

The Enemy, by this Surrender, lost several Ships and Vessels which fell into our Hands. Some were burned by themselves, among which were Two large French Ships, who were said to be loaded with a Thousand Hogheads of Tobacco.

Apprehending that many more Rebel Vessels had pushed up the River, I dispatched the Cornwallis Galley, Two Gun-boats, Four Flat-boats manned and armed, together with Four Privateers which had desired to receive Orders from me, under the Command of Lieutenant Bradley, assisted by Lieutenants-Hitchcock and Johnson, in Pursuit of them. They were very successful in their Enterprise, taking and burning a great Number of the Enemy's Vessels, many of which were on the Stocks ready for Launching. Amongst the Captures was the Black Snake, a Rebel Privateer of Fourteen Guns, who, after being cannonaded by the Gun-boats, was carried by boarding, with the Loss of some of the Rebels, but on our Side Two Men only were wounded.

I had sent some small Ships, under the Direction of Captain Creyk of the Otter, up the main Branch of the Chesapeak, at the same Time I entered Elizabeth River. The Movements of this little Squadron were so judicious, that the Enemy were much harrassed and distressed; they destroyed many Vessels and captured others, among which were Two with about Two Hundred Hogheads of Tobacco.

The Reasonable remaining stationed before the Town of Hampton, with some armed Tenders, blocks up that Port, and the Navigation of James River; Elizabeth River is already taken effectual Care of, and Captain Creyk's little Squadron renders the Ingress and Regress of the Chesapeak almost impracticable for the Rebel Vessels without their being taken.

I have now informed your Excellency of the Detail of our Military Operations by Sea, to the present Time. Our Success and the present Appearance of Things infinitely exceed our most sanguine Expectations; and if the various Accounts the General and myself have received can be depended upon, the most flattering Hopes of a Return to Obedience to their Sovereign may be expected from most of this Province; the People seem importunately desirous that the Royal Standard may be erected, and they give the most positive Assurances that all Ranks of Men will resort to it. You are too good a Judge, Sir, of the very great Importance of this Pass we now hold, to render my Saying much upon that Subject necessary; permit me however, (as a Sea-Officer) to observe, that this Port of Portsmouth is an exceeding safe and secure Asylum for Ships against an Enemy, and is not to be forced even by great Superiority. The Marine Yard is large and extremely convenient, having a considerable Stock of seasoned Timber, besides great Quantities of other Stores.

From these Considerations, joined to many others, I am firmly of Opinion, that it is a Measure most essentially necessary for His Majesty's Service that this Port should remain in our Hands, since it appears to me of more real Consequence and Advantage than any other the Crown now possesses in America; for by securing this, the whole Trade of the Chesapeak is at an End, and consequently the Sinews of the Rebellion destroyed.

I trust and hope, Sir, you will see this Matter in the same important Light I do, and give such Directions for Reinforcements to be sent here as you may think necessary, in order for our pursuing and

improving those Advantages, which we have with so much good Fortune acquired.

General Matthew proposing to write to you by this Express-Boat, I shall leave to his Pen to inform you of the Destruction of the considerable Magazines in Suffolk, (intended for the Rebel Army) by a Detachment of the King's Troops under Colonel Garth; and, before I conclude my Letter permit me to express my great Satisfaction in the Choice of the Officers you were pleased to name for Co operating with me on this Expedition, as too much Praise cannot be given General Matthew for his indefatigable Zeal and Attention for the King's Service; and I have the Pleasure in acknowledging the perfect Harmony and Understanding which subsists between His Majesty's Land and Sea Officers.

I have the Honor to be, &c.

Sir, &c.

GEO. COLLIER.

(Signed) Sir Henry Clinton, K. B. &c.

*Return of Stores, Ships, &c. &c. taken by His Majesty's Troops in the Town of Portsmouth and River Elizabeth, in the Province of Virginia, May 15, 1779.*

- 26 Casks of Nails.
- 87 Piles of Ropes.
- 8 Hawfers.
- 5 Cables.
- 110 Pieces of Sail-cloth.
- 21 Bags stuffed.
- 14 Bales of Cloth.
- 6 Ditto Blankets.
- A large Quantity of Iron.
- 193 Hogheads of Tobacco.
- 43 Ditto Rum, 1 Puncheon ditto.
- 117 Barrels Pork.
- 113 Ditto Flour.
- 6 Ditto Oil.
- 59 Hogheads Molasses.
- 67 Bags of Salt, with a Number of Barrels ditto.
- A large Quantity of Rigging, Sails, Blocks, Tar, and other Stores not enumerated.
- 1 Ship loaded with Tobacco.
- 1 Ditto.
- 1 Ditto with Mahogany and Logwood; with a Number of smaller Vessels.

*In the Dock-Yard,*

- 1 Frigate ready to launch, burnt by the Rebels at our Approach.
- 1 Ditto for 36 Guns on the Stocks.
- 1 Ditto larger, Keel only laid.
- 1 Brig pierced for 20 Guns on the Stocks.
- 1 Sloop ditto.
- A large Quantity of Masts and Yards, with Timber, Plank, Iron and other Stores to a very considerable Amount.
- Upwards of 3000 Barrels of Pork destroyed, with the Stores, &c. at Suffolk; also a large Quantity of different Species of Provisions at Shepperds on the Nansemond.
- 22 Vessels, with a considerable Quantity of Powder taken and destroyed up the South Branch by the Navy.

*At Norfolk,*

- 1 Stand of Colours, Sails and Canvass prepared for the Ships and Vessels on the Stocks, 4 Four-pounders, 1 Six ditto, 7 Hogheads of Tobacco, some Provisions and other Stores.
- A Brig with 8 Guns, and a Sloop burnt up the West Branch.

(Signed)

Edw. Mathew, M. G.

*Return.*