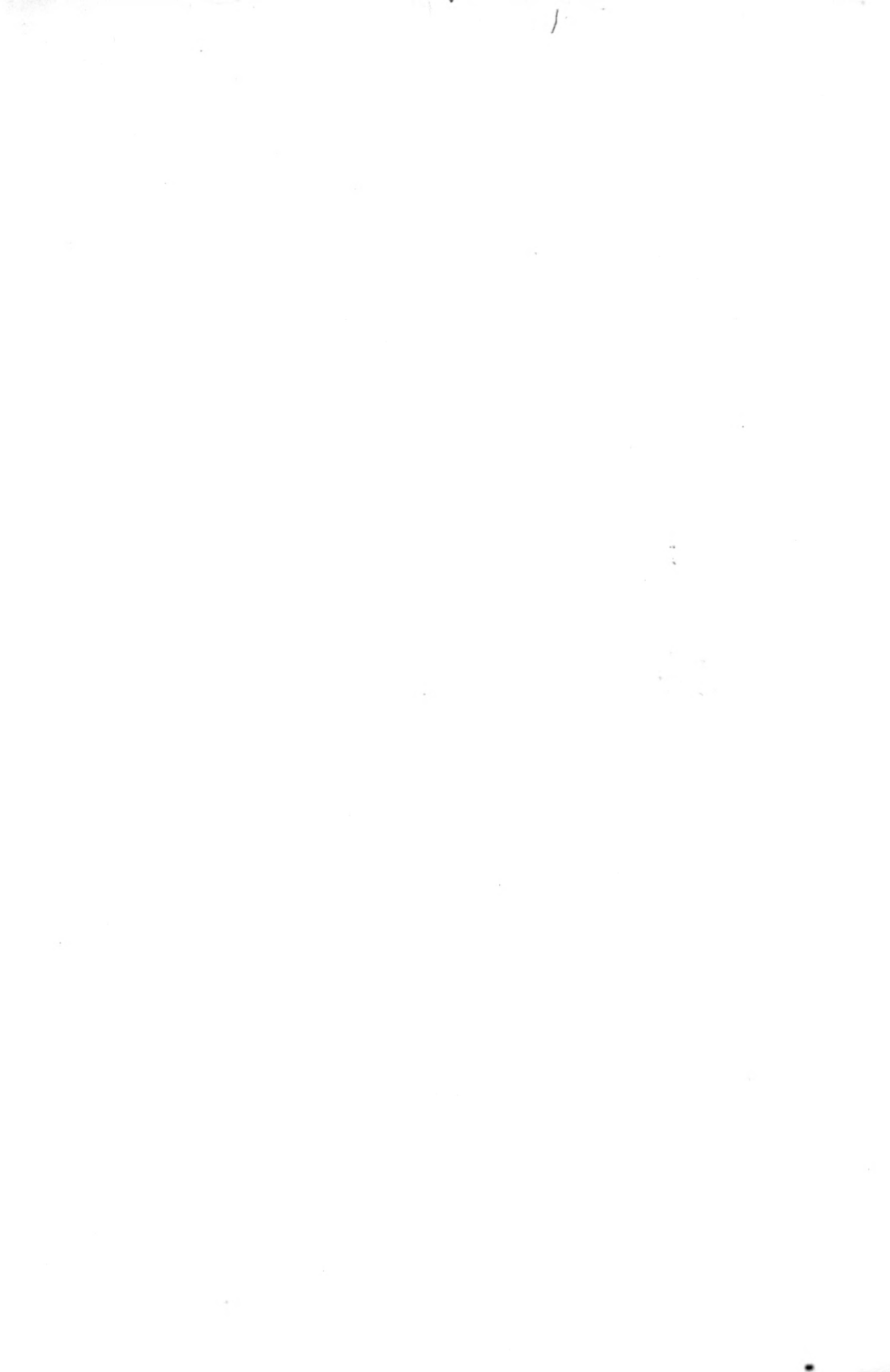


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PUBLICATIONS  
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NAVAL HISTORY SOCIETY  
VOLUME IV



OUT-LETTERS OF THE  
CONTINENTAL MARINE COMMITTEE  
AND BOARD OF ADMIRALTY







Captain John Paul Jones

May 9<sup>th</sup> 1777

Sir

The Congress have thought proper to authorize the Secret Committee to employ you a voyage on the Amphibole from Baltimore to Carolina and France where it is expected you will be provided with a new frigate and as your present Commission is for the Command of a particular Ship we now send you a new one whereby you are appointed a Captain in our Navy and of course may command any Ship in the Service. You are to obey the Orders of the Secret Committee.

We are Sir

Your humble servants

Captain John Young

May 13<sup>th</sup> 1777

Sir

You are to return to Newport and after sending up the Stores you brought thither in the Independence, you are immediately to proceed out to Sea on a Cruise of the Capes of Delaware, keeping out side of the British Men of War and so distant from them as may be necessary for your own safety. You are to Cruise in such places as may be most likely for you to meet or fall in with American Ships or vessels bound into this Port, taking care when you chase any such as you take for Americans to show them Continental Colours, & when you speak them inform them of the British Cruizes in the Mouth of Delaware and Chesapeake Bay, advising them to get into the Inlets or if large Ships to seek safety either in the Eastern or Southern States, you are to continue this Cruise for about three weeks sometimes to the Northward and some times to the Southward of Cape Henlopen and render every assistance and service in your power to such American Ships as you fall in with during that time. We hope also that you may show some good Prize the way into some of the Inlets along the Coast, when this Cruise is finished you may put into any one of the said Inlets where you can with most convenience leave down the Schoop and send an Officer or two Express to inform us where you are, when you can be ready to sail again, and what Stores and Provisions you will want for a three months Cruise when we shall send fresh orders and take measures for your being supplied.

We are Sir

Your humble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE  
CONTINENTAL MARINE COMMITTEE  
AND BOARD OF ADMIRALTY

AUGUST, 1776—SEPTEMBER, 1780

EDITED BY  
CHARLES OSCAR PAULLIN  
OF THE CARNEGIE INSTITUTION OF WASHINGTON

VOLUME I

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# CONTENTS

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION . . . . .	PAGE XXI
------------------------	-------------

1776

Aug. 22 . . To NATHANIEL SHAW, JR. . . . .	1
Aug. 22 . . To NATHANIEL SHAW, JR. . . . .	2
Aug. 22 . . To CAPTAIN HOYSTED HACKER . . . . .	3
Aug. 23 . . To LIEUTENANT JOHN BALDWIN . . . . .	3
Aug. 27 . . To CAPTAIN WILLIAM STONE . . . . .	5
Sept. 2 . . To DANIEL TILLINGHAST . . . . .	6
Sept. 20 . . To CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG . . . . .	7
Sept. 21 . . To THOMAS CUSHING . . . . .	10
Sept. 21 . . To JOHN BRADFORD . . . . .	11
Sept. 21 . . To CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON . . . . .	12
Sept. 21 . . To CAPTAIN HECTOR MCNEILL . . . . .	14
Sept. 21 . . To JOHN LANGDON . . . . .	15
Sept. 21 . . To CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES . . . . .	16
Oct. 1 . . To LIEUTENANT THOMAS ALBERTSON . . . . .	17
Oct. 3 . . To HEWES AND SMITH . . . . .	18
Oct. 4 . . To WILLIAM BINGHAM . . . . .	19
Oct. 9 . . To STEPHEN HOPKINS . . . . .	20
Oct. 9 . . To THE RHODE ISLAND FRIGATE COMMITTEE . . . . .	21

[ix]

## CONTENTS

		PAGE
Oct. 9 . . .	To THE RHODE ISLAND FRIGATE COMMITTEE . . . . .	23
Oct. 9 . . .	To CAPTAIN NATHANIEL FALCONER . . . . .	24
Oct. 9 . . .	To JOHN LANGDON . . . . .	25
Oct. 9 . . .	To THE NEW YORK CONVENTION . . . . .	26
Oct. 10 . . .	To COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS . . . . .	27
Oct. 10 . . .	To HENRY TUCKER AND THOMAS GODET . . . . .	29
Oct. 13 . . .	To CAPTAIN NATHANIEL FALCONER . . . . .	31
Oct. 13 . . .	CIRCULAR LETTER TO CONTINENTAL AGENTS . . . . .	32
Oct. 13 . . .	To THE RHODE ISLAND FRIGATE COMMITTEE . . . . .	33
Oct. 13 . . .	To JOHN LANGDON . . . . .	33
Oct. 17 . . .	To CAPTAIN ISAIAH ROBINSON . . . . .	34
Oct. 18 . . .	To CAPTAIN JAMES ROBINSON . . . . .	35
Oct. 18 . . .	To CAPTAIN WILLIAM HALLOCK . . . . .	36
Oct. 18 . . .	CIRCULAR LETTER TO CONTINENTAL AGENTS . . . . .	36
Oct. 18 . . .	CIRCULAR LETTER TO PRIZE AGENTS . . . . .	38
Oct. 23 . . .	To COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS . . . . .	41
Oct. 23 . . .	To CAPTAINS JOHN MANLEY, HECTOR Mc- NEILL, AND THOMAS THOMPSON . . . . .	42
Oct. 23 . . .	To THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL OF NORTH CAROLINA . . . . .	44
Oct. 25 . . .	To JONATHAN TRUMBULL . . . . .	45
Oct. 30 . . .	To DANIEL TILLINGHAST . . . . .	46
Oct. 30 . . .	To COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS . . . . .	47
Nov. 1 . . .	To CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER . . . . .	48
Nov. 11 . . .	To CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER . . . . .	50
Nov. 14 . . .	To JOHN WEREAT . . . . .	52
Nov. 14 . . .	To LIEUTENANT ISAAC BUCK . . . . .	54
Nov. 17 . . .	To LIVINUS CLARKSON AND JOHN DORSIUS . . . . .	55

## CONTENTS

			PAGE
Nov.	29 . .	To CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER . . . . .	56
Dec.	14 . .	To WILLIAM BINGHAM . . . . .	57
Dec.	25 . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN NICHOLSON . . . . .	58

### 1777

Jan.	1 . .	To LIEUTENANT JOHN BALDWIN . . . . .	59
Jan.	21 . .	To COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS . . . . .	60
Jan.	24 . .	To ROBERT MORRIS . . . . .	61
Jan.	30 . .	To CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE . . . . .	63
Feb.	1 . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES . . . . .	65
Feb.	5 . .	To COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS . . . . .	70
Feb.	5 . .	To ROBERT MORRIS . . . . .	71
Feb.	7 . .	To JOHN BRADFORD . . . . .	72
Feb.	9 . .	CIRCULAR LETTER TO CAPTAINS JAMES CAMP- BELL AND WILLIAM ROGERS . . . . .	74
Feb.	15 . .	To CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE . . . . .	75
Feb.	15 . .	To CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER . . . . .	79
Feb.	16 . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN NICHOLSON . . . . .	80
Feb.	17 . .	To CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER . . . . .	81
Feb.	18 . .	To LIEUTENANT THOMAS ALBERTSON . . . . .	82
March	12 . .	To CAPTAIN JAMES ROBINSON . . . . .	82
March	21 . .	To JOHN BRADFORD . . . . .	84
March	21 . .	To ISAAC SMITH, EBENEZER STORER, AND WIL- LIAM PHILIPS . . . . .	85
March	21 . .	CIRCULAR LETTER TO WASHINGTON'S AGENTS .	87
March	25 . .	To JOHN BRADFORD AND LEONARD JARVIS . .	88
March	25 . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES . . . . .	89
March	29 . .	To CAPTAIN JAMES ROBINSON . . . . .	89

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
March 29 . . . To WILLIAM BINGHAM . . . . .	90
Apr. 4 . . . CIRCULAR LETTER TO CAPTAINS J. B. HOPKINS, ABRAHAM WHIPPLE, AND DUDLEY SALTON- STALL . . . . .	91
Apr. 8 . . . To CAPTAIN CHARLES ALEXANDER . . . . .	92
Apr. 8 . . . To CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON . . . . .	93
Apr. 18 . . . To CAPTAIN BENJAMIN DUNN . . . . .	96
Apr. 18 . . . To CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER . . . . .	97
Apr. 18 . . . To CAPTAIN ISAIAH ROBINSON . . . . .	98
Apr. 19 . . . To CAPTAIN ISAIAH ROBINSON . . . . .	100
Apr. 19 . . . To CAPTAIN BENJAMIN DUNN . . . . .	103
Apr. 23 . . . To CAPTAIN ELISHA HINMAN . . . . .	106
Apr. 23 . . . To CAPTAIN JOHN PECK RATHBURNE . . . . .	107
Apr. 26 . . . To CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE . . . . .	109
Apr. 26 . . . To LIVINUS CLARKSON AND JOHN DORSIUS . . . . .	114
Apr. 29 . . . To CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE . . . . .	117
Apr. 29 . . . RESOLUTIONS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE . . . . .	118
Apr. 29 . . . To JOHN DUPUY . . . . .	124
Apr. 29 . . . To CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON . . . . .	125
Apr. 29 . . . To BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, SILAS DEANE, AND ARTHUR LEE . . . . .	129
Apr. 29 . . . To CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON . . . . .	131
May 1 . . . To THOMAS JOHNSTON . . . . .	131
May 1 . . . To LIEUTENANT AQUILLA JOHNS . . . . .	132
May 9 . . . To CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES . . . . .	133
May 13 . . . To CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG . . . . .	134
May 16 . . . To CAPTAIN HOYSTED HACKER . . . . .	135
May 16 . . . To DANIEL TILLINGHAST . . . . .	136



## CONTENTS

			PAGE
May	26	To THE RHODE ISLAND FRIGATE COMMITTEE . . . . .	137
June	1	To CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON . . . . .	137
June	17	To NATHANIEL SHAW, JR. . . . .	138
June	17	To CAPTAIN SAMUEL CHEW . . . . .	140
June	17	To JOHN DESHON . . . . .	142
June	18	To CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES . . . . .	143
June	18	To WILLIAM WHIPPLE, JOHN LANGDON, AND JOHN PAUL JONES . . . . .	145
June	26	CIRCULAR LETTER TO CAPTAINS GRENNELL AND HODGE . . . . .	146
June	26	To THE NEW YORK COUNCIL OF SAFETY . . . . .	147
June	26	To JAMES WARREN, WILLIAM VERNON, AND JOHN DESHON . . . . .	148
July	5	To CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG . . . . .	150
July	11	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	152
Aug.	25	To LIEUTENANT JOHN STEVENS . . . . .	153
Aug.	27	To MAXWELL AND LOYALL . . . . .	154
Sept.	6	To CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON . . . . .	155
Sept.	10	To COMMODORE STEPHEN HOPKINS . . . . .	156
Sept.	10	To DANIEL TILLINGHAST . . . . .	157
Sept.	26	To COMMODORE JOHN HAZELWOOD . . . . .	157
Sept.	26	To CAPTAIN CHARLES ALEXANDER . . . . .	158
Oct.	23	To CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON . . . . .	160
Oct.	24	To CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE . . . . .	161
Oct.	26	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	163
Nov.	5	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE MIDDLE DEPART- MENT . . . . .	166

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Nov. 6 . . . To CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON . . . . .	167
Nov. 12 . . . To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	168
Nov. 13 . . . To THOMAS CUSHING . . . . .	172
Nov. 13 . . . To JOHN DESHON . . . . .	172
Nov. 13 . . . To DANIEL TILLINGHAST . . . . .	173
Nov. 17 . . . To STEPHEN HOPKINS . . . . .	174
Nov. 17 . . . To DANIEL TILLINGHAST . . . . .	176
Nov. 22 . . . To JONATHAN HUDSON . . . . .	177
Nov. 22 . . . To SAMUEL AND ROBERT PURVIANCE . . . . .	178
Nov. 22 . . . To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	179
Nov. 27 . . . To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE MIDDLE DEPART- MENT . . . . .	180
Nov. 29 . . . To MAXWELL AND LOYALL . . . . .	180
Dec. 2 . . . To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	181
Dec. 2 . . . To CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON . . . . .	182
Dec. 2 . . . To JONATHAN HUDSON . . . . .	183
Dec. 2 . . . To JOHN LANGDON . . . . .	184
Dec. 12 . . . To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE MIDDLE DEPART- MENT . . . . .	184
Dec. 19 . . . To CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON . . . . .	186
Dec. 20 . . . To CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON . . . . .	186
Dec. 20 . . . To PATRICK HENRY . . . . .	187

1778

Jan. 7 . . . To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE MIDDLE DEPART- MENT . . . . .	188
--	-----

## CONTENTS

		PAGE
Jan. 10 . . .	To WILLIAM SMITH . . . . .	189
Jan. 13 . . .	To CAPTAIN THOMAS READ . . . . .	190
Jan. 13 . . .	To JONATHAN HUDSON . . . . .	192
Jan. 16 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	193
Jan. 20 . . .	To SAMUEL AND ROBERT PURVIANCE . . . . .	195
Jan. 22 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE MIDDLE DEPARTMENT . . . . .	196
Jan. 28 . . .	To CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON . . . . .	197
Jan. 29 . . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY . . . . .	198
Jan. 29 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE MIDDLE DEPARTMENT . . . . .	200
Feb. 12 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	201
Feb. 23 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	202
Feb. 24 . . .	To WILLIAM SMITH . . . . .	204
Feb. 28 . . .	To NATHANIEL SHAW, JR. . . . .	204
Feb. 28 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	205
March 4 . . .	To STEPHEN STEWARD . . . . .	206
March 4 . . .	To CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON . . . . .	207
March 4 . . .	To THOMAS JOHNSTON . . . . .	208
March 6 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	209
March 11 . . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY . . . . .	214
March 26 . . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY . . . . .	217
Apr. 3 . . .	To JOHN LANGDON . . . . .	218
Apr. 6 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	219

## CONTENTS

			PAGE
Apr.	6 . . .	To CAPTAIN THOMAS PLUNKETT . . . . .	220
Apr.	6 . . .	To CAPTAIN THOMAS READ . . . . .	221
Apr.	7 . . .	To CAPTAIN LAWRENCE AND SAMUEL TUDOR . . . . .	222
Apr.	7 . . .	To CAPTAIN PETER LANDAIS . . . . .	222
Apr.	8 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE MIDDLE DEPARTMENT . . . . .	223
Apr.	9 . . .	To ISAAC SMITH, EBENEZER STORER, AND WILLIAM PHILIPS . . . . .	225
Apr.	11 . . .	To MAXWELL AND LOYALL . . . . .	226
Apr.	11 . . .	To DAVID STODDER . . . . .	227
Apr.	11 . . .	To PATRICK HENRY . . . . .	228
Apr.	14 . . .	To WILLIAM SMITH . . . . .	228
Apr.	20 . . .	To JONATHAN TRUMBULL . . . . .	229
Apr.	22 . . .	To CAPTAIN THOMAS READ . . . . .	230
Apr.	22 . . .	To RICHARD ELLIS . . . . .	230
Apr.	24 . . .	To NICHOLAS VAN DYKE . . . . .	231
Apr.	28 . . .	To JOHN BRADFORD . . . . .	232
May	5 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	234
May	5 . . .	To JOHN LANGDON . . . . .	234
May	5 . . .	To JONATHAN TRUMBULL . . . . .	235
May	6 . . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG . . . . .	236
May	6 . . .	To HEWES AND SMITH . . . . .	237
May	8 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	238
May	9 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	240
May	16 . . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE MIDDLE DEPARTMENT . . . . .	244

## CONTENTS

		PAGE
May 25 . .	To RICHARD ELLIS . . . . .	246
May 26 . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	247
May 30 . .	To JOHN LANGDON . . . . .	248
May 30 . .	To JOHN BRADFORD . . . . .	249
May 30 . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY . . . . .	250
May 30 . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	250
June 10 . .	To THE UNITED STATES COMMISSIONERS AT PARIS . . . . .	255
June 18 . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE MIDDLE DEPART- MENT . . . . .	256
June 18 . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG . . . . .	257
June 18 . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	258
June 18 . .	To CAPTAIN PETER LANDAIS . . . . .	259
June 19 . .	To WILLIAM SMITH . . . . .	260
June 19 . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	260
June 19 . .	To CAPTAIN DANIEL WATERS . . . . .	262
June 19 . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN GREEN . . . . .	262
June 24 . .	To JOHN WEREAT . . . . .	263
June 24 . .	To CAPTAIN OLIVER BOWEN . . . . .	264
July 11 . .	To PATRICK HENRY . . . . .	264
July 11 . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	265
July 12 . .	To COUNT D'ESTAING . . . . .	267
July 17 . .	To COUNT D'ESTAING . . . . .	268
July 24 . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPART- MENT . . . . .	270

## CONTENTS

			PAGE
July	29 . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	274
July	29 . .	To JOHN WEREAT . . . . .	275
July	30 . .	To COLONEL JOHN BEATTY . . . . .	276
July	31 . .	To THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL OF GEORGIA .	277
Aug.	1 . .	To JOHN WEREAT . . . . .	277
Aug.	4 . .	To THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS . . . . .	278
Aug.	5 . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	279
Aug.	12 . .	To COLONEL JOHN BEATTY . . . . .	281
Aug.	12 . .	To THE NAVY BOARD OF THE EASTERN DEPARTMENT . . . . .	282
Aug.	12 . .	To JOHN BRADFORD . . . . .	283
Aug.	12 . .	To JEREMIAH WADSWORTH . . . . .	283
Aug.	12 . .	To COUNT D'ESTAING . . . . .	284
Aug.	20 . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN GREEN . . . . .	285
Aug.	21 . .	To RICHARD PETERS . . . . .	286
Aug.	24 . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY . . . . .	287
Aug.	24 . .	To CAPTAIN WILLIAM BURKE . . . . .	288
Aug.	28 . .	To CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY . . . . .	289

# ILLUSTRATION

A PAGE OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE LETTER-BOOK

*Frontispiece*





## INTRODUCTION

THE letters that are printed in this volume and that are to be printed in a succeeding volume of the Publications of the Naval History Society constitute all the out-letters of the Continental Naval Department that are preserved in the "Marine Committee Letter-Book," now deposited in the Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. These letters are official copies. Only a few of the originals are now in existence. The letter-book is a folio, and contains 315 pages of letters. The total number of letters in it is 506. The earlier letters, 372 in number, were written by the Marine Committee, and cover the period August 22, 1776–November 20, 1779. The later letters, 134 in number, were written by the Board of Admiralty, and cover the period December 10, 1779–September 19, 1780. It would seem that this letter-book does not contain all the out-letters of the Naval Department for the years covered, but only the more important ones—possibly those that were deemed worthy of preservation.

The principal correspondent of the naval office was the Navy Board of the Eastern Department, to which 86 of the 506 letters are addressed. The Continental agents residing at the chief seaports of the colonies, especially those at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Boston, Massachusetts, and New London, Connecticut, re-

## INTRODUCTION

ceived many letters. In the list of correspondents are found the names of most, if not all, the leading naval officers—among others, Esek Hopkins, John Paul Jones, Abraham Whipple, John Barry, Nicholas Biddle, James and Samuel Nicholson, Thomas Thompson, Hector McNeill, John Young, Lambert Wickes, Elisha Warner, James and Isaiah Robinson, John Peck Rathburne, Hoysted Hacker, Seth Harding and J. B. Hopkins. There are letters to Jonathan Trumbull, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Joseph Reed, Thomas Johnston and other colonial governors, to Generals Washington, Lincoln, Schuyler and Heath, to the commissary-general of purchases, the commissary-general of prisoners and other officials of the staff of the army. There are also letters to the French minister at Philadelphia, the United States Commissioners at Paris, Count D'Estaing, Benjamin Franklin, the President of the Continental Congress, the Treasury Board, and the Board of War.

The materials contained in the Marine Committee Letter-Book are more extensive than those of any other collection of the records of the Continental Navy. They are invaluable for a study of the beginnings of the American navy and for an understanding of naval administration and naval operations during the Revolutionary war. From them one may discover the aims and plans of the Naval Department, the obstacles which it encountered, and the extent to which it succeeded or failed. They contain much information respecting the purchase and construction of ships, the obtaining of provisions, munitions of war and other naval supplies, the officering and manning of the navy, the distribution of

## INTRODUCTION

the proceeds of prizes, regulations regarding prizes, naval rules and regulations, naval finance, the work of the naval agents, the movements of Continental and of British ships of war, the blockade of the American coast, naval engagements, prizes captured, convoying of ships, protection of trade, joint expeditions, voyages to France and the West Indies, naval news in those countries, courts-martial and courts of inquiry, naval discipline, sailing orders to officers, and many other subjects.

A brief account of the Continental Naval Department will aid the reader to understand the correspondence in the letter-book. The first organ of naval administration of the Revolutionary government was the Naval Committee, which was established early in October, 1775, and which was composed first of three and later of seven members, all delegates to the Continental Congress. This committee acquired the first American ships of war, selected their officers, and fitted them for sea. It drafted the first naval rules and regulations and not a little fundamental legislation for the navy, all of which after amendment was adopted by Congress. Its letters, with but few exceptions, have not been preserved.

In December, 1775, a new organ of naval administration was established. On the 13th of that month Congress resolved to build thirteen frigates, and on the following day a committee consisting of one member of Congress from each of the thirteen colonies was chosen to take charge of the work of constructing these vessels. This committee was soon designated the Marine Committee. Larger and more representative than the Naval Committee and intrusted with more important work, it

## INTRODUCTION

soon supplanted that committee, and from March, 1776, to November, 1779, it was the recognized and responsible head of the Continental Naval Department. Its office was regularly in Philadelphia, but when Congress was compelled to leave that city it followed the fortunes of the peripatetic legislators. Its movements may be disclosed by a list of the places and dates of the sessions of Congress: Philadelphia, May 10, 1775 to December 12, 1776; Baltimore, December 20, 1776 to February 27, 1777; Philadelphia, March 5, 1777 to September 18, 1777; Lancaster, September 27, 1777; York, September 30, 1777 to June 27, 1778; and Philadelphia, July 2, 1778 to June 21, 1783.

The officers of the Marine Committee consisted of a chairman or president, a vice-president, and a secretary. Its sessions were rarely or never attended by its full membership. Much business was transacted by a minority of its members. On June 6, 1777, Congress resolved that five members should constitute a quorum. Frequent changes were made in the membership of the committee. The office of chairman was filled at one time or another by some of the leading members of Congress—notably by John Hancock and Samuel Adams of Massachusetts, Henry Laurens of South Carolina, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, and William Whipple of New Hampshire. Among other distinguished members of Congress who rendered important service on the committee were Stephen Hopkins and William Ellery of Rhode Island, Francis Lewis of New York, Robert Hewes of North Carolina, and Robert Morris of Pennsylvania. The last named for a time served as vice-president, and during the winter of 1776–1777, when

## INTRODUCTION

Congress was at Baltimore, remained at Philadelphia and managed the navy with but little assistance from his colleagues. The members of the committee were not paid for their services. In 1778-1779, when the currency was greatly depreciated, the secretary received a salary of \$8000 a year. The early letters of the committee are not preserved in the Marine Committee Letter-Book, and are doubtless for the most part lost. The first letter in the letter-book is of the date August 22, 1776.

The Marine Committee proved to be slow, inexpert and irresponsible. Much dissatisfaction with its work and with the work of the other administrative committees of Congress arose. For several years a considerable agitation was conducted for the establishment of a new administrative system, which was to be more permanent and expert than that based on committees of Congress. The objects of the promoters of the new system were in part realized by the establishment in October, 1777, of a Board of War, and in July, 1779, of a Board of Treasury. In line with this reform, Congress on October 28, 1779, provided for a Board of Admiralty, to be composed of five members, two of whom were to be delegates to Congress, and three of whom were to be chosen from outside that body. The latter were called commissioners. Any three members could form a quorum. No two members could come from the same state. The office of the board was always to be located at the federal capital. Congress was to choose the secretary, but the board was to choose the clerks. Each commissioner was to receive a yearly salary of \$14,000, and the secretary a salary of \$8000—evidently to be paid in depre-

## INTRODUCTION

ciated money. In 1780 these salaries were decreased to \$1850 and \$1100 respectively, and made payable in specie, or its equivalent.

Several of the first commissioners chosen by Congress declined to serve. Finally early in December, 1779, a commissioner who would accept the honor, Francis Lewis of New York, was named, and he with the two Congressional members, James Forbes of Maryland and William Ellery of Rhode Island, organized the board. The task of finding men who would accept commissionerships proved to be a difficult one. In June, 1780, Ellery, having retired from Congress, was elected commissioner, and he and Lewis for a time constituted the active membership of the new naval department. Among the members of Congress who served on the board were James Madison of Virginia, Daniel Huntington of Connecticut, Whitmill Hill of North Carolina, and St. Thomas Jenifer of Maryland. John Brown, the secretary of the Marine Committee, served as secretary of the Board of Admiralty. In July, 1781, the board was discontinued, and shortly thereafter the administration of the navy was vested in an agent of marine. The last letter of the Board of Admiralty copied in the Marine Committee Letter-Book is of date September 19, 1780. Some of the records of the Board of Admiralty subsequent to that date and some of the records of the agent of marine will be found in the Records and Papers of the Continental Congress preserved in the Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress.

The two most important secondary organs of naval administration were the Navy Board of the Middle Department or the Navy Board at Philadelphia, and

## INTRODUCTION

the Navy Board of the Eastern Department or the Navy Board at Boston—each composed of three members or commissioners. The former, which had charge of administrative details in the Middle states, was established by a resolution of Congress of November 6, 1776. Its first commissioners were John Nixon, John Wharton and Francis Hopkinson, all residing in or near Philadelphia. The Navy Board of the Eastern Department, which had charge of naval affairs in New England, was established by Congress on April 19, 1777. Its first three and only commissioners were James Warren of Plymouth, Massachusetts, William Vernon of Providence, Rhode Island, and John Deshon of New London, Connecticut. Several changes were made in the personnel of the Philadelphia board. In May, 1778, William Smith of Baltimore succeeded Nixon. In August of that year Smith and Hopkinson resigned and James Searle of Pennsylvania was appointed to fill one of the vacancies. He served for only a month. Later James Read of Delaware and William Winder of Maryland were chosen commissioners. Owing to the location of the Continental Naval Department and the Navy Board of the Middle Department regularly in the same city, usually Philadelphia, they transacted but little business through correspondence, and therefore but few letters to the Navy Board of the Middle Department are found in the letter-book.

The letters of the Marine Committee copied into the Marine Committee Letter-Book are generally unsigned. All signatures, whether that of secretary, chairman, commissioner, or other official, are quoted by the editor. The name occurring in the address of the letter is not

## INTRODUCTION

quoted, but is found, sometimes with a slight change, in the heading provided by the editor. The place at which the letter is written is quoted whenever given, but it is usually not given, especially when the place is Philadelphia. Capitals are followed, but it is not always possible to distinguish a capital from a small letter.

For permission to copy these letters and for other courtesies, the editor is under obligations to Dr. Herbert Putnam, librarian of the Library of Congress, and to Mr. Gaillard Hunt, chief of the Division of Manuscripts in that library.



OUT-LETTERS OF  
THE MARINE COMMITTEE



OUT-LETTERS OF  
THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO NATHANIEL SHAW, JR.<sup>1</sup> ]

Philadelphia Augt 22d 1776

Sir

Commodore [Esek] Hopkins recommends the purchase of the armed Schooner his Fleet lately carried into New London as an adviseable measure for this committee to adopt and in hopes to promote the Public Service thereby, we now request you will purchase said Schooner on the best terms in your power and assist the Commodore to fit equipp and man her with all possible expedition as a Continental Cruizer, he is ordered to offer the command to Captain Chew of New London and we hope he may accept it as he is so well recommended by your Committee. You will supply this Vessel with all necessary Provisions and Stores for a Six Months Cruize providing the whole on the best terms and in due Time rendering us an account thereof. If you have not money sufficient for this purpose your drafts on us will be duely honored by Sir

Your very hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Shaw was the Continental agent at New London, Connecticut. He was a wealthy and public-spirited citizen, and was on intimate terms with Washington and other Revolutionary leaders.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO NATHANIEL SHAW, JR. ]

August 22nd 1776

Sir

The Secret Committee<sup>1</sup> have directed Mr. Barnabas Deane<sup>2</sup> of Whethersfeild Connecticut to deliver you sundry articles he has imported on Continental account which you are to receive for the use of the American Navy, granting Mr. Deane a receipt for the whole in order to answer the accounts of said Secret Committee, but as Mr. Deane is in want of some of those very articles as well as others for the Frigate built under his direction, you are to supply any of these and assist him in procuring any other articles wanted for that Ship charging the same to his account or to the Ships as you shall judge most proper. You are hereafter to render us an account of the expenditure of all Stores you receive or buy on account of the Continent. The Salt you will keep for the purpose of putting up Pork the ensuing Season for the use of the Navy.

We are sir

Your hble servants

<sup>1</sup> The Secret Committee of the Continental Congress was engaged in exporting colonial products and in importing supplies.

<sup>2</sup> A brother of Silas Deane.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN HOYSTED HACKER<sup>1</sup> ]

August 22d. 1776

Sir

Since the dates of those orders we have already addressed to John Paul Jones and you as Commanders of the Brig. Hampden we have in consultation with Commodore Hopkins altered your destination as you will learn from him. You are therefore to receive fresh Orders from the Commodore and Obey them as if from Sir

Your very hble servants

[ TO LIEUTENANT JOHN BALDWIN<sup>2</sup> ]

August 23d. 1776

Sir

The Continental Schooner Wasp under your command being now thoroughly repaired, well fitted equipped and manned you are immediately to proceed in said Schooner on a Cruize against the enemies of these States. We deliver you herewith a Marine Book by which you will know who are our enemies and also how to conduct yourself in conformity to the Continental Rules and Regulations you have likewise a List of

<sup>1</sup> Hacker was No. 16 in the list of naval captains as fixed by the Continental Congress on October 10, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> The ranking lieutenant in the navy according to the navy list of October 10, 1776.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

the Agents in the several States to some of whom you must address the Prizes you take.

We deliver you herewith a Letter for a Gentleman in Bermuda which is of much consequence to America You are therefore to proceed with the utmost expedition to Port Ellis at the Eastend of that Island and deliver the said Letter as quickly as possible, receive from him any others he may send in return, and as you will then be near the best Cruizing ground for West India Ships you may make a Cruize about that Latitude for such length of Time as your Provisions will enable you to keep the Sea, unless success should tempt you to return much sooner with a good Prize. You must be careful of the schooner her Stores and Materials. Use your people well but preserve strict discipline, treat prisoners if any you make, with humanity and in all things be duely attentive to the honor and interest of America, if you can get any Seamen at Bermuda Ship as many as you can accommodate and bring us the best account you can obtain of the State and condition of that Island, with respect to Provisions, Numbers of Inhabitants what Canon arms &c they have there and enquire particularly after any british men of war, that have been there, that are there, or that are expected. Should you be unfortunately taken either going to or after you leave Bermuda be sure to destroy all Letters you may have for or from that Island

Should you gain any intelligence you may think important you must quit all other pursuits to inform us thereof soon as possible. Wishing you success

We are Sir

Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM STONE<sup>1</sup> ]

August 27th 1776

Sir

The Marine Committee have directed me to inform you that the Hornet Sloop is now returned from her Cruize, during which she has been extreamly leaky as Captain Hallock<sup>2</sup> the Bearer hereof will inform you. The Committee have come to a resolution either to purchase the Sloop or deliver her up to you as they will not any longer hire her, but as the greatest part of the materials she now has on board belong to the Public they would prefer buying her at the valuation, to stripping her and when you consider that she will be a mere wreck when so stripped, and that the Hull is old and Shattered I should imagine you woud readily see that it is more your Interest to sell than to receive her back in such bad condition, as you will have the hire to this Time in addition to the price. You will upon the whole receive a great sum for her I am Sir

Your hble servant

ROBERT MORRIS

P.S. If you will not sell pray appoint some person to receive her

<sup>1</sup> Stone was the owner of the sloop Hornet, which had been rented by the Continental Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Captain William Hallock of the Continental Navy.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO DANIEL TILLINGHAST<sup>1</sup> ]

Sir

September 2nd 1776

The Secret Committee of Congress have directed Mr. Thomas Green of Providence in your State to put into your hands the following articles belonging to the Continent now in his possession for which you will please to give him a receipt.

330 Bolts of best holland and Russia Duck

26 $\frac{1}{4}$  Casks of Powder

2 pair 4 lb Cannon

3 pair 3 lb Do

4 pair Swivels

3 Casks leaden ball

21 Casks Sewing Twine

598 lb salt Petre

60 lb Brimstone

470 Bushels salt

50 half Iohannes

1 Drum

You have underneath a Copy of a Resolve of Congress of the 30th ulto ordering such part of the above Duck as is suitable for Tents to be made up and forwarded with all possible expedition to his Excellency General Washington, which we request you will immediately execute, you will hold the rest of the articles ready for the future orders of this Committee

Who are Sir

Your hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Continental agent at Providence, Rhode Island.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

“In Congress Augt. 30th 1776

“Resolved that the duck in the hands of Mr. Green at  
“Rhode Island be made up into Tents and forwarded  
“with all possible expedition to General Washington  
“Extract from the Minutes

“CHAS. THOMSON, Secr.”<sup>1</sup>

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG<sup>2</sup> ]

September 20th. 1776

Sir

The Sloop Independence of which you are appointed Commander being now laden, compleatly fitted, armed, victualled and manned, you are to proceed with said Sloop and Cargo for the Island of Martinico putting into Fort Royal or St. Piers just as the winds and other circumstances point out for the best. On your arrival at either place you must enquire for Mr. William Bingham<sup>3</sup> our resident in that Island, should he be at the place where you put in, deliver to him the sundry dispatches now committed to your care, should he be at any other part of the Island you will send an express to inform him of your arrival, & that you have such despatches which you are directed to deliver into his own

<sup>1</sup> Secretary of the Continental Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Young was twenty-third in the list of captains of October 10, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> Commercial agent of the Continental Congress at Martinique.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

hands. He will then repair to you immediately, and you must comply with his Orders by landing the Cargo wherever he may direct, You must also consult with him and be advised by Mr. Bingham in all things that respects the Interest or honor of the United States in the concerns of their sloop under your command. If you put into Fort Royal and Mr. Bingham is not there, you must wait on the general and inform him you belong to the United States of America, ask the liberty of the Port and protection during your stay there. If you put into St. Piers and dont find Mr. Bingham wait on the Governor and Intendant observing the same conduct. If Mr. Bingham is present he will direct what you are to do on these points. You are to consider the French and all nations but Great Britain as the Friends of these United States and conduct yourself towards them accordingly and during your stay in any French Ports be particularly attentive to the behaviour and prudent conduct of your people. You are to receive on board the Sloop any arms, ammution or other goods Mr. Bingham may order receive from him also his despatches and then proceed back for this Port. You are to consider that we are anxious for you to make an expeditious voyage, notwithstanding, which as you are well armed and manned and the Sloop sails fast, we do not forbid you chasing such Vessels either going or coming as you think may become your Prize, for this purpose you have a Commission, a book containg the Resolves of Congress respecting Prizes which you must strictly conform to, and a list of the Continental agents to some of whom you must address any Prize you take. Should Mr. Bingham find it necessary to detain you any time,

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

and he and you should think it adviseable to make a short cruize during that Time, we do not forbid it, but take care not to fall into the enemys hands. It is an Object with us that you should pick up and bring home with you as many seamen as possible, the more the better, and you may enter all you get on the same pay and terms of those you carry out.—

You must sling our dispatches to Mr. Bingham, and on your return, his to us, with a weight sufficient to sink them and always keep them ready to be thrown over board should you unfortunately be taken for you must not let these Packets fall into the enemies hands on any account. You are to afford reliefe or assistance to any of the subjects of the United States that want it if in your power, unless proof should appear that they are inimical to their Country and its cause. You are authorized to take, burn, Sink or destroy the Vessels and property of all British subjects except those residing in Bermuda and New Providence, but we recommend humanity and politeness to be inseperable companions of the officers in the Continental Service. It is necessary you should be careful of the Sloop her Materials and Stores, diligent in the discharge of your own duty and careful to make your officers and men perform theirs—Strict in discipline but attentive to render the service agreeable to all concerned in it.

We expect you will be frugal in expences and on your return furnish us with duplicates of your Logbook and Journal giving also a satisfactory account of your voyage, and when you approach this coast, keep a good look out as you may expect many of the enemies Ships will be Cruizing for plunder.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

If you cannot get in here you may push for any of the Inlets or other place of safety the nearer to this the better.

We are Sir

Your hble servants.

[ TO THOMAS CUSHING<sup>1</sup> ]

September 21, 1776

Sir

In consequence of a letter from the President of Massacuset Bay dated the 13th instant to the President of the Congress which was by Congress referred to this Committee, we have determined to comply with the wishes of your Assembly by ordering the Frigate commanded by Captain McNeill and that by Captain Thompson of New Hampshire to be fitted immediately and proceed on a Cruize on your Coast in hopes of taking the Millford Frigate or driving her or any other enemy away from those Seas. We therefore authorize you to accept the proffered assistance of the said Assembly or any Committee they appoint to assist in fitting, equipping, arming and manning that Frigate. You are also to accept their offer of Twenty four Nine Pounders Canon, and to co-operate with them in getting the ship to sea with the utmost expedition, and we agree to reimburse the State of Massachusets Bay for all just and

<sup>1</sup> A Boston statesman who served as a delegate to the First and the Second Continental Congress.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

necessary expences they incur in effecting this business. We shall in due time cause their Canon to be returned unless they think proper to make sale of them for the use of this ship and in that case we wou'd choose to purchase them provided they are good Guns quite suitable for the service. You will please to purchase a proper number of Swivel Guns, good Muskets, Blunderbusses, Cutlasses, Pikes and other Arms and Instruments suitable for this Ship.

You will apply to the state for a proper quantity of Powder Ball, musket shott, and other Military Stores, to be paid for or returned by the Congress, and in short as this Ship will instantly go into danger we hope nothing will be neglected that ought to be done in fitting and Manning her. If Mr. Langdon applies to you, Mr. Bradford, or to your state for assistance in fitting out the Frigate under his care we hope it will be granted, and we shall reimburse all just expences and charges.—The intended enterprize should be kept secret as possible.

We are sincerely Sir

Your mt obedt servts.

[ TO JOHN BRADFORD<sup>1</sup> ]

Sir

September 21st. 1776

In consequence of some overtures from the Assembly of your State, we have determined to order the Continental Frigate commanded by Hector McNeill Esqr to

<sup>1</sup> Continental agent at Boston.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

be immediately armed manned and fitted for the sea and accordingly have this day written what we judged necessary to Mr. Cushing and the Captain on that subject. The present is to desire you will give them all the aid and assistance in your power in this business. You are to supply them with any Continental stores you may have in your possession that are wanted and assist in procuring such. Similar orders are sent to John Langdon Esqr of New Hampshire respecting the Frigate there and should he apply to you for any assistance we pray it may be granted. We are Sir

Your hble servants.

[ TO CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON<sup>1</sup> ]

September 21st. 1776

Sir

The assembly of New Hampshire and Massachusets having offered their assistance in equipping arming and manning the Frigate under your command we have accepted their kind offers and hope in consequence thereof, you will soon be ready for sea, we expect the same will be the case with the Frigate commanded by Captain McNeill of Massachusets and our design is that you should join Company soon as possible and cruize in consort.

<sup>1</sup> Commander of the frigate Raleigh, and sixth in the list of captains.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

We are informed the Millford<sup>1</sup> Frigate now infests the Coast of those States and does much Injury to their commerce. It is our duty to prevent the continuance of this soon as we can, and as the two Frigates mentioned will be an overmatch for the Millford or any single Frigate of the enemy, you are to join Captain McNeill and go in search of that or any of the enemies Ships in those seas that you can cope with, and we hope in due Time that you have taken destroyed or drove off the said enemy. The Rank betwixt you and Captain McNeill is not yet established you are therefore to act in concert and consult each other in all things that relate to the good of the service, to the safety and preservation of your ships or to the Interest and honor of the United States of America.—The Continental Agents in any State you put into will supply provisions or any necessaries that may be wanted—to some of them you are to address your Prizes, and you must advise the Committee of your proceedings as opportunitys occur. You are also to furnish us in due Time with Copies of your Log Book and Journal, and advise us of any important intelligence that may come to your knowledge.

With the best wishes for your success

We are Sir

Your hble servants

<sup>1</sup> H. B. M. S. Milford. This vessel arrived off the Massachusetts coast in March, 1776. See R. W. Neeser, *The Despatches of Molyneux Shuldham*, pp. 33, 35, 36, 157.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN HECTOR MCNEILL<sup>1</sup> ]

September 21. 1776.

Sir

The Assembly of Massachusetts having offered their assistance in equipping, Manning and Arming the Frigate under your command, we have accepted the same, and therefore hope you will very soon be ready for the sea. We expect the same from the Frigate in New Hampshire commanded by Captain Thompson and our design is that you should join company as soon as possible and cruize in Concert.—We are informed that the Milford Frigate now infests the Coasts of these states and does much injury to their trade. It is our duty to prevent this soon as we are able and as the two frigates mentioned will be an over match for the Milford or any single frigate of the enemy, and go in quest of that or any other of the enemies Ships in those Seas, provided they be such as you are able to Cope with, and we hope in due time that you have taken destroyed or drove the enemy of[f] the Coast. The rank betwixt you and Captain Thompson is not yet established, you are therefore to act in Concert, and consult each other in all things that relate for the good of the service, to the safety and preservation of your Ships or to the Interest and honor of the United States of America.

The Continental Agents in any State you put into will supply Provisions or any necessaries that may be wanted—to some of them you are to address your

<sup>1</sup> Commander of the frigate Boston, and third in the list of captains.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Prizes; and must advise this Committee of your proceedings as opportunities occur. You are also to furnish us in due time with a Copy of your log book and Journal, and advise us of any important intelligence that may come to your knowledge. With the best wishes for your success.

We are Sir your friends &c &c

[ TO JOHN LANGDON<sup>1</sup> ]

Sir

September 21. 1776.—

The Assembly of Massachusetts Bay having represented the necessity and utility of fitting out with all possible expedition one of the Frigates built in that State and that under your direction, to Cruize on your Coasts, in order to take or drive off the enemy that now infest them, and having offered their assistance to equip and man these Ships, and also handed us the Copy of a Vote or resolve of your honorable Assembly to the same purport—We have determined to comply with their wishes, so far as depends on us, and have this day given the necessary orders to Mr. Cushing Captain McNeill and Captain Bradford for getting their Ship ready.

We are therefore to request that you will exert your utmost endeavours to have the frigate under your care compleated immediately. You will accept the assistance of your Assembly or the Committee the[y] appoint for

<sup>1</sup> Continental agent at Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

that purpose. You may either purchase or borrow suitable Cannon, Swivels, Blunderbusses, Muskets, Pistols Cutlasses, Pikes, Ball, Shott, Powder &c: &c: You May apply to the State of Massachusets, to the Honble Mr. Cushing, or to any of the Continental Agents in the neighbouring States for materials or other assistance you stand in need of and this Committee on behalf of the United States, will pay all just equitable Charges that you or any of them incur in effecting this business, so that we hope Captain Thompson will soon be able to join Captain McNeill in this enterprize which ought to be kept as secret as possible. We are Sir

Your friends &c. &c.

[ TO CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES<sup>1</sup> ]

September 21. 1776.—

Sir

This Committee being very desirous of sending the Reprisal under your command on immediate service—desire that you forward her outfit take in provisions and Stores for two Months, and get ready for Sea with the utmost expedition, and all commanders and officers of the fleet now in this Port, as well as all other persons in the Continental employ, are hereby desired to aid and assist you in getting your Ship immediately fitted and manned.

We are Sir &c. &c.—

<sup>1</sup> Wickes was eleventh in the list of captains.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO LIEUTENANT THOMAS ALBERTSON<sup>1</sup> ]

October 1. 1776.—

Sir

The Continental Schooner Muskeito<sup>2</sup> under your Command being well fitted and manned you are to set sail for Occracock<sup>3</sup> in North Carolina and proceed up with said Schooner to Edenton. On your arrival there put into the post office any letters you carry with you and the Military Stores and other goods you have on board deliver to Messrs. Hewes & Smith Merchants at that place. Those Gentn. are to lade you back therefore you must loose no time in discharging and getting the Vessel ready for the reception of Naval Stores, or any other goods which they may want for to put on board, which you are to receive to the full lading of your vessel. You are to apply to the Convention or any other Public body at that place for any dispatches they may want to send by you, and as soon as you have received your Cargo and dispatches from Messrs. Hewes & Smith, you are to set sail for this place, proceeding with caution to avoid being taken by the enemy. Should you find our Bay shut up by the Men of war and that you cannot get in by the Cape May Channel, bear away for some of the Inlets and write to us when you get in.

You are to be careful of the Schooner her Materials

<sup>1</sup> Albertson was second in the lieutenants' list.

<sup>2</sup> The sloop-of-war Mosquito, which was purchased by Congress in 1775.

<sup>3</sup> Ocracoke Inlet.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

and Stores and we expect you will be diligent and attentive to the execution of your business.

We are Sir

Your hble servants

P: S: You must make the utmost dispatch from Carolina & take care not to waste any Powder. Should you be taken, throw all Letters and Papers overboard Slung to a Shott to Sink them.—

[ TO HEWES AND SMITH<sup>1</sup> ]

Gentlemen

October 3d. 1776

You will receive this from Lieutenant Thomas Albertson commander of the Schooner Muskeeto now employed in the Continental service as an advice Boat, She carries but few Letters this voyage but what there are must be put in the post office, and the same price charged for carriage as if they had gone from hence by Land—which you will please to see done Mr. Hewes having fitted this Schooner himself before he left this— You will take care to receive the Cargo which consists altogether of Continental Stores sent for the use of the Continental Troops in your State and deliver the same to the proper Officers granting Lieutenant Albertson a receipt for what he delivers and you'll please also to

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Hewes, merchant, of Edenton, North Carolina, and his partner. Hewes was a member of the Continental Congress and much interested in naval affairs.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

supply him with what money may be absolutely necessary to defray the Charges and expences of his Vessel but no more, taking his accountable receipts for what you pay him one of which you'll transmit by the Vessel. We desire you to Ship back by this Vessel One hundred Barrels Cool [Coal?] Tar, two tons tallow [tallow?] in barrels, and twelve barrels Rosin, for the use of our Navy. If the Schooner will carry more put it on board, if not so much, you must leave out a little of each. We beg you will despatch Mr. Albertson back immediately, don't allow him to stay on any account. If he wants a few men pray assist him in getting them and your drafts on the Chairman of the Marine Committee for the Cost of the goods ordered & of the Schooners disbursements will be duely honored. We are sir

Your very hble servants

P: S: You have enclosed a manifest of the Cargo and Mr. Hewes must allow a handsome freight for his goods which you'll Credit in the Schooners accounts.

[ TO WILLIAM BINGHAM<sup>1</sup>. ]

October 4th 1776

Sir

You have herein a Memorandum from the Commissioners of the Continental store for sundry Articles wanted for our Navy— If you can send the whole or

<sup>1</sup> Commercial agent of the Continental Congress at Martinique.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

any part back by the Sloop Independence do, but if you cannot get them send forward this List and the Files to Mr. Thomas Morris with this Letter requesting him to ship them as soon as possible and charge the amount to the Secret Committee.

We are sir

Your hble servants.

[ TO STEPHEN HOPKINS<sup>1</sup> ]

October 9th. 1776

Sir

We have received from John Langdon Esquire of Portsmouth New Hampshire such an extraordinary account of the conduct of the Committee you appointed to superintend the building of two Frigates in Providence, that we cannot forbear transmitting you a Copy of his Letter. The respect we all entertain for you and the Justice due to them induces us to do this, at the same time we impart to you that common fame says many things respecting them which Mr. Langdon does not touch upon. We do not however pretend to condemn them either on his or her report, but when the[y] exhibit an account of their proceedings we shall expect these things to be cleared up to the satisfaction of this Committee or of Congress. We have ordered them to supply Mr. Langdon with a set of those Cannon that have been paid

<sup>1</sup> Hopkins, a brother of Commodore Esek Hopkins, resided at Providence, Rhode Island. He was a member of the Continental Congress, 1774-1780, and chairman of the Naval Committee, 1776.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

for, and as we find the demands of the Owners of your Furnace are so extravagant, we now request that you will desire them to give in the terms on which they will cast an other Set in lieu thereof to be ready in time for the Frigates at Providence. If they persist in these extravagant demands we shall supply them either from Hughe's works in Maryland or from this State, as we shall soon be able to spare sufficient from either place, and no consideration shall induce us to submit to such extortion as was attempted with Mr. Langdon. We hope Sir, that, your attachment to the general Interests of America, your regard to the character of your State and your Freinds employed therein, and your influence in that State will all combine to have those abuses re[c]tified that have given rise to reflections and complaints if any such abuses have really taken place in the management of Marine Affairs. We hope for an immediate answer respecting the terms of Casting more Cannon & are

Sir

Your very hble servants

[ TO THE RHODE ISLAND FRIGATE COMMITTEE<sup>1</sup> ]

October 9th. 1776—

Gentlemen

We have been presented with a Letter from John Langdon Esquire Continental Agent at Portsmouth in

<sup>1</sup> This is the committee which had charge of the building of two Continental frigates at Providence, Rhode Island.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

New Hampshire to Josiah Bartlett Esquire a member of Congress, giving a very extraordinary account of your proceedings in respect to the Cannon cast in your State for the use of the Continental Frigates. He says that the frigates at Providence cannot be ready to go to sea for two or three months, and that the frigate at New Hampshire waits only for Cannon, which under one pretence or other you have refused to supply him with altho they are lying useless in Rhode Island, and another Set might be cast in time for your ships, He represents your refusal of his reasonable request as having its foundation partly in interested motives and partly in jealousy of the New Hampshire ship being at Sea before yours.

We cannot pretend to judge of the propriety of his Observations having only heard One side, but if the representation he has made be a just one, we shall think the Continental Interest was much misplaced when put into the hands of those who are capable of acting from such Motives against the public good. You'l observe we do [not] pretend to decide on your conduct, because we are willing to hear your defence of it. Mr. Langdon is a Gentleman of character and puts his name to what he writes, therefore we suppose he will be ready to make good his charge, however it is not our present purpose to inquire into your conduct at this time, but to inform you that we have sent Mr. Langdon Orders to call on you again for a Set of Cannon suitable for the New Hampshire Frigate, & as we understand those Cannon are paid for out of the Moneys you have received and drawn for, We now direct and insist that a compleat set of the Cannon most suitable for that Ship be imme-



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

diately delivered to the said John Langdon Esquire or to his order for the use of the Continental Frigate the Raleigh now at Portsmouth, and we request that you will render him or his Agents all the assistance in your power in transporting the said Cannon to Portsmouth in the most safe and expeditious manner. Mr. Langdon has said nothing about Shot or other stores, but as it is our business to consider and attend to the Continental Interest at large abstracted from Jarring Interest or Jealousey of one State against another we likewise desire you may Supply Mr. Langdon with Shott or any other Stores you have provided for the Continental service provided he wants them to expedite the sailing of the Raleigh which is now under Orders for immediate service. We also inform you that we shall send an Agent to inspect the state of the Frigates built under your direction that we may include them in our intended report to Congress.—

We are Gentlemen

Your Obedt servants

[ TO THE RHODE ISLAND FRIGATE COMMITTEE ]

October 9th 1776

Gentlemen

We the Subscribers Members of the Marine Committee of Congress being duely authorized to give such directions as may conduce to the Service of the United States of America in all things relative to this department, are now of opinion that a Compleat Set of the

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Cannon you have had Cast for the Continental Service ought to be applied to the immediate use of the Raleigh Frigate and therefore do Order and direct that you deliver a Sufficient Number of the most suitable Cannon for that Ship to John Langdon Esquire or to his Agent employed for the purpose of receiving and forwarding the same to Portsmouth, and for so doing this shall be your Warrant. Given under our hands at the Marine Office in Philadelphia the day and year above written.—

[ TO CAPTAIN NATHANIEL FALCONER<sup>1</sup> ]

October 9th 1776—

Sir

You are hereby authorized and directed to repair to Providence in Rhode Island and there view examine and inspect two frigates lately built & now lying at that place, You are to call on the respectable Committee of Gentlemen under whose direction they were built and are to be fitted; give them notice of your arrival and appointment to this service, require from them an Inventory of the Continental Stores provided for these Ships, and examine into the quality of the same comparing the said Stores with the Inventory to see that they agree, and you are to make report as soon as may be to this Committee of the State and condition of these

<sup>1</sup> Falconer was a Pennsylvanian. In 1778 he declined the appointment of commissioner of the Navy Board of the Middle Department. He was not an officer of the Continental Navy.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Ships, as to the Strength, workmanship, beauty and other qualitys, also, as to the quality and quantity of Stores; Number of Men and Officers belonging to them, and of their forwardness for the Sea; and all persons employed in the building or fitting of said Frigates are hereby required to aid and assist you if need there be in performing the service hereby enjoined you, and for so doing this shall be your Warrant.

Given under our hands at the Marine Office the day and year first above written.

[ TO JOHN LANGDON ]

October 9th 1776.—

Sir

Your freind Mr. Bartlett<sup>1</sup> having laid before this board your Letter to him of the 14th Ultimo respecting the conduct of the Committee at Providence Rhode Island, on your applying to them for Cannon for the Raleigh, this conduct appears to us in the most extraordinary point of light, but as it is unbecoming of public Bodies, to condemn the conduct of any before they are heard in their own defence, We have wrote them of this date telling the points of which you complain and ordering them to deliver you a compleat set of the Continental Cannon in their possession those that are most suitable for the Raleigh, and further we have directed

<sup>1</sup> Josiah Bartlett, a delegate to the Continental Congress from New Hampshire.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

them to deliver you Shot or any other Continental Stores they have, if you think them necessary to expedite the sailing of that ship. We have also requested them to afford you any assistance in their power in transporting the cannon and stores safe and soon to Portsmouth. We may not omit telling you that we have thought it only common justice to send Governor Hopkins a Copy of your Letter as the Comm[itt]ee were all of his appointment. We have said that deeming you a Gentleman of honor we doubt not but you will support the charge made against them, and under that believe we think it is justly your due and return you thanks for the information given us, as well as for your apparent solicitude for the public good. We have determined to have the Frigates inspected, and report made thereon. Before we close we must request your utmost exertions to get the Raleigh out to Sea, and the Captains and other Officers Commissions will now go forward immediatly

We are sir

Your obedt & hble servants

[ TO THE NEW YORK CONVENTION ]

October 9th 1776—

Gentlemen

Having received information that some of the enemies Ships of war and Tenders have passed the obstructions laid in Hudsons River, and got above the same;

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

we are very anxious for the fate of the Frigates now building in your State. We therefore earnestly desire to direct your close attention to some probable means of securing the said Ships; either by launching them immediately, if possible, and removing them to some place of greater Safety, or by such other Methods as your wisdom shall devise.

With great respect. We are Gentn  
Your very hble servants

[ TO COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS<sup>1</sup> ]

October 10th 1776—

Sir,

We learned some time ago with much concern that the expedition we had planed for you to execute, woud prove abortive; as the ships had gone out a Cruizing under the sanction of Governor Trumbulls recommendation, with which we cannot be well satisfied, altho in this instance, we are disposed to pass it by in silence being well convinced both he and the several Captains meant to perform service at a time the Ships were idle. Supposing therefore that you will have been obliged to lay aside the expedition to Newfoundland, We now direct, that you immediately collect the Alfred, Columbus, Cabbot & Hampden, take them under your com-

<sup>1</sup> Hopkins was commander-in-chief in the American navy from 1775 to 1778.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

mand and proceed for Cape Fear in North Carolina where you will find the following Ships of war

The Falcon of 18 Guns  
The Scorpion of 16 Guns &  
the Cruizer of 8 Guns & a

number of valuable prizes said to be 40 or 50 in number, and other vessels under their protection the whole of which you will make prize of with ease. We understand they have erected a kind of a fort on Baldhead at the entrance of Cape fear River but it being only manned with a few people from these Ships we expect you will easily reduce it and put the same in possession of the State of North Carolina or dismantle it as may appear best. When you have performed this Service you had best deliver to the Continental Agents there such of your prizes as may sell well or be useful in North Carolina others you may convoy into Virginia or this place for we don't recommend your remaining at North Carolina for fear of being blocked up there; perhaps you will receive advice that will render it eligible to proceed farther Southward to rout the enemies ships at South Carolina and Georgia and if that is practicable you have not only our approbation but our orders for the attempt.

We hope, Sir, you will not loose one single moment after receipt of this Letter but proceed instantly on this expedition. We are Sir

Your hble servants

P: S: Should the Cabbot be still on a Cruize, or if returned cannot be ready to proceed upon the Above ex-

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

pedition as early as one of the frigates lately launched at Rhode Island, you will proceed with the later in lieu of the Cabot as soon as she can be prepared for the Sea or you may take both the Cabot and frigate if to be done without delay. We wish your plan for manning this fleet from the State of Rhode Island may prove effectual, and we do in the warmest manner urge you to omit nothing on your part which may tend to promote so important a purpose and which we have most earnestly at heart. The Commissions for the officers of the frigates will be forwarded immediately.—

[ TO HENRY TUCKER AND THOMAS GODET<sup>1</sup> ]

October 10th 1776

Gentlemen

We have occasion for a quantity of Salt to cure beef & Pork the ensuing season for the use of our fleet and dont care to buy up what arrives here transiently as the people are much in want of that article, and would murmer were it to be bought off their hands. We therefore request that you will immediately on receipt of this letter Charter five or Six good fast sailing large Sloops, Schooners or Brigantines, and either load them with salt at Bermudas or send them to Turks Island for it, just as you may find safest and best—send one of them to Edenton in North Carolina consigned to Messrs.

<sup>1</sup> Merchants, of Somerset, Bermuda.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Hewes & Smith one to Baltimore in Maryland consigned to our order; & the others here addressed to us. Perhaps it may be most prudent to load part in Bermudas and part in Turks Island but our great object is to get the Salt soon and safe here.—

You will Charter these Vessels on the best terms in your power by the month or otherways, have them valued and we agree to insure them for so long as they remain in our Service, and if the terms are reasonable that may probably be a long time. You'll buy the salt as cheap as you can and give them the utmost dispatch or it will be too late for our purpose. We must depend on you to advance the money for the cost of the salt until we can reimburse you, which shall be done by returning some of these Vessels to you with Cargoes of Provisions and probably a Convoy with them. Should any of the Vessels be taken or lost we will either pay for them in Provisions or undoubted good bills on Europe or the West Indies as may best suit the Owners. We hope you will be able to comply with these orders immediately for which we shall allow you a reasonable Commission-Interest for the advance of your Money and Commissions on the Goods we shall consign you hereafter and for your security we pledge you the faith and Credit of the United States of America being so authorized to do by the Honorable the Continental Congress of which we are members and are Gentlemen

Your very hble servants

P: S: If you cannot send Six send as many Vessels as you can short of that number



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN NATHANIEL FALCONER ]

Sir

October 13th 1776.—

We are in great want of Coals to make anchors and other Smiths work for the frigates here, and as you are going on public business into the States of Connecticut, Rhode Island Massachusets & New Hampshire you may probably meet with some Coals fit for Smiths use, that have been or may be taken on board some of the Prizes sent into those places. Should that happen we request you will purchase as many as will load two Schooners or Sloops and send them to us immediately For this purpose we desire you will buy two fast Sailing Marble head Schooners or Sloops that will sail and carry well, buy them cheap as possible and if you get coals send them here directly. If you get the Schooners but cannot get the Coals, then put some Salt, Sugar, or rum on board as much in value as you think will pay for a load of Coals for each at about 2/ per bushel and dispatch them with the same immediately for James's River Virginia consigned to the Honble Benjamin Harrison Esqr. inclosing him an Invoice of the Goods you send and advising him to sell those goods and load the Vessel with coals immediately dispatching the same to us. You will take care to procure active good Masters, Mates and men, and manage the whole to the best advantage for the public and as you have this and other business to transact we deliver you herewith Four thousand Dollars for which you are to account on your return. We also give you letters of Credit & recommen-

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

dation to the Continental Agents in each state and a warrant authorizing you to survey the Continental Frigates at Rhode Island, but since this was agreed to, we have heard those frigates are compleated and ready for the sea which we hope may be true. We are sir

Your very hble servants.

[ CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE CONTINENTAL AGENTS  
IN NEW ENGLAND ]

Circular

To Nathl Shaw junr. eqr. }  
Danl. Tillinghast. esq }  
John Bradford esq }  
John Langdon eqr. }

October 13th. 1776.

Sir

This will be delivered to you by Nathaniel Falconer esqr. a Gentleman in our service and who has in charge to execute some business for us in yours or the neighbouring States. Should he stand in need of your assistance we hope it will be readily afforded him, and if he wants money you may depend that his drafts will be paid. We recommend this Gentleman to your friendly attention and are sir

Your very hble servants.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE RHODE ISLAND FRIGATE COMMITTEE ]

Gentlemen October 13th. 1776

We fear our orders of the 9th Instant for sending a set of Cannon from your State to New Hampshire may not be so proper as we thought them at the time of Signing, because we are since informed through several Channels [that the Rhode Island frigates] are quite or very near fit for the Sea, which is a very different account from that which caused us to send that order, therefore to prevent inconvenience or disadvantage to the public service we dispatch this immediately after the other and desire you may not forward the said Cannon to Portsmouth if your Ships are actually ready for service, for our view is only to get such of the frigates as are ready into action, and it [matters] not to us whether it be yours or the New Hampshire frigate that goes first, but you will still answer what we have said to Governor Hopkins respecting Cannon. We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants

[ TO JOHN LANGDON ]

Sir October 13th. 1776

Since sending you our Order of the 9th instant we are well informed that the Frigates at Rhode Island are ready for sea and if that is really the case it would be im-

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

proper to strip them of the Cannon to send them to you. We have now wrote the Committee to keep their Cannon if their Ships are actually fit for service, for we did not mean by the former order to give a preference, it was our design only to prevent the Guns from lying useless there when you wanted them: but we desire them to tell us whether they will not cast another set and on what terms. We are sir

Your hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN ISAAH ROBINSON<sup>1</sup> ]

October 17th 1776

Sir

The Honorable the Congress having ordered that you should make a voyage under direction of the Secret Committee therefore you will receive their Instructions and comply with them— Those fulfilled you must give us notice that we may again direct your further proceedings, and during your present voyage we expect you will transmit us any useful or important intelligence that comes to your knowledge—that you take good care of the Andrea Doria, her Stores provisions and materials that you maintain proper discipline amongst your officers & men at the same time using

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah Robinson was seventeenth in the list of captains, and was at this time in command of the Continental brig Andrew Doria.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

them well. We dare say you will treat all such as become your prisoners with tenderness and humanity and on your return lodge Coppies of your log book & Journal in this office. We are sir

Your most hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES ROBINSON<sup>1</sup> ]

October 18th. 1776

Sir

The honorable Congress having directed that you should make a voyage under orders of the Secret Committee you are therefore to receive their Instructions and comply with them, giving us notice when the service by them required is performed that we may direct your future operations. During the present voyage we expect you will transmit us any useful or important intelligence that comes to your knowledge, You are to take good care of the Schem her Stores provisions and materials—preserve good discipline amongst your officers and men, but use them well, treat any that become your prisoners with humanity and in due time return Coppies of your Journal and Log Book into this office. Wishing you success we are Sir

Your hble servants.—

<sup>1</sup> James Robinson commanded the sloop-of-war Schem, and was twenty-second in the list of captains.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM HALLOCK<sup>1</sup> ]

Sir

October 18th. 1776

Congress having ordered us to consign you over to the management of the Secret Committee for the present voyage you are to receive from them such orders as they think proper to give and fulfil the same— After doing so give us notice that we may direct your future proceedings. We expect you will during this voyage take good care of the Lexington her Stores Provisions and materials, that you preserve good order & strict discipline amongst your officers and men at the same time using them well, treat your prisoners if any fall into your hands with humanity, transmit us accounts of any interesting intelligence that comes to your knowledge and in due time lodge in this office Copies of your Log book and Journal.

We are Sir

Your hble Servants

[ CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE CONTINENTAL AGENTS ]

Sir

October 18th 1776

Herein you will find two Resolves of the Continental Congress of which we have the honor to be members, whereby you'll observe you are ordered to account with

<sup>1</sup> Hallock commanded the Continental brig Lexington, and was fifteenth in the list of captains.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

us from time to time for the Continental Share of all Prizes received and sold by you as Agent and to pay the amount thereof to our order. In obedience to this Resolve we think proper to lay it down as a Rule, that you State your accounts every three Months crediting therein the Continental Share of every Prize whose accounts can be settled and included within that quarter of a year, and that you add thereto a Schedule containing an exact account of all the prizes that then remain in your care whose accounts are unsettled, and we desire that you will constantly remit us undoubted good bills on this place as you can meet with them which will save the trouble and risque of sending money, in taking drafts prefer those of the Continental Agents, Paymasters & Commissarys to any other provided they are drawn on the President of Congress, this Committee or any other public Board for public Service— Next to these [are] undoubted good private Bills but none others. When neither One or the Other can be met with, inform us and of the sums you have, that we may give particular orders respecting the Remittance or application thereof.

By the other Resolve you will find yourself under orders of Congress to make a just distribution amongst the officers and men concerned in taking each Prize as soon after the sales as possible agreeable to the Rules and Regulations made by Congress in this respect, and it is our duty to see this punctually complied with as the Service has already suffered by delay—therefore you will always make the said distributions as soon as can be after the Sale and transmit us duplicates of the accounts and your proceedings therein. We shall allow

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

all your just expenditures on account of the Continent to be charged against their share of Prize Money but those charges must be supported by vouchers.

We are Sir

Your very hble servants

To

John Langdon Esqr.	Continental Agent.	Portsmouth	New Hampshire
John Bradford Esqr.	Do.....	Boston	Massachusets
Daniel Tillinghast Esqr.	do. ....	Providence	Rhode Island
Nathl. Shaw jr. Esqr.	do. ....	New London	Connecticut
Jacobus Vantzantz <sup>1</sup> Esqr.	do. ....		New York
JohnNixon&JohnMaxwellNesbittEsqrs.		Philada.	Pennsylvania
William Lux Esqr. ....		Baltimore	Maryland
John Teazwell <sup>2</sup> Esqr. ....		Williamsburg	Virginia
Robert Smith Esqr. ....		Edenton	} No. Carolina
Richard Ellis esqr. ....		Newbern	
Corneilus Harnet esqr. do. ....		Wilmington	
Livinus Clarkson & John Dorsius esqrs.		Chs. Town	So Carolina
John Wereat Esqr. ....		Savannah	Georgia

[ CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE PRIZE AGENTS IN MASSACHUSETTS AND NEW HAMPSHIRE ]

October 18th 1776.

Sir

We have the honor to inclose herein a Resolve of the Continental Congress of which we are members whereby you will see we are empowered to order a proper and

<sup>1</sup> Jacobus Van Zant.

<sup>2</sup> John Tazewell.



## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

just distribution of all Prizes taken by the Cruizers Genl Washington caused to be fitted out on Continental Account, and also that we are authorized or rather ordered to receive from the Agents who received and sold the said Prizes, the Continental share thereof, and as we find you have been employed as an Agent in this business, we desire that you will immediately send us an Account of the Prizes that have been put under your care, with Coppies of the decrees of the Court of Admiralty, Inventories of Ships and Cargoes, with Copys of the Accounts Sales properly Authenticated, an Account Current for each Prize wherein you Credit the Neat Proceeds, and charge the share appertaining to the Officers and Crews who were interested in the Capture and also the Continental share agreeable to the Rules and Regulations laid down by Congress and a General Account Current wherein you will credit the Continent for their share in every Prize and charge for all such Remittances as you make to us in consequence of these Orders as well as for any other just charge you have to make against them. We desire that you will remit to this Board whatever moneys you have in hand arising from the Continental share of the Prizes put under your management, and as there are many persons gone from hence to purchase prize goods, you may procure drafts on this place from undoubted safe good men which will save the trouble and risque of sending the money, or you may pay it in to the Continental paymaster at Boston Ebenezer Hancock Esqr. and transmit us his draft on the President of Congress, or the Honorable Thomas Cushing Esqr., John Bradford esqr. of Boston or John Langdon Esqr. of New Hampshire

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

have occasion for money on our account—their drafts on ourselves will be good and the sooner you make these Remittances and render the Accounts the better. We must also enjoin you to make an immediate division and distribution of that share of Prizes that appertains to the Officers and Crews that took them, agreeable to and in strict conformity with the Rules and Regulations of Congress, and that you transmit us soon as can be duplicates of those Accounts as it is our duty to see this business perfected, otherways the Maritime service of America will suffer greatly, by the discouragements arising from delays in the payment of Prize Money &c. Where any part of the Prizes have been applied to Continental use, that part must be valued and included at the valuation in the new account of Sales—if applied to the use of yours or any other State, they must pay the valuation and that be included in the Acct. Sales. Expecting your compliance with an answer to this Letter We remain sir

Your Obedient servants

To

William Bartlet[t] Esqr. in Beverly  
William Watson Esqr. in Plymouth  
John Wentworth Esqr. in Portsmouth  
Wintrop Serjent<sup>1</sup> Esqr. in Cape Anne  
Messrs. Bartlet[t] & Glover<sup>2</sup> in Lynn Marble head  
and Boston  
John Bradford Esqr. Boston

<sup>1</sup> Winthrop Sargent.

<sup>2</sup> John Glover.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS ]

October 23d 1776

Sir

Since our last we are informed that the Galatea a new 20 Gun Ship with the Nautilus of 16 Guns are gone to cruize off the Capes of Virginia. These ships you will endeavour to fall in with and take or destroy in your way to Cape Fear— We are also informed that the Raven of 20 Guns and the Sphynx of 16 have quited Georgia and South Carolina but where gone we know not. You may take with you to the Southward both the Rhode Island frigates as well as the Cabot if they are ready, and we will write to North Carolina to have two fine Brigantines belonging to that State in readiness to join you, they have 16 Guns each and near 100 men. You had best send one of your fleet into Occracock Inlet<sup>1</sup> for them, as they are in there, we understand the Sloop Providence Captain Jones has put into Rhode Island—you may add him to your Fleet and then you'll be very strong. As this service to the Southward is of much public importance, we expect from your Zeal and attachment to the Interest of the United States, that you proceed on, and execute this service with all possible vigor and despatch. Wishing you health and success

We are Sir

Your hble servants

<sup>1</sup> On the North Carolina coast.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

P: S: We are informed that two ships of war passed the other day along the Jersey shore, steering Southward—we know not whether to Cruize of[f] the Mouth of Delaware or join the Southern Ships. But we deem it highly proper that you provide yourself with a very quick [tender?] commanded by a spirited, sensible and skilful man to precede your fleet and bring you intelligence of the number force and situation of the enemys ships. It might not be amiss for you to remain a short time within the Capes of Virginia until the Tender should reconoitre and inform you of the state of things at Cape fear.

[ INSTRUCTIONS FOR CAPTAINS JOHN MANLEY, HECTOR  
MCNEILL, AND THOMAS THOMPSON ]

October 23d 1776

Gentlemen

We expect the Continental frigates Hancock Boston and Raleigh under your respective commands, are either now ready for the Sea, or shortly will be so. You are hereby directed to act in concert and Cruize together, for the following purposes, and on the following Stations. Your first object must be to inform yourselves in the best manner possible, if any of the British men of war are Cruizing in the bay of Boston or off the Coast of Massachusets, and all such you are to endeavour with your utmost force to take, sink, or destroy,—Having effected this service you are to proceed together

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

towards Rhode Island, and there make prize of or destroy any of the enemies Ships of war that may be found Cruizing off the Harbour or Coast of Rhode Island.

The Prizes you make are to be sent into the nearest Port. When you arrive at Rhode Island if Commodore Hopkins should not be already sailed on his Southern expedition, and the two frigates built in that State should not be ready for the sea, in that case you are to join Commodore Hopkins, and proceed with him on the said expedition producing these orders to him to justify the measure— But if the Rhode Island frigates should be ready for the sea there will be no occasion for you or either of you to go Southward. And you will then proceed taking with you any Continental Vessel that may be at Rhode Island and ready if Commodore Hopkins should be sailed before you come there, and proceed to Cruize against the enemies Ships & Vessels that may be found of [f] the Coast between the Harbour of Newport and the Banks of Newfound Land.

We have no doubt from your zeal and attachment to the cause of America, that you will execute this service with all possible dispatch and vigor, and so bid you heartily farewell.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL OF NORTH CAROLINA ]

October 23d. 1776

Gentlemen

We have ordered Commodore Hopkins immediately to proceed to Cape Fear in the State of North Carolina with the following Vessels under his command

The Alfred of .	30	Guns	
Columbus .	28		
Cabot . . .	16		
Hamden .	16		
Providence	10		
frigate Warren .	32		} If these two last mentioned can be made ready in Season
Providence	28		

The object of this expedition is to take or destroy the British men of war in the River of Cape Fear or any other Cruizing upon the Southern Coasts with a view to distress the trade of yours & the Southern States. Strong as the Commodore may be with the force that accompanys him from Rhode Island, yet we wish to put as little as possible to the hazzard, but pursue this measure with the fullest confidence of Success. We request that you will upon the earliest information of Commodore Hopkins being off your Coast despatch the two Provincial Armed Vessels and any others which may be under your control to join him and Co-operate in this important expedition, in the event of which your State is particularly and essentially interested.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

You will therefore hold your Vessels in perfect readiness to comply with this requisition.

We beg leave to hint to you the necessity of providing Skilful Pilots for conducting the Commodore that he may suffer no delay nor run no risque from his ignorance of the Coast of North Carolina. As the Success of this Attempt depends much on the Secrecy with which it may be conducted, we need say nothing to urge you on the strict observance of this injunction.

We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants

[ TO GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL<sup>1</sup> ]

October 25th. 1776

Sir

The Marine Committee being desirous to get the Continental Frigates to sea quickly as possible, request the favour of you to provide Sixty four Cannon for the use of the frigate Building in New Hampshire and one of those in Massachusets Bay, 52 of these Cannon to carry 12 pound Shott and 12 of them to carry four pound Shot. The proof that Congress have already contracted for the other Cannon to undergo is, for the first proof, a weight of Powder equal to the weight of one Shott, on which Charge two Shott and three wads. The second proof is powder equal to  $\frac{2}{3}$ ds of the weight

<sup>1</sup> Governor of Connecticut from 1769 to 1783.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

of one Shott, with the same Shott and wads as in the first. We wish Sir that the above mentioned Cannon may undergo similar proof. Should the Ship building in Connecticut not be in equal forwardness with the New Hampshire frigate, we shall be well pleased if the lat[t]er is immediately furnished with the Guns provided for the former, adding thereto as many as will make the number 26 twelves & 6 four pounders. The Connecticut frigate we hope may be furnished in due time from the Guns above desired to be provided for the New Hampshire frigate.

Your well known Zeal in the common cause gives us perfect confidence that you will do herein what will most contribute to promote and expedite the public service.

We are Sir  
Your hble servants

[ TO DANIEL TILLINGHAST ]

October 30th. 1776.—

Sir

As heavy duck is wanted for the New Hampshire frigate which cannot be procured in that State, we desire you will without delay send forward to John Langdon Esq. Eighty Bolts of heavy duck if that quantity belonging to the Continent is in your possession or in the possession of any other person in your State. You will also supply Mr. Langdon and Messrs. Silas & Bar-



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

nabas Deane with any Continental Stores that they may apply to you for, for the use of the Frigates Raleigh and Trumbull.

Lieutenant McDougal of the Brig Andrea Doria has accounted for the expenditure of £45 you advanced him to defray his travelling expences together with seven of the people belonging to said Brig from your State to this place, therefore we think proper to direct that you deduct that Sum from the Sales of the prize which they brought in and put under your care.

We are sir

Your very hble servants

[ TO COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS ]

October 30th. 1776.

Sir

We have received such intelligence as satisfies us that the enemies Ships and Vessels have all quitted Georgia and the Carolinas, which renders it unnecessary for you to pursue the expeditions formerly directed to these States. But as we have still reason to suppose that the Galatea and Nautilus are Cruizing of[f] the Capes of Virginia, we desire you will proceed thither with all possible dispatch and endeavour to fall in with these Ships and take sink or destroy them. If when you are on that station you shall be informed that any of the enemies ships of war have returned to the Carolinas or Georgia, you are in that case to go in search of them and

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

effectually remove them. Having finished this business you are to return and Cruize for and endeavour to intercept the Store and provision Vessels coming from Europe to the enemies army at New York. We expect you will give this committee information by every opportunity of your proceedings, and what success you may meet with in the above enterprizes.

We wish you success and are sir

Your most hble servants—

[ TO CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER<sup>1</sup> ]

November. 1. 1776.—

Sir

You are to proceed with the Continental Sloop Fly now under your command for the Coast of Shrewsberry in New Jersey and take such Stations along the Jersey shore as will enable you to see every vessel that goes in or out of Sandy hook. We imagine there must be Transports, Store Ships and provision vessels daily arriving or expected to arrive at that place for supplying our enemies with provisions and other Stores, and the design of your present Cruize is to intercept as many of those Vessels and supplies as you possibly can.

You have got or may get a good coasting Pilot so that you may run close in shore or into Toms River or any

<sup>1</sup> Warner was twenty-fourth in the list of captains.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

other River, Inlet or Harbour in the Jerseys whenever you are chased or endangered by Vessels of a superior force, therefore you will keep an especial good look out for all vessels inward or outward bound and whenever you discover any give chase, make prize of as many as possible, and as fast as you take 'em send them for this port, unless you hear men of war take station at our Capes, and in that case send them into Toms River, Egg Harbour or any other safe place, and fast as your people arrive here we will send them or others over land to Tom's River or Shrewsbury from whence you can take them on board again, therefore you must keep this station and pursue this business as long as possible unless we send you other orders.

You must be careful not to let any british frigate get between you and the land, and then there's no danger for they cannot pursue you in shore, and they have no boats or Tenders that can take you, besides the Country people will assist in driving them off shore if they should attempt to follow you in. The Schooner Wasp commanded by Lieutenant Baldwin goes round on the same Service—you must act in Concert, Consult the best Stations and best method of Cruizing, and be sure to pursue your Object the taking of provision Vessels, Store Ships and Transports with the utmost vigor and vigilance, and altho we recommend your taking good care of your Vessel and people, yet we should deem it more praiseworthy in an officer to loose his vessel in a bold enterprize, than to loose a good Prize by too timid a Conduct. As fast as you make prisoners you may send them in the Jerseys, and deliver them to the Continental Officers to be sent here or confined in New Jersey, but if

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Seamen send them here unless they enter. Use your officers and men well, and do the same by your prisoners let us hear from you as often as necessary. Wishing you success

We are sir

Your very hble servants

Note. Similar Instructions to the foregoing were given Lt. Baldwin Commanding the Schooner Wasp.—

[ TO CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER ]

November 11th 1776

Sir

We have received intelligence that our enemies at New York are about to embarque 15000 Men on board their Transports, but where they are bound remains to be found out. The Station assigned you makes it probable that we may best discover their destination by your means for it will be impossible this fleet of Transports can get out of Sandy hook without your seeing them; and we particularly direct you to take such station as will prevent a probability of their passing you unseen the Wasp must act in conjunction with you, and for that purpose you will concert with Lieutenant Baldwin what is best to be done and give him orders accordingly, when you discover this fleet watch their motions and the moment they get out to Sea and shape their course send your boat on Shore with a Letter to be despatched by

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

express informing us what course they steer—how many sail they consist of if you can ascertain their numbers and how many Ships of war attend them. We expect this Letter will be sent off to you by Mr. James Searle<sup>1</sup> who is at Shrewsbury and he will either receive your letters and send them off to us by express or get some proper person to do it. If this fleet steer to the Southward either the fly or wasp which ever sails fastest must preceede the fleet—keeping in shore and ahead of them, and if you find they are bound into the Capes of Delaware, run into some of the Inlets on the Jersey Shore, and send one of your officers or some proper person to us instantly with an Account thereof. The dullest sailer of the Fly or Wasp must follow after this fleet and watch their motions and whenever you make discovery of their destination so as to know it with certainty put in for the Land and send us the information by Express. Thus you must watch this fleet one before and the other after them until you can inform us where they are bound. Should they go for Chesapeake Bay, put into some of the Inlets on the Coast and give advice to the Council of Safety of Virginia and Maryland by express. If they go for North Carolina South Carolina or Georgia observe the same conduct, and if they go to the Northward do the like. In short we think you may by a Spirited execution of these Orders prevent them from coming by Surprize on any part of this Continent, and be assured you cannot recommend yourself more effectually to our freindship. If you could find an opportunity of attacking and tak-

<sup>1</sup> Later commissioner of the Navy Board of the Middle Department.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

ing one of the fleet on their coming out it might be the means of giving us ample intelligence, in such case send all the papers and prisoners here expeditiously.—

We are sir

Your hble servants

[ TO JOHN WEREAT<sup>1</sup> ]

November 14th. 1776

Sir

By the recommendation of George Walton Esqr. one of your Delegates in Congress we have appointed you Continental Agent in the State of Georgia, in that Station it will fall to your share to supply all Continental Cruizers or other vessels in the Continental Service with provisions Stores and necessaries, to assist the Captains and officers in whatever may be needful—to advance them monies—give them advice, and in all things take care of the Interests of the United States. If any Prizes are sent into Georgia by the Continental Cruizers you are to receive them, libel and prosecute to condemnation—then make public sale of Vessels, Cargoes, and all effects that are condemned; and for your guidance we send you a pamphlet containing the Rules and Regulations in these respects, and we shall also send you at a future day Coppies of our official letters to all our Agents along the Continent.

<sup>1</sup> Of Savannah, Georgia.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

You will receive this by an advice boat belonging to the Continent called the Georgia Packet, intended to be an advice Boat between your State and the Congress. She has been loaden this voyage by your Delegates with Stores for your State, and we expect you will Credit us a handsome freight for the same. We desire you may receive these goods with despatch and as the Secret Committee of Congress order a Cargo back we hope you will use equal dispatch in shipping it. Lieutenant Buck who commands this schooner is ordered to put all the Letters he carrys into the Post office, and we desire you will inform the postmaster he is to charge the same postage as if they had come by land, for we expect in this way to raise some thing towards defraying the expence of these packets in future altho at present the Letters will be very few. You will please to advertize for Letters back by this packet, and as soon as you can dispatch this Schooner back for this port. You will keep a regular account of your disbursements for this schooner and if any balance arises in your favour we will pay your drafts on us for the Amount.

We hope you will not suffer Captain Buck to loose any time nor Stand in need of any Assistance that you can afford him.

We are sir

Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO LIEUTENANT ISAAC BUCK ]

November 14th 1776.

Sir

The Continental Schooner Georgia Packet under your command being now fitted manned and ready for Sea, you are to proceed with said Schooner and Cargo for Savannah in Georgia and on your Arrival there deliver the Cargo put on board said Schooner by the Georgia Delegates to such person or persons as they have directed it to. Any letters you carry are to be put into the Post office, this you must particularly attend to and deliver none of them to any person but the Post Master there. You are to apply to John Wereat Esqr. Continental Agent at Savannah who will load the Schooner back with such goods as may be ordered by the Secret Committee of Congress and you are to receive on board a full loading from him. You are to advertize for Letters to be sent back in the Schooner and receive all that offer which are to be put into the post office here. When the Schooner is reloaded at Georgia and you have received your dispatches from Mr. Wereat, you are then to make the best of your way back for this port, We expect dilligence and dispatch from you both at Sea and in Port. You are to be careful of the schooner her Stores and Materials, kind to your Officers and men but attentive to strict discipline and duty. If you have the good fortune to make any prizes send them into any safe port in the United States addressed to the Continental Agent and use your pris-



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

oners well. Should you find it impracticable or dangerous to get into Savannah, you may put into any other safe port in the State and do your business there and if on your return, you find this port shut up by the enemy you may put into any of the Inlets of New Jersey and give us notice, that we may direct what is to be done. Wishing you success we are Sir

Your very hble Servants

[ TO LIVINUS CLARKSON AND JOHN DORSIUS<sup>1</sup> ]

November 17th 1776

Gentlemen

Upon the recommendation of your freinds here we have appointed you Continental Agents in the State of South Carolina, as such you are to supply any of the Ships or Cruizers with whatever Provisions Stores or necessarys they may be in want of when they put into or arrive in any of your ports. If repairs are necessary we depend on you to employ the best Tradesmen and see that the business is done with dispatch. You will in short do all things in this department that you think will serve the Continent and promote the service of the Navy and you must send us proper Certificates Signed by the Captain or principle officer of each Ship or Vessel of your expenditures and your drafts on this board for the amount will be duely honored. It is a

<sup>1</sup> Both of Charleston, South Carolina.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Standing order to all our men of war and Cruizers to send their prizes address to the Continental Agents at the ports where they arrive. If any such come into South Carolina, you must receive the same into your charge, prosecute them in the Admiralty to condemnation make the Sale of them at Public vendue—pay all charges justly attending each Prize, and credit us for such part as appertains to the Continent agreeable to the Rules and Regulations of Congress, a book of which shall be sent you. The shares belonging to the Officers and Crews of the Captors you must divide amongst them agreeable to the said Rules and Regulations, and to do this justly and equitably the Commanders must furnish you with compleat and certified list of the officers and men entitled to a Share of each prize and the share or shares they are respectively entitled to, and you are to pay all persons concerned their shares as soon after sale is made as you possibly can, and return to this Board duplicates of all your accounts and proceedings.

We are Gentlemen

Your very hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER ]

November 29th. 1776

Sir

We have sent Doctor Smith to take charge of the wounded men belonging to the Fly, and since the Vessel is no longer in condition for prosecuting her Cruize,

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

you are to return with her into this Port as quickly as you can, bringing with you the wounded men, and the Surgeon now sent to take care of them. We are sir

Your very hble servants

[ TO WILLIAM BINGHAM ]

December 14th 1776

Sir

We expect this will be delivered to you by John Nicholson Esqr. who commands the Hornet Sloop of war belonging to the Continent. She will carry you some Rice and Indigo by order of the Secret Committee which you'll please to receive expeditiously. As this sloop touches at Carolina before she sails for the West Indies it is uncertain when you may see, therefore our orders must be discretionary, and when she arrives if you [have] any advices or any goods to send that you think of importance to these States, you may dispatch Capt. Nicholson therewith immediately. Should this not be the case you may assist him to procure more Men, and let him go a cruizing during the Winter Months only dispatching him so as to be here by the beginning of April. If our Trade in the Islands is interrupted by any privateers or Tenders that this Sloop can match they should be her object, If there be none such she may cruize where there is the best chance of good Prizes.—

If Captain Nicholson is lucky enough to send any in

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

to you, sell such parts as are suited for the Island consumption, but be careful what you sell is the property of none but british subjects not resident in Bermuda or New providence. Whatever you sell render regular accounts of it—make the seamen &c necessary advances and transmit us their receipts with the Accot. Sales &c for what you sell that just distribution may be made on their return. If Captain Nicholson meets with any Canon more suitable for the Hornet than those on board, assist him in buying and getting them mounted—Supply him with Money and necessaries he may want for the service his receipts will be your vouchers and your drafts on us will be paid—

When you dispatch him for the Continent he will take on board any goods you have to ship.

We are sir

Your very hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN NICHOLSON ]

December 25th. 1776

Sir

As this severe weather is like to make ice, Captain Biddle will try to make a push with the Randolph and as it is of the utmost consequence that you should get to Carolina if possible I think it most [advantageous] for the public service that you should go down the Bay in company with him and I hope this will find you in readiness. You will see the Ship as she comes down,

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

and must join her as soon as you can, and you must concert with Captain Biddle the best plan you can think of for getting out. I am fearful an expedition is gone or will soon go against Charles Town, therefore you must proceed cautiously and get into the first safe harbour in that State that you can & give immediate notice to the president and the Continental Agents of your Arrival.

I am Sir by Order of the M: Committee  
your hble Servant  
ROBERT MORRIS<sup>1</sup> V: P:

[ TO LIEUTENANT JOHN BALDWIN ]

January 1st: 1777—

Sir

Mr. Patterson is now going down to Egg Harbour to take the care and management of your Prizes in that place, and as its probable you may return there from your present Cruize, you are hereby directed on receipt of this Letter to send up immediately a return of the Provisions and Stores that will be wanted to compleat the Wasp for a three months voyage. Send also a List of your men and an account of what Slops and clothing may be necessary if you should be ordered to proceed to Europe. You may heave down the schooner & get her

<sup>1</sup> During the winter of 1776–1777, while Congress was at Baltimore, Robert Morris, the vice-president of the Marine Committee, who remained at Philadelphia, administered the navy, with but little assistance from the committee.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

in good order against the return of the Express by whom you make these returns and if you are ordered on the service mentioned all things necessary shall be sent you. Keep this to yourself until further orders.—Mr. Patterson will supply you with money for such expences as arise on the Vessel at Egg Harbour and if more is wanted write us for it.

I am on behalf of the Marine Comee.

your hble Servant

R MORRIS V: P:

[ TO COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS ]

Baltimore January 21. 1777.

Sir

As we are informed that the enemies fleet and Army have Orders to leave Rhode Island, if this proves true, you are hereby directed to fit for Sea the Continental Frigate Warren and Providence with all possible expedition, and Order them to proceed forthwith to Cruize upon the enemies Ships of war that are now interrupting the Commerce of the United States from the Harbour of Newport to the Capes of Virginia. And they are to take, burn, sink or destroy all such of the enemies Vessels as they shall fall in with.—

The other Continental Armed Vessels that are in your port you will order to proceed to Sea, and do their best endeavour to intercept supply Ships that may be coming to the enemy at New York.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

You will please to see that the wages are duely paid to the Seamen, and that the prize Money due to them be paid to them by the Agent as punctually as circumstances will admit to prevent murmurs among the seamen. We have heard some complaints for want of attention to the Seamen which induces us to mention it to you. We wish to hear from you as often as possible and are Sir

Your hble servants.—

[ TO ROBERT MORRIS ]

Baltimore January 24th 1777.

Sir

The Marine Committee judging it of the utmost consequence that the frigate Virginia<sup>1</sup> should be got to sea as soon as possible and finding it impracticable to procure the necessary Articles for the Ship without which she cannot proceed to Sea have determined to send to Philadelphia for them, and have sent the Bearer an Officer of Captain Nicholsons to expedite the business; and I am now in the name of the Marine Committee to request you will immediately order such of the articles as are mentioned in the inclosed memorandum and can readily be got in Philadelphia to be forwarded here without loss of time in such manner as you shall judge best, the bearer will afford every aid in his power. I

<sup>1</sup> The Virginia was at Baltimore where she was built.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

should think that it would be no disservice in taking an Anchor and the Cables from one of the Frigates in Philadelphia as you can with much more ease replace them there than we can procure them here, and all your Frigates are not in the readiness the Virginia is, and indeed she waits only for these articles. I submit it to you to conduct as you think most for the Public service, but with respect to the Anchor and Cables and Rigging, it is of the utmost importance they should be sent. Two Carts put together would easily effect this, let the expence be ever so great, but care should be taken to prevent the Cables chaffing, by matting the turns or putting Canvas round the parts liable to rub against the waggon, but I need not give *you* any hints of this kind. I wish we may have as many of the articles as can be got, I know you will exert yourself to effect this business. I am in behalf of the Marine Committee

Sir

Your very hble servant

JOHN HANCOCK Chn.

P: S: the inclosed Letter to Commodore Hopkins I leave open for your perusal—please to seal and forward it by first good opportunity.—



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE ]

January 30th 1777

Sir

I have undoubted intelligence that there are not any men of war at the Capes indeed as an evidence of it a large ship is come up the Bay, I therefore think it highly proper that you proceed to sea immediately, and as you have now more men considerably than you had when I gave your last orders, I think proper to recall those and instead thereof you must observe the following Instructions.

You are first to make returns to the Board of Assistants of all the Stores in each department, that your Boatswain, Gunner and other officers may account for what is under their respective care and the same with provisions. Return also a compleat List of your officers and men on board, but as I would wish you not to loose one Moments time in getting out to Sea these returns can be made out as you go down and may be sent up from the Capes therefore you are to make the best of your way down the moment the Ice will permit, and I expect the Hornet and Fly will be in readiness to go down with you. If so you had best keep them ahead to look out. Several Merchantmen will also go down with you, and you are to convoy them fairly off to sea and keep with them for a few days if possible, soon as you find yourself fairly out at sea you will no doubt try the ships sailing and I expect she will perform wonder-

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

fully in that way, you will of course exercise your Men at the great guns, and prepare them for action soon as possible.

The Marine Committee now at Baltimore have instructed Commodore Hopkins to fit out the two Continental Frigates Warren and Providence with all possible expedition, and to order them forthwith to proceed on a Cruize upon the enemies ships of war that are interrupting the commerce of the United States from the Harbour of Newport to the Capes of Virginia and they are to take burn, sink, and destroy all such of the enemies Vessels as they shall fall in with. These are the Instructions for those Ships and therefore I think they must be proper for you and for your encouragement in this service I must observe that there are no Cruizing Ships an over match for you except the two Deckers, for altho you think you have not seamen enough yet this is just their case, except the Roebuck there is none of them halfmanned, therefore you have only to avoid two Deckers or engaging when there is more than one in sight. Any of their other single Ships you need not fear, especially if you can persuade your men to board, remember what a glorious exploit it will be, to add one of their frigates or 20 Gun Ships to our Navy, in a few days after you get out and if the Randolph has but Heels I think you can and will do it, you will then get seamen plenty. If your ships sails remarkably fast you may take libertys with them, If she does not be more cautious and try to find out her trim. I shall send a Copy of these Instructions to Congress and it is possible they may send fresh orders to you, which shall be lodged with Henry Fisher at Lewis Town, and

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

the light House will be ordered to shew a large white sheet when they have any orders for you and find a frigate in sight.

Should any unfortunate accident befall you destroy these orders rather than let the enemy get them, and you will as opportunitys occur transmit us Accounts of your proceedings. You'l observe that many merchant Vessels are expected in with valuable Stores to this port, therefore you'l afford them all possible protection and had best keep in their tract as long as you can.—

I wish you would send me signals by which you may be known, in case we should send out any of our small Cruizers to look for you, also to deliver to the other frigates that may go from hence Rhode Island &c. You will be careful of the Randolph her Stores and Materials, kind to your officers and men, but observing Strict discipline, humane to your Prisoners, and send your prizes into safe ports.

With the best wishes for your success I am Sir

Your obedt. sert

ROBT MORRIS V: P:

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES ]

Philada. feby. 1st. 1777

Sir

I have frequently received your letters advising me the particulars of your several Cruizes, and with pleasure [assure?] you the contents in every instance have been very acceptable, always intertaining and in many

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

parts useful. These Letters I have from time to time communicated to the Members of the Marine Committee all of whom express their satisfaction with your conduct. You would no doubt expect an answer from them to your proposal for a Cruize this winter on the coast of Africa, and such the[y] intended to give you long since, but the confusion occasioned by their removal from this City and the multiplicity of business that has unavoidably crowded on every member of Congress put it out of their power to give that attention to your department that they would always wish to carry into every American concern. Thus circumstanced they never doubted that your active genius would find useful employment for the ship under your command, as you were so near the Commodore and could go cloathed with his authority, and they have not been disapointed for you have in that way made a most useful and successful voyage to Cape Breton and thence to Boston. Major Frazer<sup>1</sup> passing through this City (which I have never left) sent me an account of that Cruize which appeared to be in your own handwriting. Pleased with your success I transmitted it to Congress and wrote that if they pleased I would point out an enterprize or two for you to undertake and leave the choice to yourself this was agreed to and my present design is to fulfil that promise. When I made it I had in veiw either to gratify your desire, by undertaking an expedition as you proposed to the Coast of Africa, or to gratify my own by undertaking what I think will prove a more useful one nearer home.

I have pretty good information that there is Stationed

<sup>1</sup> An officer of the Continental army from the South, and a friend of John Paul Jones.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

at Pensacola only two or three Sloops of war from 10 to 16 Guns and that at that place there is not less than 100 Pieces of Artillery which our armies are much in want of. These insignificant Sloops of war lay there in perfect security, and now and then take a Cruize along the Coa[s]ts of Georgia & Carolina—should they be met with they will immediately become your Prizes—should they be out of the way Pensacola may become the more easy prey. It is true that Govr. Chester<sup>1</sup> has been trying to put that place in a State of defence, but he has no troops and the Inhabitants will never defend it, therefore my plan is that you should take the Alfred, Columbus Cabot, Hampden, and Sloop Providence—proceed just to the Island of St. Christophers where a sudden and unexpected attack will carry that place being very defenceless. There is a number of Canon & Stores there, as well as Merchandise of various sorts that we are in want of and I fancy you will make a considerable booty. This however is not what I have so much in veiw as to alarm not only the Inhabitants but the whole British nation. It will oblige the Ministers to provide for the security and protection of every Island they have, and by that means this must divide their force and leave our Coasts less carefully gaurded.

From St. Kitts (where your stay must be short) you can proceed down to Pensacola. I apprehend the best passage might be down the south side of Hispaniola, and then you might give an alarm to the North side of Jamaica by putting into some of the Ports there, cutting out their ships &c in all which you must be expeditious

<sup>1</sup> Peter Chester, Governor of West Florida, 1770–1781.

or their Fleets will be after you, should you decline meddling with Jamaica the best passage will be down the north side of Hispaniola, through the passage of Cape St. Nicholas and Cape Maize and then down the north side of Cuba. When you arrive at Pensocola it may be well done to send a Brigantine & Sloop to Cruize of [f] the Mouth of the Mississipi so long as you remain in that quarter but they should wear English Collors and never go so near into the Balize as to be known for anything but english Cruizers. There is at this time not less than £100.000 Sterling value in goods up that River—The Remittances for which will come away in the Months of March April and May, in Indigo, Rice, Tobacco, Skins and Furr's so that this alone is an object worthy of your attention; But as I have said before destroying their settlements—spreading alarms, showing and keeping up a spirit of enterprize that will oblige them to defend their extensive possessions at all points, is of infinitely more consequence to the United States of America than all the Plunder that can be taken. If they divide their force we shall have elbow room and that gained we shall turn about and play our parts to the best advantage, which we cannot do now being constantly cramped in one part or an other. It has long been clear to me that our Infant fleet cannot protect our own Coasts; and the only effectual relief it can afford us is to attack the enemies defenceless places and thereby oblige them to station more of their Ships in their own Countries, or to keep them employed in following ours, and either way we are relieved so far as they do it. I do not pretend to give you any account of the Coasts and Harbours, strength of fortifications or

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

mode of attack for I cannot doubt your being well acquainted with these things, knowing as I do that you have been a Commander in the West India trade, and at any rate your appearance will be unexpected and the enemy unprepared—They have no Troops and the very sound of a great Gun will frighten them into submission. Governor Chester will no doubt know where the Brass Artillery are deposited and be Glad to surrender them as a Ransom for himself and his Capital. When your business is done at Pensacola you may give them an alarm at St. Augustine but they have some Troops & you must be careful of your men. I think you should carry with you as many Marines as possible, for they will be useful & Necessary in All your Land excursions. The southern Colonies wish to see part of their Navy, and if you find it convenient and safe you might recruit and refit at Georgia, South or North Carolina, there make sale of such part of your Prize goods &c as would be useful to them, learn where was the safest Port to the Northward, and then push along to such place of safety as might be necessary for refitting and remanning the fleet. Should you prefer going to the Coast of Africa you have the consent of the Marine Committee, but in that case I apprehend you only want the two ships and Sloop Providence. Remember it is a long voyage—that you cannot destroy any English settlements there, and that if you meet any of their men of war in those seas they will be much superior to you in Strength &c. You may it is true do them much mischief but the same may be done by Cruizing to Windward of Barbadoes as all their Guinea Men fall in there. However you are left to your choice and I am sure will choose for the

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

best. Should there be a difficulty in getting all the Vessels fully manned with so many Seamen as you may think necessary, take the more Marines and you will get seamen from Prizes in the Course of your Voyage. It is a standing Instruction from the Marine Committee to the Commanders in the American Navy to be careful of their Ships their Materials and Stores—to use well their officers and men, preserving however strict discipline—to treat Prisoners with humanity and generosity and to keep them advised of their proceedings as frequently as circumstances will admit

Wishing you success I am Sir

Your hble servant

ROBT. MORRIS V: P:

P: S: If you get the brass Pieces hand them into the first Port in these states and have them valued.

[ TO COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS ]

February 5th 1777—

Sir

By consent of the Honble Congress I have this day given Instructions to John Paul Jones Esqr. commander of the Alfred to take upon him the conduct of an expedition wherein he will require the assistance of the Columbus, Cabot, Hampden & Sloop Providence and you will please to order the Commanders to join him and to put themselves under his Command. I flatter



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

myself with having your utmost exertions to get these Vessels well and expeditiously manned and compleatly fitted that they may sail as soon as possible.

I lately forwarded you a packet with Instructions respecting the frigates from the Marine Committee which I hope will arrive safe. I long to hear that you contrive ways and means to get rid of the enemy in your neighbourhood and am with esteem

Sir

Your very hble servant

ROB. MORRIS V : P :

[ TO ROBERT MORRIS ]

Baltimore february 5th 1777

Sir

Judging it of the last consequence to the Public that the Military Stores probably lodged for the Continent in the West Indies should be brought over with all possible expedition we have determined to send all the Armed Vessels mentioned in your Letter to be now at Philadelphia and the frigate Randolph likewise on this business. The Island each Vessel is to go to and the port she is to aim at returning is left to your discretion. You will please Sir to give the necessary orders for the quickest possible execution of this important service.

We are Sir

Your hble servants

J. HANCOCK Presdt.

[ 71 ]

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JOHN BRADFORD ]

Philadelphia Feby. 7th 1777

Sir

Your Letters of the 21 december & 17th January to the Marine Committee are with me and I have great pleasure in acknowledging on behalf of that Committee your Zeal and attention to the Public business. The tiding contained in those Letters was very acceptable and I was particularly pleased with Captain Jones's success. By this Express I send him orders for an other Cruize, but by an expression in one of your Letters I imagine he or you have wrote to the Committee and proposed altering the Ship Alfred, that Letter must have passed through here without coming to my hands and the Committee have said nothing to me about it. Should they give any Orders that contradict mine let them be obeyed but if nothing contradictory, Captain Jones will abide by what I have wrote him. I have observed that you frequently did propose discharging those Vessels that were fitted out as Cruizers<sup>1</sup> by General Washington and the Committee were always of your opinion but some how or other in the multiplicity of business and in their late confusion they omitted to give you orders. Now Sir, as I know it was their desire to have those Vessels paid off and dismissed the service I will venture to authorize your doing it and shall send the Committee a Copy of this Letter which you may

<sup>1</sup> For an account of these vessels, see G. W. Allen's *A Naval History of the Revolution*, I, 59-89.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

deem a proper authority: But as I have mentioned in another Letter your employing one of those Vessels to carry the dispatches to France, you must either keep that one in pay or buy her, which I should much prefer, and if any of the rest of them are good Vessels, suitable for Cruizers I should think it best to buy them and continue them in the service, especially as I suppose some of the Commanders and officers have merit to deserve a continuance in the service: but I am utterly against continuing them on hire and so I think are all the Committee. You may inform Mr. Turnbull that altho the Congress wish by all means to procure the Public Stores on the most reasonable terms possible, yet they cannot desire to injure One part of the Public service for the sake of another, and that the Honest Tars ought to have fair play in the sales of their Prizes. We don't wish to take any advantages of them but would chuse he would gaurd against monopolizers, Forestallers and combinations of that kind. If you can persuade Commodore Hopkins to give up his Guns you may, but I dont think the Committee will order it as there has already been some altercation on that subject. On Behalf of the Marine Committee I am

Sir     Your Obed Servant  
          ROBERT MORRIS V: P:

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ CIRCULAR LETTER TO CAPTAINS JAMES CAMPBELL AND  
WILLIAM ROGERS ]

Baltimore February 9th 1777

Sir

You will convoy the Transport Vessels with the Troops across the Bay to such place on the Eastern Shore as the Commander of the Troops shall direct. That being done you will proceed down the Bay—reconnoitre the enemies Ships, and use all possible dilligence to prevent their Tenders and Barges from getting supplies of any kind from the Shores, either of Maryland or Virginia, You will do good Service by giving notice of their danger to any inward bound Vessels coming up the Bay and fail not to take or destroy any of the enemies Tenders that may fall in your way. You are to act in Freindly conjunction with the Land Troops and with the other armed Vessels that accompanies the Troops having always in veiw the great purpose of preventing the enemies ships to taking any thing off from the Land or giving any assistance to the Tories you will inform this board of your proceedings by every opportunity.

We are sir

Your hble servants

J. HANCOCK Presdt.

To

Captain James Campbell of the Schooner Enterprize  
Captain William Rogers of the Sloop Montgomery

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE ]

Philadelphia 15th february. 1777

Sir

I hope this will soon be delivered to you after despatched from hence as I have received directions from the Marine Committee at Baltimore to send you on a different service to that which the Orders I gave you before you left fort Island directed.

With this you will receive Letters for William Bingham Esqr. the Continental Resident at Martinico and you are immediately to proceed for that Island and deliver said Letters, the purport of them are that he should ship on board your ship, a quantity of Arms Ammunition Cloathing and other Stores that we suppose will be lodged there previous to your Arrival. If you find that Mr. Bingham has it in his power to comply with this requisition, you are forthwith to receive on board all such stores as he may desire and return with the utmost expedition to the Coast of America in order to get them landed in some safe place, from whence they can be transported by land to our Armies or Magazines. These supplies are exceedingly necessary for the service of the ensuing Campaign and you cannot render your Country a more essential service than by bringing them soon and safe in. Should it so happen that these expected Supplies are not arrived at Martinico or that Mr. Bingham has but A Small portion of them, you may take on board what he has and then proceed to St. Eustatia, first consulting with Mr.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Bingham on the propriety of this measure. At St. Eustatia you will call on Mr. Samuel Curson,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Corneilus Stevenson<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Henricus Godet<sup>1</sup> with the letters herein and if they have any of the expected stores receive them on board & should these make quantity or value sufficient return to America from thence, but should you be disappointed here also, you will then proceed to the Island Curacoa and deliver the enclosed Letter to Mr. Isaac Gouverneur;<sup>2</sup> and should you find at this Island Mr. John Philip Merkle<sup>3</sup> of Amsterdam who will be at Mr. Gouverneurs; you may consult with him and Mr. Gouverneur whether it is better to take him and his goods on board the Randolph or to ship his goods on board other fast sailing Vessels to come on the Coast under your Convoy; and do therein what shall seem best to them and yourself, but be sure to bring them safe. Should it so happen that Mr. Merkle is not at Curacoa, nor any of his goods you will then proceed to Cape Francois and deliver the Letter herewith to Mr. Stephen Ceronio<sup>1</sup> if he has goods or Stores receive them on board, but failing of sufficient there you will go to the Mole St. Nicholas deliver the Letter herewith to Mr. John Dupuy<sup>1</sup> take in what he has to ship, and then make the best of your way back to the Continent.

As you command the first American frigate that has got out to sea, it is expected that you contend warmly on All necessary occasions for the honor of the American flag.

At every foreign port you enter salute their forts and

<sup>1</sup> Agent of the Continental Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Isaac Gouverneur, Jr., a partner of Samuel Curson.

<sup>3</sup> A Dutch adventurer. See *Works of John Adams*, III, 129-130.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

waite on the Governor, General or Commander in Chief, asking the liberty of their ports for the Ships of the United States of America. Take care that your people do not molest their Trade nor Inhabitants nor in any shape disturb that good understanding we have with them.

Should you take any prizes in the West Indies that are bona fide British property within the discriptions of Prizes as laid [down] by Congress, you may send them into Martinico to the care of William Bingham Esqr.—to St. Eustatia to the care of Saml. Curson junr. Esqr.—at Curacoa to Mr. Gouverneur—at the Cape Francois to Mr. Ceronio, at St. Nicholas Mole to Mr. John Dupuy, observing that if any part of the Cargoes suit the consumption of the West Indies, and not consisting in such articles as are wanted here, the Agents of the Prizes may make sale of all such goods and apply the Neat proceeds to the purchase of such supplies as we are in want of, and we will pay here that part of the amount that appertains to you, your officers and Crew, but the ships must be sent to some port in these States for condemnation with a Compleat Inventory of what has been taken out, any Prize you take that you think may be disputed or appealed for, must be sent for the States without breaking bulk. The Agents at each place will make the necessary supplies for the charges and expences of your ship, but you are not to pay any Custom House fees or duties any where. you must encourage as many Seamen as possible to enter on board your Ship at every port you enter and from every prize you take. As the British men of war on the West India stations are not often well manned, it would give great

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

eclat to our Naval service if you can make prize of one or more of them, and if so you will do well to tempt some of their best warrant officers such as Boatswains, Gunners, Quarter Masters and their several mates to enter our service, for we would wish you to bring both these and plenty of Common Sailors home to assist in manning our other ships of war. When your errand to the West Indies is compleated, you'l observe it is mentioned already that you are to return to some safe port in these United States of America. The uncertainty of the fate of war makes us cautious of saying positively which shall be the best port. There is little doubt but this will be the most convenient to receive the Stores at, being most Centrical and probably not very distant from the Scenes of Action, and as you are well enabled to defend yourself against most single ships, and capable we hope of outsailing any of the enemies it appears that you might venture to call at Cape Henlopen or Cape May for intelligence without incurring the charge of rashness, and we will endeavour to keep out some small Cruizers about the time you are expected to give you information. To these you'l shew the signals mentioned in your letter of the 6th instant to me but least you should forget to keep a Copy I shall repeat that "you are to be known to small Cruizers by a White Jack at the fore top mast head and a pendant over it." Shew this same signal to the Light House and we will send down orders there to answer it by a White sheet if All is well, but to hoist english Colors if you are in danger, and as it is probable some more of the Continental frigates may be out and Cruizing on the Coast, I shall enclose you herein some Signals by which Continental



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

frigates may be known to each other by day or by night, as Copies shall be furnished to each of the Captains and you will duely observe your part of them. I need not repeat what has been said in your former Instructions respecting the care of the Randolph, treatment of your men and prisoners &c &c but wishing you honor and success I am Sir

Your Obedt hble servant

ROBT MORRIS V: P:

P: S: If you do your business at Martinico you may bring back the Letters for Messrs. Curson, Godet, Stevenson, Gouverneur Ceronio & Dupuy & return them to

R M

[ TO CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER ]

February 15th. 1777

Sir

I send down to you by the Muskeito sundry Packets for Captain Biddle of the Randolph frigate which is now a Cruizing on the Coast you are to proceed down the Bay directly send on shore to the Light House and tell the Keeper of it whenever he discovers a frigate in the offing whilst you are in sight of the Light House to hoist or shew a large white sheet on sight of which the Randolph will stand in, another will not know what it means. You will keep Cruizing about the Capes in

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

sight of the Light House until you deliver these despatches to Captain Biddle and take care every night to get under the Land to prevent being cut off by the enemy. When you see any frigate hoist your Continental Colours and you will know the Randolph by a White Jack at the fore top mast head and a Pendant over it, dont trust too near until you discover this signal, and when you see it you will know the Randolph. Soon as you have delivered these despatches to Captain Biddle come up to the Cheveaux Defrize or some place where you can keep your men on board and inform me of your action. I am Sir

Your very hble servant

ROBT. MORRIS V: P:

P: S: These despatches are of great consequence and must be delivered Captain Biddle soon as possible, and if any unfortunate accident befalls you they must be Sunk for the enemy must not have them on any acct.

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN NICHOLSON ]

Feby. 16th 1777

Sir.

As the enemies ships and the ice have detained you in Delaware until this time when the Marine Committee are in Baltimore I only think it necessary to add to these orders that the first of April limited for your return

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

need not be regarded if the public service will be benefited by your longer detention, but tell Mr. Bingham if he has any public stores to send us, the receipt of them is of more consequence than Cruizing. I am Sir

Your hble servant

ROBERT MORRIS V : P :

[ TO CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER ]

Febry. 17th 1777—

Sir

Since writing the annexed orders I have received advice that it is reported in the West Indies that this City is in the Hands of the enemy in consequence of which all the homeward bound Vessels are going into Cheseapeake Bay where innevitably they will fall into the enemies hands, therefore as soon as you deliver these dispatches to Captain Biddle which you must first perform and then proceed to Cruize of[f] the Capes of Virginia keeping outside of the enemies men of war, and give all inward bound Vessels notice of their danger and that our Bay is clear of the enemy. Keep a Sharp look out a Long shore and you will retake some of the Prizes they are sending to New York.

I am Sir

Your hble servt.

ROBT: MORRIS V : P :

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO LIEUTENANT THOMAS ALBERTSON ]

February 18. 1777

Sir

You are immediately to proceed down the River in search of the Sloop Fly Captain Elisha Warner which I am told is now at Rheedey Island. You must find him speedily as possible and deliver him the Letter and Packet given you herewith and return to this City bringing his receipt.

I am Sir

Your hble servant

ROBT. MORRIS V: P:

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES ROBINSON ]

Philadelphia March. 12. 1777

Sir

The Sachem Sloop of war under your command being ready for sea, after having received on board a quantity of Indigo shipped by the Secret Committee of Congress. You are to proceed from this port to the Island of St. Eustatia, and on your arrival there apply to Mr. Saml. Curson junr. to whom the Indico is addressed, deliver it to him agreeable to Bills of Lading and take his receipt. On your arrival in that Port wait on the Governor and ask the Liberty and protection of the Port in the name of the United States of America.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Take care not to violate the neutrality of it neither suffer your people to behave in any disorderly or irregular manner there—procure the utmost despatch of your business and receive on board any Stores or Merchandize Mr. Curson, Mr. Henricus Goddet, or Mr. C. Stevenson all of that place may have to ship, or so much thereof as you can with propriety or convenience bring back. Which done you must grant them bills of Lading receive their despatches and proceed back for this Coast.

If you can get back to this Port and find it secure do so. If it is gaurded by the enemy get into Cheseapeake Bay, or into some safe Inlet or harbour and give us the earliest notice of your arrival with an account of what goods you bring back. Should you make any Prizes going or coming, send them into the safest Ports, addressed to the Continental Agents where they arrive. If you carry them into the West Indies you may order perishable commodities or those suited for the Country to be sold provided the property is indisputably Prize, agreeably to the discriptions of Congress, but the Vessels and other parts of the Cargoes must come to the Continent for condemnation.

It is a Standing Instruction of this Committee to all the Navy that Prisoners be used with humanity and kindness and that you pay due attention and obedience to the printed Instructions of the Navy Board. So farewell

We are your friends &c

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JOHN BRADFORD ]

March 21. 1777

Sir

We find complaints are made by the officers and Seamen concerned in the Capture of Prizes that have fallen into your hands as Continental Agent, for want of a distribution of Prize Money and it is urged by Mr. Glover<sup>1</sup> their Agent that you neglect or refuse to settle the accounts or to pay him the share appertaining to the Captors which puts it totally out of his power to make such distribution, and in consequence of these delays the Maritime service of the Continent suffers exceedingly, in short it is owing to unhappy circumstances of this kind that the navy cannot be manned and we now must press your immediate attention and utmost exertion to settle the accounts of every prize whose circumstances can admit of settlement, and if you have delivered any Prize goods for the Continental service produce the Inventories thereof with the receipts that prove the delivery to Messrs. Isaac Smith Ebenezer Storer and William Philips whom we have appointed to value the same. The amount of such valuations you will charge to the Continent and Credit in the respective account sales which will enable you to compleat the Accounts of all such prizes and you will then pay to the Agent for the Captors their proportion agreeable to the Resolves of Congress.

<sup>1</sup> John Glover.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

We must also remind you of our Letter of Instructions dated the 18th of October the receipt of which you acknowledged but hitherto have not complied with the Contents. We suppose it will be sufficient to inform you, we shall be under a necessity of requiring a Strict Compliance with those injunctions from all the Agents.

We are sir

Your hble servants

[ TO ISAAC SMITH, EBENEZER STORER, AND  
WILLIAM PHILIPS<sup>1</sup> ]

March 21. 1777

Gentlemen

Inclosed are several documents by which you will learn that you are appointed Commissioners to transact some business on behalf of the United States with the Gentlemen who were appointed Agents by General Washington for the Prizes taken by the fleet fitted out by his directions.

The Marine Committee request you will undertake the said business and proceed in it with as much expedition as possible. The service having already suffered by reason of delays in that department. You will perceive that you are empowered to pay any balances which you shall find due to any of the said Agents, but as you may not receive funds sufficient for that purpose,

<sup>1</sup> Of Boston, Massachusetts.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

we hereby empower you to draw bills on us for any sums you may want to enable you to execute the Resolution and if you cannot conveniently procure Money on such bills we request you to use your Credit to procure the same, & we shall take care to reimburse you as soon as we can know the amount, with all expences attending the transactions, and Interest for any advance if required. You will please to observe that the Captors in the above mentioned Fleet, are not entitled to so large a proportion of the Prizes, as those who have served in the Navy line constituted by Congress— You will be pleased therefore to have recourse to the Regulations made by Genl. Washington relative to this matter, and to subsequent Resolutions of Congress. We suppose that the Agents are possessed of Copies of the Regulations. Your well known Zeal for the Public cause has induced us to appoint you to this business and we have the strongest confidence in your dilligence & fidelity— You will perceive you are also empowered to value any goods which may have been delivered by the Continental Agents for Prizes for the use of the United States. We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ CIRCULAR LETTER TO WASHINGTON'S AGENTS ]

March 21. 1777

Sir

Messrs. Isaac Smith, Ebenezer Storer & William Philips are appointed by this Committee, Commissioners to adjust the several accounts of the Agents appointed by General Washington for the fleet fitted out by his directions, to value such goods as the[y] duely delivered for the use of the United States and give Credit agreeable to such valuation, also to receive any balances due from, and pay any due to such Agents, and to require them to pay the proper proportion to the Captors.

You as one of the said Agents are required to pay due regard to the applications of those Gentlemen for the above purposes so that the same may be effected with all possible expedition.

We are Sir

Your very hble servants

To

Mr. William Bartlett . at Beverly  
William Watson . Plymouth  
Joshua Wentworth . Portsmouth  
Wintrop Sergent . Cape Anne  
Bartlett & Glover . Lynn Marblehead  
John Bradford . Boston

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JOHN BRADFORD AND LEONARD JARVIS<sup>1</sup> ]

March 25th 1777

Gentlemen

Inclosed is a Resolution of Congress in consequence of which, you are hereby directed to purchase, Arm and fit out for the service of the United States three fast sailing good ships that will conveniently mount not exceeding 18 Sixpounders on One Deck.

If it should be necessary to take off raise or lower a deck, you'll have it done, or make any other necessary alterations, you'll take care to have them fitted in the best and cheapest manner possible.

Advise the Committee of the purchase as soon as made, and should you not have public Money enough in your hands to execute this business, inform us what sum you shall want for the purpose.

These ships are to be commanded by three Gentlemen mentioned in the Resolution, Captain Jones to have the preference.

We would have the Commanders superintend the fitting of their respective ships. We are Gentn

Your hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Jarvis was Continental agent at Dartmouth, Massachusetts.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES ]

March 25th 1777

Sir

The Agent Mr. Bradford has orders from this Committee to purchase and fit out three Armed Vessels pursuant to a Resolve of Congress which is transmitted to him, one of which you are to command and the Committee have directed that you should have your choice, therefore you are directed to make your election as soon as the purchase shall be made, and to superintend and hasten the fitting her out for sea with all possible expedition.

We are sir

Your hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES ROBINSON ]

March 29th 1777

Sir

Herewith you will receive several Packets for Wm. Bingham Esqr. at Martinico, they are of great consequence and must not on any account fall into the Hands of the enemy, therefore have them slung ready for Sinking in case of danger. Should you fall in with the Islands so as to make it convenient for landing these Letters at Martinico send an officer on shore with them.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

He must deliver them himself and bring Mr. Bingham's receipt for them. If you cannot land them going to St. Eustatia, you must either send them from thence to Martinico by one of your officers or some person Mr. Curson can depend upon who must go passenger in a Dutch or french Vessel & bring you back a receipt, or else you must after landing the Indico at St. Eustatia run over with the Sachem and deliver them yourself.

I am Sir

Your obed. servant  
per order

ROBT MORRIS V: P:

[ TO WILLIAM BINGHAM ]

March 29th 1777

Sir

The several Packets sent herewith were intended to be conveyed to you by the Randolph Frigate. They were sent out to sea after him by a small continental sloop which has been cruizing in the proper station for her since the Middle of feby.

But it seems the Randolph carried away one of her Masts soon after she left this Port and put into Charles Town to refit, therefore I send these down after the Sachem Capt. Robinson bound for St. Eustatia from whence he must carefully forward them to you. I am  
Sir

your very hble servant

ROBT MORRIS V: P:

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ CIRCULAR LETTER TO CAPTAINS J. B. HOPKINS,  
ABRAHAM WHIPPLE, AND DUDLEY SALTONSTALL ]

Sir

April 4th 1777

The Committee have written to the Council of war in Providence requesting their assistance in getting the Frigate under your command manned with all possible expedition. On your part as the service of your Country demands it, so this Committee expect your most diligent exertions in getting immediately manned, and out to sea, there to Cruize in such Lattitudes as will be most likely to fall in with & intercept the enemies Transport Vessels coming to reinforce or to supply their Army at New York. If it should be your good fortune to meet with any of the enemies Ships of war not greatly your Superior in force we doubt not but you will do honor to the Navy of the United States, and to yourself by bringing such into port with you.—

Should your efforts aided by the Council of War be insufficient to man your ship fully for a Cruize you are in that case to endeavour to get her manned in such manner as to carry the ship round to Boston and there exert yourself to compleat your number and proceed on the Cruize aforesaid.

Wishing you success and health we are Sir

Your freinds & servants

To

Captain J : B: Hopkins of the Frigate Warren

Captain Abra[ha]m Whipple of the Frigate  
Providence

Captain Dudley Saltonstall of the Frigate Trumbull

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN CHARLES ALEXANDER ]

Sir

April 8th. 1777

The Marine Commissioners having reported to this Board that the Frigate Delaware under your command is ready for Sea, you are hereby directed to proceed to Cruize for the enemies Transport and Provision Vessels that may be coming from Europe to New York, You will proceed so far to the Eastward and so far from the Coast as will be the least likely to fall in with the Enemies Ships of war until you[r] men are well practiced and fitted to engage with strong ships. When that is the case you are then to draw nearer to the Coast of North America, and Cruise along the said Coast from Block Island to the Capes of Virginia doing your true endeavour to take, burn, sink, or destroy as many of the enemies Ships and Vessels of every kind as you may have the good fortune to fall in with. The prizes you may be lucky enough to take you will send into such Ports of the United States as you shall think will be the safest from the informations you may receive, you are to pay due attention to the printed Instructions from the Navy Board. It is possible that we may think proper to give you fresh orders which shall be lodged with Henry Fisher at Lewis Town, and the light House will be ordered to shew a large white sheet when they have such orders and find a frigate in sight. Should any unfortunate accident befall you destroy these orders rather than let the enemy get them, and you will as opportunities occur transmit us accounts of your proceedings.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

You will be careful of the Delaware her Stores and Materials, kind to your Officers and Men but observing strict discipline, and you are to pay due attention to the printed Instructions of the Navy Board. Inclosed you have Signals whereby you are to know American Vessels of War.

We are sir

Your hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON ]

April 8th 1777

Sir

It seems currently reported that the Frigate Virginia under your command is ready for the sea and that she only waits for Orders. Hoping this may really be the case, we despatch the following Instructions by which you are to be governed. You are immediately to proceed with the said Frigate to sea, embracing such favourable winds as may be likely to run you quickly of[f] the Coast, for as we know you are not in condition to meet the enemies ships in Battle on advantageous terms at present, we wish you to avoid them until you get well manned and your People tollerably trained, therefore soon as you clear the land schape your Course for the Island of Martinico, and there deliver to William Bingham esqr. American Resident at that Port the letter sent herewith directed for him. We expect a quantity of Arms ammunition Cloathing and other

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Stores to be lodged with him by this time and he is directed to put a part of them on board the Virginia and you will direct them to be received on board, granting bills of lading for what are so received. Should Mr. Bingham have shipped these Stores or the greatest part of them previous to your Arrival, it is likely there may be others at St. Eustatia and you may apply there to Mr. Saml Curson junr. Mr. Corneilus Stevenson & Mr. Henricus Goddet for any such that may have come to their hands granting them bills of Lading for what you receive. When you arrive at Martinico Mr. Bingham will inform you what british ships of war are amongst the Windward Islands also what other of the enemies Cruizers are there, and whether the Inhabitants of the British West India Islands continue the practice of fitting out ships in a Piratical manner without commissions and if upon a veiw of these things Mr. Bingham and you should be of opinion that it will be useful to our Commerce for you to make a short Cruize amongst the Islands for the purpose of protecting our Trade and distressing the enemy by all means let it be done.

The British ships of war after being any length of time in the West Indies are rarely well manned and as we hope your ship will sail well, we hope you may either be able to cope with them in Battle or to outsail them, as to any other Cruizers they must outsail or submit to you, but if you can add some of the enemies ships to our Navy it will render essential service to your Country inspirit our Seamen and do honor to yourself.

Should you take any Prizes whose Cargoes are perishable or particularly suited to the West India



## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Markets you may order such articles to be sold there and lodge the Money with Mr. Bingham taking his drafts for the same, but the Ship and other parts of the Cargo must come to America for condemnation.

You will be particularly attentive to collect as many Seamen as possible, not only what may be necessary for the Virginia, but as many as you can bring to assist in manning the rest of our Navy. It is expected that you contend warmly on all necessary occasions for the honor of the American Flag. At every foreign port you enter salute their Forts, and wait on the Governor, General or Commander in chief, asking liberty of their Ports for the Ships of the United States of America— Take care that your people do not molest their Trade or Inhabitants nor in any shape disturb that good understanding we have with them. We think you should not only attempt to get seamen at every port you touch at, but also encourage them to enter from every Prize you take, and if amongst these you should number any of the British ships of war, you must be particularly attentive to prevail on the most useful Petty & Warrant Officers to engage in our service—the encouragement for them is great and we want them much. When your errand to the West Indies is compleated you are to return to some Port in these States.

The uncertainty of the state of war and the stations the enemy may choose for their large ships makes it improper we should fix positively on any one particular, but as it is likely those middle states may be the seat of war the nearer you can land the Stores to our Army the better. It is expected from every Commander in our Navy that he will use his officers and people well, still

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

preserving strict discipline and decorum—that prisoners be treated with humanity that great care be taken of the ships their materials and stores, and that due attention be paid to the private Instructions of the Navy Board. We are Sir

Your very hble Servts

P: S: you have herewith signals whereby to know the American ships of war.

[ TO CAPTAIN BENJAMIN DUNN ]

Philadelphia 18th April 1777

Sir

The Navy Board of this State having made application for the assistance of such Continental Cruizers as can with propriety be employed to defend the Cape May Channel in Delaware Bay against the enemies Ships and tenders now mollesting the trade at the Capes. We have thought proper in compliance with their request to order the Andrea Doria, Surprize, & fly on this service. You are therefore to proceed soon as it is possible with the Sloop Surprize under your Command down the Cape May Channel until you join the Andrea Doria, where you will put yourself under the command of your Senior Officer Captain Isaiah Robinson and in conjunction with him and the Gallies of this State exert your utmost abilities to secure the communication between this City and the Sea by means of that Channel,

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

You must to the utmost of your power protect and assist all American Vessels inward or outward bound, and you are also to exert your utmost abilities and address to take, sink, burn or destroy any or all of the enemies ships that may come in your way.

When this service does not require your further Attention consult your senior officer, and with his concurrence you may open the other orders given you herewith and proceed upon the execution of them. Remember there is a Cargo on board the Surprize and you will be careful not to expose it unnecessarily to risque of being lost or taken.

We are Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN ELISHA WARNER ]

April 18th. 1777

Sir

The Fly under your command being now ready for service you are to proceed down the Cape Channel until you join the Andrea Doria, Surprize and two Gallies of this State all of which with the Fly are now directed down that Channel for the purpose of securing a Communication & passage between this City and the Sea and to protect and assist all American Vessels inward and outward bound as well as to oppose the enemy all in their power.—

You are therefore to Consult with and be directed by

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

your senior officers in this business and exert yourself to the utmost in executing and promoting the service you are now ordered upon. When this shall be done and Captain Robinson shall think it proper that the Andrea Doria and Surprize should proceed on their Voyage, you may run up the River and send an officer to inform us how things are circumstanced, keeping your people on board and waiting for such farther Orders as we may find necessary to give.—

We are Sir

Your hble servts

[ TO CAPTAIN ISALIAH ROBINSON ]

April 18th 1777

Sir

The Navy Board of this State having requested the assistance of the Continental Navy in defending the Cape May Channel in Delaware Bay so that the inward and outward bound Trade may not be totally obstructed by the enemies ships stationed at the mouth of said Bay.—

The Brigantine Andrea Doria being now ready for service you are forthwith to proceed down the Cape May Channel and Co-operate with the two Gallies sent down by the said Navy Board the Commanders of which will be instructed to Consult with and be directed by you in pursuing such measures as may be nec-

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

essary to secure and defend the said Channel as well as in any attempt you may think it proper and prudent to make on such of the enemies Tenders and Vessels as you may judge your force equal to Cope with, and you will exert your utmost abilities and address, to take sink burn or otherwise destroy, any or all of their Cruizers you meet with.—

You will particularly attend to the business of protecting our Trade and procuring any American Vessels inward or outward bound to which you can extend protection or assistance. The Gallies of this State whilst acting in conjunction with you will be subject to your orders. They draw Little water and have heavy Canon in their Bows which induces us to think they might be very successfully employed in mollesting and galling the enemies larger Ships lying at Anchor in the Road or any part of the Bay especially by attacking them in the night. The Gallies might run into shoal water on the shoals nearest to where the Ships anchored and take such a Station that the large ships could not get near them, bring the Bow Guns to bear on the Enemy and keep up a Constant firing until they obliged them to weigh Anchor or slip their Cables. Calm weather will be the best for this sort of business, because the enemies ships would remain unmanageable and the Gallies could Row and do what they pleased. If attacks of this kind are frequently made and with success they will get tired of Anchoring and prefer keeping the sea which will give our vessels a better chance of geting in and out. We would like to have this plan attempted and think you would do well to go in one of the Gallies on the first occasion taking care not to disgust the Captain

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

of her thereby, but you will be the better able to judge what can be done afterwards. When you find the service herein recommended does not require your particular attention, either by means of your taking or destroying the enemies Tenders or by their quitting the Station, you may then deem these orders to be fully complied with and opening the others given you herewith proceed as therein directed. And as you have a valuable Cargo on board you will during this service be particularly attentive to the safety of the Andrea Doria and her Cargo, only exposing her to danger when you are sensible the true Interest or honor of America requires it.

We are sir

Your hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN ISAAH ROBINSON ]

April 19th 1777

Sir

The Marine Committee gave you Instructions of yesterdays date for performing certain services in Delaware Bay which being accomplished you are to have recourse to the following Orders which you are to obey and fulfill soon as possible. You are to proceed with the Andrea Doria and the Cargo on board direct for Cape François in Hispaniola and on your Arrival there wait on the Governor or General asking the pro-

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

tection and liberty of the Port. You will be attended in this visit by Mr. Stephen Ceronio to whom you must deliver the letter given you herewith and to whom the Cargo on board is consigned. This Gentleman will receive the said Cargo with despatch and if he has any public stores on hand that have been provided by him previous to your Arrival or if there be any arrived there from Europe you are to receive the whole or such part as you can conveniently take on board the Andrea Doria and return therewith to the first safe Port you can get into in the United States of America preferring this part of the Coast if equally safe. You are to land the Stores and goods wherever you arrive giving us notice thereof and employing proper persons to take charge of them until we can direct how they are to be disposed off. We believe there is sufficient water for the Andrea Doria in Egg Harbour—several of the Inlets south of Cape Henlopen, or in several Inlets in North Carolina and probably these may be safer than the great Bays. You will be careful to keep your men on board wherever you go and then take in three or four months Provisions.

We hope all this business will be finished before the first day of July. Should there be no Public Stores for these States at Cape François, you will depart from thence immediately after landing your Cargo and proceed down to Cape St. Nicholas Mole where you are to apply to Mr. John Dupuy and if he has any goods or Stores to ship receive them on board and proceed as already directed. You will get as many men to enter on board your Brig as possible at these places and should there be no stores or goods to bring away you may then proceed on a Cruize against our enemies, tak-

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

ing sinking burning and destroying as many of their Ships and Vessels as possible. You may send your Prizes into the French Ports or for the Continent preferring the later when proper and practicable. The Gentlemen mentioned will transact your business, they will supply you with whatever may be necessary, and you may order them to sell all perishable Prize goods or those suited to the West India Markets taking care they are really and truly indisputable Prizes agreeable to Resolves of Congress, but the Vessels and other Parts of the Cargoes must come to some American Port for condemnation. In this manner you may continue Cruizing until the first day of July, and should you return from the Cape or the Mole and land a Cargo on the Continent as already mentioned before the first of July, you may proceed on a Cruize for West India Ships or others in these Seas until that day. On the first day of July you are to open the Sealed Orders enclosed herein and exert yourself to the utmost in the execution of them taking care that the Andrea Doria is clean well manned victualled and every way in good Order for service at that Time.

We are now at the second of May and as you have been detained so long for want of Men and may probably be some time longer before you get out to Sea we now direct that you embrace the first opportunity to push out and proceed for Cape François delivering the Letters given you herewith to Mr. Ceronio also the Cargo, after which you need not take in any Stores nor attempt coming back to this Coast, but proceed from the Cape soon as possible on a Cruize which you may continue until the 10th day of July and then open the



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

sealed Instructions which are to govern you from that time. Should you fall in with the Randolph Captain Biddle you must receive Orders from him and Cruize in Concert.

We are sir

Your obedt servants

P: S: we expect Captain Biddle to proceed to the Cape and he is directed to Convoy from thence the Brig Anne Capt: Garrigues, and the Sloop Phoebe Captain Gilbert. Should the Randolph not arrive you must convoy those two Vessels off the Coast of Hispaniola as they will take in the stores intended for you.

[ TO CAPTAIN BENJAMIN DUNN ]

April 19th 1777

Sir

We gave you orders yesterday respecting the service you are required to perform in Delaware Bay, after that is performed you are to have recourse to these Orders which you are to obey and execute soon as possible, You are to proceed with the Sloop Surprize and Cargo on board direct for St. Nicholas Mole in Hispaniola and on your arrival there wait on the Governor to ask the liberty and protection. In this visit you will be attended by Mr. John Dupuy Merchant at that place to whom you will deliver the letter given you herewith and the Cargo being consigned to this Gentleman you

[ 103 ]

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

are to deliver the same to him immediately and if this Gentleman has on hand any goods or Stores belonging to the Public, say the United States he will put the whole or as many as you can conveniently take in on board the Surprize for which you must grant bills of Lading and then proceed back to the first safe port you can get into in these United States preferring this part of the Coast if equally safe. You are to land the stores and goods wherever you arrive giving us notice thereof and employing proper Persons to take charge of them until we can direct how they are to be disposed off. We think there is sufficient water for the Surprize in Egg harbour, several of the Inlets southern of Cape Henlopen, and in several inlets of North Carolina & probably this may be safer than the great Bays. You will be careful to keep your men on board wherever you go and take in three or four Months Provisions. We hope this business will be finished before the first day of July. Should there be no public Stores at the Mole, you may then proceed from thence on a Cruize against our enemies, get as many men as you can to enter the service on board the Surprize and exert your utmost endeavours to take, burn, sink, and destroy as many of the enemies Ships as possible. You may send your prizes into the french Ports. Mr. John Dupuy will transact your business faithfully at the Mole as will Mr. Stephen Ceronio at the Cape François and these Gentlemen will also supply you with every thing wanting for the Service of the Sloop. You may order them to sell all perishable Prize Goods or those particularly suited to the West India Markets taking care they are actually prize agreeable to resolves of Congress, but the Vessels

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

and other parts of the Cargoes must come to some American Port for Condemnation. In this manner you may continue Cruizing until the first day of July and should you return from the Mole and land a Cargo on the Continent as already mentioned before the first day of July, you may proceed on a Cruize for West India Ships or others in these Seas until that day. On the first day of July you are to open the sealed orders enclosed herein and exert yourself to the utmost in the execution of them taking care that the Surprize is clean, well manned victualled and every way in good Order for Service at that time.

We are now at the second of May and as you have been detained here so long for want of Men it may probably be too late to take in Stores at the Mole and return to the Continent therefore you may deliver the flour to Mr. Dupuy and immediately proceed on a Cruize which you may continue to the 10th day of July and then open the sealed Instructions given you herewith by which you are to be governed after that time and if during your Cruize you fall in with the Randolph Captain Biddle or Andrew Doria Captain Robinson you must receive orders from them to Cruize in Concert. You have Signals enclosed to know them by and

We are Sir

Your hble servants.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN ELISHA HINMAN ]

April 23d 1777

Sir

We expect by the time that these Orders will get to your hands, the Ship Alfred under your Command will be compleatly fitted and manned, You are therefore to proceed with said ship immediately to sea, and there Cruize in such Latitudes as will be most likely to fall in with, and intercept the enemies Transport Vessels coming to reinforce or supply their Army at New York, and you are to use your true endeavours to take burn, sink or destroy as many of the enemies Vessels of every kind, as it may be your good fortune to fall in with.

The Prizes you may be lucky enough to take you will send into such Ports of the United States as you shall think will be the safest and most Convenient. It is our desire that you shall return to Boston or some safe port contiguous thereto by the 20th of June or first day of July next, You will therefore regulate your Cruize so as to be [in] port by that time when we will have fresh Orders for you Lodged with John Bradford Esqr. at Boston to whom you are to apply or send for the same immediately after your Arrival—these Instructions will demand immediate execution therefore you will hold your ship in readiness and keep your Crew together for that purpose. It is expected from every Commander in our Navy that he use his officers and people well still preserving strict discipline and decorum—that Prisoners be treated with humanity and that great care be

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

taken of the ships their materials and stores, all which we desire you will carefully observe and advise us of your proceedings by every opportunity. We expect your most dilligent exertions will be used to execute these orders with all possible dispatch and in the best manner for the service of your Country. Wishing you health and success we remain Sir

Your very hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN PECK RATHBURNE ]

April 23d 1777

Sir

As we have appointed you to the command of the Sloop Providence of war now at Providence in the State of Rhode Island we expect your good conduct in this station will be equal to the trust reposed in you, and that by a diligent attention to your duty every thing possible will be done for the benefit of your Country which will recommend you to the esteem and future favours of this Committee— We now think proper to give you the following Instructions which you are to Obey. You are to loose no time in proceeding to join your vessel at Rhode Island where you must exert yourself to have her fitted and manned immediately—when ready for the Sea you are to proceed on a Cruize in such Latitudes as will be most likely to fall in with and intercept the enemys Transport Vessels coming to reinforce or supply their Army at New York, and you are to use

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

your best endeavours to take, burn, sink or destroy as many of the enemies Vessels of every kind as it may be your good fortune to fall in with— The Prizes you may be lucky enough to take, you will send into such Ports of the United States as you shall think will be safest and most convenient— You are to continue this Cruize for three months when you are to put into the most convenient safe Port & apply to the Continental Agent there with whom it is probable we may lodge fresh instructions for you. but should that not be the case you are to victual your Sloop for another Cruize of the same space as the present, and immediately proceed to sea again taking these Instructions for your plan and conforming to them strictly. When your Provisions are expended return again into some safe Port in these States advise us of your arrival and we will give you fresh orders. You will loose no opportunity to give us an account of your proceedings and we depend much on your vigilance and care in executing these orders.

It is expected from every Commander in our Navy that he use his officers and people well still preserving strict discipline and decorum—that Prisoners be treated with humanity and that great care be taken of the Ships their materials & stores, all which we desire you will carefully observe.

Wishing you health and success

We are sir  
Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE ]

April 26th 1777

Sir

Your letter of the 14th instant is the only one we have received since the misfortune of carrying away your masts or indeed since you left the Capes of Delaware so that we are strangers to the cause and manner of that unfortunate accident, if you wrote us any previous Letter it never reached our hands. We observe with infinite concern that your people have been and remain Sickly—this has happened in so many of our Ships that we cannot help attributing it to some cause that may with proper care & attention be removed. You should therefore insist that your officers do frequently see the Ship thoroughly and perfectly cleansed, aloft and below from Stem to Stern, burn Powder and wash with vinigar betwixt Decks—order Hammocks all bedding bed Cloths and Body Cloaths daily into the quarters or to be aired on Deck, make the people keep their persons cleanly and use exercise—give them as frequent changes of wholesome food as you can, Fish when you can get it and fresh food in Port. Ventilate the Holds and between Decks constantly. In short cleanliness, exercise, fresh air and wholesome food will restore or preserve health more than medicine and it is deserving the utmost attention of any or every officer to preserve the Health & Spirits of the men. If he does not do it he never can

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

make a figure but performing this there is nothing he may not accomplish be his ambition ever so great. We expect the Randolph will be fitted and ready for Sea by the time that this reaches you, and it is sent by Express that it may not arrive too late, you are then to follow these Instructions, as we hereby revoke those given you by Mr. Morris on our behalf. You are to receive from the Continental Agents at Charles Town, any quantity of Casks or Packages of Merchandize that they may have to ship on the public account and take them on board the Randolph. It is not meant by this that they will ship more than you can conveniently take in, or so much as to make the ship deep, or in any degree interfere with the duty or business of a ship of war. Perhaps 50, 60 or 70 Casks of Indico may be the extent, and at the same time that we avoid as much as possible incommoding the ship, we recommend accommodating the Public service all in your power. It is absolutely necessary that we make immediate Remittances to our Agent at Cape François in the Island of Hispaniola as his Credit is nearly ruined there for want of them, and ours has greatly suffered by having three Vessels laded here intended for his relief blocked up by the enemy a long time & no likelyhood of their getting away. You will therefore consult with the Agents and receive from them as much of the goods as they have to ship as you possibly can without injuring the fighting or Sailing of the Ship. It is not only necessary to make these Remittances but to make them speedily, and therefore we expect your utmost endeavours will be used to get away with the goods immediately.

The Agents will be ordered to Load one or more



## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Vessels if possible and send along with you to the Cape you are to receive them under your Convoy and give them proper Signals and Sailing orders and then proceed with them direct for the said Port of Cape Francois using your utmost endeavours to keep Company and carry them safe into that Port where you will apply to Mr. Stephen Ceronio our Agent, whom you will probably find in a good deal of distress which your safe arrival will relieve him from. To this Gentleman you are to deliver the goods shipped by the Agents at Carolina and to him the other ships will be consigned. He will procure for you any necessaries wanted there and will attend you in a Visit to the Governor, Intendent and proper officers of whom you will ask the liberty and protection of the Port and pay the proper Compliments on behalf of the States you serve. We have advice that the American Trade to and from Hispaniola is nearly destroyed by the Cruizers from Jamaica consisting of two Frigates, Two Brigantines, Two 14 Gun Sloops and 4 or 5 small schooners and it will be a work of great merit to take and destroy such of these plunderers as your force will enable you to Cope with; and that we judge may be either of the Frigates seperately, or all the others in any Shape. Going with your Convoy and goods on board it will be prudent to avoid large Vessels, but when you have delivered the goods at the Cape, we desire you may not loose an Hours Time in that Port take in any fresh provisions or stores you want and immediately go out on a Cruize against these enemies of our Peace, Happiness and Prosperity. The Randolph by all accounts comes to our ears has the Heels of most ships that swim—therefore if the Frigates Cruize to-

gether you can avoid them, if you meet either single we hope you can & will take them but particularly exert your utmost diligence and endeavours, to take sink or destroy all the small Cruizers of our enemies that infest that Coast, and after driveing them from the Cape go down to the Mole St. Nicholas and clear that Coast of them as America has much valuable Commerce there. Any American Traders that may be ready to sail when you leave these Ports convoy them safe off, and meeting any bound in you will contribute what you can to their safety. Mr. John Dupuy at the mole will supply you with what may be wanting there. The Ship or two Ships that go under you[r] Convoy from Carolina, as also a Brigantine Anne Captain Garrigues and Sloop Phœbe Captain Gilbert will have to sail from thence to America soon after your arrival there wherefore you will fix with Mr. Ceronio the time when they will [be] ready to depart and return from your first Cruize at that time on purpose to Convoy them out and off that Coast as they will have stores on board for the Continental service. You will procure at every Port you go into and from every Prize you make as many Seamen as possible to enter our service. We hope you will have the good fortune to take many Prizes & amongst them a Number of those Cruizers that have been fitted out against us. You may send your Prizes into the Cape or Mole consigned to Mr. Ceronio, or Mr. Dupuy, who will make sale of them to the best advantage if permitted by the Government there as is done in other french Ports both in Europe and the West Indies; or you may send them to the Continent to the first safe Port they can make. But should you take any fast sailing Vessel with Guns

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

and Stores suitable and can spare officers and men for her you may employ one or more such as Tenders to Cruize in Concert with you, giving the Commanding officer a Copy of your Commission and suitable Instructions; and we hope by this means you will be able not only to Clear Hispaniola of Cruizers but also to retaliate the injuries they have done us, on the Trade of Jamaica; and for this purpose you should get Mr. Dupuy or some other Person to employ a proper person in Jamaica or to send one on purpose to send up accounts regularly to the Mole of the Times when single ships or fleets are ready to sail and the Convoys intended to guard them. Such intelligence will be very useful to you on many accounts and on every occasion. You may employ the Randolph in the manner already pointed out to the 10th. of July next, when you are [to] open the Sealed Instructions inclosed herein and as those Instructions require from you an other service you must keep your ship in as good Order and as well manned as possible and in every respect fit for Action at that period or as much so as the Circumstances of your Cruize will permit. Should it be necessary we imagine you might heave down or give the ship a Parliament Heel at the Cape or Mole. Any Prisoners that you take who will not enter into our service you may Exchange at Jamaica for Americans taken in Armed Vessels and held as Prisoners there, sending down a flag from the Mole for that purpose if you think it necessary or if convenient you may send or bring them to the Continent always treating them with humanity. We wish to hear of strict discipline being introduced in our Navy, at the same time we recommend kind usage and great

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

care of the Crews. You must attend to the Printed Instructions of the Navy Board and with the best wishes for your success

We remain Sir

Your very hble servants

[ TO LIVINUS CLARKSON AND JOHN DORSIUS<sup>1</sup> ]

April 26th 1777

Gentlemen

Your Letter of the 14th instant arrived yesterday and is the only one we have received from you respecting the Randolph Frigate altho it is a considerable Time since we heard of her putting into your Port dismasted. From what you write she will be fitted and ready for the sea by the Time this reaches [you], and it is sent by Express that the orders may arrive in Time.

We very chearfully express our approbation of your Conduct in employing the Schooner Lewis Captain Stevens to assist in taking up the anchor and cable you mention, as well as in making a purchase of the Schooner Betsey to continue that service and shall acquiese in such reasonable reward as you may think a proper recompence for the services of Mr. Richard Hearn [?] in this business, never doubting but you will have due regard to the Interest of our Infant Country, which will have to struggle with a heavy debt after the

<sup>1</sup> Of Charleston, South Carolina.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

present contest is ended. It is the duty of every individual to take what care they can for the States but more particularly it is the duty of all Public officers, and we are persuaded your Conduct will bear the proper Marks of  $\text{\textcircled{E}}$ conomy. Under this persuasion we desire the continuance of your endeavours to save what can be saved of the Anchors, Cables, Guns or Stores of that Fleet which suffered such distress in their Attack on fort Moultree as forced them to leave these things behind them. As the increasing of our Navy will be a constant object it will be necessary to purchase suitable Materials and Stores whenever they can be met with in these States. The Actions Anchor will no doubt come into use before long and you will please to purchase it on the lowest terms in your power; the price of the best Anchors made here before the price of Labour was raised by our inlistments was  $6\frac{1}{2}d$  this Currency per lb. but an Anchor suitable for the Public service and obtained as a prise should not be held in proportion to the general state of enormous Prices that too much prevail through the Continent at this time. You must purchase this and such other Materials and stores suitable for the Navy as you meet with them, as cheap as possible. The Experiment Cable had best be unlaidd and as you propose made up into small Rigging, we mean that of 40 fathom. The whole Cable may remain as well as the Anchors until we order them for the use of some of the ships now building. The Other Anchors and Cables not delivered to Captain Biddle may remain for the same purpose & when you have finished the business of taking them up, you'll send us a return of all that remains after the Randolph is gone.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

We shall order you to be Credited for the amount of the supplies to the Schooner Lewis, Sloop Hornet and Ship Randolph in due time and you will furnish the Accounts and vouchers for those supplies. We understand there are some of the Actions Guns that have been saved by the State of South Carolina, we wish to purchase them as we find some difficulty in getting Guns cast fast enough— These Guns are not so suitable for the Land as for the sea service and we hope the State will part with them. If they agree give us immediate notice that we send for them, but should they refuse to sell they will probably exchange. We are told the Guns are 9 Pounders and it may be in our power to procure 9 Pounders of the long sort which are fitter for fortification. If any of those ships Guns still remain in the water you will no doubt use your utmost endeavours to have them taken up & we flatter ourselves that success will attend you. The Service Captain Biddle is now Ordered upon being urgent and the objects in view important, we request your utmost exertions to get him out to sea as soon after the receipt of this Letter as it possibly can be done. With much esteem we remain Gentn

Your hble servants

P: S: As Mr. Clarkson wishes to leave Carolina for a few Months, we can have no objection as you will take care that the public bussiness does not suffer thereby. You'l mention to Mr. Ceronio the articles he had best [use?] to ballast the returning Ships with.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE ]

April 29th 1777

Sir

You are directed in the Instructions in which these are inclosed to break the seal of this Letter on the 10th day of July next at that time we expect you will be cruising near the Island of Hispaniola, and that agreeable to our former orders you will have the Randolph Frigate in good order and every way fit for Action. We have it in contemplation to Strike a Stroke against the British West India Trade that will be severely felt in the Pecuniary way, and that will at the same time if well executed give an eclat to our Navy that will be of infinite service to it. We propose that you shall have a share in the execution of this plan and hope it may be a distinguished One.

You know that the largest and most valuable fleets of Jamaica Sugar Ships always depart from that Island about the 26th day of July under Convoy and that they pass through the Gulph on their way to England. Our design is to intercept this Fleet and take, sink, burn and destroy as many of them as possible, You are therefore to repair to the Island of Abacoa near New Providence which is the place we have appointed for the Rendezvous of such Ships & Cruizers as we may find it in our power to order on this service and you must make it a point to be there on or before the 25th. July that being the day we shall fix for every Ship or Vessel being at Abacoa.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

When the fleet are collected at that place the Captains must compare Commissions and the Senior is to be deemed Commodore to whom the Inclosed Orders are addressed, every Captain in the fleet will be furnished with a Copy, and it is expected not only from the Captains but from every officer in the fleet that they will use their most strenuous endeavours to effect this business in a Compleat and effectual manner and for this purpose it will be necessary to cultivate Harmony and good understanding with One Another. We also recommend it as a constant Object of your Attention to encourage the seamen and Petty officers which you take on board Prizes to enter our service and bring as many of them as possible into America.

We doubt not you will signalize your Zeal upon this occasion and happy shall be at a future day to congratulate you on the accomplishment of this enterprize.

We are Sir your friends  
& obedt Servants

[ RESOLUTIONS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE ]

Philada. April 29th 1777

It being this day determined to form a plan for intercepting the Jamaica Fleet that will Sail from the Island for Great Britain about the 26th day of July next. Resolved

That this Committee will Order such of the Continental Frigates and Cruizers as can conveniently be



## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

spared or appointed for this service to Randevouz at Abacoa One of the Bahama Islands near to New Providence on or before the 25th day of July next.

That as it is uncertain what number or which of the Ships or Cruizers may be so Ordered, those that arrive at the said Station are to wait until the 28th day of July, each employing themselves in taking on board wood Water &c if wanted and to be got until that day when the several Commanders are to meet and producing their Commissions to each other the Senior Officer is to be deemed Commodore and may hoist a broad Penant during the continuance of this service. The Commodore and every Commander are then to pay due obedience to the following Instructions exerting themselves in their respective stations to execute them and to accomplish what this Committee have in veiw.

The grand Object of this expedition being to intercept the Jamaica fleet that will be departing from that Island about the Time the Commodore assumes his Command, he is to hold a Council of War assisted by all the Commanders and determine the following points.

First where is the best Cruizing Ground.

Second, How to station the Squadron over that ground so that the enemies fleet cannot pass by unobserved.

Third, fix Signals for discovering the Enemy, their numbers force and Number of the Convoy, how they bear, distance &c.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Fourth, fix Signals for knowing each Other generally, & each ship in particular with all other necessary & proper Signals for the well governing & managing the fleet during the Cruize and in time of Action.

Fifth, each Commander to be supplied with a Copy of these orders Copies of the Proceedings of the Council of War Signals &c and Copies of such other orders as the Commodore & council may think proper to be given to each captain in addition to these Instructions which orders are to have the same object in veiw and are to be calculated for the more effectual Accomplishment of it. The Commodore or Council of war are empowered to order or do any thing they may think necessary or essential to enable the Squadron to perform the intended service, whether pointed out by the Committee or not. The Commodore must call on each Captain for any intelligence he may have gained respecting our enemies before he arrived at the Randevouz and particularly respecting the Jamaica fleet, the force and number of Ships of war intended as Convoy to that fleet, and proper advantage must be made of any intelligence so gained. These things done and the sooner they are accomplished the better, the Squadron must weigh and sail under the Signals and Orders of the Commodore to the Appointed Station which we suppose will be near the Havannah and as there will be some time to wait for the Jamaica fleet geting that length such time cannot be better spent, than in repeating the Signals agreed on constantly in order that they may become familiar to every one, and whenever they appear to be misunder-

stood to any Ship or Ships an explanation should immediately take place. The men should be constantly exercised at the Guns, and infinite pains taken on board every Ship to sweeten the air, and keep not only the ship clean but the Men so in their Cloathing and Persons. During this Cruize there is little doubt but Prizes will be taken by the Squadron before the Jamaica fleet appears and such may be sent into Georgia or Carolina, but in doing this care must be taken that no ship is much weakened by sending away their men in such Prizes. Should they be of little value it may probably be best to burn them and encourage the seamen found on board to enter our Service by offering them share of Prize Money to be taken, Pay and allowance equal to those already engaged and assurance of good treatment. It may not be amiss for the Commodore to send One of the small Cruizers into the Havannah with a Polite Letter to the Governor asking leave for the Ships of war belonging to the United States of America to send in their Prizes there until convenient to bring them away or for sale if that will be permitted. When the main object of this enterprize appears the Jamaica Fleet, it must be the business of the Commodore to keep the Frigates together until he finds out the strength of the Convoy and if it be such as he judges he can cope with, with a tolerable prospect of success, He is to make the proper disposition for Attacking to the best advantage and engage their ships of war whilst all the smaller vessels are employed in attacking and taking the Merchantmen. It must be remembered that the enemy generally send home for

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Convoy such of their ships of war as have been long in the West Indies. They are frequently foul and ill manned which are circumstances favourable for engaging them, even if they should appear of superior force. If you can but make Prizes of the Convoy or any part of them, we think it will then be in the power of the Squadron to take any number of the Merchantmen and such as cannot be manned and brought into Port may be sunk or Burned. Should the Convoy consist of such or so many Ships as it would be folly or rashness to engage, the Squadron in that case had best to separate and hover after the fleet, for as we have little doubt but most of our ships will outsail theirs, being cleaner you may in this manner pick up a vast many of their Merchant ships altho protected by Superior force, and for this purpose every Ship or Cruizer may follow the fleet as long and as far as the Commander shall think prudent, but the Squadron is not to separate until the Commodore shall give Orders or make signals for that purpose. If the Squadron separate in this manner each Commander will return into the first safe Port in the States after he has performed his Cruize and rendered his Country all the services he can for that voyage, each giving us immediate notice of his Arrival and preparing again the Vessel he commands for further service against he receives fresh Orders. On the Contrary if the Squadron are successful in taking a number of Prizes it will be best to bring them into the first safe Port or Ports in these States delivering the Prizes to the Agents, and each ship to be got ready for further services immediately. If the

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

fleet arrive any where in the neighbourhood of Congress we can and will transmit fresh Orders—if too distant the Commodore must call a Council of war of all the Commanders with him and any enterprize or expedition planned by that Council, that has for its object the service of the United States of America, to distress or disable the enemies of these States or to Capture their ships of war or Merchantmen will meet our Approbation & if executed with vigour will merit the praise of all America. Our ships should never be Idle. The Navy is in its infancy and a few brilliant strokes at this Œra would give it a Credit and importance that would induce seamen from all parts to seek the employ for nothing is more evident than that America has the means and must in time become the first Maritime power in the world. The several commanders employed to execute this Plan now laid down will have an opportunity to open the first Ideas of the importance of our Navy and a glorious chance of immortalizing their own names besides enriching all the brave Fellows under their command. To them then under Heaven we look for that success which is the Object of our wishes.—

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JOHN DUPUY<sup>1</sup> ]

April 29th 1777

Sir

This may probably be delivered to you by Captain Nicholas Biddle of the Randolph Frigate which will be Cruizing on your Coast this summer and should Captain Biddle pay you a visit we request that you will supply him with any Stores or necessarys the Ship may stand in need of. Should he send any Prizes into your Port we hope you will be permitted to make sale of them, and that you will do it to the best advantage.

Mr. Morris gives us assurance of your attachment to the American cause which induces us to trouble you on this occasion, and should you be led into advance for the supplies Captain Biddle may require, you may depend on being reimbursed by Consignments of Goods made you for that purpose, or probably Mr. Ceronio at Cape François may have funds in his hands as considerable Remittances are now going to him.

We are sir

Your very hble serts

<sup>1</sup> Of Mole-Saint-Nicholas, Haiti.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON ]

April 29th 1777

Sir

We have long been anxious to hear of the Raleigh frigate under your Command being completed for the sea but hitherto the difficulty of obtaining her Guns has been insuperable you may rest assured that the measures you have taken to obtain them from the Furnace in Massachusetts Bay are quite agreeable to us. We approve very much of the Iron Ballast being taken from the Alfred, and in case that should not be sufficient you are authorized to take a quantity out of the Columbus so much of her Iron Ballast as may be necessary and shall defray such reasonable Charges as attend the doing of it, and further we are well pleased that Mr. Paine<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Bradford came into this measure and gave you their assistance. You are therefore to return to the furnace in Massachusetts Bay and immediately try or prove the Guns already cast for the Raleigh agreeable to the standard or mode given you herewith. If you find they stand this proof urge the utmost expedition in completing the set. We hope a sufficient quantity of the proper Metal will be got from the Ballast of the Two Ships mentioned, but if that falls short you may then make application in our name and produce these orders to the Council or Assembly of Massachusetts Bay to spare you what may be wanting from the

<sup>1</sup> Probably Robert Treat Paine, delegate to Congress from Massachusetts.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

quantity lately sent them from Maryland and we will pay for or replace it. We expect and hope that you will get a compleat set of good Guns for the ship by these means, and if you do you must take the most effectual means to get them on board as expeditiously as possible. Apply to Mr. Langdon the Agent to second and support your endeavours and compleat the Complement of Hands, take in the necessary Stores, Provisions, Arms & ammunition for a Six Months Cruize if they can conveniently be had—if not you must be content with less—make the ship as compleat as you can but don't loose time or lavish away Money. Expedition and vigilance are excellent qualities in a Sea Officer. Frugallity is an absolutely necessary one in all men that are connected with the American Revenue. These things duly attended to proceed as soon as you can on a Cruize. The first thing after you get out to sea is to try your ships sailing. If she goes fast you may venture to take liberties with our enemies, if she does not you must keep clear of those of superior force and many of these we fancy will be found on the American Coasts. We hope you will be at Sea by the Month of June and if so your first Cruize had best be employed in seeking the Enemies Transports and Provision Vessels bound in for New York chusing the best station for falling in with them, and as you make Prizes send them into the first safe Port to the care of the Continental Agent. Thus you may employ the ship until the first of July when you are to open the sealed Instructions that we shall send you in a very short Time. Those Instructions will direct your attention to an object of importance and you must keep the Raleigh in good order,



## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

well manned, clean, and in every shape fit for Action or as much so as possible against that time. The said Instructions will point out your business after that date, therefore we now return to the supposition of your not getting the Guns wanted from the Furnace in Massachusetts Bay. If it so happens that you cannot get the whole there get as many as you can that will stand the proof, and apply to the State of Massachusetts to furnish what may be wanting, if they cannot, then apply to Mr. Paine or Mr. Bradford to assist you in purchasing as many good 12, 9 or 6 pounders as will fill your Ports. You may do this either in Rhode Island Massachusetts or New Hampshire wherever you can suit the ship best and cheapest, get the whole on board with expedition, take in suitable stores and ammunition make up the Complement of about 150 men including Marines and take the first favourable opportunity to go out to sea and push off the Coast. Should any of the Continental frigates or Cruizers be in your Neighbourhood write to the Captains and if inferior in Rank to you, order him or them to come and Convoy you off; If superior inform him it is our Orders that he or they do it for which this shall be his or their justification and you may send him or them Coppies of this Paragraph which he or they are hereby required to obey. When you get fairly out to sea and are but thus partially armed, you must make the best of your way for brest in France taking care on the Passage to avoid large ships of war, but we hope you will take some Prizes from the Enemy and carry them in with you, these to be sold and the Continental share of such Prizes must be sold to pay for Guns, stores and charges. On your arrival at Brest

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

write to William Lee & Thomas Morris<sup>1</sup> Esqrs. at Nantes and to the Honble Dr. Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane and Arthur Lee<sup>2</sup> Esqrs. in Paris informing them of your arrival and that your errand to France is to compleat the ship with a proper set of Guns telling them how many and the different sorts, mention also what other Stores and supplys you will want and request them to inform you whom to value on, and to take effectual measures to prepare with expedition all the supplies you need, on this head you must never cease urging them until you get what you want. When you get the proper Guns, strike the others in your Hold and keep them there until your return to America. You may ask the Honble Dr. Franklin, Silas Deane & Arthur Lee Esqrs. if they have any commands for you and if they desire you to go on any particular service, Cruize or expedition you must obey their Orders. If they have nothing particular you will take in water, Provisions &c for a long voyage and leaving Brest proceed on a Cruize—taking of Prizes and distressing the enemy must be the object of your Cruize but particularly we recommend your looking out for some of their East India Ships. You will find the Ports of France and Spain open to your Prizes with liberty of selling them there. You must be careful to keep your Ship well manned, and whenever you take Prizes give great encouragement to Seamen and Petty officers to enter.

Any Prizes you take with Cloathing (particularly Blankets), arms, ammunition or any of those articles that you think will be particularly useful in America

<sup>1</sup> Agents of Congress.

<sup>2</sup> American commissioners to France.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

should be sent for the first safe Port in these States. We do not object to your Cruizing a reasonable time in the European seas provided our Commissioners at the Court of France are of opinion it will be more useful than returning, otherways you will return back for these Coasts Cruizing on the enemies Ships during the passage, and should you think it proper to call at any of the French Islands for information we have no objection. You must make it a point to encourage seamen to enter our service wherever you meet with them. Use your People well but preserve strict discipline, attend most carefully to keep a clean ship or the Men will grow sickly, treat Prisoners with Humanity and upon all occasions support with spirit the Honor of the American flag.

We are Sir your friends & Servants

[ TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, SILAS DEANE, AND  
ARTHUR LEE ]

April 29th. 1777

Gentlemen

Should you see this Letter it will be forwarded to you by Thomas Thompson Esqr. Commander of the Raleigh Frigate in the Service of the United States of America. This Ship was built in New Hampshire where is no Foundreys for Casting Cannon and the distance from the places where they are Cast to Portsmouth where the frigate now lies is so great that we

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

think it better to put on board such Guns as can be got for her in the Neighbourhood and send her to France to be compleated, than to Hall them by Land such an amazing distance, or than to trust them by Water to her, or her along the Coast to them, now that the enemies Ships are so numerous and powerful at the Mouths of our Bays and Harbours. We have ordered her to Brest as the most suitable Port for supplies. Captain Thompson will transmit you an Indent of all the Guns, Stores and Materials he wants and we hope you may procure an order for his being Supplied out of the Kings Arsenals or Stores. Orders are given to the Commercial Agents to pay your drafts for the amount of such supplies, but if you cannot obtain them in the way proposed, you will write to the said Agents William Lee & Thomas Morris Esqrs. to purchase every thing necessary on the best terms and in the most expeditious manner they can.

We have told Captain Thompson if you had any particular service, Cruize or enterprize to point out for the benefit of these States, that he should obey your Orders, otherways to return to America well manned and fitted Cruizing on our enemies ships the whole voyage, you will therefore write to him giving such Instructions as you may think best calculated to promote the honor, Interest and welfare of these States. With great esteem and regard we remain Honorable Gentlemen

Your Obedt. servants .

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON ]

April 29th 1777

Sir

In consequence of Letters just now received from the executive Powers of the State of Maryland we have it in charge from Congress to direct that you do not leave the Port of Baltimore with the frigate Virginia under your command until you receive further orders from Congress or from this Committee.

We are sir

Your very hble servants

[ TO GOVERNOR THOMAS JOHNSTON<sup>1</sup> ]

May 1. 1777

Sir

The President will inclose you certain Resolves of Congress relative to the Contempt offered by Captain James Nicholson against the Executive Power of the State of Maryland. The Marine Committee have directed William Lux Esqr. the Marine Agent at Baltimore to serve the said Captain Nicholson with a Copy of them and to inform your Excellency of the time of such service. The Committee have also ordered the

<sup>1</sup> Governor of Maryland.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Commanding officer on board the Virginia to set at liberty all Persons who have not signed the Marine Articles and received the Continental bounty.

We request your Excellency to give the President of Congress the most early notice whether or not Captain Nicholson makes such confession to the Executive Power of the State as they shall require within the limited time.

We are Sir

Your very hble servts

[ TO LIEUTENANT AQUILLA JOHNS<sup>1</sup> ]

May 1. 1777

Sir

A Resolution of Congress this day passed has suspended the Command of Captain James Nicholson in the Continental service for a limited time, and we think it necessary to inform you thereof, requiring you to act in all things necessary on board of the Virginia Frigate during this suspension.

You are to discharge immediately on receipt hereof all such Men as have not received the Continental bounty and suscribed the Articles, you are to preserve strict discipline on board the ship and keep all the people belonging to her not included in the above discription constantly on board, employing them in such

<sup>1</sup> Ranking lieutenant on board the frigate Virginia.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

services as may be necessary for preparing her for Sea and in all matters that Occur we expect you to perform the duty of an Active Attentive Officer, vested with a temporary command until further orders from this Board.

We are sir  
Your Friends & Servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES ]

May 9th 1777

Sir

The Congress have thought proper to authorize the Secret Committee to employ you a voyage in the Amphitrite from Portsmouth to Carolina and France where it is expected you will be provided with a fine frigate and as your present Commission is for the Command of a particular Ship we now send you a new one whereby you are appointed a Captain in our Navy and of course may command any Ship in the service. You are to obey the orders of the Secret Committee.

We are Sir  
Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG ]

May 13th. 1777—

Sir

You are to return to Senepuxent<sup>1</sup> and after sending up the Stores you brought thither in the Independence, you are immediately to proceed out to Sea on a Cruize off the Capes of Delaware, keeping out side of the British men of war and so distant from them as may be necessary for your own security. You are to Cruize in such places as may be most likely for you to meet or fall in with American Ships or Vessels bound into this Port, taking care when you chase any such as you take for Americans to shew them Continental Colours, & when you speak them inform them of the British Cruizers in the Mouth of Delaware and Chesapeake Bay, advising them to get into the Inlets or if large ships to seek safety either in the Eastern or Southern States, you are to continue this Cruize for about three weeks some times to the Northward and some times to the Southward of Cape Henlopen and render every assistance and service in your power to such American Vessels as you fall in with during that time. We hope also that you may shew some good Prizes the way into some of the Inlets along the Coast, when this Cruize is finished you may put into any one of the said Inlets where you can with most convenience heave down the Sloop and send an

<sup>1</sup> Sinepuxent Bay, Worcester County, Maryland.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Officer or an Express to inform us where you are, when you can be ready to Sail again, and what Stores and Provisions you will want for a three months Cruize when we shall send fresh orders and take measures for your being supplied.

We are sir

Your hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN HOYSTED HACKER ]

May 16th 1777

Sir

As we have now appointed you commander of the Ship Columbus, you are to repair without delay to Providence Rhode Island and there put on board said Vessel Provisions for a four months Cruize, using every endeavour to get fitted and manned with dispatch. When ready for the sea you are to proceed out against the enemies transport ships coming to reinforce or supply their Army at New York, and take burn sink or destroy as many of their Vessels of every kind as you possibly can. You will employ your Vessel in this manner until the 10th day of July next, when you are to breake open the sealed Instructions enclosed herein and follow the orders there laid down for you.

Those Instructions will direct your attention to an object of great importance the execution of which we have much at heart and on your part we expect that every thing in your power will be done to accomplish it.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Should any misfortune happen to you be sure to destroy those Instructions keeping them ready slung with a weight to sink them should there be occasion so to do.

We wish to see strict discipline supported in our navy & the seamen well treated—great care to be taken of the Ships their Materials and Stores, and Prisoners are to be treated with humanity therefore recommend that you attend carefully to these points, as well as to keep us constantly advised of your proceedings.

Your exertions for the Public benefit will always command our esteem and freindship and we doubt not you will be very dilligent in the service of your Country.

We are sir

Your very hble servants

[ TO DANIEL TILLINGHAST ]

May 16th 1777.

Sir

Enclosed herein we send forward to you some blank warrants which are to be filled up with the names of suitable men for Petty officers on board the Ship Columbus, therefore we request that you will join with Captain Hacker to have good men appointed and transmit us a list of their names.

We have ordered the Columbus out on a Cruize and request you will lend Captain Hacker every assistance in your power to get her to sea as soon as possible.

We are sir

Your very hble servants

[ 136 ]

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE RHODE ISLAND FRIGATE COMMITTEE ]

May 26th 1777

Gentlemen

Your Letter of the 17th feby lies before us requesting a Remittance of Seven thousand Dollars, or an order on the Loan office of your State for that sum, As you have in the latter part of your Letter given us reason to hope that you would shortly forward to us compleat Accounts of the two frigates built under your Inspection, accompanied with proper vouchers we think it will be more regular to wait the arrival of these accounts before we advance any further sums. We assure you that when the said Accounts have passed this board the balance shall be punctually and speedily remitted to you.

We are Gentlemen

Your very hble servts

[ TO CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON ]

June 1. 1777

Sir

I am ordered by the Honble the Marine Committee to send forward to you the enclosed Sealed Instructions which you are to open on the first day of July next as they have directed in their Letter to you of the 29th of April last and to which I beg leave to refer. I hope

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

when this reaches you that your Ship will be completely ready to execute these Orders and you have my best wishes for your success being Sir respectfully

Your very hble servant

JOHN BROWN Secy<sup>1</sup>

[ TO NATHANIEL SHAW, JR.<sup>2</sup> ]

June 17th 1777

Sir

We received by Captain Chew your Letter of the 27th ulto advising your having purchased a Brigantine suitable for an Armed Cruizer in our Navy. On recurring to our letter to you of the 22nd August last, we find that our Orders were expressly that you should purchase and fit out the Schooner taken by Como. Hopkins in his return from the New Providence expedition and sent by his Fleet into your port. Our principal inducement in giving those Orders was, that a Vessel of that kind was then wanted for an expedition we had planned and Commodore Hopkins recommended that Schooner as suitable for our purpose.

If on examination you found that Vessel defective, you certainly did your duty to decline the purchase of her, but we cannot consider that you were authorized by the Orders we gave you to buy a Brigantine Eight

<sup>1</sup> Secretary of the Marine Committee.

<sup>2</sup> Of New London, Connecticut.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Months after without having first consulted us on that head. Commodore Hopkins never has been invested with any authority from us to order the purchase of Vessels for our Navy and we beg leave to recommend in future an observance of our orders only, advising us when you think any alteration of them will be of service to the Public. From what we have thought proper to say on this subject you will perceive we do not consider ourselves bound to take this Vessel, but as we think the Public service will be benefited thereby we have concluded to take her, and have appointed Captain Samuel Chew to command her. We now request that you will assist him in getting her ready for the Sea with all possible expedition. You will please to put on board provisions &c for a four Months Cruize and make the necessary advances of Money which will be wanted for manning and fitting her out, and recommend your doing every thing in the most frugal manner. Should you have any Money belonging to the States in your hands for which you are to account with this Committee, you may apply it to this purpose, if not, you may draw on us and your bills shall be paid. You will please to furnish us in due time with accounts of the Cost and outfit of this Vessel with proper vouchers and a List of the Men on board at the time of sailing. Recommending this business to your attention we remain Sir

Your very hble servants

P: S: This Brig is to be called the Resistance.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL CHEW ]

June 17th 1777.

Sir

The good recommendations we have had given of you as being well qualified for a Command in our Navy, has induced us to appoint you a Captain therein, in full faith that it will be your chief study to contribute all in your power to the Interest of the United States and the honor of their flag. We now think proper to direct that you repair immediately to New London where you are to take the command of the Brig Resistance lately purchased by Nath Shaw jr Esqr our Agent at that place. That Gentleman will assist you in fitting and manning that vessel, and we expect your best endeavours will be United with his to have this done with all possible expedition. We have directed our said Agent to make the Necessary advances of the Money that will be required in this business, and to put on board sufficient Provisions for a four Months Cruize therefore as soon as ready for the sea you are to proceed immediately on a Cruize against the enemy, choosing such stations as you think will be most likely to intercept their Merchant or Transport ships, and you are to take sink, burn, or destroy, as many of their Vessels of every kind as may be in your power. The Prizes you may take you will send into the most convenient and safe Ports in these States addressed to the Continental Agents, and you may continue your Cruize so long as your Provisions will last and then return into the first

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

safe Port you can make advising us of your arrival and we will give you fresh Orders. You are to preserve strict discipline on board your Vessel, using your people well; and you will treat any Prisoners you may take with humanity. Great care must be taken of the Brig her materials and Stores, observing that you are to be Accountable for every thing on board—therefore you will take care that your officers keep proper Accounts of their expenditures in their respective departments and see that no waste is made of any kind. You must make Monthly returns of the State of your Vessel while in Port, together with exact lists of every Person on board to the Navy Board at Boston or at this place and recommending strict attention to these Orders we remain Sir

Your hble Servants

P: S: We send forward to Mr. Deshon a sufficient number of blank Commissions and Warrants to be filled up with the names of such persons as he may think proper to appoint your Officers. Should you be tempted by any Circumstances not known to us at present to continue your Cruize until your Provisions and Stores may be nearly expended, you may procure further supplies at such foreign Ports as may be convenient for the purpose and we shall punctually pay your drafts.—

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JOHN DESHON<sup>1</sup> ]

June 17th. 1777

Sir

We have lately added to our Navy the Brigantine Resistance purchased by Nathaniel Shaw jr. Esquire our Agent at New London and have appointed Captain Samuel Chew to command her. We now inclose you some Blank Commissions which we must trouble you to fill up with the Names of such persons as you think proper for Lieutenants and other officers on board this Brigantine in doing this we wish the preference to be given to the officers that are in our Service at Rhode Island who may be unemployed or are deserving of promotion, this we leave to your discernment and requesting that you will transmit a List of the names of those you appoint. We remain Sir

Your very hble servants

P: S: We give you this trouble in consequence of your being appointed a Member of the Navy Board of the Eastern Department.

<sup>1</sup> The Connecticut member of the Navy Board of the Eastern Department, residing at New London.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES ]

June 18th 1777

Sir

Your Letter of the 26th May to the Secret Comm[itt]ee was laid before Congress and in consequence thereof the design of fitting the Mellish is laid aside and you are appointed to Command the Ranger Ship of war lately built at Portsmouth. Colo Whipple<sup>1</sup> the Bearer of this carries with him the Resolves of Congress appointing you to this Command and authorizing him Colo Langdon<sup>2</sup> & you to appoint the other Commissioned as well as the Warrant Officers necessary for this Ship and he has with him Blank Commissions & Warrants for this purpose.

It is our desire that you get the Ranger equipped Officered and Manned as well and as soon as possible, and probably we may send you other Instructions before you are ready to Sail, however the design of the present is to prevent your waiting for such after you are ready for Service in every other respect and if that happens before the receipt of further Orders from us you must then proceed on a Cruize against the enemies of these United States conforming to the Orders and regulations of Congress made for the Government of their Navy, and in conformity thereto Take, Sink, Burn or

<sup>1</sup> William Whipple, the New Hampshire member of the Marine Committee.

<sup>2</sup> John Langdon, Continental Agent at Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

destroy all such of the enemies Ships, Vessels, goods and effects as you may be able. We shall not limit you to any particular Cruizing Station but leave you at large to search for yourself where the greatest chance of success presents. Your Prizes you will send into such safe Ports as they can reach in these United States, your Prisoners must also be sent in and we recommend them to kind treatment. Any useful intelligence that comes to your knowledge must be communicated to us whenever you have opportunity.

You are to preserve good order and discipline but use your People well. The Ship her Materials & Stores must be taken good care of, and every officer to answer for any embezzelments that happen in his department. You are to make Monthly returns of your Officers Men &c to the Navy Board. You are to be exceedingly attentive to the Cleanliness of your ship and preservation of the Peoples healths.—

You are to afford Assistance and protection to the American Commerce whenever in your power & on your return from this Cruize lay Coppies of your Journal & Log Book before the Navy Board and inform us of the wants of your Voyage.

We are Sir your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO WILLIAM WHIPPLE, JOHN LANGDON, AND  
JOHN PAUL JONES ]

Gentlemen

June 18th 1777

You will find herein Sundry Resolves of Congress passed the 14th instant the first relative to Captain John Roach<sup>1</sup> and you'll be pleased to furnish him with a Copy thereof that he may do what is incumbent on him to do — another Copy will be sent to the Eastern Navy Board.

The Second appoints John Paul Jones Esqr to Command the Ranger Ship of war— The Third empowers you Gentn. to appoint the Lieutenants and other Necessary Officers for this Ship and Colo. Whipple takes with him the Blank Commissions and Warrants which you are to fill up with the Names of those you appoint and make return thereof to the Navy Board Copy whereof be pleased to send us also. We must also recommend that you make enquiry at Boston and other places in your neighbourhood, if there are any Young Officers who have served with reputation in our Navy that deserve promotion and give such the preference in your appointments, as it will be a great encouragement to all our officers when they find this practice is adopted and their merits attended to. We hope for your united endeavours to get the Ranger and Raleigh to Sea soon as possible and with much regard subscribe ourselves

Gentlemen

Your most obedt servants

<sup>1</sup> Roach was a merchant captain who assisted Colonel Langdon in the construction of the Ranger.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ CIRCULAR LETTER TO CAPTAINS GRENNELL  
AND HODGE ]

June 26th 1777

Sir

As it is the opinion of the General officers directed by his Excellency General Washington to take the most effectual measures for Securing the command of the North River that the Continental Frigates will be of essential service in securing the Chain and obstructions in Said River; and as by your Letter of the 9th instant we find you entertain a similar sense. We now think proper to direct that you have the frigate under your Command put in as good a State of defence as can be admitted of, and follow such orders as may be given you by his Excellency the General, or the Commanding officer appointed to direct the operations in that quarter, using your best judgment in the execution of such orders as you may receive. We now send forward to the Council of Safety for the State of New York a sufficient number of Blank Commissions and Warrants for your officers, who are to be appointed temporary only until such time as their Characters and qualifications are sufficiently evinced and made known to us, therefore we wish you to join with the Council in having those Commissions filled up with the Names of Men of Merit whom you can recommend freely for a permanent establishment. We recommend your taking great care

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

of the frigate her Materials and Stores and keep us constantly advised of your proceedings. We are Sir  
Your hble servants

P: S: Congress have allowed Pursers for their Ships whose pay is — Dollrs per month, and we send you herewith a Pay List & the Rules & Regulations of the navy for your Government.

To Capt. Thos. Gren[n]ell  
Capt. John Hodge<sup>1</sup>

[ TO THE NEW YORK COUNCIL OF SAFETY ]

June 26th 1777

Gentlemen

We are informed by a Letter from the Captains of the Continental Frigates in Hudsons River that the General officers sent by His Excellency General Washington to veiw the fortifications and obstructions in Said River were of opinion that the frigates would be serviceable in defending and covering the same and we find by an extract from your Minutes enclosed that you were of the same opinion.

In consequence whereof we have now given orders to the said Captains to have the frigates put in as good a state of defence as can be admitted, and to follow and obey such orders as they may receive from General

<sup>1</sup> Captains in the Continental Navy from the State of New York, commanding, respectively, the Congress and Montgomery.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Washington or the Commanding officer who may direct the operations in that quarter. We must beg your assistance in getting the ships fitted, and we now take the liberty to enclose a Sufficient number of blank Commissions & Warrants for the Lieutenants and other Officers who are to be appointed temporary until such time as we are sufficiently informed that they are well qualified for the Stations in which they may be put, therefore you will please to fill the Commissions with this proviso. & we have required the Captains to join in your researches for men of good Character whom you can freely recommend for a permanent establishment in our Navy. We must further beg leave to trouble you to send us a List of their Names, Stations, & qualifications & have the honor to be Gentlemen

Your hble servants

[ TO JAMES WARREN, WILLIAM VERNON, AND  
JOHN DESHON<sup>1</sup> ]

June 26th 1777

Gentlemen

We have the pleasure to transmit you herein a Resolution of Congress appointing you a Navy Board in the Eastern Department to conduct and manage the busi-

<sup>1</sup> Warren was from Plymouth, Massachusetts; Vernon, from Providence, Rhode Island; and Deshon from New London, Connecticut. A Navy Board for the Middle Department was established in November, 1776, with headquarters at Philadelphia. The headquarters of the Eastern Board were at Boston.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

ness of such part of the Continental Navy as may be Built, bought, or fitted from Time to Time in the four New England States. You are considered by this appointment as a board of Assistants to the Marine Committee and subject to their orders and directions in all such things as are not particularly provided for by orders or Resolutions of Congress, and we have now under our Consideration a Set of Instructions adapted to the nature of your business and the extent of the powers you are to be invested with. In the mean time we desire you will meet together soon as possible fix on the most convenient place for opening your office which we suppose will be at Boston, appoint your Clerk and get all things so arranged as that you may be ready to enter on the execution of your duty without delay & should any business occur to you as absolutely necessary to be done previous to the receipt of the intended instructions, we hereby authorize you to do All such things in the Naval Department as in your opinion will promote the service and conduce to the true Interest of the United States of America taking care however that you do nothing that is contrary to or inconsistant with the Rules, Regulations, Orders or Resolves of Congress, which you are in all instances and on All occasions invariably to pursue & obey.

We are Gentlemen

Your obedt. servants.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG ]

July 5th. 1777

Sir

It is expected that the Continental Sloop Independence under your command is now ready to proceed to France agreeable to the directions sent you a few days since. You will receive herewith sundry dispatches from the Committee of Foreign Affairs and Secret Committee respecting which you will obey such orders as they may give. You are to proceed in said Sloop from Senepuxent for the Port of Nantes in France where you must apply to William Lee and Thomas Morris Esquires Commercial Agents of the United States and they will supply you with money to defray the expences of your Journey from thence to Paris and back. Whilst you are on that journey your Lieutenant must employ the Crew in heaving down, Cleaning and refitting the Sloop, and in getting all such things done to her as may be necessary. The Agents will supply the Money and other articles proper on this Occasion for amount whereof you must grant them receipts, You must give directions also to your Lieutenant and other officers to engage as many seamen as possible that you may return full manned—the more the better only taking care to lay in a Stock of Provisions proportioned to the number of men you get. You are to receive from the Honorable Docter Franklin and the other Commissioners at Paris all Letters and dispatches they have to send, and to wait any time they may think proper to detain you.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

You are to receive from the Commercial Agents any goods they have to send out by the Sloop and bring from [them] also all Letters and Packets they have to send. Should the Honorable Commissioners think it necessary to detain you any time for their dispatches, it may probably be an eligible plan for you to make a Cruize on our enemies Trade from which you may return at an appointed Time for their dispatches & then also take in such goods as may be ready— This you may propose to the Commissioners and to the Agents.

If you are fortunate enough to take any Prizes you will send them to Address of said Agents, who will receive the Continental share and divide the other as it ought.

When you are dispatched from France you must make the best of your way for this Coast and get into the first safe port you can, immediately bringing to us all the dispatches and Letters, which both going & Coming have always ready Slung to a weight sufficient to Sink them, and if you perceive an inevitable misfortune put them into the Sea for they must not on any Account fall into the enemies hands.

You must duely observe the Instructions of the Navy Board, preserve strict discipline but use your officers & men well that they may be fond of the service—treat Prisoners with humanity and in All things act the part becoming an active good officer which will recommend you to

Sir

Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

July 11th 1777

Gentlemen

As there are now lying within your Department several Continental Vessels of war which if at Sea might do essential service to the States and much injury to our enemies We are exceedingly anxious to have them out for these desirable purposes; and have strong hopes from your exertions that they will not remain long inactive. We know of no better way they can be employed than in Cruizing; and now direct and authorize you to send them out as fast as they can be got ready, directing the Commanders to such Latitudes as you shall think there will be the greatest chance of success in intercepting the enemies Transport and Merchant Ships, and they are to take, burn, sink or destroy as many of their Vessels of every kind as may be in their power. The Prizes they may take are to be sent into the most convenient and safe Ports in these States addressed to the Continental Agents. We shall leave you to judge of the time for which each Vessel is to cruize, and when they return into Port you must again dispatch them with all possible expedition on fresh Cruizes always advising us of their arrival, and the time you think they will be ready for sea, but they are not to be detained for any further orders from us. You are to instruct the com-

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

manders that they are to be careful of the Ships their Stores and Materials, that they Support strict discipline on board their Vessels but treat their people well, Prisoners are to be treated with humanity; and that they are to be accountable to you for the expenditure of every thing on board their Ships, recommending to them a strict observance of frugality and Œconomy.

We remain Gentlemen

Your obedt servants.—

[ TO LIEUTENANT JOHN STEVENS<sup>1</sup> ]

August 25th 1777

Sir

Your Letter of the 18th. June advising your arrival at Charles Town with 500 Stand of Arms has come to hand, and we are pleased with your success. The Commercial Committee has now given Orders to the Agents to load your Vessel with a convenient Cargo which you must receive and proceed therewith to the Island of Martinico where you are to deliver the same as the said Agents shall direct.

When this is done you must again return to Charles Town where the Agents will employ your Schooner agreeable to orders now given them, therefore you must follow such directions as they give you in future ad-

<sup>1</sup> Commander of the schooner Lewis.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

vising us when you arrive. We doubt not you will be extremely cautious to prevent your Vessel from falling into the hands of the enemy and that you will be diligent for dispatch in Port and at Sea. Wishing you success

We are Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO MAXWELL AND LOYALL<sup>1</sup> ]

August 27th. 1777

Gentlemen

The Honorable the Marine Committee has ordered me to communicate their apprehensions for the safety of the Frigates now building by you for the Continental service, should the enemy attempt to destroy them on their return or during their continuance in Chesapeake Bay. They request that you will give your opinion on this head, and should you think it necessary to form any plan for the preservation of those Vessels wherein their interposition or assistance will be required please to inform them thereof.

I am Gentlemen

Your obedient Servant

By order of the Committee

JOHN BROWN Secy

<sup>1</sup> Commissioners in charge of the construction of two frigates at the Gosport Navy-yard, Virginia. "Loyall" is also spelled "Loyal." Admiral Farragut married into a Norfolk family of this name.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON ]

September 6th 1777

Sir

As soon as these Instructions get to hand you are to make immediate application to the proper persons to get your Vessel victualled and fitted for the Sea with all expedition. When this is done you are to proceed on a Voyage to some convenient port in France, and on your arrival there apply to the Agent, if any, in or near said port for such supplies as you may stand in need of. You are at the same Time to give immediate notice by Letter to the Honorable Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, & Arthur Lee Esqrs. or any of them at Paris, of your arrival, requesting their Instructions as to your future destination; which Instructions you are strictly to obey as far as it shall be in your power. If however in the course of your voyage a favourable opportunity should offer of doing Service to the States by taking or destroying any of the enemys Ships, you are not [to] omit taking advantage of it, but may go out of your course to effect so good a purpose, in this we trust to your Zeal and discretion—you are to take particular notice that whilst on the Coast of France or in a french Port, you are as much as you conveniently can to keep your Guns covered and concealed and to make as little warlike appearance as possible. On your arrival in France send one of

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

your officers with the Letter you are to write to the Commissioners at Paris to prevent its falling into improper hands. We wish you a successful and happy voyage & are

Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO COMMODORE STEPHEN HOPKINS ]

September 10th 1777

Sir

This Committee have examined the accounts of the Gentlemen you employed to build the Continental Frigates at Providence and have no objection thereto save the charge of an Anchor which Mr. Olney agreed to take out of the Account, and also a charge of Interest which never has been and cannot be allowed, the balance therefore being £1506,18,8 $\frac{1}{4}$  Lawful Money it is expected you immediately discharge out of the sum of 20,950 dollars which it appears by the Treasury Books you have drawn for the Purpose of building these Frigates over and above the sums you have advanced, and that the remainder of the Money which you will still be accountable for being 15926 $\frac{8}{100}$ ths Dollars you pay to Mr. Tillinghast as Continental Agent for the State of Rhode Island in whose favour we have drawn an order therefor. The particular Account of the Monies you have from Time to Time drawn is now enclosed. We are Sir

Yr hble servants

[ 156 ]

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO DANIEL TILLINGHAST ]

September 10. 1777

Sir

We enclose you herein a draft on Stephen Hopkins Esquire for 15,926<sup>8</sup>/<sub>100</sub> Dollars in your favour which you will find by the enclosed Copy we wrote him this date is the balance of Moneys which he drew for the use of the two frigates building at Providence more than was expended in building those Frigates. We expect this draft will be immediately paid and you will place the same to the Credit of this Committee.—

We are Sir yr. hble servants

[ TO COMMODORE JOHN HAZELWOOD<sup>1</sup> ]

Lancaster [Pa.] 26th September 1777

Sir

It being of great importance to the future safety of Philadelphia, and to the Public good that the defences on the River Delaware should not fall into the enemies hands, or their fleet be suffered to get up to the City,

<sup>1</sup> Hazelwood was an officer of the Pennsylvania Navy, and was at this time in command of the vessels of that State on the Delaware River. Howe's army, on its march to Philadelphia, encamped at Germantown on September 25.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

orders are this day sent to the Commander of the Continental armed Vessels to be subordinate to your Command in defending the River.

We have no doubt but that your joint and vigorous efforts will be employed to defend the passage of the River to the last extremity and if at last it must be given up, it is expected that you will assist in removing the Troops from Fort Mifflin to a place of safety. Your knowledge of the River will best enable you to determine where it may be necessary to sink vessels or other obstructions in Order to supply the vacancies between the Cheveaux de frize already sunk, and to prevent the enemy from bringing many Vessels to bear against the Fort. Such Vessels as are necessary for the above purpose you are hereby authorized to take and supply.

We wish you success and are Sir

Your humble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN CHARLES ALEXANDER<sup>1</sup> ]

Lancaster Septemr. 26th 1777

Sir

As the future safety of Philadelphia and the public good so greatly depend upon preventing the enemies Fleet from getting up to Town and succoring the Army,

<sup>1</sup> This letter was addressed to Alexander, "or the officer commanding the Continental vessels on the Delaware." As commander of the frigate Delaware, Alexander was the ranking Continental officer on the Delaware River.



## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

you are desired to co-operate in the most full and freindly manner with the Other Land and Sea forces both of the Continental and the State of Pennsylvania in effecting this valuable purpose. It is expected that you exert every art that valour, vigilance and address can suggest to you, as well as to prevent the enemy from Philadelphia possessing themselves of the Fort, as to keep the British Fleet from getting up. If there should be a probability of either provisions or ammunition failing you, let timely care be taken to get supplied from General Washington who with his Army will be in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia above the City. If the Fort and the passage of the River is bravely and properly defended, the possession of Philada will probably turn out to be the ruin of the British Army.—

Your established reputation for valour makes it unnecessary to say that brave minds should never despair, and that every thing is to be hazarded where the public good require it. You and the brave American forces with you, will therefore keep the defences on the River Delaware to the last extremity. But, if every resource of valour and skill should fail you, and it becomes absolutely impossible to hold out any longer, you are then to push with the Continental Vessels as far as they can swim up the River, and having defended them there as long as possible, they must all be destroyed rather than suffer them to fall into the enemies hands. If it should be found that Fort Mifflin must be given up, you are then to use your utmost endeavours to bring off the garrison and convoy the Troops to a place of safety. Congress has already determined that in defending the Delaware the Continental Marine officers shall be un-

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

der command of the Commodore of this State, and you are accordingly to observe and pay due regard to that Resolve.

Wishing you the most honourable success

We are Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON ]

York<sup>1</sup> [Pa.] October 23d. 1777

Sir

As we understand that the Frigate Virginia under your command is nearly ready for Sea and a prospect of your being able to get out, We desire you may proceed down the Bay of Chesapeake soon as you can with propriety taking under your care and convoy the Continental Merchant Ships that may be ready and such private Ships as apply for that purpose, all which you are to see safe out to sea if possible, when you get out you are to proceed on the voyage directed by the Commercial Committee, and on your return to any part of this Continent give us notice thereof. Should you be fortunate in taking any prizes suitable for Sale in the West Indies carry them with you giving notice thereof to Mr. Stephen Ceronio or in his absence to Monsr. Carrabasse who will readily obtain permission to make sale of them, but it will be most agreeable to have prizes with Cargoes suitable for this Continent sent into some

<sup>1</sup> See page xxiv.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

of our own Ports addressed to the Agents where they arrive. You are to inform us from time to time of your proceedings. We expect great care will be taken of the ship her Stores and Materials and that you will be as frugal in expences, and expeditious in getting out of Port as possible. Knowing you to be of a humane Temper we need not urge the propriety of treating prisoners with all the kindness your and their situation will admit of. As the Commercial Committee mean to order goods back by the Virginia you are to receive the same on board, and should the Coast of Hispaniola be infested by any Cruizers that you can manage, it would be a good business to go after and seize them whilst the goods are getting ready. We are Sir

Your very hble servants

P: S: On your arrival at Hispaniola wait on the Governor Count D Argent and express to him the high sense Congress have of his favourable attention to the Interests of the United States of America in his former Government and that you were desired to beg a continuance of the same friendly disposition for the time to come.

[ TO CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE ]

Sir York Town October 24th 1777

As quickly after you receive this as your Ship can be provided for the Voyage, you are to proceed to france, and when there you are to be directed as to your future Cruize, and the disposal of your Prizes, by the Commis-

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

sioners of the United States at Paris. For this purpose you are immediately on your arrival to send a trusty officer to acquaint the Commissioners of your arrival, and to receive their directions. Until you receive their answer it is left to your discretion and the intelligence you may collect of the enemies Cruizers, whether to remain at your Port of arrival, or make a short Cruize, and repair for the reception of their answer to any other port; taking care to inform the Commissioners of your determination on this point.

Whatever supplies of any kind you may want for the Ship in France you will apply for, either to the Commercial Agent in France or any correspondent of the Commercial Committee at the Port where you may be, or to the Commissioners at Paris.

We would have you make as little shew as possible of being a Ship of Force, when you arrive, and during your stay in any Port of France; and let your stay in Port be as short as possible. It is not necessary to direct a person of your discretion to be very cautious of communicating to any person, either in America or in France, what is your destination or what your orders. If the Agents of the Commercial Committee of Congress should direct you to take on board Merchandize for France you are to follow such directions concerning this, and the delivery of the goods as you may receive from that Committee.

We desire you will correspond with this Committee by every suitable opportunity. Wishing you health & success

We are Sir  
Yr Friends & hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

York October 26th 1777

Gentlemen

Your several letters of the 3d & 9th of September and of October 11th have come to hand, but the removal of Congress & the necessary attendance to other very important matters has hitherto prevented an attention to them. You are doubtless to have a general superintendance over the Agents for building the Continental Ships, as well as to furnish them with such articles as you shall judge Necessary, but as they were constituted Agents before your appointment, they are to continue their more immediate attention to that business. We enclose you a resolution of Congress empowering any two of your Board to act in the absence of the third; but it is the expectation that this will happen as seldom as possible. Enclosed you also have two Warrants One upon the Loan Office of Massachusetts Bay for 50,000 Dollars, and the other for the like sum upon the Loan office of Rhode Island. You are sensible of the great call for money from every quarter. The drafts upon these Loan offices have lately been large as well as upon every other.

Should there not be money sufficient for the immediate payment of the whole of these sums, yet we apprehend the whole will not immediately be wanted, and

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

you'll draw only as you want, that other drafts may stand an equal chance, where the monies are as much or more wanted—doubtless you'll be able to satisfy some demands with the loan office Certificates which these Warrants will enable you to procure, and which we recommend always to be attended to when it can be done. We also inclose you a resolution of Congress making an additional allowance to your Clerk and giving you power to appoint another if absolutely necessary— The Navy Board however in this Department has but one. You will have inclosed a List of the several Ships names and their Commander and we have directed the Navy Board of this Department now sitting at Bordentown to send you a number of the printed resolutions of Congress. The getting the ships out of Providence River and the Ship Trumbull out of Connecticut River is a matter of great importance, and what Congress has much at heart; the procuring this with the hazard that may attend it, may be left to your prudence and the good conduct of their Commanders. We are sorry to find that a disaffection subsists between Captain McNeill and his Officers & Seamen. This Ship must be got to sea at all events. Captain McNeill writes us that he expects to be able to man her notwithstanding the obstructions and difficulties he meets with. But if you find he is unable to do this, you must appoint some other Commander to the Ship at least for the present cruize in whom you can confide, and Captain McNeill must be otherwise provided for, more especially as an enquiry must be had (if not a Court Martial) upon the Conduct of the late Cruize, with Captain Manly, but which its apprehended cannot be fairly done till cap-

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

tain Manly is exchanged.<sup>1</sup> Captain McNeill seems to think such a measure necessary. We think in justice to his Character, as well as to the public good, it is so. You have inclosed a Resolution empowering you to suspend any officer till the pleasure of Congress shall be known. This power we doubt not will be exercised with proper prudence. By the words commander in Chief must since the suspension of Commodore Hopkins necessarily mean and intend the oldest Commander in Rank of the Continental Ships or Vessels of war in any One Port or Harbor. Or when Court Martials are necessary, the oldest Commander within your district that can be applied to. The procuring Iron & Flour we must leave to be done when absolutely necessary, by such means as [you] would think prudent and proper under a like necessity acting for yourselves. Lead is not to be obtained here, but orders are sending to the Eastward for that article for the Army. We hear a very considerable quantity has lately arrived there, we think at Bedford, perhaps the whole may not be taken up. We have no immediate employ for Captain Tucker, but shall attend to the appointment of Commanders for the Ships building at Sal[i]sbury and Norwich— In the mean time you'll please to transmit us the names of such persons within your district as you can recommend for Captains and officers of them, paying attention to such as are at present in Commission but out of actual service, informing us at the same time of their particular Merits and pre-

<sup>1</sup> While cruising in company with Manley, McNeill failed to come to Manley's aid when the latter was attacked by the British, and was tried by a court-martial and suspended.—Allen, *A Naval History of the Revolution*, I, 216.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

tentions. Captain McNeill has already Instructions where his Ship is to proceed viz to france— A form of like Instructions is herewith enclosed, to be by you given to each of the Commanders of the Ships at Providence. We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants

P: S: the Warrants for the Money are not enclosed. but will be forwarded by the President of Congress.

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
MIDDLE DEPARTMENT ]

November 5th 1777

Gentlemen

Your letter of the 27th ultimo to Mr. Morris having been laid before Congress, you will find enclosed herein a Copy of their Resolves in consequence thereof, and we have only to add that you are to be governed by such Orders and Instructions as you may receive from his Excellency General Washington to whom a Copy of the said Resolves are also sent forward. We have the preservation of the Shipping up the Delaware much at Heart, particularly the Frigates, and should they be sunk we see but little probability of their being got up again before the Winter sets in.—

We are sorry that you have been so distress'd for want of money, the Committee imagined that your former application had been attended to, but by some on ac-



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

countable neglect find it is otherways—we now inclose you herein, an Order on the Loan Officer of the State of New Jersey for 40.000 Dollars of which you will make due note; and depending on your care and attention to all things that will be for the benefit of the Public, we remain

Gentlemen

Your very hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON ]

November 6th 1777

Sir

This Committee being wearied with the long delay of the Frigate Virginia under your Command in port, and with the great expence Accruing on that Account, have determined that you shall proceed to sea by the first favourable opportunity and depend much on your experience and prudent management to have this desirable business speedily accomplished. You have inclosed your Instructions for the Voyage.—

You will inform Captain Parker<sup>1</sup> of the Phoenix that it has been the constant practice throughout the United States to suffer British seamen taken in the merchant service to depart at their pleasure, and consequently there can no just demand be made on us from the British Navy for a return of such persons in lieu of what they have heretofore discharged, because if that

<sup>1</sup> Hyde Parker, captain of H. B. M. S. Phoenix.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Account was to be fairly settled and a List made out of what we and what they have discharged without Account the Ballance would be very considerably in our favour, and still much greater were we to include the vast number of Passengers and other British subjects not seamen heretofore discharged without account; but the practice of exchanging Officer for officer of equal Rank, and Sailor for Sailor of those taken in Ship of war will be continued. Mr. Barney<sup>1</sup> the Bearer informs us you want a Lieutenant, he will rank on board the Virginia as second Lieutenant should he be agreeable to you in that station we have directed him to obey your Orders. Wishing you success we remain Sir  
Your hble servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

November 12th 1777

Gentlemen

We have received Mr. Warrens favour of the 4th & 7th ultimo informing us of the loss of the Brigantine Hampden, and we have no doubt but care has been taken to save as much of that Vessels materials as possible, should you think what has been saved of those materials worthy of another Hull we would have you purchase One, provided it can be done on reasonable

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant Joshua Barney.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Terms, and that you get one every way well calculated for a Cruizer, particularly in point of sailing as that is a most material object with us. Mr. Bradford the agent at Boston hath lately advised us of the arrival of a Prize Brigantine called the Industrious Bee which he thinks would be suitable for a Cruizer. You will please to order a Court of enquiry on Captain Burroughs and his Pilot and if the Captain is acquitted and you purchase the Hull as above advised we would have the command given to him and when ready for Sea you will despatch him on a Cruize the most likely for success. Enclosed are some Resolves of Congress which you will please to have published in all the Eastern Papers. Mr. Cushing<sup>1</sup> informs [us] the 36 Gun Ship will soon be launched, but that he knows of no provision of Guns for her. That matter is under your direction and you will use every possible means to obtain them, and inform us as soon as may be what probability you have of succeeding therein and upon what terms; and you will see that all materials are provided for intire equipment for Sea and that all possible dispatch be given. The Expencc of the Navy is very great, but every delay adds to the charge and deprives the States of that advantage over our enemies, and of those supplies which are the great ends of their destination. We sent you by Docter Lynn warrants upon the Loan Offices of Massachusetts and Rhode Island to the amount of 100,000 Dollars which we hope considering the present applications for monies from every quarter will for a time answer the demands

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Cushing, member of the Continental Congress, 1774-1775, from Massachusetts, and superintendent, 1777, in charge of the construction of a frigate and a 74-gun ship in Massachusetts.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

on your Department. We are extremely sorry to find such heavy complaints against Captain McNeill and we hope that Gentleman will be able to justify his conduct but as a Court Martial must be hereafter appointed for that purpose as well as for doing justice to the publick, we cannot consent in the mean time that the public Service should suffer, in addition therefore to what we have already in our former Letter said to you on that subject we must add, that if you apprehend the service will be injured by Captain McNeills remaining in the command of the Boston, you will suspend him till his conduct respecting his last Cruize is properly enquired into— Should this be done, you will put a person in command of her, the best qualified and most deserving you can procure being already in Commission perhaps you'll find none more diserving than Captain Olney<sup>1</sup>; and you will also establish all such Officers in her, as have been in her the last Cruize who from proper inquiry you shall judge adequate to their stations, notwithstanding any suspensions or arrests of Capt. McNeill. We have sent by Captain Palmes warrants in favour of Mr. Daniel Tillinghast Continental Agent at Providence for 44,000 Dollars and an order in his favour on the Honble Stephen Hopkins Esq for 15.926 Dollars &  $\frac{8}{100}$ ths which we hope will answer the sums he has hitherto advanced. We shall direct him to exhibit his Account to you till the first of November from the time of his last Accounts exhibited to us— you will examine his vouchers and then transmit his account to us with such observations thereon as may occur

<sup>1</sup> Captain Joseph Olney.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

to you, in order that we may settle the same to that time, after which he will from time to time settle his Accounts with, and make all applications for direction &c to you.

As you have authority so we approve of the Exchange of any officers from one Ship to another as the service may require, and we doubt not you had sufficient reasons for the Exchange of Captain Grannis<sup>1</sup> for Captain Palmes.<sup>2</sup>—

We are sorry to hear the expedition against Rhode Island was likely to prove unsuccessful, but we hope the getting the Frigates out of Providence River will not depend upon that circumstance. Fully relying on your utmost exertions in that object as well as in every other in your department

We remain Gentlemen

Your hble servants

P: S: Captain Palmes having lost his Horse in the Road, and being obliged to purchase another as he informs us, and not being in Cash to defrey his Expences on his return— On his application we have advanced him 200 Dollars and taken his receipt therefor duplicate whereof signed by him we inclose you in Order that you properly settle with him, referring to you how far he ought to be considered as to his loss, & Charges.

<sup>1</sup> Captain John Grannis of the Marine Corps.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Richard Palmes of the Marine Corps.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THOMAS CUSHING ]

November 13th 1777

Sir

You will on all occasions apply to the Navy Board of the Eastern Department for advice, Instructions and necessary Moneys for completing your Agency— We are glad to hear the 36 Gun Ship is so far advanced, we shall give Instructions to the Navy Board for providing her Guns and every other necessary for her equipment.

We are Sir

Your very hble servants

[ TO JOHN DESHON<sup>1</sup> ]

November 13th. 1777

Sir

We have received yours of the 26th of October and altho we have very unfavourable Accounts of the expedition upon Rhode Island yet we are glad to find the Continental Ships in Providence River are so nearly fit for Sea and hope their getting out will not depend on the Success of that expedition. The getting those Ships out is an object of very great importance and we learn there were but two Ships in the Bays when Captain Palmes left Providence we are in hopes that one of the

<sup>1</sup> This letter was addressed "John Deshon Esqr at Providence."

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Ships at least has already sailed we had sent forward before Captain Palmes Arrived Loan Office Certificates for 100.000 dollars by Docter Lynn which we hope will answer for the present necessitys. The calls for Money are pressing on every side. However we shall endeavour as much as possible to support the important department entrusted to the direction of the Navy Board. We shall write more at large to the Navy Board and in the mean time remain

Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO DANIEL TILLINGHAST ]

November 13th 1777

Sir

Yours of the 27th of October inclosing a Copy of your Letter of the 13th we have received. Some particular circumstances together with the removal of Congress prevented the signing and forwarding the Letter now enclosed of the 10th of September and the order of that date on the Honble Stephen Hopkins Esqr. for 15,926<sup>8</sup>/<sub>10</sub>ths Dollars also the obtaining any further Moneys for you. With that order we now inclose you a warrant on the Loan office for the State of Rhode Island for 44,000 Dollars for which you are to be accountable and which we hope will answer present emmergencies.

You will present your accounts and vouchers from

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

the last charge of your accounts heretofore exhibited to us to the 1st of November to the Navy Board of the Eastern Department who we have directed to examine the same and thereupon to transmit the account to us in order that the same may be settled after which you will be pleased from time to time to apply to that Board for settlements and for any directions necessary for your conduct when you shall not have received particular directions from the Marine Committee.—

We enclose you the Order of the Court of Appeals reversing the judgment in the case of Hopkins against Darby upon the Brigantine Kingston Packet. We are glad to hear the Frigates are in such readiness for putting to sea. This is an object of great importance and we hope the attainment of it will not depend upon the intended attempt upon Rhode Island as we hear that Expedition in all probability has turned out unsuccessful but from what causes we are yet ignorant.

We are Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO STEPHEN HOPKINS ]

November 17th 1777

Sir

Since our last to you Mr. Ellery<sup>1</sup> handed to us a Memorandum from which we have directed such an

<sup>1</sup> William Ellery, delegate to the Continental Congress from Rhode Island.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

examination into the various charges made in the Treasury office, and the order drawn in your favour upon which the charges were made against you as has entirely convinced us, that the late State[ment] transmitted to you was as to the 20,000 dollars charged to you the 10th of Feby 1776 as being received towards the building of the Frigates entirely erroneous. This error arose from the short manner in which the charges are made in the Treasury and not reciting the purport of the Orders. By inspecting that Order it appears to have been drawn on the Continental Treasurer and by you received for the use of the Naval Committee who fitted out the Ships of war at Philadelphia. The inclosed Copy of the order of this Committee which is entered upon our Journals will shew you how the mistake is rectified—we are very sorry such a mistake was made, we shall immediately give notice thereof to Mr. Tillinghast and at the same time supply him with a Warrant upon the loan office of the State of Rhode Island to enable him to discharge the balance due the Gentlemen you employed to build the Frigates at Providence—and to supply him with as large a Sum as we drew upon you for in his favour. There still appears a balance of nine hundred and fifty Dollars in your hands—your memorandum shewn to us by Mr. Ellery suggests that also is a Mistake but we cannot discover it— If you can clearly point it out we shall be ready to make the allowance, otherwise we would desire you to pay it into the hands of Mr. Tillinghast as Continental Agent for the State of Rhode Island he to be Accountable and his receipt shall be sufficient as also for the further sum of 119<sup>36</sup>/<sub>100</sub> Dollars due from you to the Naval Committee

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

as appears by their accounts rendered to Congress by Mr. Hewes<sup>1</sup> and referred to this Committee.

We are Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO DANIEL TILLINGHAST ]

November 17th 1777

Sir

Since our last inclosing an Order in your favour on the Honble Stephen Hopkins Esqr. we have discovered that the charge of 20.000 dollars against that Gentleman as moneys received by him the 10th of feby. 1776 as being received towards the building the Frigates at Providence is a mistake, of which we have particularly advised Mr. Hopkins— That order drawn on him in your favour you will return to us to be destroyed. We have now enclosed you a Warrant upon the Loan office of Rhode Island for 20,950 Dollars to enable you to discharge the Balance of 5023 $\frac{1}{2}$  Dollars due to the Gentlemen employed by Mr. Hopkins to build the Continental Frigates at Providence (their Commissions &c hereafter to be considered) and to supply you the sum for which our Order in your favour on Mr. Hopkins was drawn being 15.926 $\frac{8}{10}$ ths Dollars and for which you are to be accountable. You will please to take Duplicate receipts of those Gentlemen to whom you pay the above mentioned balance of 5023 $\frac{1}{2}$  Dollars and transmit one

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Hewes, a member of the Naval Committee.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

of them to us. How the above mistake arose you will see by our Letter to Mr. Hopkins— We are sorry it should lead us to trouble him and to delay you and the Gentlemen employed in building said Frigates. We have endeavoured to rectify it as soon as possible— There still however appears to be a balance in Mr. Hopkins hands on Account of those Ships of 950 Dollars which he also suggests is a mistake. If he should not be able to point it out to us we have desired him to pay that sum to you, we desire you to receive it to be accountable therefor— We have not lessened the Warrant on the Loan office on that Account. A further sum of 119<sup>36</sup>/<sub>100</sub>ths Dollars appears also to be due from Mr. Hopkins to the Naval Committee of which he was Chairman and which sum we have also requested him to pay you, and we desire you to receive it and place it to our Account.

We are Sir  
Your most hble servants

[ TO JONATHAN HUDSON<sup>1</sup> ]

November 22d. 1777

Sir

We have determined that the Continental Brigantine built under your direction and now called the Baltimore shall be fitted and prepared for the Sea imme-

<sup>1</sup> Of Baltimore, superintending the construction of the Continental brigantine Baltimore.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

diately, and depend upon you to have this business done with as much dispatch as in your power we have directed Messrs. Samuel & Robert Purviance to deliver to you any Rigging Sail Cloth or materials which they may have in their possession belonging to the Public that shall be wanted and may be suitable for fitting this Brigantine, therefore you will apply to those Gentlemen Accordingly and what they cannot furnish you must provide yourself on as moderate terms as possible.

You will advise us of your proceedings and we are  
Sir  
Your hble servants

[ TO SAMUEL AND ROBERT PURVIANCE<sup>1</sup> ]

November 22d. 1777

Gentlemen

As we have given directions to Mr. Jonathan Hudson of your place to have the Continental Brigantine built under his direction and now called the Baltimore fitted & prepared for Sea as soon as possible, we must request you will deliver to him any Rigging Sail Cloth or Materials in your possession belonging to the public which will be suitable and may be wanted in fitting out this Vessel taking his receipts for the same.

We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Of Baltimore, agents of the Continental Congress.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

November 22d. 1777

Gentlemen

We have received a Letter from John Bradford Esqr. the Agent for Prizes at Boston dated the 30th of October last informing us that the Schooner Lee Captain Skimmer<sup>1</sup> was then out on a Cruize, and wanted to know our determination whether this vessel should be continued in the pay of the public after her return into port.

As we do not think proper that the States should hire armed vessels as cruizers we now direct that this Schooner be discharged on her return, and that you settle with the Owners and pay them the balance which may be justly due to them.

As Mr. Bradford recommends Captain Skimmer in very warm terms as a Gentleman every way well qualified for a command in our navy, you will please to enquire particularly into his merits and if you think him deserving we would have you give him the first suitable Vessel which may be in your power.—

We are Gentlemen

Your very hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Captain John Skimmer.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
MIDDLE DEPARTMENT ]

November 27th 1777

Gentlemen

This moment we have received yours of the 24th instant informing us of the destruction of our small fleet<sup>1</sup> down the Delaware. As we cannot immediately determine what directions to give you respecting the seamen belonging to the Vessels we think they may be employed for some time on board the Galleys until some other way can be pointed out. We would have you by all means keep them together in good humour and in Action until you hear further from us on this subject.

We are Gentlemen

Your very hble servants

[ TO MAXWELL AND LOYALL ]

November 29th 1777

Gentlemen

Your letter of the 6th of October having come to hand and we deeming it necessary to lay the same before Congress, you will find enclosed herein some Resolves

<sup>1</sup> Burned by the Americans to prevent its capture.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

that have been passed in consequence thereof. To those Resolves we refer you for your Government in what relates to the safety and preservation of the Continental Frigates you are building against any attempts the enemy may make to destroy them. We trust to you to have this business properly executed and have no doubt but the Governor & Council will readily comply with what is requested of them.—

We have agreed that you shall purchase and lay in a sufficient quantity of Provisions for the use of your yards & for that purpose and to enable you so to do, we now enclose you a draft of Congress on the Loan office of Virginia for Ten Thousand Dollars which pass to our Credit. We expect you will be able to procure further sums for your drafts upon us, and are

Gentlemen

Your very hble servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

Decemr. 2d 1777

Gentlemen

It is the earnest desire of this Committee that you press forward the two Frigates at Rhode Island and get them to Sea if possible with all dispatch when they are to proceed to France agreeable to our former direc-

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

tions. We are exceedingly anxious to have this business accomplished and hope for your utmost exertion therein being Gentlemen

Your very hble servants

P: S: Having been informed that the Syren frigate is cast a Shore on point Judith—that she is in our possession and that her Guns, Cables & Anchors, and some other parts of her Tackle and Apparel are like to be saved, we would have you purchase her Guns and Anchors and her Cables and all other Tackle and Apparel if you should think them fit for service, and remove them to some safe place in Massachusetts Bay to be applied to the use of the first frigate that may want them.

In order that you may not be in want of money to carry on the business of your Department we now enclose you two drafts on the Loan Offices of Massachusetts Bay and Rhode Island for fifty thousand Dollars which you will please to draw as you may want it—

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON ]

December 2d 1777

Sir

We find it necessary to give you the following Instructions which you will please to observe. We desire that you will proceed with the frigate Virginia down the bay as low as you can with prudence place said



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

frigate not to be exposed to superior attack from the enemy and there wait for a fresh northwest wind and other favourable circumstances to proceed to sea upon the Voyage directed by your Instructions of the 23d of October last. It is expected that you will provide a fast sailing Tender to precede the frigate and give you notice of the Situation of the enemy their Numbers and force thereby to enable you to act in such manner as will be most likely to effect the business of your voyage properly. We expect the speedy execution of those Orders and wishing you success remain Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO JONATHAN HUDSON ]

Decemr. 2d 1777.

Sir

Yours of the 22d. ultimo has come to hand and I am ordered by the Honble the Marine Committee to inform you that the Baltimore is to be fitted out as a merchantman. It is also their desire that should Captain Ward be such a character as you can freely recommend to be master of this Brigantine that you employ him for that purpose. You will please to write to the Committee on that subject and I am Sir

Your obedt. servant

JOHN BROWN Secy.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JOHN LANGDON ]

December 2d 1777

Sir

Your favour of the 3d. ultimo has come to hand and we are now to inform you that you are to apply to the Navy Board at Boston in every matter which relates to the public business under your care, the said Board being fully authorized and empowered to give directions and make the necessary advances of Money—therefore referring you to them we remain

Sir

Your obedt hble servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
MIDDLE DEPARTMENT ]

Decemr. 12th 1777

Gentlemen

Lieutenant Barney of the Frigate Virginia will hand you this—he came from Baltimore with a representation from Captain Nicholson that he was deficient in his Complement of men—we have therefore thought proper to despatch him down to your Board in order that you may procure for him 50 or 60 of the seamen belonging to the service now unemployed at Borden—

[ 184 ]

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

ton<sup>1</sup> which we request you will do. The Virginia is under sailing orders and waits for those men to proceed. As we are very anxious to get her to sea we hope you will give all possible dispatch to this business. There will be occasion for Two or three Waggons to carry down the baggage &c and perhaps you may think best to send provisions along. Those Waggons will be furnished by the Quarter Masters Deputy nearest to you and we will just suggest that the men can go from the head of Elk by Water—you will give Lieutenant Barney suitable instructions which he will obey.

There are now at Baltimore lying loaded with Tobacco on the public account a Ship and a Snow which the Commercial Committee intend sending to France, and would wish them to proceed down the Bay under Convoy of the Virginia. But as they are in want of Masters and Crews to navigate them (which it is impossible to procure where they are) we wish you to engage some proper persons for Masters and Mates and send down with Lieutenant Barney ten Seamen for each of the said Vessels. It is probable some of the Officers belonging to the Vessels that were destroyed will be willing to make this voyage. We shall write you again very soon and are

Gentn

Your hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Bordentown, N. J., to which place the Navy Board of the Middle Department retreated after the destruction of the American fleet in the Delaware.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON ]

December 19th 1777

Sir

It being suggested to this Committee that some Tobacco might be shipped on board the Virginia without much inconvenience we now direct that you receive from the Agent of the Commercial Committee as much of that article as you can carry so as not to incommode the sailing or fighting of your ship and that you follow the directions of the said Committee in the delivery of the said Tobacco.

We are Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON ]

December 20th 1777

Sir

Since writing the annexed Letter we have received advice that a large French Ship of 54 Guns laden with Clothing may be daily expected into Virginia. We think proper to communicate this intelligence to

[ 186 ]

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

you that should you see this Ship and fall in with her any where in the Bay or on the Coast, you will give the Captain of her full intelligence of the strength and situation of the enemies Ships of war in the Bay and advise him what measures are best to pursue. This we request you will do and that you will keep what we now write you a profound secret from all persons.—

We are Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY ]

December 20th. 1777

Sir

There has lately arrived in New Hampshire a french ship with a large quantity of Brass Cannon and Military Stores for the United States. The Gentleman who has the direction of the said Vessel has informed Congress that he expects a frigate of 54 Guns with a large Cargo of Cloth part of which is the property of a Company of Merchants in france and the other part we imagine is upon Continental Account, will arrive about this time in Virginia. As it is of great importance to America to encourage a Commerce of this Sort, and to prevent the said frigate from being taken by the British men of war. The Marine Committee have thought it adviseable to give your Excellency this information, referring to your Judgment the propriety of employing

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

one or more fast sailing boats the fidelity of whose hands you can best depend on, to keep a Look out in such manner as you may think best calculated to give the earliest intelligence to the French Frigate of the situation of the British Men of war. We have no doubt of your taking every precaution to prevent this matter from being made public and also of giving such directions as may answer the above design. We have the honor to be with great respect

Your Excellencys

Most obedt servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
MIDDLE DEPARTMENT ]

January 7th 1778

Gentlemen

Your Letter of the 26th ultimo has come to hand and shall be duely attended to. As the Eastern Navy Board are in great want of flour & Iron to carry on the public business within their district we request that you will immediately purchase on the best terms in your power 2,000 Barrels flour and 100 Tons Iron and have the same transported down to little Egg Harbour<sup>1</sup> and there stored to wait the arrival of some Vessels which the Navy Board at Boston will send round. The Masters

<sup>1</sup> On the coast of New Jersey.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

of said vessels will be directed to apply to you, and you will give Orders for the delivery of the same.

We shall expect an immediate answer from you relative to the above purchase and remain

Gentlemen

Your obedt servants

P: S: please to let us know if Vessels can be Chartered at Egg Harbor to carry the Flour & Iron to Boston.

[ TO WILLIAM SMITH<sup>1</sup> ]

January 10th 1778

Sir

Two thousand Barrels flour & 100 Tons Iron is wanted to send to the Eastward for the use of the Navy. As flour hath become scarce and dear in the Jerseys and all that can be got there will be wanted for the Army, it is doubtful whether we can insure that quantity to be delivered at Egg Harbour to be shipped on board Vessels to be sent from the Eastward, we desire your opinion whether that quantity cannot be procured on reasonable terms either in Maryland or Virginia contiguous to some secure port on the Eastern Shore where

<sup>1</sup> Delegate to the Continental Congress from Maryland, and agent of the Marine Committee at Baltimore.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

vessels can come to & return from without danger from the enemy if it can we desire your advice who to employ for that purpose and shall order vessels accordingly.

We are Sir

Yr. hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN THOMAS READ ]

January 13th 1778.

Sir

The present situation of the Frigate Washington<sup>1</sup> of which you are Commander rendering it very uncertain at what time she may be brought into service, and the desire you have to be active in the service of your Country having induced you to take the Command of the Continental Brig Baltimore we now direct that you repair immediately to Baltimore where the said Brig. lies and as we intend that she shall be fitted out as a packet and under your direction you will without loss of time proceed upon that business and we trust your good judgment will direct the most frugal & beneficial way of manning that vessel. We have wrote to Mr. Jonathan Hudson to assist you in the execution of this business, and as the Agents at Baltimore were formerly directed to supply him with any articles in their possession

<sup>1</sup> Laid up at Bordentown, N. J., owing to the control of the Delaware by the British.



## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

belonging to the public which might be suitable for fitting this Vessel, you will apply to him to know what has been done and what may be had from the Public Stores. We now authorize you to purchase any materials Canon or Stores which may be wanted for fitting this Vessel and to engage on the best terms in your power a proper complement of men for manning her, but we recommend to you to observe the greatest frugality in all cases. Mr. Hudson will assist you, and we would have you advise with him in every matter—he will pay off Accounts which may arise in the course of the business.

We would have you get your officers from those already engaged in the service but at this time unemployed. When the Brig is ready to take on board a Cargo you will advise the Commercial Committee who will order her a lading and direct your voyage which you are to obey. The Public dispatches which it is intended you shall carry will also be sent down in due Time, and before you sail you must furnish this Committee with a Compleat inventory of every thing on board your Vessel signed by yourself and officers together with a return of the men on board and the terms on which they are engaged. We are Sir

Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JONATHAN HUDSON ]

January 13th 1778

Sir

This will be delivered you by Thomas Read Esquire Commander of the Continental frigate Washington now laid up at Bordenton in the Delaware, who being anxious to be active in the service of his Country, we have appointed to the Command of the Brig Baltimore and have determined that she shall be fitted out under his direction. He now goes down to your place for that purpose, and we have directed him to apply to you for Assistance and advice in all cases which we hope you will readily give him. You will get from the Agents any public Stores, Cannon, or Materials in their possession which may be suitable for this Brig, and also concert with Captain Read the best and cheapest mode of procuring what is wanted. You will pay all accounts which may arise in the execution of this business, and have them certified by Captain Read where he contracts.

Messrs. Purviances have lately informed us that they had delivered you sail Canvas for the use of the Brigantine—you will please to enquire of them for the Cannon Muskets &c left in their care out of One of the Continental Vessels laden'd the last Spring at Baltimore which may now answer, and we hope you have made considerable progress in procuring the Cordage that will be wanted. We are sir

Your very hble servants

[ 192 ]

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

January 16th 1778

Gentlemen

We have before us your Letters of the 18th November and the 16th. and 19th. of December last. We should have sent an answer to the first before this Time, but have waited for the resolutions of Congress on the report of this Committee respecting the principal parts of that letter. We now inclose you the resolutions of Congress<sup>1</sup> on all the points about which you requested information, excepting that of Pay and Rations for officers not in actual service, which is postponed for further consideration.

When Congress shall have determined thereon we will transmit to you their Resolution. We inclose you likewise a Resolution of Congress of the 9th. of Decemr. and the opinion of the Marine Committee of the 25th of March from their Books which hath long since been transmitted to the Continental Agents; and also twelve blank Commissions and fifty Warrants. You will inquire for such Continental officers as are out of employ and commissionate them, and not others, unless such cannot be found.

A Bill drawn by the Honorable Thomas Cushing Esqr. superintendant of the building of the 74 Gun Ship and frigate in Massachuset Bay hath been pre-

<sup>1</sup> Many of the resolutions of Congress relating to naval affairs will be found in the Journals of the Continental Congress.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

sented to Congress and paid, and is charged by the Marine Committee to your Board for which he must be accountable to you the amount is 13359 Dollars you will please to inform him that applications for Money and any thing respecting these Ships ought regularly to be made to you. In answer to yours of the 16 December we observe what you have said respecting the equipment of a Number of Brigts to employ our officers not in actual service and to Cruize on the Trade of the enemy is a measure that cannot be gone into at this time. The Dispatch must pursue her intended Voyage— The necessity of fulfilling our Contracts requires it. A voyage is planned for the Mellish and we shall have employment for the Schooner and every other Vessel we can procure. We have wrote to the Navy Board in this District and to Maryland about the purchasing flour and Iron for the use of the Navy in your department and so soon as we shall have got things in a proper train shall give you notice of it.

We are at a loss to determine precisely what you mean by the distribution of Prize Money among supernumerary officers as to each Vessel a Certain Number of Officers is assigned among whom and the seamen the prizes are to be distributed, all above that number are useless and cannot be entitled to a share of Prizes otherwise than Privates.

We are sorry to find that you were under the necessity of augmenting the wages of the Carpenters in Connecticut. As Committees are met at New Haven to regulate the Prices of Provisions and other articles we hope you will be able soon to reduce the wages to sums proportionate to such regulations.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

In answer to your last of the 19th. of December—  
The account of the arrival of Captain Chews valuable prize gave us great pleasure, we hope the Boston will be soon at sea; and don't doubt but you will take proper Steps for the preservation of the Warren, Providence and Columbus. How any of the Continental Agents could have paid Commodore Hopkins the one twentieth part of all prizes taken before his suspension and since his arrival from the Bahamas we cannot conceive when the inclosed determination of the Marine Committee of the 25th of March was immediately transmitted to them for their Government.

As to a supply of Cash we presume before this Time you have received the Warrants granted the 3d of December for 100,000 Dollars which we think you could not have received when you wrote the 19th December.— We send you a Copy of the New Signals for the Navy of which you will order your Clerk to make out Copies and see that they are delivered to the Commanding officers of the Ships in your district as soon as may be.—

We are Gentlemen

Yr hble servants

[ TO SAMUEL AND ROBERT PURVIANCE ]

January 20th. 1778.

Gentlemen

We acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 10th instant and agreeable to your requisition we now inclose you herein a Warrant of Congress upon the

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Loan officer of your State for Ten thousand Dollars which you will apply to the Credit of this Committee. If the Office can't furnish you out the Cash, we wish you would, if you can negotiate them, take Loan office Certificates in Lieu thereof.

We rejoice to hear that Captain Nicholson is of[f] your hands and now require you to make up your Accounts with this Committee and transmit them as soon as possible.—

We are Gentlemen  
Your hble servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
MIDDLE DEPARTMENT<sup>1</sup> ]

January 22d. 1778

Gentlemen

As that part of the Continental Navy late in the Delaware are either lost or rendered useless, there appears no necessity of your continuing in Jersey we therefore request your removal to Baltimore giving us notice when you arrive.—

If you should think it necessary one of your Board may remain at Bordenton for a short time, the expediency of which you will be able to judge, and if necessary you'l agree among yourselves upon the person to

<sup>1</sup> The Navy Board of the Middle Department was at this time at Bordentown, New Jersey. It moved to Baltimore in April.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

remain. If Mr. Nixon should not be with you on receipt of this, you will be pleased to give him notice that the place of residence of the Navy Board is by our direction to be at Baltimore and that we expect his attendance.

We are Gent

Yr hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON ]

January 28th 1778

Sir

We have received your favour of the 23d instant and are sorry that your late effort to get to Sea had failed. The great service that might be done to the States by your Ship being out, has urged us to wish much for that event and altho you have been unsuccessful in your late attempt yet we would not have that prevent your making an other trial and as we are perfectly satisfied that your best endeavours has been used, we doubt not a continuance of them will be kept up until the business is happily accomplished.

We observe what you say respecting the term of entry of some of your Crew being expired. We would have you if possible engage them again allowing them the bounty.

The Navy Board at Bordenton in a Letter of the 13th instant writes that they had collected 19 or 20 Seamen belonging to the Navy and would send them forward to

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Baltimore as soon as a waggon could be had to take their baggage and Provisions— These men we expect are now nearly got down and you may order them on board your ship. This supply with such of your present Crew as you may reinlist will keep the Virginia well manned.

We authorize you to provide a small fast sailing Tender to preceede your ship down the Bay to give notice of the situation and motions of the enemies Vessels as we formerly directed & we trust you will embrace the first opportunity of pushing out confiding in your vigilance & good conduct we wish you success & are Sir

Yr hble Servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY ]

January 29th 1778.

Sir

We having agreed to employ the Pinnace and Barges belonging to the Frigates and the Barge taken up by Captain Josiah<sup>1</sup> in the River Delaware on a Cruize in said River under your command We hereby empower you to receive such war-like Stores, Provisions & other Stores from the Navy Board, and to employ such Continental Navy Officers not in actual service and to collect such a number of Men as you shall think necessary

<sup>1</sup> Captain James Josiah.



## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

for officering manning victualling and equipping said Boats. As you will have frequent occasion to land on each side of the Delaware during your Cruize you will take effectual care to restrain your officers & men from plundering, insulting or in any way treating ill the Inhabitants of the Country Humanity good Policy and your reputation demand that they should be treated with kindness—you may want supplies from them and their assistance in moving to a place of safety such effects as you may capture. You will therefore attend particularly to this Instruction. We have directed the Navy Board to furnish you with every thing necessary for equipping your little fleet and with money to procure supplies for your Crews as occasion may require. You will take account of all goods of every kind which you may Capture and prevent their being pilfered. As it will be necessary that you should take with you or appoint on shore some honest faithful persons who are well acquainted with the Country and will undertake to procure waggons for the speedy removal to a place of safety and take care of such goods as you may Capture—you will attend particularly to this necessary point and employ such persons. You will give immediate notice to General Washington of such stores as you may Capture which are necessary for the use of the Army. We would have you sink or otherwise destroy the Hulls of all such Vessels as you may take which cannot be removed to some place of safety. The Vessels wh. you take and preserve and the goods which you Capture must be libelled in the Court of Admiralty in the State into which they are carried—you will therefore employ some suitable Attorney to libell for the same.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

The Success of your Cruize depending upon your dispatch activity prudence and valour we hope you will exert the utmost of your abilities on this occasion. Write to us frequently and particularly of your proceedings. Wishing you success

We are sir

Yr hble servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
MIDDLE DEPARTMENT ]

January 29th. 1778

Gentlemen

We have directed Captain Barry to employ the Pinnace and Barges belonging to the Frigates and the Barge taken by Captain Josiah in annoying the enemies Vessels in their Passage up and down the Delaware and to employ such a number of Continental Navy officers now out of service, and collect such a number of men as he may think necessary to officer and man the Fleet of Boats under his command.

We desire that you would deliver to him such Warlike Provisions and other necessarys as he may think necessary for equiping and victualling the said Boats.

As it appears to us that in this way we may greatly annoy the enemy and collect considerable quantities of Provisions and other necessarys for the use of the Army and the Country, and as every thing depends upon dispatch we earnestly request that you will give him all the

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

assistance in your [power] in equipping and moving the Boats across the land and in every other thing that respects the execution of this business. As Captain Barrys station cannot from the nature of the business be fixed and he may occasionally by his distance and situation down the River want supplies, we would have you furnish him with such sums of Money as he may want during his Cruize.—You will have the Barge taken by Captain Josiah valued before fitted to make her Continental property.

We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

Feby. 12th 1778

Gentlemen

We have lately paid a bill drawn by John Langdon esqr. on this Committee dated the 20th December last in favour of Stephen Hooper Esqr. for 12,000 Dollars and have charged the same to your Account. You will please to debit Mr. Langdon with the amount of the said Bill and direct him to apply to you in future for any money he may want as it is proper the Marine Agents in your Department should make their applications to your Board.

We are Gentr

Yr hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

Feby. 23d. 1778.

Gentlemen

The French Ship Flamand now in Portsmouth New Hampshire is directed by the Committee of Commerce to proceed forthwith to Charles Town in South Carolina there to be laden'd with Rice &c for France. This Ship mounts 18 Six pounders and is navigated with 70 Seamen and fast sailer. The Committees intention is to give this Ship a Commission in expectation of picking some Prizes on the passage to Charles Town, and for that purpose you are requested to send out of your department a Captain and two Lieutenants in the Continental Service who have not at present an actual command together with Eight or ten Seamen in order to conduct any prizes that may be taken into Port. In navigating the Ship as a Merchant ship the french Captain is to have the command, but in giving chase or in an engagement the Continental Captain and his officers are to have the sole direction. The Captain & Officers apptd. to this service should be persons who have some knowledge of the Carolina Coast—they are upon their Arrival at Charles Town to return as soon as may be to their former station in your department. Should they be so fortunate as to take Prizes on the Passage—One half will be set apart for the Continent— The Continental Captain and his Officers will draw one eight[h] and the french Captain and his Offi-

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

cers and Crew will be intitled to the other  $\frac{3}{8}$ ths. If you should or should not be able to procure a suitable Captain officers and seamen, you will give seasonable notice thereof to the Continental Agent at Portsmouth that the ship may not be unnecessarily delayed.

We have given orders to our Agent in Maryland to purchase 2000 Barrels flour and 30 Tons bar Iron and to have the same transported to the Inlet of Senepuxent on the Sea Coast in Maryland about 50 Miles to the southward of the Capes of Delaware.

You will immediately on receipt hereof dispatch the Continental Schooner at Bedford, and charter as many small fast sailing Vessels and dispatch them for that Port as you shall think will be sufficient to carry the above quantity of Flour to such Ports or places in the Eastern States as you shall think proper to direct. Our Agent William Smith Esqr. will give the necessary orders for having the Vessels loaded immediately on their arrival. You will endeavour to get Masters for those Vessels who are acquainted with the Coast and Inlet above mentioned and if you cannot Charter Vessels without Insureing them we empower you so to do having them properly valued. We are

Gentl

Yr hble Servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO WILLIAM SMITH ]

February 24th 1778

Sir

We request you will immediately on receipt hereof purchase 2000 Barrels of Common Flour with 30 Tons of bar Iron and forward the same as soon as may [be] to Senepuxent with directions to a proper person there to receive and deliver the same to such Masters of Vessels as shall arrive there for that purpose. We have by Express this day directed the Navy Board for the Eastern Department to send from thence round to Senepuxent small fast sailing Vessels that may be sufficient to take off the above quantity.

We shall apply to Congress for money to enable you in the execution which we shall send you by the first safe conveyance. We shall rely upon your care and expedition in this affair & are Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO NATHANIEL SHAW, JR. ]

February 28th 1778

Sir

We have received your Letter of the 2d. instant & in consequence of your demand for money you have advanced by the Marine Service we have paid Mr. John

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Hertell whom you sent for that purpose Five thousand Dollars and have delivered to him a Warrant on the Loan Office of your State for thirty five thousand Dollars making 40,000 Dollars to your debit. Since the appointment of the Navy Board at Boston it has been our determination that all applications for money and other matters relative to Marine affairs should be made to them, for which reason we have charged that Board with the above sum and you must Credit them for the same. As it is high Time your Accounts with the Marine Department were settled, we request that you will with all expedition produce them to the Navy Board who will settle and pay the balance that may be due to you and in future you are to be governed intirely by their directions in Marine Affairs.

We are sir

Your hble servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

February 28th 1778

Gentn

We have received your Letter of the 2d instant. We have now to advise you that we have this day paid to Nathl. Shaw jr. Continental Agent at New London the sum of Forty thousand Dollars in part [payment] of the balance of his Account against the Marine Department which you will please to charge him with and we

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

have ordered him to place the same to your Credit. We have also directed him to make up his accounts and produce them to your Board in order that they may be examined and settled. This we desire you will have done without loss of time and when he furnishes his Account Current you will please to transmit to us a Copy thereof for our Inspection before we order payment of the balance.

We are Gentlemen  
Yr hble servants

[ TO STEPHEN STEWARD<sup>1</sup> ]

March 4th 1778

Sir

We have this day determined that Captain Nicholson should make another attempt for proceeding with the Virginia Frigate to sea, and having reasons to believe that the late Agents will demur to the supplying her, unless we put more money into their hands which we are restrained from doing until the account for the large sums already delivered them. From these and other motives the Committee have appointed you their Agent for supplying the said ship with Stores, Provisions &c and to enable you thereto you are to call on Mr. Francis Lewis jr. at Baltimore for four thousand Dollars giving him duplicate receipts for the same.

<sup>1</sup> Of West River, Maryland.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

From the knowledge we have of your Zeal for the service of your Country we flatter ourselves this business will be executed under your direction with alacrity.

We are Sir

Yr. hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JAMES NICHOLSON ]

March 4th 1778

Sir

Your letters of the 25th & 26th ultimo per Lieutenant Barney are now before us. We are concerned to find your last attempt in getting the frigate Virginia to sea had been fruitless; but as your letters inform us such is the fondness your Officers and Seamen retain for the Ship that you think they will chearfully make another trial, This has induced the Committee to resolve that another trial be made as soon as possible and to expedite the same they have this day requested Governor Johnston to continue to you the use of the Tender, as well as to furnish you with, or empower you to procure an able and Skillful Pilot.—

By information from Lieutenant Barney we have reason to apprehend our late Agents will not supply the Ship unless more Money is put into their hands, this we are restrained from doing until the large sums already placed there is accounted for, and least this should throw embarrassments in your way the Committee have this day appointed Stephen Steward Esqr. of West

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

River their Agent for supplying the Virginia and have put money into his hands for that purpose, we shall rely upon your giving him all the Assistance in yr. power. We assure you that we retain a tender regard for your Character, and hope you will by this succeeding attempt be enabled to wipe off any malicious reflections (if any there be for we know of none) on your character.—

Enclosed you have Lieutenants Plunket and Barneys<sup>1</sup> Commissions. Wishing you success We are sir  
Yr. hble servants

[ TO GOVERNOR THOMAS JOHNSTON<sup>2</sup> ]

March 4th 1778

Sir

We have been honoured with your Letter of the 11th ulto addressed to Mr. Lewis a Member of this Committee. The offer you therein make us of furnishing the Brig Baltimore with Six Pieces of Cannon four pounders with their Carriages, Rammer Rods, Spunges &c or as many thereof as may be compleat, we accept and will order payment for the same as soon as the value is ascertained agreeable to the mode you propose. We beg

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant Thomas Plunkett of the Marine Corps and Lieutenant Joshua Barney of the Navy.

<sup>2</sup> Governor of Maryland.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

leave to request your Excellency to order those Cannon to be sent up to the point at Baltimore in the manner most convenient.

As we have hitherto been unfortunate in our attempts to get the Frigate Virginia to Sea, the Committee have this day resolved that Captain Nicholson be ordered to make One other attempt. We are informed it will be necessary that he be furnished with a Tender for giving him intelligence in the Bay also a proper Pilot to carry the Ship out as the want of a Pilot rendered his last attempt abortive—for these reasons we must entreat your Excellency to permit Captain Nicholson to a further use of the Tender, he was lately furnished with as well as to empower him to procure a good Pilot in such manner as you shall think fit for we are informed he cannot procure one without your sanction. We have

the Honor to be

Yr. Excllys Obed servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

March 6th 1778

Gentlemen

We acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 20th feby. of the 2d & 17th. of March last, and are exceedingly pleased to hear that the Warren, after having been so long cooped up in the Bay had got out to sea— We have since heard that she is arrived at Boston and car-

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

ried in two or three Prizes. We should be glad to get the Providence and other armed Vessels out of the River, and at a less expence than we find will attend it, but they must be got out let the expence be what it may, if it should be practicable and from the success that hath attended such attempts we infer its practicability. We highly approve of the Conduct of the Board in getting out the Warren and don't doubt but that they will exert themselves in getting out the Providence & Columbus, especially as the season for brisk, steady north winds will in a short time be over, and we are sure that you will exercise frugallity wherever it may be beneficial.—

The Demands upon the Treasury from the great departments of the Army are so large and frequent that they cannot be supplied. We have however procured Three Warrants—One on the Loan Office of New Hampshire for 30,000 Dollars—One on Massachuset Bay for 40,000, and One on Connecticut for 30,000 making 100,000 Dollars transmitted herewith for the use of your Board. We chose to have them on those different States, because Money will be wanted in each. If the Money cannot be had at the offices, the Certificates may be disposed of—you will take care that Mr. Langdon hath his share. We have already advised you that we have paid Mr. Shaw 40,000 Dollars and charged the same to your Account, part of which money we presume will be applied towards fitting out the Trumbull &c. The Warrants we returned to you corrected we are glad to find have reached you.

We have determined to stop the building of the Seventy four at Portsmouth for the present, and desire

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

you will give orders accordingly, and for seasoning of the Timbers prepared for her You will man and equip the Warren with all possible dispatch and order her out on a Cruize to the West Indias with directions to Captain Hopkins<sup>1</sup> to apply to Mr. Bingham at St. Pierre, Martinico or Mr. Ceronio at Cape François, Hispaniola, for such supplies as he may Chance to want, and send the Prizes he may take to their address or to the Continent as he may judge proper.—You will further direct him towards the Close of his Cruize to go to Cape François, call upon Messrs. Ceronio & Carrabasse for such goods as they may have to ship and take in what he can conveniently bring to the Continent without hurting the Ships sailing. You will furnish us with a Copy of the Instructions you shall give him.

By the Notes in the Margin and endorssment on the Account which you sent to us for inspection, and which we now remit you will see what part thereof is allowed and what rejected.

Before discharging the wages of those and any other Continental officers, you will procure from the Continental Agents in your district accounts of the Monies they have paid them on that score. We have ordered the Paymaster of the Navy in this district James Read Esqr to transmit to you a state of Captain Olneys Account, and the Accounts of such other officers now in the Eastern Department as may have received any Monies of him. Enclosed is a Resolve of Congress respecting the pay Rations and allowances of officers not in Actual service and during their Captivity and under Parole.

<sup>1</sup> Captain John Burroughs Hopkins, son of Commodore Esek Hopkins.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

We wish Vessels for the flour and Iron speedily. We congratulate Captain Rathbourne upon his success, but cannot think he is entitled to the whole of the ship Mary and her Cargo. The question was put in Committee & they came to the following Resolution—

“It is the opinion of this Committee from the representation of the said Board, that by the Resolves of Congress the Captors are only intitled to One half of said Vessel & Cargo.” Enclosed is a Copy of the Resolves referred to. You will see that a Claim is put in on behalf of the Continent. We shall write to Mr. Landais<sup>1</sup> by this opportunity—it is out of our power to comply with his wishes. We have a number of Captains out of employ, and it would be imprudent to pass by them. We shall immediately write Samuel Tuder and Captain Lawrence at Poughkeepsie on Hudsons River to send forward to you at Boston the Sails of the two frigates, which were saved at the time said frigates were burned and which is in their possession. If they should receive directions from you therefor. One of those frigates was 28 and the other 24 Guns— The sails of the 28 may suit one of the Ships building at the Eastward as they are large, and the sails of the 24 may suit for some of the sails of the other. You may direct both or either of the suits of sails of these burned frigates to Boston or Norwich or part to one place or part to the other as you shall judge proper—they had two suits each. We are satisfied with your report respecting Mr. Roche.<sup>2</sup> How he came to be suspended by a Resolve of Congress from his command of the continental ship of

<sup>1</sup> Captain Peter Landais.

<sup>2</sup> John Roach.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

war the [Ranger] when he never was appointed to the command of her we cannot tell. Captain Roche laid a plan before Congress, which they referred to the Marine Committee to carry into execution, whereupon they empowered Mr. Langdon to build a Vessel of war, and employed Captain Roche to advise and assist about the building &c. He wrote the Committee a Letter dated the 29th of December last at the close of which he mentions that he had waited with that patience that became a Gentleman in his situation living on his own Money for Six Months, wages &c being stopped ever since his suspension and that he waited impatiently for our further orders. He hath a right, as you have reported in his favour, to his wages, and therefore would have you enquire into what time he hath been paid, and what per month, and pay him off.

We have no vessel to give him the command of without passing by several good Commanders who now hold Commissions and are out of service. If he will accept of a Lieutenancy on board of one of the Frigates and you think him a proper person we shall have no objections, otherwise we shall not consider him any longer as being in the service of the Continent.

We approve of your altering the name of the Industrious Bee to that of the General Gates altho we think it would have been a higher compliment to have given his name to a frigate. We cannot determine upon a proper person to command the frigate at Salisbury, We would have the berth left open for Captain Manley as he may be exchanged, and for the present the Charge of her be given to the person who you may judge suitable for a first Lieutenant of her. We leave to you to determine

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

respecting the Lieutenants who are desirous to make a Cruize of a few Months. Inclosed are the Rules & Regulations of the Navy—Congress has ordered us to Revise them—If you can suggest any New Rules or alterations that will be necessary, we would be glad you would propose them, and if you can by any means procure a British Privateers Commission, send it forward to us. Coppies of Captain Judds and the Captain of the Jamaica Packets may answer—they were taken by Captain Harding<sup>1</sup> of the Connecticut State ship and their Commissions are in the Maritime Court of the Middle District Massachuset. We have ordered Mr. Barnabas Deane of Connecticut to lay his Accounts against the frigate Trumbull before you, which you will please to examine and transmit to us a Copy of his account Current when we shall give Orders for the paymt. of the balance that may be due to him.

We are Gentlemen  
Yr hble Servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY ]

March 11th 1778

Sir

We have received your letter of the 8th instant and congratulate you on the successful commencement of your expedition and hope it will be attended with similar advantages to the Public and Glory to the gallant

<sup>1</sup> Captain Seth Harding.



## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Commander, brave officers & men concerned in it, throughout the whole course. The good opinion you have of your Prize Schooner has determined us to purchase her for a Cruizer, you will therefore obtain the consent of the Partys who took her, have her fairly valued, and take her at that valuation for the public. She is to be called the Wasp, and as you have represented her to be properly equiped in every particular for an Armed Vessel, you will see that she is officered & manned as soon as possible, take the command of her yourself or bestow it on some brave active prudent officer. You will employ her there so long as you shall think prudent, but should you apprehend there will be danger of her falling into the hands of the enemy you will send her out of the Bay into Senepuxent, Chincotiague<sup>1</sup> or any of the Inlets on the Coast, where you will be able to collect a full Complement of Men if not well manned before— That done let her take such Station off Cape Henlopen as to be able to descry the enemies Vessels coming in & going out of the Capes and to secure a retreat should she fall in with any Vessels of superior force. We observe that you have advised General Washington of your success, and expect you have furnished him with Inventories of what was on board your Prizes. Any articles which he may direct to be kept for the use of the Army you will retain having them properly valued and deliver them as he may direct. With regard to the general distribution of the Prize Money it is our opinion it should be distributed according to the number of Men & Guns in each Boat concerned in

<sup>1</sup> On the coast of Maryland.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

the Capture. As to the distribution among the officers and Men in the Continental Boats (If no previous agreement had been entered into) it must be made agreeable to the Continental Regulations, but if those Regulations should appear not to be adapted to the peculiar circumstances of your expedition, we consent that you should enter into such agreement with your officers and Men as shall be most satisfactory to you & them. We approve of your consulting the Honorable Nicholas Vandyke<sup>1</sup> Esqr when necessary and would have you agreeable to your Instructions, put your Prize goods under his care or any other person you may think proper, and continue to pursue the main object of your expedition with all your usual vigour and activity. The Prisoners you have taken or shall take you will deliver to the commander of that Department of the main Army which may be most convenient to you. We thank you for the early intelligence of your success—your well known bravery and good conduct gives us strong hopes of hearing from you often on similar occasions.

With the best wishes for your success

We are sir

Your very hble servts

P: S: Please to transmit to us an Inventory of the effects you have Captured. enclosed is Lieutenant Cokelys<sup>2</sup> receipt for 50 Dollars which he will account with you for.

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Van Dyke, delegate to the Continental Congress from Delaware.

<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant James Cokely of the Marine Corps.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY ]

March 26th 1778

Sir

We have received your Letter of the 20th instant covering an Inventory of the goods lately Captured, and are sorry that your Prize Schooner had unfortunately been retaken; and that the Militia instead of affording you assistance had pilfered so much of the goods you had saved. We think with you that the Bay will be the best place for your meeting with success & hope you will use your utmost diligence in getting your small Squadron speedily down there.

With regard to the Prize goods you have Captured one half in our opinion belongs to the Continent. If it had fully appeared that the Schooner Alert was a vessel of war and belonged to the Crown of great Britain, or was duely commisionated a privateer by his britannick Majesty and you had held she would have been solely the property of the Captors. We inclose herein a Resolve of Congress of the 30th of October 1776.

As to the bounty offered by Congress for burning the Ships of War and Transports of the enemy it was confined intirely to the fire Ships fitted at Philadelphia last fall.

We have advanced your officer Mr. Clarkson Eight hundred Dollars for which sum we have inclosed his receipt and you are to be accountable for the same.

We are sir

Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JOHN LANGDON ]

April 3d. 1778

Sir

We have received your Letter of the 3d. of March, and must confess that it gives us great concern that you should have been thrown into so disagreeable a Situation for want of a proper supply of Money. So great and so frequent have been the demands on the Treasury for that necessary article that it hath been out of our power to furnish the Navy Board agreeable to our wishes. It is on this account principally that we have wrote to them directing them to stop the building of the seventy four gun ship at Portsmouth. You will drop the building of her for the present & take proper measures for securing and seasoning the Timber provided for her. We shall procure an order on the Treasury or a warrant on the Loan Offices eastward if possible to enable them to supply you with some money; hereafter when the great departments of the Army shall have been supplied therewith, we will endeavour at the payment of all our debts, and don't doubt but that we shall be able to accomplish it, in the mean time you must make your self and your Creditors as easy as possible. We are satisfied with your conduct and believe that the Building of the Ships at Portsmouth hath been conducted with as much Œconomy and advantage to the Continent as in any of the United States.—

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

The Navy Board at Boston are empowered to settle all Marine Accounts in their Department—the Commercial Accounts must be transmitted for settlement to the Committee of Commerce. We are with respect

Sir

Your very hble servts

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

April 6th 1778

Gentlemen

You have inclosed with the other papers herein the Sailing Instructions and Signals by Day & night for the enemys Transports & Ships under convoy—they were lately taken on board a Transport in the River Delaware and we wish Copies of them may be given to the Commanders which you send out of your Department as they be serviceable. You will take care to dispatch the ship Providence as soon as possible—we leave it to you to order her Cruize as you may think proper sending us a Copy of the Instructions you give the Captain.

We are Gentn

Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN THOMAS PLUNKETT<sup>1</sup> ]

April 6th 1778

Sir

We have received yours of the 4th instant and are much pleased to hear of the Virginia having got to sea, yet are sorry that you and Mr. Fanning were so unlucky as to be left behind.

There is no employment for you at the Northward, therefore you are at liberty to engage in any business that you think proper and when vacancy happens we shall inform you. With regard to Mr. Fanning we have wrote to Captain Thomas Read of the Brig Baltimore that should he want an officer, to apply to Mr. Fanning which we hope will be agreeable. You will deliver over the men belonging to the Virginia to Captain Read and we will order the payment of such wages as is due to them.

We are sir

Your hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Plunkett was an officer of the Marine Corps.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN THOMAS READ ]

April 6th 1778

Sir

We have been favoured with your letter of the 21st. of March and hope you have by this time got the Brigantine Baltimore nearly fitted. We observe you are under some difficulty in procuring Seamen; but as we have this day been informed that Captain Nicholson of the Frigate Virginia left behind him fifteen of his men, with two of his officers—we would have you immediately endeavour to secure these men for your Vessel as they are in the Continental Service. Upon your applying to Mr. Stephen Steward he will furnish you with what tobacco you may further want to compleat your lading, and ship the remainder of your Crew on the best terms you can.

As Mr. Fanning<sup>1</sup> is one of the officers Captain Nicholson left behind, should you want an officer of his Rank we would advise you to engage him for your Vessel if agreeable.

We are sir

Your hble servants

<sup>1</sup> One of the naval lieutenants of this name.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN LAWRENCE AND SAMUEL TUDOR<sup>1</sup> ]

April 7th 1778

Gentlemen

We have directed the Continental Navy Board at Boston to apply to you for the Sails belonging to the frigates which were destroyed in Hudsons River & which are under your care, as they will be wanted for some of the frigates in the Eastern States, you will please to follow such directions as you shall receive from that Board as to the forwarding of those sails. We are gentlemen

Your hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN PETER LANDAIS ]

April 7th 1778

Sir

It would give us much pleasure could we at this time comply with your wishes by giving you a command in the Continental Navy, but it is entirely out of our power, without neglecting several good Commanders who are already in Commission but unemployed, and whose merit and former services we cannot over look.

We are Sir respectfully

Your very hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Of Poughkeepsie, New York.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
MIDDLE DEPARTMENT<sup>1</sup> ]

April 8th 1778

Gentlemen

Agreeable to your application in your letter of the 21st. of February last, we enclose a Warrant on the Loan office of the State of New Jersey for Eleven thousand Dollars to enable you to pay Mr. Taylor for the shot he furnished for the use of the navy. We shall now answer the queries you presented for our consideration in that Letter.—

1st. We have already ordered the Paymaster to remove his office to Baltimore when your Board removes to that place.

2d. We would by all means have the Commissarys store at Bordenton immediately broke up. Congress has resolved that no Rations or Subsistence Money shall be allowed to any officers but such as are in actual service—inclosed is the Resolve dated the 20 March last.

3rd We would have you examine the Accounts of your clerk and Treasurer yourselves, and appoint or nominate a new one just as you please.

4th The Agents at Baltimore will be notified that they are responsible to your Board for the settlement for their Accounts.

As the New Signals for the Navy have been sent to

<sup>1</sup> The Navy Board of the Middle Department was still at Bordentown, New Jersey.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

the Navy Board of the Eastern Department and have been given to several Commanders we think it would be improper to alter them at this time, however as it may be necessary hereafter to change the Signals, we would be glad if you would compose a sett.—

The want of officers at present makes it impracticable to hold a Court Martial for the trial of the officers who commanded on board the Continental Vessels that were destroyed in the Delaware. Congress having ordered us to revise the Rules and Regulations of the Navy, we would be obliged to you to propose any alterations or amendments which you may think necessary to be adopted.

We acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 12th. of March and are pleased to hear that you had lodged the Stores in places of greater safety. We are glad to inform you that the Virginia frigate has got to sea.\* Mr. Read<sup>1</sup> the Paymaster having represented that the duties of his office did not require his constant attendance he had our permission to transact some business for the Board of war. Congress has not appointed him to any new office—you will please to write to him and advise him to return to his office if he hath not already returned. You have enclosed an account of Maxwell & Loyals which we refer to you for examination. We suppose you will require them to exhibit the particulars of

\* An account since received that she unfortunately go on a Bank in the night and was next morning taken by the enemy. Captain Nicholson and nine of his Crew who were all that chose to venture in the Barge escaped to shore.—

<sup>1</sup> James Read, later commissioner of the Navy Board of the Middle Department.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

the Charges in the said Account with the vouchers we have marked the drafts paid by this Committee since our removal from Philadelphia, and you have in your Books an account of what had been paid before. You have also inclosed a Receipt of Lieut. Robert Harris's late of the Ship Reprisal for 150 dollars paid him by the Navy Board at Boston which please to order to his debit in the Paymasters Books. We have your favour of the 25th. of March and approve of the offer you have made the General of Rice, Codfish and Oil for the use of the Army. You will take the Commissarys Receipt for those articles and charge him in your Books. The Board of war have had [under] consideration that part of your letter which relates to Captain Robinson and we suppose will communicate their sentiments thereon to General Washington who doubtless will take proper measures for his releasement. We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants

[ TO ISAAC SMITH, EBENEZER STORER, AND  
WILLIAM PHILIPS<sup>1</sup> ]

April 9th 1778.—

Gentlemen

Enclosed is a Copy of a Letter from Colo. Benjamin Tup[p]er to the President of Congress with a Resolve of Congress thereon you will please to enquire of Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Commissioners, at Boston, appointed by the Marine Committee to settle the accounts of prizes captured by "Washington's fleet."

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Watson whether the Vessels & Cargoes have been sold—  
if not you will dispose of them and pay to the Captors  
the several proportions justly due to them.

We are Gentlemen  
Your hble servants

[ TO MAXWELL AND LOYALL ]

April 11th 1778

Gentlemen

We have determined for the present to stop the building of the Frigates in Virginia. We find on examining your account that you have neglected giving us Credit for the following Sums which will make a considerable balance in our favour.

Your draft of the 9th July last in favour of Wm. Holt for	£390: 0:0	Va Curry
A Warrant on the Loan Office in Virginia for 10,000 Dollars transmitted you the 24th of November last a 6/ p Dollr.	} 3000. 0.0	
Your draft of the 5th March last in favour Wm. Holt for		243. 11. 0
		Virga Currency <u>£3633. 0.0</u>

Mr. Stodder tells us that you have not received any Money on the Warrant on the Loan Office transmitted you the 24th of November If there should be no money in the Office you must negotiate the Loan Office Certificates. We inclose you a Resolve of Congress em-

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

powering you & Mr. David Stodder Master builder of the Frigates to consider and Report what allowance if any you think ought to be made to Thomas Hoggard for the frames of the Frigates over and above the prices originally stipulated. When we shall resume the building of those Frigates we shall be glad to have your superintendency of them. in the mean time we are with great respect Gentlemen

Yr hble servants

[ TO DAVID STODDER ]

April 11th 1778

Sir

We have determined for the present to stop the building of the Frigates in Virginia of which you are the Master builder and are willing that you should enter into the employ of the State of Virginia, and continue therein until we shall think proper to resume the building of them or you shall be ordered to build other vessels for us. In the mean time we would have you take particular care of the Ships Frames and Materials for building so as to prevent any rot or embezzlement, and shall make you a reasonable allowance for your trouble therein. When we shall have an opportunity to converse with the Honorable Richd. Henry Lee Esqr. who was the Gentleman that agreed with you respecting the Terms of your employment we shall be able to determine upon an allowance to be made you. So soon as we shall have decided on this matter we will give you

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

notice thereof, and at the same time will inform you whether the terms you have proposed for your future service is agreeable in the mean time we are Sir

Your hble Servants.—

[ TO GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY ]

Sir

April 11th 1778.

We have ordered the building of the Frigates to be stopt for the present and agree that Mr. Stodder should be employed by your State in building small Vessels upon condition that he shall resume the building of the Frigates or build any other vessels for the Continent when we judge proper.

We dont doubt but that you will give every assistance in your power to that business when it shall be again taken up and are with great respect

Your Excellencys

Most hble servants

[ TO WILLIAM SMITH ]

Sir

April 14th 1778

Enclosed is Captain David Porters receipt for Ten thousand Dollars paid him by this Committee which he will deliver to you and you will apply towards purchasing the flour and Iron for the use of the Navy in the Eastern Departmt.

We are Sir

Yr. most hble Servants

[ 228 ]

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL ]

April 20th 1778

Sir

We have the honor of acknowledging your Letter of the 2d inst. and very unhappy in not being able to comply with the request of your Excellency and your Council of safety. The gallant conduct of Captain Harding intitles him to notice, but when you Sir, and your Council of safety consider that by the destruction and Capture of several of our frigates their Captains are thrown out of actual service, you will easily perceive that it would be doing not only injustice to those officers some of whom at least are very valuable, but to the Continent to pass by them, and appoint to the command of the frigate at Norwich any Gentleman who hath not had a Command in the Continental Navy let his merit be ever so great. It would particularly disapoint the expectations of Captain Hinman<sup>1</sup> who hath wrote to us on the subject should we honor Captain Harding with the Command of that frigate. Indeed it is not with us to appoint it is our duty only to nominate and recommend. We beg leave to answer the last paragraph in your Excellencys letter to observe, that it is not the practice of States to recommend Navy Officers, and that Captain Saltonstal<sup>2</sup> was nominated to Congress by the Marine Committee in consequence of recommendations from the Delegates of your States. We are with great respect yr. Excellencys

Most obed servants

<sup>1</sup> Captain Elisha Hinman.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Dudley Saltonstall.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN THOMAS READ ]

April 22d. 1778

Sir

We have received your Letter of the 13th instant and are now to observe that the Captains of the Chase & Snow George were not considered as Continental Officers in the agreement the Committee of Commerce made with them, therefore no arguments can be drawn from that agreement to support the unreasonable demands of your Lieutenants, who if they will not go with you at the Continental pay must quit the service. We have directed Mr. Steward to pay the wages due to the Seamen belonging to the Virginia and trust that Captain Nicholson will cooperate with you in getting such a number of those Seamen to enter on board the Baltimore as you may want. We shall send down the Hemp wanting for your Brig very soon & are sir

Yr. very hble Servants

[ TO RICHARD ELLIS<sup>1</sup> ]

April 22d. 1778

Sir

We have received your Letter of the 2d. of March last advising us of your having received from the Marshal of the Court of Admiralty at your place Two hun-

<sup>1</sup> Of Newbern, North Carolina.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

dred & Sixty nine pounds 12/- for the two thirds of the net sale of the Prize Sloop Tryall taken by the Continental Sloop Providence and sent into your port. We are now to inform you that by the Rules and Regulations of Congress the Captors are intitled to one half of the Prize, and that you had ommitted to enclose in your Letter the account sales, nor have we received your Letter of the 9th feby. Considering the high prices at which Vessels are sold, we cannot help being surprized at the small sum which the Sloop sold for, therefore we must request you will inform us on that head and whether she had any Cargo on board or not.

We are Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO NICHOLAS VAN DYKE ]

April 24th 1778

Sir

Captain Barry hath informed us that he hath appointed a Mr. Hall Agent in behalf of the Continent for the Prizes he took in his Cruize in the Delaware, and that when distribution should be made that Mr. Hall would deposit the Continental share in your hands. If that should be the case, and you should come to Congress soon, we wish you would bring the Money with you, or otherwise transmit the same by a safe hand to the Navy Board at Baltimore.—

We are Sir

Your most obedt servants

[ 231 ]

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JOHN BRADFORD ]

April 28th. 1778

Sir

We are now to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 8th Current, inclosing an Inventory of the Continental part of the goods captured by Captain Hopkins, we wish to hear of the arrival of his Prizes, but are afraid they are retaken. you will deliver to the order of the Board of war the

- 26 Pieces of coarse Sheeting
- 24 Bolts Oznabrigs
- 9 doz felt hats
- 17 sadelles & their furniture
- 81 Pieces Napped Cottons
- 200 ready made bags enumerated in that Inventory.

Such of the other articles as the Navy Board may want for the use of the Navy, you will deliver to them and sell what remains to the best advantage. We are sorry to hear of the death of Captain Chew, but are glad at the same time to find that he died bravely fighting a ship of superior force. The loss of the Alfred gives us much concern and we are not a little surprized to hear that the Raleigh should be in sight at the time of the Capture and not give her assistance especially when it is said that the force of the enemy was inferior to that of our Ships, however we shall suspend our judgment until this matter shall be fully enquired into. By advice from our Continental Agent in Charles Town we have the melancholy intelligence that the Randolph which

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

sailed from Charles Town in february last in company with four Armed Vessels fitted out by that state during the Cruize in Longitude 53, latitude 13.30 the fleet fell in with a british man of war of 50 Guns a severe engagement between her and the Randolph ensued and after it had continued 12 minutes the latter unfortunately blew up and in all probability every soul perished. The British ship immediately on the explosion gave chase to the other Vessels, who were enabled to make their escape by Captain Biddles having shot away the ships bowsprit and Mizen top Mast. If this most unfortunate accident had not taken place in all probability the Randolph and the Armed Vessels had given a good Account of the 50 Gun Ship. Our little fleet is much diminished hoping that we may be more fortunate in future

We are Sir

Yr. most obed servants

P: S: Inclosed is a Resolve of Congress of this date appointing William Burke a Captain in the Navy, and directing that he should receive from the time he was appointed to the Command of the schooner Warren to this day according to the Rate of Pay settled when he was so appointed. We now desire that you will settle his account and pay him Agreeable to the said Resolve. You will please to inform us who was the Captain next in Commission to Captain Manly of the five Vessels fitted out by order of General Washington.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

May 5th 1778

Gentlemen

We request that immediately on receipt hereof you will procure two swift sailing Vessels for Packets to carry despatches to france, and have them prepared in every respect for the Sea, so soon as the Council of Massachusetts State shall apply for them which will be in a very short time, and you must direct the Commanders to sail agreeable to the orders of the said Council. If the Sloop Providence hath not sailed before this reaches she will be a suitable Vessel for one of those Packets, and it is our desire that you detain her for that use. We shall only add that it is highly important that those Vessels should be provided and got ready with all possible despatch. We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants

[ TO JOHN LANGDON ]

May 5th 1778

Sir

We request that you will immediately on receipt of this use your best endeavours to procure a small fast sailing Vessel for a Packet to go to france and have her

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

prepared for the sea with all expedition. The Committee of foreign affairs will very shortly apply to you for such a Vessel, and we hope you will be able to have One ready to execute such orders as may be given you by that Committee.

We are sir  
Your hble servants

[ TO GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL ]

May 5th 1778

Sir

As a swift sailing Packet is immediately wanted to carry despatches to France, we must request your Excellency should the Armed Vessel belonging to your State, called the Spy be in port, that you will order her to be got ready for that purpose, but if she should not be in Port that you will give directions for some other suitable Vessel being procured and prepared for the sea with all dispatch. The Committee for foreign Affairs will forward in a short time the despatches, and we beg leave to request your Excellencys attention to what they shall write you on that subject. We are Sir

with great respect  
Yr. most hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG ]

May 6th 1778.

Sir

We have received your Letter of the 26th ultimo from Edenton and are sorry to hear of the loss of the Continental Brig Independence under your Command. We have no doubt but you have done all in your power for saving as much as possible from the wreck & we desire that you will deliver the same to our Agents Messrs. Hewes & Smith making out an Inventory thereof and taking their receipts for what you deliver, which you must transmit to the Navy Board at Baltimore.

As we have immediate service for yourself officers & men, we desire that on receipt hereof, you will march them to Portsmouth in Virginia, and advise Governor Henry of your getting there to whom we have wrote respecting your employment and you must follow such Instructions as you shall receive from the Governor. Messrs. Hewes & Smith will advance you Money to pay the Expence of your Journey in which you will make despatch. We are sir

Your hble Servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO HEWES AND SMITH ]

May 6th. 1778.

Gentlemen

We are informed by Letter from Captain John Young of the Continental Brig Independence on the Bar of Occracock but that he had saved the Guns & Sundry other things from the Wreck which we have now directed him to put under your care and which you will please to give receipts for. Should that business not be accomplished when this reaches you, we request you will have it done, and depend on your care that nothing be lost which can be saved. As we have immediate services for Captain Young his Officers & Men, we have directed him to march them to Portsmouth in Virginia and there follow such Instructions as he may receive from Governor Henry. You will advance Captain Young Money for his Expences, and we shall pay your Bills for the same or otherwise reimburse you. We are with regard

Gentlemen

Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

May 8th 1778.

Gentlemen

The many interesting subjects contained in your last Letter shall shortly receive a full answer, for the present we shall confine ourselves to the disagreeable business of the Alfreds loss, and the conduct of Captain Thompson upon that occasion. From various concurring informations as well as from Captain Thompsons letter to this Committee of the 7th of April last, The Committee are of opinion that both the public Interest and the honour of Captain Thompson render it necessary that a Court of Enquiry should be held on his conduct But this Enquiry the Committee think cannot properly be made until Captain Hinman or some of his Officers can be heard upon the Affairs and in the mean time it is not fit that the public should be deprived of the use of the Raleigh. It is therefore the desire of the Committee that you forthwith suspend Captain Thompson from the Command of that Frigate until a full and fair enquiry can be made into his Conduct, on the Occasion of the Alfreds loss, and that the Raleigh be got ready for Sea with all possible expedition. By the time this will happen the Committee will appoint a Captain to take the Command of her. The Committee are intirely of Opinion with you that it will be proper to send out a Collected force to Cruize against our enemies that we recover the injured reputation of our Navy and the



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

losses we have sustained. with this veiw the Committee wish that the Warren and any other of the Continental Vessels that you approve, may be quickly made ready for Sea and you shall shortly hear further and fully from us concerning the destination of these Ships. We have the pleasure to enclose you the late Resolves of Congress concerning Marine misconduct, and the mode of trying it, which we hope may in future remove the dificulty that hitherto subsisted in Affairs of this nature. It seems from your information of the Enemy at Rhode Island hawling three additional Ships into the Channel thro' which you proposed sending the frigate Providence to intercept her, that the chance of her escaping is too great to be unnecessarily run— We would therefore propose you should endeavour to man the Warren with the hands of the Providence and lay aside the attempt to get her out unless through a change of circumstances you should discover a fair Opportunity of effecting it—in case this should happen we would have her ordered round to Boston there to join the Continental frigates.

We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

May 9th 1778

Gentlemen

We have received yours of the 6th. 9th. 15th. 20th & 22d April last under the signature of Mr. Warren and now sit down to give them an answer. The loss of the Columbus altho' considerable yet by the prudence of your Board in taking out her Cannon & Stores before she left Providence, is much less than it would have otherwise been.

As it is highly proper that a Strict enquiry should be made into the causes of the loss of any of the Continental Vessels, you will institute a Court of Inquiry for the purpose of Inquiring into the loss of that ship. We have given directions respecting the frigate Providence in ours of yesterday which went by Express to which we refer you.

With regard to the Trumbull, the Governor & Council of Connecticut were desired to assist in getting her out of the River because you were not then assembled at Boston, and not from any the most distant Idea of your incompetancy to the business. How it hath happened that you have not received notice of their being requested to aid in that affair we know not but suppose it to be owing to a multiplicity of business. However we hope that this circumstance will not prevent your exerting yourselves on this occasion.—We don't doubt but that you will attend closely to the equiping and man-

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

ning the Warren and Raleigh, so that they may be ready to go on a Cruize in company as soon as possible agreeably to what we have written to you in the letter already referred to—

The Sloop Providence is to be stopped if she hath not already sailed and to wait the orders of the Committee of foreign affairs We lament the death of that gallant Sea Officer Captain Chew. Fourteen or fifteen hundred Barrels of Flour and about 15 Tons of Iron are at Senepuxent waiting the arrival of the Vessels you may have ordered to receive them. We should have directed the whole thither had you not expressed a doubt whether you should be able to succede in procuring Vessels. If you should collect a sufficient number of vessels to carry all the flour and Iron let us know it and we will immediately send the remainder to Senepuxent The price of 30/— per Ton and insure so far from being thought enormous is so low as to induce a Suspicion that there is some error in your manuscript. No pursers have as yet been appointed for the navy, when there are their pay will be established. Captain Landais is here— hath been before us and his business is submitted to Congress. We have procured a Continental Commission for Captain Burke. Captain Skimmer if he should behave well, which we cannot doubt after reading the good character you have given will be promoted *Ceteris Paribus* according to his Rank.

To yours of the 9th of April we reply, that we have wrote fully respecting the loss of the Alfred &c by the Express, and that we have transmitted to you the Resolve of Congress respecting the pay & Rations of officers not in actual service. We would observe here with

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

regard to rations that none in fact are allowed to Navy officers by the Regulations of the Navy, all that was intended by the Resolve is the allowance made to Seamen on Ship Board. We should not be sorry to get rid of our bad officers, as for the good ones they may depend upon receiving every encouragement that Congress can reasonably give.—

On yours of the 15th. we would observe that we approve of your ordering the Raleigh to Boston. That part which relates to an enquiry on the conduct of Captain Thompson is already answered. We shall transmit Instructions for the Frigates in Season. We shall attend to supplying you with Money from time to time as the Treasury will admit of it, so as to enable you to execute the business of your Department with advantage and satisfaction to the public and reputation to yourselves. We are glad to hear that one of the Warrens prizes is arrived, the other we fear is lost. We will attend to the affair of the Peggy. We had received Letters from Captain Jones of the Ranger before we received your account of him. In the Paragraph in answer to yours of the 9th we answered part of yrs of the 20th. If it be meant that Tea, Coffee & Sugar should be allowed to officers not in actual service in lieu of the Rations of Meat &c we shall not object to it provided they do not receive of those articles more than to the amount in value of that Ration. It was thought improper that Captain Skimmer & Tucker or any other Officers appointed by General Washington should be ranked in the Continental Navy at the time the Rank of Continental officers were determined by the Marine Committee. They must take Rank after them and their

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Ranks as they respect each other ought to be determined by the Seniority of their appointments under General Washington. We now enclose you Commissions & Warrants.

In reply to your last of April the 22d. we are glad to hear that Captain Manly is exchanged. It is our intention that he should take the Command of the Frigate Salisbury, If upon enquiry into the loss of the Hancock it should turn out it was not owing to any mal conduct in him. The Resolve of Congress, which we have transmitted to you empower the Navy Boards to order Courts of Enquiry & Courts Martial in the cases mentioned in the said Resolve. Captain McNeill should be tried by a Court Martial. When the Resistance shall have arrived it may be time enough for us to appoint a Commander for her. We are somewhat Surprized that the Governor & Council of the State of Rhode Island should make any difficulty about sending in Captain Furneaux, as it would seem improper that he should [be] exchanged for a Captain of a Privateer if any one of that state should be in captivity.

We have nothing more to add at present, but our wishes that you continue to exert the utmost vigor and Industry in getting the ships and other Vessels of war to sea, that we may avail ourselves of the extensive property which our enemies have upon the Water. We understand our enemies have a practice of detaining all the Boys that they make prisoners from us. We desire that this practice may be retaliated by not exchanging Boys that the Continental Frigates may captivate from them. We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

P: S: Inclosed is an account of Disbursements on the Continental Sloop Providence at Charles Town South Carolina amounting to £5009.2.6 S: Currency, also an account of Slops furnished the Commander of the said Sloop by the Agents at that Port. amtg to £3493.12.3 of both which Accounts you will Make due note and see that the Slops are properly accounted for.—

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
MIDDLE DEPARTMENT ]

May 16th 1778

Gentlemen

You are to appoint a Clerk & Treasurer for your Board and a Clerk for the Pay Office.

You are to call upon Mr. Lux<sup>1</sup> for and Liquidate any Accounts he may have against the Continent as Continental Agent.

You are to call upon & settle Mr. Jonathan Hudsons account for Superintending the building of the Brig Baltimore.

You are to call upon Mr. Stephen Steward whom we have appointed to settle the outstanding accounts and pay off the wages of the seamen of the Virginia and receive of him such Accounts as he hath collected as well paid as unpaid, and also his receipts for Seamens wages,

<sup>1</sup> William Lux.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

and discharge him from any further trouble in that business which you are to take up & settle.

You are also desired to take care of the Timber and other Materials for ship building belonging to the Continent which we are informed are floating about the River Patapsaco.

You are to converse with Mr. Wells Ship Carpenter about the building of small Vessels for the Continent, and after that require of him whether any Continental Timber or other Materials for ship building have been converted to private use.

You are to be strict in the enquiry into the loss of the Virginia, among other things how Captain Nicholson came to attempt to go out of the Cheseapeake without having a Pilot on board his Ship. Why he did not attempt to run his ship ashore. If that could not be effected why he did not throw overboard his Guns ammunition war-like and other Stores.—

Eight Ton of Continental Hemp hath been lately sent from this place to Baltimore and the other part was to be wrought up for the said Brigantine if she should want the whole. We would have you see that such Cordage is made up as Captain Read may want as soon as possible that Vessel lying at a great expence and waiting only for Rigging, and dispose of the Remainder of the Hemp as you may judge proper.

We are Gentlemen

Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO RICHARD ELLIS ]

May 25th 1778

Sir

We are now to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 27th of April last. The receipt of yours of the 2d March we have already acknowledged and fully answered, and refer you to that answer—

We are exceedingly glad to hear of the arrival of the Raleighs Prize loaded with salt at Beaufort. The Continent as we informed you in our last are entitled to One half only of such Prizes as may be Captured by Continental Vessels of War. We would have you purchase the half of the salt belonging to the Captors at the lowest rate you can and remove to and store the same together with the Continental half at Newbern until further orders as this salt may be much wanted in the fall to pickle meat for the use of the Army. We have delivered your Oath of Allegiance and Oath of office to the Secretary you will take care not to sell anything belonging to the Continent that may come in your hands without first consulting us, unless the same should be of a perishable nature. We are sir with great respect

Your very hble servts



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

May 26th 1778

Gentlemen

We now transmit you by the hands of Mr. Norton Brailsford an Express the sum of fifty thousand Dollars agreeably to the enclosed receipt which you will receive and appropriate to the use of the Navy in your Department, crediting this Committee for the same. We hope this sum with the Monies which you will have received for the Warrants on the Loan Offices formerly transmitted will enable you to go on with vigor in your business, and it is our desire that your utmost endeavours be exerted to have all the Continental Vessels of war in your District speedily prepared for the sea & that you send them out to Cruize Against the enemy according to the plan proposed in your Letter of the 9th of March last.

We are Gentlemen  
Your hble servants.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JOHN LANGDON ]

May 30th 1778

Sir

Enclosed herein is a resolve of Congress of yesterday's date whereby you will find that the Ship<sup>1</sup> on the Stocks at Portsmouth heretofore intended for one of 74 Guns is to be constructed to carry 56 Guns only, upon two Batteries, that is to say Twenty eight 24 pdrs. upon the lower deck, & 28—18 Pdrs. upon the upper deck. We have determined to resume the building of this Ship Agreeable to the Resolve of Congress, and now direct that you employ the necessary workmen for that purpose and let them proceed immediately on that business which we expect will be conducted upon the best and most Economical terms for the public, under your direction.

We shall direct Captain Landais of our Navy to repair to your place and assist you in superintending the building of this Vessel, and as we consider him as having great knowledge in constructing and building of ships of war, we doubt not you will find him a useful assistant. You will inform us from time to time what occurs as necessary for us to be acquainted with in this business, and apply to the Navy Board at Boston who will furnish you with Money and every assistance in their power, they will also take proper measures for

<sup>1</sup> The America.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

procuring Guns, Stores, and other Materials for the Ship. You will please to exhibit your accounts with this committee to the said Board who we have directed to adjust and settle them.—

We are sir

Your hble servants

[ TO JOHN BRADFORD ]

May 30. 1778

Sir

We have before us your Letter of the 15th. ultimo enclosing your accounts against the Vessels fitted out by order of General Washington, we now desire that you produce Copy of these accounts to the Navy Board and also that you exhibit to said Board your General Account including all your transactions with this Committee which they will adjust and settle with you. You will give Credit for the Continental share of all Prizes that you have already received and in future account with the Navy Board for what you may hereafter receive.

We are sir

Yr. hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY ]

May 30th 1778

Sir

We having appointed you to command the Continental frigate Raleigh now in the Port of Boston in Massachusetts Bay, you are hereby directed to repair immediately to that place and there apply to the Honorable the commissioners of the Continental Navy Board who will deliver up that Frigate with all her appurtenances to your care, and in due time will give you orders for your employment which orders you must obey and fulfill as far as may be in your power.

We are Sir

Yr hble servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

May 30th 1778

Gentlemen

We have to acknowledge the receiving of your favours of the 7th 9th & 12th instant and to reply to their contents.—

In answer to that of the 7th we are glad to hear of the

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

arrivals you mention. We observe that you had offered the command of the Brigantine Resistance to Captain Waters who refused accepting it alledging he was intitled to a better vessel. We have determined that Captain William Burke shall command that Vessel of which you will please to notify him, and inform Captain Waters that should he again refuse such command as shall be offered him, we will consider the propriety of dismissing him from the service— You will have the Resistance fitted & manned for the sea immediately.

It was certainly out of the Line of your Department to have the receiving and storeing of Captain Greens cargo of Clothing & Stores—that was the business of the Continental Agent, who in the delivery thereof should be governed by the Orders of Congress, the Board of War or the Committee of Commerce agreeably to the enclosed Resolve of Congress dated the 28th Current which we send to prevent your taking unnecessary trouble in future.

The schooner Loyalty which you dispatched to bring flour & Iron is safely arrived at Sennepuxent, and we expect by this time is Laden'd and ready to proceed back if not already sailed. We observe what dificulty you have in procuring other suitable Vessels, and only wish that your exertions in that respect be in proportion to your want of those Articles. Principles of humanity & Œconomy direct the establishment of hospitals & that provision should be made for the sick seamen belonging to the Navy, and we doubt not Congress will consider that matter when time will permit. It gave us much pleasure to hear the Providence Frigate had got out but we are sorry to find that you despair of getting out the

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Trumbull. The Printers were premature in naming the New ship at Salisbury. The Congress have resolved that she be called the Alliance.

Mr. Vernon of your Board writes to Mr. Ellery of this Committee as follows: "The two ships at Salisbury & Norwich are much larger than any yet built, will bear 18 Pds. very well at least 16 of their Guns may be of that Size and wish they were Ordered in time before these Guns are provided." If you consider those ships as competent to carry sixteen 18 Pds. each we have no objections to their being put on board & should be glad to know whether guns of that size can be provided.

To yours of the 9th we shall answer that we are sorry Mr. Roach hath been so great a sufferer, and should be glad he would accept of a Lieutenancy until a command can be given him. As you think it would be proper to resume the Building of the frigate in Connecticut River we have determined so to do, and desire you will give the necessary orders for that purpose, agreeable to the plan you have proposed. We have not seen the Petition of the Hancocks officers we suppose it lies with the Secretary of Congress. we shall make enquiry and will duely consider it. We hope Strict enquiry and impartial judgement will be had on the conduct of Captains Manly, McNeill & Thompson. We desire that it may be a particular charge against Captain Manly how he came to surrender the Continental Frigate under his command without firing as it is said a Gun. and summon Captain William Burke as an evidence on his and Captain McNeills Trial. We have already wrote you that we wished to have as many of the Continental Vessels within your Department as can

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

be ready in convenient Time fitted for Sea, and sent out to Cruize collectively against the enemy. It is our desire that the Warren should join this force and that our former orders respecting her should not be executed.—We transmitted you the 23 instant 50,000 Dollars by Mr. Norton Brailsford an Express for your place which we hope will be adequate to the demands of your Department for some Time. When you are obliged to draw we shall answer your Bills, but wish you to be as spareing as possible, as the heavy demands of the Army Departments keeps the Treasury very low. As you have not been able to procure a Hull for the Ham[p]den's Rigging & Materials, we desire that you will order One to be built accomodated to them and employ Mr. Peck to plan the construction thereof.

In answer to yours of the 12th. we approve of your drawing in favour of Mr. Shaw for 80.000 dollars and shall pay the Bill when presented. [With respect to the ship Queen of France if she be calculated for a Cruizer we would have her employed as such, and joined with the other ships of war which you are to send out, but should she be a dull sailor and otherwise not well calculated for war, it is thought best to employ her as a merchantman, and in that case you will put her under the care of the Continental Agent to be employed agreeable to the orders of the Committee of Commerce As to the french officers on board that Vessel, they are become useless since the French Seamen have been taken away, and we apprehend it will be impracticable to man her with American seamen so long as they continue on board. We have [directed?] therefore that they shall be discharged. Any Contract that may have been

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

made with them in france we would have strictly fulfilled on our part. and you will either pay them their wages or give them Certificates to receive the same from our Ambassadors in france just as the Nature of their Agreement shall require.] We are glad to hear the frigate Deane had arrived at your port, and hope she is again preparing for sea. Enclosed is a Resolve of Congress of yesterdays date respecting the ship on the stocks at Portsmouth heretofore intended for a Seventy four but now to be constructed as a 56 Gun ship. We have determined to resume the building of that ship immediately, and now write to Mr. Langdon for that purpose, and that Captain Landais in conjunction with him is to superintend the building of her. You will afford all necessary assistance in the prosecution of that business.—

You will give strict orders to all Commanders of Continental Vessels of war, not to take any private property on board their Vessels unless by Order of Congress or this Committee.—

We have directed the Continental Agent John Bradford esqr. to exhibit to you his accounts against the Vessels fitted out by order of General Washington, and all other accounts he may have with this Committee, which you will please to examine and settle, He is to account with you for the Continental share of all Prizes already received, or that he may hereafter receive. This will be handed you by Captain John Barry whom we have appointed to Command the Frigate Raleigh—He is a brave active officer and we doubt not you will find him very attentive to his duty. You will put him in possession of the Raleigh, and he will be governed by



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

your orders. We have only to add that we hope your strongest exertions will be used in getting out the vessels of war agreeably to your plan, and that their successes will repair the losses and honor of our navy.

We are Gentlemen

Your Hble servts

P: S: We have directed John Langdon Esq to lay his Accounts before your Board which you will please to adjust & settle with him. As we would not in any respect have the cause of Captain Manly prejudged, so we would not have it understood from what we wrote you of the 6th of March that he was by any means appointed to Command the new frigate Alliance.

[ TO THE UNITED STATES COMMISSIONERS AT PARIS ]

June 10th 1778

Honble Gentlemen

There is wanted for a fifty Six Gun Ship now building at Portsmouth in the State of New Hampshire Twenty eight 24 Pounder Cannon & twenty eight 18 Pounder which we request you will order to be shipped for that Port or the Port of Boston by the first opportunity. Should the Continental frigates Boston & Providence be in France when this gets to hand they may take in those Cannon and in that case you will please to ship an equal number of each Size sufficient

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

to ballast said frigates as we shall have occasion for more than will be wanted for the 56 gun ship. We request your attention to this business and are honorable Gentlemen

Your obedt. servants

P: S: We request you will order our ships of war to sail in company as it is the practice of the enemy so to do—

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
MIDDLE DEPARTMENT ]

June 18th 1778

Gentlemen

We desire that a Court of Inquiry may be held to enquire into the Cause of the loss of the Continental Brig Independence John Young Esqr. Commander And if it shall appear that the same was occasioned by the negligence or mal Conduct of the Captain or any other Commissioned officers belonging to that vessel that then a Court Martial be held for the Trial of the officer so offending agreeable to a Resolve of Congress of the 6th of May last. We have ordered Captain Young to repair to Baltimore and hope you will be able to proceed upon that business immediately It is our desire that you order the seamen of the Independence to be paid off their wages. We have agreed that the officers of the said Brig shall have liberty to make a voyage in

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Private service their pay to cease during that time, and to inform us when they return that they may be again ordered upon service should there be occasion for them.

We are Gentl

Your Hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG ]

June 18th 1778

Sir

We desire you will repair to Baltimore where we have ordered the Navy Board to hold a Court of Inquiry into the Cause of the loss of the late Continental Brigantine Independence under your Command, and if it shall appear that the same was occasioned by your negligence or Mal Conduct or that of any of the Commissioned officers, that then a Court Martial be held for the trial of the Officer offending agreeable to a Resolution of Congress of the 6th of May last. We have directed the said Board to order Payment of your seamens wages & have agreed that your officers shall be permitted to make a voyage in private service their pay to cease during that time and when they return they are to give us notice that they may be ordered on Public service should there be Occasion for them.

We are sir

Your Hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

June 18th 1778

Gentlemen

This will be handed you by Captain Peter Landais whom Congress has appointed to take Command of the new frigate Alliance. We desire you will put that vessel under his care and use your utmost endeavours to have her speedily fitted and manned for the sea. We have desired Captain Landais to proceed as far as Portsmouth in New Hampshire to give his advice as to the Construction of the 56 Gun Ship now building there, he will afterwards return and attend the fitting & manning of the frigate which he is to command, and in which we doubt not you will find him very assiduous You will please to pay him the balance of his wages at the Rate of Sixty Dollars per Month from the date of his Commission. He hath not been paid any money at this place only what we agreed to allow for his travelling Expences to Boston. Inclosed is a Resolution of this Committee passed in consequence of a Memorial from sundry Captains of french Merchant ships which you will please to order to be duely executed. We are  
Gentl

Your Hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN PETER LANDAIS ]

June 18th 1778.

Sir

Congress having appointed you to command the frigate Alliance you are to repair to Boston and there apply to the Continental Navy Board who will put that vessel under your care. We doubt not your best exertions will be used in getting her speedily fitted and manned for the sea in which business you will be aided by the Navy Board whose orders in every respect you are punctually to obey. You are to proceed as far as Portsmouth in New Hampshire and there give your advice respecting the construction of the 56 gun ship now on the Stocks in that Port. We have directed the Navy Board to pay you the balance of your wages—and have agreed that the consideration of a gratuity to be made you be deffered until we shall be enabled by consulting with Silas Deane Esqr. to judge with propriety what sum will be adequate to your services. We are sir

Your very hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[TO WILLIAM SMITH ]

Sir

June 19th 1778

In a letter from the Eastern Navy Board dated the 2nd instant they wrote to us—"that they have already sent forward to Senpuxent three schooners which if they arrive safe will take more flour and Iron than is already provided, and shall soon get another which will be sufficient to bring the whole quantity proposed you will therefore please to order the remainder to be ready" It is the opinion of this committee that if there is not already at Senepuxent a sufficient quantity of Flour and Iron (which we suppose is the case) to load these Vessels that shall be sent out for that purpose by the Navy Board of the Eastern Department and arrive & the navigation of the Bay should be open—they should be ordered round to Baltimore and you are desired to send your orders accordingly. We are sir

Your hble servants

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

Gentlemen

June 19th 1778

We have been favoured with yours of the 25th. ultimo 2d & 8th Current which we have considered & as we wrote to you fully by Captain Barry and other late conveyances we shall now only reply to such parts

[ 260 ]

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

of your Letters as have not been determined on. So soon as will be convenient we wish to be furnished with the Accounts of your transactions. We agree that you shall appoint a Naval Paymaster for your Department and hope you will be able to get some proper person for that purpose. It is an office of much importance and should be filled by a man of integrity and capacity who will keep Regular and fair Books of accounts with all persons belonging to the Vessels of war within your department and pay them their wages as it may become due taking care always to keep a months pay in hand from the seamen until their time of entering is expired. Congress has not yet fixed a Salary for the Paymaster—when they do we presume it will be adequate to the importance of the office. Before this you will know that we have appointed Captain Barry to the Raleigh & as he is an active good officer, we have strong hopes she will shortly be manned.

Exclusive of the Vessels you have provided to carry dispatches to France, the sloop Providence will also be wanted for that purpose, and we request you will get her ready as soon as in your power. The Committee for foreign affairs will send off their dispatches to go by her in a day or two.—

We have only to repeat our former request that you will use your utmost endeavours to get our Vessels fitted for sea and sent out together as speedily as possible. We hope the news of the Bostons safe arrival in France may be true and congratulate you on the Enemies having been obliged to evacuate Philadelphia. We are Gentlemen

Your very Hble servants

[ 261 ]

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

P: S: We have received a Petition signed by Stephen Hill, Simon Gross, Joseph Adams, Adam Thaxter, Esek Hopkins & John Deamon.<sup>1</sup> Should they not be wanted in their stations on board any of the Continental Vessels—we have agreed that they shall be at liberty to make a voyage in Private service their pay to cease during that time, which you will please to inform them.—

[ TO CAPTAIN DANIEL WATERS ]

June 19th 1778

Sir

We have received your Letter of the 1st Instant and refer you to what we have wrote to the Navy Board touching your refusal of the Command of the Brigantine Resistance. We are Sir

Your hble servants

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN GREEN ]

June 19th 1778

Sir

We have received your favour of the 7th May we are now to inform you that we have written to the Navy Board fully as to the employment of the ship<sup>2</sup> under

<sup>1</sup> Officers of the Continental Navy.

<sup>2</sup> The frigate Queen of France.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

your command. We have directed them to discharge the french officers and now desire you will be governed intirely by the orders of the said Board.

We are sir

Your Hble servants

[ TO JOHN WEREAT<sup>1</sup> ]

June 24th 1778

Sir

We have received your favour of the 18th May advising the Capturing of three of the enemies Vessels by the Gallies under the Command of Oliver Bowen esqr. and approve of your intention to purchase the said Vessels for account of the United States which we expect you have executed and that they are employed in assisting of the Continental Troops upon the expedition to the southward. We expect shortly to have from you an account of your proceedings in that business. We enclose herewith a set of Rules & Regulations for the Navy and a Resolve of Congress of the 30th of October 1776 for your government a new set of Rules & Regulations for the Navy are now forming when they are finished we shall send you Coppies thereof in the mean time We are with much regard

Sir

Your very Hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Continental agent at Savannah, Georgia.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN OLIVER BOWEN<sup>1</sup> ]

June 24th 1778

Sir

We have received your Letters of the 6th April 7th & 17th May which with their enclosures we shall fully consider and will shortly transmit you our determination thereon.

In the mean time we think it justly due to your Merit to say that we highly esteem your prudence in the conduct of the squadron under your command and applaud the activity & spirit of your officers and men on a late occasion in Capturing the enemies Vessels on the Coast of Georgia which we request you will signify to them in the name of this Committee.

We are sir with much regard

Your very Hble servts

[ TO GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY ]

Philada July 11th 1778

Sir

A french Fleet of 12 Sail of the Line and 4 frigates being on the coast near the Capes of Delaware under command of Count D'Estaing vice Admiral of France which is proceeding to New York in order to co-operate

<sup>1</sup> Of the Georgia Navy.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

with the American Army in destroying the Sea and Land force of our enemy in that Harbor and it being understood here that some of the French ships now in Virginia were desirous of joining the Admiral when he came here; the Marine Committee request of you Sir, that you will be pleased to give immediate notice to such french Vessels that they may if they choose proceed to assist in the accomplishment of the great work meditated against the common enemy. As this is an affair that requires despatch so the Committee hope your Excellency will loose no time in giving the necessary information.

I have the Honor to be yr. Excellys

Hble servant

RICHD HENRY LEE Chairman

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

Philada July 11th 1778

Gentlemen

Your several Letters lately received have not been considered because of the obstructions created by a removal of Congress from York Town to this place where as yet the committee have not been able to get themselves properly fixed for business.—The sense entertained of the increasing importance of your Department will secure a close attention to it from this Committee and every care shall be taken to furnish you

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

with the money requisite for the proper Accomplishment of the ends proposed by your appointment. The immediate design of this Letter is to inform you of the arrival on the Coast near the Capes of Delaware of a french squadron consisting of 12 ships of the Line and four frigates under the command of the Count D Estaing Vice Admiral of France who is proceeding immediately to New York there to act in conjunction with the Army of the United States for destroying the fleet & army of the common enemy in that Harbour. Congress being determine[d] to give every possible aid to the execution of so salutary a purpose has directed us to order all the Continental frigates and armed Vessels within your Department to be immediately made ready for Sea and dispatched one after an other as soon as each can be prepared, to join the Squadron of france and to act in such manner as the Count D Estaing shall judge most proper for distressing and destroying the enemys force upon the Coast of North America. Congress trust to the bravery and good disposition of the American seamen that they will on this great occasion step forth with alacrity and exert themselves in supporting our freinds who have come so far to assist us to vanquish an enemy too long triumphant upon the sea. The expence attending this business no doubt will be considerable, altho we are well assured your œconomical wisdom will lead you to abridge it as far as may be possible. We shall without delay forward you as large a Sum of Money as can now be spared, and in the mean time desire you will on the credit of the States push the business forward with all possible vigor.

We are to observe to you that the french fleet is more

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

than fully manned, so that some small aid in way of seamen may be expected, and we mention this that you may not wait for the most compleat manning of every Vessel altho we wish you to procure as many seamen as you can consistant with the great object we have in view viz a speedy junction of our force with that of france.

We are Gentlemen

Your very hble servts

[ TO COUNT D'ESTAING ]

July 12th 1778

Sir

The Marine Committee of Congress have received information that the Squadron under your Excellencys Command has occasion for a supply of Water and fresh Provisions and they have taken proper measures to furnish both with all possible expedition The frigate Chimere and the two Vessels with her will be despatched immediately with as much Water as we can find Casks for; the enemy lately here having destroyed every thing of this kind that they could discover. The same Vessels will bring some hundred Barrels bread and flour with a small supply of fresh provisions. A Commissary has orders quickly to collect near Shrewsbury<sup>1</sup> and the Hook<sup>2</sup> 50 Bullocks and 700 Sheep with a quantity of vegetables a number of Poultry and he will

<sup>1</sup> On the coast of New Jersey.

<sup>2</sup> Sandy Hook.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

wait on your Excellency to know your pleasure concerning the particular place on the Water where he must bring them to be shipped. The same commissary has general orders to furnish your Excellency with such further supplies as you may please to direct. The accidents of wind and weather may possibly prevent the Chimere from arriving so soon with the water as it may be wanted and therefore I am to inform your Excellency that in Little Egg Harbour or in Tom's River neither of them far from the Hook fresh water may be conveniently obtained.

The Pilots on board the fleet will conduct Vessels sent for the purpose to either of these places. Your Excellency may be assured that Congress is disposed to supply your Excellency and the squadron under your command with every thing in their power that may induce to the accomplishment of the valuable ends you have in view against the Common enemy. I have the honor to be with the highest respect

Your Excellencys most obedt. & most Hble st

RICHARD H: LEE Chairman

[ TO COUNT D'ESTAING ]

July 17th 1778

Sir

I had the honor of writing to your Excellency on the 12th instant about the means of procuring fresh water and the measures taken by the Marine Committee of

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Congress to furnish fresh provisions for the squadron under your Excellencies Command. The Casks that could be obtained here since the late ravage of the enemy are delivered to the Chimere, and the three Vessels with her—they will bring the Squadron a present supply of water and I am informed that in future this article can be obtained easily and near to Sandy Hook as I formerly wrote your Excellency. The Chimere brings likewise Bread flour, fresh meat, and vegetables for the fleet, which we hope may answer present purposes, until the larger quantity shall be carried thro the Jersey and taken on board the squadron at such places as your Excellency shall appoint for the Commissary to deliver them at. I am desired by the Marine Committee to request your Excellency will be pleased to accept from them a small present of live Stock and vegetables in testimony of the high respect the Committee entertain for your Excellencies character.

I must beg leave once more to repeat the assurances already made, that the Marine Committee will at all times have pleasure in directing such further Provisions for the Squadron as you shall think proper to desire.

I have the honor to be with great respect your Excellencies

Most obedient & Most Hble servant

RICHARD HENRY LEE

Chairman of the Mar: Comtee.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

Gentlemen

July 24th 1778

We have received your sundry Letters of the 12th 24th & 29th ultimo and of the 4th 7th & 8th Current to which we shall now reply in their order. To yours of the 12th ultimo. Our letter to you of the 11th instant will convey our Instructions for every possible endeavour being exerted in preparing for Sea the continental Vessels of war in your department and for sending them out one after another to join the squadron of France under the command of vice Admiral the Count D Estaing therefore we hope before this will reach, that you will have despatched the Warren and that others will shortly follow. We enclose herewith a set of signals received from the french Admiral, copys of which you will deliver to our Commanders enjoining great secrecy and in case of necessity that they destroy them. We approve of your having purchased a Schooner for bringing round the flour and Iron from Senepuxent. In a Letter from William Smith Esqr our Agent in Maryland of the 18th instant is the following Paragraph. "I am sorry to inform you there is the greatest reason to believe Captain Whippy of the Schooner Loyalty is Captured by the enemy in his outward bound passage from Senepuxent—he had on board upwards of 900 Barrels flour and a quantity of barr Iron, and I am informed he was so imprudent as to go to sea when three of the enemies Cruizers were in



## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

sight—they were seen in chase of him, and as he is so dull a sailor, there is very small hopes of his having escaped— The Swan Captain Stiles arrived from Boston at Senepuxent about the 23d ultimo, her Cargo of flour and Iron was all ready and doubt not she is despatched before this.” Should the Schooner be taken it will be a disapointment and we think Captain Whippys conduct will be highly reprehensible.—To yours of the 24th ultimo. The estimate of Monies wanted in your Department hath been laid before Congress who have granted the full amount we therefore send you five hundred & Twenty four thousand by the Bearer according to his Receipt enclosed— this large sum we hope will be fully adequate to all your wants, and enable you to prosecute with vigour the business of your Department, we have no doubt but that you will render the expenditure thereof as beneficial to the public as possible.

To yours of the 29th ultimo. We are much pleased to hear of Captain Summers success and the arrival of his Prizes. To prevent delay and inconvenience hereafter as was the Case with regard to the Brigantine Resistance being without a Commander, we empower you to appoint to any Vessel under 20 Guns any Captain that may be unemployed in your department.

We shall lay before Congress the Sentences of the Courts Martial relative to Captains Manly and McNeill. The account you give of the Ham[p]dens Stores has determined us to countermand the orders we formerly gave to build a hull Accomodated to them therefore we desire you may drop that plan. When a proper opportunity shall present and you may think Mr.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Pecks Talents in the construction of Ships will be useful to the Public, you will please to give us notice. We shall overlook Captain Waters mistake and consider his appointment the first opportunity. We enclose herewith an order of the Board of War to their Agents in the Eastern States to furnish you with Blankets, Duck, Oznabrigs Coarse Linnen, Stockings and Coarse Cloths, lead Copper &c: which they may have in their possession, and you may want for fitting out the Ships of war in your Department. As most of these articles are essentially necessary for the army and will be much wanted in the Winter we request you will be sparing of them as possible.

To yours of the 4th instant. We inclose herein a Resolve of Congress of the 15th November 1776 respecting the Bounty allowed for Men and Guns taken from the enemy at sea. It is the opinion of this Committee that Men of war and Privateers are the only Vessels that comes within the meaning of this Resolve, therefore on all Vessels coming within this discription the Bounty is to be paid but none other. We have ordered the Navy Board here to make a return of the British Seamen that are Prisoners within their district, when they do we shall attend to your proposal of Exchanging them for ours at Halifax and will write you. For the present we desire you will engage Pilots for our Ships of war on the best terms you can. We wish to know your reasons for having Pilots established in the Navy—we apprehend they are founded on some local custom with you with which we are unacquainted.—You will also inform us what pay and share of Prize Moneys should be allowed to Pilots. We never have allowed

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

any Commission to any of our Captains for disbursing Money, and would by no means have that Custom introduced. As we do not think proper that the Public should be concerned with individuals in Vessels of War we cannot accept of Mr. Ginons proposals.

To yours of the 7th instant. We do not approve of going into the custom of allowing travelling expences to the officers of the Navy, but on account of the particular circumstances attending Lieutenant Leeds<sup>1</sup> of the Brig Resistance we make him a gratuity of the amount of his account viz £56.17.9 which you will please to pay.

To yours of the 8th. instant. As you think the ship Queen of France will do for a Cruizing Ship we desire she may be equipped accordingly and the Command of her given to Captain Joseph Olney— The One half of the sea Books you mention you will please to send forward to this place.

It is our desire that you have the accounts of the building fitting &c of the Hancock & Boston frigates compleatly settled and examined and sent forward to us. It is also our desire that you keep seperate and distinct accounts of all Vessels ordered to be built within your Department, and that you regularly furnish this Committee with the Cost of each when fitted for the sea; and that afterwards you keep seperate and distinct accounts of the Disbursements of each Vessel and furnish us with them in that manner. You will direct the Commanders that sail by your Orders to inform this Committee of all occurrences that may happen on their Voyages.

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant William Leeds.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

You will please to hold a Court of Inquiry on Captain Johnstons<sup>1</sup> conduct relative to the loss of the Continental Brig Lexington of which he was Commander. Mr. Bradford the Agent at Boston hath lately remitted to us a bill drawn by Otis & Andrews on the Clothier General James Mease Esqr. at this place for 29.651½ Dollars being for Prize Goods which they purchased of him— We desire you will inform Mr. Bradford, that he is to charge this Bill to your Board and not to the Marine Committee, as he and all other Agents in your department are to settle their transactions with you. We shall shortly transmit you the Money for the above Bill.

We are Gentlemen  
Your Hble servants

P: S: We send this Letter by Post being anxious to communicate the contents—the 524000 dollars shall be sent off immediately after it.

[TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

July 29th 1778

Gentlemen

The Committee now send by the Bearer hereof Mr. William Dodd the sum of Two hundred Thousand Dollars agreeable to his receipt enclosed, which he will

<sup>1</sup> Captain Henry Johnson.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

deliver to your Board, being part of a Warrant for 524,000 Dollars lately Issued by Congress for the use of the Navy in your Department. The Treasurer at this time is not able to pay more of the Warrant [than] the sum now sent you, but in a few days he will have it in his power when we shall send forward the balance.

I am Gentlemen

Your Hble servant

By order      JOHN BROWN Sec'y

[TO JOHN WEREAT ]

July 29th 1778—

Sir

Inclosed is a list of Timber wanted for repairing Two of our Continental Frigates which were partly burn'd by the Enemy while at this place.<sup>1</sup> It is our request that on receipt hereof, you immediately provide a Suitable Vessel, put on board of her the Timber Specified in Said List and despatch her for this Port, ordering the Captain to use all expedition in the Voyage.

As there is a considerable quantity of Timber belonging to the Public in your State and under your care, which will be wanted at this place for the use of our Navy—we now direct that you take speedy measures for sending it round here. In procuring Vessels for

<sup>1</sup> Philadelphia.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

that purpose we have no doubt but you will be as attentive to the Interests of the States as possible. We are

Sir

Your Hble Servants

400 middle Foothooks	}	To repair two Frigates one of 36 the other 28 Guns
400 upper Do		
400 Top Timbers		
400 half Timbers		
10 Haws[?] Ps.[?]		
20 [?] counter Timbers		

[ TO COLONEL JOHN BEATTY<sup>1</sup> ]

Sir

July 30th 1778

Your letter of yesterdays date hath been received and laid before Congress— You will find herein a Copy of a Resolve passed in consequence thereof which for the present will answer all the questions you have proposed except what relates to the French Seamen—on that head we expect you will receive Instructions from the French Minister through Colo. Boudinet. We think it necessary to explain that you are not to consider the means to be furnished the seamen for going on to Boston as meaning the advance of Money, that being to be done at Boston, but you will give Orders to the proper Continental officers to supply them on the way with Provisions.

We are Sir

Your Hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Commissary-General of Prisoners.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL OF GEORGIA ]

July 31. 1778

Gentlemen

We take the liberty of enclosing herein a Resolve of Congress passed the 29th instant to the execution of which we request your Attention. Our Agent Mr. Wearet will lay before you the Papers relative to the Complaint made by him against Colonels Elbert & White<sup>1</sup> on your requiring the same. We have the honor to be

Gentlemen

Your very Hble serts

[ TO JOHN WERAT ]

August 1. 1778.

Sir

We have to acknowledge your favour of the 1st of June last which with its inclosures were laid before Congress, in consequence whereof a resolve was passed Copy of which we now enclose. This Resolve we have sent to the Governor and Council of your State and have informed them that you would produce Copies of the papers which occasioned it, which we request you will do.

We wrote you the 24th of June last, and sent you a

<sup>1</sup> Colonels Samuel Elbert and John White, of Georgia.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

book containing extracts from the Journals of Congress relative to the Capture and Condemnation of Prizes together with the Rules and Regulations of the Navy. In that Book page 12. is a resolve which relates solely to prizes made by the people or detachments from the Army without the Agency of Continental Vessels, and therefore not to effect Captures made by Continental Vessels having accidentally Continental Troops on board, but Prizes made by Continental Vessels altho they may have accidentally Continental Troops on board are to be governed by the General Regulations made respecting Prizes taken by Continental Vessels.

We are much pleased with your Zeal and attention to the public Interest, which you have testified in many Instances and are with great regard Sir

Your very Hble serts

[ TO THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS ]

August 4th. 1778.

Gentlemen

It is the request of this Committee that you will aid the Navy Board with the Powers of Government in manning the Continental ships of war that are at Boston which have been Ordered out to join the French Fleet under the command of vice Admiral the Count D Estaing which Congress most earnestly wish may be speedily accomplished.

We are Gentlemen

Your hble servts



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

Gentlemen

August 5th 1778

Since our last of the 24th ultimo, we have received yours of the 17th and 22d. to which we shall now reply.

As we shall often want small Vessels for Packets we desire you will order three Schooners to be built of about 50 or 60 Tons burthen and let swift Sailing be the Object— Mr. Peck may be employed to exercise his Talents in constructing One of them. We are glad to hear of the arrival of the Schooner Loyallty as you will perceive by our last we had reason to fear she had fallen into the hands of the enemy. We hope the Schooner Swan Captain Stiles will arrive safe.

We enclose herein a Resolve of Congress passed yesterday directing a Compensation of 500 Dollars to be made to Mr. Storey<sup>1</sup> the Clk of your Board for his extra services and expences since his appointment which you will please to pay him. You will also find another resolve of Congress allowing you 365 dollars each for travelling expences in visiting the different parts of your department for the year past which we hope will be deem'd sufficient.

We are very sorry to hear of the misfortune that had befallen the Schooner Ranger—we have no doubt but you will duely attend to have such things as have been saved from her applied to the public account.

<sup>1</sup> William Storey.

## OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

The Prices you are obliged to give for Cordage, are indeed very extravagant, but at this time we cannot remedy that evil as the Ships that are now built must be fitted out. It will be an object with us when we order other Ships to be built to provide their materials on the best terms. We hope the Warren has gone to Sea and that the Raleigh will shortly follow her— We wrote by yesterdays post to the Governor and Council of Massachusetts to aid you in Manning the ships at Boston, which we expect they will do, and that you will thereby be enabled to send out the Vessels very shortly.

We have directed the Paymaster of this department to send you a State of Lieutenant Morans account. Mr. Trevot was at York Town when Congress were there, but went off without making any application.

We have already sent you by Mr. Dodd 200,000 Dollars, and wish we could now send you the remainder of the Warrant granted by Congress for your department. The Treasury hath not yet got money sufficient for that purpose, but in a few days we expect to get the balance which shall be immediately sent forward together with the Money for Mr. Bradfords Bill.

We are with regard Gentlemen

Your Hble servants

P: S: You will in future send forward the proceedings at large of all Courts Martial—at present those relative to Captains Manly and McNeill are wanted; please to Send by the first opportunity.—

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO COLONEL JOHN BEATTY ]

August 12th. 1778

Sir

You are hereby directed forthwith to send into New York an equal Number of British Seamen Prisoners of war to the United States, to those of American seamen lately sent out from thence by Admiral Gambier, or that may hereafter be sent out agreeably to the tenor of our proposition, which was to return an equal number of Prisoners of the same rank and condition—making a distinction betwixt men and Boys, Sick and well.

Mr. Barney<sup>1</sup> 2nd Lieutenant of the Continental frigate Virginia and Lieutenant Pownal<sup>2</sup> of Marines of the Said Frigate having come from New York, It is our desire that you send in Exchange for them the Second Lieutenant of the British frigate Mermaid and the first Lieutenant of Marines belonging to said frigate who are in captivity at this place.

You will please to observe that British seamen taken by the French and now Prisoners within these States are not to be exchanged by you.

We are Sir

Your Hble servants

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant Joshua Barney.

<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant Samuel Pownal.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVY BOARD OF THE  
EASTERN DEPARTMENT ]

August 12th 1778

Gentlemen

We are favoured with yours of the 29th ulto and now desire you will send to us an account of the value of the Provisions which you have spared to the Commissarys for the use of General Sullivans Army in order that the same may be duely settled.

We beg you will enquire for Mr. Galletheiu a french Gentleman lately gone from this place to Boston and inform him that it is our desire that you accomodate him with a free Passage to france in the first Continental Vessel that may be going that way.

The Treasurer has given us assurance that he will be able to pay the balance of the Warrant for the use of your department in a few days which shall be immediately sent forward.

We have only to repeat our great desire to have the Continental Vessels at sea, which no doubt you are using your endeavours to accomplish.

We are Gentlemen

Your very Hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO JOHN BRADFORD ]

August 12th. 1778.

Sir

We have received your favour of the 30th ultimo advising the arrival of the Prize Brig Nancy with 2070 quintals of Fish taken by the Continental Brig. General Gates which is a pleasing account and we hope to hear Shortly of the Other Prizes arriving from Captain Skimmer. As the Continental portion of the above Cargo of Fish will be wanted for the use of the Army and the French Fleet, we desire it may not be sold but that you will deliver to the Commissary General of Purchases or his Order any quantity thereof he may require taking receipts for the Same.

We are Sir

Your Hble servants.

[ TO JEREMIAH WADSWORTH<sup>1</sup> ]

August 12th. 1778

Sir

A Prize Brig taken by a Continental Vessel having lately arrived at Boston with a Cargo of 2070 Quintals Fish we have directed the Continental Agent there

<sup>1</sup> Commissary-General of Purchases.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

(John Bradford Esquire) to deliver to your Order the Continental Portion of the said Fish being one half, should it be required for the use of the Army or the french fleet.

We are Sir  
Your Hble servants

[ TO COUNT D'ESTAING ]

August 12th. 1778

Sir

The Marine Committee of Congress have heard with concern that the Squadron under your Excellencys command was on the 4th instant supplied with no more than 20 days provisions, but you may be assured Sir, that accident and concurrence of Circumstances, not a want of Zeal and Industry to supply you has hitherto delayed the arrival of Provisions. The enclosed paper will shew your excellency what orders have been Issued from the Marine Committee on this subject, with the Measures taken and taking to comply with these orders. The movement of the Squadron and the Number of the enemies Cruizers, between this place, the great resource of Provisions especially of the Bread kind, rendering a long Land carriage necessary have chiefly produced this delay. In future we hope you will receive a more regular supply, except it be of Salt provisions which the want of Salt, the great consumption of the army, and the season of the year, renders scarce and difficult to be

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

obtained. To your wisdom must be left the propriety of Spareing the salted provisions as much as possible, and using fresh whilst you remain in a Country capable of furnishing the latter in abundance, but for the reasons above given not well provided with the former at present. A considerable quantity of bread, flour, live Stock vegetables and water have been put on board the frigate Chimere and the Transports with her, but these I apprehend have not reached the Squadron. The Commissary General has fixed directions to supply your Excellency from time to time with such quantities of Provisions as you shall call for. I have the honor to be with sentiments of the highest respect and esteem, Sir,

Your Excellencies

Most obedient Hble servant

RICHARD HENRY LEE Chn  
of the Marine Committee

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN GREEN ]

August 20th 1778.

Sir

The Brigantine Retaliation being at present in the Service of the United States and under your command; on being ready you are immediately to join the French Frigate Chimere and proceed with her down the Delaware in search of the enemies Ships said to be in the River or this Bay. If you fail meeting with the enemies Ships in the River or the Bay, you are after parting with the Frigate Chimere at the Capes of Delaware, to

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

continue to cruze of[f] the said Capes for the time stipulated with your Crew, not exceeding ten leagues from Cape Henlopen.

Should you be fortunate to take prizes, you must send them to the most convenient port in the United States, and the Cruize being ended you are to return with your Brigantine to Philadelphia and make report of your Cruize to this Committee together with the Journals of the same. You will use your endeavours to prevail with the directors of the Brig Convention belonging to this State to order the said Brigantine to make the Cruize aforesaid in company with you. On going down the Bay you will proceed ahead of the Frigate Chimere if desired so to do by the captain of that frigate in order to reconnoitre the enemy, and receive on board your Brig the Pilot of the Chimere should the Captain request it.

Wishing you success we are sir

Your Hble servants

[ TO RICHARD PETERS<sup>1</sup> ]

Sir

August 21. 1778.

As Colonel Pickering's<sup>2</sup> letter to this Committee of the 19th instant Stated the Military Stores at Baltimore to be so small as to render it unnecessary to appoint a Commissary to take charge of them, it was concluded that

<sup>1</sup> Secretary of the Board of War.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Timothy Pickering, member of the Board of War.



OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

these Stores were not wanted on this quarter; and therefore altho an immediate call for them in the Marine way did not exist, the Committee upon consideration of probable want, did determine that the stores should be sent to Portsmouth, where a Continental agent already appointed might take charge of them— But your letter of this day representing that the Stores may be wanted here, the Committee have reversed their order of yesterday, and the Stores are now at the disposal of your board. I have the honor to be Sir

Your very Hble servant  
R. H. LEE Chairman

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY<sup>1</sup> ]

Sir

August 24th. 1778

Immediately upon receipt of these our orders you will commence on a Cruize in Company with the Continental Brig. Resistance, Captain Bourke, between Cape Henlopen and Occracock on the Coast of North Carolina, with a view to take certain armed Vessels fitted out by the Goodriches,<sup>2</sup> or any other of the enemies Vessels that may be infesting that Coast.

As both the Raleigh and Resistance may soon be wanted to answer the purpose of Convoy, you are to manage your Cruize assd. as that you may be ready to receive the future orders of this Committee. For this

<sup>1</sup> Commander of the frigate Raleigh.

<sup>2</sup> Tory privateersmen.

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

purpose you are once a week to put into Cheseapeake Bay and call at the Town of Hampton, where you will find such orders lodged and you are to continue to cruize and call at Hampton in this manner until you receive our Instructions.

We are Sir  
Your Hble servants

P: S: You will communicate to Captain Burke these our Orders, and as Senior officer will give such Instructions for the Cruize as may be necessary. We have written to the Governor of Virginia to furnish you at Hampton with such provisions or Supplies as you and captain Bourke may want. We expect that Governor will appoint some person at Hampton to supply you—let us know by every opportunity the progress of your Cruize.

[ TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM BURKE ]

August 24th. 1778.

Sir

We have given orders to Captain John Barry of the Frigate Raleigh for a Cruize on the Coast in which he is to be accompanied by the Brig Resistance under your command. Captain Barry will communicate to you a Copy of our orders and as Senior Officer will give you such further Instructions as may be necessary which you are to obey.

We are Sir

Your hble servants

OUT-LETTERS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE

[ TO CAPTAIN JOHN BARRY ]

August 28th. 1778.

Sir

Agreeable to what we wrote you the 24th. instant which Letter you will receive at Rhode Island, this will meet you at Hampton in Virginia where we hope you will get safe and you are duely to observe the following orders.

So soon as you shall receive information from Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth Commissary General of Purchases, who will be in Virginia, that he hath any number of Vessels not less than Six, loaded and ready for the Sea, you are to proceed and take such Vessels under your Convoy and conduct them to the places of destination pointed out by the said commissary, which having done you and Captain Burke of the Resistance are to return to your Cruizing station directed by our Letter of the 24th instant and you are again to call in at Hampton once a week and in receiving information from the Commissary General that he hath other Vessels ready for your convoy you are to proceed with them as he shall direct.

We wish you much Success & are sir

Your very Hble servants



## THE NAVAL HISTORY SOCIETY

THE NAVAL HISTORY SOCIETY has been established for the purpose of publishing and preserving manuscripts, documents, and writings relating to our naval history, naval art and science, and the surroundings and experiences of seamen in general and of American seamen in particular.

THE SOCIETY HAS ALREADY ISSUED:

In 1910: Volume I. *The Logs of the Serapis, Alliance, Ariel under the Command of John Paul Jones, 1778-1780.* Edited by Captain John S. Barnes.

In 1911: Volume II. *The Narrative of Nathaniel Fanning, an Officer of the Revolutionary Navy.* Edited by Captain John S. Barnes.

In 1912: Volume III. *The Despatches of Molyneux Shuldham, Vice Admiral of the Blue and Commander in Chief of His Britannic Majesty's Ships in North America, January-July 1776.* Edited by Robert W. Neeser.

For 1913: Volume IV. *The Out-Letters of the Continental Marine Committee and Board of Admiralty, 1776-1780.* Volume I. Edited by Dr. Charles Oscar Paullin.

Other works in preparation are the second volume of the *Out-Letters of the Continental Marine Committee and Board of Admiralty*, the *Journals and Letters of Gustavus Conyngham*, and the *Despatches of Thomas Graves*.

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