

Letters to the Commissioners, Book 26, 1805 1807

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2 December 1805 Friday evening was wrecked at Brook on the coast of the Isle Wight the Bremen ship Triumph from Bordeaux laden with wine and brandy. The Comptroller with several of his trusty Tidesmen are gone to the spot to assist in the salvage and prevent embezzlement.

2 December 1805 In addition to our application of 25 Ult. for 20 large store Casks we beg to report that within the last week Captain Amos of the Swallow and Captain Blake of the Tiger Cutters have sent to the King's Warehouse at this port 4000 Gallons of seized Spirits, which with the Quantity we had before in small Casks makes 8000 Gallons.

The packages being of Ash Wood and of a very open and porous nature, a serious waste from evaporation of the Spirits & imperceptible exhaustion of the Quantity will take place before the same can be condemned & the subsequent removal of it to London. And we should think ourselves not very incorrect in our calculation if we were to assert that the Crown would sustain a loss of nearly £500 by allowing the Liquor to continue in the packages it is now in and as *we are* anxious of avoiding such a decrease & preserving the Quantity brought in we earnestly reiterate our application to your Honors that we may be permitted to expend £200 in the best and most judicious mode in the purchase of as many large *Legars* of 300 gallons each as the sum may compass, to be used as fixed and permanent Store Casks for the purpose of starting all seizures in.

When you Honors Directions are received for forwarding Condemned Spirit to the Victualling Office, they can be drawn off into Porter Hogsheads or Barrels which we can buy at one Guinea each and which cost the respective Brewers in London to whom the Casks belong are always ready to reimburse.

4 December 1805 The Land Surveyor having reported to us the insufficiency of the padlocks at this port for the security of the Revenue and that the Locks on the Blue House are easily opened being of a common nature. Inclosed we forward his application that he may be supplied with two dozen padlocks.

19 December 1805 We are desired by Captain Blake to transmit the Inclosed Certificates of Mr Ferris of the Drake Cutter stating the services of John Brown his Pilot from 27 October 1805 to 11th December following and signify Brown's Wish to be paid by us that being the agreement entered into when he *shipped* himself in the Drake.

Adverting to your Honors Order of 22 October last we observe it therein directed that the Pilots engaged for this Special Service were to be paid each five Guineas for the *Run* and six Shillings per day afterwards.

19 December 1805 In obedience to your order we herewith transmit a plan of the property at this port for your honours to purchase on which we have to report that the premises leased by the late Mr Arnold to the Crown in 1791 for 21 years at £54 per annum, comprising the Custom House, Liquor store and a Courtyard. The Crown have an unexpired lease of 6 ⁸/₁₂ years. No part of the deed specifies that the Crown shall be entitled to renew.

30 December 1805 Christian Elming Master of the Lubec Hoy Patriot, from Oporto to Rotterdam with Hides, Cotton, Wine and Sugar last from Motherbank as per Certificate dated the 18th inst., the Enumerated goods having left on board the Lazarick.

Having made Oath that in consequence of the badness of the weather he experienced since he left Oporto his vessel is become so leaky & damaged as to render it impossible for him to proceed on his voyage without her being first repaired which cannot be done but by unloading the cargo, to the health of which the Tide Surveyor has certified.

We have at the request of Mr Thomas Day, Agent, granted a Special Sufferance for landing & depositing the Cargo in secure Warehouses under the King's Locks to be done in the presence of Waterside Officers whom we have enjoined to due attention on the occasion & to prevent Embezzlement.

9 January 1806 As directed by your Order of 30 Ult. we have procured an estimate from Mr John Peddar an eminent Cooper at Newport to supply your Honors with 12 large Casks to contain 12,000 gallons which he will do at the sum of £192.

We are sorry to add that much avoidable waste in the 8000 Gallons of unstarted Spirits for want of large Casks & we have no doubt of the cost of the above 12 Casks being saved in two months from the adoption of the mode we have taken the liberty to suggest to your Honors for the preservation of seized spirits.

10 January 1806 As permitted by your General Order of 11 April 1801 we enclose a Statement of Salary received by William Gregory a Boatman on Incidents at this Port between the 5 January 1805 & 5 January 1806 humbly craving from your Honors an Allowance of £25 – 0 – 0 being the difference between the Sum he actually received this year and his actual Salary of £30 per Annum. There has been no amendment in the Health of Mr Gregory nor is there likely to be.

15 January 1806 Inclosed we transmit an incidental Bill for £8 – 4 – 0 humbly craved to be allowed by James Snudden, Coastwaiter at Newport in this Port for Expenses incurred by him between 5 January 1805 & 5 January 1806 in attending his Duty as Coastwaiter, in the Shipping & landing of Corn & Flour Coastwise at a distance from his Station.

Snudden has only £30 per annum and considering his Personal attendance as a absolutely necessary we are humbly of the opinion the allowing of his Bill of Expenses will operate as an Encouragement to a continuance in the Proper discharge of his Duty.

20 January 1806 We have this day forwarded to you by the Mail Coach from Southampton addressed to your Honors a Box containing Accounts as particularized in the Inclosed Schedule for the freight and carriage of which two shillings and eight pence is paid:

Cowes Schedule of Accounts sent to the Honorable Commissioners of Customs for the Christmas Quarter

1. Collectors Quarterly Book
2. Controllers Quarterly Book
3. State of Bonds
4. Personal Prosecutions
5. Merchants Bonds processed & Wool Bonds outstanding
6. Ships discharged from the Plantations
7. Wool brought Coastwise – Mr Alder
8. Wool carried Coastwise – Mr Alder
9. Uncertified Bonds for Lead, Tin & Coals
10. Masters Reports Inwards
11. Masters Reports Outwards
12. Ships Inwards, Outwards & Coastwise
13. List of Ships Registered and Endorsements made
14. Goods Reweighed
15. List of Bonds
16. Tobacco Imported
17. Naval stores Imported
18. Extra Men Employed
19. Wool brought Coastwise – Mr Dally
20. Wool carried Coastwise – Mr Dally
21. Official Letters Received or Sent
22. Bounties to Seamen
23. Seizure Accounts for Mr Bastin
24. Wool brought Coastwise – Mr Datton for Half year ended 5 January 1806
25. Wool carried Coastwise – Mr Datton for Half year ended 5 January 1806
26. Irish Wool Imported – Mr Datton for Half year ended 5 January 1806
27. Schemes A B No. 1 & 2, C No. 1 & 2 of Ships, Vessels &c
28. List of Vacant Offices

- 29. Officers Ages and Capacities.
- 30. Tobacco Imported
- 31. Accounts of Ships, Vessels &c for Mr Steppings

A Letter with Annual Accounts Current for the Comptroller General
 A Letter for the Examiner of Officers Securities
 Eight Letters for the Honorable Board
 A Letter for the Receiver General
 Journals of the Tide Surveyor and the Officers under his Survey
 Journals of the Riding Surveyor and ditto
 Journals of the Commander and Mate of the Swan Cutter
 Journals of the Commander and Mate of the Fox Cutter

21 January 1806 As directed by your Order of 14 Instant we herewith transmit a Plan and Elevations of Store Houses belonging to Mr Thomas Auldjo merchant at this Port described in our letters 16 & 30 last proposed by him for the reception and depositing under the King's Locks the Articles of Merchandize Enumerated in Tables A and B of the 43rd of the King – Chapter 132 as they may respectively be brought to this Port; which is humbly submitted.

24 January 1806 In obedience to your directions, we have today forwarded Two Padlocks belonging to the Crown by Mail Coach the charge for which will be 2/6.

Two of the Blue Houses being without the proper Fastenings it has become necessary to provide two Stock Locks for their Security – and the Articles now wanted will with your Honors permission be two Dozen Padlocks. The Landing Surveyor has no reason to suspect the Padlocks now in Use have ever been picked or opened, but we consider them to be of a very inferior Manufacture, and humbly submit if it would not be better to select some of a patent make the picking of which would be impossible.

29 January 1806 We are requested by Mr William Arnold Deputed Mariner of the Fox Cutter to Crave your Honors directions for allowing him & Crew of the Fox Cutter One Moiety of the Appraised Value of Edward Smuggling Cutter which he seized on the 13th March 1805.

The owners gave their Intention to defend the Prosecution in the Exchequer but proposed a Compromise in Court which it was thought proper to accept in paying the full appraised Value and £50 towards Costs.

30 January 1806 Richard Caws a respectable seafaring man, having called at this office voluntarily made the enclose affidavit. We think it is our duty to transmit to your honours that such steps may be taken as appropriate.

William Matthews whose conduct Bateman, Excise Officer, wishes to justify is a most Notorious offender against the Revenue and is in jail awaiting Two Indictments that are to be preferred against him by the Crown at the next Assizes. One for beating Two of your Honors Officers in the Execution of their duty, the Other for stealing or having in his possession oars belonging to the Roebuck cutter, Mt Stiles Commander.

The Attorney General is also prosecuting him in the Exchequer this present term for Smuggling.

As Mr Caws Oath is not an ---- ----- but can be corroborated by all the Parties whose names he has recited in the Affidavit we most humbly submit if some enquiry should be made to ascertain Mr Batemans motives for indulging in such sort of conversation the import propriety of which as an officer of the Revenue is glaringly obvious. (There was clearly no love lost between the Customs and the Excise).

4 February 1806 We herewith transmit Accounts of Sale of Sundry Seizures of Tobacco made by Officers at this and other Ports, and when the same shall have been examined and adjusted and your Honors have determined Officers shares thereof we humbly pray to receive your orders thereon.

Annexed to the account is one for Tobacco which would not sell for the Duties which has in consequence been Burnt and we pray your directions for paying the Seizure reward the Officer is entitled to amounting to One Pound four Shillings and nine Pence exclusive of two Pence for Charges which is respectfully submitted.

9 February 1806 In obedience to your Order of the 6th Inst. we beg leave to nominate Messrs. *Gerrams & Butcher* – respectable Rope Makers living at East Cowes – as fully competent to supply your Honors Cruizers with any Cordage that may be wanted for the Service.

These Tradesmen whose Ropewalk is near the shore & within a short distance of the Custom House, engage by written Tender which we inclose for the Honorable Board satisfaction to manufacture such Articles as may be wanted from the best Materials, to debit the Crown only with the actual weight of Cables & Cordage supplied & to charge the whole at London prices at the time of Manufacture.

Messrs. *Gerrams & Butcher* have been known by us many Years, are people of Character and we are convinced will fulfil any engagement or contract they may make with true principle and honesty.

10 February 1806 We beg to Solicit your Acquiescence to our crave of 9 Ult. for large *Legars*, several Seizures since that period having been brought into the Warehouse and the Goods much deteriorated resting in the original wood Packages. As the Estimate we transmitted Honors for providing *Legars* to contain 12000 Gallons of Spirit is considered remarkably low at £192 and as that Sum may be saved by starting the Spirits into these large *Legars* in the Course of Two Months, we humbly hope your Honors will allow them to be provided.

Lest we should not have been sufficiently explicit in our applications we beg to explain that the *Legars* we asked for are intended to be used as permanent store Casks in the Warehouse (and not for the conveyance of the Spirits to London, Smaller Casks being better adapted for that purpose) and would have been wanted If the Act of His Majesty – the 45th:Chapter 121 had not been passed – which is respectfully submitted for your early directions.

11 February 1806 We transmit Inclosed a Certificate to obtain an Admiralty Licence for the Smack *Medina* belonging to this Port of which Henry Lallow, Robert Deacon and William Ruskin are Sole Owners.

Smack *Medina* – Cowes – value £1000

11 February 1806 As directed by your Order of Yesterday we transmit a Statement of the Seizure made 5th March 1805 by Richard Chiverton in conjunction with some Soldiers belonging to Colonel Chichesters Regiment.

PS. The Kings Share remitted 9 Oct 1805 was £35 – 5 – 10½.

24 February 1806 Captain John Smith of the Leopard Cutter arrived at this Port Yesterday afternoon with two Seizures made in Conjunction with Captain Blake of the Tiger Cutter consisting of the Rose Cutter of Looe and 125 Ankers of Spirits and a Lugger with 201 Six Gallon Casks of Geneva.

Captain Smith's Cutter while at Anchor in Guernsey Roads the Night preceding his Departure was run foul by of by a large Dutch Galliot which carried away his Bowsprit & Two parts of a Hawser & stove his Boat.

The Service at Guernsey require the return of the Leopard as soon as possible (Three Cutters are still absent Viz. Hart, Beagle and Hope) we have caused Estimates to be furnished for repairing the Damages which are transmitted for your Honors early directions.

10 March 1806 We are requested by Mrs Cooper Widow of the late Thomas Cooper Jun., deceased, late Pilot of the Lion Cutter on the Guernsey Station to transmit your Honors the Inclosed Bill for Pilotage amounting to £33 – 9 – 0 which she humbly prays may be paid her at this Office.

17 March 1806 Many of the Private Warehouses at this Port being of ancient construction & entirely of Wood Materials we think it our Duty to acquaint your Honors that the Board of Excise lately objected to the depositing of any Excisable Article or Merchandize landed from Ships in Distress for temporary accommodation during the ships repair, unless the Warehouse intended to receive the Goods are Built of Brick & Mortar & fitted agreeable to the Dock Warehouses in London for Bonded Goods.

Humbly presuming that it is your Honors wish that ample Security should be required in a like manner for Depositing Customable Merchandize when landed by the Indulgence of a Special Sufferance and that we may be doing wrong in the practice of allowing Cargoes to be put into Warehouses when objected to by the Board of Excise – We earnestly entreat your Directions hereon taking the liberty of reminding your Honors that it has never been the *usage* to insist on a Merchants Bond for landing a distressed Cargo & therefore the more *expedient* Order to guard against Accidents, that the Warehouses should be built of Bricks and Mortar with Iron Bars to the Windows & in every respect substantially Built for the protection of the Revenue.

PS. At times Cargoes subject to Duties landed by Special Sufferances remain 3 or 4 Months in Warehouses as before described without any Bond given for Security of the Revenue against Burglary or Pillage.

22 March 1806 The Transient Norway Ship Constantia Burre Selfert Master with a Cargo of 380 Pipes of Brandy taken in at Valencia (last from Gibraltar with a Clean Bill of Health) came to Anchor at Cowes Roadstead this day for the purpose of Receiving Orders for his further destinations. Pursuant to the 7th Section of His Majesty's Order in Council of 5th April 1805 the Examining Quarantine Officer has laid the said vessel and her Cargo under Restraint of Quarantine which will be enforced until we receive your Honors directions for discontinuing the same. Inclosed we transmit the Masters Answers on his Oath.

23 March 1806 Captain Tedbury of the Hope Cutter last Evening from Guernsey with several Seizures amounting to upwards of 300 Ankers & Casks of Spirits, sundry parcels of Tobacco, Cordials & Wine & two Sloops seized by Captain Blake & the Squadron under his Command.

The Hope Cutter being Damaged in her Hull by striking on a Rock near Jersey she must undergo a Repair before she can return to her station & as Captain Blake writes us that the services of the Cutter are particularly wanted at this Moment, we pray to receive your Honors Directions by return of Post if possible for such Repairs being effected by Mr Gely as may appear on a survey of her Bottom absolutely necessary.

27 March 1806 The Six oared Boat commanded by Mr Willis at this Port being in want of Colours and a New Cable the old One being quite worn out we transmit your Honors his Crave for the same which he humbly prays to be allowed him.

The Ropemakers are under a General Engagement to the Cordage made of the best Materials and at the London Price.

28 March 1806 In obedience to your Order of 29 November last there has been transhipped into the undermentioned Vessels the Goods particularized in the *Justices* Certificates saved from the Stranded Ship John and William from Surinam and which Certificate we now transmit agreeable to your Honors Directions for the Landing Waiter in London.

Medina – Mr Ruskin Master
Four Friends – Mr *Oaken* Master
Friendship – Mr *Bert* Master

22 April 1806 We have to request you will be pleased to Order Twelve new Coal Bushels to be forward for the Service at this Port, those in present Use being nearly worn out, our last crave was on the 12th Inst 1804. We take the liberty of submitting to your Honors that if the plate which covers the bottom of the Bushel was Copper instead of Cast Iron, One Half the number of Coal Bushels now requisite for the Service might be dispensed with.

28 April 1806 We are desired by Captain Ferris to transmit your Honors his application to obtain the release of Jeremiah Ashton One of the Mariners of the Swan Cutter Impressed into His Majesty's Service and now on board the Race Horse Sloop of War. We had appointed the 17th Instant for the paying of Wages of the Cutter & it appears Captain Ferris sailed unexpectedly the Evening of the 16th leaving Ashton on shore. The man being a good Seaman and not being Impressed through

any neglect of Duty, he humbly hopes your Honors will intercede with the Lords of the Admiralty to obtain his discharge.

15 May 1806 Captain Ferris Jnr. of the Drake Cutter in your Honors employ is this Morning arrived having under Seizure the Swift Brig of Guernsey – Jas. *Lattow* Master – burthen about 170 Tons laden with 38 Puncheons of Foreign Spirit seized by Captain Blake & himself for having broken Bulk at Sea and delivered part of her Cargo. It appears by the return given us by Captain Blake that the Swift on the 19th April last took in at Guernsey 69 Puncheons & 1 hhd of Brandy, 14 Puncheons of Rum & 3 Bales of Manufactured Tobacco under a clearance from Mr Champion for Madeira & that she sailed on her pretended voyage the 24th April in company with the Renown Cutter and Amity Lugger – laden with empty small casks, but from the circumstances of the last named Vessel being intercepted, the Brig's design of running her Cargo was frustrated & she returned to Guernsey the 9th Inst. deficient of the Cargo cleared by Mr Champion 45 Puncheons & 1 hhd Spirits & 3 bales of Tobacco.

Since her arrival the Collector has been on board the Swift & in rummaging under the Cabin Floor has discovered 30 Cartridges of Powder said to be calculated for Guns of 4 lb Calibre & 2 Muskets – and also the following Implements used for the purpose of Drawing off Spirits from large Casks into small viz:

4 large Brass Cocks & 2 Pipes with Hoses
3 large Funnels
6 Measures
4 *Tin Pumps* to fit large Casks
1 bag containing Bungs for Ankers or small Casks
1 Bung Drawer or Lever
Several Cooper's *Tools* & Drivers

We have placed trusty People on board the Swift to watch & take care of the Cargo, until your Honors directions are signified to us for dismantling the Brig & taking out the Goods.

16 May 1806 We transmit pursuant to your Order of 1st April last an Affidavit sworn before a Commissioner in the Court of the Exchequer of the circumstances of the Seizure of a Foreign Mast & a Foreign Spar by the Comptroller being brought Coastwise without Security.

Not being able to discover the Name of the Persons who conveyed the Goods – We submit as it appears by the Sufferance that the Boat belonged to J C Murray of Gosport, whether he is not the proper person against whom proceedings should be directed.

3 June 1806 Captain Betts of the Lion Revenue Cutter who arrived last Night from Alderney with a Seizure 110 Casks of Spirit having by letter Inclosed represented that the Cutter is in need of a New Mast and a partial refit – We transmit your Honors his application to have the same provided, the Service requiring his immediate return to his Station. We enclose an Estimate for the Mast but as the Ropemaker is under engagement to supply the Cordage at London Price we have waived calling on him for his estimate, which is most respectfully submitted.

16 June 1806 Pursuant to your Order of the 7th Inst. enclosed *information obtained* by visiting to Guernsey to procure Evidence as to the Illicit practice of the Brig Swift seized & brought into this Port for drawing off part of her Cargo at Sea – Captain Blake having furnished us with all the particulars thereto he has been able to obtain – We hereby transmit his Letter, a Copy of the Brigs original Clearance with Searchers report of her putting back to Guernsey & a copy of the Smuglers Spot note describing the Property of the Cargo for your Honors Information and further Direction.

Captain Tedbury of the Hope Cutter who arrived her last Evening with two Boats and 178 Casks of Spirit informs us there are at this time lying in Guernsey Pier loading and taking in cargoes of Spirits & tobacco in legal Packages the undermentioned Vessels all of which are above 100 Tons Register Viz:

Maria Cutter of Guernsey
Dover Cutter of Guernsey
Head Cutter of Guernsey
Toby Cutter of Hastings
Lion Cutter of Hastings

Leo Cutter of Hastings

and that these Vessels are receiving their Clearances proceed to Sea accompanied by small Craft charged with empty Ankers & 4 Gallon Casks into which are drawn off at the first favourable opportunity for the purpose of being run into the Kingdom.

As this method affords great facility to Smugling we take the liberty of submitting to your Honors the expedience of instituting as soon as possible some Restrictive Regulation on the quantity of Spirit to be Imported into Guernsey and the Islands similar to that which allows a certain Quantity of Tea for the use of the Inhabitants only or that Vessels clearing with Spirits in large Casks should give Security to produce Certificates under the Hands of the British Consul, that the Cargo has been bona fide landed at the Port for which she cleared, otherwise we fear fraudulent traders will carry on their schemes to injure the Revenue in spite of every exertion to protect it

24 June 1806 In return to your Order of Enquiry contained in Mr Secretary's Letter of Yesterday we have to report that no deduction whatsoever has been made by ourselves or Clerks on account of Poundage from the Sum of £2517 – 14 – 6 Ordered by Treasury Warrant of 25th May 1805 to be paid to the Commander and Crew of the Swan Cutter as a remuneration for loss of Seizures when under Admiralty Orders. On enquiry we find that after the Collector had paid Captain Ferris the full sum and taken this Receipt for the same he desired the Clerks to assist him in calculating each Mans proportion & that they would draw out the Accounting & write receipts for which extra trouble he complimented them with a present no demand whatever being made for them for such an assistance.

7 July 1806 On the 3rd June last Mr Robert Douglass mate of the Hope Cutter on the Guernsey Station seized near the Casketts a Lug called the Happy go Lucky with 84 half Anker Casks and 4 Flaggons containing Spirit and 4 Bales containing Tobacco all of which were brought to this Port and duly delivered to our Custody. In the Boat were six Seamen viz. Thomas Bailey, John Clarke, Henry Reed, John Witchy, George Barnes and Bone Tucker, the first five of whom voluntarily entered on board His Majesty's Frigate Thisbe lying Guernsey and the other for the Pisiphone. Captain Lewis Sheppard of the Thisbe after having accepted Thomas Bailey as a capable Seaman thought it proper about a fortnight since to return to Captain Blake the Commanding Revenue Officer at Guernsey the said Bailey as Unfit & Incapable (being ruptured) to serve in the Navy, and in consequence the Man was sent to Us by Captain Blake on Saturday to be dealt with as the Law directs. Your Collector attended a Bench of Magistrates same day at Newport and requested that Bailey being unfit for His Majesty's Service might be proceeded against under the 7 Section of 45th of the King Chapter 21 but to which desire the Justices refused to comply with alledging that this Man having been accepted by a Captain of the Navy and mustered on the Ships books had already by the surrender of his Person commuted for his Offence against the Revenue and he was accordingly set at liberty.

As the clause we have already quoted forbids the discharge of any smugler so entered for His Majesty's Service during the term of Five Years we humbly submit if your Honors may not think proper to investigate this case by reference to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty by desiring that Captain Sheppard should be called upon to state what report the Surgeon of the Thisbe made of Bailey's infirmity when his person was examined at the time of his offering himself to the Navy and if he was not then considered an incapable man.

25 July 1806 We transmit inclosed a Bill for one Years Rent of a Storehouse used for securing Boats and Materials of the Swan Cutter between 6 July 1805 and 5 July 1806 amounting to Ten Guineas which Captain Ferris prays your Honors will direct us to discharge.

26 July 1806 Inclosed we Submit the Surveying Officers Certificate to obtain an Admiralty Licence for the Smack Rose of this Port of which Anthony Caws, Richard Caws and Henry Caws are Owners.

Rose of Cowes – Henry Caws Master – value £300

28 July 1806 In Obedience to your Order of the 23rd Instant we transmit Inclosed an Account of Seized & Condemned Spirits, Tobacco & Snuff sent to this Warehouse since the 12th July 1805 – the period when the 45th of the King Chapter 121 was first acted on.

The most eligible conveyance for the Spirits to London would be a large Coaster or Collier either of which an account of the Magnitude of the Quantity to now be forwarded could we apprehend be engaged on very advantageous Terms for the Trip perhaps at one third less than paying the customary freight of a Pipe or Cask containing 110 Gallons which is always charged Sixteen shillings from Cowes to London.

It being not only hazardous but impractical to remove the said Spirits in their original Packages, many of which are in an impaired state and the Hoops rotten from the length of time they have remained in the Warehouse, the sort of Casks we would propose that the Spirits should be started into, are Ironbound Puncheons or White Wine Butts holding on an Average One hundred and fifteen gallons each – 150 of which would nearly contain the 16,000 Gallons we have to transport and may be bought in this Neighbourhood at about 25/- each, and some perhaps at a less price, they are far preferable to smaller Casks, and are always in demand for similar purposes or as Water Casks for Shipping.

With the view to ensuring the safe delivery in London and to guard against Embezzlement in their transit, we submit to your Honors the following regulations Viz:

That at the time of Starting the Spirits the Warehousekeeper shall admeasure the Quantity filled into each Cask, that the casks shall be Numerically Marked and a Crown burnt on the stave on which the Number is painted – that the Bungs be nailed over with a tin Plate and the Cask Holes secured in the same manner.

That when the Vessel has taken on her Cargo, an Invoice or Account of each Cask be transmitted to your Honors signed by ourselves and Excise Officer (if necessary).

That two of the most preferable Tidesmen be placed on board the Vessel prior to the Spirits being shipped who shall be directed to take an Account of the Cargo as put on board, that they should fit Padlocks on the Hatches & Bulk Heads & keep the keys & continue on board until the Cargo is discharged in London as your Honors direct. That a duplicate of the Invoice before proposed be given to the Senior Tidesman, to be delivered to the proper Officer of the Customs who may attend the discharge of the Cargo, who will thereupon be able to detect any deficiency.

That the Tobacco & Snuff be packed in Sugar Hogsheads, the Contents and Quantity of which may be inserted in the Invoice under similar Regulations as suggested for the Security of the Spirits.

In the lapse of three Weeks we have no doubt of being able to procure a sufficient Number of Casks & having the Goods prepared for Shipping.

Considerable but unavoidable diminution in the original Quantity when first lodged in our Custody having taken place by exhaustion and imperceptible leakage, caused by the porous nature of the small casks & the length of time it has been contained in the Warehouse, we beg to submit to your Honors the purchasing of Twelve large *Legars* each to contain 1000 Gallons to be fixed to in the Warehouse, in which there is ample space, as permanent store casks, to Start Seizures of Spirits into when brought here in small packages.

From enquiries we have made we learn that 12 Casks as described may be constructed for about £240. The beneficial Effects of which would be in the course of 7 Years (on the presumption that a large quantity would be brought to the Warehouse annually as we have received within the last twelve months) on a moderate Calculation at least £2500.

The Collectors Clerk and Warehousekeeper are fully competent to ascertain by Hydrometer the strength of the Spirits, and have regularly in conjunction with the Excise Officer of the District examined and tried the Strength of every Seizure brought to the warehouse since 12 July 1805 & duly entered the same in the Book kept for that purpose agreeable to the method & instruction issued by Clark as and accompaniment to his instrument.

11 August 1806 The Ranger Seized Cutter brought to this Port from St Ives in December last for the purpose of being refitted to replace the Batt Cutter of Christchurch commanded by Mr John Williams being deemed unworthy of the expence of the requisite repairs.

We humbly submit as the Ranger is daily deteriorating in Value from unavoidable exposure to the present intense Heat of the Sun and Weather, if it may not be advisable to expose her and her Materials to Public Auction at our next Sale.

12 August 1806 One hundred and fifty one packs of exportation playing cards seized at different times as particularised on the back were condemned by the Court of the Exchequer now in the warehouse and we request your orders for burning the same.

15 August 1806 Two Row Galleys, One 35 feet the other 45 in length have been lately seized and brought into this Port for Smuggling.

We considerate our Duty to your Honors, as Boats of such dimensions can only be constructed for carrying on an illicit Trade, if it may not be advisable to withhold Your acquiescence to the granting of Admiralty Licences for any Boat whose length shall exceed 28 feet – having been assured by the Service Revenue Commanders that it is almost impossible for any of your Honors Cruizers to Cope with these Galleys in fast Sailing if there is any Wind and they are making a Slant across Channel. The Cutters Boats seldom exceed 28 feet, a length that no well intentioned Private Owner of a Boat can object to if built for pleasure or business.

1 September 1806 We are requested by Mr James Turner Commander of the Fox Cutter to transmit to your Honors a representation of the impaired state of the Vessels present Mast which was placed in her when the property of a Smuggler and to submit for your consideration a proposal to purchase a Mast the Sheering Seized Cutter (the Hull of which has been broken up) at the Appraised price of £45. One of the Shrouds of the Cutter having been carried away by the negligence of Thomas Allen Master of the Hope Sloop of Bridport, Mr Turner is under the necessity of craving a new One and submits that the amount of damaged may be demanded from said Allen as they have sufficient evidence to prove the Injury was occasioned by his neglect.

12 September 1806 The Ensign Staff fixed at the front of the Custom House on which it has been customary for time immemorial to hoist your Honors Colours in commemoration of their Majesties Birth Days & on other Holidays, being decayed having been erected 18 years, we entreat your Honors Permission to substitute in its place the Condemned Mast of the Fox Cutter, the worth of which by Valuation at the Utmost is £40/0, the Mast being sprung & unserviceable in any way but the one which is respectfully submitted.

19 September 1806 We transmit Inclosed a Charge we have thought it our Duty to give William Arnold Deputed Mariner of the Fox Cutter on the Complaint of Mr James Turner his Commander with the answer thereto annexed.

Lorance alluded to in the Charge is a notorious Contraband Trader resident at Alderney and in the Month of April last, had Seized by Mr John Betts, Commander of the Lion Cutter (on the Information of Hugh W Cormic one of his Mariners) a Vessel called the Mary which was directed to be prosecuted in the Exchequer by your Honours Order of 15 April but which Vessel is unconsidered as *Lorance* in his own or some other name has preferred a claim in Court.

It appears the *Lorance* object in prevailing on *Veryon* to make an Affidavit that he heard Mr Cormic say he would take 100 Oaths for half a Crown (for which *Veryon* has been discharged the Fox and service for improper conduct) is to Invalidate the Testimony of the Informer against the Vessel, or, to support the Application he may probably present to your Honors to have her released on bail, but which should have the Effrontery so to do will be rejected.

Mr Arnold has held a Deputation under your Honors upwards of Four Years, has always shown great zeal for the Service, is a sober Man and has as he sets forth made several good Seizures & was never before Charged.

His granting of leave of absence to *Veryon* we believe arose from want of due consideration and not from any evil design.

1 October 1806 I obedience to your Order of the 3 September last on the Subject of the Bill for the better Regulation of Pilots we have to submit to your Honors the following Information and Observations.

Within the Limits of the Port of Cowes comprehending the Isle of Wight at large there are Sixty eight Registered Vessels admeasuring from 10 to 40 Tons, all of which are ostensibly employed as Pilot

Boats by Homeward bound Vessels from the East and West Indies, American Ships bound for Cowes for their Orders and Foreign Ships of all Countries, either directly consigned to the Ports of Cowes, Portsmouth or Southampton or Transiently touching at Cowes for necessities or otherwise in Distress.

Each of these Pilot Boats when departing from Port, in search of Ships approaching the Coast, has on an average on board Four People including a Master and Apprentice, most of whom we believe are competent to the Occupation they profess – But as it is proposed by the Bill that no person may hereafter presume on Self Qualification to carry on his Trade, we suggest as Examining Officers the two Senior Pilots of Cowes, both of whom have followed the Piloting Trade upwards of 40 Years and are well known by Naval and East India Commanders to be superior, intelligent Men in that particular line of Life, their Names are Thomas Cooper Senior and Isaac Blandford both of Cowes – who together with John Ward could be as principal Officer of the Port, Henry Parke Esquire resident Agent of the Transport Board a Lieutenant in His Majesty's Navy formerly a Master, and William Goodrich Esquire retired from the Sea Service shall form a Board, before whom the Examination of Candidates to be Pilots shall take place and on each person's pretensions being admitted he shall receive a Certificate or Licence signed by the said Collector, Henry Parke and William Goodrich, that such a person have been duly examined in their presence by Thomas Cooper Senior and Isaac Blandford (persons approved by Trinity for that purpose) is found duly qualified to Act as a Pilot and is Licenced accordingly. – And having dovoted some attention to the Collecting various experienced Opinions as to what might be considered an equitable allowance to Pilots for their services, we submit for your Honors approval and Recommendation the following Rates, deduced from the mass of Opinions before mentioned.

"For any Ship or Vessel Piloted from the Sea by a Licenced Pilot belonging to the Isle of Wight to Cowes Roads or Harbour, Portsmouth, Southampton or any Creeks or Harbour thereunto respectively belonging, whether brought in by the passage of the Needles or Saint Hellens between the first of May and thirtieth of August in each year Nine Shillings per foot for every Foot Draft of Water such Ship or Vessel may draw – on her being brought to her Anchorage.

For every Ship or Vessel Outward Bound that shall be Piloted from Cowes, Portsmouth, Southampton or any of the Harbours or Creeks thereunto respectively belonging, to Sea without the Isle of Wight, either by the Passage of the Needles or Saint Helens Three Shillings per foot for every Foot Draft of Water.

Between the first of September and the thirtieth of April each Year comprising the Winter Months instead of 9/0 per Foot Ten Shillings and six Pence per Foot on any Ship or Vessel Piloted Inwards as beforementioned and Three Shillings and six Pence per Foot an any Ship or Vessel Piloted Outwards.

In instances of real Distress that is to say when a Ship or Vessel has lost a Rudder or Mast or being disabled through loss of Sails, Water logged or having a considerable List by shifting of the Cargo so as to be unfavourable and consequently to require additional Skill and Assistance we would submit in such cases that the Quantum of Reward to Pilots for Services rendered should be adjusted by the said John Ward, Collector of the Customs, Henry Parke and William Goodrich. In addition to these suggestions we would propose that a Clause should be introduced in the Bill, to compel Pilots to go off to Sea when Signals are made for Assistance, and to Impose a Penalty on Pilots wilfully evading their Duty.

8 October 1806 William Matthews, a Notorious Smuggler living at St Helens within this Port having had his Vessel the Tatar seized for smuggling the 3rd September last, and conveyed to Arundel and subsequently Condemned in the Exchequer Michaelmas Term 1805 and sold at Public Auction at Arundel by your Honors Order of 18th July 1806.

We have, on a Proper Certificate being received from the Collector and Comptroller of Arundel of the Circumstances of Seizure, Condemnation & Sale Registered the said Vessel Tartar de Novo the purchaser Edward *Clare* being a Resident at this Port, but being informed by the Officers at Arundel that at the time of Seizure no Certificate of Registry was found on board the Tartar, we transmit inclosed the Bond of said Matthews, that the same under your Honors directions may if it is thought proper may be put in suit – though we fear with little prospect of recovering the penalty at present as Matthews is from this Country and a process of outlawry for his daring Offences is now pending against him.

25 November 1806 William Gregory, a boatman at St Hellens who has been incapable of duty since 17 November 1801 most humbly implores your Honors permission by the inclosed Letter and Documents to be placed on the superannuation list. He is upward of sixty two years of age and has paid towards the support of the fund 19 years and is without the least hope of recovery & has no resources but in your Honors clemency which is respectfully submitted.

27 November 1806 The Transient Portuguese Schooner Nostra *Siguora de Carmen*, Joze de Santos Master from Lisbon to Hamburgh with Tobacco, Sugar, Tapioca, nuts and Grapes agreeable to the Manifest arrived Yesterday in Cowes Roads having come in the Needles passage through stress of Weather. The Consul Generals Certificate in Spanish states that the Cargo to be the produce of Portugal and its Colonies but as the Declaration required by the 42 Section of the Order in Council of April 1805 to prove the growth of Goods should be signed by the Shipper & Certified by the British Consul or a Magistrate, we have thought it our Duty to impose on her Restraint of Quarantine for want of this Formality. She first came to Anchor at Yarmouth at Yarmouth within the Needles & was questioned by Mr R Willis, the Sitter of the 6 Oared Boat & not being able to ascertain from the Portuguese the exact nature of the Cargo he & his crew went on board where they now remain with the Ship under Restraint in Cowes Roadstead. As it appears by the Bill of Health and Quarantine Answers Inclosed that the crew are healthy & free from Infection and the Ship is not liable to Quarantine under Order in Council of 17 September last, we humbly entreat your Honors directions (on Account more particularly of Mr Willis & his crew) for the Ships early Release.

17 December 1806 The small 2 Oared Boat used by the boatmen at Yarmouth being 8½ years old and so rotten that it is impossible to repair her.

Inclosed we transmit an application from Mr Chas Leigh, Boatman to be allowed another agreeable to Estimate herewith sent. We humbly recommend as it is quite expedient a boat should be at that creek for the purpose of Boarding Vessels that arrive from foreign Ports that his application may be allowed.

18 December 1806 We respectfully beg leave to represent to your Honors that the Allowance of Ten Pounds per annum granted in the Year 1782 for the Service at this Port is now found totally inadequate to the expenditure of ourselves and other Officers in transacting the Official Duty of our respective departments.

In the year 1782 the supply allowed we presume, was considered commensurate to the demands of the Port, at this time the price of stationary is nearly double what it was, and the Correspondence and Accounts of Office addressed to your Honors are increased in a Similar Ratio so that at the conclusion of last Year, Your Collector was obliged to buy several Quire of Paper for the absolute service of this Port.

We therefore humbly hope your Honors will not consider us unreasonable in respectfully Craving an addition of one third to our present allowance of ten Pounds which will greatly oblige.

In the year 1782 the Official Letters were 132. This present year the number will be approaching 300.

19 January 1807 As directed by your Order of the 15th Instant we have entered the Name of William Gregory, a Boatman at St Hellens on the Superannuated List and by the courier this day we transmit his Deputation Cancelled.

The nature of the Duty required of the Two Boatmen at St Hellens is to watch the Motions of the regular Smuglers at that place, of which there are not less than Eighteen, owning small Vessels employed, we believe almost entirely in the Contraband Trade, to board and rummage every Vessel that comes into the Harbour, and to detect Smuggling by every means in their power.

Many seizures have been made by these Officers at St Hellens and the Vicinity within these last Ten Years & they have through their vigilance caused the Out Lawry of William Matthews, one of the most desperate Offenders that ever there was. The Senior Boatman attends Shipping & Delivery of Goods of Goods brought Coastwise under Dispatches & reports the arrival of any Foreign suspicious Vessels. While any Smuggling exists we are of the opinion there is a necessity of continuing two Boatmen at St Hellens.

20 January 1807 The Ensign Colour which was sent to us after the Union with Ireland near seven Years ago being worn out we humbly crave to be allowed another, which will oblige.

29 January 1807 We transmit Inclosed and Incidental Bill amounting to Eight pounds nineteen shillings and six Pence humbly craved to be allowed by James Snudden Coastwaiter at Newport in this Port for Expenses incurred by him between the 5th January 1806 and the 5th January 1807 in attending his Duty as Coastwaiter in the Shipping and Landing of Corn & Flour Coastwise at a distance from his Station.

Snudden has only £30 per Annum and considering his Personal attendance is absolutely necessary, We are humbly of the opinion the allowing of his Bill of Expenses will operate as an Encouragement to a continuance of the proper discharge of his Duty.

29 January 1807 Two Vessels belonging to this Port whose descriptions are shown on the back hereof have recently been captured by a French privateer & carried to France. The Crew of the Prime we learn are in Prison but Henry Humphreys the Owner and Master of the Dove, is said to have escaped the Enemy in his small Boat and is now at St Hellens.

We have sent repeated Messages to him, to deliver up his Certificate of Registry agreeable to the conditions of his Bond, but no attention having been paid thereto, we submit to prevent Improper use of the Register, if Humphreys should not be served with legal Notice from the Solicitor to compel him to deliver up.

We take occasion to remark that we have reason to believe many Owners and Masters of small Craft studiously avoid giving information at the Custom House of their Vessels being captured either by the Enemy or the Revenue Cruizers (as the case may be) in order that they may withhold and make use of the Certificate of Registry by carrying them in their Pockets for the purpose of Protection against the Impress, which is respectfully submitted.

30 January 1807 Pursuant to your Order of 28 Instant, we have this day forwarded addressed to the Tobacco Warehousekeeper under Seals of Office a Box containing 56 lbs of Tobacco Samples taken from 28 Hogsheads landed ex *Cicero* at this Port.

The Master of the Vessel not being able to say the Amount of the Waggon Charge from Southampton, the proprietor will have to pay the Customary Rate of Carriage.

7 February 1807 The Custom House Premises and Warehouse having been surveyed by an eminent Surveyor pursuant to your Honors Order 20 March last, we are desired to transmit the Inclose Bill of Mr Andrews for payment.

26 February 1807 We reported to your Honors by Letter 20 July 1803, copy of which we transmit on back hereof that Robert Scriven a Boatman & Tidesman had died that morning.

Having since learned that Scriven received (when employed in the Tide Surveyors Boat as and Extraman in the Year 1773) his Deputation from the Honble Board to enable him to make Seizures & to encourage his Activity for the Service, we most humbly take the liberty of recommending to your Honors favour for a similar Reward (as no one has had a Deputation granted in lieu of Scriven) Richard Smart an old and faithful Extraman who has now been employed in the Tide Surveyors Boat Twenty years at 2/- per day.

His Wages holding a Commission under your Honors Regulations of 24 April 1804 would be £5 per annum and 2/6 per day when Employed and with respectful submission we are of the opinion the generating the little promotion to an old servant of the Revenue might operate as an encouragement to other Extramen in the performance of their Duty.

12 March 1807 Mr Davis, a Tidewaiter and Boatman at this Port who on the 8 February 1770 (37 years ago) received a Deputation from the Honorable Board to act in their Capacities with Daily Pay / whenever employed / without any Salary – on being called on by us a few days since to produce his Commission – to our great surprise informed us that he had lost it 6 Years since agreeable to his statement in the Inclosed Affidavit.

Davis under your Honors regulations of the 24th April 1804 regarding Boatmen holding Commissions was paid on the £5 List & 2/6 per Day when employed.

He is nearly 80 Years old & very infirm and at such an advanced period of Life we are sorry to say that we are unable to urge anything in his favour. If the concealing of the loss of his Deputation for six Years should be decreed by your Honors to be sufficient Offence for his Dismissal we should humbly beg leave to recommend John Fowell who has been an Extraman in the Tidesurveyors Boat 10 Years at 2/0 per Day only & who has a Family to keep as a proper object to receive your Honors Deputation in lieu of Davis.

22 March 1807 We regret considerably the necessity of reporting to your Honors that the Swan Cutter belonging to this Port was captured on Friday Morning the 20 Inst. Six Leagues S.W. of the Needles by Three French Lugger Privateers. The Cutter sailed from Cowes the 2nd Inst. under the Command of Mr Comben the Mate, Mr Ferris at that time being with a *Spasm* & Gout as to render him incapable of Service.

We thought it our Duty to require of Oath the details of the Swans Loss from the Deputed Mariners who escaped which we transmit for your Honors information.

25 March 1807 In return to your Order of yesterday we have to state that Three Persons only were Captured on board the Swan Cutter & carried Prisoners to France:

Viz	Mr R Comben	Mate
	John Gale	Mariner
	John Jolliffe	Boy

The remainder of the Crew escaped & are disposed of as described on back hereof.

Persons forming the Crew of the Swan Cutter when captured by Three French Luggers six Leagues S.W. of the Needles on Friday 20 March 1807:

1	Richard Comben	Mate)	
2	John Gale	Mariner	)	Prisoners in France
3	John Jolliffe	Boy)	
4	Edward Bartlett	)		Deputed Mariners, now
5	James Ferris	)		at Cowes
6	Jeffery Ford)		
7	James Bannister)		
8	James Corke)		
9	Joseph Trattle)		
10	Henry Moorbarrow	)		Impressed into His Majesty's
11	Joseph Allen	)		Service & now on board
12	Samuel Arnold	)		His Majesty's Brig
13	Robert Bradby	)		Forward
14	Samuel Whitcom	)		Lieut. Shields
15	Thomas Robertson	)		Commander
16	William Simpson)		
17	Joseph Tookes)		
18	John <i>Millens</i>)		
19	Joseph <i>Vicents</i>)		
20	Edward Bell)		
21	----- Cook)		
22	James Norris	)		Impressed by the Regulating Officer at Cowes
23	David Chessell	)		& sent on board the Argos Frigate