<sup>2</sup> You express a desire that the committee may be possessed of my opinion of the plan proposed, and that I should suggest such additions and alterations as may appear to me necessary for attaining so desirable an object.

It appears to me, sir, and is my opinion, that the plan proposed by the report will contribute towards the desired end, but I do not think it calculated to obtain the whole object proposed by Congress. Viewing it as an auxiliary to the Navy Department, it will unquestionably facilitate the operations and relieve the officers of that Department from much of the detail duties, which all must be aware are too extensive and diversified for any one person to discharge with necessary and due attention. We must also be aware how difficult it is to change a system once begun, and whose basis is not established on the best foundation, though it should afterwards be found inadequate to the object.

If we compare this new and young nation, rising in the Western hemisphere, and progressing towards a zenith of greatness which may cast a shade over some of the oldest and most enlightened nations of the Eastern, to a young man commencing life, with the experience of his predecessors, whereby to regulate his conduct and economy, would not his error strike us forcibly, on observing him erecting temporary structure after structure, instead of raising on solid foundations the ground work of his future comfort and prosperity, which would bid defiance to time, and could only be shaken by the general wreck of things? Presuming the Legislature wish to establish the marine of this country on the best possible foundation, and calculated to be conducted with the greatest economy in all its various branches, I do apprehend the plan submitted will not be found to effect that object, and will fall far short of the end contemplated.

Of the first section, it will only be necessary to remark, that it would be injudicious to destroy the department, but highly essential to reorganize it.

The second section provides five inspectors of the Navy, to form a sort of navy board, which will contribute no further than to relieve the department from some of the detail service, and sharing with it certain portions of the responsibility. The principal objection to a board of inspectors constituted as I apprehend, arises from its not combining the variety and necessary practical knowledge and information among its members requisite on many important subjects that will come before them.

The assigning to individuals of the board of inspectors (as contemplated by the third section) distinct control over, and responsibility for, specific portions of the service, can and will answer no purpose whatever,

The provisions of the fourth section will be highly essential at all events.

Section the fifth may or may not be requisite; in the latter case the office could at any time be created.

Sections six and seven will only be requisite if the plan is adopted.

As the principal features in the plan of the bill proposed are contained in the section providing the board of inspectors, it will only be necessary to remark, in support of my objection above, that the duties contemplated to be assigned to this board would require, at least, one member in it conversant with each of the important branches of the establishment. The drawing up all the rules and regulations for each branch of the service; the examination of all the officers below the rank of masters commandant for appointments or promotion; the adopting models, for vessels of war to be created from; the planning and arranging their internal apartments; the external equipment and armament; the arranging the proper stores for a given time for each department; the regulating dock yards, navy yards, foundries, &c., demand the combined talents and professional experience of men conversant with the different professions. By referring to my letter of the 20th of January, 1813, to the honorable Langdon Cheves,<sup>3</sup> you will observe by the plan of a board there proposed that I had those objects in view, and therefore constituted it of such characters and professions as are essential to give every subject submitted to them a fair and professional examination. The above duties comprise almost the whole economy of the establishment, and form a subject of the first importance to the nation.

With respect to the flotilla, it ought either to form a part of the navy, and be subject to its rules, regulations, and economy, and be under the superintendence and control generally of the Navy Department and Navy Board, or else be entirely separated therefrom.

One great source of expenditure and inconvenience to the naval service arises from the short enlistment of our seamen, ordinary seamen, and boys, and the principal cause which would defeat any particular object or expedition of our marine, more so than any imagined deficiency of seamen. During part of our war with Tripoli, the crews were enlisted only for one year; the consequence was, that a ship could scarcely arrive at her station, and have time to organize her crew, before she was obliged to return and discharge them. The term of enlistment now is two years; but such is the difficulty of getting men, for the small pay and bounty allowed, compared with what they can get in other service, and the ship is so long delayed in procuring her complement, that the times of one half expire before the crew is completed. The inducements given to fill the ranks of the Army being much greater than that of the Navy, many seamen have joined it; some, from necessity, have gone into foreign service, and are even navigating the commerce of the enemy; many are in the private armed ships and privateers, owing to the exclusive advantages given them over the Navy. By this means the glory and maritime reputation of the nation is made to yield to the inglorious warfare of plunder, which deeply affects some individuals of the enemy, but makes only a small impression on the nation at large; some are locked up in the prisons of our foe, who is aware of the short period of their enlistment, and is wary enough to detain them from exchange until their term of service expires, when our Government can no longer command their services. The frequency of changing men from the ship they select to cruise in, to another, or into different service, such as the lakes and flotilla, contributes much to impede the recruiting service. When the above causes are considered, it is only wonderful that any men can be procured for our ships of war. The registering and classing



of the seamen of the United States would produce much good, but the compulsory command of their services would produce much evil, and should only be resorted to in the most extreme necessity. None will serve so well as those who serve voluntarily. To this account may be placed much of our superiority over the British, which has hitherto baffled all their boasted advantages of experience, skill, and long practice.

With respect to a naval academy, the best school for the instruction of youth in the profession is the deck of a ship, presuming that none would be offered or received into the service as midshipmen whose education had not been such as to fit them for officers, and calculated for gentlemen. To derive advantage from expenditure, and induce that corps of officers to pursue their profession, in time of peace, through private service, I would allow no half pay to midshipmen, except for such term as they can produce a journal of their voyages, and certificates of the master or owner of the vessel, countersigned by the collector of the port. By this means many will be induced to pursue that calling to acquire the essential knowledge of seamanship, the properties of different species of vessels, an acquaintance and familiarity with coasts, countries, and nations; a knowledge of their marine, commerce, and fortresses; the genius of the people, and their language; which would be essential to them as officers, and important to the nation. It would enable them to form a true estimate of the requisite force for the attack of any point, place or object, and the seasons best calculated for expeditions and enterprises, with the least hazard to themselves, when they should be called to execute the object, or plant the standard of our Union over the humbled foe.

The love of country and patriotism of the seamen of the United States stand unrivalled, or only equaled by their intrepidity and perseverance in commercial pursuits, and their valor in naval combat. We see them encountering all the horrors of the enemy's prisons, the privation of liberty and comfortable support, in preference to bearing arms against their country: impressed (during a state of peace with us) on board the British ships of war, and, by oppression, compelled to serve them against other enemies, they submitted with patience to their misfortune; but, when they heard of the war with their own country, no inducement or force could prevail on them to take arms against her. Sir, the Navy looks up to the Government, with confidence, for its fostering care, and the nation trusts that they will place this important and essential national force on a systematic and solid foundation, that it may progress to maturity by gradual and regular augmentation. Although it may present to the enemies of our country a front too formidable for them to penetrate, it never can be rendered a machine to menace the Constitution or liberties of our country; it will at all times strengthen the arm of Government, bind the Union together, protect our coast and harbors from blockade, menace, or insult, our commerce from plunder, and our citizens from the slavery and dungeons of Barbary.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, sir, your obedient humble servant.

CHARLES STEWART.

1. *Annals of Congress*, 13th Cong., 3rd sess., 1049.

2. Immediately above.

3. Although Stewart's letter to Langdon Cheves of 20 January 1813, apparently written in response to the same inquiry that produced Lieutenant Charles Morris's letter to Congressman Cheves of 9 January 1813, (Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 20–24), has not been located, its contents can be inferred from those of Stewart's plan for the reorganization of the Navy Department of 26 November 1814, immediately below, and his letter to Reed of 27 November 1814, next following.

CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART: PLAN FOR THE  
REORGANIZATION OF THE NAVY DEPARTMENT

Nov. 26, 1814,

A Plan Submitted &c. &c. for the organization of the Navy Department and other purposes; by Charles Stewart Captain in the Navy of the United States.

Section 1st. Provision by law authorising the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate to appoint and commission the following Officers

A Naval Constructor General  
Commissary or Purser General  
Surgeon General

Master General of Ordnance— and to designate two Officers of the Navy, not under Post rank, which Officers so designated being joined to the above appointed Officers shall constitute and form a board of Commissions of the Navy, and the whole, or any number of them not less than four, to meet at such times and places and for such purposes touching Naval affairs as the President of the United States shall direct by order of the Navy Department— that the said board thus constituted shall deliberate on, examine into, and investigate and approve or disapprove such matters and things as may be laid before them, and recommend and submit to the Navy Department all such matters and things as may appear to them essential for the organization of the Navy of the United States and all things appertaining thereto except the employment of all or any part of the Naval forces, or the correspondence relating thereto, or the commissioning of Officers, or paying of Public monies for any purpose, all of which is reserved to the Navy Department— that all their rules, regulations, allowances, plans, models &c when approved by the Executive of the United States, and signified by the Navy Department, shall be binding on all Officers, Seamen, Ordinary Seamen Artificers, Constructors Agents &c &c employed in the Navy Yards, Naval Arsenals, Dock Yards, Ships and vessels of war &c. of the United States.

Section 2. Provision by law that the Senior Navy Officer of the board preside thereat and in case of his absence the other Navy Officer shall preside.

Section 3. Provision by law that the board of Commissioners appoint their Secretary to the board.

Section 4. Provision by law fixing the Salaries of the Constructor General, Surgeon General, Commissary or Purser General, Master General of Ordnance and the Secretary of the Board.

Section 5. Provision by law fixing the reasonable additional compensation for the members of the board of Commissioners, as Such.

Section 6. Provision by law for increasing the Officers and Soldiers of the Marine Corps equal to the Military peace establishment for the Sea board of the United States, and dividing it into batalions of Artillery and Infantry.

Section 7. Provision by law for placing the Marine Corps wholly under the War Department.

Section 8. Provision by law authorising and requiring the Secretary of War to furnish and detatch Marine Guards for the Navy Yards, Dock Yards, Arsenals, and vessels of War on the requisition of the Secretary of the Navy.

Section 9. Provision by law for placing the Marine guards so detached wholly under the rules and regulations of the Navy.

AD, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box III:23.

#### CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART TO CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM REED

United States frigate *Constitution*  
November 27. 1814

Sir

Inclosed I have the honor to transmit to you a letter in reply to yours of the 17th instant. I have endeavoured to touch on all the Subjects contained in the Honble. Secretary's Report deemed important on the occasion. As I have given in my letter to the Honble Langdon Cheves of the 20th January 1813 my ideas fully on the subject of a Navy board, and of what its component parts might be constituted to make it most perfect, I deem it unnecessary to alter or add to the report by recapitulating what is there stated, but think some explanation may be necessary that my views may be understood for constituting the board as therein proposed; conceiving there would not be much necessity for keeping the board together after the rules and regulations for the Service and establishment generally have been selected, digested, approved and adopted, and that the occasionally reviewing them by order of the Navy Department for the examination of Officers, preparing estimates for supplies &c. &c. would not interfere with their individual occupations as heads of their respective Departments. For the first purpose the Secretary of the Navy could make the time and place convenient to the Service, for the last it might be periodical and previous to the meeting of Congress. With Salaries attached to their offices as professional men, and reasonable compensation to them as a board of Commissioners, they would be amply compensated for their Services. Holding commissions from the Government, as Officers over their distinct Departments, and being made liable as officers, for misconduct, to a competent Court Martial, and amenable at common law in their persons and property for losses sustained by their misconduct, would be an ample Security to Government for the faithful discharge of their duties. A board of Commissioners constituted as proposed in my letter of the 20th January 1813 would contain in it a head of each important Department where talents and experience would enable him to explain to the rest of the board all matters and subjects relating to his own Departments by which means they would be enabled to form correct views and opinions on the

subject before them. Should a gentleman apply for commission as a Surgeon or Surgeon's Mate, unless one of the board be a medical man, they would be unable to inquire into his qualifications and fitness for the Office; this example will apply to other cases for different appointments and promotions, it will also be applicable to forming all the rules and regulations for the different Departments and the apportioning of a proper allowance of Stores for each class of vessels &c. &c. Should Government view this System as on too extensive a scale, I beg leave to observe, that I have no doubt of its being the most economical, and that they will find their account in its adoption; no species of machinery will go well unless it have a sufficient moving power and no deficiency in any of its component parts.

While I am on the Subject of the Navy, with permission, I will present to your view some ideas on the Marine Corps as intimately connected with the Navy and attached to its operations. For brevity's sake, I will suppose that Corps augmented to a division or force equal to the Military peace establishment for the Atlantic Coast, then divided into portions of Marine Artillery for the Forts, and infantry for the Navy Yards and ships;— would it not afford at all times for our ships of war a well disciplined Marine Guard at any Port from whence they may be Sent on Service instead of raw necessity, for a ship going to Sea, where but little opportunity offers for teaching them the military art? I have the honor to be, Very Respectfully, Sir, Your Obedient Humble Servant

Chs. Stewart

P.S. I will thank you to acknowledge the receipt hereof, and if not inconvenient should like to have your opinion of this connected with my former letter of the 20th Jany. 1813.

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box III:23.

AN ACT TO ALTER AND AMEND THE SEVERAL ACTS FOR  
ESTABLISHING A NAVY DEPARTMENT, BY ADDING  
THERETO A BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled,* That the President of the United States be, and he is hereby authorized, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to appoint three officers of the navy, whose rank shall not be below a post captain, who shall constitute a board of commissioners for the navy of the United States; and shall have power to adopt such rules and regulations for the government of their meetings as they may judge expedient: and the board so constituted, shall be attached to the office of the Secretary of the Navy, and under his superintendence shall discharge all the ministerial duties of said office, relative to the procurement of naval stores and materials, and the construction, armament, equipment, and employment, of vessels of war, as well as all other matters connected with the naval establishment of the United States. And the said board shall appoint their own secretary, who shall receive in compensation for his services a sum not exceeding two thousand dollars per annum, who shall keep a fair record of their

proceedings, subject at all times to the inspection of the President of the United States, and the Secretary of the Navy.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That the said board of commissioners, by and with the consent of the Secretary of the Navy, be, and are hereby authorized to prepare such rules and regulations, as shall be necessary for securing an uniformity in the several classes of vessels and their equipments, and for repairing and refitting them, and for securing responsibility in the subordinate officers and agents: which regulations, when approved by the President of the United States, shall be respected and obeyed, until altered and revoked by the same authority; and the said rules and regulations thus prepared and approved, shall be laid before Congress at their next session. It shall also be the duty of said board, upon the requisition of the Secretary of the Navy, to furnish all the estimates of expenditure, which the several branches of the service may require, and such other information and statements as he may deem necessary.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That the officer of the said board holding the oldest commission shall preside, and each commission shall be entitled to receive in compensation for his services, three thousand five hundred dollars per annum in lieu of wages, rations, and the other emoluments, as naval officers; and all letters and packets to and from the said commissioners, which relate to their official duties, shall be free from postage.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That nothing in this act shall be construed to take from the Secretary of the Navy his control and direction of the naval forces of the United States, as now by law possessed.

APPROVED, February 7, 1815.

Printed, *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 3, pp. 202–3.

#### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO SENATOR CHARLES TAIT

Hon: Chas. Tait Chairman  
Naval Committee of the Senate

Navy Department  
Novr. 15th 1814

Sir

In answer to the Inquiry contained in your letter of the 8th Inst. founded upon two Resolutions of the Senate passed on the 7th Inst. instructing the Committee on Naval Affairs to inquire “what provision should be made for the appointment of Officers above the grade of Captain in the Navy of the United States” and “What provisions should be made for conferring Naval Rank by Brevet, in consideration of Meritorious Service”<sup>1</sup> I have the honor to represent, that the high character which the American Navy has justly acquired— the general sentiment which indicates its rapid increase and permanency & the long faithful & honorable Services which its Senior Officers have rendered their Country, appear to me to justify & call for the appointment of Officers of a higher grade than that of Captain—

Love of Country & the laudable desire of honorable fame are Strong excitements to noble actions; but the prospect of progressive promotion to the highest distinction which talents, zeal, & valor may justly aspire, is not perhaps less active & Stimulating.

Captains of long & honorable Standing in the Navy cannot but contrast the Cheerless prospect of promotion— in the Naval Service, with the rapid & high distinction to which their military brethren with equal but not higher pretensions have attained

The Naval force in officers, Seamen, & Marines is probably, two fifth parts of the whole military force of the United States actually employed, in which there are I think ten Major Generals<sup>2</sup> & Sixteen Brigadiers, exclusive of those of the Staff who enjoy the Rank pay & emoluments of Brigadiers.—

The effect of a limited grade without hope of promotion is to contract the range of Study & professional attainment within the Sphere of the command thus limited; hold out but the prospect of elevated Rank & Command & every officer of talents & worth, will aspire to the highest qualifications—

Foreign example is to be received with caution, yet the practice of Nations of great Maritime experience may throw some light upon the subject. A comparison of the force of the British Navy with the number of Admirals in that Service will exhibit the following result.

viz of ships of 74 Guns & upwards, there are	
Building about -----	24
In Ordinary " -----	54
Guard, Hospital, Prison, Store Ships &c --	33
In commission about -----	99
Ships of 74 Guns & upwards -----	210

The list of admirals contains 209 exclusive of 27 superannuated Rear Admirals, upon half pay. Thus exhibiting more than two Admirals for every Ship of 74 Guns & upwards in commission.

We daily see on our own Coast Admirals with Commands inferior to those which the American Navy may even now afford.

The New Grade to be established and number of promotions should be consistent with the scale & character of the Naval establishment which may not for some years require the distinction of flags as in the British Navy, viz Red, White, & Blue, at the Main, Fore, or Mizzen of each; making nine grades of Admirals, rising in the order of the flags, from Blue to Red.—

I am therefore of opinion, that it is now expedient to establish the Grade of Rear Admiral without any distinction of flags, leaving the promotions to Vice Admiral & Admiral, for future Service, & an enlarged establishment—

I am also of Opinion that the Same principle which induced the establishment of Brevet Rank in the Army for Gallant Actions, meritorious conduct, or long Service is equally applicable to the Navy & cannot fail to excite to those actions which it is intended to reward; but no officer so brevetted to be entitled to any additional pay or emolument, except when Commanding on Seperate Service. I have the honor to be Very respectfully Sir your Ob. Servt

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, Letters to Congress, No. 2, 4 January 1811–14 March 1818, pp. 323–25 (T829, Roll No. 336).

1. *Annals of Congress*, 13th Cong., 3rd sess., 324.

2. The printed version of this letter in *ASP: Naval Affairs*, Vol. 1, pp. 324–25, gives this number as “eight.”

## The Capture of U.S. Frigate *President*

*President would not sail until 14 January 1815, when its commander, Commodore Stephen Decatur, expecting to rendezvous later with the other ships of his squadron, took advantage of a winter storm that had driven the British blockaders off station to put to sea. Two factors led to President's failure to avoid an encounter with the blockading squadron. The first was the frigate's grounding at the entrance of New York Harbor. The damaged rudder and distorted keel slowed the warship's progress. The second was the British commander's accurate estimation of the route the American warship took in attempting to evade the blockade, enabling him to intercept the crippled frigate.*

*President's encounter with the squadron began with a duel with H.M. frigate Endymion and ended with President's capture when the rest of the British squadron came into range. The opposing commanders' accounts of the action differed considerably, the British reporting that President surrendered to Endymion, and Decatur that President had disabled Endymion before being compelled to yield to the squadron.*

COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

U.S. Frigate *President*  
Sandy Hook Jany. 14th. 1815

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that the *Tom Bowline* was yesterday ready for Sea, but unfortunately, in coming down from the Navy Yard, grounded, it will require some time to unlade her & get her off, in consequence of which, and the Enemy's being driven off by the Storm of yesterday, I have determined to proceed to Sea with this Ship, leaving the *Hornet* & *Peacock* to take charge of the *Tom Bowline*, & convoy her out; I have come to this conclusion in consequence of the difficulties that exist in this Ships' crossing the Bar, it being requisite that both Wind & Tide should be favorable; such a time, when the Enemy are absent, may not occur again shortly, the other vessels can proceed at all times,

From the information I have received, no detention will arise in consequence of the *Tom Bowlines* getting on shore, but, if contrary to my expectation, she should be so far injured as to occasion any great loss of time, I have directed Captn. Warrington to apprise you thereof, and to solicit, that one of the small vessels now at the Navy yard be substituted for her, and the *Tom Bowline* be delivered to Com: Porter in her stead.

I had the honor of speaking to you on the subject of Mr. Howel, whom I have appointed as Acting Lieutenant[;] his merits and standing in the service entitle him to this situation<sup>1</sup> as also of Mr. J. Creamor whom I have appointed as acting Midshipman, he has four years in the service,<sup>2</sup>

I have to solicit, Sir, that these Gentlemen may be confirmed in their appointments, I have the honor to be Sir, Very Respectfully yr. obt. St.

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 41 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Edward F. Howell's appointment as midshipman is dated 17 December 1810.

2. John (or Jack) Creamer (Cremar, or Cramer), served as a boy in *United States* during its engagement with *Macedonian* on 25 October 1812. His appointment as midshipman was 1 May 1816. He drowned in a boating accident in 1822. Mackenzie, *Life of Stephen Decatur*, pp. 172, 178–79.

### LOG OF H.M.S. *ENDYMION*

Sunday 15 January

AM modte. Breezes and blowg. 3–34 set Jib and Driver 4 DW Squadron in Company 5–25 ansd. Genl. Signal to Chace bore up and made all Sail daylight a Frigate and Brig ahead Supposed to be Enemy from not answering the private [*sigl.*] with *Majestic* Noon from W coming up with the Chace which now supposed to [*be*] the US Ship *President* & a Brig of War—<sup>1</sup>

1. P.M all hands at quarters gaining fast on the Chace 1–18 Observed the Chace throw overBoard, Boats Spars, Casks, &c.; at 2 the Chace commenced firing from her stern Guns at 2–30 returned the Enemys fire from our Bow Guns—at 2–39 a shot from the Enemy came through the head of the Larboard fore Lower studdingSail, foot of the MainSail, through the stern of the Barge on the Booms and going through the Quarter Deck lodged on the Main without doing any other damage The Chace keeping up a quick fire from her stern Guns, returned it as our Bow Guns could be brought to bear at 4–10. shot away the Enemys Jib halyards, at 4–20 shot away the Enemys Main Topgt. StaySail Sheet The Enemy luffing occasionally to bring his stern Guns to bear, gaining fast on the Chace, observed that our shot did considerable Execution, The Enemys shot passing over us, at 5–10 gained the Enemys starboard quarter and preserved the position evidently galling him much, at 5–30 the Enemy brailed up his spanker, and bore away, shewing a Disposition to Cross our bow and rake us put the helm hard a Weather to meet this manœuvre and brought the Enemy to close Action, in a parallel line of sailing at 6–4 the Enemy Commenced firing musquetry from his Tops, returned it with the marine party, hauled up occasionally to close the Enemy without losing the bearing of our Broadside, Enemy now distant half-musquet shot—our sails and rigging much Cut, The Enemys fire slackg. considerably at 640 the Enemy hauled up apparently to avoid our fire succeeded in giving him two raking Broadsides and then hauled up also, again placing ourselves on his starboard Quarter, at 7–15 the Enemy shot away our boat from the Larboard quarter and lower and main Topgt. studdingSails at 7–18 the Enemy not returning our fire at 7–25 the Enemy Kept more away and recommenced firing at 7–30 the Enemy shot away the larboard main Topmast studding Sail and main brace, at 7–32 the Enemy hauled suddenly to the Wind, trimmed sails & again obtained the advantage of giving him a raking Broadside which he returned with One shot from his stern gun, The Enemy much shattered at 7–40 the Enemy Kept more away firing at Intervals at 7–58 the Enemy Ceased firing, observed him to shew a light Called all hands to bend new sails &c. conceiving that the Enemy had struck, Ceased firing at 8–10 observed two of our squadron coming up at 8–52 new Courses Main TopSail, jib Foretopmast StaySail and spanker bent, and sails



trimmed ranging up with the Chace at 9–5 observed one of our squadron run up on the larboard beam of the Enemy and fire into her, which was not returned but the light hoisted higher in the rigging The ship of our squadron Ceased firing and shot ahead at 9–45 hailed by the *Tenedos* and acquainted her of our not having a boat that Could be hoisted out *Tenedos* took possession of the Chace, which proved to be the United States Frigate *President* secured the Guns and beat the ritual

D, UK-KeNA, Adm. 51/2324, Log of H.M.S. *Endymion*. The tabular information on heading, knots, and wind alongside the left side of the ship's log has been omitted.

1. U.S. frigate *President* and armed merchant brig *Macedonian*, which was accompanying *President* as a supply ship.

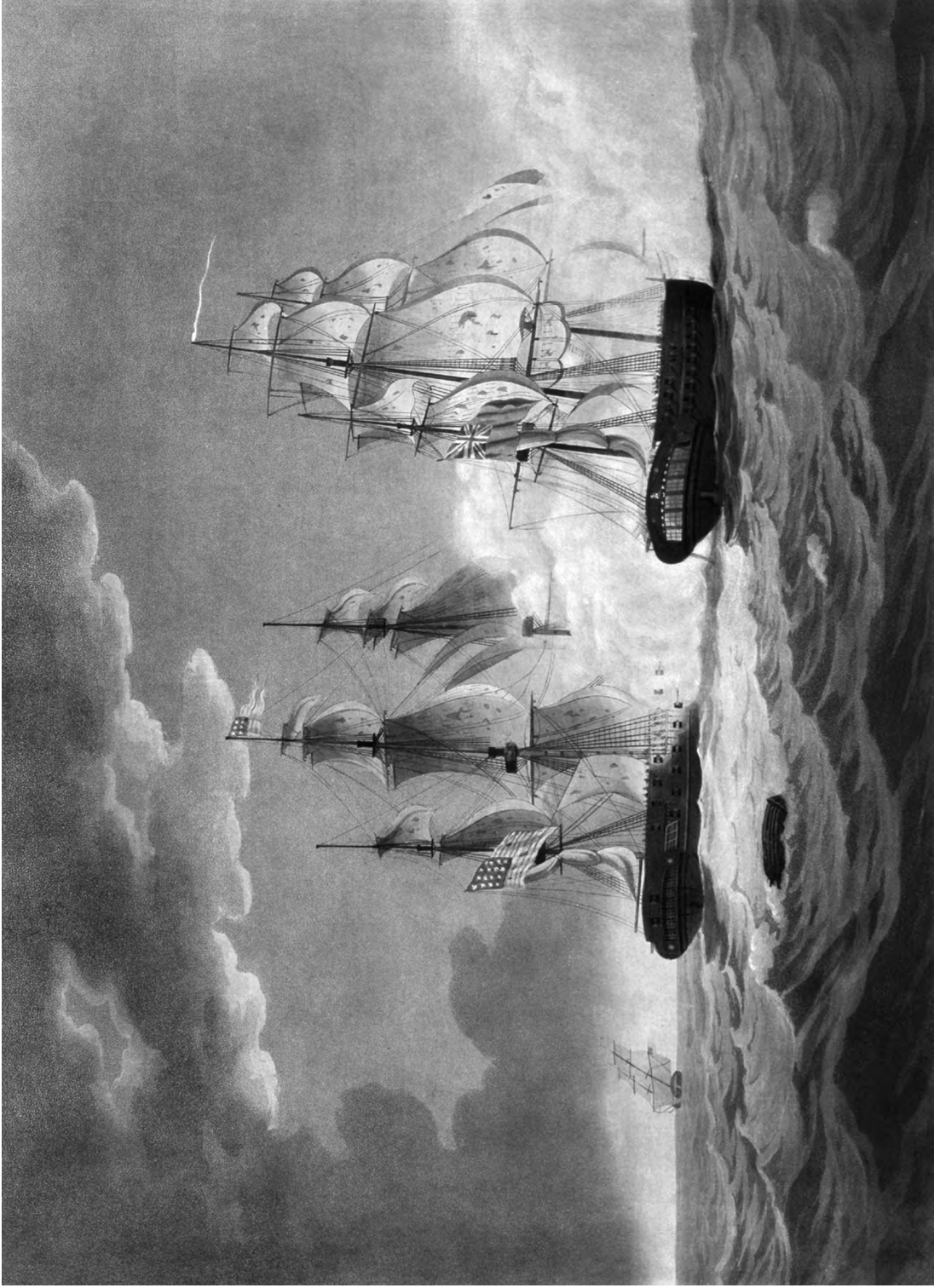
CAPTAIN JOHN HAYES, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL SIR HENRY HOTHAM, R.N.

*Majestic*, at Sea,  
17th. January 1815,  
Lat: 39°43 N. Long: 71°54 W.

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you, that notwithstanding my utmost endeavours to keep the Squadron committed to my charge close in with Sandy Hook, agreeable to your directions, for the purpose of preventing the escape of the United States Ship, *President*, and other Vessels ready for Sea at Staten Island, we were repeatedly blown off by frequent Gales; but the very great attention paid to my Orders and Instructions by the respective Captains, in situations difficult to keep company, prevented separation; and whenever the wind did force us from the Coast, I invariably on the Gale moderating placed the Squadron on that point of bearing from the Hook, I judged it likely from existing circumstances would be the Enemy's track; and it is with great pleasure I have now to inform you of the success of the Squadron, in the Capture of the United States Ship, *President*, Commodore Decatur, on Sunday night, after an anxious chace of eighteen hours—

On Friday the *Tenedos* joined me with your Order to take Captain Parker in that Ship under my command; we were then in company with the *Endymion*, and *Pomone*, off the Hook, and in sight of the Enemy's Ships; but that night the Squadron was blown off again in a severe Snow Storm; on Saturday the wind and weather became favorable for the Enemy, and I had no doubt but he would attempt his escape that night; it was impossible from the direction of the wind to get in with the Hook, and as before stated, (in preference to closing the Land to the Southward,) we stood away to the Northward and Eastward, till the Squadron reached the supposed track of the Enemy; and what is a little singular, at the very instant of arriving at that point, an hour before day light, Sandy Hook bearing WNW. 15 leagues, we were made happy by the sight of a Ship and Brig standing



*President vs. Endymion, 15 January 1815*

to the Southward and Eastward, and not more than two miles on the *Majestic's* weather Bow; the night Signal for a General Chace was made, and promptly obeyed by all the Ships.

In the course of the day the chace became extremely interesting by the endeavours of the Enemy to escape, and the exertions of the Captains to get their respective Ships alongside of him; the former by cutting away his Anchors, and throwing overboard every moveable article, with a great quantity of Provisions; and the latter by trimming their Ships in every way Possible to effect the purpose; as the day advanced, the wind declined, giving the *Endymion* an evident advantage in Sailing; and Captain Hopes exertions enabled him to get his Ship alongside of the Enemy and commence close action, at half an hour past five O'Clock in the evening, which was continued with great gallantry and Spirit on both sides, for two hours and a half, when the *Endymion's* sails being cut from the Yards, the Enemy got ahead. Captain Hope taking this opportunity to bend new Sails to enable him to get his Ship alongside again, the action ceased, till the *Pomone* getting up at half past eleven at night and firing a few Shots, the Enemy hailed to say, he had already surrendered.

The Ship on being taken possession of proved to be the *President* as above stated, Commanded by Commodore Decatur; Victualled for Six months, and said to be bound to the East Indies.

The Vessel in company with her was the \**Macedonian* Brig,<sup>1</sup> which made her escape by very superior Sailing.

And, now Sir, a very pleasing part of my duty, is the bearing testimony to the able and masterly manner in which the *Endymion* was conducted, and the gallantry with which she was fought; and when the effect produced by her well directed fire upon the *President* is witnessed, it cannot be doubted but that Captain Hope would have succeeded in either Capturing or sinking her, had none of the Squadron been in sight.

For your further information I have the honor to enclose Captain Hopes letter with a return of Killed and Wounded onboard the *Endymion*; I have not yet been able to ascertain the loss of the *President*, but I believe it to be much greater than the *Endymions*; and she had Six feet water in the Hold when taken possession of; both Ships were very much cut in Masts and Rigging; and had the present most severe Gale commenced twelve hours sooner, the Prize would undoubtedly have sunk; as soon as the weather will permit a communication, I will forward further particulars, and then send the *Endymion*, and *Pomone* with the Prize and Prisoners to Bermuda. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

(Signed) Jno. Hayes Captain

P. S. The ships having parted company in the Gale, no further particulars have been obtained.

Number of persons of all descriptions on board the *President* previous to the action—about 490<sup>2</sup>

## Number and Caliber of her Guns

Main Deck	30 long 24 pounders
Quarter Deck	{ 14 Forty two pounder Carronades, One Long 24 pounder, and one 24 Pounder Howitzer.
Forecastle-	{ 6 Forty two pounder Canonades, and one long 24 pounder
Fore Top	2 Brass 6 pounders.
Main Top	2 Brass 6 pounders
Mizen Top	<u>2 Smaller Guns.</u>
Total	59—

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 387–90.

1. The following note is written at the foot of the page: “\* a merchant ship laden with provisions.” The armed merchant brig *Macedonian* was to accompany Decatur’s squadron as a supply ship, along with the *Tom Bowline*. When the opportunity to evade the British blockade of New York appeared, Decatur decided to sail only with the fast-sailing *Macedonian*. *Peacock*, *Hornet*, and *Tom Bowline* were to follow as soon as *Tom Bowline*, which had accidently grounded, was ready.

2. In an undated note to Hayes, Captain John Lumley, of H.M.S. *Pomone*, wrote, “I have Examined the Diff. Officers but they Cannot tell the Number of Men at the time of sailing. Neither do they know the Number Killed & Wounded.” Filed with this note is a sheet that begins with the statement, “Number of persons of all descriptions on board including all officers previous to the Action.) about 490.” The remainder of the sheet contains calculations of the number of *President*’s killed and wounded and of the number and caliber of its guns. The figures that follow here in Hayes’s letter to Hotham are drawn from that note. Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters, (Ref U DDHO/7/2).

[Enclosure]

His Majesty’s Ship  
*Endymion* at Sea  
Jany. 15. 1815.

Sir,

I have great satisfaction in acquainting you that we closed with the United States Frigate *President* and brought her to close Action at half past five in the afternoon and continued in that position for two hours and a half, when we succeeded in crippling her very materially.

I have now great pleasure in bearing testimony of the very great assistance I received from the Senior Lieutenant (Morgan)<sup>1</sup> during the whole days proceedings, together with the cool and determined bravery of my Officers and Ship’s Company on this fortunate accasion, where every individual has so conspicuously done his duty. It would be injustice for me to particularize, but I trust the loss and damage sustained by the Enemy’s Frigate will shew the steady and well directed fire kept up by His Majesty’s Ship, under my Command.

Although our loss has been severe, I am happy to state that it is trifling when compared to that of the Enemy.

Herewith I enclose a return of the Killed and Wounded,<sup>2</sup> And have the honour to be Sir Your most Obedient humble Servant.

H Hope

John Hayes Esqr.  
Captain of His Maj's. Ship  
*Majestic*, & Senior Officer Off New York—<sup>3</sup>

LS, Hull History Centre, Hull University Archives, Hull, United Kingdom, Sir Henry Hotham Letters, (Ref U DDHO/7/2). For a copy of this letter and accompanying enclosure, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 391–92.

1. The Admiralty rewarded Lieutenant William T. Morgan with promotion to commander, dating from 18 February 1815.

2. Not printed. It lists 11 killed and 14 wounded.

3. Address line appears at the foot of the first page of this letter.

COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

H. B. M. Ship *Endymion* at sea Jany. 18th. 1815

Sir,

The painful duty of detailing to you the particular causes which preceded & led to the Capture of the late U.S. Frigate *President*, by a squadron of B. M. Ships (as  $\emptyset$  margin)<sup>1</sup> has devolved upon me, in my communication of the 14th. I made known to you my intention of proceeding to Sea on that evening, owing to some mistake of the Pilots the Ship in going out grounded on the Bar, where she continued to strike heavily for an hour and a half, altho' she had broken several of her Rudder Braces & had received such other material injury as to render her return into port desirable, I was unable to do so from the strong Westerly wind which was then blowing, it being now high Water it became necessary to force her over the Bar before the Tide fell, in this we succeeded by 10 O'clock, when we shaped our course along the shore of Long Island for 50 miles, & then steered S. E. by E; at 5 O'clock three Ships were discovered ahead, we immediately hauled up the Ship & passed 2 miles to the Northward of them, at day light we discovered four Ships in chace, one on each quarter & 2 Astern, the leading Ship of the enemy a Razeer.<sup>2</sup> She commenced a fire upon us, but without effect.— At meridian the Wind became light & baffling, we had increased our distance from the Razeer but the next Ship Astern, which was also a large Ship,<sup>3</sup> had gained & continued to gain upon us considerably, we immediately occupied all hands to lighten Ship by starting Water, cutting away the Anchors, throwing overboard provisions, Cables, Spare Spars, Boats & every article that could be got at, keeping the sails wet from the Royals down, at 3 we had the Wind quite light, the enemy who had now been joined by a Brig<sup>4</sup> had a strong Breeze & were coming up with us rapidly, the *Endymion* (mounting 50 Guns, 24 pounders on the main Deck) had now approached us within Gun shot & had commenced a

fire with her Bow Guns which we returned from our Stern, at 5 O'clock she had obtained a position on our Starboard Quarter within half point blank shot, on which neither our Stern nor quarter Guns would bear, we were now steering E by N the Wind NW. I remained with her in this position for half an hour in the hope that she would close with us on our Broadside, in which case I had prepared my crew to board, but from his continuing to yaw his ship to maintain his position it became evident that to close was not his intention, every fire now cut some of our sails or rigging, to have continued our course under these circumstances would have been placing it in his power to cripple us, without being subject to injury himself, & to have hauled up more to the Northward to bring our Stern Guns to bear would have exposed us to his raking fire, It was now dusk, when I determined to alter my course South for the purpose of bringing the enemy abeam, & altho' their Ships Astern were drawing up fast, I felt satisfied I should be enabled to throw him out of the Combat before they could come up & was not without hopes if the night proved dark, (of which there was every appearance) that I might still be enabled to effect my escape; our opponent kept off at the same instant we did, & our fire commenced at the same time, we continued engaged Steering South with Steering Sails set two hours & a half when we completely succeeded in dismantling her,

previously to her dropping entirely out of the Action there were intervals of minutes when the Ships were Broadside & Broadside in which she did not fire a gun, at this period ( $\frac{1}{2}$  past 8 O'clock) altho' dark, the other Ships of the Squadron were in sight & almost within gun shot, we were of course compel'd to abandon her, in resuming our former course for the purpose of avoiding the Squadron we were compel'd to present our Stern to our Antagonist, but such was his state, tho' we were thus exposed & within range of his guns for half an hour that he did not avail himself of this favorable opportunity of raking us, we continued this course until 11 O'clock when two fresh ships of the enemy (the *Pomone* & *Tenedos*) had come up, the *Pomone* had opened her fire on the Larboard Bow within musket shot, the other about 2 Cables length astern, taking a raking position on our quarter, & the rest (with the exception of the *Endymion*) within Gun Shot, thus situated, with about one fifth of my Crew killed & wounded, my Ship crippled & a more than four fold force opposed to me, without a chance of escape left, I deemed it my duty to surrender,

It is with emotions of pride I bear testimony to the gallantry & steadiness of every Officer & man I had the honor to command on this occasion, & I feel satisfied that the fact of their beaten a force equal to themselves in the presence & almost under the Guns of so vastly a superior force, when too it was almost self evident that whatever their exertions might be, they must ultimately be captured will be taken as evidence of what they would have performed had the force opposed to them been on any degree equal, It is with extreme pain I have to inform you that Lieuts. Babbit Hamilton & Howell fell in the Action, they have left no officers of superior merit behind them

If Sir, the issue of this affair had been fortunate, I should have felt it my duty to have recommended to your attention Lieuts. Shubrick & Gallagher, they maintained throughout the day the reputation they had acquired in former Actions

Lieut: Twiggs of the Marines displayed great zeal, his men were well supplied & their fire incomparable, so long as the enemy continued within musket range.

Midshipman Randolph who had charge of the Forecastle Division managed it to my entire satisfaction

from Mr. Robinson who was serving as a Volunteer I received essential aid, particularly after I was deprived of the services of the master, & the severe loss I had sustained in my Officers on the Quarter Deck,

Of our loss in killed & Wounded I am unable at present to give you a correct statement, the attention of the Surgeon being so entirely occupied with the wounded that he was unable to make out a correct return when I left the *President*, nor shall I be enabled to make it until our arrival in Port, we having parted company with the Squadron yesterday, the enclosed list,<sup>5</sup> with the exception I fear of its being short of the number will be found correct

for 24 Hours after the Action it was nearly calm & the Squadron were occupied in repairing the crippled Ships, such of the Crew of the *President* as were not badly wounded were put on board the different Ships, myself & a part of my Crew were put on board this Ship, On the 17th. we had a Gale from the Eastward, when this ship lost her Bowsprit, Fore & Main mast & Mizzen Topmast, all of which were badly wounded, & was in consequence of her disabled condition obliged to throw overboard all of her upper Deck Guns, her loss in killed & wounded must have been very great, I have not been able to ascertain the extent. Ten were buried after I came on board, (36 hours after the Action,) the badly wounded, such as are obliged to keep their Cots, occupy the Starboard side of the Gun Deck from the Cabin Bulk head to the Main Mast, from the crippled state of the *Presidents* Spars I feel satisfied she could not have saved her Masts, & I feel serious apprehensions for the safety of our wounded left on board,

It is due to Captn. Hope to state that every attention has been paid by him to myself & Officers that have been placed on board his ship, that delicacy & humanity could dictate I have the honor to be With much respect Sir yr. Obt. St.

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 50 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. The names of the British squadron's ships listed in an enclosure to this letter were: *Majestic* (razeed), *Endymion*, *Pomone*, *Tenedos*, and a dispatch vessel or brig-sloop, *Dispatch*.

2. H.M.S. *Majestic*.

3. H.M.S. *Endymion*.

4. A dispatch vessel that joined the battle in the early afternoon of 14 January.

5. Not printed. It lists 24 killed and 55 wounded.

COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

New York March 6th. 1815

Sir

I arrived at this place on the 26th. Ulto. indisposed in consequence of a contusion of the breast, received in the Action of the 15 January, & am still confined

I have to request Sir, that a Court shall be appointed as speedily as may meet the convenience of the Government, for the purpose of investigating my conduct in the loss of the late U.S. Ship *President*, In making this request I trust that my expressing a wish that the most distinguished men of the profession may be selected for this purpose, will not be considered as indecorous,

In my official Letter of the 18 Jany I omitted to state that a considerable number of my killed & Wounded was from the fire of the *Pomone* & that the *Endymion* had on board in addition to her own Crew, one Lieutenant one masters mate & 50 men belonging to the *Saturn*, & when the action ceased, was left motionless and unmanageable until she bent new Sails, rove new rigging and fished her Spars, nor did she join the Squadron for Six hours after the Action, & three hours after the surrender of the *President*. my Sword was delivered to Captn. Hays of the *Majestic*, the senior officer of the Squadron, on his Quarter Deck, which he with great politeness immediately returned; I have the honor to enclose to you my Parole,<sup>1</sup> by which you will perceive the British admit the *President* was captured by the Squadron. I should have deemed it unnecessary to have drawn your attention to this document, had not the fact been stated differently by the *Bermuda Gazette* on our arrival there, which statement however the Editor was compel'd to retract through the interference of the Governor and some of the British Officers of the Squadron,<sup>2</sup>

The great assiduity of Dr. Trivett & Surgeons Mates' Dix & Wickes to the wounded merit the highest approbation, the only Officer badly wounded is Midshipman Richard Dale who lost a Leg, a circumstance to be particularly regretted, as he is a young man possessed of every quality to make a distinguished officer. I have the honor to be With much respect yr. obt. St.

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG 45, CL 1815, Vol. 2 no. 16 (M125, Roll 43).

1. Not found.

2. In its 28 January 1815 issue, *The Bermuda Gazette, and Weekly Advertiser*, also known as the *Royal Gazette*, stated, "the credit of capturing the *President* belongs entirely to the *Endymion*: no other ship was engaged, or near enough to afford any assistance." A few days later, the gazette reported that, after *President* had struck, Decatur concealed 68 men in the hold "for the purpose of rising on the prize crew, and recapturing her." *Endymion's* captain, Henry Hope, disclaimed any hand in the latter article and the governor of Bermuda demanded a retraction. The editor, Edmund Ward, at first complied with the demand, publishing in a handbill on 2 February the somewhat ambiguous disavowal. "The editor of the Royal Gazette having learned from authority, that the statement published yesterday was incorrect, takes the earliest opportunity of thus contradicting the detail therein given," (reprinted in *Niles' Weekly Register*, 4 March 1815). On 15 March, however, Ward reasserted the veracity of the report (see R. B. Randolph to the editor, 3 April, where he refers to Ward's "scurrilous remarks in the *Royal Gazette*" of 15 March, in *Niles' Weekly Register*, 15 April 1815). The accusation of concealment and its reassertion apparently appeared in supplements or extraordinary issues, copies of which we have not seen. They do not appear in the regular weekly issues. Bowen, *Naval Monument*, 164–67, summarizes the controversy. Decatur writes here in this letter as if Ward's retraction related to *President's* striking to *Endymion*, making no reference to the report of his concealing men in *President's* hold, whereas it is probable that Ward intended the retraction to refer to the latter accusation.





*John T. Shubrick*

COURT OF INQUIRY INTO LOSS OF *PRESIDENT*:  
TESTIMONY OF LIEUTENANT JOHN T. SHUBRICK

[Extract]

[*New York, U.S.S. Constellation, 11 April 1815*]

John T Shubrick having appeared and been sworn to testify the truth, was examined, and testified as follows

That he was second Lieutenant on board the *President* when she lately sailed from New York and when she was captured on the fifteenth day of January last. That he commanded the first division on the Gun Deck- Being desired by the Court to state the proceeding of the Ship and the occurrences from the time the Ship left the Harbour of New York- he proceeded as follows—

On the morning of the 14th. Jany. 1815 The *President* was laying at Staten Island, and at about 9 oclock A.M. of that day unmoored, and proceeded to Sandy Hook, where she anchor'd at about 12 or 1 Oclock— Three Gun Boats were dispatch'd from the Hook to anchor as Guides, for the ship to pass the Bar & to proceed to sea.

At 4 P.M. or about that time the Ship got under way and stood for the Bar with an intention of anchoring inside the Bar to wait there for a proper time to get over— When they came near the First Gun Boat the Ship was rounded to and the Anchor let go, at about that time the Ship struck on the Bar. The Cable was immediately cut and the fore & Mizen Topsails sheeted home and hoisted with a design to shoot the Ship further to the Southward, The Ship thumped heavily, and was moved a little but did not deepen her water The Sails wind then taken in and a second Anchor let go. The Royal Yards were send down, & preparations made to lighten the Ship aloft. The Guns on the Gun Deck were moved forward to bring the Ship on an even keel. The Ship continued to thump very heavily on the Bar till about 8 oclock- the violence of her shocks decreasing as the tide rose—

The Anchor was weigh'd about half past 8 and the Ship between that and about 9 OClock passed the Bar touching as she went over it. That the Ship was on the Bar certainly not less than one hour and a half, and a great part of that time striking very heavily The Boats as soon as the ship got clear of the Bar were run up. The Anchors were Stowed and the Ship at about 10 OClock P.M. made sail and steered E. by N. She continued that Course or near it till about 3 oclock the next morning when she was kept away to about SE. About 5 OClock A M two ships were discovered ahead. The *President* was then haul'd up to the Nd. & Ed. and she passed two or three miles to the Windward & Northd. of the strange sails. About or just before 6 Oclock AM. a blue light was burnt by one of the strangers in sight which were supposed to be Enemies. At Day Light four Ships were discovered in chase, and one of them fired a shot at the *President* which fell short about a quarter of a mile At 8 oclock A M. they perceived they had dropped the nearest Ship but the other Ships appear'd to gain on the *President* as soon as this was perceived, the sails of the *President* from the Royals down were kept wet and they commenced trimming the Ship and to lighten her by cutting away the anchors throwing overboard some of the heavy Boats, spare spar, Cables, starting water throwing over provisions &c and some Shot the wind had been dying

away the whole morning and at about 1 O'clock the headmost ship, (which they afterwards ascertained was the *Endymion*) fired one or two shot at the *President* which were returned, and Shot continued to be exchanged at intervals till about 3 O'clock P.M. when the fire on both sides, was as rapid as the heavy swell going would permit— The Enemy firing his Bow chases and the *President* returning her stern Guns (The witness desires to state than in his first part of his examination, he omitted to mention that at about 10 O'clock A.M. of the 14th. sea time, a sail was discovered in the N.E. which had the appearance of a man of war, which induced them to alter the course of the Ship and to steer to the Sd. & Ed. as he had mentioned in the former part of his testimony, which course was continued until it was discovered that a strange Sail in the N.E. was only a Brig of War that this vessel passed the *President* to windward joined the Squadron in chase and Continued with them.[.]) The witness resuming the course of his narrative Says, that at about 4 O'clock P.M. of the 15th. sea time, the *Endymion* had gained a position on the *Presidents* Starboard quarter, so that the *President* could not without altering her course bring any Gun to bear. At this time the remainder of the Enemys Ships were in chase, Two large Ships with the Brig were on the Larboard quarter and one large Ship was astern, The most distant the deponent does not think was more than seven miles from the *President* and the others not more than five miles—The *Presidt.* continued her course receiving the fire of the *Endymion*, till about dusk The Enemy continually Yawing his Ship to prevent her shooting ahead, that he might maintain his favourable position on the *President's* quarter— That at about dusk the *President* was kept away so as to bring her broadside to bear on the *Endymion* and previous to her firing the broadside the covers were taken off the Battle Lanthorns, which had been previously lighted. The *President* and *Endymion* were at the time within Musket shot of each other and continued so for ten or fifteen Minutes, steering probably the same course. At the expiration of the above mentioned time the *Endymion* edged off from the *President* and hauld up for the Other Enemy Ships The wind was now very light, in consequence of which the *Endymion* increased her distance from the *President* very slowly, that from the time the *Endymion* sheer'd off, her fire was not so rapid as it had been and it continued to slacken untill about 8 o'clock in the Evening when her fire entirely ceased. All hands were then called on the *President* to make sail and repair Damages and she resumed her former course to the Nd. & Ed.

The Enemy Squadron was then coming up very fast At about 11 P.M. Two of the Enemy Ships which they afterward ascertained to be *Pomone* & *Tenedos* had approach'd very near to the *President* (Say to about a Cables length) on her Larboard Quarter and the other Enemy Vessel, which they afterward ascertained to be the *Majestic* Razee, was astern within very short Gun Shot. Commodore Decatur then asked the deponents Opinion with regard to the *President*, The deponent thereupon gave it as his Opinion that a further contest would be unavailing, and that the Ship ought to be surrendered to so superior a force, Upon this Commo. Decatur directed the deponent to send for the remainder of the Officers who were Mr. Gallagher & Mr. Robinson—Mr. Gallagher being the only surviving Lieut. and Mr. Robinson acting in the place of the Master who was Wounded. Mr. Gallagher joined the Commodore and the deponent on the quarter Deck first In answer to the same question from Commodore Decatur, which had been put by him to the Deponent, Mr. Gallaghers answer was couched in the same terms as

those which had been used by the deponent— Mr. Robinson then joined them, and he agreed on the absolute necessity and propriety of surrendering the Ship. Commodore Decatur then directed that a light should be hoisted with Mizzen Rigging, which the deponent ordered Temple Haight, a quarter Master to do, When the quarter Master about executing the orders Mr. Robinson made some exclamation, which appeared expressive of dissatisfaction, which being heard by Commodore Decatur, he stopped the man who was hoisting the light, and enquired of Mr. Robinson what he meant— upon which Mr. Robinson stated that he did not mean to disapprove of surrendering the ship, but it was merely an expression of the mortification which felt at the necessity of yielding to the Enemy—

The Light was then hoisted and the Crew ordered below to prevent them being killed unnecessarily—

Quesn. Question by the Court; Did the Ships on the quarter which you afterwards ascertained to be the *Pomone* & *Tenedos* open a fire on the *President*, before the light in the Mizzen Rigging was hoisted?

Ansr. The two Ships above mentioned ranged up the *Pomone* along side & the *Tenedos* on the quarter, the light was then hoisted and the *Pomone* commenced firing. The *Pomone* fired three or four Broad-sides after the light was hoisted, At this time Commodore Decatur hailed the *Pomone* on the larboard Side, and the *Tenedos* hailing, the Deponent answd. from the Starboard quarter. The Enemy asked ‘What Ship.’ and being answered “the US. Ship *President*.”, they asked if she had surrendered, and was answd. in the affirmative, The Boats from the *Pomone* & *Tenedos* were sent on board and the Enemy took possession of the *President*—

Question. (by the Court) What was the Situation of the *Endymion* at the time of the surrender,

Ansr. This deponent does not recollect to have Seen her at the moment of surrender but he had observed her some short time previous, and she could not at the time of *Presidents* surrender (in his opinion) have been within seven Miles of the *President*

Question (by the Court). How long after the *President* surrendered was it before *Endymion* Came up & joined the Squadron?

Answer He does not know how long it was He turned in at about two oclock AM. and then the *Endymion* had not come up—

Questions by Comm. Decatur—

Quesn. From the Wind & Sea that prevailed when the *President* passed the Bar, was it possible to get the Ship back to her former anchorage?

Ansr. It was not, The Wind was Strong from the West. N.W. and the tide was ebb with a heavy Swell in the Bar occasioned by the previous prevalence of Easterly weather—

Quesn. Was the Sailing of the Ship injured in your Opinion by her having Struck on the Bar—

Ansr. It was, And he is confirmed in this Opinion by having afterwards when the *President* arrived at Bermuda observed that she was very much hoggd and twisted, which he believes was owing to her having struck on the Bar, and this he thinks must have manually effected her Sailing—

- Question Was it in consequence of the approach of the other Ships of the Enemys Squadron that the *President* left the *Endymion*
- Answer. It was—
- Question Under what Sail was the *President* when she left the *Endymion*?
- Answer. She had her staysails and all her Steering sails on the larboard side set—
- Question Was the *Endymion* in a situation to follow the *President*, when the *President* left her without bending fresh sails and repairing Damage?
- Answer. I presume not, From the view I had of her during the fight, she appeared very much cut to pieces her sails seemed entirely useless, and She appeared so much injured that She could not manoeuvre—
- Question. Did the *President* present her stern to the *Endymion*, when the *President* altered her course— and was the *President* at that time within Gun Shot of the *Endymion*—
- Answer The *President* at that time did present her stern to the *Endymion* and was within Gun Shot—
- Question. Did the *Endymion* at this time avail herself of the opportunity which she had, to rake the *President*?
- Answer. She did not, She did not fire a Gun after the *President* altered her course to leave her—
- Question. Was there at any time, any disposition manifested by any Officer on board the *President*, or by any of her crew to surrender the *President* to the *Endymion* Or was the *President* while engaged with the *Endymion* in such a state or would in your Opinion have rendered a surrender necessary or proper?
- Answer I saw nothing in any Officers or man on board the *President* which manifested any disposition to surrender or thought of surrendering to the *Endymion*— The *President* was so little injured by her engagement with the *Endymion* that a surrender to that Ship would neither have been necessary or proper The *President* when the *Endymion* left her was in such a state that she could have placed herself in relation to the *Endymion*, as she pleased, while the *Endymion* was so crippled that she could not manoeuvre and must have been at the mercy of the *President*—
- Question If the *Endymion* had been alone, do you believe the *President* would have captured her—
- Answer I do— I firmly believe it—
- Question Was the *Endymion* at any time during the action with her, in such a situation as that she could have been boarded by the *President*—
- Answer No. The *Endymion* appeared anxiously to avoid offering the *President* an opportunity to board. At one time the *President* luff'd up to board the *Endymion*. She evidently haul'd off—
- Question Did Commodore Decatur previous to this apprise his officers & Crew, that he intended to board the *Endymion*, if She Shoul put it in his power to do so?
- Answer. He did. The Boarders were prepared for the purpose- The Crew cheerd the Commodore when he communicated to them this design and appeared very much pleased with it—

- Question. How far from the *President & Endymion* was the headmost ship of the rest of the Enemy Squadron, when the *President* left the *Endymion*?
- Answer They were within Gun Shot as I judged and momentarily I expected them to fire—
- Question How long after the Action had ceased between the *President & Endymion*, before the other Ships came up with the *President*
- Ansr. Between two & three hours—
- Question In Your Opinion could the *President* been saved from Capture, by persuing any other course or any other measures than those which were adopted—
- Ansr. No. In my Opinion, the course & measures adopted were the only ones which could have offered any reasonable hope of Escape—

Questions by the Court

- Question Was the Conduct of the Officers and the Ships company of the *President* before and after the surrender, such as the rules & regulations of the service require—
- Answer. It was—
- Question Did they do all in their power to defend the Ship—
- Answer They did. So far as came within my knowledge—
- Question What was the force of the *President* as to men and guns, at the time of the Engagement?
- Ansr. The Crew I believe was about four Hundred & fifty, and I am Sure It did not exceed four Hundred & Sixty, including Officers and Marines and every Soul on board, The *President* Mounted 30. twenty four pounders on the Main Deck, 2 twenty four pounders and 20. forty two pound Carronades, on the quarter Deck and forecastle—
- Question You have read Commodore Decatur's Official letter the Secretary of the Navy respecting the Capture of the *President*, Do you believe it to be a true Statement of the circumstances in relation thereto?
- Answr. I do. . . .

[*New York, U.S.S. Constellation, 14 April 1815*]

Lieutenant John T Shubrick being again called at the request of Commodore Decatur is further examined as follows.

- Question By the Court. Did Commodore Decatur before during or after the action use any abusive or intemperate language to you to any of the officers to your knowledge?
- Answer He did not to me and I knew of none.
- Question Was Commodore Decatur's Conduct during the Chace and the action Cool and Collected?
- Answer It was perfectly so—

OPINION OF THE COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE LOSS OF *PRESIDENT*

[*New York, U.S.S. Constellation, 14 April 1815*]

The Minutes of the Court, having been read and approved the court was cleared and after due deliberation, resolved to express the sentiments and opinions of the members on the matters submitted to them, as follows:—

In execution of the order of the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy, We have (with the exception of two very young midshipmen) examined every officer belonging to the *President*, within the reach of the Court, who survived the late glorious contest between the Frigate *President* and a squadron of his Britannic Majesty. We are of opinion, that the primary cause of the loss of the *President* was her running on the bar, as she was leaving this port. The violence and continuance of the shocks she received, for an hour and half or more, considering that she was laden with stores and provisions for a very long cruise, could not but have injured her greatly, and must have impeded her Sailing. Her hogged and twisted appearance after she arrived at Bermuda, must have been the effects of this unfortunate accident. We are convinced, that it is owing to this, that the enemy was able to overtake her.

The striking of the *President* on the bar, cannot be imputed, to the fault of any officer, who was attached to her: on the Contrary, we think every possible precaution was taken, and the utmost exertions were used by her Commander and officers to insure her safe passage over the bar, and to relieve her after she had struck. The accident was occasioned by some mistake in placing the boats, which were to serve as beacons for the *President*, thro' a channel always dangerous for a vessel of her draft, but particularly so at such a time as she was obliged to select for passing it, when the land-marks could not be distinguished.

From the time that the Superiority of the enemy's force was ascertained and it became the duty of the *President* to evade it, we are convinced, that the most proper measures were pursued and that she made every possible effort to escape. No means in our opinion were so likely to be attended with success as those which were adopted by Commodore Decatur. Any suggestions that different measures would have been more proper or more likely to accomplish the object, we think are without foundation and may be result of ignorance, or the dictates of a culpable ambition, or of envy. We consider the management of the *President* from the time the chase commenced, till her surrender as the highest evidence of the experience, skill and resources of her commander, and of the ability and seamanship of her officers and crew. We fear that we cannot express in a manner that will do justice to our feelings our admiration of the conduct of Commodore Decatur and his officers and crew, while engaged with the enemy. Threatened with a force so superior, possessing advantages, which must have appeared to render all opposition unavailing, otherwise than as it might affect the honor of our navy, and the character of our Seamen. They fought with a spirit which no prospect of success could have heightened; and if victory had met its common reward the *Endymions* name would have been added to our list of naval conquests. In this unequal conflict, the enemy gained a ship, but the victory was ours. When the *President* was obliged to leave the *Endymion* to avoid the other ships, which were fast coming up, the *Endymion* was subdued, and if her friends had not been at hand to rescue

her, she was so entirely disabled, that she soon must have struck her flag. A proof of this is, that she made no attempt to pursue the *President* or to annoy her by a single shot while the *President* was within her reach, when with the hope of escape from the overwhelming force which was nearly upon her the *President* presented her stern, to the *Endymion's* broad side. A further proof that the *Endymion* was conquered, is the shattered condition in which she appeared, while the *President* in the contest with her, had sustained but little injury; and the fact, that the *Endymion* did not join the squadron, till many hours after the *President* had been surrounded by the other four enemy ships and had surrendered to them, is strong, corroborative evidence of the disabled state in which the *President* left the *Endymion*.

We think it due to Commodore Decatur and his heroic officers and crew, to notice the proposition he made, to board the *Endymion*, when he found she was coming up and the manner in which this proposition was received by his gallant crew. Such a design at such a time, could only have been conceived by a soul without fear, and approved with enthusiastic cheerings by men regardless of danger. Had not the enemy perceived the attempt and availed himself of the power she had in that early part of the action, to shun the approach of the *President* the American Stars, might now be shining in the *Endymion*. In the subsequent part of the engagement, the enemy's Squadron was too near to permit the execution of this design, and the disabled state of the *Endymion* would have frustrated the principal object which Commodore Decatur had in making so bold an attempt, which was to avail himself of the *Endymion's* superior sailing, to escape with his crew, from his pursuers.

We conclude by expressing our opinion, that Commodore Decatur as well during the chase as thro' his contest with the Enemy, evinced great judgment and skill, perfect coolness, the most determined resolution and heroic courage. That his conduct and the conduct of his officers and crew, is highly honorable to them, to the American Navy, and deserves the warmest gratitude of their Country. That they did not give up their ship, 'till she was surrounded and overpowered by a force so superior, that further resistance would have been unjustifiable and a useless sacrifice of the lives of brave men.

The order of the Secretary of the Navy, requires us to express an opinion as to the conduct of the officers and crew of the *President* after the capture. The testimony of all the witnesses concurs in enabling us to give it our decided approbation.

By the court.<sup>1</sup>

A Murray Prest.

Cadwallader D Colden  
Judge Advocate

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 202 (M273, Roll No. 8). For the complete printed record of this court's proceedings, see *Causes of the Loss of the Frigate President*.

1. The court's membership consisted of Captains Alexander Murray, Isaac Hull, and Samuel Evans with Murray acting as president. Cadwallader D. Colden served in the capacity of judge advocate.



SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

Como: }  
New York. }

Navy Department  
April 20th: 1815.

Sir

In the course of official duty, it is my highest satisfaction to render justice to the gallantry and good conduct of the brave officers and Seamen of the United States Navy.—

In giving an official satisfaction to the recent proceedings of the Court of Enquiry instituted at your request, to investigate the cause of the loss by Capture, of the Frigate *President* late of the Navy of the United States, while under your Command, and to enquire into the conduct of the Commander, Officers & Crew of said Frigate, before and after the surrender to the Enemy; it would be equally unjust to your merit, as well as to my sentiments & feelings, to pass over this investigation with a mere formal approbation.—<sup>1</sup> I have therefore, Sir, to express to you in the fullest manner, the high sense of approbation, which the President, of the United States, and this Department, entertain for your professional character, as an Officer, who, in every instance, has added lustre to the stars of the Union, and whose brilliant actions have raised the national honor, and fame, even, in the moment of surrendering your Ship to an Enemy's Squadron of vastly superior force, over whose attack singly, you were decidedly triumphant;—and you will be pleased to present to each of your gallant Officers and Crew, the thanks of your Government, for their brave defence of the Ship and the flag of the United States.—

The proceedings and opinions of the Court of Enquiry, of which Commodore Alexander Murray is president are approved.— I am, very respectfully &c

B. W. Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 107 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Captain Alexander Murray, president of the court, and Calwallader D. Colden, judge advocate, transmitted the proceedings and opinion of the court to Crowninshield on 17 April. DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 202 (M273, Roll No. 6).

## The Search for a New Navy Secretary

*With William Jones having resigned as Secretary of the Navy, President Madison cast about for a worthy candidate to succeed his departing department head.<sup>1</sup> He first approached Captain John Rodgers, “the navy’s unchallenged professional leader” at the time.<sup>2</sup> Though he believed himself ill-suited to fill this office, Rodgers was willing to accept the post as long as such acceptance did not interfere with his “Rank or further pretensions as an Officer of the Navy.”<sup>3</sup> But Rodgers’s insistence on retaining his captain’s rank while serving as Navy Secretary, a circumstance that Madison deemed legally incompatible, prompted the President to search elsewhere for William Jones’s replacement. He finally secured the services of Benjamin W. Crowninshield, a former merchant captain and a member of one of Salem,*

*Massachusetts's most prominent and wealthy families.*<sup>4</sup> *Crowninshield would oversee the Navy's transition from war to peacetime service.*

1. For documents relating to Jones's resignation, see pp. 328–32.

2. *McKee, Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession*, p. 225.

3. *Rodgers to Madison*, 29 November 1814, below.

4. For a brief treatment of Crowninshield's direction of the Navy Department, see Hall, "Benjamin W. Crowninshield," pp. 113–28.

### PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Washington Novr. 24. 1814

Dear Sir

The present Secretary of the Navy being about to retire into private life, my thoughts are turned on you for his Successor. But before I make the nomination to the Senate, it will be agreeable to me & proper in every respect, that I shd. have your sanction to it. Will you be so good as to satisfy me on this point? And as Mr. Jones' affairs will not, I find permit him to remain in the Dept. after the 1st of Decr. the earliest answer from you is desirable. Should it be consistent with your views of serving your Country, as I hope will be the case, to fill the important vacancy, it is further desirable that you be prepared to transfer yourself to it, with the least possible delay; some of the most important business of the Dept. being in a very interesting train. Accept assurances of my great esteem & of my friendly respects

J. M.

ALS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Roll No. 16. For another printed copy of this letter, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, pp. 399–400.

### COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON

Phila. Novr. 29th. 1814

Respected Sir

Your Letter of the 24th Inst. did not reach me until late last Night.—

The estimation in which you appear to hold my qualifications to fill the important Office of Secretary of the Navy, can not be otherwise than flattering to my pride, and I would fain add, as singularly auspicious to my views, did not my own reason but too forcibly tell me that my abilities are not of a kind to justify my acceptance of a trust so highly important and responsible.— No Sir, neither my habits, temper, or Education are such as, in my own estimation, to sanction the like.

The diversity of experience and information necessary to qualify a person to fill the Office with satisfaction to himself, and advantage to the Public Interests, is seldom, if ever, to be found in any individual, and more particularly in one whose Scholastic education has been of a very limited character

With the most respectful deference, permit me Sir, to observe, that I have for a long time past considered a single individual entirely incompetent to execute the duties, which under the present regulations of the Office, devolve on the Secretary of the Navy, and for this reason that an auxiliary aid uniting the services of three or five of the most intelligent and respectable Navy Officers is indispensable.—

In fine, Sir, instead of a single individual being adequate to the uniform and exact discharge of all the multifarious duties of the Office, experience teaches us, that the united talents of three or even five persons would not be superfluous; and for this reason I beg leave to suggest for your consideration, whether it might not be advisable to combine the services of three or five Navy Officers, taking such care in their selection as to unite all the diversity of Talent which may be deemed important.

For the sake of perspicuity, say that the duties of the Navy Office shall be executed by a Board to consist of a secretary of the Navy and three or five Navy Officers as Directors; the former to be a civilian of high reputation, otherwise a person of acknowledged talents and respectable standing in Society; and the latter, Navy Officers of Rank and fair reputation, so far as regards their intelligence and professional acquirements:— the Secretary of the Navy as heretofore, to belong to the Presidents cabinet council; to be the organ of communication between the Department and the Executive and Legislative Branches of the Government; as also, to have the general direction and controul of all the Fiscal duties of the Department. Those being the only essential duties of the Office except such as imperiously require the aid of Nautical information and practical experience in their execution; I would advise that all others be pl[*a*]ced under the Superintendance and management of the Directors.—

Having thus given you a brief and hasty sketch of my Ideas of the collected talent necessary to ensure the prompt and entire execution of the duties required of such an Establishment, permit me to inform you Sir, that after all which I have said of my own incapacity, you should still deem it expedient to require my appointment to the responsible situation which you have been pleased to propose, I will not any longer hesitate to comply with your arrangements, but accept the situation for a limited time, or at any rate until the Office can be better organised, or more suitably provided for—the like however, I must beg leave to stipulate, is not to be at the expence of interfering with my Rank or further pretensions as an Officer of the Navy.—

At present, Sir, I will only add, that whatever your own Judgement may suggest as being most proper, will not only meet my concurrence, but be perfectly agreeable and satisfactory to me.— I beg that you will be pleased to accept my best acknowledgements, and to be assured of the high consideration and perfect respect, with which I have the honor to be Respected Sr, Yr Obt Servt.

Signed Jno. Rodgers

LB, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box III:38. For another printed copy of this letter, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, pp. 406–8.

## ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD RUSH TO PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON

In considering the case submitted to him yesterday by the President, the attorney general has the honor to report; that, in his opinion, the holding a commission and rank as captain in the navy would be incompatible under the laws with holding, at the same time, the office of secretary of the department of the navy.

Washington  
December 4. 1814.

D, DLC, James Madison Papers, Roll No. 16. For another printed version of this document, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, p. 420.

## PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Washington Decr. 4. 1814

Dear Sir

I have duly recd. yours of the 29th. Ult. The wishes conveyed in mine which it answers, are far from being lessened by a diffidence of yourself, in which I can not participate. But I regret to find an insuperable obstacle to them, in your repugnance to exchange your present Commission for the one I had contemplated, & the legal incompatibility between them, according to an official exposition on the subject. My regret is the greater as the obstacle applies equally to the aid of your temporary services.

Under these circumstances I can only express the satisfaction I should have felt at a different result, and repeat the assurances of my esteem & my best respects.

James Madison

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box III:23. Docket: "President Madison on the Subject of having Offered the Secretaryship of the Navy to Com. R." For another printed copy of this letter, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, pp. 415–16.

## PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON TO BENJAMIN W. CROWNINSHIELD

Wash: Decr. 15. 1814

Sir

Mr. Jones having retired from the Secretaryship of the Navy, my thoughts have been turned to you as a desirable Successor; and I have this day sent in your name to the Senate for the appointment. I hope you will excuse my doing it without your consent which would have been asked, if the business of that Dept. had less urged an avoidance of delay. The same consideration will apologize for my hoping that it will not be inconsistent with your views to



*Benjamin W. Crowninshield*

aid your Country in that Station, nor with your conveniency to be prepared to repair to it as soon as you may receive notice that the Senate have given effect to the nomination. Accept Sir assurances of my esteem and of my friendly respects

J. M.

AD, DLC, James Madison Papers, Roll No. 16. For another printed version of this document, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, p. 436.

PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON TO BENJAMIN W. CROWNINSHIELD

Washington Dcr. 23. 1814

Dear Sir

My letter of the 15th will have informed you that I had taken the liberty of naming you to the Senate for the vacancy in the Secretaryship of the Navy. I have now the pleasure to inclose a Commission by which you will see that the Senate have sanctioned the appointment.

I repeat my hope that it will not be inconsistent with your views to undertake that very important service, and that its urgency will prevail on you to lose not a moment in repairing to the Seat of Govt. Accept my friendly respects

James Madison

ALS, MH-H, MS Am 1649.23 (87). For another printed version of this document, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, p. 464.

BENJAMIN W. CROWNINSHIELD TO PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON

Salem Decr. 26th. 1814.

Sir

Your polite & friendly communication of the 15 Int. has been duly rec'd, wherein you state that your thoughts have been turned to me as a proper person for Secretary of the Navy Department; for this expression of your kind & frankly avowed opinion of my fitness for the office, be pleased to accept the thanks of a grateful heart, & be assured, if I could, consistant with the duties I owe my family & friends, there is no administration I should be more proud to serve than yours; but my health & domestic arrangements all conspire to tell me that I ought not to attempt so difficult & arduous an undertaking.

I must therefore beg of you to obtain some one to fill that station better than myself & perhaps more satisfactorily to the public. Accept Sir the assurance of my highest esteem & respect.

B W Crowninshield

ALS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Roll No. 16. For another printed version of this, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, p. 467.

BENJAMIN W. CROWNINSHIELD TO PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON

Salem 28th. Decr. 1814.

Sir,

At the special request of my political friends, & the permission of my family, I have prevail'd on myself to accept your very honorable appointment of Secretary of the Navy of the U States; if you have not named any other person for that office to the Honl. Senate, in consequence of my letter of 26th. Inst.

I will come on to Washington in a week at farthest; this reconsideration I hope you will not think dishonorable. very respectfully Sir Yr. Obt. he. St.

B W Crowninshield

ALS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Roll No. 16. For another printed version of this letter, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, pp. 471–72.

PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON TO BENJAMIN W. CROWNINSHIELD

Washington Jany. 3. 1815

Dear Sir

I have just recd. yours of the 28 Dcr. communicating the agreeable result of your reconsideration of your first determination on the subject of the Secretaryship of the Navy. It only remains to say that no obstacle has been created by another nomination to the Senate, and to repeat my hopes that you will be with us as soon as possible. Accept my friendly respects

James Madison

ALS, MaSaPEM, MH 15, Crowninshield Family Papers, Box 13, Folder 6. For another printed version of this letter, see Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, p. 484.

## The 1815 Cruise of *Peacock*

*Peacock* returned from its second 1814 cruise in late October. Lewis Warrington spent the next months refitting his sloop and waiting, along with squadron commander Stephen Decatur (President), James Biddle (Hornet), and John Carlton (supply ship Tom Bowline), for a chance to escape the British blockade off New York. President sortied first on 14 January, but surrendered the next day, unbeknownst to Biddle and Warrington, to a British squadron. Hornet and *Peacock* sailed together on 23 January for the rendezvous point—Tristan da Cunha—near Africa in the south Atlantic to embark on a commerce-raiding cruise.<sup>1</sup>

*News of the treaty of peace did not reach New York until after the squadron had left. Peacock and Hornet separated soon after their departure, but reunited in late March at the rendezvous.<sup>2</sup> The two ships cruised off Tristan da Cunha for 23 days waiting for President until the appearance of H.M.S. Cornwallis forced their separation again.<sup>3</sup> Unaware of the ratification of a treaty of peace, Warrington continued on to the East Indies. Arriving at the island of Java on 8 June, Peacock's crew eagerly envisioned garnering lucrative prizes after suffering months of monotonous cruising. Indeed, the American sloop captured several British vessels four months after the peace treaty was ratified. After Peacock's last engagement on 30 June 1815 in the Sunda Strait with the East India Company brig Nautilus, Lieutenant Charles Boyce commanding, the British provided Warrington with evidence that peace was declared. Although the War of 1812 was finally over, the diplomatic war over Warrington's actions during June of 1815 continued for years as the British pursued compensation for its commercial losses.<sup>4</sup>*

1. For more on President's final cruise, see pp. 693–711.

2. For more on Hornet's engagement with H.M.S. Penguin, see pp. 738–41, 742–43, and 745–47.

3. For more on Hornet's encounter with H.M.S. Cornwallis, see pp. 743–45 and 747–49.

4. For more on Peacock's last cruise, see Hughes, "Peacock in the Sunda Strait."

### JOURNAL OF MIDSHIPMAN WILLIAM T. RODGERS

[Extract]

1815

- Jany. the last cruize we have gone over about 30,000 Miles pr. Log—  
 11th. Dropped down to the Quarantine & moored near the US. Frigate *President* & Sloop of War *Hornet*  
 14th. US. Frigate *President* sailed on a cruize in company with the *Macedonian* Store ship—  
 20th. Dropped down to Prince's Bay ready for sea—  
 22nd. Experienced a heavy Gale of wind (accompanied with snow & hail) from Northward & Eastward  
 23rd. Stood to sea in company with the U.S.S. *Hornet* & store ship *Tom Bowline* Capt. Carleton, with a fine breeze from NW— 24th. saw a sail supposed one of Johnny Bull's sharpshighted cruisers— did not think it worth while to trouble her or ourselves to chase her—  
 26th<sup>1</sup> discovered 2 sail to Leeward to which we gave chase—the weather squally— soon came up with the sail last seen while the *Hornet* went in pursuit of the 1st.—the *Tom Bowline* with us the chase being brought to proved to be the American Schooner *Delight* of & from Salem Captn.— bound to St. Bartholemews Guadalupe with lumber— this schooner we boarded under English colors she being under the same flag on coming up with her she hailed from "Liverpool Nova Scotia" supposing us an English Man of War, but changed his colors (& no doubt his papers) on ascertaining our real character— at 12 this night lost sight of the *Tom Bowline* & hove to for her—& burnt blue lights &c &c for her guidance— At 7 next Morning discovered a sail ahead & gave chase— at 9 came up with her & making the Signal she proved to be the *Tom Bowline*—*Hornet* out of sight . . .



[*February*]

27: Monday— This day crossed the Equinoctial Line and as “Dad Neptune” did not think proper to favor us with a visit a double allowance of liquor was served out to all hands that the already initiated Sons of Neptune might drink his health & those not initiated might invoke his special protection— Neptune heard us, was satisfied, and ordered Old Boreas to give us a breeze as a token of his acknowledgement of us—<sup>2</sup> . . . .

[*March*]

24th. 7.20' in the Morning sent a boat ashore to see about watering & get necessaries for the Ship— 9 the boat returned—& brought a report of an action having been fought yesterday off the Island between a Ship & a Brig probably the *Hornet* & also reported that the Brig *Macedonian* Capt Black had been at the Island & given an account that the US. Frigate *President* Com: Decatur had been captured by three frigates when three days out— this ship we expected to find here— at 10 o'clock came to anchor with the stream anchor in thirty faths water—& sent boats ashore for water—

Since leaving New York we have run pr Log. 7536 Miles . . . .

26th. 45.' PM. the *Hornet* came under our stern & gave us three cheers which was returned by three from our ship & was answered by another— sent a boat on board of her which returned with the news that she had on 23rd. in sight of Tritan D'Acunha captured after an action of 26 minutes HBM Brig *Penguin* Capt. Dickinson of 19 guns—Wounded on Board the *Hornet*, Capt Biddle, 1st. Lieut Connor, & [*left blank*] men & one man killed— Capt Dickinson of the *Penguin* was killed, with the Boatswain & about 15 men, & 2 midshipmen & 30 men wounded—<sup>3</sup> . . . .

[*April*]

13th. at 10 PM took our departure from Tristan D'Cunha the Island Bearing SWbyW 12 Miles dist— at Midnight lost sight of the Island—having cruized here for 23 days in hopes of the arrival of the US. Frigate *President* Com: Decatur but from her not joining us I fear the story related by Captn. Black of the Store Brig *Macedonian* will prove too true—

14th. the *Hornet* tho' accounted a fast sailor cannot keep way with us—Lat 38.58—Long 5°.10'— . . . .

26th.<sup>4</sup> At 5. P.M a strange sail was descried from Masthead bearing East, in an instant sail ho! was réechoed through the ship, this being the first sail seen for forty four days “expectation was on tip toe”—but the night coming on lost sight her in 40', minutes to our great disappointment— it being calm throughout the night expected to see her at the dawn of day— day broke—& with it all our hopes vanished—nothing in sight—

at 11 am sent the Yawl to the *Hornet* with our spare spritsail yard, she having sprung her Main top Gallt. yard. clear day—light & variable breezes—

27th.<sup>5</sup> at 7.10' AM, clear morning— saw a sail bearing SebyS.— supposed to be the same seen before on 26th. PM— made all sail in chase—

28th<sup>6</sup> at 4 PM made the strange sail to be a very large ship—probably a fat East India Man—a good recompense for all our lost time (if taken) at 5.20 PM.

being dark lost sight of him bearing SSE— cleared ship for action (it being calm) that we might be ready for her in case a breeze should spring up during the night— 6.30' AM saw her again & tho' twas a dead calm air last night she appears to have gained ground in getting away from us— *Hornet* “in the back ground”

- 29th. Commences clear & pleasant light breezes from Nd.&Wd.— 1.45' PM— being distant about 6½ Miles she hauled her wind to Nd.&Ed. & showed two tier of guns— still our anxiety to finger English Dollars & English Goods, under the supposition of her being an East India Man, induced us to run down to her 2.30' being about 4 Miles dist from the chase, made her out to be to all intents & purposes an English Line of Battle Ship, not being Solicitous of a further acquaintance, we hauled our wind to Nd.&Ed.— having chased her for 32 hours, & she in her turn gave us chase— 4. PM leaving the chase— she having hoisted St. George's Ensign, an Admirals flag & various other signals, which were equally disregarded— We made signal for the *Hornet* to haul her wind to escape capture— 5.30' the 74 hove two shot at us, but they fell short 6—leaving the chace—dist 6 miles she appears to lay much nearer the wind than we do— 6.45' lost sight of the *Hornet* bearing WbyS½S.— 8 lost sight of the 74 Bearing SWbyS½S— thro' the night kept away & made all sail— at day break—saw nothing of the 74, or the *Hornet*—fearfull that during the night the 74 tacked Ship in chase of the *Hornet*, in which case tis probable she will capture her as she sails much faster than the *Hornet*— Lat. 39.14 S Long. 34.18 E (this is probably the Medway Admiral Taylor from the Cape) . . .

[June]

- 13th. Made Java Head ran close in with Clapps Island— at 6 PM “First Point” on island of Java, Bore NE½N, the west end of Princes Island NbyW½W, East end NNE & the Hole in the Rock ESE. 8°15'. AM saw a sail bearing NNW, thus are our hopes again raised. May fortune favor us!— 10 lost sight of Java Head Bearing SEbyE & the Peak on Princes Island bore EbyS— Made the Island of Sumatra bearing North at Meridian Sumatra bore NbyE, the Peak on Princes Island ESE— nearing the chase, which Proves to be a large ship—
- 14th. at 2 PM the chase tacked ship & stood for us & hoisted English colors— beat to quarters, shortened sail & cleared ship for action at 2.20' fired Long Tom at her—on which she down her colors & hove to & sent boat on board, she proved to be the English East India Country Ship Union 6 guns formerly the “*Telegraph*” of New York. Now of Calcutta & from there, having touched at Pulo Punang & other places on the coast of Sumatra bound to Batavia for Convoy to England—Cargo Pepper, Opium, Gum Benjamin or Bengoin, Raw Silk, Saffron, Peice Goods, wines &c &c —the most valuable prize we have yet taken —she had some Gold worth about \$5,000 ! ! ! sent boats on board to remove the valuable goods &c &c on board— Kept Prize in company during the night & thro' the next day stood in for the Land —Capt. Hall, crew of 56 Lascars & Malays—
- 15th. at 4 PM South pt. of Sumatra Bore ENE. Fortune Island a low & wody Isle NbyW½W Sounded in 25 faths. rocky bottom. 7 came to anchor in

- 17 faths sticky bottom, furled sails— Prize came to anchor Bearg. NW dist  $\frac{1}{4}$  miles. next day got boats out & sent them for goods
- 16th. at anchor receiving goods &c &c from the Prize— 3.30' recd. the prisoners on board— 4.30' set fire to the *Union*, she burnt upwards of 12 hours— 9.30' AM weighed anchor & made sail for Princes Island— . . .
- 22nd. employed watering & overhauling rigging, found the Bowsprit to be sprung in the gammoning—set hands to work to fish it— at 3.30' saw a sail working up the Straits, up anchor & gave chase, 6 fired at & brought to the chase, she proved to be English Ship *Venus* Captn. Boon<sup>7</sup> from Isle of France to Batavia in ballast, having a few articles which proved to be of great use, such as shoes, stockings, hankerchfs, razors, combs & about 6000\$ in “hard Dollars” stowed away in 6 barrels of Pork—crew 56 Lascars— 9 anchored in 25 faths off “First Point” (Java Shore) the prize in co—the Nth.E end of Princes Island bearing NW $\frac{1}{2}$ N & First pt SW $\frac{1}{2}$ W this night observed a total eclipse of the Moon—
- 23rd<sup>s</sup> weighed anchor & stood down to New Bay *Venus* in co— 2 anchored abreast the watering place & commenced watering & receiving goods from the prize this day completed filling our water
- 24th sent crew of *Union* on board the *Venus* intending to give her up as a cartel to go to Batavia—employed painting the ship— 26th Gave crew Liberty to go ashore & wash clothes &c &c— shared the money found in the prizes reserving the half for Government— by the *Venus* we hear that a treaty of Peace has been made, but do not Know the terms—tis rather doubtfull . . .
- 28th. anchored at 6.15' PM in 16 faths muddy bottom near Anjer Point 6.15' AM saw a sail bearing West, weighed & made sail in chase at 7. a great number of Malay proas came alongside bringing fowls, turtle cocoa nuts, yams, birds & &c &c for trade which they sell very cheap. fowls 30 for a dollar other things in proportion
- came up with strange sail & brought her to & proved to be English Ship *Brio De Mais*<sup>9</sup> Captn. Grover from Isle of France to Batavia in ballast—crew 37 Lascars She informs us a treaty of Peace had been signed by the Prince Regent but hostilities were not to cease till ratified by our President, which from the terms I think never will or never ought to be the case—terms no fishing on Grand Banks no trade East of Cape of Good Hope !!! if such is the case, we are the last ship East of Cape—& so we will make the most of our time—took prisoners out & destroyed the prize— 5.30' AM saw a sail to which we gave chase—she proves to be the cartel *Venus*— put the crew of the *Brio De Mars* on board of her & permitted her to proceed— from the Last ship we took about 9500\$

[July]

- 1st. 1.45. PM saw a sail a ship (while beating up thro' the straits) at anchor in Anjer Roads— 2.15' saw another ship & a Brig both at anchor— 2.30' the Brig weighed & stood out of the roads towards us, the Ships Shewed Portugese & Dutch colors, the Brig shewed none— 5°.15' on nearing the Brig, & our shewing English colors, she sent a boat with 2 officers (her Master & a Lieut of Marines) the Master Intendant<sup>10</sup> also came off at the

same time from the Fort, under the idea of our being an English Sloop of War— on being informed of their mistake they were ordered below— 5.30' came up with the Brig; & on discovering his error the Captn. of the Brig sung out “there is Peace with America, but on being ordered to haul down his flag (as a token) he refused, on which we fired a broadside in to him, which he returned & struck his colors.<sup>11</sup>— she proved to be the Honorable East India Company’s Cruizer *Nautilus* of 14 Guns, bound from Batavia to Calcutta with dispatches & 30.000 dollars in specie & copper to the value of 100,000\$!—her Commander Boyce, first Lieut[.], Lieut of Sepoys (Marines) & 5 men wounded & 6 Killed her rigging a good deal cut— we received no damage a few shot holes only in our sails—took possession of the prize;— the Master Intendant informed us that a Peace had actually taken place & that he could produce proof. 7. took out part of the Prizes crew— 9.50. anchored in 12 faths muddy bottom Anjer Pt. bearing NE— 7. AM sent the Master Intendant ashore to bring off proof sufficient to cause us to Liberate the Brig. 9.20 sent the prisoners back to the Brig— 10.20' the M.I— returned bringing off sufficient evidence of a Peace having been ratified on 18th. Feby. 1815. in consequence of which we will give up the Brig—thus are our bright prospects blighted In this Brig an American called John Dean<sup>12</sup> alias John crow was found fighting against his country—he was brought on board to be taken to America for trial—

2nd. Sunday—at anchor— 3. Gave the *Nautilus* up to the Master in consequence of yesterdays news—with orders to run into Anjer Roads— 4. the *Nautilus* weighed & stood into Anjer Roads— Mustered ships company— 4 men on Drs List— our captn. informed us of Peace having been made— in consequence of which we shall run for Isle of France or Bourbon to get Bread &c &c— in the mean time to be on half allowance— Sultry day— the thermometer on deck at 1 PM. at 92°— at 8 AM the Portugese Ship in the Roads got under way & stood down the Straits bound to Rio Janeiros— 9 weighed & made sail to Sd. & Wd. Homeward Bound

D, DLC, Journal of William T. Rodgers.

1. The latitude and longitude reading written in the margin for 26 January was Lat 37°. 22' Long 66°.20'.

2. The latitude and longitude reading written in the margin for 27 February was 12 o'clock 00.31.5.

3. This phrase was written in the margin near the date: “the vessel the *Hornet* went of chase of when parted (27. Jany.) was a Portugese Brig.” James Biddle (captain, 28 February 1815); David Conner (lieutenant, 24 July 1813); Commander James Dickinson, R.N.

4. The heading at the top of the journal page for 24 April 1815 was “US.S. PEACOCK—Indian Ocean.” The latitude and longitude reading written in the margin for 26 April was Lat 38.15.S. Long. 27.53.E.

5 The latitude and longitude reading written in the margin for 27 April was Lat. 38.39' Long. 31.22'.

6. The latitude and longitude reading written in the margin for 28 April was Lat 39.22—Long. 32.17.

7. Robert Boon.

8. The heading at the top of the journal page for 23 June 1815 was “Straits of Sunda.”

9. *Brio de Mars*.

10. R. B. Macgregor was the East India Company master intendant from Anjer.

11. Rodgers added this in the margin: “into & over this Brig we fired a federal salute. 17 Guns.”

12. Lewis Warrington referred to him as Daniel Dean. See p. 727.

LIEUTENANT CHARLES BOYCE, EAST INDIA COMPANY, TO  
SECRETARY TO THE EAST INDIA COMPANY MARINE BOARD JOHN LOWE

Sir,

I beg leave to acquaint you, for the information of the board,<sup>1</sup> that the wounds received by me on 30th of June last, in a short but smart action with an American sloop of war, off Anjier, in the straits of Sunda, have hitherto prevented my transmitting an official report of the circumstances attending that melancholy affair.

I am happy to state, that my health is now tolerably re-established; and I think myself particularly fortunate, considering the nature of my wounds, that the honor of addressing you on this subject has been reserved for my pen, although, no doubt, public rumour has, ere this, put you in possession of most of the facts which I now do myself the honor to state, and request that you will do me the favor to submit them to the honorable board.

On the 30th June last, being off Anjier, in the straits of Sunda, on my passage to Bengal, in charge of public despatches from the Java government, about 4 P.M. a strange sail hove in sight, standing with a fair wind to the north-eastward; and, as the honorable company's cruiser *Nautilus*, under my command, was working to the south-westward, the two vessels approached each other rapidly; and, when the stranger was distant about three miles, I observed that she had British colours hoisted, and knowing that universal peace had been restored to Great Britain, I despatched a boat in charge of my master, Mr. Bartlett,<sup>2</sup> to obtain intelligence, which reached the stranger nearly at the same time as the master-attendant's<sup>3</sup> from the shore; and I observed, with my spying-glass, that the officers had no sooner got up the ship's side than the crews were forcibly taken out, and both boats made fast a-stern. I prepared for action, and the stranger at once opened her tier of ports, and bore down towards us. To prevent her crossing our hawse I tacked, then shortened sail, hove to, and soon afterwards hailed the stranger, "What ship is that?" To which I received no reply, until repeated four times, and then merely "Halloo!" About this period the English blue ensign was hauled down, and American colours hoisted. I then asked, "Am I to consider you in the light of a friend or an enemy?" The reply was, "An enemy." I then informed the American captain that peace had been ratified between Great Britain and the United States of America; also, that I had the proclamation on board, and hoped that a due consideration of this would induce him to spare bloodshed. I was then commanded, in a very loud and peremptory manner, to "haul down my colours," which was immediately repeated still louder, and with the addition of "instantly;" to which I replied, "I shall do no such thing." The American then opened his fire on us, by which two men were killed at the gun near me, and I received a grape-shot, in a slanting direction, through the right cheek of my posteriors. A short but brisk action ensued, and observing some casualties, my first lieutenant, Mr. Robert Mayston, and several others, wounded, and being myself disabled by a 32-pound shot, which shattered my right knee-joint, and splintered my thigh-bone; also considering the great disparity of force, I deemed it my duty, although I must confess that it was with no small degree of reluctance, to strike the British colours to the American. Her first lieutenant,<sup>4</sup> about dusk, took possession of us. She proved to be the U.S. sloop of war *Peacock*, Captain Warrington, carrying twenty 32-pound carronades, and two long 18-pounders. Her crew is said to consist of 220 men.

Both vessels anchored for the night about six miles off Anjier, and in the morning I was permitted to be taken on shore, as well as the rest of the wounded, in compliance with my request to that effect.

About 2 P.M. on the day following the action, the honorable company's cruiser *Nautilus* was restored, and Captain Warrington addressed a letter to Mr. Macgregor, master-attendant at Anjier, stating, that in consequence of the information received from him, and *the several different sources* from which he had heard that a peace had been concluded between the United States and Great Britain, he felt himself bound to desist from hostilities, and regretted that his *reasonable demand* had not been complied with by the commander of *Nautilus* brig the preceding afternoon.

On the 4th of July the *Nautilus* sailed for Batavia, where she arrived the day following, and was sent from thence to Rembang, on the coast of Java, in the temporary charge of acting lieutenant Barnes, (who was ordered on board from the honorable company's cruiser *Malabar*, by Captain Hepburn,) to receive such repairs as the damages she had sustained required. In the meant time I remained, on account of my wounds, on shore at Anjier, where I was most handsomely received and accommodated by the kindness of Colonel Yule, resident, and attended by Mr. Hervey Thompson, surgeon of the district. On the 14th July it was deemed necessary to amputate my right leg. I submitted to the operation, and it was accordingly taken off above the knee. On the 20th following I was removed to the residence of Colonel Yule, at Ceram, and there I remained, experiencing every mark of hospitality, and the most unlimited attention, until the return of the *Nautilus* from Rembang; at which period, finding my health intolerably restored, I rejoined her on the 23d instant.

I beg leave to subjoin a list of the killed and wounded on board the honorable company's cruiser *Nautilus*, on the 30th of last June; and, in having to lament the loss of so many, I regret that a fairer opportunity for their exertions was not afforded them, and myself, with a vessel of more equal force.

[Here follows a list of 6 killed, and 8 wounded.]<sup>5</sup>

What loss the American may have sustained I am not able to say. If report is to be relied on, they had four or five men wounded, and their bow-gun dismantled.

The damage the *Nautilus* received in the action was considerable both to her hull and rigging. The bends on the starboard-side, (the side engaged,) were shivered from aft to the fore-chains, and the bulwark, from the chess-tree aft, much torn. The launch and cutter were both perforated with shot, the lower masts and tiller slightly wounded with grape, and the boom-mail-sail shot through in many places. Two guns were disabled by the enemy's shot, and the sheet-anchor completely so, by the loss of its iron stock, ring, and fluke. Four 32-pound shot, that were found lodged, have been picked out of her: one was under the counter, very nearly level with the water. A great number of small-arms and gunner's stores were thrown overboard by the Americans, on their taking possession, to clear the deck. The packets, I am happy to say, remained on board without being touched, but almost every thing below was ransacked.

It now only remains for me to do that justice to the conduct of the officers and crew of the *Nautilus*, on the 30th of last June, which they so well deserve, by declaring my admiration of their firmness, and thus publicly expressing my satisfaction with their conduct throughout.

The two seapoys and native servant, with amputated limbs, have, I understand, recovered, and been sent by Captain William Eatwell, of the honorable company's cruiser *Benares*, to Calcutta, in the honorable company's cruiser *Antelope*. Lieutenant Maystone's wound was once healed, but has broken out afresh: he is however now, I am happy to say, again on the recovery.\* My own cure has been greatly impeded by two unfortunate fistulas, in my stump, which have caused me to suffer much. The rest of the wounded are all well. I beg to subscribe myself, with the utmost respect, Sir, your most obedient servant,

CHARLES BOYCE, commander.  
H. C. cruiser *Nautilus*, 24th September, 1815.

John Lowe, Esq. secretary to the marine-board.

\*The wound subsequently mortified, and he died December 3, 1815.

Printed, William James, *Naval Occurrences of the War of 1812: A Full and Correct Account of the Naval War Between Great Britain and the United States of America, 1812–1815*. London: Printed for T. Egerton, Whitehall, 1817. Reprint. London: Conway Maritime Press, with new introduction by Andrew Lambert. 2004, pp. 392–95.

1. East India Company Marine Board.
2. Master Joseph Bartlett was the acting commanding officer after Lieutenant Boyce's injury.
3. R. B. Macgregor.
4. Samuel Henley.
5. The list of killed and wounded was not included with this printed version

CAPTAIN LEWIS WARRINGTON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

New York 2nd. November 1815

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that the U.S. Sloop *Peacock* arrived at this place on Monday evening last,<sup>1</sup> after an absence of nine months.

As by the arrival of the *Tom Bowline* & *Hornet* you have been made acquainted with our transactions to the 29th. of April, I shall commence from our separation from the latter. In May we reached the Isles of St. Paul & Amsterdam<sup>2</sup> (our second rendezvous) where we found a letter for us, which had been left a few days before, by the *Macedonian* Brig, informing us of the *President's* action & probable capture.<sup>3</sup> Here I had intended remaining some time to rejoin the *Hornet*,<sup>4</sup> but being carried to leeward in chase of a strange sail, we were not able to regain them, and were at last compelled by a verry severe gale to bear up, and on the 8th. of June made the Island of Java— From that time until the 29th. we were cruising in the Strait of Sunda where we made four captures, two of which were burnt, a third was given up to carry 150 prisoners into Batavia and the fourth released, as from her we learnt that a peace had been made.— From the different

captures, we obtained a[bout] fifteen thousand dollars in Specie, and gold to the amount of 4 or 5000\$ more. We have onboard 10 chests of opium—The first prize was loaded with pepper, and a few bales of coarse goods for the Malay market, some of which (as we had no room to stow them away) we distributed amongst the crew, as they were much in want of thin clothes— Of the money 5000\$ was divided by me amongst the Officers & men, not one of whom had previously a dollar, the remainder has been expended in the disbursment of the Ship—

From Java we proceeded to the Island of Bourbon where we procured bread and other articles of which we were much in want, as we were on an allowance of half a pound of bread per man— From Bourbon which we left in August we made the best of our way to the U. States, touching for a few days a[t] St. Helena— I enclose a list of our captures and am respectfully

L. Warrington

LS, DNA, CL, 1815, Vol. 6, No. 2 (M125, Roll No. 47).

1. Monday, 30 October 1815.

2. Île Saint-Paul and Île Amsterdam are in the Indian Ocean.

3. *Macedonian*, a brig belonging to the merchant John Jacob Aster, was to accompany the squadron commanded by Commodore Stephen Decatur to the Indian Ocean. *President* and *Macedonian* left New York several days before the remainder of the squadron. On the capture of *President* by the British squadron blockading New York, see pp. 693–711.

4. For more on *Hornet's* fate, see pp. 743–45 and 747–49.

[Enclosure]

The vessels captured by the *Peacock* were the ship *Union*, laden with pepper and piece goods, divested and burnt; ship *Venus*, made a cartel of; ship *Brio*, burnt; ship *Nautilus*, 14 guns, 130 men, captured after a *single broadside* from the *Peacock*, which killed 7 and wounded 16 men. The *P.* has none killed or wounded, nor was she damaged. The *Nautilus* commenced the firing, though she had intelligence of the peace, and on making it known was released by captain Warrington.

Printed, *Niles' Weekly Register*, 11 November 1815. The original list was not found with Warrington's letter.

CAPTAIN LEWIS WARRINGTON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

U.S.S. *Peacock*. New York  
November 11th. 1815

Sir

As it is probable you will hereafter see or hear some other account of a rencontre which took place between the *Peacock* and the English East India Company's Brig *Nautilus* on the 30th. of June last in the Straits of Sunda, I take the liberty of making known to you the particulars.



In the Afternoon of that day, when abreast of Anjier, as we closed with this Brig, which appeared evidently to be a vessel of war and completely prepared for action, her Commander<sup>1</sup> hailed and asked if I knew that there was a Peace. I replied in the negative, directing him at the same time to haul his colours down, if it were the case in token of it, adding, that if he did not I should fire into him. This being refused one of the forward guns was fired at her, which was immediately returned by a broadside from the Brig; our broadside was then discharged and his colours were struck after having six Lascars killed and seven or eight wounded. As we had not the most distant idea of a Peace and this vessel was but a short distance from the fort of Anjier, I considered his assertion coupled with his arrangements for action a finesse on his part to amuse us till he could place himself under the protection of the Fort. A few minutes before coming in contact with the Brig, two boats containing the Master Attendant at Anjier<sup>2</sup> and an Officer of the Army came on board and as we were in momentary expectation of firing they were with their men passed below, I concluding that they had been misled by the British Colours under which we had passed up the Straits— No questions in consequence were put to them and they very improperly omitted mentioning that Peace existed. The next day, after receiving such intelligence as they had to communicate on this subject, (no part of which was Official) I gave up the vessel first stopping her shot holes and putting her rigging to rights—

I am aware that I may be blamed for ceasing hostilities without more authentic evidence that Peace had been concluded but I trust Sir when our distance from home with the little chance we had of receiving such evidence are taken into consideration I shall not be thought to have decided prematurely.

On board the *Nautilus* I found Daniel Dean, an American Seaman, who had deserted from the *Jacob Jones*, Privateer after attempting to assassinate her commander and entered into the service of the East India Company— He was serving as a Quarter Master and as he was Captain of a Gun and remained at his quarters fighting against the Flag of his Country I deemed it my duty to bring him to America to answer for his transgressions— Since our return, his friends (who I am told are respectable) have obtained his release by Habeas Corpus and given bail for his appearance to be tried whenever required by the Government— I suppose however that the Government may decline agitating such a question as his Case involves since the war is terminated—

I should have made this Communication earlier had I not thought it better to wait until you had been a few days in Washington, well knowing that you would have a multiplicity of more important business to attend to—

Will you be pleased Sir to inform me whether it is the intention of the Government to require the Five thousand Dollars which I distributed as Prize=money to the Crew, to be refunded and instruct me how to dispose of the Gold & Opium on board.<sup>3</sup> I have the honour to be Sir your very humble Servant

L. Warrington

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 6, No. 17 (M125, Roll No. 47).

1. Lieutenant Charles Boyce, East India Company.

2. R. B. Macgregor.

3. Secretary Crowninshield found Lieutenant Boyce's firing a broadside at *Peacock* as "unwarrantable" and Warrington's actions as appropriate. The Secretary instructed Warrington to deliver the money, gold, and opium to the district attorney of New York and have them libelled and condemned. Crowninshield to Warrington, 20 November 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 220 (M149, Roll No. 12).

BRITISH MINISTER CHARLES BAGOT TO SECRETARY OF STATE MONROE

Washington  
March 28. 1816

Sir

In conformity with the instructions which I have received, it is my painful duty to bring under your immediate notice the conduct of a naval Officer in the service of The United States, which has not only been in direct infraction of the conditions of that Peace which is now so happily restored between the two Countries, but which has been also characterized by such wanton violence, and unfortunately attended with such fatal consequences, as cannot fail to aggravate those feelings, to which any transaction of such a tendency must give rise in both Countries.

From a representation which has been made to His Majesty's Government by the Governor of the Mauritius,<sup>1</sup> it appears that, at different periods in the course of the month of June last, the Captain of The United States Sloop of War *Peacock*<sup>2</sup> fell in with, and captured, in the vicinity of the Straits of Sunda, three British Merchant Vessels (the *Union*, the *Venus*, and the *Brio de Mer*) notwithstanding that he was apprized, by papers found on board the *Venus*, and by a *Mauritius Gazette* of which he was put in possession, that a Peace had been concluded between the two Countries. Two of these Vessels he burnt, having previously taken out the most valuable part of their Cargo.

It can only be necessary for me to recall to your recollection the provisions of the second Article of the Treaty of Ghent,<sup>3</sup> in order to satisfy you of the illegality of these captures, and to ensure for the sufferers such indemnification, as the restoration either of the property, or of its value can afford. But I regret to state that, this unfortunate affair was immediately followed by an act on the part of the Commander of the American Sloop, for which any excuse which might be urged in extenuation of his former proceeding cannot possibly avail, and for which unhappily no compensation can be found proportionate to the injury which has been inflicted.

It appears by the same representation made to His Majesty's Government by the Governor of the Mauritius, that, after the capture of the three Merchant Vessels already mentioned, the East India Companys Brig *Nautilus* was officially sent from Java to announce to the Commander of the *Peacock* the cessation of hostilities between the two Countries in that part of the world. In reply to this communication so made, the Commander of the *Peacock* ordered the *Nautilus* "to haul down her colours if it was peace or he would otherwise sink her"—With a proposal so novel and so insulting it was of course impossible for the Commander of the *Nautilus* to comply; but it appears that, he did make answer that, if the Commander of the *Peacock* would send back the boat of the *Nautilus*,

which he had detained, he would convince him of the truth of his assertion; but that he could not strike his colours. Upon this, the Commander of the *Peacock* fired a broadside into the *Nautilus*, which the latter having returned, immediately struck— I lament to add that, the consequences of this unwarrantable proceeding were that, the Captain, the first Lieutenant, and six men of the *Nautilus* were wounded, and seven men unfortunately killed.—

In calling your attention to this transaction as it has been represented to His Majesty's Government, it must be wholly unnecessary for me to make any comment upon it— It is evident that, if the papers produced upon the capture of the *Venus* in proof of the cessation of hostilities had failed to convince the Commander of the *Peacock* of the fact; or even (what is still more difficult to believe) that, he attached any suspicion to the information which the *Nautilus* was officially sent to communicate, it was surely his duty to have taken those means of satisfying himself upon the point, which the Commander of the *Nautilus* invited him to take, and which the decided superiority of his force at any time enabled him to take, before he proceeded to that dreadful extremity to which he so precipitately and so unjustifiably resorted. Equally evident is it, on the other hand, that, if the Commander of the *Peacock* did believe that the information given by the Commander of the *Nautilus* was correct, he could not possibly have any right to require from him, in testimony of the truth of his assertion, the humiliation of striking his Flag.

In representing to you these facts, I have it in command from His Royal Highness the Prince Regent to express to you the entire confidence which His Royal Highness feels that, the Government of the United States will direct such measures to be taken in respect to the conduct of the Commander of the *Peacock*, and such indemnification to be made for the injuries which have been suffered through his violence, as, upon due investigation, shall be commensurate with the claims of Justice under that peace which so happily exists between the two Countries.<sup>4</sup> I have the honour to be, with high consideration, Sir, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) Charles Bagot<sup>5</sup>

Copy, UK-KeNA, F.O. 5/114, fols. 22–24. This copy was enclosed in Bagot to British Foreign Secretary Robert, Viscount Castlereagh, 7 April 1816, UK-KeNA, F.O. 5/114, fols. 19–21. Another copy of this letter is found in the record of the court of inquiry investigating the engagement between *Peacock* and *Nautilus*, the verdict of which is printed below.

1. Robert Farquhar.

2. Captain Lewis Warrington.

3. The peace commissioners addressed the problem of naval vessels captured after the ratification of the peace, but before the news had reached the belligerents, by only recognizing the validity of those captures made within a specified time after the war. *Peacock's* captures were all made after the time limits set by Article 2 of the Treaty of Ghent, and thus did not qualify for being retained as prizes.

4. The Madison administration regretted "that incidents of a nature so distressing should have occurred." Monroe ordered Secretary Crowninshield to convene a court of inquiry as soon as possible. Monroe to Bagot, 3 April 1816, UK-KeNA, F.O. 5/114, fols. 26–27; enclosed in Bagot to British Foreign Secretary Robert, Viscount Castlereagh, 7 Apr. 1816, UK-KeNA, F.O. 5/114, fols. 19–21.

5. Charles Bagot had served as Britain's minister to the United States since 31 July 1815.

REPORT OF THE COURT OF INQUIRY FORMED TO  
 INVESTIGATE THE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN U.S. SLOOP OF  
 WAR *PEACOCK* AND THE BRITISH EAST INDIA COMPANY'S BRIG *NAUTILUS*

Report.

At a Court of Enquiry Assembled on board the United States Ship *Independence* in the Harbour of Boston, State of Massachusetts, on the third day of September in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and sixteen, and held each and every day afterwards, by adjournment (one Sunday excepted, until the ninth day of the same month of September

Present

Captain William Bainbridge President  
 Captain Jacob Jones  
 Captain Charles Morris.

The Court (being duly sworn according to the directions of the Act of the Congress of the United States, in such case made and provided) In pursuance of a Warrant and instructions from the Honourable Benjamin W. Crowninshield Secretary of the Navy of the United States, bearing date on the 29th day of June now last past; proceeded to call before them all Officers, and others whose presence was deemed necessary, and to examine intimately into every circumstance in relation to the rencounter between the US. Ship *Peacock* under the command of Lewis Warrington Esquire, a Captain in the Navy of the United States, and the British East India Companys Brig *Nautilus*, under the command of Lieutenant Boyce, in the Straits of Sunda, near the Fort of Anjier; and to collate all the testimony that might tend to elucidate, in any manner or degree, the facts connected with that transaction; And having heard read the several letters of Captain Warrington, addressed to the Honourable the Secretary of the Navy, bearing date respectively on the eleventh day of November in the year 1815, and the 27th. of February & 13th. of April 1816;<sup>1</sup> And also two several letters from the Honourable Charles Bagot, His Britannic Majestys Minister to the United States, dated respectively march 28th. and May 9th. 1816,<sup>2</sup> addressed to the Honourable James Monroe Secretary of State of the United States, copies of all which letters being contained in the records of the proceedings hereto prefixed: And the Court having also seen and duly examined, the several letters and documents which are referd to in the last above mentioned letter from Mr. Bagot; and minutely and deliberately examined, all the testimony relative to the transaction in question, have unanimously agreed upon, and do hereby report, as the result of their investigation, the following statement of facts—Viz—

Statement.

That on the 30th day of June in the year eighteen hundred and fifteen, the US. Ship *Peacock*, then under the Command of Captain Lewis Warrington, being out on a Cruise, fell in with, near the Fort of Anjier, in the Straits of Sunda, the British East India Companys Brig *Nautilus*, under the Command of Lieutenant Boyce; that at the time of discovering the Brig from the *Peacock*, it being about

three O'clock of the afternoon, the Vessels being, then, about six miles asunder, the Brig was perceived to be under English Colours, and apparently armed— She was, at first, seen at anchor, but soon got under Weigh, endeavouring, apparently, to beat out of the Roads— The *Peacock*, being also, at the time, sailing under English Colours, stood for the Brig, and when within about three or four miles from her, a Boat from the Shore, came along side the *Peacock*, bringing a Gentleman, afterwards found to be the Master Attendant of Anjier,<sup>3</sup> who came from the Boat onboard the Ship, and remained on board until the ensuing day— A short time, probably about twenty minutes, after the arrival of the Boat, as above mentioned, another boat, apparently dispatched from the Brig, came along side of the Ship, and from this Boat, there came on board the Ship, two persons, one of whom proving to have been the Sailing Master belonging to the Brig, and the other a Cornet of Dragoons, by the name of White, belonging to a detachment of British Troops, then on board the Brig, both of whom remained also in the Ship until the succeeding day—

At about four O'clock in the afternoon of same day, and when the Ship and Brig had got within hailing distance of each other, the *Peacock*, as it appears, was hailed from the Brig, in the usual manner, her commander asking, at the same time, if the ship was coming down upon him as a "Friend or an Enemy"— After returning the hail, the answer of Captain Warrington to this enquiry was, "as an Enemy," or in words to that effect— Upon this, the Commander of the Brig, again addressing the Ship, threw out some suggestion concerning a Peace having [*taken*] place between Great Britain and the United States; the particular expressions employed on the occasion having been, either in the form of the Assertion, "there is a Peace" or as the interrogation, "do you not know there is Peace"— It appears, however, that this intimation, in whatever form of expression it was conveyed, was not received by Captain Warrington as having been given out with seriousness, and he thereupon ordered the Colours of the Brig to be hauled down or he would fire into her— To this the answer from the other side was, "he shoud do no such thing"— Captain Warrington then gave the order for one of his Bow Guns to be fired, which was accordingly done, and this, immediately followed by a broadside from the Brig, and, at the same instant, by a broadside from the *Peacock*—

It appears however to the Court, that, after the discharge of the first Gun, as before stated, from the Ship, the firing on both sides was so instantaneous, as to render it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to determine from the evidence in the case the precise order or succession in which the broadsides were interchanged— About the number of seventeen Guns in all, having been discharged from the *Peacock* the Brig gave out the signal of surrender, by hauling down, first her Ensign, and, a few minutes, afterwards, her Pennant—

It further appears that before the Entire broadside from the ship was discharged (eight or ten Guns only having yet been fired) an order was given, and an ineffectual effort made, on the part of Captain Warrington to arrest the fire in its progress— The giving of this latter order appears to have arisen from the circumstance of his having discovered the first indication of a surrender on board the Brig, in the striking of her Ensign; while, on the other hand, the men at the Guns, not observing this movement, and prevented, probably, by the noise of the firing from hearing, distinctly, the order alluded to, were induced to

continue their fire, in consequence of having remarked the Pennant still flying after the Ensign had, in fact, been struck— At the Striking of the pennant, the firing from the Ship appears to have ceased—

From the evidence in the case, it further appears to the Court that at different periods, a short time antecedent to the above described engagement, the *Peacock* had fallen in with, and captured three British Merchant Vessels (the *Union* the *Venus* and the *Brio de Mar*) and that from one of these Vessels, namely the *Venus*, from the Isle of France, Captain Warrington received a rumour of peace having been concluded between the United States and Great Britain, but the report appears not to have been accompanied by papers or documents of any kind or any particular circumstance, giving to it the semblance of truth— Until after the *Peacock* had fallen in with the *Nautilus*, and the people from the Boats, as before mentioned, had come on board, the rumour above stated appears to have been the only intimation ever received by Captain Warrington on the subject of the peace— With respect to the intelligence on the head, which is supposed to have been communicated to some of the Officers of the *Peacock*, by the Master Attendant of Anjier, and the two other persons before mentioned, who came on board from the boats, it appears to the court, after a careful examination and comparison of the testimony, that until after the actual surrender of the *Nautilus*, no information whatever, derived from either of those persons was made known to Captain Warrington— It appears, in fact, that each of the persons above alluded to had been induced to visit the *Peacock* in the expectation of receiving, in place of giving, intelligence; and that they were under an impression, at the time, that the Ship (She having been cruising under English Colours) was an English Vessel of War— At the moment of coming on board, these Visitants were received at the Gang Way by an Officer of the *Peacock*, and without entering into conversation with any one on deck, they were immediately passed below by that Officer, and delivered, in the Ward room, to the custody of Mr. Bourne,<sup>4</sup> the Purser of the Ship— In this situation they remained until the close of the action, having no communion with any person on board, excepting the Purser, to whom, as it appears, they did, at different periods as well before, as after the Action, make some remarks, in the Ward Room, on the subject of the peace— These remarks, whatever might have been their import, were not mentioned to Captain Warrington or to any other person on deck, until after the conclusion of the engagement;— That the Gentlemen from the Boats did not communicate, previously, to some person on deck, the circumstances which are stated to have been represented, afterwards, to Mr. Bourne in the Ward room, appears to have been owing, according to the explanation thereof by the Master Attendant, to a momentary confusion at finding themselves, unexpectedly, on board an Enemy Vessel, and the promptitude with which they were conducted below— The cause of the omission on the part of Mr. Bourne to mention to Captain Warrington, immediately, the import of the intimations given by the British Officers in the Ward Room respecting the existence of a peace, appears to have been, that the conversation between those Officers and himself, on the occasion here particularly alluded to, took place at the moment of preparing for action; and moreover that the particular suggestions, relative to the peace, having been mingled with remarks and enquiries on various other subjects, did not, at that time produce any serious impression upon his mind—

It further appears that the Commander of the *Nautilus*, did not, at any time, after falling in with the *Peacock*, display a White flag or any other symbol of a peaceable or friendly character, but on the contrary, approached the *Peacock* under his usual Colours, with tompions out, and, in every respect, prepared for immediate Action—

It further appears, that on the morning subsequent to the engagement, a deliberate enquiry was instituted by Captain Warrington into the subject of the reported Peace; and that, with the view of obtaining every possible information on this head, the Master Attendant was permitted to go ashore on his parole, engaging to return on board with such evidence as he should be able to procure— He accordingly proceeded on shore, and, returning in the course of the same forenoon, brought with him his letter Book, containing copies of his correspondence with the Governour of Batavia,<sup>5</sup> in which there was found the copy of one letter purporting to have been addressed, a short time previously, to the Governour, announcing the arrival, at Anjier, of an American Brig, the *Seneca* from Newyork, bringing with her intelligence of a peace between Great Britain and the United States and a paper containing a copy of the Treaty, which was stated to have been enclosed in that letter and transmitted to the Governour— In consideration of the evidence afforded by this document, with other attendant circumstances, it appears, that Captain Warrington after a deliberate consultation with his Officers, determined to cease hostilities, and accordingly, on the same day last mentioned gave up the *Nautilus* into the possession of her Commander—

It further appears in evidence to the Court, that, after the capture of the Brig, & during the time she remained in the possession of Captain Warrington, every proper precaution was exercised by himself and his officers to prevent any depredation being committed on board of her, and that if any was committed, it must have been so, by the men belonging to the Brig, and not by those of the *Peacock*.

W<sup>m</sup>. Bainbridge  
President

Geo: Blake  
Judge Advocate

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 7, No. 244 (M273, Roll No. 9.)

1. Warrington's letter of 11 November 1815 is printed above; in the letters of 27 February and 29 (not 13) April 1816, Warrington lamented the inaccurate reports of the engagement between *Peacock* and *Nautilus* and asked Crowninshield to publish his account found in his 11 November letter. Warrington to Crowninshield, 27 February 1816, DNA, RG45, CL, 1816, Vol. 1, No. 41 (M125, Roll No. 48) and 29 April 1816, DNA, RG45, CL, 1816, Vol. 2, No. 91 (M125, Roll No. 49).

2. Bagot's letter of 28 March 1816 is above; the letter of 9 May 1816 forwarded letters from officials in India relating to the incident. See UK-KeNA, F.O. 5/114 fols. 138–39.

3. R. B. Macgregor.

4. Benjamin F. Bourne.

5. Lieutenant Governor Thomas S. Raffles.

SECRETARY OF STATE MONROE TO  
BRITISH MINISTER CHARLES BAGOT

Department of State  
October 31: 1816

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to you the Report of a Court of Enquiry, instituted by order of the President, into the conduct of Captain Warrington Commander of the American Sloop, the *Peacock*, on the charge alledged against him, in your letter of the 28th of March last—

By this report, it appears, that this much to be lamented disaster, is to be imputed to the approach, by the *Nautilus*, of the *Peacock*, without hoisting a Flag of Truce, or taking any other ostensible measure, founded on, or manifesting a State of Peace; as was proper in such a case; and that Captain Warrington had no knowledge of the Peace, until after the action was terminated—

That such an unfortunate event should have occurred is much regretted by the President—<sup>1</sup> I have &c &c &c

(signed) Jas: Monroe

Copy, UK-KeNA, F.O. 5/115, fols. 155–56. This copy was enclosed in Bagot to British Foreign Secretary Robert, Viscount Castlereagh, 19 November 1816, UK-KeNA, F.O. 5/115, fols. 153–54.

1. The British Foreign Office did not pursue its remonstrance against Warrington's actions after the U.S. naval court of inquiry exonerated him. Instead, British efforts shifted from an inquiry into the *Nautilus* affair to restitution for the owners of the merchant vessels *Union*, *Venus*, and *Brio de Mar*. Although Congress by 1819 appropriated monies for most of the claims related to the illegal seizures made by Warrington, it was not until 1828 that the American government finally satisfied all the claims put forward by the owners and insurers of the merchant vessels captured by *Peacock* in violation of the second article of the Treaty of Ghent. The British decision to exercise diplomatic restraint in pursuing indemnification for the alleged "wanton violence" against *Nautilus* is perhaps an example of British Foreign Secretary Lord Castlereagh's conciliatory policy in the postwar era. In a secret and confidential dispatch to Minister Bagot in November 1817, a year after the court of inquiry and in the midst of the filings of indemnification claims, Castlereagh wrote: "The avowed & true Policy of Great Britain, being, in the existing State of the World, to appease Controversy, & to secure, if possible, for all States a long interval of Repose." For more on this affair, see Hughes, "*Peacock* in the Sunda Strait," pp. 123–31. For the Castlereagh quotation, see Castlereagh to Bagot, 10 November 1817, UK-KeNA, F.O. 5/120, fol. 67.

## The 1815 Cruise of U.S. Sloop of War *Hornet*

*The 1815 cruise of Hornet, Master Commandant James Biddle, featured a voyage from New York to the southern tip of Africa, a victory over a British warship, an escape after a sea chase of almost 48 hours, and a subsequent court of inquiry that looked into the sloop's having jettisoned all its guns except one.*

*Hornet began the cruise as part of a squadron under the command of Commodore Stephen Decatur with orders to cruise in the East Indies. In addition to sloop Hornet, the squadron consisted of Decatur's flagship, frigate President; sloop of war Peacock, Captain Lewis Warrington commanding; and supply ships Macedonian and Tom Bowline.*



*Decatur split his command and, on 14 January, leaving the remainder of the squadron still at anchor, President slipped out of New York with Macedonian. President went aground on the bar off New York, damaged its hull, and fell prey to British blockaders.<sup>1</sup> The remainder of the squadron set sail on 23 January, unaware of President's fate. Having separated during a chase and unable to locate the other ships in its squadron after this separation, Hornet sailed on to the squadron's rendezvous, the remote Tristan da Cunha in the south Atlantic Ocean.*

*When Hornet arrived at the island chain, Biddle found, fought, and defeated H.M. brig-sloop Penguin. Penguin was so damaged that Biddle ordered it scuttled the next day, when Peacock and Tom Bowline arrived at the rendezvous. While the American warships awaited President, Biddle repaired battle damage. In the meantime, Tom Bowline sailed for the United States, via Brazil, carrying the captured crew from Penguin. When President had not arrived after two weeks, Peacock and Hornet made sail for the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>2</sup>*

*En route, sighting a British ship of the line, the two American vessels fled in different directions and the warship, Cornwallis of 74 guns, pursued Hornet. Wind conditions enabled Cornwallis to close and fire into the American sloop, forcing Biddle to lighten ship in an attempt to escape. A change in the wind finally allowed the Americans to make good their escape. With Hornet no longer capable of commerce raiding, Biddle proceeded to the neutral port of San Salvador, Brazil, where he learned that the war was over. Resupplied, Hornet returned to New York. Thus ended an eventful cruise.*

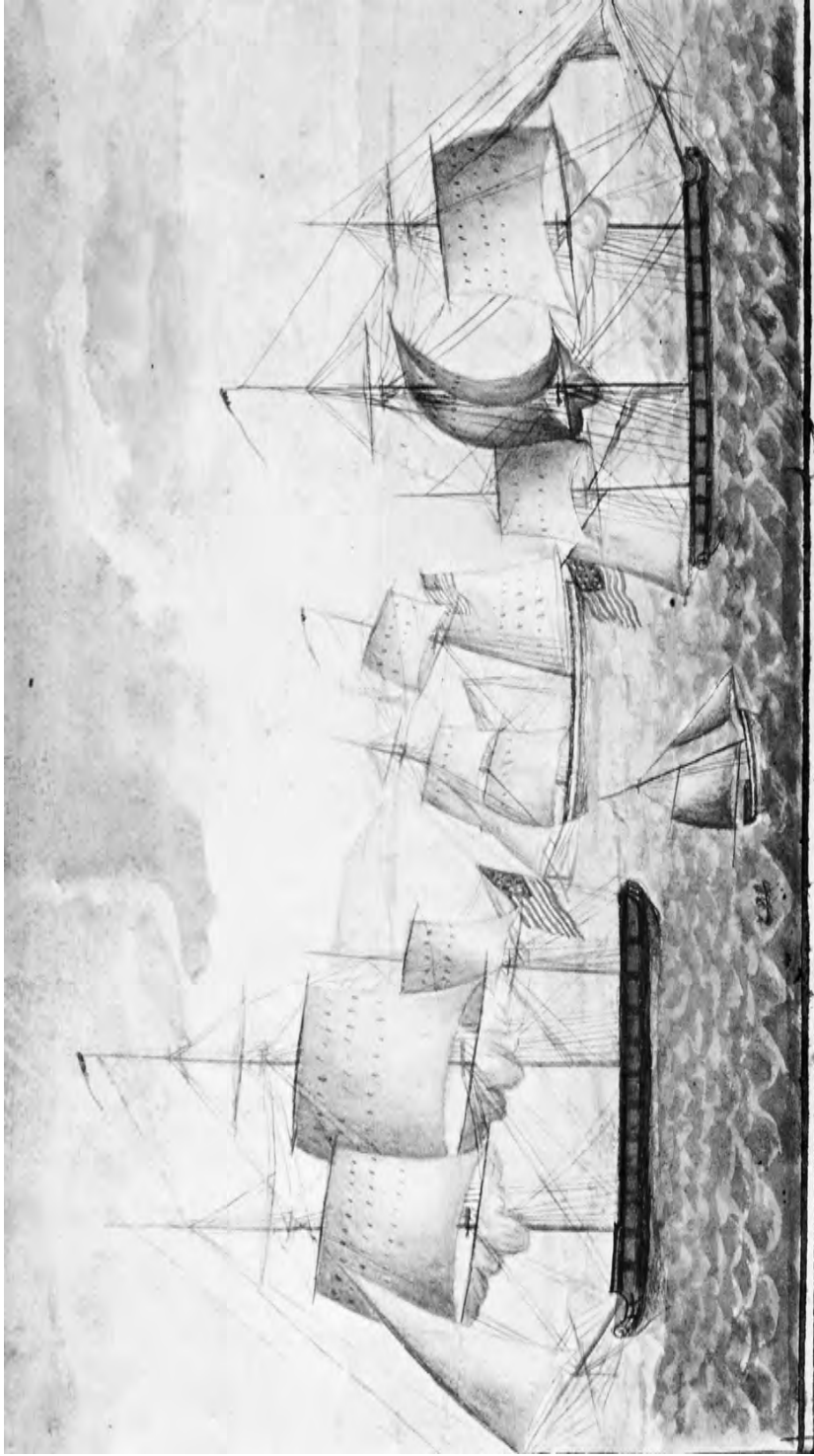
1. For more on President's capture, see pp. 693–711.

2. For more on Peacock's last cruise, see pp. 717–34.

### JOURNAL OF MIDSHIPMAN WILLIAM BOERUM<sup>1</sup>

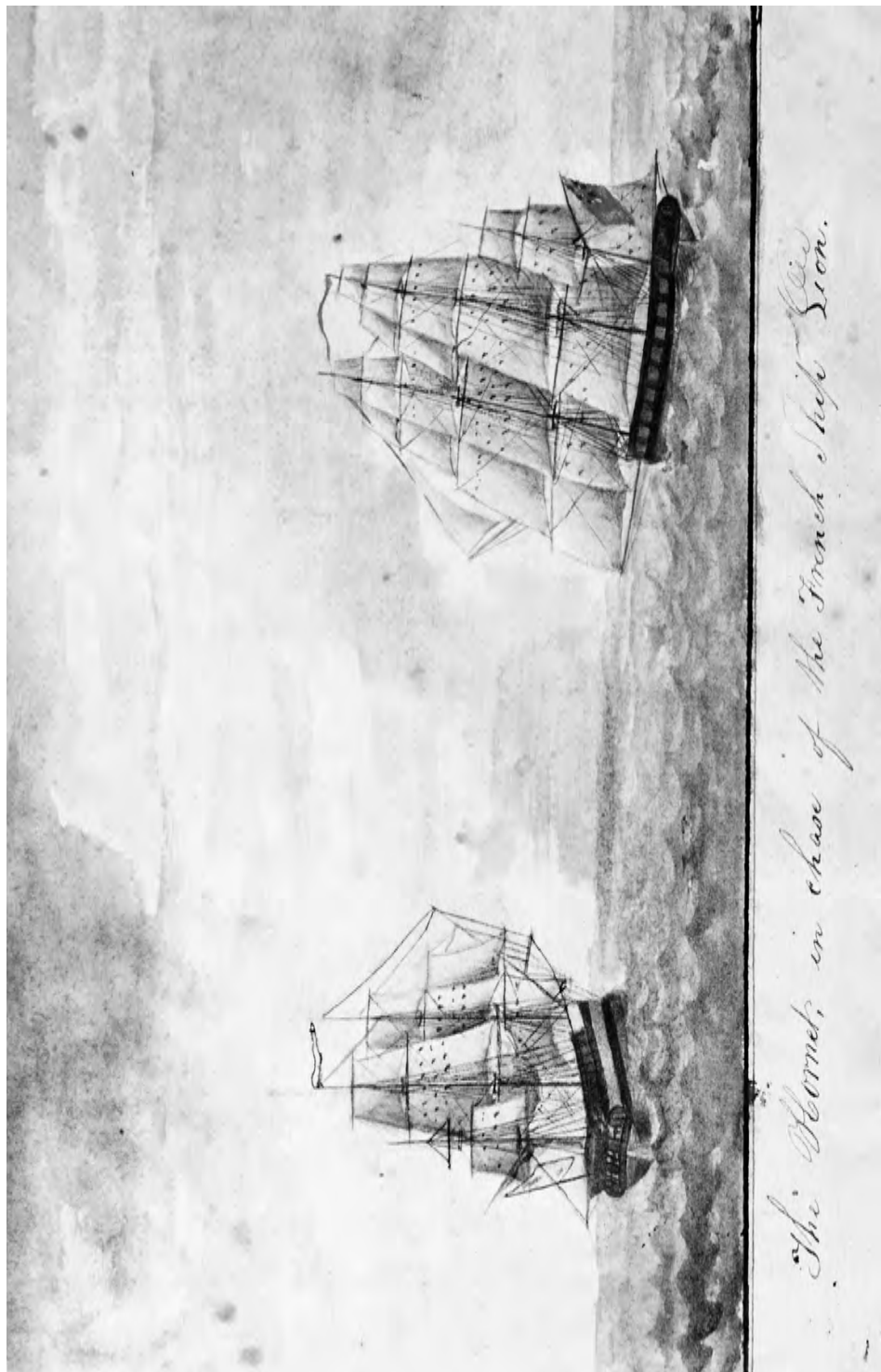
[January] 24. [1815] At 4 PM. Capn. Warrington (who I shall call commodore, untill we meet the *President* Commodore Decatur) made a signal to get under way. At 1/2 past 4. we were all under way standing out to Sea with a favouring breeze. At 5 Sandy Hook light-house bore WbS. distance about 4 miles. hove too to discharge our pilot. At 1/2 past 5 filled away, and bid adieu to our native shore. Turn'd the reefs out of the Top-sails, set Top Gallant sails and Jib. Unbent the cables, and coiled them in the tier. After dark made all Sail, the Commodore directed us to keep on his Larboard beam and The *Tom Bowline* on the Starboard. Made and shorten'd sail as occasion required to keep our station during the night. Carried away our Larboard lower steering sail boom. In the morning no land was visible, and we found that we had made a rapid transition from smooth water, and fine weather, to tempestuous seas and angry skies. The commodore made a signal for a strange sail. She being very Large, we supposed her to be an Enemy's line of Battle Ship. This day ends with Heavy squals and cloudy. No Observation. Temperature of the air 36 Water 59.

25. This day has been, throughout, dark, stormy and dismal. Towards evening, however, it began to moderate, and we enjoy'd a scene of much grandeur and Beauty, produced by the setting sun, which suddenly shone out from the clouds with great splendour, and a heavy sea from the NW. whose snow white tops were render'd doubly resplendent by the reflection of the sun beams. A fair Wind and



Discharging the Pilots off Sandy Hook  
January 24<sup>th</sup> 1815.

Watercolor sketch by Midshipman William Boerum



Watercolor sketch by Midshipman William Boerum

the prospect of serene weather made ample amends for the gloom of the day. Lat. Obs. 38.11 N. Tempr Air 45.30 water 66.

26. Commences moderate breezes and pleasant weather—ends with heavy squalls of wind & rain— Lat 37.19.

Jan 27. Clear pleasant weather. Discover'd two strange sail bearing E.b.S1/2.S. made all sail in chace. At 2 PM. discover'd the strange sails to be on different tacks. One a Brig and the other a Schooner. The *Peacock* stood for the Schooner and we for the Brig. At 4 lost sight of the *Peacock*, *T. Bowline* and the strange Schooner. At 5 beat to Quarters, clear'd Ship for action and fired the Starboard bow Gun, upon which the strange Sail hove too and hoisted Portuguse colours. Boarded and found her to be the Portuguse Brig *Predade*, Wm Morrisson master, from Amelia Island bound to Liverpool, cargo cotton and Tobacco, out 9 days—at 9. fired a gun, set of[f] a Sky rocket, and hoisted a light at the Gaff end, as a signal for the *Peacock*.— Ends with light breezes and pleasant weather.

D, NWM, Journal of Midshipman William Boerum.

1. William Boerum held his midshipman's warrant from 1 September 1811 and served in *Hornet* during the entire war.

#### CAPTAIN JAMES BIDDLE TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

United States Sloop *Hornet* March 25th. 1815. off Tristan d' Acunha.—

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that on the morning of the 23rd. instant at ½ past 10, when about to anchor off the north end of the island of Tristan d' Acunha, a sail was seen to the southward and eastward, steering to the westward, the wind fresh from S.SW. In a few minutes she had passed on to the westward so that we could not see her for the land. I immediately made sail to the eastward, and shortly after getting sight of her again, perceived her to bear up before the wind: I hove too for her to come down to us. When she had approach'ed near,—I filled the main Topsail, and continued to yaw the Ship while She continued to come down; wearing occasionally to prevent her passing under our stern. At 1h. 40' P.M. being nearly within musket shot distance; She hauled her wind on the Starboard Tack, hoisted English colours, and fired a gun. We immediately luffed too, hoisted our Ensign, and gave the enemy a broadside.— The action being thus commenced a quick and well directed fire was kept up from this ship, the enemy gradually drifting nearer to us, when at 1h. 59' he bore up apparently to run us on board. As soon as I perceived he would certainly fall on board, I called the Boarders, so as to be ready to repel any attempt to board us. At the instant, every officer and man repaired to the quarter deck where the two vessels were coming in contact, and eagerly pressed me to permit them to board the enemy; but this I would not permit, as it was evident from the commencement of the action, that our fire was greatly superior both in quickness and in effect. The Enemys bowsprit came in between our main and mizen rigging, on our Starboard Side, affording him an opportunity to board us, if such was his



*James Biddle*



*Isaac Mayo*



*David Conner*

design but no attempt was made. There was a considerable swell on, and as the sea lifted us ahead the enemy's bowsprit carried away our mizen shrouds, stern davits and spanker boom; and he hung upon our larboard quarter. At this moment an officer who was afterwards recognized to be Mr. McDonald,<sup>1</sup> the first Lieutenant and the then commanding officer, called out that they had surrendered. I directed the marines and musketry men to cease firing, and while on the taffrail asking if they had surrendered, I received a wound in the neck. The Enemy just then got clear of us, & his foremast and bowsprit being both gone and perceiving us wearing to give him a fresh broadside, he again called out that he had surrendered. It was with difficulty I could restrain my crew from firing into him again, as he had certainly fired into us after having surrendered. From the firing of the first gun to the last time the enemy cried out he had surrendered, was exactly twenty two minutes by the watch. She proved to be H. B. M. Brig *Penguin* mounting sixteen thirty two pound carronades, two long twelves, a twelve pound carronade on the Top Gallant forecastle with swivels on the Capstern and in the Tops. She had a spare port forward so as to fight both her long guns of a side. She sailed from England in September last. She was shorter upon deck than this ship by two feet, but she had a greater length of keel, greater breadth of beam thicker sides and higher bulwarks than this ship, and was in all respects a remarkably fine vessell of her class. The Enemy acknowledge a complement of one hundred and thirty two; twelve of them supernumerary marines from the *Medway* 74 received on board in consequence of their being ordered to cruize for the American privateer *Young Wasp*.<sup>2</sup> They acknowledge also a loss of fourteen killed and twenty eight wounded; but Mr. Mayo<sup>3</sup> who was in charge of the prize assures me that the number of killed was certainly greater. Among the killed is Captain Dickenson<sup>4</sup> who fell at the close of the action, and the Boatswain; among the wounded, is the second Lieutenant, purser, and two Midshipmen. Each of the Midshipmen lost a leg. We received on board, in all one hundred and eighteen prisoners, four of whom have since died of their wounds.— Having removed the prisoners, and taken on board such provisions and stores as would be useful to us, I scuttled the *Penguin*, this morning, before daylight, and she went down.— As she was completely riddled by our shot, her foremast and bowsprit both gone, and her mainmast so crippled as to be incapable of being secured, it seemed unadvisable, at this distance from home to attempt sending her to the United States.—

This Ship did not receive a single round shot in her hull, nor any material wound in her spars; the rigging and sails were very much cut; but having bent a new suit of sails, and knotted and secured our rigging, we are now completely ready in all respects for any service. We were eight men short of complement, and had nine upon the sick list the morning of the action.

Enclosed is a list of killed and wounded. I lament to state that Lieutenant Conner is wounded, dangerously. I feel great solicitude on his account, as he is an officer of much promise, and his loss would be a serious loss to the service.<sup>5</sup>

It is a most pleasing part of my duty to acquaint you, that the conduct of Lieutenants Conner and Newton, Mr Mayo acting Lieutenant Lieutenant Brownlow of the Marines, Sailing Master Romney,<sup>6</sup> and the other officers, Seamen and Marines, I have the honor to command, was in the highest degree creditable to

them, and calls for my warmest recommendation. I cannot indeed do justice to their merits. The satisfaction which was diffused throughout the Ship when it was ascertained that the Stranger was an Enemy Sloop of War, and the alacrity with which every one repair'd to quarters, fully assur'd me that their conduct in action would be marked with coolness and enterpridity. I have the honor to be Your Obedt. Servant

J. Biddle

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 112 (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. Lieutenant James McDonald, R.N.
2. The American privateer ship *Young Wasp*, Lemuel Hawley from Philadelphia commanding, carried 20 guns and a crew of 150. It had captured a rich prize, the armed merchantman *Caledonian*, loaded with ivory and coffee, and was threatening to capture other East Indiamen returning to England from the East Indies. *Niles' Weekly Register*, 13 April 1815.
3. Issac Mayo was promoted to lieutenant on 4 February 1815.
4. Commander James Dickinson, R.N.
5. David Conner's rank as a lieutenant dated from 24 July 1813.
6. John T. Newton (lieutenant, 24 July 1813), William L. Brownlow (first lieutenant, U.S.M.C., 18 June 1814), and Edward Rumney (sailing master, 18 November 1812).

#### CAPTAIN JAMES BIDDLE TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

United States Sloop *Hornet* April 8. 1815. off Tristan d'Acunha.

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you that three days after leaving Newyork, I parted company with the U.S. Sloop *Peacock* in chase. The vessel that caused me to seperate from my consort, I brought too' and boarded; a portuguese brig from amelia with cotton bound to Liverpool. All my endeavours to rejoin the *Peacock*, being unsuccessful, I proceeded alone to the place of rendezvous appointed by You and made the island of Inaccessible<sup>1</sup> on the Evening of the 22nd. ultimo. On the passage I chased and boarded every vessell that came in sight, which was only four in all, & all of them neutrals. On the following day I was close in with Tristan d'Acunha and captured H.B.M. brig *Penguin*. On the 25th. I joined the *Peacock* again.— I have thought it necessary to communicate to you respecting this Ship, which seperated from the *Peacock*.

I have the happiness to acquaint you, that all the wounded of this ship are in a fair way of recovery, and that Mr. Conner the 1st. lieutenant is now out of danger, tho I shall for some time to come be deprived of his Services.<sup>2</sup> To the unwearied attention and professional skill of Dr. Kissams, the Surgeon, & Mr. S. M. Kissam the Surgeon's mate,<sup>3</sup> must be ascribed the very favorable state of the wounded; and to both of these gentlemen, the greatest praise is due.—

By an arrangement of Captain Warrington all the prisoners taken in the *penguin* are to be removed from this Ship to the Brig *Tom Bowline*. this arrangement is very satisfactory to me, since it enables me to proceed upon my cruize. I have the honor to be Your Obedt. Servt.

J. Biddle

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 27 (M125, Roll No. 44).

1. Inaccessible Island is an island in the Tristan da Cunha group.

2. Conner still had not recovered when *Hornet* arrived in New York on 20 July and Biddle arranged for a doctor not in the Navy's service to treat him. Even with this treatment, Conner remained on crutches for two years. Conner did eventually recover and returned to serve in the Navy, achieving the rank of commodore at the end of his career. Long, *Sailor-Diplomat*, pp. 53–54.

3. Benjamin P. and Samuel M. Kissam (surgeon and surgeon's mate, 24 July 1813). Benjamin was Samuel's nephew.

MIDSHIPMAN WILLIAM BOERUM TO COLONEL AND MRS. MARTIN BOERUM

U.S. Ship *Hornet*. off the Island of Tristan Dé. Acuna.  
April 8th. 1815.

Dear Parents,

With sentiments ineffable beyond expression, I once more gladly grasp my pen to address you a few lines, and inform you of my being in perfect health, as are all, whom you are acquainted with on boa[r]d.

We have had another action, and the *Hornet* is again triumphant— After leaving New York, we had a continued series of ill luck, having seen only five sail, all of which proved to be neutrals. We parted with the *Peacock* and *Tom Bowline* four days after we left N York, in chase. On the evening of the 22nd of march, we made the Island of Tristran Dé acuna, in Latitude 37°. 7' South. Longitude 11°. 38' West. The next morning whilst preparing to bring the ship to anchor, we discover'd a strange sail, we supposed her to be either the *President*, *Peacock* or brig *Macedonian*, that sailed in company with the *President*. We however, stood off a short distance from the shore, hove too, and clear'd ship for action. About ½ past 1, the strange sail being within pistol shot to windward, hoisted a British ensign and fired a gun. But no sooner did our brave tars see their enemy's flag, than they gave three hearty cheers, the Yankee stripes were unfurled aloft, we gave them a bloody broadside and the action commenced, which was continued with great spirit. But in the short space of 22 minutes, their pride was humbled, and their flag came down. She proved to be His majesty's Sloop of War *Penguin*, of 20 guns, James Dickinson Esqr. Commander, who was killed the latter part of the action. She lost her foremast and Bowsprit, had 28 wounded, and they acknowledge'd 14 killed, but from all accounts, she must have had many more. A number of her wounded have died, since they have been on board. Her upper works were completely cut to pieces, two of her ports were knocked into one, and 5 shot struck her mainmast. Our loss was trifling— 1 killed and 11 wounded nothing but grape shot touched our ship, our rigging was considerably cut, and our spanker boom was carried away by the Enemy's running foul of us. Some tutelary angel certainly hovers over the american flag, and where's the Youth, whose bosom is fired with the righteous cause of liberty, that don't aspire to be foremost in guarding the sacred banners of his Columbia? When men fight for freedom they must be victorious.— The next morn[ing] we took our prize in tow and stood off from the land till we got every thing that was of service to us out of her, and then sunk her. We had kept Capt Dickinson on board that we



might bury him on shore, but on the third day, we were standing in for the Land when we discover'd [*obliterated*] sail, one of which we plainly distinguished to be a man of war. The ship was immediately cleared for action, which oblig'd us to commit the body of our gallant enemy to the deep. The vanquished if brave are renowned, they are like the sun when he hides his f[ace] in a cloud, but shines again redoubled splendour. He was buried with all the honours of war. The two strangers proved to be the *Peacock* and *Tom Bowline*. The *Peacock* has been more unfortunate than we were before we fell in with the *Penguin*, having seen only 1 sail since we separated. We have made a cartell of the *Tom Bowline*, she will take the Prisoners to South America, from thence she proceeds to the U States. We have water'd here, and shall continue our cruise with the *Peacock*. Mayo wishes to be remember'd to all the family. My respects to Mr Barbarine—and Family—Capt. Angus<sup>1</sup> and his Lady, all enquiring friends &c &c &c— I write in Love to you all, with it may the perpetual smiles of heaven be yours, and ever gratefully I remain your affectionate Son.

Wm. Boerum

N.B. Capt. Biddle and Lieut Connor, are among the wounded. The *Penguin* had by their own account 132 men, but I am confident she had more. They had 12 additional marines from the *Medway* 74.

ALS, Private collection of Vice Admiral George W. Emery, USN (Ret).

1. Possibly Captain Samuel Angus.

### JOURNAL OF MIDSHIPMAN WILLIAM BOERUM

[*April*] 25. [1815] Clear weather, with light breezes from the Southd and Eastd. About 4 P.M. the *Peacock* made the signal for a strange sail, and at the same time, we discover'd her two points on our weather bow, we then steering N.N.E. All sail was immediately set upon our little ship, night coming on we lost sight of the stranger, the *Peacock* on our weather bow. The most part of the night it was calm, but towards morning a light breeze sprung up from the Nrd. & Erd. At daylight we could see nothing of the strange sail. Light airs and pleasant, Exercised telegraphic signals with the *Peacock*, at noon she sent us a top gallant yard. Throughout the day, moderate breezes and pleasant Latitude 38°.42' South Longitude East.

Thursday. April 27. Light breezes clear, and pleasant weather. At 7 A.M. the *Peacock* made the signal for a strange sail. Our ship was immediately under a press of canvas in chase. Wind at NE by E. and so very light that we made but little progress. At meridian the wind continued lulling, consequently, we gained but slow upon the chase. At 5 pm it fell dead calm, the *Peacock* on our Larboard bow & the chase S. E½ S. distance about 22 miles. At dark lost sight of the strange sail, and during the night it continued calm and clear. At daylight on the 28th. discover'd the strange sail bearing S by E½ E. A breeze now sprung up from the NW. At meridian all sail set before the wind. The *Peacock* on our larboard bow about 3 miles, the strange sail nearly ahead. Latitude observed 39°.18' South Longitude

East. About 3 p.m. the strange ship being close upon the wind, by the *Peacock's* manoeuvres, she appeared to be suspicious of the stranger's character. The *Peacock* was now 3 or 4 miles ahead of us, she hauled her wind, and we could see the stranger had two tiers of ports, and supposed her to be a very large India-man, and Capt Warrington was waiting for us to come up, that we might go along side of her together. But about 4 the *Peacock* made a signal that the strange ship was of the Line, and an enemy.<sup>1</sup> This we already knew by his firing at the *Peacock* and hoisting British colours. Took in all the Studding-sails and haul'd upon the wind to the Northrd. and Eastrd. on the Larboard tack. The enemy was now about 2 leagues on our Lee beam, and bore E15° S. the *Peacock* E19N. At twilight the enemy bore E23°S. and the *Peacock* E6N. At 6 in the evening loosed the wedges from the lower masts, as it was now evident the enemy was chasing us. At 8 all sail set on the Larboard tack, the Enemy weathering on us very fast, and the *Peacock* nearly out of sight. As the night was perfectly clear, and the moon shining very bright, the enemy in all probability would keep sight of us all night it was thought prudent by Capt. Biddle to lighten the ship, about 9 o'clock we cut away the sheet-anchor, hove the cable, a quantity of spare rigging all the heavy spars, and about 12 tons of kentledge out of the spirit room, over board. About this time we lost sight of the *Peacock*. As the enemy was greatly superior to us in sailing upon the wind he was by 2 o'clock A.M. on lee bow. At ½ past 2 we tacked to the Southrd. and Westrd. But before our yards were braced up, we observed him to be also in stays. We now edged off from the wind in order if possible, to bring the enemy in our wake. But our endeavours were all frustrated by the wind's heading us off, and fresh'ning up at the same time. At daylight, on the 29th. the enemy hoisted St Georges cross at his flag staff, and a rear Admiral's of the white's flag. In a few moments he commenced a heavy fire upon us from his bow guns, his shot over-reaching us half a mile. At 7 A.M. broke up the Launch and hove her overboard, cut away the only remaining anchor and cable, hove over the two after and two bow guns, a quantity of shot kentledge, sails, spars, and every heavy article that was at hand. At ½ past 8 A.M. the enemy continued firing, being with ¾ of a mile, and still nearing us, we hove over ten more of our guns, and very soon had the satisfaction to see that we slowly drop'd him, but he continued firing 'till after 9, when his shot fell short. The wind had now considerably moderated, and we were leaving the enemy apace. About 11. the weather became squally, which oblige'd us to take in our light sails occasionally to prevent our spars from being carried away. We now had the mortification to see the enemy nearing us very fast, and at 1 pm. he was within half a mile of us, on our Lee quarter, when he opened a dreadful fire upon us of Round, grape, and shells. The grape scattered round our ship, and the shells burst over our heads and flew in every direction. At ½ past 1 the enemy still holding way with us, and heaving his shot upwards of a mile over us, We now hove over-board 5 of the 6 remaining guns (retaining only one of the 18 prs.) all the shot. At 2 knocked away the stantions on the Birth deck, cut to pieces the T.Gallant Fore Castle, to ease the ship, and hove over 24 barrels of provision, the capstern,<sup>2</sup> armorers forge, all the spare blocks, and nearly all the muskets, pistols, cutlasses, Battle-axes, all the remaining spars, and every thing that could be any impediment to our sailing, or of service to the enemy, for I dont believe there was an officer or man onboard but what thought of sleeping that night onboard the 74. But, hope, as the saying

is, is a good stream anchor, tho' special little had we. Two shot about this time hull'd us, both of which came inboard, one lodge'd in our bulwarks, and the other struck the deck between the fore and main masts, and went through the foresail. Several shot went through our sails, but fortunately, and which is very extraordinary, none of them touch'd any of our spars or haliards. Some of her shot that struck under our stern, recoucher'd<sup>3</sup> near half a mile over us. About ½ past 3 p.m. we edged off from the wind, set all the Starboard steering-sails, the enemy's grape all this time was falling round us like hail, and we momentarily expecting a broadside. About 4 we percieved with the greatest satisfaction that we were again dropping the enemy, though very slowly. In about half an hour his shot fell short. At 6 all sail set, heading NE by N. wind on our starboard quarter. About 7 it being dark and squally attended with rain, we lost sight of the enemy. During the night we kept the ship before the wind, with studding-sails on both sides, saw the enemy at intervals with the night glass, directly astern. At daylight on the 30th. saw the enemy about 15 miles astern of us. At 9 the enemy shorten'd sail, and hauled upon the wind to the Eastd. At ½ past 10 we lost sight of the enemy, it blowing very heavy, and squally shorten'd sail and sent down top gallant yards. Steered to the N.W. Carpenters employ'd in stopping up the ports, and the crew in filling the empty water casks, restowing the hold and Spirit-room. Latitude at meridian 37°. 5' South Longitude East. During the night moderate breezes and pleasant, the wind S.E. and steering NW. During the chase, the wind was so baffling that we steer'd round the compass, and continued on the enemy's weather bow the whole time, consequently we must have sailed near half a knot faster than he did.—

D, NWM, Journal of Midshipman William Boerum, pp. 55–60. Pages numbered: “55, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60.”

1. H.M.S. *Cornwallis*.

2. That is, the capstan, used for hoisting, which consisted of a vertical, spool-shaped cylinder that was rotated manually using bars or levers and around which a cable was wound.

3. Presumably, ricocheted.

LIEUTENANT JAMES McDONALD, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

Bahia, May 3rd. 1815

Sir,

I have the Honour to inform you for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that His Majestys Sloop *Penguin* arrived off the Island of Tristan de Cunha on the 17th. March, and receiving information of an American Brig of War having been off the day previous, Captain Dickinson determined if possible to intercept her, and succeeded in falling in with her on the 21st. at 9,,0 A.M.— at noon His Majestys Sloop closing fast, Enemy shewed his Colours and commenced firing his Stern Guns, at 1,,0 P.M. Enemy with fine breeze at

N.N.W. *Penguin* becalmed, at 7,,0 lost sight of him and at Midnight hauled up for the Island, which we made on the 23rd. bearing W.N.W.—

At 11,,15 AM. standing in for the Land a Sail was seen N.WbN. all Sail was immediately made in Chase, and the Stranger was shortly after made out to be a Ship under easy Sail.— at 1,,30 P.M. shortening Sail and prepared for Action, at 1,,45 fired a Shot to induce him to hoist his Colours which he immediately did by hoisting American and firing a broadside, at 1,,50 (Tristan de Cunha S.W. distance 3 or 4 Miles) rounded too on the Starboard Tack within Pistol Shot when the Action became warm and Brisk, at 2,,15 Enemy apparently inclined to bear away. Orders were given by Captain Dickinson to lay her on board, His Majestys Sloop much Cut up in her Sails and Rigging, several Shot through both Masts, all the Officers at the foremost Quarters either killed or wounded, and at this time I regret much to say a severe loss was felt generally by Captain Dickinsons receiving a Mortal wound, I then conceived as our Masts were momentarily expected to fall our only chance of success was to endeavour to board and at 2,,25 succeeded in passing our Bowsprit through his Starboard Quarter, Bowsprit and Foremast both fell at this moment, the latter inboard directly on the Larboard Guns. Vessels separating, every exertion was then made to bring our Starboard Broadside to bear without effect, His Majestys Sloop a perfect wreck and the Larboard After Guns rendered useless by the Breaking Bolts drawing, I deemed it only sacrificing the lives of the remaining Crew making further resistance, I therefore at 2,,35 Hailed to say we had Surrendered and at 3,,0 were taken possession of by the United States Ship of War *Hornet*, mounting Eighteen 32 pounders carronades, Two long 18 pounders and Musqetoons with a complement of at least 165 Men (not a Boy among them).

I regret much to state our loss in Killed and Wounded has been severe for the time engaged, a Report of which I have the Honour to enclose, the Enemys loss I have not been able to ascertain they say only 1 killed and 12 Wounded among the latter are the Captain and First Lieutenant both severely, the *Hornet* is in a Leaky state from our shot which I trust will shorten her Cruize,

I am happy to find His Majestys Sloop was not destined to bear American Colours or assist the Squadron of the Enemy, as she was destroyed after their taking a few Stores out, two Sail hove in sight shortly after the Action, which proved to be the United States Ship *Peacock* and a Store Brig, the one chased by us I have since learnt has a similar Cargo and were both intended by all accounts for the supplies of a Squadron expected off this Island consisting of Three Frigates and Two Corvettes, sent out I conjecture for the destruction of our East India Fleet,

Articles of Agreement having been drawn out by Captain Warrington Senior Officer I have for the relief of the wounded and anxiety to give you the earliest information thought proper to acced thereto,

I cannot close this without begging leave to recommend to their Lordships notice Mr. John H Bond, Masters Mate, who has been nearly twelve years in the service and is very severely wounded, the most unremitted attention has been paid to the wounded by Mr. Ralph Elliot Surgeon, and Mr. Edwd. Joyce Assistant, the professional abilities of the latter the Surgeon has spoken of in the highest mann[er]

Thus, Sir fell His Majestys Sloop *Penguin* and I trust the defence made will meet their Lordships approbation.

The Crew of His Majestys late Sloop arrived here on the 26th. Ulto., and Despatches were sent off the same day to the Commanders in Chief on the Brazil and Cape of Good Hope Stations, I send this by the British Schooner *Volunteer*, a Petty Officer and Five Men being on board of her to be sent on board the first Man of War they may fall in with, or other Vessel for passage to England. I have the Honour to be Sir Your Most Obedient Humble Servant

James McDonald  
Lieut. and Senior Surviving Officer of HM late Sloop *Penguin*

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/5451; enclosed in *Penguin* court-martial.

CAPTAIN JAMES BIDDLE TO COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR

United States Sloop *Hornet*  
St. Salvadore June 10th. 1815

Sir,

I have the honor to report, that the *Peacock* and this Ship, having continued off Tristan D'Acuha, the number of days directed by you, in your letter of instructions,<sup>1</sup> proceeded in company to the Eastward on the 12th. of April, bound to the second place of rendezvous. Nothing of any importance occurred to us untill the 27th. of April when at 7 A.M. in latitude 38° 30' South and Longitude 33° East, we made a strange sail in the South east, to which we gave chase. The wind was from the N.E. by No. and Light throughout the day, and by Sundown we had neared the chase considerably. It was calm during the night, and at daylight on the 28th. she was yet in sight. A breeze springing up from the N.W. we crowded sail with steering sails on both sides; the Chase standing to the Northward upon a wind. At 2h. 45' P.M. the *Peacock* was about six miles ahead of this Ship, and observing that she appeared to be suspicious of the Chase, I took in Starboard Steering Sails, and hauled up for the *Peacock*. I was still however of opinion that the chase was an Indiaman, tho' indeed the atmosphere was quite smoky and indistinct, and I concluded as she was very large, that Capt. Warrington was waiting for me to join him that we might together go alongside of her.— At 3h. 22' P.M. the *Peacock* made the Signal, that the chase was a Ship of the Line and an Enemy.—<sup>2</sup> I immediately took in all Steering Sails and hauled upon a wind, the Enemy then upon our lee quarter distant about eight miles.— By Sun down I had perceived that the Enemy sailed remarkably fast, and was very weatherly. At 9 P.M. as the Enemy was gaining upon us, and as there was every appearance that he would be enabled to keep sight of us during the night, I considered it necessary to lighten this Ship. I therefore threw overboard Twelve tons of kentledge,<sup>3</sup> part of our Shot, some of our heavy spars, cut away the Sheet Anchor and Cable, and started the wedges of the Masts.<sup>4</sup> At 2 A.M. the enemy being rather before our lee beam, I tacked to the westward; the Enemy also tacked, and continued in chase of us. At daylight, on the 29th. he was within gunshot upon our lee quarter. At 7 A.M. having hoisted English Colours and a Rear Admirals Flag,<sup>5</sup> he commenced firing from his bow gun. As his Shot went over us, I cut away the remaining Anchor

and Cable, threw overboard the Launch, six of our guns, more of our Shot, and every heavy article that was at hand. The Enemy fir'ed about thirty Shot, not one of which took effect, tho' most of them passed over us. While he was firing, I had the satisfaction to perceive that we slowly dropt him, and at about 9 A.M. he ceased his fire. —

At 11 A.M. the Enemy was again coming up with us. I now therefore threw overboard all our remaining guns but one long gun, nearly all our shot, all our spare Spars, cut away the Top Gallant Forecastle, and cleared every thing off deck as well as from below, to lighten as much as possible.<sup>6</sup> At noon the enemy again commenced firing, He fired many shot, only three of which came on board, two striking the hull, and one passing thro' the Jib.— It is however extraordinary that every Shot did not take effect, for the enemy the second time he commenced firing was certainly within three quarters of a mile of this Ship; and the Sea quite smooth. I perceived from his sails that the effect of his fire was to deaden his wind, and at 2 P.M: he again ceased firing. At 2h. 30' P: M: the wind which had previously, and greatly to our disadvantage backed to the Southeast hauled to the westward, and freshened up. At Sundown the Enemy was about four miles astern. The Wind was fresh, and we went at the rate of Nine knots throughout the night. We saw the Enemy at intervals thro' the squalls during the night, and at daylight the 30th. he was about twelve miles astern, still in chase of us. At 9h. 30' A.M. he took in Steering Sails, reefed his Topsails and hawled to the eastward, and at 11 A.M. he was entirely out of sight.

During the chase the Enemy appeared to be very crank, and I therefore conclude he must have lightened while in chase of us. I did not at any time fire our stern chasers, because it was manifest that the Enemy injured his sailing by his firing.

As we had now no Anchor, no Cable, no Boat, and but one Gun, there was of course an absolute necessity for relinquishing our intended cruize; and as in our then condition, it would have been extremely hazardous, on account of enemy's cruisers, to approach our own coast, I considered it most advisable to proceed for this port. I arrived here yesterday and on my arrival I received information of the peace between the United States and Great Britain.— Permit me to state that it was with the most painful reluctance, and upon the fullest conviction that it was indispensable in order to prevent a greater misfortune, that I could bring my mind to consent to part with my Guns—; and I beg leave to request, that you will be pleased to move the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy, to call a Court of Inquiry to investigate the loss of the armament of this Ship.<sup>7</sup> It will be very satisfactory to me to have such an investigation.— I have the honor to be Respectfully,  
Your Obedt. St.

J. Biddle

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 4, unnumbered; follows No. 19 (M125, Roll No. 45).

1. Those instructions have not been found.

2. H.M.S. *Cornwallis*.

3. According to the logbook, the crew of *Hornet* also threw overboard the "wardroom deck" so as to be able to get to the kentledge (ballast made of pig iron). To access the kentledge stored in the "Spirit room under the casks," they drained "300 gallons of whiskey." DNA, RG24, *Hornet* log (M1030a, Roll No. 2).

4. In an account of the chase submitted to the court of inquiry, Biddle wrote that he had jettisoned “such articles only as would not prevent my continuing my cruise.” Proceedings of a court of inquiry, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 219 (M273, Roll No. 8).

5. British Rear Admiral Sir George Burlton was in H.M.S. *Cornwallis* en route to his new post as commander in chief of the British East Indies station. However, operational responsibilities for *Cornwallis*, a 74-gun ship of the line, belonged to Captain Thomas Bayley.

6. At the 23 August 1815 court of inquiry into the loss of *Hornet's* armament, Lieutenant James Newton testified that as *Cornwallis* bore down on the American sloop, Biddle told his crew that: “it was likely we should very soon be captured, and if that should be our lot, he would stand by them. If they were confined in the Black Hole at Calcutta for twenty years, he would stay with them and he hoped they would continue to behave as well as they had done.” Newton added that the crew was “very much gratified” by Biddle’s words and he heard many of them murmuring, “Let’s hold on.” Proceedings of a court of inquiry, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 219 (M273, Roll No. 8).

7. As Biddle requested, the Navy Department ordered a court of inquiry to be held in New York City. It convened on 23 August 1815 and completely exonerated Biddle. In fact, the president of the court, Captain Samuel Evans, stated that Biddle deserved “the greatest applause” for his “persevering gallantry and nautical skill evinced in escaping under the most disadvantageous circumstances.” *Ibid.*

## The New York Navy Yard—Who Commands?

*Commodore Isaac Chauncey was commandant of the New York Navy Yard from 1807 until 31 August 1812 when Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton appointed him the commanding officer of naval forces on Lakes Ontario and Erie.<sup>1</sup> For the next eight months that command was tossed back and forth half a dozen times among Master Commandant Charles Ludlow, Captain Isaac Hull, Master Commandant William Crane, and Captain James Lawrence until Captain Samuel Evans took over on 6 May 1813.<sup>2</sup> It is not known if Secretary Hamilton or his successor, William Jones, had promised Chauncey that he could return to his former position at the yard. He did leave his wife and children behind when he departed for the Lakes and they, not Evans’s family, resided in the commandant’s house. Evan’s complaints about his housing situation and the resumption of peace finally forced Secretary Benjamin W. Crowninshield to decide who was to command the New York Navy Yard after the War of 1812.*

1. Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 1, pp. 296–302.

2. Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2., p. 110.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL EVANS

Capt. Samuel Evans }  
U.S. Navy Present }

Navy Department  
July 26: 1815

Sir.

You will return to New-York and resume the command of the U.S. Navy Yard at Brooklyne, with which you have hitherto been charged, and you will be entitled to all the privileges & perquisites appertaining to that command and you will receive the double rations as commanding officer.<sup>1</sup> I am respectfully &c.

B W Crowninshield

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 276 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Evans probably visited Washington to confer with the new Secretary of the Navy about his claim to the command of the New York Navy Yard.

COMMODORE ISAAC CHAUNCEY TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL EVANS

Copy

Sackets Harbour 18th. Feby 1815

Dear Sir

Your favor of the 25th. ult,<sup>1</sup> I received some time since, and I should have answered it immediately but have been much pressed with business—

Before I left New york, I had taken my determination to remove my family from the navy yard early in the spring— I presume however that it would be impossible for me to obtain a House or Rooms before the first of May. I had determined however if it would subject you to inconvenience by holding it until that time to remove earlier— The recent news of peace however may make a change as I intend to claim a promise made by the last secretary that I should return to the navy yard— this I trust would not interfere with your arrangements, and I hope would be agreeable to you— If however I should not return to that establishment, I certainly shall leave this station early in the Spring and as it would be agreeable to attend myself to the removal of my family, you would oblige me to suffer them to remain until I arrive in New york and any extra expence that you might be at in Consequence of my retaining the house after April I would refund it to you with pleasure— I am my dear Sir with great respect & esteem your Obt & hbl St.

Signed— I. C[h]auncey

Captain S. Evans  
US Navy New York—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 26, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43). This was enclosed in Evans to Crowninshield, 8 March 1815. See below.

1. Not found.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL EVANS TO COMMODORE ISAAC CHAUNCEY

(Copy)

US Navy yard New York March 8th. 1815—

Sir

I have this moment received your letter dated the 18th. ulto. but bearing the post mark of the 28th. and am much surprised to discover by it, that you consider you have a claim to the Command of this establishment—

Without entering at this time into the Merits of your claim, or putting in question the generosity, or even justness, of an attempt to eject me from my Command, I hasten to inform you that it will “interfere” with my “arrangments” most essentially, to be removed from here— that I know of no circumstances under



which it “would be agreeable,” to be removed for the convenience of any one—that I shall in this case oppose it in such manner as I may judge right and proper, and I have no doubt but the Honble Secretary will consider the question, as every officer I have Conversed with considers it—That is—if there is any claim to the command, it rests with me—

I wish no pecuniary compensation from you for the time your family has been in the house since I had authority to occupy it, which was on the 26th. of January last— But I trust you will not suffer them to remain there longer than the last of the present month, as every day they are there, keeps me so long from my family, who will not leave Baltimore until the house is ready to receive them— I am Sir very respectfully your Obt St

Signed Saml. Evans

Comme. Isaac Chauncey—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 26, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43). This was enclosed in Evans to Crowninshield, 8 March 1815. See below.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL EVANS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

US. Navy yard New York March 8th. 1815

Sir

Presuming that Com: Chauncey has before this applied to you for the Command of this establishment, I consider it advisable to lay before you a copy of a letter I have received from him on the subject, with a Copy of my answer to it—<sup>1</sup>

Com: Decatur & Porter,<sup>2</sup> and indeed every officer I have Conversed with on the subject, Considers with me, that he can have no just claim to it—and I flatter myself that you will not be the cause of my being longer a Convenience for him—I have the honor to be with great respect your Obt St

Sam<sup>l</sup> Evans

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 26 (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. See above, Chauncey to Evans, 18 February 1815 and Evans to Chauncey, 8 March 1815.

2. Commodore Stephen Decatur and Captain David Porter.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
COMMODORE ISAAC CHAUNCEY

Como. I. Chauncey. }  
U.S. Navy, Present.<sup>1</sup> }

Navy Department  
May 20th. 1815

Sir.

You will proceed to Sacketts Harbor and make such disposition of the fleet, Stores, contracts, and other objects connected with the Naval Establishment at that place, as, in your judgement, the Public interest may seem to require.— You will then repair to Portsmouth N.H. and assume the command of the U.S. Ship

*Washington*; open such recruiting rendezvous as may be necessary to obtain her complement of Seamen &c., and, after having effected the requisite arrangements toward equipping her for Sea, return to this Department to settle your accounts.— I am very respectfully &

B. W. Crowninshield

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 127 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. On 23 March 1815, Chauncey asked to come to Washington to settle his accounts. On 5 April, Crowninshield agreed to this request. Chauncey to Crowninshield, 23 March 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 93 (M125, Roll No. 43). Crowninshield to Chauncey, 5 April 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 92 (M149, Roll No. 12). Crowninshield decided that Evans rather than Chauncey would be the Navy's postwar commandant of the New York Navy Yard.

## John Rodgers Comes Ashore

*On 7 February 1815, President James Madison signed into law a bill establishing a board of Navy commissioners.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this new board was to relieve the Navy Secretary of those administrative duties requiring a high level of professional expertise, such as the design and construction of warships, the management of yards and stations, and the training and discipline of officers and men. To lead the newly created Navy Board, the Madison administration reached out to the Navy's senior leader, Commodore John Rodgers, then in Philadelphia preparing the frigate Guerriere for its first cruise.<sup>2</sup> But before surrendering his seagoing command for one ashore, Rodgers sought the council and confirmation of his wife, Minerva. In the three-week interim that followed, he offered Secretary Crowninshield a candid appraisal of his brother captains, sizing up the officers who were best- and least-suited to serve as Navy commissioners. By the end of the month, Rodgers had accepted the presidency of the Navy Board, a position he was to hold for 19 of the next 22 years.<sup>3</sup>*

1. For commentary and documents relating to this measure, see pp. 673–92.

2. On *Guerriere's* proposed cruise, see pp. 653–60.

3. Rodgers directed the Navy Board from 1815 to 1824 and again from 1827 to 1837. See Schroeder, *Commodore John Rodgers*, chapters 8 and 10.

### SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Private.—

Washington Feby. 8. 1815.

Dear Sir,

By an act lately passed, it becomes the duty of the President of the U States to select three from among the post captains of our Navy, to form a Navy Board, to be attached to the Dept. to aid & assist the Secy. of the Navy, with a salary of three thousand Dolls., for, or in lieu of pay & rations: now my dear Sir you have been thot of by the President for one of the board, my object in writing you is to know if you accept, such an appointment: if not, be so good as to suggest what Offcr.

it would be most proper to take, so as to do the most benefit to the service & to create the least uneasiness among the Off[icer]s.—

I write to you with frankness & friendship & trust that it will be recv'd in the same honorable way. I am, very respectfully Yr. Obt. St.

B W Crowninshield

LS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box III:24.

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Private

Phia Feby. 11th. 1815

My dear Sir

I have received your kind letter of the 8th. Inst. and am much obliged by its contents inasmuch as it affords me a proof of your confidence

I am really at a loss for words to express how much I feel obliged to the president for his good opinion of me— the friendship which has manifested for me on more than one occasion will leave on my mind impressions of gratitude never to [ceased] but by the termination of my sublunary existence— indeed had I not resolved on seeking every opportunity during the present war, affording the prospect of rendering myself in any degree *immediately* instrumental in humbling the presumptuous pride of our ignoble and ungenerous enemy,— the overbearing and perfidious conduct of whose Government I religious[ly] abhor and detest; I would most certainly avail myself of his present goodness by accepting the situation you mention— in fine was the war with any other nation I would most willingly accept it as well because I am devotedly attached to the endearing pursuits of a more domestic life, as on account of the pleasure I should desire from being associated with yourself in the exercise of so important and honorable a trust, under his administration

As you have done me the honor to disclose your wishes on the occasion without reserve, I will in the same frank manner, according to my own best Judgment, give you the outline of the character, as well as of the pretensions of the several post captains of the Navy to fill the situations in question

Com. Murray, altho an amiable old gentleman has not been regularly bred to the profession of a seaman, his pretensions therefore as a navy officer are of a very limited description— Capt Bainbridge is an excellent officer, uniting much practice with considerable Theory— he is also industrious, & if there is any objection to him it is because he feels the importance of his own consequence abilities too sensibly to qualify him as well as he otherwise would be for a subordinate situation— Capt Campbell is a good old gentleman but is fond of novelty, and at the same time an enemy to every thing that is likely to call the reflections of his mind into operation— Capt Decatur, Stewart, Warrington & Blakely being at sea I feel it unnecessary to say any thing concerning their pretensions— Capt Chauncey is an excellent officer but I consider him better qualified for a

command at sea than any thing else— Capt Shaw altho an amiable man is by no means qualified for any thing requiring the exercise of more than an ordinary share of intellect— Capts Tingey & Evans you are acquainted with— Capt Porter is a man of far more than ordinary natural Talents, indefatigable in whatever he undertakes and added to these, his acquirements, professional as well as more immediately scientific, are respectable— Capt Dent, altho his opportunities of gaining professional knowledge has been considerable nevertheless wants stability of character— Capt Gordon is a good seaman & qualified for a command at sea but his opinions are too flexible to qualify him— Capt Perry as you well know is a good officer but I do not believe he has ever paid so much attention to naval science as to qualify him for such a situation— Capt McDonough is an officer of similar merit— Capt Morris is a man of strong discriminating mind of considerable science, & unites perhaps as much, if not more theoretical and practical knowledge than any man of his age in the service— Capt Jones is a good officer, but altho a man of far more than ordinary general information does not possess the particular kinds to qualify him— Capt Crane is a good seaman & an intelligent man but he is better qualified to command a ship than any thing else— Capt Bainbridge, the Junior, I do not think qualified for any command as I have reason to believe him intemperate, & I am induced to mention this that you may be guarded against giving him a command at sea— Capt Hull I had almost forgot to mention, he is never the less a man of most amiable disposition, and altho he does not pretend to much science is however an excellent seaman & at the same time unites all the most essential qualifications necessary for such a situation

Was I authorized to nominate the three Capts to assist in the discharge of the duties of the Dept. over which you preside;— I would name Bainbridge, Hull & Morris, Otherwise Hull, Porter & Morris— It is probable Bainbridge might prefer the situation he at present holds, out of respect to his rank & services, it might be well however to make him the offer— If Bainbridge should refuse— Hull & Morris, neither of them having active commands at present, might be appointed without giving umbrage to any others— By this you see that I wish to remain popular with the officers— you are certainly so at present with all I have conversed with— It is so cold where I am writing that my senses as well as my fingers are benumbed therefore after congratulating you on the late success of our arms at New Orleans permit me to say that I am with sincere regard & esteem Dear Sir yr much obliged

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

P.S A moment after concluding this hasty scrawl an express has arriv'd bringing intelligence of a treaty of peace being concluded between our commissioners & those of the enemy— if this is true, & peace is actually to be concluded I will have no hesitation in accepting the appointment of which this is the subject

J R

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Private

Phia Feby 13th. 1815

My dear Sir

Should the late dispatches from our Ministers be of a complexion to authorise an immediate cessation of hostilities, it would give me pleasure to be afforded an opportunity of a personal interview at Washington, before you decide on the nomination of Captains to be associated with you for the execution of the duties of the Dept over which you preside; and this I am the more anxious for, because when I wrote you last, my desire to be in time for the mail, was such as to prevent my being so explicit as I could have wished— indeed I wrote in such haste, and under such circumstances as hardly leaves me a distinct recollection of what I did write

The *Guerriere* is now completely equipped, & after receiving the 30 men whom you ordered to be sent from New York, might sail in five days— she is unquestionably the finest frigate that ever floated, and however irreligious it may be, I shall ever regret that any thing occurred to prevent my trying her stings on John Bull's hide— her armament is far more complete than that of any ship in our service, or perhaps that of any other ship in the world With great regard respect & esteem I am sir yr much obliged

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

LS, MaSaPEM, MH 15, Crowninshield Family Papers, Box 13, Folder 6.

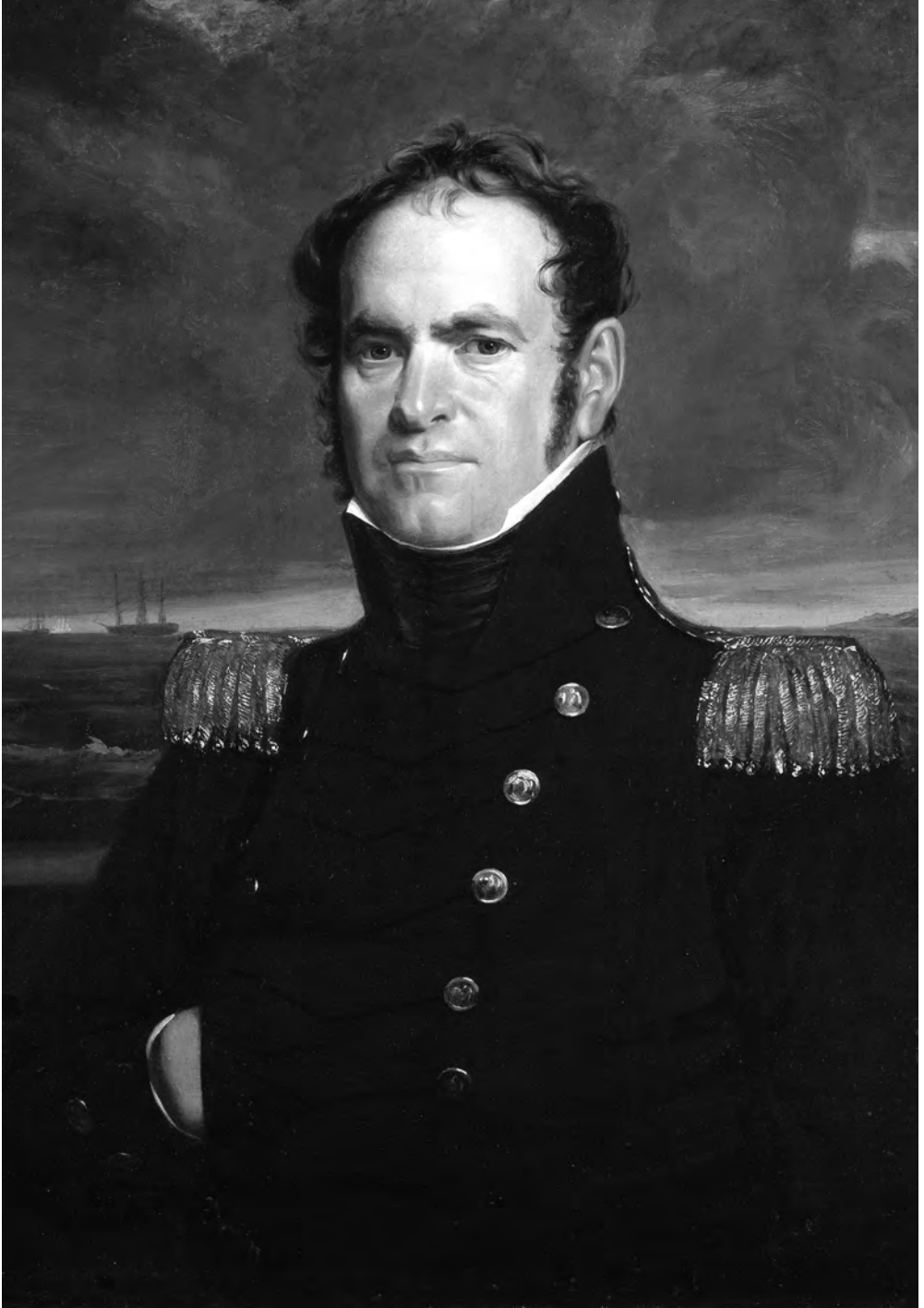
COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO MINERVA RODGERS

Private

Phia. Feby 14th. 1815

My beloved Wife

Contrary to all my calculations peace is, or is likely to take place between us and England— I am now waiting to hear from Washington whether the Treaty which is said to have arrived a few days since will be ratified by our government— In the event of peace with that detestable nation whether to take a command to Algiers or be President of the Board of commissioners for which a Law passed a few days since, I have not yet decided— the latter the President with his usual goodness has directed the Secty of the Navy to offer me what say you my wife on the subject— the Salary is \$3000 besides a house free of rent— I have written expressing a desire to go to Washington for the purpose of making my determinations you will therefore see me perhaps in a week or ten days when you will be able to express to me yr wishes on the subject & what figure You think I should make attending to the “dull pursuits of domestic Life”— The Navy will never again I fear present such a field for the acquirement of glory as it has done as a war with no other nation can afford such a field— The peace, particularly at this moment, has deranged all my plans, & was it not for the ardor of my love for you I think I should nearly grow crazy I have Just rcd yr letter of the 10th. & am glad to learn that yrself & all at home are well



*John Rodgers*



*Minerva Denison Rodgers*

Enclosed is a letter *rcd* last even'g from Gamble<sup>1</sup> which he must have written before the arrival of the Treaty— I send it to you because I suppose a sight of the hand writing will be as good as [*a*] piece of sugar plumb to Elelezer—

I have this moment [*rcd*] a card of invitation for you to the [-] Washington birth night ball— Yr ever devoted

Jn R

Let me hear from you otherwise I'll not give you a single Kiss when we meet  
I yesterday dined with Mrs. Decatur & never saw her appear to so much advantage She desired me to present her love & to say that she is almost tempted to go to see you<sup>2</sup>

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box II:2. Addressed on envelope: "Mrs. Com Rodgers/Sion Hill near H, D, Grace/Maryland."

1. Lieutenant Thomas Gamble, first lieutenant of *Guerriere*. Rodgers praised Gamble highly for his conduct during the defense of Baltimore. See Rodgers to Jones, 23 September 1814, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 300.

2. This paragraph appears as a postscript in the left-hand margin of the first page of this letter.

### MINERVA RODGERS TO COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

[*Havre de Grace, Maryland*] Feby. 18th. 1815

My Beloved Husband—

Last evening I received yours of the 14th. You ask me what kind of figure I think you would make in the "Dull Pursuits of civil life" but you know what I think on that subject and that in my estimation no earthly advantage could outweigh the happiness which would result from having you at home in perfect security with a co[m]petence & just so much employment as would keep your zeal and talents from rusting Therefore I trust you will have nothing to do with an Algerine war— & yet I am far from being insensible to the voice of Fame nor am I so contracted in my ideas as to think that your life—should be devoted to me and my children— No my Dearest! I know and feel that you were formed to play your part on a scale of more extensive usefulness but I cannot think that you could add to your reputation by accepting of a command to Algiers— Any of the Younger officers would be capable of chastising those Barbarians It is true that in case the Peace with England is ratified (of which I presume there is scarcely a shadow of a doubt) the Navy will no longer present such an ample field for glory as it has hitherto done— but yet my Love I cannot think that you have any thing to regret but much to exalt in— Altho you have not like some others excited the clamorous and unmeaning voice of popular applause, you know that there are some valuable hearts which duly appreciate the value of your services, & tho the importance of your exertions were known only to yourself—the consciousness of having deserved well of your country will ever be a pleasing retrospect, and like a vernal sunshine gild the remainder of your life—



Poor Gamble I suppose will be sadly disappointed— his affectionate & respectful letter drew tears from my eyes, for I am confident that he feels for you the most devoted regard and he is too honest to say the thing that he does not think & too sincere to make professions which would wear the appearance of flattery—

—Let me hear from you my Husband two or three days previous to your leaving Philada. in [case] you go on to Washington in order that I may send for you to the ferry or meet you at Havre De grace Say which you will prefer? If I go to Hav[re] I shall only take with me the little one as our family is now too large to move in a Body— Ever Yours most tenderly—

M R—

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box II:2. Addressed on envelope: “Commodore Rodgers/Washington Philadelphia/City—.” Docketed: “M. Rodgers/Feb. 18th., 1815—/R. —,” and, above address line: “Havre De Grace Feby 18th. 1815}.”

#### COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS TO MINERVA RODGERS

My beloved Wife— I have consented to accept the Presidency of the board of Commissioners— Hull & Porter are nominated as the other members— I expect to leave here about Friday on my way to Phil where, if the roads are not so very bad as likely to injure little Eliza’s health, I should be glad for you to accompany me for the purpose of Purchasing your furnite— It would be well my love to make a list of what you will require by the time I reach Havre as in the [event] of yr not being able to accompany me I shall have to do this service for you— Oeconomy is the ordre of the day here I shall however allow you \$3,000 for every thing which with yr carriage & a pair of good horses will rather exceed \$4000— I shall look out for a house before I leave here— I have already been to look at two or three but do not like them— I wish you was here to choose for yrself, for this is the only thing in which I feel much dread of being able to suit yr taste—

I have rcd yr letter & thank you my dear for yr affectionate solicitude— Your dream concerning me is [no more] than a phantom

Give my love to yr mother & sisters & tell Eliza that her entreating had no little weight in inducing me to accept a peaceable occupation— She & Louisa are to be maids of honor to the Lady of the 1st. Lord of the Admiralty, otherwise captivity Yr Ever devoted

Jn<sup>o</sup> Rodgers

Monday 27th. Feby 1815

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, MSS38125, Box II:2. Addressed on envelope: “Mrs. M Rodgers/Sion Hill near/ H D Grace—.” Bracketed text supplied by conjecture.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

Navy Deptmt.  
February 28. 1815.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that the President of the United States, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, has appointed you a member of the board of Naval Commissioners; and am, With great respect, Yr: Ob: Servant.

B W Crowninshield

MiU-C, John Rodgers Papers. Addressed flush left at foot of page: "Commodore Jno. Rodgers,/U.S. Navy,/Present."

## "Tails" of "Old Ironsides"

*The keeping of pets at sea was a common feature of shipboard life in the age of sail. Pets offered companionship, diversion, and—when food was scarce—a source of sustenance. The typical animals kept in ships as pets included cats, dogs, monkeys, and birds, although sailors sometimes made "a special pet of one of the barnyard animals" brought aboard to provide nourishment for the crew.<sup>1</sup> Contemporary accounts of 1812 seamen testify to the presence of pets in U.S. warships. While the two large mastiff dogs that accompanied Essex during her Pacific cruise might qualify as the most imposing pets to sail with the wartime Navy, they were certainly not the most unique.<sup>2</sup>*

*That distinction belongs to a terrier named Guerriere and two adolescent jaguars that accompanied Constitution on her final wartime cruise. The terrier belonged to the frigate's second lieutenant, Beekman V. Hoffman, and the lively, intelligent nature of this canine endeared him to the entire ship's company. The jaguar cubs joined Constitution as part of a prize cargo taken out of the British ship Susannah captured off the coast of Brazil. As the following documents reveal, this pair of young cats, styled tigers by the crew, quickly altered the dynamic that had heretofore prevailed amongst the two-legged and four-legged denizens of "Old Ironsides." Upon the frigate's return home to Boston, the two "tigers" achieved a notoriety that would endure for nearly two years as they appeared on public display in cities ranging from Boston to Charleston, South Carolina.<sup>3</sup>*

1. Stark, "Sailors' Pets," p. 79.

2. In addition to the mastiffs, Essex's crew also kept "monkeys and young goats as pets." See Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 31 and 340. On birds as pets, see Leech, *Voice from the Main Deck*, p. 127. Oliver Hazard Perry took his spaniel aboard Niagara during the Battle of Lake Erie. See Mackenzie, *Oliver Hazard Perry*, Vol. 1, pp. 238–39, and Bunnell, *Travels and Adventures*, p. 117.

3. Advertisements promoting the viewing of Constitution's tigers in Boston and New York are reproduced below. For similar promotions in three other cities, see the *Baltimore Patriot & Evening Advertiser*, 13 August 1816; the *American Beacon and Commercial Diary (Norfolk, Virginia)*, 15 January 1817; and the *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser (Charleston, South Carolina)*, 18 February 1817. Over time, these advertisements offered more exaggerated descriptions of the tigers and their origins, no doubt to arouse greater public interest in viewing them.

## JOURNAL OF ACTING CHAPLAIN ASSHETON Y. HUMPHREYS

[Extract]

[U.S.S. *Constitution*, 12 February 1815]<sup>1</sup>

. . . . A terrier dog (named Guerriere) belonging to Lieut. Hoffman, from the very great sagacity with which he was gifted had become a great favourite with all hands officers and men. so great a display of almost rational faculties did he exhibit that many were of the opinion that he would talk were it not that he feared he should be set to work, be the talking part as it may, he frequently did work, for whenever all hands were called to about ship he was sure to pay his respects to the Captain of the mast, who placing the end of the weather fore brace in his mouth he would lead it along in a perfect order as any two legged sea dog and perform various little duties about the mast full as well. Never would the drum beat to quarters but with every token of the greatest satisfaction he would repair to the taffrel, and there remain until it again beat for boarders, firemen, &c when he would always go with them and when they returned to their quarters or guns he would return to his former station. On this day his sagacity appeared preeminent. 'Twas about 4 o'clock P.M. Lieut. Ballard and myself were walking the weather side of the quarter deck lamenting our hard luck in not falling in with an Enemys ship altho we had almost bearded the lion in his den, and all unconscious of any craft being near us. Guerriere who was playing about the heels of Lieut Ballard appeared uncommonly frisky and was rather troublesome, at length becoming an incumbrance he attracted the particular attention of the Lieut, perceiving which he jumped upon the hammock cloths and stretching his head to windward began to bark most vehemently;— upon looking to discover what attracted his notice lo! and behold! there was a large frigate<sup>2</sup> standing down before the wind under a press of sail, which the gentlemen at the mast had not yet discovered. . . .

[U.S.S. *Constitution*, 16 February 1815]<sup>3</sup>

Received an addition to our crew in the persons of two tigers found on board the *Susan* intended as a present (somewhat outré to be sure) to the owners from her late consignees in S. America. They are perfectly docile and upon a short acquaintance become very familiar, and though but four or five months old are remarkably large and exhibit feats of strength beyond what I have ever seen in any other animals of a similar size—with a blow of the paw they capsize a dog much heavier than themselves and have taught some of the men in the same manner to keep a respectful distance while they are at meals, at which time they appear to have a particular aversion to being disturbed, in which however they are not singular.—

AD, InU, Journal of Assheton Y. Humphreys, 17 December 1814–26 March 1815. For a printed version, see Martin, *Constitution's Finest Fight*, pp. 19–20 and 24–25.

1. According to *Constitution's* logbook, the ship sighting and chase mentioned in this first extract occurred on the afternoon of 12 February. It was recorded in sea time as 13 February. See *Constitution* logbooks, 13 February 1815. Humphreys erroneously dated this portion of his journal 14 February.

2. Identified in *Constitution's* logbook as the Portuguese frigate *Amazon*. Ibid.

3. Based on *Constitution's* logbook, the American frigate overhauled the merchantman referenced in this second extract, the British ship *Susannah*, on 16 February. The capture was recorded in sea time as 17 February. See *ibid.*, 17 February 1815. Humphreys erroneously dated this portion of his journal as occurring prior to 16 February.

## NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT OF *CONSTITUTION'S* CRUISE

[*Boston, 5 June 1815*]

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### OLD IRONSIDES

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#### ANECDOTES OF THE CONSTITUTION

. . . It is known that sailors are apt to be superstitious. Lieut. Hoffman had a [fi]ne terrier, who was a great favorite on board the ship. When he was transferred to the *Cyane*, he took the dog with him. At Porto Praya the dog being much attached to Old Ironsides, jumped over to swim to her, a boat was lowered down from the *Constitution* to try to save him, but the poor animal was drowned. The sailors then said that they should have a fight or a run in 24 hours. The next morning the British squadron hove in sight. This is not likely to lessen their belief in omens.— Having before mentioned the tigers, something may be related of them. They are two beautiful animals, young, and quite playful with the men, very tame and gentle, except when they are eating. They are excessively ferocious to all other animals except dogs, and this, owing to their having been suckled by a bitch. One day when they were loose and running over the ship, one of them perceived a cat on the table round which the officers were sitting, he instantly jumped through the hatch on to the table, seized the cat, and sprung over their heads into a state room. Here he became so savage that there was no rescuing the cat, and poor puss was devoured. Another sprung upon an unlucky monkey on the quarter deck, and bore him off behind a gun, so ferocious, that no one could approach him; but having lowered down a slip noose through the splinter netting, he was caught by the neck and drawn up, still holding the monkey; at length, when nearly suffocated, one of the men got the monkey by the tail, and saved him from the grasp of his enemy.

Printed, *Boston Gazette*, 5 June 1815. This article is a continuation of a piece appearing in the 1 June edition of the *Boston Gazette* under the banner "OLD IRONSIDES." Bracketed text supplied from a copy of this article published in *Niles' Weekly Register* on 17 June 1815.

# TIGERS.



and its vicinity,

THE Ladies and Gentlemen of

are informed that

## Two Royal Brazilian TIGERS,

Remarkably Elegant and Docile, taken by the U. S. frigate Constitution, out of the ship Susannah, will be Exhibited at

To gratify the curiosity of those who may desire to see the Monarchs of this Continent.

Admittance, 12 C.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR VIEWING *CONSTITUTION'S* TIGERS[*Boston, 29 June 1815*]

## TIGERS.

THE subscriber informs the public that he has added to the Museum in Boylston Market House, two LIVING TIGERS, which were taken out of a prize, and brought into this town by the frigate *Constitution*.<sup>1</sup>

They have not yet attained their full size, being but about 7 months old. Owing probably to that circumstance, and to the familiar manner in which they were treated by the crew of the *Constitution*, on board of which ship they were about 4 months, they are so gentle, as to suffer strangers to play with them without danger. Their playfulness, together with the brilliant hues of their skins, make them the most interesting animals which were ever shewn to the public. The price of admittance to the Museum, 25 cents, is not enhanced in consequence of this addition.

June 22

EDWARD SAVAGE.<sup>2</sup>Printed, *Boston Gazette*, 29 June 1815.

1. A published account of the Boston Society of Natural History credits Captain Charles Stewart with donating the two jaguars to the Linnaean Society of New England, its predecessor institution. The society may have had a financial arrangement with Edward Savage (identified below) to display the cats at his museum. See Bouvé, *Historical Sketch*, p. 7.

2. American portrait painter and engraver. He opened the New York Museum at Boston's Boylston Hall in 1812 to display artwork and curiosities. See Bayley, *Early American Portrait Painters*. Savage's collection was later sold to the New England Museum at 76 Court Street. See Bowen, *Picture of Boston*, pp.193-94.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR VIEWING *CONSTITUTION'S* TIGERS[*New York, 13 April 1816*]

## TIGERS.

THE Ladies and Gentlemen of New-York and its vicinity, are respectfully informed that TWO ROYAL BRAZILIAN TIGERS have just arrived, and are to be seen at No. 40 Nassau street, near the corner of John street. These celebrated Animals were intended as a present to the Prince Regent, and were taken by the frigate *Constitution*, whilst on their passage in the ship *Susannah*, bound to England. The beauty and size of these Tigers render them peculiarly interesting. Gentlemen who have viewed them have always expressed the highest degree of satisfaction, and recommend the person as worthy of public patronage, who exhibits in this country, Animals which are known to us only in name. Among the different quadrupeds, the history of which may have excited our attention, there is none which can give greater satisfaction to the beholder than the TIGER.

Those who may wish to view these Royal Tigers, can gratify their curiosity for a few days only, by applying as above. The proprietor intends removing them in short time from this city.— Those persons who would wish to view these beautiful animals would do well to apply soon.

Admittance 25 cents. Children under 12 years half price.

March 25<sup>th</sup>

Printed, *The Columbian* (New York), 13 April 1816.

## Jacob Lewis Demobilizes the New York Flotilla: The Men

*Secretary of the Navy Benjamin W. Crowninshield penned a letter to the commander of the New York Flotilla, Captain Jacob Lewis, the day word of the Treaty of Ghent reached Washington. The Secretary ordered Lewis to suspend recruiting and all naval preparations, but to remain vigilant for possible enemy maneuvers.<sup>1</sup> No attack ever came. In the ensuing months, Lewis oversaw the dismantling of his command and the dissolution of the New York Flotilla. All the while, the men under his command paced the streets of New York, anxious to receive their discharges and pay, and resume their regular lives.*

1. See Crowninshield to Lewis, 15 February 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 37 (M149, Roll No. 12).

### CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Sir

I am under necessity of reporting to you, the situation of the men lately under my Command—

There are about one hundred & fifty walking the streets of this City whose Terms of servise has Expired—

many of them, wish to return to their homes to go the [— —] fishing— there is no money here to pay them, altho they are discharged—

The Clammour is great, and I am sorry To add that they have reason on their side—<sup>1</sup> most respectfully your very Obt. Sev't.

NYk. Feby. 24. 1815

J Lewis

It may be Calculated that it will require funds to pay 2,00 men In all this month— it would be a fair calculation To make 80\$ per man—JL—

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 97 (M124, Roll No. 69).

1. Crowninshield promised to immediately remit funds to New York Navy Agent John Bullus to pay Lewis's men, but the requisite funds would not arrive until April. Crowninshield to Lewis, 27 February 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 42 (M149, Roll No. 12).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Capt. Jacob Lewis  
Comm'g U.S. Flotilla New York.

Navy Department  
March 22d. 1815.

Sir

It is very desirable to expedite the departure of the U.S. Ship *John Adams* Capt. Angus<sup>1</sup> to Bermuda to bring home the Officers and men of the late U.S. Frigate *President* and others of our unfortunate Countrymen who are languishing under British duress.— Your aid in this respect is requested, by consulting with Capt. Angus as to the transfer of as many men from the Flotilla, whose term of service is not expired, and who may make the Voyage before their time of enlistment be out.—<sup>2</sup> I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 73 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Master Commandant Samuel Angus.

2. Lewis responded by soliciting his men to volunteer to join Angus, but very few accepted. Most of his flotillamen had joined to defend the New York harbor and were not interested in other service. Lewis to Crowninshield, 25 March 1815, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 71 (M124, Roll No. 70).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Como. Jacob Lewis }  
U.S. Flotilla New York. }

Navy Department  
April 12th. 1815

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 8th. Inst.—<sup>1</sup> All the Officers and men lately employed in the Gun Boat Service, are to be discharged and by the Law passed the last Session of Congress, are entitled to four months extra pay— the Law directs them to be paid off on the first of April current.—<sup>2</sup> I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 99 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Lewis wrote to Crowninshield that: "The officers and Crews of the Gun Boats whose Times of Service have not expired, are very desirous of obtaining their discharge, they are living at a great expence to themselves as well to the Government—" Lewis to Crowninshield, 8 April 1815, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 157 (M124, Roll No. 70).

2. This 27 February 1815 "act to repeal certain acts concerning the flotilla service, and for other purposes" repealed previous laws that established the flotilla service in 1813 and provided for the appointment of officers in 1814. This postwar law discharged the flotillamen as of 1 April 1815, giving them a bonus of four extra months of pay. In addition, this act provided that the flotilla vessels be sold and the naval stores preserved. *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 3, p. 217.



## JACOB LEWIS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Private

My Dear Sir

I wrote you yesterday on the Subject of discharging the officers and men attached to The Flotilla; you must be Convinced that I could not act from any law of Congress untill it should be promulgated and order'd to be acted upon by The Department;—<sup>1</sup> as many persons were discharged as There were funds to pay (but. their Times had expired) I could not discharge those whose times had not Expired without paying them off; and without orders to do so from the Department—

It has happen'd that a number of the fishermen were discharged at their own Instance, previous to the Information ariving of their being intitled to four months pay and previous to the first day of Apl.—

I will thank you to tell me what ought to be done in that Case as well as in all Cases relating to the End of the Flotilla servise,<sup>2</sup> Yours most Sincerely

J Lewis<sup>3</sup>

New yk. 22 Apl. 1815

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 74 (M124, Roll No. 71).

1. Lewis received Crowninshield's 12 April letter on 21 April. He wrote that he had no idea of the Department's order to discharge and pay members of the Flotilla for an extra four months. He further stated that even if he had received those instructions, he did not have the necessary funds to act on them. Lewis to Crowninshield, 21 Apr. 1815, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 74 (M124, Roll No. 71).

2. Crowninshield, in response to Lewis's letter of 21 April, wrote that he was to continue to discharge men, reserving two officers for the gunboats that Lewis selected to lay in ordinary at New York. Crowninshield to Lewis, 24 April 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 110 (M149, Roll No. 12). Lewis complied, but expressed dissatisfaction on behalf of his men. Many of the officers and crew left before receiving the additional four months of pay, and some left without being paid at all. Lewis to Crowninshield, 28 April 1815, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 98 (M124, Roll No. 71).

3. After the dissolution of the New York Flotilla, Lewis was named the United States Consul to Malta, despite seeking the more prestigious posting of consul and naval agent at Port Mahon. Lewis to Crowninshield, 4 April, 1815, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 137 (M124, Roll No. 70); and Crowninshield to Lewis, 28 April 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 313 (M149, Roll No. 12). The exact date of Lewis's discharge from naval service is not known. The last extant letter from Secretary Crowninshield addressing him as commander of the New York Flotilla is 12 April 1815. His return to civilian life probably occurred between that date and his 28 April appointment as U.S. consul at Malta.

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO JACOB LEWIS

Jacob Lewis Esqr. }  
New York. }

Navy Department  
June 6th. 1815.

Sir

I have received your letter of the 30th. May<sup>1</sup> enclosing the power of Attorney from several Seamen late of the United States Flotilla, claiming the benefit of the four months extra pay allowed by Law.—

You will direct the Purser<sup>2</sup> to check all their names upon the Shipping articles and the Muster Rolls, and such of them who regularly entered for the Flo-tilla service, and served until after the peace, and the passage of the Law on the 27th. Feby. will be entitled to receive the four months extra pay in addition to their wages, as it is evident that had the War continued and the Government had required their further Services, they would have continued up to the period pointed out by the Law for their discharge.— The Purser will take measures for the payment of the money upon a properly authorized Power of Attorney, and make his requisition accordingly.— I am very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield.

LB, DNA, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 144 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Lewis wrote Crowninshield on behalf of some of his men who had been discharged before word had been disseminated about the bonus discharge money for flotillamen. According to Lewis, “no men are more intitled to the Consideration of the Government.” Lewis to Crowninshield, 30 May 1815, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 5 (M124, Roll No. 72).

2. George S. Wise held his purser’s commission since 25 April 1813 and had served on the New York Station since 24 May 1813.

## St. Marys Station Demobilizes

*Demobilization on the Georgia Station followed a similar pattern as on other stations: some vessels and crews were retained in service, while other craft were sold, and their crews discharged. The Navy Department consolidated the southern stations by merging the Georgia and South Carolina forces under Hugh G. Campbell at Charleston, permitting Captain John H. Dent to leave that place on an extended furlough in March 1815.<sup>1</sup>*

*What distinguished the transition to a peacetime status in Georgia was the strong British presence there at the end of the war and the differing interpretations of the peace treaty among the former combatants regarding the disposition of African American slaves who had fled to the enemy.*

1. For more on the southern Atlantic Theater during the War of 1812, see Tucker, *Jeffersonian Gunboat Navy*, pp. 138–53.

REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL THOMAS PINCKNEY, U.S.A.

Head Quarters Cumberland Island 2nd. March 1815

Sir

I am this moment honored with your obliging Communication of the 24th Ultimo announcing to me the Ratification of the Treaty of Peace between our respective Countries, and I beg you to believe the real pleasure I derive from having it thereby in my Power to give immediate Orders for stopping all further hostility on the part of the British Forces on this Division of the Station against the United States

Of course Sir until the Terms of the Treaty are officially communicated to me I shall remain without authority for evacuating this Island and retiring from the Coast, and I therefore venture to hope you will take measures for causing me to be furnished with such Document as early as possible

Permit me Sir to renew to you the assurances of high consideration with which I have the honor to be Sir Your most faithful and Obedient Humble Servant

(Sigd.) G. Cockburn Rear Admiral

LB, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 10, p. 81 (Roll No. 7).

REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO  
CAPTAIN THOMAS M. NEWELL, U.S. SEA FENCIBLES, AND  
THOMAS SPALDING<sup>1</sup>

(Copy) Head Quarters Cumberland Island the 7th. March 1815.  
G Cockburn<sup>2</sup>

Gentlemen,

I have had the Honor to receive the Document which you state yourselves authorized to assure me is a true Copy of the Treaty of Peace<sup>3</sup> that has been concluded between our respective Governments and which you have been instructed to lay before me by Generals Pinckney and Floyd.<sup>4</sup>

Accompanying this Document I am likewise honored with your Note of this Day,<sup>5</sup> informing me of your being authorized to receive from me any public or private Property or Slaves to be restored by me under the 1st Article of the afore-said Treaty, and explaining to me the Construction you are pleased to put upon that Article. But I only find in the certified Copy you have laid before me that “All Territory, Places or Possessions taken during the War or after the signing of the Treaty (excepting only as therein excepted) shall be restored without Delay and without causing any Destruction, or carrying away any of the Artillery or other Public Property originally captured in the said Forts or Places and which shall remain therein upon the Exchange of the Ratification of this Treaty, or any Slaves or other private property”— It becomes therefore alone necessary for me to state to you that Cumberland Island being the only place or Possession taken from America in this Neighbourhood which was retained by me at the Date of the Ratification alluded to, I shall as quickly as possible evacuate it without causing any Destruction, and I shall leave on it or deliver to you, whatever public or private Property or Slaves (originally Captured here) remained upon the Island at the Date of the Ratification.

I have not the slightest Reason nor Inclination to doubt the amicable Disposition you state to have actuated the British and American Commissioners in forming this Treaty; It appears however clear to me by the Expressions they have thought proper to adopt in it that I am only required or authorized to make the Restitution I have above stated, and I must beg to decline venturing an opinion as to whether the Treaty is properly worded according to the Intentions of the Commissioners, but I apprehend had they wished to imply (as you

conceive) “that all private Property and Slaves in my Possession whether on Land or Water were to be restored,” it might have been so specified without Difficulty; And although you observe there are no Slaves and but little private Property ever taken in “Forts,” yet the Continuation of the words, “or Places” may perhaps do away the Difficulty which presented itself to you on that Point. Therefore Gentlemen in giving up the Place in Conformity with the Treaty you have done me the honor to lay before me, I must beg to be excused from entering into Discussion relative to Captures made elsewhere on land or Water, and which have been removed from the Places where captured prior to the Exchange of the Ratification of the Treaty.

I have the Honor to be with much consideration Gentlemen Your most Obedient Humble Servant

(signed) G. Cockburn Rear Admiral

To, Captain Newell of the U.S. Sea Fencibles and Thomas Spalding Esqre.— Agents on the part of the United States for receiving property to be restored according to Treaty &ca. &ca. &ca.

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fols. 93–94.

1. Generals Thomas Pinckney and John Floyd designated Captain Thomas M. Newell, formerly of the Georgia Sea Fencibles, and Thomas Spalding, a prominent planter on Sapelo Island, Georgia, to negotiate with Rear Admiral George Cockburn for the return of American public and private property. Bullard, *Black Liberation*, p. 85.

2. Rear Admiral George Cockburn signed this copy here.

3. The copy of the treaty of peace was not found with this correspondence.

4. Brigadier General John Floyd, Georgia State Militia, led the defense of Savannah at the end of the war.

5. Newell and Spalding to Cockburn, 7 March 1815, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/509, fols. 91–92.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL

Hugh G. Campbell Esqr.  
Comm’g Naval Officer Savannah.

Navy Department  
March 9th.1815.

Sir

You will immediately proceed to dismantle all the Gun Boats and Barges on the Station under your Command, and deliver to the Navy Agent<sup>1</sup> their entire Armament, Equipments, and Stores of every kind, to be carefully Stored by him on the most economical terms.— You will take his Receipt for the Articles placed under his care, and transmit it to this Department.— The Gun Boats will be laid up in Ordinary, in the most convenient and suitable place for their preservation, and the Barges be placed under cover, so as to protect them from the effects of the Sun and Weather.—

You will also furnish a List of all the other Small Vessels under your Command accompanied by a particular description of their Rig, Qualities, Dimensions, and Tonnage, and the state of their Hulls, Rigging, Sails, and Equipments, in order

that those may be retained in Service which are best calculated f[or] Despatch Vessels, Transportation &c.—

Please to make a Report of the whole, to this Department, as soon as practicable.— I am very respectfully &c.

B. W Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 53 (M149, Roll No. 12). Crowninshield sent a similar letter to the commanders at Savannah, Charleston, Wilmington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Newport.

1. Archibald S. Bulloch.

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Savannah 9th March 1815

Sir

I am honored with your orders of the 25th ult relative to the *Epervier* and men belonging to the Gun Boats to be transfered to that vessel<sup>1</sup>

Presuming, by this arrangement you intend laying up the Gun Boats permit me to ask Sir, how the officers are to be disposed of—<sup>2</sup>

Most of them are anxious to enter the merchant Service and are daily importuning me on that Subject, others to be discharged having offers made them here to command merchant vessels, and some of them requesting Furlough,— a list of whom are here enclosed— If the Gun Boats are to be laid up in ordinary, I would suggest the propriety of placing them at charleston, this harbor being the most inconvenient on the continent for Naval arrangements, nor is their a part of this harbor, where they could be properly moored without being Exposed to the movements of shipping small craft &c, occasioned by the numerous shoals and contracted breadth of the channel, all of which is respectfully Submitted I have the honor to be With Great Respect Sir Your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 30 (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. Crowninshield ordered Campbell to transfer to Master Commandant John Downes of the U.S. sloop of war *Epervier* all of the station's seamen, ordinary seamen, and boys who were not needed to maintain the vessels being retained in Georgia. See Crowninshield to Campbell, 25 February 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 40 (M149, Roll No. 12).

2. Crowninshield ordered Campbell to grant furloughs to all officers who applied and send the remainder to New York. He was at liberty to discharge any sailing masters who requested that. Excess gunboats and barges were to be sold at Charleston, South Carolina. See Crowninshield to Campbell, 18 March 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, 1815, Vol. 12, p. 70 (M149, Roll No. 12).

[Enclosure]

A List of officers<sup>1</sup> attached to the US Flotilla on the Georgia Station under the command of Commodore Hugh G Campbell, March 9th 1815—

John R Grayson	S Master	James McIntosh	Midshipman
John Hulburd	S Master	W. H. McIntosh	Midshipman
William Collins	S Master	Daniel Shoemaker	S Master
Wm. Rudder	S Master	Wm. Mayo	Midshipmn.
Wm. McConnel	S Master	James McCall	Midshipmn.
Wm. Elliott	Act. Master	James D. Knight	Midshipmn.
Saml. Brownjohn	Act. Master	Thos. N. Bonneville	Midshipmn.
William Baldwin	Surgeon	Isaac Baldwin	Surg. mate
Joseph W New	Surgeon	George Forrester	Act. Midship
N W. Rothwell	Purser	John Hopkins	Midshipman
James Spalding	Midshipman		

D, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 30, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. Isaac Baldwin (surgeon's mate, 24 July 1813); William Baldwin (surgeon, 24 July 1813); Thomas N. Bonneville (midshipman, 1 January 1812); Samuel Brownjohn (acting sailing master; no listing in Navy Register); William Collins (sailing master, 3 February 1814); William Elliott (acting sailing master; no listing in Navy Register); possibly George B. Forrester (midshipman, 1 January 1818); John R. Grayson (sailing master, 10 February 1809); John L. Hopkins (midshipman, 26 February 1814); John Hulburd (sailing master, 11 February 1809); James D. Knight (midshipman, 30 November 1814); James McCall (midshipman, no listing in Navy Register); William McConnell (sailing master, 2 November 1812); James McIntosh (midshipman, 1 September 1813); Joseph W. New (surgeon, 28 June 1809); William Mayo (midshipman, 9 June 1811); Nathaniel W. Rothwell (purser, 2 March 1813); William Rudder (sailing master, 4 March 1814); David (not Daniel) Shoemaker (sailing master, 19 October 1814); James Spalding (midshipman, 9 November 1813).

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Savannah 21st March 1814 [1815]

Sir,

I am honored with your orders of the 9th & 10 Inst, the first to dismantle the Gun Boats, the second to report such as are fit to proceed to New Orleans—<sup>1</sup> I beg leave to observe, that five of the Gun Boats here, are Capable of proceeding, with a little caulking in the upper works, viz *Nos. 151, 153, 158, 165 & 168*,— Should you determine on sending these Boats round, I, presume there will be required commanders for most of them as the officers, generally are averse to going that way, several of them having families at the Northward and others very Desirous of changing their situation from this inhospitable climate, having served upwards of three years in the Flotilla, exposed to the fatigues of an inland Navigation,

and of most of that time hauling their vessels through marsh and mud— I have informed them of the necessity their is for drawing their conclusions as early as possible for orders must be obeyed; and should you be pleased to order the boats to proceed, It will be too late for them to decide; To refuse acting in the face of an order, is incomptable with public Service by which the public good may be injured—

They have agreed to make you acquainted with their views— I shall proceed to dismantle the *Troup Nos. 63 & No. 3* and lay up the Barges under cover, all of which shall be reported to the Department I have the honor to be with Great Respect Sir Your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 84 (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. For the 9 March 1815 letter, see above. For the 10 March 1815 letter requesting information about replacing New Orleans' captured vessels with some from Georgia, see Crowninshield to Campbell, 10 March 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 55 (M149, Roll No. 12).

COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Savannah 9th April 1815

Sir,

Since I suggested the propriety of having the Gun Boats laid up at Charleston,<sup>1</sup> I have Examined the different parts of this River<sup>2</sup> above the City and find that the *Troup* and Gun Boats can be moored in safety and at no Expence, but a few hands to attend their mooring and to wet them round night and morning; and have taken the liberty of placing them in that situation which will save time and expence Especially as you intend having them sold—

Your orders of the 29th ult authorise me to proceed to Charleston and complete the sale and disposition of the whole force on the two stations.<sup>3</sup>

I beg leave to ask Sir, If I am to dispose of them, or are they to be delivered over to the Navy agent, to have them disposed of, after a correct account is taken of them and forwarded to the Department— Unless they are immediately sold we must be at the Expence of covering over with boards and pay the Decks with a coat of Turpentine &c., as the heat is already great and the approaching Summer will injure them materially— I have selected *Nos. 168 & 158* for this and the Charleston Station, and should you think proper to retain any more of the Boats I would recommend *Nos. 165 and 3*— They are fine vessels, about 60 Tons and body framed of live oak— A particular statement of their condition will be forwarded to the Department as soon as possible with an account of the Public Stores— I have the honor to be with Great Respect Sir Your obedient Servant

Hugh G Campbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 33 (M125, Roll No. 44).

1. See Campbell to Crowninshield, 9 March 1815, above.
2. Savannah River.
3. Crowninshield ordered Campbell to proceed to Charleston and take command of both the South Carolina and Georgia stations for the time being. Captain Dent was ordered to New York. See Crowninshield's 29 March 1815 letters to Dent and Campbell in DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, pp. 82 and 83, respectively (M149, Roll No. 12).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
COMMODORE HUGH G. CAMPBELL

Hugh G. Campbell Esqr.  
Commanding Naval Officer Savannah Geoa.

April 17th. 1815.  
Navy Department

Sir

You will retain two of the best Gun Boats in service, with Masters and Crews; and in concert with the Navy Agent, have all the rest Advertized and sold at Public Sale.—

You will discharge and pay off all the Flotilla Officers and Crews, except such Seamen as will reenter for the Navy.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 102 (M149, Roll No. 12).

## Jacob Lewis Demobilizes the New York Flotilla: The Establishment and Vessels

*When the war began, the commandant of the New York Navy Yard oversaw the gunboats in that harbor. That station's overarching role in the war effort clearly necessitated a division of duties. Thus, the Navy Department created the special Flotilla Service and tapped former privateersman Jacob Lewis to oversee the defense of New York.<sup>1</sup> The Flotilla Service filled a temporary need for the Navy. By the spring of 1815, while Lewis was fully engaged in reducing the New York Flotilla to a few vessels, he was also making postwar plans to be the U.S. consul at Malta.<sup>2</sup>*

*1. Lewis's appointment on 27 November 1812 to this distinctive post garnered him the equivalent pay and rations of a master commandant in the Navy, and his service further earned him a captain's commission, dating from 26 April 1814.*

*2. Crowninshield to Lewis, 28 April 1815, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 313 (M209, Roll No. 4).*

CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Sir/

Its my duty to inform you that I had by my owne men made a very Convenient and important navy Establishment at Spermeciti Cove Sandy Hook—



There is a blacksmith shop—

a Carpenters ditto—

a Carpenters Shed—

a Coopers ditto—

An Armory Store—

a Store house—

a Sail loft—

a Hospital—

a Doctors dwelling &c &c—

All which are of Jacksraw<sup>1</sup> Construction Nevertheless—they are to be disposed of I presume I must premise by saying, that all these buildings are on sand, not belonging to the Government (therefore) if not disposed of in some way without loss of time—they will disap[pear.]<sup>2</sup> I would recommend the sale of all the Gun Boats but two—and all the Barges—but two— Six weeks in the Navy Yard—in ordinary will destroy all the Galleys the Gun Boats are generally rotten therefore the sooner they are disposed of the better I am most Respectfully yr. very Obt. Svt.

J Lewis

New York March 6th. 1815

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 150 (M124, Roll No. 69).

1. Jackstraw (pick-up sticks) was a game in which wooden strips were let fall in a heap with each player in turn trying to remove one at a time without disturbing the rest. The flotillamen probably constructed their buildings quickly with whatever materials were readily available.

2. Crowninshield ordered Lewis on 11 March to “dispose of the whole establishment at Spermaceti Cove.” Crowninshield to Lewis, 11 March 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 59 (M149, Roll No. 12).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Capt. Jacob Lewis  
Comm’g U.S. Flotilla New York.

Navy Department  
March 9th. 1815.

Sir,

You will immediately proceed to dismantle all the Gun Boats on the New York Station, excepting two of the best,<sup>1</sup> that will be obtained for occasional Service, with crews sufficient to Navigate them.— The Armament, Equipments, and Stores of every kind, of those dismantled will be delivered to the Naval Store Keeper,<sup>2</sup> to be carefully stored by him.— You will take his Receipt for the Articles so deposited, and transmit it to this Department.— The Gun Boats will be laid up in Ordinary at the Navy Yard, in a convenient and suitable place for their effectual preservation.—

You will also furnish a List of any small Vessels that may be attached to the Flotilla, accompanied by a particular description of their Rig, Qualities, Dimensions, and Tonnage; and the state of their Hulls, Rigging, Sails, and Equipments, in order that those may be kept in service which are best calculated for Despatch Vessels,— Transportation &c.<sup>3</sup>

Please to make a Report of the whole to this Department, as soon as practicable.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 56 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Gunboats *No. 6* and *No. 8* were retained; see Lewis to Crowninshield, 19 March 1815, below.
2. Samuel Anderson.
3. See Lewis to Crowninshield, 19 March 1815, below.

CAPTAIN JACOB LEWIS, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Sir

I have the honor herewith To hand you a statement on the Condition and Quallities &c. of the Gun Boats under my Command—

*Numbers 6 & 8* I have retained in servise being large copper'd & carrying two 32 Pounders Each—

*Numbers—37. 93. 57.* are in the best order

*93, 37. 97. 42.* are the strongest—

*43]. 44. 100. 97.* Sail the fastest—

as to all the others, the sooner they are disposed of the better—

For the good of the servise and to further the views of C. Perry<sup>1</sup> I have dispatched *No. 6* to Middle Town, with men & Stores For Come. Perry' Squadron, I hope the procedure will meet with your approbation Sailing Masters Jones and Story<sup>2</sup> command *No. 6* and *8.* two officers of Merit— be assured Sir of my high Consideration & Respect

J Lewis

New Yk. 19th. March 1815

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 44 (M124, Roll No. 70).

1. Captain Oliver H. Perry.
2. Possibly Daniel Jones and Thomas W. Story. The latter's sailing master warrant dated from 27 April 1813.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL EVANS TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

U.S. Navy yard New York 19 May 1815.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that agreeably to your instructions, all the Gun Boats on this station except *Nos. 6* and *8* were sold at public sale vendue on the 17th. instant.—

There were altogether, including 3 bare hulks sunk nearly to the water's Edge, forty four of them, and they sold for Drs 18,840.—

The U.S. schooner *Alligator* arrived here to-day with Sailing Master Hurlburt, and midsn. Cottineau, McIntosh, & Bonneville,<sup>1</sup> as passengers; the master with directions to report himself to the Department, and the Midshipmen to the Commanding officer.—

The Commander of the Schooner states that she is absolutely unfit for Sea until repaired, and I think she is not fit for the Service. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir your most Obt Servant

Sam<sup>l</sup> Evans

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 144 (M125, Roll No. 44).

1. Sailing Master John Hulburd, Midshipmen Hercules Cottineau, James McKay McIntosh, and Thomas Bonneville. Cottineau's warrant dated to 9 November 1813. He spent the war at Wilmington, North Carolina, and was transferred in 1815 to the brig *Boxer* at New York. McIntosh was in Charleston before being reassigned to New York. His midshipman's warrant dated to 1 September 1811. Bonneville's warrant dated from 1 January 1812.

## Demobilization, POWs, and Dissatisfaction

*Demobilization on the Charleston Station was similar to that on other stations—it was abrupt. In early March 1815, Secretary Crowninshield ordered the following: a minimal retention of vessels for guard duty, the dismantlement and preservation of some, the disposal of the remainder, and an accounting of station assets. The Navy Department also charged Captain Dent with outfitting the brig Enterprise and schooner Nonsuch as cartels to ferry British and American prisoners back and forth. Dent worked diligently to facilitate this exchange, proving himself a capable administrator of this southern station, but was still bitter about not obtaining his own ship. Postwar demobilization led to peacetime retrenchment in the military, effectively stymying Dent's hopes for his own command. Dent subsequently received permission to leave the Charleston Station and await further orders. Rankled by his being passed over by junior officers, Dent took several months to reconcile himself to returning to Charleston, but not before threatening resignation again. Commodore Campbell, not Captain Dent, commanded the Charleston Station after the war.*

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

John Dent Esqr.  
Comm'g Naval Officer Charleston S. C.

Navy Department  
March 9th. 1815.

Sir

You will immediately proceed to dismantle all the Galleys and Barges on the Station under your Command, retaining the two Gun Boats<sup>1</sup> for occasional service, with crews sufficient to navigate them.—

The Armament, Equipments, and stores of every kind, belonging to the dismantled Vessels, will be delivered to the Navy Agent<sup>2</sup> to be carefully stored by him, on the most economical terms,— You will take his receipt for the articles deposited, and transmit it to this Department. The Galleys and Barges must be placed under cover, in a convenient and suitable position to preserve them, in perfect safety from the effects of the Sun and Weather.—

You will also furnish a List of the other small vessels on the Station, accompanied by a particular description of their Rig, Qualities, Dimensions, and Tonnage; and the state of their Hulls, Rigging, Sails, and Equipments, in order that those may be kept in Service, which are best calculated for Despatch Vessels, Transportation &c.—

Please to make a Report of the whole, to this Department, as soon as practicable.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 54 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Gunboats *No. 158* and *No. 168*.

2. John Robertson.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

Capt. John H. Dent  
Comm'g Naval Officer Charleston So. Ca.

Navy Department  
March 14th. 1815.

Sir,

You will immediately prepare for Sea the U.S. Brig *Enterprise* & Schooner *Nonsuch*, with a Crew sufficient to navigate each, and order the Commander of the *Enterprise*<sup>1</sup> to receive on board all the British subjects, late prisoners of War at Charleston, and proceed to Savannah, and there take in all that the Marshall of that State has under his care, and proceed with the whole to Bermuda, and deliver them to the commanding Naval Officer on that Station,<sup>2</sup> taking his receipt for the number which he will forward to this Department on his return to Charleston.— You will order the Commander of the *Enterprise* to bring home as many American prisoners as his Vessel can accommodate, giving the preference to those longest in captivity, and who may belong to the Southern or Middle States.— And in case there should not be as many at Bermuda, as will complete the complement the Vessel can bring, he will proceed to Jamaica, and take on board such as are there, and if none be left there, or his complement be still incomplete, he will proceed to Nassau, New Providence & take any that may be there, these Orders you will give to each Commander, with discretion to act according to circumstances.—

The Commissary General of Prisoners, and the British Agent here,<sup>3</sup> will furnish letters to the British Naval Officer, Commanding on the Station.—

You will therefore transmit immediately the names of the Officers designated to command each of the Vessels.— You will send a Surgeon or Surgeon's Mate in each Vessel with such Medicines &c. as may be necessary to supply the wants of

the sick, on the voyage.— Should there not be a Surgeon or Surgeon's mate to spare at Charleston, for each Vessel, the *Nonsuch* will find one at Wilmington who will be ordered by this Department.—

You will apply to the Marshalls of each State for the necessary supply of provisions for the men out & home, and put on board as many Hammocks, Bedding, Cooking Utensils & mess implements, as a full complement of men shall require

You will give the same orders to the Commander of the *Nonsuch*,<sup>4</sup> to proceed to Wilmington No. Ca. and take the Prisoners there, to proceed to Bermuda, and then as pointed out in the above instructions to the Commander of the *Enterprize*, and give me early advice of your proceedings herein.—

The Schooner *Nonsuch* can be supplied with some Provisions at Wilmington, as that Station is broken up, this, in case you have not enough on hand, may prevent buying more.— It is desirable to make the utmost despatch to relieve our unfortunate Countrymen from their present situation & to restore them as soon as possible to their friends and to the Service.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield.—

P.S. You will order the *Enterprize* & *Nonsuch* to return from Bermuda with the officers and men to New York.— B. W. C.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 62 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Lieutenant Lawrence Kearny.
2. Captain Andrew F. Evans, R.N.
3. John Mason was the commissary general of prisoners.
4. Edward Haddaway was commissioned a lieutenant dating from 9 December 1814.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Charleston (S.C.) 16. March 1815

Sir

Not having received any orders since the ratification of Peace, relative to vessels and Flotilla on this station,<sup>1</sup> I have the honor to report, for your information, that I have dismantled and taken out the Armament & stores of the Galleys & Barges and transferred the Officers and Men to the *Enterprise* & *Nonsuch*. Should the *Enterprise* be required for Service, she will require to be hove out, a new gang of Standing Rigging fore and aft, with some Sails; as neither canvass or Rigging can be had here, I would recommend her going to a Northern port to be properly fitted.—

The Galleys & Barges must be laid up in some suitable place, otherwise the Worms will destroy their Bottoms in a very short time.— I have directed the agent<sup>2</sup> to take charge of all public property & Stores belonging to the Department, Inventory's thereof shall be forwarded as soon as completed, also the Purser<sup>3</sup> to forward proper muster Rolls of the Officers & men attached to the

Station— Several Sailing Masters attached to the Flotilla, are desirous to be permitted to go on furlough and to report themselves to the Departt. on their return from Merchant Voyages.— Sailing Master Cansler a Valuable and deserving Officer is desirous to retain his Warrant, and when required, to rejoin the service, he informs me he has written you for a furlough to go to the West Indies.—<sup>4</sup> I have the Honor to be, Sir, with great Respect yr. Obt. Servt.

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 56 (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. Dent had not received Crowninshield's letter of 9 March 1815 (see above) when he penned this.

2. John Robertson.

3. On 17 December 1814, John H. Carr was ordered to Washington to settle his accounts. Dent had requested that Carr and Edwin W. Turner, the purser at Wilmington, North Carolina, exchange their positions. Carr was still in Charleston on 9 February 1815, at which time he requested a delay in his transfer. There is no indication in the correspondence that the exchange took place. Carr's service record does not list a change of station for him until 9 October 1816. See Dent to Jones, 15 Nov. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 133 (M125, Roll No. 40) and Carr to Crowninshield, 9 February 1815, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 93 (M148, Roll No. 14).

4. William Cansler was warranted a sailing master, dating from 29 March 1814. The Navy Department denied his 15 March 1815 application for a four- or five-month furlough. Secretary Crowninshield requested Cansler's resignation, effective the end of March, as the peacetime Navy had a surplus of sailing masters. Cansler to Crowninshield, 15 March 1815, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 60 (M148, Roll No. 14) and Crowninshield to Cansler, 21 March 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 73 (M149, Roll No. 12).

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

(private)

Charleston March 16h. 1815

Sir

The menacing Situation of the Enemy on this coast at the time of the recpt. of your Letter of the 28th. of Jany. in reply to mine to the President of the U.S. remonstrating again[s]t the appointment of Junior captains, to the commds. of Frigates &c—<sup>1</sup> was not answered, as I expected active & important operations in this quarter, The peace having taken place, renders my Services no longer requisite here, and my health requiring a change of climate, I have to reque[s]t I may be ordered either into active Service, or to a Northern station— I have the honor to be Sir with great respect

J H Dent

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 57 (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. For more on Dent's dissatisfaction with his status in the Navy, see Crowninshield to Dent, 28 January 1815, pp. 584–85 and Dent to Madison, 22 December 1814, p. 584.

## CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Charleston 18th. March 1815

Sir,

In conformity to your orders of the 9th I have the honor to report, the state and condition of the different vessels and Flotilla, attached to this station under my command.

	<i>Brig Enterprise</i>
Dimentions	Length on Deck 84 Feet. Breadth of Beam 22 Feet. Depth of Hold 13 Feet.
Condition	Hull, Masts, and Spars in complete order and repair (Copper very foul from lying so long in port). Standing Rigging, Old and unfit for service, Running Do half worn, Sails complete but half worn.
Armament	7 18 lb. Carronades, & one long 9 lb. cannon in complete order. Note, the guns were thrown overboard while chased during the last cruize and have not been able to procure the number required of proper calibre, while doing Guard duty a Battery of 16 long 6 lb. cannon were mounted, small arms &c complete, with the requisite number of slides & carriages to complete her Battery of 18 lb. Carronades.
Qualities	In every respect a very fine vessel and well calculated for cruizing and commd. by Lieut. Commd. Kearny with a complement of 109 Officers, Petty Officers, Seamen, Ordy. Seamen & Marines.
	<i>Schooner Nonsuch</i>
Dimentions	Length on Deck 86 Feet. Breadth of Beam 21 Feet. Depth of Hold 9 Feet. Distance between ports 7 ft. and pierced for 14 Guns. Tonnage 147 93/95.
Conditions	Hull, Masts, Spars & Rigging in good order. Copper very thin & much worn. Sails complete but half worn. Draft of water, abaft 13 ft., forward 6 ft. 9 in.
Armament	One long 12 lb. cannon mounted on pivot amidships, and 5 12 lb. Carronades with small arms &c in complete order.
Qualities	Sails uncommonly fast, and well adapted for a Dispatch vessel or light cruizer. Commanded by Acti. Lt. Haddaway, with a complement of 35 Officers, Seamen, Ordy. Seamen & Boys.
	<i>Gun Boat No. 10</i>
Dimentions	Length on Deck 70 Feet. Breadth of Beam 18 feet. Depth of Hold 5 feet 9 in. Tonnage 70. Cutter Rigged.

Condition	Hull, requiring a thorough repair and particularly new decks. Copper very thin. Rigging Old and unfit for service. Sails and cables about half worn.
Armament	One Long 32 lb. Cannon, mounted on pivot, and 6 12 lb. Carronades with small arms &c in complete order.
Qualities	Sails and works uncommonly well for a vessel of her class, and adapted for the Bays & sounds within this state. Commd. by Acti. Lieut. Mork <sup>1</sup> with complement of 33 Officers, Seamen, Ordy. Seamen & Boys.
Dimentions	Schooner <i>Alligator</i> , formerly Gun Boat No. 166 Length on deck 60 ft. Breadth of Beam 16 ft. Depth of Hold 5 ft. 11 Inches.
Conditions	Hull, Masts, Spars & Rigging in good order. Sails about half worn. Draft of Water 6 ft. 6 in.
Armament	9 12 lb. Carronades with small arms &c in good order.
Qualities	Sails and works well, and well calculated for a Revenue Cutter or to Guard a Coast.

I have the Honor to be with great Respect Sir, Your Obt. Serv.

J. H. Dent

LS, NcD, Letters, 1815–1816.

1. Sailing Master James Mork was appointed an acting lieutenant on 9 February 1815. This commission was never confirmed before his resignation on 1 July 1818.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Charleston March 18th. 1815

Sir

Your Letter of the 10th. Inst.<sup>1</sup> I have had the honor to receive— I have ordered the *Nonsuch* to be held in readiness to fulfill your orders— all the British prisoners of war at this place and Savannah have been taken on board H.M. Ships *Severn* and *Manelaus*,<sup>2</sup> the former Sailed yesterday, the latter will Sail this day with the remainder for Norfolk to receive such as may be there; as all the late prisoners of war have been embark'd from this & savannah may make it unnecessary for the *Nonsuch* to proceed to Bermuda, I [s]hall have her held in Readiness and await your further orders— I have the honor to be Sir very respectfully

J H Dent



ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 72 (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. This was Crowninshield's first letter to Dent regarding the repatriation of prisoners of war. See Crowninshield to Dent, 10 March 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 57 (M149, Roll No. 12).

2. *Menelaus*.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

Capt. John H. Dent  
Comm'g Naval Officer Charleston (So. Ca.)

Navy Department  
March 23rd. 1815.

Sir

I have received your letter of the 16th. and approve your measures relative to the Barges &c. in anticipation of the orders of this Department for laying them up.— You will keep Gun Boats *9* & *10* in Service, and after landing all the Stores, Armament &c. from the Galleys & Barges, you will advise with the Navy Agent<sup>1</sup> and have them advertised for public Sale.—

The *Enterprize* & *Nonsuch* will proceed in their destination, without any repairs, except their Sails for the Voyage, and on their arrival at New York orders will be given respecting them.— You will retain two of the best Sailing Masters in the two Gun Boats and the others must be discharged, as the Department cannot incur the expense of keeping them in Service on furlough.— I am, respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 77 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. John Robertson was the navy agent at Charleston.

CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Charleston S.C. 29th March 1815

Sir

My absence from town for a few days on private business, prevented my replying to your Letters of the 10th. 14th. 18th. & 21st. Inst. which I had the honor to receive.—<sup>1</sup> Lt. Kearney of the *Enterprize* opened them and governed himself accordingly. This Vessel was sent here to do the duty of a Guard Ship and not intended to cruize, otherwise I should have furnished her with Standing Rigging, which is condemned, and not fit for to proceed to sea, a new gang has been made, is now fitting, and the Brig will be ready to proceed in execution of your orders in a few days— The *Nonsuch* sails in the morning for Wilmington, there being no prisoners here, she will take in her complement 100 men and proceed direct to Bermuda. The Marshall<sup>2</sup> not being able to procure the necessary provisions for the voyage, I have directed the Agent<sup>3</sup> to loan her the required quantity,

to be settled on her return to the U. S between the Navy Department and the Commissary General of Prisoners,<sup>4</sup> which I hope will meet your approbation. I have the Honor to be Sir, with great Respt. Yr. Obt. St.

J H Dent

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 123 (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. Crowninshield's letters related to returning British prisoners of war, held in Georgia and North and South Carolina, to Bermuda, and transporting American prisoners, being held in Bermuda, or elsewhere, to New York. Crowninshield to Dent, 10, 14, 18, and 21 March 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, pp. 57, 62, 69, and 72 (M149, Roll No. 12).

2. Morton A. Waring was the marshall at Charleston.

3. John Robertson.

4. John Mason.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

Capt. John H. Dent  
Comm'g Naval Officer Charleston So. Ca.

Navy Department  
March 29th. 1815.

Sir

In compliance with your request by letter of the 16th. Currant,<sup>1</sup> you are hereby permitted to leave the Station at Charleston So. Ca., and to repair to any Northern Port, to await the further orders of this Department.—<sup>2</sup>

Como. Campbell will take command of the South Carolina & Georgia Stations for the present, and complete the execution of orders from this Department so far as remains to be done.— You will send the US. Schooner *Alligator*, with such Officers as are under arrest to Savannah, to receive orders from Como. Campbell to proceed to New York for their trial, and you will please to have the necessary depositions taken in legal form to be used in evidence, where the witnesses cannot go on for that purpose.— You will send all the superfluous Officers and men to New York in the *Alligator*, except such as shall be necessary on the Station, and for which purpose you will advise with Como. Campbell, as well as for the Sale of the Barges, Gun Boats, & other Vessels not wanted for the Service.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 82 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. See above for Dent's private letter of 16 March to Crowninshield.

2. Shifting his command to Commodore Campbell occupied Dent until late May 1815, at which time he left Charleston for New York and then Newport, Rhode Island. He remained at Newport for the next four months awaiting further orders. Dent to Crowninshield, 16 May 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 130 (M125, Roll No. 44) and Dent to Crowninshield, 1 June 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 4, No.2 (M125, Roll No. 45).

## CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Newport, RI, Sept. 21st. 1815

Sir

Preparatory to my leaving this for Charleston,<sup>1</sup> I wish to be informed, whether it is probable my services will be required this winter, that I may make my arrangements accordingly.

I have been officially inform'd Capt. Sinclair had been nominated to the commd. of the *Constitution*, if that is the case Sir, and I am thus to see my Rank daily pass'd over by Officers so far my juniors, without assigning any reason, or any notice taken of my repeated remonstrances on that subject I shall be necessitated to Tender my resignation, after a proper appeal to the constituted authorities, in justice to my character, long services, and Rank in the Navy.

I have heretofore Sir, said so much on the subject of my Rank, my Desire for an active commd. and have been so often disappointed, & treated with neglect, that I shall refrain from any further attempt. My several Letters to your predacessor, and to the president of the US. must have been made known to you, as the answer to the latter was written by yourself— I have the honor to be sir respectfully Yr Obedt. Servt.

J H Dent

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 5, No. 36 (M125, Roll No. 46).

1. Having heard nothing from the Navy Department for months, Dent apparently decided to return to Charleston, but not before complaining about being neglected.

CHIEF CLERK OF THE NAVY DEPARTMENT BENJAMIN HOMANS TO  
CAPTAIN JOHN H. DENT

Capt. John H. Dent,  
U.S. Navy, Newport, R.I. or Charleston, S.Ca.

Navy Department.  
Octr. 13th. 1815.

Sir,

Your letter of the 21st. ultimo, was duly received;— expecting the early return of the Secretary of the Navy to the Seat of Government,<sup>1</sup> I was induced, from the delicacy of the subject, to delay an answer, in order that you might receive the Secretary's direct sentiments, to enable you to decide upon the arrangements you have to make.—<sup>2</sup>

It cannot be necessary to explain to you the present state of the Naval Service, and the absolute inadequacy of that Service, to provide for the active and honourable employment of all the officers of every grade. Whatever motives may have prevailed, heretofore, to have deprived you of more active Service, by which you could have acquired a participation of fame and fortune, I have no hesitation in assuring you, that no impressions now exist, in this Department,

to your prejudice; and if they have existed any where, at any time, they have never come within my knowledge; and I presume you will find every disposition to do you ample justice. I am very respectfully, &c. For the Secretary of the Navy.

Benjamin Homans.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, pp. 211–12 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Benjamin Crowninshield, who had worked steadfastly as Secretary of the Navy since mid-January 1815, took an extended period of leave from July to early November 1815.

2. On 26 October 1815, Dent wrote Secretary Crowninshield from New York a one-sentence letter stating his decision: "I shall proceed from this in the morning for Charleston." Dent to Crowninshield, 26 Oct. 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 5, No. 82 (M125, Roll No. 46).

## A War of Words

*Shortly after his return from British captivity, Siren's former commander, Nathaniel D. Nicholson, wrote a letter to Navy Department officials excoriating his Royal Navy captors for their cruel and inhumane treatment of the American brig's crew. Nicholson's letter was widely published in U.S. newspapers and was subsequently reprinted in the British press. The letter's publication in the London Times drew an angry rebuttal from James Eicke, second lieutenant of H.M.S. Cumberland, one of the vessels whose officers Nicholson had singled out for criticism. The war of words continued when the Times edition carrying Eicke's rebuttal reached American shores, prompting a further rejoinder from Nicholson and his officers.*

*The exchanges between Nicholson and Eicke provide additional details on the capture and confinement of Siren's company, and highlight the integral role newspapers played in the flow of information throughout the Atlantic world.*

### CAPTAIN SAMUEL EVANS TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

U.S. Navy Yard, New York,  
August 25th. 1815—

Sir,

I transmit enclosed a Letter from Lieut. N. D. Nicholson., who commanded the U.S Brig *Siren*, when she was captured by the British Ship *Medway* in July 1814.

This Communication affords additional proofs, if proofs were wanting, of the inhuman, and arrogant conduct, when successful, of our late Enemy. I have the Honor to be Very Respectfully Sir, Your Obdt. Servt.

Sam<sup>l</sup> Evans

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 128 (M125, Roll No. 45).

[Enclosure]

New York August 24th. 1815.

Sir,

Conceiving it my duty to make Known the treatment exhibited by British Officers, & Men to those who are so unfortunate as to fall in their power, induces me to acquaint you with the following circumstances.

After the surrender of the *Sirens* to the *Medway* the Officers, & Crew of the former were removed to the latter the crew not being allowed the privilege of taking their cloathing &c. with them so that the prize crew had a fair Opportunity of plundering such Articles as they thought proper, which Opportunity they took care to profit by as many of our men were pillaged of every Article they possessed excepting what they had on at the time, and the Officers in like manner were plundered on board the *Medway*, the Midshipmen, some of them were completely striped, others lost their watches &c. For my own part I came off with the loss of about half my cloathing & thought myself well off when compared with the losses of my shipmates,. The Morning after our Capture we were muster'd on the Quarter Deck to undergo a search, the men were there strip'd to the skin & their cloathing not returned, so that many of them were left without any thing more than a shirt & trowsers;<sup>1</sup> the next day Mr. Barton (the first Lieutt. of the *Medway*) distributed the cloathing he had taken from our men, to his Quarter Masters & Quarter Gunners, in my presence. After being on board the *Medway* five weeks we were landed at Simons Town Twenty five Miles to the Eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, myself & Brother Officers parol'd & the men march to cape Town under an escort of Dragoons, being obliged to ford a lake on the march where the Boys were compelled to go over on the Backs of the tall men. this march of twenty five miles was performed in one day & without Shoes or food the latter article they were kept without four & twenty hours, their Shoes were Stolen by the crew of the *Medway* while they were asleep,<sup>2</sup> After remaining in this situation nearly eight Months without Bed or Bedding (They were not even furnished with straw, & their Hammocks were taken on a plea of their being public property.) we were all Embarked in different Men of War & Indiamen for England myself with about Sixty Officers & Men in the *Cumberland* 74 Capt. Baker,<sup>3</sup> where we were all put on the lower Gun Deck without distinction, among their own Crew, & fed on Prisoners allowance; & on my remonstrating with the Capt. for receiving such treatment, he order'd me off the Quarter Deck, with a threat at the same time to put me in Irons. we remained in this situation Eighteen Days after which Lieuts. German,<sup>4</sup> Gordon<sup>5</sup> & myself were removed to the *Grampus* 50, at St. Helena, admitted to the Wardroom Mess & treated with civility With Respect I have the Honour to be Sir, Yr. Obt. Servt.

N, D, Nicholson

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 128, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 45). Addressed: "Samuel Evans Esqr./Commanding Naval/Officer New York Station."

1. Samuel Leech states that the *Sirens* "underwent a strict search" on *Medway's* quarterdeck by rapacious captors who "expected to find" the Americans "in possession of large quantities of gold dust." Leech, *Voice from the Main Deck*, p. 132.

2. Leech described the 21-mile march from Simon's Town, South Africa, to Cape Town, as "one of great suffering to our crew." *Ibid.*, pp. 132-33; quoted text on p. 132.

3. Captain Thomas Baker, R.N. His career is summarized in O'Byrne, *Naval Biographical Dictionary*, p. 40.

4. Lewis German was warranted a midshipman on 15 November 1809 and promoted to lieutenant on 24 July 1813.

5. William L. Gordon was warranted a midshipman on 15 November 1809 and promoted to lieutenant on 9 December 1814.

LIEUTENANT JAMES EICKE, R.N., TO  
THE EDITOR OF THE LONDON *TIMES*

London, Oct. 22, 1815.

Observing in our paper of the 16th inst. a copy of a Letter, inserted in the *National Intelligencer*, under the head of British Magnanimity,<sup>1</sup> from Lieut. N. D. Nicholson, of the late United States brig *Syren*, prize to his Majesty's ship *Medway*, accusing British Officers with having plundered himself and crew of their private property, and acted towards them with the greatest inhumanity; and having read with indignant astonishment, that part of his statement, wherein he asserts, that himself and officers were embarked on board his Majesty's ship *Cumberland*, Captain Baker, and were all put on the lower gun deck without distinction among the crew, and fed on prisoners allowance; I conceive it my duty as an officer of his Majesty's ship *Cumberland*, in absence of Capt. Baker, to refute such falsehoods and unmerited calumny; and I should hope, that the gross improbabilities contained in this statement have already exposed the virulent and malignant spirit of its author. The fact is, that at the time we were ordered to take them on board the *Cumberland* we had previously received three invalided, and four other British Officers, to accommodate for a passage to England; and of this Lieut. Nicholson, and the other officers, were duly and frequently informed by the agent of prisoners of war at the Cape. The above unusual addition to the ward-room establishment made it impossible for us to invite the Officers of the *Syren*, to partake generally of that mess, but for their accommodation and comfort, the after-part of the lower deck (the gun-room) was partitioned off, and allotted solely for their use, and every other accommodation was afforded to them that the service allowed, or themselves could suggest. For this purpose the two officers of marines were removed from their cabins in the gunroom, as well as several of the midshipmen who had established a mess there, and instead of the officers being fed on prisoners allowance, as Lieut. Nicholson asserts, they were supplied with every article of food, as also with cooking utensils, &c. by order of Capt. Baker, and the Ward Room Mess; and throughout the passage Captain Baker invariably invited one or two of the officers (generally two) every day to his table, as did the officer of the Ward Room, exclusive of the Master and Surgeon, who from the time of our arrival at St. Helena, lived entirely at the Ward-room table, Lieut. Nicholson, and two other officers, having at that time been removed to the *Grampus*. The refractory and disrespectful behaviour of Lieutenant Nicholson, compelled Captain Baker to admonish him; and was such as would fully have justified the execution of the threat he complains of. I have every reason to believe, that his letter

does not convey the language and sentiments of the other American Officers and men captured at the same period, but only those of an individual; whose conduct from the time of his capture, was most disgraceful, and un-officer like.

I shall leave it to the Officers of his Majesty's ship *Medway*, (which ship I hear is shortly expected in England) to answer (if they think proper) the other parts of this statement; but having it in my power, to *contradict that part* which relates to the treatment of the officers on board the *Cumberland*, I am inclined to believe the other charges are equally unfounded and untrue. I am, Sir, Your very obedient Servant,

JAMES EICKE, Lieut. R.N.

Printed, *Times* (London), 25 Oct. 1815.

1. Incredulous "that any British officer could have been guilty of the inhumanity" ascribed to them by Nicholson, the *Times's* editor reprinted his letter in hopes of soliciting a refutation of his "gross calumny" against the officers of *Medway* and *Cumberland*. The *Times* cites the *National Intelligencer* as the source of its version of Nicholson's letter. While the *Intelligencer* did publish Nicholson's letter on 29 August 1815, it neither used the heading "BRITISH MAGNANIMITY" nor the postscript "CONTRAST" as published in the 16 October edition of the *Times*. For an example of an American newspaper upon which the *Times's* text was modeled, see *The Essex Register* (Salem, Massachusetts), 6 September 1815.

LIEUTENANT NATHANIEL D. NICHOLSON TO  
THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK *NATIONAL ADVOCATE*

NEW YORK, Feb. 7, 1816.

SIR—James Eike, second lieutenant on board the British ship of war *Cumberland*, has, as appears by the *London Times* of the 22d October last, contradicted a statement made by me, relative to the treatment of the officers and crew of the late U.S. brig of war *Siren* while prisoners.

In the statement, so far as it regards the treatment of the American officers and men while on board the *Medway*, at Simon Town and at the Cape. remains uncontradicted by the officers of the *Medway*. I might content myself by publishing the certificates of the *Siren's* officers, but must indulge in the remark, that I am astonished not one among the *Medway's* officers would be found of sufficient courage to second Lieut. Eike in his refutation, and especially, too, when particularly invited by one of his majesty's officers. This act of cruelty towards a brother British officer can only be accounted for by me thus: that no one individual dare to contradict the facts stated by me, because his brother officers would know that he thereby subscribed to an untruth, and because each must have suspected the secret indignation of the *Cumberland's* officers towards Eike. for subscribing to that which their honor forbid them from doing.

Lieut. Eike conceives it his duty to refute the statement, because, as he says, cap. Baker was absent. If captain Baker was absent from London can Lieut. Eike induce even the people of London to believe that captain Baker could write at no other place?

No, sir, you may rely, his absence from London was not the cause of his non-appearance. Capt. Baker has a better cause for that, although his treatment direct, and permitted to the American officers and men. was base in the extreme; yet capt. Baker would not be willing to subscribe to a refutation that every officer and man on board his ship knew to be false. Capt. Baker left that duty to be performed by his second lieutenant.

Lieut. Eike has assigned no reason why Mr. Ingraham,<sup>1</sup> first lieut. of the *Cumberland*, has not denied my statement, and I will assign one for him. Mr. Ingraham is an honorable man, and a gentleman—had he been the commanding officer no cause of complaint would have existed.

Although, in every circumstance stated by me in my note to capt. Evans is true and notorious to every officer and man, both American and British, on board those ships, yet Lieut. Eike's denial, does not surprise me; for the man who is so depraved as to treat prisoners in the manner the Americans were treated by him, and others on board the *Medway* and *Cumberland*, or who would permit such treatment, is the fit instrument to pervert truth.

You will please to publish herewith the certificate of lieutenants German and Gordon, and that of Thomas Waine, esq. purser in the U.S. navy. I am, sir, yours, &c.

N. D. NICHOLSON

Lt. U.S. navy, and late com'r of the *Siren*.

*Sacket's Harbour, Jan. 29. 1816.*

This is to certify, that I was on board the late U.S. brig *Siren* when she was captured by the British ship of war *Medway*, and that the statement of the infamous treatment we received, as made by you, and addressed to Capt. Evans, bearing date 24th Aug. 1815, is correct.

L. GERMAN,  
Lieut. U.S. Navy.

To Lt. N. D. Nicholson, late com. U.S. brig *Siren*.

*U.S. Ship Independence,  
Boston Harbour, Jan. 9. 1816.*

SIR—I do certify that I was on board the late U.S. brig *Siren*, at the time of her capture by the British ship *Medway*, of 74 guns, and every individual experienced the treatment as described by Lt. Nicholson, in a letter addressed to Capt Evans, of the U.S. navy, bearing date 24th. Aug. 1815, and that the said statement is not the least exaggerated, but, on the contrary, falls short of giving a full statement of the infamous treatment we received. I am, sir, very respectfully, your most obd't serv't,

W. L. GORDON,  
Lt. U.S. Navy.

To Lt. N. D. Nicholson, late Com. U.S. brig *Siren*.



*New York, Jan. 29, 1816.*

*Dear Sir*—In answer to your note of the 26th inst. I have no hesitation in saying, that your statement respecting the treatment of the crew of the late U.S. brig *Siren*, after capture, by the British ship *Medway*, 74, is perfectly correct. I have the honour to be, respectfully, your obed't serv't.

THOS. WAINE.

N. D. Nicholson, esq.

Printed, *National Advocate* (New York), 9 February 1816.

1. Alexander Ingram's appointment as a lieutenant to *Cumberland* was published in *The Naval Chronicle*, Vol. 31, p. 85.



## Chapter Two

# The Gulf Coast Theater: January 1814–May 1815

*Daniel Todd Patterson arrived on the New Orleans Station in June of 1808. It was a disagreeable posting for the New York–born lieutenant—the region’s climate was taxing, the cost of living exorbitant, and the demands of naval service both tedious and burdensome. Within three years of his arrival, Patterson had had his fill of the Gulf Coast station, requesting official approval “to return to the Atlantic States”—which the Navy Department denied.<sup>1</sup> The determined lieutenant renewed his request again in November of 1812, entreating then–Navy Secretary Paul Hamilton to approve a transfer. Patterson expressed his ardent desire “to rise to the highest grade of my profession,” but lamented that he was unlikely to gratify this ambition while attached to such an “inactive forlorn Station.”<sup>2</sup> As with his earlier application, Patterson’s request for removal went unrealized. Though he could not have known it at the time, Daniel Patterson stood on the cusp of winning the martial glory and high rank he so deeply desired.*

*Promoted to master commandant in July of 1813, Patterson assumed command of the New Orleans Station in December of that year, following the departure of his predecessor, Captain John Shaw. His new appointment carried with it important and long-familiar charges such as enforcing the revenue laws, protecting American commerce, and suppressing piracy. The war had broadened these responsibilities to include countering the activities of Royal Navy warships cruising Gulf waters and providing logistical and operational support to U.S. Army forces stationed along the coast. Taken together, the proper execution of these duties would have challenged even the best-resourced station commander. But such was not Patterson’s situation as the New Orleans Station had suffered from departmental neglect since its establishment in 1806, leaving it chronically short of men, money, and ships.*

*Not surprisingly, the first crisis Patterson faced at New Orleans was not a military one but a financial one. Unbeknownst to the master commandant, Captain Shaw had failed to pay off many of the station’s bills before leaving New Orleans. To maintain the Navy’s standing with local creditors, Patterson had no choice but to settle Shaw’s old accounts as they were presented for payment. With Navy Secretary William Jones unwilling to provide additional funds to liquidate these debts, Patterson had to institute stringent austerity measures in order to restore his station’s finances, which remained in arrears well into the spring. This circumstance, combined with the station’s shortage of vessels, officers, and men, severely*

*circumscribed Patterson's ability to defend the Gulf Coast over the last 14 months of the war. Secretary Jones could offer little relief to Patterson, save for the assignment of the schooner Carolina to his command in the summer of 1814. This vessel would play a key role in fighting pirates and battling a British invasion force during the remainder of its short-lived Navy career.*

*The New Orleans Station had remained a backwater of the war in 1812 and 1813. This situation prevailed through the spring and early summer of 1814, when disturbing intelligence of British activity in Spanish West Florida reached Patterson at New Orleans. The reports concerned British efforts to arm, train, and organize southeastern tribesmen to attack the region's American settlements. As events would prove, these enemy intrigues were part of a much larger design to invade the Gulf Coast and capture New Orleans. The prime mover of this scheme was Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, who replaced Admiral Sir John B. Warren as commander of British naval forces in American waters in late March of 1814. To better gauge the feasibility of invading Louisiana, Cochrane dispatched warships to the Gulf region to gather intelligence and forge possible alliances with Indian tribes hostile to the United States. The Scottish admiral's planning continued through the summer in concert with advice from the home government. On 17 September, a week after the British reversal at Baltimore, Cochrane received orders from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to organize an expedition to seize the Crescent City. The British expeditionary force arrived off the Louisiana coast the second week of December, marking the beginning of the New Orleans campaign.*

*Over the next six weeks, Master Commandant Patterson cooperated with Major General Andrew Jackson to conduct a successful defense of New Orleans, repelling the enemy from Louisiana's borders. U.S. naval forces suffered a major reversal early on in the campaign with the capture of five American gunboats at the Battle of Lake Borgne on 14 December. Although deprived of over half his operational force, Patterson and his sailors continued to provide active, able service to Jackson and the city's defenders. Navy warships stationed in the Mississippi and naval shore batteries mounted on the river's west bank delivered a constant barrage of deadly gunfire against the British forces attacking Jackson's lines. Navy artilleryists also served guns in Fort St. Philip and in the main American line commanded by Old Hickory. Even after the British withdrew from the banks of the Mississippi, enterprising Navy boat crews harassed enemy barges and transports retreating to their fleet's main anchorage, taking prizes and inflicting more casualties on the invaders. The brave and steady conduct of Patterson and his men throughout the defense of New Orleans earned the praise of Andrew Jackson, Louisiana's Governor William C. C. Claiborne, and the U.S Congress.*

*Undaunted by their defeat at New Orleans, the British directed their next offensive at Fort Bowyer, a small wood and earthen fortification guarding the water approaches to Mobile. The fort's garrison surrendered on 12 February 1815, following a methodical four-day siege by the vastly superior enemy. The day after this triumph, the expedition's commanders received official word that the United States*

and Great Britain had formally concluded a peace treaty at Ghent, Belgium, on 24 December 1814. News soon followed that the two combatants had exchanged ratifications of the peace treaty, which brought to a close the War of 1812 on the Gulf Coast.

With the war over, Daniel Patterson sought to put the New Orleans Station on a proper peacetime footing. Although recently appointed Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Crowninshield seemed willing to grant Patterson certain latitude in determining the number and type of ships assigned to his station, the Navy Department's watchword remained economy. Patterson believed that swift-sailing, shallow-draft vessels best met his station's operational demands, especially the combatting of piracy. An upsurge in piracy and illegal privateering in the Gulf after 1815 prompted the Navy to adopt an aggressive response to these threats. Newly promoted Captain Daniel T. Patterson, one of the heroes of the Battle for New Orleans, would help lead that fight as the commandant of the New Orleans Station until its closure in 1827.<sup>3</sup>

1. See Patterson to Hamilton, 7 February 1811, DNA, RG45, BC, No. 77 (M148, Roll No. 8), and, Hamilton to Patterson, 7 March 1811, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 9, p. 305 (M149, Roll No. 9). In declining Patterson's request, Hamilton wrote: "Special considerations forbid my granting Your request at this time— Capt. Shaw will be able to judge when You can be spared from the N Orleans Station: & when he shall think that You can be spared without injury to the service he may order You to this place, & I shall acquiesce in such order."

2. Patterson to Hamilton, 10 November 1812, Dudley, Naval War of 1812, Vol. 1, pp. 423–25; quoted text on p. 424.

3. On the early years of the Navy's New Orleans Station, see Dudley, "Pinchpenny Flotilla," and two essays by Gene A. Smith: "U.S. Navy Gunboats and the Slave Trade" and "The U.S. Navy and Control of the Mississippi River."

## A Costly Station

The high cost of maintaining a naval force at New Orleans had drawn the ire of William Jones soon after he had assumed direction of the Navy Department. Deeply concerned that the expense of supporting the Gulf station was "extravagant beyond all reasonable bounds," Jones issued orders in February and March of 1813 aimed at bringing spending at New Orleans under control.<sup>1</sup> The Secretary reiterated this call for fiscal restraint later that fall in a letter to the station's new commanding officer, Daniel T. Patterson.<sup>2</sup>

Much to his embarrassment, Patterson had not even held his command a month before he was compelled to inform Jones that the station's finances were deeply in arrears. He blamed his financial predicament on the large number of unpaid accounts contracted by his predecessor, John Shaw. Patterson's ability to repair the station's finances was hindered by the heavy monthly outlays he was required to make for the block ship building at Tchefuncte and by the high price naval stores and provisions commanded on New Orleans markets. It would take Patterson six months before he was able to place the station's precarious finances on a more secure footing.

1. See Jones to Smith, 5 February 1813, and Jones to Shaw, 1 March 1813, in Dudley, Naval War of 1812, Vol. 2, pp. 638–39.

2. See Jones to Patterson, 18 October 1813, in *ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 669–70, and also Jones to Smith, 19 October 1813, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 3 (M209, Roll No. 4).

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

NeworLeans January 5th 1814

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge from Mr. J. K. Smith Navy Agent for this Station the receipt of a copy of your instructions to him under date of the 19th October last<sup>1</sup> relative to the expenses of this Station, and Stating that he would be limited to the sum of Twenty thousand \$ 0 month, to cover the whole expenditure of this Station, and which was to commence on the 1st December last.

In specifying that date I presume you supposed all accounts for Commodore Shaw's command, would have been paid by that date, but such a length of time unavoidably elapsed before the Transfer of this Station took place after I had the honor to receive your instructions of the 18th October<sup>2</sup> that it was impracticable to call in many of those accounts and of considerable amount prior to the latter part of last Month and which has compelled the Agent to exceed the limited Sum of \$20,000 dollars indeed there are still some outstanding unsettled accounts for the same Command not yet produced & which must necessarily be included in this months expenditure, every exertion in my power shall be used to retrench the expenses of this Station and hereafter I hope they will more frequently fall under than exceed the Sum allowed, and which I consider fully adequate for all necessary purposes.—

The Pay Roll of Mechanics &c. employed in Building the Block Ship, amounts to upwards of \$4,000 0r. month exclusive of numerous other expenses necessarily attending the Building a heavy Vessell. Respectfully Sir I have the honor to be Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 1 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Jones to Smith, 19 October 1813, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 3 (M209, Roll No. 4).

2. Jones to Patterson, 18 October 1813, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 669–70.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

NeworLeans 4th Feby. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that the Navy agent has been obliged to exceed in the last Two months, the limited Sum of Twenty thousand dollars; in consequence of many accounts for Commodore Shaws command, and contracted prior to the 1st December, having been brought forward for payment; amounting to nearly Fifteen thousand dollars, he has therfore with my advice, drawn on the Navy Department, for the Sum of Ten thousand dollars; which draft, I trust

will be honored; for I feel convinced it was your intention, that all outstanding accounts, Should be paid, previous to a commencement of the limited Sum of Twenty thousand dollars @ month being enforced; & that, that Sum would be allowed to cover the monthly expenditure thereafter; the Sum drawn for will I think be sufficient to cover the expenditure for this month; and the month of March will then be commenced clear of all incumbrances; & for which Month, I should hope Twenty thousand dollars, will prove all sufficient; had the accounts alluded to been produced in proper time, they would have been paid; and the amount drawn for prior to the 1st December; but the amount of them being unknown, it was impracticable.—

In a former letter<sup>1</sup> I had the honor to State to you, that the large amount required monthly, for the payment of the Mechanics, &C. employed in building the Block Ship: exclusive of disbursements, for materials necessary for her progress;— that, Pay roll, and the Sum drawn by the Purser,<sup>2</sup> on account of Pay, and Subsistance; amounts to one half the Monthly Stipend; in addition to which all the most expensive articles of Provision, for the Station are purchased in this City: and of a course at a high price; particularly the articles of Butter, Cheese, & Pease; these, might be purchased to great advantage in the Western States: and during the autumnal, and Winter Months, could be issued from the Navy Store; with very little, or no loss; and would relieve the Station from a heavy expense:— I have the Honor to be Sir with great Respect Your Obt. Sert

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 42 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Patterson to Jones, 5 January 1814, p. 796.

2. Thomas Shields.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 4th. March 1814

Sir,

On the 4th: ulto. I had the honor to report to you that in consequence of the payment of a number of accounts, contracted during Commodore Shaws, command and of a date anterior, to the 1st of December last, amounting at that time to nearly fifteen thousand Dollars, the Navy agent had, by my authority, drawn upon the Navy Department for the Sum of Ten Thousand \$ which sum I then, Supposed would have enabled me, to commence this month, without any incumbrances, and with the full amount of the mont[*h*]ly allowance to act on; in this Supposition, I am extremely sorry to inform you; I have been unfortunately deceived, for old outstanding accounts for my predecessor's Command, have been produced daily Since that date, and paid to a considerable amount; and there are Still many forthcoming, Some dated as far far back as September last; which have lain this long unpaid, from want of the

Signature of the Officers commanding the Vessels for which they were respectively incurred, the sum thus paid from the mont[*h*]ly allowance of this Station, for debts contracted, prior to the operation of that order; amounts now to nearly Twenty thousand Dollars, by which the Station has now become embarrassed; for I directed the Navy agent to pay off as far as his means (the deposit of the Twenty thousand Dollars in the Louisiana Bank) would admit him to do; the Station of course is from these circumstances deficient Ten thousand Dollars, of the monthly Stipend allowed it by the Department; for which Sum I have the honor to inform you; I have authorized the Navy agent when he can; to draw on the Department; to reimburse those disbursements, and which will I trust meet your approbation, and be duly honored, tho' at this time a Bill cannot be disposed of.

I am truly mortified, at having been thus compelled, to exceed the Sum which you prescribed for my command; but I feel conscious you will admit the necessity there existed for so doing, & that the excess will be placed to the proper account.—

In my letter of the 4th February, I stated the large amount necessary monthly for the Pay Roll of the Block Ship, building on the Tchifuncti; exclusive of the heavy disbursements for materials &c. necessary for a Vessel of her size; as well as the Sum drawn by the Purser on account of Pay and Subsistance; for the month of February the Sum necessary for the above mentioned purposes, amounted to nearly fifteen thousand Dollars, alone; and the Sum drawn monthly, by the Commanding officer of the marine Corps at this place,<sup>1</sup> amounts to about one thousand Dollars, thus you will perceive Sir, how very Small a balance is left for the residue of this Station.—

We labour under many disadvantages in this Country too Sir, which no other Station does, Viz, we have no articles of Ship chandlery in our Navy Store worthy of mention; and such as are there, we purchase here; of course at a high price; and for such articles as we necessarily require from day to day, not in the Store; or to be purchased by the quantity; we are compelled to pay a most exorbitant price; tis this circumstance Sir, which leads in a very high degree, to the expense of this Station; to lessen which, I shall exert myself to the utmost, and have no doubt of ultimate Success, tho' Such a change cannot be effected instantly

Should the articles which I did myself the honor to report, as necessary for the ensuing year be furnished; from the Atlantic, or Western States it, will very materially aid me, and reduce very much, the expense of my Command.—

From the various circumstances herein Set forth, I would beg leave to State, that untill the Block Ship is completed; I do not think Twenty thousand Dollars will cover the monthly expenditure, but Should you deem it proper to encrease it to Twenty five thousand Dollars; I think that Sum would be sufficient, and in that case 'twill be necessary that the credit of the Navy agent Should be extended to that amount; for 'tis impossible, at this time to Sell a Bill, and there is every prospect that Such difficulty will continue for Some time, Should the expenditures not equal that Sum, the balance will of course, remain for the ensuing month, for be assured Sir, tho having the power to be so, will never render me extravagant, or induce me to approve of expenses, not absolutely necessary for the proper equipment, and maintenance, of the Vessels entrusted



to my Command, and upon examining the abstracts of accounts, for the last three months, since the 10th December; they will not I trust, be found so large as those preceding.—<sup>2</sup> I have the honor to be Sir with great Respect Your Obt. Serv.t

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson.

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 75 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Major Daniel Carmick, U.S.M.C. For a detailed sketch of Carmick's 18-year career in the Marines, see Claiborne, *Interim Appointment*, pp. 461–75. For documentation on Carmick's command at New Orleans, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 1, pp. 408–16.

2. For Jones's reply to the question of raising the monthly credit allowed the New Orleans Station, see Jones to Patterson, 26 March 1814, pp. 819–20.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 3rd June 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that upon a consultation called by the Collector of this District,<sup>1</sup> consisting of the Commanding General,<sup>2</sup> the Collector, and myself, it was considered by us, to be our duty to permit the people of this part of the union to partake, the benefits which their Brethren, of the other States enjoyed in the repeal of the Embargo, and Non-importation Acts,—<sup>3</sup> a consultation became necessary, from no official information, of their repeal having been received, in this City, by any of the Public authorities unless the Law itself, which we saw published by authority in the *National Inteligencer*<sup>4</sup> could be considered as official, and in that light we were at length induced to receive it, and have acted accordingly, my proceedings in this case will I hope meet your approbation, it has offered to the Western States a Sale of their produce which they would not otherwise have obtained

I have the Satisfaction to inform you that my Station is at length released from its embarrassments, and that I shall commence the month of July with the full sum of Twenty thousand Dollars, and have no doubt, but a considerable balance, will remain at the end of the month, in my former letters, on this Subject, I had the honor to State to you the large Sum paid for the Command of my predecessor,<sup>5</sup> Since then accounts for the Same have been almost daily presented and paid, which, has very considerably encreased that amount, add, to which the heavy expenses, incurred for the Block Ship, on the Tchifonté, prior to the receipt of your orders, of the 7th: March,<sup>6</sup> the Sum thus required to clear the Station, beyond the Credit lodged in Bank amounts to fifteen thousand Dollars, this Sum has been furnished by the House of Smith Dorsey & Co. for the present, for which I have authorized the Navy agent to draw, on you, it was judged adviseable both by the agent, and myself to pay off all outstanding accounts at once, free the Station from all difficulties, and endeavour by Strict economy to Save a Sufficient

balance, to refund the Sum necessary for that purpose and which I am confident, the two Succeeding months will enable me to do, I trust Sir you will app[r]ove of the Steps taken in this business.—

All workmen are now discharged from Tchifonté except only Such joiners as are necessary to complete the Shed, over the Ship, and labourers to Cut up those live oak trees, which are already felled on the borders of the Lake,<sup>7</sup> and which, would be destroyed if left there, all will be completed ere the end of this month, when that establishment, will be entirely broken up,— the timber I have caused to be deposited in the River Tchifonté near its mouth, where the water is Shoal, it will there be safe and seasoning, at the Same time,— a great portion of it would I think be extremely servicable, and Valuable for building, in any of the Navy Yards to the Northward, I should prefer its going to Washington that the Live oak of this Country, might be seen, and its Value understood, by the most competent judges; there is a very considerable quantity.—

Out of the twenty thousand Dollars  $\varnothing$  month the Commanding Marine Officer, has always drawn the Sum, necessary for the pay &c. of his Command, this usually amounts, to Two or three thousand Dollars and the last month more from his being authorized to give fifty Dollars bounty to his recruits; will you be pleased Sir to give me such instructions on this Subject, as to you may appear necessary, for it might so happen, that he would require a much larger Sum, which would of course embarrass me much, the Sum thus drawn Since the 1st December cannot be less than fifteen thousand Dollars, Sufficient to cover all the naval expenditures, before Stated, exceeding the monthly allowance.—

Gun Vessel *No. 5* is now undergoing Some repairs of no great magnitude; she requires water ways, a few new Top Timbers, Plank Shears, and graving pieces, in her bends, she will be completed in a few days, and will then be as good as ever,— these repairs being not great, and very urgent, I directed them to be done previous to advising, you therof, and trust it will not be disapproved.— I have the honor to be Sir with great consideration and respect Your obt. St.

Danl. T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 138 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Peter Francis DuBourg replaced Thomas Hill Williams as collector of customs for the Port of New Orleans in the summer of 1813. See Dubourg to Madison, 30 August 1813, in Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 6, p. 578.

2. Brigadier General Thomas Flournoy, U.S.A., who resigned his command on 15 June 1814. Flournoy to Armstrong, 15 June 1814, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, F-29 (8) (M221, Roll No. 61). Andrew Jackson succeeded Flournoy as commander of the Seventh Military District. On Jackson's appointment to this command, see Armstrong to Jackson, 22 May 1814, and Jackson to Armstrong, 8 June 1814, in Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 76, 79.

3. For the text of the Non-Importation Act and the Embargo Act, see *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 2, pp. 651–52, and Vol. 3, pp. 88–93, respectively. Both these acts were repealed 14 April 1814. *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 123.

4. Text of the repeal act was published in the *Daily National Intelligencer*, 15 April 1814.

5. John Shaw.

6. See pp. 809–10. In this letter, the Navy Secretary ordered work on the block ship at Tchefuncte to cease.

7. Lake Pontchartrain.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 19th. August 1814

Sir,

Enclosed herein I have the honor to transmit you a memorial, to the President, in behalf of those whom I have [t]he honor to command, and beg leave to Solicit of you the favor to present it to the President, and to add your influence in behalf of my prayer.—

I should not Sir, have obruded upon the President or [y]ourself but that I find from experience that with the present Pay it is with the utmost difficulty the Officers, can support the appearance [t]heir respective grades require, and the Seaman clothe himself or [e]njoy the little indulgencies, so highly necessary for his health and comfort, in this most unhealthy climate; and permit me to represent to you, that many articles, which are considered, and denominated luxuries in other parts of the Union, become here indispensable necessities, for the preservation and recovery of health:—

Assured of your desire to render the situation of those under you as comfortable as circumstances will admit by obtaining for them, that which the law sanctions, I most cheerfully confide the memorial to your guidance.— I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your Obt. Sert.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 21 (M147, Roll No. 5).

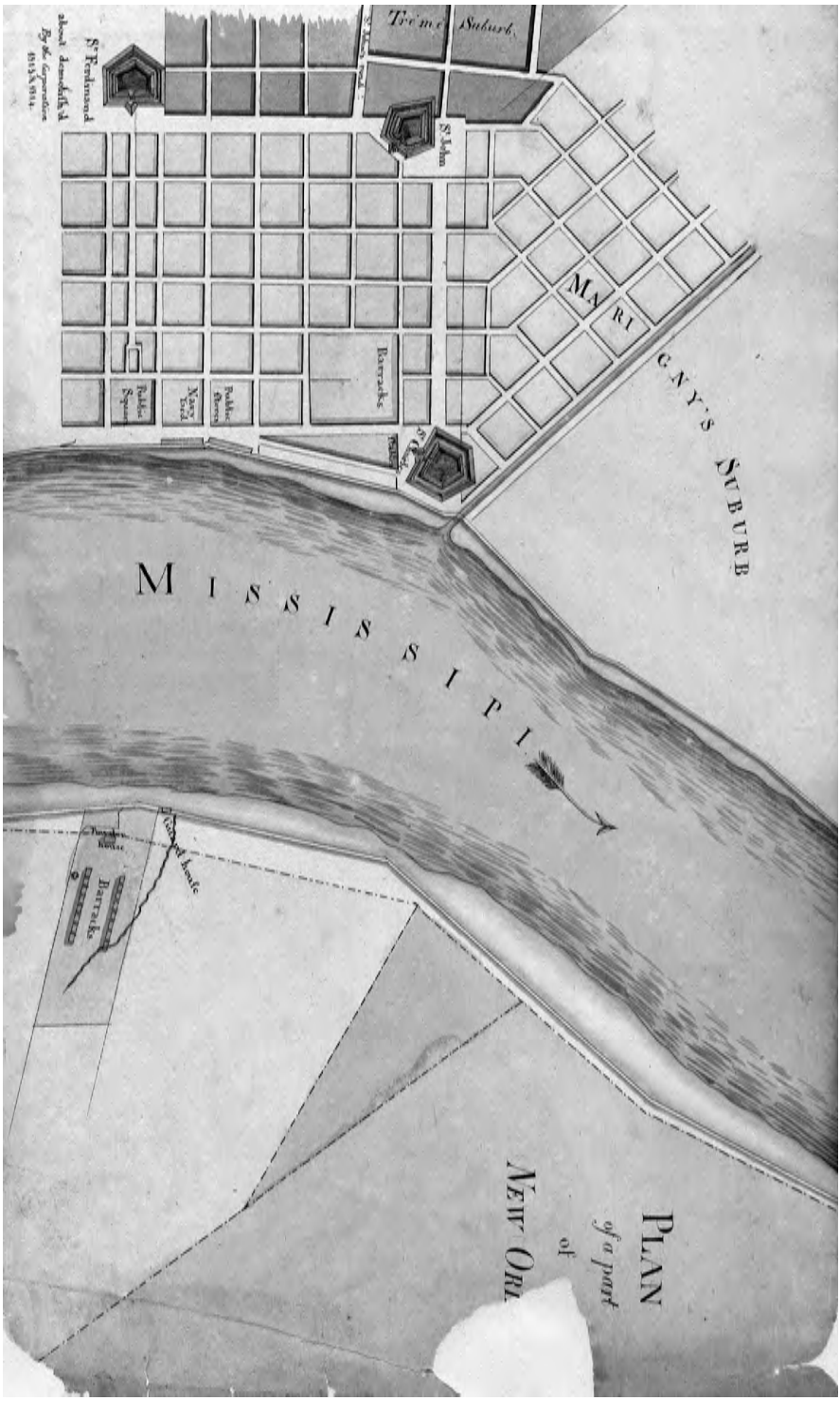
[Enclosure]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Memorial of the Subscribers, in behalf of the Officers, Petty Officers, Midshipmen, Seamen, and Marines on the New orleans Station,

Humbly Sheweth;

That having Seen [the] provision, of an Act, entitled, an Act, concerning the Pay of Officers, Seamen, and Marines in the Service of the United States, passed the 18th day of April 1814,<sup>1</sup> that the President is authorized to make an addition of twenty five ¢ cent, to the Pay of the Officers, Petty Officers, Midshipmen, Seamen, and Marines engaged in any Service of peculiar hardship, or disadvantage; Your petitioners, pray leave most respectfully to draw your attention to the situation of the Navy Officers, Seamen, and Marines, on this Station; which is one of those we presume the Legislature must principally have had in view, when they made the provision alluded to;— If any station is exposed to hardships, and disadvantages it must be ours; where the exposure to the heats of a climate nearly tropical, and to the moisture of a country continually inundated distroys all the comforts of the Service, and renders the lives of those engaged [i]n it exposed to dangers greater than those of Battle,



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while the victim sinks into his watery grave without the cheering consolation, of knowing that his name, will be repeated as that of one of those who have fallen in defence of their country; if however we were exposed only to fatigues and dangers greater than those of our brethren, on more favored Stations, we should not think of applying for the advantages of the Act; We owe our Services and our lives, to our Country, and whatever be the nature of that Service or the mode in which our lives be required we should never think of appreciating those Sacrifices by money.—

But this Station is not only a fatiguing and unhealthy one; it is uncommonly expensive every necessary article of cloathing and Subsistance being full one hundred ¢ cent higher than on any other Station in t[he] Union, so that the Same Pay and emoluments, which would enable the Officer to support his rank; and give his little comforts to the Seaman in other parts of the world will here Suff[ice] for neither; Your petitioners need adduce, no proof of this fact an examination of the Public accounts, as well for the Army a[s] the Navy on this Station will clearly Shew that the rate of encrease established by the act, is not edequate to the enhanced price of every article necessary for Subsistance at this place

Your petitioners therefore pray that an addition of twenty five ¢ cent be made to the Pay of the Officers, Petty Officers, Midshipmen, Seamen, and Marines serving on the Neworleans Station; and they further pray that such addition if compatible, may take effect from the date of the aforesaid act.—<sup>2</sup> And your petitioners will ever pray &c.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson  
Comg. Naval Officer  
New Orleans Station  
Dan Carmick  
Major Marine Corps

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 21, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5). This memorial was also printed in Madison, *Papers*, Vol. 8, pp. 117–18.

1. For the text of this act, see *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 3, pp. 136–37.

2. The officers and men serving on Lake Ontario presented a similar memorial to Congress in February 1814. See Petition of William H. Crane and Others to Congress, 8 February 1814, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 399–401.

## A Proper Force for the Gulf

*Upon assuming command of the New Orleans Station in December 1813, Master Commandant Patterson lost no time in soliciting the Navy Department for more ships and men to protect Gulf waters, overtures that were repeated into the New Year. With only five gunboats capable of performing seagoing service, Patterson lacked an adequate force to defend his station against British cruisers, let alone to aid in the enforcement of the embargo or the suppression of piracy, duties with which he was also charged. The station's operational capabilities were further undermined by a shortage of officers and sailors, which prevented its vessels from being properly manned. Patterson sought the addition of several*

*swift-sailing, shallow-draft schooners and the transfer of several hundred sailors to New Orleans to bolster his station's defenses.*

*As Jones had expressed official displeasure at the excessive, wasteful spending at New Orleans, he was not entirely sympathetic to Patterson's plight. In Jones's estimation nearly \$30,000 of public moneys had already been spent on the construction of a block ship at Tchefuncte, "a worthless, useless hulk" the Secretary stated, "utterly unfit for" service on the Gulf Station.<sup>1</sup> With the Department's resources stretched thin by the needs of the Lakes squadrons, its ocean cruisers, and the flotilla service, all Jones could offer Patterson was advice and a pledge of token reinforcement. The New Orleans commandant would have to make do with the force he had.*

1. Jones to Patterson, 7 March 1814, pp. 809–10.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

NeworLeans 20th January 1814

Sir

I was honored on the evening of the 14th inst by the receipt of your letter of the 17th ulto.<sup>1</sup> covering a circular of the Same date<sup>2</sup> from the Honorable the acting Secretary of the Treasury<sup>3</sup> in consequence of the act laying Embargo &C., which I put into immediate execution, and Stopped Several Vessels in the River, which had cleared out and dropped down as low as Fort St. Phillip—

On the morning of the 15th. hearing that the copy which I had received was the only one in Town, I immediately furnished Certified Copies to the Governor of this State,<sup>4</sup> the Commanding General and the Collector of the Customs on which the latter instantly acted.

To enforce rigorously the Embargo and to detect Such as may violate that Law; or even attempt so to do: will require more Vessels Officers, and men, than I have under my command, for there is no Port, in the United States from whence there are such numerous avenues to the Sea, and all favorable in a high degree to Smuggling, which I have no doubt will be attempted to a great extent; be assured Sir that every effort in my power, Shall be used to enforce the law, and to detect the violators thereof. I have the Honor to be with Great respect Sir Your Obt. Servt

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

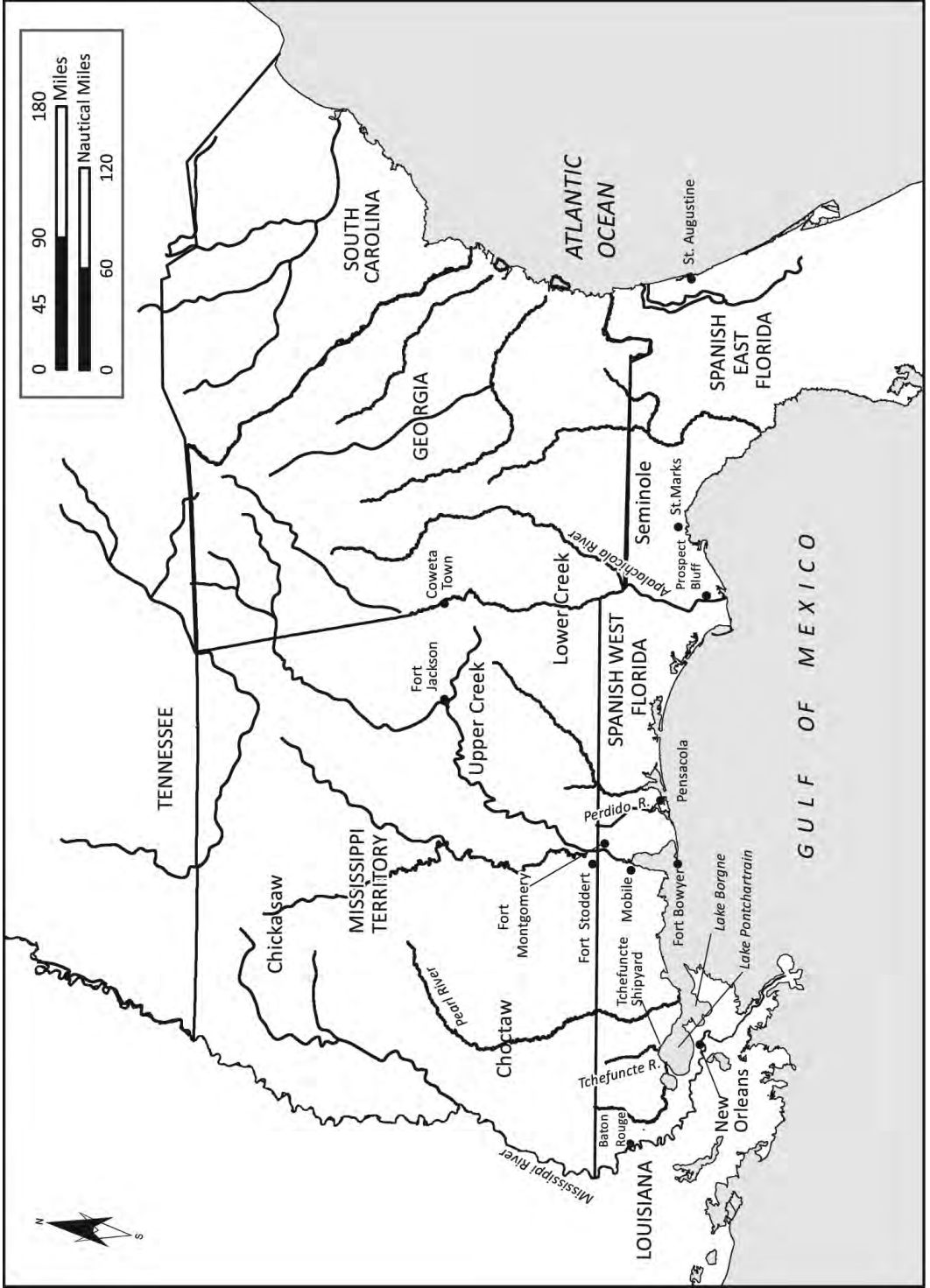
LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 22 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Navy Department Circular, 17 December 1813, DNA, RG45, CGO, Vol. 1, pp. 104–5 (M977, Roll No. 1).

2. A Treasury Department circular dated 24 December 1813 containing instructions on the enforcement of the new embargo law is in PHi, Uselma Clark Smith Collection, William Jones Papers, Vol. 1.

3. William Jones, acting secretary of the treasury 21 April 1813–8 February 1814.

4. William C. C. Claiborne, governor of the state of Louisiana, 1812–16.



Map 16. Gulf Theater

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

NeworLeans, 21st. January 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that pursuant to my intention as stated to you in my last<sup>1</sup> I have visited the Block Ship building on the River Tchifuncti,<sup>2</sup> from which place I returned on the 13th. inst. when I left the Yard on the 13th She was nearly closed in, a few streaks only wanting, and is as far forward inside as out, her Beams, Carlines, ledges &c. are all ready to put in, Stern frame nearly completed, the plank for Bulk heads &c cut, and Seasoned, three of her Boats built Viz, Launch 1st & 2d. Cutters, and the timber Squared for her deck plank; Capt. Shaw, and myself have laid her deck plan, & proportioned her Masts &c., She will probably be launched in all the month of May, with all her inside work completed, her rigging will be put in hand immediately, and Gun Carriages are all made but Six; She will mount 20 long 24 prs. and 6. 32's her draft of water will be with every thing on board about 6 feet 6 inches She has only 4 inches dead rise, but the drafts which Capt Shaw takes with him for your inspection will more fully inform you of her dimensions &c. than I can describe them; the probable extent of her Cost &c. Still will I presume be about Sixty thousand dollars, to complete her for actual Service, about Twenty thousand dollars of which will be for carpenters, the remainder for the necessary Outfits and materials; I find her a Vessel infinitely Superior to any idea I had formed of her, and that She will be a most formidable & Valuable Vessel, there can be no doubt, and will be able to defend the Lakes and Passes to this City, against almost any force which even our present enemy could Send against us.—

From the great breadth of beam weight of Hull and light draft of water of this Ship 'twill consequently be extremely unsafe to heave her out, when required to review her Bottom, or repair her Sheathing, and 'tis necessary in the waters in which She will be employed, (Should She not be coppered) to pay her Bottom at least twice a year; as the worms abound in those waters, & are extremely destructive; would it not therefore Sir from those various I trust weighty considerations be advisable and even necessary to copper her to light water mark, as every thing necessary might then be accomplished by a heavy careen and preclude the necessity of endangering so valuable a Vessel by heaving her intirely out, the necessary quantity of Copper, Nails, &c. can be purchased at Pensacola reasonably nor do I think it would add more than four thousand dollars to her costs, a very trifle when compared to its utility in the preservation of so important a portion of the maritime defence of this great Country; and I really believe from experience that heaving out such a Vessel twice would be a greater expense, than the amount necessary to Copper her, independant of the loss of her services, during the time necessary for that purpose and which I humbly conceive to be of very great moment in this case.—

She will receive no equipment, other than Such as may be absolutely necessary, and that of the plainest and most Substantial Kind.—

I am Sorry to report that upon examination, Gun Goat *no. 65* was found to be so extremely decayed as to oblige her to be condemned as almost impossible to repair and to be unsafe in her present State.—



I have caused her to be intirely dismantled, and directed her Hull to be burnt to procure her iron work, I am thus reduced to five Gun Boats only.—

I have the honor to report that there will be left from the building of the Block Ship at Tchifuncti, live oak and fine timber of the best quality Sufficient to build Six Gun Boats which could be built at that place very reasonably, and on Such a plan as to be admirably adapted for this Station; Galleys could also be built there on very advantageous terms and of the best materials, and as the number of Gun Boats on this Station is so very reduced and likely to be still more so; for *no. 5* is much decayed and will not be worth any material repair,<sup>3</sup> permit me to request permission to put up Some frames of such Species of Vessels as you may judge most servicable for this Station, at the Same time I beg leave to State that Ten Gun Boats are not too many to effectually guard the extensive Sea Coast, which requires protection in this Country. I have the Honor to be Sir with great respect Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 25 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Probably a reference to Patterson's letter of 27 December 1813, in which he states, "In a few days I shall visit the Block Ship Building on the Tchifuncte." Patterson to Jones, 27 December 1813, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 681–82.

2. For documentation on the block ship's construction under John Shaw, Patterson's predecessor, see *ibid.*, pp. 663–68.

3. Patterson did proceed with repairs to gunboat *No. 65*. See Patterson to Jones, 3 June 1814, pp. 799–800.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

NeworLeans 31st. January 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that on the 26th. inst. I received a communication bearing that date,<sup>1</sup> from his Excellency Governor Claiborne; relative to a force to be employed in dispersing the Pirates who have taken Post, on the Shores, and Islands, of Lake Barataria & its vicinity; and requesting to be informed, in the event of an expedition being Sent against them; whether any, and what, co-operation, could be afforded by the Naval Force under my Command;<sup>2</sup> to this, I was, mortifying as it was; obliged to reply that none could be afforded; from the number of effecient Vessels calculated for Such a Service, being so very limited; and those which I had being so Stationed, that they could not consistently with my Sence of duty, and Public Safety, be withdrawn from their Posts; and that in case they were so withdrawn and sent on that Service, they would necessarily be greatly exposed to the Superior Force of the enemy now on our coast, and to which they would in all probability fall an easy sacrefice, without rendering any Service to their Country of accomplishing the object in View.—

In my last, I had the honor to report to you the condemnation of Gun Boat *No. 65*, which reduces the number of Gun Boats to five only; of those five the

three best Boats are Stationed in Mobile Bay, to aid the Fort: on Mobile Point,<sup>3</sup> protect the Bay and defend the approaches to the Town of Mobile; the other Two are employed as convoys, and to guard the Regolets, and Passes to this City from Lake Borgne; the Brig *Aetna* guards the River and is badly manned; the Ship *Louisiana* has been unable to descend the River, from the want of a crew, Seamen cannot be obtained here at all, and I know not what to do without them, or where to procure them.— From this Statement of the distribution of Force under my command you will perceive Sir, how utterly impossible it was for me to afford any aid to the Governor.—

The Embargo has detained several very fine Vessels here which are admirably adapted for the Naval Service on this Station; and which could, I fancy be purchased very low; particularly two fast Sailing Sloops, drawing only 6 feet water when deep laden; which would make very fine Gun Boats, and Five Schooners of the discription, contained in my letter to you of the 6th. ulto.<sup>4</sup>

The Embargo will I hope enable me to recruit a few Seamen, tho very high wages is given in the Barges, which navigate this River as high up as Pittsburg; allow me Sir to urge my anxiety to do Something that will raise the credit and reputation of my Station; hitherto in the back ground, in excuse for my repeated solicitations, for men and Vessels,— & I feel Sensibly mortified, that there Should exist: within the bounds of my Command a Band of Pirates, who daily commit the greatest, and most wanton outrages, on the Citizens of the United States, and of nations in amity with the United States; Piracy on the high Seas, and make a part of the United States, a place of Safety, and a mart for their lawless Spoliations, who bid defiance to all law, and the Force of the United States, in this Section of the Union; and 'tis a most mortifying truth that their force exceeds ours.—

The dispersion of this lawless Bane, I view as highly important, nay absolutely necessary for the very Safety of this important, and wealthy City; and would also be rendering an essential Service, to my Country at large, 'tis an object, the accomplishment of which: I have long been desirous of effecting.— they have attained a most alarming and formidable Strength, which is daily encreasing, for 'tis the resort of the disaffected of all classes, nations, & Colours, of men of desperate fortune; who have every thing to gain, and nothing to loose; who are obliged to fly civil Society; and of criminals who have fled from Justice for crimes of the blackest hue; and who are of course Capable of the greatest Vilanies, and exercising the most cruel barbarities, on those unfortunate beings who may unhappily fall within their power, from which few ever escape with life I have the honor to [*be*]<sup>5</sup> Sir with great respect your Ob. Servt

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 35 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Not found.

2. Claiborne's letter of 26 January not found. On the expedition Patterson led to disperse the Baratarian pirates in September 1814, see pp. 895–907.

3. Fort Bowyer.

4. Patterson means 7 December 1813. See Patterson to Jones, 7 December 1813, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 676–77.

5. Text torn here.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Daniel. T. Patterson Esqr. }  
Commanding Naval Officer }  
New-Orleans }

Navy Department  
March 7th. 1814

Sir,

Your letters of the 20th & 21st. of January last,<sup>1</sup> have been received the requisitions for stores, which you have made, are much larger than any force, which can be organized on your station, will require. John K. Smith Esqr. the Navy Agent, takes with him a List of such articles as appear to me, abundantly sufficient for the actual force, which will be employed. He will procure the Stores at Philadelphia and Pittsburg, and proceed with them, from the latter place, in the Steam Boat. He will also carry with him Draughts and plans of a Barge or Galley, and of a Schooner of the fleetest form, and easy draught of water. Instructions on this subject you will receive by him.

The Inhabitants, as well as the commanders, of every district, or place, in the Union, in any degree exposed to the annoyance of the enemy, are too prone to imagine the power and resources of the Government of the Union, inexhaustible, and without taking a sufficiently enlarged view of the immense extent of Sea-Frontier (indented with innumerable Bays and Rivers, the Shores, towns and villages of which are constantly exposed to the predatory incursions of the enemy, without the possibility of defending more than a few of the most important points,) call upon the Government for a force competent to protect each point.

The demand for Seamen on the Lakes, for the Flotilla from New Hampshire to Georgia, and for our cruising Ships, is such as to render it impossible to strip those in order to send Seamen to New-Orleans. That place must, therefore, depend for Naval protection, upon the force you now have, increased by all the Seamen you can procure on the spot, with the addition of Kentucky Boatmen for the Barges, and such of our cruising vessels as may occasionally, visit the coast; some of which you may soon expect to hear from.

This view of the subject, and it is the only correct view, will demonstrate to you the impossibility of that kind of protection, which you contemplate, for the great extent of country, and the innumerable inlets from Mobile to New-Orleans. The only responsibility, which a commanding Officer sustains, or the extent of the service which can be required of him, is, the proper and efficient use of the force, actually, under his command. Thus you will perceive, that the extent of your force must be regulated by the number of men you can procure on the Spot; and, that any number, or description of vessels, or of armament, beyond this, is a useless expenditure of Public Money. The force employed, therefore, should be such as to produce the greatest possible effect, with the smallest number of Men.

The reverse, unfortunately, has hitherto been the case with the force employed on the New Orleans Station.

Heavy clump Block Ships, Bomb Vessels, and Sluggish Gun Boats, all equally unfit for either pursuit or retreat, answer no purpose, but to produce a wasteful expenditure, and excite discontent, by their inertness and inefficiency; whilst

the Officers and men, employed in those indolent hulks, if engaged in active enterprize, in proper vessels, against the Public enemy, Smugglers, and Pirates, are capable of rendering important services; and exciting public confidence and respect. Whatever additional force, of a proper description, may be added to that already existing, may be manned from the latter, as occasion may require; for it can scarcely happen that they will act in conjunction. I come, now, to the New Block Ship, this desiderata in Naval Architecture, according to Captain Shaw, combining all the excellence of the various descriptions of vessels, and in herself an Armada. The very description of her form, and proportions, is sufficient for me; I pronounce her, without hesitation, to be a worthless, useless hulk; utterly unfit for any other purpose, than that of a stationary, floating Battery; incapable of navigating any where but in a Lake or River; and utterly so of pursuing or retiring from an enemy; requiring as is admitted, 250 men, who would become a prey to idleness, vice and musquitoes;— in short, she is exactly the reverse of that which is proper for the service.

The expenditures, on that Vessel, now known to the Department, amount to about Thirty thousand Dollars. Captain Shaw's estimate, to complete her, according to your last letter, is Sixty thousand Dollars; and the probability is, that it would be twice that sum, including all her equipments. I should not regret to learn, tomorrow that she was burned. The obscure manner in which this vessel was commenced, and has progressed; the partial and imperfect information given to the Department, in respect to her, until your last report, has prevented a decision, which should have taken place long since. I therefore, now, direct, that, on the receipt of this, all further progress with the New Block Ship, her equipments and armament, be suspended; and that the establishment, at Tchefuncta, be entirely broken up; taking proper measures for the preservation of the public materials and effects, at that place, untill further orders.

Of the correctness of your views, and disposition so to conduct your command, as to produce the greatest Public good, with zeal, prudence, and economy, I entertain the most perfect confidence. I am, very respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 234–36 (M149, Roll No. 11). A postscript flush left below the signature line reads: "N B Duplicate per mail 14th march.—".

1. See pp. 804 and 806–7.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 22nd April 1814

Sir,

I have the honor, to acknowledge the receipt, of your letter, of the 7th: ulto., which reached me, by express from this place, on the 7th inst, on my return from Mobile, and route to Tchifuncti, where I arrived, on that day, and pursuant to

your instructions, suspended the further progress, of the New Block-Ship, Building at that place: and discharged the workmen, except only such as were necessary, to Secure the Ship, on her Stocks, erect a light Shed over her, and Secure the Public effects, and materials, which are very considerable; as soon as this shall be effected, they will be discharged, and that establishment, broken up; I now regret sir, that I had not, on assuming the command, arrested, the progress of the Block Ship, till I should receive instructions, from you, as I wished, and was on the point of doing, but was doubtfull, whether it would, meet your approbation. She is now very far advanced, her whole Deck frame, is laid, Water ways in, filling in Timbers in, and Bolted, her port Sills in fore and aft planked up, and Caulked, a considerable part, of her Deck plank, dressed, and her lower Standing, rigging nearly ready, She will not injure, by standing on her Stocks, for years, when protected from the weather, it will be necessary, to have a Marine Guard, Kept there, to protect her, and the materials, which will necessarily remain, there, and as the Marines, are generally removed, from this City, during the Sickly months, that place will answer for them, and they can, at the Same time, form the necessary, Guard, for the Ship; without detaching, any part of them, for that particular, purpose.—

There is at Tchifuncti, Live Oak and Yellow pine. Timber, of the very best quality, ready Cut, and pretty well seasoned, belonging to the Navy Department, Sufficient to Build at least four Schooners, and as many Galleys, or Gun Barges, and Should you as your letter before alluded to, leads me to believe, determine upon Building, on this Station, any Vessel of that discription, I beg leave to recommend Tchifuncti, as in every way the most elligible, place in this Country, for that purpose, and more particularly, from the quantity, of materials ready for use, as Stated at that, place which would cost, an enormous Sum to bring to this City, and when here, there is no proper place, to Build a Vessel, of any discription; nor is there Timber, sufficient in this City, at this time, to Build a Galley.—

I beg leave to state, that in making, the estimate of Stores, necessary for this Station, for the ensuing year, I took into consideration the very large quantity, that would be required, for the Block Ship, and to Supply the number of Gun Boats, which, it had been determined to Keep in service, on this Station, by your letter of the 1st: March, 1813, to Captain Shaw,<sup>1</sup> which of course encreased, it much beyond, what was necessary, for this present force, and I am very happy to learn, that the requisite, quantity are on their, way, as it will tend, to lessen, in a great degree, the heavy expenses, of this Station.—

I returned to this City, on the 10th: inst, from Mobile, and Tchifuncti, the Gun Vessels, Stationed in Mobile Bay, I left in excellent order, and well manned, as are the other Two, which are Stationed in the Lakes, I was in hopes to have found, the Fort erected on Mobile Point, Sufficiently Strong, and formidable, as to enable me to withdraw, at least one, Vessel from thence; but this I was unable to do, for without their, aid the entrance into, the Bay cannot be effectually defended, and the possession of the Bay, would afford to the Enemy, an excellent harbour, and Cut off all communication between, this place, and Mobile, and enable them, to invade this Country, with great facility. I have therefore Judged it most expedient to continue them there.—

I feel highly gratified, by the communication, of your views, of the Defence, protection, and extent, of Service, which can be expected, or required, of a Commanding Officer, by the inhabitants, of any place, or Station, and which, to my mind, are just, and incontrovertible.—

By the confidence, you have done me, the favor in expressing to entertain, of the correctness, of my views, and disposition, to conduct my Command, I feel much honored, to possess, the Confidence, of the head, of my Department, has ever been, one of the, objects, of my highest ambition;—

I was honored by the receipt of your Circular of 12th Ulto.<sup>2</sup> on the 15th. inst.— I have the honor to be With great Consideration and respect Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 111 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Jones to Shaw, 1 March 1813, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, p. 639.

2. Navy Department Circular, 12 March 1814, DNA, RG45, CGO, Vol. 1, p. 230 (M977, Roll No. 1). This circular gave instructions on how to complete returns of naval stores.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Daniel T. Patterson Esqr.  
Comdg. the U.S. Naval force  
New-Orleans

Navy Department  
July 8th. 1814

Sir,

Enclosed you will receive a duplicate of my order of this day<sup>1</sup> to capt. Henley, commanding the U.S. Schooner *Carolina* now ready for sea at charleston S:C: with an excellent crew of ninety five in number officers included.— She is a new vessel built in charleston in the best manner and of the most durable materials.—

You will perceive by the discriptive papers herewith enclosed, that she is admirably calculated for the station under your command to which she is to be attached, and I should hope with this addition combined with the small vessel under your command, that some impression may be made upon the pirates & smugglers, with which the coast & waters of the district continue to be annoyed.—

The small Schooner<sup>2</sup> which was built and fitted here with a view to join your command, has been some time in readiness; but despairing of success in any attempt to elude the vigilance of the Blockade of the chesapeake I have substituted the *carolina* of treble her force.—

I have ordered the Battery of the *Carolina* to be changed from 12's. to 18 pdr. carronades which I expect has been done.—<sup>3</sup>

Should you deem it expedient to add to your force two small schooners or three or four Barges 50 or 60 feet long 12 to 13 feet wide & 3 feet 8 inches deep with a long 12 pounder or a light 18 in one end and a 24 pd. carronade in the other with a gang way on each side four feet wide to extend from Gun to Gun, you are at liberty to procure such additional force.— This you will be able to

accomplish without exceeding the monthly credit as the Block Ship is laid aside, and large supplies of stores have been sent from Pittsburg.—

The men from the Block vessels may also man these as the whole can never act together.— I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones.—

Duplicate with enclosures & the following postscript sent on the 12th.

By a letter<sup>4</sup> just received I find that the 18 pd. carronades could not be procured.— We have however a contract for a number of carronades now casting at Pittsburg which, will be sent to your station out of which a Battery for the *carolina* may be selected

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 369–70 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. See Jones to John D. Henley, 8 July 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 366–67 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. Schooner *Lynx*.

3. See Jones to Dent, 23 June 1814, p. 249.

4. See Dent to Jones, 2 July 1814, pp. 249–50.

## Patterson's Officers

*Even before the commencement of hostilities with Great Britain, the New Orleans Station lacked adequate numbers of commissioned and warranted officers to properly conduct naval operations ashore and afloat. After the declaration of war, the number of active-duty officers at New Orleans was further reduced through deaths, transfers, and dismissals. The lack of officers not only affected the day-to-day operations on the station, but also prevented Commandant Patterson from holding courts-martial to discipline refractory personnel. While Patterson was authorized to make acting appointments to fill officer vacancies, such appointments, when made from local gentlemen desirous of embarking on a naval career, often proved less than satisfactory. As the following correspondence reveals, filling the officer void at New Orleans proved one of the more challenging problems confronting that station's commander.*

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Duplicate

Neworleans 25th. February 1814

Sir,

I had hoped ere this I should have had the honor to make to you a particular report, of the officers, Seamen &c. attached to my command, conformably to your instructions;<sup>1</sup> but owing to a variety of circumstances not under my control it has been unpracticable, nor can I correctly ascertain the actual number onBoard the different Vessels 'till I visit them myself, which I shall do the first week in next month.—

Enclosed I have the honor to transmit you a list of the Officers transfered by commodore Shaw to me,<sup>2</sup> on assuming the command by which you will perceive that there are on this Station, only four Commissioned Lieutenants, four Warranted Sailing Masters, Six warranted Midshipmen, Two commissioned Surgeons one Surgeons Mate, and one warrented Carpenter; all the other officers therein named, are acting in their respective grades by letters of appointment from Captains Porter, and Shaw.—

Of the Six warranted Midshipmen, there are three viz. Messrs. Spedden, McKeever, and Cunningham, acting as Lieutenants by authority of Commodore Shaw, and as those Gentlemen have been frequently reported by him, as acting Lieutenants under his appointment, I presume their advancement to that rank, meets the approbation of the Department: they have now sir been doing the duties of Lieutenants for a year past, and in a manner highly satisfactory to their late immediate commander Lieutenant Dexter;<sup>3</sup> and meeting the highest approbation of commodore Shaw, and myself, they having each of them Served a long time in the Navy, the former particularly permit me sir to recommend them to you, as highly worthy your notice; and to earnestly solicit for them, a confirmation of their present Rank, which they merrit, and are perfectly qualified to fill.—<sup>4</sup>

I would also beg leave to recommend for confirmation in the Rank they respectively hold; Doctors William Barnwell, and Samuel Perry, acting Surgeons the former a Commissioned Surgeons mate,<sup>5</sup> Mr. John Gates acting Sailing Master<sup>6</sup> and the following young Gentlemen acting Midshipmen, appointed by authority of the Navy Department under date of the 28th august 1811<sup>7</sup> Viz.—

Messrs. Joseph Morales  
 William Watts  
 John L Milligan  
 Gaston Davezac DeCastie  
 William P. Canby  
 Joseph B. Groulier  
 John Reynolds  
 Daniel Stanislas Allard  
 Peter Charles Rion  
 &  
 Pierr Nicholas Justin Hugon

all very intelligent, promising Young Gentlemen; who I think bid fair to do credit to the Naval Service;<sup>8</sup> first Six appointed by commodore shaw, the remainder by me; having found very great need for officers of that grade, on this Station for Some time past.—

Mr George Farragut,<sup>9</sup> has heretofore been considered as a Sinecure appointment, as he is not qualified to do the duties of a Sailing Master; and has been some time out of actual Service, tho' drawing full pay and rations.—

Messrs. Richard Dealey, and William Johnson, acting Sailing Masters<sup>10</sup> were I understand confirmed, tho' their warrants have never reached them.—

Mr. John M Cotter<sup>11</sup> I have given permission to accompany commodore Shaw at their joint request. a few days ago I received the warrant of Mr. T. W. Daily.<sup>12</sup> Mr M. Perrault resigned by permission of the Navy Department on the first of November



On the 31st January I did myself the Honor to address you on behalf of Mr. Thomas Pollock at present an acting Sailing Master, and to which appointment I also beg leave to solicit your attention.—<sup>13</sup> I have the honor to be Sir with great respect Your obt Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 66 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Jones to Patterson, 18 October 1813, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 669–70.
2. List not found. But for a list of officers under Shaw in 1812, see *ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 380–82.
3. On Daniel S. Dexter's service on the New Orleans Station, see Dudley, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 398–99, 403–7; and, Vol. 2, pp. 647–51, 672–75.
4. Robert Spedden, Isaac McKeever, and Thomas Cunningham were promoted to lieutenant on 9 December 1814.
5. William Barnwell was promoted to surgeon, 27 April 1816. Samuel Perry was entered on the New Orleans Station rolls as an acting surgeon on 12 January 1813. He resigned on 16 March 1814. Patterson to Jones, 3 June 1814, pp. 815–16.
6. John Gates was appointed an acting sailing master on 9 July 1812.
7. To enable Shaw to supply the deficiency of midshipmen on the New Orleans Station, Secretary Paul Hamilton authorized him to appoint gentlemen to that rank from New Orleans and the surrounding country. The Secretary suggested that "some young Creole French" might make suitable candidates for midshipmen. Hamilton to Shaw, 28 August 1811, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 9, p. 440 (M149, Roll No. 9).
8. Appointments for acting midshipman were entered on New Orleans Station rolls for Joseph Morales on 12 December 1811; William Watts on 29 June 1812; John L. Milligan and Gaston DeCastie Davezac on 21 March 1813; William Canby on [2 October] 1813; Joseph B. Groulier on 10 February 1813; and John Reynolds, Daniel S. Allard, Peter C. Rion, and Pierr N. J. Hugon on 24 January 1813.
9. For more on Farragut, see Jones to Patterson, 26 March 1814, pp. 819–20, and Patterson to Jones, 13 May 1814, pp. 820–21.
10. John Shaw appointed Dealy and Johnson acting sailing masters on 14 February 1811. The Navy Department did not confirm Dealy's appointment with a warrant until 6 December 1814, nor Johnson's until 6 June 1815.
11. John M. Cotter was entered on the New Orleans Station rolls as an acting midshipman on 12 November 1812. He was detached from the New Orleans Station on 4 January 1814.
12. Thomas W. Dailey was warranted a midshipman on 9 November 1813.
13. See Patterson to Jones, 31 January 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 36 (M147, Roll No. 5). Pollock was warranted a sailing master 1 November 1816.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New orleans 3rd June 1814

Sir,

Enclosed herewith, I have the honor to transmit you a Correct Muster Roll,<sup>1</sup> of all the Officers, and men attached to my Command, designating particularly those whom, are Stationed on Shore; all the others, are in active Service afloat, every Officer, and man, on the muster Roll, is attached to the Service, either by Commission, warrant, appointment, or Shipment,— I have reduced the number of Petty Officers, considerably since, I assumed the Command.—

In my letter relative, to the Officers on this Station of the 25th Feby.<sup>2</sup> I solicited a confirmation of the Rank he then held by appointment for Doctor Samuel

Perry, since then he tendered to me his resignation which as he was acting only by appointment of a Commanding officer and not by the Navy Department, I was induced to accept, I hope therefore, my application in his behalf may not have been acted on,— in his place I have appointed, untill your pleasure Should be known Doctor Thomas A. Claiborne,<sup>3</sup> an old practitioner, and who was appointed a Surgeon, in the Army but would not accept it, and Brother to his Excellency the Governor of this State,<sup>4</sup> which appointment will I hope prove a good one: he has been so Short a time in Service, that I have not had, an opportunity, to jud[g]e of his talents and worth, and therefore cannot yet venture to solicit his confirmation;— Mr. Clair Lefebre, returned to you, on the 25th. February, as an acting Midshipman by appointment from Captain Shaw, I have been compelled to dismiss in disgrace from the Naval Service, I should not have done so, could I have convened a court Martial; as I wished to make an example of him, or had he borne, a warrant or appointment, from the Department; in all Such cases, I shall report to you,— and have to report midshipman, Emanuel Morales, as unworthy, to hold a warrant, as a Midshipman, or indeed, any other, situation, in the Navy, nor is he worthy a Court martial.—<sup>5</sup>

I beg to be informed, if I am correct in accepting the resignation or dismissing from the Service Officers acting only by the appointment of the Commanders of this Station, as I would not willingly arrogate to myself any undue authority.—<sup>6</sup>

In consequence, of the Severe, and tedious indisposition of Doctor William Barnwell, Surgeons Mate, I have been obliged to appoint, as an acting Surgeons mate Doctor Joseph Kenz<sup>7</sup> as an assistant in the Hospital, at this place, Doctor Kenz has been attached to the Hospital, for a long time, and by his good conduct, and talents, meritted, and received, the approbation of his Superiors—

On the 7th march, I also appointed Mr Charles F. Winn an acting Midshipman,<sup>8</sup> at the particular recommendation of Thomas, H. Williams Esqr. late Collector of this District, his Family and connections are of the first respectability, in the Western Country

The accompanying Muster Roll will I hope meet your wishes and prove Satisfactory.— I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your obt. Servt

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 137 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Not found. There is a muster roll for the period June 1811 to May 1817 bearing Patterson's endorsement dated 31 May 1817 in DNA, RG45, New Orleans Station and USS *Viper* muster rolls, 1805–26, fols. 98–152 (T829, Roll No. 149).

2. See pp. 813–15.

3. Thomas A. Claiborne was entered on the New Orleans Station rolls as an acting surgeon on 30 April 1814. He was detached from service on 13 April 1816. DNA, RG45, New Orleans Station and USS *Viper* muster rolls, 1805–26, fols. 98–152 (T829, Roll No. 149).

4. William C. C. Claiborne.

5. Jones dismissed Morales from the naval service on 11 July 1814. Jones to Morales, 11 July 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May–23 November 1815, p. 194 (T829, Roll No. 382).

6. Jones informed Patterson that he was authorized to dismiss or accept the resignation of any officer acting only by appointment of the station commander. Jones to Patterson, 11 July 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 372 (M149, Roll No. 11).

7. Joseph Kenz was entered on the New Orleans Station rolls as an acting surgeon's mate on 29 April 1814. His commission was confirmed on 28 March 1820. DNA, RG45, New Orleans Station and USS *Viper* muster rolls, 1805–26, fols. 98–152 (T829, Roll No. 149).

8. Charles F. Winn was entered on the New Orleans Station rolls as an acting midshipman on 17 March 1814. His warrant was confirmed on 1 January 1818. *Ibid.*

## *Louisiana*

*Shortly after the declaration of war, the New York firm of J. H. Laurence and Company offered one of its ships, Remittance, for sale to the U.S. Navy. At the time of the offer, Remittance was detained at New Orleans due to the embargo. Rather than suffer one of its vessels to be idled by the war, the company approached the Navy Department about purchasing Remittance. Company owners described their ship as a "well constructed" vessel that sailed "remarkable fast . . . for a Merchantman." Secretary Hamilton authorized the purchase of Remittance, which was renamed Louisiana and added to the New Orleans Station's force.<sup>1</sup>*

*Louisiana had scarcely been fitted out for service in the spring of 1813, when its commander, Daniel S. Dexter, reported evidence of rot and decay in the beams supporting the converted merchantman's gun deck. Reinforcing stanchions and a lighter battery were two measures taken to compensate for Louisiana's weakened gun deck.<sup>2</sup> But bad news regarding the ship continued into the New Year as Patterson reported fresh evidence of decay and structural problems with Louisiana. A survey of the ship determined that it was not worth the cost to repair and Louisiana was laid up. The threat of British invasion brought the derelict vessel back into operation and Louisiana ended up playing the important role defending New Orleans that Navy officials had originally envisioned for it.*

1. For documentation on Remittance's purchase, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812, Vol. 1*, pp. 382–84.

2. On early reports of Louisiana's structural defects, see *ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 647, 649.

### MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 4th. March 1814

Sir,

I regret extremely, being obliged to report to you; that upon examination of the Stern frame, of the Ship *Louisiana*, all her Transoms, were found to be entirely rotton, so much so, that the Bolts, by which they were secured to the Stern Post, were considerably drawn into the wood; the rot extends their whole length; and the Knee Bolts, are so loose, that the Knees, can without exertion be drawn off; to repair this defect, it will be necessary to take down the whole Stern frame, her lower Transom being So very rotten that it will not hold the Spikes for Securing her wooden Ends, nor Support her counter-Timbers, in

Such a manner as to render her safe; and, altho', this repair is of such material consequence; yet from its being so extensive, I do not feel myself authorized agreeably to my instructions, to afford it her; without the previous approbation of the Department; I shall therefore only close her in, for the moment, 'till I have the honor to receive your instructions, relative thereto; but Shall in the mean time cause the necessary Timber, for her Transoms to be cut at Tchifuncti and Seasoning.—

Permit me Sir while on the Subject of this Ship, to represent, that She would in my opinion, and that of very Officer who has examined her; be infinitely more capable, and superior as a vessel of war: was her upper Deck taken entirely off; and make her into a corvette and for the following reasons, which I beg leave to state, viz,—

1st, She, would be capable of sustaining a heavier armament; than at present; Say thirty two pound Carronades.—

2nd, She could be fought to infinitely greater advantage, as her men at her first Division; would not then be incommoded by the Smoke from her Gallery, and her own Guns as they now are; and so much so, that I very much doubt, whether they could from this circumstance, be able to Stand to their Guns, for any length of time; She being so low between deck that her Smoke cannot escape.—

3rd, From the circumstance of her being so very low between Decks, her Guns are consequently fought to great disadvantage; as the men fighting them, cannot Stand upright, nor Swing their rammers, and Sponges; when in the act of loading; without Striking each end one on the Deck, the other against the Beams over head; which would of course very much retard their firing, thereby affording the Enemy a manifest advantage in action.—

4th, She would sail much better, and bear her Sail longer, and to greater advantage; a very serious and important consideration in a Vessel of war.—

These Sir, are the various reasons, why I take the liberty to recommend as extremely beneficial to the Service; and particularly this Station, the before mentioned alteration in the Hull, of this Ship; to render her at all Servicable, even if confined to this River; She will require an entire new Stern frame, the difference of expense, and time to make the alteration in her Hull: will not very much exceed, that, which will be necessarily required to complete her repair as already Stated to be indispensably requisite; nor will She then require the same Kind of Stern She now has, and which will consequently lessen the expense of that part; the alteration might I think be completed for three thousand Dollars, and a new Stern frame will cost nearly half that Sum.—

From the report, of the number, State, and force, of the Vessels on this Station as transferred to me; which I had the honor to make on the 6th of December last; you will perceive that the *Louisiana*, constitutes full, one half the effective force on this Station; consequently how highly necessary it is that She Should, in the Shortest possible period be ready for actual Service.— I have the honor to be Sir, with great respect Your Ob.t. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Daniel. T. Patterson Esqr. }  
Comm'dg. Naval Officer }  
New Orleans }

Navy Department  
March 26th. 1814

Sir,

Since writing you of this date in respect to the alleged situation of Midshipman Farragut, I have received the duplicate of your letter of the 25 feby. and perceive that he has "heretofore been considered as a sinecure appointment as he is not qualified to do the duties of a Sailing Master and has been for some time out of actual service, though drawing full pay and rations."<sup>1</sup>

It is circumstances of this nature, that are calculated to injure the reputation of the service and justly excite public indignation. Why he should have been so considered, or paid without being on duty or capable of doing duty, is to me inexplicable and in order to put a stop to so gross an imposition, I now enclose his dismissal<sup>2</sup> from the service of the U. States.

The cases of the other officers whom you approbate and recommend shall be considered.—

I have at same time, received your letter of the 4th current,<sup>3</sup> stating the expenditures beyond the monthly Credit, placed in Bank, occasioned by the excessive arrearages due as far back as September last, and that an increase of that credit \$5000 above the existing limitations, was necessary to meet the Public engagements.—

This will be effectually remedied by the suspension of the building & equipping of the Block Ship and breaking up the establishment at Tchefuncta, and a large Surplus will remain of the 20,000. Ds. credit Monthly.

Though it is a subject of regret, it is not to me of astonishment, that the *Louisiana* should have been found in a State of serious decay, which I apprehend will be found upon a thorough survey to be more extensive than you imagine, if not entire.— You will therefore before any repairs are undertaken cause her to be thoroughly examined and report her state and condition.

If with the exception of the decay which you have described you find her generally sound, you will cut her down as you have proposed, but on the contrary if the decay should pervade her frame you will refrain from incurring the expense of repairing her. I wish to know whether the qualities of the *Louisiana* are such as to warrant the alteration & repairs. Unless her form & construction is such as to give her the fleetest sailing she would be utterly unfit to cruise upon the coast.

Mr Smith will procure and take with him a variety of Stores from Pittsburg, and we are now building at the Navy Yard here a schooner<sup>4</sup> of a beautiful model about 100 tons not to exceed in cruising trim 8 feet draught of water. When completed she will take out ordnance and other stores for your station.

In a short time I shall determine whether to authorize you to purchase the two small sloops, you mention,<sup>5</sup> or to build three or four of the Barges I mentioned in a former letter<sup>6</sup> and shall then reply to your letter of the 14th. ulto.<sup>7</sup> I am, respectfully &c

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 256–58 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. In another letter dated 26 March 1814, Jones ordered Patterson to investigate charges brought against “Mr. Faragut” and the gunboat officers on the New Orleans Station by Edwin Lewis of Pascagoula. Lewis complained that Farragut was drawing full pay and rations while performing no actual service for the Navy. He also claimed that gunboat officers were plundering cattle from the inhabitants of Ship, Horn, and Cat Islands. Jones incorrectly assumed that the Farragut complained of by Lewis and Patterson was Midshipman William A. C. Farragut, instead of Sailing Master George Farragut, mistaking the son for the father. He noted his error in a letter to Patterson dated 12 April. The Secretary’s confusion is understandable as three Farraguts, George and his two sons William and David Glasgow, had served at New Orleans. See Lewis to Jones, 13 December 1813, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1813, Vol. 7, No. 113 (M124, Roll No. 59); Patterson to Jones, 25 February 1814, pp. 814 and 815, note 9; and Jones to Patterson, 26 March and 12 April 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 256, 276 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. See Jones to Farragut, 25 March 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815 (T829, Roll No. 382).

3. See pp. 797–99.

4. Schooner *Lynx*.

5. Patterson to Jones, 31 January 1814, p. 808.

6. Jones to Patterson, 7 March 1814, pp. 809–10.

7. Patterson to Jones, 14 February 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 53 (M147, Roll No. 5). In this letter, Patterson requested the pay and emoluments of a post captain noting both the heavy expense attending service on the New Orleans Station and the fact that David Porter had been granted this identical privilege while he had commanded at New Orleans as a master commandant between 1808 and 1810.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

(Duplicate)

Neworleans 13th. May 1814

Sir,

On the 29th: ultimo I was honored by the receipt of your letters of the 26th: march<sup>1</sup> with their Several enclosures, that for Mr. Farragut I acted on notwithstanding the error in the direction which is corrected by your letter of the 12th ultimo<sup>2</sup> received on the 6th: instant.—

On the Subject of Mr Lewis’s letter<sup>3</sup> I will do myself the honor to write you as soon as I shall have afforded him an opportunity of substantiating the accusations, he makes against the officers of this Station; for which purpose have Sent a Lieutenant to him: his letter is the only information that has reached me, of such acts having been committed, either before or since I have been honored with the command; had he communicated his complaints to me, I should immediately have caused them to be investigated, and if proved, the offenders punished and remuneration made the proprietors.—<sup>4</sup>

Since the receipt of your letters relative to the Ship *Louisiana*,<sup>5</sup> I have caused her to be Surveyed, a copy of the report I do myself the honor to enclose herein: from that report I shall of course Suspend doing any thing to her, ’till I receive your instructions; She will answer in her present State during the war as a guard and receiving Ship, and I would recommend her being Sold, as She will a[n]swer extremely well for the Merchants Service at the termination of the war; or even

immediately (if after slight repairs necessary to procure a sale) a proper price could be obtained for her; as She is not a fit Vessel for the Naval Service; her Officers and Crew I shall immediately draft to other Vessels and employ them as actively as occasion will admit.

'Till I received the enclosed report, I had in common with the Commander, and Officers of the *Louisiana* entertained a belief that the decay of her Stern, was the extent, and that belief arose from the report of the Survey which I had understood, to have been made to Captain Shaw at the time of her purchase, and it was on those grounds, I ventured to recommend her being Cut down, if continued in Service; herewith I do myself the honor to transmit you Copies of the letters which passed between Captain Shaw, and Benjamin Morgan Esqr. relative to the Ship *Louisiana*.—<sup>6</sup>

I am very happy to learn your intentions of Sending to this Station the Schooner building at Washington, She will be a valuable acquisition to me, as will the ordnance and Stores with which She will be laden.—

John K Smith Esqr. navy agent arrived here on the 11th inst. the articles under his charge are hourly expected. I have received from him, the draughts of the galleys mentioned by you, in your instruction of the 18th October;<sup>7</sup> Vessels of that class are particularly well adapted for this Country, and can be built in a Short time of the best materials, I should very much like to have at least four.—

The suspension of building and equipping the Block Ship will very shortly enable me to relieve my Station from its present embarrassments, without any further extention of the Credit in the Louisiana, Bank, and hereafter leave a considerable balance monthly I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your Obt. Sert.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 127 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. See pp. 819–20 and Patterson to Jones, 26 March 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 256 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. Patterson to Jones, 12 April 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 276 (M149, Roll No. 11).

3. Lewis to Jones, 13 December 1813, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1813, Vol. 7, No. 113 (M124, Roll No. 59). For additional letters from Lewis criticizing George Farragut, see Lewis to Jones, 16 May 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 48 (M124, Roll No. 63), and Lewis to Jones, 4 August 1814, *ibid.*, Vol. 5, No. 110 (M124, Roll No. 64).

4. On 4 May, Patterson dispatched Lieutenant George Merrill to Pascagoula to investigate Lewis's charges. When confronted by the naval officer, Lewis was unable to produce any witnesses or evidence to support his accusations. Indeed, he found his own reputation under attack from fellow neighbors who signed statements testifying to Lewis's "base character." Although cleared of any wrongdoing, Farragut was still compelled to surrender his warrant to the Navy Department, as he was unable to serve on active duty. Patterson recommended the former sailing master be granted a pension on account of his Revolutionary War service. See Patterson to Jones, 19 and 20 May, 1814, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, Nos. 130, 131 (M147, Roll No. 5). Farragut appealed to Jones to be reinstated to naval service. His memorial to the Navy Secretary provides a narrative of his long naval service to the nation. See Farragut to Jones, 20 May 1814, pp. 1083–86.

5. See pp. 819–20.

6. These letters, nine in number and dated between 12 and 17 August 1812, deal with the purchase and original survey of *Remittance*, later renamed *Louisiana*. They are not reproduced here.

7. Jones to Patterson, 18 October 1813, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 669–70.

[Enclosure]  
(Copy)

U.S. Ship *Louisiana*  
Neworleans 4th may 1814

Sir,

Having according to your order, of the 30th: ultimo examined the different parts of the United States Ship *Louisiana*, we do ourselves the honor to report as follows.—

That independant of her transoms, her bends & timbers, are mostly decayed, and five, of her Gun Deck Beams out of Seven, are also found to be rotton.—

We are therefore of opinion, that in order to repair the *Louisiana*, thoroughly (admitting She was cut down) it would be necessary to take her down nearly to the waters edge.— And in answer, to the close of your letter, we beg leave to State that the model, and qualities of the *Louisiana*, are not Such in our opinion, as to warrant Such extensive repairs.— We have the honor to be very respectfully Sir your obt. Servts.—

{	Signed	Louis Alexis Lt. Comdt.
		Robert Spedden Actg. Lieutenant
		I: McKeever Actg. Lieutenant
		Thomas Pollock Sailg. master
		John Gates Sailg. master
		Robert Fell master Carpenter

Daniel T. Patterson Esqr.	}
Comg. U S. Nava Forces	
New orleans Station	

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 127, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5). Eight enclosures are not printed here. They are misnumbered as letter No. 128.

## Making Allies of Indians

*The British had made use of Indian auxiliaries to fight the Americans since the beginning of the war. On the northern frontier, these native warriors had contributed to a number of important victories early on in the conflict, most notably the capture of Fort Detroit. As the theater of offensive operations broadened in 1814 to include U.S. territories bordering the Gulf Coast, British officials attempted to make similar use of Indians in the south as they had in the north.*

*The British governor of New Providence, Charles Cameron, made the first overtures to southern tribes in September 1813. Cameron's representative met with a delegation of Creek and Seminole leaders, who appealed to the British for arms and troops to train and lead them. Based on the outcome of this meeting and other intelligence, Cameron recommended to Secretary of State for War and the Colonies Earl Bathurst that the British supply, arm, and train the southern Indians for use in diversionary raids against U.S. targets in the south. One of Admiral Cochrane's first initiatives upon reaching the Bahamas was to implement*



*Cameron's recommendations to equip and organize the hostile southern tribes into a potent fighting force.*<sup>1</sup>

1. For more on this subject see Owsley, "British and Indian Activities," pp. 111–23, and, Chapter 9 of *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
CAPTAIN HUGH PIGOT, R.N.

Most Secret

By the Honble Sir A Cochrane &ca,—

You are hereby required and directed to take under your Orders His Majesty's Schooner the *Shelbourne* and her Commander and to apply to the Ordnance Storekeeper at St. Georges for two thousand Stand of Arms with Flints and a proportion of Accoutrements and three hundred thousand Ball Cartridges, part of which you may put into the *Shelbourne*.

Having received them on board you will proceed in H Majs. Ship under your Command<sup>1</sup> accompanied by the *Shelbourne* off Nassau New Providence and deliver to His Excy. Governor Cameron the accompanying Letter, with whom you will consult as to the best and most sure method of supplying the Creek Indians with the Arms &ca; and having received such information as His Excy. may be in possession of, also Pilots for the Gulf of Mexico you will proceed to the place that may be judged most proper for communicating with the Chiefs of the Indian Nations, to whom you will deliver the Arms &ca, if they have not been already supplied from Barbadoes; from whence it is understood that 3,000 Stand have been sent, in which event, you will only furnish them with the proportion their wants may require, which I leave entirely to your own judgement also as to such further supply of Powder as you may be able to spare: The place I conceive to be most fit for your proceeding to is the mouth of the River Apalachicola but this you will be informed of by Governor Cameron. Should you unavoidably be subjected to expences in carrying this Service into execution you will keep an account of the same which I will direct to be repaid.

Having performed this Service you will take the Command of the Cruizers employed North of the Tropic and continue to cruize in the Gulf of Mexico for the Blockade of the Enemy's Ports near the Mississippi and to cut off all Trade as the American Ports are under a strict Blockade. You will remain there until relieved, which I will endeavour to do early in May to enable you to proceed to Halifax to refit.

You will endeavour to communicate to me your proceedings and the State of the Indian Nations, sending it by any Vessel you may meet with to this place before the first week in May afterwards to the Chesapeake. You will endeavour also to acquaint the Admiralty of the same should an opportunity offer.

Given on board the *Asia*  
at Bermuda 25 March 1814.

sgd. A Cochrane.

LB, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fols. 1–2.

1. H.M. frigate *Orpheus*.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
CHIEFS OF THE CREEK NATION

The Honorable Sir Alexr. Cochrane K B. Vice Admiral of the Red & Commander in Chief of His Maj's. Ships & Vessels upon the North American Station &c—&c—&c—

To the Great and Illustrious Chiefs of the Creek Nations

Your Father King George has heard with Grief that his Rebellious & Wicked Children in the United States, thirsting for Blood & Robbery, have invaded your Country, of which it is their wish to deprive you, but the Great Spirit who we all adore will protect the Innocent & their Wicked Plans will be defeated by your Union in defending your Lives & properties.—

Your Groans have reached the Ears of our Father & King & he has sent me, one of his Admirals to relieve you & by his desire I have ordered one of his Frigates<sup>1</sup> with this Letter, whose Captain<sup>2</sup> will deliver you a Supply of Arms & Ammunition if you are in want of them, & should they not be Sufficient for arming your Warriors let me Know what further number you require & I will Send to our Father for what may be necessary to enable you to drive the Robbers away. Send to me a full account of how many Warriors you can bring into the Field, & establish with the Captain who delivers this, the way we are to communicate together in future— Depend upon my protection and may God grant You Success which your Just Cause merits & preserve you & your Nations many Years

Given under my hand & Seal  
at Bermuda this 28th. day of March 1814

(Signed) Alexr. Cochrane.

LB, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fol. 3.

1. H.M. frigate *Orpheus*.

2. Captain Hugh Pigot, R.N.

CAPTAIN HUGH PIGOT, R.N., TO  
BREVET CAPTAIN GEORGE WOODBINE, ROYAL MARINES

Copy/

By Hugh Pigot Esqr. Captain  
of H.M. Ship *Orpheus* &  
Senior Officer West Florida

You are hereby directed to proceed up the River Appalachicola and endeavour by every means in your power to procure an interview with the Chiefs of the Creek Nations,— You will inform them that the *Orpheus* Frigate has arrived on the Coast with Two Thousand Muskets Ammunition, &c &c for them, and learn where they can best be landed, enquire if the present supply is sufficient, and of the place most convenient for our future communication that they may be furnished with such other Articles as they require—

You must procure every information respecting them and the neighbouring Nations and of the Country in General, and should Cavalry be able to act inform me what Arms and Furniture the[y] stand in need of—

You will take under your command Serjt. Smith & Corporal Denny (who have volunteer'd their services) giving them such orders from time to time as you may find necessary for the good of His Majestys Service in instructing the Creek Nations in the use of Arms and acting against the United States of America and by adopting every measure to forward their interest, to the furtherances of which, it is my desire you act with full power as British Agent to the Creek Nations (for which this is your authority until the pleasure of the Commander in Chief is Known,—

In fulfilling these directions you are most particularly enjoined on no account what soever to give offence to the Spaniards in East or West Florida, but advice the Chiefs to this effect, as it may be the means in future of furnishing them with supplies with greater facility

Given on board the *Orpheus*  
the 10th May 1814 off Appalachicola River

Sigd./ Hugh Pigot Captain

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fols. 5–6. Addressed at foot of first page: “To/Lt. George Woodbine/Royal Marines/H.M. Ship/*Orpheus*.”

BREVET CAPTAIN GEORGE WOODBINE, ROYAL MARINES, TO  
CAPTAIN HUGH PIGOT, R.N.

Prospect Bluff May 25th. 1814

Sir/

Yesterday Evening an express arrived here from the Governor of Saint Marks<sup>1</sup> to Mr. Hambly,<sup>2</sup> whose letter was submitted to my Inspection— He therein solicits information respecting the English Man of War, that has arrived, and her Object The Commissary has also written requesting some Bullocks to be sent on, stating that such is the distress of that Fort, for Provisions, that there remained then in store, but twelve days rations for the Garrison, at half Allowance & the Governor of Pensacola<sup>3</sup> cannot Give them any relief I have information also of the Indians from the Neighbourhood of Pensacola being all on their way A party of Euphallas<sup>4</sup> (of the American side) were sent to cut them off but by the Management of the Young Chief Yellow hair,<sup>5</sup> who on his road heard of their intention, & turned off [f] his course to persuade them not, and to inform them of the Arrival of Their Old friends the English, they have returned, and the Young Chief has sent word that the principal Chiefs of that Tribe (the largest Against us) intend to wait on me & that if they will be welcome, to send a messenger I have done so, with instructions to Say I will be glad to see them, There is also a party of Negroes, upwards of 200 Men, who have run away from the States, and are on their March for this, in Company with Cappachimicos tribe,<sup>6</sup> that I look

for in a few Days,— the Proclamations<sup>7</sup> of the Commander in Chief I intend to forward in a day or two to Georgia, Tennessee, and New Orleans, by trusty Indians who have been Appointed at a general meeting of the Chiefs, for such purposes, and I have no doubt of several hundred American Slaves, joining our standard the moment it is raised, which shall be done when the Arms are all up, and an encampment formed on the forks of [*the*] River,—<sup>8</sup> at this same meeting the Chiefs have unanimously decided, that all power to Conduct operations, Shall be taken out of their hands, and Lodged solely in mine, as Chief of all, as also the Appointment of all Officers, & that no interference of a Single individual shall be allowed, this Command I have accepted on Condition that they will make prisoners (and give them up to me for the purpose of working on any public works I may order) & that they put to death no one but those resisting with Arms in their hands, which is agreed to, And all the Chiefs Individually have pledged themselves that their tribes shall Comply, as the first step of Authority, I have nominated Old Perryman<sup>9</sup> & Cappachamico, Generals, and Joint with me, to receive all reports and information and to Consult upon all Subjects; this measure Appears to have given great Satisfaction, They I Know I can twist round my finger and Induce them to think as I do, particularly the latter, I have a large store building and almost finished, 48 feet by 24 as also a Powder Magazine, the people working on it, I must Victual as they have not a morsel of any description of their own to eat,— Five Canoes arrived here last night, with the following Articles (Viz) 73 Kegs Ammunition, 180 Stand of Arms, 90 Pouches Complete 93 side Belts 88 Slings and 4 Pouches without Belts, they are now dispatched for another load, the remainder of the Canoes, that were to have come down, have been detained up the Country, owing to the great Scarcity of Provisions, and I will be down in 2 days more trusting to our furnishing them while here, enough will come to bring up every thing with the Launch, at one Trip, I have sent a Tamatha Indian<sup>10</sup> who speaks Spanish & has long been Accustomed to small vessels he says he will take Charge of the Boat, with Some of his Countrymen who Accompany him, & bring her up here,— I have dispatched a party under the Young Warrior that was on board to seize Wilson,<sup>11</sup> the American Spy (wh[o] I hear is purchasing Cattle up the Country) & all his property, and bring him down here; Should I succeed in Catching him, I will send him down to you, if you should not have sailed,

Immediatly on the return of the Young Chief yellow Hair, from Pensacola, I purpose sending him to the Brig [*Big*] Warrior,<sup>12</sup> and doubt not succeeding in gaining every Indian over from the Americans, I sadly fear for some weeks, till the Crops are ripe, that a considerable sum must be laid out in purchasing Provisions (say Cattle) particularly when the Pensacola party of Negroes come in, they having no land or provisions to maintain themselves on till we levy supplies on the states, If a small quantity of goods were send down here immediatly from providence, I could purchase Cattle for Government at one half Cheaper than getting them from the House here— I shall be much Oblidged to You Sir for particular Instructions, how I am to act in respect of drawing for the payment of the Cattle sent on to Pensacola, and also for the flour Should it have been delivered, or for any thing else that the present service should absolutely require,

The Chiefs have requested me to ask you for some red paint to paint themselves for War if you can spare any, I will feel also obliged by your sending a Cask of Rum, as the people working on the store, expect a small quantity each day— the American newspapers you were good enough to say I should have, the Bearer will take charge of, he is the Brother of one of the Chiefs and is extremely anxious to see an English Man of War having heard so much from those who were on board and has requested me to allow him to hand you this, personally— We have been drilling a little, the young men Appear Anxious to learn their Exercises and I have great hopes of our doing some thing very shortly, I trust Should I not have an Opportunity of Addressing you again, you will Sir do me honor of Asking for me a Continuation in my present situation, from the Commander in Chief— I have the honor [to] Subscribe myself Sir Your most Obedient Humble Servant

G Woodbine Brevet Captain Royal Marines

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fols. 14–15. Other copies of this document may be found on fols. 12–13, 20–21, and 45 continued on 47.

1. Unidentified. Fort St. Marks was situated at the juncture of St. Marks and Wakulla Rivers, Florida.
2. William Hambly, employee of the trading firm of John Forbes and Company and interpreter for British at Apalachicola. See Jackson, *Papers* (Printed) Vol. 3, p. 386, n. 3.
3. Mateo González Manrique, governor of West Florida, May 1813–March 1815.
4. Member of Euphalla Tribe on west bank of Apalachicola River north of Prospect Bluff. See map of river, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 400.
5. Not identified.
6. The Miccosukees. Coppichimico was their war chief.
7. On 2 April 1814, Cochrane issued a proclamation offering to receive U.S. residents into Britain's armed forces or as free settlers in one of its North American or West Indian colonies. The proclamation was meant to entice American slaves to desert their masters. For the text of this document, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 60.
8. Apalachicola River.
9. Either William or Thomas Perryman, spokesmen for the war factions of the Seminoles and lower Creeks.
10. Inhabitant of Tomathea Town on west bank of Apalachicola River, north of Prospect Bluff. See map of river, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 400.
11. Not identified.
12. Big Warrior (Tustanagee Thlucco), war chief at Tuckabatchee and spokesman for the friendly party of upper Creeks.

CHIEFS OF THE CREEK NATION TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

[*Coweta Town, 28 May 1814*]

To the Honorable Sir Alexander Cochrane K.B. Vice Admiral of the Red Squadron of His Majestys Fleet, and Commander in Chief of His Majestys Ships & Vessels employed, and to be employed upon the Coast of America—

We the Chiefs of the Creek Nation at a Grand Council, assembled at the Coweta Town,<sup>1</sup> beg leave to return you our grateful thanks for the unbounded supply of

Arms & Ammunition and other articles forwarded to us— Be assured that this great proof of the regard of our good and Great Father King George, has still further tended to bring deeper in our Hearts, his Image, which all the intrigues of his enemies could never, or will ever eradicate—

Our old Men always told us, that when our Great Father, gave up this Country to the Spaniards, that his Agent said “That a day might come, when he would send to us again.”— The Great & Good Spirit the Master of Breath, has at last complied with our wishes, and blest us with the sight of Englishmen on our Shores— The British Agent<sup>2</sup> in his Talks to us, told us to drop all animosity, against our fellow red Men, and with much trouble, he has Succeeded in persuading all that were at variance to bury the Hatchet, and now noble Chief, we can safely say that all red Men are Brothers— We have ever remained a free and unconquered Nation, always supporting the Spaniards in the Floridas, by the desire and express orders of the last British Agent,<sup>3</sup> on evacuating this Country, but when our troubles came on us, by the encroachments of the Americans, and encouragement they held out, but too successfully to create Civil War among us— We found the Spaniards through fear of the Americans, shrunk from Supplying us with Powder & Arms, to expel our Invaders,— This measure has determined us, in full Council to assert our independance, and to solicit our good and great Father, thro’ you to receive us once more under his protection, and that we may by then proudly say we are British, for not an Englishman breathing can say he loves his King, with more ardor, than does the Creek Nation to a Man, their great and good Father King George—

Never have they Known a moments happiness or union, in the Nation, since the British gave them up to the Spaniards, ’till the arrival of the present Agent, since which every Indian, that he has seen, has at his desire; laid aside all differences and embraced each other like a Brother—

We shall not molest the Spaniards in their Settlements, as the British Agent, has order’d us expressly to the contrary.—

The Agent has persuaded us, to do what we have long wished to effect, that is, to unite the four Nations, in one family, and we have no doubt with his assistance, that in a very few Weeks, the Choctaws, Cherokees, & Chickasaws, will be united with us, and all ready to die to a Man, in the service of our great and good Father King George—

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fols. 18–19. An explanatory note preceding the text of this letter reads: “Two days before I came on board the *Sophie*, a deputation from the Chiefs of the Upper Town Indians, (headed by the principal Chief) that had sided with the Americans waited on me, and gave me the following account of a measure that is in a full meeting of the Indian Chiefs, to take place, and when the signatures are all affixed to the paper—it will be sent me and forwarded to you—a Copy is annexed.—”

1. Creek Town on the Chattahoochee River in Russell County, Alabama. Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 15, n. 6.

2. George Woodbine.

3. Not identified.

CAPTAIN HUGH PIGOT, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

A Copy  
A. Cochrane

His Majesty's Ship *Orpheus*  
New Providence 8th. June 1814

Sir,

I beg leave to acquaint you that in pursuance of your Orders,<sup>1</sup> in Company with the *Shelburne* we anchor'd on the 10th. May between Cape Blaise and Cape St. George near the Appalachicola River, for the purpose of communicating with the Indian Chiefs of the Creek Nations, and that after great fatigue and indefatigable exertion in my 1st. Lieutenant Mr. Kyle, he assembled ten of the Principal Chiefs with an Interpreter and other inferior Chiefs from the distance of nearly one hundred Miles in the Country and brought them on board on the 20th.; he also desired them to order all their Canoes down the River for the Arms &ca—

In the mean time we built a Log House on Vincent Island<sup>2</sup> and landed all the Stores, finding their Canoes too small to carry the Arms I left the *Orpheus'* launch for that service; and that we might not be longer delayed I directed Lieut. Hope of the *Shelburne* to remain at that Anchorage until they were removed up the River.—

Governor Cameron mentioned to me that the Indians wished much to get some English Men to lead them and therefore I accepted the Service of Mr. George Woodbine and gave him a temporary appointment as Lieutenant of Marines of this Ship, and on landing the Brevet rank of Captain.— The Indian Chiefs having expressed a great desire to have a small British Force with them, that they might be drilled and trained to the use of the Bayonet, Sergeant Smith and Corporal Denny of the Royal Marines of this Ship, voluntarily offered to undertake this duty, and I was too sensible of the Service they would render, not to accept it, and I have placed them under the charge and Command of Brevet Captain Woodbine.—

Shortly after Captain Woodbine's landing he received information from a Young Chief (Yellow Hair) that the Americans had driven a thousand unarmed Warriors of the Creek Nation from their town, and obliged them to take shelter in the Marshes near Pensacola with little or no provisions; that they sent to entreat the House of Mr. Forbes<sup>3</sup> would send Twenty five or Thirty head of Cattle to prevent them from Starving and enable them to join their Countrymen on the Appalachicola.— I immediately directed Captain Woodbine to purchase such Cattle as was absolutely necessary for their relief and gave him the Appointment of British Agent for the Creek Nations until your pleasure was Known, with Orders to take charge of the Arms and Ammunition and Stores supplied from the *Orpheus*, a list of which Sir, I beg to enclose, with a Plan of the River.<sup>4</sup>

According to the best information I have been able to obtain the present number of the Warriors of the Creek Nation friendly to the English and now ready to take up Arms is about 2,800; exclusive of the thousand in the Swamps near Pensacola who by this time have joined the main body— I have annexed their Names and Tribes—<sup>5</sup>

These may be embodied and organized in 8 or 10 Weeks and be fit to act in concert with any British Force that might be landed for the annoyance of the Southern States. They are a strong active race of Men, and generally understanding the use of Muskets, are extremely anxious to make an entry into Georgia which I have endeavoured to persuade them from, until they receive support; but it is very probable their ardour will push them to the attack of the nearest American Fort, which is about 200 Miles up the Appalachicola [and]<sup>6</sup> fear is to be entertained their rashness will carry them so far, as to subject them to be cut off from their retreat; the Town Creeks in general appear worked to desperation against the Americans—

The Chiefs represent that the “Big Warrior” who is now acting with the Enemy has had a Serious quarrel with him and may be easily gained over with all his friends, provided we arm them and allow them to retain the Arms, which the Americans have always deprived them of after an Action—

Should it be deemed expedient to assemble them it will be necessary that a Small Armed Vessel should attend them with Ammunition and a supply of Flour or Bread, as they are without storehouses— Bullocks they can procure in great abundance—

The Enemy having generally employed Cavalry against them, I should propose it as an adviseable measure the sending them about 1,000 sets of Cavalry Accoutrements or more; they have excellent horses in great abundance and are very good horsemen— The Common size Muskets are too heavy for their youths, between the Ages of 10 & 14, of whom there are a great number which the Chiefs represent as being of infinite Service and pressed the utility of arming them with Fuseses or Carbines—

The Creeks which were acting with the Enemy amounting to about 1200 as well as the Militia for want of Provisions have been Sent home and the American Force now in the Country consists of about 2,000 Regulars stationed at the different Wooden Forts lately built, in the upper part of the Creek Nation.

There is every reason to suppose the Negroes of Georgia Knowing the Creeks are armed will come over to them in great numbers; many have already taken refuge with these Tribes.

“Mobile” is the only Garrison the United States hold until you come to New Orleans— The Town is defended by a Fort with 200 Troops and Several Pieces of heavy Artillery.

Forty Miles above Mobile is another Fort<sup>7</sup> and a few miles above it two<sup>8</sup> more—the whole possessing not more than 6 or 700 Troops and in case of Emergency they can call to their assistance about 500 Militia, none of whom are well affected to the Americans, with a few Choctou Indians who may be gained over the moment possession is taken of Mobile. These Forts would become an easy Conquest to a few Troops assisted by small armed Vessels and the co-operation of the Indians in the rear who are very willing to come forward— even the Creeks would assist in any expedition to dispossess the Enemy of that Country as it separates one part of the Creek Nation from another and they from their intimate friends the Choctous—

This Nation is as numerous as the Creeks and with their assistance a handful of British Troops accompanied by a few Gun Boats would soon get possession of



Batton Rouge from which New Orleans and all the Mississippi would become an easy Conquest— I am informed the disaffected in Barrataria consist principally of French Creoles and Indians that would cheerfully assist in any operations against the Americans if afterwards protected by Great Britain— they act as Pirates to all Nations, are in number about 800 and are daily encreasing to the great dread of New Orleans—

I beg leave to enclose you a letter from the Indian Chiefs<sup>9</sup> in answer to your Despatch<sup>10</sup> with a list of Articles supplied them by my Order pursuant to your directions also a list of Articles which would be most desirable as Presents, should you wish to send them any— I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

sigd. H. Pigot  
Captain

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 394–97.

1. Cochrane to Pigot, 25 March 1814, p. 823.
2. St. Vincent Island, Fla.
3. Trading House of John Forbes and Company.
4. See UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 400.
5. This enclosure, entitled "Tribes friendly to the English," lists 17 tribes totaling 3,255 persons in number. UK-KeNA, 1/506, fol. 399.
6. Text supplied from another copy of this letter in UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 149–59.
7. Probably Fort Stoddert, situated on the west bank of the Mobile River 44 miles above the entrance to Mobile Bay.
8. Probably Fort Montgomery, located opposite the "cutoff" of the Alabama River 16 miles from Fort Stoddert and Fort Pierce and about four miles southeast of Fort Montgomery.
9. This may refer to Creek Chiefs to Cochrane, 28 May 1814, above, or Creek Chiefs to Cochrane, UK-KeNA, 1/506, fols. 402–3. This latter document was written some time in late May or early June 1814.
10. This may refer to Cochrane to Creek Chiefs, 28 March 1814, above, or a letter penned in April from Cochrane to the Creek Chiefs referenced in Cochrane to Croker, 23 June 1814, UK-KeNA, 1/506, fol. 401. This latter piece of correspondence has not been found.

[Enclosure]

#### A Copy

A List of Articles supplied to the Indian Chiefs of the Creek Nation Pr. order Hugh Pigot Esqr. Captain of His Majesty's Ship *Orpheus*—

Pistols	40 in No.
" Flints	100
" Ball Cartridge	1000
Corn Powder, whole Barrels of 110 lbs each	11 } lbs
Do.—Do. half Barrels of 50 lbs each	1 } 1260
Drum with Sticks	1
Launch	1
Oars	12
Sails	3
Grapple	1
" Rope 15 fms. 3½ in	1

Boat Hook	1
Do. Travellers	2
Tobacco	100 lbs
Wine	60 Gallons
Blankets	75 in No.
A Coat & Epaulet	1

Memo.

A Box of Dry goods and 18 Soldiers Jackets by Governor Cameron to the Indian Chiefs—

Signed H. Pigot  
Captain

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 398.

## Gathering Intelligence

*A number of Royal Navy and British colonial officers had suggested striking at New Orleans early in the war. But for several reasons, a lack of military and naval resources among them, the idea failed to come to fruition until 1814.<sup>1</sup> Before an offensive campaign of any scope in the Gulf could be undertaken, British planners required information on the region in which their land and naval forces would be operating. Upon taking up his new post in North America, Admiral Cochrane wasted little time in gathering intelligence on New Orleans and its environs. As the following documents illustrate, Cochrane had a wide range of questions to which he required answers. A veteran of joint operations in Europe, the Mediterranean, and the West Indies,<sup>2</sup> Cochrane recognized that the success of his expedition might well turn on the accuracy and completeness of the reports he received.*

1. See Bartlett and Smith, "Milito-Nautico-Guerilla," pp. 174–75.

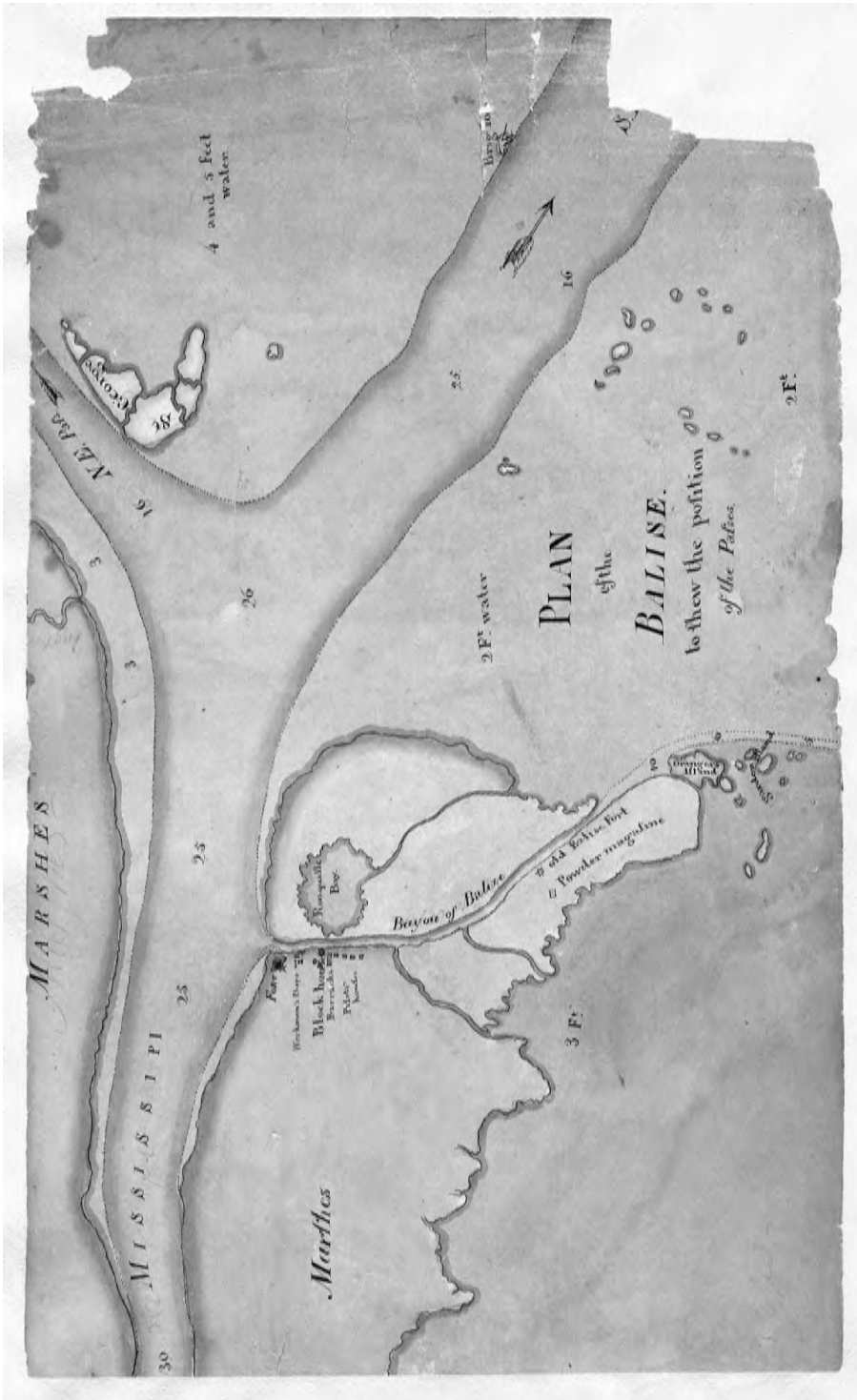
2. Details of this aspect of Cochrane's career may be found in Marshall, Royal Naval Biography, Vol. 1, pp. 257–66.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
CAPTAIN HUGH PIGOT, R.N.

Secret Memo.

Asia, Bermuda 27th. March 1814

As it may be of great importance to His Majesty's Service in the prosecution of the War against the United States of America to be in possession of the present Situation & Force of their Settlements upon the Mississippi, I have to request that you will by every means in your power endeavor to obtain & convey to me a correct account of the following Queries



PLAN  
of the  
**BALISE.**  
to shew the position of  
of the Passes.

MARSHES

MISSISSIPPI

Marshees

Bayou of Balise

Pass  
Black House  
Pond

Nonquahitic Bay

old Fortification  
Powder magazine

4 and 5 feet water

3 F. water

3 F.

2 F.

30

25

25

26

25

16

16

3

3

2

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

QuestionsAnswers

What Regular Force is at New Orleans?—

What Regular Force there is within the District?—

What number of Militia there may be at New Orleans & within the District?—

The nature of the Militia & how they are affected towards the United States?—

The State & Extent of the Fortifications?

If the Country is accessible by Lake Pontchartrain?  
The best place to land, should an attack be meditated upon New Orleans?

If the town of New Orleans is healthy?—

If the Balise at the mouth of the River is fortified & if it is healthy?—

The best point to be occupied in order to cut off New Orleans from any communication with the Sea: this will embrace the Eastern communication through Lac Borgne or the Blind Lake by Cat Island and Les Isles aux Malhereux?

The produce of the New Orleans District in Sugar and other Articles?—

The Prices of Provisions in the Spanish Ports: also of their produce & what quantity they export— if British Ships calling there cod. be loaded?

What Species of alongshore Trade is carried on between the West Florida Coast & New Orleans by the Lakes, & the best way to intercept it?

Exchange at the Havanna & Pensacola for British Govt. Bills?—

QuestionsAnswers

A set of Pirates or Free Booters are said to have established themselves to the Westward of the Mississippi at a place called Baritaria Longe. 91:20— What their plans are, their number & if an Expedition was undertaken against New Orleans if they would lend their aid, in which case lands woud. be granted them?<sup>—1</sup>

The number of Warriors belonging to the Creek Nations & if they woud. assist Great Britain shod. an Expedition be sent against New Orleans and with what force?<sup>—2</sup>

(Signed) A. Cochrane

LB, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fols. 3–4.

1. For British overtures to the Baratarian pirates, see pp. 889–95.

2. For British efforts to organize the Creeks into an allied fighting force, see pp. 859–70 and 928–35.

CAPTAIN HUGH PIGOT, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F.I. COCHRANE, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Orpheus*  
New Providence April 13th. 1814

Dear Sir/

I feel greatly obliged to Governor Cameron for his exertions in procuring me every information that was possible on so short a notice relative to the service you have been pleased to order me upon, likewise Pilots and an intelligent young man<sup>1</sup> that has traded with the Indians and known to many of the Chiefs— It has been strongly recommended by a Merchant here (a Mr. Gordon to whom I am particularly obliged to for a Map of the River Appalachicola and the surrounding country)<sup>2</sup> to take on board Blankets & Clothing with various other articles, necessary presents to be made the Chiefs and the Governor has offered to purchase all that may be necessary, but as there may be obstacles in the way of our communication I have taken some few uniforms only, and should I find any thing more necessary will send the *Shelbourne* for them—

I learn from Mr. Gordon and others that New Orleans is in a very defenceless state the regular force there is very trifling and the Militia refuse to act, one part are French another Spanish the third American, they relieve each other, but when the term of duty of one is expird they have to apply to the Governor to allow them by force to oblige the other to take their turns— The Americans have three or four Gun boats up the Lakes and no Forts of consequence until you get as high as Batton Rouge a very small Force would accomplish this in boats

through the Lakes where they would be joined by the French Royalists where a few gun boats placed on the Mississippi above Baton Rouge would effectually stop any reinforcements from the interior for the succour of New Orleans, as the banks of the River and adjoining Country is totally impassable— I place full confidence in this account as it is given me by two or three persons that have been many years on the spot

I hope you will excuse this hasty scrawl and in my next I have no doubt of being able to answer all or most of your queries— I have the honor to remain Sir Your very humble Servant

H Pigot—

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fols. 1–2.

1. George Woodbine. For Pigot's orders to Woodbine, see Pigot to Woodbine, 10 May 1814, pp. 824–25.

2. Pigot forwarded a map of the Apalachicola River and surrounding country to Cochrane in a letter dated 8 June. For the text of this letter, see pp. 829–31. For the map it encloses, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fol. 400.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
CAPTAIN JAMES A. GORDON, R.N.

[*Chesapeake Bay, 6 September 1814?*]

Secret Memo. to Capt Gordon upon his proceeding to Mississippi—Inquiries for him to make &ca

- 1st. Lt Col. Nicolls<sup>1</sup> being directed to communicate & advise with the Senior Naval Officer near him you will give him every opportunity of so doing & mutually assist each other in devising the best plans of carrying on the Service in which he is employed.
- 2nd. You will be particularly careful not to attack any place especially New Orleans with a force that cannot retain it against the Enemy. Because such an attack however creditable in itself might impede a competent force gaining possession at a future period.
- 3rd. You may expect to be supported by the beginning of Janry until which period you will have sufficient to do in training & bringing over the Indians to our interest & in preparing for an attack on New Orleans for which purpose you will endeavor to secure Boats to transport Troops.
- 4th. You will carefully attend to the undermentioned enquiries & inform me thereon by the earliest opportunity, Sending me also an account of your proceedings & observing the utmost Secrecy, directing the Vessel you may send to call in Lynhaven Bay to ascertain my position.
- 5th. What are the best Situations for a Fleet to anchor as near New Orleans as possible from whence the troops can proceed in boats—
- 6th. Is it necessary in order to attack New Orleans to possess the Mobile territory—

- 7th. Which are the best places for taking post in to command the River Mississippi to prevent reinforcements being sent down the River to New Orleans—
- 8th. Can an Army at once proceed in Boats thro the Lake Pontchartrain to the back of New Orleans—
- 9th. Are the passes into the Lake fortified—
- 10th. Are the landing places upon the Lake defended—
- 11th. What sort of Roads are there leading to the town—
- 12th. What is its state of defence & number of regular troops—
- 13th. Are the Militia disaffected as generally supposed and if so what Support can be expected from them—
- 14th. What number of Country boats can be procured & will the natives man them willingly, or in consequence of such threats as may vindicate them in the eyes of their own Government—
- 15th. What are the best places to halt at—
- 16th. Can provisions be procured for an Army of about 5,000 Men, wholly or in part, & if only in part of what kind, or if it will be necessary to Supply every thing from the Shipping—
- 17th. Does water abound all along the Coast, or if not, at what places it can be procured—
- 18th. What no. of Indians would join the Army in the Mobile territory without taking away those employed against the back parts of Georgia or will it be necessary to withdraw the whole of them from the head of the Appalachicola River—
- 19th. Can horses fit to mount Cavalry be procured, and others or Mules for draft—
- 20th. Does the Country abound in Cattle for the supply of the Army, all of which will be paid for except what may be taken from those who are hostile to us.
- 21st. What are the average prices of horses, Cattle & Stock in general—
- 23rd. You are to engage 1/2 a doz: or more good Pilots who could conduct an Expedition against New Orleans thro' the Providence Channels & up the Eastern Side of the Gulf part of the double headed Shot—
- 22nd.<sup>2</sup> What no. of Negroes are raised already & what no. may be expected to join our Standard should a Strong Force be landed—

(Signed)

LB, UkENL Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fols. 15–16.

1. Cochrane had sent Major Edward Nicolls of the Royal Marines to West Florida to raise an auxiliary force of Indians and blacks to serve in the New Orleans campaign. For documents relating to Nicolls's mission, see pp. 859–70.

2. Order is correct.

## Planning the Expedition Against New Orleans

*In April of 1812, Sir Alexander Cochrane, then governor and commander in chief of the island of Guadeloupe, forwarded his views to the Admiralty on how a war with the United States ought to be waged. The vice admiral, who had gained an intimate*

knowledge of American waters during the Revolutionary War, identified New Orleans as one of the two places most vulnerable to British attack. As the chief entrepôt "for the productions of all that vast Country laying on the Mississippi Ohio and other Rivers," New Orleans was an economic target of the first importance. Whoever had "possession of the mouth of the [Mississippi] River," declared Cochrane, would "have the Inhabitants of the Interior more or less under his Controul." And because "Self Interest" was "the Ruling principle with" all Americans, Cochrane confidently predicted that westerners would readily "Join the party that pays for their produce," ultimately separating themselves "from the Atlantic States."<sup>1</sup>

Cochrane revisited his ideas for a New Orleans campaign with both Lords Melville and Bathurst before departing England in early 1814 to assume command of the North American Station. But it was not until June of that year that he formally proposed to undertake an expedition against the Louisiana capital. Coincidentally, just as Cochrane's proposal for a New Orleans campaign was transiting across the Atlantic to England, a similar scheme drafted by Admiralty and War Office ministers was travelling in the opposite direction to America. Over the next three months, plans for the New Orleans expedition underwent repeated revision as government officials responded to the fluctuating fortunes of British arms on the European continent and in North America. The joint expeditionary force that grew out of these deliberations represented the mightiest combination of ships, guns, and men ever assembled by the British during the war, one expected to achieve a decisive victory over the Yankee defenders at New Orleans.

1. Enclosure to Cochrane to Melville, 27 April 1812, in UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, fols. 3–6. The cover letter appears on fols. 1–2.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 48

Bermuda 20th. June 1814.

Sir,

His Majesty's Ship *Tonnant* with the Troop Ships and Bombs, named in the Margin,<sup>1</sup> and the 3rd. Battalion of Marines, arrived here upon the 6th. Instant; Since which the Marines have been landed in order to<sup>2</sup> their better discipline while in Port: it is my intention to re-embark<sup>3</sup> them in the course of this week to proceed to the Chesapeake.

I am sorry to observe that none of the Articles of which I delivered in a List<sup>4</sup> previous to my leaving England have attended them—not even a Flat Boat, and I beg to recommend that they may be sent without delay.

The force being so much inferior to what I expected I cannot of course carry my original intentions into execution, I must therefore be regulated in my future movements by the circumstances of the moment.

Upon their Lordships instructions by the *Alban*, which arrived here on the 19th., relative to possession being taken of the Islands in passamaquoddy<sup>5</sup> I immediately proposed to Major General Horsford<sup>6</sup> who commands here, that without waiting for the Transports from England the Regiment<sup>7</sup> should be embarked without delay in two Transports I have here, and the *Ramillies* and to proceed



to Shelburne,<sup>8</sup> being more convenient for the Expedition to rendezvous at than Halifax— this the Major General has consented to and they embark tomorrow.

I have sent on the *Alban* and another Schooner with information to Sir John Sherbrooke and directed Rear Admiral Griffith to co-operate with him in the Expedition

You will receive herewith a Report made to me by Captain Pigot of the State of the Southern Indians,<sup>9</sup> and I beg leave to recommend it to the serious attention of Government. I have not a doubt in my mind that three thousand British Troops landed at Mobbille where they would be joined by all the Indians, with the disaffected french and Spaniards, would drive the Americans entirely out of Louisiana and the Floridas. If this meets with the concurrence of Government I will attend the Expedition myself and considering that the most fit Season for the proceeding upon it will be in October or the beginning of November the Troops ought to rendezvous, if from England, at St. Thomas or Tortola from whence they have a fair Wind to the place of destination.

I will direct the Indian Nation to be supplied with one thousand Stand of Arms in addition to what they have; two Field pieces, a Howitzer and a 9 pounder, with a large Stock of Ammunition: I much recommend one thousand Sets of Dragoon Accoutrements, being sent out and a number of Carbines for the young Indians; Cloathing they are in great want of and they desire to have Jackets like the British Soldiers; any Colours will do but I should think green the best: I will endeavour to supply what I can from hence.<sup>10</sup>

It is my intention to send Major Nichols of the Marines with some good Sergeants and Corporals to drill them—<sup>11</sup> they have been particularly desirous of having British Officers among them; if thirty or forty with Sergeants and Corporals could be sent direct from England to the River Appalachicola they will be of the greatest service—the Ships bringing them out to call at New Providence for Pilots.

I propose giving Major Nichols first, the provincial rank of Lieutenant Colonel and then of Colonel,<sup>12</sup> to give him a consequence with the Chiefs; and I beg leave to propose that I should be specially furnished with powers to appoint Officers to Local Rank to enable me to accept of the Services of those calculated for this species of Warfare, which is by far the most destructive that can be adopted against such a perfidious Enemy.

As a number of Regiments are in all probability disbanded I trust there will be no difficulty in furnishing me with the Military Stores: five hundred Rifles will be of much use and Tents in proportion to my Force.

Should their Lordships deem it proper to act upon the information contained in Captain Pigots report I beg leave to submit the expediency of being furnished with Vessels of light draught of Water to carry heavy Guns into Lake “la Pontchartraine” and calculated for the Coast between that and “Bay Mobbille”: they should be large enough to carry about one hundred men. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane  
Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 390–93. A letter book copy of this letter is in UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2348, pp. 32–34. The Admiralty received this letter on 8 August.

1. *Regulus, Melpomene, Brune, Ætna, and Terror.*
2. This word is rendered as “for” in a letter book copy of this document. Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2348, p. 32.
3. This word is rendered as “embark” in the letter book copy of this document. *Ibid.*
4. Two documents, Cochrane to Melville, 2 January 1814, and, “Abstract of several communications from Sir Alxr. Cochrane to Viscount Melville Jan 1814” list what Cochrane considered necessary to successful operations in America. In the latter of these documents, dated 20 January 1814, Cochrane requested a supply of flat boats and other shallow-draft vessels to navigate in shoal waters. Both are found in InU, Lilly Library, War of 1812 Mss.
5. See Barrow to Cochrane, 29 April 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2343, fols. 43–44; and Bathurst to Sherbrooke, 28 April 1814, pp. 418–19. For British operations in Passamaquoddy Bay, see pp. 416–29.
6. George Horsford, British army major general and lieutenant governor of Bermuda, 1812–16. Cochrane sent Horsford copies of the Admiralty’s and War Office’s instructions on the Passamaquoddy expedition on the morning of 19 June. See Horsford to Cochrane, 19 June 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 175.
7. The 102nd Regiment of Foot.
8. Port town on the southwest coast of Nova Scotia.
9. Pigot to Cochrane, 8 June 1814, pp. 829–32.
10. For Cochrane’s efforts to arm, clothe, and train the Creek Indians, see pp. 859–70, 928–33, 935, 1056, and 1057.
11. For Cochrane’s orders to Nicolls, see pp. 861–63.
12. The Admiralty disallowed Cochrane’s brevet appointment of Nicolls. See Croker to Cochrane, 10 August 1814, p. 844.

FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY ROBERT SAUNDERS DUNDAS MELVILLE TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Secret.

Admiralty  
29. July 1814.

My Dear Sir

It being intended that a considerable military force under Lord Hill<sup>1</sup> should proceed against New Orleans as soon as the Season of the year, which is deemed favorable for operations in that quarter, will admit, I think it right to put you in possession of our present ideas on that subject. Lord Bathurst is aware of my writing this letter, & sends also by this opportunity a dispatch<sup>2</sup> for Major General Ross, but I believe that it relates merely to his being at the appointed time at the rendezvous which I am going to arrange with you. You will therefore use your own discretion in communicating the Contents of this Letter to Major General Ross, or the Officer in command of the Brigade attached to your Squadron. It is proper however that I should remind you of the indispensable necessity of secrecy on this occasion, & of guarding to the utmost of your power against the American Government being apprized of our intentions in time to make preparations for greater resistance than might otherwise be expected.

The amount of force from this Country will be about 7000 men & it is intended that they shall be joined by the corps acting with you. It will therefore be necessary that in any operations on which you may be engaged during the intermediate period, you should have in view then being at the rendezvous at Negril Point (the West end of Jamaica) by the 20th November, or as soon after as possible; all our proceedings here will be with a view to that day & it is material that the 7000 Men from hence should not be detained longer than necessary in the West

Indies; we rather expect indeed that they will be at the rendezvous before the day which I have named. It will be proper that you should either proceed yourself with an adequate Naval force on this service, or that you should send one of your Flag Officers. The greater portion of the Troops from hence will be in Transports; but some part, (probably about 1200) will be in Troop Ships. We propose that the whole of this force from England shall proceed in the first instance to Barbadoes, or some other of the Leeward Islands, there to complete their water, which may be filled up again, if necessary at Negril. We reckon upon their being a week at Barbadoes, & a fortnight from thence to Negril. I remain, My Dear Sir, Your very faithful hble. Servant

Melville

ALS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, fols. 146–49. Cochrane included a duplicate of this correspondence as enclosure number four in his letter to Melville of 15 December 1815, in UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 289–93. The designation “No. 4,” written in another hand, appears at the top center of the first page of this document.

1. Rowland Hill, 1st Viscount Hill, one of Wellington’s most able senior commanders in the Peninsular War.

2. Bathurst to Ross, 30 July 1814, UK-KeNA, W.O. 6/2, fol. 5. In this letter, Bathurst directed Ross to embark as many troops as possible in Cochrane’s squadron and sail for Port Negril, Jamaica, there to unite with Lord Hill’s expeditionary force by 20 November.

FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY ROBERT SAUNDERS DUNDAS MELVILLE TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Private.

Admiralty  
10th. August 1814.

My Dear Sir,

I wrote to you in Duplicate on the 29th. Ulto. detailing the arrangements in contemplation here as to a considerable force proposed to be sent out under Lord Hill. The receipt within these few days of your letter of the 20th. June<sup>1</sup> has induced us to alter our determination to a certain extent, & to place at your disposal, with a view to the objects pointed out by you, the force which will be mentioned to you in the Official letter from Mr. Croker which you will receive herewith.<sup>2</sup> In fact the sending away from hence at present so large a force as was stated in my last letter would have been seriously inconvenient. The disbanding the Militia, the heavy drain of Troops already sent to America, & the large Corps we must still have in Flanders, leave this Country in a very ill provided state, even for a limited peace establishment. I trust however that if the War with America shall continue, we may be enabled to have at your disposal early in the Spring, a sufficient number of Troops, if those now sent should not be sufficient both for the object immediately in view, & for carrying on operations against their Coasts on the side of the Atlantic.

The sending any Troops to you, except the Marines, at an earlier period than those under General Ross, was a measure which may have appeared very easy to you; but with the drain on this country for every disposable man for the Duke of Wellington's Army & for Flanders, & the necessity of maintaining our whole force in their positions till our arrangements with France were finally concluded made it a matter not merely of difficulty, but of impossibility, unless by abandoning our system on the Continent at the very moment that we were bringing it to a successful close. The experience of twenty years of War on an extended scale has taught the Government of this Country to have no more Irons in the fire than what we can contrive to Keep red hot.

Having already written to you on the subject of sending articles<sup>3</sup> which you wished to be sent to you, & which I presume, are those contained in a list which was left at Lord Bathurst's Office, I have nothing farther to add respecting them. They related chiefly to the formation of Corps to be formed from the Slaves in the Southern Provinces, a measure, to which we have great reluctance It would be very injurious to America but not less so, in all probability to ourselves. Believe me, My Dear Sir, Yours most faithfully

Melville

ALS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, fols. 171–72. For a duplicate of this letter, see fols. 169–70.

1. Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, above.

2. Croker to Cochrane, 10 August 1814, below.

3. Before he left England, Cochrane provided Melville with a list of articles he considered necessary for conducting operations in America. Two documents, Cochrane to Melville, 2 January 1814, and, "Abstract of several communications from Sir Alxr. Cochrane to Viscount Melville Jan 1814," may provide the list to which Cochrane referred. While both documents mention the need for uniforms, arms, and accoutrements for outfitting black troops, they also include requests for additional artillery, rockets, engineering personnel, and shallow-draft vessels. Both documents are in InU, Lilly Library, War of 1812 Mss.

FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Duplicate  
Secret & confidential

Admy. Office  
Aug. 10th. 1814

Sir

I received on the 8th. Inst. and communicated to my Lords Commissioners of the Admy Your letter No 48 dated from Bermuda 20th. June relative to the expediency of undertaking an expedition against the American settlements on the Gulf of Mexico.

This letter my Lords have communicated to his Majesty's Government and they have commanded me to convey to you the following observations & directions on this subject.

You will have perceived by Earl Bathurst's dispatches to Major General Ross,<sup>1</sup> & by Lord Melville's private letters to you<sup>2</sup> which have been sent by the *Pigmy* & *Vesta* that the object of attacking the Enemy from the side of the Gulf of Mexico had already occupied the attention of His Majesty's Government, and that a considerable force under the command of Lieutenant General Lord Hill was destined to cooperate with the Naval force which you could have supplied, in this service.

Circumstances have however since induced H. M. Government to defer their intention of employing so considerable a force in that quarter; but as your letter holds out an expectation that a severe blow may be struck against the Enemy by a force not so large as was at first proposed, it has been determined to enable you to carry the operations proposed by You into effect.

For this purpose Major General Ross on whose Zeal & abilities great reliance is placed is directed to proceed to carry into operation the plan which you may agree upon with him, and in addition to the force now under his orders & the Marines, the troops named in the margin<sup>3</sup> are preparing to proceed to join you.

These reinforcements will all be embarked in troop ships, and, under the protection of the *Valiant* or some other 74 gun ship, may be expected to sail from Cork about the Middle of September or the first fair wind after the equinox.

The Expedition will then proceed with all dispatch to Barbadoes where it will complete its water & provisions, & thence to Negril roads at the West end of the Island of Jamaica. At this rendezvous it may be expected about the Middle of November & you, with Major General Ross, the troops under his orders, the Marines and such Naval force as you may think proper to employ on this service should meet at this rendezvous not later than the 20th. November—

In addition to the troop ships you may also expect to find at Negril from ten to twenty small vessels of an easy draft of water and capable of carrying about 100 men each: which I, this day write to Admiral Brown<sup>4</sup> at Jamaica to hire & to prepare if he shall have the means of doing so with slides for the reception of carronades.

These small vessels are to be manned from the ships under your orders & to enable you to effect this without distressing the squadron some supernumeraries will be sent in the line of battle ship which convoys the troop ships.

At Jamaica the force is to be further increased by the 5th. West India Regt. & 200 black pioneers, for which these small vessels will afford you the means of transport, but lest any accident should prevent Admiral Brown from obtaining these vessels, or that they should appear better fitted to some other purpose of the expedition it is advisable that you should bring down with you all the troop ships which may be at your disposal.

The ships from Europe will convoy to you a number of Rifles, carbines and an adequate quantity of ammunition for the purpose of arming the friendly Indians agreeably to your suggestion and measures will be taken for forwarding to the Gulf of Mexico by a future fleet an additional supply of arms & ammunition together with another black regiment if it can be spared without inconvenience from the West Indies.

Each of the troop ships will carry two flat boats; but as to the articles specified in a list mention'd in your letter & which articles you complain of not having

received, I am to acquaint you that no such list appears in this office; but if you allude to a list delivered by you privately to My Lord Melville I am commanded by My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to refer you on this point to such private answer as his Lordship may have thought proper to give you<sup>5</sup>

The measures which You state yourself to have taken & to intend to pursue for arming & disciplining the Indians my Lords fully approve and the suggestion you offer for carrying on this system into more complete effect have been submitted to the consideration of the Secretary of State for war & colonies.

On the point however of the ranks of Lieutenant Colonel & Colonel which you state that you propose conferring on Major Nicholls of the Marines, my Lords command me to remind you that they have not themselves the power of conferring and still less of authorizing you to confer any military rank & they desire that this part of your intentions with regard to major Nicholls be abandon'd, or if already done recall'd

I am commanded to conclude by acquainting You that in the event of your being engaged in any enterprize against the Enemy, inconsistent with the pursuance of your plans against Louisiana & which you may think more likely to be of advantage to H. M's arms you are authorized to postpone or even to abandon the object now in contemplation; but in this event you will not fail to give timely notice to the force to be assembled at Negril and to convey to them orders for a junction with you or for such other proceedings as in conjunction with Major General Ross you may think proper to adopt

I have only now to repeat to you their Lordships authority (originally conveyed in my letter by the *Pigmy*) to proceed on the expedition to the Gulf of Mexico yourself or, if you shall be otherwise & more essentially, in your opinion, employed, to depute one of the flag officers under your command to proceed with Major General Ross in your stead. I am Sir Your obedient humble Servt.

Jno Croker.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, fols. 161–66. Cochrane included a duplicate of this correspondence as enclosure number 3 in his letter to Melville of 15 December 1815, in UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 289–93. The designation “No. 3,” written in another hand, appears at the top center of the first page of this document. A copy of this letter is in UK-KeNA, W.O. 1/141, fols. 7–12.

1. Bathurst to Ross, 30 July 1814, UK-KeNA, W.O. 6/2, fol. 5.

2. Melville to Cochrane, 29 July 1814, and, 10 August 1814, above.

3. Information supplied from copy in UK-KeNA, W.O. 1/141 states: dismounted light dragoons, 160; artillery, 150; artificers and staff, 50; 5th Battalion, 60th Regiment, 500; 93rd Regiment, 1,000; detachments of the 4th, 44th, and 85th Regiments, 270; total of 2,130 men.

4. Croker to Brown, 10 August 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2330, fol. 34. Cochrane also wrote Rear Admiral Brown on this head on 19 September, see pp. 923–24. On Cochrane's disappointment at not finding the promised transports at Jamaica, see Cochrane to Croker, 7 December 1814, pp. 927–28.

5. See Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, note 4, p. 840; and, Melville to Cochrane, 10 August 1814, note 3, p. 842.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR AND THE COLONIES EARL BATHURST TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT ROSS, BRITISH ARMY

Duplicate  
Secret

War Department, London  
10th. Augt. 1814

Sir/

My Secret Dispatch of the 30th. July<sup>1</sup> conveyed to you the orders of His Majesty's Government that you should proceed with the Troops under your Command to join an army which it was intended to send from this country under Lord Hill, and of which the appointed Rendezvous was Point Negril at the Western Extremity of Jamaica.

Circumstances have since induced His Majesty's Government to defer the intention they had entertained of employing a large force in that quarter. But, as it appears by the advices received from Vice Admiral Sir A. Cochrane<sup>2</sup> that there is reason to believe a serious Blow may be struck against our American Enemies by employing in the Gulph of Mexico a Force somewhat more considerable than that of which you have the Command, & as great reliance is placed upon your Military abilities & Zeal for His Majesty's service, it has pleased the Prince Regent to order that you should be reinforced sufficiently, & that you should proceed in Command of the Troops destined to carry into effect the plans contemplated by Sir Alexr. Cochrane.

You will therefore concert your measures with that officer and give him your most zealous assistance.

The reinforcements preparing for you in this country consist of above 2,000 rank & file as entered in the margin.<sup>3</sup>

To these are to be added the 5th. W India Regiment & 200 Black Pioneers from Jamaica so that it is calculated you may carry to the Theatre of your operations above 5,000 effective rank & file. The Rendezvous off Point Negril is still considered the most advantageous: and the Admiral Commanding in the Jamaica Station<sup>4</sup> will have orders to collect for the Service of the Expedition as large a proportion of Schooners & small craft as may be considered necessary.<sup>5</sup> The Troop Ships which convey the reinforcements from England will carry out flat bottomed boats, & the rifles, carbines & ammunition which have been solicited by Sir Alexr. Cochrane for the army of the friendly Indians.

Such are the arrangements which have been made for the Equipment of the Expedition: but, as it is considered that further supplies of arms & ordnance stores may be found necessary after you shall have landed in the Enemy's Country, measures have been taken for forwarding to the Gulph of Mexico by a future Fleet a considerable supply of Arms, Ammunition Stores & provisions; & these supplies will be accompanied by another Black Regiment if it can be spared without inconvenience from the West Indies. I have the honor to be, Sir Your most obedt. humble Sert.

(signed) Bathurst

P.S. You will understand that the Time, as well as the Place, originally fixed for the Rendezvous remains unchanged. It is considered that there might not be sufficient time for Sir A Cochrane to make his Dispositions, & come down to Point Negril to unite with the Ships from England if an earlier day were proposed than the 20th. of November—

(signed) Bathurst—

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 231–32. A letter book copy of this letter is in UK-KeNA, W.O. 6/2, fols. 5–7.

1. Bathurst to Ross, 30 July 1814, UK-KeNA, W.O. 6/2, fol. 5.
2. Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, pp. 838–40.
3. These units are enumerated in note 3 of the preceding letter.
4. Rear Admiral William Brown.
5. Croker to Brown, 10 August 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2330, fol. 24.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR AND THE COLONIES EARL BATHURST TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT ROSS, BRITISH ARMY

Duplicate

War Department London 10th. Augt. 1814

Sir/

My Secret Dispatches of this date<sup>1</sup> will inform you of the Alteration which has taken place in the Intentions of His Majesty's Government respecting an Attack upon the Southern parts of the United States, & will shew you in detail the amount of Force placed under your Command & the Means upon which you may rely.

I cannot attempt to give you any detailed Instructions in regard to the operations which may be undertaken.

You will be guided by the Plans contemplated by Sir Alexr. Cochrane, by the information you obtain respecting the Enemy, & by your own Judgement & Military Experience.

I only beg to press two Considerations upon your mind, & to express my hope that you will never lose sight of them. 1st. The Importance of preserving uninterruptedly the most cordial Understanding with the Naval Commanders and 2dly. The necessity of constant Attention to the Health of the Troops placed under your Command. An extra supply of medical Stores & a sufficient medical staff will be sent out in the Troop ships that are to sail from England, in order that your Division may have ample means & every possible assistance in case the climate should prove more injurious than I have at present any grounds to expect.

You will seek every opportunity to cultivate the good will & respect of the Indian Tribes, & to attach them to the British Interest. You will also pay attention to, & conciliate the Subjects of His Catholic Majesty,<sup>2</sup> upon whose Territory the American Government has made most unjustifiable encroachments. If the Blacks of Georgia, or other Provinces, should come over to you in considerable numbers you will endeavour to persuade the most effective young men to enlist



into His Majesty's West India Regiments, or take such other steps regarding the Blacks as Sir A. Cochrane and yourself may find adviseable for giving them protection.

If at the time of your receiving these Dispatches you should be engaged in any operation which in the opinion of Sir A. Cochrane & yourself it would be inexpedient to abandon, you are at liberty (with the entire concurrence of the Vice Admiral) to continue such service, & you will in that case send Instructions to the Place of Rendezvous (Point Negril) ordering the officer who commands the Troops which go from England to proceed to join you at such place as the Vice Admiral and yourself shall determine I have the honour to be Sir, Your most obedt. humble Servant

signd Bathurst

Copy, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 229–30. A letter book copy of this letter is in UK-KeNA, W.O. 6/2, fols. 7–8.

1. Above.
2. Ferdinand VII of Spain.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR AND THE COLONIES EARL BATHURST TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT ROSS, BRITISH ARMY

Copy.  
Most Secret.

War Department, London,  
6th. Septem. 1814.—

Sir,

It appears by Dispatches which have been received from Vice Admiral Sir Alexr. Cochrane<sup>1</sup> that he considered it adviseable to direct His Majesty's Arms against the Southern Extremity of the United States, & that by supporting the Indian Tribes situated on the Confines of Florida, & in the back parts of Georgia, it would be easy to reduce New Orleans, & to distress the Enemy very seriously in the neighbouring Provinces.— The Vice Admiral appears to have considered a Body of 2000 Troops (exclusive of the Marines, & the Naval forces he had already at his disposal) to be requisite for carrying these Objects into execution. He was not aware at the time he wrote that you were upon your Passage to join him. The Brigade which you carried from the Gironde is supposed to have consisted of above 2300 Effective men; & you were authorized to chuse any one of three Battalions which sailed about the same time from Gibraltar for Bermudas, the strongest of these Battalions consisting of above 1100 Rank & file.— I calculate therefore that your Corps will have amounted to 3400 men, inclusive of the Marines;— a force very superior to what Sir A. Cochrane had contemplated as necessary for an Expedition to the Southward.

His Majesty's Government however are desirous to render the force under your Command so respectable that there may remain no doubt of its being equal to the object which Sir A. Cochrane has proposed, & to which His Majesty's Governmt. attach a great Importance.

I have therefore ordered the immediate Embarkation of the Troops noted in the Margin<sup>2</sup> under the Command of M. Genl. Keane, & I have instructed this Officer to place himself & his Corps under your Orders.—<sup>3</sup> I have also directed the Commander of the Forces in Jamaica to place at your Disposal the 5th. West India Regimt., & 200 Black Pioneers;— so that, when the whole of your force shall have been assembled at the place of rendezvous, I calculate that you will proceed to your destination with near 6'000 men, exclusive of the Marines & Seamen. Care has also been taken to send out whatever was necessary for arming & equipping the friendly Indians:— & you may reckon upon receiving further Supplies of Arms Ammunition, Provisions & some Heavy Ordnance by the Jamaica fleet which is to leave England in October.— About the same time, you will be joined by the 1st. West India Regt. from Guadeloupe.

Having thus recapitulated the means which are placed in your hands, I proceed to explain the leading Objects which are in the contemplation of His Majesty's Government, & which render the Success of your Expedition extremely important.

The first of these objects is to obtain a Command of the Embouchure of the Mississippi, so as to deprive the back Settlements of America of their Communication with the Sea.

The Second is to occupy some important & valuable possession, by the restoration of which we may improve the Conditions of Peace, or which may entitle us to exact its Cession as the price of Peace.

Sir Alexander Cochrane & yourself will be best able to judge whether the Success of the Expedition, & the ultimate attainment of one or both of these objects are most likely to be secured by your proceeding directly against New Orleans, or by moving in the first instance into the back parts of Georgia, & the Country of the friendly Indians:— & it is left to your joint discretion to decide upon this Question.

The first of the two objects abovementioned might perhaps be secured (after dispossessing the Enemy of New Orleans) by your occupying some position upon the River which may be less unhealthy than the immediate neighbourhood of New Orleans is understood to be,— or by fortifying some of the Islands near the mouth of the Mississippi.

The extreme importance of your taking every precaution to secure the Health of your Troops cannot be too strongly pressed upon your Attention:— and you must be prepared to find New Orleans situated in the midst of Swamps & marshes, & exposed during the Summer Months to the diseases incidental to such a Situation.

If you find that, with the Assistance of the Navy, you can maintain the requisite Command of the River, by occupying Islands or positions where the health of your Troops would be liable to less risk than in New Orleans itself, you will lose no time in strengthening such posts by every means within your disposal.— But if no such Situations can be found, you must endeavour to strengthen the Town itself so as to make it defensible till you receive fresh Instructions from England, grounded upon the Reports which you will make to me upon this subject.

But it must be remembered that New Orleans cannot be maintained for any length of time without a great Expence, & the locking up of a large Body of Troops, & therefore that the second Object in view could not be attained, against

the will of the Inhabitants. With their favour & Cooperation, on the other hand, we may expect to rescue the whole Province of Louisiana from the United States— If therefore you shall find in the Inhabitants a general & decided Disposition to withdraw from their recent Comunion with the United States,— either with the view of establishing themselves as an independent People, or of returning under the Dominion of the Spanish Crown, you will give them every Support in your power:— You will furnish them with Arms & Cloathing;— & assist in forming & disciplining the several Levies,— provided you are fully satisfied of the loyalty of their Intentions, which will be best evinced by their committing themselves in some act of decided Hostility against the United States.

Under such Circumstances, you will not only discountenance, but, if necessary, assist in repressing any Disposition to revolt which may arise among the Black Population in Louisiana;— and you will use your Influence to induce the Indian Tribes to ally themselves with the Authorities which may be constituted, & to cooperate with them in repelling the Attacks of the Common Enemy.

You will discountenance any proposition of the Inhabitants to place themselves under the Dominion of Great Britain:— and you will direct their Disposition towards returning under the protection of the Spanish Crown, rather than to the attempting to maintain (what it will be much more difficult to secure substantially) their Independence as a separate State:— and you must give them clearly to understand that Great Britain cannot pledge herself to make the Independence of Louisiana, or its restoration to the Spanish Crown, a *Sine quâ non* of Peace with the United States.—

If the sincere Good Will & active Cooperation of the Inhabitants be acquired, you will be relieved from the necessity of maintaining a large Garrison in New Orleans.— But, having regard to the supposed Unhealthiness of the Climate, you will not, at any rate, place there a more numerous Garrison than is absolutely necessary, & of this Garrison the two Black Regiments which will be placed under your Command should form a part, unless any local Objections should make this inexpedient.

It must be remembered that the occupation in force of any position which would effectually command the Embouchure of the Mississippi without obliging you to Garrison New Orleans, or expose your Troops to its unhealthy Situation, would secure the Main object of the Expedition, would enable us to maintain as much or as little Intercourse as we may think expedient with the Inhabitants of Louisiana, & would not expose us to the Charge, at a Conclusion of Peace, of having availed ourselves of their Support while it was necessary, & leaving them without protection when it became convenient.

The Instructions I have given you with regard to the people of Louisiana apply, & with still greater force (more particularly that part of the Instructions which relates to the repressing a Disposition to revolt in the black Population) to the Inhabitants of West Florida, over whom the Government of the United States has assumed a Dominion which can be regarded only as an Usurpation.

It must be left to the Judgement of Sir Alexr. Cochrane & yourself to determine whether any & what Operations can be carried on against the Enemy's Southern States, after the reduction of New Orleans & the giving every practicable support to the Indian Nations. But, if you shall both be of opinion that nothing further of material Importance ought to be attempted in that quarter, you will, after

providing for the defence of New Orleans, or any other Posts you may see it advisable to occupy with a view to the two leading Objects to which I have directed your Attention, cause the disposable part of your force to return to Bermudas, in order to its being employed afterwards as fresh Instructions from home or the Circumstances of the War in America may render necessary. I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) Bathurst

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/4360, pp. 58–65. A letter book copy of this letter is in UK-KeNA, W.O. 6/2, fols. 10–13.

1. Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, pp. 838–40.
2. The forces are listed in the margin as:

	<u>R. &amp; F.</u>
93d. Regt.	900.
95th.—	470.
Detachmt. of 4th., 21st., 44th., 86th.[85th] Regts.	380
One Squadron of 14th. Lt. D.—	160.
1 Compy. R.A.—with Detachmt. of Drivers.—	150.
Rocketmen.—	40.
Sappr. & Miners	<u>50.</u>
	2150—

3. Major General John Keane was to assume command of the expedition's troops in the event of Ross's death or failure to make the rendezvous. See Bunbury to Keane, 12 September 1814, UK-KeNA, W.O. 6/2, fols. 15–17.

FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Secret.

Admy Office  
Sept. 14. 1814.

Sir,

In pursuance of the intentions of His Majesty's Government communicated to you in my letter of the 10th. of August last (of which I annex a duplicate) I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admy to acquaint you that I, this evening, shall dispatch to Capt. Walker at Plymouth their Lordships orders for his sailing with the ships & vessels named in the margin<sup>1</sup> as soon as the weather shall permit.

Captain Walker's orders<sup>2</sup> are to proceed with all expedition off madiera where he is to detach the *Portia* with this letter & one from himself acquainting you with his proceedings— If the *Portia* should previously have parted company her Commander has orders to proceed at once to join Your flag & you are to take him under your orders.

From madiera the Squadron will proceed to Carlisle Bay, Barbadoes where the ships will complete their water & provisions with all expedition & Capt. Walker has orders to sail thence on the 12th. or at latest the 14th. of November & proceed to Point negril at the west end of Jamaica where he is told that he may expect to meet you or receive Your orders, under which he is directed to place himself & the squadron; & my Lords Commissioners of the Admy direct you to take him under your orders accordingly.

My letter of the 10th. Augt. will have acquainted You with the amount of the land forces to be embark'd in this expedition, but you will find the statement at the foot of this letter more accurate than that which I was before enabled to afford you.

You will observe that a rocket ship & party train'd to rocket exercise have been added to the force.

My letter of the 10th. August promised you some supernumeraries to enable you to man the small craft, which Rear Admiral Browne is directed to collect at Negril;<sup>3</sup> I am now to acquaint you that for this purpose & to make up the ordinary deficiency of the squadron under your command 400 Seamen, 100 boys & 100 marines proceed in Captain Walkers squadron to join you. to the 100 marines are attach'd a double proportion of noncommission'd officers from amongst whom & the other noncommissioned officers of the Squadron a sufficient number of volunteers for the service of disciplining the Indians will probably offer, but my Lords cannot themselves promise, or authorise you to promise or confer the rank of commission'd officers on these volunteers.

I am to signify to you their Lordships further commands that, if you have any means of providing other wise for the transport of the troops embark'd in the *Bedford* or as soon as you can spare her from the service she is now employed in, you are to direct her to join Rear Admiral Browne at Jamaica & follow his orders for her further proceedings & You will send the enclosed letter to the Rear Admiral by that ship when you may detach her. I am Sir your most obedient humble Servant

J W Croker

Force embark'd

	R. & F.
93d. Regt.	900
95. Do.	470
Detachts. of 4th. 21st. 44th. & 86th. [ <i>85th</i> ].	380
One Squadron 14 Lt. D[ <i>ragoons</i> ]s.	160
1 Compy. R.[ <i>oyal</i> ] Art.[ <i>illery</i> ] with drivers	150
Rocketmen	40
Sappers & miners	<u>50</u>
	2150

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 242–45. A copy of this letter is in UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/4360, pp. 83–89.

1. *Bedford, Norge, Dover, Hydra, Alceste, Belle Poule, Fox, Bucephalus, Portia, Norfolk* transport, *Mary* transport, and *Gorgon* hospital ship.

2. The Admiralty charged Captain James Walker with convoying Major General John Keane's reinforcements for the New Orleans expedition to the Point Negril rendezvous. It issued him three separate sets of orders on this head, all dated 14 September 1814. For copies of these orders, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/4360, fols. 148–52. For copies of orders to the captains in Walker's fleet, see *ibid.*, fols. 153–60.

3. Rear Admiral William Brown was ordered to hire 10 to 20 shallow-draft vessels capable of carrying 100 men each and fit them with slides for carronades. See Croker to Brown, 10 August 1814, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/4360, fol. 147.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY ROBERT SAUNDERS DUNDAS MELVILLE

*Tonnant.* 17th. September 1814  
Chesapeake Bay

My Dear Lord

I had just closed my letter of this date<sup>1</sup> when the *vesta* Arrived and brought me your Lordships letter of the 29th. July— The instructions by her has completely changed our Plans. I will therefore leave. Rear Admiral Malcolm with the charge of the Ships and troops and proceed direct to Halifax to get the necessary stores and supplies. The Rear Admiral will have orders to leave the Chesapeake Bay on or before the Tenth day of October which will give him sufficient time to reach Negril by the 20th. of November<sup>2</sup> I intend to sail from Halifax about the 5th of October. taking Barbadoes in my way where I hope to meet with Lord Hill—passing down from thence to Point Negril without Calling at Port Royal—, I will take upon me the Command upon that Station during the Currency of this service

Rear Admiral Cockburn will be left in Command of the Ships here and the Coast to the southward I will place under his orders the Battalions of Marines—to make a diversion upon the Coast of Carolina and Georgia this will prevent those states from sending aid to Louisiana<sup>3</sup>

I am Confident that every Success will attend the expedition The force in my Opinion is most ample I intended in the month of december to have taken New Orleans—with our present little Gallant Army—in Conjunction with the Indians I ever am With Much Truth My Dear Lord most faithfully and sincerely yours

Alex<sup>r</sup>. Cochrane

I have given a turtle a Chance by this Vessel for your Lps. also one for Lord Bathurst

P S

any Ships sent out to me had better proceed direct for Mobile—where in all probability I will not be far distant from for some time.— I beg to call to the Consideration of Govt. the employing the detachment of the Troops after the Capture of N Orleans in Georgia and South Carolina—as so large a force in conjunction with the Indians well not be necessary for the protection of that Country— being Ignorant of Lord Hills orders I only point this out as a Service that will harass the Enemy—who ought not to be allowed one days repose While the war lasts— I pray Your Lordship to send out at least Twelve Captains and Thirty Six Leiutenants of Marines and men that with my Black recruits Id Complete the Three Battalions— I hope The Ships having on Board Lord Hills Army have been Supplied with Flat Boats without which (unless we can procure the Boats of the Country) we will be puzzled how to get the Army on as they must all be Conveyd from Mobile to New Orleans in Shallow Vessels not exceeding the Draught of four or five feet.—

A. C

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, War of 1812 Mss. A letter book copy is in UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2345, fol. 18.

1. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 289–91.
2. For Cochrane's instructions to Malcolm, see Cochrane to Malcolm, 19 September 1814, p. 924.
3. For Cockburn's diversionary operations off the coast of Georgia, see pp. 590–610.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR AND THE COLONIES EARL BATHURST TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT ROSS,<sup>1</sup> BRITISH ARMY

War Department London 28th: Sept 1814

Sir,

The Dispatches which were received yesterday morning from Sir Alex Cochrane & yourself<sup>2</sup> have inclined H: M: Govt: to carry to a still greater extent the Reinforcement & Supplies which it had been determined to send out to your corps. Those which were already under Orders have been detailed sufficiently by my Letters of the 10th & 13th Inst.<sup>3</sup> of which the Triplicates are enclosed herewith. The superior Talents which you have displayed in your first Enterprize are a sufficient Pledge of the Ability with which you would conduct Operations upon a larger Scale, and I am anxious to mark the full confidence which I repose in your Military Skill & your zeal for His Majesty's Service, by placing at your disposal such means as may be completely adequate to the Objects which seem to have been in the contemplation of Sir Alexander Cochrane & yourself.

I understand from the Vice Admiral's Dispatches that He intended to move immediately to the Northward with the view of acting in a more healthy climate during the Hot Season, and that He would return to the Southward about the beginning of November.<sup>4</sup> The Dispatches which Sir Alexander & yourself will have received from England and your knowledge that large Reinforcements for your Corps will have sailed with Orders to rendezvous off Cape Negril, may perhaps induce you to run down direct from the Northern States to the board of Jamaica;— but the Vice Admiral seems to have been strongly impressed (at the date of His last letters) with a Feeling that an important Blow might be struck against Baltimore; and I consider it not improbable that you may wish to make an attempt upon that Town, or some other Place on the Chesapeake or Delaware, before you proceed upon the Expedition against New Orleans. It is also possible that the Success of your late operations in the Chesapeake, the better Information you may have obtained, and your view of the Impression which has been made upon the Sentiments of the American People in different Parts may have inclined Sir Alexander Cochrane & yourself to renew your attacks upon the Central States & increase your Efforts in that Quarter either independently of, or in preference to, or previous to engaging in the more distant Enterprizes projected against New Orleans & the Enemy's Possessions in West Florida.

I have directed the Troops named in the Margin<sup>5</sup> & a Major General<sup>6</sup> to accompany them to proceed to Bermuda with a view of meeting any one of three Contingencies. You will be able to avail yourself of this Reinforcement

immediately in any attacks you may deem it advantageous to make in person, or direct to be made, on that part of the Enemy's Coast which lies North of the Gulf of Mexico without being obliged to wait for the Troops which are ordered to rendezvous at Cape Negril:— or to weaken yourself by Detachments from those at present under your Command. If you shall prefer directing your whole Force on the Central States of the Enemy, to the Enterprizes projected in the Gulph of Mexico you will of course send orders down to Jamaica for the guidance of the different Corps which are directed to rendezvous off Cape Negril & for the proceeding of the Vessels having on board Supplies of all sorts intended for the use of your Army. But if it be your decision to carry round to the Gulph of Mexico the whole or nearly the whole of the Army which is placed at your disposal, the Troops now ordered to Bermuda will be in time to accompany you upon that Expedition.

I hope the Troops now under orders will sail by the end of next week. Their Instructions will be to run directly for Bermudas, and there wait for Your Orders. These troops will be accompanied by some Medical Officers with Medicines for 3000 Men and a proportion of Intrenching Tools will be put on board the Transports, in addition to the Supply sent out with Major General Keane, and those which are to go with the Jamaica Fleet, The Transports will be also accompanied by the *Albion* Victualler. On the Subject of Provisions I beg to remark that there are great Supplies in Store at Halifax & if you move to the Southward you will find at your disposal the Provisions which go out with the Jamaica Fleet.

As you may find it advisable to employ some black Troops on the Coasts of Georgia & the Carolinas, without waiting for those which are to rendezvous at Jamaica, I enclose an order (under a flying Seal) addressed to the Governor of the Bahama Islands,<sup>7</sup> by which He is directed to place at your disposal (when-ever you may find it necessary to call for them) two Companies or more of the 2d. West India Regiment which forms the Garrison of those Islands at present. I am &c. &c.

Bathurst

LB, UK-KeNA, W.O. 6/2, fols. 19–21.

1. As Ross had been killed in the attack on Baltimore two days prior to the drafting of these orders, it was left to his successors, first Major General John Lambert, then Major General Sir Edward Pakenham, to execute them as well as those of 6 September. On Ross's death, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 279–80, 282.

2. Probably a reference to Ross and Cochrane's dispatches reporting the capture and destruction of Washington, for which see *ibid.*, pp. 223–28.

3. See Bathurst to Ross, 10 September 1814, in UK-KeNA, W.O. 6/2, fols. 13–15, and Bathurst to Ross, 13 September 1814, *ibid.*, fols. 17–18. Bathurst's letter of 10 September contained news of additional troops and military stores being sent to Ross beyond the reinforcements ordered to America under Major General Keane. His 13 September letter enclosed a memorandum describing the heavy ordnance, arms, and ammunition being transported from Cork, Ireland, for the use of Ross's army.

4. Following the capture of Washington, Cochrane intended to attack and occupy Rhode Island. In late October he planned to resume his offensive to the southward, striking in turn, Baltimore, the Carolinas and Georgia, and New Orleans. Major General Ross persuaded Cochrane to alter his plan in favor of an immediate assault on Baltimore. See Cochrane to Bathurst, 28 August 1814, in UK-KeNA, W.O. 1/141, fols. 13–14, and Cochrane to Melville, 3 September 1814 in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 269–70.



5. The following text appears in the left margin:

14 Lt. Drags One Squadn. Dismounted	160
7th: Royal Fuzaleers—	1000
43d. Lt. Infantry—	<u>1000</u>
	2160
One Compy. of Staff Corps	<u>60</u>
	<u>2220</u>

6. Major General John Lambert.

7. Charles Cameron.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR AND THE COLONIES EARL BATHURST TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT ROSS, BRITISH ARMY

Downing Street 29th: Sepr: 1814

Sir,

The accompanying Dispatch<sup>1</sup> detailing the Reinforcements which have sailed or are under orders for Embarkation, will place under your command, upwards of ten thousand men, including the Black Regiments, and the Troops now with you.

You will also observe that this Force is placed very much at your Discretion as to its Employment. You will have two General officers<sup>2</sup> under you. This will enable You to detach part of your force in separate Expeditions, if you shall think proper.

There are cases when such Dispositions are desirable, but generally speaking an united effort is most expedient, as having a better chance of Success.

By this, however, I by no means intend to dissuade You from Your projected visits in the Chesapeake or on the Southern Coast in your way to the Gulph of Mexico. It is to enable you to do this more effectually that I have been chiefly induced to send out the reinforcements now under orders to Bermuda, as I have every reason to believe that what has already gone is fully adequate to any opposition you can meet with in the Gulph of Mexico.

You and Your troops have gained great Credit in the Discipline you observed at Washington. It is no disparagement of your merit to say that it was prudent as well as merciful to shew such Forbearance. If however you should attack Baltimore and could consistent with that Discipline which it is essential for you not to relax make its Inhabitants feel a little more the effects of your visit than what has been experienced at Washington, you would make that portion of the American people experience the Consequences of the War, who have most contributed to its Existence.<sup>3</sup> The publick Buildings of Baltimore strictly so called are not, I apprehend, so considerable as to make any material part of that City. I have &c.

Bathurst

LB, UK-KeNA, W.O. 6/2, fols. 23–24.

1. Bathurst to Ross, 28 September 1814, above.

2. Major General John Keane and Major General John Lambert.

3. Unlike Vice Admiral Cochrane, Ross was unwilling to wage a punitive and destructive war against the American populace. This last paragraph may have been inserted to encourage the general to overcome this reluctance. "When he is better acquainted with the American Character," opined Cochrane, "he will possibly see as I do that like Spaniels they must be treated with great severity before you ever make them tractable." See Cochrane to Melville, 3 September 1814, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 270.

## The Enemy at Apalachicola

*In the contest for the Gulf borderlands, American naval and military commanders benefited from an able and far-flung intelligence network that kept them well informed of British activities in the region.<sup>1</sup> The information thus provided enabled New Orleans's defenders to respond more quickly and effectively to enemy thrusts along the Gulf Coast. Such was the case when U.S. operatives gave Master Commandant Patterson early warning of British efforts to arm Indians and runaway slaves at Apalachicola. While the New Orleans Station commander accurately assessed the threat this force posed to backcountry settlements and the coastal town of Mobile, there was little he could do about it. It was left to Patterson's army counterpart, Major General Andrew Jackson, to respond to the Apalachicola menace, news of which prompted the Tennessean to immediately reinforce Mobile.<sup>2</sup>*

1. Frank Owsley, Jr., credits Major General Andrew Jackson's intelligence service with contributing to that officer's success in the Creek War (1813–14) and in the defense of New Orleans. See Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, p. 3.

2. Jackson received intelligence of British activity at Apalachicola about the same time as Patterson. See Jackson to Armstrong, 27 June 1814, in Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 83.

### MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

NeworLeans 24th June 1814

Sir,

I have the honor, to inform you that, a report has reached this place from Pensacola, and which as far as I have been able to learn, is entitled to credit, that a Schooner of the enemy,<sup>1</sup> had arrived there, with a supply of Arms, and amunition, for the Creek Indians, of the latter three hundred barrells Powder: and that they had landed three hundred Troops, on an Island<sup>2</sup> at the mouth of the Apalachicola River; on which they intended erecting a Fort to protect that harbour, for their cruizers; and enable them the more, easily to instigate the Seminole tribe of Indians to commence hostilities against the United States.—

A fortified harbour at that place, would be of essential Service to their cruizers in this Gulf, as it can be entered with a Northwest Wind, and forms for them a refuge, against a gale from that quarter, when they may not be able to keep this coast; and I entertain little doubt, but they will occupy the Fort on Mobile Point;<sup>3</sup> so soon as it shall be evacuated; as it is about to be, by the orders of the War

Department; the enemy will then have it in their power, to place Arms in hands of the hostile Indians, and to excite the friendly tribes against us; at these important Points, viz, Mobile Point, Pensacola, & and the River Apalachicola; when it will become necessary for the inhabitants on the Eastern Shore, of Mobile Bay, to Seek Safety in flight, or to perish under the Tomohawk, and scalping knife of the Merciless Savage, Set on by our no less merciless enemy.—

Should the enemy, as I believe they will; occupy the Fort on Mobile Point, they will by that means, have the entire command of the Bay; and can very readily cut off all communication, by water, between that Town; and this place: which will oblige, all supplies for the Army in that quarter, to be Sent by land carriages, a most expensive mode in this country; their possessing that Fort, and a place of Strength, and deposit, at Apalachicola; will also greatly facilitate, any designs, they may have against this country in the ensuing autumn; or Winter, and after the campaign Shall have closed in the north, they will doubtless direct their forces to South, to repel them should they attempt an attack on this Country I should wish to be prepared.—

From the last paragraph of your letter of the 26th; March,<sup>4</sup> I have been anxiously expecting to receive from you, instructions relative the purchase of the Sloop therein mentioned; or for building Galleys &c. and on the Subject of my letter of the 4th February;<sup>5</sup> the supplies via Pittsburgh have not yet arrived.—

In my letter of the 3rd inst.,<sup>6</sup> I had the honor to report, that Gun Vessel *No. 5*, was undergoing some repairs; I have now great Satisfaction in informing you, that those repairs will be completed tomorrow; and that She is nearly as good as the day She was launched.—

The Officers in command of Gun Vessels on this Station, are extremely desirous that their respective Vessels, should receive names, instead of numbers; as I did not feel myself authorized, to alter the denomination, without your Sanction, I have not complied with their request; it would gratify them, and me, if you would authorize such a change; which I beg leave to solicit.—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th May.—<sup>7</sup> I have the honor to be sir with great consideration and respect Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 151 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. H.M. schooner *Shelburne*.

2. St. Vincent Island.

3. Fort Bowyer.

4. Jones to Patterson, 26 March 1814, pp. 819–20.

5. Patterson to Jones, 4 February, 1814, pp. 796–97. This letter dealt with heavy expenditures on the New Orleans Station.

6. Patterson to Jones, 3 June 1814, pp. 799–800.

7. Jones to Patterson, 10 May 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 310 (M149, Roll No. 11). This letter replies to Patterson to Jones, 18 February 1814, which has not been found. From Jones's reply it appears that Patterson was proposing to relocate the site of the navy yard at New Orleans. Jones did not approve Patterson's plan.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 8th July 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that the report Stated in my letter of the 24th ulto.; has since been corroborated, by every arrival from Pensacola; that the enemy have in contemplation, an attack on this country, from the formation of an establishment, at Apalachicola; as well as to excite the Indian tribes, to hostilities with us, I cannot doubt; and that they will also, endeavour to create, an insurrection, among the Blacks here; is I think no longer to be doubted, for after inducing the Savage, to raise the Tommohawk and draw the Scalping knife; they will descend, to tamper with Negroes.—

So soon as the Fort on Mobile Point,<sup>1</sup> Shall actually be evacuated, I shall be compelled, to withdraw the naval Force from thence; for after that, takes place, the enemy can possess, themselves of the entire command, of the Bay; by their superior force, which, would compel our Vessels, to retire to the Town of Mobile; where they can be of little, or no Service; whereas if Stationed in this, neighbourhood they would, be of essential Service, in repelling the enemy, Should, they attempt this place.—

I have judged it necessary to give you information of this Subject, as I well know the citizens of Mobile, ignorant of the cause which requires Such a measure, will complain, Should the Naval Force be withdrawn from that Bay.—

In your letter of the 26th march,<sup>2</sup> you did me the honor, to say in reply to my letter of the 28th Feby.,<sup>3</sup> that the cases of the Officers whom I approbate and recommend shall be considered,— excuse me Sir, for again, recommending those Officers, and more particulary Lieutenant Louis Alexis,<sup>4</sup> and Acting Lieutenants Robert Spedden Isaac McKeever and Thomas S. Cunningham, fearfull that in accumulation of the arduous business of your high Office this may have escaped your memory, it would indeed afford me infinite Satisfaction, that they Should receive promotion, for which they are highly qualified; from which, and their length of Service, they feel Strong claims for advancement.—

The Service is also Suffering, on this Station, from my inability, for want of Officers; to form a court martial, for the trial of offenders; there are now Two Midshipmen, under arrest; waiting a trial, one of whom is by appointment from Captain Shaw an Acting Master,<sup>5</sup> both of whom are accused of offences of a Serious nature, as also Several men for Desertion; all of whom, I feel extremely anxious Should be brought before a Court martial; this could very readily be done, were the Acting Lieutenants Commissioned, and would be of great benefit to the Station.— I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 2, (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Fort Bowyer.

2. Jones to Patterson, 26 March 1814, pp. 819–20.

3. Patterson meant 25 February. See pp. 813–15.

4. Louis Alexis was promoted to master commandant on 10 December 1814.

5. Midshipman James Roney and Acting Midshipman Philip Philibert. Roney was appointed a midshipman on 10 February 1809 with his warrant antedated to 24 July 1807. John Shaw later appointed him an acting sailing master. Thomas ap Catesby Jones ordered Roney's arrest on 20 April 1814 on three separate charges, including mutinous conduct and disobedience of orders. Roney was court-martialed on 26 July 1815, found guilty of improper conduct, and sentenced to a reprimand. Patterson ordered Roney's return to service without reprimand. DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 217 (M273, Roll No. 6). Like Roney, Philibert also had a clash with Jones. The latter ordered Philibert's arrest on 8 August 1813 on charges of disobedience of orders, neglect of duty, and treating a superior officer with contempt. Philibert leveled his own damning counter-charges against Jones, accusing his commander of sodomizing a crewman of gunboat *No. 156*. An investigation into the midshipman's charges exonerated Jones and prompted Secretary Crowninshield to order Philibert's dismissal. Philibert deserted before Patterson could execute the Secretary's order. The documents relating to Philibert's charges against Jones are in DNA, RG45, Subject File, Box 331 [NO], Folder 1813–15, Case of Midshipman Philip Philibert, 1813–15. See also Philibert to Jones, 14 April 1815, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 103 (M124, Roll No. 71); Crowninshield to Patterson, 16 May 1815, and Homans to Patterson, 14 August 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, pp. 123, 180 (M149, Roll No. 12); and McKee, *Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession*, pp. 438–39. Despite his reputation as a malcontent, Philibert managed to earn commendations from Patterson and Lieutenant Charles C. B. Thompson for his conduct in the defense of New Orleans. Patterson to Jones, 2 January 1815, p. 998, and Thompson to Patterson, 18 January 1815, p. 1042.

## Nicolls's Mission to the Creeks

*Having forwarded the Admiralty his proposal for an expedition against New Orleans,<sup>1</sup> Vice Admiral Cochrane proceeded to put the preliminary phase of this plan into action. This involved dispatching a cadre of Royal Marines to organize, arm, and train Creek warriors hostile to the United States into a disciplined fighting body. Cochrane also hoped to entice enough runaway slaves to the British banner to form a small corps of Colonial Marines. To direct this mission, the Scottish admiral chose Edward Nicolls of the Royal Marines, whose larger-than-life military exploits had earned him the nickname "Fighting Nicolls."<sup>2</sup> A man of great energy, high resolve, and unquestioned bravery, the Irish-born Nicolls seemed the ideal candidate to forge the battle-ready native force Cochrane envisioned supporting his New Orleans campaign.*

*Nicolls established his command at Prospect Bluff, the site of an Indian meeting ground on the east bank of the Apalachicola River some 15 miles from the Gulf.<sup>3</sup> Here, Nicolls oversaw the construction of a fort, and the organization, drill, and supply of his Indian and black recruits. The fort's remote location rendered its logistical support difficult and tedious, as all provisions, military stores, and equipment had to be transported up the shallow Apalachicola River in ship's boats. Moreover, because Nicolls's stronghold lay well within Spanish West Florida, its presence there was guaranteed to embroil the Marine officer in a military conflict between Spain and its American neighbor. For these and other reasons, Nicolls failed to realize the objectives his commander in chief had set out for him. The following documents treat the initial months of Nicolls's mission to the Gulf Coast frontier, when optimism for that sea soldier's success remained high.*

1. See Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, pp. 838–40.

2. Nicolls served actively in the Royal Marines for 40 years. He fought in theaters ranging from the West Indies to northern Europe to the Mediterranean. Nicolls's obituary offered the following catalog of his battle wounds: ". . . he had his left leg broken and right leg severely wounded, was shot through the body and right arm, received a severe sabre-cut in the head, was bayoneted in the chest, and lost an eye in his one hundredth and seventh action with the enemy having received altogether twenty-four wounds." *Gentleman's Magazine*, May 1865, pp. 644–66;

*quoted material appears on pp. 645–46. Nicolls's service as a Royal Marine is also treated in Nicolas, Royal Marine Forces, Vols. 1–2.*

*3. The fort at Prospect Bluff was later known as the "Negro Fort." Nicolls's activities at Prospect Bluff and Spanish West Florida are treated in depth in Millett, Maroons of Prospect Bluff. See also, Owsley, Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands.*

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
CHIEFS OF THE CREEK NATION

Copy

The Honourable Sir Alexander Cochrane, K B, Vice Admiral of the Red and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels upon the North American Station &c—&c—&c—

To the Great and Illustrious Chiefs of the Indian Nations.—

Your Letter<sup>1</sup> by Captain Pigot in answer to the one I wrote to you upon the 28th. March<sup>2</sup> has convinced me that your Breasts are filled by the glorious love of Liberty and that you are zealous in your wish to free yourself from the Chains that the Wicked Americans have prepared for you and your Children.

Yes Great Warriors your Father King George will not suffer his Indian Children to be made Slaves of by his rebellious Subjects.— You only will it to be free and I will support you by every means in my power.

That I may know your real wants and the number of your Warriors I send to you Colonel Nicholls with some officers and Men to instruct you in the Military Exercises— In him you may confide, he is an experienced Warrior and under his guidance you may look for Victory over your Foes, but to secure this a strict discipline must be submitted to, and an implicit obedience to orders, the bravest of Men may be overcome by a weaker force where regularity prevails.— I have sent by him two Field Pieces and Two thousand stand of Arms with One thousand Swords, whatever number of Warriors you can bring into the Field I will engage to arm them, which Arms shall remain as their property after you have driven the Americans from your territories for the defence of themselves and their Children Send to your deluded Brothers now fighting against you and tell them that by adhering to the cause of the Americans, they are forging Chains for themselves and their Children, tell them that when Congress meets, their Country is to be sold and that not one foot of Land will be left them to the Eastward of the Mississippi.

Thus all is now at stake, let them flock to your standard there they will be armed and placed on a footing with yourselves, Encourage also by every means the Emigration of Negroes, from Georgia and the Carolinas,— I have ordered the Chief I now send you to organize, Clothe and Arm as many as can be got to engage in the Common cause, By these means you cannot fail of Success and if you want any further assistance from me you may depend upon receiving it.—

The King, our Father, having with his allies subdued the French and sent their Emperor Buonaparte a prisoner to a little Island, has determined to chastise Mr. Madison and his worthless associates for which purpose great fleets and Armies are now coming over the Great Waters, when he will be forced to beg a Peace. Your rights will not be forgotten if you are true to yourselves, May the

Great Spirit guide you in your Councils and lead you to Victory Freedom and Independence.

Given under my hand and Seal at Bermuda the 29th June [1814]

(Signed) A. Cochrane

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 163–64.

1. Possibly a reference to Chiefs of the Creek Nation to Cochrane, 28 May 1814, pp. 827–28, or Chiefs of the Creek Nation to Cochrane, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 402–3. This latter documents was written in late May or early June 1814.

2. Cochrane to Chiefs of the Creek Nation, 28 March 1814, p. 824.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
BREVET MAJOR EDWARD NICOLLS, ROYAL MARINES

To Brevet Major Edward Nicolls Captain of the 156th. Company of the Royal Marines appointed, with the Local Rank of Lieutenant Colonel, to command a detachment of that Corps about to proceed upon a particular Service.—

Article 1st. The Officers and Men placed under your Command are intended as the Ground Work of a Corps which you are to endeavor to raise to the number of Five hundred Men for His Majesty's Service, upon the Continent of North America, amongst the Creek and other Indian Nations situated to the Northward of the Floridas (where you are to be landed) and such Negroes and others as may be induced to desert from the territory of the United States, to whom you are to hold out every Encouragement,

2nd. This Corps being meant as an Auxiliary force, for the assistance of the Indians in hostility against the Americans, and to instruct them in the use of Fire Arms, and in an organized mode of Warfare, your first and principal attention must be directed to this latter duty, taking great care to keep upon the best possible terms with the Indians and being particularly cautious not to assume more power over them than their Chiefs may think proper to invest you with but you have full authority to accept of any Command that may be offered to you by the Chiefs and in the event of your being employed with them, you will use every persuasion to induce the Indians to desist from the practice of scalping and other Species of cruelties which they have been in the habit of practicing towards their Prisoners; taking especial care that no such acts be committed upon any Captured Enemies by the Corps under your Command.

3rd. The wresting of New Orleans from the United States being an object much to be desired, you will use your best endeavors to obtain information of the nature of the Country between the River Appalachicola and the Mobbille territory: particularly whether the Indian Tribes, situated near to the Mississippi, would unite with your Force, or any other that might be sent to you, in the reduction of New Orleans. When proceeding upon any Service of this Kind you are to be guarded in all your movements for securing a retreat into the Indian and Spanish Territory should the Enemy be enabled to collect a Force too superior for you to

encounter with: taking care at all times to husband your Ammunition and other resources, and in the distribution of Arms, Clothing &ca among the Indians and others, you will see that they are given to those only who mean to serve.

4th. While the Spanish Government remains at Peace with the United States, you must be cautious (excepting in self defence) not to commit any act of hostility against the United States within the Spanish Boundary, or in any other way infringe on the neutrality of the Spanish territory; but should a War take place between them, you will in that case afford every possible assistance to the Spaniards, co-operating with them, should it be necessary, against the common Enemy.— In the latter event you will of course move to the Westward and the Scene of Action will lie between Mobile and the New Orleans territory.

5th. You will endeavor to draw off the Indian Tribes now acting with the Americans by assurances of every protection being given them and of their being supplied with Arms, which shall remain with them and not be recalled upon Peace being made, which is the case between them and the United States—

6th. Your Provisions will be supplied you from His Majesty's Ships stationed in the Gulf of Mexico, and from time to time you are to make such arrangements with their Commanders as may be necessary for ensuring you regular supplies, but in case of any failure therein, you will try and find Substitutes for your regular Provisions, the Country abounding with Cattle and Vegetables—

7th. While acting upon this Service on shore you will consider yourself vested with the Same Powers for holding Courts Martial &ca as are possessed by the Commanding Officer of any detachment of Marines doing duty on shore.—

8th. Yourself, the Officers and Detachment under your Command as well as Captain Woodbine (who was appointed by Captain Pigot of His Majesty's Ship *Orpheus*, to remain with the Indians) Sergeant Smith and Corporal Denny of the Royal Marines, belonging to the *Orpheus* (left under the Command of Captain Woodbine for the purpose of instructing the Indians in the use of Fire Arms)<sup>1</sup> together with such auxiliary Officers as may be here after appointed, and such Men who may be raised, are to be borne on a supplementary list of the 3rd. Battalion of Royal Marines for Pay: the Officers for the Pay and allowances of their respective Local Rank; you will therefore cause regular Returns of the Detachment and Corps under your Command to be Sent, by every opportunity, to Major Lewis or the Commanding Officer of the Said Battalion, in order that he may direct the Pay Master thereof to furnish you with the means of paying the Officers and Men, distinguishing those non-commissioned Officers who are competent to, and are employed in drilling the new raised Corps, to whom I have ordered double pay to be allowed while So employed.

9th. You will herewith be furnished with eight blank Commissions for auxiliary Officers, four for Lieutenants, and four for 2nd. Lieutenants, which as your Corps encreases to the number of Men requiring these additional Officers, you will cause to be filled up for such Gentlemen Volunteers as you may conceive are competent to the Employment; but you will be careful not to appoint more Officers, than may be absolutely required for the number of Men raised and to accept of the Services of none but Persons of respectable Character.—

10th. You will keep a correct Journal of your proceedings, a Copy of which, with a Return of the Detachment and Corps under your Command, containing all the particulars of their State, Condition and Progress, you will forward to me by every opportunity either by the Rivers Appalachicola, Pensacola, St. Augustine,



or by Amelia Island; acquainting me at the Same time what number of Men you consider it likely to be raised, that you may be supplied with Clothing in good time, of the state of the Country, the disposition of the Indians, and of all circumstances which may tend to the promotion of, or relate to the Service upon which you are employed: using in matters which may require Secrecy the Cyphers of the Telegraphic dictionary furnished you herewith: for your better information and guidance you will receive with this a Copy of Captain Pigot's report<sup>2</sup> of the state of the Country and the Indian Tribes while he was employed among them. 11th. For the due encouragement of your Zeal in the performance of the Service pointed out in the foregoing Instructions, you will receive herewith (in addition to your appointment as local Lieutenant Colonel) a Commission appointing you with the Local Rank of Colonel, to the Command of the Colonial Corps of Marines employed upon the Continent of North America,<sup>3</sup> the authority of which you are to consider yourself invested with, when you shall have augmented the Detachment under your Command to the number of Five hundred—

Given under my hand at Bermuda 4th. July 1814

(Signed) A Cochrane Vice Admiral and  
Commander in Chief upon the North American Station

By Command of the Vice Admiral  
(Signed) Wm. Ballhetchet

N.B. You will herewith receive a number of printed Proclamations<sup>4</sup> which you will distribute among the Black Population; and further assure them that those who emigrate from America shall have Lands given them in some of the British Colonies on which to Settle, and that at any future period when there may be Peace with America they shall not be returned to their former Masters

(Signed) A. Cochrane—

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 480–85. Endorsed in left margin opposite date line: "A Copy./A. Cochrane."

1. See Pigot to Woodbine, 10 May 1814, pp. 824–25; and, Pigot to Smith and Denny, 31 May 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fol. 9.

2. See Pigot to Cochrane, 8 June 1814, pp. 829–32.

3. The Admiralty disallowed Nicolls appointment as lieutenant colonel and colonel. See Croker to Cochrane, 10 August 1814, p. 844.

4. See Cochrane's proclamation of 2 April 1814, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 60.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
GOVERNOR OF BAHAMAS CHARLES CAMERON

Bermuda 4th. July 1814

Sir,

Lieutenant Colonel Nicolls will have the honor to deliver this letter to your Excellency—

I have selected him as an Officer of much experience, zeal & Intrepidity, to proceed with a detachment of Marines & Artillery to join the Indians in order to train them to oppose regular Troops, he takes with him 3 Captains, a Surgeon & a large proportion of non-commissioned Officers, in all about 115 with two Field Pieces & he is provided with every Article I thought he could want, the only things I had it not in my power to give him are dragoon Accoutrements which possibly your Excy. may be able to provide him with— Each of the Ships have 600 Stand of Arms with Ammunition &ca—, which with the 500 that went in the *Espoir* & the 2000 Capt Pigot delivered, make 3500 Stand that have been sent from hence, I have been given to understand that a considerable number has also been sent from New Providence & you will do me a favor by informing me of how many more you can spare— I have a great many yet remaining in store, but expect to find full employment for them all, in the heart of the United States as soon as Lord Hill & the Army arrive— Lieut. Col. Nicolls is empowered to raise a Regiment of Colonial Marines from the American Blacks, of which he is to be Colonel as soon as they amount to 500 Men; he is possessed of some Blank Commissions for 1st. & 2nd. Lieuts. & possibly your Excy. may be able to recommend some active young men, acquainted with the Country who may wish to be employed. they will receive pay & if they conduct themselves properly are very likely to be allowed Rank—. I have to beg your Excy's. interest in procuring good Pilots for the Ships & guides for the Troops— If the prospects are favorable it is my intention to send large reinforcements in about 2 months hence— It will be a matter of great importance to obtain the Countenance of the Spaniards, without their committing themselves to the United States, I fear their natural Jealousy will induce them to consider our efforts in favor of the Indians as pointed at obtaining possession of the Country— Should your Excy. have any Communication with their Governors assure them that I have no motive whatever but to preserve the Indians from being destroyed by the United States, the maintaining of them in their rights is the best barrier the Spanish Provinces in the Floridas can have against their encroachments— You may also say that in the event of Spain being at War with America I will assist them with all the Force that can be spared from other Services— It will be a great object to establish a Communication with Coll. Nicolls by St. Augustine & by Amelia Island possibly this may be in your Excy's powers to effect— I expect a number of Ships from England & other quarters; as soon as they arrive the force on the Providence & Georgia Stations will be considerably encreased I have the honor to be &c—

(Signed) A. Cochrane

To His Excy.  
Governor Cameron  
&c— &c— &c— New Providence

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 67

Bermuda 23rd. July 1814

Sir,

I have to request you will be pleased to inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that in fulfillment of the intention expressed in my letter No. 48 of the 20th. June<sup>1</sup> I have placed under the command of Brevet Major Nicolls of the Royal Marines, the Officers and Detachment of that Corps mentioned underneath and having furnished him with two howitzers and a field Piece and 300 Suits of Clothing I have embarked him and his Detachment, with 1,000 Stand of Arms, on board the *Hermes* and *Carron* to proceed in execution of the Instructions delivered to him of which the enclosed is a copy.— The Officers have received each, three months pay in advance, and the allowances of his local Rank and pay for that period for the Detachment is placed in the hands of the Brevet Major, all of whom together with what Officers may be hereafter appointed and such Men as shall be raised are to [be] borne on a Supplementary list of the 2nd. (late 3rd.) Battalion of Marines for Pay &c.—

I have furnished the Brev[et] Major with—1000 Dollars also, for [the] extraordinary expenses of the Service upon which he is to be employed [&] have given him directions to Keep an exact account of his disbursements therefrom and to appropri[ate] it only where it may be absolutely required—<sup>2</sup>

I enclose also a Copy of the Orders<sup>3</sup> which I have given The Honorable Captain Percy of the *Hermes* for assisting and cooperating with the Brevet Major— I have the honor to be Sir, Your very obedient humble Servant

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane

Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

Detachment embarked on the *Hermes* & *Carron*.

<u>Names of Officers—</u>	<u>Present Rank—</u>	<u>Local Rank.</u>
Rt. Henry	2d. Lt. R:M: Artillery—	Captain
Willm. Allen	2d. Lt. R: M:—	Captain
J. McWilliam	2d. Lt. R: M:—	Captain
Jas. Chapman	Serjeant—	Lt. & Adjutant
Michl: Goodsir	Surgeon—	Surgeon
	H:M:S: <i>Dominica</i>	

Eleven nonCommissioned Officers and Ninety Seven Privates—

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 478–79. Bracketed text supplied from a letter book copy of this document. Cochrane to Croker, 23 July 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2348, pp. 42–43.

1. Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, pp. 838–40.

2. For Cochrane's instructions on the disbursement of these funds, see Cochrane to Nicolls, 5 July 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 119–20.

3. Cochrane to Percy, 5 July 1814, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 486–88.

BREVET MAJOR EDWARD NICOLLS, ROYAL MARINES, TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Nassau Providence July 27th. 1814<sup>1</sup>

Sir/

We arrived here on the 22nd. Instant. I waited on the Governor<sup>2</sup> and presented your letters,<sup>3</sup> he received me most handsomely, has given me every thing I asked for, is quite a right sort of man and has no difficulties, he has recommended four young men for Commissions, which I have accepted, they go down with us, are all from the Militia, two of them Artillery Officers, the Adjutant of the Militia Mr. Cassel is one of them he has given up an appointment of 2000 Dollars pr. annum. which will I hope be given back to him on his return, he is a very great acquisition, and I hope if we are successful you will be pleased to give him a Captains Commission, I have been busily Employed in collecting every description of information, the more I hear the better I am pleased, and my hopes of Success gain strength daily: a very intelligent frenchman has given me complete information respecting Baritaria, I am in hope to take new orleans through the means of the people there, a Monsieur Lafete<sup>4</sup> Commands them and I trust there is nothing against them on record here that would Prevent my accepting his services and those of 800 followers I have also had complete information how I am to Attack the place which is to be done through lake Ponchetrain, as soon therefore as I arrive at Appalachicola I shall go up and gain the Creeks with a few people and Consult with them before I set out. I shall request Captain Percy to go or send to Pansacola and procure through the house of Forbes, and Co a steady person to proceed to new orleans and bring me back answers to a long list of Queries which I shall give him in writting, and an other Person on the same errand to Mobile by the time they have returned, I shall have returned, and then request that the whole squadron or a part present themselves before Baritaria, propose to Lafete his coming into our service and assisting us in taking orleans,<sup>5</sup> if he goes, or even agrees to be neutral I think there is no fear of success the people here say the New Orleans folks are very anxious to get rid of the Americans I have also got a letter to a Mr. Workman who resides there from Mr. Lewis Kerr a Most intelligent gentleman of Nassau who was in the American service, at the time they took possession of Louisiana he was Brigade Major to the former Governor of New Orleans and resigned his post on the Americans declaring against Great Britain, he has Given me a Chart, and so well has he described the Position of New Orleans and its environs that I feel he would be a most usefull person to have with me there, and in your next letter I beg to suggest to you the propriety of Your granting the permission to employ him in Case I find it Necessary, The field Officers, Captains, Lieutenants, Non-Commissioned Officers, and privates of the 2nd. West India Regiment have requested me to inform you how ready they are, and how happy they would be to serve with me under your orders in Florida, indeed I think if I had that Regiment there with me, or a Corps of Detachments from several Black Regiments under the Command of Major Flemming of the 2nd. West India Regiment, it would have a very good effect ye. Blacks I think would the more readily join us if they saw men of their own Color in a State of discipline, Major Flemming is a very Active Young man who I have long known, and he has had a

great deal of experience, I trust if you have it in Contemplation to Apply for such aid you will be good enough to name him as the Officer to Command it, Major Poiters who is governor-Camerons Brigade Major, has requested me also to say to you, how anxious he is to serve with me in Case my force should increase, so as to give employment to an Officer of his rank all this volunteering is with the consent of Governor Cameron who would have sent a Detachment of the 2nd. West India Regiment with me if he had the power, it has been the intention of Captain Percy to have sailed these two days past, but it has blown so strong as to prevent it. several well informed persons here have recommended me to take from hence some things as presents for the Indian Chiefs which they say will be valued far above Money, and as I shall have to depend on them for getting me information, as well as to distribute my Proclamations<sup>6</sup> and to bring others over to our side, I have with the advice and Concurrence of Governor Cameron laid out £100 out of the Thousand dollars you give me as follows 3 Fowling Pieces 3 Belts 3 powder Flasks with a proportion of flints and 6 Gilt Sabres and belts, 4 Pieces of red Camblett 12 dozen of gold gilt buttons, with thread for working Jackets and Trowsers two pairs of Gold Epauletts with some vermilion for painting the Chiefs when they go to War, any thing red attracts their attention very much, on the day we sailed we fell in with the *Sherbourne* Schooner who brought me intelligence of the Americans being on their way to attack Pensacola of his having informed the Governor of the Havana,<sup>7</sup> who requested he would acquaint the Commanders of any of our Men of War, how glad he would be of their aid in expelling the Common enemy, on receiving this important intelligence it was determined Immediately to land and acquaint Governor Cameron, who was so good as to write to the Governor of the Havanna, requesting he would give us all possible aid this Circumstance I am glad, it will remove all jealousy on the part of the Spaniards as Necessity will compel them to accept of our assistance, and if the place is taken before we arrive it will of Course all be enemy's country and we can do as we please. I think then the first thing I should do, would be to fortify the Bluffs as an entrepot if I find it tenable, as soon as we have heard the resolves of Don Apodaca. I shall close his letter and forward it to You. Lieut. Hope having given us a Copy of Captain Woodbines last dispatches to Capt. Pigot I herewith send you a copy of them, from these reports I have requested Governor Cameron to send me all the Arms he can dispose of which will Amount to 1500 Stand also for a Couple of long 24 pounders to fortify the Bluff, or whatever other place we may determine on, I also beg to State to you the necessity there will be for me having a Couple of large Launches, or flat Boats, as well to carry things up from the Island to the Bluff, as to carry on Operations up the River. Mr. Bryerly who I told You had Volunteered his services, may I beg of you Sir to send him to me, I know I shall get on the better for having him, we are likely to have a great deal of River and Lake work, in which he would be in valuable. Mr. Mer and Mr. Phipps also Volunteered and with a few steady Seamen as Coxswains of boats, I think it would much forward the service of this however I shall have a more full Account to send you when I get to the Spot,

We arrived at the Havanna this day 4th. August and waited on the Governor with Governor Camerons letter he informed us that he had later letters from Pensacola than those brought by the *Sherborne*, and that they did not stand in need of our aid that the American General<sup>8</sup> had Communicated with the Governor of Pensacola<sup>9</sup> and told him that the moment he suffered a british soldier to debark in Florida,

it should be the Signal to Attack the Spaniards,<sup>10</sup> I then asked His Excellency if he considered all Florida as Spanish, or only the parts virtually in Possession of his Troops. he said only that part of it in Possession of Spanish Troops. I then told him I should debark and attack the Americans, wherever I found them which he did not gainsay. we now know from Captain Umphrevill that they have invested Pensacola and are only Sixteen Miles from it, I think it must be their intention to attack the Indians under Captain Woodbine, but I hope to Attack them first, which I shall loose not time in doing as soon as I get there; they cannot pass through the Country of the Chochus to get at the Bluff,<sup>11</sup> and they are in actual hostility with them, as several Chochuos Came into Pensacola wounded before the *Childers* sail'd, we leave this Immediately. I send this by the *Childers* and shall write to Governor Cameron requesting all the Arms and Ammunition to be sent to me as soon as Possible, we must have flour and Spirits before we can Commence Operations. I have the honor to be Sir Your faithful humble Servant,

Edward Nicolls Lt. Colnl.<sup>12</sup>

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fols. 54–55. Docketed: “Bt. Lt. Coll. Nicolls/proceedings to 27 July/to Augt./14—.”

1. This letter was written in journal form and embraces the period from 27 July to 4 August 1814.

2. Charles Cameron, governor of Bahamas.

3. Cochrane to Cameron, 4 July 1814, above, and, perhaps Cochrane to Cameron, 23 June 1814, *ibid*, MS 2349, pp. 93–94. In the 23 June letter, Cochrane informed Cameron of his intention to increase supplies to the Indians owing to “the flattering prospects . . . of making a diversion upon” the Gulf Coast “frontier of the United States.” He planned to increase Nicolls’s force if that officer forwarded reports favorable to such an operation.

4. Jean Lafitte, leader of a pirate band operating out of Grand Terre Island, Lake Barataria. On American efforts to eradicate the Baratarians, see pp. 895–907.

5. On British overtures to Lafitte, see pp. 885–95.

6. For the text of Nicoll’s proclamation to the inhabitants of Louisiana dated 29 August 1814, see pp. 891–93.

7. Juan Ruiz Apodaca, captain general of Cuba.

8. Major General Andrew Jackson, U.S.A.

9. Mateo González Manrique.

10. Jackson had received reports that the governor of Pensacola had not only provided sanctuary and succor to Indians guilty of “murdering our unoffending women and children,” but had allowed the British to land on Spanish soil to arm natives at war with the United States. The American general wrote the Spanish governor warning of “disagreeable consequences” if this intelligence was true. Jackson to Manrique, 12 July 1814, Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), pp. 85–86.

11. Prospect Bluff.

12. Though Vice Admiral Cochrane appointed Nicolls to the local rank of lieutenant colonel of Royal Marines, the Admiralty disallowed the appointment upon receiving word of it. For that reason, Nicolls’s actual rank of brevet major is used for his correspondence published in this volume.

CHIEFS OF THE CREEK NATION TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Copy

[ca. August 1814]

Great and Illustrious Warrior

We have received the letter<sup>1</sup> you sent to us by Colonel Nicholls—You say well Great Chief that our hearts are filled with the glorious love of liberty, and

protected by our Great and good Father we will live or die free of which we have given hard proof by choosing to abandon our Country rather than live in it as Slaves. We thank you for the Supplies you have sent and promise to send, we receive them with unbounded gratitude, but for them we should all have perished, be pleased to send our love and duty to our great father King George he has shewn that he has not forgot his once happy Children and we bless the great Spirit for freeing him from his Enemies in Europe.

Our long absence from him we liken to the longing of a father for a lost Son our happiness like a father that had found one.

Your Sons whom you have sent to our aid we hail as Brothers on the Shores of the Sea but we hope soon to embrace them in the land of our forefathers, our distress has been beyond the power of our tongues to tell you we were driven from our homes and our Clothes and household utensils taken from us From that time until we took your Sons by the hand, famine, nakedness and their accompanying miseries have been our lot— Our fathers were true men to your father, they told us to be so always they are dead but their truth remains with us, and we implore our good father to continue his paternal assistance for we have fought and bled in his cause— Pray of him great Chief keep a fort on this Coast for the Spanish are weak frail friends, in our distress they turned us into the Woods like dogs but since your sons came here we walk like Men in their Streets.

The Chief you have sent to us we receive as we ought we will obey him in all things, we have made him our head Warrior and Commander in Chief— We will get all the black men we can to join your Warriors, we thank you also for your promise of protecting our rights in a general peace, taking care we will do our best to unite our red brethren and form a strong arm that will be ready to crush the wicked and rebellious Americans when they shall dare to insult our father and his Children. We hope you will always keep a chief here with us for as long as he stays among us your ways will be shewn to us and we will walk in them.—

We pray to the great Spirit for, and give our blessing to your Father and to you, and tell him we will fight bravely under his Colors. In the names of our brothers

Signed Capich X Mico  
Hopoy X Mico<sup>2</sup>  
their  
John X Frances<sup>3</sup> Warrior of Tuckeese  
Peter X M<sup>c</sup>Queen<sup>4</sup> Warrior of Talasee  
marks

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 165–66. The partially obscured docketing on this letter reads: “Letter to the Indian/Chiefs and their answer.”

1. See Cochrane to Creek Chiefs, 29 June 1814, pp. 860–61.

2. A chief of the Creek Nation. See Benjamin Hawkins to Edward Nicolls, 28 May 1815, in *Niles' Weekly Register*, 24 June 1815.

3. Probably Josiah Francis or Hillis Hadjo, a follower of Tecumseh and the most influential Creek prophet and holy man of the period. In 1815, Francis travelled with Edward Nicolls to London to secure British diplomatic and military support for the Creek Nation. He was hanged by order of Andrew Jackson in 1818 for his supposed role in instigating the First Seminole War. On Francis's life, see Owsley, “Prophet of War,” pp. 273–93.

4. Peter McQueen, prominent leader among the war faction of the Creek Indians. He would continue his hostilities against the United States in the First Seminole War.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
BREVET MAJOR EDWARD NICOLLS, ROYAL MARINES

H M Ship *Tonnant*  
Chesapeake 17 Sept. 1814

Sir

It is my particular direction that you do not make any movement towards New Orleans without you receive instructions from me to that purport, but that you do your utmost to Arm and drill the Indians so as to enable them to co-operate with any force I may hereafter have occasion to employ them with;—<sup>1</sup> A Vessel laden with presents accompanies the *Sea Horse*, their disposal I have left to Captain Gordon and yourself, and I have to desire that you will undertake nothing of consequence without his concurrence. I have the honor to be &c

A. Cochrane

LB, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 167–68.

1. This letter was written six days after Nicolls participated in the failed British attack against Fort Bowyer, which guarded the navigational approach to Mobile.

## Embargo on Pensacola

*When General Jackson received intelligence confirming that the British were organizing a force of Indians at Pensacola to attack Mobile and New Orleans, he immediately ordered an embargo placed on food stores shipped to the Spanish West Florida town. As Pensacola relied heavily on Louisiana for its food supply, Jackson's embargo disrupted British efforts to use the town as a base of operations. It also created hardship for the residents of Pensacola, where provisions were already in short supply.*<sup>1</sup>

1. In a letter notifying Louisiana Governor Claiborne of the embargo, Jackson reported: "They are in great want of Provisions at Pensacola." See *Jackson to Claiborne, 30 August 1814, Jackson, Papers (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 126.*

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.:  
GENERAL ORDER PROHIBITING THE EXPORT OF PROVISIONS TO  
SPANISH WEST FLORIDA

Genl. Orders

Head Quarters 7 M[ilitar]y District  
Town Mobile August 27 1814

All officers commanding Military posts Garrisons or detachments at New Orleans Mobile, or their vicinity as well as on the Lakes and rivers forming out lets therefrom are ordered to use every exertion to prohibit the passage to Pensacola or any other Spanish Port or harbour any vessel laded in whole or part with



provisions of any description except the necessary sea stores, We cannot feed our enemies, any person found supplying them with provisions or holding intercourse with them enemical to the government of the, U S will be immediately arrested confined and tried under the 56 and 7 articles of the rules and articles of war—<sup>1</sup> By command of the Majr. Gnl.

Tho<sup>s</sup> L Butler<sup>2</sup> captn. 28 Infty  
and Aid De camp

ADS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Unregistered Series, J-1814 (M222, Roll No. 16).

1. These articles authorized the court-martial of persons giving aid, comfort, or intelligence to the enemy. Violators were subject to the death penalty. *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 2, p. 366.

2. Captain Thomas L. Butler, U.S.A., was breveted to the rank of major on 8 January 1815 for gallantry at the Battle of New Orleans.

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
SECRETARY OF WAR JOHN ARMSTRONG<sup>1</sup>

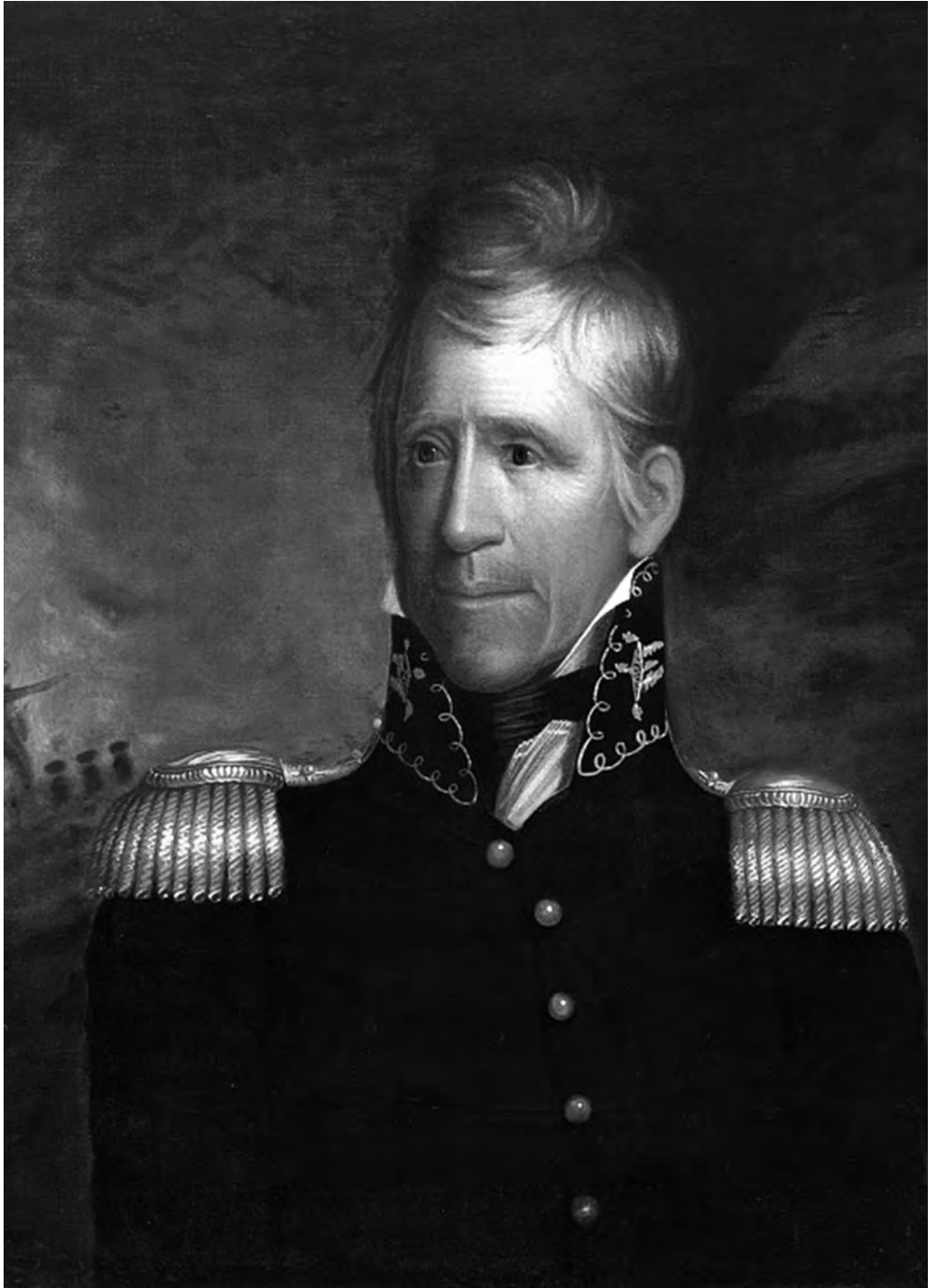
Headquarters 7th. M. District  
Mobile Augt 30th. 1814

Sir

Mine of 26—<sup>72</sup> will have advised you of the landing of a British force at Pensacola, and large reinforcements daily expected— Having recd. information that they chiefly depended on drawing their supplies from Mobile, and Neworleans, I issued the order<sup>3</sup> a copy of which I inclose— I immediately despatched a confidential agent to Pensacola with necessary instructions, he last evening, and confirms the account of the—British having landed there, that he saw from 120, to 200 and many officers, a small park of field artillery, and about 500—Indians in British uniform, armed compleat with Musquets, Bayonets & Boxes, and under the drill of British officers.

This agent collected from their conversation, that there were on the Iland of St Rose<sup>4</sup> Still a larger force,— and large reinforcements daily expected—that the British officer<sup>5</sup> had Sent a number of Sloops & Schooners under Spanish colours to Mobile, and Neworleans, for corn, flower, and other provisions, with a number of active agents to our frontier to purchase & drive their cattle. I immediately Issued orders to stop all vessills, laden in whole, or in part, with corn flower, or other provisions, (sea stores excepted) and charged the officers commanding on the frontier, to keep out good patroles, and apprehend all droves with their drivers bound for Pensacola, and hope they will reach the different posts in due time, to prevent a supply of provisions from this frontier—

Private letters which I have Seen advise the writers friends here, to secure themselves by removing to Pensacola without delay, as this country will be shortly overwhelmed with numbers, and all that resist will be doomed to destruction— regardless of numbers, resistance will be made and every inch of ground contended for— I hope in a few days to get Mobile Point in a state of defence— (this



*Andrew Jackson*

alone is the Point capable of defence, had the garrison at this place been removed to Dauphin Iland, instead of desmantling Fort Bowyer, It would have compleatly prevented any force from entering the bay and given Security & confidence to this section of the frontier—

Pensacola has become the strong point, from which Great Britain, can and will carry on her Military operation against us— Commanding the ocean, having transportation at will, she can assail any point on our coast either east, or west, in a few days— this will necessarily compell us as soon as practicable to strengthen all our weak points, not having sufficient transportation for a disposable force (if we had one) to enable us to move rapidly to the relief of any Point that may be invaded— hence results, the propriety of dispossessing the British from Pensacola, This in our Possession would give the advantage to us, and leave us a disposable force always ready to cover any Points that could be assailed by Great Britain— I hope Government will take into consideration the importance of Pensacola in the hands of our enemy, and give me orders accordingly.

I have to beg one moment of your attention to the enclosed letter and Statement of Capt. Butler—

It appears that by the omission or neglect of the colo. of his regiment, great injustice has been done to him in his rank— nothing leads to injure military feelings more than such neglect— it carries thorns with it that a brave and meritorious officer never ought to wear— I have no doubt, as soon as you read the enclosed letter of cpat. Butler you will cause Justice to be done him, and have him place in the Register of the army where of right he ought to Stand— I am verry respectfully yr Mo. ob Servt.

Andrew Jackson  
Major Genl. Comdg—

LS, DNA, RG 107, Letters Received by the Secretary at War Registered Series, J-160 (8) (M221, Roll No. 63). A letter book copy of this correspondence is in DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 62). Another printed version is in Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, pp. 37–38.

1. Although this letter was addressed to John Armstrong, he had been replaced by Secretary of State James Monroe as acting secretary of war on 30 August.

2. See Jackson to Monroe, 25–27 August 1814, in Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 122–24.

3. Jackson's general order of 27 August prohibiting trade with Pensacola, above.

4. A narrow barrier island south of Pensacola Bay.

5. Jackson identifies this officer as "Coll Nicholls of the Royal Marines" in Jackson to Claiborne, 30 August 1814, Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 126.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

New Orleans September 7th. 1814.

Sir,

I had the honor to write you at some length on the 2nd. inst.—<sup>1</sup> I have this day received a Letter from your aid de camp, written by your order, dated on

the 31st. ulto.<sup>2</sup> brought by Captn. Wirt of the Army,— in consequence of your Letter of the 27t. ulto.<sup>3</sup> to His Excellency Governor Claiborne, he requested the Co-operation of the naval Force under my command to prevent the exportation of provisions; particularly to Any spanish port,— And I have given the necessary instructions accordingly— as regards the schooner lately from Pensacola, I shall not permit her to depart with provisions for any foreign port; and have directed a watch to be kept on her movements; as provisions can very easily be conveyed through the different inlets which lead from the lakes to this City, without passing within many miles of any Fort or military post;— these I have ordered to be strictly watched and any person detected conveying provisions thro them for exporation, to be taken into custody— To guard these avenues to this City effectually will require all my force; for ere long, there will be many attempts to relieve the Enemy by these openings.— A sudden stoppage of those supplies which they have been in the habit of receiving in abundance from this place; and which they doubtless calculated a continuance of; will affect them very seriously.— The adoption of such measures is in my opinion, weilding against the Enemy, a most powerful Weapon; & if Spain thinks proper to deprive herself of the advantages of neutrality, by admitting our Enemy the Free use of her ports, from whence to carry on their operations against us; she must take, & ought to be made to feel, the Consequences of her direliction from principles.— I have the honour to be with great respect Sir Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

Comg. U.S. Naval Forces. Louisiana

ALS, NHpR, Naval Manuscripts (Roll No. 1).

1. Patterson to Jackson, 2 September 1814, pp. 877–79.

2. Letter not found.

3. Jackson to Claiborne, 27 August 1814, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 62).

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Head Quarters 7 M D  
Mobile Octo 14 1814

Sir

Information reached me last evening that Vessels with Flour are daily passing from N Orleans to Pensacola to feed our enemy contrary to my express orders and the rules of warfare. Through the same channel I am informed that the British are fitting out Barges mounting 22 and 12 pound caronades, which must be to cut off our communication and supplies from New Orleans— I have therefore to request that you will without delay advise me whether I am to rely upon the employment of your Flotilla in preserving the communication through the Lakes and along the coast to pass Heron, The existance of my army and the defence of the District assigned to my command and protection may depend upon the preservation of this communication, and the safety of N Orleans greatly

depends on your vigilance with the Flotilla, I must consequently request of you a prompt and decisive answer to the above enquiries— Not a moment is to be lost, The Barges fitting out at Pensacola, with proper vigilance on your part may be easily destroyed with a few Gun Boats— I have the honor to be &C

Sigd. Andw. Jackson M G comdg

LB, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 62). This letter is also reproduced in Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 161–62.

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Head Quarters 7th. Military district  
Mobile Oct 23d. 1814.—

Sir

Your communication of the 17th.<sup>1</sup> inst by Mr. Boyd, reached me this morning.—

I regret that you Should have misconceived my construction of the relation, existing between the Navy and army— I never had an Idea that you were bound to acknowledge my Command.— I know that we can together act only, by common consent; and So only can we effectually Serve our Country.— Therefore I thought that a Communication of my wishes would have ensured an instantanious co operation on your Part.— And I Still hope, when you receive the Letter, I had the honor to address to you on the 14th inst. you will Immediately take the Steps necessary to effect the objects therein detailed.—

Our Situation has been extremely disagreeable, during the absence of the Naval force from our Waters— The enemy has advanced into our Territory—but wanting the aid of a few Gun Boats to Protect this Section of my Command, I could not make even a Temporary movement to Punish his Temerity

Now that I hear of a Part of Your flotilla, approaching this Station, I Shall leave here for a Short time.— during my absence—I Shall rely confidently on the Navy, for the Preservation, of the Coast from the ravages of the enemy, and of the Communication from New Orleans to Mobile Point— without this is open, our Supplies for the Army will be very Precarious— the Cannon lent by the Navy have arrived; for the loan of them, Permit to thank you.—

It will afford me great Pleasure to See you at Head Quarters; And to ensure a good understanding with the Navy.— I have the honor to be very respectfully,—

A. Jackson,  
Majr. Genl. Comg.

LB, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers, (Roll No. 62). This letter is also reproduced in Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 172, and, in Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, pp. 80–81.

1. Not found. The editors of Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), identify this document as a letter fragment in the Andrew Jackson Papers housed at the Library of Congress. The published index to these papers does not list this letter as part of its collection.

## Attack on Fort Bowyer

*The capture of Mobile was the first stepping stone in Admiral Cochrane's campaign for the conquest of New Orleans. Once secured, that town would then serve as a base of operations from which British forces might move against the Crescent City either overland or by water. But before this element of Cochrane's plan came to fruition, two of his subordinates launched their own assault on the Gulf Coast town, the failure of which may have factored in the elimination of Mobile as the New Orleans expedition's first target.<sup>1</sup> The authors of this unsuccessful enterprise, Captain William H. Percy and Major Edward Nicolls, clearly underestimated the courage and pugnacity of the U.S. garrison at Fort Bowyer, a wood and earthen work that commanded the entrance to Mobile Bay. In an action spanning 15–16 September, the American defenders turned back attacks from ashore and afloat, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy including the loss of the 20-gun sixth rate *Hermes*.<sup>2</sup> Six months later, the British would obtain a different outcome when they returned in far greater force to the waters off Mobile Bay.<sup>3</sup>*

1. Cochrane articulated Mobile's role in New Orleans operations in *Cochrane to Croker*, 20 June 1814, pp. 838–40. From a letter to Secretary of State for War and the Colonies Earl Bathurst written in early September, it is plain that Mobile still figured in Cochrane's calculations. See *Cochrane to Bathurst*, 2 September 1814, pp. 1088–89.

2. For the British operation against Fort Bowyer, see Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, pp. 108–12.

3. For documentation on the British capture of Fort Bowyer, see pp. 1049–54.

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Head Quarters 7 M[ilitar]y. District  
Town Mobile Augt. 27th. 1814

Sir,

By my Express direct from Pensacola I have information which can be implicitly relied on that th[re]e British Vessels the *Hermes*, *Orpheus*,<sup>1</sup> and *Caron* arrived at that place on the 25th. Inst. And on Yesterday disembarked a large number Arms munitions of war Ammunition and provisions and marched into the Spanish Fort with between two and three hundred troops under Command of Colonel Nicholas—That 13 Sail of the line with a large number of transports are daily expected to arrive at that place under Command of Sir J. Towbridge<sup>2</sup> with Ten thousand troops, This information produces the necessity of again occupying Mobile point; which I have put in execution And must request that you will with all the Gun Boats and armed vessels under your command repair without loss of time to the point and cooperate with Majr. Laurence for the defence of that important place, as well as to be ready to aid me in any other operations I may find necessary for the Security of this Country—I am &c.

A. Jackson

LB, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 62).

1. Jackson's intelligence source misidentified H.M. brig-sloop *Sophie* as *Orpheus*. Patterson corrected this error in his reply of 2 September below.

2. Captain Edward Thomas Troubridge.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

(Copy)

New Orleans 2nd. september 1814.

Sir

I am this moment, honored with the receipt of your letter of the 27th. ulto., brought by express, the information contained therein reached this, direct from Pensacola some days ago, brought by a very intelligent American, upon whom implicit reliance can be placed, and who stated, that three British armed Vessels, viz, *Carron*, *Hermes*, and *sophie*, (and not the *Orpheus* Frigate,) had arrived there, that the only Troops, brought by them, was about one hundred and fifty marines, Commanded by a Colo. of Marines,<sup>1</sup> that they had been sent from apalachicola, in consequence of a request made by the Governor of Pensacola,<sup>2</sup> who was fearful, of your approach, from the letter you had, written him;<sup>3</sup> Captain Woodbine of the British marines, stationed in Pensacola, gave out that a number of Transports, with a large Force of Land-Troops had been expected to be convoyed to Pensacola, by those vessels, which arrived there, without them; but no confidence, whatever was placed in the report, and from every information I can obtain, from thence the report of a large Force being daily expected there, originated with this Captain Woodbine, who my informant states to be very apprehensive of an attack, from you, and creates these reports, under the impression, that should such be your intentions, they may deter you from carrying them, into effect, and from the frequent reports of this nature, which have been communicated from Pensacola, and proved groundless, it appears to me highly probable, that, which you have received, may have originated from the same source, unless you have a confidential agent at that Place from whom you receive your information.

To co-operate with you, in every measure, where t'is practicable, with the Naval Force under my command, is my most ardent wish, and shall most readily and with all heart, whenever I can do so without exposing my vessels, to a certain loss from a too superior Force, or placing them in a situation, where they will be blockaded, and effectually cut off from this place, or from acting in concert, for the protection of the sea Board generally; which they would, most certainly be, in Mobile Bay; for if they once entered it the enemy would most unquestionably prevent their leaving it again, during the war; The consequences would be, that for want of the necessary supplies, I should soon be compelled, to lay them up, the numerous avenues, to this truly important City, the great depot of the western Country, will then be left open to the enemy, who will in that event, be able without difficulty, to introduce in the Country any number of Troops they may wish, without opposition, and obtain possession of it, ere it were known here that they were on the coast, and it appears to my mind that this, is the most important place to defend, and most capable of being defended by a small Force; and should the Enemy attempt Mobile Bay, and point, with the force report states: the very small naval force I have, must be sacrificed, without being able to render any aid of moment in defence of either; as the Bar at the entrance of Mobile Bay, will admit vessels drawing 15 feet water, to enter and the Bay is sufficiently deep as high as Dog river, for them to act with great advantage, and should they be in force sufficient to pass the Fort, six Gun-Boats, would be no obstacle to them, whereas the

approaches to this City by water are so shoal as to prevent the enemy's bringing larger, or heavier Vessels than those I have which can then offer a defence that will promise a successful issue my Idea is to station my Vessels at different Points in the Lake<sup>4</sup> to the eastward of this, and if attacked by too superior a force retreat to the Fort at the Rigolets,<sup>5</sup> then make a stand and aid that Battery in the defence of that important Pass; for should this part of the Country be invaded, it strikes me it will be by that route, as no enemy will I think be so unwise as to attempt it by way of the River, where their shipping can be destroyed by fire vessels; and should the Gun Boats be withdrawn or cut off from the neighbourhood of this City, the enemy will have it in their power to commit depredations on the coast with impunity from their small cruizers

This sir, is my view of the subject of the defence of this Country, as respects the naval Force, and which I have judged it necessary to give that a perfect understanding may exist between us.

The U.S. Schooner *Carolina* of 14 Guns arrived here a few days ago<sup>6</sup> she is attached to my command, and the Honorable Secretary of the Navy in his last letter to me<sup>7</sup> gives me to understand, that this increase of my Force was made, with a view of breaking-up the Band of Pirates, and smugglers that infest our Western Coast, and have taken post on one of the islands,<sup>8</sup> in considerable force; from whence they carry-on their Piracies to an alarming extent, greatly to the injury of the revenue, and honest Merchant, and credit of our Country. I am just on the eve of departure for Barrataria,<sup>9</sup> by the express wish of the Executive, and the call of the Governor of this State; with the Gun vessels &c. under my command, every arrangement having been made and instructions given for that purpose several days previous to the receipt of your letter, this expedition will not I hope, employ me more than ten days or a fortnight, as soon as accomplished I will should you remain at Mobile proceed to that place to see you as I deem it essentially necessary for the efficient co-operation of the Two Forces, that I should be acquainted, with the measures you may contemplate taking for the defence of this District. in which let me assure you, whenever it's practicable you shall have my hearty co-operations I have only to regret that my Force is not as large as I could wish, or such as to afford that aid, to you, which you may require

I do myself the Honor to enclose you a copy of the arrangement entered into between the War, and Navy Departments,<sup>10</sup> in order to make you acquainted therewith, should you not have a copy, and to prevent any thing like a misunderstanding between the two Corps

I cannot conclude this letter, without expressing to you how happy I am that you sir are appointed to the Military Command of this District, upon which I really felicitate the inhabitants and shall feel myself honored by serving in conjunction with, and enjoying the confidence of an Officer who has rendered such distinguished services to his Country. I have the honor to be Very Respectfully Sir  
Your obt. servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 39 (M147, Roll No. 5). This letter was enclosed in Patterson to Jones, 4 September 1814, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 38 (M147, Roll No. 5).



1. Edward Nicolls.
2. Mateo González Manrique.
3. Perhaps Jackson to González Manrique, 24 August 1814, published in Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 119–21. In this letter, Jackson criticized González Manrique for assisting Creeks openly at war with the United States. Jackson promised retaliation against those who “countenanced and excited the barbarity” of the Indians against Americans.
4. Lake Borgne.
5. Fort Petites Coquilles.
6. *Carolina* arrived at New Orleans on 24 August 1814. John D. Henley to Jones, 24 August 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 30 (M147, Roll No. 5).
7. Jones to Patterson, 8 July 1814, p. 812.
8. Grand Terre Island, headquarters of the Lafitte brothers’s smuggling and privateering operations. Along with Grand Isle, it guards the entrance to Lake Barataria from the Gulf of Mexico.
9. For documentation relating to Patterson’s expedition against Barataria, see pp. 895–907.
10. Agreement Covering Joint Operations, 8 April 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 434–35.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM H. PERCY, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Copy

His Majesty’s Ship *Hermes*  
Pensacola Bay 9th. Sept. 1814—

Sir,

I have the honor to detail my proceedings Since I last addressed you from the Havanna,<sup>1</sup> which place I left in Company with His Majesty’s Sloop *Carron* on the 5th. day of August.

We arrived at the entrance of the Appalachicola River on the 13th. day of the same month when having landed the Marines under the command of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Nicolls on Vincents Island, I proceeded with him to Prospect Bluff, whence I learnt that Brevet Captain Woodbine had proceeded to Pensacola in His Majesty’s Sloop *Sophie* for the purpose of assisting and communicating with a party of friendly Indians driven by the Americans into the Spanish Territory near that place.<sup>2</sup> On my return from the Bluff I found a Vessel had arrived from Pensacola hired by Captain Woodbine to bring the Arms and the Ammunition and every thing from the depôt at the Bluff to Pensacola having leave to that effect from the Governor.<sup>3</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Nicolls then proposed immediately re-embarking the detachment for the purpose of proceeding to that place. I expressed a doubt that the Governor would ever allow us to land the detachment, but the Lieutenant Colonel’s orders<sup>4</sup> directing him to assist the Spanish Nation should they require it, which it appeared they were about to do as they were threatened to be attacked by the Americans; I assented to re-embark the Marine detachment and proceed to that place, acquainting him at the same time with my determination in the event of not receiving a request from the Governor to land them, immediately to return to the anchorage off the Appalachicola, as I had promised the Captain General at the Havanna<sup>5</sup> not to land on Spanish Territory without being requested to do so.

On the 21st. day of August I left Appalachicola and arrived at this anchorage on the 23rd. having fallen in with off the bar, and brought in with me His Majesty’s

Sloop *Sophie*— I fortunately found that a letter from the Governor had been sent to me requiring the naval force might be brought down as he was threatened with an attack by the Americans on the next morning I waited on the Governor when he requested I would disembark the detachment ammunition &ca which I immediately complied with.

The fort San Miguel the only one near the Town was put into the hands of Lieutenant Colonel Nicolls and the British Colors were hoisted in conjunction with the Spanish which he informed me was done with the Governor's approbation.

You will have received from Lieut. Colonel Nicolls the details of the previous proceedings of Captain Woodbine and every other information relative to the Indians—<sup>6</sup>

On the 29th. day of August I directed Captain Lockyer of His Majesty's Sloop *Sophie* to proceed to Barrataria (taking with him an Officer belonging to the detachment the bearer of letters from Lieut. Colo. Nicolls) to communicate with that people in the event of his finding them disposed to co-operate with His Majesty's Forces against the Enemy to hold out to them that they should be considered as British Subjects and have lands assigned them in His Majesty's Colonies, and to deliver to them a letter containing proposals to that effect, on conditions of their armed Vessels being put into my hands until the pleasure of the Commander in Chief Should be Known—<sup>7</sup>

Since we arrived here we have been employed in completing the Squadron in Water & Provisions—

The *Childers* having joined me on the 6th. instant from New Providence with a further supply of Arms, Ammunition &ca for the Indians as also a small supply of flour for the Squadron.

It being necessary to have possession of the town of Mobile, to hold communication with the very numerous tribe of Choctau (who are supposed to be friendly towards us) I have determined if found practicable to attack with the Squadron, Fort Bowyer on Mobile Point, it appearing from every information I have been able to obtain that it is a low wood battery of little strength, mounting at the most fourteen Guns of small Calibre en barbette<sup>8</sup>; though others state the number only at Six, the Men are exposed as low as the Knee and there is depth of Water sufficient for the Squadron to anchor within Pistol shot of their Guns.— The capture or destruction of it will enable us effectually to stop the trade of Louisiana and to starve Mobile— I have heard that General Jackson has ordered it to be refortified after having lately dismantled the Guns and Sent them up to the Fort<sup>9</sup> near the town of Mobile.

I have communicated my intention to Lieutenant Colonel Nicolls, requesting a hundred Indians may be sent with me to divert the Fort on the land Side, Colonel Nicolls refused to permit any to go without himself, but volunteered to go with a party of about forty Marines a Howitzer and twenty Marine Artillery with one hundred and thirty Indians, I shall sail tomorrow or next day after embarking them and taking with me His Majesty's Ships named in the margin,<sup>10</sup> having procured the best pilot in the place for the bar of Mobile.

I have detained His Majesty's Sloop *Carron* for this service, and because as yet, I have had no intelligence of importance relative to the Indian Nations to transmit to you. I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

Signed W. H. Percy Captn.

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 152–55. Endorsed: “A. Cochrane.”

1. Percy to Cochrane, 4 August 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fols. 43–44.

2. On Woodbine’s decision to assist the refugee Indians at Pensacola, see Woodbine to Cochrane, 25 July 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fols. 35–36. Woodbine arrived at Pensacola on 28 July.

3. Governor González Manrique not only permitted Woodbine to land arms and provisions for the Indians, but he also requested the marine officer’s assistance in strengthening the town’s defenses to meet an expected American attack. Woodbine to Cochrane, 9 August 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fols. 56–57.

4. Cochrane to Nicolls, 4 July 1814, pp. 861–63.

5. Juan Ruiz de Apodaca, governor of Cuba, 1812–15.

6. Nicolls’s and Woodbine’s activities in August and early September are described in Nicolls to Cochrane, 12 August–17 November 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, fols. 62–66.

7. For documentation on British overtures to Lafitte, see pp. 889–95. For Percy’s orders to Lockyer of 30 August 1814, see p. 890.

8. Guns mounted *en barbette* fire from raised platforms over the parapet rather than through embrasures.

9. Fort Charlotte.

10. *Carron and Childers*.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL THOMAS H. BENTON, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Fort Montgomery, Sept. 11th. [1814]  
7 o'clock P.M.

Sir,

Mr. Boyles<sup>1</sup> has this instant arrived from Pensacola having left there at dark last night. All the English forces with a part of the Indian force went on board of vessels yesterday in the bay of Pensacola, destined to Mobile Point. There had been no further arrivals of British troops. The artillery was not embarked last night but would be put on board to day, and the transports he expects would clear the bay this day.

He heard it said that two English brigs had landed troops on the west of the Perdido.

Comprehended from the English that they intended to use rockets against the wo[r]ks at the point, and counted on setting them on fire.

He thinks about 750 Indians embarked, who sat up a horrid yelling on going aboard; about 40 recruits of negroes, mulattoes, american deserters and refuse Spaniards. He saw there James Grant deserter from the 39th. who is now on board the British fleet.

Two hundred & fifty Seminoles headed by McQueen and Kanard<sup>2</sup> had arrived night before last and embarked yesterday, with about 500 Creeks making the 750 above mentioned

Between two & three hundred left Pensacola between 11 and 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon in great haste to make a stroke by surprize on this frontier and to carry off horses.

The British and Spanish flag have been flying together over the ramparts of St. Georges Redoubt<sup>3</sup> for eight days.

M O B I L E B A Y

Plan

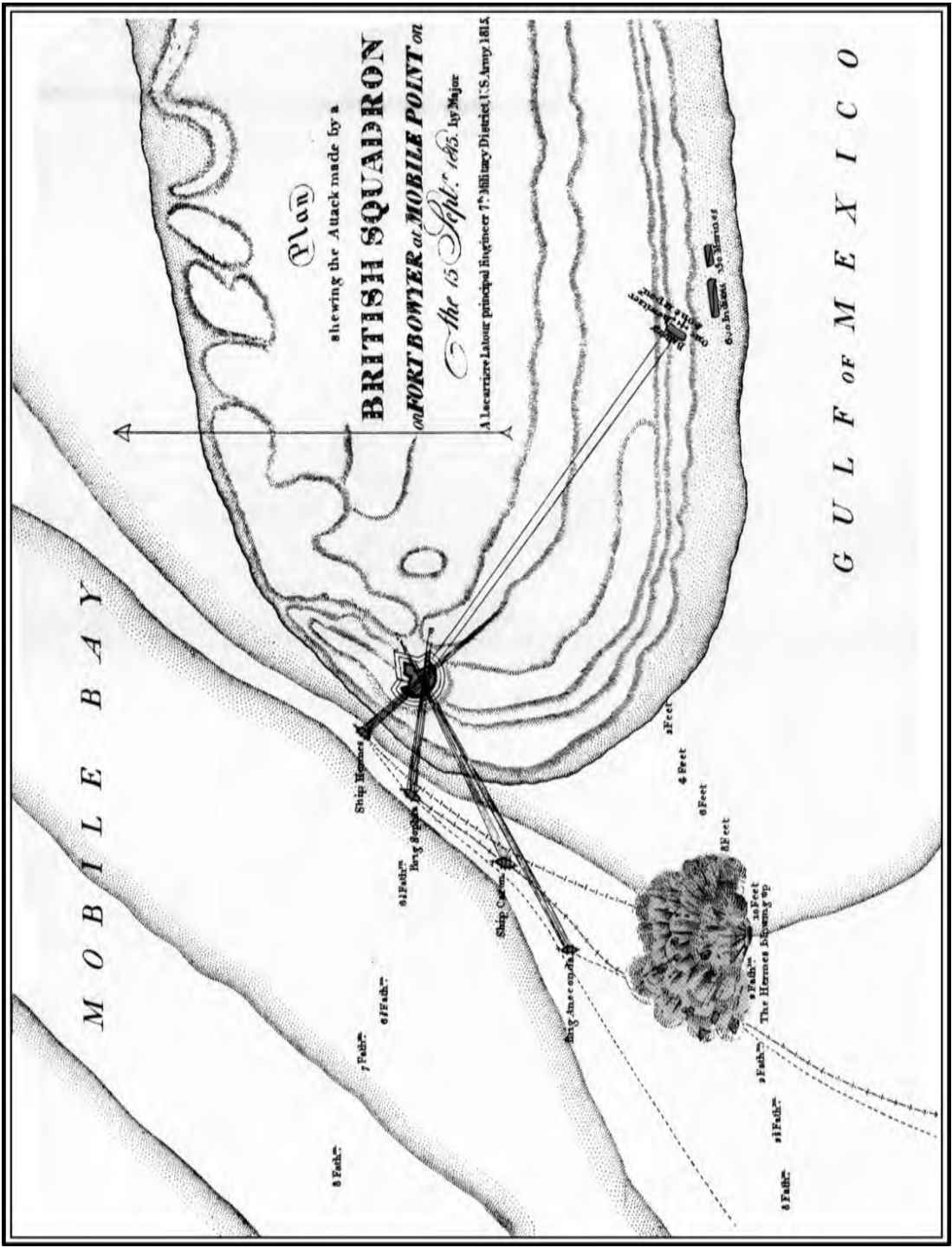
showing the Attack made by a

**BRITISH SQUADRON**  
ON FORT BOWYER at MOBILE POINT on

*the 15 Sept. 1863.* by Major

A. Lecouriere, Lieutenant Colonel 1<sup>st</sup> Military District, U.S. Army, 1865.

G U L F O F M E X I C O



Boyles has certainly deserved well at your hands. He will be with you tomorrow night. He will inform you that in spite of all your vigilance there is a daily correspondence between Mobile & Pensacola.

Only 17 horsemen have arrived here; but they say that 250 will come in less than a fortnight.

Boyles says that he heard a Spanish officer say on yesterday that the works at the Point would be attacked in the rear; that an Engineer had examined it, and reported it vulnerable in that quarter. Also heard them say that Fort Charlotte<sup>4</sup> was filled with old wooden buildings, & expected to fire it—

Lieut. Pangle sets out at this moment 50 minutes after seven with orders to report to you at 10. oclock tommorrow morning. yr. Obt. Servant.

Thomas H. Benton.  
Lt. Col. 39th. Inf.

Boyles says he saw the trails of the Indians at Stedhams Cowpen, 20 miles from this place: That Dolieves overseer and two of his negroes were carried in by the 100 clubs and are now on board the English transports.

T. H. B.

ALS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 12).

1. Thomas H. Boyles, American resident of Spanish West Florida with land holdings near Pensacola. The U.S. government later rewarded Boyles for his services as a spy against the British and Creeks. Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 133, note 1.

2. Possibly John Kinnard, headman among the lower Creeks and spokesman for the Seminoles. He was allied with Spanish interests. Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 133, note 3.

3. Originally Fort George, Pensacola. It was renamed Fort San Miguel (Fort St. Michael) by the Spanish in 1783.

4. Fort guarding the town of Mobile. American forces captured Fort Charlotte from the Spanish in April 1813. Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 642–46.

BREVET LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM LAWRENCE, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Fort Bowyer 15 Sepr. 1814  
12 oClock at Night

Sir,

After writing the enclosed I was prevented by the approach of the Enemy of sending it by an express. At Meridian they were under full Sail, with an easy and favourable breeze standing directly for the Fort and at 4 P.M. we opened our Battery, which was returned from two Ships,<sup>1</sup> and Two Briggs;<sup>2</sup> as they approached. The Action became General at about 20 Minutes past 4 and was continued without intermission on either side untill 7; when One Ship and Two Briggs were compelled to retire: The leading Ship supposed to be the Commadore Mounting 22. 32 pound Carronades having Anchored nearest our Battery was so much disabled, her Cable being cut by our Shot that she drifted on shore

within 600 Yards of the Battery; and the other Vessels having got out of our reach, we kept such a tremendous fire upon her, that she was set on fire, and abandoned by the few of the Crew who survived; at 10 P.M. we had the pleasure of witnessing the explosion of her Magazine. The loss of lives onboard must have been immense as we are certain no boats left her except three which had previously gone to her assistance, & one of those I believe was sunk; in fact one of her boats was burned along side of her.

The Brig that followed her I am certain was much damaged both in hull and Rigging, The other two did not approach near enough to be so much injured, but I am confident they did not escape, as a well directed fire was kept on them during the whole time.—

During the Action a Battery of a 12 pounder and a Howitz, was opened on our rear, but without doing any execution and was silenced by a few Shot.— Our loss is four privates killed, and five privates wounded: The Surgeon reports one Man lost, owing to the want of Surgical Instruments as he was compelled to amputate his arm with a Razor The Man shortly after expired.—

Towards the close of the Action the Flag Staff was Shot away but the Flag was immediately hoisted on a Sponge Staff over the Parrapitt: while the Flag was down the Enemy kept up their most incessant, and tremendous fire, the Men were withdrawn from the Curtains & N.E. Bastion; as the Enemys own Shot completely protected our rear except the position they had chosen<sup>3</sup> for their Battery.—

Where all behave well, it [*is*] unnecessary to discriminate suffice it to say every Officer and Man did his duty, the whole behaved with that coolness & intrepidity which is Characterestic of the true American and which could scarcely have been expected from Men most of whom had never seen an Enemy, and were now for the first time exposed for nearly 3 Hours to a Force of nearly or quite 4 Guns to One.—

We fired during the Action between 4 & 5 hundred Guns most of them Double Shotted, and after the first half hour, but few missed an effect.

Sept. 16th. 11 oClock A.M.

Upon an examination of our Battery this Morning, we find upwards of 300 Shot & Shot holes in the inside of N. and East curtains & N.E. Bastion, of all Callibres, from Musket ball to 32 pound Shot in the N.E. Bastion there were three Guns desmounted; one of which a four pounder was broken off near the Trunnions by a 32 pound Shot and another much battered; I regret to say that both the 24 pounders are cracked in such a manner as to render them unfit for service; & I trust Sir, the affair of Yesterday will point out the necessity of heavy Mettle at this Post.—

I am informed by two deserters from the Land force, who have just arrived here, and whom I send for your disposal, that a reinforcement is expected when they will doubtless endeavour to wipe off the stain of Yesterday.—

I beg you Sir to send Vessels to take off the Sick and wounded, as there is no means of protecting them from the heat of the Sun & inclemency of the Weather; if left here they will certainly die as we have neither Medacines, Hospital Stores, or aid whatever; and if you will send the *Amelia* down, we may probably save most or all of the Ships Guns, as her Wreck is lying in 6 or 7 feet Water and some of them are just covered. They will not however answer for the Fort as they are too short.—

By the Deserters<sup>4</sup> we learn that the Ship we have destroyed was the *Harmas*, but her Commander's name they did not recollect. It was the Comadore, and doubtless fell on his Quarter Deck, as we had a raking fire upon it at about 200 Yards distanc[e] for some time.—

I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you hear shortly; when I think you will be convinced of the necessity of supplying with the Articles heretofore required.—

By Capt. Sands who will have the honor of handing you this dispatch I have sent a list of articles necessary to enable us to sustain a simular attack as the one of Yesterday, and beg you to order such Articles in his Department as he may not have on hand to him I also refer you for a more particular accounts of the movements of the Enemy than may be contained in my letters; his services both before and during the Action were of great importance, and I consider fully justify me in having detained him. Capt. Walsh and several Men were much burned by the accidental explosion of 2 or 3 Cartridges they are not included in the list of wounded heretofore given.—

The Enemies fleet this Morning at Day break were at anchor in the Channel about 4 Miles from the Fort, shortly after it got under way and stood to Sea, After passing the Bar they hove too and Boats have been constantly passing between the disabled Brig & the others, I presume the former is so much injured as to render it necessary to lighten her. 15 Minutes after 1 P.M. the whole Fleet has this moment made Sail and are standing to Sea I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Your Obt. Servt.

N.B. I hope you will pardon me for detaining Lt. Conway. as yet I cannot dispense with his services. In a few days I will send him with such information that I may have to communicate

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, J-168 (8) (M221, Roll No. 63). Enclosed in Jackson to Armstrong, 17 September 1814.

1. The sixth rates *Hermes* and *Carron*.

2. Brig-sloops *Sophie* and *Childers*.

3. Appears to have been written first as "closed"; the "d" was altered to an "n" to rewrite it as "chosen."

4. The deserters are identified in Henry to Nicolls, 20 September 1814, note 1, below.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM H. PERCY, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Copy

His Majesty's Sloop *Sophie*, Pensacola bay,  
September 16th. 1814—

Sir

You will have received a copy of my Letter of the 9th. inst<sup>1</sup> acquainting you with my intention to attack Fort Bowyer on Mobbille Pointe; it is with the greatest regret that I have to inform you of our miscarriage in that affair, and of my having been necessitated to destroy His Majesty's Ship *Hermes*. The following is a detailed

account of my Proceedings. Having embarked Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Nicolls and his Detachment of Marines and Indians, as stated in my former Letter: on the 11th. inst I left this Port, in company with His Majesty's Ships named in the Margin,<sup>2</sup> and off the entrance of it, fell in with and took with me His Majesty's Sloop *Sophie*, Cn. Lockyer, returning from Barataria from whom I received the enclosed Letter,<sup>3</sup> acquainting me with the ill success of his Mission.

On the morning of the twelfth I landed Lieutenant Colonel Nicolls with his Party about nine miles to the eastward of Fort Bowyer and proceeded with His Majesty's Ships off the Bar of Mobile, which we were prevented from passing, by contrary winds until the afternoon of the 15th. during which time the enemy had an opportunity of strengthening themselves which we perceived them doing; having reconnoitered in the boats within half a mile of the Battery: I had previously communicated to the Captains of the Squadron the plan of attack, and at 2.30 P:M on the abovementioned day having a light breeze from the westward I made the signal for the Squadron to weigh, and at 3.10 passed the bar in the following line of Battle, *Hermes*, *Sophie*, *Carron*, *Childers*.

At 4.16 the Fort commenced firing which was not returned until 4.30 when being within Pistol shot of it, I opened my broadside, and anchored by the head and stern, at 4.40 the *Sophie* having gained her Station did the same, at this time the wind having died away and a strong ebb tide having made, notwithstanding their exertions, Captains Spencer and Umfreville finding their Ships losing ground, and that they could not possibly be brought into their appointed Stations anchored, but too far off to be of any great assistance to the *Hermes* or *Sophie* against whom the great body of the fire was directed. At 5.30 the bow spring being shot away the *Hermes* swung with her head to the Fort, and grounded, where she lay exposed to a severe raking fire, unable to return it except with one Carronade and the small Arms in the Tops; at 5.40 finding the ship floated forward, I ordered the small bower Cable to be cut, and the Spanker to be set, there being a light wind to assist, with the intention of bringing the larboard broadside to bear, and having succeeded in that, I let go the best bower anchor to steady the ship forward, and recommenced the action.

At 6.10 finding we made no visible impression on the Fort, and having lost a considerable number of our Men, and being able only occasionally to fire a few Guns on the larboard side in consequence of the little effect the light wind had on the Ship, I cut the Cables and Springs and attempted to drop clear of the Fort with the strong tide then running, every sail having been rendered perfectly unserviceable, and all the rigging being shot away; in doing which, unfortunately His Majesty's Ship again grounded with her stern to the Fort. There being now no possibility of returning an effective fire from the Ship, I made the Signal No. 203, it having been already arranged that the storming Parties destined to have acted in conjunction with the Forces landed under Lt. Coll. Nicolls were to assemble on board the *Sophie* to put themselves under the Orders of Captain Lockyer; while they were assembling, Captains Lockyer and Spencer came on board the *Hermes*, and on my desiring their opinion as to the probable result of an attempt to escalate the Fort, they both agreed that it was impracticable under existing Circumstances (at the same time offering their Services to lead the Party if it should be sent) in this opinion I coincided with them.



The Ship being entirely disabled, and there being no possibility to move her from the position in which she lay exposed, I thought it unjustifiable to expose the remaining Men to the showers of Grape and Langrege incessantly poured in, and Captains Lockyer and Spencer, who saw the state of the Ship, at the same time giving it as their decided opinion that she could not by any means be got off. I determined to destroy her, and ordered Captain Lockyer to return to the *Sophie* and send the Boats remaining in the Squadron to remove the Wounded and the rest of the Crew, and to weigh, at the same time I made the signal for the Squadron to prepare to do so; the Crew being removed, and seeing the rest of the Squadron under weigh, at 7.20 assisted by Mr. A Matthews 2nd. Lieutenant (Mr. Mariny 1st. Lieutenant having been ordered away to take charge of the People) I performed the painful Duty of setting fire to His Majesty's Ship.

I then went on board the *Sophie* and finding it impossible to cross the bar in the night, I anchored the Ships about a mile and half from the Fort, and at 10 I had the melancholy satisfaction of seeing His Majesty's Ship blow up in the same place in which I left her.

The Squadron having during the night partly repaired the Damages in their rigging, at daylight I took them out off the Bar, having previously communicated with the Commanding Officer of the Detachment on Shore, and desired that he would fall back upon Bon Secour.

Altho this attack has unfortunately failed, I should be guilty of the greatest injustice, did I not acquaint you, Sir, of the high sense I entertain of the intrepidity and coolness displayed throughout this Action, by the Officers, Petty Officers, and Crew of His Majesty's late Ship *Hermes*; from Mr. Peter Maingy, 1st. Lieutenant I received the greatest assistance, and I beg to mention the activity and good conduct of Mr. Alfred Matthews, 2nd. Lieutenant in Mr. Pyne the late Master (who fell early in the Action) the service has sustained a severe loss.

Lieutenant Colonel Nicolls having been seriously ill on shore, had been removed to the *Hermes*, and was on board during the Action; it is almost unnecessary for me to mention of him, that he was actively assisting on deck, to which post he returned after a severe wound, which he had received in the Head, had been dressed.<sup>4</sup>

It is also my most pleasing duty to inform you, Sir, that I received every possible assistance both before and during the action from Captain N Lockyer of the *Sophie*, the Honble. R C Spencer of the *Carron*, and J B Umfreville of the *Childers*, to Captains Lockyer and Spencer I am peculiarly indebted for their assistance when on board the *Hermes* during the Action, and at so anxious a moment of it, it is with great pleasure I have to add that the Captains of the Squadron have expressed their highest approbation of the steady and cool conduct of their Respective Officers and Ship's Companies who together with their Commanders had all volunteered for the storming Party

I also beg to call your attention Sir to the able conduct and professional Abilities of Mr. James Wilson, Surgeon of the late *Hermes*, and of the other Surgeons of the Squadron, who under every local disadvantage, encreased by the total want of Medical assistants have succeeded beyond expectation with the wounded, of whom, and of the killed, I regret having such large Returns to enclose to you.<sup>5</sup> I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

(Signed) W: H: Percy Captn.

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 156–60.

1. Percy to Cochrane, 9 September 1814, above.

2. *Carron* and *Childers*.

3. Lockyer to Percy, 11 September 1814, p. 895.

4. Nicolls became ill with dysentery shortly before the expedition's departure for Mobile. Unable to walk, he spent a rainy night ashore with the landing party before retiring to *Hermes*. During the attack on Fort Bowyer, he was twice wounded—once in the head by grape shot, by which he lost the sight in his right eye, and then again in the head and thigh by flying splinters. Nicolls to Cochrane, 12 August–17 November 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fols. 62–66.

5. Returns not printed. *Hermes* had 17 killed and 25 wounded (4 dangerously so); *Sophie* had 5 killed and 17 wounded; and *Carron* had 1 killed and 4 wounded. See UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/505, fols. 161–62.

CAPTAIN ROBERT HENRY, ROYAL MARINES, TO  
BREVET MAJOR EDWARD NICOLLS, ROYAL MARINES

Pensacola September 20th. 1814

Sir,

On the morning of the 15th. Instant I had the honor to forward you a penciled report of our operations on the 14th. but have reason to believe it has not reached you, It was in substance to say, that in pursuance of your orders, we advanced with the Howitzer and took up a Secure position within about eight hundred yards of the fort and commenced firing before discovered by the enemy, whom we soon ascertained to be too strong for us, in Consequence I ordered a retreat and determined on taking a position sufficiently near to enable us at a moments notice to cooperate with the Shipping on this occasion I am sorry to say we had a man killed by an Eighteen pound shot from the enemy. At about 3 or 4 OClock being fully assured the shipping would not weigh that Evening, we removed the Gun to the distance of about two miles from the fort, placed our Sentinals and remained till the shipping got under weigh next day, as I observed them standing in, we moved along the Beach with the Gun, and halted at the distance of about Seven hundred yards from the works, the *Hermes*, and *Sophia*, being at this time in Action, we commenced firing Shells till having Expended all, several of which fell well amongst the Enemy, we moved the Howitzer to the nearest possible position, in order to fire our case Shot with effect, untill three rounds only remained, which I thought proper to remove, and leaving the Gun we took the whole of the Detachment together with the Indians, and advanced towards the point, to act with the [-] at this time coming on Shore with scaling ladders &c.— here we remained close under cover, and within Six hundred yards of the works, untill seeing the Houses deserted, we returned to the Howitzer set the whole detachment to the dragropes and retreated about four miles, where from the extreme fatigue the men had suffered, were obliged to halt for the night, not expecting any communication with the shipping before morning, however about half an hour after one OClock, a boat from the *Childers* with a reasonable supply of provision and a Message from the Commodore, to say he could do nothing more for us, that I had the Schooner to do as I pleased with,

and that he recommended our retreating to Pensacola on this I did not hesitate to embark the Howitzer which the Lieut. of the *Childers* handsomely offered to take to the Schooner, together with about seven or eight Sick men, and such provisions, as was not convenient for men to carry on the March. Having dispatched the last boat, and distributed the provisions amongst the men, we commenced our retreat, (missing two men who basely deserted to the Enemy, their names as per Margin)<sup>1</sup> and reached Bon secour on the 17th. where I found Lieut. Castle with a detachment of Indians in possession of the place, killed two Bullocks and ordered the men a supply of flour, marched out at 3 OClock and took with us ten Black men who volunteer'd their Services, stating they belonged to a Mobile merchant. on the 18th. reached the perdido and during the night of that day, succeeded in transporting the whole of the Marine detachment with part of the Indians, on the 19th. marched into Pensacola.

I must now beg leave to assure you Sir, that while at Mobile point, and during the March both Officers an men have paid the greatest attention to their duty. I have the honor to be Sir, Your very humble Servant

Signed Robert Henry Captain

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fol. 91.

1. "William Brown Privt./John Bryoffer Privt./The latter is a foreigner."

## Jean Laffite Receives an Offer

*Because Louisiana's large Creole population had lived under American rule for less than a decade, the political loyalties of its French- and Spanish-speaking citizens were suspect in the minds of some U.S. officials. Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane shared these suspicions and believed that, with the proper encouragement, native Louisianans might be roused to liberate themselves from what one British officer styled "a faithless, imbecile Government."<sup>1</sup> Soon after taking up his American command, Cochrane sought intelligence on the temper of Louisiana Creoles towards their Yankee rulers. The reports he received convinced him that there were enough "disaffected french and Spaniards . . . to drive the Americans entirely out of Louisiana and the Floridas."<sup>2</sup>*

*Of particular interest to Cochrane were the "Free Booters" of Baratavia, a loose association of piratical adventurers under the titular leadership of Jean and Pierre Laffite.<sup>3</sup> In June of 1814, Captain Hugh Pigot had reported favorably that the Baratarians "would cheerfully assist in any operation against the Americans if afterwards protected by Great Britain."<sup>4</sup> But Pigot's optimism, and Cochrane's, proved unfounded, for the Louisiana buccaneers had little interest in setting aside their profitable enterprises in favor of serving under the British. Less than two weeks after turning away the British mission to Baratavia, a joint U.S. force arrived and laid waste the pirate base. The following documents include copies of correspondence between Lafitte and the British envoy discovered by the Americans among Baratavia's ruins.<sup>5</sup>*

1. Nicolls to Inhabitants of Louisiana, 29 August 1814, below.

2. Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, pp. 838–40.

3. See Cochrane's query regarding the "Pirates or Free Booters" of Baratavia, in *Cochrane to Pigot*, 27 March 1814, p. 835. The most authoritative biography of Jean and Pierre Laffite is Davis, *Pirates Laffite*. See Chapter 9 for the events related to this section's topic.

4. *Pigot to Cochrane*, 8 June 1814, pp. 829–31.

5. For documents on the American raid on Baratavia, see pp. 895–907.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM H. PERCY, R.N., TO  
COMMANDER NICHOLAS LOCKYER, R.N.

By the Honble. William Henry Percy, Captain  
of His Majesty's Ship *Hermes*, and Senior  
officer in the Gulf of Mexico.

You are hereby required and directed after having received on board an Officer belonging to the first Battalion of Royal Colonial Marines to proceed in His Majesty's Sloop under your Command without a moment loss of time for Baratavia;—

On your arrival at that place you will Communicate with the chief persons there, you will urge them to throw themselves under the Protection of Great Britain and should you find them inclined to pursue such a step you will hold out to them that their property shall be secured to them that they shall be Considered British subjects and at the conclusion of the war Lands in his Majesty's Colonies in America will be Allotted to them in return for these concessions you will insist on an immediate Cessation of Hostilities against Spain and in Case they should have any Spanish property not disposed of that it be restored, and that they put their Naval Force into the hands of the Senior Officer here until the Commander in chiefs pleasure is Known in the event of their not being inclined to act offensively against the United States you will do all in your power to persuade them to a strict neutrality and shd. endeavour to put a stop to their Hostilities against Spain, should you succeed completely in the object for which you are sent you will concert such measures for the annoyance of the Enemy as you judge best from Circumstances having an eye to the junction of their small arm vessel with me for the Capture of Mobile &c. You will at all events yourself Join me with the utmost dispatch at this Post with the accounts of your Success;

Given under my hand on board  
His Majesty's Ship *Hermes* at Pensacola  
this 30th day of August 1814—

(signed) W. H. Percy Capt.

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, R-70 (8) (M 221, Roll No. 65). Addressed: "Nichs. Lockyer Esqr./Commander of His Majesty's sloop/*Sophia*." Enclosed in Ross to Monroe, 3 October 1814, *ibid*. Marked as enclosure "C." Endorsed: "I certify this a true Copy of the original in possession of Gov. Claiborne—/Geo: T. Ross/Col 44th. I[*nfantr*]y."

## BREVET MAJOR EDWARD NICOLLS, ROYAL MARINES, TO JEAN LAFFITE

Head Quarters Pensacola  
August the 31st. 1814

Sir

I have arrived in the Floridas for the purpose of annoying the only enemy Great Britain has in the world, as France and England are now friends I call on you with your brave followers to enter into the Service of Great Britain in which you Shall have the rank of Captain lands will be given to you all in proportion to your respective ranks on a Peace taking Place and I invite you on the following terms your Property shall be guaranteed to you & your Persons Protected, in return for which I ask you to Cease all Hostilits against Spain or the allies of Great Britain. Your Ships and vessels to be placed under the orders of the Commanding officer on this Station, untill the Commander in Chiefs<sup>1</sup> Pleasure is known but I Guarantee their fair value to you at all events.— I Herewith enclose you a Copy of my Proclamation to the Inhabitants of Louisiana which will I trust Point out to you the honourable intentions of my Government you may be a useful assistant to me in forwarding them therefore if you determine loose no time the Bearer of this Captain McWilliam will satisfy you on every other Points you may be anxious to learn, as will Captain Lockyer of the *Sophie* who carries him to you, we have a Powerful reinforcement on its way here and I hope to cut out some other work for the Americans than oppressing the inhabitants of Louisiana [*be*]<sup>2</sup> expeditious in your [*resolves*]<sup>3</sup> and rely on the verity of, your very humble Servant

(Signed) Edward Nicolls Lt. Colonel<sup>4</sup>  
Commanding his Britannic  
Majestys forces in the Floridas.

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, R-70 (8) (M 221, Roll No. 65). Enclosed in Ross to Monroe, 3 October 1814, *ibid*. Marked as enclosure “D.” Endorsed: “I certify this a true copy of the Original in possession of Gov. Claiborne—/Geo: T. Ross/Col 44th. I[*nfant*]y.”

1. Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane.

2. The copyist rendered this word as “by.” The bracketed text is supplied from a printed version of this document in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 187.

3. The text is blank here. The bracketed text is supplied from a printed version of this document in *ibid*.

4. Nicolls’s brevet rank of lieutenant colonel was disallowed by the Admiralty. See Croker to Cochrane, 10 August 1814, p. 844.

BREVET MAJOR EDWARD NICOLLS, ROYAL MARINES: PROCLAMATION TO  
THE INHABITANTS OF LOUISIANA

By Lieut. Colonel Edward Nicolls Commanding His Britannic Majesty’s Forces in the Floridas.

Natives of Louisiana, on you the first call is made, to assist in liberating from a faithless, imbecile Government, your Paternal Soil, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Italians and British, wither settled or residing for a time, in Louisiana, on you also

I call to aid me in this Just Cause, The American Usurpation in this Country, must be Abolished, and the lawful owners of the Soil, put in possession, I am at the head of a large body of Indians, well Armed, disciplined and Commanded by British officers A good train of Artillery, with every requisite, Seconded by the Powerful aid of a numerous British, and Spanish Squadron, of Ships & vessels of War— Be not alarmed Inhabitants of the Country at our approach, the Same good faith and disinterestedness, which has Distinguished the Conduct of Britons in Europe (accompanies them here) you will have no fear of Litigious laws imposed on you for the purpose of Carrying on an unnatural and unjust war; your property, your laws, the peace and tranquility of your Country, will be Guaranteed to you by men who will Suffer no Infringement of theirs, rest assured that these brave redmen, only burn with an ardent desire of Satisfaction for the wrongs they have Suffered from the Americans, to join you in liberating these Southern Provinces from their Yoke and drive them into those limits formerly prescribed by my Sovereign—

The Indians have pledged themselves in the most Solemn manner, not to injure in the slightest degree, the persons or properties of any but enemies, to their Spanish or English Fathers a flag over any door, whether Spanish, French, or British, will be a Certain protection. Nor dare any Indian put his foot on the threshold thereof under penalty of Death from his own Countrymen not even an enemy will an Indian put to death except resisting in arms, and as for Injuring helpless, women, or children, the redmen by their good Conduct and treatment to them, will if it be possible make the Americans Blush for their more than inhuman Conduct, lately on the Escambia, and within a Neutral Territory,—

Inhabitants of Kentucky, you have too long borne with Grievous Impositions. the whole brunt of the war has fallen on your brave Sons, be imposed on no more, but either range yourself under the Standard of your forefathers, or observe a Strict Neutrality, if you Comply with either of these offers, whatever Provisions you send down, will be paid for in dollars and the safety of the persons bringing it, as well as the free Navigation of the Mississippi Guaranteed to you. Men of Kentucky let me Call to your View (and I trust to your abhorrence) the Conduct of those factions, which hurried you into this Cruel unjust, and unnatural war, at a time when Great Britain, was straining every nerve in defence of her own, and the Libertys of the world, when the bravest of her Sons, were fighting and Bleeding in so sacred a cause, when She was Spending Millions of her Treasure in endeavouring to pull down one of the most formidable and dangerous Tyrants,<sup>1</sup> that ever disgraced the form of man, when Groaning Europe was almost in her last Gasp, when Britons alone shewed an undaunted front, Basely did those Assassins endeavour to stab her from the rear, she has turned on them, renovated from the Bloody but successful struggle— Europe is happy and free, and She now hastens justly to avenge the unprovoked insult, Shew them that you are not Collectively unjust, leave that Contemptible few to Shift for themselves, let those slaves of the Tyrant Send an Embassy to Elba, and Implore his aid, but let every honest upright, American, spurn them with merited Contempt, after the Experience of 21 years, can you any longer support those Brawlers for liberty, who call it freedom, when themselves are free; be no longer their dupes, accept

of my offers. Every thing I have promised in this paper I guarantee to you, on the Sacred honor of a British Officer,

Given under my hand at my  
Head Quarters Pensacola this 29th day of August 1814.

(Signed) Edward Nicolls.

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, R-70 (8) (M 221, Roll No. 65). Enclosed in Ross to Monroe, 3 October 1814, *ibid*. Marked as enclosure “B.” Endorsed: “I Certify this a true copy of Original in possession of Govr. Claiborne./Geo: T. Ross/ Col 44th. I[nfantr]y.”

1. Napoleon.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM H. PERCY, R.N.: PROCLAMATION TO  
THE INHABITANTS OF BARATARIA

By the Honble. Wm. Henry Percy Captain  
of His Majesty’s Ship *Hermes* & Senior  
officer of the Gulf of Mexico.

Having understood that Some British merchantmen, have been detained, taken into, and Sold by the Inhabitants of Baratavia, I have directed Captain Lockyer of his Majesty’s Sloop *Sophie* to proceed to that place, and to enquire into the Circumstances with positive orders to demand instant restitution, and in Case of refusal to destroy, to his utmost every vessel there, as well as to Carry destruction over the whole place, and at the same time to assure him, of the Cooperation of all his Majesty’s Naval force on this Station, I trust at the Same time that the Inhabitants of Baratavia, consulting their own Intent, will not make it necessary to proceed to such extremities, I hold out at the same time, to them, a War instantly destructive to them, and on the other hand, Should they be Inclined to Assist Great Britain, in her just and unprovoked war against the United States,

The Security of their Property; the Blessings of the British Constitution, and should they be inclined to Settle on this Continent, Lands will at the Conclusion of the war, be allotted to them, in his Majesty’s Colonies in America— In return for all these concessions, on the part of Great Britain, I expect that the direction of these armed Vessels will be put into my hands (for which they will be renumerated) the Instant Cessation of Hostilities against the Spanish Government, and the Restitution of any undisposed of property of that Nation, Should any Inhabitants be inclined to Volunteer their Service into his Majesty’s forces either Naval or Military, for limited Service they will be received, and if any British Subjects, being at Baratavia wishes to return to his native Country, he will on joining His Majesty’s Services received a free Pardon.

Given under my hand on Board  
H.M. Ship *Hermes*, Pensacola 1st. day of Sept 1814

(Signed) W. H. Percy. Capt. & Senior officer

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, R-70 (8) (M 221, Roll No. 65). Enclosed in Ross to Monroe, 3 October 1814, *ibid.* Marked as enclosure "E." Endorsed: "I certify this a true copy of the Original in Possession of Gov. Claiborne./Geo: T. Ross/Col 44th. I[*nfantr*]y."

JEAN LAFFITE TO COMMANDER NICHOLAS LOCKYER, R.N.

Mr.

La Confusion qui a eu lieu dans notre Camp hier et aujourd'hui, & dont vous avez plaire Connaissance, m'a empêché de répondre d'une manière précise a l'object de votre mission dans ce moment Cy, même je ne puis vous donner toute la Satisfaction que vous desirez Cependant Si vous pouvez m'accorder quinze Jours je Serai tout a vous, J'ai besoin de ce delai pour me debarrasser de Trois Personnes qui ont Causées Seules tous les desordres de ce jours, les deux qui m'ont donné le plus de difficultes doivent partir dans huit jours au plus tard, d'ici et l'autre pour la ville, le reste du tems je le demande pour mettre ordre a mes affaires— vous pourrez Communiquer avec moi en Envoyant votre Canot a la pointe Est de la passe où je me trouverai, vous m'avez inspiré plus de Con fiance qui n'auroit fait peut-etre l'amiral votre Superieur, aussy c'est avec vous que je traiterai et de vous que je reclamerai les Services que je pourois vous avoir rendu en tems et lieu Veuillez monsieur me Donner une reponse & me Croire votre tres humble Serviteur

Barataria le 4 Sep 1814.

(Signed) Lafitte

[Translation]

Sir,

The confusion which prevailed in our camp yesterday and this morning, and of which you have a complete knowledge, has prevented me from answering in a precise manner to the object of your mission; nor even at this moment can I give you all the satisfaction that you desire; however, if you could grant me a fortnight, I would be entirely at your disposal at the end of that time— this delay is indispensable to send away the three persons who have alone occasioned all the disturbance— the two who were the most troublesome are to leave this place in eight days, and the other is to go to town— the remainder of the time is necessary to enable me to put my affairs in order— you may communicate with me, in sending a boat to the eastern point of the pass, where I will be found. You have inspired me with more confidence than the admiral, your superior officer, could have done himself; with you alone I wish to deal, and from you also I will claim, in due time, the reward of the services which I may render to you. Be so good, sir, as to favour me with an answer, and believe me your very humble servant.

(Signed) Lafitte

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, R-70 (8) (M 221, Roll No. 65). Enclosed with Ross to Monroe, 3 October 1814,



ibid. Marked as enclosure “F.” Translation from Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 188–89. Endorsed: “I certify this a true copy of the original letter in the joint possession of Commodore Patterson & myself/Geo: T. Ross/Col 44th. I[*nfantr*]y.”

COMMANDER NICHOLAS LOCKYER, R.N., TO  
CAPTAIN WILLIAM H. PERCY, R.N.

Off Pensacola September 11th 1814

Sir

In obedience to your orders of the 30th last I proceeded with his Majestys sloop under my Command for Barataria off which place I anchored on the 3rd Inst. with a Flag of Truce Flying at the mast head, when I proceeded on shore accompanied by the master and a Captain of the Naval marines with a Flag of Truce in the Boat, notwithstanding which on landing, myself officers & Boats Crew were immediately confined in a Prison, the Letter & order I received from you torn before my face: receiving much personal Insult and my life threatened myself and marine officer continued in this situation untill the following day; the master & Boats then having been permitted in the Evening to return to their Ship, on their arrival on shore the ensuing morning to attend me, they were immediately imprisoned with myself & marine officer and all told we would be immediately sent to New Orleans, a sudden change of mind on the part of these Pirates enabled me to depart from the shore when I returned to the *Sophie* and made sail for this place,

I beg leave to add that the force there was 9 schooner privateers of from 6 to 16 guns each, I have the Honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient Humble Servant,

Nic<sup>s</sup> Lockyer

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fol. 81.

## Raid on Barataria

*In early September 1814, the British made overtures to Jean Laffite to secure his services, and those of his fellow Baratarians, in the forthcoming attack on New Orleans. The British proposal carried with it the promise of financial gain or, if refused, the threat of military sanction. Although Laffite provided an encouraging response to this offer, he had no intention of accepting it. Instead, the buccaneer leader sought to turn the British offer to his own advantage by forwarding documents related to the scheme to Louisiana Governor William C. C. Claiborne. Laffite hoped this action, coupled with offers to assist in New Orleans's defense, would secure clemency for himself and his brother Pierre, as both were facing federal prosecution for their piratical activities.<sup>1</sup>*

*But Laffite's message reached Claiborne after an Army-Navy expedition had already left the Crescent City to break up "the hordes of Marine Banditti" based at Barataria.<sup>2</sup> This joint force, under the command of Master Commandant Daniel Patterson and Lieutenant Colonel George Ross, arrived off Grand Terre Island, home of the Laffites and their pirate*

associates, on 11 September 1814. The Baratarians had little stomach for a fight and scattered in the face of the American onslaught, leaving behind a rich haul in ships, exotic goods, and specie to the attackers.<sup>3</sup>

The raid on Barataria, although successful, failed to eradicate the pirate menace from Louisiana's waters. Indeed, Patterson would continue to combat pirates, smugglers, and illegal privateers for the remainder of his tenure as commandant of the New Orleans Station. Ironically, the Laffite brothers, the two pirate leaders who Patterson and Ross failed to capture during their raid on Barataria, would go on to win enduring fame for their volunteer service in Andrew Jackson's victorious army during the Battle of New Orleans.<sup>4</sup> This patriotic duty earned the Laffites and their followers a presidential pardon for their criminal activities as smugglers.<sup>5</sup>

1. See Laffite to Claiborne, undated, printed in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 191. Though undated, this letter was probably written on 7 September 1814 and enclosed with Laffite's letter of the same date to Jean Blanque. See Laffite to Blanque, 7 September 1814, and, Sworn Statement by William C. C. Claiborne, undated, printed in *ibid.*, pp. 190 and 191–92.

2. The quoted text is Commodore John Shaw's collective term for the pirates, smugglers, and privateers operating in Gulf waters. Shaw to Williams, 24 February 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, p. 634.

3. For a scholarly treatment of the Barataria raid, see Davis, *Pirates Laffite*, especially Chapter 10, and, Vogel, "Patterson and Ross Raid."

4. On the Laffites' role in the defense of New Orleans, see Davis, *Pirates Laffite*, pp. 211–23, and, Vogel, "Jean Laffite and the Baratarians."

5. Davis, *Pirates Laffite*, pp. 224–25, 252–53, and 259.

GOVERNOR WILLIAM C. C. CLAIBORNE TO  
COLONEL GEORGE T. ROSS, U.S.A.

New Orleans 16th. August 1814

Sir.

The pirates & Smugglers who have so long infested the Coast of Barataria, have it is Said lately brought in five valuable prizes richly loaden with dry goods & other merchandize, all of which will Soon be Smuggled into this City to the disgrace of the State, & in violation of the law. Can you not detach to Barataria, a part of the Regiment under your Command, & is it not practicable by a joint operation between yourself, & Captain Patterson, the naval Commander on this Station, wholly to disperse this Banditti? whatever is done, should be done promptly; & the greatest Secrecy observed, or otherwise the object will be defeated. Had you not better See & Confer with Captain Patterson on this Subject— I doubt not his readiness to Cooperate in Such manner as his means will permit; and of your disposition to furnish on this occasion, the force necessary to maintain the Supremacy of the Laws, I am fully assured. I am Sir Very Respectfully Yr. Obt. Sev't.

(Signed.) William C. C. Claiborne

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, R-70 (8), enclosure (M221, Roll No. 65). Enclosed in Ross to Monroe, 3 October 1814, pp. 900–902. Docketed on reverse: "A." Addressed flush left below signature line: "Col Ross./Comg./44th. Infy."



*William C. C. Claiborne*

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

NeworLeans 20th Augt. 1814

Sir,

It affords me infinite satisfaction to have the honor to report to you the safe arrival of the U.S. Schooner *Carolina*, in the River after a passage of twenty one days all well; I this moment received this pleasing intelligence by letter from Captain Henley;— She has arrived at a most fortunate moment, as I had intended proceeding against the Pirates of Baratavia in the ensuing week even had She not arrived, and had issued the necessary instructions for that purpose I shall of course carry my intentions into effect without the smallest delay and am very sanguine that the result will be favorable to us and effectually break up that Piratical Band, the reasons for my wishing to make an immediate attack upon them, is that they have from the best information which can be obtained at this moment five valuable prizes at that place.—

In virtue of the permission afforded me by your letter of the 11th: July<sup>1</sup> I have purchased one of the Small Sloops<sup>2</sup> formerly mentioned to you; She is built of good materials perfectly sound of the fleetest form and launched only in November last, will mount with perfect safety and ease, one long 12 pr. & four 12 pd. Carronades & draw when in best Sailing trim about 6 feet 6 inches aft 4 feet 6 inches forward and will I am convinced from her form perform well in any weather. She will proceed to join the other Gun Vessels on the 24th. inst. She cost with anchors, Fore & aft Sails, Boat &c. Two thousand four hundred Dollars, which sum will be paid out of the monthly allowance for this Station.—

My next letter will I hope be dated from Baratavia informing you of my Success.— I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your Obt. Sert.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 22 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Patterson means Jones's letter of 8 July. For the text of which, see pp. 858–59. Jones's letter to Patterson of 11 July authorized the latter to dismiss or accept the resignation of officers acting by appointment only. Jones to Patterson, 11 July 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 372 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. Sloop tender *Alligator*.

CAPTAIN CHARLES WOLLSTONECRAFT, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Fort St. Philip<sup>1</sup> 13th. Sepr. 1814—

Sir/

This morning sailed from this place, that part of the flotilla, destined to act against the pirates at Baratavia, which came from New orleans; this afternoon,

they were joined by five vessels from mobile bay, the remaining two, part of that division, were on the outside of the bar, not having had wind enough to stem the current of the Mississippi; however by this time, they must have formed a junction, & as the wind is fair, are probably on their way down the Southwest pass—<sup>2</sup> About a week past a British Schooner, the *Sophia*, took from the Balize<sup>3</sup> four pilots, she sailed for Baratavia bearing a white flag, & in her passage drove two privateers on shore:— The Captn. of the *Sophia* landed under the flag, but was detained & his flag insulted:— he was afterwards liberated, & last thursday, returned the pilots to the Balize.<sup>4</sup> Since thursday, no vessel has been in sight at the Balize, except our squadron.

The smugglers have been informed of the intended attack, for some time past, & it is reported, are well prepared for it & determined to stand out to the last; it is also said, that they are very strong, in men & vessels— very respectfully I am Sir Your Hble St.

C. Wollstonecraft Captn.  
Corps Arty. Commdg.

ALS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 12).

1. Fortification situated on the eastern bank of the Mississippi River, about 30 miles above that estuary's mouth. It guarded the river bend at Plaquemines. For a brief history of this fort, see, Roberts, *Historic Forts*, pp. 352–53.

2. The westernmost navigational pass or channel of the Mississippi River.

3. The Northeast Pass of the Mississippi River. At the time, it was the main navigational channel for ships entering the river. A blockhouse and pilots' station situated near the mouth of the Northeast Pass was known by the same name.

4. For details of *Sophie's* visit to Baratavia, see Lockyer to Percy, 11 September 1814, p. 895.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
ACTING LIEUTENANT ROBERT SPEDDEN

U.S. Gun Vessel *No. 23*.  
September 15th. 1814

Sir,

The Subjoined order is the one which will be adopted in entering Baratavia, in close order; should any Vessel ground, those astern will immediately pass a head, and form the line; no Hostilities to be committed by the Vessels under my command, unless fired upon; untill Signals Shall be made for that purpose, and then the whole force to be directed to any armed Vessels there may be there; after they shall be silenced, to be taken possession of; when our fire shall be directed against any cannon that may be placed on the Shore, as soon as they shall be silenced, the Signal will be made to disembark Troops & marines, to act in a body on shore, with a party of Seamen from each Vessel; aid the seamen, that may be landed; will be commanded by Lieut. Comdt Louis Alexis, to act in

conjunction with the Troops & marines under Colo. Ross of the Infantry.— I am  
Very Respectfully Your Ob Svt

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

Order of Battle

*Sea-Horse*

No. 5

" 23

" 156<sup>1</sup>

" 162

" 163

" 65

Act Lieut Robert Spedden  
Comg. Gun Vessel No. 162.

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2330, fol. 9. Cochrane came into possession of this document following the capture of Spedden's gunboat at the Battle of Lake Borgne.

1. A drawing of a starred pennant indicating Patterson's flagship appears to the right of this gunboat number.

COLONEL GEORGE T. ROSS, U.S.A., TO  
ACTING SECRETARY OF WAR MONROE

New Orleans October 3d. 1814.

Sir!

In Consequence of the enclosed Letter marked A.<sup>1</sup> an interview took place between Commodore Patterson & myself, and arrangements were made to put the Governors request into execution Notifying Major General Jackson of the intended Movement. In the begining of September—The Papers marked B. C. D. & E.<sup>2</sup> were sent his Excellency & by him laid before a Council of War, Composed of his Staff; The Officers Commanding Posts of the Army, Commodore Patterson & Major Carmick of the Marines & tended to hasten our Departure The Gun boats being on Duty to the Eastward detained us untill the 11d. September at One in the Morning when with a Detachment of Seventy of my Regiment I embarked (the Governor having requested my personal services) on board of Gun barges prepared for the occasion by Commodore Patterson and dropped down the river arriving at the English turn Barracks<sup>3</sup> by Sun rise thus passing the City & Subur[b], without being observed On the Night of the 13th. we arrived at the Balize & the 15th. in the morning embarked on board the Gun Vessels, reascended the Mississippi to the South West Pass Crossed the Bar and on the

Morning of the 16th. stood in for the harbor of grand Terre The Vessels of Lafite the Pirate, then plainly in view formed in line of Battle awaited our approach altho' in some Confusion as our appearance was the first intimation they had of our intentions The Gun Vessels on board of which were the Commodore & myself both grounded on going in we however immidiately took to our Barges The other four Gun Vessels with the Smal Schooner the *Sea Horse* & two Gun barges, with a Ships Cutter continuing their Course as was ordered in the event of any of the Vessels grounding in Crossing the Bar The Enemy suddenly broke & fled in all directions across the lake, cutting loose some & firing others of their fleet The[y] were pursued by such boats as could be even brought to within cannon Shot who succeeded in saving a fine S[c]hooner with a Twelve pounder & four smaler pieces fired by the Enemy

The Gallantry of Lt Jones of the Navy effected this, who boarded after the Vessel had been a long time on fire The fore shrouds & foresail burnt & blank around the fore mast

Lt. Gordon of the 44th. Infy & Pursar Shields distinguished themselves in the pursuit of Mr. Shields it is not my province to Speak the Commodore will no doubt do him justice but as it respects Mr. Gordon, I am proud in saying he belongs to my regiment He is a Young Gentleman of Military promise. Many Prisoners have been taken some of Consequence who have been delivered over to the Laws of the Country which they have been offending by outrageous acts of Piracy and generally believed of horrible Murders in as much as we Never hear of the Crews of the Vessels taken by them.

After burning all the Establishments, Telegraphes &Ca. along the Coast of this Band, repairing the Vessels taken (except those we were obliged to burn to wit an unrigged Brigg & two Schooners aground) possessing ourselves of their Merchandize to as great an extent as time would allow We with our Prises eight in Number proceeded to Sea, entered by the South west Pass and on the first October in the Evening anchored the whole fleet opposite this City.

I Can not but congratulate this Station on the acquisition of this Fleet the injury is done not only to Lafite but is a loss to our British Enemy whose propositions the enclosures B, C, D, & E. will explain & the Paper marked F.<sup>4</sup> shews Lafites acceptation This may be turned the first Enterprise of the 44th. & from the Conduct of the Officers & Men I presage a Valuable regiment to my Country I am now four hundred strong a part of which is under the Command of Captain Baker with Major General Jackson.

I some time since recommended Sergeant William Cannady & James Collins as third Lieutt. to the 44th. again I solicit they have entered as Sergeants under a promise of Commission and assisted me much at that time the Law authorized the Field Officers to nominate & they were on our List but some how passed over<sup>5</sup> I pledge myself for their good Conduct & Capacity & if an Ensigny is Vacant for Sergeant Major Knauff. With respect I have the Honor To be Sir Yr. Obt. Servt.

Geo: T. Ross  
Col 44th. I[*nfantr*]y.

ALS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, R-70 (8) (M 221, Roll No. 65).

1. Claiborne to Ross, 16 August 1814, p. 896 above.

2. The enclosures mentioned in order are: Nicolls to the Inhabitants of Louisiana, 29 August 1814; Percy to Lockyer, 30 August 1814; Nicolls to Lafitte, 31 August 1814; and, Percy to Lafitte, 1 September 1814. Enclosures B, C, D, and E are printed on pp. 890–94.

3. A sharp bend in the Mississippi River below New Orleans. Fort St. Leon guarded this strategically important and navigationally tricky stretch of river.

4. Lafitte to Lockyer, 4 September 1814, pp. 894–95.

5. Both William Cannady or Canady and James Collins were commissioned third lieutenants on 20 December 1814.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans Octo. 10th. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that I departed from this City on the 11th: Ulto, accompanied by Colo. Ross with a Detachment of seventy of the 44th: Regiment of Infantry; on the 12th: reached the Schooner *Carolina* at Plaquemaine and formed a junction with the Gun Vessels at the Balize on the 13th: sailed from the Southwest Pass, on the evening of the 15th: at half past 8. A.M. on the 16th: made the Island of Grand Terre (Barataria, and discovered a number of Vessels in the harbour some of which shewed Carthagenian Colours, at 9 perceived the Pirates forming their Vessels ten in number including Prizes into a line of Battle near the entrance to the harbour, and making every preparation to offer me Battle, at 10, wind light and variable formed the order of Battle with the six Gun Vessels viz, *No. 5. 23. 156. 162. 163. & 65* the *Sea-Horse* Tender, mounting one six pounder and fifteen men, and a Launch mounting one 12 pound carronade; the Schooner *Carolina* drawing too much water to across the Bar; at half past 10 perceived several smokes along the coast as signals, & at the same time a white Flag hoisted onBoard a Schooner, at the fore, an American Flag at the main mast head; and a carthagenian Flag (under which the Pirates cruize) at her Topping lift: replied with a white Flag at my main; at 11 discovered that the Pirates had fired two of their best Schooners, hauled down my white Flag, and made the signal for Battle; hoisting with it a large white Flag bearing the words "Pardon to Deserters" having heard there were a number, from the army and Navy there; who wished to return if assured of Pardon, and which the Presidents proclamation offered 'till the 17th.<sup>1</sup> at a quarter past 11 Gun Vessels *No. 23. & 156* (the latter bearing my Pendant,) grounded, and were passed agreeably to my previous order;<sup>2</sup> by the other four, which entered the harbour— I manned my Barge; and the Boats belonging to the grounded Vessels, and proceeded on, when to my great disappointment I perceived that the Pirates, had abandoned their Vessels, and were flying in small Boats, in all directions, I immediately sent the Launch, and two Gun Barges, with small Boats in pursuit of them; at meridian took possession of all their Vessels in harbour, consisting of Six Schooners, and one Felucca, Cruizers and Prizes of the Pirates, one Brig a Prize and two



armed Schooners under the Carthagenian Flag; both in the line of Battle with the armed Vessels of the Pirates; and appearantly with an intention to aid them in any resistance they might make against me, as their crews were at quarters, Tompions out of their Guns, and matches lighted.— Colo. Ross at the same time landed, and with his command took possession of their establishment on Shore, consisting of about forty houses of different sizes, badly constructed, and thatched with Palmeto leaves.—

When I perceived the enemy forming their Vessels into a line of Battle, I felt confident, from their number and very advantageous position; and their number of men, that they would have fought me; their not doing so, I regret, for had they; I should have been enabled more effectually to destroy or make Prisoners of them, and their leaders; but it is a subject of great satisfaction to me, to have effected the object of my enterprize, viz capturing all their Vessels in Port, and dispersing the band, without having one of my brave fellows hurt.—

The enemy had mounted on their Vessels 20 Pieces of cannon, of different Callibers; and as I have since learn't, from 800 to 1000 Men, of all nations and colours.—

Early in the morning of the 20th., the *Carolina* at anchor about five Miles distant made the Signal of a "Strange Sail in sight to the Eastward." immediately after, she weighed anchor and gave chace, the Strange Sail standing for Grand Terre, with all sail, at half past 8, the chase hauling her wind off Shore to escape, sent acting Lieut. Robert Spedden with four Boats manned, and armed to prevent her passing the harbour; at 9. a.m. the chase fired upon the *Carolina*, which was returned, each Vessel continued firing during the chase, when their long Guns could reach, at 10 the chase grounded outside the Bar, at which time the *Carolina* was from the Shoalness of the water obliged to haul her wind off shore, and give up the chase; opened a fire upon the chase across the Island from the Gun Vessels, at half past 10 she hauled down her colours, and was taken possession of by Lieut. Spedden, she proved to be the armed Schooner called the *General Bolivar* under the carthagenian Flag, by grounding she broke both her rudder Pintles, and made water, hove her off in the course of the day, and at day light on the 21st: sent out a small Prize schooner to lighten her, took from her, her armament, consisting of one long Brass 18 pr. one long Brass 6 pr. two 12 pd. carronades, small arms &c. twenty one packages of dry goods, and brought her into Port; and as I could not wait for the repairs necessary for her rudder, ordered her to this Port for adjudication; I am well convinced that she is one of the Vessels belonging to, or connected with the Pirates, as signals of recognition for her, were found onBoard one of the Pirate's cruizers; and at the time she was discovered, she was standing directly for Grand Terre, which she still endeavoured to gain, after chased by the *carolina* not knowing of our being [*in*] possession of it; she fired several Shots at the *Carolina*, after the latter had shewn her colours.—

On the afternoon of the 23rd. got under way with the whole squadron in all seventeen Vessels, (but during the night one Schooner under carthagenian colours escaped) on the morning of the 24th: entered the Southward Pass of this River, and on the 1st inst. arrived opposite the City with all my Squadron.—

The amount of the Prizes and Prize goods, will probably be considerable but at present cannot be ascertained.—

Three of the Schooners are admirably adapted for the Public Service on this station, being uncommonly fleet sailers, and light draught of water; and would be of infinite Public Utility.—

I cannot speak in too high terms of commendation of the good conduct of the Officers, seamen, and Marines, whom I have the honor to command, nothing could exceed the zeal shewn by all on the occasion.—

Great credit is due to Lieut. Louis Alexis and Mr. Thomas Shields Purser, for gallantly leading in, in face of the enemy, the former in the *Sea Horse* Tender, and the latter in the Launch; when they had every reason to believe, the enemy would open their whole Battery upon them; supported by Gun Vessel *No. 5* a Stern of them, commanded by Mr. J. D. Ferris Mr. Shields very handsomely volunteered his Services on this expedition, and has from his being a seaman rendered me great assistance in taking charge of and bringing one of the Prizes to this city.—

Lieut. Thomas A. C. Jones particularly distinguished himself by boarding one of the Schooners which had been fired, and extinguishing the fire after it had made great progress; a quantity of powder being left in her open cabin evidently designed to blow her up; he is also with Lieut. Norris, and Acting Lieut. Thomas S. Cunningham entitled to my thanks for the severe duty performed by them, in open Boats for several days and nights.—

Acting Lieut. Spedden meriits particular notice for the handsome manner in which he lead the Boats, to cut off the *General Bolivar*, and afterwards bringing her into Port.—

I am also greatly indebted to Lieut. Alexis Acting Lieuts. Spedden & McKeever, Sailing Masters J. D. Ferris, George Ulrick<sup>3</sup> and William Johnson for their indefatigable exertions in fitting the Prizes for sea, to Acting Lieut. McKeever also, for his extreme attention to the duties devolving on him from my Pendant being hoisted on Board *No. 23* under his command,— I beg leave sir to seize this opportunity of recommending these officers to your particular notice, and to solicit a confirmation of their present rank for Acting Lieuts. Robert Spedden, Isaac McKeever, and Thomas S. Cunningham.—

It affords me great satisfaction to inform you that the most cordial co-operation of Colo. Ross, and the Detachment of his Regiment in every measure adopted or duty performed, the utmost harmony existing between the two corps during the whole expedition, himself Officers and men sharing in every enterprize, or arderous duty where their services could be usefull.—

Had it been possible for the *carolina* to have entered the Harbour, or prudent to have drawn her officers & men from her, when anchored in an open roadstead, and where I had every reason to expect the appearance of the enemy's cruizers; I should have derived great aid from Capt. Henley his officers and crew, who all expressed the strongest desire to partake of our toils, and any danger there might be to encounter, I have no doubt the appearance of the *carolina* in the squadron had great effect upon the Pirates.— I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

1. On 17 June 1814, President Madison issued a proclamation offering pardon to all army deserters who surrendered to military authorities. Deserters had until 17 September to take advantage of the commander in chief's grant of amnesty. For a printed version of this proclamation, see *Niles' Weekly Register*, 26 June 1814.

2. Patterson to Spedden, 15 September 1814, above.

3. George Ullrick was warranted a sailing master on 4 December 1809.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 14th. Octo. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that in consequence of having since my return from Barataria, received information, that a number of the Pirates dispersed by my squadron on the 16th: ulto. had returned to Grand Terre, and Cat Island, further Westward; and that one or two of their Cruizers, had also arrived at the latter Island, bringing with them some prizes; I yesterday dispatched that enterprising officer Lieut. Thomas, ap. Catesby Jones with three Gun Vessels, and one of the prize schooners officered and manned from the *Carolina*, with instructions to capture or destroy their Cruizers and prizes; and if possible to secure the persons of their leaders, which I have no doubt he will be able to effect; as they will now be entirely off their guard not apprehending a second visit so shortly after the first. thus continuing at short intervals (when the force of the Enemy's cruizers,) will admit, to dispatch secretly a force against them; I shall be able effectually to destroy them, and render the commerce of this Port secure from an enemy that has long, and I am sorry to say successfully preyed upon it, and set at defiance the force and Laws of my country.—

I beg leave to solicit the permission of the Department to purchase for the Public service on this station, the three Prize Schooners mentioned in my dispatch of the 10th inst: It would afford me much pleasure to bestow on Lieut. Jones the command of the Vessel he so gallantly rescued from fire.—

My expedition to the westward, has been beneficial in a two fold degree, for had the GunVessels not been withdrawn from the Eastward; I am fully confident, the enemy, would not have attacked Fort Bowyer; and of course we should not have been able to boast of the gallant defence of that Fortress, which has inspired a degree of respect in the enemy, they did not before feel, and a confidence in the People of this part of the Union, in the Regular Forces, which will prove highly beneficial to the Country.—

The Gulf of Mexico is crowded with armed Vessels under carthaginian colours, committing every species of Plunder. upon all nations many of which, if not all, I am well convinced are connected with the Pirates on our Coast, and introduce thro their aid their captured Goods to this City in vioalation of the Revenue Laws and make our harbours to the Westward a place of shelter and Rendezvous, some of these Vessels come to this Port, receive the rights of a Friendly power to repair, and equip, and provision their Vessels, and upon going to Sea commit depredations upon the commerce of Nations in Amity with the United States, and the one which I have brought here from Barataria, I can prove to have captured,

Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish, and Russian Vessels, in the same cruize; the cargo of the latter was taken by her to Barataria, and composes a part of the goods seized by me at that place, the Flag of the Captured Russian Vessel is also in my possession.—

I beg leave to solicit from you for my government such instructions relative to Vessels under the carthaginian Flag as you may deem proper.— I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 67, (M147, Roll No. 5).

LIEUTENANT THOMAS AP CATESBY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

(Copy)

U.S. Gun Vessel *No 156*.  
Plaquemaine November 11th. 1814

Sir,

Having arrived at this place with the U.S. Gun Vessels *No. 23, 162, 156* and the Schooner *Eagle*, under my command accompanied by the Prize Schooners, *General Bolivar*, and *Peter* I now acquaint you with my proceedings since I left NeworLeans.—

On the 16th: October, I cleared the Southwest Pass and steered for Grand Isle; was close into that Island on the morning of the 17th:, the wind falling sent in the Boats of the Squadron & brought out the Schooner *General Bolivar*, the only Vessel in the harbour; by her crew was informed of an English Brig and schooner, which had anchored off that Pass the preceeding evening; that circumstance dictated to me the propriety of making my force as formidable as possible to proceed to the Westward. The *General Bolivar* is a Vessel, of superior sailing, and our crews were much weakened by sickness; the *Eagle* not sailing as well as was expected, I put Lieut. Norris, and 20, men on Board the *Bolivar*, making a complement for her from the GunVessels of 32 men, & officers armed with 2 six pounders from *23* and 2. 12 pd. carronades from the *Eagle*, which with the 2 sixes & 2 Carronades found on Board her (with small arms) constituted her Armament.

One, the same evening I departed from Grand Tèrre shaping my course for cat Island. At 10. A.M. in the 18th Lat. 28° 45' North Longt. 92° 35', board a Spanish schooner from Campeaché, bound to Pensacola laden with salt. The Wind being adverse the weather thick and & foggy and *No. 23's* extreme dull sailing prevented our reaching Cat Island until the evening of the 19th, when I anchored in that harbour with the Squadron. I employed several days in Searching Cat and the adjacent Island in Ascension Bay, but made no discoveries of the Pirates, except the remains of the three large Vessels which had been taken there and afterward destroyed by them. From observations the best information I could gain from two fishing Boats found there, I do not believe that or any other West of Grand Isle has been much frequented by Lafittes parties for a

length of time Past. I therefore determined to go no father West but to make the best of my way back to grand Tère and strictly search the neighbouring Islands. The wind being unfavorable I could not leave Cat Island until the morning of the 27th, and in crossing the Barr, the *Bolivar* had the misfortune to strike so hard as to break off her rudder, but received no other injury, the pintles only were broken; they were replaced, and the rudder rehung; on our arrival off Grand Tère, where we anchored at 3. P M, the wind at North and tide setting out too strong for us to beat in, and perceiving a Schooner at anchor in that harbour having no colours I dispatched the Boats in and took possession of her totally abandoned. During that night and the succeeding morning succeeded in getting all the Vessels safely anchored in harbour Lieuts Norris and McKeever, with a party were immediately dispatched to search the chenir [Comin]ada<sup>1</sup> and Grand Isle whilst other parties were employed in searching Grand Tère Chenir Ranquille, &c. Lieut Norris's party having returned on the night of the 29th without having made any discoveries of much consequence, other than that of Vincent and his party who from their superior knowledge of that Country and their innumerable friends were enabled to make good their retreat to the La, Fourche where I am informed both the Lafittes with several others of their principal associates are. In searching Grand Tère found several men belonging to the *Peter* also two Deserters from the Army one from the 1st Artillerists and the other from the 44th Infantry both of whom I shall deliver to the commanding Officer at Plaquemaine.—

Thus far having executed your orders of the 10th. of October, and believing that any further searches would prove a fruitless loss of time, I resolved on returning to this place as soon as possible. The Strong Easterly gales which prevailed several days prevented my departure from Grand Tère untill meredian on the 5th, November and at 7 P.M. anchored at the Southwest Pass, at that time there [*w*]as a fresh breeze from N.N.E. which encreased to a strong gale veering to the Northwest during which the Prize schooner *Peter* was driven from her anchorage and did not rejoin me untill the eight,th 8th, when the gale had abated and a Shift of wind enabled me to enter and proceed up the Pass with all the Vessels. Having sent a Boat to the Balize in quest of letters and the wind not very favorable I did not reach this place untill to day.

The prizes under charge of Lieut Norris will proceed immediately for Neworleans. the Report of the Gun Vessels will be forwarded you prior to my leaving this place, I am sorry to say that during our cruize we have had on an average from 12 to 20 sick men, and many of whom have not yet recovered Should I receive no contrary orders by the Mail Boat I shall proceed without delay to Pass christian; on our arrival We shall be in want of Provisions &c. I have the honor to be Sir very Respectfully your obt. st.

(Signed) Thos. Ap. Catesby Jones

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 76 (M147, Roll No. 5). Endorsed flush left on signature line: "True Copy."

1. Site of additional pirate encampments and stolen goods. It lay off the western tip of Grand Terre Island. See Davis, *Pirates Lafitte*, pp. 76 and 189.

## Preparing to Meet the Enemy

*Less than three months before the arrival of Admiral Cochrane's invasion fleet off the Louisiana coast, a committee of New Orleans citizens wrote to the region's military commander, Andrew Jackson, offering advice on how U.S. forces might best defend their city. In this communication, the committeemen observed: "This Country is strong by Nature, but extremely weak from the nature of its population."<sup>1</sup> The committee's observation likewise described the state of the local military and naval forces charged with the region's defense, for neither the Army nor the Navy had sufficient men to properly garrison its forts or fight its ships. As the following documents reveal, manpower shortages were just one of the challenges local, state, and federal officials had to contend with in preparing to meet the British threat to New Orleans.*

*1. New Orleans Committee of Safety to Major General Andrew Jackson, 9 September 1814, below.*

LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM MACREA, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

New Orleans 9th. Sepr. 1814.

Sir

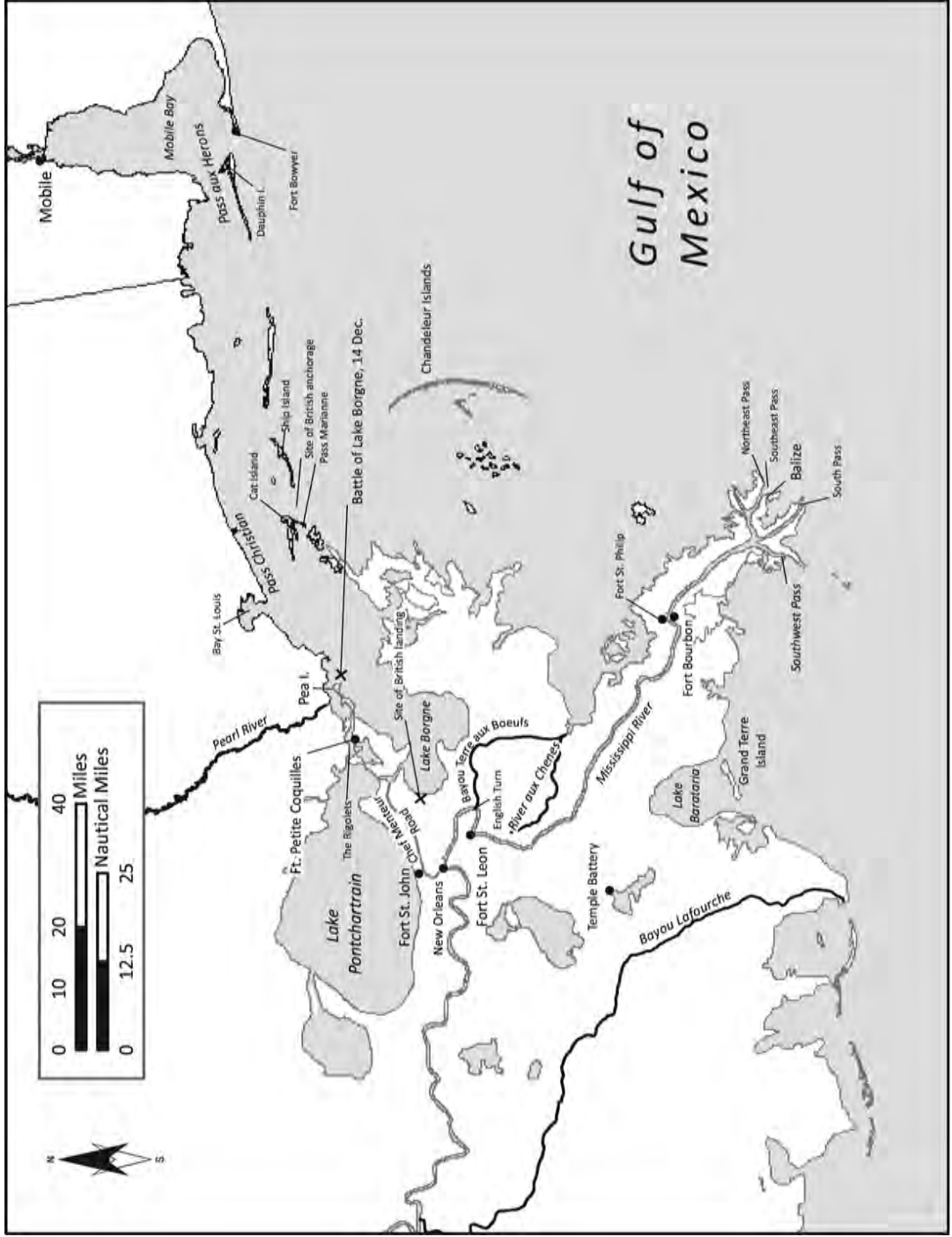
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30 Ult<sup>o</sup>.<sup>1</sup> by Capt. Wirt, and have communicated your orders accordingly.— The last order<sup>2</sup> preventing the passing of Vessels through the Lakes laden with provisions, has caused considerable agitation, as it prevented several from sailing to Mobile.

In your letter of the 27th.<sup>3</sup> you direct me to put the Fortifications at New Orleans and its vicinity in the best possible state of defence.— There is now mounted at Fort St. Philip, Twenty eight, twenty four pounders, besides some brass pieces, all of which were in good order for service when I left that place in May last. The barracks are very old and decayed, and might be easily fired by an enemy with shells or rockets. The foundation was laid for a new set of barracks last winter, but the work was suspended for want of funds, by order of Genl. Flournoy.—

The Battery at English Turn<sup>4</sup> was calculated for nine pieces of Ordnance, there are no platforms for mounting Cannon, and neither Magazine nor barracks.—

Fort St. Charles,<sup>5</sup> in this City, is very much out of repair; the platforms very rotten, and the parapets and glacis has been long going to decay.— It answers for preserving a small powder Magazine, the Laboratory and deposit of fixed ammunition, contains barracks for a Company of Artillery which is stationed in it, and where the Artificers in the employ of the Deputy Commissary of Ordnance are quartered.— It serves as a rallying point in case of insurrection, but being almost in the center of the City, and surrounded by houses, could have but little effect in preventing the enemy from taking possession of the City.— In repairing this work much expence would be incurred, and it could be of little service even in the best order.

The principal powder Magazine is on the opposite side of the river, guarded by a Detachment of the 44th. Infantry under Col. Ross.— It contains a very large deposit of powder, belonging to the Army, Navy, and Citizens.



Map 17. New Orleans and vicinity

Fort St. John about six miles from this place, is situated at the mouth of a large bayou<sup>6</sup> on Lake Ponchartrain, it is a small work of brick, very much out of repair, the pickets in the rear have almost all fallen down; This Battery was intended for nine pieces, but only four nine pounders are now mounted. There is a detachment of one Subaltern and twenty men of the 7th. Infantry stationed there.

Enclosed you will receive a Copy of a letter,<sup>7</sup> addressed to the Quarter Master Genl. on the subject of horses, for the Field Arty. He has purchased six, which increases our number to twenty two— He will go on to purchase whenever he meets with any that will answer for the service.

You will receive herewith a Morning Report of the Artillery in Fort St. Charles, and of the Infantry in Barracks, by which you will observe, that there is fifty four men absent from the two Companies of the 7th. the most of them with the Regiment at Tchifonta. With great respect I am Sir Your most Obt. Hble servt.

W MacRea  
Lt. Col. Artillery

LS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 12). For another printed version of this letter, see Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, pp. 46–47.

1. Jackson to MacRea, 30 August 1814, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 62). In this letter, Jackson ordered an embargo on ships carrying provisions from New Orleans. On Jackson's decision to resort to this measure, see pp. 870–75.

2. For the text of this order, see Jackson: General Order, 27 August 1814, pp. 870–71.

3. Jackson to MacRea, 27 August 1814, Jackson, *Papers* (SR Microfilm), Roll No. 4.

4. Fort St. Leon. For a brief history of this fort, see Roberts, *Historic Forts*, p. 352.

5. For background on Fort St. Charles, see *ibid.*, pp. 345–46.

6. Bayou St. John. On Fort St. John, see *ibid.*, pp. 351–52.

7. MacRea to William Piatt, 3 September, 1814, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 12). William Piatt was quartermaster general for the Seventh Military District. A major in the 34th Infantry Regiment, Piatt was brevetted to lieutenant colonel for gallant conduct during the American attack on British lines on 23 December. For Jackson's praise of Piatt, see Jackson to Monroe, 27 December 1814, p. 984.

NEW ORLEANS COMMITTEE OF SAFETY TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

New Orleans Sept. 18th. 1814

Sir,

At a meeting of the Citizens of New Orleans and its vicinity held on the 14th. Instant the subscribers were appointed a Committee to cooperate with the constituted Civil and Military authorities in the Defence of this place against the open attacks, or secret Machinations of the Enemy—<sup>1</sup>

The performance of the duty assigned us naturally leads to a communication with the Commander in Chief of this District which we make by means of the Governor of the state<sup>2</sup> who has expressed his approbation of our measures, and does us the honor to forward this letter— Altho in our resolutions and addresses, Policy and Duty have induced us to assume a tone of confidence necessary to



animate the people and impose on the Enemy—from you sir we ought not to conceal, that the only hope of preserving this place in case of a serious attack lies in an efficient force to be furnished by you—

This Country is strong by Nature, but extremely weak from the nature of its population— from the La Fourche downwards on both sides the River, that population consists (with inconsiderable exceptions) of Sugar Planters on whose large Estates there are on an average 25 slaves to one White Inhabitant the maintenance of domestic tranquility in this part of the state obviously forbids a call on any of the White Inhabitants to the defense of the frontier, and even requires a strong additional force— attempts have already it is said been detected, to excite insurrection, and the character of our Enemy leaves us no doubt that this flagitious mode of warfare will be resorted to— at any rate the evil is so great that no precautions against it can be deem'd superfluous—<sup>3</sup> We have some strength of militia in the City but it is badly armed, and the same considerations forbid the removal of it from the immediate vicinity of the town— Under these circumstances we look to the forces under your command alltogether for external defence and in a great measure for Domestic tranquility— that part of them which consists of the drafted Militia from the upper part of the state will suffice when organized for the latter object, but it will be some weeks before that organization can be effected and in the mean time we fear that the first appearance of attack would expose us to considerable danger— the mix'd population particularly of the City presents a source too from which we anticipate much evil, tho we cannot yet form any accurate idea of its extent—<sup>4</sup> But tho' we consider our present force as inadequate to the defence of the Country its natural strength would render it impregnable if protected by a comparatively small force— In reviewing the several points of probable attack, we say nothing of that by way of Mobile and the lake Ponchartaine, or the more circuitous one of Baton Rouge this is under your immediate inspection and therefore gives us no uneasiness, of the others we beg leave to take a rapid view which may possibly present some ideas that may have escaped your attention—

The first of these is the ascent of the River by the Balize; it presents many inconveniences to our Enemy and will not be attempted unless we are left entirely destitute of force— Two Thousand Men stationed between the City and the English Turn would be sufficient with heavy artillery on travelling Carriages, to prevent his approach by this route, especially if assisted by a few Gun Boats, and exposed to the danger of fire ships which the Current would carry among the fleet— We mention a position between the City and the English turn for this reason, that the same body would be ready to meet the Second and as we think a more probable point of attack by a landing at the Chef Monteur this point projects into Lake Borne—is accessible to shipping and is connected by an high ridge with the City from which it is distant only five leagues, this place is at present wholly unfortified, tho' it is susceptible of being so at a small expence, and the ridge of communication between it and the City, is narrow and may be obstructed by Abbatis—so as to render the approach extremely difficult if not impracticable in the face of a very inferior force— there is also an app[ro]ach by the Riviere Aux Chiens and the Bayou Terre Aux Beufs these would be effectually guarded by a Fort at a place called La Fourche de Lisle—

The Lake Ponchartraine and the Bayou St. John's is the only remaining point on this side, the fort at the Petit Coquille<sup>5</sup> the Gun Boats if they resume their station and the same body of Men spoken of above join'd to the Governor and Militia of the town, would be sufficient on this side as the passage of the Bayou may in a few hours be rendered impassible by water; and the swamps render the approach by land little to be dreaded— On the West side of the River the first approach as we descend from the sea is by the Bayou La Fourche, this is navigable for armed boats up to the place where it forks from the Mississippi,<sup>6</sup> it has little or no current, and the navigation is not difficult but it is narrow and may be easily obstructed, the banks are thickly inhabited by about Five Hundred Men used to the Gun— if they were inspired with a proper spirit, little need be apprehended from that quarter, but to guard against accidents One Thousand Men should be stationed about Mid Distance between the forks and the City, ready to march to the nearest point of the Bayou which there runs nearly parallel with the River, or to descend and cover the City should an attack be made by the last Route to which the Committee will call your attention, which is by Baritaria— here is a port occupied until lately by a number of Buccanee[r]s under the Carthaginian flag, it is accessible only to vessels drawing about 10 feet water and is capable of being strongly defended against any attack either from the sea or the Bayou and lakes by which it is surrounded— this port should be secured by a Battery and two or three Gun Boats it communicates with the River by a series of Lakes & Bayous bordered by trembling prairies<sup>7</sup>— not more than 3½ to 4 feet water can be carried up to the heads of the bayous whence canals are cut communicating with the banks of the River opposite the town— this approach is naturally very difficult, and may at a small expence be rendered impracticable— a post with a few pieces of Cannon established at a place called the Temple<sup>8</sup> and a blockhouse or two at the forks below would secure us on this side against a much superior force— The Grand Magazine for Powder together with the barracks on the opposite side of the River are in the present state of things at the mercy of the Enemy should they make a Coup de Main this way, as they are guarded only by a small detachment of regular troops and by a Company of Militia relieved every day from the City— here about One Thousand Troops ought to be stationed, and this would complete the plan of defence which we take the liberty to propose against external attack which you will observe exclusive of the Garrisons of Plaquemin, Fort Charles and about Five Hundred Men for the City, form a total of only Four Thousand Men which in our opinion would completely secure this place from any, but such an overwhelming force as will not probably be brought against it, and which at any rate, cannot be brought before we can receive efficient aid from above— A Corps of One Hundred Cavalry divided on the two banks of the River would effectually repress insurrection, and if practicable we pray may be sent to us— A Battery was erected at the Balize and by order of General Flournoy abandoned— the reestablishment of this post, with a small guard would we think be of essential service in protecting vessels that are fortunate enough to enter the River against the Armed boats of the Enemy, and would serve as an advanced post to the Fort of Plaquemin, a Block ship anchored off the same place would also be extremely useful and the Ship *Louisiana* tho' old and unfit for sea would answer this purpose—

We have thus sir performed a part of the duty assigned us, by communicating freely to you our ideas on a subject so interesting to us, to our fellow Citizens, and to our Country at large that we are sure we need make no apology for the liberty we take— Should you concur with us in opinion that the force required would put us in safety against any attack, and if you have the means of ordering the required number of men to our aid, we cannot but believe that steps will immediately be taken to comply with our request— No point of the whole union is so important to so large a portion of it as this City is to the Western states and the expence of defending it, bears no kind of comparison to the inconveniences and distress, to say nothing of the dishonor attending its loss—

We have but one other request Sir, with which we shall close our communication— It is that if your operations will permit, you will honor our City with a visit, tho' short it would have an happy effect—<sup>9</sup> the good people of this state would be encouraged by your presence— the emissaries of the Enemy, and the partizans of foreign powers would dread the scrutiny of your intelligence, and the reputation which your talents have so justly acquired would inspire all with that confidence which we individually feel— With sentiments of respect We remain &c.—

Dusuau De La Croix<sup>10</sup>  
 P. Foucher  
 Destréhan  
 Edw Livingston  
 Aug. Macarty  
 Benj Morgan  
 G. M Ogden  
 D. Boulligny

LS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 12). For another printed version of this letter, see Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, pp. 51–54.

1. Arsène Latour gives the date of the committee's formation variously as 15 and 16 September. Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 32 and Appendix 13. See also, Davis, *Pirates Lafitte*, pp. 194–96.

2. William C. C. Claiborne.

3. Local fears of a British-inspired slave revolt were strong and rumors of slave uprisings on the Gulf Coast were common throughout the war. The citizens of New Orleans had good reason to be uneasy over the temper of their resident slave population. Fifteen months before the war, nearly 500 slaves rose up in rebellion in St. John the Baptist Parish. A force of sailors and Marines under Captain John Shaw helped suppress the insurrection. Shaw to Jones, 18 January 1811, DNA, RG45, CL, 1811, Vol. 1, No. 35 (M125, Roll No. 21). For more on this slave revolt, see Rasmussen, *American Uprising*.

4. On British efforts to exploit the loyalties of Louisiana's large population of Spanish- and French-speaking natives, see Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, p. 939; Nicolls to Inhabitants of Louisiana, 29 August 1814, pp. 891–93; and Bathurst to Ross, 6 September 1814, pp. 848–49.

5. Fort Petite Coquilles guarded the channel linking Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Borgne at Pass Rigolets. See Roberts, *Historic Forts*, pp. 346–47.

6. Bayou Lafourche branches from the Mississippi at Donaldson, Louisiana.

7. A contemporary expression for the region's marshlands, so named because they tremble or vibrate when walked upon. See Lockett, *Topographical Survey of Louisiana*, p. 10.

8. The Temple was located near the confluence of Bayou Perot and Bayou Rigolettes with Little Lake, about midway between New Orleans and Grand Terre Island. Contemporaries believed it to be the former site of Native American religious and burial ceremonies. It was one of the sites at which the Lafittes auctioned off their contraband goods. See Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 22–23. Jackson ordered the Temple fortified on 22 December. See Jackson to Reynolds, 22 December 1814, below.

9. Jackson arrived at New Orleans on 1 December 1814.

10. The signatories of this letter were among the Crescent City's most prominent citizens. François Dusau De La Croix was founder and president of the Bank of Louisiana. Pierre Foucher was a wealthy planter and former member of the legislative council of the Territory of Orleans. Jean Noël D'Estrehan, a former president of the Louisiana Territorial Council, was a state senator (1812–17). Edward Livingston had considerable public service to his credit before arriving in New Orleans from New York in 1804, including stints as U.S. congressman (1795–1801), U.S. district attorney (1801–1803), and mayor of New York City (1801–1803). Besides presiding over the New Orleans Committee of Safety, Livingston acted as Jackson's aide and confidential adviser during the New Orleans campaign. He later served Old Hickory as Secretary of State (1831–33) and minister to France (1833–35). Augustin de Macarty served as the mayor of New Orleans (1815–20) following the war. Benjamin Morgan, a merchant and financier, had served in the territorial legislature and on the New Orleans city council. Charles Dominique Joseph Bouligny was a lawyer, justice of the peace, and former member of the territorial legislature. He later represented Louisiana in the U.S. Senate (1825–29).

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New Orleans 18th: November 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that I yesterday surveyed the Bomb Brig *Ætna*, and found her, in her present State totally unfit for service. She requires new Decks, caulking inside & out heaving out, and graving, and an entire new Set of Sails; those repairs, are of so material, a nature, and will amount to so large a sum, that I shall do nothing to her, 'till I have the honor, to receive instructions from the Navy Department; nor do I think, her worthy of those repairs, for any other purpose, than a Mortar Vessel; to be manned, and used when occasion might require a Vessel of that discription for any particular service; as she is not fleet enough to form a cruizing Vessel of; and whatever armament other than a mortar, which may be put on her, except as a Block Vessel to defend a particular pass, is lost for active service; as well as any arms that may be put onBoard her. Small fleet Schooners, of light draught of water, to mount one heavy Piece, with from four, to eight carronades, will be of infinite greater Public Utility than the *Ætna* as they will answer both, as Battery Vessels, and cruizers; and, which will be necessary to prevent the re-establishment of the Pirates on our Western Border. the *Ætna* upon re-establishment of Peace, will I think sell advantageously as a Merchant Vessel, for which Service She Sails very fairly and her Hull is good. I shall lay her up with only Sufficient men to take care of her, and draft the remainder, very few in number to the other Vessels.—

Strong apprehensions being entertained that the expedition fitting out under Lord Hill, is destined for this place, and that he will attempt, this City by way of the River; I am preparing the necessary materials to fit fire Ships at the Shortest notice which I think, from the nature of the current can be used in this River with great effect, I can obtain the proper Vessels very readily, under a promise that if used, they shall be paid for at a fair valuation; if not, to be returned to the owners

in the State I received them; my procuring them on these terms, will I hope, as well as my preparations therefor meet your approbation.—

It is with regret that I have to state my inability to procure men; the large Bounty given by the army prevents my shipping a man; even those discharged from the navy allured by the Bounty, generally enlist in the Army Should this country be invaded, I shall be obliged to resort to coersive measures to obtain them, for in such an event, I consider them bound to serve, where they can be most usefull to their country.—<sup>1</sup>

Should the enemy attack this place, as I have every reason to believe they will; I shall no doubt be compelled to increase an expenditure beyond the monthly credit allotted to this station & am happy to inform you, the navy agent<sup>2</sup> states to me officially he will be able to procure without difficulty, whatever sum may be requisite; but no expense shall be incurred, other than may be found indispensably necessary for the defence of the Country.—

The Ship *Louisiana* being as capable of performing River duty, as ever She was; I am extremely desirous to man her, and render her usefull by a co-operation with the Batteries on Shore; to cover any attack that may be made upon the Enemy by Land, in event of their landing Troops & marching up; on the borders of the River: and to annoy them, on their march, from her upper Deck Guns, which are high enough to fire over the Levee with great effect; nor can the enemy get beyond the reach of her Guns, having but a narrow strip of Land to march on, on one side of which is the River, and on the other an impenetrable marass, thro which an army cannot march, nor transport artilery— but I have not the necessary men, nor can I procure them, except from the army who have at this place enlisted a number of seamen; for one hundred of whom. I made a requisition upon the commanding Officer at this place,<sup>3</sup> who informs me he cannot comply therewith but which I hope the comg Genl. will on his arrival here— I shall use every possible exertion to man her, and station her below.—

A report reached this today that General Jackson, has taken Pensacola; but that the enemy made their escape in their Shipping, after Spiking the cannon,— and blowing up the Fort Barrancas;<sup>4</sup> if this is true, tis strange! that the General never acquainted me with his intentions, or accepted the co-operation of the Naval Force, repeatedly proffered him, in aid of any of his crews when practicable; but on this subject, I shall do myself the honor to address you, so soon as I may receive the particulars of the enterprize.— I have the honor to be With great consideration and respect your obt. St.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 80 (M147, Roll No. 5).

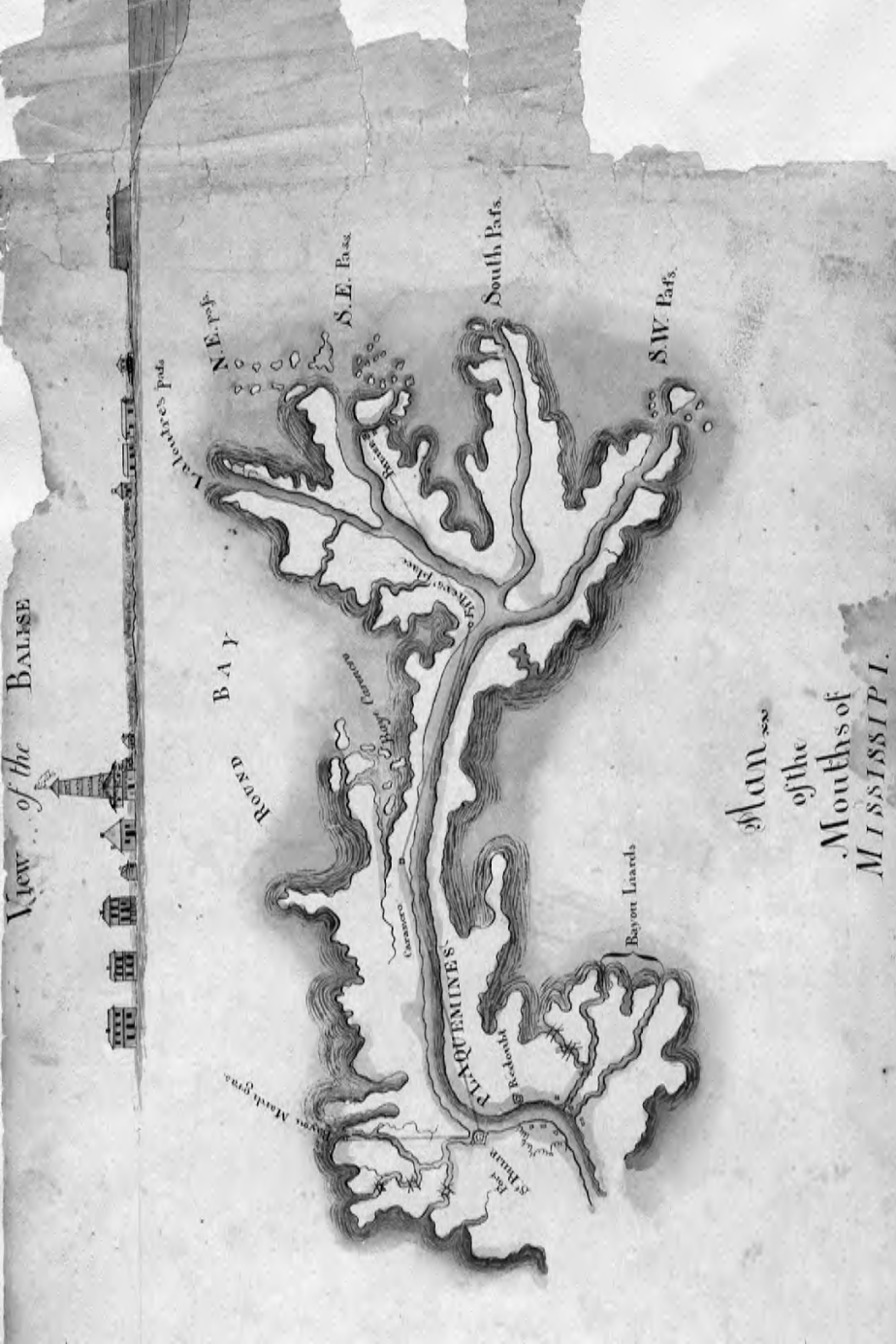
1. Patterson did impress a number of men into naval service following Jackson's declaration of martial law on 15 December. See Patterson to Jackson, 3 April 1815, pp. 1073–74.

2. John K. Smith.

3. Lieutenant Colonel William MacRea, U.S.A.

4. Jackson occupied Pensacola from 7–9 November 1814. See Millet, "British Occupation of Pensacola," and, Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, pp. 112–19.

View of the BALISE



Plan of the Mouths of MISSISSIPPI

INSPECTOR GENERAL ARTHUR P. HAYNE, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Inspr. Genl's Office  
7th. Mil[*itar*]y. Distt.

Balize 1st. Decr. 1814

Sir—

In obedience to your order, I repaired with all possible expedition to New-Orleans—I left the City on the 27th. ultimo, “to examine and determine, whether a Fortification at the Balize, would give greater security to New-Orleans”.—I have duly appreciated the high trust which you have done me the honor to repose in me, and have very sensibly felt my own incompetency to perform it in the manner I could wish.—I have performed the duty, and now do myself the honor of making the following report.—

In order to be clearly understood, it is necessary to describe the various Outlets to the Mississippi.—The principal Outlet, is the South East Pass—commonly called Ship Channel or Main Bar—this has one Branch, called North Channel—the former giving from 12 to 14 feet Water—the latter about 10.—The former is Known by the appellation of the New-Orleans Bar, and is the point most to be guarded.—The next principal Outlet, is the South West Pass, which is about 21 miles, below Fort St. Philips, and about 11 miles above the Balize.—It gives from 10 to 12 feet Water.—There are two other Outlets, but the obstacles which they present, are insurmountable to the enemy.—

I have examined the Balize, and am decidedly of opinion, that a Battery, cannot be erected, in such a situation as to Command the Bar.—The following are my reason's and sure I am, I risk nothing in expressing the Belief, that every disinterested man endowed with common sense, will concur with me in this opinion.—It is only necessary then, that I should inform you, that the Distance from the Battery, which has been constructed at the Balize, to the Bar, is at least 5 miles.—The Pilots call it Six.—Can Cannon of any Calabre, be efficient and effectual, at that distance?—If it can, the Balize ought to be fortified— but if it can not—which is the fact—then I say, a Fortification in Siberia, would be of as much service, in defending the Bar of the Mississippi, as the Work which has been constructed at the Balize.—But again—if the British approached us, by proceeding up the Mississippi, it will be by Gun Brigs, carrying from 4 to 6—24 pounders— and would not the South West Pass afford the enemy an opportunity of entering the Mississippi, with nearly equal advantages, leaving our Battery at the Balize, in the rear— nor is there at the South West Pass, any situation, on which a Fort could be placed, so as to command the Bar of that pass.—I would however advise, two or three Vessels prepared for the purpose, to be at the Balize, and to be sunk in the Channel, so soon as the enemy should make his appearance.—These Vessels might be sunk in such a position, as to prevent any Vessel drawing over 9 feet, from entering the Bar.—I would also strongly recommend that a Corps of Observation be permanently stationed at the Balize.—

I have the honor of reporting that I have examined Fort St. Philips.—It is the Key, as well as the Kings Post of all of our positions on the Mississippi, and one upon which all of our defences must turn— all other points must be subordinate to that—and made Links in the great Chain—Fort St. Philips, is a military

position, and well calculated for defence.— Batteries placed so as to co-operate with the Fort, would in my mind, be far preferable, and would not be attended, with half the time or expense.— It is the first position, which holds forth the prospect of a vigorous Stand.— The following are the positions which I would select for the Batteries. viz—one at the position, where the old Spanish work called Fort Bourbon stood—about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile, on the opposite side to Fort St. Philips—and in a diagonal direction—the other on the same side with Fort St. Philips, one mile higher up the River, and about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile, from the above mentioned Spanish Work.— Thus defended and fortified, it would be impossible for such Vessels as could enter the Bar, to pass Fort St. Philips— at least if they could, it would at once establish the principle that no Batteries can prevent the passage of Armed Vessels.—

I have the honor also to report, that I have examined the English Turn and the Battery opposite— combined they form a strong position, but must be held Subordinate to Fort St. Philips and its dependancies— the latter defended and Fortified, the former at once becomes an object of consideration.—

I should do injustice to my own feelings, if I did not inform you, that my friend Capt. Henly of the Navy very politely accompanied me to the Balize.— To his talents and information I owe more than I can express.— I have the honor to be sir, very respectfully yr obt. Sevt.—

A. P. Hayne  
Inspr. Genl. 7th. Mil[itar]y. District.

ALS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 14).

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
ACTING SECRETARY OF WAR MONROE

Head Quarters 7 M Dist.  
New Orleans Decr. 12th. 1814

Sir

I have the honour to inform you that I returned last evening from exploring the banks of the River Mississippi as low down as Fort St. Phillips— I should have descended to the Balize had I not previously sent my Inspector Genl.<sup>1</sup> from Mobile to that point with special instructions to examine and make report of the propriety of reoccupying the old Fort, Whether it would command the entrance of the River, and if so, would it be secure against the assault of an envading enemy—

The report of this officer<sup>2</sup> is in unison with the information I have received from all military gentlemen with whom I have conversed on the subject, and has confirmed me in the belief that a fortification could not be made so strong as to defy the assault of an enemy, nor would it protect the entrance over the bar. I have therefore halted at Fort St. Phillips as the Key to the defence of the River, and have directed two temporary Batteries to be erected in aid of that Fort, The first on the Site on which old Fort Bourbon stood on the East bank of the River a small distance above, which will work five twenty four Pounders, and form a cross fire with St. Phillips for the distance of half a mile on an enemy ascending the River,



The second is situated on the west bank of the river about a mile above St. Phillips and will form with the other two Batteries a triangular fire, and is so situated as to compel an enemy to approach it bow on, at least two miles, and will work four twenty four Pounders one thirty two, and a thirteen and a half Inch mortar,

I have assurances from the Legislature of the State, that it will speedily afford me the means of completeing these Batteries— Two hundred negroes will do the labour in ten days. The Batteries completed Guns mounted, and a sufficient number of Artilleriests to work them, and I am persuaded as little danger is to be apprehended from the Boats of an enemy, as the Proclamation of Colo Nicolls and Sir William Henry Percy—<sup>3</sup> In addition to these Batteries the committee appointed by the State for the defence thereof, has reccommend the fortification of the English turn to be occupied, and a Battery aided by a ditch from the River to the marsh in its rear to be established—<sup>4</sup>

This work was progressing when I reached New Orleans, and I have assured the Legislature if they will provide the labourers to complete it, That I will furnish the Guns & men to work them, as well as a Battery prepared to be made at Terra au bouf, These Fortifacations in case the enemys Fleet should pass St. Phillips, will be able to halt them, and I am convinced aided by fire Ships, and Light Artillery they may be destroyed— This if the aid promised by the Legislature is afforded, will form the defence of the River, And I hope the Gun Boats will prevent the enemy from approaching by the Lakes.

If the fine Ship<sup>5</sup> now on the Stocks was finished, and placed in the Bay of mobile to support Fort Bowyer I should think this the most secure section of the union— and I beg again to reccommend the immediate completion of this vessel, This done and she placed at the point suggested and my life on the event, that ten Thousand men, and all the British Shipping cannot take the Fort or enter the Bay— Fort Bowyer will be the First point of attack, and if carried they will endeavour to penetrate the Indian country and make a stand—excite the Indians to war, the negroes to insurrection, and then proceed to the Mississippi and cut of [/] the communication between the upper & lower country— Should that be effected this section of the country falls as a matter of course, I have seen commodore Patterson & had the pleasure of his company in my excursion down the River, He has promised me, and I am confident of his entire cooperation with me in the defence of the country as far as he has the means in his power<sup>6</sup> and I have only to regret they are not more extensive—

I have Just heard from Pensicola The Spaniards are rebuilding the Barancas, and have refused the proffered assistance of the British, and replied when they wanted aid, they should apply to their friend General Jackson. I therefore hope my visit to that place may have produced beneficial effects—

Permit me in case the proposed encrease of the army should take place, to suggest the propriety of appointing the colonels of the new Regiments from the Lieut. colonels and Majors of the old ones, and to reccommend to your notice Colo Butler my Adjutant Genl. and Major Woodruff of the 3rd. Infantry, as proper persons for the command of Regiments— I have the honour to be respectfully yr. obedt. Servant.

Andrew Jackson  
Major Genl. comdg.

LS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Unregistered Series, J-1814 (M222, Roll No. 12).

1. Arthur P. Hayne.
2. Hayne to Jackson, 1 December 1814, above.
3. See Nicolls's Proclamation to the Inhabitants of Louisiana, 29 August 1814, and Percy to Inhabitants of Baratavia, 1 September 1814, pp. 891–94.
4. See New Orleans Committee of Safety to Jackson, 18 September 1814, above.
5. Probably a reference to the block ship *Tchefuncta*, whose construction William Jones had ordered halted as an economy measure. See Jones to Patterson, 7 March 1814, pp. 809–10.
6. The following is inserted at this point: "decr 13—1814/genl jackson—." Apparently this letter was begun on 12 December and completed on the following day.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE LOUISIANA LEGISLATURE  
CONCERNING THE BARATARIANS

[*New Orleans, 14 December 1814*]

Resolution.

Whereas in the Present State of Public affairs it is of the greatest importance to procure Seamen for the Service of the United States, and whereas many Persons who have Served on board or been concerned in, or connected with the privateers lately resorting to Baratavia in this state are deterred from offering their Services for fear of prosecution, as violators of the Revenue Laws of the United States.—

Wherefore Be it Resolved by the senate and house of Representatives of the State of Louisiana in general assembly convened, that the commanding officer of the District<sup>1</sup> be requested to use his endeavours to procure an amnesty for all the Persons above described who are now actually in service, or who shall within thirty days enrol themselves to Serve in the land Service or in the navy of the United States or other ways when directed by the commanding officer, for the defence of the state during the Present occasion, or while the Enemy shall remain on the coast, and shall continue in Such Service according to the time of their engagement, and that this Legislature will earnestly recommend to the President of the United States to grant a full pardon to all such Persons for, any offence they may have committed against the laws of the United States as aforesaid.—

and Be it further resolved that the Governor of the State<sup>2</sup> & the Said commanding General be requested to use their endeavours to procure the attorney of the United States with the Leave of the court to enter a *nolle prosequi*<sup>3</sup> against all such persons now confined for any of the offences aforesaid on the Conditions above stated.—

Signed/ Magloire Guichard,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives—  
Signed/ Fulwar Skipwith  
President of the Senate

Copy, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 14). For another printed version of this letter, see Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, p. 114.

1. Andrew Jackson.
2. William C. C. Claiborne.
3. Latin for “to be unwilling to pursue.” In law, an entry on the record of a legal action denoting that all or part of the charges against a defendant are to be dropped.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 19th: December 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that since the date of my last letter<sup>1</sup> Doctr. Marshall has arrived at this place, and made to me the within statement<sup>2</sup> relative to the action between our Gun Vessels and the Barges of the Enemy, and their subsequent movements; since when no further intelligence has been received; by this statement it appears the Enemy's Force was infinitely superior to that reported by Mr. Johnson;<sup>3</sup> the Vessels stated by Doctor Marshall to be within the shoals, of Passes Christian, & Mary Ann, must have been built expressly for our shoal waters; and their having brought them in within those shoals indicate, I think; an intention relying upon them and numerous Flat Barges to attempt this City by forcing their way up the Bayou St. John; to guard against their so doing, on the evening of the 17th [I] commenced erecting on the Banks of the Bayou two Batteries to mount each 2 long 24 pounders, one of which in despite of Rain, and other difficulties is now thro' the active exertions of my few remaining Officers, redly for action, the other will be completed by tomorrow night, when I hope the Enemy may attempt us by that route, these two Batteries are independant of the Fort St. John at the mouth of the Bayou, every exertion is also making to have fire vessels ready for them in the event of an attack by the way of the River their attack will no doubt be made simultaneously by the River, Barataria, and Lake Pontchartrain, Capt. Henly & Lieut Norris have the superintendence of the Batteries erecting at the Bayou St. John, Lieuts. Alexis<sup>4</sup> & Thompson Acting Lieuts. Crowley,<sup>5</sup> & Cunningham and sailing master Pollock are indifatigable in their endeavours to expedite every measure which is found necessary, at this time.—

The Flag sent to the Enemy has not yet returned,<sup>6</sup> I am happy to inform you that the most determined spirit of resistance to the Enemy is manifested by every class of Citizens of this country and I have no doubt that the enemy will be repulsed in any attack he may make upon us with very great loss— the gallant resistance made by the few Gun Vessels appears to have roused the Spirits of the people, animated them to the highest pitch. I have the honor to be with great considerat and respect Your Obt. St.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 101 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Patterson to Jones, 16 December 1814, pp. 940–41.
2. George Marshall to Patterson, 17 December 1814, p. 946.
3. See William Johnson to Patterson, 15 December 1814, pp. 937–40.
4. Louis Alexis was promoted to master commandant on 9 December 1814.
5. Charles E. Crowley was promoted to lieutenant on 9 December 1814. He arrived on the New Orleans Station in August in the schooner *Carolina*.
6. On 15 December, Patterson dispatched Purser Thomas Shields and Surgeon Robert Morrell to the British fleet under a flag of truce to obtain the parole of the gunboat crewmen wounded in the Battle of Lake Borgne. For documentation on this mission, see pp. 940–41 and 956–66.

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR MICHAEL REYNOLDS, DECLOUET'S REGIMENT OF  
LOUISIANA DRAFTED MILITIA

Major Reynolds<sup>1</sup>

Head Quarters 7th. military District  
New Orleans 22d December 1814

Sir

You will please immediately to proceed to the Temple with fifty Men of the force under your command and all the Artillery Stores &c. the thirty remaining men you will leave at the Bayou st. Denis called on Duponts Map Bayou Dupont which was formerly obstructed by Colonel Ross which Bayou they must efficiently obstructed and then join you at the Temple leaving a Picket there with orders to give you notice of any attempt to penetrate that way

On your arrival you will please fortify yourself at the Point of the Temple, two Sixes and a nine pounder will be Sent to you with a reinforcement and if possible a chain to be put across the Bayou below the Temple within half cannon shot

Mr. Jean Lafite has offered me his services to go down and give you any information in his power you will therefore please to afford him the necessary protection from Injury and Insult And when you have derived the information you wish furnish him with your passport for his return, dismissing him as soon as possible as I shall want him here I am Sir your most obt. Svt.

Andrew Jackson  
Major Genl. Commanding

LS, Jackson, *Papers* (SR Microfilm), Roll No. 4. For the letter book copy of this order, see DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 62).

1. Reynolds served in the Marine Corps for more than 11 years before resigning his captain's commission on 30 January 1811. His Marine career included duty as adjutant to the Corps' commandant, Colonel Francis Wharton, as well as multiple postings at New Orleans. Reynolds's brother-in-law, Colonel George T. Ross, commanded U.S. Army troops in the 16 September raid on the pirate stronghold at Baratavia. For additional biographical details on Reynolds, see Bradley, *Interim Appointment*, p. 417, note 50.

## British Preparations for the Attack on New Orleans

*Having been turned back by the American defenders at Baltimore, Admiral Cochrane planned to shift his offensive operations from the Chesapeake Bay to the northward, making a surprise landing on the Rhode Island seaboard. After resting and refreshing his expeditionary force, Cochrane intended to close out the campaigning season with a descent upon the Carolina and Georgia coasts, followed by a strike at New Orleans.<sup>1</sup> These plans shifted dramatically on 17 September, when Cochrane received word that the British government intended to support a large-scale invasion of Louisiana, for which preparations were already underway.<sup>2</sup> Over the next ten weeks, the Scottish admiral issued instructions to coordinate and ready his force for a successful campaign. To Cochrane's great frustration, not all his orders were properly executed.*

1. These objectives were outlined in *Cochrane to Melville*, 3 September 1814, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 269–70.

2. See *Melville to Cochrane*, 29 July 1814, pp. 840–41, and *Cochrane to Melville*, 17 September 1814, pp. 852–53.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM BROWN, R.N.

Sir/

I have received directions<sup>1</sup> from the Lords Com[issione]rs of the Adm[iralty] to send the Army which is now acting on this Coast to join the Army of Lieut. General Lord Hill off Point Negril on or before the 20th. of next November—& to proceed myself to take Command of the Naval part of the Expedition which is intended to act against New Orleans & Louisiana—You will therefore take measure for collecting the necessary Pilots & Boats best calculated for transporting Troops along that Coast into Lake Pontchartrain, & also Keep Victuallers ready to compleat the Ships upon their arrival at Point Negril with all species of Provisions so soon as you shall hear of the approach of Rear Adml. Malcolm, who will quit this Coast in charge of the Troop Ships & Transports upon the 10th. of Oct. next— This Fleet is at present very short of Bread, Cocoa, Pease & Sugar & it is possible that a Sufficiency to compleat them may not arrive from Halifax before they Sail—but of Beef, Pork & Flour we have abundance— It is my intention to be at Jamaica before the 21st. Novr. first calling at the Leeward Islands where it is possible I may meet with Lord Hill—<sup>2</sup> In the mean time you will Select such of the Vessels of His Majesty now under your command of a light draft of Water as will be able to enter the shallow waters in the neighbourhood of New Orleans, & you will also fit any such other Vessels as you may be able to procure adapted for this Service, mounting them with one or more Guns for the purpose.—

Given on bd. H M S *Tonnant* 19th. Septr. /14

(Signed) A. Cochrane

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fols. 11–12.

1. See Croker to Cochrane, 10 August 1814, pp. 842–44.
2. Cochrane arrived at Jamaica on 18 November.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL PULTENEY MALCOLM, R.N.

Most Secret

By the Hble Sir A. Cochrane K B &cca

It being the intention of His Majestys Govt. that the division of Troops acting on this Coast should join the Army of Lieut. Genl. Lord Hill on the 20th. of Novr. next of [f] Point Negril, you will prepare to proceed with them under your particular charge. You will take care to have all the Troop Ships & Transports compleat in their water & also in their Provisions as far as the supplies will admit, & taking also under your Orders the Ships of War named in the margin<sup>1</sup> hereof. you will put to Sea with the whole on the 10th. day of next October & make the best of your way to Point Negril, leaving sealed Rendezvous for any Ships which may be directed to join you to be opened after they are ten leagues past of the Capes of Virginia & delivering to those with you similar Sealed Rendezvous for point Negril— Should you be in want of Provisions you will forward your demands to the care of Rear Adml. Brown at Jamaica—and you will endeavor to Keep the Ships under your Orders in every respect complete & ready to proceed to their further destination on the 20th. day of next November— Upon your quitting the Chesapeake you will leave the command in the hands of the Senior Officer of H M Ships remaining putting under his charge the whole of the Marines of each Battalion with the accompanying Orders for his guidance<sup>2</sup>— And you will make such changes in the Ships destined to receive Troops or Marines as you may find most advantageous for the purposes of the Expedition.—

Given on bd. H M S *Tonnant*, 19th. Sept 1814

(Signed) A. Cochrane—

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fol. 12.

1. *Royal Oak, Ramillies, Asia, Meteor, Terror, Volcano, Borer, and Thistle.*
2. Malcolm left Robert Barrie in command of the Chesapeake Bay blockading squadron. See Malcolm to Barrie, 6 October 1814, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, p. 330.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 133

*Tonnant* 3d. Oct. 1814  
Halifax—

Sir

Your duplicate of the 10th. August<sup>1</sup> arrived by the *Whiting* on the 29th. uo. informing me of the receipt of my letter No. 48<sup>2</sup> relative to the expediency of

undertaking an Expedition against the Enemy's Settlements in the Gulph of Mexico, which had been laid before His Majesty's Government.

In consequence of the former orders when it was proposed that Lord Hill should have commanded the Expedition against New Orleans every arrangement was made agreeably to what I communicated by the *Rover*. The change that has taken place as to the magnitude of the force has not in any shape altered those arrangements, and it is my intention to proceed direct from hence to the West Indies upon the 10th. of this month, by which time the *Tonnant* will have received some necessary repairs.

I have every prospect of the fullest success attending the Expedition; and unless the United States have sent very great reinforcements to New Orleans I consider the force to be employed as perfectly adequate without the assistance of the Marines whom I wish to employ on a service of equal consequence.— As it is a most material object to occupy the attention of the States of South Carolina & Georgia before the Expedition leave Jamaica, in order to draw off the Force they have in the interior now employed against the Indians, for the defence of their Sea coast, I have directed Rear Admiral Cockburn to take with him the second & third battalion of Marines consisting of about one thousand men, and about the 10th. of November to make a landing upon the Southern frontier of Georgia, taking post upon Cumberland Island and there throwing up temporary works for the protection of the negroes that seek refuge under the British flag.<sup>3</sup> About 200 men will be sufficient for the security of this post, where they will be daily gaining strength. With the two battalions of Marines & the additional aid which can be spared from the shipping the Rear Admiral will have a force of about 1500 men, with which he will be able to occupy the attention of the Enemy whilst we are carrying on our operations in Louisiana.

You forgot to name the troops upon the margin of your letter, as also the number of troop-ships.<sup>4</sup> I am well pleased however to observe that every ship is to bring out two flat boats, as we are much cramped in our means of landing a sufficient body of men to resist the immediate attack of an Enemy.

I am much affraid that it will not be in the power of Rear Admiral Brown to procure the number of small vessels you speak of, (10 to 20) of a construction calculated for the shoal water in the vicinity of New Orleans.

The 5th. West India Regiment will be of much use & I hope that the other may also follow. But as the composition of the West India Regiments does not make them equal to British troops in numbers fit for active service, I trust that none but the really effective may be allowed to come with them.

I am glad to find that the Rifles & Carbines &c are on their way; but I hope they are accompanied by some hundred sets of Dragoon's accouterments for the Indians as well as such Cavalry as we may be able to form from the regiments and the Ships of war.

In relation to the temporary rank of Colonel which I wished Major Nicholls to hold whilst acting with the Indians, it is conformable to what was adopted all through the American war, where provincial Rank was given as high as that of Brigadier General, & even to those who had never held any Military Rank whatever. With the Indians it is absolutely necessary to impress a belief that their leaders are men of rank & consequence, or as they style them, "great warriors". They are accustomed by their intercourse with the United States to see how Military Rank is prostituted, & that even the taverns are kept by persons bearing the

Rank of Colonels, Lt. Colonels &c. This being the case I judged it for the advantage of H.M. Service to place Major Nicholls in a situation beyond or at least of equal Rank to persons of that description.

After the Service has been completed at New Orleans & the country properly secured I beg leave to propose that should there be more troops than are necessary for the security of our conquests they shall join the Marines upon the coast of Georgia & Carolina; and if an additional force can be sent from home so as to compose a body of six thousand men I am fully satisfied that these two states will be at our mercy. And by recruiting there during the winter I expect to add at least 2,000 men to that number before the month of April, at which time we shall be about to recommence our operations in the Chesapeake.

I submit this plan to the consideration of Government, & beg to be informed as soon as possible if it is to be acted upon.

As Rear Admiral Cockburn will be constantly employed upon that coast I recommend that their lordships instructions directed to me off New Orleans should be sent in duplicate to him for his perusal.

I shall make an arrangement to have a regular conveyance established between Amelia Island & Pensacola. By this means I shall have a double chance of receiving your communications, and the Rear Adml. will have at least three weeks previous knowledge of the Intentions of Government.

\*A report<sup>5</sup> has just reached me by a vessel from Quebec that Sir George Prevost has drafted all the Marines of the First Battalion & that he is about to send me merely the staff. Their Lordships will be well aware how serious a disappointment I feel in being deprived of this excellent corps upon which they had taught me to rely, & how much it may cramp our future operations on the coast. I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant,

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane

Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

This letter has been copied by Rear Adl. Codrington—being unable from the Rheumatism in My Arm, to write Much Myself.—

A C

\*Have been Confirmed by an Arrival from Quebeck

A C

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/4360, fols. 69–71.

1. Croker to Cochrane, 10 August 1814, pp. 842–44.

2. Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, pp. 838–40.

3. For Cochrane's orders to Cockburn, see Cochrane to Cockburn, 1 October 1814, pp. 591–92.

4. Croker named the troops and vessels being sent from Europe in his letter to Cochrane of 14 September 1814. See pp. 850–51 and 851, note 1.

5. Cochrane requested Prevost to send him the first battalion of Royal Marines in its entirety. Cochrane to Prevost, 5 October 1814, UKENL, MS 2346, fol. 14.



VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 163

*Tonnant*, off Pensacola  
7th. December 1814—

Sir

I have the honor to acquaint you for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that I arrived in the *Tonnant* at Jamaica upon the 18th. Ultimo, and being joined there by the *Bedford* with the Troop Ships and Transports having on board Major General Keane and the Division under his command upon the 21st., on the 25th. I left Port Royal and having communicated and arranged with Rear Admiral Malcolm at Negril bay, I proceeded to this Coast with Major General Keane, leaving the Rear Admiral to bring on the Fleet.

I conceive it highly incumbent upon me to state to their Lordships that on my arrival at Jamaica, I found to my very great astonishment, the intention of sending an expedition against New Orleans and Louisiana which I had taken the utmost precaution to keep profoundly secret, publicly talked of; and was given to understand that it had been generally known throughout Port Royal and Kingston a very few hours after the arrival there of their Lordship's instructions, and my secret and confidential Letters to the late Rear Admiral Brown relative to this Service, which I forwarded to him from the Chesapeake in September last.

It appears that these were opened by Captain Fothergill, who at the time of their arrival was Senior Officer in Port Royal; and upon them he issued to Captain Bremer, the Agent of Transports an Order of which I send herewith a Copy<sup>1</sup>; submitting for their Lordships consideration, whether, under the strict secrecy enjoined, Captain Bremer was not furnished with more particulars than there was any necessity of detailing to him for his performance of that part of the Service with which Capt'n. Fothergill thought proper to entrust him.

To one or the other of these Officers must be attributed the publicity of the intended Operations, of which Correspondents of the Enemy have not failed to avail themselves, for, two days after the arrival of these Letters, a Mr. Hudson, who is connected with a Mercantile House in New Orleans, sailed from Jamaica in a small Schooner that cleared out for Pensacola, and I here understand that through him, about three weeks since, this information was brought (via Orleans) to General Jackson at Pensacola, where he had entered a few days before with an Army of three thousand Men, and had made his dispositions for remaining during the winter months: this information however caused him to relinquish his intention, and proceed immediately for New Orleans.

Their Lordships will perceive by the enclosed Return<sup>2</sup> of Vessels hired at Jamaica for the service of the expedition, that little progress had been made in procuring that means of transport which is so essential to our Operations: Although Captain Bremer possessed every information relative to the nature of the service and the situation for which these Vessels were wanted, and hired them at a most exorbitant rate; there is not above one that even when empty, does not draw too much Water for the Navigation of either of the Lakes, or that is at all calculated to perform the Service intended for them.

The moment I arrived at Jamaica I sent the *Herald* to Pensacola to endeavour and hire or purchase small Vessels there, but our success has been very limited as their Lordships will see by the enclosed Return<sup>3</sup> from the Honorable Captain Spencer; which I sent principally to shew the considerable difference between the price at which Vessels have been taken up by the Agent at Jamaica and that of those hired at Pensacola.

Their Lordships may conceive that I must feel this unlooked for Exposure, and failure of obtaining necessary transport, most sensibly; for, the one renders rapidity of movement doubly important, while the other leaves me without the means of execution: I entertain every hope however that the zeal and exertion of the combined Forces will not fail to surmount these unexpected Obstacles. I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane

Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 395–97.

1. Fothergill directed Bremer to obtain three types of craft for the New Orleans expedition: boats to transport troops, victuallers to carry provisions to Point Negril, and light-draft vessels for operating in the shoal waters off New Orleans. Fothergill admonished Bremer “to observe the most profound Secrecy” in executing his orders as any rumor of the preparations underway would “prove of material Detriment to His Majesty’s Arms.” William Fothergill to James Bremer, 8 October 1814, Adm. 1/508, fols. 398–99.

2. Cochrane enclosed two copies of this return to the Admiralty. The return lists eight vessels taken up by Bremer, one of which he later dismissed from service. The 914 tons of shipping he retained—five schooners, one brig, and one snow—ranged in size from 50 to 258 tons and drew from 5½ to 12½ feet of water when fully laden. The rate of hire was £5 per ton. “A List of Vessels taken up by Captain Bremmer  $\phi$  order of William Fothergill Esquire,” UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 400–401.

3. Spencer hired three craft and purchased one. They ranged in size from 22 tons to 148 tons. The two largest vessels drew between six and seven feet of water and were hired at the rate of one to two dollars per ton per month. “Vessels hired at Pensacola by the Honourable Captain Spencer His Majestys Ship *Carron*.” UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fol. 402.

## The Indian’s Role at New Orleans

*Vice Admiral Cochrane’s plan to capture New Orleans originally envisioned the seizure of Mobile, which would then be used as a stepping stone to attack the Louisiana port city.<sup>1</sup> As a prelude to this phase of the campaign, Cochrane dispatched Major Edward Nicolls of the Royal Marines to West Florida to recruit, equip, and train a cadre of local Indians and blacks to support the main British invasion force once it arrived.<sup>2</sup> The failure of Nicolls’s premature assault on Mobile,<sup>3</sup> coupled with the brief American occupation of the Spanish port of Pensacola, likely prompted Cochrane to abandon his Mobile stratagem in favor of a direct attack on New Orleans. Under this new scheme, Nicolls and his mixed force of Indians and black Colonial Marines would strike eastward along the Georgia frontier, diverting American troops that might otherwise reinforce Andrew Jackson’s command at New Orleans. The following documents reveal Cochrane’s aspirations for employing the southeastern tribesmen as fighting allies of Great Britain.<sup>4</sup>*

1. Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, pp. 838–40.

2. For documents on Nicolls’s mission, see pp. 860–70.

3. On the failed British attack on Mobile, see pp. 876–89.

4. Historian Frank L. Owsley, Jr., argues that the British plan to attack New Orleans “evolved (in the beginning) from two separate but similar ideas: Cochrane’s small-scale Indian operation, and the revived British plan to send a large force of men to be used directly against New Orleans.” Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, pp. 133–35; quoted text on p. 133.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
BREVET MAJOR EDWARD NICOLLS, ROYAL MARINES

*Tonnant* off Appalachicola 3rd. Decr. /14

Sir,

It is with extreme concern I learned the orders I gave for organizing the Indians in the River Appalachicola does not appear to have been acted upon, & that an Expedition has been undertaken against Mobbille consequently the assistance I expected from the junction of the Indian Tribes as a collective body cannot be counted upon—I have now to inform you that a Major General Keane is on board that Ship & that an Army consisting of about eight thousand Men, Infantry & Cavalry will be upon the Coast in the course of three days— The place to be first attacked is New Orleans after which we mean to drive the Americans out of the Indian Country—You will therefore distribute the accompanying Proclamations<sup>1</sup> which I trust will be satisfactory to the Indians— On board the convoy there are 3,000 suits of Clothing, 1,000 sets of Dragoon accoutrements & Carabines for the young Indians & great abundance of Presents for the Indian Tribes. You have my authority to assure the Indians that no treaty will be made with the United States without including the Indian Tribes both here & in Canada— You must be particularly careful not to give Arms to any but those known to be hostile to the Americans & use your endeavors to engage all you possibly can to assist in the attack of the Georgian Frontier.

About this time Rear Adml. Cockburn will have landed in Georgia with Four thousand men— your attacking the back part of that State will very much forward the operations upon the Sea Coast & I make no doubt you will be able to keep up a communication with him across the Country— If you have any of the Choctaw Indians with you, I think they had better join me in order that measures may be concerted to arm all their Nation upon our going to the attack of New Orleans— I will order a Brig to anchor off the River and to remain there for the protection of the vessel with the Presents of which you will not land more than are immediately wanted or can be well secured from the reach off the Enemy. You must however without delay send me an account of all your wants and also of the force you expect to bring into the Field to co-operate with the Army acting in Georgia & the Carolinas—

The Army was to sail from Jamaica the day after this Ship sailed & I expect we will be able to make our landing in the course of a week— The *Shelburne* will receive on board as much Flour & bread as she can stow for the use of the Detachment and Indians under your Command & will remain off Appalachicola until relieved. I am &c.

(Signed). A. Cochrane.

I have sent you by the <i>Anaconda</i>		
Spades & Shovels	30 in No.	} With a compleat Map of America <sup>2</sup>
Pick Axes	20— "—	
Wood Axes	10— "—	
Hatchets	15— "—	

LB, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 214–16.

1. Cochrane and Keane to the Creek and other Indian Nations, 5 December 1814, below.
2. This list appears in the left-hand margin of p. 215.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
BREVET MAJOR EDWARD NICOLLS, ROYAL MARINES

*Tonnant* off Appalachicola  
3 Decr. 1814

Dr. Sir,

I was sorry to find upon my arrival here that you had begun where you ought to have left off. I cannot conceive what could have induced Capt. Percy to attempt any thing against Mobile when my instructions most particularly pointed out that the back part of Georgia was to be the Scene of action.<sup>1</sup> this I considered of a double importance the first to draw off the Negroes from Georgia & South Carolina, & Secondly to make a diversion in favor of the projected attack upon New Orleans— You will have two strong well appointed Companies of one of the West India Regts. sent you from hence, these will make good recruiting Parties You will therefore encourage the Negroes to enter into them in preference to any Corps originally raised. in doing this you will derive more merit from Govt. than if you raised a Corps yourself as Ministers are particularly anxious to recruit the 8 W. I. Regts. Any you may obtain for these Regts. inform me of with their numbers & I will take care that your exertions are attended to. Do not depend upon your Fort<sup>2</sup> as a place of safety to contain all your Stores Keep there only a part the rest on board the Brig below your chief Depôt— You must be particular in Keeping a regular account of the expenditure of the Indian presents and take care there are no jobs entered into with those who have the distribution of them, none are to be given except to friends & to them in proportion to their wants— A Storekeeper is come out to regulate the issues & will be sent round as soon as he can be spared let me know if you can mount any Indian Cavalry & how many that I may send you Accoutrements & Saddles &ca for them, also the No. of Carabines you want for the young Indians— I am sorry to hear the Indians have expressed a dislike to being regularly trained I hope this is not general— Keep a sharp look out that the Americans who were at Pensacola do not surprize you. As soon as we shew ourselves off New Orleans their attention will be drawn to that quarter— I expect much from your exertions in the Georgia frontier where you must lay all waste— I do not mean to mean to the personal injury of the Inhabitants unless those found in Arms. point your attacks towards the quarter that will be attacked by Rear Admiral Cockburn & General Gibbs in Georgia the Americans

will thereby be placed between two fires induce all the Negroes you can to come over, those that are not willing to be soldiers shall be provided for, as also the Families of all. You may expect the two Companies in 8 days from hence— You will receive with this a doz Proclamations but only distribute as many as may be required for the Tribes giving one to each Chief as a pledge to be made Known only among our friends as I wish them not to fall into the hands of the Enemy, let them however be fully explained to the Indians— and it would be adviseable that you send round one of the Chiefs deputed by the different Tribes to consult with General Keane & myself & to be assured of the Succours & the Presents which we bring them,; when they will be able to make their own Report— You will endeavor to communicate with Rear Adml. Cockburn sending him every information in your power & accounts of your Strength & what co-operation you can afford him, writing your letters in the Cypher of the Vocabulary delivered to you at Bermuda, attending to the Secret Memo. herewith sent you & with which he is furnished. I am not clear that you will not be able when you get back into the Country to enter for the War some of the white Inhabitants called Croakers & incorporate them with the Indians they may be promised lands & protection after the War is over— In short I have every confidence in your exertions that the Service entrusted to your management will be faithfully performed— I remain &ca

(Signed) A. Cochrane

LB, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fols. 16–17.

1. For Cochrane's instructions to Percy, see Cochrane to Percy, 5 July 1814, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/506, fols. 486–88. Both Cochrane's orders to Percy and Nicolls are silent on the diversionary mission the Admiral expected Nicolls's force was to undertake. In September, Cochrane cautioned both Nicholls and James A. Gordon, Percy's replacement, against bringing on premature military action with the Americans. Cochrane to Gordon, 6 September 1814, pp. 836–37, and Cochrane to Nicolls, 17 September 1814, p. 870.

2. Nicolls's fort was located at Prospect Bluff on the Apalachicola River.

BREVET MAJOR EDWARD NICOLLS, ROYAL MARINES, TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Prospect Bluff 3rd. December 1814

Sir

I have had the pleasure of seeing a Copy of your Secret memorandum to Captain Milward of His Majestys Sloop *Herald*.<sup>1</sup> I am happy to think that you will be as successful as you can wish. for I am sure you will be Joined by all the blacks and Mulatoes of Louisiana.— General Jacksons whole disposable force is at Mobile and Pensacola. the 7th. Regiment has lately left chiffhunty [*Tchefuncte*] for New Orleans or its neighbourhood. it is one of their best Regiments. I send you a deserter from it, of the name of Geary, he can be of use about the point of attack. I also send you 2nd. Lieut. Belletre, the Officer mentioned in my letter to you as having been sent to New Orleans, he is well acquainted in that quarter, and I hope will be of use to you. but you will have plenty of information the moment you land at Saint Jean. I expected 200 Mulatoes from thence to Join

me at Pensacola, but the Embargo<sup>2</sup> and General Jackson's arrival prevented their joining me. I have detached Captain Woodbine to the Southward, to communicate with Admiral Cockburn. and 50 of the Meakasukee Warriors are gone to attack the Americans in the same quarter. their brave and faithful old Chief Capachamico who has adhered to England through all difficulties, is here with me and 70 of his men helping me to build the Fort. I am waiting the arrival of the other Chiefs for I now find, that before I advance it is absolutely necessary to have the upper Town Creeks in our alliance. those people Justly dread the Idea of their Attacking them in the rear. when they are engaged with the Americans, as was lately the case. I am therefore taking every possible step to gain them over, and as I have before told you, I must give them money as well as presents. now is the time as lately the Americans have failed paying them from inability. if you can send me a small sum, say £500. Mr. Hambly thinks it would buy them all aided by the presents. and that sum, or as much of it as you can in gold it being more Portable, and in their opinion a more valuable present, they have also been led to believe that a force of Troops was Coming to aid them. if you possibly can spare a Battalion of Marines, or black Troops. I am sure it would be of the greatest benefit to the service. and red clothing is much wanted. herewith is enclosed a field return of the strength of our present force.<sup>3</sup> in a day or two all the red sticks who were with me at Pensacola, will be here. I shall then have upwards of 2500 Men women and Children to victual. and those who come down for their presents ten at a time I have to give a few days provisions to— now that I have a great deal of boat work to perform I find the want of a few Sailors to direct in the boats. our people, and the blacks pull very well, but they cant steer, and if any little accident happens, they dont know how to Extricate themselves. Enclosed also is the plan Lieut. Christie of the Royal Artillery drew of this fort during my absence; but I found it so defective that I ordered Captain Henry to Execute it differently as you will see by his plan. we have the ditch dug all round 12 feet wide, and Six deep. we would get on much faster if we had a larger proportion of entrenching tools, if you can Spare any Pray Sir send me some; also canvas for boats sails. the pull up against the stream is very severe with loaded boats and those very clumsy. our Medicines are all Expended, and we want a Couple of Surgeons assistants.— The Brother of the Foule town<sup>4</sup> Chief is Just arrived, he says two hundred enemys Cavalry came into the Chehau Town and asked them leave to come on and Chastise the Foule Town people for stealing their Horses. but unfortunately they would not let them. if they had the Foule Town people would have brought them down to me. The Chehaus are but lately armed and they are very faithful.

Mr. Hambly the head interpreter and the person most in the Confidence of the Creek Chiefs, is now with me. I have found him fully as useful as I was led to believe he would be, and very gentlemanly in his manners and appearance. he is indispensably necessary to me, as he is Thoroughly acquainted with every body, and every thing in this province. I have given him the last of your Commissions, but I hope you will give him a Salary as interpreter besides with an assurance of protection for the future. he has sacrificed every thing for His Majesty's Service his Father was one of the old Tory's, and stuck to his country to the last. his son has followed him in his honorable track. and I am sure he will meet with a protector in you.— he was lately in the employ of Forbes & Co. who are as great a Set of Scoundrels as Exist.<sup>5</sup> you will see by the intercepted letter in Captain Gordon's possession

that they have been endeavouring to stop the Indians from Joining us. they have also offered large Sums to Perryman if he would Join the Americans. it was Forbes who put the Irons on Bowles,<sup>6</sup> and Capachamico has sworn to kill him were ever he meets them. the Chiefs have Confiscated all his property here and annulled all their parts of land to him and his house. I am told he is now in St. Augustine doing what mischief he can— our daily Expenditure of flour is four barrels. and when the red sticks Join it will be 12 so that I have only twenty four days flour to Calculate on, as I have said before, the Indians up the Nation, have barely enough for themselves. I hope Sir, you will be so good as to let McNamara Join me if you can spare him I have the honor to be Sir your faithful humble Servant,

Edward Nicolls Lt. Colnl.  
Commanding

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2328, fols. 117–18.

1. Memorandum not found.

2. For documentation on the American embargo on Pensacola, see pp. 870–75.

3. Return not found.

4. A Seminole town on the Flint River in what is now Decatur County, Georgia. U.S. regulars from nearby Fort Scott attacked Fowltown in November 1817, touching off the First Seminole War.

5. Nicolls's faith in Hambly proved misplaced for the latter surreptitiously provided intelligence on British activities at Prospect Bluff to the Americans via his former employers at Forbes. See Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, p. 176.

6. William Augustus Bowles, Maryland-born adventurer and filibusterer who attempted to establish an independent Creek Indian state in Spanish Florida. John Forbes played a role in his arrest in 1803. Bowles died two years later a Spanish prisoner in Havana, Cuba. For an authoritative biography of Bowles, see Wright, *William Augustus Bowles*.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., AND  
MAJOR GENERAL JOHN KEANE, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
THE CREEK AND OTHER INDIAN NATIONS

TO THE  
GREAT AND ILLUSTRIOUS CHIEFS  
OF THE  
CREEK AND OTHER INDIAN NATIONS.

HEAR!— O YE BRAVE CHIEFS AND WARRIORS OF THE CREEK AND OTHER INDIAN NATIONS,

THE Great KING GEORGE, our beloved Father, has long wished to assuage the sorrows of his warlike Indian Children, and to assist them in regaining their Rights and Possessions from their base and perfidious oppressors.

The trouble our Father has had in conquering his Enemies beyond the great waters, he has brought to a glorious conclusion; and Peace is again restored amongst all the Nations of Europe.

The desire therefore which he has long felt of assisting you, and the assurance which he has given you of his powerful protection, he has now chosen us his Chiefs by Sea and Land to carry into effectual execution.

Know then, O Chiefs and Warriors, that in obedience to the Great Spirit which directs the soul of our mighty Father, we come with a power which it were vain for all the People of the United States to attempt to oppose.— Behold the great waters covered with our Ships, from which will go forth an Army of Warriors as numerous as the whole Indian Nations; inured to the toils and hardships of war— accustomed to triumph over all opposition—the constant favorites of Victory.

The same principle of justice which led our Father to wage a war of twenty years in favor of the oppressed Nations of Europe, animates him now in support of his Indian Children. And by the efforts of his Warriors, he hopes to obtain for them the restoration of those lands of which the People of the Bad Spirit have basely robbed them.

We promised you by our Talk of last June,<sup>1</sup> that great Fleets and Armies were coming to attack our foes; and you will have heard of our having triumphantly taken their Capital City of WASHINGTON, as well as many other places—beaten their Armies in battle—and spread terror over the heart of their country.

Come forth, then, ye brave Chiefs and Warriors, as one family, and join the British Standard,— the signal of union between the powerful and oppressed,— the symbol of Justice led on by Victory.

If you want covering to protect yourselves, your wives, and your children, against the winter's cold,— come to us and we will clothe you. If you want arms and ammunition to defend yourselves against your oppressors,— come to us and we will provide you. Call around you the whole of our Indian brethren,— and we will shew them the same tokens of our brotherly love.

And what think you we ask in return for this bounty of our great Father, which we his chosen Warriors have so much pleasure in offering to you? Nothing more than that you should assist us manfully in regaining your lost lands,— the lands of your forefathers,— from the common enemy, the wicked People of the United States; and that you should hand down those lands to your children hereafter, as we hope we shall now be able to deliver them up to you, their lawful owners. And you may rest assured, that whenever we have forced our Enemies to ask for a Peace, our good father will on no account forget the welfare of his much-loved Indian Children.

Again then, brave Chiefs and Warriors of the Indian Nations, at the mandate of the Great Spirit we call upon you to come forth arrayed in battle, to fight the great fight of Justice, and recover your long-lost freedom. Animate your hearts in this sacred cause,— unite with us as the sons of one common Father,— and a great and glorious victory will shortly crown our exertions.

Given under our Hands and Seals, on board His Britannic Majesty's Ship *TORNANT*, off Appalachicola, the 5th of December, 1814.

(Signed) ALEXANDER COCHRANE,  
Vice-Admiral, and Commander in Chief  
of the Fleet on the North American and Jamaica Stations.  
(Signed) JOHN KEANE,  
Major-General, Commanding the Forces.

D, UK-KeNA, W.O. 1/143, fol. 157.

1. See Cochrane to Chiefs of the Creek Nation, 29 June 1814, pp. 860–61.



VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

No. 33

Head Quarters near New  
Orleans 6th. January 1815

Sir

On the other side hereof I send you a Copy of Major Nicolls Statement of the intended Route of Operations by the Detachment of Marines and Indians under his Command, which from the latest Accounts received from Apalachicola amount to between two and three thousand Men who will be ready, in all probability, to depart from thence in three Weeks from this period I have &c

Sigd. Alex Cochrane— Vice Adml.  
and Commander in Chief

[Enclosure]

Intended Route of Operations by the Detachment and Indians under Major Nicolls

The Indians and Detachment from the Bluff will pass up the Chattahooche River, attack Fort Mitchel at the Cowetas; proceed from thence to Hartford on the Oakmulgee and then to Mulledgeville; from whence they will if possible communicate with Rear Admiral Cockburn by the Altamaha but more certainly by the Route of St. Augustine

Head Quarters near New  
Orleans the 6th. January 1815

(Signed) Edward Nicolls Major R M

LB, DLC, Sir George Cockburn Papers, Container 14 (Roll No. 9).

## The Battle of Lake Borgne

*The first elements of the British fleet arrived off the southeastern coast of Louisiana on 8 December. Three days later, the entirety of Admiral Cochrane's armada had assembled at a deep-water anchorage between Ship and Cat Island. The fleet's advance scout ships had warned the admiral that a small flotilla of enemy gunboats was guarding the eastern approaches to Lake Borgne. As these vessels were likely to contest passage of the lake by the British invasion force, Cochrane ordered the American gunboats neutralized.*

*On the evening of 12 December, more than 40 small craft carrying some 1,200 sailors and marines, led by Commander Nicholas Lockyer, set out from the British anchorage to overwhelm the U.S. flotilla. Rowing in open boats, Lockyer's assault force battled wind, tide, and fatigue in pursuit of a foe unwilling to challenge the British advance. The 36-hour chase came to a close on the morning of 14 December, when the American gunboats ran aground in a shallow channel at the entrance to Lake Borgne. Unable to retreat further into the lake, the American commander, Lieutenant Thomas ap Catesby Jones, anchored his gunboats in a defensive formation and prepared to receive the enemy. Despite a determined*

resistance, Jones's men were unable to fend off Lockyer's sailors and marines, who swarmed the American gunboats, carrying each in turn in hard-fought boarding actions.

The capture of Jones's flotilla on 14 December proved a heavy blow to Master Commandant Daniel Patterson, nearly halving his force to defend the New Orleans Station. The loss of the gunboats also deprived General Andrew Jackson of his best means for gathering timely intelligence on the activities and movements of the British fleet. Yet the brave action fought by Jones and his men, though not crowned with victory, succeeded in delaying British amphibious operations in Lake Borgne by a full 72 hours, thereby buying precious time for U.S. commanders to strengthen New Orleans's defenses.<sup>1</sup>

1. For the most detailed account of the Battle of Lake Borgne, see *La Violette*, Sink or Be Sunk. See also, Reilly, *British at the Gates*, pp. 233–36; Smith, *Thomas ap Catesby Jones*, pp. 27–30, and Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 50–52.

LIEUTENANT THOMAS AP CATESBY JONES TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

US. Gun Vessel No. 156  
Off St. Mary's. Island 9th Decr. 1814

Sir

Having for several days past been employed in collecting the Gun Vessels together, which were employed on different stations, on the look-out &c and watching the motions [of] the Enemy's Squadron at Ship Island; which now consists of one Ship of the line, two large Frigates, one Brig of Twenty Guns, and two Schooners. one of which appears [to] act as a Tender, and the other a Store Ship; the above mentioned Vessels are provided with a number of large Barges; which with the Schooners and Brig are always kept in such positions that we cannot approach them with the Gun Vessels without first encountering one of the Ships.—

The position I am now in [is] [th]e most central I know of and the best calculated to oppose any Force which may attempt to come through Pass Marian; Pass Christian, or the South Pass.—<sup>1</sup> I shall remain here untill I see, or hear from you unless some act of the Enemy should Justify an attack on some part of his Forces; as I cannot yet form [an] idea of his designs, or whether or no he has Troops on board his Ships.— Several Vessels laden with Provisions &c for the Army bound to Mobile had got [as] far as Pass Christian on their passage but have returned to the Petite Coquilles as I could not afford them a Sufficient convoy, to ensure them a Safe passage to Pass Heron<sup>2</sup> without taking my whole Force; which would have left this part of the coast—entirely unguarded, and of affording the Enemy an opportunity of cutting me off in my return should he be reinforced during my absence.— the thick Fogs which have prevailed here for some days has prevented me in some measure, from reconnoitering the Enemy as minutely as I wished to do. Gun Vessels No. 5. 23. 162. & 163 and the *Sea Horse* are now with me, I have the honor to be Most Respectfully Your Ob Servt.

Signed Thos. Ap. Catesby Jones

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 97a (M147, Roll No. 5). This letter was enclosed with Patterson to Secretary Jones, 12 December 1814, pp. 967–68. Bracketed words in roman are conjectures for text that is missing or illegible owing to tight binding and damage to the original document.

1. The three navigational channels by which shipping moved into and out of Lake Borgne from the Mississippi Sound and the Gulf of Mexico. Vessels employed in the coasting trade used Pass Christian; those engaged in blue-water commerce used Pass Marianne and South Pass. For a contemporary description of Pass Christian and Pass Marianne, see the entry for “Lake Borgne” in Darby and Dwight, *Gazetteer of the United States*, p. 64. A period map depicting these two channels is in Latour, *Memoir*, Plate II. See also the entries for Pass Marianne and Pass South in National Ocean Service, *United States Coast Pilot 5*, p. 324.

2. Pass aux Herons navigational channel connecting the southwest corner of Mobile Bay with the east end of the Mississippi Sound. National Ocean Service, *United States Coast Pilot 5*, p. 311.

LIEUTENANT THOMAS AP CATESBY JONES TO JOHN McDILL

U.S. Gun Vessel No. 156  
Bay St. Louis, 4 OClock P.M.  
12th. Decemr. 1814—

Sir,

Immediately on receipt of this, cause the Vessels which contains the Public property (of every description) to be run on shore and stand by to burn them with their cargoes as soon as you discover a boat turning the point between you and pass Christian. Execute this order with the most rigid punctuality; not an article of public property is to be left undestroyed. Roll together all that remains in store, and be ready to Commence the conflagration immediately after sun set, if the enemy's boats do not approach before Respectfully Your's &c.

Tho<sup>s</sup>. Ap Catesby Jones

Mr. Jno. McDill,—  
In charge of Navy Store Bay St. Louis

ALS, DNA, RG46, Records of the Senate, SEN 17-A-G9.

SAILING MASTER WILLIAM JOHNSON TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Neworleans 15th December 1814

Sir,

It falls to my lot, with extreme regret, to give you a [sketch] of the capture of the late Division of Gun Vessels; under command of Lieut. Comdt. Thomas ap. Catesby Jones; by a British Flotilla, near one of the Malhereaux Islands; it run thus; in the afternoon of the 12 Inst. the Division of Gun Vessels, with the Schooner *Sea Horse* under my command got underway from Pass Mary Ann; and Stood

# Plan of the Attack

made by the **BRITISH BARGES** on Five

**AMERICAN GUNBOATS**

on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 1814

by Major ALACABRIERE LATOUR principal

Engineer 7<sup>th</sup> Rég<sup>t</sup> d'Artillerie L.<sup>ts</sup> Army 1815

2 Miles

M A I N L A N D

St. Joseph Island

14 Barges

15 Barges attaching Cap<sup>t</sup> Jones

Out of the reach of 32 pounder

The Alligator

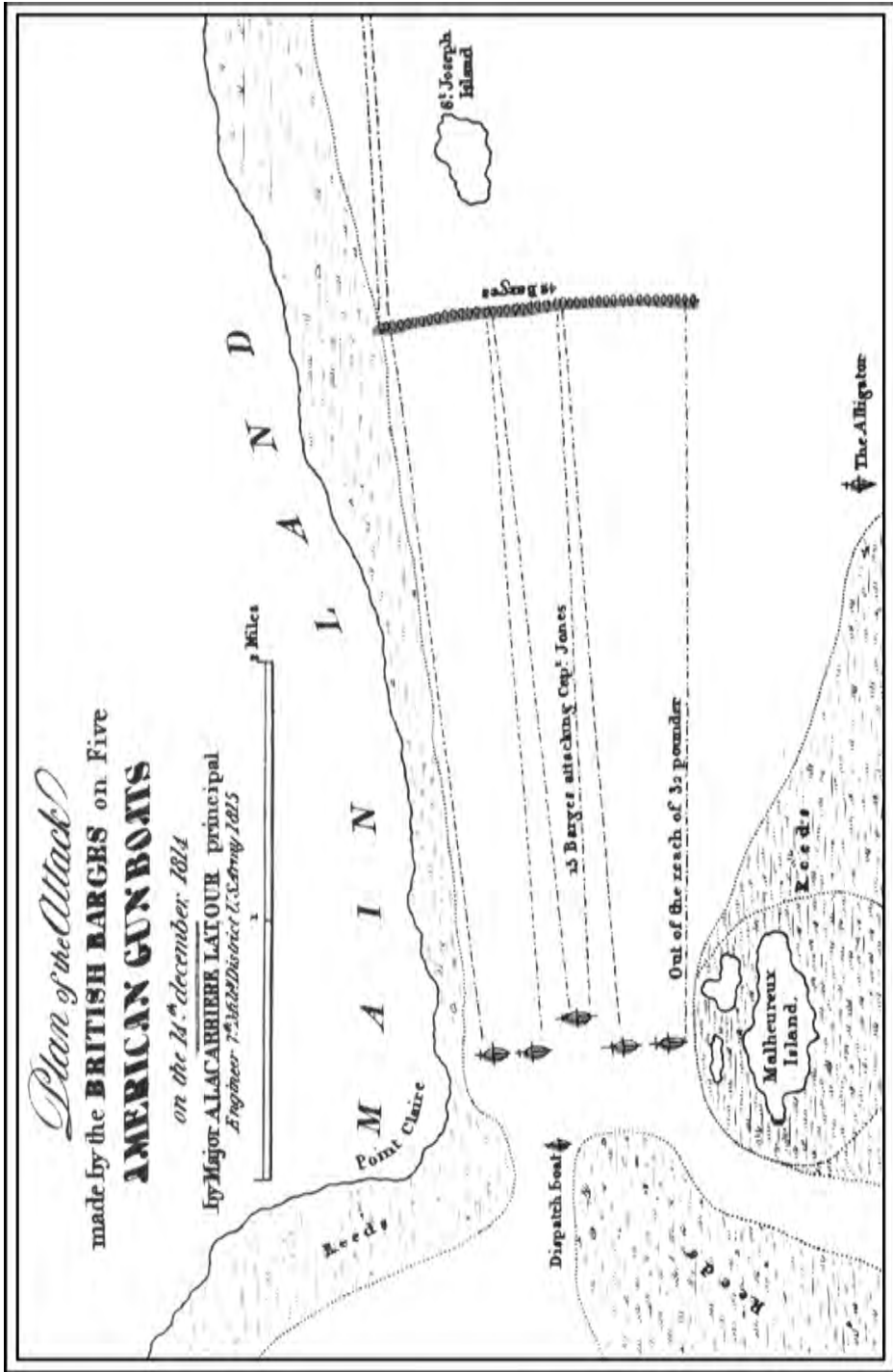
Point Claire

Reeds

Malheureux Island

Reeds

Dispatch boat



to the Eastward for the purpose of ascertaining the force of the Enemy than at anchor between Cat & Ship Islands; at Sunset discovered about Twenty five Sail, five, or Six, [of] them supposed to be Ships of the line; and Frigates; with a great number [of] Boats; hauled our wind and made all sail to regain Pass Mary Ann. at half past Six, anchored in said Pass; at day light on the 13th, inst. the Division got under way and stood to the Westward. I received an order from Lieut Comdt Jones, to destroy the Marks of said Pass; after excuting this, I received orders to proceed to the Bay of St. Louis, and prepare the Hospital Department, under the care of Doctr. Thomas C. Claiborne to embark; about meridiem, while in the Act on getting on Board the Sick, and Medicines; the Division of GunVessels anchored about one League [to] the Westward of Bay St. Louis; and the Enemy's Flotta hove in sight [from] the Eastward, consisting of from Thirty five to Forty Barges. supposed to have on board from thirty to thirty five men; all with carronades; got under way immediately, with the *Sea-Horse*, made sail, and [torn] sweeps; but the wind having shifted to S.W. and that being very [torn] with a strong Flood tide, I found myself cut off from all hopes [of] rejoining the Division; I then concluded to anchor the *Sea Horse* as [near] the Two Six pounders placed near the navy deposit, as possible; and, succeeded in landing the sick and medicine; I had previously taken on board; when two of Enemy's Boats with eight men in each, approached within Gun Shot, I immediately directed Doctr. George Marshall to commence firing from the guns on shore; and began firing from the *Sea-Horse*; succeeded in keeping those Boats off; untill three of their Launches [came] within Gun Shot; and commenced firing with their cannon on the *Sea Horse*; shortly after two more Launches came within Gun Shot; finding [it] useless to contend against this force with only Eleven men, I concluded the destruction of my Vessel; accordingly at half past five cut her [cable], run her on shore, and landed apart of her crew to the assistance [of] Doctor Marshall; who Gallantly succeeded in keeping off the Enemy untill I set fire to the vessel, about half past 6 P.M. She blew up; set fire to the navy deposit which totally destroyed it; and spiked all the Guns, after which embarked with Doctr. Marshall, and my crew in two Small skiffs; and proceeded along shore under cover of the night, in hopes of being able to rejoin the Division the next morning; at midnight, made a halt about Two leagues to the Westward of the Bay of St. Louis to rest my men; at 4 Oclk A.m, on the 14th; embarked and proceeded to the Westward; at daylight being abreast of the Malhereaux Islands, discovered one of the Enemy's Launches in pursuit of us; but succeeded in escaping from her by getting into a small Bayou near the said Islands; when she gave up the chase. and we proceeded up the Bayou; about 11 A.m, a gun was fired; by getting up a tree we discovered the five Gun Vessels, and the dispatch Vessel *Alligator* at anchor near the Malhereaux Islands, distant from us about five miles, at the same time discovered the Enemy's flotilla approaching from the Eastward, and our Gun Vessels commenced their fire with their long Guns; at meridiem the Enemy's flotilla closed [with] our Gun Vessels when a tremendous fire of cannon, and musketry commenced from all quarters; and fifty minutes past meridiem with great sorrow saw our Flags lowered; but not without being conscious they were dearly bought; on counting the Enemy's Barges after the firing had ceased; I could not discover more than sixteen, or eighteen of them; about half past 1. P.M. discovered the Gun Vessels with the Flotilla under way, Standing to the Eastward; we then embarked, and proceeded

to the Westward, at the mouth of the Rigaletts, we fell in with Mr. James Berthé masters mate, charged with dispatches for Lieut. Jones; received from him said dispatches and gave him instructions to return with me to Fort St. Johns at 7 P.M., arrived at Petite Coquille Fort; at 8. P.M directed Doctr. Marshall to proceed with one of the skiffs, and two men to the Eastward with a Flag of Truce, to render all the assistance in his power to the wounded American Prisoners, and proceeded myself to Fort Saint John's, where I arrived this morning with my crew, much fatigued but in good Spirits; they have all done their duty satisfactorily.—

I hope Sir my conduct on this occasion will meet with your approbation.— Sir I have the honor to be with the greatest respect Your ob. St.

(Signed) Wm. Johnson

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 100a, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5). Endorsed in Patterson's hand opposite signature line: "True Copy/Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson." Bracketed words in roman are conjectures for text that is missing or illegible owing to tight binding and damage to the original document.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 16th December 1814

Sir,

I have the painfull task of reporting to you the loss of Gun Vessels, *No. 5, 23, 156, 162, & 163*, commanded by Lieutenant Thomas ap, Catesby Jones; acting Lieutenants, Robert Spedden, & Isaac McKeever, and Sailing Masters Jonathan D Ferris & George Ulrick, which were captured by the Enemy (whose force at ship Island had on the 11th: inst. encreased to from 25 to 30 sail,) after a most desperate action, of one hour and fifty minutes, by a squadron of English Barges 38 in number, each mounting one long Gun, or carronade, and manned as nearly as can be ascertained with 35 or 40 men, the Gun Vessels averaged about 40 men each; I had been using every effort to procure more with which to join the Gun Vessels immediately upon receiving intelligence from Lieut Jones, that the Force of the Enemy had encreased from the number stated in my letter to you of the 12th: inst<sup>l</sup> to 25 or 30 sail of various rig and sizes;— the Enemy have I feel well assured paid dearly for their success. and tho', the Vessels have fallen, the credit of the american name, and Navy has been well supported, and when a particular statement can be obtained from the surviving officers, this action will be classed among the most brilliant [of] our Navy;— Enclosed is the only account<sup>2</sup> I have, yet been able to obtain; I dispatched Mr. Thomas Shields Purser, and Doctor Robert Morrell last evening in a Flag of Truce, with a letter<sup>3</sup> to the commander in chief of the Enemy's Forces; requesting the release on parole of the surviving wounded officers, and men; which, will I hope be complied with; when I shall, be able to give you a more correct and detailed account of the action: with the number, and names of the Killed, and wounded; tho I cannot flatter myself, that any of the commanders, are not either killed, or desperately wounded; (for braver

or more deserving officers in their respective grades the Navy could not boast); I deeply lament the inadequacy of our force afloat, to contend with that of the Enemy, with any prospect of success; Lieut. Jones had been, according to my instructions, endeavouring, from the time the Enemy's force increased; to that of the Battle; to gain the Rigolets, but was prevented doing so by head winds, and tides, and at the time the, action took place it was perfectly calm. which gave the Enemy's Barges, over our GunVessels a great advantage I had intended at the Rigolets to have made a final Stand, against the Enemy— I have the honor to be with consideration and respect Your Ob St.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 100 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Patterson to Jones, 12 December 1814, pp. 967–68.
2. Johnson to Patterson, 15 December 1814, above.
3. Patterson to Cochrane, 15 December 1814, pp. 956–66. Additional documents relating to this flag truce follow this letter.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 169

*Armide* off Ile au Chat  
16th. December 1814

Sir,

Having arrived at the anchorage off Chandeleur Islands on the 8th. instant, Captain Gordon of the *Seahorse* (which Ship, with the *Armide* and *Sophia*, I had sent on from off Pensacola to the anchorage within Ile au Vaisseau<sup>1</sup>) reported to me that two Gun Vessels of the Enemy, apparently large size sloops of very light draught of Water had fired at the *Armide* upon her way down from within the chain of small Islands that run parallel to the coast from Mobile towards Lac Borgne, and having afterwards joined three others cruising in the Lake were then visible from his Masthead.

The Bayou Catalan (or des Pecheurs)<sup>2</sup> at the head of Lac Borgne being the contemplated point of disembarkation, the distance from the inner anchorage of the Frigates & Troop Ships to the Bayou fully 60 miles,<sup>3</sup> and our principle means of transport open boats, it became impossible that any movement of the troops could take place until this formidable Flotilla was either captured or destroyed.

Rear Admiral Malcolm joined me with the Fleet upon the 11th. instant, and upon the 12th. I placed the launches, barges and pinnaces of the Squadron, with Captain Montresor of the *Manly* and Captain Roberts of the *Meteor* under the command of Captain Lockyer of the *Sophie* and sent them into Lac Borgne in pursuit of the Enemy; while the Frigates, Troop Ships and smaller Vessels moved into the inmost anchorage: each Vessel proceeding on until she took the ground.

After an arduous row of thirty six hours Captain Lockyer had the good fortune to close with the Flotilla, which he attacked with such judgment and determined bravery, that notwithstanding their formidable force, their advantage of a chosen

position, and their studied and deliberate preparation, he succeeded in capturing the whole of these Vessels in so serviceable a state as to afford at once the most essential aid to the Expedition.

For the particulars of this brilliant affair I refer their Lordships to the accompanying copy of Captain Lockyer's letter detailing his proceedings, which I am fully aware their Lordships will duly appreciate

Captain Lockyer's conduct on this occasion, in which he has been Severely wounded, and his long and active Services as a Commander justly entitling him to their Lordships protection and finding it expedient to place this flotilla collectively upon the establishment of a 36 gun frigate I have appointed him to the command thereof—<sup>4</sup>

Captain Montresor whom I have placed in the command of the Gun Vessels until Captain Lockyer's wounds will admit of his Serving and Captain Roberts whom I have before had occasion to mention to their Lordships, together with Lieutenants Tatnell and all of the *Tonnant* and the whole of the Officers mentioned by Captain Lockyer I trust will not fail to meet their Lordship's notice.

There are many other Officers whose names do not appear in Captain Lockyer's letter that from their conduct in this affair are fully entitled to their Lordship's most favorable consideration, and whose merits I shall take an opportunity of bringing before them the moment the service will admit of my enquiry.<sup>5</sup>

The returns of Killed and wounded which the present separation of the Boats from their Ships does not admit of my immediately ascertaining, shall be collected the moment it is practicable and transmitted.<sup>6</sup> Our loss I fear has been Severe, particularly in Officers, but considering that this successful Enterprize has given us the command of Lac Borgne and considerably reduced our deficiency of Transport, the effort has answered my fullest expectations. I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

Alexr Cochrane

Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 357–59. A duplicate copy of this letter follows on fols. 361–63.

1. Ship Island.

2. In the left-hand margin near this text is written: "in the Admiralty Charts 'Masan's Bayou.'" Bayou Mazant was the principle branch of Bayou Bienvenue or Catalan. British forces established themselves on the banks of the Mississippi below New Orleans by following Bayou Bienvenue, to Bayou Mazant to Villeré's Canal. For a description of these strategic waterways and the lands surrounding them, see *Historical Memoir*, pp. 62–63.

3. Using reference points taken from "A General Map of the seat of War in Louisiana & West Florida" reproduced on plate two of Arsène Latour's *Historical Memoir*, the straight-line distance between the inner anchorage of Cochrane's fleet and the landing place for the British army at Bayou Bienvenue is 44 nautical miles or 51 statute miles.

4. For Lockyer's appointment to command the New Orleans Flotilla, see Cochrane to Lockyer, 15 December 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 228–29. Cochrane's scheme for the flotilla, including a list of officers appointed to each gunboat, is described in Cochrane to Croker, 24 January 1815, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 337–39.

5. Several such officers were praised in Cochrane to Croker, 10 February 1815, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fol. 523.

6. A casualty list was enclosed in Cochrane to Croker, 28 December 1814, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fol. 268. The list follows on fols. 269–70.





*Battle of Lake Borgne, 14 December 1814*

COMMANDER NICHOLAS LOCKYER, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

His Majesty's Sloop *Sophie*  
Cat Island Roads, 16 Decr. 1814

Sir

I beg leave to inform you that in pursuance of your orders,<sup>1</sup> the Boats of the Squadron which you did me the honor to place under my command, were formed into three Divisions, (the first headed by myself; the second by Captn. Montresor of the *Manly*, and the third by Captain Roberts of the *Meteor*) and proceeded on the night of the 12th. instant from the Frigates anchorage,<sup>2</sup> in quest of the Enemy's Flotilla.

After a very tedious row of thirty six hours, during which the Enemy endeavoured to escape from us, the wind fortunately obliged him to anchor off St. Joseph's Island; and nearing him, on the morning of the 14th. I discovered his Force to consist of five Gun Vessels of the largest dimensions, which were moored in a line abreast with Springs on their Cables, and boarding nettings triced up, evidently prepared for our reception.

Observing also, as we approached the Flotilla, an armed Sloop<sup>3</sup> endeavouring to join them; Captain Roberts, who volunteered to take her with part of his Division, succeeded in cutting her off and capturing her without much opposition.

About ten o'Clock having closed to within long gun shot, I directed the Boats to come to a Grapnel and the people to get their breakfast; and as soon as they had finished, we again took to our Oars and pulling up to the Enemy against a strong current, running at the rate of nearly three miles an hour, exposed to a heavy and destructive fire of round and grape, about noon I had the satisfaction of closing with the Commodore in the *Seahorse's* barge.

After several minutes obstinate resistance, in which the greater part of the Officers and Crew of this boat, were either killed or wounded, myself amongst the latter, severely, we succeeded in boarding; and being seconded by the *Seahorse's* first barge, commanded by Mr. White, Midshipman, and aided by the boats of the *Tonnant* commanded by Lieutenant Tatnell, we soon carried her, and turned her Guns with good effect upon the remaining four.

During this time, Captain Montresor's Division was making every possible exertion to close with the Enemy; and with the assistance of the other Boats, then joined by Captain Roberts, in about five minutes we had possession of the whole of the Flotilla.

I have to lament the loss of many of my brave and gallant Companions who gloriously fell in this attack; but considering the great strength of the Enemy's Vessels (whose force is underneath described) and their state of preparation, we have by no means suffered so severely as might have been expected.

I am under the greatest obligations to the Officers, Seamen and Marines I had the honor to command on this Occasion, to whose gallantry and exertions the Service is indebted for the capture of these Vessels, any comments of mine would fall short of the praise due to them: I am especially indebted to Captains Montresor and Roberts for their advice and assistance; they are entitled to more than I can say

of them, and have my best thanks for the admirable style in which they pushed on with their Divisions to the capture of the remainder of the Enemy's Flotilla.

In an expedition of this kind where so many were concerned, and so much personal exertion and bravery was displayed, I find it impossible to particularize every Individual who distinguished himself, and deserves to be well spoken of; but I feel it my duty to mention those whose behaviour fell immediately under my own eye.

Lieutenant George Pratt second of the *Seahorse* who commanded that Ships Boats, and was in the same boat with me conducted himself to that admiration which I cannot sufficiently express: in his attempt to board the Enemy, he was several times severely wounded and at last so dangerously, that I fear the Service will be deprived of this gallant and promising young Officer.<sup>4</sup>

I cannot omit to mention also the conduct of Lieutenants Tatnell and Roberts of the *Tonnant*, particularly the former, who after having his boat sunk alongside, got into another, and gallantly pushed on to the attack of the remainder of the Flotilla: Lieutenant Roberts was wounded in closing with the Enemy.

Not having learnt the number of killed and wounded, I cannot give an accurate statement of our loss; the only return I have received is that of the *Seahorse*, in which you will observe a very severe one has been sustained both in Officers, and Men. I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

Nichs Lockyer

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2330, fols. 39–41. Additional copies are in Adm. 1/508, fols. 364–67 and 368–71.

1. Not found, but see Codrington to The Respective Captains, 12 December 1814, UKLNMM, COD/6/4.

2. The channel between Ship and Cat Island.

3. Tender *Alligator*, Sailing Master Richard S. Shepperd commanding. *Alligator* was sloop-rigged.

4. Pratt's wound proved mortal. UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fol. 269.

[Enclosure]

No. 1 Gun Vessel—One long 24 Pounder—Four 12 Prs. Carronades, and four Swivels with a Complement of 45 Men Captain Jones Commodore

No. 2 Gun Vessel—One long 32 Pr. Six long 6 Poundsers Two Five Inch Howitzers and four Swivels with a Complement of 45 Men, Lieut. McIves [*McKeever*]

No. 3 Gun Vessel—One long 24 Pr.—Four long 6 Prs. and four Swivels with a Complement of 45 Men.—

No. 4 Gun Vessel—One long 24 Pr. Four 12 Prs. Carronades with a complement of 45 Men

No. 5 Gun Vessel—One long 24 Pr. Four 12 Prs. Carronades with a complement of 45 Men

No. 6 Armed Sloop—One long 6 Pr. Two 12 Pr. Carronades with a Complement of 20 Men

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2330, fol. 41.

ACTING SURGEON GEORGE MARSHALL TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Neworleans 17th: December 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that on Tuesday evening the 13th: inst. at 10 oclock, A.M, the Enemy landed at Pass Christiann, with one hundred and Six Barges from the squadron off Ship Island; at 2 P.M. got underweigh and directed their course towards the U,S, GunVessels, then laying at anchor off Bay St. Louis; they did not however come up with our squadron that night, which in the mean time retreated to the Malhereaux Islands; where the wind and tide forced them to remain; wednesday the 14th: inst the weather being calm at 10. oclock A.M. an engagement ensued, which continued about two hours, when the Enemy closed and surrounded the GunVessels, in every direction keeping up a constant fire from their great Guns and Musketry, and making frequent attempts to carry by boarding; in this situation, our gallant officers and men, resolving never to give up their Ships fought with the most distinguished bravery, for the incredible space of one hour against such an overwhelming force; when the action terminated in the capture of Gun Vessels *No. 156, 162, 163, 23, 5,* and Dispatch Boat *Alligator*, which were immediately carried to the Eastward; I immediately proceeded with Mr. Johnson to the Petite Coquilles, where I received instructions to join the Enemy, and render such aid as their Prisoners might require; on Friday morning I arrived at the Bay of St. Louis, and at daylight discovered that the British had succeeded without difficulty in getting one large ship, several Brigs, and Schooners thro' Pass Mary Ann, and others rapidly following them, ammounting to at least fifty in number:— having made this discovery, I deemed it prudent to dispense with my instructions, in order to acquaint you with this circumstance;— I accordingly employed a guide to convey me in the most expeditious route to Neworleans, (the direct communication being in possession of the Enemy); Friday evening I discovered Ten schooners in the mouth of Pearl River, and Five GunVessels at the East entrance of the Rigolets, underweigh and Steering towards the Petite Coquilles.—

I have no doubt the above Vessels are constructed for those waters, and that in ten days the British will have from twenty to forty sail in Lake Pontchartrain.— I have the honor to be Your Ob. St.

(Signed) George Marshall  
Actg. Surgeon



*Thomas ap Catesby Jones*

LIEUTENANT THOMAS AP CATESBY JONES TO  
CAPTAIN DANIEL T. PATTERSON

(Copy)

New Orleans 12th March 1815

Sir

Having sufficiently recovered my strength I do myself the honor of reporting to you the particulars of the capture of the Division of United States Gun Boats late under my command.—

On the 12th: December 1814 the Enemy's fleet off Ship Island, had increased to such a force as to render it no longer safe, or prudent for me to continue in that part of the Lakes with the small force which I commanded; I therefore determined to gain a station near the Malhereux Islands, as soon as possible, which situation would better enable, me, to oppose a further penetration of the Enemy up the Lakes, and at the same time afford me an opportunity of retreating to the Petite Coquilles if necessary.—

At 10, a.m. on the 13th: I discovered a large Flotilla of Barges had left the Fleet (shaping their course towards the Pass Christian) which I supposed to be a disembarkation of Troops; intending to Land at that place,— about 2. P.M. the Enemy's Flotilla having gained the Pass christian, and continuing their course to the Westward, convinced me, that an attack on the Gun Boats was their design. At this time the water in the Lakes was uncommonly low; owing to the Westerly wind which had prevailed for a number of days previous, and which still continued from the same quarter; *Nos. 156, 162 & 163* altho' in the best channel, were in 12 or 18 inches less water than their draught; every effort was made to get them afloat by throwing overboard all articles of weight that could be dispensed with. at 3.30'. the flood tide had commenced; got under weigh; making the best of my way towards The Petite Coquilles.— at 3.45'. the Enemy dispatched three Boats to cut out the Schooner *Sea Horse*; which had been sent into the Bay St. Louis that morning to assist in the removal of the Public Stores which I had previously ordered; their finding a removal impracticable I ordered preparations to be made for their destruction, least they should fall into the Enemy's hands. a few discharges of Grape Shot, from the *Sea Horse* compelled the three Boats, which had attacked her to retire out of the reach of her Gun, untill they were joined by four others, when the attack was recommenced by the seven Boats [Mr.] Johnson having chosen an advantageous position; near the 2: 6 prs. mounted on the Bank; maintained a sharp action for near 30 minutes when the Enemy hauled off, having one Boat apparently much injured; and with the loss of several men killed and wounded.— at 7.30' an explosion at the Bay, and soon after a large fire enduced me to believe the *sea Horse* was blown up, and the Public Store House set on fire, which has proved to be the fact.—

About 1. a.m. on the 14th: the wind having entirely died away, and our Vessels become unmanagable, came to anchor in the west end of Malhereux Islands, passage. at day light next morning still a perfect calm, the Enemy's Flotilla, was about 9 miles from us at anchor, but soon got in motion and rapidly advanced towards us. The want of wind, and the strong ebb tide which was setting through

the Pass left me but one alternative which was to put my Vessel in the most advantageous position, to give the Enemy as warm a reception as possible. The commanders were all called on board, and made acquainted with my intentions. and the position which each Vessel was to take, the whole to form a close line abreast, across the channel anchored by the Stern with springs on the cables &c &c.— Thus we remained anxiously awaiting an attack from the advancing foe; whose force I now clearly distinguished to be composed of forty two heavy Launches, and Gun Barges, with three light Giggs manned with upwards of one thousand men and Officers. about 9.30'. the *Alligator* (Tender) which was to the southward and Eastward and endeavouring to join the Division, was captured by several of the Enemy's Barges, when the whole Flotilla came too, with their Grapnels a little out of reach of our Shot apparently making arrangements for the attack. at 10.30'. the Enemy weighed, forming a line abreast in open order, and steered direct for our line, which was unfortunately in some degree broken, by the force of the current driving *Nos. 156 & 163*, about 100, yards in advance; as soon as the Enemy came within reach of our shot, a deliberate fire from our long Guns was opened upon him, but without much effect, the object being of so small a size. at 10' before 11. the Enemy opened a fire from the whole of his line when the action became general, and destructive on both sides. about 11.49'. the advance Boats of the Enemy three in number, attempted to board *No. 156* but were repulsed with the loss of nearly every officer killed or wounded and two Boats sunk; a second attempt to board was then made by four other Boats, which shared almost a similar fate; at this moment I received a severe wound in my left shoulder, which compelled me to quit the Deck leaving it in charge of Mr. George Parker Masters Mate; who gallantly defended the Vessel until he was severely wounded when the Enemy by his superior numbers succeeded in gaining possession of the Deck about 10 minutes past 12: Ock. The Enemy immediately turned the Guns of his, Prize, on the other Gun Boats, and fired several shot, previous to striking the american colours; the action continued with unabating severity untill 40. minutes past 12. Oclk. when it terminated with the surrender of *No. 23*. all the other Vessels having previously fallen into the hands of the Enemy.—

In this unequal contest our loss in killed, and wounded has been trifling compared to that of the Enemy which amounts to nearly four hundred

Enclosed you will receive a List, of the killed and wounded and a correct statement of the force, which I had the honor to command at the commencement of the action, together with an estimate of the force I had to contend against, as acknowledged by the Enemy which will enable you to decide how far the honor of our country's Flag has been supported in this conflict.— With much respect I have the honor to be Sir Your obedient Servant

(Sign'd) Thos. Ap. Catesby Jones  
Lieut. Commdt. U.S. Navy

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 66 (M125, Roll No. 43). Bracketed text supplied by a printed version of this letter in *Niles' Weekly Register*, 22 April 1815.

[Enclosure]  
(Copy)

Statement of the effective force of a Division of United States Gun Boats under the command of Lieut comdt. Thomas ap. catesby Jones at the commencement of the action, with a Flotilla of English Boats on the 14 December 1815—

Vessels	No. of Men on board	Gun's calibres &. Qualities							Total No. of Guns	Total no. of men	Commanders
		32 Pounders	24 Pounders	18 Pounders	12 Pounders	6 Pounders	Long Guns	Carronades			
Gun Boat <i>No. 5</i>	36	"	1	"	"	4	5	"	5	36	Sailg. Master Jno. D Ferris
Do Do " <i>23</i>	39 <sup>1</sup>	1	"	"	"	4	5	"	5 <sup>2</sup>	39	Lieut. Isaac McKeever
Do Do " <i>156</i>	41	"	"	3	2	"	1	4	5	41	Lt. Comdt. Ths. a. c. Jones
Do Do " <i>162</i>	35 <sup>3</sup>	"	"	1	4	"	1	4	5	35	Lieut. Robert Spedden
Do Do " <i>163</i>	31 <sup>4</sup>	"	1	"	"	2	3	"	3	31	Sailg. Master Geo: Ulrich
Total	182	1	2	4	6	10	15	8	23	182	Total

N.B. The Schooner *Sea Horse*, had One six Pounder & 14 Men Sailing Master William Johnson commander, none killed or wounded

The Sloop *Alligator* (Tender) had one pounder and 8 men Sailing Master Richard S. Sheppard commander.—

(Signed) Thos. ap. catesby Jones  
Lieut Comdt. US. Navy

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 66, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. Isaac McKeever testified that the crew numbered 37. See court of inquiry into the loss of U.S. gunboat flotilla on 14 December 1814 in DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 8, No. 208 (M273, Roll No. 8).

2. According to Quartermaster George H. Bourse, *No. 23* also carried "two Howitzers, on slides, upon the poop," neither of which could "be brought to bear during the action." Ibid.

3. Robert Spedden testified that the crew numbered 37. Ibid.

4. Master's Mate James Thompson gave *No. 163's* crew as either 34 or 35. See p. 955.



[Enclosure]  
(Copy)

The following is a correct statement of the British Forces which were engaged in the Capture of the late United States Gun Boats *Nos. 23, 156, 5, 162 & 163*—Near the Malhereux Islands Lake Borgne 14th December 1814

40 Launches & Barges mounting 1 Carronade each of 12. 18. & 24 calibre	40
1 Do Mounting 1 long Brass 12 pr.—	— — — — 1
1 Do " 1 " " 9 pr.—	— — — — 1
3 Giggs with small arms only	— — — — —
45 total number of Boats—	—total number of Cannon 42

The above Flotilla was manned with 1200 men, and Officers commanded by Capt Lockyer, who received three severe wounds in the action. The Enemy as usual will not acknowledge his loss on this occasion in Boats or men; but from the nature of the action, and the observations made by our Officers while prisoners in their Fleet, his loss in killed and wounded may be justly estimated to exceed three hundred, among whom are an unusual proportion of Officers.—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 66, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43).

COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF THE FLOTILLA  
UNDER THE COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT THOMAS AP CATESBY JONES

[Extract]

[*New Orleans, 15–19 May 1815*]

At a Court of inquiry held in the Naval Arsenal, at New Orleans, On Monday the fifteenth day of May, 1815, by virtue of the 1st. Article of the 2nd. section of the “Act for the better Government of the Navy of the United States, passed April 23rd. 1800”,<sup>1</sup> authorizing Commanders of Squadrons to order Courts of inquiry; present

Master Commdt. Louis Alexis, president,  
Lieut. Commdt. Charles C B. Thompson & members;  
Lieutenant Charles E. Crawley

the officers and others, whose conduct had become the subject of investigation, being present; the order from Commodore Daniel T. Patterson, commanding the U.S. Naval forces on the New Orleans Station, addressed to Master. Commdt. Louis Alexis, was read,— directing an inquiry into the Capture, by the enemy, on the 14th. of December 1814, of the division of U.S. Gun Vessels, at that time under the command of Lieut. Commt. Thomas ap Catesby Jones; and after a careful investigation of the conduct,— first of the commander of the division, and afterwards, that of the commanders of the several Gun Vessels, respectively,— to be particular in the statement of facts, and to report, in the fullest manner, an opinion thereon. The members of the court, and the officiating Judge Advocate, then, in open court, and before they proceeded to the investigation, respectively took the oath prescribed by law.

The court proceeded, accordingly, to the examination of evidence, in relation to the conduct of the divisional commanding officer, Lieut. Commt. Jones. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The next witness examined, was Midshipman George Parker, who was Master's Mate on board the flag Vessel, at the time of her capture; who, after being sworn gave a statement of occurrences as follows:

Midn. Parker. The division of Gun Vessels under the command of Captain Jones, were lying at anchor, on the 13th. of December, near the petty coquilles, opposite the Bay St. Louis. Signal was made between 11 & 12, in the forenoon, to get under weigh. We stood up towards the Bay St Louis for the purpose of taking in wood and water. I believe it was about 3 P.M. when the Division came to. About half after 3, the enemy's barges being in sight, and advancing, some provisions and other heavy articles were thrown overboard, from *No. 156*, in order to lighten her. At the same time, three small boats from the enemy, were seen going into the Bay St. Louis, to attack the *Sea-Horse*; which were repulsed. The Division then got under weigh, and stood towards the Malheureux Islands; shortly after we saw four other boats from the enemy, going as a re-inforcement to the three which had been repulsed from the *sea-horse*; these last were also repulsed. The Division, still standing on towards the Malheureux Islands, at 9 in the evening, we heard the *sea-horse* blow up. About 2 A.M. on the 14th. it becoming calm, the division came to an anchor in the Malheureux Islands passage. Early in the morning, we saw the boats from the enemy advancing. A signal was made for the commanders of the several gun boats to repair on board of us. Shortly after they had repaired on board their respective Vessels, they were all moored in a line abreast across the passage. At 10 A.M. the enemy, who had continued to advance, anchored at about 3 miles distance from the gun vessels. About this time the Tender sloop, *Alligator*, was captured by a division of the enemy's boats. At about half past 11, the enemy's barges having advanced upon the Gun boats, a fire was opened upon them. They at first advanced in a line abreast, until they came within carronade distance, when they formed in three divisions. The center division, of about 17 boats, made their attack upon Gun Vessel *No. 156*. They were three times repulsed, and several were sunk along side. The fourth attempt, while we were engaged with a number at the bow, others gained the quarter-deck.

Question by the Court.— How long was the enemy along side, before he got complete possession of the deck of your Vessel?

Answer. Six or seven minutes along side; and about the same time on board, before they had obtained full possession of the Vessel: The American colours were still flying when the crew were driven below.

The court then adjourned to Tuesday morning half past 9 o'clock.

Tuesday morning, the 16th.

The court met pursuant to adjournment. Evidence in relation to the conduct of Lieut. Jones continued

Mr. Parker was again called.

Question by the court. Can you tell at what stage of the action you received your wound?

Answer. It was at the first attempt of the enemy to board us.

Court. Were the other Gun boats boarded at the same time of *No. 156*?

Ans. At the same time that we were boarded, the enemys boats were very nearly along side of *No. 163*.

Court. Did the divisions of the enemy's boats, attack the whole of the Gun Vessels together, at the same time?

Ans. No. The enemy's boats were divided into three divisions; one attacked on the right, another on the left, and the center division attacked *No. 156*.

Court. How long do you think the action continued at close quarters?

Ans. About 45, or fifty minutes.

Mr. Parker was permitted to withdraw. . . .

The court next went into an examination of testimony in relation to the capture of Gun Vessel *No. 163*, Sailing Master, George Ulrich, and,

Mr. James Thompson, Masters mate, late of *No. 163*, was sworn.

Court. Relate such circumstances as you know, respecting the capture of the Gun Vessels in December last, and more especially that of *No. 163*, to which you were attached.

Ans. At about half past 11 A.M. on the 14th. of December, the enemy having advanced upon the gun Vessels, the action became close; which, as nearly as I can recollect, continued about forty minutes. The enemy were first observed to advance in three divisions. *No. 156*, Capt. Jones's boat, having drifted out in advance of the line, was first attacked. *No. 163*, was attacked by one of the enemy's divisions, which I believe consisted of nine boats. They were kept off about fifteen minutes, as nearly as I can recollect. She was, at last carried (by a great superiority of force) by boarding, which was effected on the starboard bow, having attempted at the same time to board by the starboard gangway, they were repulsed. A little previous to this, the enemy having obtained possession of Gun Vessel *No. 156*, her guns were turned and fired upon us. From the great numbers by which *No. 163* was boarded, all resistance had become useless at the time she was taken.

Court. What do you suppose to have been the whole force in boats and men, by which the gun Vessels were attacked on the 14th. of December?

Ans. I counted forty-eight boats, having observed them with a glass; and I suppose there was, from nine hundred to a thousand men on board.

Mr. Thompson was permitted to withdraw; and the Court adjourned until tomorrow morning at half past 9 o'clock.

Wednesday morning, May 17th.

The court met, pursuant to adjournment.

The next subject taken up by the court, was the examination of evidence respecting the capture of Gun Vessel *No. 5*, on the 14th. Decr. last; her late commander, Sailing Master, Jonathan D. Ferris.

Thomas Cunningham, Master's mate, late of that Vessel, Sworn.

Court. Relate what you know of the action of the Gun Vessels, and particularly that of *No. 5*, in Decr. last?

Ans. We came from the pass Marian, on the 13th. December, and anchored off the Bay of St. Louis. The boats of the enemy were then in sight, advancing, to the number of forty-nine. We got under way again that evening, and proceeded to the Malheureux Islands, where we came to anchor. Next morning we saw the enemy's boats still advancing;— cleared for action. At about half past 8, we commenced firing, which was kept up till about 1 P.M. The enemy did not commence their fire, for an hour after we did.

Court. What position did gun Vessel *No. 5*, occupy, at the time the action became close?

Ans. In a line abreast with the other Gun-Vessels.

Court. What number of the enemy's boats attempted to board *No. 5*?

Ans. Six launches and barges, manned with from eighteen to thirty men each, as nearly as I could judge

Court. In what manner was *No. 5*, boarded & carried?

Ans. She was boarded both on the bows & quarters.

Court. After the enemy came along side, how long was it before they succeeded in boarding?

Ans. About ten minutes.

Court. What number of the other gun Vessels had struck, before the enemy had got possession of *No. 5*?

Ans. Three; *No. 156, 162 & No. 163.*

Court. Was there any resistance made after the enemy had got on deck?

Ans. No: but they were resisted until they had gained the deck.

Court. How many men boarded you?

Ans. An hundred and fifty, as nearly as I can guess.

Court. Did they fire into *No. 5*, from any of the other gun boats, after their capture?

Ans. Yes, from the flag Vessel, *No. 156.*

Court. How long were you closely engaged before the enemy got along side?

Ans. About forty-five minutes.

Court. Were there a great number of the enemy Killed on board their boats?

Ans. None of their dead were brought along side, but many of their wounded were. There was a great deal of blood (three or four inches deep) in their boats.

Court. Did every person on board your boat appear to do his duty?

Ans. Yes.

Court. When the fire was opened upon *No. 5* from *No. 156*, was the american flag flying, or not, on board of the latter Vessel?

Ans. The American flag (Ensign) was flying at the gaff topsail peak; and the Divisional pendent was flying at the mast head.— The broad pendent was Kept flying on board *No. 156*, until after *No. 5*, had struck.

Court. Did *No. 5*, receive much injury from the shot of *No. 156*, after the latter Vessel was taken by the enemy?

Ans. I can't be certain, as we were surrounded by the enemy's boats; but I believe, that several shot struck us from *No. 156.*

Cross examined by Mr. Sailing Master Ferris.

Question. Are you at present attached to the Naval service?

Ans. No: I am discharged.

Quest. At what part of the Vessel was the Commander in, during the action?

Ans. At all parts at different times, as duty seemed to require.

Quest. Was he below during the action?

Ans. No

Quest. How long previously to her falling into the hands of the enemy, was it, that her 24 pounder was dismounted?

Ans. About 8 or 10 minutes.

Thomas Cunningham permitted to withdraw. . . .

The court adjourned until tomorrow morning, half past 9 oclock.

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Thursday, May 18th.

The court met pursuant to adjournment.

Mr. Parker was called again.

Court. What was the armament of Gun Vessel *No. 156* at the time of her capture?

Ans. One long 18 pounder, on a pivot; two 18 pounder carronades, and two 12 pounder carronades.

Court. What was the complement of officers and men on board that vessel?

Ans. Forty-one, including officers and men; the commander, two Masters Mates, thirty-four men, including seamen, ordinary seamen & Marines,— and four boys.

Court. During the action of the 14th. December, did every person on board *No. 156*, appear to behave properly and to do their duty?

Ans. They did, Sir, behave gallantly, and do every thing that was in their power.

Mr. Parker is allowed to withdraw.

Mr. James Thompson, Masters mate, late of Gun Vessel *No. 163* called again.

Court. What was the armament of *No. 163*, at the time of the action?

Ans. One 24 pounder, and two six pounders; one only of the two latter, could be brought to bear upon the enemy, at any part of the action.

Court. What was the complement of officers and men on board that Vessel at the time of the action

Ans. Thirty-four or thirty-five, I cannot be certain which:— Her commander, Mr. Ulrich, one Master's mate, one Boatswain's mate, one Gunner's Mate, and one quarter Master, 28 or 29 seamen, ordinary Seamen & marines,— and one boy.

Court. Did every officer and man appear to do their duty on board, on that day?

Ans. They did, Sir.

Mr. Thompson directed to withdraw. . . .

Thomas Cunningham, Master's Mate, late of Gun Vessel *No. 5*, called again

Court. What was the number of officers and men, on board *No. 5*, at the time of the action in December last?

Ans. The commander, one Master's mate, one Gunner, one Boatswain's mate, one quarter Master, one quarter gunner, twenty-nine Seamen, ordinary seamen, & Marines,— and one boy; making in the whole, thirty-six.

Court. What was the armament on board *No. 5*, at the time of the action?

Ans. One long 24 pounder, on a pivot, & four Sixes.

Court. In what manner was your twenty-four pounder dismounted?

Ans. The breeching of the gun, was either carried away, or shot away, I can't be certain which.

Court. Do you know whether or not, the gun had preventer breeching, before the action?

Ans. No; it had not.

Court. Was the fire of the enemy so destructive, during the action, as to prevent you from preparing your gun again for service?

Ans. The gun was again prepared by tackles, which were carried away.

Court. Did every officer and man, do his duty on board, during the action.

Ans. Yes, all, except the gunner; who had made some of his cartridges so large, that they would not go into the guns: After the action, I discovered that he was drunk.

Thomas Cunningham permitted to withdraw. . . .

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 8, No. 208 (M273, Roll No. 8).

1. For the text of this article, see Brodine, Hughes, and Crawford, *Interpreting Old Ironsides*, p. 118.

2. The editors selected the testimony from this court of inquiry with a view to providing the most detailed testimony on the events of 14 December by witnesses serving in the five gunboats of Jones's flotilla. The testimony reproduced here was given by men stationed in gunboats *No. 5*, *No. 163*, and *No. 156*.

## A Flag of Truce Violated

*Upon learning of the defeat and capture of his station's gunboats on Lake Borgne, Master Commandant Daniel Patterson dispatched two officers to negotiate the parole and release of the wounded American flotillamen. Travelling by boat under a flag of truce, Patterson's mission made contact with the enemy off the mouth of the Pearl River, near a major staging area for the British expeditionary force. The American officers met with Vice Admiral Cochrane the following day, requesting he sanction their humanitarian mission. To their surprise and outrage, Cochrane refused this request, declaring their "visit an improper one," made while the British army was in the act of "moving against New Orleans."<sup>1</sup> Unwilling to let the American deputation return to the Crescent City with intelligence that would certainly aid its defenders, Cochrane ordered their temporary confinement. The admiral's decision led to an angry exchange of letters with Patterson, who denounced Cochrane for having violated the sanctity of a flag of truce.*

1. Shields and Morrell to Patterson, 14 January 1815, below.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

(Copy)

Neworleans 15th December 1814

Sir,

I have this moment learn't, that a part of the Forces, under your command have succeeded in capturing, five of the United States Gun Vessels; from a knowledge of their respective commanders and crews; I am well assured the contest must have been long and sanguinary of course the wounded numerous; to alleviate as far as in my power the situation of those gallant Officers, and men, whom the fortune of war has placed in your hands; I send this Flag to solicit, that you will permit all the wounded Officers and men in your possession to be paroled and returned to their Country, and friends, who are anxious as far as human means can avail, to alleviate their sufferings. This request I trust will be complied with as it is consistent with the modes of civilized warfare; the officer who I send in charge of this Flag, is empowered to receipt for such

prisoners as you may release, who will be considered as Prisoners of War on parole till regularly exchanged; with the Flag I send a surgeon who, with those<sup>1</sup> already in your possession (who as non-combattants will I presume be released) will attend to the wounded on their way to this place; I trust that this appeal of humanity to a gallant Enemy in the cause of brave men, who gallantly fighting for their country's rights, have wounded, fallen in your power will not be made in vain; should this request be complied with, a Vessel bearing a Flag of Truce will proceed to receive them— I have the honor to be Your Ob. Humble Servant

signed Danl. T. Patterson  
Commanding U S. Naval Forces  
on the Neworleans Station

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 2, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43). Addressed: "To the commander in chief/of H.B.M. Forces/off Ship Island." Docketed on reverse: "A No. 1." A duplicate copy is in DNA, RG45, AF 8 (M625, Roll No. 200).

1. Surgeon's Mate William J. Barnwell, Jr.

PURSER THOMAS SHIELDS AND SURGEON ROBERT MORRELL TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

His B, Majesty's Ship *Gorgon*  
3 January 1815—

Sir,

The undersign'd bearers of the flag of Truce from New Orleans, who visited your fleet for a specifid and clearly express'd object, in the full belief its sacred character would be respected by you, as it is by every other civil power in Christendom, & who consequently approachd you with perfect confidence; Address you in the present instance, for the purpose of remonstrating and solemnly protesting against this their unwarrantable & outrageous detention.

To be distinctly consider'd as prisoners of war, and openly, not covertly, treated as such, would be consider'd by the undersign'd as highly honorable in Adml. Cochran, when compared to the mode of Conduct adopted & pursued towards them: they left New Orleans on the 15th Ulto. not expecting to be absent more than a week, consequently brought but a change or two of linen with them; their boat's Crew had but the Cloaths on their backs; one of them has already perish'd & the rest suffer much: The Surgeon one of the Officers under the flag, whose health has been much impaired for a length of time past, has been & Still is seriously indisposed—

Individual oppression when no public good can possibly result, the undersign'd did think, would not have been inflicted or even tolerated by a man of Sir Alexr. Cochran's, high standing in Society, and they have only to lament, that in their persons, without any just cause, it is so pertinaciously adhered to & persevered in.

They Communicated with Sir Thomas Hardy, of His M Ship *Ramilies* on the 29th Ultó. who pledged himself to represent their Situation to you He has however returned from your neighbourhood & has given us no satisfaction or information whatever.

The Undersign'd cannot help expressing their belief, that the cause of their detention as stated by you must long since have ceased to exist—tis the case with all armies, more or less, to experience desertions & no doubt something of this Kind has occurred in yours— Men of this class, are surely better enabled to give intelligence than a flag of truce possibly can be—who have no intercourse except among your own officers & who would not divulge anything that might prove disadvantageous to themselves—

They have therefore only to request of "Sir Alexander Cochran," if he intends to respect the flag of truce, as he said he would do, to order their immediate release.

They further deem it necessary to state, that their boat, with every thing in her was towed under and lost through the negligence of the Lieutenant<sup>1</sup> Commanding your Tender, on their way down to the fleet, & they hope some Kind of boat will be furnished them to return in—

In expectancy of an answer as soon as it may be convenient to the Admiral We have the honor to be very Respectfully his Ob. Servants

Tho. Shields  
Purser, Navy U. States  
Rob<sup>t</sup> Morrell  
Surgeon Navy U. States

ALS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2330, fols. 49–50. Letter is in Thomas Shields hand. For a copy of this letter, see DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 2, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43). A printed version appears in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 222–23.

1. Acting Lieutenant Edward John Johnson. Johnson received his lieutenant's commission on 28 February 1815. O'Byrne, *Dictionary*, p. 584.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
PURSER THOMAS SHIELDS AND SURGEON ROBERT MORRELL

(Copy)

Head Quarters of the British Forces  
near New Orleans 6th. January 1815

Gentlemen,

I have received your letter of the 3rd inst. and I am concerned to find that you should consider your detention as a harsh measure; you must be aware that it cannot be personal.—

The nature of your mission requiring your visiting the Hospital Ship<sup>1</sup> and it happening that [*at the time of*] your arrival the Forces were moving on against New Orleans, it would not have been prudent or consistent with the rules of War,



to have permitted your immediate return. I trust however that you have individually been made as comfortable as circumstances would admit of, and that you have found the wounded Prisoners receiving the same treatment as our own. Directions have been sent to the Fleet for your being conveyed with a Flag of Truce to Coquille and I have acquainted Commodore Patterson of the accidental loss of your Boat and requested I may be permitted to make good her value.— I am Gentlemen your obedient Servant

signed, Alexr. Cochrane  
vice adm. & commander in chief of the Naval Force

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 2, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43). Addressed: "Messrs. Shields & Morrell/on board the *Gorgon*." Docketed: "No. 5." Text in brackets supplied by a letter book copy of this correspondence dated 9 January 1815 in UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, p. 239. Another printed version of this letter appears in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 223.

1. H.M. fifth rate *Gorgon*.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Copy/

Head Quarters of the British Army  
Near New Orleans 8th. January 1815

sir

In answer to the letter which I had the honor to receive from you, dated 15th. Ulto. by Messrs. Shields and Morrell.—

I have to inform you that these Gentlemen were sent down to the Hospital ship of the Fleet, on board of which had been placed the sick and wounded taken in the Gun Boats.—

In consequence of the service, upon which the British Forces have been engaged, and the Flag of Truce meeting them while on their passage up the Bay, I regret much, that prudential reasons did not allow of its immediate return.—

The Boat which carried the Flag of Truce having been upset and lost on her passage to the Hospital Ship, in tow of the Tender conveying these Gentlemen, I request that I may be permitted to make good her value.—

I trust that the report you will receive of your sick, and wounded, will satisfy you that they have had the same care and attention, as our own; and I beg leave to assure you that I will with much pleasure meet your wishes relative to their exchange; in which, I presume you will be joined by the Commander of the United States Army; so that a General exchange of Prisoners may take place on both sides.—<sup>1</sup>

I have directed that Messrs. Shields and Morrell and the men who accompanied them, shall be sent up from the Fleet immediately, and upon their arrival

here they shall be forwarded to New Orleans.— I have the honor to be sir Your most Obedient humble Servant

Signd Alexr. Cochrane  
Vice admiral and commander in chief of H. B. Majs. Naval forces  
upon the north american and Jamaica Stations

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 2, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43). Docketed: "B No. 1."

1. For more on prisoner-of-war exchanges, see pp. 1026–34.

PURSER THOMAS SHIELDS AND SURGEON ROBERT MORRELL TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

(Copy)

Neworleans 14th: January 1815

Sir,

In obedience to your orders of the 15th. ult.o we have the honor to report to you, that we proceeded towards the British Fleet under a Flag of Truce, on the evening of the same day, and at 2 P.M. on the 16th: we boarded the late United States Gun Vessel *No. 5* off the Eastern mouth of Pearl River,— under British coulours—

On an interview with Captn. Gordon of the British Frigate *sea Horse*, the senior officer present and explaining our business, he proposed sending the Flag down to the commander in chief, whom we then understood to be sir alexr. Cochrane— As we were exceedingly anxious to perform immediately our mission and to learn the fate of our countrymen, we urged our departure, and was sent on board a Tender, under command: of a Lieutenant in the British Navy. On the morning of the 17th: we met the admiral in his Barge, when we presented your letter with the authority you had invested us; it was read and returned to us, without comment, and the Tender was ordered to return to her anchorage off Pearl River. At 10, o.Cl'k on the morning of the 18th: the admiral sent for us on shore<sup>1</sup> when after asking our rank, in the Navy U. States he observed that our visit was an improper one, and ought not to have been made, that as we had been in the heart of his Army, then moving against New orleans, he could not possibly think of permitting us to return until the Battle was over and the fate of the Town decided; he cited a similar case which he said occurred at Baltimore,<sup>2</sup> and that motives of prudence and policy induced him to send us down to the Fleet; we then asked him to say in what light he viewed us, as we wished to know distantly our character in his estimation. He replied he intended to respect the Flag altho he might be justified in considering us Prisoners of war.—

Our reasons Sir, for asking the admiral this question are these:, The evening before our Boat was ordered astern of the Tender, her tackle and apparel taken out and a guard placed over her;; the night being wet, excessively cold we were allowed to retain our sails, to make an awning for the protection of our men, from the weather; we believed also from the precautionary measures of the admiral that we were regarded rather as Spies, than otherwise, and that we were only

watching an opportunity to effect our escape; in no other way can we account for this mortifying and contemptuous treatment.—

On Monday the 19th: we were required to go on board his Tender, the commander of whom was instructed to carry us to the *Gorgon* Hospital Ship, on board of which Vessel we were informed the most of our wounded countrymen lay. On the same evening our Boat owing to the negligence of the Lieut. commanding the Tender, was towed under and lost with every thing in her; Doctor Barnwell with several of the wounded of Gun Vessel *No. 156* came on board the Tender from the *Anna Conda* Brig of war where he had been detained since the action of the 14th.; on the evening of that day we were anchored in pass marian, and the next morning the Tender grounded on the shoals.; some time after we observed our Boats crew at work and on enquiring learned from them that they had been ordered by the commanding Officer. which he took the liberty of doing without our consent or knowledge; we immediately ordered them to desist, with instructions to obey no person without our approbation.—

This produced, an explanation on the part of the commanding Officer, who was much irritated, tho we cannot say his language was indecorous.— We mention this trivial circumstance Sir thus minutely because Lieut. Johnson, the (commanders name) refused to let our wounded have any thing to eat, when asked altho they had been on board the Tender twenty eight hours, and had sent to us, begging for food, which he had not to give them; Doctor Barnwell, who had taken some bread for them, out of the Cabin, without Lieut. Johnsons, knowledge, was on asking his permission to give it to them told by him they had no bread to spare, they wanted it themselves, etc. it was consequently returned to the Cabin, where he got it, and our men had to go without.; on the same day our wounded were sent on board the Brig *Sophia* and the next day we followed them, the Tender being still aground— on the 22nd, she floated and we again joined her, the wounded having been sent to the Hospital Ship the day before; on the 23rd we got on board the *Gorgon* where we were happy to find our loss in killed was not so severe as you apprehended. Lieut. Comdt Jones severely wounded in the left shoulder, Lieut. Spedden severely in both arms his left was afterwards, amputated, and he is doing well; Midsm. Reynolds, in the thigh the bone badly fractured, some after the Boat struck it is said unintentionally, since dead; we had five killed and between twenty-five and thirty wounded, three only have died since the action.—

We remark'd sir that our wounded Officers and men, were treated with the same attention as their own.— were we to say any thing of our treatment personally we should simply state that we were generally received with politeness— But we cannot help believing that Admiral Cochrane in every instance shewed his jealousy of our character, on leaving him he said we should be permitted to visit our countrymen; they being on board of different Vessels, we applied to Capt. Bowden of the *Gorgon* for a conveyance to another Frigate for the above purpose he replied by shewing us the Admirals orders to him, in which it is stated that, "on no pretence whatever" were we to be permitted to leave the *Gorgon* until further orders!!!— we were consequently disappointed, tho Lieut. McKeever was permitted to visit us twice, the other Officers having we beleive been sent to the line of Battle Ships laying outside Ship Island.—

On the 26th we wrote the note N.o. 1.<sup>3</sup> to capt. Bowden and same evening received his reply marked No. 2.<sup>4</sup> on the 28th: we wrote the note No. 3<sup>5</sup> and

received for answer verbally that Sir Thomas Hardy would see us at 8 o'clock next morning on board the *Hydra* Frigate— we stated to capt'n. Hardy very concisely our situation; he expressed his opinion with us that the cause which produced our detention had ceased to exist, he seemed to intimate that it was possible or probable the admiral had forgotten us; he said he was going up to the admiral that morning, that he would mention the subject of our conversation and our expectations to him and that he had no doubt we should be immediately liberated;— he returned from the Head Quarters of the British Army three days afterwards but passed on to his Ship without letting us hear from him; and as the admiral continued silent, we wrote to him on the 3rd, the letter marked No. 4,<sup>6</sup> and on the 11th inst. had the inexpressible pleasure to receive his answer No. 5 dated the 6th!!!<sup>7</sup> permitting our return; we left the Fleet on the morning of the 12th. and arrived at this place at midnight on the 13th—

We would just observe that on our arrival at the Coquille Fort, the wind being fair Mr. Shields borrowed of Captain Newman<sup>8</sup> his sail Boat for the sake of greater expedition leaving your Gig that had no sails until his return, Mr. Shields pledged himself personally to Captain Newman to make good her value should any accident happen or the Boat be lost; captain Newman estimates her at 300. Dollars.— Very Respectfully, we have the honor to be Sir Your mo. obt. Servants

sign'd Tho. Shields  
Purser  
Signed R. Morrell M.D.

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 2 enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. Pearl River Island.

2. Likely a reference to the temporary confinement of Francis Scott Key and John S. Skinner, who had visited Cochrane's fleet during the Battle of Baltimore to obtain the release of Dr. William Beanes. During his detention, Key witnessed the bombardment of Fort McHenry, which inspired his composition of the "Star Spangled Banner."

3. Shields and Morrell to Richard B. Bowden, 26 December 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 2, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43). Docketed "No. 1." Published in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 221.

4. Bowden to Shields and Morrell, 26 December 1814, *ibid.* Docketed "No. 2." Published in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 222.

5. Shields and Morrell to Bowden, 28 December 1814, *ibid.* Docketed: "No. 3." Published in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 222.

6. Shields and Morrell to Cochrane, 3 January 1815, *ibid.* Docketed: "No. 4." The original of this letter is printed above.

7. Cochrane to Shields and Morrell, 6 January 1815, above.

8. Francis Newman, commander at Fort Coquille and captain in the Corps of Artillery, U.S. Army.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

(Copy)

New orleans 23rd Jany. 1815

Sir,

I have delayed until the return of the Officers sent with my Flag, to reply to that part of your letter, which I had the honor, to receive from you under date of the

8th: Instant. informing me that my Flag of Truce sent for the purpose of obtaining my wounded Officers, & Seamen, met you with the British Forces while on your passage up the Bay; and that prudential reasons, did not admit of its immediate return; Policy; Sir, may excuse the detention of my Flag, even in violation of the Laws of War; but, I know not how you can justify the want of respect which it, my letter, and Officers experienced from you personally & thro' many of your Officers, it would also have been more noble, more consistent with the character of magnanimity with which the British Nation wish to impress Foreign Nations, for you to have sent a Boat to meet my Flag, at a distance from your Forces, to say they could not be received, or if they were, they must be detained prudence certainly would not have forbid a measure so much more honorable, than that which was pursued; was it worthy an Officer, of your standing & command,? first to take my Officers into the heart of your Army; an act of compulsion not of choice, then to use as a pretext for their detention, their being there.—

The measures pursued towards my Officers from the time my Flag first met you was infinitely more rigorous than, was observed towards your prisoners of war, the former were confined to one single Vessel; the latter permitted to pass from one to another; for such disregard of the sacred character in which a Flag of Truce is considered by all civilized Nations there can be no palliation.—

Motives, of humanity and a reliance upon the honor, and magnanimity, which I had been led to believe, I should find in, a British Officer, enduced me alone, to send a flag; the result has proven to me, how very fallacious were those impressions I had received.—

You inform me of the loss of the Boat which bore my Flag, and offer remuneration, this sir I cannot receive, altho', from the statement of my Officers I feel fully convinced that it occurred from the wilful neglect of Lieutenant Johnson the Commander of your Tender; the same, who refused with savage sternness, when earnestly solicited by my surgeon, a mouthful of bread to my wounded men who had then fasted twenty eight hours (and employed my Officers to give them food but which they had not to give), and whose reply was, he wanted it himself and had "no bread to spare." The treatment they received after their arrival on board the *Gorgon* Hospital Ship, I am satisfied with, it was, as you correctly informed me, such as was paid to your own, and I could expect no more, for this sir, I beg you to receive my Thanks; but when you receive your wounded ask them, if by the inhumanity of any subaltern Officer, any Petty Tyrant they were kept Twenty eight hours without food; and when they employed it, were refused a little bread, I should blush with shame for the American character could any of your prisoners wounded, or in health, with truth so assert.—

I am, willing to believe you, discountenance such inhumane unmanly conduct in any Officer under your command; and that you only require it to made known to you, to notice it in the manner it deserves.— I have the honor to be Your Ob. Hum. Servant

(signed) Danl. T. Patterson  
Comg. U.S. naval Forces on the N. Orleans Station

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.: REMARKS OF  
CA. 12 FEBRUARY 1815 ON MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T.  
PATTERSON'S LETTER OF 23 JANUARY 1815

[Tonnant, *Mobile Bay, ca. 12 February 1815*]<sup>1</sup>

I know of no personal insult offered these Officers. The situation in which I was myself placed bivouaked on swampy ground, in a rainy night would not allow of my shewing any particular attention, farther than that of offering them any supplies they wanted, which was, done.—

The Flag of Truce was met by me between the advance position, of our Army at the entrance of Peal River, and Bay St. Louis. It was necessary I should confer, with the Officer, who sent it before determining whether to admit the Flag to proceed. These officers accordingly went back with me to the advance, and from thence were forwarded to the Hospital Ship by the earliest opportunity that offered; they could not have fulfilled the declared object of the Flag, without passing thro' our Army and Fleet; it cannot be supposed therefore, that advancing to the attack of New Orleans, would admit of their immediate return.—

The wounded prisoners being in the Hospital Ship, I know of no occasion for their visiting other Ships, nor am I aware that any Prisoners went from one Ship to another, excepting for a change of residence until my return to the Fleet.—

The humane purposes which had brought Messrs Shields and Morrell to the Squadron Seemed to have escaped them the moment they were met by my Boat. For instead of being anxiously desirous of being sent to where they could see, the wounded and administer to their comfort the service on which it is stated they were employed, they had no sooner delivered Captn. Pattersons letter, than their sole attention appeared to be directed to their return to New Orleans; and I must confess their manner, created a general suspicion of what their subsequent conduct has fully verified.—

Since these Officers were permitted to return they have thrown aside their non combattant character, and have returned at the head of a predatory expedition<sup>2</sup> to take advantage of their, information which our regard to the wounded suffered them to obtain by their passing under a Flag of Truce thro' the ground our Vessels occupied. I, have now to regret, that I placed so much reliance upon their honor and the character they had approached us under, as to allow them to return until operations had ceased in that quarter.—

I have questioned Lieut Johnson on this subject, & he acquaints me that having brought up Troops unexpectedly, his bread and other provisions, were entirely out, excepting two or three pounds of bread which, he had reserved in his Cabin, and divided equally with the Officers of the Flag of Truce and others who were on board— This statement is corroborated by an other Officer who was on board as well as the American Officers expressing themselves satisfied upon their leaving the Vessel, at the treatment they had experienced on board.—

I have certainly no reasons to doubt Mr. Johnsons account as he is an Officer, on whom I have at all times placed much dependance.—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 134, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43). The undated draft version of Cochrane's remarks are in UkENL, Alexander

F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2330, fols. 74–75. Patterson's letter of 23 January, along with Cochrane's comments thereon, was published in parallel columns in Latour's *Historical Memoir*, pp. 224–25.

1. This document was likely written on or around 12 February 1815, the date Cochrane forwarded a copy of it, along with Patterson's letter of 23 January, to General Andrew Jackson. For Cochrane's covering letter to Jackson, see pp. 1033–34. Cochrane's comments themselves are in DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 15).

2. A reference to Thomas Shield's cutting-out expedition on 21 January 1815, which for documentation on, see below, pp. 1039–40.

CAPTAIN DANIEL T. PATTERSON'S 31 MARCH 1815  
REMARKS ON VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE'S  
LETTER OF CA. 12 FEBRUARY 1815

[*New Orleans, ca. 31 March 1815*]<sup>1</sup>

No complaint is made by me of any personal insult offered my Officers, but a want of that respect, which was due to them, my Flag and communication as will be seen be the statement alluded to.—

The sole object of my Flag as distinctly stated in my letter to the Admiral, being to obtain my wounded Officers and men; there was no necessity that I know of for taking my Officers into the heart of his Army or, sending them thro the Army and Fleet to the Hospital Ship; no request having been made for them to visit the wounded upon which the Admiral appears to found his justification of sending them there) but simply that they might be paroled [to?] which he had only to reply; if in the affirmative, a fit Vessel would be sent for them; if in the negative, my Flag to return without delay.

There certainly was no absolute necessity for the Officers of the Flag visiting different Ships any more than there existed for their visiting the Hospital Ship, futher than to fulfil the new object which the admiral had by force of superior power thought fit to give my mission, viz. that of seeing the wounded, who were divided among several Ships; and that of enjoying as much liberty as the other prisoners of war, for as such they appeared to be viewed by the Admiral and were treated in the harshest manner.—

The humane purposes upon which alone Messrs Shields and Morrell were sent, never for a moment escaped them, they knew perfectly well, that after having met the commander in chief to whom they had been dispatched, that it was not necessary, they should be sent thro' his Army and Fleet to the Hospital Ship, to receive a reply to the letter with which they were charged for, and had delivered to him; their duty required their return to New Orleans so soon as they had delivered it and, received a reply, Twas therefore most natural that their sole Attention should be directed to that object; and had they not been carried by compulsion into the heart of their Forces; the unworthy pretext used for their detention by the Admiral, of "their having been there," would not have existed; nor can I think it was necessary for them to be taken there, to enable the Admiral to give a distinct reply to my plain request.—

The Admiral arrogates to himself to misconstrue the object of my mission from its only and true intent. to such purposes, as could alone exculpate in any degree his unjustifiable, treatment of my Flag.—

The Admiral presumes much, in offering as a complaint non-combattants divesting themselves, of that character and, appearing as combattants in their Country's cause, particularly after having by his unwarrantable detention of them in their characters, as non-combattants; even when the bearers of a Flag of Truce, forgotten their character [i]n the first instance himself [i]s, certainly a novel cause of complaint; he has also been pleased to adopt a new Term for a Naval expedition, which tho' small, was nevertheless, fitted out, and dispatched under proper authority; tis certainly new, to hear, an expedition which, was sent to combat the Enemy in open fight, on the water called, "predatory expedition" or perhaps he supposes because his Army was retreating that I had no right to intercept, embarrass, or capture, such as I [cou]ld, and therefore Terms it a "predatory expedition" that he was mortified, and irritated that a few open Boats with only fifty men, should on a Lake covered with his almost innumerable Vessels, and Barges, capture and destroy double their numbers I can very readily conceive; and, to the success, of the "predatory expedition" more than to the Temper of the Style" of my letter of the 23rd January. do I attribute his declining further correspondence with me— had he treated the Flag of Truce, and my communication with the respect which was due to it, and permitted it to return with his reply immediately when he first met it as he ought to have done, he would have had no cause to "regret the information, which his regard for the wounded suffered them to obtain, by their passing under a Flag of Truce, thro' the ground his Vessels occupied." which was only obtained by his sending them to the Hospital Ship, where they had no business whatever in relation to their mission; and where they were sent by superior power.—

With how much propriety I might apply the term "predatory expedition" to that under the admirals command, I leave the world to judge when I inform you that when, he, and his Army retreated to their Fleet, they took with them four hundred negroes, from the Plantations their Troops occupied. and all others within their reach.—

Several English Officers, hesitated not, to partake uninvited, of the provisions which Messrs Shields & Morrell had taken for their own use, and which would otherwise have enabled them to comply with the entreaties of the wounded; I am informed too from an unquestionable source, that there were one or two bags of bread onboard weighing from fifty to seventy pounds each instead of only five or six pounds.— I have no reason to doubt the official statement of Messrs. Shields & Morrell, they are officers on whom I have ever placed implicit reliance nor, ever found, that confidence abused; that part of their statement relative to the Bread is corroborated by Doctor Barnwell, of the United States Navy who was captured on board Gun Vessel *No. 156*, (and who altho, a non-combattant was not released until an exchange of Prisoners was effected) as also by Lieut. Shillingfort, of the British Navy, who very humanely gave from his own stores to our wounded, and for which I shall ever feel grateful to him.—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 134, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. The date of this letter is taken from that of the cover letter with which it is enclosed, Patterson to Crowninshield, 31 March 1815, *ibid*.



## For the Want of a Sailor

*By the fall of 1814, the New Orleans Station was in the midst of a deepening manpower crisis as large numbers of mariners left naval service after obtaining their discharges.<sup>1</sup> Beyond offering higher enlistment bonuses to attract or retain veteran tars, there was little Master Commandant Daniel Patterson could do to staunch this outflow of seamen. The station's manning situation became critical following the 14 December capture of the American flotilla at the Battle of Lake Borgne.<sup>2</sup> With his few remaining vessels immobilized owing to the shortage of seamen, Patterson turned to Governor William Claiborne and the Louisiana General Assembly for relief.<sup>3</sup> On 16 December, the state's lawmakers passed three emergency measures that ensured the U.S. Navy would secure the sailors it needed—an embargo, a grant of state bounties for new recruits, and the authority to impress seamen.<sup>4</sup> The Crescent City's now “captive” mariners had no alternative but to serve—willingly or no—in Mr. Madison's navy.*

1. In early November, Governor Claiborne informed General Jackson that Patterson's naval force was woefully undermanned. “Captain Patterson complains much of the want of sailors. The Brig *Etna* has not more, than 26 persons on board; The ship *Louisiana* is wholly without sailors, nor can they be obtained.” Claiborne to Jackson, 4 November 1814, Jackson, Papers (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 178.

2. For documents on the battle, see pp. 935–56.

3. See Latour, Historical Memoir, p. 56

4. For the text of the embargo, see Louisiana, Acts, p. 14. The texts of the other two measures are reproduced below. All three were enacted on the same day that Andrew Jackson declared martial law in New Orleans. Jackson would later seek Patterson's endorsement of this controversial action. See pp. 1072–74.

### MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

(Duplicate)

Neworleans 12th: December 1814

Sir,

I have the honor herin to enclose you an extract from a letter<sup>1</sup> received this morning by express from Lieut. Jones senior Officer of the Gun Vessels Stationed between this and Pass Heron by which You will perceive that the force of the Enemy on this coast is encreasing; it now consists of one Ship of the Line, Two Frigates, one twenty Gun Brig, & two Schooners: what their ulterior object may be cannot Yet be ascertained nor to what Squadron they may belong; whether from our Northern Coast, or direct from England; but no effect will be neglected to learn both; by which we shall be enabled probably to judge how far they meditate an attack on this country; their present object I strongly suspect is to cut off the communication by water between this place and Mobile, this they can certainly effect with their present force; but fortunately large Supplies of Provisions have been very recently convoyed to that place by the Gun Vessels, which will for a long time render further transportation unnecessary.—

The term of Service of a great number of the *Carolina's* men, & those attached to the Gun Vessels; having expired, and they claiming their discharge, and being compelled to comply therewith, has very seriously weakened my force; and to enduce those discharged to reshipe in the Navy, in preference to enlisting is [*in*] the Army, or engaging themselves on Board Merchant Vessels, and Barges, to

ascend the River; I have been compelled to encrease the bounty for Seamen to Thirty dollars, presuming that You will approve the measure, when so indispensably necessary for the defence of the Country with the Enemy at our doors; to do this, and upon an emergency to enable me to employ such men as can be procured, I have required the Navy Agent to hold a Sum of Money at my disposal; he informs me that he has on his own credit obtained Twenty thousand dollars, which sum is now subject to my order, but which nothing but absolute necessary shall induce me to touch; altho the monthly sum allotted for this station, has not as I hoped it would have been adequate to the necessary expenditure, particularly since the addition of the *Carolina*, which Vessel was on her arrival here in great want of many necessary sails, and other articles & many of her crews time expired, who have been paid off on this [Station] for services performed on the Charleston Station; Capt. Henley states to me that he had informed Capt Dent. of the short time many of his crew had to serve, and solicited permission to exchange them for men who had a longer period to serve or to ship others in their place.—

To Mr. Smith the Navy agent I feel greatly indebted for his attention to the duties of his Office and his exertions to procure the necessary supplies for the Station.—

I returned on the 10th: Inst. from accompanying Genl. Jackson down the River to make him acquainted with it, and determine upon the Scites for Forts to defend the approach of [the] Enemy by that route.—

I shall as soon as my duties here for the defence of the River will permit, proceed to the Eastward, and act myself with the Gun Vessels against the Enemy.—

Lieut Thompson reported himself to me on the 11th: inst: and I have put him in command of the Ship *Louisiana*, which I am fitting for River Service.— I have the honor to be With great consideration and respect Your Ob. Sert.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, AF 8 (M625, Roll No. 200). Bracketed text is supplied from another copy of this letter in DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 97 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. See Jones to Patterson, 9 December 1814, pp. 936–37.

## RESOLUTION OF THE LOUISIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY AUTHORIZING A LOAN TO THE U.S. NAVY

### RESOLUTION

Whereas the approaches of the enemy on our coast expose the state to dangers great and impending, and whereas the present bounties to seamen are not a sufficient inducement to enter into the naval service on this station, and considering the urgency of the present crisis, therefore—

*Resolved by the senate and house of representatives of the state of Louisiana in general assembly convened,* That the governor be and he is hereby authorised to draw out

of the public treasury any sum or sums not exceeding six thousand dollars, or to procure the said sum by loan, and that he do pay out of the said six thousand dollars to the order of commodore Patterson, twenty-four dollars for each & every seaman procured by him for a term not less than three months, for the reimbursement of which sum of money with the usual interest at six per cent per annum, the faith of the state stands pledged.

*And be it further resolved,* That the governor shall immediately issue a proclamation for the purpose of inducing the seamen now in this city to unite with their fellow citizens in repelling the common enemy, and that this proclamation be published with due military pomp.

MAGLOIRE GUICHARD,  
*Speaker of the house of representatives.*  
FULWAR SKIPWITH, *President of the senate.*

APPROVED, December 15, 1814

WILLIAM C C CLAIBORNE, *Governor of the state of Louisiana.*

Printed, Louisiana, *Acts*, p. 12.

ACT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF LOUISIANA TO  
ENROLL SEAMEN IN THE SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES

AN ACT

*To provide the means of enrolling all seafaring men now in this state, who are not in the service of the United States.*

SEC. 1. *Be it enacted by the senate and house of representatives of the state of Louisiana in general assembly convened,* That all seafaring men now in this state and not in the service of the United States, shall within twenty-four hours after the promulgation of the present act report themselves to wit: those who are at present in the city or parish of New Orleans to the secretary of state, at his office, there to be enrolled into a company or companies, which company or companies shall be placed at the disposition of the commanding officer of the naval forces of the United States on this station, and those at present in the other parishes to the military commander of the parish in which they may actually be at the time of the promulgation of the present act, there to be enrolled; and it shall be the duty of the said commander to send them immediately under escort to New Orleans, to be placed at the disposition of the officer commanding the naval forces of the United States as aforesaid.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That it shall be the duty of the several captains of the militia in this city and parish to deliver within the same delay to the secretary of state, a list of all persons whether seafaring men or others, who under whatever pretext have not been enrolled in the companies of their respective district, designating particularly those who claimed an exemption as seafaring persons.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That after the expiration of twenty-four hours mentioned in the first section of this act, the governor is authorized to arrest wherever they may be found all persons who without a legal excuse shall refuse to conform to the provisions of the present act, and deliver them over to the officers who shall be named by him to command the said company or companies of seafaring person or to the captain of militia of their respective district in case they should not be seafaring persons.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That every seafaring person who after having been enrolled shall absent himself with the intention of eluding the dispositions of the present act shall be considered as a deserter and subject to the same penalties as deserters of the militia in the service of the United States.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That a sum of twenty-five thousand dollars shall be kept in reserve to enable the legislature to make such appropriations as circumstances may render necessary; which said sum shall be composed of the funds at present in the treasury, after the payment of the six thousand dollars placed at the disposition of the governor for the payment of the bounty granted to such sailors as shall enroll themselves in the service of the United States, and of the first funds which shall be received into the treasury until the completion of said sum of twenty five thousand dollars.

SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted*, That this law shall be immediately in force from and after its passage.

SEC. 7. *And be it further enacted*, That all dispositions in any proceeding laws contrary to the provisions of this act, be and the same are hereby repealed.

MAGLOIRE GUICHARD,  
*Speaker of the house of representatives.*  
FULWAR SKIPWITH, *President of the senate.*

APPROVED, December 16, 1814.

WILLIAM C. C. CLAIBORNE, *Governor of the state of Louisiana.*

Printed, Louisiana, *Acts*, pp. 14–18.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 16 December 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that by the loss of the Five Gun Vessels, reported to you by my letter of this date,<sup>1</sup> the Naval Force on this station, is now reduced to the Ship *Louisiana*, Brig *Etna*, Schooner *Carolina* and one Gun Vessel; the former fit only for River Service, the second unfit for service; and none of them fully manned; I am therefore, from the indispensable necessity there exists for men, endeavouring to ship them for three months; giving them a bounty of thirty

dollars, to which the state have added Twenty four; this will I hope sir procure me all the men in port, capable of serving afloat; and had I thirty such Gun Vessels as those captured from me I could most effectually guard every avenue to this City, against even the very large force the Enemy have brought against us, or had I the Block Ship Launched and equipped they could not enter any pass where she might be stationed; nor am I by your letter of instructions even in this great emergency permitted by purchase to endeavour to [re]pleace those Vessels captured; but had I men, and sufficient time allowed me by the Enemy, I would from the extreme necessity of the case feel myself authorized to purchase such Vessels, as would answer to mount cannon, for the service of the Lakes; but without men the Vessels would be worse than useless. I shall use very effort to have fire Vessels ready should the Enemy enter the River, with any of his Vessels;— be assured neither Labour nor expense shall be wanting to effect the object of a successful defence, at any point w[h]ere I can act with such Force as I can collect; the Navy Agent has funds sufficient at his command to answer such demands as I may be obliged to make upon him, to carry my views into execution;— in the event of the Enemys reaching this city, with too superior [a] Force, I shall retreat with my Vessels which are all in the River (except the *Etna*) as high up as may be necessary, and there await to aid any force sent to recover this city.— I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your obt. st.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 98 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. See Patterson to Jones, 16 December 1814, which reports the capture of the American gunboats on Lake Borgne, pp. 940–41.

#### SHIPPING ARTICLES: NEW ORLEANS STATION

WE, who have subscribed our names to these presents, in an appropriate column in this paper, being inferior officers, seamen and ordinary seamen, engaged for the Vessels of War called the Gun Vessels at present commanded by Captn. D. T. Patterson do severally acknowledge hereby to have received as advanced wages, (and Bounty) the sums of money placed opposite our respective names in the other column. And we who have subscribed our names as Sureties, in a column entitled “Sureties,” do hereby acknowledge that we are sureties for the several inferior officers, seamen and ordinary seamen, so engaged as aforesaid, against whose names our names are written, that he or they shall repair on board in proper time, and proceed to sea in the Vessels aforesaid, or in default thereof, that we will respectively answer, and be accountable for the advanced wages, bounty and shipping charges so as aforesaid acknowledged to have been received by any inferior officer, seamen and ordinary seamen, for whom we are respectively surety.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, WE, the inferior officers, seamen and ordinary seamen, and the sureties, have hereunto set our hands, in appropriate columns, the day and year mentioned in the margin.

DATE OF ENTRANCE	NAMES OF INFERIOR OFFICERS, SEAMEN, AND ORDINARY SEAMAN		WAGES ADVANCED	Bounty	SURETIES
1814					
December 20th	John Davis	O. Seaman	————	Fifty Dollars	
Do.	his Hosea X pablogomes mark	O Seaman	————	Fifty Dollars	
Do.	his joseph X rosman mark	seaman O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.	his Jocano X Santo mark	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.	Hatherley M Foster	Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.	Daniel B Mitchell	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.	his Jan X Petro mark	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.	his Hosea X M Deas mark	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
December 21st	James Young	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.———	John X Raldolph his mark	Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	Tho* Franklin
Do.———	John Adams	O seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.——— 22nd	William Taylor	Seaman	————	ditto———	
Do.——— 22nd	William Hepp	M. Mate	\$20-00 ———	None	Jacob Knab
Do.——— 22	Josef Maria Osená	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.——— 22	his Wm X Decastro mark	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.——— 22	Pellee green X Baveli	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.——— 22	Joseph X Willcome	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.——— 22	his Antonia X Jocan mark	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
Do.——— 22	his Manuel X Jokin mark	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
December 23	F D Williams	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	Jn° Gates
December 23rd	Peter Anderson his X mark	Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	jacque Zino
Do. 23d	Josef Maxiane	O Seaman	————	fifty Dollars	
	Joseph X Antoney	Seaman	————	ditto	

Approved	\$1,100==Total amt. paid
<u>Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson</u>	<u>440</u> —— " paid by City of N. Orleans
	\$660—— " " by U S.

A Bounty of twenty dollars ♂ Man was granted by the State of Louisiana in addition to the Bounty given by the Government to those men who Shipped during the Campaign in this Quarter

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

DNA, RG217, 4th Auditor's Accts., Numerical Series, No. 739. Endorsed on back: "23 men/3 mos Articles." This is one of five sets of shipping articles accompanying this account. Collectively, they bear the names of 127 enlistees. The names of the 23 men listed above, with variations in spelling, appear as entries 1525–47 on the New Orleans Station muster rolls. See DNA, RG45, New Orleans Station and USS *Viper* muster rolls, 1805–26, fols. 159–60 (T829, Roll No. 149).

## An Admiral's Journal

*Owing to Lake Borgne's shallow waters, the deep-draft vessels carrying the British invasion force—and everything required to support it—could anchor no closer to the actual field of battle than a distance of some 60 miles. Most of that expanse was covered by water, best navigated by oar-powered boats and flat-bottomed barges. The remainder ran over uneven wetlands whose terrain and vegetation hindered easy movement by foot. To transport an entire army and its train over such distances by both sea and land posed a logistical challenge of the highest order. The officer Sir Alexander Cochrane chose to superintend this effort was Rear Admiral Pulteney Malcolm, who had executed a similar charge during the Washington and Baltimore campaigns.<sup>1</sup>*

*Because the distance between the British fleet's anchorage and the Louisiana shore was too great to be traversed in a single day, Malcolm designated Pine Island, near the mouth of the Pearl River, as a way station for the transiting army. This leg of the journey spanned roughly 32 miles. The second leg of the passage, covering about 21 miles, terminated at the mouth of Bayou Bienvenue, on the far western shore of Lake Borgne. For over seven weeks, Malcolm's sailors negotiated this circuit, moving staggering amounts of men, supplies, and equipment between ship and shore—first in support of an invading army, then in aid of a retreating one. It was hard, backbreaking work, often performed under the most severe conditions.<sup>2</sup> The routine and details of this arduous service are captured in the following extract from Pulteney Malcolm's journal.*

1. For a biographical sketch of Malcolm, see Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, Vol. 1, Part 2, pp. 582–97.

2. Some of the hardships experienced by sailors and troops transiting from the British anchorage to Bayou Bienvenue are described in Remini, *Battle of New Orleans*, pp. 60–65.



*Sir Pulteney Malcolm*



EXTRACTS FROM THE PERSONAL LOGBOOK OF  
REAR ADMIRAL PULTENEY MALCOLM, R.N.

[Extracts]

December 1814

Thursday 15th. on board the *Sea Horse & Dover* [off *Cat Island*]  
A.M. Moderate & fine Several of the Ships aground others coming in & working up &c. Small Sloops of War, Schooners & Transport Brigs &c. were—ordered to move up as far as their draught of water would permit Such Boats as remained in the Squadron employed carrying the 21st. Regt. up to the Gun Vessels<sup>1</sup> & small vessels in advance Struck my Flag on board the *Sea Horse* & hoisted it on board the *Dover*<sup>2</sup>

Friday 16th. on board the *Dover*  
A.M. Fresh breezes and thick weather with rain Boats employed transporting the 93d. Regt. &c. up to the advanced Ships The *Ætna* Bomb and two Transports of the Convoy arrived— Col. Thornton with the Advance of the army landed on the Isle of Marengovin<sup>3</sup>

Saturday 17th. on board the *Dover*  
A.M: Mod: breezes & hazy Boats of the Fleet employed transporting Troops &c. to the Island occupied by the Advance. The Commander in chief<sup>4</sup> struck his Flag on board the *Armide* and proceeded to the Advance Arrived the *Nymphe & Manly*—  
Sunday 18th. on board the *Speedwell* Tender

A.M. Mod: breezes & thick rainy weather— At 7—Struck my flag on board the *Dover* and hoisted it on board the *Speedwell* Tender— Received on board of her 150 of the 95th. Regiment from the *Dover*, they being the remainder of the army at this anchorage— Made sail for the advance Hove to occasionally and communicated with such Ships, small vessels and Boats as I fell in with, and gave directions to the Officers in charge of them Small vessels grounded occasionally— At 5 p.m. the *Speedwell* grounded while standing in for the Isle Marengovin Found at anchor here, H M Ship *Anaconda* & several small vessels— Small vessels & Boats with Troops &c. arriving occasionally— Sent the Troops of the 95th. on shore. waited on the Commander in chief. . . .

Thursday 22d. Embarking Troops &c.  
A.M. Mod: breezes with rain— Launches &c. employed embarking the 93d. Regt. on board Gun Boats and small vessels &c. The Advance consisting of the 85th. & 95th. Regts. with Artillery, Rocketteers & Sappers & Miners &c. were embarked in the Flat Boats Cutters &c. and the 4th. Regt. in Launches Barges &c. At 10 the whole of the Army (except a few Companies of the 5 West India Regt. were embarked in the Flat Boats) and at 11 the whole of the Expedition was under weigh for the place of attack. At 12 the *Anaconda* & *Britannia* grounded— At Sunset the Expedition was off Chef-menteur pass where several of the small vessels grounded At 6 hove to in the Schooner which had the Flat Boats with the *Anaconda* in Tow. Got into my Boat and ordered the Tows to be cast off Sent 3 fast sailing Boats ahead to surprize a Picquet of the Enemy which were stationed in some Fishermen's Huts near the mouth of the Bayou Catalan<sup>5</sup> in which they succeeded— At Midnight the Boats entered the mouth of the Bayou

Friday 23d. on Shore with the army  
 A M. Mod: & fine weather Boats rowing up the Bayou At Daylight the passage became so narrow & the water so shallow that it was found almost impracticable to ascend higher. General Keane & myself therefore decided upon attempting a landing at this place, the entrance of the Canal of Mons. Villere<sup>6</sup> and as the Bayou<sup>7</sup> did not admit of more than one Boat at a time, the Soldiers were passed through the Boats as over a Bridge; and as the Boats were emptied they were sent back to the small vessels for the remainder of the Troops The place on which the Troops landed was a Plain covered with strong reeds or Canes from 8 to 10 feet high, through which the Army advanced toward the Town of New Orleans and took up a position on the Bank of the River Mississippi— Boats arriving occasionally with Troops of the different Regiments, Ammunition and Provisions &c.— At 8 heard the report of some Great Guns in the direction of the Army Firing increased accompanied by volleys of Musketry and continued till about 10 O'clock when it ceased<sup>8</sup>

Saturday 24th. on shore with the army  
 A M. cold frosty weather Boats arriving with Troops Provisions &c. Employed transporting ammunition artillery &c. up the Canal Villere in Canoes & small flat bottomed Boats— A Schooner<sup>9</sup> of the Enemy which had taken up a position in the Mississippi near our Troops, fired occasionally during the day.

Sunday 25th. on Shore with the army  
 A.M. Cold frosty weather Boats with Troops Provisions Ammunition & Guns arriving Employed sending them up the Canal in Canoes &c. The Enemys Schooner firing occasionally— A Ship<sup>10</sup> dropped down the river— Artillery & Seamen attached to them employed in the night throwing up a Battery opposite the Schooner and transporting the Guns to it &c. Major Generals Sir Edward Pakenham & Gibbs and Colonels Dixon of the Artillery and Burgoyne of the Engineers with their respective Staffs arrived. . . .<sup>11</sup>

Tuesday 27th. on Shore with the army  
 A.M. Cold frosty weather At daylight the Battery which had been erected opposite the Schooner opened on her with red hot shot with such effect as almost immediately to set her on fire, and at 9 O'clock she blew up—<sup>12</sup> The Ship instantly got under weigh—and having a fair wind got beyond the reach of our Guns. Boats arriving with Ships 18 pounder Guns—Troops—ammunition & Provisions &c. Seamen transporting do. up the Canal in Boats

Wednesday 28th. on shore with the army  
 A M. Cold frosty weather At Daylight the army advanced on the Enemy's Picquets—<sup>13</sup> Ship in the river opened a heavy fire on our Troops— Enemys Batteries kept up a constant Fire— Boats with Troops & Heavy Guns arriving—Transporting do. up the Canal. . . .

Saturday 31st. on shore with the army  
 A.M. Fine weather. Boats with small arm Seamen & Marines arriving occasionally with Shot Ammunition &c. having at this time sent up to the army ten 18 pounders long Guns—and four 22 [32] pounder Carronades from the Ships, independent of the 9, 6 & 3 pounder—Brigades of Artillery

1815 January

Sunday 1st. on shore with the army  
 A.M. Moderate weather with heavy showers of rain & a thick fogg. At 9 the fogg cleared away and the Batteries opened from our Lines about  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 9 the Enemys Batteries opened and kept up a heavy Cannonade until Sunset—<sup>14</sup>At 9 O'clock [*p.m.*] the Boats Crews & small arm—Seamen were ordered up to assist in withdrawing the Guns from the Batteries A very heavy rain commenced about 3 O'clock and continued till Midnight—Several Boats with Marines, Stores &c. arrived during the day. . . .

Wednesday 4th. on Shore with the army  
 A.M. Fine weather. Maj. General Lambert arrived Also several Boats with Provisions &c. & part of the 7th. & 43d. Regiments— A large working party was employed in clearing and widening the Canal of M Villère to render it passable for the Boats of the Fleet being brought to the Mississippi. . . .

Friday 6th. on Shore with the army  
 A.M. Moderate and fine Troops and Supplies arriving Fatigue parties clearing the Canal making & repairing Roads Seamen transporting Ammunition, Provisions &c. Carpenters repairing and making Carronade Slides for the Boats to be launched into the Mississippi.

Saturday 7th. on Shore with the Army  
 A.M. Fine weather The canal being well filled with water the Boats were ordered up— And at Noon Barges Yawls and Cutters in number about Fifty were hauled up by their respective Boats Crews, and ranged in the Canal from the Main road down towards the Landing Place— At 7 p.m. the Seamen were ordered to launch the Boats into the Mississippi, which owing to a quantity of Mud being collected a few yards from the river required the greatest exertions— At Midnight employed launching Boats into the Mississippi

Sunday 8th. on shore with the army  
 A.M. Fresh breezes & cloudy Employed launching Boats into the Mississippi and embarking Troops in them At Daylight the Boats proceeded across the river and landed the Troops without opposition on the opposite bank— In the meantime an attempt was made to Storm the Enemys Line's which proved unsuccessful and the Troops were withdrawn with considerable loss in killed & wounded. Among the former were Maj: General the Hon. Sir Edward Pakenham commander in Chief—and Maj: General Gibbs—<sup>15</sup> The Detachment thrown across the River were however more successful as they marched several miles along the bank driving the Enemy before them, and capturing 17 Guns— They were recalled and brought over about Noon with but little loss, and by Sunset the whole of the Boats were got out of the Mississippi and ranged in the Canal Villere—<sup>16</sup> A very heavy Rain commenced about 2'O'clock [*p.m.*] which continued until Midnight

Monday 9th. on shore with the army  
 A M. Mod: breezes with rain The Boats which had been launched into the Mississippi were employed transporting wounded down the Canal The 40th. Regiment arrived Enemys Battery fired occasionally

Tuesday 10th. on shore with the army  
 A M. Fresh breezes with rain Employed sending wounded down the Canal to the landing place—and from thence to the Shipping Parties also employed bringing down Shot Ammunition &c. . . .

Sunday 15th. Do. [*Embarking Troops, Baggage*]  
Employed sending down Ammunition, Guns, Royal Artillery & Marines Artillery and Small arm Seamen, Baggage &c. owing to a heavy rain which continued the whole of the day, the roads were very bad. . . .

Tuesday 17th. on Shore with the army  
A.M. Moderate & fine— Sending down the remdr. of the Baggage, Medical Stores &c. &c. Fatigue parties repairing Roads Sappers, Miners & Staff Corps employed throwing temporary Bridges over the small creeks branching out from the Bayou Catalan, to enable the Troops to march down to the landing place at the mouth of the Bayou— The Enemy fired occasionally from his Batteries with Guns and Mortars

Wednesday 18th on Shore with the army  
A.M. Mod: and Cloudy— By this time the road down to the landing place at the mouth of the Bayou was finished— Our Guns which had been landed from the Ships were all destroyed or rendered unserviceable by spiking and breaking off the trunions &c., and their Carriages were embarked In the Evening the whole army retired from their position down to the landing place without molestation from the Enemy. . . .

Saturday 21st. Do. [*Embarking Troops &c.*]  
A.M. Fresh breezes & fine w[*eather*]. Boats transporting Troops to the Shipping, or landing them on Cat Island— Some Row Boats of the Enemy came out of the Rigolets passage, and captured a Flat and several Transport Boats— The Flat however recaptured by the Boats of the *Alceste*

Sunday 22d. Do.  
A M. Fresh breezes and Cloudy Boats employed transporting Troops from the landing place to the Shipping or landing them on Cat Island— Some of the Enemys Row Boats made their appearance off the Rigolets, one of which was captured and her Crew driven on Shore. . . .<sup>17</sup>

Saturday 28th. *Royal Oak* off Ship Island  
A M. Mod & hazy w[*eath*]r. The whole of the Army were embarked on board the Shipping— Hoisted my Flag on board the *Royal Oak* off Ship Island

D, MiU-C, Pulteney Malcolm Collection, Logbook of HMS *Royal Oak*, 1 June 1814–28 May 1815. The text printed here is drawn from five columns in the manuscript log bearing the following headings: “Week days,” “M days,” “Place of the Ship at Noon,” “Remarks & Occurrences,” and “Signals.” Information from a sixth column titled “Winds” was not reproduced. From 15 December 1814 to 21 January 1815, the noontime location of Malcolm’s flag was entered in the “Signals” column instead of “Place of the Ship at Noon” column. Here, the noontime location appears in the dateline.

1. The five American gunboats captured on 14 December and taken into service under Nicholas Lockyer’s command as the New Orleans Flotilla.

2. Malcolm had shifted his flag from *Royal Oak* to *Sea Horse* at 5 P.M., 13 December.

3. Also referenced in British documents as Pea Island (Isle aux Poix), Pine Island, and Pigeon Island. Its modern-day designation is Pearl River Island.

4. Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane.

5. This waterway was known to the Americans as Bayou Bienvenue. For additional information on the American picket guard at the fisherman’s village, see Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 62–67. The fisherman’s village served as a temporary headquarters for Cochrane, Malcolm, and Edward Codrington, Cochrane’s fleet captain.

6. Jacques Philippe Villeré, major general commanding the first division of the Louisiana State Militia. The canal mentioned here led to Villeré's Plantation. Jackson had ordered General Villeré to the waterways providing passage from Lakes Borgne, Pontchartrain, and Maurepas to the Mississippi River. Jackson to Villeré, 19 December 1814, Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 210–11.

7. Bayou Mazant. This bayou connects Villeré's Canal with Bayou Bienvenue.

8. For documentation on the American night attack on the British encampment, see pp. 979–85.

9. U.S. schooner *Carolina*.

10. U.S. block ship *Louisiana*.

11. Pakenham and his staff arrived at the British fleet's anchorage in *Statira* on 24 December 1814.

12. For documentation on *Carolina's* destruction, see pp. 986–90.

13. For documentation on the British reconnaissance in force, see pp. 991–96.

14. For documentation on this New Year's Day cannonade, see pp. 996–99.

15. For documentation on the British assault on the main American line below New Orleans, see below pp. 999–1011.

16. For documentation on the British attack on the right, or western, bank of the Mississippi, see pp. 1011–22.

17. For documentation on the American attacks of 20 and 21 January 1815, see Shields to Patterson, 25 January 1815, pp. 1039–40.

## The Americans Attack

*The first units of the British advance force reached the east bank of the Mississippi River approximately seven miles below New Orleans in the late morning hours of 23 December. The enemy's arrival caught General Jackson unawares, and despite his uncertainty as to whether these troops represented the vanguard of the main British army or were instead a feint, the American commander moved aggressively to drive off the invaders. Jackson coordinated his attack with Master Commandant Daniel Patterson, whose ships were directed to provide a naval bombardment of the British encampment.*

*In the gathering dark, the U.S. schooner Carolina dropped silently downriver from New Orleans, taking up station opposite the enemy's bivouac. At 7:30 P.M., Carolina's starboard battery delivered a broadside into the unsuspecting British soldiery, signaling the launch of the American attack. For the next two hours, the American schooner's guns and small arms rained a destructive fire upon the enemy camp. The fighting ashore, much of it hand-to-hand, was fierce but inconclusive with Jackson breaking off the engagement before evening's close. Carolina's participation in this night-time action illustrates the important defensive role the U.S. Navy would play throughout the Battle for New Orleans.<sup>1</sup>*

*1. For further reading on Jackson's night attack of 23 December, see Remini, *Battle of New Orleans*, Chapter 4; Greene, *Jean Lafitte*, Chapter 3; and Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, pp. 141–46.*

MAJOR GENERAL JOHN KEANE, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
MAJOR GENERAL SIR EDWARD PAKENHAM, BRITISH ARMY

Copy

Camp on the Left Bank of the Mississippi  
9 Miles from New Orleans  
Decr. 26. 1814

Sir

I have the Honor to inform you that between the 17th and 22 Insts. the Troops destined for the Attack of New Orleans were collected at Isle aux Poix which is at the Entrance of the Pearl River.<sup>1</sup>

Having learnt that it was possible to effect a landing at the Head of the Bayou Catalan which runs into Lake Borgne, I directed Major Forrest<sup>2</sup> Asst. Q M General to have it reconnoitred. Lieutt. Peddie of that Department accompanied by the Hon: Captn. Spencer of the Navy ascertained on the night of the 18th that Boats could reach the Head of the Bayou from which a Communication might be made to the High Road, on the Left Bank of the Mississippi, leading to New Orleans.

On the morning of the 22nd every arrangement being made by Vice Admiral the Hon: Sir Alexr. Cochrane I determined to attempt it— The Light Brigade composed of the 85th. & 95 Regts.; Captain Lane's Rocketeers one hundred Sappers and Miners and the 4th. Regt. as a support, the whole under the Command of Colonel Thornton were placed in the Boats, and the 21st., 44th., and 93 Regts. under Colonel Brooke and a large proportion of Artillery under Major Munro were embarked in small Vessels—

At 10 A:M: on the 22nd we sailed from Pearl River and reached the Head of the Bayou at Day light next Morning. A landing was immediately effected without any other opposition than the Country presented. Captn. Blanchard of the Royal Engineers in the Course of two hours, opened a Communication through several fields of Reeds intersected by deep muddy ditches bordered by a low swampy wood— Col. Thornton then advanced and gained the high Road, taking up a position with the right resting on the Road and the left on the Mississippi. In this situation I intended to remain until the Boats returned for the rest of the Troops to the Vessel, some of which grounded at a great Distance.

At about 8 oClock in the Evening, when the Men much fatigued by the length of time they had been in the Boats were asleep in their Bivouac, a heavy flanking fire of round and grape Shot was opened upon them by a large Schooner and two Gun Vessels which had dropped down the River from the Town and anchored abreast of our Fires—<sup>3</sup> Immediate steps were necessary to cover the Men, and Colonel Thornton in the most prompt and judicious Manner placed his Brigade under the inward slope of the bank of the river, as did also Lieutt. Coll. Brooke of the 4th. Regt. behind some Buildings which were near that Corps— This movement was so rapid that the Troops suffered no more than a single Casualty.—

The three pounders being the only Guns up, the success of a few twelve pound Rockets, directed by Captain Lane, was tried against these Vessels, but the ground on which it was necessary to lay them not being even, they were found not to answer, and their firing was ceased.

A most vigorous attack was then made upon the advanced point, and right flank Picquets, the former of the 95th. under Captain Hallan, the latter the 85th. under Captain Schaw— These Officers and their respective Picquets, conducted themselves with firmness and checked the Enemy for a considerable time, but renewing their Attack with a large force, and pressing at these Points, Colonel Thornton judged it necessary to move up the remainder of both Corps— The 85 Regt. was Commanded by Brevet Major Gubbins whose Conduct cannot be too much commended: on the approach of his Regt. to the point of Attack, the Enemy, favored by the Darkness of the night, concealed themselves under a high Fence which separated the Fields, and calling to the Men as friends, under pretence of being part of our own force, offered to assist them in getting over, which was no sooner accomplished, than the 85th. found itself in the Midst of very superior Numbers, who discovering themselves, called upon the Regt. to immediately

surrender— The Answer was an instantaneous Attack— a more extraordinary Conflict has perhaps never occurred. Absolutely hand to hand both Officers and Men— It terminated in the repulse of the Enemy with the Capture of thirty Prisoners. A similar finesse was attempted with the 95 Regt. which met the same treatment.—

The Enemy finding his reiterated Attacks were repulsed by Colonel Thornton, at ½ past 10 OClock advanced a large Column against our Centre— Perceiving his Intention I directed Colonel Stovin to order Lieut Col. Dale with an hundred and thirty men of the 93d. Regiment, who had just reached the Camp, to move forward and use the Bayonet, holding the 4th. Regiment in hand, formed in Line, as my last reserve. Col. Dale endeavoured to execute his Orders, but the crafty Enemy would not meet him, seeing the steadiness of his small Body gave it a heavy fire and quickly retired— Col. Brooke with 4 Companies of the 21st. Regt. fortunately appeared at that Moment on our right flank, and sufficiently secured it from further Attack.—

The Enemy now determined on making a last Effort, and collecting the whole of his force, formed an extensive Line, and moved directly against the Light Brigade— At first this Line drove in all the advanced posts; but Coll. Thornton, whose noble exertions had guaranteed all former success, was at hand— He rallied his brave Comrades round him and moving forward with a fierce determination of charging, appalled the Enemy, who, from the Lesson he had received on the same ground in the early part of the Evening, thought it prudent to retire and did not again dare to advance— It was now 12 OClock and the firing ceased on both sides.—

From the best Information I can obtain the Enemy's force amounted to five thousand Men, and was Commanded by M General Jackson— Judging from the number left on the field, his Loss must have been severe.<sup>4</sup> I now beg leave to enclose a list of our Casualties on that night, and have only to hope it will appear to you, that every Officer and Soldier on shore, did his Duty.<sup>5</sup>

To Sir Alexander Cochrane I feel particularly obliged for his very friendly counsel, and ready Compliance with every wish I expressed respecting the Service or Welfare of the Troops.—

To Rear Admiral Malcolm and the several Captains employed in the landing &c I confess the greatest Obligation. I must leave it to the Vice Admiral to do them the Justice they so much deserve, for I cannot find Words to express the exertions made by every branch of the Navy since the Period of Our Arrival on this Coast.

In the Attack made on the Centre Lt. Col. Stovin A[ssistant] A[djutant] General received a severe Wound which deprived me of his able Services— To him and Major Forrest Asst. Q[uarter] M[aster] Genl. I feel greatly indebted, they are both Officers of great Merit.—

Colonel Brooke is entitled to every praise for securing our right flank.—

To Coll. Thornton I feel particularly grateful. his conduct on the Night of the 23rd I shall ever admire and honor— He headed his Brigade in the most spirited manner, and afforded it a brilliant example of active Courage and Cool determination.—

I have every reason to be satisfied with Lt. Col. Brooke Commg. the 4th. Regt., as also with Major Mitchell of the 95th., who was unfortunately taken prisoner at the close of the Affair—

The Exertions of Major Monroe of the Royl. Arty. were unremitting— To him and the Officers under his command, I feel every obligation— The Assistance given by Captain Blanchard and the Officers of the Royal Engrs. was most conspicuous, and entitle them to my best thanks.

Brevet Major Hooper Actg. D[*eputy*] A[*ssistant*] A[*djutant*] Genl. was attached to the light Brigade— Col. Thornton states that he derived the greatest benefit from his Activity Zeal and Judgment— I regret to have to add that he was very severely wounded, and had his leg Amputated in the Course of the Night.

The indefatigable Zeal and Intelligence displayed by Lieutts. Peddie and Evans of the Q M Genls. Departmt. entitle them to the most favorable consideration.—

Asst. Commy. Genl. Wemyss's Arrangements were satisfactory, and D[*eput*]y. Inspector Thompson claims my best Acknowledgments for the Care and Attention shewn the wounded, the whole of whom, were collected, dressed and comfortably lodged before two in the morning

Major Wills of the 14th. Light Dragoons accompanied me on shore,— from him, Captn. Persse my A[*ide*] D[*e*].C[*amp*]. and the Hon: Lieut. Curzon Naval A D C I received every assistance— Trusting that the steps I pursued while in Command will meet your Approbation, I have the Honor to be Sir With the greatest respect Yr. most obedt. humble Servt.

(Signed.) John Keane  
M General

Copy, UK-KeNA, W.O. 1/141, fols. 149–56.

1. An advance guard of the 95th Regiment under Thornton landed on Isle aux Poix on the night of 16 December.

2. Charles R. Forrest, a major in the 34th Regiment, kept a journal of the British army's movements during the New Orleans campaign. Forrest's journal highlights the logistical difficulties the British had to overcome in positioning their army on the banks of the Mississippi River. For a published version of this journal, see Forrest, *Battle of New Orleans*.

3. Neither Andrew Jackson nor Daniel Patterson mentions the participation of U.S. gunboats in the American attack of 23 December.

4. For totals of American forces engaged, see Jackson to Monroe, 27 December 1814, pp. 982–84. American casualties are given in footnote 2 to this letter.

5. The British casualty list is reproduced in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 327–28. British losses totaled 46 killed, 167 wounded, and 64 missing.

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
ACTING SECRETARY OF WAR MONROE

Head Quarters  
7th. M[*ilitary*] District

Camp below New Orleans  
27th. Decr. 1814 in the morning

Sir

The loss of our gun boats near the pass of the Rigolets having given the enemy command of lake Borgne, he was, enabled to chuse his point of attack. It became therefore an object of importance to obstruct the numerous bayous & Canals leading from that lake to the highlands on the Mississippi. This important service was committed, in the first instance, to a detachment from the 7th. Regt.—afterwards to Col, De Laronde of the Louisiana militia, & lastly, to make all sure, to



Majr. genl. Villerè commanding the district between the river & the lakes, & who being a native of the country, was presumed to be best acquainted with all those passes. Unfortunately however, a picquet which the general had established at the mouth of the bayou Bienvenu, & which notwithstanding my orders, had been left unobstructed, was completely surprised; & the enemy penetrated through a canal leading to his farm about 2 leagues below the city,—succeeded in cutting off a company of militia stationed there. This intelligence was communicated to me about 12 Oclk of the 23d.—My force at this time, consisted of parts of the 7th. & 44th. Regts, not exceeding six hundred together—the city militia—a part of Genl. Coffee's Brigade of mounted gunmen—& the detached militia from the Western division of Tennessee under the command of Major General Carrol. These two last corps were stationed 4 miles above the city. Apprehending a double attack by the way of Chef-menteur I left Genl. Carroll's force, & the militia of the city posted on the Gently road; & at 5 Oclk P.M. marched to meet the enemy, whom I was resolved to attack in his first position, with Majr. Hind's dragoons—Genl. Coffee's brigade—parts of the 7th. & 44th. Regts—the uniformed companies of militia under the command of Majr. Plauche—200 men of colour, chiefly from St Domingo raised by Col Savary & acting under the command of Majr. Dagwin—& and a detachment of Artillery under the directions of Col: McRea with 2 Six pounders under the immediate command of Leiut Spots—not exceeding in all 1500.

I arrived near the enemy's encampment about seven & immediately made my dispositions for the attack. His forces amounting, at that time, on land to abt 3000 extended half a mile on the river, & in the rear, nearly to the wood. Genl. Coffee was ordered to turn their Right, while with the residue of the force, I attacked his strongest position on the left, near the river. Commodore Patterson having dropped down the river in the Schooner *Caroline* was directed to open a fire upon their Camp, which he executed at about half after seven. This being the signal of attack, Genl. Coffee's men with their usual impetuosity, rushed on the enemy's Right, & entered their Camp; while our Right advanced with equal ardor. There can be but little doubt, that we should have succeeded on that occasion with our inferior force in destroying or capturing the enemy had not a thick fog which arose about 8 Oclk, occasioned some confusion among the different Corps. Fearing the consequences, under this circumstance, of the further prosecution of a night attack with troops then acting together for the first time, I contented myself with lying on the feild that night; & at five in the morning assumed a stronger position about 2 miles nearer to the city. At this position I remain encamped, waiting the arrival of the Kentucky militia & other reinforcements. As the safety of the city will depend on the fate of this army, it must not be incautiously exposed.

In this affair the whole corps under my command deserve the greatest credit. The best compliment I can pay to genl. Coffee & his Brigade is to say they behaved as they have always done while under my command. The 7th. led by Majr. Pieri, & the 44th. commanded by Col. Ross distinguished themselves. The battalion of city militia commanded by Majr. Plauche realised my anticipations, & behaved like veterans. Savary's Volunteers manifested great bravery; & the company of city riflemen having penetrated into the midst of the enemy's camp were surrounded, & fought their way out with the greatest heroism—bringing with them a number of prisoners. The two feild pieces were well served by the officer commanding them.

All my officers in the line did their duty; & I have every reason to be satisfied with the whole of my feild, & Staff. Colonels Butler & Piatt and Majr. Chotard by their intrepidity, saved the Artillery. Col. Haynes was every where that duty or danger called. I was deprived of the services of one of my Aids, Capt. Butler whom I was obliged to station, to his great regret, in town. Capt Reid, my other Aid, & Messrs. Levingston, Duplisses & Davizac who had volunteered their services faced danger wherever it was to be met, & carried my orders with the utmost promptitude.

We made one Major—two subalterns, & sixty three privates, prisoners; & the enemy's loss in killed & wounded must have been at least [blank]<sup>1</sup> My own loss I have not as yet been able to ascertain wi[th exactness], but suppose it to amount to 100 in killed, wounded & missing.<sup>2</sup> Among the former I have to lament the loss of Col. Lauderdale, of Genl. Coffee's brigade, who fell while bravely fighting. Colonels Dyer & Gibson, of the same Corps, were wounded, & Majr. Kavanaugh taken prisoner.

Col De Laronde, Majr. Villerè of the Louisiana militia, & Majr. Latour of the Engineers having no command, volunteered, their services—as did Doctors Ker & Flood; & were of great assistance to me. I have the honor to be with great respect Yr. Obt. St

Andrew Jackson  
Major Genl comdg

ALS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of the War, Registered Series, J-182 (8) (M221, Roll No. 63). Bracketed text supplied from a printed version of this letter published in *Niles Weekly Register*, 4 February 1814, pp. 357–58.

1. The document is partially torn here. Contemporary printed versions of this letter do not provide the British casualty total. For these figures, see note 5, p. 982.

2. American casualty figures were published in the *Daily National Intelligencer*, 13 February 1815. American losses totaled 24 killed, 115 wounded, and 74 missing. This casualty list is reproduced in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 242.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Neworleans 28th Decemr. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that on the 23rd, inst. while at the Bayou, Saint John, examining the Batteries there erecting by the Navy under the superintendance of Captain John D. Henley of the Schooner *Carolina*, I learn't that information had been received by General Jackson that the Enemy had penetrated thro', Bayou Bienvenu with a large Force, and effected a landing at General Villeries plantation on the Banks of the Mississippi which upon application to the General proved to be true, the alarm was immediately given in Town and the Troops put in motion I repaired on Board the u.s. schooner *Carolina* with Captain Henley and after ordering the Ship *Louisiana* commanded by Lieutt Comdt. C. C. B. Thompson, to follow me, at 4 P.M. weighed and it being calm

dropped down with the current,— at about half past Six I received a request from Genl. Jackson, through Mr. Edward Livingston his Aid de Camp, to Anchor abreast of the Enemy's Camp, which he pointed out, and open a fire upon them. it continuing calm got out sweeps, and a few minutes after seven after having been frequently hailed by the Enemy's Centinels anchored, veered out a long scope of cable, shered close in shore abreast of their Camp, and commenced a very heavy (and as I have since learned most destructive) fire from our starboard Battery and small arms which was returned most spiritedly by the Enemy with congreve Rockets and musketry from their whole Force, when after about forty minutes of most incessant Fire the Enemy was silenced, the fire from our Battery was continued 'till 9 oclock upon the Enemy's Flank while engaged in the Field with our Army, at which hour, ceased firing supposing from the distance of the Enemy's fire (for 'twas too dark to see any thing on shore) that they had retreated beyond the range of our Guns; weighed and swept across the River, in hopes of a breeze the next day to enable me to renew the attack upon the Enemy should they be returned to their encampment; but was disappointed, on the 24th: by a light air from N.N.W. which towards evening hauled to N.W. and blew a heavy Gale compelling me to remain during the 24th: 25th & 26th: at Anchor in a position abreast of the Enemy altho' every possible exertion was made [by] Capt. Henley to warp the Schooner up, without success from the extreme rapidity of the current occasioned by the very uncommon rise of the River; on the afternoon of the 26th: at the request of General Jackson, I visited him at his Head Quarters, and went from thence to town, to equip and arm with 2. 32 prs. such Merchant Vessel in Port as I might find capable of supporting them,<sup>1</sup> during the 24th, 25th, & 26th, fired at the Enemy from the Schooner whenever they could be seen;— owing to the calmness of the night of the 23rd the Ship *Louisiana*, could not join me till the morning of the 24th, when she fortunately anchored about one mile above the *Carolina*; by the fire from the Enemy on the night of the 23rd. one man only was wounded and very little injury done to Hull, Sails or Rigging, in her Bulwarks, were a great number of musket Balls, several in her masts and Top-masts thro' her main sail; nothing could exceed the incessant Fire from the Battery and small Arms of the *Carolina*, which can alone be attributed to the high state of decipline to which Captain Henly had brought her crew, of him Lieuts. Norris & Crawly and Sailing Master Haler,<sup>2</sup> I cannot speak in too high terms; the Petty Officers & Crew behaved with that cool determined spirit and zeal which has so strongly characterised the American Tar in the present war;— I have the honor to be with great consideration And Respect Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 108 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. On 26 December, Patterson wrote to Jackson that he was fitting out a brig laden with cotton with two 32-pounder carronades. The brig was to be ready for service on the following day provided it could be manned from the garrison of Fort St. John. Patterson to Jackson, 26 December 1814, Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 223–24.

2. Isaac Haller was appointed a master's mate on the Charleston Station on 30 November 1812. He was soon assigned to the schooner *Carolina*, first in the capacity of acting commander then later as that vessel's acting sailing master. The Navy Department confirmed this latter appointment with a warrant on 7 July 1814. He resigned from the service in September of the following year.

## The Destruction of *Carolina*

*Following Jackson's night attack of 23 December on the British advance guard, Carolina remained "in irons" opposite the enemy's encampment, unable to ascend the Mississippi to a safer anchorage owing to contrary winds and tides. For the next three days the schooner's commander, Master Commandant John D. Henley, had little choice but to play the role of floating gadfly, peppering the British lines with a harassing gunfire. Unbeknownst to Henley and his crew, their adversaries ashore soon devised the means to destroy their American tormentor. Under the cover of night, Royal Artillery officers directed the placement of a river-side gun battery capable of firing hot shot. As Carolina's outlines came distinctly into view in the dawn light of 27 December, the British cannoners unleashed a red-hot, 9-pound shot at the immobile schooner. It took only one more salvo before Carolina received the fatal shot that brought its short-lived naval career to a fiery end.<sup>1</sup>*

1. For a secondary account of the loss of Carolina's, see Reilly, *British at the Gates*, pp. 283–86.

### JOURNAL OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL ALEXANDER DICKSON, ROYAL ARTILLERY

[Extract]

Decr. 26th. Monday 26 Decr. Head Quarters Villarés.

. . . This morning before day light the Guns were taken to the river side, in readiness to put into Battery but as it is uncertain whether we are to open, I ordered them to be placed under the Levee and covered over with Cane trash so that they may not be discovered. The preparation for the Guns is rather above the Schooner, and the embrasures are at extended distances, occupying a space from 200 to 300 Yards, so that the fire of the Vessel will be less likely to annoy. As soon as all was ready I withdrew the men before daylight not to occasion suspicion on the part of the Enemy.

Sir Edward<sup>1</sup> ordered the opening the Battery to be deferred, indeed, he expressed a doubt about the Success of Field Pieces to destroy a Vessel at such a distance, and has written to urge the Four 18 Prs. to be sent. I assured him however I was certain we should dislodge the Schooner with our light Guns, and if the wind failed her, that she would Undoubtedly be either Sunk, burnt, or obliged to drift down the river. . . .

Between Col. Thornton's post and Head Quarters<sup>2</sup> there is a house that has been used by us as an Hospital, and it being situated in the line of fire of the Schooner in case she returns that of our Battery, it has been thought proper to remove the wounded from it, and this was carrying into effect whilst we were in front, which the Schooner observing she opened a brisk fire upon the house, and also around Head quarters, where we have some Ammunition deposited in a Shed, but a working party being procured, a (sufficient) traverse of logs of wood was soon raised in front of our depot by which it will be secured from Cold Shot,

but the remedy would be but a bad one, if the Enemy were to fire hot shot from the opposite Side of the river.

Sir Edward was extremely enraged at this firing upon our wounded, and wished the Battery to begin, but I recommended him to defer it untill the morning early, when we shall take the Enemy by Surprise, and fortunately this fire of the Schooner did no mischief.

I had part of the small Arm Ammunition brought this day from the landing place to Head Quarters Depot.

A (very small) few rounds of Howitzer and 6 Pr. Ammunition have arrived at the landing place, but our prospect of Supply is as yet very disheartening, we must be Economical in our expenditure upon the Schooner, as otherwise I fear we shall have no Gun Ammunition when the Army advances. . . .

Sir Thomas Troubridge of the *Armid*i is ordered to Command the Seamen to be employed on Shore, having under him Captain Money of the *Trave*, Captain Westphall of the *Anaconda*, and Capt. Rogers of the *Dover*, but only 60 men have as yet arrived, the whole are ordered to be placed at my disposal.

In the Evening received a final order from Sir Edward to open on the Schooner tomorrow Morning at day light, for which I gave the necessary directions. (And that implements should be prepared and arrangements made for firing hot shot from the 9 Pounders was done yesterday. . . .)

Tuesday 27th Decr., Head Quarters, Villaré's.

About two o'clock in the morning the fire was kindled for heating the 9 Pr. shot, and at three quarters past seven as soon as it was light enough plainly to discover the Schooner, we opened a very brisk fire upon her as follows, the distance being about 800 Yards, and the wind down the river (which prevented her going up). Viz.

2	9 Prs. firing hot shot.	
4	6 Prs. firing shot and spherical.	
1	Heavy 5½ Inch Howitzer	} with shells
1	Light Do. Do.	
1	5½ Inch Mortar Do. Do.	
Total 9		

The Guns, particularly the 9 Prs., got the range almost immediately, and the practice was generally good, the Howitzers also throwing Several Shells on board with great Success.

On our first opening the Enemy returned Four Shot at Random, after which I believe the crew all run on Shore, for she never fired a Gun (after a few rounds) afterwards, in a short time finding ourselves not disturbed by any return of fire, we continued our own very leisurely, and we presently saw a small flame appearing through a Shot hole low down in the Hull, which soon increased and burnt a little outside, a great smoke from Midships soon afterwards appeared, our Hot Shot etc. Continuing to be fired with great precision. This was followed by a Considerable smoke arising from the stern, and also from the head, at which period a man was discovered on board very busy, but he soon quitted the Vessel

and went on Shore, to which she lay quite close, indeed her sides must have been nearly touching the logs that are Cast up on the bank, this man I imagine had left Something Valuable on board, which he risked his life to recover. The smoke increased, forming a Mass nearly over the whole Hull, and at last at half past ten she blew up abaft, and the Masts and Hull fell outwards into deep water and disappeared.

This Schooner was named the *Carolina* and mounted 14 Guns and Carronades.

As soon as the Ship<sup>3</sup> which lay about a mile further up saw the fate of her Comrade, she began warping up the river, we fired a few Shells at her from the heavy Howitzer, but it was too far, and she was soon entirely out of reach. . . .

Printed, *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 44 (July–October 1961), pp. 13–17. Reprinted by permission of the Louisiana Historical Society.

1. Edward Pakenham.

2. Major General Jacques Philippe Villeré's home served as headquarters for the British army.

3. The block ship *Louisiana*.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

(Duplicate)

U S. Ship *Louisiana* Four Miles  
below New Orleans 28th: December 1814

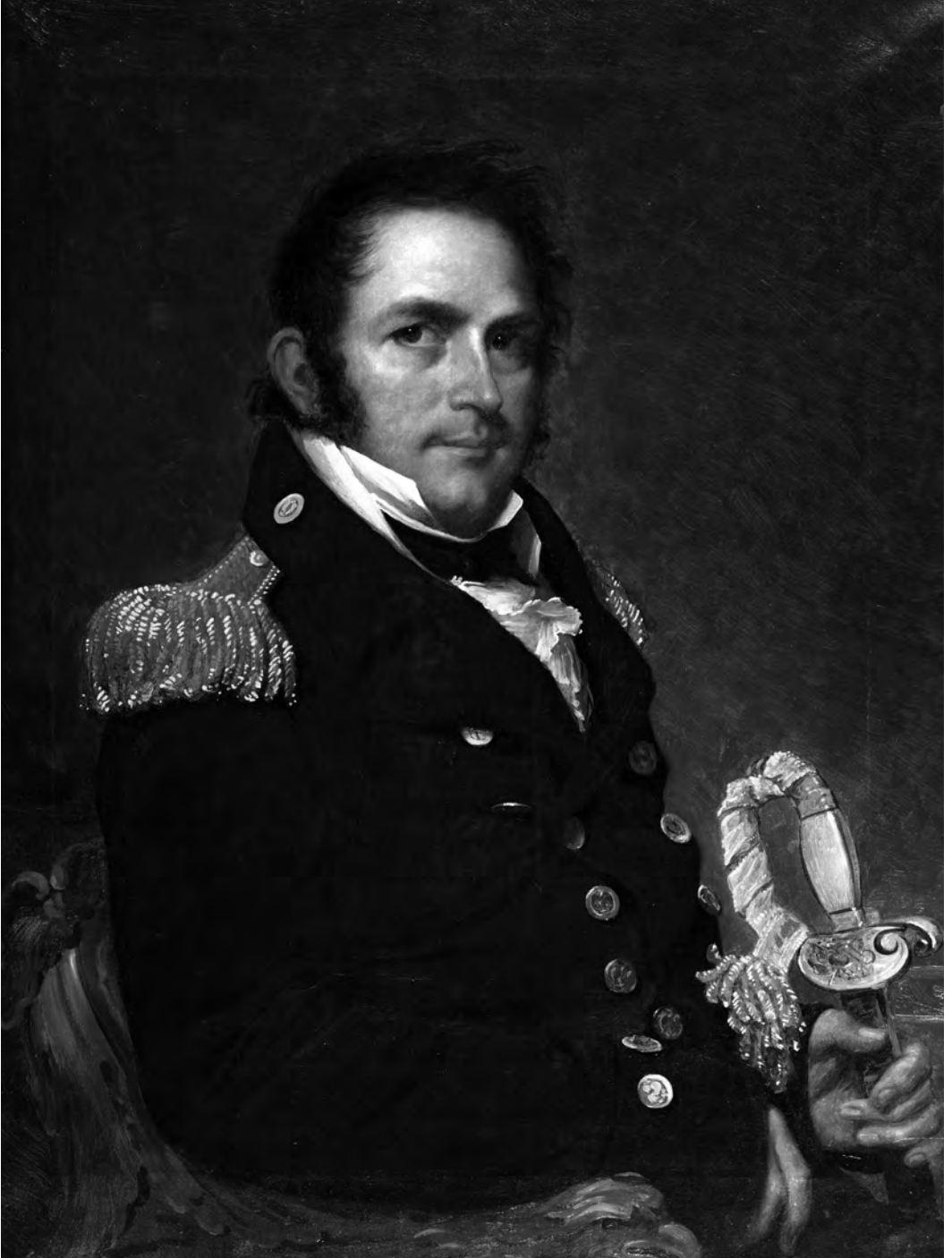
Sir,

Enclosed I do myself the honor to transmit you a Copy of a letter this day received from Captain John D Henley commander of the late United States Schooner *Carolina* destroyed on the 27th: inst by hot shot from a Battery erected by the Enemy unknown to us nor was it deemed practicable for them to transport artillery through the swamps to the Banks of the River, tho apprehended; I left Town, (where as I informed you by my letter of this date<sup>1</sup> I had gone to equip a Vessel with heavy cannon) at daylight on the 27th: and hastened hearing firing as fast as possible to join the Schooner, judging the firing to be from her at the Enemy instead of from them; I arrived very near her just as Captain Henley and his Officers had left her, after the crew had been saved, and found her enveloped in fire and smoke beyond a possibility of extinguishing; a few minutes after my joining Capt Henley I had the extreme mortification of seeing her blow up; the exertions made by Capt Henley his officers and Crew were such as reflect upon them the greatest credit, as also the good conduct of the crew after the destruction of their Vessel no single instance of insubordination occurring among them.— I have the honor to be With great consideration and respect Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, AF 8 (M625, Roll No. 200). Another copy of this letter is in DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 106 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. See Patterson to Jackson, 28 December 1814, pp. 984–85.



*John Dandridge Henley*

[Enclosure]  
(Duplicate)

New Orleans 28th: December 1814

(Copy)

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that after you left on the 26th: inst:, in pursuance to your orders, every exertion was made to move the Schooner *Carolina* higher up the River and near Genl. Jackson's Camp, without success; the wind being at N.N.W. and blowing fresh and too scant to get underway, and the current too rapid to move her by warping, which I had endeavoured to do with my crew.—

At daylight on the morning of the 27th: the Enemy opened upon the *Carolina* a Battery of five Guns from which they threw shells & hot shot:— returned their fire with the long 12 pounder, the only Gun on Board which could reach across the River, the remainder of her Battery being light 12 pound Carronades.—

The air being light and at North, rendered it impossible to get underway; the second shot fired by the Enemy, lodged in the Schooners Main Hold under her Cables and &c in such a situation as not to be come at, and fired her, which rapidly progressed finding that hot shot were passing through her Cabin and filling Room which contained a considerable quantity of Powder; her Bulwarks all knocked down by the Enemy's shot, the Vessel in a sinking situation and the fire encreasing and expecting every moment that she would blow up; at a little after sun rise I reluctantly gave orders for the crew to abandon her, which was effected, with the loss of one killed, and six wounded; a short time after I had succeeded in getting the crew on shore, I had the extreme mortification of seeing her blow up.—

It affords me great pleasure to acknowledge the able assistance I received from Lieutenants Norris and Crowley and Sailing Master Haller, and to say that my Officers and Crew behaved on this occasion, as well as on the 23rd.<sup>1</sup> when under your own eye in a most Gallant manner.—

Almost every article of Clothing belonging to the Officers & Crew from the rapid progress of the fire was involved in the destruction of the Vessel.— I have the honor to be Very respectfully Your Obt. Servt.

(Signd) John D Henley

P S, I have not made out a detailed account of the action on the night of the 23rd., as you were on Board during the whole Action.—

Copy, DNA, RG45, AF 8 (M625, Roll No. 200). Another copy of this letter is in DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 106a (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. For documentation on the American attack on British lines the night of 23 December, see pp. 979–85.



## The British Reconnaissance in Force

*On 28 December, Major General Sir Edward Pakenham, the British expedition's commander in chief, ordered a reconnaissance in force of Andrew Jackson's main fortified line, the Rodriguez Canal. In the event this probe exposed weaknesses in Old Hickory's defenses, Pakenham intended to exploit them by pressing home an immediate attack. But American batteries directed such a deadly gunfire at Pakenham's troops advancing along the river levee that, instead of ordering an assault, the British general directed a full retreat of his reconnoitering force. The skill and marksmanship of U.S. Navy gun crews afloat and ashore played a critical role in turning back this attempt to penetrate Jackson's lines.<sup>1</sup>*

*1. For further reading on the British operation of 28 December, see Reilly, British at the Gates, pp. 288–91, and, Remini, Battle of New Orleans, 94–97.*

### JOURNAL OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL ALEXANDER DICKSON, ROYAL ARTILLERY

Decr. 28th. Wednesday 28th Dec. Head quarters Villaré's.

at day light this morning the Army moved forward in two Columns, one under the Command of General Gibbs by the centre road leading towards La Rondes house,<sup>1</sup> and the other under Genl. Keane by the road along the bank of the river. I accompanied this last. On General Gibb's Column approaching La Ronde's house, the 3 Prs. and Rockets were opened upon it, which obliged the Enemies Pickets both Infantry and Cavalry to fall back immediately, the Columns then pushed on, Genl. Keane's moving rapidly along the high road passing the Enemies late great picquet house (La Ronde's) further on another large house named Bien venu's plantation,<sup>2</sup> and still further a house burning,<sup>3</sup> (about 3000 Yards from the Enemies great Picket house.) which the Enemy had set fire to as they retired; at this point by a turn of the road we suddenly found ourselves within 700 or 800 Yards of the Enemy, drawn up behind an entrenchment, touching the river, and from thence extending to the left across to the wood, our Rockets which were up immediately opened, and the Enemy commenced a brisk fire of Cannon, with considerable effect on our Column, which had been pushed nearer than it otherwise would, from our so Unexpectedly getting close to their line of entrenchment.

Our left Column however was soon drawn off from the road, and put under Cover, and in the mean time the two 6 Prs. under Capt. Carmichael, and the 9 Prs. and Howitzer under Major Michel,<sup>4</sup> moved up some distance in front of the burning house, and opened their fire, at least as many as could be employed on the high road. The Enemies Corvette,<sup>5</sup> which was anchored on the Flank of their entrenchment now opened a very heavy and galling fire upon us, and as the two 6 Prs. and one 9 Pr. were as many as could be properly employed on the road, I turned the other 9 Prs. and Howitzer to annoy the Ship with Spherical and Shells.

In the mean time Sir Edward<sup>6</sup> Came to the left, and informed me that the Enemies line<sup>7</sup> appeared strong, and as he wished to examine it carefully before he came to any determination about attacking, he desired that the Artillery should



*Sir Alexander Dickson*

Continue the Cannonade, and everything hold on, and in the mean time directed that I should accompany him to the right, which I did, and we got off our horses and went to the front to make a closer examination, the Enemy appear to have made a Strait entrenchment from the river to the wood apparently a distance of about 1000 Yards, by which both flanks of it are secured, and there are Cannon distributed along the whole length, I think about 9 or 10 Guns, five or six of which are on the Enemies right, and opposed to our Artillery on the high Road.

Lieut. Wright<sup>8</sup> of the Engineers examined the Enemies line from a high tree, by which he has discovered that the entrenchment is upon a Canal<sup>9</sup> apparently full of water, which serves as a ditch to it, and the wood being very thick, there is no means of turning the entrenchments through it.

During this our troops, which had all advanced within 700 or 800 Yards of the Enemy, covered themselves by the means of ditches, Standing Cane trash etc., and Sir Edward with the view still of attacking, ordered a party to begin throwing up cover for Six or Eight Guns at about 700 or 800 Yards distance, to support the advance of our attack, and try to make an impression upon the Enemies line, in the mean time he ordered me to go to the left again and look out for a Communication to bring the Artillery across to the point in question, but not to move untill he sent orders, I proceeded accordingly and found a way Artillery could move by, but upon my reaching the burnt house, I learnt that both Carmichael's 6 Prs. were dismounted by Wheels or Axles being Shot away, and the Guns left in the road, and that the Enemies fire had been so heavy, it was requisite to withdraw the 9 Prs. and people in general to the right of the road, under cover of the ruins, Garden Hedges etc., of the burning house, here I found the Guns halted, the Artillery men and Sailors being Sheltered in ditches etc. On learning this, I sent Capt. Carmichael back with his horses to Villaré's to bring up the two 6 Prs. left there, which he did with such activity, that they were up before we retreated.

(At this period) the fire of the Enemy was most heavy from their entrenchment and Corvette towards this point, during the period of our waiting for orders, which was from an hour to an hour and a half, and Considering the number of people around, it was astonishing we had not more Casualties; that of my department being one Seaman, and Capt. Francis Collins Commanding the Detachment of 1st. West India Regt., both of whom had their Heads shot off whilst thus waiting, in addition to which I had two men of the Artillery killed, and Lieut. Poynter<sup>10</sup> and five wounded in the previous Cannonade.

Sir Edward having thoroughly reconnoitred the Enemies position, he came to a determination not to attack at present, and gave orders for the troops to be drawn off gradually, it became necessary therefore to bring away the two 6 Prs. dismounted on the road, an operation the more difficult as it could only be done by dragging them away by bodily strength, the men so employed being exposed to a heavy fire of the Enemy, who being undisturbed and unoccupied from any other object, could direct their fire with more Steadiness towards this. Sir Thomas Troubridge<sup>11</sup> immediately undertook to do it with Seamen assisted by Artillery men.

It was found the men could get under Cover round by the right of the burning house to the road near the Guns, the party therefore being formed, and headed by Sir Thomas, they proceeded this way, and quickly entering the road

they hooked on to a Gun, and dragged it way upon one Wheel and the point of the axle by Main Strength. The Enemy being taken by Surprise had not time to fire much. The party took the Gun back three or four Hundred Yards to a turn of the road, where it was no longer seen by the Enemy, and then returned for the other Gun, which they brought away in like manner, with the difference of being under a Most heavy fire of round and grape, the Enemy being this time fully prepared, but most fortunately without loss in either this or the first trip, for the thing was so well arranged, and done with such rapidity that they never stood still for one moment, which greatly assisted in preventing the fire taking effect.

The Army was soon out of the reach of the Enemies fire, and thus ended our movement in a reconnoissance, the general loss however did not exceed 50 or 60 Killed and wounded,<sup>12</sup> but the latter were chiefly requiring amputations, being from Cannon Shots.

The Army fell back and took up a position across the plain about 2200 Yards from the Enemies line, extending from the river to the wood, the 3 Pr. and half the Rockets remaining on the right with General Gibb's Brigade, the other half of the Rockets with Genl. Keane. Michel's two 9 Prs. and Howitzers were stationed on the high road on left of the line, and Carmichael on the high road in Michel's rear, with the Two 6 Prs. brought up after the others were disabled. The two disabled 6 Prs. were sent back to the Depot at Villaré's for repair. I then ordered all the Guns to be Completed with Ammunition of which there is now sufficient, a considerable quantity, as well as a proportion of general Stores having arrived at the Depot, as also two 18 Pr. Sea Service Guns with some Ammunition for the same, and One light, 5½ Inch Howitzer.

It is determined to Construct a Battery for two 18 Prs. at our Main piquet house being the One immediately in the rear of the House burnt this day, this Battery is intended against the Corvette should she drop down.

A Battery is also ordered to be Constructed on the high road on the left of our position for the 9 Prs., and two Redoubts near the Wood in front of our position for the Security of our right.

Printed, *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 44 (July–October 1961), pp. 20–23. Reprinted by permission of the Louisiana Historical Society.

1. The home of Colonel Pierre Denis de LaRonde, 3rd Regiment, Louisiana State Militia.

2. The plantation house of Pierre Antoine Bienvenue.

3. The plantation house of Ignace Delino de Chalmet. Jackson had ordered all the buildings on Chalmet's plantation burned down to deny their use to the enemy.

4. Major John Michell's diary of the New Orleans campaign is published in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 44 (July–October 1961), pp. 127–30.

5. The block ship *Louisiana*.

6. Sir Edward Pakenham.

7. The main American entrenchment along Rodriguez Canal.

8. Lieutenant Peter Wright, Royal Engineers. Wright was killed the evening of 31 December while reconnoitering the American lines. See Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 326.

9. Rodriguez Canal.

10. First Lieutenant Benjamin Lyon Poynter, Royal Artillery.

11. Captain Sir Edward T. Troubridge, commander of H.M. frigate *Armide*. Troubridge was married to Anna Maria Cochrane, the eldest daughter of Sir Alexander Cochrane.

12. British casualties totaled 16 killed, 41 wounded, and 2 missing. The figures are printed in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 328–29.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONESU S. Ship *Louisiana* four Miles below  
Neworleans 29th. December 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that, on the morning of the 28th: inst, at about half past 7, perceived our advance Guard retreating towards our lines, the Enemy pursuing; firing shot, shells, and Rockets, from field Artillery, with which they advanced on the Road behind the Levee; sprung the ship to bring the starboard Guns to bear, upon the Enemy; at 25 minutes past 8. A M. the Enemy opened their fire upon the ship with shells, hot shot, and Rockets, which was instantly returned with great spirit, and much apparent effect, and continued without intermission 'till 1. P.M. when the Enemy Slackened their fire, and retreated with a part of their Artillery from each of their Batteries; evidently with great loss, two attempts were made to recover one heavy peice of ordnance mounted behind the Levee, with which they threw hot shot at the Ship; and which had been along time abandoned; before they succeeded in recovering it, and then it must have been with very great loss, as I distinctly saw, with the aid of my Glass several shot strike in the midst of the men (seamen) who were employed dragging it away at 3. P.M. the enemy were silenced; at 4. P.M. ceased firing from the Ship, the Enemy having retired beyond the range of her Guns; many of their shot passed over the Ship, and their shells burst over her Decks which were strewed with their fragments yet after an incessant cannonading of upwards of 7 hours, during which 800 Shot were fired from the Ship one man only was wounded Slightly, by the peice of a Shell; and one shot passed between the Bowsprit and heel of the Jibboom;—

The Enemy drew up his whole force, evidently with an intention of assaulting Genl. Jackson's lines; under cover of his heavy cannon; but his cannonading being so warmly returned from the lines, and Ship *Louisiana* caused him I presume to abandon his project, as he retired without making the attempt—

You will have learn't by my former letters, that the crew of the *Louisiana* is composed of men, of all nations (English excepted) taken from the streets of neworleans,<sup>1</sup> not a fortnight before the Battle, yet I never knew Guns better served, or a more animated Fire, than was supported from her.—

Lieut. C. C. B. Thompson deserves great credit for the declipline which in so short a time he had brought such men, to two thirds of whom do not understand English.—

Genl. Jackson having applied for Officers, and seamen to work the heavy cannon on his lines, furnished by me; Lieuts. Norris, & Crowley of the late Schooner *Carolina*, instantly voluntiered, and with the greater part of her crew were sent to those cannon, which they served during the Action herein detailed;<sup>2</sup> the Enemy must have suffered a great loss in that days action by the heavy fire from this Ship and Genl. Jacksons Lines, where the cannon was of heavy calibre and served with great Spirit.—<sup>3</sup> I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your  
Obt: St.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 109 (M147, Roll No. 5). A duplicate of this letter is in DNA, RG45, AF 8 (M625, Roll No. 200).

1. Following Andrew Jackson's declaration of martial law on 16 December, Patterson impressed a number of local sailors into temporary naval service. For documents relating to the manning crisis on the New Orleans Station, see pp. 802–3 and 808 and pp. 967–73 and 1072–74.

2. For Jackson's praise of Norris and Crowley, see Jackson to Patterson, 19 January 1815, p. 1043.

3. For Jackson's after-action report, see Jackson to Monroe, 29 December 1814 in Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 224–25.

## The Artillery Battle of 1 January 1815

*Convinced that his 28 December attack on General Jackson's lines failed for want of proper artillery support, Sir Edward Pakenham ordered heavy ordnance brought up from the fleet's anchorage to the battlefield. By herculean effort, British tars helped shift 14 naval long guns, weighing more than two tons each, a distance of some 70 miles to the banks of the Mississippi. By New Year's Day 1815, Pakenham's chief artilleryist, Alexander Dickson, had formed these guns—and 16 others—into three separate batteries to pulverize the Yankee defenses.*

*The Americans also took steps to augment their firepower after the action of 28 December, including the erection of gun batteries on the west bank of the Mississippi from which to enfilade Pakenham's lines. The author of this scheme, Master Commandant Patterson, began building the first in a series of batteries under cover of darkness the night of 29 December. By 31 December Patterson had three guns in place—a 24-pounder and two 12-pounders. The establishment of this small battery proved timely, as the British launched a massive artillery barrage the morning of 1 January. Patterson's gunners responded by delivering a sharp flanking fire that helped frustrate the enemy's efforts to smash Line Jackson. In the days leading up to the battle for New Orleans, Patterson's west bank batteries would provide vital defensive support to the main U.S. forces defending the Crescent City.<sup>1</sup>*

1. On the artillery duel of 1 January, see Reilly, *British at the Gates*, pp. 291–301; Remini, *Battle of New Orleans*, Chapter 5; and Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, pp. 149–51.

### JOURNAL OF MAJOR HOWELL TATUM, U.S.A.

[Extract]

28 December 1814<sup>1</sup>

... Commodore Patterson, about this time,<sup>2</sup> suggested to the General the advantages that would result from the erecting batteries on the Levey on the right bank of the river, which he had examined, and tendered his services of that purpose. The General highly approved of this plan, as it afforded an opportunity to enfilade the enemy's Encampment and would prove of great advantage, in annoying the enemy in all his movements near the river. He immediately ordered General Morgan (who had crossed to St. Leon) with a considerable proportion of his Command to march up and cover the operation of the Commodore, assist in erecting the batteries and, to throw up a line of defence, at some proper place, to cover his command. These arrangements were soon compleated and

several batteries erected mounting one and two Guns each some of which were 24 lbs., the balance 18, 12 & 19 lbs. These batteries were erected at different places and extended nearly a mile from the upper to the lowest. Furnices for heating ball, was erected at some in order to destroy the houses on the left bank, that incommoded our operations. Brown's House was soon destroyed by this means and a number of attempts made upon Bienvenue's Dwelling & Sugar Houses, but without success, as the enemy occupying them, extinguished the fire whenever they discovered our shot to have taken effect, for which purpose, it is said, they kept wet blankets in constant readiness. The flank of the enemy's encampment and the Picquet Guards, near the river, were considerably annoyed by these batteries, as well as from a well directed fire from our own lines and the ship *Louisiana*. . . .

1 January 1815

At 10 o'clock A.M. the enemy commenced their attack by a heavy discharge of Ball, grape & shells, from a number of 4, 9 & 18 lbs. and one or two Howitzers, accompany with showers of congreve Rockets. This discharge was met with great spirit and zeal on the part of the defenders, by an incessant fire of Ball, Grape & shells from their batteries. I had never before witnessed so severe a cannonade for the time it lasted, as on this occasion (even in the 6 weeks siege of the City of Charleston, in 1780) the firing was, almost, without intermission on both sides for nearly three hours. The Batteries of the enemy near the Centre and on the Levey road were compleatly silenced by one o'clock P.M. and that on the enemy's right about 3 o'clock. The firing from the central & Levey Batteries were directed principally up and along the levy, and at the House of Madame McCarty, occupied by the General as his Head Quarters. This building was considerably injured by the enemy's Ball. Little, or no injury was experienced from the Rockets & shells, excepting the destruction of one casson blown up by the explosion of one of the shells. The fire from the battery on the right of the enemy, appeared to be directed, principally against the Regiment of Coffee's Brigade, in the rear, which was immediately ordered to join and form with the balance of the Brigade, near the swamp. This Regiment had one serjeant killed and a few horses wounded. They received no other injury.

Shortly after the Batteries were silenced the enemy retreated from the left of their front line, and the whole of their rear line with great speed & confusion.

During this action, the batteries on the right bank of the river, kept up a constant fire on the column near the Levey, and enfiladed the rear line of the enemy & their camp severely. The ship *Louisiana* was also placed in a distant position and aided considerably in annoying the enemy on the left of their front line, and the battery on the Levey road.

Printed, Tatum, *Journal*, pp. 118–19, and 120–21.

1. Tatum's journal entry for 28 December includes descriptions of American activities in the days leading up to the artillery duel of 1 January 1815.

2. Based on Tatum's narrative, Patterson likely made this proposal on 29 December, the day following the failed British reconaissance in force.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Marine Battery five Miles below  
Neworleans 2nd: January 1815

Sir,

Finding the advantageous effect which resulted from the flanking fire upon the Enemy from the *Louisiana* as detailed in my letter of the 29th: ulto:<sup>1</sup> I that night had brought down from the Navy Yard & mounted in silence, a 24 pr. on shore, in a position where it could most annoy the Enemy when throwing up works on the Levee, and in the Fields; on the 30th: opened upon the Enemy with the 24 pr. which drove them from their works, the ship firing at the same time upon their advance, which retired from the Levee and sheltered themselves, behind houses &c; the great effect produced by the Gun on shore enduced me on the 31st: to land from the *Louisiana* two 12 pr.s. which I mounted behind the Levee in the most advantageous position to harrass the flank of the Enemy in his approaches to our, lines and to aid our right; at 11 A.M. the Enemy opened a fire upon the left of our line with Artillery and Musketry which was returned most spiritedly with artillery and Musketry; at 2 P.M. the Enemy having retired the firing ceased.—

On the 1 inst: at 10: A:M: after a very thick fog the Enemy commenced a heavy cannonading upon Genl. Jackson's, line, and my Battery; from Batteries they had thrown up during the proceeding night. on the Levee; which was returned from our lines and my Battery. and terminated, after a most incessant fire from both, parties of nearly five hours, in the Enemys, being silenced, and driven from their works: many of their shells burst immediately over my men, and their Shot passed thro' my breast work, and embrazures; without injuring a man,; on this as on the 28,th Ulto. I am happy to say that my Officers, and men, behaved to my entire satisfaction, but I beg leave particularly to name Actg. Lieut. Campbell,<sup>2</sup> Acting Sailing Master John Gates, and Acting Midshipman Phillip Phillibert, of the *Louisiana*. & Sailing Master Haller of the late schooner *Carolina*; I did not drop the *Louisiana* down within the range of their shot, having learned from deserters, that a furnace of shot, was kept in constant reddiness at each of their Batteries to burn her; & the Guns being of much greater effect, on shore, her men were drawn to man them, and I was particularly desirious to preserve her from their hot shot as I deemed her of incalculable service to cover the Army in the event of Genl. Jackson's retiring from his present line, to those which he had thrown up in his rear.— I have the honor to be with great consideration and Respect Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 3 (M147, Roll No. 6). A duplicate of this letter is in DNA, RG45, AF 8 (M625, Roll No 200). For Andrew Jackson's brief after-action report on the artillery duel of 1 January, see Jackson to Monroe, 2 January 1815, Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, p. 130. For two detailed contemporary accounts of the events of 1 January, see Latour, *Memoir*, pp. 95–98 and Dickson, "Journal," pp. 35–41.



1. Patterson to Jones, 29 December 1814, pp. 995–96.
2. Archibald S. Campbell was warranted a midshipman on 1 June 1812. He arrived on the New Orleans Station in *Carolina* and was appointed an acting lieutenant on 14 December 1814.

## The Battle for New Orleans

*Having failed in two successive attempts to dislodge the American troops stubbornly defending Jackson's main line, Sir Edward Pakenham decided to carry the enemy position by storm in a large-scale, frontal assault. The British general's plan called for a coordinated, two-pronged attack against U.S. defensive works on both sides of the Mississippi River. The first phase of this plan envisioned a cross-river attack whose objective was the capture of Patterson's gun batteries on the west bank. Once captured, these batteries would then be turned on Jackson's line, signaling in turn, the launch of the second phase of Pakenham's plan—a full frontal assault on the Tennessee general's main forces. The success of this plan hinged on a combination of effective coordination, decisive leadership, and a generous measure of good fortune, all of which the British general found in short supply on 8 January 1815.<sup>1</sup>*

*The outcome of the main battle between British and U.S. forces on the east bank of the Mississippi River is detailed below in the after-action reports of Major Generals Andrew Jackson and John Lambert. A third letter by Vice Admiral Alexander Cochrane, the senior British naval officer at New Orleans, though thin on details of the battle itself, offers important reportage on the Royal Navy's role in the New Orleans campaign. Documents treating the fighting on the west bank of the Mississippi appear in the next grouping that follows.*

1. Historians have written extensively on the Battle of New Orleans. Reliable accounts include Remini, *The Battle of New Orleans*, Chapter 7; Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, pp. 153–68; and Reilly, *British at the Gates*, Chapter 22.

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
ACTING SECRETARY OF WAR MONROE

Camp 4 miles below Orleans  
9th. Jan: 1815.

Sir

During the days of the 6th. & 7th. the enemy had been actively employed in making preparations for an attack on my lines. With infinite labour they had succeeded on the night of the 7th in getting their boats across from the lake to the river, by widening & deepening the canal on which they had effected their disembarkation. It had not been in my power to impede these operations by a general attack. Added to other reasons, the nature of the troops under my command, mostly militia, rendered it too hazardous to attempt extensive offensive movements, in an open country, against a numerous & well disciplined army.—Altho my forces, as to number, had been increased by the arrival of the Kentucky division my strength had received very little addition; a small portion only of that detachment being provided with arms:<sup>1</sup> Compelled thus to wait the attack of the enemy I took every measure to repel it when it should be made, & to defeat the object he had in view. Genl. Morgan with the Orleans contingent—the



*Battle for New Orleans, 8 January 1815*

Louisiana militia, & a strong detachment of the Kentucky troops occupyd an entrenched Camp, on the opposite side of the river, protected by strong batteries on the bank, erected & superintended by commodore Patterson<sup>2</sup>

In my encampment every thing was ready for action when early on the morning of the 8th. the enemy after throwing a heavy shower of bombs & congreve rockets, advanced their columns on my right & left, to storm my entrenchments. I cannot speak sufficiently in praise of the firmness & deliberation with which my whole line received their approach:— more could not have been expected from veterans inured to war. For an hour, the fire of the small arms was as incessant & severe as can be imagined. The artillery too directed by officers who displayed equal skill & courage did great execution— Yet the columns of the enemy continued to advance with a firmness which reflects upon them the greatest credit. Twice the column which approached me on my left was repulsed by the troops of Genl. Carroll—those of Genl. Coffee, & a division of the Kentucky militia, & twice they formed again & renewed the assault. At length however, cut to peices, they fled in confusion from the feild leaving it covered with their dead & wounded. The loss which the enemy sustained on this occasion cannot be estimated at less than 1500 in killed wounded & prisoners—<sup>3</sup> Upwards of three hundred have already been delivered over for burial; & my men are still in engaged in picking them up within my lines & carrying them to the point where the enemy are to receive them. This is in addition to the dead & wounded whom the enemy have been enabled to carry from the feild during & since the action, & to those who have since died of the wounds they received. We have taken about 500 prisoners, upwards of 300 of whom are wounded, & a great part of them mortally. My loss has not exceeded, & I beleive has not amounted to ten killed & as many wounded. The entire destruction of the enemy's army was now enevetable had it not been for an unfortunate occurrence which at this moment, took place on the other side of the river.<sup>4</sup> Simultaneously with his advance upon my lines, he had thrown over in his boats, a considerable force to the other side of the river. Those having landed, were hardy enough to advance against the works of Genl. Morgan; & what is strange & difficult to account for, at the very moment when their entire discomfiture was looked for with a confidence approaching to certainty, the Kentucky troops reinforcement in whom so much reliance had been placed, ingloriously fled,— drawing after them, by their example, the remainder of the forces; & thus, yeilding to the enemy, that most fortunate position. The batteries which had rendered me, for many days, the most important service—tho bravely defended, were of course, now surrendered abandoned; not however until the guns had been spiked.

This unfortunate route had totally changed the aspect of affairs. The Enemy now occupied a position from which they might annoy us without hazard, & by means of which they might have been enabled to defeat, in a great measure, the effects of our success on this side the river. It became therefore an object of the first consequence to dislodge him as soon as possible. For this object all the means in my power, which I could with any safety use, were immediately put in preparation. Perhaps however it was owing somewhat to another cause that I succeeded even beyond my expectations. In negotiating the terms of a temporary suspension of hostilities to enable the enemy to bury their dead & provide for their wounded,<sup>5</sup> I had required certain propositions to be acceded to, as a basis;

among which this was one—that altho, hostilities should cease on this side the river until 12 Oclk of this day yet it was not to be understood that they should cease on the other side; but that no reinforcements should be sent across by either army until the expiration of that hour. His Excellency Maj Genl. Lambert begged time to consider of those propositions until 10 Oclk of to day; & in the meantime recrossed his troops. I need not tell you with how much eagerness I immediately regained possession of the position he had thus hastily quitted.

The enemy having concertered his forces may again attempt to drive me from my position by storm; whenever he does, I have no doubt my men will act with their usual firmness, & sustain a character now become dear to them. I have the honor to be with great respect Yr. Obt. st

Andrew Jackson  
Major Genl comdg

LS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of the War, Registered Series, J-214 (8) (M221, Roll No. 63).

1. Two thousand Kentucky militia commanded by Major General John Thomas reinforced Jackson on 4 January 1815. Although a welcome addition to Jackson's army, the Kentuckians were poorly clothed and armed. Less than 600 carried muskets.

2. Morgan had been in charge of troops on the east bank of the Mississippi below British lines. When his position became untenable, Jackson ordered Morgan to the west bank of the river to establish a battery opposite the British lines. See Jackson to Morgan, 26 December 1814, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No 62). On Patterson's establishment of a battery, see Patterson to Jones, 2 January 1815, above.

3. British casualties totaled 291 killed, 1,262 wounded, and 482 missing. See Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 315–17.

4. For American defense of the right bank of the Mississippi River, see below pp. 1011–22.

5. Jackson's exchange of correspondence with Lambert on the recovery of wounded and the burial of the dead British soldiers is reproduced in Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, pp. 133–34.

MAJOR GENERAL JOHN LAMBERT, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR AND THE COLONIES EARL BATHURST

Camp in front of the Enemy's lines  
below New Orleans 10th Jany. 1815

My Lord

It becomes my duty, to lay before your Lordship, the proceedings of the force lately employed on the Coast of Louisiana, under the Command of M Gen: the Hon: Sir E. M Pakenham K B and acting in concert with Vice Admiral the Hon: Sir A Cochrane K B.—

The Report which I enclose from M Gen Keane,<sup>1</sup> will put your Lordship in possession of the occurrences which took place until the arrival of M Gen: the Hon: Sir E. Pakenham to assume the Command; from that period, I send an Extract from the Journal of Major Forrest,<sup>2</sup> A Q M Gen: up to the time of the joining of the Troops (which sail'd on the 26th. of Octr. last under my Command) and which was on the 6th. of Jany. and from that period, I shall detail, as well as I am able, the subsequent Events.—



*Sir John Lambert*

I found the Army in position in a flat Country, with the Mississippi on its Left, and a thick extensive wood on its right, and open to its front, from which the Enemy's Line was quite distinguishable.—

It seems Sir E. Pakenham had waited for the Arrival of the Fusiliers, and 43d. Regiments, in order to make a general Attack upon the Enemy's Line,<sup>3</sup> and on the 8th., the Army was formed for that Object.—

In Order to give your Lordship as clear a View as I can, I shall state the position of the Enemy. On the left bank of the river, it was simply a straight Line, of about a front of 1000 yards, with a parapet; the right resting on the River and the left on a Wood, which had been made impracticable for any body of Troops to pass— This line was strengthened by flank works, and had a Canal of about 4 feet deep generally, but not altogether of an equal width— It was supposed to narrow towards their left— About 8 heavy Guns were in position on this Line— The Mississippi is here about 800 yards across, and they had on the right bank an heavy Battery of 12 Guns which Enfiladed the whole front of the position on the left bank.—<sup>4</sup>

Preparations were made on our side by very considerable labor, to clear out and widen a Canal that communicated with a stream by which the Boats had passed up to the place of disembarkation to open it into the Mississippi; by which means, Troops could be got over to the right Bank, and the cooperation of armed Boats could be secured.

The Disposition for the Attack was as follows—A Corps consisting of the 85th. Light Infantry, 200 Seamen, and 400 Marines, the 5[*th*]: West India Regt., and 4 pieces of Artillery under the Command of Colonel Thornton of the 85th. was to pass over during the night, and move along the right bank towards New Orleans, clearing its front until it reached the flanking Battery of the Enemy on that side, which it had orders to carry.

The Assailing of the Enemy's Line in front of us, was to be made by the Brigade composed of the 4th. 21st. and 44th. Regts. with 3 Companies of the 9th. under M Gen: Gibbs, and by the 3rd. Brigade consisting of the 93rd. two Companies of the 95th. and two companies of the Fusiliers, and 43d., under M Gen: Keane— Some black Troops were destin'd to skirmish in the Woods on the right— The principal Attack was to be made by M General Gibbs. The 1st. Brigade consisting of the Fusiliers and 43rd. formed the reserve. The Attacking Columns were to be provided with fascines, scaling ladders and rafts, the whole to be at their stations before daylight— An Advanced battery in our front of 6: 18 pounders was thrown up during the Night about 800 Yards from the Enemy's Line— The Attack was to be made at the earliest Hour— Unlooked for difficulties, increased by the falling of the River, occasioned considerable delay in the Entrance of the Armed boats and those destin'd to land Colonel Thornton's Corps, by which four or five hours were lost, and it was not until past 5 in the Morning that the 1st. Division consisting of 500 men were over— The Ensemble of the General movement was lost, and in a point, which was of the last importance to the Attack on the left bank of the River, though Colonel Thornton, as your Lordship will see in his report<sup>5</sup> which I enclose, ably executed in every particular his Instructions and fully justified the Confidence the Commander of the Forces placed in his abilities— The Delay attending that Corps occasioned some on the left Bank, and the Attack did not take place until the Columns were discernible from the Enemy's Line at

more than 200 yards distance. As they advanced a continued and most galling fire was opened from every part of their line and from the Battery on the right bank The brave Commander of the forces, who never in his Life could refrain from being at the post of Honor and sharing the Danger to which the Troops were exposed, as soon as from his Station he had made the Signal for the Troops to advance, galloped on to the front to animate them by his presence, and he was seen with his hat off encouraging them on to the Crest of the Glacis— It was there (almost at the same time) he received two Wounds, one in his Knee, and another which was almost instantly fatal in his Body— He fell in the Arms of Maj: McDougall A D C.— The Effect of this, in the sight of the Troops, together with M Gen: Gibbs and M Gen: Keane being both borne off wounded at the same time, with many other Commanding Officers, and further, the preparations to aid in crossing the ditch, not being so forward as they ought to have been from, perhaps, the Men being wounded who were carrying them, caused a wavering in the Column, which, in such a situation, became irreparable, and as I advanced with the reserve, at about 250 yards from the Line, I had the mortification to observe the whole falling back upon me in the greatest Confusion.—

In this situation, finding that no impression had been made, that though many Men had reached the Ditch and were either drowned or obliged to surrender, and that it was impossible to restore order in the Regiments where they were, I placed the reserve in position until I could obtain such information as to determine me how to act to the best of my Judgment, and whether or not I should resume the Attack and if so, I felt it could be done only by the reserve. The Confidence I have in the Corps composing it would have encouraged me greatly, though not without loss which might make the Attempt of serious consequence, as I knew it was the opinion of the late distinguished Commander of the Forces, that the carrying of the first line, would not be the least arduous service, and for that purpose, he had rather kept back the Regiments in the first instance Who from their Strength (and whose discipline he was well acquainted with) he could place the greatest confidence in— After making the best reflexions I was capable of, I kept the Ground the Troops then held, and went to meet Vice Admiral Sir Alexr. Cochrane, and to tell him, that under all the Circumstances, I did not think it prudent to renew the attack that day— At about 10 oClock I learnt of the success of Colonel Thornton's Corps on the right bank— I sent the Commanding Officer of the Artillery, Colonel Dickson, to examine the situation of the Battery and to report if it was tenable, but informing me that he did not think it could be held with security by a smaller Corps than 2000 men, I consequently ordered Lieut Coll. Gubbins,<sup>6</sup> on whom the Command had devolved (Col. Thornton being wounded) to retire.—

The Army remained in position until night, in order to gain time to destroy the 18 pounder Battery we had constructed the preceding night in advance. I then gave Orders for the Troops resuming the ground they occupied previous to the Attack.

Our loss has been very severe but I trust it will not be considered, not withstanding the failure, that this Army has suffered the Military Character to be tarnished— I am satisfied, had I thought it right to renew the Attack, that the Troops would have advanced with cheerfulness.— The Services of both Army and Navy since their landing on this Coast have been arduous beyond any thing

I have ever witnessed, and difficulties have been got over with an assiduity and perseverance beyond all example by all ranks and the most hearty cooperation has existed between the two services.

It is not necessary for me to expatiate to you upon the Loss the Army has sustained in M Gen: the Hon: Sir E. Pakenham Commr. in Chief of this force, nor could I in adequate terms— His Services and merits are so well known, that I have only, in Common with the whole Army, to express my sincere regret, and which may be supposed at this moment to come peculiarly home to me.

M Genl. Gibbs, who died of his Wounds the following day, and M Gen: Keane who were both carried off the field within 20 yards of the Glacis at the head of their Brigades, sufficiently speak at such a moment how they were conducting themselves.— I am happy to say M Gen: Keane is doing well.—

Captain Wyly of the Fusiliers, military Secretary to the late Commr. of the Forces, will have the Honor of delivering to your Lordship these Dispatches— Knowing how much he enjoyed his Esteem, and was in his Confidence from a long experience of his Talents, I feel I cannot do less than pay this tribute to what I conceive would be the wishes of his late General and to recommend him strongly to your Lordships Protection I have the Honor to be Your Lordships most faithful & obedt. humble Servt.

John Lambert  
M: General Commanding:

LS, UK-KeNA, W.O. 1/141, fols. 137–46.

1. See Keane to Pakenham, 26 December 1814, pp. 979–82.
2. See UK-KeNA, W.O. 1/141, fols. 167–69. The extract covers the events for 26–31 December. A printed version of this extract appears in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 310–12. For the full published version, see Forrest, *Battle of New Orleans*.
3. These were the troops that accompanied Lambert to the Gulf.
4. Patterson's marine battery.
5. See Thornton to Pakenham, 8 January 1815, pp. 1020–22.
6. Gubbins was later court-martialed for failing to bring up ladders and fascines in a timely way.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

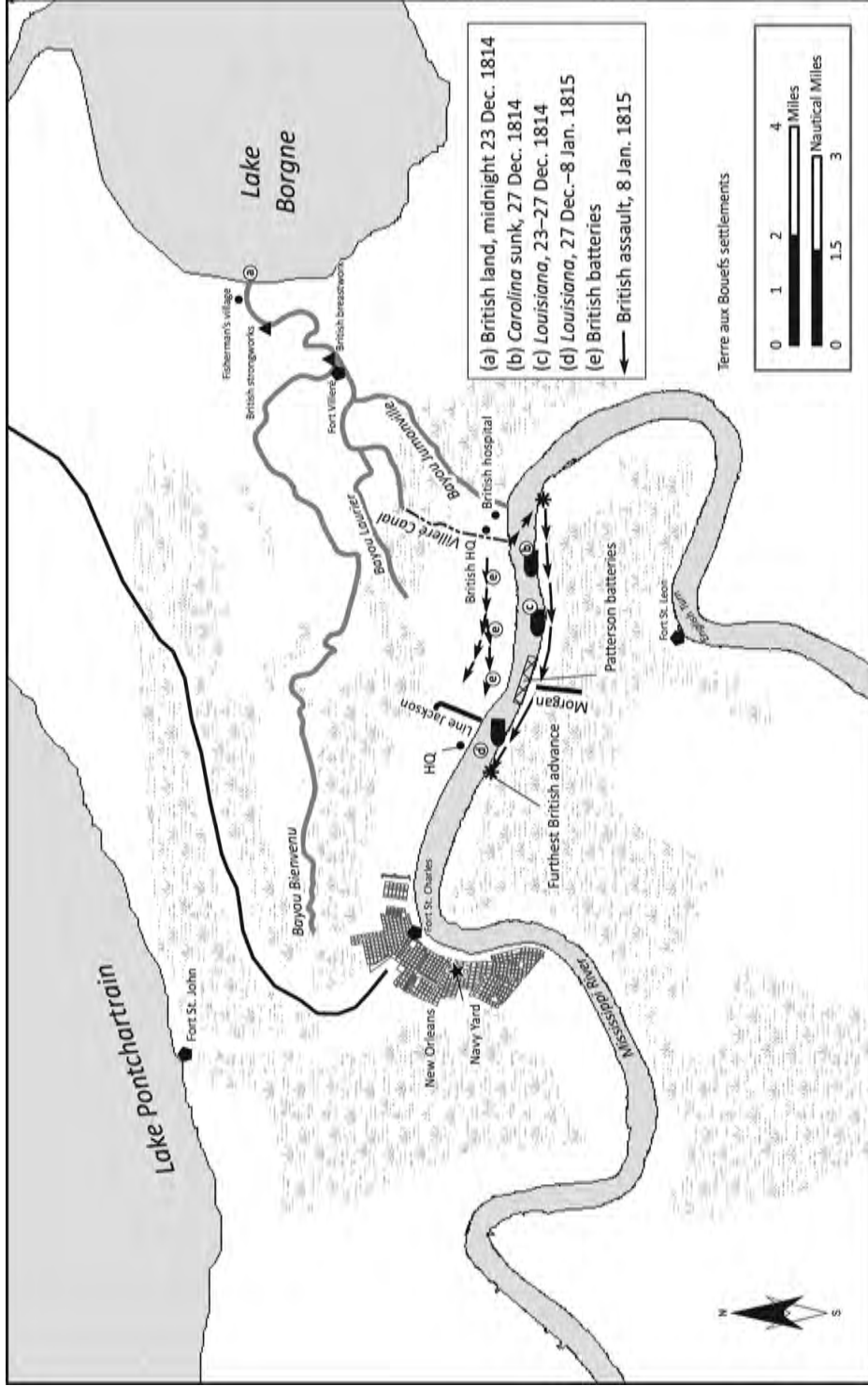
No. 2

*Armide*, off Isle au Chat,  
the 18th. January 1815—

Sir

An unsuccessful attempt to gain possession of the Enemy's Lines near New Orleans on the 8th. instant, having left me to deplore the fall of Major General the Honble. Sir Edward Pakenham and Major General Gibbs and deprived the Service of the present assistance of Major General Keane who is severely wounded; I send the *Plantagenet* to England to convey a Despatch from Major General Lambert, upon whom the command of the Army has devolved, and to inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty of the operations of the combined Force since my arrival upon this Coast.





Map 18. Battle for New Orleans, 23 December 1814–8 January 1815

The accompanying Letters Nos. 163 and 169 of the 7th and 16th ultimo will acquaint their Lordships of the Proceedings of the Squadron to the 15th December.<sup>1</sup>

The great distance from the anchorage of the Frigates and Troop Ships to the Bayou Catalan, which, from the best information we could gain, appeared to offer the most secure and was indeed the only unprotected spot whereat to effect a disembarkation; and our means even with the addition of the captured Enemy's Gun Vessels only affording us transport for half the Army, exclusive of the Supplies that were required, it became necessary, in order to have support for the division that would first land, to assemble the whole at some intermediate position, from whence the second Division could be re-embarked in Vessels brought light into the Lake as near the Bayou as might be practicable, and remain there until the Boats could land the first Division, and return.

Upon the 16th therefore the advance commanded by Coll. Thornton of the 85th. Regiment was put into the Gun Vessels and Boats, and Captain Gordon of the *Seahorse* proceeded with them and took post upon Ile aux Pois, a small swampy spot at the mouth of the Pearl River, about thirty miles from the anchorage and nearly the same distance from the Bayou; where major General Keane, Rear Admiral Codrington and myself joined them on the following day; meeting the Gun Vessels and Boats returning to the shipping for Troops and supplies of Stores and Provisions.

The Honble. Captain Spencer of the *Carron*, and Lieutenant Peddy of the Quarter Master General's Department who were sent to reconnoitre the Bay Catalan, now returned with a favorable report of its position for disembarking the Army; having, with their Guide, pulled up in a Canoe to the head of Bayou, a distance of eight miles, and landed within a mile and a half of the high road to, and about six miles below New Orleans, where they crossed thereon without meeting any interruption or perceiving the least preparation on the part of the Enemy.

The severe Changes of the Weather, from Rain to fresh Gales and hard Frost, retarding the Boats in their repeated passages to and from the Shipping, it was not until the 21st. that (leaving on board the greater part of the two black Regiments and the Dragoons) we could assemble Troops and Supplies sufficient to admit of our proceeding; and on that day we commenced the embarkation of the second Division in the Gun Vessels, such of the hired Craft as could be brought into the Lake, and the *Anaconda*; which, by the greatest exertions had been got over the shoal Passages.

On the 22nd. these Vessels being filled with about two thousand four hundred men, the advance, consisting of about sixteen hundred, got into the Boats, and at eleven o'clock the whole started with a fair wind to cross Lac Borgne. We had not however proceeded above two miles when the *Anaconda* grounded, and the hired Craft and Gun Vessels taking the ground in succession before they had got within ten miles of the Bayou, the advance pushed on, and at about midnight reached the entrance.

A Picquet which the Enemy had taken the precaution to place there being surprized and cut off, Major General Keane with Rear Admiral Malcolm and the Advance moved up the Bayou and having effected a landing at day break, in the course of the day was enabled to take up a position across the main Road to New Orleans, between the River Mississipi and the Bayou.

In this situation, about an hour after sunset, and before the boats could return with the second Division, an Enemy Schooner of fourteen guns, and an armed Ship of sixteen guns having dropped down the Mississippi, the former commenced a brisk cannonading, which was followed up by an attack of the whole of the American Army: their Troops were however beaten back and obliged to retreat with considerable loss, and Major General Keane advanced somewhat beyond his former position.<sup>2</sup>

As soon as the second Division was brought up, the Gun Vessels and Boats returned for the remainder of the Troops, the small armed Seamen and Marines of the Squadron, and such Supplies as were required.

On the 25th. Major General Sir Edward Pakenham, and Major General Gibbs arrived at Head Quarters, when the former took command of the Army.

The Schooner which had continued at intervals to annoy the Troops, having been burnt on the 27th by hotshot from our Artillery,<sup>3</sup> and the Ship having warped farther up the River, the following day the General moved forward to within gunshot of an Entrenchment which the Enemy had nearly thrown up, extending across the cultivated Ground from the Mississippi to an impassable swampy Wood on his left, a distance of about one thousand yards.

It being thought necessary to bring heavy Artillery against this Work, and also against the Ship which had cannonaded the Army when advancing, Guns were brought up from the Shipping, and on the 1st inst. Batteries were opened; but our fire not having the desired effect, the attack was deferred until the arrival of the Troops under Major General Lambert which were daily expected.<sup>4</sup>

Major General Lambert, in the *Vengeur*, with a Convoy of Transports having on board the 7th. and 43rd. Regiments reached the outer anchorage on the 1st. and this reinforcement was all brought up to the advance on the 6th. inst., while preparations were making for a second attack,— in the proposed plan for which it was decided to throw a body of Men across the River, to gain possession of the Enemy's Guns on the right Bank. For this purpose, the Canal by which we were enabled to conduct Provisions and Stores towards the Camp, was widened and extended to the River; and about fifty Barges, Pinnaces and Cutters having in the day time of the 7th. been tracked under cover and unperceived close up to the Bank, at night the whole were dragged into the Mississippi, and placed under the command of Captain Roberts of the *Meteor*.

The Boats having grounded in the Canal, a distance of three hundred and fifty yards from the River, and the bank being composed of wet Clay thrown out of the canal, it was not until nearly daylight that with the utmost possible exertion this Service was completed.

The 85th. Regiment with a Division of Seamen under Captain Money, and a Division of Marines under Major Adair, the whole amounting to about six hundred men, commanded by Colonel Thornton of the 85th. Regiment, were embarked and landed on the right bank of the River without opposition, just after daylight; and the armed Boats moving up the River as the Troops advanced, this part of the operations succeeded perfectly; the Enemy having been driven from every position, leaving behind him seventeen pieces of Cannon.<sup>5</sup>

The great loss however sustained by the principle attack having induced General Lambert to send Orders to be Colonel Thornton to retire; after spiking the Guns and destroying the Carriages the whole were re-embarked and brought

back; and the boats by a similar process of hard labour were again dragged into the Canal, and from thence to the Bayou; conveying at the same time such of the wounded as it was thought requisite to send off to the Ships.

Major General Lambert having determined to withdraw the Army, measures were taken to re-embark the whole of the sick and wounded that it was possible to move, and the Stores, Ammunition, Ordnance &c, with such Detachments of the Army Seamen and Marines as were not immediately wanted; in order that the remainder of the Army may retire unincumbered, and the last Division be furnished with sufficient means of transport.

This arrangement being in a forward state of execution, I quitted Head Quarters on the 14th inst., leaving Rear Admiral Malcolm to conduct the naval part of the operations in that quarter, and I arrived at this anchorage on the 16th, where I am arranging for the reception of the Army and preparing the Fleet for further operations.

I must in common with the Nation lament the loss which the Service has sustained by the death of Major General the Honble. Sir Edward Pakenham and Major General Gibbs. Their great military qualities were justly estimated while living, and their zealous devotion to our Country's welfare will be cherished as an example to future Generations.

In justice to the Officers and Men of the Squadron under my command, who have been employed upon this Expedition, I cannot omit to call the attention of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to the laborious exertions and great privations which have been willingly and cheerfully borne, by every Class, for a period of nearly six weeks.

From the 12th December, when the boats proceeded to the attack of the Enemy's Gun Vessels,<sup>6</sup> to the present time, but very few of the Officers or Men have ever slept one night on board their Ships.

The whole of the Army, with the principal part of its Provisions, its Stores, Artillery, Ammunition, and the numerous necessary appendages have been all transported from the Shipping to the head of the Bayou, a distance of seventy miles, chiefly in open boats; and are now re-embarking by the same process. The hardships therefore which the Boat's Crews have undergone from their being kept day and night continually passing and repassing in the most changeable and severe weather, have rarely been equalled; and it has been highly honorable to both Services and most gratifying to myself, to observe the emulation and unanimity which has pervaded the whole.

Rear Admiral Malcolm superintended the disembarkation of the Army, and the various services perform'd by the Boats; and it is a duty that I fulfill with pleasure assuring their Lordships that his Zeal and Exertions upon every occasion could not be surpassed by any one. I beg leave also to offer my testimony to the unwearied and cheerful assistance afforded to the Rear Admiral by Captains Sir Thos. M Hardy, Dashwood and Gordon, and the several Captains and other Officers named in his Letter, of which I herewith transmit a copy,<sup>7</sup> expressing his high sense of their Conduct.

Rear Admiral Codrington accompanied me throughout this Service; and I feel much indebted for his able advice and assistance.

Captain Sir Thomas Troubridge and the Officers and Seamen attached, under his command, to the Army, have conducted themselves much to the satisfaction

of the Generals commanding. Sir Thos. Troubridge speaks in the highest terms of the Captains and other Officers employed under him, as named in his Letter (of which a copy is enclosed)<sup>8</sup> reporting their Services. He particularly mentions Captain Money of the *Trave*, who I am much concerned to say had both bones of his Leg Broken by a musket shot, advancing under a heavy fire to the attack of a Battery that was afterwards carried. The conduct of Captain Money at Washington and near Baltimore, where he was employed with the Army, having before occasioned my noticing him to their Lordships,<sup>9</sup> I beg leave now to recommend him most strongly to their protection. The wound that he has received not affording any probability of his being able to return to his duty for a considerable time, I have given him leave of Absence to go to England; and shall entrust to him my Despatches.

I have not yet received any official report from the Captain of the *Nymphe*, which Ship with the Vessels named in the margin<sup>10</sup> were sent into the Mississippi to create a diversion in that quarter. The Bombs have been for some days past throwing Shells into Fort Plaquemain,<sup>11</sup> but I fear without much effect. I have sent to recall such of them as are not required for the blockade of the River. I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane  
Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 376–83.

1. See Cochrane to Croker, 7 December 1814, pp. 927–28; and Cochrane to Croker, 16 December 1814, pp. 941–42.

2. The American vessels referenced are the schooner *Carolina* and block ship *Louisiana*. For documentation on the American night attack of 23 December, see pp. 979–85.

3. On the destruction of *Carolina*, see pp. 986–90.

4. On the artillery duel of 1 January 1815, see pp. 996–99.

5. On the British attack on the right bank of the Mississippi River, see pp. 1011–22.

6. For British attack on the American gunboats in Lake Borgne, see pp. 935–56.

7. Malcolm to Cochrane, 14 January 1815. The copy enclosed with this letter was not found. For the original, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2336, fols. 44–45.

8. See Troubridge to Cochrane, 12 January 1815, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 384–85.

9. See Cochrane to Croker, 17 September 1814, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 3, pp. 286–88.

10. *Nymphe*, *Herald*, *Ætna*, *Meteor*, *Thistle*, and *Pigmy*.

11. Cochrane means Fort St. Philip. For documentation on this event, see pp. 1034–36.

## The British Attack on the Right Bank

*On his first reconnoiter of the American defenses, Sir Edward Pakenham readily grasped that his best option for defeating Jackson's forces lay in occupying the river bank opposite his opponent's main fortified line along the Rodriguez Canal. From that position, British cannoners could then deliver a destructive enfilading fire, while redcoats stormed and breached the enemy's main works.<sup>1</sup> But without boats to effect a cross-river occupation of the Mississippi's right bank, such a plan of attack was unfeasible. Thus, Pakenham pursued other alternatives to dislodge his American foe. The failure of successive operations to crack Jackson's lines on 28 December and 1 January determined Pakenham to revisit the idea of a cross-river landing.<sup>2</sup> To help execute this element in a revised plan of attack, the British commander turned to his naval counterpart, Sir Alexander Cochrane.<sup>3</sup>*

*Cochrane's scheme called for bringing some 50 shallow-draft boats from the fleet to the expedition's landing area near the mouth of Bayou Bienvenue. These craft were then to be transported to the Mississippi via the bayou and a system of connected waterways terminating behind the British lines. The last portion of this watery trek, Villeré's Canal, had to be widened and deepened to accommodate the Royal Navy's boats, as well as extended to join the Mississippi. The hard work of gathering the boats and digging out Villeré's Canal commenced on 4 January 1815 and was completed three days later.*

*Pakenham appointed Colonel William Thornton to lead the British strike across the Mississippi. In the words of one officer, Thornton was in "every way calculated for the duty," being as "cool as he was brave, and adored by his men."<sup>4</sup> Thornton's orders directed him to seize the recently established American batteries on the right bank; train them on Jackson's main line; then launch a rocket signaling Pakenham to commence the general attack on Rodriguez Canal. The documents below detail the outcome of Thornton's bold cross-river attack, and the unexpected reversal of fortunes that followed its initial success.*

1. Pakenham conducted this reconnaissance on 28 December. See Smith, *Autobiography*, p. 228–31; Dickson, "Journal," p. 21; and Wrottesley, *Sir John Burgoyne*, Vol. 1, p. 305.

2. For documents on the actions of 28 December and 1 January, see pp. 991–96 and 996–99.

3. On Cochrane's role in planning the cross-river attack, see Edward Codrington to Jane Codrington, 18 January 1815, p. 1024, and, Wrottesley, *Sir John Burgoyne*, Vol. 1, p. 305.

4. Hill, *Recollections of an Artillery Officer*, Vol. 2, p. 10. Another officer at New Orleans offered similar praise of Thornton, describing him as "a dashing and enterprising officer; one as well calculated to lead a corps of light troops, and to guide the advance of an army, as any in the service." Gleig, *Campaigns of the British Army*, p. 204. Thornton accompanied Major General Robert Ross's expeditionary force to the Chesapeake in the spring of 1814. Wounded at the Battle of Bladensburg, Maryland, on 28 August, he served for a short time as an American prisoner of war before being exchanged and returned to the British army. At the time of his death by suicide in 1840, Thornton had risen to the rank of lieutenant general. For a brief biography of Thornton, see *Gentleman's Magazine*, new series, 13 (June 1840), pp. 648–49. For contemporary reportage of Thornton's suicide, see the *Morning Post* (London) 2 April 1840; the *Morning Chronicle*, (London), 2 April 1840; and the *Champion and Weekly Herald* (London), 5 April 1840.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Jan'y. 7th. 1814 [1815]

Sir

I have this moment returned from reconnoitring the Enemy. they have dug out Villeres Canal to the River. & from the number of Men Soldiers & Seamen, I apprehend they will get their Boats into the River to-night, they have a large Body of Men encamped contiguous to the Canal all of whom I saw under Arms. they have also taken Cannon from their Batteries ericted near the woods, & deposited them either in Boats or on the Banks of the Canal I distinctly saw them transporting one peice which from the number of Horses employed (eight). I presume must be heavy. should they cross to-night, & only the Force at present on this side to oppose them, they must succeed. I would therefore beg leave most earnestly to recommend an encrease of our present Force. & that such reinforcement be of Better Materials than the present, who tho individually Brave. cannot be depended upon, I have drawn all the Men on shore from the Ship. except those indispensably necessary to take care of her, the Officer who will hand you this

accompanied me on reconnoitre. I have informed Genl. Morgan of my observations, Very Respectfully I have the honor to be Your Obt. Sevt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

ALS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 15). For a copy of this document, see Patterson to Secretary of the Navy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 11, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 6).

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Head Quarters 7t. M District  
Jany. 7t. 1815

Sir,

Your letter of this day is at hand, In answer to that part relative to manning Vessells from my lines, I regret to say, that the situation of my Camp, and the probable attempts of the enemy, will not justify me in parting with any men particularly artillerists, for the want of an adequate complement of which, I suffered considerable inconvenience in the attack of the day,

Let the Vessels at all events be equiped and drop down a little below Genl. Morgan's station on the opposite side, and anchor in the middle of the River. This will at least have an imposing effect upon the enemy and facilitate our operations by land, and they shall be protected by strong piquets placed in the rear of my Camp.

Andrew Jackson  
Majr. Genl. Comdg—

LB, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 62). Formatting for the date follows that of the preceding letter on the same page.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

[*New Orleans, 7 January 1815*]<sup>1</sup>

Sir

I have receiv'd your message by Mr. Nevill to drop the *Louisiana* down, I must unman all the Guns on the Battery on this side, she is moreover the only Magazine for this Battery & has on Board a very large quantity of Powder, which would be greatly endangered, by an exposure to the hot shot of the Enemy—the Field Pieces from the Navy Yard will require some time to move down, at the Magazine on this side the River there are two Brass 6. prs. Field pieces, with ammuniton &c. complete which could be brought down & placed at pleasure

by Midnight, if you will send an order for them, I will send an Officer to bring them,— Colo. Ross can give you every information respecting them, a portable 12 pd. would be of infinite service over here as with that Calibre I could fire directly into the Canal, & prevent their working during the day, be assured that no exertion on my part shall be wanting, to defeat the attempts of the Enemy— but we are extremely weak on this side, require a strong reinforcement; with this I send for your perusal a letter from Lt. Cunningham at Plaquemine,;<sup>2</sup> I consider the firing of the Enemy this evening, as a feint to draw your attention from their operations below. which I apprehend they will carry into execution to-night; but I hope & trust they will meet defeat, come when they may—my Guns shall roar long & loud depend upon it. Very Respectfully Yr. Obt. Svt.

Dan<sup>l</sup>. T. Patterson

ALS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 15). For a copy of this document, see Patterson to Secretary of the Navy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 11, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 6).

1. This letter is dated "Jan 7th." in pencil at the top of the page.

2. Lieutenant Thomas S. Cunningham commanded gunboat *No. 65*. The letter Patterson references was not found. On 29 December, Cunningham forwarded intelligence on British vessels at the Balize to Patterson, who passed it on to Jackson. See Cunningham to Patterson, 29 December 1814, DLC, Papers of Andrew Jackson (Roll No. 15).

MAJOR LOUIS V. FOELCKEL, LOUISIANA STATE MILITIA, TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Camp 3 miles below New Orleans on  
the west side of the river  
Jan. 8th. 1815

Sir

It is an unpleasant task which has devolved upon me to communicate to you the following detail of occurrences at Camp Morgan on the opposite side of the river this morning

About 5 o'clock A.M. we recd. information, from our troopers employed in observing the motion of the enemy, that an English force was landing at the distance of a mile & a half below our Battery. Col. [*blank*] of the Kentucky militia<sup>1</sup> was immediately detached to that point for the purpose of disputing their landing, with orders, if the enemy proved too strong, to retire up the Leveè without confusion or disorder and to keep up a constant fire until they should regain our own works— In the mean time by order of Genl. Morgan the following disposition was made of the troops that remained at the Breast-works— Col. DeClouet's Regt. of drafted militia amt'g. to 256 men was placed on the extreme right Col. Deshon's consisting of 130 men on the extreme left & Col. Cavallier's mustering 254 in the centre— After the detachment of Kentucky militia had regained our works they were stationed on Col. DeClouet's right (mustering about 400) in consequence of a manoevre of the enemy intimating an intention to turn that



part of our line. In the space of a few minutes after the return of the Kentuckians, the enemy presented another column advancing upon our left— Without delay we commenced a fire from the three pieces of artillery which I had erected a few hours before the British troops had effected their landing— When the last mentioned column had marched up within 60 yds. of the left of our line where our artillery [*was*] they fell back & inclined to the right— The troops composing that part of our line began immediately to recede & it was not within the power of the officers to rally the men who after firing not two rounds retired without charging their pieces in the greatest possible disorder & with the utmost precipitation, leaving the left no other alternative (the enemy having with little or no opposition scaled our breast work on or right) but that of spiking our guns & of retiring likewise—

The force of the enemy did not exceed four hundred men—

In corroboration of my statement respecting the dismay with which the right were inspired I have only to add that their flight was so opposite to order & regularity that but four hundred remains of one thousand & upwards to be accounted for & our loss in killed and wound[*ed*] could not have exceeded fifty

I take the liberty Genl. of suggesting to you what has most probably presented itself already—the necessity of ousting the enemy from Camp Morgan for if suffered to remain in their possession cannot fail to annoy Camp Jackson— With much respect I have the honour to be Your Obt. Hmble. Servt.

L. V. Foelckel  
acting Brig Major

ALS, DLC, Papers of Andrew Jackson (Roll No. 71).

1. Probably Lieutenant Colonel John Davis, who commanded the detachment of Kentucky militia sent to reinforce the west bank of the Mississippi. Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 238, note 1.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

Marine Battery Five Miles below  
Neworleans 13. January 1815

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that, during the 2nd & 3rd inst, I landed from the Ship<sup>1</sup> and mounted as the former ones, on the Banks of the River four more 12 prs. and erected a furnace for heating shot, to destroy a number of buildings, which intervened between Genl. Jackson's, lines and the Camp of the Enemy, and occupied by him; on the evening of the 4th I succeeded in firing a number of them, and some Rice Stacks, by my hot shot, which the Enemy attempted to extinguish notwithstanding, the heavy fire I kept up, but which at length compelled him to desist; on the 6th: & 7th: I erected another furnace, and mounted on the Banks of the River two more 24 pounders, which had been brought up from the English Turn, by the exertions of Colo. Caldwell, of the drafted militia



*Daniel Todd Patterson*

of this state, and brought within and mounted on the entrenchments, on this side the River, one 12 pr. in addition to which Genl. Morgan, commanding the Militia on this side planted two Brass 6 pd. field pieces in his lines which were incomplete having been commenced only on the 4th, these three pieces were the only cannon on the lines all the others being mounted on the Bank of the River, with a view to aid the right of Genl. Jackson's lines on the opposite shore, and to flank the Enemy should they attempt to march up the road leading along on the Levee, or erect Batteries on the same; of course could render no aid in defence of Genl. Morgans lines; my Battery was manned in part from the crew of the Ship and in part by Militia, detailed for that service by Genl. Morgan, as I had not seamen enough to fully man them

During greater part of the 7th: reconitered the Enemy at Villeries Plantation whose Canal I was informed they were deepening and opening to the River for the purpose of getting their Launches in, which upon examination with my Glass I found to be true and informed Genl. Jackson of my observations, by letters, copies of which I enclose herewith;<sup>2</sup> a reinforcement to Genl. Morgans, militia was made in consequence; consisting of about 400 Militia from Kentucky very badly armed or equipped, the Genl. not having Arms to furnish them; who arrived on this side on the morning of the 8.th: much fatigued at 1. a.m.; finding that the Enemy had succeeded in Launching their Barges into the River, I dispatched my Aid de Camp Mr. R. D. Shepperd to inform Genl. Jackson of the circumstance and that a very uncommon stir was observed in the Enemy's Camp, and Batteries on the Banks of the River, and stating again the extreme weakness of this side, the River, and urging a reinforcement; I would have immediately dropped down with the *Louisiana* upon their Barges, but to do so I must have, withdrawn all the men from the Battery on shore, which I deemed of the greatest importance, and exposed to fire by hot [*shot*] from Enemy's Batteries, mounting 6 long 18prs which protected thier Barges, and at this time she had on Board a large quantity of Powder, for the supply of her own Guns, and those on shore most of which was above the surface of the water consequently exposed to their hot shot.—

General Morgan dispatched the Kentuckians immediately on their arrival, about 5. A.M. to reinforce a party which had been sent out early on the night of the 7th: to watch and oppose the landing of the Enemy but who retreated after a few shot from the Enemy within the lines where they were immediately posted in their station on the extreme right; at day light the Enemy opened a heavy cannonade upon Genl. Jacksons lines and my Battery leading their Troops under cover of their cannon to the Assault of the lines which they attempted on the right and left, but principally on the latter wing, they were met by a most tremendous and incessant fire of artillery and musketry; which compelled them to retreat with precipitation, leaving the Ditch filled and the field strewed with their dead and wounded; my Battery was opened upon them simultaneously with those from our lines flanking the Enemy both in his advance and retreat; with round, grape, and canister which must have proved extremely destructive as in their haste and confusion to retreat they crowded the top of the Levee, affording us a most advantageous opportunity for the use of Grape and canister, and I used to the greatest advantage; while thus engaged with the Enemy on the opposite shore, I was informed that they had effected their landing on this side, and were advancing to Genl. Morgans breast work, I immediately ordered the Officers in command

of my Guns to turn them in their embrasures, and point them to protect Genl. Morgans right wing whose lines not extending to the swamp, and those weakly manned, I apprehended the Enemy's outflanking him on that wing, which, order was promptly executed by Capt. Henley and the Officers stationed at the Battery under a heavy and well directed fire of shot and shells from the Enemy on the opposite Bank of the River, at this time the Enemy's Force had approached Genl. Morgans lines under the cover of a shower of Rockets and charged in despite of the fire from the 12 pr. and field pieces mounted on the lines as, before stated, when in a few minutes I had the extreme mortification and chagrin to observe Genl. Morgans right wing composed as herin mentioned of the Kentucky Militia commanded by Majr. Davis, abandon their breast work and flying in a most shameful and dastardly manner, almost without a shot which disgracefull example after firing a few round[s] soon followed by the whole of Genl. Morgans command notwithstanding every exertion was made by him, his staff and several Officers of the City Militia to keep them to their posts; by the great exertions of those officers a short stand was effected on the field, when a discharge of Rockets from the Enemy caused them again to retreat in such a manner that no efforts could stop them, finding myself thus abandoned by the force I relied upon to protect my Battery I was, most reluctantly and with inexpressible pain after destroying my powder and spiking my cannon compelled to abandon them, having only thirty officers & seamen with me.—

A part of the Militia were rallied at a saw mill Canal about two miles above the lines from which they had fled and there encamped.—

I ordered the *Louisiana* to be warped up for the purpose of procuring a supply of amunition and mounting other cannon, remaining myself to aid Genl. Morgan. a large reinforcement of Militia having been immediately dispatched by Genl. Jackson, to this side every arrangement was made by Genl. Morgan to dislodge the Enemy from his position, when he precipitately retreated carrying with him the two field pieces and a brass Howitz after having first set fire to the Platforms and Gun Carriages on my Battery two saw Mills and all the Bridges between him and Genl. Morgans Troops; and recrossed the River and secured his Boats by hauling them into his Canal; on the 9th: we reoccupied our former ground & recovered all the cannon in my Battery which I immediately commenced drilling & remounting and on the evening of the 10th, had two 24 pounders mounted and ready for service, on the left flank of a new and more advantageous position; from the 10th to the present date I have been much engaged, in mounting my 12 prs. along the breast work erected by Genl. Morgan on this new position, having three 24 pounders (with a furnace) to front the River and flank Genl. Jacksons lines on the opposite Bank from which we fired upon the Enemy whenever [*he*] appear[*ed*]; our present position is now so strong that there is nothing to apprehend should the Enemy make another attempt on this side.—

To Captain Henley who has been with me since the destruction of his schooner,<sup>2</sup> and who, was wounded on the 8th.; I am much indebted for his aid on every occasion and to the Officers commanding the different Guns in my Battery for their great exertions at all times but particularly on the trying event of the 8.th; the exertions of Genl. Morgan his staff and several of the Officers of the City Militia excited my highest respect and I deem it my duty to say that had the

drafted and City Militia been alone on that day that I believe they would have done much better; but the flight of the Kentuckians paralyzed their exertions and produced a retreat which could not be checked; the two brass field pieces manned entirely by militia of the City were admirably served nor were they abandoned till deserted by their comrades, one of which was commanded by Mr Bosmer of Capt Simpsons company the other by a Frenchman whose name I know not, the 12 pounder under the direction of Acting Midshipman Philibert was served till the last moment, did great execution and is highly extoled by Genl. Morgan the force of the Enemy on this side amounted to 1,000, men,<sup>3</sup> and from the best authority I can obtain there loss on this side, I have since learned was 97. killed and wounded among the latter is Colo. Thornton who commanded; of the former five or six have been discovered burried and lying upon the field; our loss was one man killed and several wounded.— I have the honor to be With great consideration And Respect Your Obt. St.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 11 (M147, Roll No. 6). Bracketed text supplied from a printed version of this letter in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 243–46. Duplicate version is in DNA, RG45, AF8 (M625, Roll No. 200).

1. The originals of Patterson's two letters to Jackson, both dated 7 January 1815, are printed above.

2. On the destruction of the schooner *Carolina*, see pp. 986–90.

3. Thornton commanded between 600 and 700 men in his operations on the right bank.

EXTRACT FROM THE JOURNAL OF  
MAJOR CHARLES R. FORREST, BRITISH ARMY

[4–8 January 1815, British encampment below New Orleans]

. . . . On the 4th. a working party was employed to clear and widen the Canal Villere to render it passable for the Boats of the Fleet, under the idea of passing a Body of Troops to the Right Bank of the Mississippi and carrying the Batteries the Enemy had constructed upon our flank and which of late they have been busily at work upon— On the 5th. Accounts were received of the Arrival of the 7th. & 43d. Regts. under Major General Lambert and the following Day the greater part of these Troops landed—

On the evening of the 6th. the canal was completed, and on that of the 7th. Forty seven Boats were brought up the canal from the Bayou in readiness to be put into the Mississippi in the night, and arrangements made for a General Attack on the Enemy's line on the Morning of the 8th. Inst. The Detachment destined to cross the River and carry the Enemy's Batteries on that side, consisted of the 85th. Regt. about 300 Strong, 200 of the Royal Marines, 200 Seamen, and the greater part of the 5th. West India Regt. The whole under the Command of Colonel Thornton 85th Regt.

On the evening of the 7th. as soon as it was dark the Boats commenced to be crossed over into the River, a dam erected below the Sternmost Boat had raised the water about two feet, still there was a very considerable fall from the River;

and thro' which for an extent of 250 Yards the Boats were dragged with incredible labor by the Seamen. It required the whole night to effect this, and the Day had dawned before the first Detachment of Colonel Thornton's Corps (about 600 Men) had embarked, and they just reached the opposite Bank when the Main attack commenced on the Enemy's Line. The attack proving unsuccessful the Troops were recalled under cover of the Artillery of the Line, the Cannonade continued 'till about 9 O'clock when the firing nearly ceased on both Sides—

(Signed) C. R. Forrest Major 34 Regt.  
Ass. Qr. Mst.General

Copy, UK-KeNA, WO 1/141, fol. 87. For a published version of Forrest's journal, see Forrest, *Battle of New Orleans*. The entries for 4–8 January appear on pp. 39–40 and 42.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM THORNTON, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
MAJOR GENERAL SIR EDWARD M. PAKENHAM, BRITISH ARMY

Copy

Redoubt on the Right Bank of the  
Mississippi—Jany. 8. 1815

Sir

I lose no time in reporting to you the success of the Troops which you were yesterday pleased to place under my Orders, with the View of attacking the Enemy's Redoubt and Position on this side of the River.—

It is within your own knowledge, that the Difficulty had been found so extremely great, of dragging the Boats through the Canal which had been lately cut with so much labour to the Mississippi, that, notwithstanding every possible exertion for the Purpose, we were unable to proceed across the River until eight hours after the time appointed; and even then, with only a third part of the force which you had allotted for the service.—

The Current was so strong, and the difficulty, in consequence, of keeping the boats together, so great, that we only reached this side of the River at Daybreak; and by the time the Troops were disembarked, which was effected without any molestation from the Enemy, I perceived, by the flashes of the Guns, that your Attack had already commenced.—

This Circumstance made me extremely anxious to move forward, to prevent the destructive enfilading fire, which, would of course be opened on your Columns from the Enemy's Batteries on this side; and I proceeded with the greatest possible expedition, strengthened and secured on my Right flank by 3 Gun boats, under Captain Roberts of the Navy, whose Zeal and Exertions on this occasion, were as unremitted, as his Arrangements in embarking the Troops, and in keeping the Boats together in crossing the River, were excellent.

The Enemy made no Opposition to our Advance, until we reached a Picquet, posted behind a Bridge, at about 500 paces from the House in the Orange Grove and secured by a small Work apparently just thrown up.—

This Picquet was very soon forced and driven in by a Divn. of the 85 Regt., under Captn. Schaw of that Regt., forming the Advanced Guard, and whose Mode of Attack for the Purpose, was prompt and judicious to a Degree.—

Upon My Arrival at the Orange Grove I had an Opportunity of reconnoitring, at about 700 Yards, the Enemy's position, which, I found to be, a very formidable Redoubt on the Bank of the River, with the Right flank secured by an Intrenchment extending back to a thick Wood, and its Line protected by an incessant fire of Grape.—

Under such Circumstances, it seemed to me to afford the best prospect of success, to endeavour to turn his right at the Wood, and I accordingly detached two Divns. of the 85th. under Brevet Lieut Col. Gubbins to effect that Object, which, he accomplished with his usual Zeal and Judgment, whilst 100 Sailors, under Captain Money of the Royal Navy, who, I am sorry to say was severely wounded, but, whose Conduct was particularly distinguished on the Occasion, threatened the Enemy's Left, supported by the Division of the 85th. Regt., under Captain Schaw.—

When these Divisions had gained their proper position, I deployed the Column composed of two divisions of the 85th. Regt., under Major Deshon, whose conduct I cannot sufficiently commend, and about 100 Men of the Royal Marines, under Major Adair, also deserving of Much Commendation, and moved forward in Line, to the Attack of the Centre of the Intrenchment.—

At first, the Enemy, confident in his own security, shewed a good Countenance, and kept up a heavy fire, but the determination of the Troops which I had the Honor to command, to overcome all difficulties, compelled him to a rapid and disorderly flight, leaving in our Possession his redoubt, Batteries and Position, with 16 pieces of Ordinance, and the Colours of the New Orleans Regiment of Militia.—

Of the Ordinance taken, I enclose the specific Return<sup>1</sup> of Major Mitchell of the Royal Artillery, who accompanied and afforded me much assistance by his able direction of the firing of some Rockets, it not having been found practicable in the first instance to bring over the Artillery attached to his Command.

I shall have the Honor of sending you a Return of the Casualties that have occurred, as soon as it is possible to collect them, but I am happy to say, they are extremely inconsiderable, when the strength of the Position and the Number of the Enemy are considered, which, our Prisoners, (about 30 in number) agree in stating from 1500 to 2000 Men, commanded by General Morgan.—

I should be extremely wanting both in Justice and in Gratitude, were I not to request your particular Notice of the Officers whose Names I have mentioned, as well as of Major Blanchard of the Royal Engineers, and Lieut Peddie of the 27 Regt. D A Q M General, whose Zeal and Intelligence I found of the greatest Service.—

The Wounded Men are meeting with every degree of Attention and humanity by the Medical Arrangements of Staff Surg: Baxter.

The Enemy's Camp is supplied with a great Abundance of Provisions, and a very large Store of all sorts of Ammunition.—

On moving to the Attack, I received a wound, which, shortly after my reaching the Redoubt, occasioned me such Pain and Stiffness, that I have been obliged to give over the Command of the Troops on this side, to Lieut Coll. Gubbins

of the 85 Light Infy.; but as he has obtained some Reinforcements, since the Attack, of Sailors and Marines, and has taken the best precautions to cover and secure his Position, I will be answerable, from my Knowledge of his Judgment and Experience, that he will retain it, until your Pleasure and further Orders shall be Communicated to him.— I have the honor to be & & &

(Signed) W Thornton  
Col. & Lt. Col. 85 Regt.

Copy, UK-KeNA, W.O. 1/141, fols. 157–62. For another printed copy of this letter, see Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 318–20.

1. Mitchell's return is published in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 318.

## Reflections on Defeat

*It took nearly three weeks for British commanders to prepare and execute a withdrawal of their defeated army from the banks of the Mississippi to the safety of the fleet's anchorage outside Lake Borgne—ample time to ponder why victory had eluded them at New Orleans.<sup>1</sup> The following letters, penned by two of the expedition's most senior naval officers to their wives, suggest some of the factors that contributed to Britain's failed Louisiana campaign.*

*1. Major General John Lambert, who assumed command of British land forces upon the battlefield death of Sir Edward Pakenham, quickly determined to end further offensive operations against New Orleans's defenders. He ordered preparations made for the army's retreat, which were completed by 18 January 1815. Nine days later, the final units of the British invasion force boarded troop ships anchored with Cochrane's fleet off Cat Island. On the British retreat, see Reilly, *British at the Gates*, pp. 333–40, and, Remini, *Battle of New Orleans*, pp. 176–82.*

REAR ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD CODRINGTON,<sup>1</sup> R.N., TO  
JANE CODRINGTON

[Extract]

frigate *Cydnus* the 18th. Jany. [1815]

We left the Fishermans Huts on the 14th., reached one of the Gunvessels that evening, slept in her most stinking cabin two cold wet nights, and got on board this frigate to a comfortable dinner on the 16th. Our presence was certainly much wanted at this anchorage. However, we have got over a great deal of business, & the Adl.<sup>2</sup> talks of going to the *Tonnant* tomorrow after sleeping on board the *Armide* tonight.— It is not unnatural that I should feel a wish that I may never again see this cursed country, which must in summer be a very Hell upon earth.— It is well contrived that our battering train with the proper means of transporting guns, the want of which has cost us so much toil, & caused the destruction of our guns upon giving the matter up into the bargain in preference to undergoing a repeton of that Herculean labour, have just made their





*Sir Edward Codrington*

appearance. Were I to mention this to Hope<sup>3</sup> he would call it growling. He must therefore hear it in what appears to me a less welcome way, officially. And by the same means he must hear that the Expedition would certainly have been successful if we had had the small craft which Sir A. wrote for. He says they have them not; & orders them to be procured at Jamaica. This order & making that place the rendezvous occasioned the object we had in view being made known to Genl. Jackson; & enquiry into the conduct of Capt. Fothergill, & Bremer (A[*gen*]t. of Transports) must I think be the consequence.<sup>4</sup> Vessels of sufficiently shallow draft are not however as the Ad[*miral*]y. imagined in use there; and as Sir A says, there are plenty of Dutch schuyts & doggers in England, which by being loaded with provisions would have paid their purchase & disguised the object into the bargain.<sup>5</sup> H. will find that unless he has colleagues of a different sort to aid him he cannot bear the weight of his arduous situation. And if, as Malcolm reported, he is about to marry a very young wife, his mind will be distracted into irritability which will make the matter worse. There must I think be a change there; and the situation is made so irksome & disreputable that the men who would do it most credit will readily give place to the Sir J. Y's<sup>6</sup> who will const[*ru*e] it for their own selfish purposes.— I have written you so much upon the subject of this Expedition with which my mind has been so long occupied, that I cannot undertake to read it all over; & I suspect you will find that repetition in my letter, which has so frequently taken place in my musings.—

ALS, UKLNMM, Edward Codrington Papers, COD/7/1, No. 13. Docketed: "13—Head Quarters/near New Orleans/Janry. 4th. 1815/to 29th." For another printed version of this letter, see Bouchier, *Sir Edward Codrington*, Vol. 1, pp. 338–39.

1. Codrington served as Sir Alexander Cochrane's captain of the fleet or chief of staff. He was nominated a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (K.C.B.) on 2 January 1815. For a biographical sketch of Codrington, see Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, Vol. 1, Part 2, pp. 635–38.

2. Vice Admiral Alexander F. I. Cochrane; also referred to in the text of this letter as Sir A.

3. Possibly Admiralty Commissioner Rear Admiral Sir George Johnstone-Hope. Referred to later in the letter as "H," who married Georgiana Mary Anne Kinnaird on 30 November 1814.

4. For Cochrane's criticisms of Fothergill and Bremer, see p. 927.

5. Cochrane requested Dutch schuyts in a letter to the Admiralty. See UK-KeNA, Cochrane to Croker, Adm. 1/509, fol. 361.

6. Perhaps Sir James L. Yeo, commander of Royal Navy forces on the Northern Lakes.

REAR ADMIRAL SIR PULTENEY MALCOLM,<sup>1</sup> R.N., TO  
CLEMENTINA MALCOLM

Janry. 24th. [1815]

Since I finished my letter on the 12th. Inst.<sup>2</sup> I can safely say I have not had a liesure moment our exertions have been unparrilled sorry and greived am I to say that they have been unsuccessful I never liked this undertaking but I did not think it would have such a miserable result— the landing was effected better than could be hoped could we have put more men on shore in the first instance we might have surprized New Orleans— we had not sufficent Boats and small Craft,

partly our own faults we have a haphized sort of way of doing things— poor Sir Edd. Packenham he was a fine fellow but on the day he fell, he committed a great error— he was convinced that he could not force the Enimies lines without great loss unless he could get round them—which was next to impossible unless we could obtain possession of the opposite bank of the River and then their Batteries on their line, which destroyed our men whilst advancing, this was done by the greatest exertion I ever witnessed on the part of seamen— unfortunately Sir Edward did not wait the result but attempted to storm, before the Enemy was aware that we had possession of their Battaries, on their flank, half an hour did all the mischief, and we were repulsed, and then recalled our men from the opposite shore, this is the fact— he was a noble Officer however, but the best will err— Genl. Gibbs is also an erreperable loss, Keane is on board the *Royal Oak* and will recover he is an active clear headed man— Lambert is overpowered with the responsibility that has fallen to him— the Admiral is gone on board and left me to manage the Retreat— things have not been managed to my mind; but I do my best and I do feel that all are pleased with what I have done, our weather is very unfavrible— consider the task of removing near one thousand wounded men seventy miles in open Boats, my Ship is full of them, I have not seen her since 13th. Decr. I shall be most happy to be again on board— I have lived ever since in a Tent in a Marsh nearly levele with the water—but I never enjoyed better health— I cannot give you a discription of all that has been done myself—but I have procured one on which you may rely, from a Gent in the Quarter Master Genals department—and I send you also a Copy of my Journal without comments—<sup>3</sup> I have received many of your letters the last the 31st of Octr. every day I am more desirous to be with you and if I see that there is not a prospect of Peace in the Spring I will endeavour to get Home I dont like the war, we should have offered the America[n]s the same terms at Hamburgh that were proposed before the Peace with France they would have been accepted and now they will not accept even those, unless we have better success— our failure at New Orleans will give them great spirits, I have recd. the Map you sent me it is very good as a general one but I should like some on larger scales— you are kind and good to think of Ben. I have told his mother that Mr. Brown must [educate?] him as seems good to himself. he must take his chance in the Hollidays it is not the good fortune of every Boy to have a good Home yet they do very well in life—

we must now find some place to orgenize our Army and prepare for further work— Mobbille is near to us we cannot go to the Nothd. till spring I hope soon to be on board then I will conclude this letter god bless you and Ge[o]rge prays your affectionate

Pult<sup>y</sup> Malcolm

I will Desire my friend Thornton<sup>4</sup> to call on you a better Soldier is not in the Army—

I write this from the point from which we embark, the Boats have to go sixty Miles to deposit one Corps before they take another—

we are now reduced to three thousand but the nature of the ground secures us from an attack from the Enemy I[t] freezes at this moment, and tomorrow it rains I never saw a more changeable climate—. our men are becoming sickly

Our Boats crews have not been out of their Boats since the 13th of Decr. and constantly employ'd they have performed their duty cheerfully and well to the admiration of the Army— their exertions have been wonderful and their disappointment is great

ALS, MiU-C, Pulteney Malcolm Collection, No. 34.

1. On 2 January 1815, Malcolm was nominated a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (K.C.B.).

2. See Pulteney Malcolm to Clementina Malcolm, 12 January 1815, MiU-C, Pulteney Malcolm Collection.

3. For an extract from Malcolm's journal, see pp. 975–79.

4. Brevet Colonel William Thornton.

## Exchange of Prisoners

*With the Battle of New Orleans over, both combatants turned their immediate attention to caring for the fallen. Major General Andrew Jackson and his British counterpart, Major General John Lambert, promptly agreed to a cease-fire, during which each side could recover the wounded and bury the dead. The two commanders also discussed negotiating an exchange of prisoners, for which an agreement was signed on 17 January. The documents below highlight the Navy's role in recovering these captured servicemen, which included the U.S. gunboat crews taken prisoner at the Battle of Lake Borgne.<sup>1</sup>*

1. On 15 December 1814, Master Commandant Daniel T. Patterson sent a flag of truce to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane to arrange for the parole of the wounded gunboat crews. Patterson's mission failed, which led to a heated exchange of correspondence between him and Cochrane. See pp. 956–66.

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL JOHN LAMBERT, BRITISH ARMY

Head Quarters 7h. M. District  
Lines below Orleans  
8h. Jan. 1815. 3 O'clock

Sir,

I have recd. your dispatch of this date.<sup>1</sup> The Army which I have the honor to command have used every exertion to afford relief to the wounded of your Army, even at the constant risque of their lives, your men never intermitting their fire during such exertions. The wounded now on the field beyond my lines, if you think proper may be taken beyond a line to be designated by my Adj. General, and be paroled; Otherwise they may be taken to my hospital and treated with every care and attention. The flag sent by Commodore Patterson at my request, has been detained by the Admiral; leaving him uninformed of the fate of his command, that was taken in the Gun boats—<sup>2</sup> The dead on the field beyond the line, above alluded to, you can inter, Those within that line shall be interred by my troops.

When a return is made of the wounded and prisoners taken onboard the Gun boats, and the few men taken on the night of the 23d. it shall be returned by a similar one on my part.

If you should think proper to accede to the above propositions, you will please suggest any arrangement which you may think best for their Accomplishment. I am respectfully &c

A Jackson M G Cg

LB, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 62). For two other printed copies of this letter, see Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 235, and, Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, pp. 133–34.

1. See Lambert to Jackson, 8 January 1815, in Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, p. 133.

2. On Cochrane's detention of Patterson's flag of truce and subsequent controversy it engendered, see pp. 956–66.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Head Quarters nr. New Orleans  
9th. January 1815

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of Yesterdays date<sup>1</sup> replying to mine and acquainting me that the Commander in Chief of the Land Forces<sup>2</sup> will join with you in a general and equal Exchange of Prisoners, to facilitate which no time shall be lost in preparing and forwarding to you Lists of such Americans as are now Prisoners with our Forces and of such as were found in Arms and have been permitted to return to their homes upon Parole— Should the number of English Prisoners exceed that of the Americans I have to request that they may all be released and I will give receipts for them, to be taken credit for by the American Government upon the general account Should it be found that the balance is in our favor (which I am given to understand is the case to a very considerable Amount) or otherwise to be accounted for by the release of equal numbers from our depots All the Americans now in our possession shall be sent by a Flag of Truce to Fort Coquelle,<sup>3</sup> being the nearest American Post to the Shipping Such of the Wounded as can with safety be removed shall be sent with the others, and those which it is necessary to retain in the Hospital shall be released upon their recovery by a Cartel. I have &c

Signed A. Cochrane

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 253–54.

1. Not found.

2. Major General Andrew Jackson.

3. Fort Petite Coquilles.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SIR VICE ADMIRAL ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

(Copy)

Head Quarters of the American Army  
Near Neworleans 9th: January 1815

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date, and hasten to inform you, that the commander in chief of the Land Forces, and myself will be glad to receive Lists of the Americans, who may now be Prisoners, to your Forces; similar lists of the English, at present Prisoners, with our Forces will be made out and transmitted to you with as little delay as possible, as it is our joint wish, that no time should be lost, in effecting an exchange, and as, the number of English Prisoners, now with our Forces, greatly exceeds the Americans in possession of your forces; the remainder will be released upon your receipts and accounted for by the release, of an equal number, of Americans from your depôt of prisoners, but who are not to serve untill such release shall have been carried into effect.—

But sir the commander in chief of the Land Forces, will not acknowledge, or exchange as Prisoners, the persons alluded to, in you letter, as having been permitted to return, to their homes, or paroled, as he cannot view them in that light they having been paroled to answer your own views, and not as Prisoners of war.—

It would be preferred by the commander of the Land Forces and myself that the americans should be delivered at this Camp instead of the Petite Coquilles

Such of the wounded as can with safety be removed, will be sent with the others and those it may be necessary to retain, of which the number will be considerable, will receive every comfort in our power to afford; and be released upon their recovery upon the same conditions as the others.— I have the honor to be  
Your Obt. Hume. Servt.

(Signd) Danl. T. Patterson  
Commanding U S Naval Forces  
on the new orleans Station

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 2, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43).

MAJOR GENERAL JOHN LAMBERT, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

11th. January 1815. [*New Orleans*]

Sir/

I have the Honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this days date<sup>1</sup> and to inform you that I am Commr. of the Forces acting on the left Bank of the Mississippi.—

It is no doubt my duty not to allow any correspondence connected with this Force to go through any other hands but my own, especially when what may be required must have the Sanction of the Commr. of the Forces of the U. States Army acting on the same territory.

Vice Admiral Sir A. Cochrane has told me that he had had a correspondence with Commodore Patterson, commd. the naval Forces on this Station on the subject of the exchange of Prisoners but I conceived that this originated from and had reference to those who were taken in the Gun boats, I recollect his saying, that he considered the terms so explicit and fair that he and no difficulty in embracing them—

If I am right, the basis was that there should be a mutual exchange, on each side, as far as equal numbers went, that the residue on either should be given up on Parole, not to serve untill regularly exchanged, and that the Wounded whose cases would not admit of removal, should remain untill sufficiently recovered.

If Sir such are your sentiments on the subject I shall be very happy to concur in them and as in our situations we find sufficient employment, if you will have the goodness to direct your Adjt. General to make the correspondence relative to it pass through his office, it shall be met with equal attention from that of this Force I have the Honor to be Sir your most Obedient Servant

John Lambert  
M. General Commg.

ALS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 15). For two other printed version of this letter, see Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 243–44, and, Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, p. 139.

1. Jackson to Lambert, 11 January 1815, in Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, p. 243.

MAJOR GENERAL JOHN LAMBERT, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

12 Jan 1815 [*New Orleans*]

Sir

I have received your Letter of this Date & beg to inform you that the only American Prisoner[s] of War at present on Shore were named with the List transmitted to you on the 11th. in[s]t.

All others who have fallen into my hands since the Arrival of H:M: Forces before New Orleans have been sent down to the Shipping as soon as captured & are so dispersed in different Vessels that considerable delay & difficulty will arise in procuring nominal Lists of them

Vice Admiral Sir Alex: Cochrane has however undertaken to have the Whole of the Prisoner[s] of War at the Shipping sent up Either to be landed at Petit Coquille or at this place

This intermixture of Naval & Military Prisoner[s] having already taken place allow me to propose that you appoint a Person who shall receive all the Prisoners

of the U. States & give receipts with the rank & names of Persons so delivered upon Honer— And I will appoint a Person who shall furnish similar Lists & receipts upon Honer on delivery of H: Britanic Majesty's Prisoner[s]—

By the Enclosed Letter you will be furnished with names of 52 American Prisoner[s] which I believe is within 15 or 20 of the Whole taken on Shore & sent to the Ships

The *Plantagenet* on board which most of the Prisoner[s] are is at present is procuring Water at the mouth of the Mississippi but will return to our Anchorage in Two Days when they shall be instantly Landed

Major Smith Ass. Adj General who has full powers to negotiate the Exchange will meet any Officer you may appoint to make a final Arrang[em]ent at 12 o'clock tomorrow between the Advance Posts I have the honor to be Sir Your most obt. Servnt.

John Lambert  
M. General Commd.—

P.S. I Enclose a Letter from Vice Admiral Co[c]hrane w[hic]h he has just sent relative to the General Exchange of Prisoner[s].

LS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 15). For another printed version of this letter, see Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, pp. 140–41.

[Enclosure]

Head Quarters, near  
New Orleans, 12 Jany. 1815

Sir

As in the proposed exchange of Prisoners of War with General Jackson, there must be a considerable balance due by you to the United States, and as His Majesty's Government has placed the Prisoners of War of all descriptions at the different Depôts under my controul; I beg to inform you that as soon as you ascertain the balance that appears after exchanging those taken in the Gunboats, I will direct an equivalent number of American Prisoners to be sent to the United States; or if equally agreeable to General Jackson I will sign Certificates for the balance to be forwarded to General Mason<sup>1</sup> at Washington, that he may take credit for them in the Exchanges constantly going on between the two Countries: I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane  
Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 15). For a copy of this letter, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, pp. 242–43.

1. John Mason, commissary general of prisoners for the United States.



## AGREEMENT FOR THE EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS

Provisional Articles agreed on between Major Smith authorised by Major Genl. Lambert and Edward Livingston Aid de Camp to Major Genl. Jackson authorised by him for that purpose subject to the ratification of the respective commanders of the two armies Between the lines Jany 17, 1815

1. It being understood that Admiral Sr. Alexander Cochrane has sent or will immediately send the American prisoners as well of the Army as Navy now on board the british fleet to the mouth of the Rigolets. It is agreed that a nominal & descriptive receipt shall be given for the same upon honor and that on the receipt of the said Prisoners a number of british prisoners equal in rank and number to those so sent to the Rigolets together with those confined in the british camp shall be sent to the Mouth of the River & be received by ships appointed for that purpose by the Admiral.

2. At the same time all the prisoners now in the british Camp shall be sent to the American Lines and received for as above not to serve until an Equal number of English prisoners shall be delivered

3. Officers of Equal Rank shall be exchanged for Equal Rank & wounded as far as circumstances will permit

Edw Livingston  
H G Smith  
Major—

I approve and ratify the above arrangement

Jany. 17. 1815  
Head Quarters 7th.  
Military District

Andrew Jackson  
Major Genl Comdg

ADS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 15). Document is in Livingston's hand and signed by Smith and Jackson.

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN D. HENLEY

Instructions for Capt. Henley

Head Quarters 7th. Military  
District. Jany 23d. 1815

Sir

You will herewith receive for your Govmnt. the following papers

1. A Copy of an Agreement Entered into between Mr. Livingston one of My Aides and Major Smith of the British Army relative to the Exchange of prisoners ratified by me

2. A list of the prisoners on board the English Fleet belonging to the Army Commanded by Me furnished by Admiral Cochrane

You will observe that by the first of these papers the prisoners mentioned in the second are to be Delivered at the ~~petite Coquille~~ Rigollets on the receipt of an officer appointed to take Charge of them, I therefore hereby Authorise you to give a receipt for the said prisoners on their being Delivered to you—which rece[*i*]pt is to be written at the foot of a correct list of such prisoners as shall be so Delivered Specyfing their Names, their Ranks, and Designating such as are wounded—the same thing must be observed on your receipt for the Officers and Seamen of the Navy

The Rece[*i*]pt may be in the following form.

“I acknowledge to have Recd. from [*blank*] in his Britannick Majestys Service the Officers and Men Specified in the above list to be exchanged Conformably to an Agreement Entered into on the 17th. instant between Edward Livingston Esq Aid to Genl. Jackson and Major Smith of the British Army Duely Authorised by the Commanders of the American & British Armies respectively”

You will keep a Copy of the List and rect. Certified by the Officer from whom you receive the Prisoners—You will also give the English Credit for Dennis Prieur a private in the N.O. Volunteer Rifle Men whom they put on parole taking a Certificate from the Officer that he was included in the Exchange.— you will also ask a Similar Certificate for Harvey Elkins a prisoner taken & paroled last year by the *Herald* Sloop of War and credited in the list of Prisoners recd. at our Lines on the 18th. instant

Draft, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 15).

MASTER COMMANDANT JOHN D. HENLEY TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Neworleans 2nd February 1815

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that agreeably to your instructions of the 23rd: ulto., and Commodore Patterson orders of the same date; I proceeded to the Petite Coquilles to carry into effect the exchange of Prisoners conformable to the agreement entered into by Mr Edward Livingston your Aid; and Major Smith of the Royal Army. I arrived at that post on the evening of the 25th: not finding the Prisoners at that place as was expected, I waited forty eight hours, and then dispatched, Doctor Flood to the English Fleet with your dispatches to Genl. Lambert, to which no answar was received.—

On the evening of the 29th: a Schooner arrived, with prisoners, a List of them I have the honor to enclose, on the 31st. two other Vessels arrived with Eighty one Prisoners, a List of which is also enclosed; Doct. Flood returned in the last Vessel and informed me that there was no more to be sent, one hundred of our seamen having been sent to Jamaica, but that a Vessel had been dispatched, with orders for them to be sent back immediately.—

I am sorry to add that I could get no answer from Genl. Lambert relative to the negro's mentioned in your instructions.— I have the honor to remain with consideration Your obt. Servt.

J D Henley

P.S. Enclosed herewith I have the honor to transmit you copies of my letters to Admiral Cochrane.—

LS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 16).

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

His Britannic Majesty's Ship  
*Tonnant* off Mobile Bay  
12th. February 1815.

Sir,

In consequence of the style which Captain Patterson thought proper to adopt in a letter that he addressed to me on the 23rd January (a copy of which I beg leave to enclose, with some remarks upon the margin)<sup>1</sup> I find myself precluded from making him any reply thereto, or of holding with that Officer any further correspondence—

But to prevent our respective Prisoners suffering any unnecessary detention, I do myself the honor to communicate to you: that in order to fulfill the agreement for an Exchange of Prisoners entered into by Major Smith (aid de camp to Major General Lambert); upon the 27th. Ultimo I sent His Majesty's Ship *Nymphe* to the Havanna to receive from His Majesty's Ship *Ramillies* the One hundred of the American Prisoners taken in the Gun Vessels, which she had carried to Sea.—

These with five Seamen, who for the purpose of being examined in the Vice Admiralty Court respecting the capture of the Gun Vessels, I have been obliged to send to Bermuda, but who are to be returned the moment the legal forms have been complied with, will complete the number of American Prisoners which have been accounted for by the British Forces under the agreement of the 17th Ultimo; and they shall be forwarded to you without any delay, so soon as they arrive in the Squadron.—

As it has been found very inconvenient the sending of Vessels to the Rigolets (those last sent not having yet returned, and are reported to be on shore) Colonel Livingston and myself have agreed that the Prisoners expected in the *Nymph* shall proceed to the mouth of the Mississippi, and be delivered to the Officer commanding at Fort Plaquemine.<sup>2</sup>

Having by this arrangement fulfilled the Stipulations of our beforementioned treaty in which we agreed to the restoration of all the Prisoners that our forces had made before we received from you any British Prisoners, it is but just that you should allow the same principle with respect to the Prisoners who have fallen into our hands by the surrender of Fort Bowyer; all of whom Major General Lambert and myself are ready to exchange as they stand upon the Lists (Copies of which are enclosed)<sup>3</sup> for such British Prisoners as you may cause to be delivered at the mouth of the Mississippi, after the first account has been finally settled and on my part I will engage to send to the same place an equivalent of American Prisoners

so soon as I am informed of the number and qualities of the British Prisoners received— I have the honor to be Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

Alexr. Cochrane  
Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief of  
His Britannic Majesty's Ships and Vessels upon the North  
American and Jamaica Stations—

LS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 16). For Cochrane's letter book copy of this correspondence, see UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 264–65. For other printed copies, see Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 276–77, and, Jackson, *Correspondence*, Vol. 2, pp. 163–64.

1. Not printed. Another copy of Patterson's letter is printed on pp. 962–63.
2. Fort St. Philip.
3. These lists may be found in DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 67).

## Bombardment of Fort St. Philip

*While Sir Edward Pakenham's operations against New Orleans were underway, warships from Vice Admiral Cochrane's fleet kept up an active blockade of the Mississippi's main navigational channels. It was not until after Pakenham's disastrous defeat at the battle of 8 January that five of Cochrane's warships moved upriver to strike at the Americans. On 9 January, these vessels took up station just below Fort St. Philip, considered the key to New Orleans's lower river defenses. Located approximately 80 miles south of the Crescent City, Fort St. Philip mounted over 40 pieces of ordnance of various calibers. A mixed force of 366 regulars, militiamen, and volunteers garrisoned the fort, supported by the presence of gunboat No. 65, commanded by Lieutenant Thomas Cunningham.<sup>1</sup>*

*After testing the range of the American guns, the British squadron commenced a relentless nine-day bombardment of the Mississippi stronghold. As the enemy's vessels had anchored just beyond the range of the fort's batteries, there was little its defenders could do to drive off their floating tormentors. The arrival of ordnance supply boats from New Orleans finally enabled the fort to deliver long-range mortar fire against its foe. Unable to break the fighting spirit of Fort St. Philip's men, and now subject to effective counter-battery fire, Cochrane's warships gave up the contest and retreated downriver.<sup>2</sup>*

1. A detailed description of Fort St. Philip, its ordnance, and garrison, see Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 128–29.

2. For a contemporary account of the bombardment of Fort St. Philip, see *ibid.*, pp. 130–33. See also Remini, *Battle of New Orleans*, pp. 169–75.

MAJOR WALTER H. OVERTON, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Fort St. Philip Jany. 19th. 1815

Sir

On the first of the present month I received the information that the enemy intended passing this Fort to cooperate with their land forces, in the subjugation

of Louisiana, and the destruction of the city of New Orleans. To effect this with more facility, they were first with their heavy bomb vessels to bombard this place into a compliance; on the grounds of this information I turned my attention to the security of my command I erected small magazines in different parts of the garrison, that if one blew up I could resort to another; built covers for my men to secure them from the explosion of shells & removed the combustible matter without the work.— Early in the day of the 8th. Instant I was advised of their approach and on the 9th. at a quarter past ten A.M. they hove in sight, two bomb vessels, one Sloop, one brig & one Schooner;<sup>1</sup> they anchored two & one quarter miles below at half past eleven,— at half past twelve they advanced two barges apparently for the purpose of sounding within one & a half miles of the Fort; at this moment I ordered my water battery under the command of Lt. Cunningham of the Navy to open on them. Its well directed Shot caused a precipitate retreat. At half past three o'clock P.M. the enemy's bomb vessels opened their fire from four Sea Mortars two of 13 inches two of ten; And to my great mortification I found they were without the effective range of my Shot, as many subsequent experiments proved, they continued their fire with little intermission during the 10th. 11th. 12th. 13th. 14th. 15th. 16th. & 17th. I occasionally opened my batteries on them with great vivacity; particularly when they shew a disposition to change their position.— On the 17th. in the evening our heavy Mortar was said to be in readiness. I ordered that excellent officer Capt. Wollstonecraft of the artillerists, who previously had charge of it, to open a fire which was done with great effect, as the enemy from that moment became disordered and at day light on the 18th. commenced their retreat. After having thrown upwards of a thousand heavy shells, besides small shells from howitzers, round shot and grape, which he discharged from boats under cover of the night.

Our loss in this affair has been uncommonly small owing intirely to the great pains that was taken by the different officers to keep their men under cover; As the enemy left scarcely ten feet of this garrison untouched. The Officers & soldiers of this garrison through this whole affair although nine days & nights under arms in the different batteries, the consequent fatigue and loss of sleep, have manifested the greatest firmness & the most zealous warmth to beat the enemy. To distinguish individuals would be a difficult task as merit was conspicuous every where. Lt. Cunningham of the Navy who commanded my water battery with his brave crew evinced the most determined bravery & uncommon activity throughout; & in fact Sir the only thing to be regretted is that the enemy was too timid to give us an opportunity of destroying him

I herewith inclose you a list of the killed & wounded<sup>2</sup> I am Sir very respectfully

W. H. Overton  
Majr. 3rd. R.R. Comg.

LS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 15).

1. H.M. sloop of war *Herald* and H.M. brig-sloop *Sophie*. Cochrane identified the ships at Plaquemine as the frigate *Nymphé*, sloops of war *Herald* and *Thistle*, bomb vessels *Ætna* and *Meteor*, and schooner *Pigmy*.

2. The casualties totaled 2 killed and 9 wounded. DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 67). A printed version appears in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 251.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

Marine Battery five miles below  
Neworleans 20th. January 1815

Sir,

I have great satisfaction in informing you, that the Enemy after having been several days, sending off his sick, wounded, and Baggage retreated with his whole force on the night of the 18th, and as I learn completed the embarkation of his Troops about midday yesterday; leaving in his Hospital 83, wounded, who could not be removed; with a surgeon and surgeon's Mate to attend to them; he has also left fourteen pieces of cannon, 10 long 18 pr. ship Guns, and 4. 24 pound carronades, six of the Eighteen prs. are only spiked; and can easily be rendered fit for service, the other four, with the carronades cannot be made serviceable, the former having their Trunions broken off the latter the pomillions, a great number of shot have also been left. which can easily be collected; I have every reason to believe, that they have also left behind, the Brass pieces taken from this side the River; From the date of my last, to the retreat I have fired from my Battery upon the Enemy whenever opportunity offered. and with a 9 pd. brass field piece, which I sent two miles below my Battery to rake their Camp; continued my fire till 11 oclck at night on the 18th directly into their Camp from which they suffered much.—

By a letter<sup>1</sup> received last evening from Acting Lieut. Cunningham commanding Gun Vessel *No. 65.* stationed at Plaquemaine to aid Fort St. Phillip; who had drawn his crew on shore and manned two 32 pounders, I learn that the Enemys Vessels Viz Three Ships one Brig & Schooner, two of which were Bomb Vessels; had departed after Bombarding the Fort from the [*space*]<sup>2</sup> during which time they threw one thousand Shells, without injury to the Fort, killing only one man and wounding Seven in the Fort; he States his Vessels spars, & rigging to be much cut to pieces, but none of his men hurt; he had sent his Boat to watch their movements, and should I learn by her that they have not left the River, I shall immediately proceed with fire Vessels and endeavour to destroy them.—

In a few days I will have the pleasure of stating to you the names of my Officers, who have distinguished themselves, and merit the notice of the Department.—<sup>3</sup> I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your Obt. St.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 17 (M147, Roll No. 6).

1. Letter not found.

2. A space approximately four words in length appears here.

3. See Patterson to Crowninshield, 27 January 1815, pp. 1044–46.

## Attacks on the British Fleet

*The capture of the U.S. gunboat flotilla at the Battle of Lake Borgne failed to eliminate the American naval threat to the British army investing New Orleans. Over a two-week period in January 1815, U.S. Navy and Army officers cooperated in cutting-out expeditions that managed to capture or destroy five enemy craft of various sizes, while taking 93 prisoners and recovering two slaves. Such harassing attacks disrupted the Royal Navy's efforts to provide secure, logistical support to British forces bivouacked on the banks of the Mississippi.*

SAILING MASTER WILLIAM JOHNSON TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

(Copy)

Neworleans January 7th: 1815,

Sir,

I have the pleasure, to inform you of my succeeding in burning one of the Enemy's Transport Brigs in Lake Borgne yesterday morning at 4. a.m. the following are the particulars; [after] receiving a reinforcement of the Launch, and 12. men, and with the assistance, of an Officer and [twelve] men from Capt. Newman, commanding Fort Petite Coquilles, I manned the Launch and three small Boats, and on the 4th: inst. proceeded down Pass Chef Menteur, as far as Bayou Sauvage, where Colo. Morgan with a Detachment of Militia are stationed, we encamped there for the night; on the 5th: inst in the afternoon, I proceeded down to East mouth of Pass Chef Menteur, with one of the small Boats to ascertain [the] position of the Enemy in Lake Borgne; finding at anchor there, one Brig, three Gun Boats, three schooners, and several Barges rowing from Vessel to Vessel; the Brig lying at a distance of about two [miles] from the other Vessels; I returned to the Camp, determined on making an attempt to destroy her [I] received the assistance of six men from Colo. Morgan; we then making in number 38 men, with this [force] I was consious, I should be able to destroy her, tho I had been previously informed, she mounted 4 [pieces] of cannon, and equipped accordingly; at midnight proceeded down Pass Chef Menteur, and on the [6th] inst at 4 oclock, A.M. took possession of the Brig, only one man [on] Deck, about 5 minutes after 4. A.M. one [of] the Enemy's Launches came along side fired two muskets into her, when she surrendered; but owing to blowing very fresh from the northward making considerable of a sea, she parted her painter was not able to regain the vessel, and the sea being too heavy to tow her with my Boat, I abandoned [her] it being near daylight, I immediately ordered the Prisoners, into the Launch and set fire to the Brig; at half [past 5]: oclock, a.m. she was totally destroyed; she proved to be the British Transport Brig *Syrus*, a Captain, a sailing Master and 8 men of the British Navy on Board Laden about half full, with Rum Bread and a quantity of Soldiers Clothing for the British Army at Bayou Bienvenu; at daylight we arrived at [the] camp at Chef Menteur, delivered to Colo. Morgan the Prisoners, who will send to the City after which returned to Fort Petite Coquilles, finding my Provisions almost out and being short of arms I

have returned to Town with the Launch leaving Mr. Boyd Masters Mate, and five men at Petite Coquilles to watch the movements of the Enemy and give every information in his power.—

I have the pleasure to say that on this occasion the conduct of the Officers and men, whom I had the honor to command convinced me clearly that had she been of the force expected we could have burned her with ease.— Sir I have the honor to be Your Obt. hume. Servt.

(Signed) William Johnson

[P.S.] I think the Brigs lying at anchor at the east mouth of the Rigolets may easily be destroyed

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 20, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 6). Patterson's covering letter of 27 January commended Johnson for his capture of *Syrus* and for beating off the British barges on 11 December 1814. He expressed the hope that Johnson and his crew would be allowed the value of the destroyed ship as a reward for their brave conduct.

CAPTAIN FRANCIS NEWMAN, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Petite Coquille  
Jany. 15th. 1815

Sir

At day break this morning the Picket Guard discovered a large la[u]nch close up with them and immediately commenced firing on her with one 6 pr. and Musquetry but did not reach her observing but few men in her and not appearing to have a carronade I dispatched an armed cutter under the command of acting Sergt. Major Foster of my company in persuit as she attempted to descend again the Rigolets firing at her several heavy Guns as we could bring them to bear after a persuit of about three miles he succeeded in ove[r]taking her and captured her without resistance she proved to be the launch belonging to the Transport Ship *Mary* with the mate and four hands, he reports that he was proceeding to the encampment with a number of other boats &c. for the purpose of taking off the Troops as the enemy intended to evacuate as soon as possible having been so severely handled in the several engagements with our troops the General report in their Fleet of the loss they sustained in the attack of the 8th. is universally stated and believed to be 2,000 the cause of his entering the rigolets was his having lost his way in the Fogg last night and did not find out his mistake untill he was hailed this morning at our picket— she is a Very fine boat and will answer me very well for this part. I have no doubt from the eagerness and desire that the men shewed to meet the enemy that if the occasion offered they would not fail of rendering themselves worthy of the trust reposed in them, I beg leave to recommend to you the Sergeant as a brave enterprising young man, I forward the five prisoners by him in the U S Schooner *Tonant* which I have purchased from the Captain (Mr. Johnston U S Navy) [*text torn*]<sup>1</sup> will save a great deal of



expençe in fetching water &c. I have the honour to be Sir with Great Respect  
Your. Obt. Servt,

F. Newman Capt. Ary.  
Comdg. at Petite Coquille

P.S. I searched the men particularly but found no papers on them —

F. N —

ALS, DLC, Papers of Andrew Jackson (Roll No. 15).

1. One to two words missing here.

PURSER THOMAS SHIELDS TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

New Orleans 25t. Januy. 1815

Sir,

I have the honor to report my arrival in this city last night from the Expedition, order'd by you on the 17th. inst. & which you did me the honor to entrust to my command.—

On the night of the 19th. I left the pass Chef Menture, having made the necessary observations on the Enemy's situation before sun set, with five boats & your Gig man'd & armed with fifty men. At 10. P.M. discover'd a boat at Anchor, which I captured by surprize no resistance being made— she had Forty men of the 14th. light Dragoons, including Officers & fourteen seamen of the British Navy under Command of a masters mate.

The number of troops exceeding my own, I thought it most prudent to convey them in to the picket guard, from whence they could be more conveniently sent to new orleans by land than by water, & by which means I should also avoid weakening my own force in itself already too limited for the completion of the object in view.—

After landing the prisoners & putting them in charge of the Army I again left the pass about 2 a.m. & Stood on to gain the Enemy's track, in the hope of intercepting some of them about day light, but without success.— I returned to the pass on the 20th. at 8. a.m. where I was detained until the morning of the 21st.; three Gun Boats having arrived from the fleet below with four transports, all of whom were soon filled with troops from the shore, at 4 a.m. 21st. I again got out and fell into their track to the fleet about day light, finding it impossible to make any captures without being discover'd, I determined to run down among them in disguise & strike at every opportunity, hoisted English colors & took a Transport boat with five men, order'd her to follow & stood on for a Transport schooner who was beating up for the army, at 9 I boarded & took her without opposition with 8 men, she had ten on board, from this time until 12 were in the midst of their boats going up to the Army & during which time we took five others having on board about 70 men:— The wind at this time had unfortunately

haul'd to N.W. & blew with great violence, order'd the boats with their prizes to make the best of their way to the Rigolets, finding the transports draft of water too great to take her over the shoals, having already taken the ground, I set her on fire & joined the boats on shore— the wind still encreasing & many boats approaching full of men from the army, induced a belief that they had discovered my character from the burning of the schooner, & meant to attack me; my force was unfortunately divided, the large Launch with a 12 pr. carronade and some of my best men, with twenty prisoners, having drifted below, were compell'd from the strength of the current, to anchor on the other side nearly half a mile distant, every disposition was made by our little band to defend ourselves to the last extremity & fire was prepared to burn the marsh should the Enemy land in my rear,— Six boats approached us at one time crowded with men, and three made a feint to attack the Launch, but a well directed shot from her carronade compell'd them to haul off & a few discharges of our musketry drove the others also, in about 2 hours we were entirely clear of them, the violence of the wind & tide drove two of the prizes from their Anchorage, on board of which were about 20 prisoners with three of my own men, who were taken off, the prisoners having overpowerd them so soon as they got out of the reach of our musketry, this is the only loss I have experienced during the Expedition,— finding it totally impracticable to stem the strength of the current, & the wind being directly ahead for the Fort at Coquille, my own safety & the preservation of the men entrusted to my command induced me to parole the prisoners & let them go with their boats, particularly as a number of them were Officers attach'd to the civil Dept. & could not as I believe be consider'd as prisoners of war.

Enclosed I have the honor to transmit a list of their numbers, names & Rank.—<sup>1</sup>

The damage done the Enemy on this occasion is the loss of a transport burnt, a large flat boat taken, one sunk & Seventy eight prisoners taken & brought in, with three slaves, two belonging to citizens of this state & one stolen by the Enemy from a Mr. Edward Thomas near Washington City, when they destroyed our Capitol.—

To Captain Newman commanding at Coquille I owe my best thanks, for his uniform cheerful & friendly assistance, he furnished me with a boat & Eight volunteers under Lt. Brush of the U.S artillery who were of great Service.— To Capt. Collins commanding the Picket Guard at Chef menture I am under many obligations, he also assisted me with eight volunteers.—

To Sailing master Dealey who commanded the Launch & masters mate Thomas Boyd Commanding a cutter I am much indebted, Doctor Morrell the Surgeon who attended me was particularly active & tho I had fortunately but little use for the exercise of his professional skill, his advice and assistance were always at hand— very Respectfully I have the honor to be Yr Most Ob St.

Tho. Shields

LS, DNA, RG45, MC 1815, Vol. 1, No. 21, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 6).

1. Enclosure not found.

SAILING MASTER RICHARD DEALY TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

New Orleans 27th Feby. 1815

Sir.

I consider it a duty confered on me to state to you the conduct of Sergt. Bloomfield & a man named "Carden," who volunteered their services in my boat at the pass—Chef Menture on the 21st. of January which men are of Captn. Jno. W. Collins company of Orleans Militia and are I understand condemned to be Shot on the 1st. of March, those men behaved as well as any men could do on that occasion in boarding and destroying a Transport schooner & taking seven of the enemys boats—and were very circumspect in obeying every order.— resp'y. Yr. obt. Set.

Rich<sup>d</sup>. Dealy  
Sailing Master U S Navy

ALS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 17).

SAILING MASTER WILLIAM JOHNSON TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

New Orleans Feby. 27th. 1815

Sir

Having been inform'd that serj't. Bloomfield of Capt. Collins Company regt. of Militia is now under sentence of death— On the 6th. of Jany. 1815. his conduct was that of a good soldier, while at the distruction of the British Transport Brig *Syrus*, in the Lake Borgne. he volunteer'd his services with me at Pass Chef Mentor and was the first man on the Brig's deck, and after, his attention to my orders was very conspicuous. Perhaps, Sir, your humane interfearence mite tend to mitegate the sentence he his under, Permit me to solicit of you that interfearence, and be assured I shall be extreemly gratefull. The sentence is to be put into execution on the first of March— Sir, I have the honor to be Your Obt. Humle. Servant

W<sup>m</sup>. Johnson U.S. Navy

ALS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 17).

## Plaudits and Accolades

*Given the small size of the U.S. naval establishment at New Orleans, it would be easy to discount the role it played in turning back the British invaders near war's end. But the contributions of the U.S. Navy in successfully defending the Louisiana capital should not be*

*underestimated. For a critical six-week period, running from mid-December 1814 to the end of January 1815, U.S. sailors and Marines battled, harassed, and delayed the determined efforts of a vastly superior foe to seize the Crescent City. The following documents testify to the vital contribution the nation's sea services made to the stunning American victory on the banks of the Mississippi.*

LIEUTENANT CHARLES C. B. THOMPSON TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

U S Ship *Louisiana*  
January 18th. 1815

Sir

I have heretofore been too much occupied by the most urgent duty, to pay to the officers whom you have done me the honor to place under my orders, the tribute due to their uncommon merit. I now seize the first moment which could be spared for the performance of that delicate duty, to recommand to your notice and patronage, those, by whose abilities and constant exertions, I have been enabled, under the most inauspicious circumstances, to accomplish the various services confided to me since the appearance of the Enemy in this country. I will not trespass on your attention by adverting to the quality of the Ship under my command: But will state as a fact necessary to be known in order to form a just estimate of my officers, that two thirds of the crew were pressed, under a law of the state a few days before the Enemy landed. Under those discouraging circumstances we went into action on the 28 Ult.; & it is to the talents, & undeviating attention of acting Lieut. Archibald S. Campbell, supported by the activity and vigilance of the officers whom I shall thereafter name, that such a result was produced, as I have already had the honor to communicate—

To Lieut. Campbell, Sailing Master Gates Midshipman Daily & Acting Midshipman Phillebert, I cannot express my gratitude, for their constant attention to duty & the cheerfulness with which they performed the most arduous Service both on board, & on Shore in assisting to construct & serve batteries— My warm thanks are likewise due to Dr. Marshall, for his diligence & good arrangement:— Mr. John Quinn, volunteer from the Merchant Navy & Mr. Crosby Acting Boatswain—& Mr. Smith Acting Gunner have performed much service. The Acting Midshipmen on Board this Ship deserve warrants— Wilson R Ennis, Acting clerk, volunteered several times to serve in the advance battery under Mr. Phillebert. I cannot forbear expressing a belief that the conduct of my officers & men while serving under your eye excited your warmest approbation— Accept, if you please, Sir the assurance of my highest respect & regard

Ch<sup>s</sup> C B. Thompson

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, No. 22, enclosure. (M147, Roll No. 6).

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
 MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

(Copy)

Head Quarters 7th: Military District  
 Left Bank of the River 19th. January 1815

sir,

The Enemy having at length been compelled to retreat to their Shipping I feel it a duty to express to you my high sence of the meritorious conduct of your Officers, and seamen stationed on this Bank of the River Lieut. Norris who commanded a twenty four pounder, and Lieut. Crawley who, commanded a thirty two pounder, displayed during the several engagements the utmost skill and courage. They receive my warmest thanks and have merited the gratitude of their Country.—

And J. F. Pelott, Midshipman and William Livingston Masters Mate, who served at those Batteries have equly entitled themselves by their good conduct, to my and their Countrys thanks.—

I must avail myself of this occasion to express my sence of the obligations you and Capt. Henley have laid me under, by the active and important Services you have rendered me since the opening of the Campaign. To your well directed exertions from the other side of the River must be ascribed in a great degree, that embarrassment of the Enemy, which led to his ignominious flight. It has afforded me the highest satisfaction Commodore, that there should have existed during the whole of this interesting crisis, so perfect a harmony between the land and Naval Forces; in which sentiment I am sensible you fully participate.— With the highest Respect I am Sir Your Obt. Servt.

(signd) Andrew Jackson  
 Majr. Genl. Commanding

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, No. 22, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 6).

LIEUTENANT LOUIS ALEXIS TO  
 MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

(Copy)

U,S, Arsenal Neworleans 25th: January 1815

Sir,

In compliance with your request of this date I do myself the honor to inform you, that during the stay of the Enemy near this City, every Officer, and man attached to the arsenal under my immediate command, conducted themselves in such a manner as to merrit my entire approbation, in the great exertions used by them to meet the calls, of the Army, Militia and Navy at the different Posts, for munition of every discription, and different works necessary for the Fortifications, as well as their constant watching at night over the Public Property, entrusted to their charge.—

Sailing Master Thomas Pollock, is particularly entitled to my thanks for his constant, attention to the transportation of heavy Cannon &c, to the different works and to all other duties wherin he could be useful.—

I am also indebted to Acting Capt Miller & Lieuts. C. Pollock & Boswell of the arsenal Fuzileers, for their exertions in rendering their men fit for the Field, had their services there been required and for attentions, to whatever duties imposed on them.— acting Midshipman Joseph Morales by his good conduct also merits my approbation.—

Before closing this communication I beg leave to express my thanks to Capts. Wm. Sayers, Wm. Shepperd, Gifford, Colcock, Anto. Sylva, Fowler, Roberts, and Laurence of the Merchant service, for their constant assistance to the duties we have had to perform.— Sir, I have the honor to be Very Respectfully Your Obt. Servt.

(Signd) Louis Alexis

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, No. 22, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 6).

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Neworleans 27th: January 1815

Sir,

The Enemy having retreated, as I had the honor to inform you by my letter of the 20th: inst.,<sup>1</sup> I have the pleasing duty only left of reporting to you, that during the late most eventfull struggle for the preservation of this important portion of the United States; I have received from all the Officers whom I have the honor to command, every aid and support which could possibly be rendered; they have been exposed to extraordinary both by day, and night, to all the changes of this unstable clime, in this inclement season of the year, performing the most arduous duties on shore out of the line of their profession, independant of their ordinary duties; and all has been borne and executed with a cheerfullness & alacrity that reflects upon them the highest credit; and that the unwearied exertions of the small Naval Force on this station, from the first appearance of the Enemy has contributed in a great degree to his expulsion, is freely acknowledged by the Gallant Genl. commanding the land forces;<sup>2</sup> and will be I trust by all who have witnessed their endeavours to effect the end which has so happily and with so little loss been accomplished, It affords me great pleasure to have in all cases co-operated with the Army to the entire satisfaction of their commander.—

Capt Henley merits my acknowledgements for his unremitting attention. to the execution of the various duties committed to him, particularly the superintendance to the erection of two Batteries on the Bayou Saint John and one opposite this City, his Gallant conduct on the night of the 23rd. ulto.; as already detailed (the fire from the *Carolina* proving as I have since learned truly destructive to the Enemy and producing disorder and confusion in their Troops, giving to our

Army a manifest advantage) and for the able assistance, I received from him, when serving at the Marine Battery erected by me on the right Bank of the River, where he remained till the departure of the Enemy.—<sup>3</sup>

To Lieut. Louis Alexis commanding the Naval Arsenal at this place. I am greatly indebted for his indifatigable exertions to furnish the various munitions &c. which were constantly required for the Navy, Army, and Militia and which were furnished with a promptitude and correctness, that reflects upon him and those under his immediate command, as named in the accompanying copy of a letter from him<sup>4</sup> the greatest credit his services, and merit entitle him to the notice of the Department.—

Great credit is also due to Lieut. Charles. C. B. Thompson for his great exertions in fitting his Ship for service, with a crew obtained by coercion from the streets of the city, composed of all nations (English excepted) two thirds of whom could not not speak or understand English, for the spirited fire supported by his ship on the 28th ulto, and his continued endeavours to annoy the Enemy when they approached within the range of his Guns, his prompt execution of my orders particularly in landing the Guns from his Ship transporting them to my Battery and his attention in supplying the Battery with amunition from his Ship, in whose Magazine it was deposited, to the accompanying letter from him<sup>5</sup> I beg leave to refer for a detailed account of the merits of his Officers all of whom merit the encomiums passed on them.—

Lieut. Otho. Norris, Acting Lieut Crawley, Messrs. E. Watkins, & J. Pelott midshipmen, and William Livingston, M. Mate, who were stationed at heavy cannon in Genl. Jacksons lines, and named in the letter from him,<sup>6</sup> which accompanies this, have by their Gallant conduct, reflected upon the Navy great credit and merited my highest approbation.—

Acting Lieut Thomas Cunningham commanding Gun Vessel *No. 65* stationed at Fort Saint Phillip, solicited and obtained the command of 2. 32 prs: which are mounted in the most exposed situation at that Fort, being outside the walls; which he manned with his crew and rendered great service, to the Officer commanding at that Post. during the heavy Bombardment by the Enemy from the 8th [to] the 17th: inst.—<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Thomas Shields Purser of the station, and Doctr. Robert Morrell attached to the Marine Corps [(wh)o volunteered his services in any way they could be usefull) and who were sent by me with a Flag [of] Truce to the Enemy on the 15th:<sup>8</sup> ulto supported with becoming dignity. their stations. and commanded [from] the Enemy that respect which was due to them, and their mission during their detention by the Enemy [enga]ged beyond what I could possibly have expected. and have merited in a special manner my appro[bation] of those officers, and Mr. Richd. Dealey, Sailing Master, whose gallant conduct during their subsequent successfull expedition (a detailed account of which you will herewith receive) reflects upon them the greatest credit and merrits the particular notice of the Department.—<sup>9</sup>

Doctor Lewis Heermann Hospital Surgeon who with my sanction volunteered his services to aid the Hospital Surgeon of the Army. in the various duties devolving upon him; from the number of our own sick. and the wounded of the Enemy is thereby and from the uniform attention to his professional duties entitled to

my acknowledgements as are all the Officers of the Medical Department, for the particulars of his services I refer you to the letter to him<sup>10</sup> which you will herewith receive.—

Mr. John K Smith, navy agent has by his unremitting attention to his Department the promptitude with which he has furnished articles for both Navy, and Army, and for procuring me the Funds that were necessary during this period of alarm, and confusion; enabled me to carry on my operati[ons] in conjunction with the Army; against the Enemy; and contributed to that success with which the army of the U.S. have been crowned and will receive my warmest thanks; his services rendered in camp will be seen by the enclosed copy of a letter from the Comg. Genl. of the 19th: inst:—<sup>11</sup>

To Major Carmick commanding the Marine Corps on this station I am indebted for the promptness with which my requisition on him have been complied with, and the strong desire he has always manifested to further as far as was in his power my views.—

Mr. R. D. Shepherd, who very handsomely volunteered his services to me, and acted as my aid de camp, rendered me very essential assistance by the uniform promptitude with which he bore and excuted my various orders, merrits my warmest acknowledgements.—

Mr. J. B. Nevitt of natchez formerly a Lieut in the Navy<sup>12</sup> who left his home and proffered to me his services; has rendered me important assistance from his practical knowledge and which I acknowledge with much pleasure.—

My Petty officers seamen, and marines performed their duties to my entire satisfaction.—

I beg leave sir to solicit a confirmation of their present Rank for the different officers, named herin and in the accompanying letters, acting by appointment as also for acting Lieuts. Spedden and McKeever, and to recommend them all as meriting in a special manner the notice of the Department.— I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your Ob. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 22 (M147, Roll No. 6).

1. See Patterson to Crowninshield, 20 January 1815, p. 1036.
2. Major General Andrew Jackson.
3. For Henley's role in *Carolina's* night attack on the British encampment of 23 December 1814, and the defense of the marine battery on 8 January 1815, see pp. 984–85, and, 1018–19 and 1043.
4. Alexis to Patterson, 25 January 1815, above.
5. Thompson to Patterson, 18 January 1815, above.
6. Jackson to Patterson, 19 January 1815, above.
7. For Cunningham's role in the defense of Fort St. Philip, see pp. 1034–36.
8. Following the Battle of Lake Borgne, Purser Shields and Surgeon Morrell met with Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane under a flag of truce to negotiate the parole of wounded American flotillamen. For documents relating to their mission, see pp. 956–66.
9. On Shields and Dealy's successful boat attack on British shipping, see pp. 1039–41.
10. Jackson to Heermann, 27 January 1815. Enclosure not printed.
11. Jackson to Patterson, 19 January 1815. Enclosure not printed.
12. John B. Nevitt was warranted a midshipman in the Navy on 30 May 1803. He was promoted to lieutenant on 23 February 1809 and resigned his commission on 5 January 1811.



GOVERNOR WILLIAM C. C. CLAIBORNE TO  
MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON

(Copy)

Neworleans January 28th: 1815

Sir,

I have been a witness of your unwearied exertions and steady firmness during the late struggle: I am very sensible of the obligations Louisiana is under to you, and the portion of the United States Navy which you command, for a most zealous and effectual co-operation, in the defence of its Capital. Receive then yourself, and be good enough to convey to the Officers, and men, under your orders my warmest than[ks]

The misfortune which attended our GunBoats in the Lakes; is, on account of the many brave men, who fell on the occasion; cause of sincere regret; but we know that the unequal conflict; was for a length of time gloriously maintained; nor wa[s] the Flag of our country struck untill our gallant Tars had added still more lustre to the Nava[l] character of America; a character which I sincerely hope you may long live to sustain; and in those conspicuous stations, which you so well deserve to occupy.— I have have the honor to be With great respect Your Obt. Servt.

(signed) William C. C. Claiborne  
Governor of Louisiana

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 26, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 6). For another copy of this document, see DNA, RG45, AF8 (M625, Roll No. 200).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
CAPTAIN DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Capt. D. T. Patterson<sup>1</sup>  
Comm'g Naval Officer  
New Orleans—

Navy Department  
March 1st. 1815.

Sir

In transmitting to you the enclosed paper containing the Resolutions of both Houses of Congress, expressive of their “high sense of gallantry & good conduct” of your self and the Officers and men under your Command;—<sup>2</sup> I have the pleasure of communicating to you at the same time, the approbation of the President of the U. States, with my cordial congratulations, which I request you to make known to all the Officers & men under your command, and to Major Carmick of the Marine Corps, and to assure them of the high estimation in which they are held by their Country & Government, for their cooperation and bravery in the defence of the important City of New Orleans.— I am, respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield.—



*Gold presentation box awarded by the Corporation of the City of New York to Daniel Todd Patterson*

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 45 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Patterson was promoted to captain on 28 February 1815.
2. For the text of these resolutions, passed on 22 February 1815, see *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 3, p. 249.

## The British Pay a Return Call to Fort Bowyer

*In September 1814, a joint British expeditionary force attempted to capture Fort Bowyer, a weakly held American fortification guarding the entrance to Mobile Bay.<sup>1</sup> The attack proved a disaster for the British, resulting in the loss of the 20-gun sixth rate Hermes and nearly 70 men killed and wounded. The failed assault likely prompted Vice Admiral Cochrane to discard his plan to strike New Orleans from Mobile in favor of a waterborne attack on that city by way of Lake Borgne. When this effort to seize Louisiana's capital came to a calamitous end in January 1815, Cochrane's thoughts turned once again to the town of Mobile. After consulting with his army counterpart, Major General John Lambert, the two British commanders decided to challenge Mobile's American defenders anew.*

*1. For documentation on this operation, see pp. 876–89. See also, Owsley, Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands. See also Cochrane to Croker, 14 February 1815, pp. 1055–56.*

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL JOHN LAMBERT, BRITISH ARMY

(Copy)

*Tonnant* off the Chandeleur  
Islands 3d. Feby. 1815.—

Sir.

In consequence of the conversation that passed this morning, in which there appeared to be a variety of opinions, and as much responsibility attaches to me, in advising of the future operations of the land and sea forces now under our respective commands.

I think it right to commit to paper the plans that in my present opinion are most proper to be pursued, to carry into effect the measures approved of by Government for relieving West Florida from the usurped authority of the American Government (being a Colony belonging to Spain,) and at the same time to afford to the Indian Nations, an opportunity of recovering the territories of which they have been so unjustly deprived by the United States.

Previous to the expedition against New Orleans being determined upon, His Majesty's Government approved of my sending to the Creek Indians situated near to the river Apalachicola a supply of Arms, also such a detachment of Marines as I could spare from the fleet under the command of Major Nicolls, who was instructed to raise a Corps of Negroes, from those expected to emigrate from the western parts of Georgia.

The attack made by the Americans upon Pensacola has in a great measure retarded this Service, but from recent accounts the number of Indians collected in Arms amount to nearly three thousand men and independent of the Marines,

a coloured Corps has been organized of from three to four hundred men, which are expected soon to be considerably increased.

With a view to promote the success of the expedition against Mobbille, I lately sent back Major Nicolls, with the Indian Chiefs to Apalachicola, where at a situation called the Bluff a fort has been constructed for the Security of their wives and Children while the warriors take the field.

This force making in all nearly three thousand five hundred men, is to be divided into two bodies, one consisting of from twelve to fifteen hundred men, to fall upon the back parts of Georgia to act in concert with the force under Rear Admiral Cockburn employed upon that coast, while the other body is to cross the country towards Fort Studdart to co-operate with the forces under your command; they have instructions to send out parties to collect horses for the Cavalry.

The troops having now all reached the Ships at the inner anchorage, and the Americans being satisfied that any attack meditated at New Orleans is given up for the present, it must also be equally evident to them that our future efforts will be either directed against Mobbille or upon the eastern, or Atlantic Coast; to guard against the first I have not a doubt but they have reinforcements now upon the road to Batton Rouge, from whence I understand there is a direct road to Mobbille and that the whole journey can be performed by Cavalry within fifteen days.

And as it must be a material point that the Fort of Mobbille be invested before their reinforcements arrive, it is my decided opinion that the utmost expedition ought to be used to accomplish that object.

Rear Admiral Malcolm has gone into the inner anchorage to remove the Ships, to Ship Island, and to put a proportion of provisions on board the small vessels equal to an eight days supply for the whole Army.

These vessels with such as do not exceed a draught of fourteen feet can go up close to Isle Dauphine, where the troops may be landed and the vessels sent back for the remainder of the Army which may either be sent up in them; or, if a passage shall be found upon the east side of the Island, the Frigates, troop ships, and Transports will be passed into the Bay of Mobbille, without going within range of Fort Boyer; but should this passage not be discovered to be of sufficient depth of water for Ships, I think I will find little difficulty in taking in Vessels of a draught of water not exceeding thirteen feet; which, with the boats of the Squadron, may be able to convey four thousand men, but if it is ascertained to be deep enough, the whole Army may proceed to within a few miles of the place of disembarkation below Mobbille.

As I have now found that prompt measures are the best, and having a thorough knowledge of the Enemy we have to deal with, I most earnestly recommend that not a moment is lost in moving the Army forward to Isle Dauphin, and that their stay there, be as short as possible.

As soon as the Troops move along Shore, I will detach the Master of this Ship, to buoy off the passages, and take such other steps as may be necessary, for pushing the Shipping into the bay, the troops now on board the Frigates, at the inner anchorage, and in Ships of War here, can be landed upon the south side of the Island while the wind keeps to the northward, or they can be kept in readiness to be put into smaller vessels to pass at once into the harbour.

If these suggestions meet your concurrence I will be happy to accompany you into the inner anchorage, to make the necessary arrangements; and to accelerate

the Service, I beg leave to propose that a force of four or five hundred men may be immediately sent to Dauphine Island to protect the Coasts employed in surveying the western Channel, by which means we will sooner be satisfied as to the practicability of getting the Shipping into Mobile Bay, without the necessity of first attacking the fort.

After being upon the spot it will be seen how far the reduction of that fort may be an immediate or necessary measure, or if it can be carried on together with the Attack of Mobile. I am, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

(Signed.) A. Cochrane.

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 566–69. Endorsed in Cochrane's hand at top of first page: "No. 4/A Cochrane."

CAPTAIN TRISTRAM R. RICKETTS, R.N., TO  
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

8 P M—the 8th. Feby. 1815  
H M Ship *Vengeur* off Mobile

Sir/

I do myself the honor to inform you that the Troops landed early this morning, without opposition; and immediately invested the Fort on the land side—the advanced posts taking a position within eight hundred Yards of the Battery

The instant the Troops were on shore the Boats were employed in landing Provisions, Engineer and Artillery stores—two Six pounders & two Howitzers—the Eighteen will be on shore, soon after day-light to morrow agreeable to the wishes of Major General Lambert—

I can assure you Sir, that every exertion has been made by the Squadron you have done me the honor to place under my orders, and a most cordial plan of operation's is established with the army departments.

I have not yet communicated with the Captain of the *Aetna* but will take measures for placing that vessel to the best advantage to morrow

I was concerned to observe the *Meteor* aground on the Spit— I have directed the Master of the *Vengeur* to lay down a Buoy on the South Point of that shoal—

Captn Pearse of the *Royal Oak* informs me, you wished that ship to rejoin you as soon as her service's here could be dispensed with:—which I hope to comply with to morrow—

as a Division of the Troops advanced on the Sea Side, the Fort fired a few Shot; and unfortunately killed two Privates of the 21st. Regt. and severely wounded another—

At the request of the General I have landed from the Squadron one hundred Seamen Commanded by the Honbl. Captn. Spencer of the *Carron*.— I remain Sir with evry respect Your most obedient & humble Servant

T. R. Ricketts

MAJOR GENERAL JOHN LAMBERT, BRITISH ARMY, TO  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR AND THE COLONIES EARL BATHURST

Head Quarters Isle Dauphine  
Febry. 14th 1815—

My Lord./.

My dispatch dated January the 29th.<sup>1</sup> will have informed Your Lordship of the reembarkation of this force, which was completed on the 30th. The weather came on so bad that night and continued so untill the 5th. that no communication could be held with the Ships at the inner Anchorage, a distance of about 17 Miles. It being agreed between Vice Admiral Sir Alexdr. Cochrane and myself that operations should be carried on towards Mobile, it was decided that a force should be sent against Fort Bowyer situated on the Eastern Point of the Entrance of the Bay and from every Information that could be obtained it was considered a Brigade would be sufficient for this object, with a respectable force of Artillery. I ordered the 2d. Brigade composed of the 4th. 44th. and 21st Regiments for this Service together with such means in the Engineer and Artillery Departments as the Chief Engineer and Commanding Officer of the Royal Artillery might think expedient. The remainder of the force had orders to disembark on the Isle Dauphine and encamp, and M General Keane whom I am happy to say has returned to his Duty superintended this arrangement.

The weather being favorable on the 7th for landing to the Eastward of Mobile Point, the Ships destined to move on that Service, sailed under the command of Captain Ricketts, Royal Navy, but did not arrive in sufficient time that evening to do more than determine the place of disembarkation, which was about 3 Miles from Fort Bowyer. At daylight the next Morning the Troops got into the Boats and 600 Men were landed under Lt Colonel Deibbrig of the 44th. without opposition, who immediately threw out the Light Companies of the Brigade under Lieutt. Bennett of the 4th. Regt. to cover the landing, upon the whole being disembarked, a disposition was made to move on towards the fort covered by the Light Companies. The Enemy was not seen untill about 1200 Yards in front of their work. They Gradually fell back and no firing took place untill the whole had retired into the Fort and our advance had pushed on nearly to within 300 Yards. Having reconnoitred the Fort, with Lieutenant Colonels Burgoyne and Dickson, we were decidedly of opinion that the work was only formidable against an assault, that Batteries being once established it must speedily fall. Every exertion was made by the Navy to land Provisions and the necessary equipment of a Battering Train and Engineers Stores. We broke ground on the night of the 8th and advanced a firing party to within 100 Yards of the Fort during the night. The Position of the Batteries being fixed upon the next day, they were ready to receive their Guns on the night of the 10th, and on the Morning of the eleventh the fire of a Battery of 4, 18 pounders on the left, and two eight inch Howitzers on the Right, each at about 600 Yards distance, two 6 pounders at 300 Yards, and 8 small Coehorns advantageously placed on the right, with Intervals, between 100 and 200 Yards, all furnished to keep up an incessant fire for two days, were prepared to open—

Preparatory to commencing I summoned the Fort allowing the Commanding officer half an hour for his decision upon such terms as were proposed, finding

he was inclined to consider them I prolonged the period at his request, and at 3 O'clock the Fort was given up to a British Guard, and British Colors hoisted, the terms being signed by Major Smith Military Secretary and Captain Ricketts R. Navy and finally approved of by the Vice Admiral and myself, which I have the honor to enclose.<sup>2</sup>

I am happy to say our loss has not been great, and we are indebted for this in a great measure to the efficient means attached to this Force, had we been obliged to resort to any other mode of attack it's fall could not have been looked for under such favorable circumstances. We have certain Information of a Force having been sent from Mobile and disembarked about 12 Miles off in the night of the 10th to attempt it's relief, two Schooners with Provisions and an intercepted letter fell into our hands taken by Captain Price R.N. stationed in the Bay.

I cannot close this Dispatch without naming to Your Lordship again Lieutt. Colonels Dickson R.A. and Burgoyne R. Engineers who displayed their usual zeal and abilities. Lieutt. Bennett of the 4th. who commanded the Light Companies and pushed up close to the Enemy's work. Captain the Honble. Robert Spencer of the Royal Navy who had been placed under my orders greatly facilitated the service in every way by his exertions.

From Captain Ricketts of the R.N. who was charged with the landing and disposition of the naval force I received every assistance I have the honor to be Your Lordship's Most obedient humble Servant.

John Lambert  
M: General Commd.

LS, UK-KeNA, WO 1/141, fols. 118–20.

1. Lambert to Bathurst, *ibid.*, fols. 109–11.

2. Not printed. See *ibid.*, fol. 121.

BREVET LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM LAWRENCE, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Fort Bowyer Feby. 12th. 1815

Sir

Imperious necessity has compelled me to enter into Articles of Capitulation with Major Genl. John Lambert Comdg. his B M Forces in front of Fort Bowyer a copy<sup>1</sup> of which I forward you for the purpose of effecting an immediate exchange of Prisoners nothing but the want of Provisions and finding myself completely surrounded by thousands [*of*] Batteries erected on the Sand Mounds which completely command the Fort and the enemy having advanced by the regular approaches within thirty yards of the Ditch and the utter impossibility of getting any assistance or supplies could have induced me to adopt this measure feeling confident and it being the unanimous opinion of the Officers that we could not retain the Post and that the lives of many valuable Officers and Soldiers would have been uselessly Sacrificed I thought it most advisable to adopt this plan a full and correct statement will be furnished you as early as possible

Captain Chamberlain who bears this to E. Livingston Esqr. will relate to him many particulars which will I hope be Satisfactory I am with respectfully Yr. Obd. H Servt.

W<sup>m</sup> Lawrence  
Lt. Col. Comdg.

ALS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 16). Jackson forwarded a copy of this correspondence to Acting Secretary of War Monroe in Jackson to Monroe, 24 February 1815, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, J-227 (8) (M221, Roll No. 63).

1. Not printed. For a printed version, see *Daily National Intelligencer*, 20 March 1815.

BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES WINCHESTER, U.S.A., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

Mobile 16th Feb 1815

Sir

I have the mortification to inform you that the garrison of Fort Bowyer surrendered by capitulation to an overwhelming force of the enemy on sunday last the 12th instant This information I have received from Major Blue who was sent with a detachment to raize the siege if possible or effect a diversion of the enemies force; He arrived within four miles of the point on monday and surprised and took one of the enemies piquets consisting of 17 men but he was 24 hours too late to relieve the garrison, we have lost three of the small schooners which transported this detachment to Bon Secour and one has not been heard of which saild with supplies for the garrison. I expect Major Blues detachment has arrived on the east side of the bay opposite to this; by this time and am now sending the means of transport across to bring it over prisoners state the enemies force to be 5,000 strong. General McIntosh is not arrived but daily expected, you will herewith receive a copy of his last letter to me.<sup>1</sup>

Provisions is becoming a serious subject of concern; If this precious arti[c]le was transported across lake Ponchaetrain would not the road from where it could be Landed be shorter and better to Mount Vernon than from the Natchez

I have had the honor to receive your dispatch of the 20th. ult. I am most respectfully Sir Your Obedient Servant

J Winchester B. Genl  
com E Sec 7th. M Dist

LS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 16). For another printed copy of this letter, see Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 280–81.

1. See John McIntosh to Winchester, 8 February 1815, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 16).



## Peace or War

*Just a day after the capture of Fort Bowyer, Vice Admiral Cochrane received official notice that the United States and Great Britain had concluded a peace treaty at Ghent, Belgium on Christmas Eve day 1814. As the treaty would not go into effect until both nations had exchanged ratifications of the peace terms, Cochrane had to prepare both for peace and the possibility of continued fighting. The documents that follow provide insights into the type of campaign the Scottish admiral envisioned waging had the war in America continued for another year. They also speak to the importance of the Indian as a factor in British plans for both war and peace.*

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 26

Tonnant off Mobile Bay  
14th. February 1815.—

Sir,

As the departure of the convoy from Jamaica is deferred until the 15th. Instant I dispatch a Ship of War to the Havanna to meet the *Ramillies* and deliver to her this Letter, that my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty may have the earliest information respecting the operations of the combined Forces upon this Coast.

It being the intention of Major General Lambert and myself to have attacked Mobile, in which we were to be assisted by the co-operation within Land of the Indians from Apalachicola, I had previously sent round Major Nicolls and their Chiefs to bring on the Force assembled there, consisting of about two thousand Men; and having directed Rear Admiral Malcolm to proceed within the Islands with a Division of the Army to be landed upon Ile Dauphine, upon the 6th. I weighed with the Line of Battle and Troop Ships, having the remainder of the Army on board and the same Night anchored off Bay Mobile.

Finding the Entrance into the Bay so guarded by Fort Boyer as to render it unsafe to attempt forcing a passage with the smaller ships of War, the Major General and myself found it adviseable to attack the Fort by Land, and on the 7th. a Detachment of Ships under the command of Capt. Ricketts of the *Vengeur* effected a landing of the Troops intended for this Service about three miles to the eastward of the Fort which was immediately invested, and our Trenches, in the course of forty eight hours pushed to within pistol shot of the Enemy's Works.

The Batteries being compleated, upon the 11th. the Fort was summoned, when the Officer commanding it seeing the impossibility of effecting any good by farther resistance agreed to surrender upon the terms proposed to him by Major General Lambert,\*<sup>1</sup> and on the following day the Garrison consisting of about three hundred and sixty six Soldiers of the Enemy's second Regiment of Infantry and Artillery marched out and grounded their Arms; and were embarked on board the Ships of the Squadron.<sup>2</sup>

The Fort was found to be in a complete state of repair; having twenty two Guns mounted and being amply provided with ammunition.

Having thus secured the command of the Bay preparations were making for further operations when yesterday, your Letter No. 228<sup>3</sup> was brought to me, by

his Majesty's Sloop *Brazen* enclosing a Copy of an Order<sup>4</sup> that is to be forwarded to me in the event of the President of the United States ratifying the Treaty of Peace concluded at Ghent on the 24th. of December— In consequence of which I proceeded on Shore to consult with Major General Lambert, when it was considered beneficial to the Service to continue—, the Army in the position it now occupies upon Ile Dauphine and in Fort Boyer until information shall arrive whether the President of the United States intends ratifying the Treaty. This will give time for the arrival of Major General Powers and the 27th. Regiment, and the Army will be farther considerably reinforced by the Convalescents from the Hospital Ships.

The Enemy's force at Mobile consists of about five hundred Regular Troops and four thousand Militia, with a few Indians; and as the object of the reduction of Mobile was principally to secure the Indians in their possessions; which appears to be attained by the Treaty if ratified— I trust that the resolution we have come to will be approved of by his Majesty's Government.

I enclose for the farther information of their Lordships a Copy of my instructions to Major Nicolls which I shall send to him both to Apalachicola and over land by Pensacola, through the Indian territory, to stay the proceedings of the Indians and the detachments under his Orders until he shall receive further directions from myself or from Rear Admiral Malcolm.

It is my intention to proceed immediately in this Ship to the Chesapeake in order to gain the earliest information of the measures that may be pursued by the Executive of the United States, that hostile operations may recommence on Shore with as little delay as possible should the Treaty not be ratified.

Rear Admiral Malcolm will remain with the Army until my return, or until he receives official information that a Peace is concluded, when he will act conformably to such instructions as he may receive from their Lordships during my absence, and with the spirit of Lord Bathurst's directions to the Commander of the Forces.

I enclose Captain Ricketts report<sup>5</sup> of the proceedings of the Division sent under his orders to co-operate with the Army against Fort Boyer. To this Officer and to the Honorable Captain Spencer who commanded the Seamen landed with the Army I am indebted for their zeal and exertions in landing and transporting the Cannon and Supplies by which the Fort was so speedily reduced. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your obedient humble Servant

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane

Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LS, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 527–30. For a duplicate of this letter, see fols. 535–38.

1. In the left-hand margin the following text appears: “\*A copy of the Capitulation is enclosed.” The surrender articles are not printed. Two copies appear on UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 534 and 541.

2. For documents on the capture of Fort Bowyer, see pp. 1049–54.

3. Croker to Cochrane, 27 December 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2344, fol. 143.

4. Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Cochrane, 27 December 1814, *ibid.* An unsigned and signed copy of this order appear on fols. 145–46 and 147–48 respectively.

5. Ricketts to Cochrane, 15 February 1815, *ibid.*, fol. 533.

[Enclosure]  
(Copy)

*Tonnant* off Mobile Bay  
14th. Feby. 1815.—

Sir,

As I have received information from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that a treaty of Peace was signed between Great Britain and the United States by the Plenipotentiaries at Ghent upon the 24th. December, that, when ratified by the President of the United States will be final, and hostilities cease between the two Powers, and as by the said treaty the Indian Nations are included and placed upon the same footing in every particular with respect to the United States as they were in 1811.—

I have therefore to request that you will signify the same to the Indian Nations and acquaint them that until the ratification is known to be made by the President of the United States, I recommend their keeping upon the defensive only; securing for themselves provisions from the Enemy for their present support, until I can procure them supplies of Corn from the Spanish Main.— You will therefore use your utmost endeavours to restrain their hostilities as much as possible until you receive information whether the treaty has been ratified by the President.—when you will cease from all acts of hostility whatever, and recommend to the Indian Nations to do the same, by which they will assure to themselves the advantages secured to them by the treaty.

Rear Admiral Malcolm will give you notice should the treaty be rejected by the President and instruct you how to act.

Fort Boyer has surrendered, and we have taken twenty two Pieces of Cannon, and about four hundred Prisoners; The Enemy have nearly five thousand Men at Mobile, and our Army remains part at Fort Boyer and part upon Dauphine Island, until it is known whether or not hostilities are to recommence—

I enclose for the information of the Indian Nations the article of the treaty<sup>1</sup> relating to them, you will also acquaint them that I have directed the presents to be distributed amongst them and such further Arms as they may stand in need of and if you think that the Field Pieces and other Cannon now with you can contribute to their defence they will be left in their possession with an ample supply of ammunition.

It is my intention to proceed to the Chesapeake, you will therefore correspond with Rear Admiral Malcolm.— I have the honor to be Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant.

(Signed) Alexr. Cochrane.—  
Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief.

Brevet Major Nicolls  
Commg. a detachment  
&c.— &c.— &c.—<sup>2</sup>

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 539–40. For two other copies of this letter, see *ibid.*, fols. 531–32, and, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 266–68.

1. Article 9 of the peace treaty provided for the restoration of Indian lands taken from British-allied tribes since the declaration of war. Before this article could have effect, Indian nations still at war with the United States had to cease fighting.

2. This address line appeared at the foot of the first page.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL SIR PULTENEY MALCOLM, R.N.

No. 1  
(A Copy)

By the Honble Sir A: Cochrane K B.  
&c.— &c— &c—.

In consequence of the arrival of His Majesty's Sloop *Brazen*, bringing out information that a Treaty of Peace had been signed at Ghent, between Great Britain and America, in terms of which Hostilities are to cease, on both sides, as soon as it is ratified by the President of the United States; I have judged it proper for the more readily putting a period to Hostilities to proceed to the Bay of Chesapeake; from whence I can with more facility communicate with the different Squadrons.

You are therefore hereby required and directed, to take all the Ships at present here, under your orders, except those named in the Margin,<sup>1</sup> and continue upon the execution of the Service upon which you are now Employed; acting in concert with Major General Lambert, for the prosecution of Hostilities against the United States, until such time as You shall be officially informed that the Treaty has been ratified by the President.

For your guidance I enclose you a Copy of my Instructions from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, with which you will implicitly comply.\*<sup>2</sup>

Should the Ratification take place you will embark the Army and order their conveyance to such place or places, as the General shall point out. If to England and you have not a sufficiency of Provisions, you will order them to call at Bermuda to be victual[led.]

Previous to your leaving [the?] Station you will direct the *Cydnus*, and two (or more if necessary) Sloops of War, to remain for the protection of the Indian Establishment at Apalachicola until such time as they are restored to their possessions, in terms of the Treaty of Peace; and you will leave such proportion of the Indian Presents to be distributed amongst them, as they may be found to require. After they shall be fully provided for, you will consult with the Storekeeper General, as to the remainder of these presents, which may be conveyed either to Bermuda or Providence for the farther Orders of Government; placing the whole on board one Vessel.

When this is done there will be no farther occasion for the Marine Garrison, which with the Field Gun you will order to be embarked, and sent to Bermuda, if not wanted at Apalachicola.

Should the Treaty of Peace not be ratified by the President, of the United States, you will continue Hostilities upon this Coast until the last week of March,

when it will become necessary to remove the Army to the eastern Coast of Georgia; leaving for the protection of the Indians, at Apalachicola, such Force as the General may judge adequate thereto, with a division of Transports to receive them on board should they at any time be forced to embark; these Transports should contain a proportion of Provisions equal to, at least, four months Supply for the Troops, and you will provide Indian Corn for the use of the Indians and their Families, either from Campechy or La Vera Cruz, to save the expence of issuing Flour.

Being in the Vicinity of Washington, I shall be in the way to send you the earliest information, with instructions how to act. For it is very probable if the Treaty of Peace is rejected by the President, that the Army here will be called for, in support of the northern States, should they separate from the Union; but previous to your leaving this Coast you will consult with the General, if the War continues, what Force will be necessary to support the Indians, in addition to that now under Major Nicolls. In my opinion a Force not less then 1,500 Men will be required, including a strong British Regiment, which may be conveyed by the Apalachicola River to the higher Country, to act upon the back part of Georgia; by which they will always have a secure retreat to the Fort at the Bluff.<sup>3</sup> In this case you will take care to arrange for their being regularly supplied with Bread or Flour, Rum and Salt; as the Country abounds in Cattle a small proportion of Salt Provisions only, will be required. You will in this case endeavour to find a safe Anchorage for the Ships which I think will be to the eastward of the Shoal laying off Cape St. Blaze, west of Apalachicola river, and you will leave all the Gun Boats to be employed in aid to the Army, and to assist in transporting the Provisions up the river; and such other Vessels as are best calculated for that Navigation

The Spanish Governor at Pensacola<sup>4</sup> having requested, that a part of the Spanish Troops, removed to the Bluff, when the American Army attacked that Place may be returned, you will send a Troop Ship to Apalachicola to receive them on board, and land them in the Harbour of Pensacola, victualling them in the same manner as British Troops.

An arrangement having been entered into between General Lambert and myself, with the American General Jackson, when near New Orleans, that as soon as we restored all American Prisoners, taken before the 16th. of January, he was to send to the mouth of the Mississippi, an equal number of English Prisoners in exchange, about two hundred have already been sent from the Fleet and Army, and I expect one hundred more by the *Cydnus*, from the *Ramill[ies]* which she is directed to land at the mouth of the river. As soon as an equal number shall be returned, you may commence to exchange the Garrison of Fort Boyer, receiving first the British Prisoners from New Orleans for whom you will return an equal number; but should the Peace be ratified, you will deliver up the whole, as soon as you have received all the British Soldiers from New Orleans: for which purpose General Lambert may find it necessary to send Officers to receive them.<sup>5</sup>

You will cause all the Ships to touch at the Havanna for refreshments, and I will endeavour to make an arrangement, to have them regularly supplied, by some respectable House, upon contract.

I have directed four vessels laden with Provisions to be sent from Bermuda, and one from New Providence, the latter you may expect in a fortnight the others in five weeks. The *Diomedé* now in her passage from Jamaica, has also a Supply on

board for the Fleet, and orders are Sent there for a quantity to be forwarded, the moment the Convoy arrives from England.

I have directed Captain Dashwood to proceed to La Vera Cruz (his order I enclose)<sup>6</sup> after completing the service he is going upon, should the Peace take place, you may permit the *Norge* to convoy to Spain, or the Havanna from La Vera Cruz such Treasure as the Government may chuse to send; but in the event of no Treasure being to be sent, you will direct the *Norge* to proceed to Jamaica to take home one of the Summer Convoys.

Should any Vessels laden with Flour, or other Provisions, Prize[s] to the *Shelburne* or *Annaconda*, arrive in the Squadron, their Cargoes are to be taken for the Service, and triplicate receipts sent to me, for the Agents to whom they will be consigned; the Vessels and Crews you will forward to Bermuda, for condemnation when you can spare them.

When you have no longer occasion for the hired Craft employed upon the expedition, you will send back those Vessels belonging to Jamaica, under Convoy; to be delivered over to the Agent of Transports there, with directions for their being returned to their Owners; those Vessels hired at Pensacola by the Honorable Captain Spencer, must be returned and their hire paid for by Mr. Gamble, on account of the Navy Board, or by any other Person you may appoint for this service, remuneration must also be made, for a Quantity of Iron work, and Stores, which were left in these Vessels for want of other Ballast, and reported to have been partly thrown overboard, from time to time, when they have taken the ground. During my absence from hence, you will open all public Letters, coming to my address, either from the Admiralty, from public boards, from Jamaica, or from any other part of my Command and act, upon them as far as may be required for the service of the Squadron here, or for that of the Jamaica Station, sending them on to me after taking such Extracts as you may require for your guidance.

When the Garrison of Apalachicola is embarked, you will send the Vessels named in the margin<sup>7</sup> to Jamaica, with directions for their following the Orders of the Senior Officer there, considering that Station under my Command, and Subject to your directions, until you are about to leave the Gulf of Mexico, when you will instruct the Senior officer upon the said Station to take upon himself the whole charge and superint[*end*]ance thereof.

Given onboard the *Tonnant*  
off Mobile Bay Feby. 17th. 1815

(Signed) A. Cochrane

By Command of the Vice Admiral  
Sigd. Wm. Balhetchet Secy:

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 556–61. Endorsed: “A Cochrane.”

1. *Tonnant*, *Vengeur*, and *Asia*.

2. In the left-hand margin the following text appears: “\*A Letter No. 228 of 27th. Decr./14 with its Enclosure.” See Croker to Cochrane, 27 December 1814, and, Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Cochrane, 27 December 1814, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2344, fols. 143–48.

3. Prospect Bluff, the site of a British-built fort at which Brevet Major Edward Nicolls of the Royal Marines equipped and trained Indians and runaway slaves for service in Cochrane's Gulf Coast operations. For documents on Nicolls's activities, see pp. 859–70, 928–33, 935, 1056, and 1057.

4. Mateo González Manrique, governor of West Florida.

5. On 16 January 1815, the U.S. and British commanders agreed to the terms of a prisoner exchange. For this agreement and related documents, see pp. 1026–34.

6. Not found.

7. *Cydnus*, *Herald*, and *Anaconda*.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
REAR ADMIRAL SIR PULTENEY MALCOLM, R.N.

No. 2

By the Honble. Sir A. Cochrane K.B.  
&ca.— &ca.— &ca.—

Should the Peace be ratified by the President of the United States you will do your utmost to persuade the Indian Nations to accept of the Article which provides for their security, and that they sign a Copy of the Treaty as independant Nations ceasing from all kind of Hostilities against the United States, who are bound to restore to them all the Territories of which they were in possession in 1811.

You will endeavour to impress upon them, the risk they will run by continuing the War with the United States, in which the[y] cannot be assisted by Great Britain, that by Peace and a free communication with the British Nations by the river Apalachicola, they will grow rich, and being free from War become populous, so as to be able to defend themselves, from all future encroachments of the United States

You will leave with them such Cannon and Military Stores, as they may require for their Fort at Apalachicola, and have distributed amongst them such Presents as you think requisite, giving them also the Supply of Indian Corn, that is directed to be brought here by Captain Dashwood, such Presents as remain after your satisfying the Indians, you will cause to be put into One Vessel and sent to Bermuda

The Negroes who have taken refuge with the Fleet, you will endeavour to persuade to go back to their former Masters, should they determine however not to return, you will suffer those who choose to adopt a Military life, to inlist into any of the West India Regiments now here, where they and their Families will be received agreeable to the Instructions of Government, upon that head, those who are not so inclined will be sent to the Island of Trinidad, the Governor Sir Ralph Woodford having instructions to provide for them.

As directed in the accompanying Instructions when Peace is concluded you are to embark Major Nicolls and his Detachment of Marines; the coloured or Colonial Marines, and the Company of the 5th. West India Regiment now there are also to be embarked. The Marines you will send to England if you have a sufficiency of Provisions, otherwise to Bermuda or Halifax. The Company of the West India Regiment is, to be sent to Jamaica, and the Refugees will be disposed of agreeably to what is before directed.

I enclose a Copy of the Instructions which I have given to the Honorable Captain Spencer and Mr. Gamble to proceed to Apalachicola for the purpose of enquiring into the state of the Garrison there.<sup>1</sup>

Given onboard the *Tonnant*  
off Mobile Bay Feby. 17th. 1815  
(Signed) A. Cochrane

Copy, UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 562–63.

1. See Cochrane to Robert Spencer and Robert Gamble, 17 February 1815, *ibid.*, fols. 572–73.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
MAJOR GENERAL JOHN LAMBERT, BRITISH ARMY

*Tonnant* off Mobile Bay  
17th. Feby. 1815.—

Sir

Conceiving it to be of the utmost importance to the future operations which may be carried on upon the Coast of America, that the earliest possible information should be obtained, whether it is the intention of the President of the United States to ratify the treaty of peace lately signed at Ghent. I propose leaving the Command of His Majesty's Ships now here with Rear Admiral Malcolm, and to proceed myself direct to the Bay of Chesapeake, where being in the vicinity of Washington, I can have immediate communication with the American Government.

In my letter of the 3d. February<sup>1</sup> I communicated to you the views of His Majesty's Government relative to the Indian tribes, and as in consequence of the recent Accounts from England, the immediate attack of Mobile is postponed or given up; I beg leave now to state what I would recommend for our future operations, (should the war continue,) which have already been made known to His Majesty's Government and met with their approbation. As it is a material object to support the Indian Nations now in Arms upon the Apalachicola River, who have hitherto been countenanced by the presence of a small body of Marines under Major Nicolls, which force will not now be sufficient to protect them against what the Enemy may be enabled to bring against them. I beg leave to propose that previous to the Army under your command leaving the Gulf of Mexico one British Regiment and the two West India Regiments may be landed at Apalachicola, which with the Marines and the Recruits that have been obtained from the American Blacks will form a Corps of above two thousand men; these when embodied with the Indians will amount to about five thousand possibly more. With this force I propose making an inroad into the back of Georgia, while that state is invaded upon the Atlantic frontier by the remainder of the force under your Command, joined by that now acting there



under the orders of Rear Admiral Cockburn. This will find full employment for the Kentucky and Tennessee Militia and prevent them from sending any force against Canada, during the next campaign and also oblige the Enemy to keep a very considerable force inactive both at New Orleans and Mobile. The Army acting upon the Georgia frontier will always have the River Apalachicola to retire upon where a fort at the Bluff, has been constructed for the protection of the families of the Indians, while the warriors are in the field. Rear Admiral Malcolm will arrange the means for Victualling the Troops left at Apalachicola whose principal wants will be Bread, Rum and Salt, as the Country abounds in Cattle.

B[r]evet Major Nicolls will be instructed to put himself under the orders of such officers as you may think proper to command the whole, his province being confined to the Command of his troops and attending upon the Indians in seeing them properly supplied.

Before you can arrive upon the Coast of Georgia, the question of peace or war will have been decided, if the latter, I will join you there; or if I shall be called to any other Quarter, you will receive the earliest information, and I will take care to keep you regularly informed of the measures that may be adopted by the executive of the United States. If Peace is established between the two Countries, Rear Admiral Malcolm has my instructions to comply with your directions for the disposal of the Troops, and to forward them to the places of their destination with as little delay as possible I am &ca.

Signed. A Cochrane.

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 270–72. For another copy of this letter, see UK-KeNA, Adm. 1/508, fols. 564–65.

1. Cochrane to Lambert, 3 February 1815, pp. 1049–51.

## Toward a Peacetime Establishment

*At its peak strength in the summer of 1812, the New Orleans Station counted three brigs and nearly a dozen gunboats on its rolls.<sup>1</sup> By early 1815, the number of seagoing vessels attached to the station had been reduced to a sole gunboat. Lacking a credible naval force to provide for his station's maritime defense, Daniel Patterson wrote to newly appointed Navy Secretary Benjamin Crowninshield, seeking to enlarge the number of men and ships assigned to New Orleans. Patterson urged the acquisition of speedy, shallow-draft vessels, capable of navigating the station's extensive waterways and fighting the continued pirate menace. While Crowninshield recognized the necessity of strengthening the New Orleans Station, he directed Patterson—in language reminiscent of the economy-minded William Jones—to keep his command's expenses pared to the bone.*

1. *The three brigs were Siren, Enterprise, and Viper, all of which had departed the station by early April of 1813. The ship Louisiana (formerly Remittance), purchased into service in summer of 1812, is not reckoned in the above tally, as it was restricted to river duty. For lists of the vessels assigned to New Orleans in 1812, see Dudley, Naval War of 1812, Vol. 1, pp. 378–79, 385.*

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

New orleans 10th: February 1815

Sir,

By the several statements of the Naval Force on this station, which I had the honor to make to you prior to the arrival of the Enemy on this coast; but particularly that of the 10th: September last,<sup>1</sup> detailing the Force Rigg build, and construction of each Vessel on this station at that date; the Force remaining will readily be perceived by my subsequent communications; consisting at present, of the Ship *Louisiana*; One Gun Vessel; One Dispatch Vessel, two Gun Barges, & two Launches:—

By the instructions of the Department under date of the 8th: July last,<sup>2</sup> I was authorized to purchase two Small Vessels for Gun Vessels one was purchased the present *No. 65*, and in virtue of that power, when opportunity Offers I shall purchase the second; but by my instructions from the Department,<sup>3</sup> on placing me in this command, I am interdicted from purchasing under any circumstances, any Vessel without the previous approbation of the Department; From the statement herin made of the present, Force, you will readily perceive the indispensable necessity there exists for a speedy, and strong addition to it; for the maritime defence of this Country which from to its almost innumerable water courses, requires many Vessels mounting heavy cannon, and strongly manned to render that defence efficient; and I trust that the aid the small Naval Force, which was on this station at the arrival of the Enemy has rendered (as is freely acknowledged by the Genl. comg. the Troops and the Governor of the state) in their expulsion,<sup>4</sup> will induce the Government hereafter to encrease this establishment, both in Vessels, and men, and the Department to view it in a more favorable light than heretofore

I have, to request that if it meets the views of the Department, I may be empowered to purchase such small Vessels, as I may deem fit to answer for the immediate defence, and protection of the Lakes & Bayou's within my command; several Vessels admirably calculated for the public service on this station, by their fleet sailing, light draught of water, and strenght of Frame; might at this moment be purchased here on moderate terms.—

I would also beg leave to suggest the great advantages of a few Gun Brigs being built here, of dimentions & constructions adapted for the shoal Waters of this station, to carry heavy calibre, which might act in the several capacities of cruising Vessels on this Coast, Battering Vessels; and to guard the Waters approaching to this City, and Mobile; there is already cut, and seasoned at Tchifonté Timber of the most superior quality, sufficient for the construction of Four such Vessels as are herin contemplated; which number would with Eight Gun Boats, attached to them, afford great defence and security, and I have not doubt, they could be built as expeditiously as faithfully, & as reasonably here as in any of our Atlantic Ports, their equipment, and maintenance, would very little exceed that of Gun Vessels, and they would be at least trible their efficiency; the British Vessels of this discription keep the sea constantly in the British Channel, Winter and summer.—

I would also respectfully submit to your consideration, attaching Two fast sailing Schooners to this Station, to cruize in the Gulf of Mexico, harrass the Enemys

trade, between Jamaica, and the Havana; as well as to hang on the rear of Jamaica Convoys, from which they might cut off many valuable Vessels, & by that means greatly distress the Enemy for, with the Gun Brigs supported by the Gun Boats, herin mentioned; they could always be secure of a Harbour if chased by superior Force.—

You will doubtless have been informed of the advanced state of the Block Ship, which is on the Stocks at Tchifonté & her progress having been stopped by the orders of the Hon'ble your predecessor;<sup>5</sup> The completion of that Ship, I beg leave most earnestly to advise; for from recent experience, I am well convinced, that had she been in commission, the Enemy could not have effected a Landing on any part of the Island of Orleans, where they could not bring their heavy Ships, which the shoalness of our waters effectually prevents their bringing within some Miles of our shores; nor having Landed, could they have embarked their Troops again or have ever captured the five Gun Boats. Should she be finished the Gun Brigs might be reduced to Two. Enclosed I do myself the honor, to transmit a Copy of a letter from General Jackson,<sup>6</sup> relative to this ship; by which you will perceive he wishes to complete her with Funds, which would otherwise be expended in Fortifications, which he thinks would not be as efficient.—

I have, presuming the Department cannot object to it, consented that she should be finished in this way, to be then manned, armed, and equipped by me; which I trust will meet your approbation. I should not have taken upon myself this responsibility, but for the very great, and important exigencies of the times, and the indispensable necessity there exists, of placing the Country in the strongest possible state of defence with the least delay; but time sufficient will Elap[s]e prior to her causing any expenditure from this Department, for me to receive such instructions relative thereto, as you may deem necessary.—

So soon as the Officers and seamen captured in the Gun Boats shall be exchanged,<sup>7</sup> a proportion of whom I have already received I shall have on this Station all persons included about Four hundred, of these many of the seamens Term, of service will very soon expire, but who I shall endeavour to reship. I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Your Obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, No. 31 (M147, Roll No. 6).

1. Patterson meant his letter of 9 September 1814, written in response to a Navy Department circular of 16 August 1814. His enclosed report on the naval force at New Orleans is missing. See Patterson to Jones, 9 September 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 47 (M147, Roll No. 5). For the Navy Department's circular of 6 August, see DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 406–7 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. Jones to Patterson, 8 July 1814, pp. 812–13.

3. See Jones to Patterson, 18 October 1813, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 669–70. In this letter, Jones directed “that no vessels are to be purchased, or built; nor no alterations in the Hull, Rigging, or Armament; nor any extensive repairs to be made, without the previous approbation of this Department.” Quoted text on p. 670.

4. Both Major General Andrew Jackson and Governor William C. C. Claiborne offered public praise of the Navy's role in defending New Orleans. See p. 1043 and p. 1047.

5. See Jones to Patterson, 7 March 1814, pp. 809–10. Secretary Jones styled the block ship “a worthless, useless hulk.” Quoted text on p. 810.

6. Not found.

7. For documents on the exchange of prisoners taken during the New Orleans campaign, see pp. 1026–34.

MASTER COMMANDANT DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

New Orleans 27th: Febuary 1815

Sir

I have the honor to inform that by my instructions when placed in command of this Station by the Honorable your predecessor, the sum of Twenty thousand Dollars  $\wp$  month was allotted to cover the whole Naval expenditures; on the New Orleans Station,<sup>1</sup> which was to take effect from and after the 1st. December 1813, all accounts anterior to that date to be previously liquidated; but as I have before stated many accounts for my predecessors command were left unpaid, tho' all have been since paid off.—<sup>2</sup>

Out of this monthly stipend the commanding Officer of the Marines, for his Corps draws three thousand Dollars, and the Purser on account of pay & subsistence draws six thousand Dollars Monthly, leaving only a balance of Eleven thousand Dollars, for the purchase of Slops, of every discription which on this station are exorbitantly dear; for the purchase of Provisions; Beef, Pork, and whiskey only excepted; the various articles of which are very expensive here; and to defray the current expenses of the station; the sums thus limited  $\wp$  month, you will readily perceive is, as has been experienced inadequate for the Force which was on this Station, and will be if that which is required should be authorized; instead therefore of fixing any precise sum, I beg leave to suggest that the Navy agent should be suffered to draw for a limited sum,  $\wp$  month beyond the Twenty thousand Dollars, this he could do by selling Bills to individuals, and let the credit of the Twenty thousand Dollars remain as it now exists; or encrease it to Twenty Five thousand Dollars,  $\wp$  month. Every possible exertion has been made by me to lessen the expenses, of this station, which must necessarily at all times, but particularly during war, greatly exceed in proportion that of any other, so long as we have to depend upon this Market, where every article necessary for the Naval Service is full [1]00  $\wp$  Ct. higher than in any other City in the Union.—<sup>3</sup>

Upon the appearance of the Enemy on this coast, apprehending the difficulties usually attending a state of alarm, and which I foresaw would occur here I directed the Navy agent to place Twenty thousand Dollars, over and above the monthly credit at my disposal for the public Service, to enable me fully to carry into effect my views in conjunction with those of General Jackson for the defence of Country; large disbursements have unavoidably been made by the Navy Department here, for the army, to facilitate & expedite the various necessary supplies of amunition, armament and equipments which would otherwise have suffered a delay, that must have proved fatal to the Country; nearly all the cannon, and amunition used during the whole campain, with various other supplies being furnished by the Navy<sup>4</sup> a statement of which will be transmitted to you as soon as it can be correctly made, and which will clearly and pointedly shew, the very important aid the Navy Department has in that way alone rendered towards the expulsion of the Enemy and consequent salvation of this highly important portion of the union a fact that will I confidently trust, prove extremely gratifying to the Department. For the sums expended beyond the limited credit in the Louisiana Bank, I shall authorize the Navy agent when he finds it necessary to draw on the Department whose drafts will I trust be duly honored.—

A letter from the acting secretary of the Navy advises the Navy Agent, that no Beef or Pork, is to be expected for this Station, from the Western Country for the ensuing year, and that he must depend upon this Market for procuring the necessary supplies; as so much of those Articles will be bought up by the army Contractors; I would beg leave to suggest that great expense would be saved by the Department's again authorizing the Navy agent in Kentucky<sup>5</sup> to forward five, or six hundred Barrels one half of each.—

The expense of this station would be very much reduced were the articles of Ship Chandlery &c necessary for the equipment of Vessels, sent from the Atlantic States and placed in the Navy store, and in the winter the articles of cheese and Butter, in the rations might be furnished at a very low rate by contract from the Western States, as during that season little or no loss would occur, in its delivery. I have directed the Navy agent to give me an Inventory of every article in store, a copy of which will be immediately transmitted for the information of the Department.— I have the honor to be With great consideration and respect Your obt. Servt.

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, No. 44 (M147, Roll No. 6.).

1. On 13 October 1813, William Jones appointed Patterson to assume command of the New Orleans Station upon the departure of Captain John Shaw. The Navy Secretary's orders directed Patterson to observe the strictest economy in expending funds for his station. Jones issued guidance on the New Orleans Station's budget in his orders to the station's navy agent, John K. Smith, a copy of which was sent to Patterson. See Jones to Smith, 18 October 1813, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 3 (M209, Roll No. 4).

2. The necessity of settling Captain John Shaw's unpaid accounts frustrated Patterson's early efforts to put his station on a sound financial footing. See pp. 793–94 and 795–800.

3. This is the figure Patterson cited in a memorial to President Madison requesting a pay increase for all Navy and Marine personnel assigned to the New Orleans Station. For the text of this memorial, see pp. 801–3.

4. On the Navy's supply of cannon, arms, and munitions to U.S. land forces during the defense of New Orleans, see Alexis to Patterson, 25 January 1815, pp. 1043–44 and Patterson to Crowninshield, 27 January 1815, pp. 1044–46.

5. James Morrison, navy agent at Lexington, Kentucky.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
CAPTAIN DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Capt. Danl. T. Patterson }  
Comm'g Naval Officer }  
New Orleans. }

Navy Department  
March 13th. 1815.

Sir

In my answer of the 10th. Inst. to your letter of the 10th. Ult., I did not reply to that part, relative to the Ship at Tchifoncti, as the peace has materially changed the state of things, at New Orleans, it is now a question only of the best means to be adopted for the public Interest, to save the amount already expended upon that Ship, and in this I shall refer to your opinion and judgement, whether to finish and launch the Ship, or let her remain on the stocks;— and how she can be best preserved from decay in that Climate.— You will please to report to me the

actual state of the Ship on the Stocks, and an estimate of the amount necessary to complete & launch her, and the further expenses of arming & keeping her in readiness for actual Service.— I am, respectfully &c.

B. W Crowninshield.—

P.S. you will in the mean time continue to work on the Ship ready for launching, or for such other disposal of her as may be finally concluded upon.— }

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 60 (M149, Roll No. 12).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO  
CAPTAIN DANIEL T. PATTERSON

Capt. Daniel T. Patterson }  
Comm'g Naval officer }  
New Orleans }

Navy Department  
March 28th. 1815.

Sir.

I have received your letter of the 27th. Feb'y the subject of which will require material changes on the New Orleans establishment in consequence of a State of Peace, the News of which must have reached you shortly after that date.—

The allotment of \$20,000 monthly will be continued for such a length of time as the exigencies of the Station shall demand, and will certainly meet the expences of the Service under the Peace establishment.—

You will place the force under your Command upon the most economical system, consistent with the necessary protection of the Public property, and the general utility with which such force can be employed.— You will grant no furloughs except to Commissioned officers; Sailing Masters may be discharged whenever they wish to leave the Service, and the superfluous officers & men whose term of service is not expired, may be sent to New York or Boston, as occasion shall offer by any of the U. States Vessels.— After reducing the expenses of the Station as far as shall be practicable & expedient, you will transmit Indents of all the articles of equipment Ship-Chandlery, Provisions &c. which the Service may require, and which shall be forwarded in due time.—

You will report to this Department the actual condition of the *Louisiana*, and the Block Ship, and state whether in your best judgement either of those Vessels is worth keeping in service, or whether they had not better be both Sold.— four good Gun Boats are ordered round from Norfolk to supply the place of those lost.—

You will state your opinion as to the precise force which you deem necessary for the New Orleans Station in time of Peace, and for all the purposes which may arise out of the Service.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 81B (M149, Roll No. 12).

CAPTAIN DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

New Orleans 7th: April 1815

Sir,

I do myself the honor to enclose for your information the Copy of a Letter received yesterday from His Excellency Governor Claiborne.

I had hoped, that the generous pardon granted by the President to the Baratarian association,<sup>1</sup> added to the opening for employment, afforded by the return of Peace; and their dispersion last year, would have had the desired effect, of preventing a recurrence of such iniquitous practices, as have already taken place; information on which I could rely had reached me prior to the Governors Letter, that armed Vessels had appeared off the Western waters of this state, and even off the Balize; I therefore dispatched Gun Vessel *No. 65* strongly manned, and armed on the 4th inst. to the Westward, where I was informed two prize Vessels (one French the other Russian) had already been carried; in addition to *No. 65*. I dispatched to day two heavy Launches, & one Gun Barge, with heavy carronades & strongly manned on the same service, and which will I think be sufficient to cope successfully with the forces the smugglers may have in those waters at present.—

The immediate return of those people to their former mode of life, will point out the indispensable necessity of keeping a small active Naval Force on this station in time of Peace. The communications to the sea from this city are very numerous, & all admirably calculated to facilitate the clandestine introduction of Foreign articles, which during the continuance of the present duties, will be attempted to a great extent, to the ruin of the honest Merchant, defrauding the Revenue and demoralizing the community.

By my Letter of the 10th: February I informed you, that pursuant to previous instructions from the Hon'ble your predecessor, I intended purchasing a small Schooner for the public service, and I now beg leave to report to you my having done so & that in consequence of the last paragraph of your Letter of the 15th: February;<sup>2</sup> I have added a second, both of which are admirably calculated for this Station, are now fitting out, & when completed, will with my Barges, & Launches, enable me in some measure I trust, to enforce the Revenue Laws, prevent smuggling. & Piracy, and protect the commerce of this port, from the force which those Lawless Freebooters, for a time be able to procure, but which will, unless timely, and efficient measures are taken to prevent it, rapidly encrease. Those Vessels once equipped, I will allow them no respite within the limits of my command.

Enclosed I send a copy of the survey,<sup>3</sup> which I caused to be held on the Schooners alluded to, the purchase of which will I trust be approved of, considering the weak state of this station, the service required from it, for the protection of the commerce of this important port, & the very moderate price for which they were purchased, with seven peices of cannon & most of their sails in good order; the *Firebrand*, costing three thousand & fifty dollars & the *Surprize* three thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars.

I will do myself the honor, to forward you a correct Muster Roll of this Station, so soon as it can be made out, after discharging those whose times of service have expired & which are numerous.

I would beg leave to recommend that the Ship *Louisiana*, be sold, as unfit for the public Service, that for which she was originally purchased viz, that of River defence, she has performed, & as she is unfit to cruize & may not be required for many years for the kind of service, which she is alone capable of performing, she will be a constant expense without any benefit to the Government, except as a guard and receiving Ship, which is not much required on this Station; was I authorized to dispose of her at this favorable moment I have no doubt her first cost might be obtained for her, as she would answer to make a voyage to Europe. With sentiments of the highest consideration and respect I have the honor to be Your Obedient Servant

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 20 (M125, Roll No. 44).

1. On President Madison's pardon of Laffite and the Baratarians, see Davis, *Pirates Laffite*, pp. 224–25, 252–53, and 259.

2. In this paragraph, Secretary Crowninshield informed Patterson of the imminent ratification and signing of the peace treaty. See Crowninshield to Patterson, 15 February 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 36 (M149, Roll No. 12).

3. Not printed.

[Enclosure]

(Copy)

New Orleans 5th: April 1815

Sir,

I have every reason to believe that a Vessel which sailed lately [f]rom this port, under the command of one Vincent Gambier,<sup>1</sup> (formerly a chief of the Barataria [a]ssociation) is at this time cruising in the Gulf of Mexico, and has already captured two Vessels [bo]und to New Orleans. No time, no expense should be spared to put down at once this Pirate otherwise we may expect a repetition of those practices at Barataria and its vicinity, which [*has*] long existed to the dishonor of Louisiana, and to the great injury of the commerce & Revenue [*of*] the United States. If you will do me the favor to call at my office tomorrow, or if con[v]enient at my House this afternoon, I will give you the particulars of the information received. I am Sir Very Respectfully Your Obt. Sert.

(Signd) Wm. C. C. Claiborne

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 20, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 44).

1. Vincent Gambi, a pirate and associate of Jean and Pierre Laffite. His connection to the Laffites and Barataria is detailed in Davis, *Pirates Laffite*.



CAPTAIN DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

New Orleans 12th May, 1815

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 13 & 28th. March, in addition to those stated in my letter of yesterday.<sup>1</sup>

Peace having render'd unnecessary for the present, the employment of a Vessel of such force as the new Block Ship; and as she can remain on her stocks for at least twelve months, without the slightest injury, but rather improving her frame; having a good shed over her, which effectually protects her from the weather, I think she had better remain as she now is: at the expiration of a year many of her shores, will probably require to be renew'd; and she may need blocking up anew: should she be launch'd, she can be kept very securely in the River Tchifonté: while she remains on the stocks, I shall be oblig'd to keep a confidential officer, some Seamen, and a Marine Guard to protect her, and the quantity of fine Timber which is there deposited. The Block Ship is plank'd up to upper part of her Bends, excepted the garboard strake, bor'd ready for tree nailing, her deck-frame laid and secur'd; water ways in, the filling Timbers of her upper works in; & the Port sills in— it would require I think 25,000 Dollars to put her in the water, with her lower Masts in, Floors laid, and Bulkheads up; exclusive of coppering her; which I deem indispensably necessary, to guard her against the worms which abound in these waters, and are extremely destructive, independant of the great risk, loss of time, and expence which must ever attend heaving out a Ship of her size, and construction: Drafts of her were furnish'd the Department by Capt. Shaw: To equip her, and have her in readiness for actual service, would require at least 30,000 Dollars,<sup>2</sup> and the expence of keeping her so would be considerable— if her Masts, and Spars, were made, her Rigging fitted, Sails made; and Copper with Nails sufficient on hand; she could be put in Service at a short notice, all her heavy Gun Carriages being ready for her.

I am happy to find by your letter of the 28th March that the opinion I offer'd in my letter of the 7th April, relative to the sale of the *Louisiana*, coincides with yours. The new Block ship is of such dimensions and construction, that she can only be us'd for the purpose, for which she was design'd; and in the event of a War, would be invaluable to the public service on this station. The Brig *Aetna*, purchas'd and fitted for a Mortar Vessel by Capt. Shaw, I would beg leave to advise being sold— she now requires an entire new set of Spars and suit of Sails, which would cost more, than in my opinion she would be worth to the Public— she is not copper'd, and like the *Louisiana*, sails too dull, for a Vessel of War; tho' both sail fairly for Merchant Vessels in time of Peace.

Be assur'd, Sir, that the Station which I have the honor to command, shall be put, and kept, on the most economical system that circumstances will admit of; and that every effort will be us'd by me to reduce the expences as low as practicable. The allotment of 20,000 Dollars per month will I doubt not fully meet the expences of the Station: I have been much embarrass'd in consequence of having been oblig'd to exceed that sum during the Campaign, but 'am now getting reliev'd from all embarrassments.

So soon as my health will permit, I will transmit, pursuant to your directions, Indents, of all the articles of Equipment, Ship Chandlery and Provisions which will be requir'd for the Service of the Station.

The four Gun Boats order'd from Norfolk, added to the two small Schooners, reported in my letter of the 7th April, (which will be paid for out of the monthly stipend,) with G B No. 65 will I think be sufficient for this Station during Peace; and was it not for the depredations committed by the Barratarian and Carthaginian arm'd Vessels, the Gun Boats would alone have been sufficient; but to protect the Commerce of this Port effectually, and even to protect our own Flag against those Freebooters, 'tis necessary to have the two Schooners in the Gulf, since a Vessel under the Carthaginian Flag has dar'd to plunder the American Ship *Ceres* and maltreat her Crew.

The Purser has orders to make out a Muster Roll of every Officer and Man belonging to the Station, which, as soon as completed, shall be forwarded to the Department. So many of my Petty Officer's and Seamen have been discharg'd, in consequence of the expiration of their term of service, that I apprehend being left quite weak.

Your approbation of my conduct in the correspondence with Admiral Cochrane is highly gratifying to me.<sup>3</sup> I have the honor to be with great consideration & respect, Your Obedt Servt,

Dan<sup>l</sup> T. Patterson

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 121 (M125, Roll No. 44).

1. See Patterson's letter of 11 May, in which he acknowledges receiving Crowninshield's correspondence of 1, 2, and 10 March. For the text of these letters, see Patterson to Crowninshield, 11 May 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 121 (M125, Roll No. 44); Crowninshield to Patterson, 1 March 1815, pp. 1047–49; and Crowninshield to Patterson, 2 and 12 March, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 12, pp. 46, 57 (M149, Roll No. 12).

2. Fifteen months earlier, Patterson estimated the cost of readying the block ship for service at \$60,000. See Patterson to Jones, 21 January 1814, p. 806.

3. This correspondence relates to Vice Admiral Cochrane's detention of a flag of truce sent by Patterson to negotiate the parole and release of American seamen wounded in the Battle of Lake Borgne. See pp. 956–66. On 28 March, the Navy Secretary sent a letter validating his subordinate's conduct. Crowninshield to Patterson, 28 March 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 81B (M149, Roll No. 12).

## Defense of Martial Law

*Andrew Jackson placed New Orleans under martial law on 16 December 1814.<sup>1</sup> He took this extraordinary action believing it offered the only means by which he could possibly defend the city against its many enemies, both external and internal. But the Tennessee general's zealous enforcement of martial law, even after the British invaders had departed Louisiana, soon embroiled him in legal controversies with the city's civil and judicial authorities.<sup>2</sup> When Jackson's high-handed actions as a military ruler later landed him in court, he turned to his naval comrade-in-arms, Daniel T. Patterson, for a written endorsement of his wartime actions. Patterson's statement of support acknowledged that he, too, had had to adopt extraordinary measures—the impressment of sailors—to defend New*

*Orleans while it was under attack—an ironic admission given that the United States went to war in 1812 in order to protect sailors' rights.*

1. For the text of Jackson's declaration, see *Jackson, Papers (Printed)*, Vol. 3, pp. 206–7.

2. On Jackson's use of martial law in New Orleans, see Warshauer, "Andrew Jackson and Martial Law."

MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A., TO  
CAPTAIN DANIEL T. PATTERSON

The undersigned with compliments to Commodore Patterson request him to furnish the undersigned with a statement of the occurrences that took place about the [time & anterior] to the declaration of martial law, whether this step was not thought necessary and proper by the Legislature the Executive and the Judiciary—and by which alone the country could be defended and the city Saved—and whether this was not the Sentiments of every good citizen and real defender of his country—and whether the act authorizing you to impress Seamen and laying an embargo—<sup>1</sup>was not passed about that time in aid of the martial law—and a measure growing out of the necessity of the case and whether under that law you did not impress into the Service of the united States who were held in service untill the promulgation of the Treaty<sup>2</sup> whether the impressment was not a matter of notoriety to all—and furnish the undersigned with this Statement tomorrow morning—and oblige Sir yr mo ob Servt.

Andrew Jackson  
april 2nd 1815—

ALS, Jackson, *Papers* (SR Microfilm), Roll No. 4.

1. For the text of the embargo law, see pp. 969–70.

2. The Treaty of Ghent, which ended the war between the United States and Great Britain.

CAPTAIN DANIEL T. PATTERSON TO  
MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, U.S.A.

New Orleans 3rd April 1815

Sir,

In answer to your note of yesterday, I have the honor to state; that the appearance, of the Enemy's force, on this coast, and their capture of our Gun Boats;<sup>1</sup> the weak state of this city and its environs; and the situation of the country generally, was such, as in my opinion, made the declaration of Martial Law indispensable. I know that the same opinion was held by the Executive of this State;<sup>2</sup> and that the State Legislature thought so likewise; was fully proved, by the acts passed by them, previous to the proclamation of Martial Law, authorizing the impressment

of seamen, and laying an Embargo measures, wholly growing out of the necessity of the case and exigencies of the times.

I had; at the time little opportunity of knowing the opinion of the Judiciary; my personal duties occupied me wholly; but the discharge of these very duties, made me know that Mr Lewis, one of the State Judges served in the Ranks of a volunteer company of Militia, as a private soldier, and being afterwards chosen and appointed a Lieutenant, he served in the same company until the peace.—<sup>3</sup>

I do beleive that the proclamation, & enforcement of Martial Law was necessary, for the defence of the Country and preservation of the City; and that by those measures, it could alone be saved; and at the time such was the universal sentiment of all good citizens.—

Under the Law of the State, I did press into the naval Service of the United States, a number of Seamen and held them in service, until the peace took place; my impressments were made in open day in the most frequented parts of the City and were of course matter of notriety.— I have the honor to be with great respect your ob sert.

Danl T. Patterson  
Comg. the U.S. Naval Forces  
on the New Orleans Station

LS, DLC, Andrew Jackson Papers (Roll No. 18).

1. For documents on the capture of the U.S. gunboats at Lake Borgne, see pp. 936–56.

2. Governor William C. C. Claiborne.

3. Joshua Lewis, a justice of the first judicial district court of Louisiana. He served in Thomas Beale's Company of Riflemen during the New Orleans campaign. When Lewis challenged Jackson's exercise of martial law, the general ordered his arrest, which he soon withdrew. See Jackson, *Papers* (Printed), Vol. 3, pp. 298–99, 303, and Warshauer, "Andrew Jackson and Martial Law," pp. 282–83.

## Appendix

*This section includes documents that were left out of earlier volumes, but which the editors have judged important. Three letters from 1813 detail Secretary of the Navy Jones's instructions for the frigates Chesapeake and Constitution. Another from the British Admiralty discusses the command and organization of Royal Navy stations. A selection from an American journal gives testimony of the capture of Essex. In another document, George Farragut, father of David Glasgow Farragut, attempts to restore his reputation. Two more letters detail British operations in Canada and the Chesapeake in the summer of 1814. The last four documents discuss the activities of the American brigs Argus and Eagle.*

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL EVANS

May 6th 1813

Sir,

I am much satisfied with the progress you have made in the equipment of the *Chesapeake* and trust this will find you ready for sea.— In this expectation the following outline is intended to designate your cruise, which, if pursued with vigour and vigilance, I am persuaded will result no less to your honor and advantage than to the advancement of the great objects of the war. It is impossible to conceive a naval service to a highe[r] order in a national point of view than the Capture of destruction of the Enemy's Store Ships with military and Naval Stores destined for the supply of his armies in Canada and fleets on this station; and the capture of transports with troops, intended to re-inforce Canada, or invade our own Shores. With this view no position can be better chosen than the range of the coast of Nova Scotia, and the entrance of the Gulph of St Laurence— Continuing about this ground until the latter part of June; then through the Gulph of St Laurence and Streights of Belle Isle, along the coast of Labradore; or round by the east coast of Newfoundland, (as information and prospects may determine), to the Coast of Greenland, where the entire whale fishery of the Enemy, being without protection, may be speedily and completely destroyed.— By the time this could be accomplished the same route may be retraced home, so as to enter some convenient eastern port in all the month of September. In this route you will find great resource and refreshment in the fish with which those seas abound, as well as in that of the fishing vessels you may capture and destroy: moreover the moderate temperature and humidity of the climate will admit of a very moderate consumption of water.

The force of the enemy now on our coast, and the expected increase, forbid a reasonable expectation of getting prizes safe into our ports during the summer months. The risk of recaptures is so great that the public interest seems to require

rather the destruction of every prize, than to weaken your crew by attempting to send them in—particularly those with military or Naval Stores. A question never can arise between the honorable patriotism of our gallant officers and the pecuniary interest they may be supposed to have in attempting to send them into Port, when the doubtful chance of success and the very great advantage the Enemy would derive from recaptures, are duly considered.—

The cruising ground herein designated also embraces a vast and valuable mercantile trade for the supply of the British provinces, and of the Indians; and, also, a rich return in furs and peltries.

The enemy will not, in all probability, anticipate our taking this ground with our public Ships of War; and as the Enemy's convoys generally separate between Cape Race and Halifax, leaving the trade for the St Laurence to proceed without convoy, the chance of captures, upon an extensive scale, is very flattering.— It is of great importance that our account of prisoners should be kept as full as possible, and the returns regularly made, to this department, in order that an exchange of our own gallant seamen may be effected without delay; and that by the magnitude of the pledge in our hands the enemy may be induced from policy, if not from disposition, to treat our citizens with less rigour than he is accustomed to do.—

The fogs, which prevail in the seas in which you are to cruise may be considered as forming an objection, upon the presumption that a superior enemy cannot be discovered until close on board; but, admitting the fact, it is counterbalanced by the facility which it affords to a fast sailing vessel to escape from a superior enemy— that it conceals your own ship until an inferior in force & sailing is under your Guns— that by running close in with the land you are sure to have clear weather, although the fog may be ever so thick two or three leagues off; and, that, by taking a position off some known, usual, landfall for ships entering the St Laurence, you may intercept them as they approach the land the moment they develop from the fog-bank. After all, vigilance and preparation are the only safeguards in any and every situation.—

With these instructions you will proceed to sea as soon as the weather and the force and position of the enemy will admit; and as the *Hornet* is now ready for sea I shall furnish Captain Biddle with a duplicate of this letter, and order him to pursue the same route, with the same objects in view, and to endeavour to join you off Cape Breton.— Wishing you a successful and honorable cruise, I am very respectfully, &c

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 19–22 (T829, Roll No. 453).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN JAMES LAWRENCE

Captain James Lawrence,  
U.S. Navy, New York.

Navy Dep'tm't  
May 6. 1813.

Sir,

My last, of the 4th instant, will have informed you of my intention to have ordered you to the command of the *Constitution* without reservation, and the

enclosed copy of a letter, this moment received, after I had sealed the cover of the enclosed letter to Captain Evans, will explain to you the cause of the indispensable change of that determination.

Knowing your ardent desire for active service, I feel a pleasure in gratifying your laudable zeal, and, therefore, desire that you will proceed immediately to Boston, take command of the U.S. Frigate *Chesapeake*, and proceed in conformity with the foregoing instructions, which you will consider as if originally addressed to yourself. If in the course of your cruize you should derive such information of the force of the enemy, or other sufficient cause, as to render a strict adherence to my instructions prejudicial to the public service, you are at liberty to exercise your own judgment, and pursue such other course as may, in your opinion, be best calculated to accomplish the important objects of your cruise.—

Captain Biddle will receive his instructions by this mail, and may, probably, be in New York in twenty four hours after. Perhaps you had better see him and confer upon the best means of ensuring his junction with you at whatever point you may determine upon.

Captain Evans will be ordered to the Navy Yard at New York, but you need not wait to be relieved by him.— I am, very respectfully, &ca.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 22–23 (T829, Roll No. 453).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN CHARLES STEWART

Capt. Charles Stewart  
Commanding the United States  
Frigate *Constitution*, Boston Harbour

}

Navy Department  
Septemr. 19th. 1813—

Sir

The United States Frigate *Constitution* under your command must ere this be nearly ready for Sea, and as it is desirable to take the first fair opportunity after the Equinox to push into the open Ocean, you will by every means in your power accelerate her equipment and preparation for departure.

As the enemy appears to be correctly apprised of our intended operations, he will doubtless ascertain the precise period of your intended departure, and probably blockade or station a competent force near you.

It will be prudent therefore to put to sea only under circumstances of the most favorable nature to elude his vigilance and escape an unequal contest.

Should any attempt be made to allure you by a challenge to single combat, I am directed by the President to prohibit strictly the acceptance either directly or indirectly—

When you shall meet upon equal terms without premeditation, with your Crew practised and disciplined, his confidence in your skill and gallantry is entire, and no apprehensions are entertained for the honour of the flag, and the safety of the precious ship entrusted to your care.—

Having cleared Boston Bay, you will cross the Florida Stream in the shortest possible direction and continuing to the SE—passing well to windward of Barbadoes reach the coast of Cayenne as soon as possible. From thence run down the Coast of Sarinam Berbise and Demerara along by Trinidad, Tobago and Grenada South of Guadeloup then between St. Croix and St. Thomas down the So. Side of Porto Rico through the mona passage into the open ocean, following the track either of the windward or Jamaica fleets, as you may acquire information, 'til you near the entrance of the British Channel, then south passing about 3 or 4 degrees west of Cape Finistere along the Coast of Spain and Portugal, then pass in sight of Madeira and Teneriffe into the NE trade winds, thence down the Coast of Cayenne and the same route home in the Spring.— Pressing, or shortening Sail and cruising at such points on the route as the chance of—season—weather—lapse of time and hazard of meeting a superior foe, may indicate.—

After passing through the mona passage you may make your election to follow the route first prescribed or pass down the North Side of St. Domingo and Jamaica and through the Florida passage, sweeping the coast of Georgia and So. Carolina, touching off Savannah or Charleston for refreshments and intelligence, then into the track of the fleets as first mentioned.—

These instructions are given with a strong desire that they may be adhered to, unless some unforeseen event or particular information you may derive in the course of your cruise shall in your judgement render a deviation indispensable, in which case you will exercise your discretion, and adhere as near to the spirit and object of the instructions as may be.—

The British men of war on the windward Island station, invariably cruise either to windward of Barbadoes, or between that Island, Antigua and St. Barts. and out to the northward, but never to the Southward— this information is derived from unquestionable sources.

The transcripts of British Signals from those recently taken on board the enemy's Schooner *Dominica*, and sent to Commodore Bainbridge, may be of the most important service to you, particularly the Island Signals, though it will not be safe to remain long among the windward Islands, as the enemy's force is too formidable. I have said you will return in the Spring, but this is upon the presumption that your wants will render it necessary. Should you however be so fortunate as to obtain supplies from any quarter so as to enable you to continue your cruise for any considerable length of time, you will prolong it accordingly but if those supplies are partial and sufficient only for a shorttime it will be well to return in march or April so as to revictual, and get out again before the mild Season shall admit of a close Blockade of our Harbours, and New York by the way of the Sound or Hook, will in all probability be the safest of access.

The commerce of the Enemy is the most vulnerable point we can attack and its destruction the main object, and to this end all your efforts should be directed. Therefore unless your Prizes shall be very valuable and near a friendly Port, it will be imprudent and worse than useless to attempt to send them in. The chances of recapture are excessively great, the crew and the safety of the Ship under your command would be diminished & endangered as well as your own fame, and the national honour, by hazarding a battle after the reduction of your Officers and Crew by manning prizes.—



In every point of view then it will be proper to destroy what you capture, except valuable and compact articles that may be trans shipped. This system gives to one Ship the force of many and by granting to prisoners a Cartel as sufficient numbers accumulate, our Account on that head will be increased to our Credit, and not only facilitate the exchange, but ensure better treatment to our unfortunate Countrymen who are or may be captured by the Enemy. It has been usual in our service when prisoners are liberated on parole, to take an engagement not to bear arms against the U States until duly exchanged.— This leaves them at liberty to serve against any other enemy of Great Britain, and by thus employing those we have paroled, without violating their engagement, an equal number who are not prisoners may be relieved from serving against that enemy, and may be employed against us. You will therefore in the event of your liberating any prisoners on parole, take an obligation, that they “shall not bear Arms or commit any act of hostility in the service of Great Britain until duly exchanged.” Should you have an opportunity of procuring succors or supplies abroad and can negotiate for the amount through our public Agents, or other persons, your Bills on the Department accompanied by advice thereof will be duly honored.—

As free communications from abroad are very desirable, but very precarious; if you will adopt a Cypher and furnish the key before your departure, it will be duly attended to.—

Be pleased to acknowledge the receipt of this, and state the expected period of your departure.— I am very respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

P.S. on the eve of your departure direct your Purser to transmit a correct Muster Roll of the Officers and Crew.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, pp. 66–69 (T829, Roll No. 453).

FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER TO  
ADMIRAL SIR JOHN B. WARREN, R.N.

Duplicate  
No. 4—

Admiralty Office  
4th. November 1813.

Sir

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty finding it expedient in the present circumstances & appearances of the war, again to separate the stations, on the union of which you were appointed to your present command; and thinking therefore unnecessary any longer, to employ you on the North American Station; I have their Lordships command to acquaint you therewith; and to signify their direction to you, on being relieved by the Officer who will be selected to command on the Halifax Station, to return to Spithead in the *St. Domingo*, or in any other Ship that may be in more immediate necessity of returning to England.

My Lords have also directed Commissions as Commanders in Chief to be made out for Rear Admirals Sir Francis Laforey and Brown, for the Leeward Islands and Jamaica Stations respectively; and they have acquainted them that they are no longer to consider themselves, nor the Ships and Vessels within the limits of the respective stations, as under your command, after they shall have received the notification of their Lordships orders—

The distribution of the Force now under your general command is to be made between the stations in the following manner—

The Leeward Island command is for the present to consist of the force mentioned in the margin;<sup>1</sup> and as it seems by the latest dispositions that Sir Francis Laforey has under his orders about two Frigates and three Sloops above these numbers, he is directed to send that number to Jamaica to follow the orders of Rear Admiral Brown, whose force appears to have been greatly diminished.

The Jamaica command is for the present to consist of the force stated in the margin,<sup>2</sup> of which number it appears by the last accounts it will, even after the two Frigates and three Sloops from the Leeward Islands shall have joined, be still deficient five Sloops; which number you are therefore to lose no time in detaching from your Station, with directions to their Commanders to follow the orders of Rear Admiral Brown; and my Lords further direct that you appropriate Sloops of the larger class to this Service—

My Lords not being able at this distance of time & place to foresee what may be the actual state of each command when these orders shall be received cannot enter into any details as to the particular Ships which are to belong to each Station; but having thus given you a scheme of the force to be appropriated, & this general view of their intentions, they trust that you will complete that scheme in the shortest possible space of time, and with such Vessels as may be most fit for the service, & that you will take all other means for carrying these intentions into speedy and complete effect—

It follows of course that if you shall have diminished the force in the Leeward Islands & increased that at Jamaica, Sir F. Laforey may not be able, & it may not be necessary to execute their Lordships orders to him, & you will direct the reinforcement to proceed to his Station, or to Jamaica, in such proportions as may be necessary to complete the numbers of each to the amount before stated; but you are to observe that the *Grampus* and *Argo* are to be the Flag ships for the present; and the former will be ordered together with one Troop Ship from England to the Leeward Islands— The other Troop ship you will probably have already sent; but if not, you will do so without loss of time—

For the Halifax Station itself my Lords think proper at present to appropriate the force stated in the margin;<sup>3</sup> and you are immediately to send home any Line of Battle Ships above the said number which may be under your command, selecting such as may most require to return to England; but if after reinforcing the other Stations to the number specified, you should have more Frigates or Sloops than the number mentioned you may retain them—

You will, until relieved, continue to execute Convoy & all other services between the separate stations, as heretofore, taking care, however, never to detain the Ships belonging to either of the other Stations within yours, except on some most urgent occasion or necessity; and directing the Vessels of the Halifax Station which may proceed into either of the other to return with as little delay as

possible; but in all cases you are to endeavour to combine the return to their own Stations of the several Ships & Vessels with the Convoy or any other Services which they may be able to perform—

In the event of your learning that a superior hostile force shall have enter'd either of the other Stations, while you remain in command of the Halifax Station, my Lords authorize and direct you to send into them a sufficient force to enable the Admiral on the Station to meet the Enemy; or if you should think it expedient, to proceed thither yourself; and in this latter case, to take the Admiral of the Station, and all Junior Officers, under your temporary command—

You are to lose no time in acquainting me with the details of all the measures you may take in the execution of these orders— I am, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

J W Croker

LS, UKENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, fols. 79–82.

1. The text of the margin reads, “1 Flag Ship. 3 large Frigates. 2 Troop ships. 12 smaller Frigates & Sloops—and all the smaller Vessels now on the Station—”

2. The text of the margin reads: “1 Flag ship 3 large frigates 15 smaller Frigates & Sloops— and all the smaller Vessels now on the Station.”

3. The text in the margin reads: “10 Sail of the Line—or Razées—20 Frigates—25—20 Gun Ships—or Sloops—& all smaller Vessels now on the Station.”

### JOURNAL OF ACTING SAILING MASTER EDWARD BARNEWALL

U.S. Frigate *Essex* David Porter Esqr- commander  
March 28, 1814

Light winds and cloudy: at day=light got every thing ready to weigh, expecting the enemies ships were to lee=ward, according to the report of Lieut. Murray, who was last evening entrusted with an expedition, designed to effect this end: we were much surprized at about half past six to see both ships close to the weather point of the bay: they stood within the point: tacked, and stood off again: about noon the wind freshened up at S. S. W. and encreased to a strong gale: struck royal yards and masts. At 45 minutes past 2 parted the larboard cable, which caused us to drag the starboard anchor. Captain Porter hailed the *Essex jun.* to send her boat to take Mr. Poinsett on shore: immediately after he left us, Capt. Porter gave orders to cut the cable, which was done, and sail made on the ship. The enemy's ships were at this time standing in for the port. On luffing round the point of Angels, a heavy squall struck us, which carried away our main top=mast by the lower cap. Two men Saml. Miller and Thos Brown fell overboard and were drowned, as we supposed.\* The ship was wore and hauled to the wind on the starboard tack, and orders given to clear the wreck: the main-sail and top=sail were cut away from the yards so as not to act against us in working into the Bay. Capt. P. finding it impossible to gain our former anchorage, concluded to beat up for a Small Bay situated on the western side of the harbour: at 45 minutes past 2 came to with the best bower, in 9½ fathoms water, within half pistol shot of the shore. The western fort, (or Castillo viejo) bore E by

N. dist. 3 miles. The Eastern fort, (or Castillo del Baron) S.W. by W. dist. About 1½ miles— this fort was not in sight, as we were anchored under a high bluff, that screened us from it; there was a long 24 pounder detached from it, on a rising ground to the N.E. distant about half a mile, and consequently so much nearer to where we anchored in this situation we considered ourselves perfectly secure. Capt. P. gave orders to clear ship for action, altho' he did not, I believe, entertain an idea that the enemy would attack him. At 55 minutes past 3 the enemy *Phoebe* commenced firing on our Larboard quarter, and at 4 the *Cherub* commenced on our star-board bow: in about half an hour they wore round and stood out to repair damages: they appeared to be much cut in their rigging, having their top=sail sheets flying away &c, in this interval we got the third spring on the cable, the two first having been shot away as soon as put on. They soon returned and put took their position out of reach of our short guns, and opened a most galling fire on us: the wind shifting about this time, Capt. P. determined to lay the *Phoebe* aboard.— the cable was accordingly cut, but the only halliards Standing were those of the flying =jib— this sail was partly hoisted, but was not sufficient to wear the ship off— We were now in a most dreadful situation; as the enemy hulled us every shot, and our brave fellows were falling in every direction— but we were all so animated by the brave, cool, and intrepid conduct of our heroic commander, that every man appeared determined to sacrifice his life in defence of our ship, and of "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights," for which they were continually huzzaing, fore and aft,— but an unlucky accident took place, which frustrated all our hopes, to wit: the explosion of some loose cartridges in the main hatch=way, which caused a general consternation among the crew, the greatest part of whom jumped overboard. Capt. P. now seeing no hopes left, gave orders to fire the Ship, but humanely considering that many of his brave companions were lying wounded below, he countermanded this order, and gave the painful one to lower our ensign, which was executed precisely at half past six. The enemy did not cease firing until Some minutes afterwards; during this interval some of our men were wounded, and four shot dead.

Thus fell the *Essex* into the hands of the English, after a resistance worthy of the cause which animated us.

Many occurrences I am entirely ignorant of, having been taken below (on account of my wounds) before the colours were struck. But I am confident these fell under the observation of many, and will be recorded by some abler hand. Edw<sup>d</sup>. Barnewall Actg. Sailing Master.

March 12th- 1814-

\*Since the action I have been informed by 1st. Lt. of Marines, of the *Phoebe* (Mr. Burrows) that they passed these two unfortunate men on our life buoy (which had been thrown over to them) but they inhumanly left them to perish in the waves, without endeavouring to afford them the least assistance.

ADS, NDL, Thomas B. Inglis Papers. The journal entry is docketed: "1814/ From/Lieut Barnewall."

## GEORGE FARRAGUT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

New Orleans May 20th. 1814

Dear Sir.

The Enclosed memorial, is from an Individual on whose feelings you have inflicted a most serious wound, & whose life is for the present, made miserable.— Have the goodness I pray you to read his memorial, and do to him as you would be done by.— Altho' not personally known to you, you Sir, or at least your Character is well known to me.— Your Heart never erred, and your head seldom leads you wrong. But on the present occasion you have been too precipitate, Exercise the powers with which, it has pleased your Country to vest you & by an act of Justice, restore an old officer to his Command, & to his happiness. I am Sir with the greatest respect Your obedt. Servt.

Geo. Farragut

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 57 (M124, Roll No. 63).

[Enclosure]

To the Honorable William Jones Secretary of the Navy of the United States.

The Memorial of George Farragut, late a sailing Master in the navy of the U. States, respectfully represents.

That the late removal from office of your memorialist, is an act of Injustice, which the President of the U. States & the Honorable Secretary would never have sanctioned, had they been advised of the just pretensions of your memorialist to public partonage & Confidence. Your Memorialist was born in the Island of Minorca in the year 1756,— and is by profession a Mariner; From the year 1765—untill 72 your Memorialist was employed principally in the Mediterranean Seas and among other duties, whilst in the Russian Service in 71, he assisted in the destruction of the Turkish Fleet at Shimea, and was one of the Crew of the Fire Ship, which introduced the flames among the Turkish Fleet— Early in Seventy Three, your memorialist shaped his course for the American Seas, and after trading between Havanna & vera Cruz for some time, he came to new-Orleans in 1775, when for the first time he heard of the difficulties between England & her Colonies, & immediately determined to assist with his Life & his Fortune in the Struggle for American Independence— In pursuance of this design, your memorialist proceeded from new Orleans to Port-au Prince, where having exchanged his Cargo, for Cannon, Arms, Powder & Ball, he sailed for the U States & Landed at Charleston South-Carolina in the year 76.—

There he entered as Lieutenant on board of a Letter of Marque of 12 Guns, commanded by a Captain Newton and in this employ, having given much satisfaction to his Captain & particularly during an action with a British Privateer of superior force, in which the Englishman was much worsted, your Memorialist was afterwards at the recommendation of Captain Newton, appointed a First Lieutenant in the State Navy of South Carolina in the year 78.— Having superintended the Building of the Galleys at Charleston, your memorialist was

Appointed to the Command of one of them, & reflects with pleasure that in that Character, he rendered much service to his adopted Country.

Your memorialist fought a severe action in Savanna River in 78 and did not quit the Deck of his vessel until it was covered with the dead & the dying. In 1799<sup>1</sup>, if his memory serves him right, as to the year, your memorialist assisted in the defence of Savanna, & faithfully did his duty— your memorialist was also actively employed during the Siege of Charleston first on water, but when the Gallies were dismantled & the Cannon brought to the Lines your memorialist was assigned the Command of a Battery, & he has the pleasure to believe, that during the Siege he burnt as much powder, and with as much annoyance to the Enemy as any one Officer in the American Army.— General Lincoln, if living, can bear testimony to my Conduct at Charleston and also Colonel Parker of Virginia, the same officer who I saw in new-Orleans in 1808 at the Head of a R[egiment] this Gentleman was then Captain Parker of the Virginia [L]ine and his Brother Colonel Parker who fell at Charleston, died in the Arms of your memorialist.— Taken a prisoner at Charleston, your memorialist remained inactive until exchanged, when leaving Philadelphia in a Privateer bound to Charleston, your memorialist in an Engagement had his right arm badly shattered, with a musket Ball;— Doctor Ridgely now of Kentucky was his Surgeon, & saved his arm, but to this day, the Limb is of little use to your memorialist, & during foggy weather, occasions him much pain.— From this moment your memorialist, during the war, no more was employed on the Seas;— he made his way to General Merians Head Quarters in South Carolina where he for a short time acted as a volunteer;— He arrived at the Cowpens, the day before the defeat of Tarlton, & on that memorable occasion, served as a volunteer under Col. Perkins (the present Genl. Perkins) of South Carolina; the day after the Battle of Cowpens, your memorialist proceeded on to Wilmington, North Carolina, where he was appointed by Governor Nash to the Command of a Company of volunteer artillery, & was soon after engaged against a Detachment of the Enemy at Beaufort Bridge.— when Lord Cornwallis invaded North Carolina, your memorialist raised a Company of volunteer Cavalry, harassed the rear of Cornwallis's army in his march thro' Carolina towards virginia, & captured many of the Stragglers.— The assembly of north Carolina having soon afterwards raised a Legion of Horse & foot, your memorialist was appointed a Captain of State Cavalry. Mr. Mason now of Congress was then a member of the assembly, and knows this fact.— With my command of Cavalry, I assisted General Merian in enforcing the Tories of South Carolina to observance of a proper Conduct, & obtained on this occasion, the thanks of the Governor of that State, & of Genl. Merian.— The peace which soon followed, left my adopted Country free & Independent;— But your memorialist poor & penniless;— He again repaired to Sea, for a living until in 1792,— his old acquaintance the late Wm. Blount, then Governor of the South Western Territory, now the State of Tennessee, invited him to Knoxville, where being appointed a Major of Militia, he served on an Expedition against the Cherokees in 1793, under Genl. Sevier now a Member of Congress.— In 1807, President Jefferson appointed your memorialist a sailing Master in the Navy, & in the same year your memorialist reached New Orleans and was assigned the command of a Gun Boat.— Your Memorialist was married in 1795; his Wife died in new-Orleans in 1808, and left him

five Children, who are still living.— Your Memorialist enjoying bad health was ordered in 1811 by Commodore Shaw, & ~~with his permission, retired;~~ to the Bay of Pascagoula, where for the most part your Memorialist has since resided;— Whenever his health permitted, your Memorialist was ready & willing to enter on active Service; But it is too true that the Constitution of your Memorialist is much impaired & that with increase of years & hard Services, his Lamp would some time since have burnt out, but for the little relaxation he lately experienced at Bay of Pascagoula.

When your Letter of dismissal<sup>2</sup> arrived, it found me in better health than I had enjoyed for Eight Years past, and am now willing and able to serve my Country with zeal & activity.— The Representation to my Injury made by a certain Edwin Lewis, is not worthy of your attention;— my life has been devoted to honorable pursuits;— Lewis's to the basest acts;— No Gentleman I ever knew, but takes me by the hand in friendship;— No Gentleman without degrading himself, could associate with Lewis.— Commodore Patterson can tell you, the Character I support, & will send you the opinion (in writing) of the people of Pascagoula of the Slanderer Edwin Lewis.— I have five Children; my Eldest son William A C Farragut is a Midshipman in the navy, & serving I believed, on board the new—Sloop of War *Frolic*;— my second Son James G Farragut is a midshipman on Command, under that Gallant officer, Captain Porter of the *Essex*, and the happiest moment of my Life, was, when I noticed in the public Papers the h[onor]able mention Captain Porter made of my Boy.— I trust in God my two Sons, may deserve well of their Country;— I have always gave them a good example and patriotic precepts;— my dismissal is the more terrible to my feelings, lest it may hereafter be cast up to my Boys as a reproach.— I ask of the President and of you Sir, the Justice to reinstate me in my Command, & with Instructions to the naval Commander on this Station, that when age & Infirmities incapacitate me for active duty, to allow me half pay;— I ask not this as a favour; I claim it as a right;— I have served my Country long & faithful;— now that I am getting old & am poor, my Country should serve me—one good turn deserves another.— ~~If I cannot be reinstated immediately in the Command, I ask you Sir, to instruct the naval Commander on this Station, to employ me in the Navy yard, in such a manner as my capacities may render me most useful.~~— Be at the trouble Sir, to ask the Tennessee Representative in Congress, & they will assure you, that I have in my time, been an active & zealous friend of the United States— General John Sevier, the Honorable Mr. Campbell Secretary of the Treasury, Governor Claiborne of Louisiana, Govr. Blount of Tennessee, the Honble. Mr. Anderson of the Senate & the Honorable John Rhea of the House of Representatives have long known your memorialist, & he is proud to believe that they all believe him an honest Man, and deserving well of his Country.

Your Memorialist tenders to you his best wishes for the honor of your Administration,— & for the contin[uation] of the Successes, & the Glory of the American Navy.—

Geo. Farragut

New Orleans May 20th. 1814.—

DS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 58 (M124, Roll No. 63). Missing letters, owing to tears in the original, have been supplied with italicized text in brackets.

1. The copyist meant 1779.

2. Jones to Farragut, 25 March 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 November 1815, p. 141 (T829, Roll No. 382).

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR AND THE COLONIES EARL BATHURST TO  
GOVERNOR GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST, BRITISH ARMY

Secret

Downing Street,  
3rd June, 1814.

Sir,

I have already communicated to you in my despatch of the 14th of April the intention of His Majesty's Government to avail themselves of the favourable state of Affairs in Europe, in order to reinforce the Army under your command. I have now to acquaint you with the arrangements which have been made in consequence, and to point out to you the views with which His Majesty's Government have made so considerable an augmentation of the Army in Canada.

The 2nd. Battalion of the Royal Scots of the strength stated in the margin<sup>1</sup> sailed from Spithead on the 9th ulto. direct for Quebec, and was joined at Cork by the 97th Regiment destined to relieve the Nova Scotia Fencibles at Newfoundland; which latter will immediately proceed to Quebec.

The 6th and 82nd Regiments of the strength as per margin<sup>2</sup> sailed from Bourdeaux on the 15th ulto. direct for Quebec. Orders have also been given for embarking at the same port, twelve of the most effective Regiments of the Army under the Duke of Wellington together with three Companies of Artillery on the same service.

This force, which (when joined by the detachments about to proceed from this Country) will not fall far short of ten thousand infantry, will proceed in three divisions to Quebec. The first of these divisions will be embarked immediately, the second a week after the first and the third as soon as the means of Transport are collected. The last division however will arrive at Quebec long before the close of the year.

Six other Regiments have also been detached from the Gironde and the Mediterranean, four of which are destined to be employed in a direct operation against the Enemy's Coast, and the other two are intended as a reinforcement to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick; available (if circumstances appear to you to render it necessary) for the defense of Canada, or for the offensive operations on the Frontier, to which your attention will be particularly directed. It is also in contemplation at a later period of the year to make a more serious attack on some part of the Coasts of the United States; and with this view a considerable force will be collected at Cork without delay. These operations will not fail to effect a powerful diversion in your favor.

The result of this arrangement, as far as you are immediately concerned, will be to place at your disposal the Royals, The Nova Scotia Fencibles, the 6th & 82nd.



Regiments<sup>3</sup> amounting to three thousand one hundred and twenty seven men; and to afford you in the course of the year a further reinforcement of ten thousand British Troops.<sup>4</sup>

When this force shall have been placed under your command, His Majesty's Government conceive that the Canadas will not only be protected for the time against any attack which the enemy may have means of making, but it will enable you to commence offensive operations on the Enemy's Frontier before the close of the Campaign. At the same time it is by no means the intention of His Majesty's Government to encourage such forward movements into the Interior of the American Territory as might commit the safety of the Force placed under your command. The object of your operations will be; first, to give immediate protection: secondly, to obtain if possible ultimate security to His Majesty's Possessions in America.

The entire destruction of Sackets harbour and the Naval Establishment on Lake Erie and Lake Champlain come under the first description.

The maintenance of Fort Niagara and so much of the adjacent Territory as may be deemed necessary: and the occupation of Detroit and the Michigan Country come under the second.

If our success shall enable us to terminate the war by the retention of the Fort of Niagara, and the restoration of Detroit and the whole of the Michigan Country to the Indians, the British Frontier will be materially improved. Should there be any advanced position on that part of our frontier which extends towards Lake Champlain, the occupation of which would materially tend to the security of the Province, you will if you deem it expedient expel the Enemy from it, and occupy it by detachments of the Troops under your command, always however taking care not to expose His Majesty's Forces to being cut off by too extended a line of advance.

If you should not consider it necessary to call to your assistance the two Regiments which are to proceed in the first instance to Halifax, Sir J. Sherbrooke will receive instructions to occupy so much of the District of Maine as will secure an uninterrupted intercourse between Halifax and Quebec.

In contemplation of the increased force which by this arrangement you will be under the necessity of maintaining in the Province directions have been given for shipping immediately for Quebec, provisions for ten thousand men for six months.

The Frigate which conveys this letter has also on board one hundred thousand pounds in Specie for the use of the Army under your command. An equal sum will also be embarked on board the Ship of War which may be appointed to convoy to Quebec the fleet which is expected to sail from this Country on the 10th or at the latest on the 15th. instant. I have the honor etc.,

Bathurst

Copy, UK-KeNA, C.O. 43/23, fols. 152-55.

1. R. & F. 768.

2. R. & F. 6th 980, 82. 837.

3. R. & F. 3127.

4. 10,000.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR AND THE COLONIES EARL BATHURST

Private

Mouth of the Patuxent  
River 2d. Sepr. 1814

My Lord

Since I had the Honor to Address Your Lordship upon the fall of Washington on the Evening of the 24th. Ult. I have had a Conversation with Major General Ross on the advantages to be derived from Black Troops—, and we both concur in opinion that the Flank Companies of the Regiment in the West Indies and N Providence will both be a more effectual reinforcement and form the best recruiting parties for Their respective Regiments, Lt. Col. Brown will return to Barbadoes with the Officers and Men now here amounting in all to fourteen persons a number totally inadequate to the service they were sent to perform. Sir George Beckwith must have greatly mistaken Your Lordships wishes when he ordered them to Join me,— Should Your Lordship Approve of the Flank Companies being sent, the General is of Opinion that Lt. Coll. Brown is a fit person to Command, he has been in all the late services and being Upon the spot in the West Indies he can Organize the Battalion. before they are Embarked

The Worst Army we have to contend with is the Climate, this Obliges us to proceed to the Northward, by possessing Rhode Island we will draw the Attention of the Enemy to that Quarter. and as they expect the Arrival of Lord Hill with a Large Army—, they will consider that place as the General Rendezvous,— for our Attack upon New york. which your Lordship will see by the Newspapers I have sent to Lord Melville they are preparing for by fortifying the Heights of Brookline and yorks Island,— the Neighbourhood of our Army will keep Their Troops at home and prevent reinforcements Going to their Armies in Canada.— I hope that reinforcements will reach us before the first of december— by the beginning of November we will be leaving Rhode Island and pointing towards this Quarter— I am leaving with Sir Thos. Hardy who Commands here during my Absence About 500 Marines including my black recruits—which with the Marines of the Squadron will keep the Virginians Upon the Alert. about the middle of December Our Northern Campaign must Close North and South Carolina— Georgia—and Louisiana including N Orleans all lay Open to Attack

My Opinion is that About One Thousand Men half Black troops ought to be employd upon the Coast of So. Carolina and Georgia— that Possession be taken of Cumberland Island and a work thrown up to Contain 250 or 300 Men— this will Give us the Command of Their Inland Navigation and cut Off Their Communication with Amelia Island— the Northern extremity of the Floridas,— A Force so situated Acting upon the Flank of the Enemy on their Southern Boundary will operate much in favor of the Indians and oblige the Georgians to recall their troops for their internal defence— While this is going on I propose proceeding with the Army to Mobbille and to take the most prompt Measures for conveying Them in Boats by Lake pontachatren to N Orleans— in this We will be Joined By some Thousand Indians—and by Their Assistance After the fall of the City to cleave the Americans Out of Lousiana beyond the Spanish Boundary— all this may be Accomplished before the Month of March and the Keys of the Mississippi

placed in the Custody of Gr. Britain. I have the Honor to be Your Lordships Most obedient and humble servant

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cochrane

ALS, UK-KeNA, W.O. 1/141, fols. 30–31.

MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT HENLEY TO  
CAPTAIN THOMAS MACDONOUGH

U.S. Brig *Eagle* off Plattsburgh  
Sep 12th 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inclose a report of the Killed and wounded on board of the Brig *Eagle* under my command in the action of yesterday.— And while performing this painful part of my duty, sir, permit me to proffit of the occasion, in performing a more gratifying task in representing to you for the information of the Hon Secretary of the Navy the brave, and good conduct of my officers and crew, all of whom, I am proud to say did their duty, they all performed the part of true Americans.

During the severest shock of the action there courage continued undaunted and unshaken, Nothing could surpass the coolness and deliberate firmness with which every officer and man performed his respective part.— Early in the action I was deprived of services of that excelent officer Lieut Joseph Smith who was wounded and carried below, but returned to his duty, before the action closed, he went into action in that cool, and deliberate, manner which marks the truly brave man. The Gallant Acting Lieut Wm A. Spencer shortly after received a severe wound in the head, and was also carried below, but before the action seased resumed his station Acting Sailing Master Daniel Record was slightly wounded, but did not leave the deck.— Acting Lieut Jarvis Loomis Midshipman Chamberlin, Machesney, and Tardy behaved with great Spirit; in Short Sir every officer and man acted bravely and much to my satisfaction.

The zealous and able attention of Acting Surgeon Iseral Stoddard to the unfortunate officers and men that were wounded entitles him to my warmest thanks and I should be much gratified to see him rewarded by an appointment as Surgeon in the navy— Mr. Augustus Loomis a volunteer was very active and useful and through you I beg leave to recommend him to the consideration of the Hon Secretary, for a Lieutenancy of Marines; and earnestly request that Acting Lieuts Spencer and Loomis may be confirmed in their appointments.— Mr Record who I appointed Acting Saling Master at Vergennes, has proved him self a good and faithful officer and if it should please the Hon Secretary to confirm his appointment I should be much gratified also Mesrs Edward Smith as Gunner, Charles Johnson as Carpenter, and John Wilson as Boatswain, they behaved well and are worthy of warrants in the navy. Respectfully Your Obed. Ser.

(Signed) Ro: Henley

MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT HENLEY TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONESU.S. Brig *Eagle* off Plattsburg  
Sep 16th 1814—

Sir

I beg leave to acquaint you with a few particulars of the action of the 11th instant, as they particularly respect the vessel which I have the honor to command, and as they may not appear in the official report of Captain Macdonough whose duty it is to give general and impartial representation of the action.— We were anchored in the harbour of Plattsburgh in a line North and South at about the distance of one hundred yards, the *Eagle* North the *Saratoga* in the center and the *Ticonderoga* South. The enemy approached in a line a breast having a favourable wind, that enabled them to chose there position. The enemy brig took a Station off the Starboard bow of the *Eagle* at about one mile distance, the Ship about one point abaft our beam, and the sloop *Linnet* of 11 guns, made an effort to obtain a raking position under our Stern, perceiving her intentions, however I ordered a broadside to be fired into her, which caused her to Strike her coulours.

As soon as the enemy approached within point blank distance this brig commenced a most destructive fire upon there Ship and continued to direct her whole broadside excluding the two 18 pounders, forward which were occasionally fired at the brig, who relieved her position as occasion required, and kept up a raking and most destructive fire upon this vessel. I was confident that it was of the greatest importance to endeavour first to carry the enemys ship to insure us of success. For a great length of time after the action commenced, the enemy ship her whole force upon the *Eagle* dealing destruction, after having sustained the severist of the action for the space of one hour, having my springs shot away and many of the starboarded guns disabled, it was out of my power to bring a gun to bear upon the Ship or brig, consequently I ordered the cable cut and cast the brig, taking an advantagious position a little south of the *Saratoga*, bringing my larboard broadside to bear upon the ship which was very shortly obligated to haul down her coulours, our force was then directed to the brig and in the pace of eight minutes she struck and the victory terminated in our favour, we then turned our attention to the Galleys, some of which it is believed sunk and the remainder made there escape, the *Eagle* was in too shattered a condition to persue them.

I inclose the Surgeons report on the killed and wounded by which you will perceive that I had thirteen killed and twenty seven wounded, most of them severely. I have also the honor to inclose a copy of a report which I made to Captain Macdonough, for your information of the meritorious conduct of my officers and crew, which he has since informed me has been lost. I have the honor to be Sir with high respect your obed Ser—

Ro: Henley  
Commander

LIEUTENANT WILLIAM H. WATSON TO  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD

Norfolk Mar 2d. 1815

Sir

Circumstances during my residence in England, having hitherto prevented my attention to the painful duty which devolv'd on me by the death of my gallant commander Capt. Wm. H Allen of the late U.S. Brig *Argus*; I have now the honor to state for your information, that having landed the Minister Plenepo. (Mr. Crawford) and suit at L'Orient, we proceeded on the cruise which had been directed by the Department, and after capturing twenty vessels (a list of the names and other particulars of which I have the honor to enclose) being in the Lati. 52°. 15" North, Low 5°. 50" West. On the 14th. Augt. 1813 We discover'd at 4 OClock A M. a large Brig of War standing down under a press of Sail upon our weather quarter, the wind being at south and the *Argus* close hauld on the Starbd. Tack, we immediately prepared to receive her and at 4.30 being unable to get the weather gage we shortened sail and gave her an opportunity of closing. At 6 the Brig having displayd English colours we hoisted our flag, wore round, and gave her the larboard broad side (being at this time within grape distance) which was returned, and the action commenced within the range of Musketry. At 6.4. Capt Allan was wounded and the Enemy shot away our main braces, main spring stay, Gaff and trysailmast, At 6.8. Capt. Allan being much exhausted by the loss of blood was taken below, At 6.12 lost our spritsail Yard and the principal part of the Standing rigging on the larboard side of the foremast. At this time I received a wound on the head from a grape shot, which for a time rendered me incapable of attending to duty, and was carried below. I had however the satisfaction of recollecting on my recovery, that nothing which the most gallant exertions could effect, would be left undone by Lt. W. H. Allen Jr. who succeeded to the command of the Deck Lt. Allan reports at 6.14. the Enemy (being on our weather quarter edged off for the purpose of getting under our stern. but the *Argus* luff'd close to with the main topsail aback, and giving him a raking broadside frustrated his attempt. At 6.18. the Enemy shot away our preventer main braces and main topsail And the *Argus* having lost the use of her after sails, fell off before the wind, when the Enemy succeeded in passing our stern and ranged up on the Starboard side, At 6.25. the wheel ropes and running rigging of every description being shot away. The *Argus* became unmanageable and the Enemy not having sustained any apparent damage, had it completely in his power to choose a position, continued to play upon our starboard quarter, occasionally shifting his situation untill 6.30, when I returned to the deck the Enemy being under our stern within pistol shot where he continued to rake us untill 6.38. when we prepared to board, but in consequence of our shatter'd condition were unable to effect it, the Enemy then pass'd our broadside and took a position on our starboard bow, from this time untill 6.47; we were exposed to a cross or raking fire, without being able to oppose but little more than musketry to the broadside of the Enemy, our guns being much disabled, and seldom brot. To bear, The *Argus* having now sufferd much in Hull & rigging as also in kill'd & wounded among the former of whome exclusive of our gallant Captain, we have to lament the loss of of two

meritorious young Officers in Midn. Delphy and Edwards, and being exposed to a galling fire which from the Enemys ability to manage his Vessel we could not avoid. I deemed it necessary to surrender, and was taken possession of by H.B.M. Sloop the *Pelican* of twenty one carriage Guns, viz. sixteen 32 pound Carronades, four long 6s. and one 12 pound Carronade. I hope this measure will meet Your approbation, and that the result of this action when the superior size & metal of our opponent, and the fatigue which the crew &c. of the *Argus* underwent from a very rapid succession of captures is considered, will not be thought unworthy of the flag under which we serve.—

I have the Honor to enclose a list of killed and wounded<sup>1</sup> and feel great satisfaction in reporting the general good conduct of the men & Officers engaged on this occasion and particularly the zeal and activity display'd by Lt. Allan, who you will observe for a time commanded on Deck I have the Honor to be Sir with great respect Your Obt. Servt.

W. H. Watson  
Late 1st. Lt. U.S.B. *Argus*

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 10 (M148, Roll No. 14).

1. *Argus's* surgeon, James Inderwick, described the nature of each casualty's wounds in his journal, an extract of which is published in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 221–22. Inderwick originally recorded 18 casualties in his journal, while the list submitted by Watson contains the names of 23 killed and wounded. A casualty list Inderwick submitted to the Navy Department on his return to the United States in September 1814 contains 22 names, including details of where the surviving wounded *Argus* crewmen were imprisoned. See *Niles' Weekly Register*, 1 October 1814.

[Enclosure]

*Copy of a return of the killed and wounded on board the United states brig Argus, William H. Allen esq. commander.*

KILLED—Richard Delphy, midshipman; William W. Edwards, do.; Joshua Jones, seamen; William Finly, do.; William Knowlton, do.; George Gardner, do.

DIED OF THEIR WOUNDS.

William H. Allen, captain; James White, carpenter; Joseph Jourdan, boatswain's mate; Francis Eggart, seamen; Charles Backster, do.

WOUNDED.— William H. Watson, 1st lieutenant; Colin McLeod, boatswain; John Sniffer, carpenter's mate; John Young, quarter master; John Nugent, seamen; James Hall, do.; Joseph Allen, do; John Faddon, do; George Starbuck, do; William Hoventon, do.; John Scott, 1st. do.; John Scott, 2d do.

Printed, *Niles' Weekly Register*, 18 March 1815. As the original of this document was not found, a contemporary printed version was substituted.

COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE LOSS OF THE U.S. BRIG *ARGUS*[*Baltimore*], Wednesday— April 19th [1815]

[Extract]

The Court in pursuance of the Authority by which they were convened having carefully examined into the causes of the loss by capture of the United States Sloop of War *Argus*<sup>1</sup> under the command of the late W. H. Allen Master Commandant in the Navy of the United States— and also into the conduct of the Officers and Crew of the said Sloop before and after her surrender to the enemy's Ship *Pelican*<sup>2</sup> and having maturely deliberated upon all the Testimony They find the following facts—

1st. It is proved that in the number of her Crew and in the number and calibre of her guns the *Pelican* was decidedly superior to the *Argus*

2ndly. They find that the Crew of the *Argus* was very much exhausted by the continued and extraordinary fatigue and exposure to which they had been subjected for several weeks and particularly for twenty four hours immediately preceding the action—

3rdly. They find that every officer and man of the *Argus* (with the exception of one man Jacob Allister and one boy Hendrick), made use of every practicable exertion to capture the British sloop of war *Pelican*—

They are therefore of opinion that every Officer and Man of [*the Argus*] (with the exception before mentioned) displayed throughout the engagement a zeal activity and spirit in defence of the vessel and Flag committed to their charge protection which entitle them to the undiminished confidence and respect of their government and fellow citizens and do therefore honorably acquit them—

Ch, G, Ridgely Prest.  
John S Skinner—  
Judge Advocate—

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 203 (M273, Roll No. 8).

1. *Argus* is erroneously described here as a sloop of war. She was rigged as a brig.

2. On the engagement between *Argus* and *Pelican*, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 217–24.





## Index

Certain aspects of the treatment of persons and vessels in this index supplement annotation in the volume.

**PERSONS:** The rank of military personnel, whenever ascertainable, is the highest rank attained by the individual by the end of the war, 17 February 1815. When all references to an individual lie outside that span, the rank is the highest applicable to the person at the time to which the text refers. Vessels that civilians and naval personnel commanded during 1814 and 1815 are noted in parentheses at the end of the person's entry. The designation "U.S. Flotilla Service" is used to distinguish those officers who served in that service and not in the U.S. Navy.

**VESSELS:** In most cases, vessels are identified according to their use and rig—such as *President*, U.S. frigate; *Cleopatra*, American merchant brig; *Reindeer*, HM brig-sloop—according to the best information available. Since the use and rig of a vessel could vary, nomenclature used to identify vessels refers to the years 1814–15. When all references to the vessel lie outside that year, the nomenclature is that applicable to the vessel at the time to which the text refers. The names of commanders of warships, including privateers, but not most gunboats, are noted in parentheses at the end of their vessels' entry. The names of masters of commercial vessels are so listed when they are known.

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## About the Editors

CHRISTINE F. HUGHES, a native Virginian, is a historian with the Naval History and Heritage Command and co-editor of the fourth and final volume of *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History*. She earned BA and MA degrees in history from George Mason University and the University of Virginia, respectively. Before starting at the Command in 1986, Ms. Hughes worked as an editor with the Papers of George Washington Project and the Daniel Chester French Papers. Her publications reflect her interest in the early national period. She is co-author of *Against All Odds: U.S. Sailors in the War of 1812* and *Interpreting Old Ironsides: An Illustrated Guide to USS Constitution*. The USS *Constitution* Museum honored her with its 2008 Samuel Eliot Morison Award for Distinguished Service.

CHARLES E. BRODINE, JR., joined the staff of the Naval History and Heritage Command as a historian in 1987 and currently serves as head of the Public History and Education Section. In addition to co-editing and co-authoring six command publications on the early sailing Navy, Mr. Brodine has published more than a dozen essays and short articles on naval and military topics ranging from the French and Indian War to the Civil War. In October 2008, the USS *Constitution* Museum named Mr. Brodine co-recipient of the Samuel Eliot Morison Award in recognition of his “superior leadership and thoughtful scholarship” in preserving America’s “maritime heritage and the traditions of the USS *Constitution* for future generations.” In 2015, *Naval History* magazine named Mr. Brodine its author of the year for his 2014 contribution to that publication entitled “War Visits the Chesapeake.”



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**The Naval History and Heritage Command**, located at the Washington Navy Yard, is the U.S. Navy’s official historical agency. Its mission is to locate, collect, and preserve documents, artifacts, photos, oral histories, and art that best represent the history of the U.S. Navy and to present that history and heritage through publications, articles, museum exhibits, web and social media outreach, speaking engagements, static displays, loans of artifacts and art, educational programs, and the maintenance of USS *Constitution* and Historic Ship *Nautilus*.

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Jacket illustration: *Battle of Lake Borgne*, oil painting by Thomas L. Hornbrook, c. 1815–44. The Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans, Louisiana, #1950.54.



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