

Privateering Selections - American Revolution

Great Britain. Colonial Office. Original Correspondence:

America and West Indies: Military Despatches (CO 5/83-111): 1763-1783

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**References taken from *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783*.

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**** Interpreting References: fos = no. appearing at the top of every second page.

| Date & Location | Abstract | Reference to Originals (vol. & folio no.) |
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| 3 December 1775, Boston [Massachusetts] | Maj.-General William Howe to Earl of Dartmouth. <i>Nancy</i> , with arms, a mortar and stores, was taken by rebel privateer last week in the Bay. | C.O.5, vol. 92, fos. 358-363d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 235, pp.198-202 |
| 13 December 1775, Boston [Massachusetts] | Maj.-General William Howe to Earl of Dartmouth, concerning capture by rebels of ordnance brig <i>Nancy</i> and another vessel carrying woolens. Rebel privateers make this port unsafe except for armed vessels; propose stores etc. be sent out in ships of war. One privateer with 73 men has been brought in, the prisoners sent to England. | C.O.5, vol. 93, fos.10-13d; entry of covering letter in C.O. 235, pp.202-205 |
| 13 December 1776, St James's | Maj.-General William Howe to Earl of Dartmouth, enclosed: Cambridge [Massachusetts], 8 October 1775, orders by General George Washington to Captain Sion Martingale of armed brig. <i>Washington</i> to take vessels in service of ministerial army. Prisoners to be treated with kindness. Captain, officers and crew have shares in prizes. | C.O.5, vol. 93, fos.10-13d; entry of covering letter in C.O. 235, pp.202-205 |
| 14 December 1775, Boston [Massachusetts] | Maj.-General William Howe to Earl of Dartmouth, (Private). I advised sending captured crew of rebel privateer to England in order to spread terror among seafaring people here and because I wish to distinguish war on land and war at sea. | C.O.5, vol. 93, fos. 14-15d; entry in C.O.5, 235, pp.206-208 |

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| 1 February 1776, Whitehall [England] | Lord George Germain to General William Howe. Officers of rebel privateers are returned to you; private men have entered H.M's ships. | C.O.5, vol. 93, fos.16-20d; entry in C.O.5, 243, pp.113-116 |
| 7 July 1776, Staten Island [New York] | General William Howe to Lord George Germain (No. 18). Highland corps has not arrived by two transports, are reported taken by privateers. | C.O.5, vol. 93, fos. 214-216d; entry in C.O.5, 235, pp.310-315 |
| 4 April 1777, New York | General Sir William Howe to Lord George Germain, enclosing letter from Captain Stuart. I shall appoint Colonel Prevost brigadier-general. Defenses of Mobile need to be strengthened. Rebels have cruisers between Jamaica [West Indies] and Pensacola [Florida]. | C.O.5, vol. 94 fos. 153-162d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 236, pp. 62-64 |
| 24 October 1778, Whitehall [England] | Lord George Germain to General Sir Henry Clinton; duplicates of letters of 11 and 12 August have arrived; originals were thrown overboard in engagement with privateer when Colonel Howard was killed. Lord Cornwallis' letter of 6 September brings news of enemy evacuation of Rhode Island. | C.O.5, vol. 96, fos. 88-89d; entry in C.O.5, 243, pp. 274-276 |
| 4 November 1778, Whitehall [England] | Lord George Germain to Sir Henry Clinton stating that passengers by <i>Eagle</i> and <i>Harriot</i> packets, taken by <i>Vengeance</i> privateer were released on promise of exchange, which Clinton is authorized to make. | C.O.5, vol. 96, fos. 137-138d; entry in C.O.5, 243, pp. 280-281 |
| 12 January 1779, New York | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosed: Bermuda, 24 November, 1779. Governor George James Bruere to Sir H. Clinton. Major Sutherland and troops arrived in time to prevent insult by privateers and rebellious inhabitants. | C.O.5, vol. 97, fos. 77-83d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 236, p.296 |
| 27 September 1779, Whitehall [England] | Lord George Germain to General Sir Henry Clinton (Secret). Loss of St Vincent and Grenada means that troops must stay in West Indies; Sir George Collier's success at Penobscot should distress New England's privateering. | C.O.5, vol. 98, fos. 83-92d; entry in C.O.5, 263, pp. 80-86 |
| 5 June 1780, Charleston | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain (separate). Army and navy officers have differed on disposal of rebel ships taken at Charleston. Matter is submitted to the King. (Privateers) | C.O.5, vol. 100, fos. 7-20d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 238, pp.26-27 |
| 5 June 1780, Charleston | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosed: Undated proposal [by army] that all captures made ashore or afloat be divided between army and navy according to ranks and numbers. (Prizes) | C.O.5, vol. 100, fos. 7-20d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 239, pp.26-27 |
| 5 June 1780, Charleston | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosed: Undated proposal [by navy] that same be divided half to army and half to navy. (Prizes) | C.O.5, vol. 100, fos. 7-20d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 239, pp.26-27 |

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| 5 June 1780, Charleston | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosed: Richmond, 19 May 1780. Representatives of navy to field officers of army. Proposal submitted yesterday is opinion of our corps. (Prizes) | C.O.5, vol. 100, fos. 7-20d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 239, pp.26-27 |
| 5 June 1780, Charleston | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosed: Charleston, 19 May 1780. Representatives of army to captains of R.N. squadron at Charleston. Army did more service. We are ready to abide decision of Admiral and General.(Prizes) | C.O.5, vol. 100, fos. 7-20d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 239, pp.26-27 |
| 5 June 1780, Charleston [South Carolina] | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosed: Richmond, 20 May 1780. Representatives of navy to field-officers of army. Admiral Arbuthnot finds our proposal proper and does not wish to trouble the General. (Prizes) | C.O.5, 100, fos. 7-20d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 239, pp.26-27 |
| 8 March 1781, New York | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain requesting instructions to obviate disagreement between army and navy. Troops should have equal entitlement to prizes when acting with sea-service. | C.O.5, vol. 101, fos. 282- 291d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 238, pp. 340- 341 |
| 8 March 1781, New York | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosed: Portsmouth, 5 February 1781. Brig.-General Benedict Arnold to Sir H. Clinton, soliciting justice in division of prizes. | C.O.5, vol. 101, fos. 282- 291d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 238, pp. 340- 341 |
| 8 March 1781, New York | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosed: Portsmouth, 5 February 1781. Same to Commodore Thomas Symonds. You proposed equal division of prize-money but now appear to deny army its share. | C.O.5, vol. 101, fos. 282- 291d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 238, pp. 340- 341 |
| 8 March 1781, New York | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosed: 5 February 1781. Commodore Symonds to Brig.-General Arnold. R.N. captains have changed their minds and withdrawn first proposals. (Prizes) | C.O.5, vol. 101, fos. 282- 291d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 238, pp. 340- 341 |
| 8 March 1781, New York | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosed: Portsmouth [England?], 5 February 1781. Brig.-General Arnold to Commodore Symonds saying that he will lay matter before commanders-in-chief. (Prizes) | C.O.5, vol. 101, fos. 282- 291d; entry of covering letter in C.O.5, 238, pp. 340- 341 |
| 2 May 1781, Whitehall [England] | Lord George Germain to General Sir Henry Clinton. Matter of collection of New York duties is before Treasury but I am not convinced by Chamber of Commerce's reasoning. Without agreement between army and navy respecting prizes, each must be confined to what it takes. Property of loyal subjects must be respected. | C.O.5, vol. 101, fos. 309- 310d; entry in C.O.5, 244, pp. 299-301 |
| [2 June] 1781 | Memorial of Simon Porridge, on behalf of Indians of Chappaquiddick [Massachusetts], to the King, declaring loyalty and praying relief from plundering by British privateers. | C.O.5, vol. 101, fos. 317- 318d |

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| 18 July 1781, New York [New York] | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain. Mortified at division of prizes, army has libelled last captures they made in Chesapeake [Virginia?] and hopes to be awarded same. | C.O.5, vol. 103, fos.3-4d |
| 23 March 1782, New York [New York] | General Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, enclosing following and requesting that army may be put on equal footing with respect to prizes taken in Chesapeake [Virginia?] | C.O.5, vol. 105, fos. 50-53d |
| 5 June 1782, Whitehall [England] | Earl of Shelburne to General Sir Guy Carleton. Army's claim to share in prized taken in Chesapeake [Virginia?] in April 1781 has been upheld. | C.O.5, vol. 106, fos. 37-46d |
| 14 June 1782, New York [New York] | General Sir Guy Carleton to Earl of Shelburne (No. 6), enclosed: New York, 9 May 1782, Rear-Admiral Robert Digby to Sir G. Carleton. Am I to continue capturing American vessels and permitting privateers to go out? | C.O.5, vol. 106, fos. 104-109d |
| 14 June 1782, New York | General Sir Guy Carleton to Earl of Shelburne (No. 6), enclosed: New York, 13 May 1782, Sir G. Carleton to Rear-Admiral Digby. I am not authorized to give opinion but think cruisers and privateers should continue to go out, though refraining from committing hostilities ashore. | C.O.5, vol. 106, fos. 104-109d |
| 12 September 1782, New York | General Sir Guy Carleton to Secretary of State for Southern Department (No. 22), enclosed: Headquarters, 8 September 1782, General George Washington to Sir G. Carleton, acknowledging letter of 23 August and proposing meeting of commissioners at Tappan [New York] on 18th inst. I will not interfere with civil power. British may have suspended operations on land but their cruisers are still active. Parties on frontier include whites as well as Indians and are regularly commissioned. (Privateers) | C.O. 5, vol. 107, fos. 85-90d |
| 27 October 1782, Whitehall [England] | Thomas Townsend to General Sir Guy Carleton. Give all possible protection to property of British subjects in colonies being evacuated. Merchants are concerned at danger from our own cruisers. | C.O.5, vol. 107, fos. 114-117d |
| 17 November 1782, New York [New York] | New York, 15 November 1782. Proceedings of board of general officers to determine division of prizes taken in Chesapeake [Virginia?] in 1781. | C.O.5, vol. 107, fos.342-349d |
| 17 November 1782, New York [New York] | Flushing, 26 June 1782. Lieut.-Colonel de Fuchs to Sir G Carleton, claiming share of prizes. | C.O.5, vol. 107, fos.342-349d |
| 17 November 1782, New York | Plan for distribution of prize money from captures by army in James River [Virginia?] in April and May 1781. | C.O.5, vol. 107, fos.342-349d |
| 17 January 1783, New York [New York] | General Sir Guy Carleton to Thomas Townshend (No. 50), enclosed: Lancaster, 16 October 1782, certificate by A. Gillon that thirty-nine named Germans have entered <i>South Carolina</i> , Captain John Joyner, and may pay 80 dollars out of prize-money for their discharge (American privateers) | C.O.5, vol. 108, fos. 49-71d |

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| 15 March 1783, New York [New York] | General Sir Guy Carleton to Thomas Townshend (No. 62), enclosed: Annapolis, [Maryland]., 21 February 1783. Governor William Paca to General Washington, complaining of raising parties in Chesapeake Bay which land and plunder property. (Privateers) | C.O.5, vol. 108, fos. 247- 258d |
| 15 March 1783, New York [New York] | General Sir Guy Carleton to Thomas Townshend (No. 62), enclosed: New York, 15 March 1783, Sir G. Carleton to Governor Paca [of Maryland]. I have referred matter to law officers but can inform you now that I regard these operations as irregular and contrary to my line of conduct. (Privateers) | C.O.5, vol. 108, fos. 247- 258d |
| 15 March 1783, New York [New York] | General Sir Guy Carleton to Thomas Townshend (No. 62), enclosed: New York, 6 March 1783, Lieut.-General James Robertson to Maurice Morgann. These privateers are properly commissioned but I will do what I can to stop them. | C.O.5, vol. 108, fos. 247- 258d |
| 15 March 1783, New York | General Sir Guy Carleton to Thomas Townshend (No. 62), enclosed: New York, 8 March 1783, Maurice Morgann to Attorney-General John T. Kempe. Sir G. Carleton wishes opinions of law officers on operations of privateers ashore. | C.O.5, vol. 108, fos. 247- 258d |
| 11 April, New York [New York] | General Sir Guy Carleton to Thomas Thownshend (No. 66), enclosure: 2. Office of Foreign Affairs, Philadelphia, 24 arch 1783. Robert R. Livingston to Sir G. Carleton. Vessel from Cadiz has brought order for recall of French cruisers. | C.O.5, vol. 109, fos. 1-42d |
| 11 April 1783, New York [New York] | General Sir Guy Carleton to Thomas Townshend, enclosed: 24 March 1783, Resolution of Congress recalling all armed cruisers under commission of U.S. | C.O.5, vol. 109, fos. 1-42d |