

Board to Commissioners 1807 1808

Transcribed from the book at the National Archives reference CUST 61/19

7 April 1807 By our monthly account current ending 5 Inst, transmitted this day it will appear that the Collector has advanced from his private account for the management of the Port £128.12.7¼ and there also being due salaries and incidents to the sum of one thousand and seventy pounds your Collector humbly prays that the imprest bill of one thousand pounds may issue to enable him to reimburse himself and to discharge salaries and incidents as set forth.

Salaries of Establishment due and unpaid	£170
Incidents due and unpaid	£500
Taxes	£40
Boardings, watchings and rowings	£360
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	£1070
Cash advanced by Collector	£128.12.7¼
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	£1198.12.7¼

9 April 1807 We are requested by Capt. Amos of the Swallow Cutter to transmit for your Honors consideration the enclosed scheme enabling Cutters of this Revenue to communicate with each other by Signal. The known substantial advantages derived by the Navy from the present Easy mode of distinguishing Ships at a distance and conversing with each other, induce us to believe very considerable benefit may arise to this Service by establishing a distinct & specific Code for Cruizers in your Honors employ.

The Colours of the Swan were captured with her & it is very probable the Enemy will use them at sea to delude our Cruizers & Trading Vessels which the adoption of the plan would frustrate. It would also be very likely to defeat the Stratagems of the Smuglers who by carrying on their Trade in large fine Cutters of upwards of 100 tons Register may it is probable hoist Revenue Colours for deception.

The proposal of giving to a Senior Officer the Command over a Junior one may in some cases be a very judicious one but we rather doubt whether if carried into general practice, it may not be productive among some of the Commanders who may feel hurt to be directed in their own District by the accidental arrival of a Senior Officer who might not be so well acquainted with the Coast.

15 April 1807 Application having been made by several of the Crew of the Swan Cutter for payment of Wages, we request to be instructed if it is your Honors pleasure we should pay the Commander, Deputed Officers & Mariners up to the day of Capture at the rate of their respective Quarterly Allowances or if Captain Ferris and the Deputed Officers, who are now here, are to be paid as usual their Salary & Wages up to 5 April last & the Mariners to the Day of Capture, they now being in His Majesty's Navy.

17 April 1807 Having been under the necessity of Hiring a warehouse for Lodging Twenty Eight Hogsheads of seized Tobacco restored and sent here for export, His Majesty's Tobacco Warehouse being so full of Seized Spirits at the time of their arrival as being incapable of receiving them.

Inclosed we transmit the proprietors Bill for the same amounting to £4 – 1 – 4 for 8 Weeks & 5 Days for payment of which we pray your Honors directions as the expense was unavoidable incurred and the Charge is moderate.

20 April 1807 We have to acquaint your Honors that sixteen of the late Swan's Crew, that were Impressed by His Majesty's Gun Brig Forward have been released on your Honors application and are now at Cowes. Only two are at present detained by the Admiralty, Viz. David Chessel and James Norris both of whom were sent by the Regulating Officer at this Port, Captain James Hills on board His Majesty's Sloop Argus. As Captain Ferris has not been able to point out to your Honors any Condemned Vessel fit to be used as a temporary Cruizer, we submit if you would be pleased to approve of his using for the present, a large Condemned Boat 45 feet long, Constructed to Row with 10 Oars and well found with Sails & every necessary material, wanting only a few Pounds to be laid out on her to render her fit for the Summer. If your Honors should think proper to direct Captain Ferris

to equip this Boat as proposed a Deputed Officer & ten Mariners may be employed in her & in one of the Six Oared Boats of the late Swan saved from the Enemy – the other Deputed Officer & Six Hands more may be employed, the Men to be paid, and Victualled by the Commander as when on board the Cutter. We are humbly recommend the adoption of this Scheme to your Honors, as we have within these few Days, been well informed that Smuglers at and in the Neighbourhood of Portland are at this time fitting out long Boats for the Contraband Trade this Summer in lieu of Vessels over which Revenue Cutters in Calm and Light Winds have little or no chance of Capture. The ten oared Boat we conceive as calculated for the Temporary use of Captain Ferris and the Swans People released from the Impress - is called the Fox of Lyme – was seized by Captain Pearce the 28th July 1806 when quite new.

26 April 1807 The Inclosed Log from Mr R Comben Mate of the late Swan Cutter, now in Cherbourg Prison, accusing the Crew of retreating from their positions instead of defending the Cutter against the Enemy on the 20th March last having been delivered to us by his daughter Elizabeth Harris. We transmit the same for you Honors Information, as also the depositions of the Deputed Officers & mariners charged with this crime. The Deponents were individually examined by us prior to administering the Oath. We have to observe that the Individual & Collective Evidence do not vary in detailing the Narrative of the Swan's loss.

26 April 1807 John Attrill a Pauper of the lowest Class who was seduced by a promise of a Reward from some Notorious & irresponsible Smuglers to assist in running 99 Casks of Foreign Spirit having been arrested under a writ of Capias the 24th Inst. and sent to Winchester Gaol voluntarily made the following Affidavit prior to his being committed & most humbly implores your Honors Clemency in granting him his liberation & that he may hereafter be admitted as Evidence for the Crown.

6 May 1807 Inclosed we forward an Account of Rewards due to Officers at this Port, amounting to £11 – 5 – 0 for seizing Five Boats which have been Condemned in the Exchequer and since broke up pursuant to your Honors Orders of 22 October 06 and 11 April 1807 to pay which we humbly pray Your directions.

6 May 1807 We transmit Inclosed the Surveying Officers Certificates to obtain Admiralty Licences for two Boats whose Owners reside at this Port.

Boat called the Jane of Cowes Richard Webb, Master Value £40
An Open Boat 3 Oars John Tomkins, Owner Value £16

8 May 1807 As directed by your Order of 2 Inst. we have to state that we are unable to add any proof to support the confession of Charles Stamp to John Attrill that the 99 Casks sworn to in his Affidavit of 24 April last came out of the Fortitude Smack, but Captain Green of the Antelope Cutter, belonging to Portsmouth says, that on the 15th July last, as the Fortitude was coming towards Bembridge Ledge from Sea with a fair Wind from the W S W supposed from Alderney, as soon as she discovered the Antelope, immediately put about and stood to Sea to avoid being spoke with, but that the weather was too hazy & thick at the time, for any one to descry that any Casks were put overboard from the Fortitude. It is nevertheless insisted on by the informant George Young & the witness John Attrill that they have repeatedly heard it asserted that the 99 Casks of Foreign Spirit were put out of the Fortitude & sunk in consequence of the appearance of the Antelope.

23 May 1807 In obedience to your directions of 15 Inst. transmitted with the Order of Embargo against Ships & property belonging to the Ottoman Empire, we have to report that no Vessel has been permitted here to enter out or clear for the Dominion of the Grand *Signior* neither is there in this Port any Ship or Vessel bearing the Ottoman Flag.

26 May 1807 As directed by your Order of 23 Inst., we have to report that on the Swan being Captured by the Enemy in the Year 1796 the Crew were only paid until the Day she was taken, Viz. 14 December 1796.

26 May 1807 In obedience to your Directions of 18th Inst. we inclose a copy of the Honble Boards Order for granting an Allowance for Stationary to Officers at this Port in the Service of the Revenue. We have considered the Allowance of Stationary as intended for the Upstairs Departments, but it has nevertheless been the practice here to supply the Waterside Officers with such a proportion of Paper, Pens and Ink as would meet their Official necessities. From the increase in Letters in late Years and Multiplication of Accounts our Annual Allowance has been found inadequate to our actual wants and we have been driven to the expediency of buying occasionally Paper and Substitution of old Covers for a sheet of Paper. In the Year 1783 our Correspondence with your Honors was 137, Letters last Year exceeded this number by 120 & as Paper is fully one third advanced in price since the Allowance was granted, we trust our request to have the Annual Allowance of £10 augmented to £15 will not be deemed unreasonable.

29 May 1807 William Davis a Tidewaiter and Boatman at this Port receiving a Salary of Five Pounds per Annum with 3/- per Day when boarded and 2/6 per day when employed in the Tide Surveyors Boat under your Honors Order of 5 April 1801 Died Yesterday.

1 June 1807 This morning died William *Renier* an established Tidewaiter at this port receiving under your Honors order – 11 April 1804 3/- per day when boarded and 2/6 per day when otherwise employed with a salary of £5 per annum.

8 June 1807 In carrying into Execution your Honors Order of 24 April last, Mr William Ferris Commander of the late Swan Cutter, after having the Fox Galley properly equipped proceeded on immediate Service & on the 3rd Inst near Alderney Seized a large Lugsail Boat laden with 97 Casks of Foreign Spirit.

In securing his Prize, an Outrage was committed by the Officers of His Majesty's Gun Brig Safeguard Commanded by Lieut. Balfour on the person of Captain Ferris as cannot fail to excite your Honors indignation as well as to reflect much discredit on the Character of Naval Officers, unless that Board to whom they are amenable will by its timely interference & authority put a stop to any repetition of similar *occurrences*.

If an Officer of Captain Ferris's Years & footing in your Honors Service after exhibiting his *honor* and your Special Orders to act on Illicit Traders is to be degraded by a youth furnishing his Cutlass over his Head and knocked down in his own Boat, we are at a loss to know how Revenue Officers are to be protected in the execution of their Duty on the High Seas unless unless persons committing such offences are duly punished.

9 June 1807 We transmit Inclosed a Letter from Mr James Cass, Mate of the Fox Cutter belonging to this Port representing that in chasing a Smugler last Friday & seizing thereby 66 Casks of Foreign Spirit the Cutters Mast was sprung and the Bowsprit pitched away. Also a Letter from Mr James Turner Commander of the Fox who had requested leave of absence for 6 days on his private affairs & was consequently not on board at the time of the accident. Inclosing Estimates for a new Mast and some Cordage and submitting as the Cutters Bottom now wants Caulking & the Rigging an Overhaul, whether she might not have a General Refit while the Mast & Bowsprit are making, such a refit being absolutely necessary now and indispensable at the termination of another Month.

23 June 1807 Captain Ferris having acquainted us that the Cutter Stork now building by Mr Gely will require at her Outfit 25 Tons of Iron Ballast, we submit if your Honors may not think it fit for the Use of the Stork 14 Tons of Iron ballast now lying in Poole taken in the Diana Smuggling Vessel by the Sea Gull Cutter and Condemned in the Exchequer.

23 June 1807 Henry Twyman a Tidesman and Boatman at this Port who has laboured ten years past under acute and painful attacks of asthma, rheumatism & deafness and in consequence has scarcely been employed during the period has this morning signified by message to the Tide Surveyor that from his advanced stage of life being upward of 60 years old and increasingly afflictions, his hope of being able to serve again is entirely vanished & therefore returns his Commission with grateful thanks praying your Honors to accept the same.

29 June 1807 In obedience to your Order of 19 Instant we despatched Love and Miller the Officers specifically nominated to arrest William Matthews an Outlaw in Lord Edinberough's Warrant to Alderney in the Drake Cutter under the Direction of Captain Blake, and we have satisfaction in now reporting to your Honors they arrived yesterday with the Offender in their Custody. William Matthews was last night lodged in the Bridewell at Southampton and will this day be removed to the County Gaol at Winchester. On the back hereof we are the particulars of the Arrest of Matthews as described by Captain Blake.

27 June 1807 Letter from Captain Blake (from Guernsey)

I arrived here last evening after stopping at Alderney and taking William Matthews, as you directed he has lately been employed as a Pilot to a Lugger Tender to a Gun Brig stationed at Alderney Pier. I was to be sent for him on board for him, all this was performed but the moment he saw me coming on the pier he jumped overboard out of the Stern Port. I saw him immediately turned and immediately cut him off from getting among the houses, he then being obliged to take a different course. Richard Hoskins, one of Captain Ferris's Officers caught him kicked up his Heels and we secured him.

11 July 1807 Joseph Jolliffe was this Day admitted to the Office of a Boatman at St Hellens in this Port in the Room of William Gregory Superannuated pursuant to your Order of the 9 Inst.

17 July 1807 The Stork Cutter Building in this Port, to replace the late Swan, being such a state of forwardness that Mr Gely proposes laying the Dock after the ensuing week.

We beg to submit to prevent the smallest delay in the Equipment of the Cutter after her Launch that your Honors will be pleased to give directions for providing the following Anchors in London agreeable to the weights respectively set against each. It has been pointed out by Captain Ferris for the Cutter to have Viz:

Boat Bower 8 – 2 – 0
Small Bower 8 – 2 – 0
Large Hedge 4 – 0 – 0
Small to Warp 2 – 2 – 0

To be shipt in the first London Coaster for this Port.

The Stork requiring nearly 30 Tons of Iron Ballast – we beg to propose that in addition to the 11 Tons 14 Cwt that can be had at Poole at the Appraised & value that your Honors may direct that a similar quantity at Chichester seized in the Lion Cutter may also be bought & that about 6 Tons now in our Warehouse belonging to the late Batt Cutter & which Captain Williams says he shall not want may be delivered over for the use of the Stork. And it being represented by Captain Ferris that the state of the Cutter renders it expedient that the Rigging & Cordage should be forthwith *fitted* and this can be done without prejudice to his cruising (James Norris & David Chessel having been liberated from the Navy) *leaving those Men* for the purpose of preparing & fitting the Rigging, we submit in order to give due furtherance to the Public Service if your Honors may not approve of Captain Ferris's proposal & give directions accordingly.

Messrs. *Gerram* & Butcher your Honors Rope Makers at this place engage to supply the Rigging, Cordage & Cables made of the very best clean St Petersburg Hemp of good weight & lengths at London prices.

20 July 1807 As directed by your Order of 9 Inst. we immediately on Captain Ferris's return directed him to take to his assistance an experienced Person in Shipbuilding and survey the Stork and inclosed we transmit a Certificate signed by Mr Richardson, an able and respectable Ship Builder at Cowes, Mr Tedbury Commander of the Hope and Captain Ferris expressly stating the work in every respect is performed according to Contract.

No alteration in the Stem, Stern or Keel has taken place since our Certificate was transmitted to your Honors on 2 June last or that of Captain Turner, Messrs Shirlock & Hoult of 15 same month and as the first payment of £400 was then due Mr Gely represents this delay of seven Weeks very injuriously to a person in the Trade and respectfully appeals to your Honors for the immediate advance of this money agreeable to the Contract the Cutter which he says he has engaged to build on the lowest possible Terms.

We annex also a letter from Captain Ferris submitting as the Deck to be laid in a few Days he may be permitted / instead of 4 Men proposed in our letter of 17 Instant to be employed in fitting the Rigging / a complement of Mariners for the Stork as soon as may be as the work of the Rigging fitting, Blocks etc will occupy nearer 20 Men than the 4 – supposing he should be fortunate enough to meet with Seamen which at this Time we fear may be difficult.

26 July 1807 We have to represent to your Honors that on Wednesday evening the 23 inst Mr Richard Chiverton Coast Waiter seized at Ryde in this Port a Cart & Horse laden with 3 Casks of 62 Gallons Rum & 2 Casks with 42 Gallons Brandy Foreign Spirits which it is supposed had been run from some illegal Transport.

The Cart belonged to a person James Benzley of Ryde and was driven by Joseph Wetherick hired by Benzley to carry the 5 Casks of Spirit from the Shore to his House.

Wetherick after the Seizure was made by Chiverton followed the Cart & Horse to the Custom House and solicited their release instead of which we ordered him to be secured and taken before a Quorum of Magistrates at Newport who committed him to Bridewell (since released on recognizance) for being found Carrying, Conveying & assisting in Running the 5 Casks of Foreign Spirit.

No evidence was advanced in Court to incriminate Benzley, the principal in the transaction unless the declaration upon Wetherick that he was engaged by him to carry the 5 Casks from the Shore to Benzley's House will admit of their conversation neither did Chiverton the Officer at any time see Benzley receive the Goods.

The Single value of the 104 Gallons estimated according to the regulations when we prosecute for Penalties will be £104, and it seems *necessary* for your Honors to determine whether you choose to prosecute for Treble value or £100 of which election we *wish* to be appraised as soon as possible as the Magistrates have been promised to proceed to Conviction next Saturday. Joseph Wetherick we learn from due enquiries is a poor Man not worth £40.

The Magistrates adjudged the Horse & Cart forfeited & condemned under the 30 Sect George 3rd Chap. 47 which will be sent to Public Auction. (As this letter is of poor quality and barely legible, parts have been omitted.)

27 July 1807 We beg leave to lay before your Honors the enclosed account of Coals brought Coastwise to this Port showing the progressive Increase that has taken place in the introduction of this article in the Isle of Wight within the last Forty Years and humbly to submit that as Three Established Meters appointed prior to the Year 1794 when only 4000 Chaldrons were annually Consumed are now found inadequate to the delivery & admeasurement of the present regular supply your Honors will deem it expedient to augment the Establish Meters to Five instead of Three. And Robert Miller and Thomas Holbrook two sober and capable Young Men having been employed by us as Extra Meters for the last few Years in the discharging of Colliers when the regular meters were engaged much to our satisfaction from the accurate and correct manner of keeping their Books & Propriety of Conduct. We humbly hope your Honors will permit us to recommend these Persons as fit & Competent to be Confirmed as Established Meters by which augmentation the Crown will not be put to any additional allowance on Salary, the Duties on Coal are more likely to be better secured & the Coal Traders afforded satisfaction thereby, it often happening that we are obliged to stop the delivery of Coal for want of proper Meters.

4 August 1807 The Deck of the Stork Cutter being laid and the Work and State of the Hull having been examined by Captain Ferris & Smith & Mr Richardson – an experienced and respectable Ship Builder at Cowes & compared with the Terms of the Contract & certified that the Deck is laid agreeable thereto.

Mr Gely by the Inclosed application humbly submits of your Honors his Second Payment of £400.

6 August 1807 Joseph Wetherick who had been taken up by Richard Chiverton in the act of driving a cart with Five Casks of Foreign Spirits therein was prosecuted before the Justices on Isle Wight last Saturday. Convicted with the penalty of £100.

Agreeable to the Honorable Boards General Letter of 8 May 1782 the expenses attending this Prosecution amounting to £2 – 12 – 6 have been deducted from the Gross Amount. One half of the Residue £48 – 18 – 9 remitted Mr Cooper for the Crown and the other Moiety £48 – 18 – 9 paid to Richard Chiverton who Prosecuted for the same pursuant to the Regulations of the Act.

8 August 1807 Pursuant to your Honors Order of 4 Inst we have this day admitted Mr Peter Weston Mate of the Tiger Cutter on the Guernsey Station in the room of Mr Isaac Watson resigned.

8 August 1807 The Lion seized Cutter having been conveyed to this Port from Chichester by Captain Ferris pursuant to your Honors Order of 23 Ult.

We transmit his representation of the insufficiency of the Vessels Anchors & Cables to conduct the new Stork to London when launched, which we understand will be in about a months time, & submitting that new Anchors should be forthwith sent from London. The Cordage & Cables to be made here without delay and that he may be permitted to engage at once if practicable the Storks full complement of Men in order that a proportion of the Crew may be employed in fitting the new Rigging to promote the speediest equipment of the Cutter & that others may be kept Cruizing in the Fox Galley & the six Oared Boat.

We shall be much pleased to find Captain Ferris's efforts to raise twenty Men in so short a time as one Month, attended with process, but from the difficulties we have witnessed these last two Years in obtaining men for that Service, we cannot form sanguine hope of his endeavours, considering his application then as not premature.

We humbly submit your Honors will be pleased to take his request into consideration & issue such timely Orders thereon as may facilitate the quickest completion of the new Cutter.

5 September 1807 As directed by your Order of 28 Ult. we have procured additional Estimates for providing Four Boats for the new Stork Cutter, which we enclose for your Honors directions. Mr Gravener of Portsmouth has lately constructed some Boats for the use of our Cutters, which have given very great satisfaction and the number of Men constantly employed by him for the Sole building of Boats (we believe not less than Forty) enable him to fulfil a Contract in a very short space of time.

14 September 1807 Pursuant to your Honors Order of 10 Inst. we transmit a Certificate of the Age of Thomas Holbrook nominated to be a Coal Meter at the Port by which it appears he is twenty four Years of old.

We beg to observe he has been employed for some Years past, as an Extra Meter at this Port, is a Man of sober good Character & has never been to our knowledge, concerned in or suspected of Smuggling.

19 September 1807 Agreeable to your Honours order we forward enclosed certificates of the age of Robert Miller nominated to be a Coal Meter at this Port by which it appears he is twenty six years old. Robert Miller has been employed five years past as an Extra Meter at this Port is a man of good character and has never been concerned or suspected of smuggling.

Baptism – Seventeen hundred and eighty one. Robert, s of Robert Miller, September the second.

Faithfull extract from the Newport Register

G Richards, Clerk

25 September 1807 We are requested by Mr Robert Willis to lay before your Honors the inclosed representation of his inability on account of his Years & Infirmities to continue the Duty of the six Oared Boat, on incidents at Yarmouth, with that activity that the nature of such an employment requires.

Mr Willis was appointed by your Honors on 7 June 1785, a Boatman on the Establishment at Yarmouth to act in conjunction with Mr Charles Leigh the Coastwaiter and Boatman there, in boarding all vessels that arrive from Foreign Ports or otherwise in that Harbour & Roadstead & to detect illicit Trade.

Smuggling having increased on this Coast some years since he was directed (on our recommendation) by your Honors order of 19 December 1799, copy of which is annexed, to take charge of the six Oared Boat holding his Commission as Boatman. The Station at Yarmouth requires two Officers to be constantly on the spot for the purpose beforementioned & when Mr Willis has been absent two or three days on the look out Mr Leigh could not use the punt for Boarding Ships & vessels from foreign parts without getting some auxiliary assistance.

Mr Willis has been a very active successful Officer having made many good Seizures of Contraband Goods within the last 3 Years. We humbly recommend him to your Honors as deserving the indulgence he solicits.

The continuance of the six Oared Boat at Yarmouth we humbly conceive as indispensably expedient for the protection of the Revenue which we have not failed to state regularly in our half Yearly Account of Incidental Officers. (This was apparently rejected, Willis was still working at Yarmouth 15 years later at the age of 71.)

8 October 1807 Inclosed are the Surveying Officers Certificates to obtain Your Honors Licences for Two Boats as below described.

Wherry, Six Oars – Phillip Riddett, Owner – Value £11
Open Boat, Five Oars – William Ront Jnr. – Value £20

Four licences were applied for 1 September last not one of which has been sent down.

9 October 1807 Pursuant to your Honors Order of Yesterday we have to state that that this Port being enumerated by the 29 of the King Chap 68 for the Importation of Tobacco & Snuff & also for receiving & depositing all seized Tobacco Stalks & Snuff after Condemnation conformable to the 40 Section of the said Act.

A Kiln was erected in the Tobacco Warehouse at this Port by your Honors Order of 16 December 1790 for burning all damaged Tobacco and Snuff and such as would not yield at Public Sale the Duties of Customs & Excise - and could well be adapted for the use intended and is now with the Tobacco Warehouse & other premises the Property of the Crown.

We propose that all Tobacco Stalks & Snuff as may be by Law or your Honors regulations directed to be burnt shall be done as hereafter in the presence of ourselves, the Assistant Warehousekeeper, William Ralph & the Excise Warehousekeeper who immediately takes into stock all Tobacco &c lodged in the Warehouse & that the Quantities so burnt should be duly certified by us & the Warehousekeeper on the Account of Sale to enable your Honors to grant such Rewards to the seizing Officers as they may be deemed entitled to.

The Ports from which we received seized & Condemned Tobacco & Snuff for the last 15 years pursuant to your Honors Order of 5 January 1790 are particularized:

Newhaven, Shoreham, Arundel, Chichester, Portsmouth, Southampton, Poole, Lyme, Exeter, Dartmouth.

9 October 1807 The Mooring Rope of the Tidesurveyors Boat is being no longer trustworthy we transmit an Estimate for a new one.

15 October 1807 In obedience to your Honors directions we have proceeded *make* a Personal Inspection of the Coast of the Isle of Wight forming the Port of Cowes. And it appearing to us that the accessible Shore & Spots resorted to by the Smuglers could not be so well explained in a detailed Report as by delineating the features of the Coast on a map (not included in the Book). We have one drawn out under our immediate Instruction, which we herewith transmit with the results of our Survey exemplified by certain observations and propositions.

Finding in pursuing our Rounds that many of the Military Stations at the out Ports, at the back of this Island were ignorant of the Rewards held out to them by His Majesty's Order in Council of 9 April 1807 for the suppression of Smuggling we submit for the better promulgation of his Majesty's pleasure therein if His Royal Highness the Commander in Chief should not be moved to direct copies of the Order to be forthwith transmitted to every General & Commanding Officer in the Kingdom with the

Instructions to communicate the same to all Commissioned, non Commissioned Officers & Privates, all of whom that we *communicated* with knowing nothing of such Rewards being promised to them.

With a view to carrying into full effect a part of our propositions for the protection of this Coast against the inroads of the Smuglers we beg to suggest the Commanding Officer on the Isle of Wight Col. Taylor may be directed to confer with us on the practicality & propriety of extending the lookout Guard to certain Guard Houses which in our observations we have stated as unoccupied – as well as upon the best means that can be derived from an advantageous co-operation of the Revenue Officer & Military.

In recommending to your Honors the Establishment of 2 Five Oared Boats & a Sitter to each, we suggest they should be of light construction, our motive for which is that these Boats cannot have any advantage, as the back of the Isle of Wight where we have proposed to fix them – they must necessarily be drawn up on the Shore for Security when not employed & as this can only be done by the bodily strength of the Crew & a Windlass it is obviously expedient they should be built of lighter construction than usual.

We cannot refrain from reiterating to your Honors our sanguine & we hope well founded expectation of the very substantial benefits that must accrue to the Revenue from the adoption of this proposal appearing to us (& also those we have consulted on this particular subject) that it will be morally impossible if all parties do their Duty (of which we will not for a moment entertain a doubt) that any Smuggling can exist on this Coast & when it is considered that by only the additional expenditure of about £600 per annum for this increase in our Coastguard £40,000 per annum might be saved to the Country & the harmful practice of Smuggling totally annihilated on a considerable extent of Coast, we reckon with much confidence on your Honors full approval of such a proposition. The Map of the Isle of Wight having been attended with personal Expenses, we beg leave to inclose an Account thereof amounting to £16 – 9 – 0, which we humbly crave to be allowed.

Remarks, Observations & Propositions made on the map are as follows viz:

No. 1. Freshwater Gate, 2. Road to Compton Barracks, 3. Road up Cliff between Compton Barracks & Brook Chine, 4. Brook Chine, 5. Southmore, 6. Boat House, 7. Chilton Chine, 8. Grange Chine, 9. ? Ledge, 10. Barnes Chine, 11. Cowleaze Chine, 12. Compton Fields, 13. road to Barracks at Atherfield Rocks, 14. Walpan Chine, 15. Whales Chine, 16. Black Gang Chine, 17. Rockenend, 18. Watershoot, 19. Buddle, 20. Puckaster, 21. Mirables, 22. Old Rock, 23 Woolverton, 24 & 25 road up each side Sir Richard Wolseys Fort, 26 & 27 road up the cliff to Steephill, 28. Mill Bay, 29. Bonchurch, 30. Luckomb Chine, 31. Shanklin, 32. Letter Stairs, 33. & 34. road up cliff each side Sandown Bay, 35 & 36. road up Red Cliff, 37. Road up at the end of Whitecliff Bay, 38. road up cliff from Totland Bay

Observation

1st. The Spots distinguished by the numbers 1 to 38 are accessible by Boats whence roads & paths head up the Cliffs & are principally frequently & used by Smuglers in conveying their contraband Goods within the interior of the Isle of Wight.

2nd. The Cross + denote the accessible parts of the shore at the back of the Isle Wight where the Smuglers generally sink their Goods.

3rd. There are 20 Vessels belonging to the Isle Wight from 15 to 30 Tons Register that are supposed to be employed altogether in Smuggling besides others which are occasionally so occupied each vessel is said to bring about 100 small Casks each containing about 4 Gallons of Spirit & supposing 10 Trips are made annually by each Vessel to Guernsey & Alderney not less than 20,000 Casks or 80,000 Gallons are clandestinely Imported thereby injuring the Revenue upwards £40,000 per annum.

As their arrival at the back of the Isle of Wight which is often in heavy weather & Gales of Wind when Revenue Cutters are obliged to run into Port for safety, the Cask is sunk by means of Anchors, Warps & Stones at the sinking places before described & according to the success of the Contraband Trader in selling his Goods in the Isle of Wight or the Hampshire Coast, the Casks are taken up at favourable opportunities & conveyed to the Purchasers.

Messrs. Robey & Dixon, Riding Officers stationed more immediately near the most frequented Smuggling parts at the back of the Island assert that they have often seen crops of such Goods taken up about a mile distant from the Shore by the Smuggling Parties & carried off sometimes apparently to

Sea, others round Bembridge Ledge & St Hellens for, it is presumed, the Hampshire Coast, without having any means in their power as Riding Officers to frustrate the designs of the Illicit Traders.

4th. The preventive force of this Port consisting of a 6 Oared Boat Commanded by Robert Willis the Sitter stationed at Yarmouth, a 2 Oared Boat crewed by 2 Boatmen Granger & Jolliffe at Bembridge & St Hellens, Mr Robey Riding Surveyor at Yafford, Dixon at Niton, Chiverton at Ryde and Miller at Shalfleet, Riding Officers is totally insufficient in number & inadequate in force for the protection of the Coast of the Isle of Wight against the practices of Smuglers.

5th The squares denote the positions & residences of the respective Preventive Officers before mentioned.

Propositions

1st. That the Paths & Roads up the Cliffs against which the numerical figures 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38 may be guarded by the Permanent Military at the Isle Wight at all of which Spots contiguous thereto are Barracks & Guard Houses within a few Yards and mostly occupied.

2nd. That at other Paths & Roads Viz. 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 near which there are neither Barracks or Guard Houses & being connected with an extensive range of accessible shore can only be protected by an augmentation of the present Revenue force, the placing of Stop Gates being utterly impractical from the wideness of Paths & the nature of the Cliffs.

3rd. That the existing preventive force of this Island being found to be inadequate to the Services required as set forth in our observations No. 4. It is proposed that 2 five Oared Boats of light Construction each under the Command of a Sitter should be added to the present Establishment, the one to be stationed at Atherfield Rocks to keep the look out & guard the Coast from Freshwater Gate to Rockenend, the other to be fixed at Mill Bay to perform the like Duty from Rockenend to Sandown by the adoption of which proposals the 3 Sitters Boats would have 3 distinct districts to guard Viz. Mr. Willis's Boat at Yarmouth would watch the Coast from Cowes Harbour westwards towards the Needles, Freshwater Bay to Freshwater Gate & the others as before recommended.

4th. The 2 Oared Boat of Granger & Jolliffe at St Hellens may guard the Harbour there & watch the Coast to Sandown & the Riding Surveyor & Riding Officers at their respective Stations may co-operate with the Waterguard. The North East part of the Island also accessible in all parts is guarded by the Roebuck Cutter constantly fixed at Motherbank & the cruising of other Portsmouth Cutter the Antelope & their Boats – consequently if the 2 Sitters Boats are placed at the acceptable & most frequented Spots by Smuglers in landing their Goods, Viz. Atherfield Rocks and Mill Bay, no part of the Coast of the Isle of Wight will remain unguarded. The beneficial effects of which improvement in the Revenue force would be only a partial suppression of Smuggling practices but in our humble opinion a total annihilation of that fraudulent & iniquitous Traffic in which belief we are supported by the concurrent assurances of the Riding Surveyor & Riding Officers who must be competent of the efficiency of these measures.

5th. As the Crews of the Boats must have some habitation & the boats shelter, we propose that a small House the lower part of which should be appropriated for securing the Boat & their Materials & the upper room for the Men to sleep & cook in – fitted up after the plan of a Cutter should be erected under the cliff at Atherfield & a similar one at Mill Bay, at each of these places there is waste land a sufficiency of which for putting up 2 Houses may be rented on a long Lease for about £3 per annum each & we presume the cost of each House would not exceed £150 – all of which is respectfully submitted.

16 October 1807 It having fallen to our lot Six Months since to communicate to your Honors the loss of a Cutter, we trust we shall have Credit for saying that we now feel more than common Gratification in announcing the capture of the French Lugger Privateer *Friedland* by your Honors Cutters the Fox of Cowes Commanded by Mr James Turner and the Sea Gull of Poole by Mr John Carter yesterday about 3 O'Clock between Portland and Alderney.

The Lugger was commanded by Charles Douette, and made some resistance, had a complement of 30 Men on board, mounted two Guns, amply provided with small Arms and Cutlasses, out 2 Days from Cherborough but had taken nothing.

The Privateer is not more than 40 Tons but her just Value we conceive will be more properly estimated when it is considered by the vigilance of the Cutters she was frustrated in her design to capture several laden Ships & Vessels going down the Channel for which she was immediate by steering when first described by Captains Turner & Carter & which intention has since been avowed by the French Captain.

The Privateer and her Materials have been delivered to our Custody & the Prisoners are just now conveyed to Portsmouth by Captains Turner & Carter.

19 October 1807 In reply to your Order of enquiry we have to state that Yarmouth being a creek of considerable population much increased within these last 20 years & by the Establishment of Barracks in the vicinity and there being in consequence an hourly intercourse by numerous Vessels & Boats with Lymington and the appropriate necessity of Two Officers being stationed at that Town. We have no hesitation in saying it is now tenfold what it was when Chas Leigh and Robert Willis were originally appointed to execute the Coast and Harbour duty at that place.

The particular service required of these Officers, the Shipping and Landing of all Goods Coastwise, to board all Ships and Vessels arriving in the Roadstead for which Duty a two Oared Boat is allowed to guard the Harbour & Shore against the introduction of Smuggled Goods.

Since the period of Mr Willis's appointment to be the Sitter of the six Oared Boat in the Year 1799 the Act of 45 George Cap 10 empowering Regulations for the due performance of Quarantine has passed & Willis as well as ourselves & the Tide Surveyor received a Commission from your Honors to execute this Duty & when at Yarmouth if any Vessel came to Anchor coming from any infected place or carrying Goods on board unaccompanied by a Declaration as to their Growth; is thereby liable to Quarantine he with becoming vigilance & propriety always ordered them to proceed immediately to the Quarantine Ground a consideration which at this moment that will have no doubt strike your Honors as to the absolute expediency of having an experience & intelligent Officer constantly resident at that Port which we can say Willis is.

His Partner Charles Leigh who by his Commission is nominated Coastwaiter & Boatman at Yarmouth is an old faithful Officer but of very humble abilities & during Mr Willis's absences sometimes 3 or 4 Days & Nights together looking for Smugglers in the Sitters Boat the Duty of guarding the Harbour at Yarmouth & boarding the arrival of Ships from foreign Parts has been very inefficiently performed we fear & by no means to our satisfaction in as much as Leigh when occasionally required his rowing of to the Roadstead to obtain the requisite Information of the Ships voyage & Cargo, he has been dependent on any accidental aid that offered to assist him in rowing the Boat to the Ships Anchorage, which cannot be done but by 2 people. The Duty of the Sitter of the six Oared Boat should we conceive be detached from from all others to enable him to keep a vigilant & strict look out & if the district of the six Oared Boat at Yarmouth is limited from Cowes Westwards to the Needle Point Freshwater Bay and Gate and the proposition which we submitted in our letter of 15 Inst. to your Honors for increasing our Waterguard are adopted we are in return almost to pledge that the Smuggling on the Isle of Wight Coast will be almost annihilated.

19 October 1807 We transmit at the request of Captain Turner of the Fox Cutter and Captain Carter of the Seagull Cutter the inclosed application to be presented with Silver Buttons for the Uniforms of themselves & Mates stating that they shall consider such a favor as a mark of your Honors especial approbation of their late conduct.

26 October 1807 Pursuant to your Order of enquiry of the 24th Inst. respecting the qualification of John Fowell nominated to be a Tidewater & Boatman at this Port, we beg to explain that this man has been and Extraman in the Tidesurveyor Boat for 9 Years & Richard Smart likewise nominated 18 years at the trifling wages of 2/- per diem each. These Men having uniformly conducted themselves with sobriety and fidelity & complaining that the small pittance of 2/- per day is not able to support their Families, Your Collector on the demise of William Davis & resignation of Henry Twyman, Boatman that had been employed many Years in the Tidesurveyors Boat with Deputations interests himself in procuring the promotion of Smart & Fowell from Extraman to Established Boatmen meaning them to be constantly employed in the Tidesurveyors Boat only which situations they are well qualified for as must be obvious for their long servitude in the Boat already. At the granting of promotion to faithful &

deserving servants never fails to have a good effect stimulating others to a zealous discharge of Duty we humbly submit that your Honors will be pleased to grant John Fowell & Richard Smart Deputations for Boatmen only which is conformable to your Order of 11 April last. These men will receive 2/6 per day & £5 per annum.

2 November 1807 We have to report that contrary to our expectation the Military in this neighbourhood have not had any communication with us on the subject of establishing a line of posts or patrols to protect the coast against smuggling practices,

In our latest survey we acquainted these officers as well as the soldiers of the rewards that would be given to them for their services in making seizures.

14 December 1807 Pursuant to your Order of the 9th Inst. we beg leave to state that it has been the practice in the Port for the Tidesurveyor to permit one Tidesman in turn, that is to say every day, to come on shore when two are boarded for the sole purpose of obtaining Provisions many of the Ships arriving at this Port not allowing them any. 2^{ndly} That the Tidesmen here have no Blue Book given them except they are boarded on a ship discharging her cargo in which case neither of the Officers are allowed to quit the ship while she is discharged. 3^{rdly} That the practice of allowing One Tidesman to come on shore for Provisions is restricted to transient Ships arriving in Cowes Roads for Orders & those which may be in distress the Masters of which refuse to victual them when the Tidesurveyors Boat conveys them on shore about 8 or 9 o'Clock & takes them on board again at 2 o'Clock in the afternoon. 4^{thly} The Tidesurveyor uses his discretion in only suffering those Tidesmen to come on shore when it is absolutely necessary, the whole being done under his cognizance, no further notice has been deemed expedient. 5^{thly} Nightly as well as daily visitations are made by the Tidesurveyor which is noted in his Journal. 6^{thly} These Journals are regularly examined by ourselves and if found correct are attested by us. We believe our Tidesurveyor to be a very faithful and diligent Officer who would not fail on any irregularity being discovered to make the same immediately known to us & inclosed we transmit his report on your Honors enquiry.

21 December 1807 We beg to state that we are decidedly of the opinion that a permanent boat is absolutely necessary for the service of this Revenue at Yarmouth for the following reasons viz.

That the coast of the Isle Wight near Yarmouth and the Needles and Freshwater is much exposed and resorted to by smugglers whose practices could not be checked but by the vigilance of an active sitter and crew and that the boat within these past three years has by due and proper lookout made the following seizures:

817 gallons	Brandy
68 gallons	Rum
610 gallons	Geneva
10 gallons	Wine
690 pounds (weight)	Tobacco

23 December 1807 In return to your Order of reference of the 7th Inst. on the Memorial of Messrs Auldjo & Days Merchants at this Port to be admitted to the Privileges of the Warehousing System, we have to report that Auldjo's large stack two Houses high is situated on the Wharf at East Cowes within Fifty Yards of the Customs & the East End of which forms part of the High Street & the West is on the Quay facing the Water, both ends having an Entrance Door & is completed according to the prescribed printed Rules. In this Stack there are no Windows that look over the Roofs or into Private Yards, the Ground Floor is intended for warehousing Spirits & Wine but not vaulted being fourteen feet high, the ceiling of the Floor above is battened with Laths saved for the particular *peer pose* and so put on that there is not a perceptible Crevice and the Roof and Rafters near the Tiles of the upper Storey are ceiled with Lath and Plaster, in a very secure and proper manner. The Application of the Proprietor is that the whole of this stack may be Licenced for the reception of any Articles rated in Tables **A** and **B** of the 43 of the King Chapter 132 (except Tobacco that already being provided for at Cowes).

The Merchants here are responsible people; and in all cases we shall pay particular attention in requiring that Security from Importers to guarantee the Revenue against accidents & to Insure the

payment of Duties on any deficiencies that may happen on the Weight and Contents of Merchandize ascertained by the Proper Officer is at the time of Importation and the periods of entering the same from the Warehouses for Home Consumption or Exportation as is required.

2 January 1808 In obedience to your Order of Yesterday we have this day admitted John Fowell to be a Boatman at this Port, and as directed we report that Richard Smart was first employed by the Collector & Comptroller as an Extraman in the Tidesurveyors Boat on our Representation on the State of the Guard here in our Letter of 5th November 1801. Your Honors by an Order dated 11 May 1802 were pleased to approve of our adding an additional man to the complement of Four in the Tidesurveyors Boat of which number said Smart was then one.

2 January 1808 The legal proceedings directed by your Honors Order of 24 May 1805 to be carried on against Mr James Day Junior, Merchant at this Port for the recovery of £125 – 12 – 6 the amount of Salvage Charges due to the Officers here resisted Payment of by him, though allowed by an adjudication of the Magistrates on the Isle of Wight were terminated last November by a Judgement entered against Mr Day for the full sum & has since been received from him & paid to the respective Officers interested

28 January 1808 As directed by your Order of 25th Inst. we inclose an Account of Horses & Carts seized & sold at this Port in the Years 1806 & 1807 and in obedience to that part respecting the breaking up of Condemned Vessels & Boats we have to report that the Rule contained in your General Order of 25 September 1795 has in no degree been deviated from, except when an inhabitant or a neighbouring Farmer has particularly expressed a desire prior to the sale of purchasing the stem or stern of a Boat for the making of a Hog stye, in such cases with a view to selling the materials to better advantage & under the conviction that such parts of the Boat could never be made use of, but for a Stye or Shed, the middle part being sawed fore and aft & bought by different persons, We thought that we should not in waving the direction of cutting the Boats Stern Post & Stem act oppositely to the intention of the Order, especially as we always took care that the purchaser used it for that particular purpose. The Breaking up and Cutting of Vessels & Boats is performed by William Ralph, the Assistant Warehousekeeper to the Collector & person hired for the purpose & is done under the personal supervision of ourselves generally a the spot before the Custom House and on which the materials are placed for sale.

25 March 1808 Henry Mew of Newport having been arrested the 28 January last by a Warrant of Execution & conveyed to Winchester Goal & since liberated on payment of the full Penalty of £110 – Robert Miller & James Sammes the two Persons made special for arresting said Mew humbly pray your Honors will allow them the inclosed Account of Charges amounting to Six Pounds eleven shillings & six Pence, the customary allowance of Four Guineas being found insufficient to defray Vessel & Chaise hire in conveying the Offender such a distance to Gaol, having arrested him at Portsmouth.

28 March 1808 In return to your Order of enquiry of 25 Inst. on the preparatory Account of Incidents for the Christmas Quarter last. We have respectfully to report that the Warehouse & Cottages (for which some Charges are made) are the property of the Crown & that they are occupied by Thomas Love a Tidewaiter & William Barnicole a Labouring man at the yearly rent of Nineteen Pounds subject to a deduction for the Property Tax. The dreadful Hurricane which happened in the early part of last November did generally a great deal of mischief in Cowes & in its effects stripped a part of the Tiling of the Cottages which it was necessary immediately to replace. The other Charges of the Bricklayer & Carpenter were for similar repairs to the Warehouse & Custom House and for removing a petition & breaking down some brickwork to admit the fixing of twelve large Legars for seized Spirits (provided by the Honble Boards Order) and all done at different intervals & quite unavoidable & considerably under in amount your Honors discretionary limitation; to which at all times it is our study to pay the utmost attention.

11 May 1808 In reply to your Order of enquiry of Yesterday, we report that we have no knowledge, neither has any Officer under our Survey of any act committed by the Glaucus that renders her liable to forfeiture except the one for which she has been Seized Viz. That of having 222

Casks of Tobacco in a Boat attached to the Cutters stern / the Cutter at the time lying offshore for the purpose of taking the Goods on board / & which the Seizing officer saw cut from the Glaucus's stern with the Goods in; on 4th February 1808 near the shore at Alderney.