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**BRITISH-COLONIAL PRIVATEERING IN THE WAR  
OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION  
1702-1713**

**NICHOLAS MORLEY**

**Thesis for the degree of M-Phil (Research)  
University of Glasgow  
Department of History  
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## Abstract

Despite the fact that privateers cruised in all the major inter-colonial wars of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, often enjoying far greater success in capturing prizes than the Royal Navy, for the twentieth century mind privateering is an almost unknown enterprise. Piracy and the activities of the navy, by contrast, are far better understood. Historians must, first and foremost, take the blame for this anonymity, for by neglecting to discuss privateering history in a detailed and accurate fashion, they have tended to shroud its existence and significance. The role of literature and film has exacerbated this situation.

Since the 1970s, a growing number of academics have begun to discuss the prize war generally, and privateering specifically, in a far more systematic fashion. The work of Kenneth Andrews, J.S. Bromley and David Starkey, to name but three, have greatly improved our understanding of the role and importance of private men-of-war. Their work tends to concentrate on privateering in European waters, leaving the colonial experience largely at the mercy of traditional historiography. Carl Swanson has made some useful inroads into this inequality with his investigation of the American prize war in the 1740s. He has convincingly demonstrated that privateering was a popular and widespread enterprise that was actively encouraged by imperial governments. British-colonial privateering in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, by contrast, has received only scant attention from historians, old and new alike. This fact seems strange when one considers that during this period government took an unprecedented interest in privateering and the prize war. In the War of the Spanish Succession (sometimes known as Queen Anne's War), for instance, British privateering became

more strictly regulated than ever before, while French naval resources were almost entirely handed over to private *armateurs*.

My aim in writing this thesis is to try and extend our understanding of British-colonial privateering in the War of the Spanish Succession. French privateering and the activities of the Royal Navy will also be occasionally discussed in an attempt to provide a more complete picture of the prize war. I will seek to discard traditional historiography wherever possible and approach my research with an open mind as to the significance of privateering in early eighteenth century warfare. I have focused on three main areas, namely, the rules of privateering, its attraction to government, investors and seamen, and finally, its effect on commerce and economic development.

The major evidential base for this study is a data file of references to prize captures that have been drawn from a variety of manuscript and printed primary sources. Secondary sources have also proved extremely useful, particularly in my discussions of French privateering and the activities of the Royal Navy.

The results of my research have broken with traditional historiography and suggested that rather than being a borderline enterprise of limited significance, privateering played an important part in the colonial sphere of the War of the Spanish Succession. In addition, I have argued that the early eighteenth century marked a crucial turning point in privateering history, the ramifications of which were felt in later inter-colonial wars. Encouraged by imperial and colonial governmental officials at every level, British-colonial privateers were more numerous in Queen Anne's War than ever before. The outbreak of hostilities in May 1702 was greeted with jubilation because of the opportunity it offered for privateering. Royal instructions were issued, and parliamentary legislation enacted, to ensure that privateering was not only better regulated, but also more financially attractive for investors and seamen. As a consequence, many of the

most affluent and respected members of British North American and Caribbean society invested ships and money in privateering, while thousands of seamen risked their lives in the hope of making their fortune. Privateers not only captured hundreds of enemy vessels, worth hundreds of thousands of pounds, but also helped indirectly protect British colonial trade. Privateering thus had a significant impact on inter-colonial and Atlantic commerce, and, more generally, on the progress and even the outcome of the War of the Spanish Succession.

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## Abbreviations

|               |                                                                         |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| C.S.P. Col.   | Calendar of State Papers, Colonial                                      |
| C.T.B.        | Calendar of Treasury Books                                              |
| C.T.P.        | Calendar of Treasury Papers                                             |
| M.H.L.        | Manuscripts of the House of Lords, Historical Manuscripts<br>Commission |
| J.H.C.        | Journal of the House of Commons                                         |
| J.H.L.        | Journal of the House of Lords                                           |
| J.C.T.P.      | Journal of the Council of Trade and Plantations                         |
| P.R.O. C.O.   | Colonial Office Manuscripts, Public Records Office                      |
| P.R.O. H.C.A. | High Court of Admiralty Papers, Public Records Office                   |

## Chapter 1

### RULES OF PRIVATEERING

The seventeenth century had produced little interest in an effective, uniform system of control over British North American and Caribbean privateering. Steady commercial and maritime expansion under Queen Anne changed this situation. Privateering was no longer merely a 'private' means of redress against individual loss during peacetime, but rather an officially sanctioned and controlled form of 'general' reprisal against an enemy during wartime. Privateering became a tool of war, a way to protect England's growing interest in overseas trade, as well as expand it at the expense of her rivals.

Instructions from the Crown and legislation enacted by Parliament legitimized privateering activity within an established international maritime code. The various regulations outlined the eligibility of privateers, stipulated which vessels could be sought as prizes, and articulated a complicated procedure for ensuring compliance with basic rules. They also made privateering a more profitable enterprise, increasing its attraction to seamen and prospective investors.

The principal means by which the Crown regulated privateering was through Admiralty courts. Dating back to the fourteenth century, Admiralty courts were established to control the issuing of privateering licenses, regulate the behaviour of privateers once at sea, and adjudicate over the condemnation of prize captures. As a result, Admiralty courts were, in theory, able to control numbers of privateers, channel their conduct within acceptable boundaries of international maritime law, and ensure that prize captures were taken from the correct nationalities and did not exceed the loss to be recovered. Admiralty courts also acted as a way for the monarch and the Lord High Admiral to collect the percentage of prize profits due to them.

In the reign of Henry VIII, the adjudication of the High Court of Admiralty in England was extended by the creation of an extra 19 Vice-Admiralty courts in the English districts. They looked after local maritime business, leaving all matters involving offences against the King's revenue to the common law courts, and all cases involving prizes taken at sea, or criminality on the high seas involving life or death, to the High Court of Admiralty in London.

In the Elizabethan era, official regulation of privateering through Admiralty courts was far from efficient or effective. According to Kenneth Andrews, "The working of the machinery for the regulation of privateering provides a striking example of the late Elizabethan administration at its worst – feeble and corrupt."<sup>1</sup> The system of licensing was particularly ineffective, for although the High Court of Admiralty was in theory responsible for the issuing of all 'letters of marque and reprisal' and the resolving of all 'controversies arising thereof', in reality, no one knew how many commissions were being issued or to whom. This situation resulted in an embarrassing stream of complaints from neutral governments.

Vested interests and political interference constantly undermined Admiralty court regulation of privateering. Dr Julius Caesar, judge of the High Court of Admiralty in the 1590s, frequently had his judgements quashed by the Privy Council. This interference was justified on the grounds that the work of Admiralty courts affected questions of international significance. The reality of the matter was more based on the vested interests of powerful men concerned in privateering.<sup>2</sup> Most significant was the Lord High Admiral, who in addition to a stake in prize captures, also often invested in privateering ventures. Further down the administrative ladder, unpaid officials, ranging from Vice-Admirals right down to the lowest subordinates, did their utmost to connive at piracies, smuggling and the like, in order to augment their

earnings. In such a situation, the Admiralty system was looked upon as a source of private profit at the public's expense.<sup>3</sup>

Gradually over the course of the seventeenth century, the effectiveness and efficiency of Admiralty court regulation of privateering improved. A separate prize division was established within the court, for instance, while new legislation more clearly set down rules and procedures. The extension of the Vice-Admiralty court system to the British colonies in North America and the Caribbean was part of this process. The first colonial trials of prize were witnessed on Jamaica in the 1660s. At this early stage, local trials in the colonies were wholly illegal; all captures were supposed to be sent to the High Court of Admiralty. Nevertheless, many prizes were condemned in Vice-Admiralty courts erected by governors under the authority of their commissions. Only in 1689, with the outbreak of war, did this long established practice receive some form of official recognition as captors were permitted "to resort to the next judicature port where a court of admiralty is or shall be erected."<sup>4</sup> This concession was granted owing to the inconvenience and danger of sending prizes to England. The outbreak of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1702, and the prospect of large numbers of prize captures, induced the English authorities to permanently transfer responsibility for prize adjudication to Vice-Admiralty courts. This decision was popular with colonial merchants who had been for some time lobbying for a mechanism that would allow the quick and efficient condemnation of privateering captures. Vice-Admiralty courts, (viz. New York, Virginia, Rhode Island / New Hampshire, Connecticut / East Jersey, Pennsylvania / West Jersey, Carolina / Bahamas, Bermuda, Jamaica, Barbados, and the Leeward Islands) first set up in 1697, from now on operated independently from the High Court of Admiralty.

The condemnation of naval prizes in the colonies proved more problematic. Throughout the early years of the war it was not settled whether Vice-Admiralty courts

in America had the power to try naval prize cases or not. It was the opinion of the Admiralty's legal advocate, for instance, that the authority of a special commission under the great seal of the Crown was needed for the trial of prizes. He further argued that as no commission had been sent to colonial governors or Vice-Admiralty courts, prizes taken by the navy in American waters had to be condemned before the High Court of Admiralty in England.<sup>5</sup> The Admiralty, following this advise, recommended captains and governors to ensure that all prizes were sent to London for trial. Their compliance was half-hearted to say the least, as large numbers of prizes were disposed of in the colonies. However, with the passing of 'An Act for the Encouragement of Trade to *America*' in 1708 (hereafter referred to as the 'America Act'), which abolished not only central control in the adjudication of prize condemnation, but also the Queen's share in the proceeds, naval prizes were freely condemned in the colonies.<sup>6</sup>

The new Vice-Admiralty courts, in conjunction with customs officials, represented an unprecedented extension of Crown authority to British North America and the Caribbean. They marked a consolidation of metropolitan power within the empire. Colonists, who had long been comparatively free from royal interference, were now confronted with a form of oversight and restraint that placed definite limitations upon their comings and goings. New judicial and jurisdictional agencies were seeking to take cognizance of and to punish their lapses from obedience to those acts of Parliament which included within their scope the colonies, as well as England itself. This change was met by a hostile reaction from many colonists. Colonial Vice-Admiralty courts, by settling issues which even their English counterparts had nothing to do with, quickly came into conflict with other jurisdictions that possessed legal powers anterior to its own. These opposing jurisdictions were, first of all, the private and proprietary governments, and secondly, the courts of

common law. Colonial governments, operating under charters that contained undisputed grants of legal and judicial rights, took offense at being denied Admiralty powers and endeavored to limit the scope of Vice-Admiralty jurisdiction, preventing any encroachment on what they considered their rightful prerogatives. The extent and novelty of Vice-Admiralty courts also conflicted with the jurisdiction of the common law courts. This challenge was complicated by the fact that at no time were Admiralty powers clearly defined. Even the Board of Trade remained unsure of the authority of Vice-Admiralty courts throughout the War of the Spanish Succession.<sup>7</sup>

Over time, Vice-Admiralty courts were grudgingly accepted as a beneficial change. Only the colonial government of Connecticut achieved any real success in limiting the scope of Vice-Admiralty jurisdiction. By the 1730s, all the other colonies had submitted to royal authority. Colonial Vice-Admiralty courts, by exercising a jurisdiction that far surpassed the same jurisdiction in England, gave to the latter system its peculiarly varied and vigorous character. Colonial Admiralty courts were, for instance, more open to modification and less restrained by precedent and tradition than their English counterparts. As a consequence, it became clear that they served colonial interests far more frequently than they opposed them. The confused nature of authority in the colonies meant that both customs officials and Vice-Admiralty judges were often puzzled to know just what the law was and how far they were justified in interpreting it. Significantly, however, while British customs officials in America frequently made mistakes and aroused discontent, it was rare for Vice-Admiralty judges to render unjust or erroneous verdicts. Colonists were rarely disappointed in obtaining the decisions they sought.

## II

The legality of a privateer was guaranteed by the possession of a privateering license. This separated the privateer from a pirate, who committed a capital crime when he captured merchant vessels and sold their cargo. Originally these licenses, known as 'letters of marque and reprisal', were given by the Crown as a means by which an individual could redress, by force if necessary, a proven grievance against a foreign subject. It was a measure of last resort, for the wronged party could only petition his sovereign for a letter of marque once all methods to obtain satisfaction using legal processes through foreign courts had failed. Once granted, this authorisation empowered the petitioner to recover the amount of his loss from any of his transgressor's compatriots, with any surplus accountable to his sovereign. He was entitled to use the armament of his trade ship, or even to fit out a private warship, for the purpose of waging a private war against the nationals of a country that had wronged him. In 1293, for instance, a ship in what was then the English province of Gascony, carrying a cargo of fruit from Malaga to Bayonne, was intercepted by a Portuguese armed cruiser and had her cargo confiscated. The king of Portugal was asked to return the fruit or make good the loss, as England was not at war with Portugal. When this was not done, a license was issued to the owner of the ship, empowering him to seize the property of the Portuguese people for five years, or alternately until he had made good his loss.<sup>8</sup> Initially the prerogative of the Lord Chancellor, letters of marque were from 1357 issued by the Lord High Admiral in the High Court of Admiralty. Such rights were regularly granted to individuals during the Middle Ages. The practice survived until the late sixteenth century; Elizabeth I thought fit to authorise numerous private reprisals against the Spaniards.<sup>9</sup>

This form of private war was regulated to ensure that it conformed to international norms. Application for letters of marque, for instance, contained a statement of the grievance and an account of the monetary value to be recovered. Prize courts were established to adjudicate over whether the value of seizures did not

exceed the loss to be recovered. In England, the High Court of Admiralty was made the legal prize tribunal in the late seventeenth century. It was agreed that this national prize court should be outside the control of the Crown, in the hope that it would make Admiralty prize law as internationally acceptable as possible. The capacity of powerful men to demand preferential treatment, and the intervention of the Lord High Admiral, undermined the achievement of independence in the regulation of privateering. The Lord High Admiral, with a vested interest in the condemnation of prizes captured by private men-of-war, did not hesitate in pressuring Admiralty judges in cases which affected his own pocket. Judge Caesar received a letter in March 1603, for example, stating:

...and as touching certain Barbury ducats brought home by Captain Canyon long since and delivered unto my servant Robert Bragg, I must entreat you to forbear granting any attachment against him for the same, because if they be to be restored I myself must make satisfaction for them, who received them of Bragg...You yourself have told me that in cases of coin there ought to be no restitution because the same is without mark.<sup>10</sup>

While the ancient right of reprisal clearly underlay eighteenth century privateering, it was distinct in that it was not intended to break peace existing between nations. Privateering commissions, on the other hand, dating back to Norman times, were specifically given to private ships by the state for the purposes of war, in the days when royal navies were non-existent or inadequate.<sup>11</sup> Henry VIII, for example, made use of large numbers of hired merchant ships to augment his fledgling navy in the French wars of the 1540s. With the growth of the Royal Navy in the seventeenth century, the state became less reliant on the merchant service, and by the 1660s, only purpose-built warships were powerful or adept enough to serve in line-of-battle. However, the facility to commission merchant vessels was retained and

occasionally it was invoked to justify acts of private maritime warfare. Together these two devices form what we know as modern privateering - a general form of reprisal against an enemy during wartime. By the eighteenth century, differences in the respective powers of letters of marque and privateering commissions were purely technical. In the eyes of the Admiralty, merchantmen that held letters of marque were addressed in the same breath as specially fitted out privateers holding commissions - together they were collectively private ships-of-war.

Privateering licenses enabled the English authorities to ensure that private men-of-war operated within a recognised framework of international relations as a tool of war. Refusal of a license also provided a means to control privateer numbers. The *Charles* was refused a privateering commission in 1706, for instance, because

At the time of the application seamen, were extreemely .scarce and a considerable fleet was then preparing for the West Indies. The Merchants seem'd very much concerned that a vessel that carryed a great number of men should not be fitted out as a privateer to the obstruction of trade.<sup>12</sup>

The wording of commissions could also restrict the cruising ground of privateers. The brigantine *Greyhound*, commanded by Captain William Wanton, was issued a commission out of Rhode Island in July 1702, which restricted his operations within the Banks of Newfoundland to the east, and the thirteenth parallel of north latitude to the south.<sup>13</sup> In another more isolated instance, the commissions of Jamaican privateers required that their crews repair to the island every six months for military service.<sup>14</sup> This reflected the small number of white men on the island and the fear of arming the black population. A final element of control existed in the right of colonial governors, as *de facto* Vice-Admirals, to restrict the duration of commissions to short periods, sometimes as little as a few months. In this way, they were able to regularly reassess the issuing of commissions. The aforementioned

brigantine *Greyhound* was commissioned for merely five months. This situation meant that many privateers were commissioned several times throughout the war. The sloop, *Three Brothers* of Bermuda, commanded by Captain Thomas Lea, was commissioned three times between October 1709 and the end of the war – 28 October 1709, 18 December 1710 and 11 February 1712 respectively.<sup>15</sup>

Prior to 1708, the procedures involved in obtaining letters of marque and privateering commissions could vary greatly between the colonies. In some it would be straightforward, in others, especially in the West Indies, a bribe to the governor might be required or the further approval of a Vice-Admiralty judge. Political standpoints and grievances could come into play in such decisions. In 1708, the passing of the 'America Act' streamlined the procedures for obtaining letters of marque and privateering commissions. Section III stated that any British vessel could acquire a privateering license by fulfilling two requirements: firstly, filing a request, which involved attending a Vice-Admiralty court and making a declaration relating the exact account of their vessel; and secondly, guaranteeing the good conduct of the crew, by posting security.<sup>16</sup> In 1674 it was laid down that £1500 was payable for ships with less than 150 men on board and £3000 for vessels with bigger crews. These new rules were intended to eliminate the ability of the Crown and colonial governors to influence the issuing of privateering licenses. The court would then issue a code of practice, compiled by the Lords of the Admiralty, intended to guide the behaviour of privateersmen.

Within this code, the Admiralty's concern to maximise the military utility of commissioned vessels is evident. Commanders were instructed to aid British vessels in distress or under attack, as well as to maintain a regular correspondence with the Admiralty giving accounts of their activities; information concerning the designs of the enemy was particularly sort after. Captains were required to keep an exact journal of the:

Station, Motion and Strength of the Enemy, as well as he can discover by the best Intelligence he can get; of which he from Time to Time, as he shall have an opportunity, to Transmit an Account to Us [Lords of the Admiralty] or our Secretary, and to keep a Correspondence with Us or him by all Opportunities that shall present.<sup>17</sup>

Any prisoners acquired in prize actions were required to be identified and delivered into port, where they would be put into the care and custody of a civil magistrate or military commander. Disposal of prisoners on remote coastlines or islands was a crime punishable by death.<sup>18</sup>

The vast majority of instructions related to the arrest and adjudication of vessels and goods seized. A large body of evidence was required for the Vice-Admiralty judge to grant condemnation. Captains were required to record in their journals as much detail concerning their prizes as possible. Particularly valued was "the nature of such prizes, the Time and Place of their being taken, and the Value of them as near as he can judge."<sup>19</sup> The captor or the libellant had to show that the ship or cargo, either or both, belonged to the enemy, because fraud, collusion, and conspiracy, were a constant temptation. Consequently, two or three 'principal' members of the captured crew were required to attend and give evidence at the hearing. The captain and several of his officers were preferred, although ordinary mariners were acceptable if no others were available. This examination, consisting of up to 34 questions, was designed to establish the nationality, destination, and ownership of the arrested vessel and its cargo, together with the location and circumstances of its capture. Any papers found on the captured vessel were required to be examined, to verify or contradict the evidence given by the various witnesses.<sup>20</sup> The rights of any assisting ships to share in prize money also had to be determined.

Generally, the distance from the prize action, the intention of the captain to share in the attack, and his readiness or otherwise for battle, were the deciding factors. A vessel beyond supporting distance or pursuing a different course was unlikely to be successful. Contested division of prize money was a common source of delay to condemnation proceedings. Captures made by naval squadrons were particularly problematic, owing to the larger numbers of ships involved and the generally greater value of prizes. Disputes could drag on for years and generate considerable popular interest. The distribution of prize money arising from the capture of the Spanish galleon, *Santa Cruize*, by Commodore Wager in the West Indies in 1708, was a source of considerable dispute amongst the captains of his squadron. Captain Brookes, commander of H.M.S *Vulture* (a fireship), was deemed, for instance, not to have sufficiently contributed to the capture to warrant a share in the prize money. Captain Brookes, disagreeing with this view, presented and read a petition to the House of Commons on 10 April 1709, complaining that his crew had "lay ready with lighted matches...to destroy the enemy..."<sup>21</sup>

The contents of captured vessels were required to reach port intact. Section VI of the 'America Act' required privateers to deliver their prizes to the city's naval officer, without breaking bulk, immediately upon entering port.<sup>22</sup> The only exception to this rule, which included ships furniture, guns, arms, powder, ammunition and stores, were those goods and merchandise, excluding aforementioned items, found upon or above the gun deck, which were deemed lawful pillage. On arrival in port, Admiralty officials would board prize vessels and record the condition of the ship and cargo. Once complete, prize captains were required to establish a watch to prevent any embezzlement. If prize goods needed to be removed, a detailed inventory had to be taken and delivered to Admiralty officials for inspection, before any storage arrangements could be made.

Delivering a prize safely into port for condemnation was a difficult business. As prizes were accumulated, crews needed to be found to sail them. This weakened the privateer, increasing its risk of capture. Prize vessels were even more vulnerable, owing to the fact they ran the additional risk of being overpowered by their prisoners. Reports of the recapture of prizes being sent to port for condemnation figure highly in contemporary official correspondence. Most recaptures occurred when prizes were unescorted. Boston privateers were reported in 1708 to have recaptured five prizes taken from Nevis by a French naval squadron, commanded by D'ebervill.<sup>23</sup> H.M.S *Trinton's Prize*, Captain Davis commander, similarly recaptured a Virginian ship, 70 leagues off the Virginia capes, in the summer of 1707.<sup>24</sup> The capture of an enemy privateer often resulted in the additional recapture of its prizes, which would usually be sailing in consort. H.M.S *Suffolk*, Rear-Admiral Whetstone commander, in taking a French privateer from Martinique in 1704, subsequently recaptured its prize, a Jamaican sloop.<sup>25</sup> Occasionally prizes would be recaptured from predators of the same nationality. Captain Stone, for instance, commander of a privateer commissioned out of Carolina, captured and had condemned a brigantine, in October 1708, that was already the prize of a Jamaican privateer.<sup>26</sup> The risk involved in weakening the crew, the effect this might have on the subsequent ability of the privateer to take further prizes, and the likelihood of the prize being recaptured, sometimes resulted in the release of a prize vessel and crew for a ransom. The sloop *Friendship* of Boston, commissioned for H.M service, Captain Wain commander, was ransomed for 100 guineas by a French privateer in June 1705.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, the *Boston Galley*, a letter of marque, ransomed a French ship of 21 men and 6 guns, in early July 1706, for 350 pistoles in gold.<sup>28</sup> In such cases, written reasons and preparatory examinations similar to those employed in Vice-Admiralty cases, had to be sent to Admiralty officials. Commanders of privateers and letter of marque ships who

contravened these instructions risked the forfeiture of their commissions and confiscation of their bond payment.

If uncontested, condemnation could be granted quickly. The 'America Act' clearly set down time limits for prize adjudication.<sup>29</sup> Litigation began with the filling of a libel with the Vice-Admiralty court asking for a capture to be condemned as lawful prize. Within five days, judges had to complete the examination of witnesses and papers relating to the capture. Next, documents called monitions had to be posted, informing the public that a vessel had been taken and was being proceeded against in court. To prevent condemnation by default, parties interested in the captured vessel or its cargo had to file a claim within twenty days of the libel. Claimants were required to provide sufficient security to pay double the court costs if the capture should be judged a lawful prize. If no claim was filed and all necessary witnesses were available, judges were required to "immediately, and without further delay, proceed to sentence", within a period of ten days. Provision was also made for examining witnesses who resided at great distances from the court. When this occurred, the judge would have the vessel appraised and require the claimants to post security equal to the amount in case the capture should be subsequently condemned. An interlocutory order, releasing the vessel to the claimant's custody, would then be issued. Within two weeks of the claim this process was supposed to be completed.<sup>30</sup>

Quick condemnation of prizes was a difficult task as judges were often called upon to decide cases in the face of conflicting testimony, forged documentation, and insufficient evidence. If claims upon the seized property were lodged by neutral subjects or rival captors, or if irregularities were alleged to have taken place in the conduct of arrest, long and complex proceedings might ensue, particularly if evidence from overseas was required. It was rare for such irregularities to frustrate the

condemnation of prizes, not least as Admiralty judges, often with interests in privateers themselves, were not averse to bending the rules to smooth the process. When condemnation was refused, political and popular pressure usually resulted in a reversal of the decision. The refusal of judge Nathaniel Byfield in June 1705, for instance, to condemn a Spanish prize captured in the West Indies by the brigantine *Charles* of Rhode Island, commanded by Captain John Halsey, was met with considerable outrage. Judge Byfield claimed the commission held by Halsey was invalid because the Queen had instructed in March 1704 that no commissions should be issued from Rhode Island. Considerable political pressure was placed on Byfield from Governor Cranston of Rhode Island, John Coleman, agent for the Lord High Admiral and Commissioner of Prizes, as well as part owner of the *Charles*, and even Governor Dudley of Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire. Popular discontent, manifesting in Byfield's belief that his life was threatened if he did not condemn the prize, also played its part in his eventual judicial U-turn.<sup>31</sup>

A further development in the regulation of privateering in the War of the Spanish Succession can be seen in the transfer of responsibility for the management of prizes from official to independent agents. Prior to 1708, the Commissioners of Prize and the Prize Office were responsible to the Treasury for the management of prize captures. This included a wide variety of tasks, ranging from organising lading, warehousing and appraisal of prize vessels and their cargo, to the distribution of net proceeds once condemned. In a small minority of cases, prize officials were also responsible for restoring captured property to their original owners. In 1708, this whole situation changed. The Prize Office disappeared, for instance, while the granting of sole ownership of prizes to captors also transferred responsibility for the cost and organisation of their safekeeping, appraisal, condemnation and sale.<sup>32</sup> Captors from now on hired independent prize agents to deal with these tasks. The

navy was additionally required to ensure that an equal number of agents acted on behalf of commanders, officers and the crew, at appraisements and sales. Their involvement, especially in cases where more than one captor was involved in a prize action, could greatly complicate the distribution of prize shares.

Despite the many regulations, the ability of Admiralty courts to control the behaviour of privateersmen was limited by problems in detecting offences committed at sea. The Royal Navy was responsible for apprehending known offenders and indiscriminately searching privateers on suspicion of offences. The small aggregate number of naval vessels stationed in the colonies made the achievement of any effective control impossible. Informants were encouraged to report transgressions for a share in the proceeds of an alleged action. Penalties were often severe for the errant privateersmen. Cases of serious misconduct, murder, rape, mutiny and robbery could result in the death penalty. Lesser offences normally resulted in the withdrawal of a letter of marque or commission, confiscation of bond, or restoration of seizures to their owners. This final punishment brought with it a host of additional legal costs. Privateer owners were understandably keen to avoid these penalties, as they seriously affected the likely profitability of their investments. Consequently, as a further measure of self-regulation, privateering crews were required to sign articles of agreement drawn up by their promoters. These articles required the crew to agree not to distort evidence, plunder prizes prior to condemnation, mistreat prisoners, or capture neutral vessels.

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, changes were made to legislation governing the distribution of prize money. The English 'Prize Act' of 1649, required all prizes to be condemned in the High Court of Admiralty, the value of the prize to be deposited in the 'Prize Fund', and one half of it paid eventually to the Treasurer of the Admiralty to support seamen's charities.<sup>33</sup> In 1661, a distinction was

established between 'Droits of the Crown' and 'Droits of the Admiralty'. The latter were ships surrendered in English harbours or wrecked, and the Lord High Admiral was entitled to the full value. Droits of the Crown were divided between the captor and the Crown until 1692, when the monarchy waived its share. From the 1690s, an effort was made to make privateering more profitable. Prize legislation reflected a growing acceptance on the part of the crown that captors could not be expected to share the proceeds of prize captures with a government which had not contributed to the expenses. The 'Privateers Act' of 1693, granted privateers 9/10 of any lawful prize, besides being freed from the attentions of the Prize Commissioners, widely believed to be responsible for cases of theft and damage to prize ships and cargo, before selling them for less than they were worth. The navy, on the other hand, prior to 1708, operated under far more unfavourable rules. A Royal Proclamation in June 1702, granted naval captains merely half the 'net proceeds' of prizes after the payment of import duties and other charges:

...after Satisfying the Duties and Customs Payable by Law, other than the Rates and Duties Imposed on French Wine, Brandy, Vinegar, and other Goods of the Growth, Product or Manufacture of France, by an Act of the late King *William* the Third, made in the Seventh Year of His Reign, Intituled, *An Act for Granting His Majesty an Additional Duty upon all French Goods and Merchandize*, and the Legal and Necessary Charges thereupon, One Half-part of the Net Proceed of such Prize shall be Answered and Paid to the Flag Officers, Captains, Officers and Company of Her Majesties Ships of war, or Merchant Ships in Her Service, Surprising and Taking the same.<sup>34</sup>

The capture of vessels that were subsequently taken into Royal service provided a better deal. The whole value of enemy privateers, less a tenth belonging to the Lord

High Admiral, were granted to captors, while 'gunnage and tonnage' - that is, £10 for every gun and 10 shillings for every ton - was paid for the capture of enemy naval vessels. The 'America Act' equalized this inequality, by providing both naval and privateering crews the sole property of their captures; no longer was 1/10 required to be paid to the Lord High Admiral. According to the second clause of the act, "the officers and seamen of every vessel of war shall have the sole interest and property in every ship, vessel, good and merchandize they shall take in any part of America."<sup>35</sup> Another innovation, referred to as 'head money' - that is £5 for every man alive on an enemy warship at the beginning of an engagement - was paid in conjunction with 'gunnage and tonnage' money. These two payments were loosely termed as 'bounty money.' Prizes that were adjudged prerequisites of the Admiralty were subject to special rates. The rights of the Admiralty arose on:

(1) All enemies' ships that shall come into Port, whether by mistake, stress of weather or other accident, the same do wholly belong to the Lord High Admiral. (2) All such that shall be seized either by any of H.M. men of war or otherwise within any Road or Harbour, or within gun-shot of any of H.M. forts or castles, do likewise wholly belong to the Admiral...Salvage of ships and goods retaken from the enemy belongs to the Lord High Admiral. There are many other Droits of Admiralty such as wrecks of the sea, flotsons, jetsons, lasons, derelicts, ships and goods of pirates, deodants, and many others which come more particularly under the care of Vice-Admirals, for which they are accountable to the Lord High Admiral.<sup>36</sup>

The distribution of privateering prize money was a matter for the owners. It would be set down in the articles of agreement. As a general rule, the distribution of prize shares between officers and crew was far more generous on privateers than was the

case on naval vessels.<sup>37</sup> Generally, 1/2 of the proceeds went to the officers and men, and 1/2 to the owners.

Early forms of privateering were small scale and sporadic. Not only was there little need for a comprehensive set of rules, but the means to effectively enforce them did not exist in the Middle Ages. As colonial empires developed, and the value of overseas trade escalated, privateering, now restricted to wartime, became a highly lucrative business in its own right. In this situation, a greater level of regulation was needed to ensure that the conduct of privateersmen stayed within acceptable legal boundaries and that the proceeds of prize captures were properly distributed. Vice-Admiralty courts were established in the colonies to oversee the implementation of privateering regulations. At first many resisted a jurisdiction which was thought to contravene rights already granted in colonial charters. Overt resistance was short-lived, however, in the face of English determination to extend Crown authority over the Atlantic. Covert resistance was more effective. The remarkable level of success that privateers enjoyed in obtaining the condemnation of their prizes reflects the fact the Vice-Admiralty judges were unwilling to submit completely to imperial controls. This can be explained by the fact that Vice-Admiralty judges were not salaried and relied on fees for their emolument. Added to this, as Michael Craton has noted:

Since colonial posts were rarely lucrative enough to attract highly qualified personnel from the metropolis, the courts were customarily staffed with local men not only unqualified but also strongly under the influence of local interests...Colonial judges had neither the competence nor the incentives to support metropolitan authority against local.<sup>38</sup>

At the beginning of the War of the Spanish Succession, both the Crown and the Admiralty received a percentage of prize proceeds. By the end of the war, prizes

were the sole property of the privateers that captured them. This reflected not only an increasing realisation that it was unfair to demand a stake in the captures of privately financed warships, but also the contribution privateers could make to the war effort. By making privateering more profitable, government hoped that investment would increase, thereby helping the navy to concentrate on protecting trade rather than chasing prizes.

## Chapter 2

### ATTRACTION OF PRIVATEERING

By the standards of the twentieth century, by appealing to the base desire for plunder, privateering looks like a disreputable enterprise. Contemporaries of the eighteenth century would have held a different view. According to Swanson, writing in regard to American privateering in the wars of the 1740s:

...far from being an insignificant activity of borderline legality, privateering represented a major and popular form of maritime endeavor. Officials in London and the colonies encouraged privateering ventures, and well-respected merchants responded by investing heavily in private men-of-war. Hundreds of stout colonial vessels worth thousands of pounds sterling were active in the maritime prize war, and thousands of jack tars put their lives on the line.<sup>39</sup>

In the War of the Spanish Succession, while aggregate British-colonial privateering was not as widespread as later in the eighteenth century, its importance to the war effort and attraction for seamen was still great. Privateering was certainly not, as traditional historiography has tended to claim, a borderline exercise, limited to marginal elements in society, but rather, a key economic stopgap that effected the lives of great numbers of British colonists in and around the port towns of North America and the Caribbean.

Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, privateering becomes increasingly more evident in imperial warfare. Explanation for this is twofold. Firstly, one begins to notice an increase in both the volume and value of colonial

trade; between 1660 and 1688, for instance, the English merchant marine doubled in size, while between 1663-1669 and 1699-170, the English export trade expanded by 56%.<sup>40</sup> Greater numbers of merchant vessels encouraged greater numbers of privateers when war began in 1702. Furthermore, as colonial commerce grew, the rivalry between the major colonial powers intensified. Each sought more desperately to increase their proportion of world trade, by reducing that of their rivals. War was a good way to pursue this end, albeit by the forced seizure of enemy goods and shipping. War with France and Spain offered Britain the opportunity to take control of the colonial sources of profitable trade goods, while at the same time reducing the size of enemy merchant fleets. The importance of privateering in this wartime strategy stemmed from the fact that the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had witnessed a 'revolution' in European Warfare.<sup>41</sup> Armies and navies became larger and more specialised, thus enhancing the role and power of the state. Government became responsible for raising the revenue needed to pay for these larger military forces. It also had to develop a larger and more sophisticated bureaucracy to coordinate the recruitment of soldiers and sailors, as well as the movement and supply of equipment. These requirements, however, placed a huge strain on eighteenth-century states. According to Carl Swanson, "Nations were unable to build and maintain fleets sufficiently strong to control the sea lanes during imperial conflict. The costs were prohibitive."<sup>42</sup> Privateering, by mobilising the private sector to equip and man private men-of-war, became the means by which the government was able to augment its sea power.

In the later Middle Ages, when royal navies were small, monarchs depended upon their legal rights to 'arrest' ships for war purposes because they could dispose of very little revenue. Medieval armies were summoned to provide a traditional service that was legally required to be unpaid. Naval forces had to be mobilised in the

same way. The English fleet which fought the Spanish Armada in 1588, was composed of 34 Royal ships and 163 belonging to private persons. The hardship this placed on merchants who had their trading revenue reduced by a Crown, who might not even pay for wages or damage, was mitigated by the issuing of letters of marque. This innovation guaranteed the maintenance of an adequate war fleet.<sup>43</sup> Unless a state could mobilise private capital by providing incentives, it could not finance a fleet of commerce raiders at the same time as it maintained a battle fleet. Private war became public war in this context, as the individual was permitted to make a profit out of war so long as the state was provided with a low-budget navy. By harassing enemy sea-ports, warships and merchant marine, as well as acting as coast guard vessels, as convoys, as auxiliaries to the navy, as scouts, and as pirate chasers, privateersmen lifted a great many weights from the shoulders of the Admiralty. They also served as a training school for the navy; it was not uncommon for able privateer captains to eventually receive commissions.

The strength of naval forces in American waters was never particularly impressive during the War of the Spanish Succession. This reflected the fact that the Admiralty was overwhelmingly defensive in its allocation of naval resources. According to N.A.M. Rodger, "The navy's primary function was to guard against invasion, for which purpose the bulk of the fleet was almost always kept in home waters. Its essential duty remained in 1815 what it had been for at least 400 years: to guard the Narrow Seas." Bruce P. Lenman continues, "Eighteenth-century Britain was a European power...threatened by powerful European neighbours, and that the first priority of the Royal Navy was to protect Britain from invasion, not to conquer an overseas Empire. Naval forces were generally concentrated in European waters with only limited detachments overseas."<sup>44</sup> In this context, the need to encourage

privateering in foreign waters was essential; privateers were a cheap way to improve the defence of trade without sending additional naval forces.<sup>45</sup>

The attraction of privateering for government is also revealed in its compatibility with mercantilist politics, which were uppermost in the minds of eighteenth-century commercial theorists and policy-makers.<sup>46</sup> Mercantilism grew out of nationalism, which had been the prime political force in Northern and Western Europe since the fifteenth century. The creation of nation states, beginning with Spain and later followed by France, England, Portugal and Holland, required secure and expandable sources of revenue. The suppression of internal and external rivals was a key consideration. To increase local taxes was deemed unwise, given that domestic opponents might exploit consequent discontent. The rising nation states of Atlantic Europe turned, instead, to the foreign sector of their economies, as a source of money with which to buttress their central governments. Mercantilism, an economic doctrine that called upon government to develop the economy in the best interests of the state, encouraged the development of foreign trade. The expansion of a nation's foreign trade brought quick and continuing benefits to central government. The stronger the central government, the stronger the support for foreign trade: the stronger the support for foreign trade, the stronger the central government. Mercantilist doctrine suggested a way to accomplish and justify policies in the pursuit of these ends. The expansion of foreign trade could be achieved directly, through protectionist legislation, as well as indirectly, by destroying a rival's trade. Privateering's utility was primarily concerned with the latter option. According to Swanson, "With its emphasis on destroying a rival's commerce but not adding to the governments financial burdens, privateering was perfectly attuned to the mercantilist world view."<sup>47</sup> Four basic tenets formed the core of mercantilist politics. Firstly, nations should strive for a favourable balance of trade. This idea became the central

tenet of mercantilists - it reflected their belief that the safety of the kingdom was more closely tied up with trade than it was with either politics or diplomacy. To achieve a favourable balance of trade, nations enacted measures designed to encourage exports and limit imports, especially of manufactured goods. This economic structuring in the interests of the state was a direct response to the transition from weak, local, feudal governments to strong, central, national governments. Although the need for, and the value of, individual and corporate participation in the economy were recognised, mercantilism insisted that the prime consideration should be given to the national usefulness of any particular enterprise. Both the British and the French governments were content to ban the domestic production of tobacco, for instance, in order to promote overseas trade, which yielded customs revenues.<sup>48</sup> The carrying trade of both imports and exports was ideally monopolised in ships that were built, owned, and operated by a nation's own citizens, because the earnings from foreign trade were guaranteed to come home when the ships came home. To export more goods by value than one imported meant that the balance of trade was always in your favour. The importance of the North American and Caribbean colonies in this context, can be explained as they produced something that previously the kingdom had to import. In this way, not only were debits reduced in the current account, but by re-exporting from the metropolis, they also helped earn credits in the current account. The use of metropolitan shipping services profited the nation's businessmen. The duties collected on colonial produce when it entered or exited metropolitan ports replenished the monarch's treasury. Laws and regulations, sharing considerable common content, strove to bind the trade of the colonies to the interests of the mother country. The famous English 'Acts of Trade', enacted in the early 1660s, and reinforced by the Plantation Duty Act of 1673, the Navigation Act of 1696, and a plethora of eighteenth century rules and regulations, found parallels promulgated by

every continental regime. The Spanish imperial system and *Le system exclusif* of France, like the English navigation system, codified in a cacophony of statutes and edicts the commercial designs of the mercantilist mind, for the colonies and beyond.

In achieving a favourable balance of trade, mercantilists secondly argued that precious metals, in the form of gold and silver coin or bullion, should be sought as payment. An accumulated body of treasure was believed to represent the true and only embodiment of national wealth. It was a symbol of solvency - a necessary commodity for trade in Asia and the Baltic, as well as a means to continue multilateral trading relations at a time when bills of exchange and other financial services were not fully developed. Furthermore, in a world where the British Empire was surrounded by rivals and enemies, creating an environment of international tension, as Wilson has noted, "Men put more trust in treasure than I.O.U's."<sup>49</sup> Mercantilists argued that England needed a surplus from trade that could be laid by for emergencies. Preserving or enhancing human capital or capital goods was not part of the mercantilist thinking.

A third feature of mercantilism was its belief that the volume of trade and wealth were fixed and limited. In this situation, it was possible to improve one's own position and weaken one's competitors at the same time. The more gold and silver a nation had, the better off it was. Consequently, the aim of commercial policy was to secure the largest proportion of trade and bullion as possible, by way of state-sponsored economic nationalism. This fourth aspect encouraged the state to play an active role in the nation's economic life.

The utility of privateering in a mercantilist world is not hard to appreciate. By enabling a nation to pursue economic warfare, the balance of trade was benefited not only by the capture of enemy goods and shipping, but also by the protection privateers afforded to seaborne commerce. A flow of precious metals and specie also

resulted from privateering, especially by way of the Spanish shipping lanes of the Caribbean, which a West Indian merchant, writing in 1712, described as "the happy region where gold and silver do most abound."<sup>50</sup>

The wider importance of privateering to British commercial predominance was of far less significance to those actually involved. Whether one was an investor, a sailor, or merely an ordinary American colonist, the attraction and popularity of privateering was explained by its potential to provide windfall profits for the individual. The appeal of privateering was strongest in the Caribbean which possessed a key advantage over more northerly waters, in that it was ideally located for preying on the busiest and richest trade routes of the Spanish and French empires. According to Swanson:

...the commerce of Mexico, Louisiana, Central America, South America and Asia passed through the Caribbean...The sea-lanes around Cuba and Hispaniola, where most of Spain's colonial commerce aggregated, were the most popular. Fleets from Veracruz on the Gulf of Mexico and from Portobello and Cartagena on the coast of New Granda rendezvoused at Havana to take advantage of the favourable winds and currents in the Florida straits and the Old Bahamas channel. At Havana, they also enjoyed the protection of greater numbers of Spanish men-of-war. French vessels also sailed in this area going to or from the sugar colony of Saint-Dominique on Hispaniola. Many British colonial privateers operated in the shipping lanes north of Cuba, the Windward Passage between Cuba and Hispaniola, and the Mona passage off Hispaniola's east coast. Moreover, this area was closest to British North American ports. The second major cruising area lay six hundred miles east of Hispaniola. Martinique and Guadeloupe were France's most important sugar colonies, and their commerce attracted American privateers that lay to windward and picked up merchantmen sailing to or from the French possessions. Along the Spanish

Main, the southernmost theater of British colonial privateering operations in the Caribbean, private men-of-war preyed on vessels en route to Cartagena and Portobello or raided the coastal commerce from Panama to Cayenne.<sup>51</sup>

The goods that were being traded were also worth considerably more than North-American products. Rich staples, such as sugar, molasses, cocoa, coffee, indigo, logwood, spices and silks, fetched far higher prices than fish and furs.

Privateering was an expensive business. To start off with, there were the initial costs of the venture. According to Starkey:

A suitable vessel was obviously required, together with a letter of marque, or commission, to authorise commerce-raiding activities, the requisite number of men to navigate and fight her, and a sufficient quantity of victuals and provisions to supply the crew for the duration of the voyage or cruise. The costs of this initial outfit naturally varied with the scale of the project and such exogenous factors as the state of the shipping market and the availability of labour...Labour costs were another significant factor in the initial outfit of privateering vessels. Seafarers were often relatively scarce in time of war as the demands of the Navy, the merchant service and the privateering business generally exceeded the supply of trained mariners. In such a market situation, financial inducements were often necessary to entice seamen to ship aboard 'letters of marque' and private men-of-war.<sup>52</sup>

Following the initial outlay, a second set of costs were incurred during the course of the voyage or cruise. Starkey continues:

These 'running' costs might accrue from the calamities of war, the hazards of the sea, or the mismanagement, ill-conduct or bad fortune of the crew. Repairs

were often necessary as a result of engagement with the enemy, navigational error or simple wear and tear...In addition to the expense of the necessary repairs, cost accrued from the detention of vessels in port, their crews idle but not discharged...wasting crucial time while rivals were at sea seeking prizes. Further charges might result from the profligacy of the commander and his crew in the consumption of stores and provisions, such excesses leading to the disruption of cruises for re-victualling and the purchase of additional supplies.<sup>53</sup>

A third set of costs emanated from the actual capture of prizes, for the apprehension, detention and condemnation invariably entailed expenses. To encourage vigilance and bravery amongst the seamen, payments were given for being first to sight and board enemy vessels, as well as compensation for being injured or killed. Once landed, the detention and management of prize captures entailed further expenditure. Particularly significant were charges for adjudicating the value of detained property. Condemnation resulted in a final set of payments, ranging from duties on prize cargoes, the cost of warehousing facilities, and fees for Vice-Admiralty proceedings. Because of the expenses associated with the privateering business, owners and investors tended to be wealthy merchants, businessmen, or possibly government officials. Merchants were most easily able to participate, as many already owned ships that could be converted into privateers, thus avoiding the cost of purchasing a suitable vessel. The involvement of men experienced in business and influential in colonial society says a great deal about the financial appeal of the prize war. Indeed, while the financial risks associated with privateering were great, the rewards to be earned were potentially far better.

Privateering success was by no means guaranteed, however, for not only did a prize need to be found and captured, but done so before other predators had a

chance to do so first. The relatively small size of French-colonial trade in the War of the Spanish Succession, compared with later conflicts, meant that privateering captures were sporadic and usually of only moderate value. As a result, most privateers were owned by a variety of different interests in order to spread the impact of any losses that might be incurred. Privateering was a very risky business after-all, with capture by the enemy, shipwreck, embezzlement of prize goods, financial penalties resulting from an illegal capture, or failure to capture any prizes, all being possible disasters that could occur. Even after a prize had been appraised and sold, a variety of deductions still had to be made before the owners got their share. Before 1708, the Admiralty took a tenth, while certain incidental legal and administrative costs could prove significant if condemnation was disputed. The crew also had to be given a share in the prize money that was their due.

The continued growth of privateering in the War of the Spanish Succession proves, however, that despite the risks, it remained an appealing investment opportunity. Swanson reiterates this point in his study of privateering in the wars of the 1740s, stating that the outbreak of war with Spain in 1739 was greeted with enormous popularity throughout the principal ports of North America and the Caribbean. In Newport, Rhode Island, for example, there was jubilation:

Upon receiving the so longed wish'd for News, that Liberty is granted us to make Reprisals upon the Spaniards, the Merchants of this Place are fitting out their Sloops for that Purpose, and will sail next week at farthest, they having already each of them several Voluntiers inlisted. This good News, and the Small Pox seeming intirely stop'd, causes universal Joy among the inhabitants here.<sup>54</sup>

In the West Indies, merchants were no less anxious to begin privateering voyages: "Tis said, that upon the first Advise of a War, all business will be laid aside in Jamaica, but that of Privateering, the men waiting with impatience to have their Hands united."<sup>55</sup>

In northern waters, where there was less risk of capture, privateers were outnumbered by vessels carrying letters of marque. These commissioned merchantmen were first and foremost committed to the completion of a trading voyage, only indulging in prize actions if they came across an inferior or disabled opponent. Seamen serving on such vessels did not depend on prize money for their livelihood as they received a monthly wage. In areas of insufficient enemy commerce the costs of fitting out a privateer could not be justified. Organising letters of marque was far more sensible; owners only had to pay for some extra ordinance and an enlarged crew to indulge in prize taking.<sup>56</sup>

In more southerly waters, off the coasts of the Chesapeake and the Carolinas, as well as the Caribbean, the risks of continuing normal commerce were such that privateering became virtually the only form of economic activity that could be pursued relatively safely and profitably. The French commissioned unusually large numbers of privateers in the War of the Spanish Succession.<sup>57</sup> This reflected official support for a privateering *guerre de course*. With the risk of capture heightened, many merchants involved in shipping turned to privateering as an essential outlet for resources otherwise dammed up by war. Studies of French privateering in the eighteenth century reflect a similar picture.<sup>58</sup> The profits made from commerce raiding only became attractive when the risk of capture made the continuation of normal trading impossible. When British warships raided and destroyed much of the St. Malo fishing fleet on the Grand Banks, for instance, the Maloese turned to privateering. Most

privateers were converted merchantmen. Very few were purpose built from the keel up, except in the West Indies, where privateers tended to carry a heavier armament.

The financial appeal of privateering was an extremely important feature of its attraction for owners and crew. Without the prospect of prize taking, merchants were unlikely to invest in privateering and seamen unlikely to enlist. Privateersmen were only entitled to a share in the value of the prizes they captured and to 'Bounty Money' paid by the English Crown for enemy warships which were sunk at sea. In this context, the profitability of privateering was essential for its existence. According to Chapin:

Some few may have entered the service from a desire for revenge for some ill treatment received from foreigners or from a hope of escaping the press gangs of their own country, and under such circumstances they would seek to deceive themselves and others by the faint veil of patriotism. For the minority, romance may have spread a charm, but for most men it was the lure of filthy lucre, dollars and cents; pounds, shillings and pence; or, more strictly speaking, pieces of eight.<sup>59</sup>

Contemporary literature, most notably the colonial press as existed in the early eighteenth century, eagerly reported the capture of both British and enemy prizes, fuelling seaman's perception that privateering would make them rich. A privateer was reported in November 1708, for example, to have captured an enemy 'barco' off Havana, with 200,000 pieces of eight on board. French privateers were similarly reported, in December 1706, to have captured 270,000 pieces of eight from the *Tempest* sloop, 12 leagues to the leeward of Cartagena.<sup>60</sup> Dockside auctions of captured ships and cargoes were another tangible sign of the potential success of the

business. Merchants gathered around in a bidding frenzy hoping to snap up a bargain.

One should be careful not to overestimate the financial rewards of privateering. Privateers after-all did not pay wages and stood only a moderate chance, especially in northern waters, of capturing any prizes, let alone any wealthy ones. Before 1708, privateersmen were paid in two ways. Firstly, they received a share of the profit after various deductions had been made. Division of prize shares between the owners, officers, and crew, was agreed prior to the cruise and laid down in the articles of agreement. The size and reputation of the ship, the difficulty of recruiting men, and the ability of the captain, were perhaps the most important factors in the eventual decision. Usually the owners held around half the shares and so received half the prize money. Distribution was organised through the creation of a prize fund. Once the net proceeds had been distributed, a further division took place amongst the seamen and owners. According to Starkey:

The principal constituent of this general account was the gross proceeds of prize goods seized and condemned, supplemented in some cases by sundry items such as fines or shares forfeited by miscreants...Charges were then deducted from this fund, and the residue, the net proceeds, divided between the venturers according to the shares each held in the enterprise...Once the net receipts were split between the respective parties, further division took place, with the owners' portion distributed in line with the stake each individual held in the venture, and the men's allocation divided according to the number of shares each crew member was afforded in the agreement. Invariably this was decided by rank: thus, if an able seaman was entitled to a single share, lesser ratings, such as boys, landmen or ordinary seamen, might own a quarter, a third, a half or three quarters of a share, while specialised crew

members, such as the carpenter, boatswain or gunner, and officers, could claim larger allocations, rising to 12 or 16 shares for the commander.<sup>61</sup>

Seamen were paid in a second way by what was known as 'ship plunder'. This referred to everything above the main deck, apart from the actual fittings of the captured ship herself. The captain and the officers shared in what was termed as 'cabin plunder'. After 1708, this second form of payment became less significant with the disappearance of the Prize Office. For the rest of the war, the entire value of the prize was the sole property of the captor. The volume of Atlantic trade, while growing, was simply not sufficient to provide a never-ending stream of prize captures. In the wars of the 1740s, by contrast, there were far more potential prizes, especially in the West Indies. This maintained a high rate of captures throughout most of the war; before the entrance of the French in the war in 1745, a slight lull was witnessed as the Spanish could no longer maintain levels of colonial shipping.

Despite the highly speculative nature of privateering in the War of the Spanish Succession, privateers recruited men with relative ease. Successful commanders often secured their complements within days of the announcement of a cruise by 'beating up' for volunteers - that is literally beating a drum in an area of a port frequented by seamen to attract their attention. Advertisements in the colonial press and printed broadsides, normally left in waterfront taverns, reveal that many captains less well known could experience difficulties. The recruitment problems of privateers paled into insignificance when compared with many merchant vessels and the navy. This may at first glance seem surprising, when one considers that they paid monthly wages. Indeed, the pay on merchantmen far exceeded peacetime levels. Wages rose from between 22 and 35 shillings in peacetime, to between 35 and 55 shillings per month during wartime.<sup>62</sup> Usually, this money was paid at the second port of delivery and at every second port thereafter, as well as upon the completion of the voyage.

During wartime, with competition for seamen high, perhaps as much as half of total wages were advanced before the voyage to discourage desertion.

If privateers offered financial insecurity, although admittedly the chance of windfall profits, while merchantmen and the navy offered a guaranteed monthly wage, how can the attraction of privateering for seamen be explained? The answer seems to lie in the quality of life between the three respective forms of employment. The privateering lifestyle was appealing in a number of ways. The workload on privateers was relatively light. This reflected the use of small vessels which were fast enough to out-sail enemy predators. Large crews, which greatly outnumbered those needed to sail the ship, but merely existed to overrun the crew of potential prizes, also helped reduce the length and frequency of work shifts, thus giving the crew more free time.

Discipline on private men-of-war was far less violent than many of the alternatives. Privateersmen were after-all volunteers, who did not need the threat of physical punishment to motivate them to do their jobs properly. They knew that the sailing efficiency of their ships could be the difference between success and failure. Most merchant vessels, especially in colonial waters, were small, fast sailing sloops, easily capable of escaping a badly handled privateer.

Another popular feature of privateering was the flexibility of ships' hierarchy. Decision-making over navigation and prize actions seems to have been more equally shared between officers and men: "Every man has a vote, and so the majority carry the vessel where they please."<sup>63</sup> This more egalitarian regime must have given seamen a gratifying sense of self worth. Captains were required to employ tact and diplomacy when issuing orders, rather than rigid on board discipline. In this respect, privateers were similar to pirate vessels, where authority was placed in the collective

hands of the crew; egalitarianism, while a core value of the privateering lifestyle, was institutionalised on pirate ships.

Privateering cruises were relatively short and sometimes a definite period was fixed for their duration, at the end of which seamen had the right to their discharge.<sup>64</sup> At the beginning of the voyage the crew would sign articles of agreement which determined their length of service. These written articles, normally drafted by the owners, also allocated authority, distributed plunder, and enforced discipline.<sup>65</sup> This feature of the privateering lifestyle was of particular importance to early colonial sailors who were often not professional seamen in the same way as many English sailors were. According to Richard Pares, "American seamen were 'jack of all trades' not adverse to occasional voyages at sea but due to land ownership and family responsibilities, wholly unsuited to long periods at sea."<sup>66</sup> The naval historian Daniel Baugh has reiterated this point, stating that, "No people resented impressment more than Americans did, partly because they were not ordinarily career seamen in the sense that English sailors were; they made only occasional voyages and were accustomed to spending more time with their families."<sup>67</sup>

When one contrasts these facts with employment in the merchant service or the Royal Navy, the appeal of privateering can be better understood. Merchant vessels, for instance, had far smaller crews relative to their size. The crew of a merchant vessel consisted of a master, a mate, a carpenter, a boatswain, a gunner, a quartermaster, perhaps a cook, and four or five able seamen. A larger or more heavily manned ship included a second mate and four or five more common tars.<sup>68</sup> As a consequence of these smaller crew sizes, the workload for individual seamen was greater. During wartime, this workload increased yet further, as the scarcity of seamen meant that many merchant ships were forced to sail short of their full complements. Indeed, seamen frequently complained that their vessels were

undermanned. In 1705, John Turnbridge deserted the *Neptune* because “the ship had not hands enough on board to work her.”<sup>69</sup> Those that honoured their commitment gained the advantage in the form of higher wages.

The merchant service also had a reputation for harsh discipline. This must have compounded all the other negative features. According to Rediker,

The organisation of labour on each ship began with the master...Frequently a small part owner himself, the master was the commanding officer...He possessed near absolute authority. His ship was virtually a kingdom on its own, his power well nigh unlimited, and all too frequently, to the muttering of the sailors, he ruled it like a despot...The dominant institutions of the eighteenth century English and American societies played relatively small parts on the deep sea craft. The absence of family, church, and state...created a power vacuum within the wooden world. Into this vacuum stepped the merchant captain, armed with extraordinary powers.<sup>70</sup>

Masters used a wide range of strategies to ensure that obedience was adhered to. Physical punishment seems to have been a popular choice. Most brutal was the use of a cat-of-nine-tails. Other items in the captains' armoury included canes, ropes, belts and sticks; indeed almost anything that could be made to function as a weapon.<sup>71</sup> Admiralty records provide some useful examples of the potential severity of physical punishment because seamen were often injured to the extent that they were forced to seek official retribution. John Pattison, a foremastman of the *Unity* sailing to the West Indies in 1708, had his head forced “under the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gun on the larboard side by Captain Matthew Beesley for failing to remember a chore. Beesley then proceeded to beat his victim with a great Roap...so long and in such a barbarous & Cruel manner that...Pattison for sometime after was scarcely able to lift

his Arms or hands to his head.”<sup>72</sup> James Conroy, similarly testified in 1707, that Captain Wherry had “...caught him fast by the Nose with his left hand & thrust his thumb into his left Eye & with his right hand struck three Blows on his said Thumb & in that manner wilfully, designedly, & maliciously maimed & put out his eye.”<sup>73</sup> Cruelties such as these represented a tactic of authority utterly central to maritime discipline, namely intimidation. As Richard B. Morris has written, “Masters frequently drove their crews to the limit of endurance by bullying, profane threats, and the unsavory practice of hazing or ‘working up,’ which consisted of assigning dirty, disagreeable and dangerous tasks to a particular seaman.”<sup>74</sup>

Another important tactic of maritime authority was the withholding of victuals from the crew. Merchant captains had the right to restrict rations if they believed a crime warranted it. Normally this punishment was restricted to relatively minor crimes. In effect, however, masters had a significant hold over the health of seamen - a matter of special importance among men who notoriously suffered from yellow fever, malaria, dysentery and scurvy. Habitual troublemakers might, furthermore, be prematurely discharged or incarcerated into a man-of-war or prison.

The tactics used to maintain maritime authority in the merchant service were little different from those used on privateers. Seamen were well aware of the likely punishment they would face if they crossed ships’ authority, and on the whole accepted it, when it was administered in a fair manner. Where many merchant masters seem to have acquired a more notorious reputation, was in the personal vengeance that often accompanied physical punishment and the unjustified use of other forms of punishment in an attempt to increase profitability. Merchant captains seemed to connive at the latter almost whenever the opportunity arose. A ship might be blown hundreds, maybe even thousands, of miles off course by contrary or unexpected winds, or becalmed for weeks, even months, by a lack of wind. These

situations demanded the issuing of half rations as a means to make supplies last during an extended voyage. Under normal circumstances, owners were required to buy, and captains to distribute, adequate food and drink. All too often, however, seamen were unjustly denied their rightful necessities as a means to increase profitability. Captains connived on their owner's behalf towards this end by limiting ships' rations as often as possible. Captains who were owners themselves were particularly infamous for withholding victuals. William Roberts complained in 1710, that the crew of the *Selby*, commanded, not surprisingly, by Ralph Selby, had been kept "very short of Provisions so that they grew weak & almost starved - when in fact sufficient provisions for the seamen were on board the ship."<sup>75</sup> When a voyage was delayed by contrary winds, captains rarely purchased extra supplies, in effect denying seamen their proper wages. The seamen of the *Warnstead* at anchor in Maryland in 1719 were "almost starved on board the ship tho in a very plentiful Country where provisions and victuals are very reasonable."<sup>76</sup> Captains and officers with the means to purchase private supplies, rarely shared in the plight of the common seamen. A seamen testified in 1700, for instance, that whereas the people "were att short allowance and wanted bread, the captain, steward, and the doctor had and were allowed in the said Masters Cabbin their full allowance of provisions and liquors as if there had been no want or scarcity of any thing on board."<sup>77</sup> Such offences against equality of condition were made all the worse by the fact that the men often had to use their wages to buy victuals without any hope of recompense. Masters typically set themselves up as a supplier of basic necessities, with the result that his men lost the majority of their wages.

Payment of wages was in itself rarely a straightforward process. Merchant ship owners and captains tried their hardest to pay their men as little as possible, and at a time which suited them rather than one which conformed to law. In other

instances, captains exaggerated or even invented crimes as an excuse to maroon seamen on deserted islands or in foreign ports, refusing to carry them the stipulated distance. This was done in the hope that they would never see them again and thus avoid having to pay their wages. Even when seamen avoided these pitfalls they were rarely paid their wages on time or in full. Seamen had a legal right to be paid in every second port of delivery. Captains concerned that their crews might desert, especially during wartime in the American colonies, rarely paid wages in full, in an effort to maintain the services of their men till the end of the voyage. Owners often advised their captains to act in this illegal manner. Thomas Ekines and Samuel Mitchell advised Captain Owen Searle: "Y[ou]r wages must be paid off at Jamaica but if you want men and feare theire leaving you its best [to] stop 2 or 3 months pay...to those you Distrust."<sup>78</sup> Deductions made at the final payoff of wages were also a source of conflict. The volume of Admiralty business over wage disputes highlights the problem. The most common source of complaint surrounded the legal right granted to merchants and masters to dock wages. Admiralty law, as well as protecting seamen and their access to wages, also upheld and protected the interests of the owner, merchant and captain of the shipping industry. Numerous legal provisions required the forfeiture of wages by seamen. Perhaps most bitterly contested were deductions for "Such damages as do arise and accrue by ill stowage, imbezelments and want of goods." Captains were also entitled to sue for damages caused by the crews alleged refusal to pump water from the hold.

Another source of frequent conflict were attempts by captains to pay their crews in deflated colonial currencies, which were valued 25-50% less than sterling money. Wartime, furthermore, offered captains the opportunity to defraud their crews of wages when men were pressed into the Royal Navy. A contemporary seamen commented that, "Many times the master of a ship payeth what he pleaseth when a

man is pressed and not there to answer for himself; and some men having no friends or acquaintances to take that care for them, then that poor man who hath nothing but what he must get by hard fare and sore labour.”<sup>79</sup>

Employment on merchant vessels was worse during peacetime. In wartime, when merchants had to compete with the navy and privateers for the services of seamen, discipline was always less severe, victuals more generous and pay higher. If a merchant ship had acquired letters of marque her crew also had the chance to share in prize money. These concessions were granted, however, as a direct result of the added danger that merchant seamen faced during wartime. Along the main trade routes, engagements with enemy privateers were common. These encounters were feared because of the likely financial loss, and the potential to receive a debilitating injury. Indeed, when masters changed a ship's destination to, or through, an area where such a confrontation was likely, seamen often complained or even mutinied. William Howell penned a protest to his shipmates in 1713 upon discovering such a change, saying “that they did not hire themselves to fight and properly wondering in case they should lose a Legg or an Arme who would maintaine them and their Familys.”<sup>80</sup> Even if a seaman survived injury, when captured by enemy predators, he ran the risk of losing his pay, personal effects and liberty.

In the same way that the disadvantages of employment on merchant vessels helped make privateering seem more appealing, the nature of life in the navy made its attractiveness seem even greater. The work regime was extremely hard. The effort needed to keep large naval ships, especially ships of the line, in constant fighting trim, meant hours of back-breaking cleaning and gunnery practice for the crew, to say nothing of the many adjustments needed to the sails to maintain maximum sailing efficiency.<sup>81</sup> To make matters worse, these relentless tasks had to be carried out with unquestioning obedience, in an atmosphere where the slightest mistake or affront to

ships' authority could result in harsh retribution. The most common form of punishment was the indiscriminate striking of the men with 'starters' (bamboo cane tipped with twine) in order to make them work faster. More serious crimes normally resulted in lashes with a 'cat-o-nine-tails'. A variety of punishments also existed that were intended to result in death. These forms of punishment became particularly severe in the late seventeenth century. The grisly spectacle of 'flogging round the fleet' (whipping a sailor to death in view of the men of an entire squadron of vessels) was implemented in 1698 and reached a pinnacle during the War of the Austrian Succession. 'Running the gauntlet' also grew to prominence during this period.<sup>82</sup> The level and frequency of this punishment, while set down in the Articles of War, was largely at the discretion of individual captains. Unfortunately, those few captains who went too far tended to give the navy an unsavory reputation that seamen understandably sought to avoid. Complaints about the brutality of captains in the British Navy ran especially high between 1688 and 1708. Peter Kemp notes, that while excessive punishments were not applicable to the service as a whole, "there can be no doubt that the numbers of naval captains who measured up to even reasonable standards of care and decency in their treatment of the men under their command was pitifully small."<sup>83</sup>

Another unpopular feature of service in the navy was that naval vessels were expected to engage strong enemy opposition, so long as the odds were reasonably even. Court martial waited for those captains who were deemed to have not done their duty. The commanders of privateers and merchantmen, by contrast, were encouraged to avoid superior force whenever possible. Naval tars were far more likely, therefore, to be killed or injured in a sea battle. The capture of H.M.S. *Adventure* (44 guns and 194 men) for instance, between Montserrat and Martinique,

in March 1709, by the French man-of-war *Valeur* (36 guns and 286 men) resulted in 29 killed and 85 wounded.<sup>84</sup>

The only redeeming feature of naval prize actions was that they were frequently of greater value. In 1708, a small squadron under Commodore Wager attacked a Spanish bullion fleet in the West Indies, sinking or capturing treasure to the value of 14-15 million sterling. In another instance, in the spring of 1709, H.M.S. *Portland*, a fourth rate of 54 guns and 280 men, captured a French Guinea Ship with 400,000 pieces of eight on board, as well as another vessel with a cargo valued at £75,000.<sup>85</sup> The likelihood of prize money was greatest for those serving on small, fast sailing naval frigates. Colonial staples were normally transported in small sloops and brigantines. This reflected the relatively small-scale nature of colonial trade in the early seventeenth century. These vessels could easily out-manoeuvre large naval line-of-battle ships. Consequently, fourth to sixth rate frigates were preferred for colonial service. Larger, first to third rates, were usually stationed in the English Channel, off the French coast, or in the Mediterranean. Sailors stationed in colonial waters stood a far better chance of sharing in prize money than their European counterparts. Wherever one was stationed, however, the proportion of prize proceeds assigned to the crew was so pitifully small that it compared poorly with wages and prize money obtainable on merchantmen and privateers. The system employed for the division of prizes in the navy worked against the interests of the common seaman. The 'Cruisers Act' of 1708, established that prizes should be divided into eight shares, three of which went to the captain, one to the commander-in-chief, one to the officers, one to the warrant officers, and two to the crew. In this situation, only seamen serving on extremely successful frigates could expect to make a good living.

The payment of prize money and wages was wrought with frustration and embezzlement. Prize shares were often unfairly distributed by officers' eager to

enrich themselves at the expense of their crews. Wages were also habitually withheld by the practice of transferring men from ship to ship, which was contrary to the terms on which they had enlisted. Ships were paid yearly and alphabetically. By transferring seamen from one ship to another with a name further down the alphabet, therefore, the navy could avoid payment. Seamen were given a ticket for the amount of pay they had earned, which would only be honoured when his new ship was paid, if indeed he was not transferred again. It was not unusual for seamen to go six or seven years without receiving any pay. This put wives and children in a precarious situation. Occasionally, late payment of wages resulted in violence. The crew of H.M.S *Blackwell*, for instance, mutinied in 1706 and went pirating. While it was in theory possible for seamen to make a good living in the navy, delayed payment of prize money and wages meant that seamen were far more likely to die from the many other miseries of the service before they saw a decent return.

The unpopularity of service in the navy was reflected in high levels of desertion. During the War of the Spanish Succession, seamen entered the navy like “men dragged to execution.” When the opportunity arose, few turned down the chance to find alternative employment on merchant ships or privateers. The Admiralty's attempts to solve the problem merely made matters worse. Wages and prize money were withheld for sometimes years at a time, in the hope that seamen would not desert when they had money owing. Naval commanders stationed in colonial waters often criticised this strategy. Captain William Mill, commander of H.M. Brigantine *Larke*, stated to the Council of Barbados in June 1703, that it was

...very difficult on any or great occasion to man her, the men often deserting for want of being paid at the end of their cruise, and that 'twould conduce much to H.M. service and the good of this Island, if a certaine number of

sailors were constantly paid every six weeks, that they might be sure of them on all occasions.<sup>86</sup>

The Admiralty undeterred by such views, furthermore, encouraged that seamen should be denied regular shore leave and confined below deck. This life of confinement goes along way to explaining the navy's deplorable record for disease related deaths; the naval diet was after-all little different from that provided by privateers, who never achieved a similar reputation for ill health. Indeed, while both suffered from Scurvy and Typhus, it was the navy who bore the vast majority of Yellow Fever and Malaria cases, reflecting its greater tendency to confine men, both healthy and sick, together for long periods of time.

Employment in the navy was expected to last for the duration of wartime hostilities. This fact must have intensified all the other unpopular features. According to Daniel Baugh, because seamen

...could remember a time when ships were manned each spring and paid off in the autumn...service for the duration was seen as an unnatural development, an evil innovation; it forced the seamen to make a heavy commitment, a seemingly irrevocable one, when he volunteered for the King's ships.<sup>87</sup>

The navy relied heavily on impressment to man their ships. Press-gangs were active both in port, as well as at sea. By land, seamen employed a variety of tactics to avoid impressment. Port-side riots were raged, for instance, while press boats full of recruits inflicted upon themselves disabilities and feigned every manner of paralysis, idiocy and fits. Without a good disguise seamen "could not walk the streets without danger, nor sleep in safety."<sup>88</sup> Impressment was feared by married men most of all,

for they had no means of ensuring that their loved ones would not starve in their absence.

The 'America Act' freed privateersmen from the threat of impressment. There was no change to the situation for merchant seamen, however, despite the fact many held exemption papers. Their knowledge and experience made them far more tempting prey than landsmen, who required months of training before they would be able to perform even the simplest tasks. Sometimes, whole crews were taken off merchant ships and men 'in lieu' or 'ticket men' put in their place. The threat of impressment helps explain why merchantmen, offering high wages, often with the additional chance of sharing in prize money, still found it difficult to recruit seamen in contrast to privateers.

The attraction of privateering was overwhelmingly financial; patriotic fervour and romantic charm played but a minor role. For government, privateering was a way to cheaply augment naval forces during wartime. By focussing on prize taking, privateers enabled the navy to concentrate on trade protection. In this way, privateers helped government achieve mercantilist objectives. For investors, privateering was simply a business venture, undertaken for purely personal gain. It provided a useful alternative to normal business activities made more difficult, if not impossible, by the effects of enemy commerce raiding. For seamen, privateering offered the chance of windfall gains, as well as a highly attractive lifestyle. In both these respects, the merchant service and the navy found it hard to compete. Merchant vessels, for instance, offered good wages, but little chance of prize money. Naval vessels, by contrast, offered the chance of prize money, but poor wages. In both cases, on-board life left much to be desired in comparison with what was available on privateers. As a consequence, while privateers recruited men with relative ease, merchant vessels and the navy often had to rely on landsmen and elderly seamen, or otherwise were

forced to stay in port short-handed. The attraction of privateering also extended to the inhabitants of port towns as the numerous tasks involved in the fitting out of privateers provided business for a wide variety of tradesmen, while prize captures brought goods and money into colonial ports, helping to offset captures by the enemy. The loss of provision ships was felt particularly hard. Privateering provided a secondary supply, sold at a reasonable price to facilitate a quick return.

## Chapter 3

### THE EFFECTS OF PRIVATEERING

By capturing seaborne commerce the effect of privateering was widespread. Few colonies, be they British, French, or Spanish, could avoid the impact of privateering for two important reasons. Firstly, colonial expansion westwards was at this time limited, except in South America. Secondly, most colonial economies were still focused towards the development of staple agriculture that tended to leave them reliant on other sources for a wide variety of provisions and manufactures. As a consequence, seaborne commerce was extremely important, both as a source of imports, as well as a means for the export of colonial produce. Privateering, therefore, by threatening the flow of imports and exports, inevitably had an effect on colonial commerce and economic development.

This chapter examines the impact of both British and French privateering. It will seek to establish which were the principal privateering centres, when, where and how private men-of-war operated, as well as a whole host of information concerning their captures. Reference will also be made to the Royal Navy in those areas where an overlap exists in the operation and effect of privateering. Owing to the availability of sources, my examination of French privateering is largely restricted to secondary sources, although the Calendar of State Papers, in particular, provides some useful contemporary views on its effect.

#### I

Traditional historiography has largely ignored the importance of privateering. Naval historians have concentrated on fleet actions of the Royal Navy, while economic and

business scholars have focused on merchant shipping and the growth of American mercantile communities. Since the days of Alfred Thayer Mahan, naval historians have minimised the importance of privateering and adopted Mahan's view that 'sea power means naval power'. Mahan repeatedly asserted that privateering played a trivial role in maritime warfare:

It is not the taking of individual ships or convoys, be they few or many, that strikes down the money power of a nation; it is the possession of that overbearing power on the sea which drives the enemy's flag from it, or allows it to appear only as a fugitive...The overbearing power can only be exercised by great navies.<sup>89</sup>

Mahan went on to ridicule French reliance on *guerre de course*, stating that, "The multitude of French privateers was indeed a sad token to an instructed eye, showing behind them a merchant shipping in enforced idleness, whose crews and whose owners were driven to speculative pillage in order to live."<sup>90</sup> Subsequent studies by naval historians reveal the enduring acceptance of Mahan's theories. Scholars such as W. L. Clowse, Sir Herbert Richmond, Julian Corbett, Gerald S. Graham, Peter Kemp, Christopher Lloyd and John Tilley have largely ignored privateering in preference to naval fleets.<sup>91</sup> Military and economic historians have followed suit, devoting scant space to privateering activity.<sup>92</sup> Studies of American merchant and seaport communities have, furthermore, tended to view privateering investments as a sideline.<sup>93</sup> Students of ocean shipping have focussed on the effects of the prize war at greater length. Rather surprisingly, however, instead of talking about the expanding numbers of privateers and naval frigates that disrupted commerce progressively throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they have concentrated on increasing stability and security. Because of the supposedly low risk

of capture by predators, merchants lowered their costs by reducing crews and armaments and by employing vessels more efficiently designed for carrying cargoes. Douglas North has stated that

All improvements in manning efficiency during the period [1600-1770] came from a decline in crew requirements per constant average ship size...It was the decline in piracy and privateering...which contributed most to the fall in PSL [cost per day at sea of labour] prior to 1800.<sup>94</sup>

James F. Shepherd and Gary M. Walton have taken North's thesis even further: "The argument presented here is that the crew reductions were made possible by the elimination of piracy and privateering."<sup>95</sup>

Alongside the arguments of those who denigrate the importance of privateering is another school of thought which recognises its political, military, economic and social impact. These studies, which have investigated privateering in a far more systematic fashion, have tended to eclipse the outdated views of Mahan and others.<sup>96</sup> Kenneth R. Andrews has demonstrated the enormous political, economic and military consequences of English privateering, as well as its key role in the genesis of Britain's maritime empire. Richard Pares has written valuable studies of privateering's legal framework, its impact on the navy's manpower requirements, and a masterful account of imperial warfare, including the role of private men-of-war in the Caribbean. Recent works by Walter Mitchinton, David Starkey, J.S. Bromley, Peter Raban, Alan Jamieson, and William R. Meyer, discuss the economic and military significance of English and Channel Island privateering from the Glorious Revolution to 1815.<sup>97</sup> These historians have argued that private men-of-war contributed significantly to British sea power by capturing nearly as many prizes as the Royal Navy throughout the 1700s. Naval historians in the light of this new research have

also begun to appreciate the impact of privateering. Daniel Baugh has discussed the enormous political influence of the 'privateering interest' in the eighteenth century London. He has also stressed an important connection between commanders of public and private men-of-war - namely prize money. Like privateers, the navy devoted considerable time, shipping and manpower pursuing enemy prizes. Baugh has called prize money the "chief attraction" of naval service. Julian Gywn has convincingly demonstrated the importance of prize money for Admiral Sir Peter Warren's personal fortune. Similarly, Fred Anderson has emphasised that Massachusetts relied on the prospects of plunder and personal gain to recruit troops for the French and Indian Wars. Ralph Davis, a leading economic historian, has furthermore stated, in regard to the marked impact that warfare in general, and privateering in particular, exerted on Atlantic shipping: "By far the most spectacular wartime calamities were the capture of ships and their cargoes by enemy privateers and warships."<sup>98</sup>

## II

Documentary materials concerning privateering are sparse. English records are reasonably complete, and consequently, the best studies of privateering in the imperial wars of 1585-1815 focus on English private men-of-war. The shortage of North American and Caribbean records are more pronounced. Vice-Admiralty records are largely incomplete due to loss or destruction. Those remaining still provide, however, a wealth of information concerning prize actions, such as the names of privateers, their home ports, names of commanders and owners, tonnage, ordnance, crew size, value of captures and so on. Ships' journals and the correspondence of captains and owners of privateers, as well as merchants affected by their activities, have also largely disappeared over the centuries. Carl Swanson, in his influential

study of American privateering and imperial warfare in the wars of the 1740s, finds a solution to this problem by undertaking a systematic investigation of American newspapers, which were widespread by the 1740s.<sup>99</sup> These newspapers provided 3,852 of the 3,973 prize references contained in Swanson's data file. They provided a wealth of information regarding reported engagements and captures involving privateers and merchantmen. A comparable series of newspaper evidence is not available for earlier imperial conflicts unfortunately, making the study of British-colonial privateering in the War of the Spanish Succession extremely difficult. This may explain why it has received only scant attention by historians, normally in studies primarily dealing with other topics.

An investigation of privateering in the Queen Anne's War is possible, however, using British, North American and Caribbean manuscript and printed primary sources. My study is limited to British sources available in the British Library, the Public Record Office, the Institute of Historical Research, and finally the National Library of Scotland. These sources, largely Admiralty, Colonial Office, and colonial government records have enabled the construction of a relatively large data file of information concerning the activities and effect of privateers and the Royal Navy in the colonial prize war.<sup>100</sup>

### III

Imperial warfare was popular in America because it permitted privateering. Many colonial merchants and mariners were eager to fit out and serve on private men-of-war in the hope that they would get rich while the opportunity existed. All the leading ports in British North America and the British West Indies fitted out private men-of-war. The activity of these ports can be assessed in a variety of ways. One might, for instance, count the number of privateers that sailed from each city, or alternatively,

count the number of prizes captured by a colony's privateers. Due to lack of information in the data file, the latter of these two options will be the method adopted here for measuring each port's participation. This limitation makes assessment of the commitment of each port's resources to privateering impossible.

According to the data file, the privateers of twelve colonies captured prizes in the War of the Spanish Succession. Private men-of-war from the West Indies dominated these captures. The valuable cargoes embarking from the Caribbean made the area a centre of privateering operations from the sixteenth century until the end of the Napoleonic Wars. During Queen Anne's War, the participation of Jamaica was by far the most significant, accounting for 125 prize captures. This dominance was witnessed in all the other major inter-colonial wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and reflected the unique advantages that Jamaica possessed as a privateering base. The other colonies of the British West Indies totalled only 51 captures in comparison.

Unlike the Caribbean, those captures made in North American waters were more evenly spread amongst the colonies. The middle colonies of Massachusetts and New England accounted for 36 prize captures, closely followed by New York, Rhode Island and Carolina with 31, 28 and 8 captures respectively.

The nationality of these prize captures was predominantly French. Out of the 237 captures recorded in the data file as belonging to a specific country, 146 were reported to be French, followed by 50 from Spain. The remaining 41 captures consisted of 31 from a variety of neutral nations for illegal trading and 10 recaptures of British vessels.

| TABLE 1<br>Distribution of British-Colonial Privateering Prize Captures, 1702-1713 |            |             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Colony                                                                             | N          | %           |
| British West Indies:                                                               |            |             |
| Antigua                                                                            | 10         | 2.4         |
| Bahamas                                                                            | 12         | 2.8         |
| Barbados                                                                           | 13         | 3.0         |
| Bermuda                                                                            | 13         | 3.0         |
| Jamaica                                                                            | 125        | 29.3        |
| St. Christophers                                                                   | 2          | 0.5         |
| St. Kitts                                                                          | 1          | 0.2         |
| British North America:                                                             |            |             |
| Carolina                                                                           | 8          | 1.9         |
| Massachusetts*                                                                     | 31         | 7.3         |
| New England                                                                        | 5          | 1.2         |
| New York                                                                           | 31         | 7.3         |
| Rhode Island                                                                       | 28         | 6.4         |
| Unknown*                                                                           | <u>148</u> | <u>34.7</u> |
| Total                                                                              | 427        | 100.0       |

\*While the areas of Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island infact comprised New England in the early Eighteenth century, in an effort to provide a more detailed breakdown of North American prize captures the later geographical boundaries have been used in some tables and subsequent analysis.

\*Of the 148 captures that did not refer to a connection with the privateer of a specific colony, only 43 were definitely privateers. The status of the British vessels that captured the other 105 prizes is uncertain.

| TABLE 3.2<br>Distribution of British Colonial Privateer Prize Nationality, 1702-1713 |            |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Nationality                                                                          | N          | %           |
| French                                                                               | 146        | 34.2        |
| Spanish                                                                              | 50         | 11.7        |
| Other                                                                                | 31         | 7.3         |
| Recapture                                                                            | 10         | 2.3         |
| Unknown                                                                              | <u>190</u> | <u>44.5</u> |
| Total                                                                                | 450        | 100.0       |

\*Category described as 'other' refers to the capture of neutral vessels for illegal trading with the French or Spanish (includes 16 Dutch, 5 Danish, 10 British).

\*Of the 427 prize captures, 40 were made by British vessels of uncertain status (16 French, 6 Spanish, 2 Dutch, 1 recapture, 2 British, and 8 unknown).

French vessels dominated prize captures for a variety of reasons. Firstly, French trade was far more accessible to British colonial privateers than that of the Spanish, who rarely traded in American waters, preferring instead to trade along the coast of New Spain in South America. In these waters, hundreds of miles from Britain's colonies in the Caribbean, and thousands of miles from those in North America, Spanish inter-colonial shipping was far less likely to encounter privateers from more northerly

waters. The costs of provisioning privateers for long voyages appears to have been more than the majority of investors were prepared to pay. In Caribbean and North American waters, by contrast, French trade from Martinique, Guadeloupe, Hispaniola, St. Dominique, Newfoundland, Placentia and Arcadia provided a more readily available supply of shipping. The closer proximity of British ports also meant that privateers could more quickly refit when damaged, and dispose of their prizes after capture. A second reason why British colonial privateers captured more French vessels than Spanish centres around the greater protection the latter was given. Guard ships, hired at the expense of governors and merchants to protect inter-colonial trade, acted as a useful deterrent to the attentions of privateers. The British government, furthermore, eager to develop illicit trade with the Spanish took a number of steps to ensure that the actions of privateers did not upset what was at the best of times a delicate relationship.<sup>101</sup> In 1704, for instance, the Council of Trade and Plantations ordered that privateers and men-of-war should not molest British or Spanish vessels involved in the Spanish-American trade.<sup>102</sup> In 1707, furthermore, special passes were issued to Spanish merchants so that they might be able to more safely trade at Jamaica, following accusations that the recent decline in contraband trade was a consequence of the continued robbing of Spanish vessels by British-colonial privateers. The 'America Act' went a step further by creating a zone between Rio de la Hacha and the Rio Chagre, within which the capture of Spanish vessels was forbidden. According to an official memorial sent to the American colonies in August 1708, moreover, the commissions of privateers who intended to cruise to the leeward of Rio de la Hacha had to include instructions that:

- (1) That they shall attack and take no other ship, on that coast, but such as shall be mann'd and sailed by French men; preserving the ship's company to evidence the lawfulness of the capture. (2) That in case they take or destroy

any Spanish coasting vessell mann'd with Spanyards on the said shore, carrying coastwise the manufactures of Europe, that then they shall be subject to the penalty of paying to the Spanyard the double value in the same specie they shall take or destroy.<sup>103</sup>

Trade with the Spanish was hugely important because it supplied silver coin and bullion, "the measure and standard of riches".<sup>104</sup> These commodities provided Britain with a form of payment that could supplement the cloth industry in the continuation of important trades to the Baltic, the Levant, and the East Indies. Receiving payment in coin also supplied the English with a source of hard currency for their North American and Caribbean colonies.<sup>105</sup> The opportunity to vent English manufactures was another attractive feature of the Spanish-American trade, which by the late seventeenth century was esteemed above all other commerce. The Earl of Inchiquin, governor of Jamaica between 1689 and 1692, for instance, claimed that the fleet leaving Jamaica in 1690 carried away £100,000 worth of bullion, representing more than the island's recorded sugar export for 1689 (£88,000). This figure was also more than a fourth of the value of England's entire trade with Old Spain via Cadiz.<sup>106</sup> With the accession of Philip of Anjou to the Spanish throne and the acquisition of the Asiento contract by the French Guinea Company in 1701, English contraband trade appeared for the first time to be on the brink of being completely cut off. According to Nettles,

Spanish colonial ports that were closed to the English opened at the approach of the French. Everywhere French and Spanish vessels went together – the two became almost indistinguishable in the trading fleets of the war...not only did the Asiento vessels gain admittance into the lands of Philip V, but the importation of general merchandise from France proceeded on a grand scale.<sup>107</sup>

The English considered this threat so great that they were prepared to go to war because of it. Sir Charles Hedges, Secretary of State, for instance, considered the Asiento a leading cause of the conflict, "it having been the aim of the French in possessing themselves of Spain, to make themselves masters of the West Indian trade."<sup>108</sup> In addition to fighting the French and Spanish militarily, the English government gave unprecedented encouragement to the development of the Spanish-American trade on a diplomatic and legislative level.<sup>109</sup> Restrictions on the capture of Spanish vessels by British-colonial privateers in areas where they might be involved in covert trade, was pursued in this context.

When one considers that Spanish commerce was well guarded and that captured vessels might be involved in the Spanish-American trade, one can appreciate why the coast of New Spain did not figure highly in the data file as a cruising ground for British-colonial privateers. Only seven prize actions, for which an area of capture was noted, occurred off the coast of New Spain. Transatlantic Spanish trade, organised into huge convoys under the protection of naval squadrons, was even harder to target. Small, fast-sailing privateers had little chance of attacking ships that were well manned and gunned. Their date of departure was, furthermore, a closely guarded secret; Spanish officials were only too aware of the importance their treasure held for a mercantilist-minded British government and fortune-seeking naval commanders.

The leading ports of British North America and the British West Indies dominated participation in the prize war. According to Carl Swanson, there was a "strong correlation between urban development and participation in the prize war. Privateering ventures required entrepreneurial ability, shipping, and manpower. The

largest seaports...possessed more of the requisites than did smaller communities."

Swanson goes on:

Organisation of a privateering cruise required experienced merchants unafraid of taking risks and in command of sufficient capital to acquire strong sailing vessels, substantial ordnance, and enough provisions for a long voyage. They needed skilled captains with established reputations to attract large crews. Once a privateer captured an enemy merchantmen, the owners' business skills were especially important because profits did not materialize until the prize was condemned in a vice-admiralty court and the vessel and cargo were sold to advantage. Business correspondence, warehouse facilities, and market information were all necessary for success.<sup>110</sup>

It is no surprise, therefore, that the majority of privateering investors were merchants. Owners represented their privateers at Vice-Admiralty proceedings and prize sales. For this service they demanded an additional percentage of the profits, over and above the 1/3 they normally received.

In addition to entrepreneurial ability, shipping and manpower were also more readily available in the larger ports. Most private men-of-war were converted merchantmen. As the size of the enemy's commerce was relatively small, except for the trade conducted by the ships of the French Guinea Company, there was little need for large specially built privateers 'of force' as existed later in the century.<sup>111</sup> Indeed, in the War of the Spanish Succession, fast-sailing merchantmen appear to have been just as effective as specially built privateers. Communities with large merchant fleets could rapidly dispatch private men-of-war when hostilities erupted in 1702. In addition, the principal ports more easily supplied the enormous numbers of men needed for privateering crews, which was often three times larger than that

needed to sail the vessel. Obtaining crews of this size was a difficult task; the services of seamen were in high demand during wartime.

The correlation between urban development and involvement in the prize war was most marked in North America. The well established ports of Boston, New York and Newport were able to commission and fit out far more privateers than smaller, less well developed port towns, such as Charleston. Merchants in Newport, Rhode Island, for instance, dispatched a privateer, under the command of Captain William Wanton, within eleven days of the declaration of war in 1702. Port towns in the British West Indies, by contrast, played a major role in privateering despite being deficient in many of the requisites previously mentioned. Many of the Islands were dependent on shipping from other ports and had a small white population. Nevertheless, their location made the difference, being ideally situated for preying on the richest trade routes of the French and Spanish empires. The attraction of merchantmen carrying the lucrative agricultural staples of the West Indies and the lure of the fabled treasure ships of New Spain made the area a magnet for cruisers from all belligerent nations. In addition to location, the island colonies had a long and successful history of privateering, as well as a body of seamen and ships' officers thoroughly experienced in this kind of venture.<sup>112</sup> Many of the principal towns of the West Indies were built on the profits of buccaneering. Port Royal, for instance, before its destruction by earthquake in 1692, was still reliant on privateering to finance agricultural developments. For these several reasons, the British West Indian colonies were among the leaders in sending out private men-of-war.

British-colonial privateers operated right up the Atlantic coast from Central America to Newfoundland in the far north. They concentrated, however, where the pickings were richest in the Caribbean. It is extremely difficult to be accurate about the precise cruising grounds of British-colonial privateers. While most references to

prize actions provided information concerning numbers of captures and their condemnation, few offer any detail about the location of the capture or cruising grounds in general.<sup>113</sup> One can get round this problem by using the condemnation of prizes as an indication of the likely cruising ground of a privateer prior to a prize action. This assumption can be made for a variety of reasons. Firstly, most privateers were small and incapable of long cruises over hundreds of miles. Secondly, governors keen to use British-colonial privateers as a deterrent to enemy predators often restricted their cruising grounds to local waters. Thirdly, owing to the high risk of recapture, privateer captains were usually instructed by their owners to return to port once a capture was made. For these three reasons, one can logically assume that the place of condemnation of a prize capture coincided, in the vast majority of cases, with the rough area of the privateer's cruising-ground. By this rationale, with the British West Indies, particularly Jamaica and Barbados, accounting for a large proportion of the condemnation of both privateering and naval prize captures, the Caribbean can be seen as the principal cruising-ground of British predators in the War of the Spanish Succession. The smaller number of prizes condemned in the ports of North America, by contrast, suggest that more northerly waters were a less attractive option. New York and Rhode Island were again most significant, accounting for the condemnation of 44 prize captures. The 67 prizes condemned at Newfoundland were also significant, although one cannot be sure of the status of the captors. It is entirely likely that a sizeable proportion were made by merchantmen and the Royal Navy.

| TABLE 3.3<br>Distribution of the Condemnation of British-Colonial Privateering Prize Captures, 1702-1713 |            |             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Colony                                                                                                   | N          | %           |
| British West Indies:                                                                                     |            |             |
| Antigua                                                                                                  | 9          | 2.1         |
| Bermuda                                                                                                  | 14         | 3.3         |
| Barbados                                                                                                 | 12         | 2.8         |
| Jamaica                                                                                                  | 64         | 15.0        |
| Nevis                                                                                                    | 7          | 1.6         |
| St. Kitts                                                                                                | 1          | 0.2         |
| St. Thomas                                                                                               | 1          | 0.2         |
| Bahamas                                                                                                  | 4          | 0.9         |
| British North America:                                                                                   |            |             |
| Carolina                                                                                                 | 3          | 0.7         |
| Maryland                                                                                                 | 2          | 0.5         |
| Massachusetts                                                                                            | 6          | 1.4         |
| Newfoundland                                                                                             | 67         | 15.7        |
| New York                                                                                                 | 28         | 6.6         |
| Rhode Island                                                                                             | 15         | 3.5         |
| Unknown                                                                                                  | <u>194</u> | <u>45.5</u> |
| Total                                                                                                    | 427        | 100.0       |

\*Of the 427 prize captures recorded in the data file, 194 did not refer to a colony of condemnation, with 5 of this figure being predators of uncertain status. A further 10 captures were burnt, sunk or ransomed at sea. Of the remaining 223 prize captures that did refer to a colony of condemnation, 89 were prizes of British vessels of uncertain status.

The respective attractiveness of one area over another as a cruising ground for British-colonial privateers was dependent on the value and availability of enemy shipping. Privateer captains were understandably more likely to cruise where there was the best chance of success. West Indian goods were worth considerably more than North American products. The value of French trade in fish and naval stores from her North American colonies was small. As a consequence, numbers of British colonial privateers operating in northern waters were relatively insignificant compared to the Caribbean. Nevertheless, a sizeable number of French vessels were captured in the Cape Breton area and particularly off the Newfoundland Banks. The 67 prizes recorded in the data file to have been condemned at Newfoundland lay testament to this fact.

British-colonial privateering ebbed and flowed with fluctuations in Spanish and French commerce, as well as with the introduction of prize legislation. The years of

peace between King William's War in the late seventeenth century and Queen Anne's War in the early eighteenth, helped French and Spanish commerce return to its former levels. This rejuvenated body of shipping appears to have enabled the capture of a relatively large number of enemy vessels in the early years of the war. According to the data file, British-colonial privateers took 120 vessels in the first three years of the war, while the navy took 56. Chapin further notes that between 4 May 1702 and 20 November 1703, 35 prizes were condemned at Jamaica. By the 1 March this total had reached 41.<sup>114</sup> Further explanation for this phenomenon can be seen in the tendency to fit out merchant craft of every description as privateers in the early years of the war, in an attempt to catch the enemy unprepared. After several years, as the effect of the captures was felt by enemy shipping, and merchantmen began to arm themselves more heavily, not only does one see a reduction in numbers of privateers, but also a reduction in captures as well. The data file reveals that privateers and the navy were considerably less successful in 1705 and 1706, compared with the two previous years, taking 50 and 18 vessels respectively

| TABLE 3.4<br>Yearly Prize Captures of British-Colonial Privateers, 1702-1713 |            |             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Year                                                                         | N          | %           |
| 1702                                                                         | 50         | 11.7        |
| 1703                                                                         | 34         | 8.0         |
| 1704                                                                         | 36         | 8.4         |
| 1705                                                                         | 22         | 5.2         |
| 1706                                                                         | 28         | 6.6         |
| 1707                                                                         | 15         | 3.5         |
| 1708                                                                         | 40         | 9.4         |
| 1709                                                                         | 27         | 6.3         |
| 1710                                                                         | 33         | 7.7         |
| 1711                                                                         | 20         | 4.7         |
| 1712                                                                         | 6          | 1.4         |
| 1713                                                                         | 0          | 0.0         |
| Unknown                                                                      | <u>116</u> | <u>27.1</u> |
| Totals                                                                       | 427        | 100.0       |

\*Of the 116 captures that could not be assigned to a specific year, 64 were to British vessels of uncertain status. Of the remaining 311 prize captures, 34 fell into the aforementioned category.

Privateer commanders had to plan their voyages to take into account bad weather and to coincide with the height of the shipping season, which was determined by the growing cycle of the various colonial staples. This was true for all privateers, whether they were French, Spanish or British, and whether they operated in the West Indies or off the coast of North America. According to Swanson, writing in regard to the wars of the 1740s, the growing cycle of sugar cane meant that

Privateering was brisk in the winter and early spring as vessels arrived to load the new crop. Prize actions declined during the hurricane season. August and September were the slowest months with privateering activity falling 120 to 140 percent compared to the peak month of March and February. Prize actions picked up again in the late fall and steadily increased with the approach of the new season.<sup>115</sup>

While the sugar trade of France's Caribbean colonies was well developed in the 1740s, during the War of the Spanish Succession, by contrast, output was sporadic and homeward bound sugar convoys less frequent. As a consequence, the growing cycle of sugar cane was less significant to the timing of privateering cruises than was the case in later conflicts. Assessing the exact date of captures, through analysis of the data file, is a difficult task because many of the references do not give sufficient detail. Most of the information comes from the correspondence of colonial governors and government departments, such as the Council of Trade and Plantations and the Board of Trade. While a date is often given as to when a correspondence was written or when prizes were condemned, one can still not confidently use the information to suggest when prizes were captured. Condemnation could be a lengthy process for instance, while governors' letters often referred to a wide variety of information suggesting that they were written on an *ad hoc* basis rather than to specifically report

privateering successes. Nevertheless, despite the fact that only 76 of the 301 references to privateering prize actions give an exact date for their completion, one can still make some cautious suggestions as to the best months of the year for making prize captures. British-colonial privateers cruised at various times throughout the year. Success appears to have been most likely between June and October, while November through to May appears to have been slowest. With the exception of July, August and September, which were by far the most significant months, prize captures appear to have been made relatively similarly throughout the year. Captures made by the Royal Navy reveal a similar pattern, with July through to October being most successful and the other months of the year at around the same level.

Prize vessels were typically small, with a cargo of varied goods. Ships, with an average size of 203 tons, accounted for only 50 of the 155 references to vessel type of privateering captures recorded in the data file. In contrast, far smaller vessels, such as sloops, brigantines and barques, with an average size of 43 tons, accounted for 99 of the total. The average size of British-colonial privateering captures overall, including those captures that were made by predators of undetermined status, was 130 tons.

| TABLE 3.5<br>Distribution of Types of Vessels Captured by British-Colonial Privateers, 1702-1713 |            |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Vessel Type                                                                                      | N          | %           |
| Barcolongo                                                                                       | 1          | 0.2         |
| Barque                                                                                           | 10         | 2.4         |
| Brigantine                                                                                       | 17         | 4.0         |
| Ketch                                                                                            | 1          | 0.2         |
| Open Shallops                                                                                    | 2          | 0.5         |
| Periaugers                                                                                       | 1          | 0.2         |
| Pink                                                                                             | 1          | 0.2         |
| Settee                                                                                           | 1          | 0.2         |
| Ship                                                                                             | 50         | 11.7        |
| Sloop                                                                                            | 72         | 16.9        |
| Unknown                                                                                          | <u>271</u> | <u>63.5</u> |
| Totals                                                                                           | 427        | 100.0       |

\*Of the 271 prize captures of undetermined vessel type, 79 were made by British vessels of uncertain status. Of the remaining 156 prize captures that did record a vessel type, 19 fell into the aforementioned category.

| TABLE 3.6<br>Mean Tonnage, Crew Size, and Ordnance for Prizes Captured by British-Colonial Privateers<br>1702-1713 |         |      |              |      |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|------|--------------|------|----------------|
| Vessel Type                                                                                                        | Tonnage |      | Size of Crew |      | Number of Guns |
| Ship                                                                                                               | 203     | (15) | 104          | (9)  | 13 (15)        |
| Sloop                                                                                                              | 29      | (8)  | 65           | (4)  | 4 (4)          |
| Other                                                                                                              | 64      | (6)  | 0            | (0)  | 8 (1)          |
| Unknown                                                                                                            | 131     | (14) | 44           | (7)  | 12 (15)        |
| Grand Mean                                                                                                         | 107     | (43) | 50           | (20) | 9 (35)         |

\*Note: The figures in parentheses include the number of cases upon which the means are based. Furthermore, those vessels referred to as 'other' included a brigantine, a barque, two open shallops, and a pink. Those vessels cited as 'unknown' included all those references to prize captures, which provided information on tonnage, crew size, and ordnance, but not a vessel type.

The impression that these statistics give is that much of French colonial shipping was small-scale and localised in nature, transporting basic provisions and manufactures between its colonies. The small size of British-colonial privateers in the War of the Spanish Succession in comparison with the wars of the 1740s, where large transatlantic ships of 300 tons and more were far more common, seems to confirm this assumption.

The nature of French colonial shipping reflected the appalling condition of France's colonies in the Caribbean. The development of large-scale staple agriculture could hardly be expected when French colonists faced starvation and the threat of invasion on a day-to-day basis. According to Ruth Bourne, "The fleets of Coetlogon and Chateau Renault, which had been expected to bring supplies and reinforcements, sailed away leaving Martinique stripped bare of food, stores and money in a way the English never succeeded in doing, and left behind nothing but plague and a starving, mutinous people."<sup>116</sup> Guadeloupe was in little better condition. The fleets of du Casse had come and gone, leaving the island short of food. The inhabitants had no market for their sugar and so were not able to buy the small stores of wine and provisions occasional ships brought in.

The majority of privateers in the War of the Spanish Succession were small, fast-sailing vessels. According to the data file, sloops and brigantines were most popular, accounting for 90 of the vessels involved in prize actions. Ships were rarely

used by comparison; only 13 references were made to privateering ships.<sup>117</sup> Naval vessels, by contrast, were almost always ships, except when colonial sloops were occasionally hired as coast guards. The likely size of the enemy's shipping determined the most appropriate vessels to employ as privateers. Small, fast-sailing vessels were no match for heavily armed and manned merchantmen, for instance, while large, slow-sailing ships were useless against their opposites. Large privateers were rare in the early eighteenth century. In the wars of the 1740s, following the development of the French sugar islands, particularly Saint Dominique, privateers 'of force', as David Starkey describes them, were more common.<sup>118</sup> In the War of the Spanish Succession colonial commerce was relatively underdeveloped. Large privateers, expensive to build, fit out and man, were unnecessary for the capture of such commerce. Smaller privateers were far better suited to hunting small merchant vessels, which used speed and a shallow draught as their chief source of defence in ways that larger merchantmen later in the century could not.

In the same vein, the use of slow bulky ships by the Royal Navy reflected the fact that they were not primarily intended to concern themselves with the capture of localised enemy commerce. Indeed, in the view of the Admiralty, naval vessels were hoped to achieve two main objectives by their presence in American waters: firstly, the protection of trade convoys from enemy naval and privateering squadrons; and secondly, the capture of the Spanish treasure fleets. In both cases, it was generally thought that third and fourth rate ships were best suited to the task. Smaller fifth and sixth rate 'frigates' were assigned to the less important task of protecting inter-colonial shipping. As a result of the navy's use of large ships in American waters, the size and frequency of their captures contrasts significantly with those of privateering vessels; while the navy was able to capture larger vessels because of their size and firepower, privateers were able to capture far greater numbers because of their speed. In waters

where the majority of shipping could easily outrun large ships, naval commanders often had to be content with trying to intercept the occasional French Atlantic convoys that visited their colonies in the Americas. In the wars of the 1740s, by contrast, with the development of Spanish, and especially French commerce, the situation changed slightly. According to Swanson, the average tonnage, crew size and ordnance for the prizes captured between 1739 and 1748 was 244, 96, 32 (Spanish) and 255, 119, 26 (French).<sup>119</sup> This body of shipping, far greater in size and increased in strength by heavier armaments and larger crews, must have meant that the size and strength of British-colonial privateers increased compared with the War of the Spanish Succession. The work of Swanson again confirms this assumption, stating that the average tonnage, crew size and ordnance of British-colonial privateers between 1739 and 1748 was 138, 89 and 30 respectively.<sup>120</sup> By responding in this way, privateers were able to maintain their superiority over the navy in the prize war, recording 762 captures in comparison with 339.<sup>121</sup> Of these 339 captures, however, a greater proportion were likely to have been colonial vessels on route to France rather than the other way around, which appears to have been the case for the most part in the War of the Spanish Succession.

The best privateers in the early eighteenth century were fast, weatherly vessels, able to sail well in a breeze and in light airs. A heavy armament was relatively unimportant as privateers rarely fought stronger enemy opposition, where the risks to crew and ship were greater. Privateersmen were notoriously uninterested in glory in any case. Large crews were preferred instead of heavy armaments; overtaking and then overpowering smaller crews was the most efficient means of capturing enemy shipping. Long drawn out sea battles commonly resulted in damage to the prize, which reduced its resale value, and to the privateer, which led to expensive and time-consuming repairs. Privateers generally only fired a shot or two

to encourage their prospective prey to surrender. Indeed, when confronted with a well manned privateer, few merchant crews seemed willing to fight. In 1708, for instance, Captain Gale was forced to surrender his ship to a French privateer with only 8 guns compared to his 12, because his men refused to fight against an opposition crew five times as large as their own. Gale noted that while his "men seemed with great courage to Resolve upon a vigorous defence...upon the push most of them soone changed their minds and basely refusing to take up arms, shrank down into the hold."<sup>122</sup> Large crews were crucial in helping privateers to overhaul colonial shipping, which was often of the same construction and tonnage. According to Crowhurst, "a large crew could handle the sails and rigging more quickly than the small crews normally found on merchantmen and could make the ship sail faster by making her more responsive to changes in the strength and direction of the wind."<sup>123</sup> Consequently, even when they were lightened, by throwing their cargo and guns overboard, merchant vessels seldom escaped a privateer. In the matter of strength, privateers needed only to be strong enough to withstand the strain of carrying a heavy press of sail, a large crew, and the recoil of a light battery. According to Chapelle:

Weight could be kept out of the ends of the ships, which enabled light construction to be used. As no great weights, such as cargo or stores, had to be provided for, the displacement needed only to be sufficient to support the light hull construction, a small battery, a small amount of provisions and stores, some ballast and a large crew. Because the cruise of a privateer was usually short and as the crew was rapidly reduced as prizes were taken and sent into port, the amount of provisions, water, stores and ammunition was not very great. And since only valuable goods were commonly of little weight and bulk, there was little need for cargo capacity.<sup>124</sup>

#### IV

Privateering adversely affected British-colonial commerce both directly and indirectly. It affected both the operation of British-colonial commerce, as well as its protection. Privateering was an extremely popular activity. It promised a more attractive lifestyle, as well as the prospect of windfall profits. The chance to serve on privateers was eagerly sought after by sailors. Merchant seamen formed the vast majority of privateersmen. Only a small minority came from the navy, who kept their crews in prison-like conditions to ensure that they had little opportunity to desert. Privateers, by reducing the number of available seamen, thus directly affected the ability of merchant vessels to fill their complements. Furthermore, wages rose when there was a dearth of sailors, adding sometimes so much to the cost of transportation that profits were significantly reduced.

Privateers were fitted out primarily as a business investment. They were intended to make windfall profits for their owners and crew. In contrast to the navy, their role in the protection of trade was limited. Privateers were expected to aid British vessels under attack, according to the provisions of their commissions. However, there are very few instances when any assistance was given. Indeed, privateers often did more harm than good. According to Ruth Bourne, the privateers of the West Indies

...took off the islands' sailors, stores and provisions, for which they would offer better and more immediate payment than the navy did. They were never under the control of naval officers, and might promise to join an expedition and then leave it when their aid was most needed.<sup>125</sup>

Privateers only actively pursued enemy predators when they were hired as coast guard ships. Private men-of-war were in the business of hunting enemy

merchantmen, and as such, restricted their cruising to the French and Spanish shipping lanes. Few prizes were to be found in British-colonial shipping lanes, only the prospect of encountering French corsairs, or worse still, French naval squadrons. Engagements with such opponents usually resulted in damage that could not be easily repaired, owing to the scarcity, and consequent expense, of naval stores. Indeed, privateer captains were often instructed to avoid confrontation with enemy vessels, even merchantmen, that appeared to be well-armed.

In addition to the limited direct role privateers played in trade protection, they also indirectly affected the ability of the Royal Navy to protect British-colonial commerce. Privateers reduced numbers of available seamen and encouraged naval tars to desert. The navy probably lost far more men to commercial and privateering vessels than they gained in impressment. The likelihood of death or the loss of years of back pay, often years in arrears, did not seem to deter seamen from deserting. Seamen might desert for as little as £10 in cash and ten gallons of rum offered by a privateer or merchant skipper. Captain John Evans, commander of H.M.S *Burford*, stated in a letter to the Admiralty in 1707, that “though there is 15 months [pay] due to the men it is no hindrance to them from running away.” Evans further appealed for a punishment “more terrible than death, which happens so seldom to them that it is become no terror, and when it happens they say it is not a minutes pain.”<sup>126</sup>

When the navy was short of men, trade protection suffered. Cruisers, intended to patrol coastlines and the shipping routes of inter-colonial trade, as well as convoy escorts, intended to accompany the main homeward bound convoys, were often forced to remain in port until sufficient men could be found to enable them to sail. As a consequence, not only were individual inter-colonial ships and convoy ‘runners’ lost for lack of cruiser protection, but markets could be missed and perishable cargoes ruined by delays in the departure of convoys.

Conditions in the navy were such that large numbers of men were lost to illness and disease, particularly in the West Indies. Disease related deaths far outweighed those resulting from battle; of the 4,000 men brought by Benbow to Jamaica in 1701, 1,000 were soon lost to death. Losses to plague were so great in Admiral Wager's squadron in 1709, furthermore, that a fifth of his men were in fact soldiers from Governor Handasyd's regiment. Attempts to make good these deficiencies, in North American and Caribbean ports where white men sometimes only formed a small percentage of the population and where the majority of sailors were either already serving on privateers or intended to do so, was almost impossible. Free men and sailors in the colonies were as unlikely to enlist voluntarily as their English counterparts. The navy's response to this situation was to impress men both on shore and at sea. Merchant vessels, which were viewed by the Admiralty as training ships for the navy, suffered heavily from impressment. In peacetime, when privateering was outlawed, press gangs had a surplus of unemployed sailors to prey on. In wartime this situation changed dramatically, as few sailors were to be found unemployed on shore and pressing in the colonies was forbidden by the 'America Act'.

In England, if a ship-of-war needed sailors, the press gang, armed with a warrant from the Admiralty, appeared in the nearest harbour to claim unfortunate victims from merchant vessels. Sometimes the press gang worked on shore, rounding up sailors in the streets, seizing some in the public houses, and even dragging others from their beds. While impressment had no legal grounding, its practice in home waters was tolerated as a necessary means to man the navy. As such, the practice was restricted within accepted norms. Men were only supposed to be impressed from inward bound ships. Outward bound merchantmen were theoretically off limits. Commerce dictated this concession because outward bound vessels denuded of

sailors might be incapable of completing their voyages, and trade would suffer. Manpower losses from nearly completed voyages, however, were not as serious for the owners of merchantmen. The normal method of interception, according to Course,

...was for the vessel engaged in impressment to fire a gun across the merchant ship's bow to enforce her to heave-to for the press gang to board...When the boarding party meet no opposition, the officer in charge, to give some semblance legality, showed his press warrant to the master of the boarded ship and had her crew mustered for inspection. Exemption certificates were examined and the number of crew were checked against the number on the ship's Articles. Those entered as having deserted or drowned at sea were searched for throughout the ship. Outward bound ships were also searched and only the bare minimum left for their respective tonnage...A seaman impressed from a homeward bound ship was entitled to his wages up to the day he was impressed; and the master was bound to provide him with a certificate stating the money due to him. It was drawn on the ship-owners and payable on demand. The officer in charge of the press gang had to see that the certificates were issued to the seamen.<sup>127</sup>

In American waters, far removed from the restraining influence of the authorities in England, naval commanders were often inclined to disregard the rules and statutes designed to regulate the press and prevent injustice and hardship.<sup>128</sup> In the late seventeenth century, while governors were instructed by royal proclamation to supply H.M. ships with seamen when available, commanders stationed in North American and Caribbean waters were only permitted to ask governors for assistance in manning their vessels. They were forbidden "to impress any Men from Merchant Ships in the Plantations without applying to, and receiving the Consent of, the

respective Governors."<sup>129</sup> These instructions were habitually ignored. Complaints were voiced concerning virtually every squadron that was sent to the West Indies throughout the War of the Spanish Succession. Jamaicans lamented in 1701 that the impressment of Admiral Benbow was driving all the free men and privateers to Curacao. Rear-Admiral Graydon's impressment of Peter Beckford's son in the summer of 1703 heralded yet further condemnation:

If the Lord High Admiral suffers this, H.M. had better send for us all home, for the enemy may doe what they please with us, for they have now frighted away all the seafaring men, who will never come amongst us, and they were of 10 to 1 more service to us than 10 regiments of souldiers. We have within this 8 months lost above 1,200 seamen, and this finishing stroke has frighted all that were left.<sup>130</sup>

In 1708, Admiral Wager lost so many seamen to plague that he impressed virtually everyone he could get hold of, until even servants began to run away into the hills. Ships from the northern colonies also began to avoid the West Indies, leading to provisions becoming scarce and dear. While impressment was certainly more widespread in the West Indies, owing to the greater numbers of naval vessels attending the islands, it was a problem further north as well. In 1702, for example, Captain Jackson of H.M. sloop *Swift* impressed men both in the harbour and ashore in Boston. In at least two instances his gang seized the entire crew, leaving vessels without a soul aboard.<sup>131</sup>

The manning problem in the West Indies was such that captains had little choice but to resort to impressment. Tropical fevers, abetted by rum drinking and a heavy diet of salted pork, aggravated an already endemic shortage of seamen occasioned by desertion to the many privateers and merchant vessels that operated

in the area. While impressment certainly helped the navy perform its trade protection duties more effectively, its wider negative effect on West Indian commerce and economic development was potentially extremely serious. The staple agriculture of the West Indies meant that it was heavily dependent on supplies from North America. According to a survey of Canada in 1708:

There is no Island the British posses in the West Indies that is capable of subsisting without the assistance of the Continent, for to them we transport their bread, drink, and all the necessaryes of humane life, their cattle and horses for cultivating their plantations, lumber and staves of all sorts to make casks for their rumm, suagr and molosses, without which they could have none, ships to transport their goods to the European marketts, nay, in short, the very houses they inhabitt are carryed over in frames, together with the shingles that cover them, in so much that their very being, much more well-being depends almost entirely on the Continent.<sup>132</sup>

Impressment threatened this supply of provisions and manufactures as trading vessels avoided ports in the West Indies where they expected to meet naval press gangs. Indeed, the fear of service in the navy was so great, according to Ruth Bourne, that vessels from North America preferred to trade illegally with the French islands than legally with the West Indies.<sup>133</sup> Provision ships scheduled to sail to the northern colonies were also affected as if a man-of-war so much as appeared in the offing, sailors deserted their ships without warning. When seamen could not escape, masters complained that their vessels were lost in storms because there were not enough men left to bring them home in safety.<sup>134</sup> In these ways, the navy frustrated the regular course of commerce, at best, and at worst, threatened the very survival of West Indian port towns.

Merchant opposition increased as instances of illegal impressment mounted up. Only in 1707, however, was any kind of measure of reform achieved. Prompted by a petition of 150 merchants, describing the disasters to commerce resulting from impressment in America and the West Indies, the 'America Act' included a clause forbidding impressment in the colonies. All seamen serving on privateers and trading vessels were spared from impressment, unless it could be proved that they were naval deserters. For a time, the right of governors to grant captains permission to impress men caused a certain amount of confusion; the general feeling was that governors were not denied the right to impress seamen. After 1709, however, following the advice of the Earl of Sunderland, the Board of Trade took action to reword their instructions to colonial governors. The manning problems of the navy were dealt with in a number of ways, most notably by a clause in the 'America Act' which provided that trading ships and packet boats should take extra seamen to America for the use of the Queen's ships there.<sup>135</sup>

## V

In opposition to the British predators were large numbers of French privateers. Like their British counterparts, they operated off the North American coast, as well as in Caribbean waters. Their numbers reflected not only the steady commercial and maritime growth in the late seventeenth century, which increased the number of available prizes, but also the French strategy of *guerre de course*, which encouraged the fitting out of private men-of-war.

Starting with the discovery in 1614-16, that Virginia could produce tobacco that sold readily in Europe, steady commercial and maritime expansion was witnessed in England's Atlantic colonial empire. The 1620s and 1630s saw the development of colonies in the West Indies, which through the production of

cheapened sugar, once a luxury product of the Mediterranean, quickly established themselves as England's most important overseas possession.

The value of American trade was small before the Civil War. Tobacco exports were negligible and the northern colonies that clustered around Massachusetts sent only a few furs and some timber to Europe. During the two decades of the Civil War and Interregnum, however, Atlantic colonial trade leaped suddenly from triviality into great importance. Statistics of the 1660s, show the colonies supplying an eighth of London's imports, with the total rising rapidly year by year.<sup>136</sup>

The growth of cheap tobacco from Virginia and Maryland, heralded the development of a new fashion, which spread down through all social classes. Between 1615 and 1700, English tobacco imports rose from 50 thousand to 38 million lbs.<sup>137</sup> West Indian sugar also became highly desirable by the increasing use of fresh and dried fruits, as well as the drinking of coffee. English merchants were quick to capture the northern market from the Portuguese, by producing sugar more cheaply than Brazil. The average annual value of sugar imports, between 1699-1701, amounted to £630,000, while the sugar trade employed 7% of English merchant tonnage and constituted 11% of English overseas trade in 1700. Large sugar estates soon became crucial to the health of the Caribbean economy.<sup>138</sup> Jamaica's sugar industry was particularly well established by the 1670s.

Imperial warfare in the closing decades of the seventeenth century saw a slowing of sugar exports to England. It recovered quickly once peace was signed, and by 1704 was back up to its former level.<sup>139</sup> Sir William Beeston recorded a figure of 13,000 hogsheads in the years immediately following 1700. This slow growth continued throughout the War of the Spanish Succession. The Manuscripts of the House of Lords record a figure of 15,000 hogshead for the period 1706-1710. Sugar was fast becoming England's second most important import behind linen.<sup>140</sup> By 1700,

England supplied Europe with a wide variety of colonial goods. Two thirds of all tobacco imports and half of sugar were re-exported to Europe. Indeed, while the Dutch were contained by the Navigation Acts, and French colonial enterprise was held back by internal troubles in the mid century decades, England became a great entrepot.

While the almost constant state of war between 1689-1713 checked the growth of colonial commerce, there was no sign of a decline because of such events. According to Paul Kennedy, "Britain's financial sinews could take the strain of war, her shipping could carry on despite the depredations of privateers, her trades could find alternatives to closed markets, and certain industries [shipbuilding] were stimulated by armaments orders."<sup>141</sup> The rice trade of South Carolina began to rise in the last decades of the seventeenth century, for instance, finding new markets in southern Europe.

Dramatic increases in convoy size in the eighteenth century reflect the advances made in colonial commerce in the seventeenth century. Prior to 1700, convoys from the Chesapeake contained on average about 50 ships. In the following period there were often 150-200 ships in each one. By the standards prevailing later in the eighteenth century these were exceptionally large.<sup>142</sup>

Large numbers of French privateers were commissioned in the War of the Spanish Succession. The development of British inter-colonial and Atlantic trade was central to this fact, as was the French government's encouragement of a war on trade. This strategy, known as *guerre de course*, was primarily carried-out by privateers; the French navy played but a minor role. The attraction of privateering for the French government can be explained in a variety of ways. The cost of warfare in the late seventeenth century resulted in acute financial distress in France. Concentration on expensive campaigns in Europe left less and less available for the

French navy; a budget of 18 million livres, which was insufficient in 1700, dropped to seven or eight million as the war progressed.<sup>143</sup> No new naval vessels were being built and those already afloat frequently lacked essential materials for repairs. In these circumstances, France depended on private investment to utilize its naval resources. Only ships of the line, which might be deployed in the Brest or Toulon squadrons or occasional foreign operations, such as escorting home the Spanish treasure fleet, were maintained financially by the state.<sup>144</sup> The vast majority of smaller vessels, fourth rates down to light frigates and galleys, were laid up, reliant on private *armateurs* to fit them out as privateers. Often it was naval officers, whose chance of seeing offensive action and its potential rewards dwindled as their ships lay rotting in harbour, who took the initiative in proposing armaments and negotiating subscriptions for them.

The loan of naval vessels, of which instances are recorded as early as 1689, was not the mere product of financial necessity. It also implied a positive strategic plan for the application of naval power to the special circumstances of bringing two world trading powers to their knees. In a prolonged war stretching across western Europe, the English and Dutch were far more dependent on the profits of overseas trade for the continuation of the war, than were the French, whose internal resources could sustain her needs. The systematic destruction of Anglo-Dutch commerce was understandably seen as a good way to undermine the allied war effort. Powerful men in government were involved in privateering. Marshal Vauban invested his personal capital with private *armateurs*, as did many other French courtiers.

The French navy's inability to maintain a mastery of the seas also helps to explain the periodic adoption of a privateering *guerre de course*. The naval defeat at La Hogue in 1692 proved to be a crucial turning point in Louis XIV's eyes, which had always been fixed on the Rhine rather than the Atlantic. Under the influence of anti-

navalists in his ministry, notably Louvois, the Minister of War, Louis was quickly persuaded that military operations alone were decisive to the war effort. Thereafter, a belief developed that it was useless to make sacrifices to achieve sea power, which had little effect on the destinies of the continental state.<sup>145</sup> In the early 1690s, the navy built up by Colbert was a force so strong that it could meet the three other maritime powers on equal terms. According to E.H. Jenkins, "The ships were splendid, the corps of officers was skillful and spirited, the gunnery good and the organisation sound."<sup>146</sup> After 1693, however, Colbert's successor, Pontchartrain, allowed the navy to run down to a large extent. When a grain famine hit in the years 1694-5, leading to a fall in tax revenue, the French went so far as to lay up the battle fleet altogether and to rely entirely on privateers. State resources were put behind the privateering, although Vauban's recommendation that three naval squadrons should support the privateers was rendered impossible by the run-down state of the royal fleet.

French *guerre de course* had many faults. According to Nicholas Tracy, "Dependence upon private commercial motive reduced the strategic and macro-economic utility of the French *guerre de course* because *armateurs* did not cooperate with each other." Tracy goes on:

...the manner in which privateers, especially those of France, came to accept ransoms for their prizes, indicates that very little consideration was given to the possibility of denying supplies to the enemy. Privateersmen earned a profit by taking ransoms, but the effect on the enemy of their depredations was reduced to the level of a war tax. The merchants' sufferings might evoke pity, and could in the long-term lead to important loss in government revenue, but in the short term they could hardly make the enemy's prosecution of the war impossible.<sup>147</sup>

French *guerre de course* did, however, inflict substantial losses on Anglo-Dutch shipping. According to a contemporary Venetian, in the period 1688-1695, French privateers captured more than 900 English and Dutch ships.<sup>148</sup> The greatest disaster occurred in 1693 with the spectacular capture of the Smyrna convoy, causing a revolt in the House of Commons.<sup>149</sup> As a result, a requirement that extra naval forces should be created for the defense of trade was tacked onto the 1694 Land Tax Bill. Furthermore, the privateering exploits of Jean Bart in the latter stages of the Nine Years War made him a source of popular adulation well into the eighteenth century.

During the years of peace after King William's War, while the English strengthened their navy, France did not. Pontchartrain's younger son, Jerome, who succeeded him as Minister of War, continued his father's tight-fisted disparaging of the service he administered. After the inconclusive fleet action at Malaga in 1704, the pattern of the previous war was repeated as naval ships, their crews, the money for their maintenance, and naval stores from the royal arsenal, was given over to another *guerre de course*.

This wholesale change of strategy seems an odd decision. The large French fleet that put to sea in 1704, for instance, by compelling the English to concentrate their naval forces, enabled her privateers "to operate more freely than they had done before, or were to do later, and the Spanish treasure came home without the least interference."<sup>150</sup> The French did plan to fit out a fleet of some 70 ships in 1705. The run down state of royal finances and the royal arsenal, however, meant that private *armateurs* were again relied upon to continue the maritime war. This decision was made easier by the fact that the King stood to make a profitable return from any captures made. The crown agreed to provide the ship, guns, spare parts and munitions for a given period, as well as supply officers, seamen, soldiers, and wages. The *armateurs* were expected to pay for the fitting out of the ships, any additional

pay, as well as provisions for the crew. The King would not expect compensation for any ships lost in battle or by the hazards of seafaring, nor for any consumption of ammunition or spare masts or sails, and the ship should be used entirely as the *armateurs* wished. The Crown was to receive a fifth of the profits, while if there were no profits the *armateurs* were to lose their money.<sup>151</sup>

With the advantage of hindsight, it is clear that official indifference to the gradual decline of the French navy, from the early 1690s, was a long-term strategic mistake. As G.N. Clark has noted, attacks on shipping did not further the strategic purposes of either side, but were mutually war-losing:

There is a general consensus of contemporary and later judgements that, on all sides, the nations ended the war in part because, indecisive as the campaigns had been, economic resources were worn out. It would be vain to look for any discussion by the statesmen of that war how such a prevention of a military solution, could be averted in the future...[but] it may be inferred from the general cause of events in the next two generations that the war on French trade had, in its outcome, disappointed.<sup>152</sup>

The British suffered less by the fact that they strengthened their navy at the same time as commissioning privateers. In the time of Colbert, the French navy was second to none. By the end of the War of the Spanish Succession, in contrast, the Royal Navy was firmly in control; every French overseas possession lay at England's mercy.

French commerce raiding was pursued in two ways. On the one hand, small squadrons of naval ships, usually crack frigates accompanied by a host of privateers, would attack allied fleets under convoy. Naval commanders were expected to engage the convoy escorts, while the privateers rounded up the merchant vessels. On the other hand, privateers, playing a lone hand or cruising in small, loosely organised

groups, operated in open water or near the coast for unconvoyed 'runners' or stragglers from convoyed fleets. These lone raiders also frequently plunged into weakly defended bays and harbours in the hope of capturing fishing vessels and coasters.

The former of these two options was primarily restricted to the Mediterranean. Light frigates and galleys, between 28 and 48 guns, were principally used. The latter, by contrast, which consisted of a mass of wholly private and usually small armaments, was most notable in the damage it did to the seagoing trade of the Allies in the Atlantic. These privateers, of some 26 down to 6 guns or less, capable of close inshore sailing and nimble enough to 'wrong' a man-of-war, were responsible for the more or less unremitting pressure on enemy coasts and sea-lanes. They captured most of the prizes, with or without the countenance of French naval squadrons.<sup>153</sup> They could be kept at sea for two months or longer; some of them returned to it several times a year, and year after year, without being caught. Only small naval frigates could hope to keep up with the speed and maneuverability of fast-sailing sloops and brigantines commonly used as privateers. French prisoners were often heard to brag that they believed it was virtually impossible for the Royal Navy to catch French privateers. Royal Navy commanders were often in agreement. Captain Constable, who cruised at Barbados in 1711, warned the governor and council of his inability to catch the French privateers on the coast:

...which saile so very well that in Such smooth seas as Wee generally have here it is absolutely impossible for any Man of War to come up with them. And upon seeing any Man of War in the Latitude they only stretch farther to windward and continue cruising for our mercht. Vessels and often do take them.<sup>154</sup>

The commanders of naval guard ships often had to look on helplessly as French privateers captured English merchantmen right under their noses. Nicholas Smith, commander of H.M.S. *Enterprise*, reported just such an occurrence in a letter to Colonel Jennings, dated April 1710:

I am sorry to acquaint you that I yesterday saw a British ship taken by a Sloop of the Enemys' & was so unfortunate as not to have it in my power to prevent it...the wind blew right in, so that I was forced to make a great many trips to little purpose - whilst this was doing, the Privateer comes up with the Merchantman...& upon the firing of a Single gun, Struck his Colours...I continued in pursute of them (tho' I found I lost ground) till Ten at night, They then being out of sight &c.<sup>155</sup>

When guard ships attempted to capture enemy predators inshore, they were often wrecked because of their size. H.M.S *Dunkirk's Prize* was lost, for instance, trying to chase a small French privateer into shallow water off Cape Francois on Hispaniola. Governors and naval commanders were in total agreement over the need to fit out fast-sailing frigates as guard ships that could follow enemy vessels into shoal water or along navigable rivers. A lack of funds nearly always put pay to these plans.

French privateers did not always operate independently, but sometimes acted directly in support of regular military-naval operations. The French naval squadron commanded by D'Iberville, that attacked Nevis in 1706, was made up of several French privateers. The Spanish attack on Charleston in 1707, also used the services of French privateers, this time as troop transports.

## VI

The French colonies in America (*viz.* Martinique, Guadeloupe, Saint-Dominique and Cayenne in the Caribbean, as well as Acadia, Placentia and Quebec in North America) all fitted out privateers in the War of the Spanish Succession. From these bases none of Britain's Caribbean or mainland colonies could feel secure. French privateers attacked British commerce at its weakest points, along the Carolina coast and the capes of Virginia and Delaware, as well as in the Caribbean. The British Leeward and Windward Islands were a major focus for the privateers of Martinique, Guadeloupe, Marie Galante and Dominica. In this area, the large force of guard ships stationed at Jamaica could offer little assistance. The rich sugar trade of Barbados was worst affected. Governor Sir B. Granville complained in a letter to the Council of Trade and Plantations in September 1704, for instance, that "The French privateers infest very much our latitude and make many prizes. They are nimble saylers and the Queen's ships not able to come up with them."<sup>156</sup> In the first eight months of 1704 alone, French privateers captured 26 vessels from Barbados.<sup>157</sup> The Windward Islands were at least relatively safe from invasion; Barbados was particularly fortunate that it had no good harbours and navigable rivers along which enemy forces could mount an offensive. Smaller and less economically significant colonies in the Leeward Islands were far less fortunate. Not only were they far more accessible to the enemy, but they were afforded very little, if any, naval protection. As a result, not only were a great number of shipping captures made, but the very survival of many islands was threatened on a regular basis. The French attack on Nevis in 1706, for example, left the islanders desolate and defenseless. Another French force, financed by Versailles, and commanded by Jacques Cassard, attacked Antigua in August 1712. Earlier in 1710, the fortuitous meeting of H.M.S *Newcastle* with a French privateering force, carrying 1,200 men, saved Antigua from almost inevitable

capture.<sup>158</sup> A letter written from Antigua by Jonathan Dickenson in March 1710, nicely sums up the precarious situation:

The Caribbee Isles are so much troubled with the French Privateers from Martinico [Martinique], that no Vessell can pass in or out for them, Monserat they attempted to attack with six sail of their privateers, but were repulsed on their Landing: They have plundered the Dutch Island named Stacia: about two months since a small Gally belonging to Leverpoole [Liverpool], last from Dublin, intending for Antigua, the evening before she made the Island of Antigua a French Privateer Sloop came upwith her, lay by all night and about 5 in the Morning attack'd the Gally with a Design to board her but the Leverpoole having provided broken Glass bottles with which he covered his Decks and retiring to his close quarters; as the Privateer came up, he so levelled his Chase Guns upon him that he made a Lane fore and aft on the Frenchmans Decks, who still advanced and boarded him. But finding it impossible to keep the gally Decks by reason of their warm fire from their close quarters Powder Chests so they were obliged to retire. This is the more remarkable because almost every week since I have been at Antigua, we have heard of Our Vessells being taken and carried into Martinico.<sup>159</sup>

Jamaica, in the northern Caribbean, was principally threatened from privateers operating out of the harbours of Petit Guave and Leogane on Hispaniola. They annoyed the English fleets going through the Gulf of Florida, over to the Spanish coast, or up through the Windward Passage between Hispaniola and Puerto Rico on their way home.

French privateers, coming up from the Caribbean or down from Acadia and Placentia, also cruised along the North American coastline. They preyed on the trade of South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland and New York, safe in the knowledge that

reprovisioning, repair, or condemnation, could be carried at France's northern bases. Carolina was an important privateering target owing to its extensive trade in rice and naval stores. Charleston's shortage of shipping also meant that few British privateers cruised in opposition to those of the French. In addition, the many capes and islands off the Carolina coast provided sheltered rendezvous points; enemy commanders sent prizes to Ocracoke Island near Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout for safekeeping until they were ready to sail home. Privateers also took on water and slaughtered beef in the Outer Banks.

The popularity of privateering in and around the Chesapeake Bay area stemmed from the fact that the extensive trade of Virginia and Maryland passed between a narrow twelve mile channel, between Cape Charles and Cape Henry, that was too wide for a fort to command, but narrow enough for merchantmen to find it extremely hard to escape from enemy privateers. As a result, losses of incoming merchant vessels carrying hardware, wine, textiles, and other European goods, and outgoing merchantmen laden with tobacco and wheat, were relatively common. Indeed, such was the effect of French captures in the first year of the war, that half the tobacco crop of Virginia and Maryland remained in those colonies for want of ships.<sup>160</sup> By 1705 it was reported that the colony of Massachusetts had lost 140 vessels to French privateers.<sup>161</sup> Some of the more enterprising privateers also looted estates that lay along open rivers. The President of the Council of Virginia complained to the Board of Trade in 1707 that "it is easy for a privateer to land at any of these places in the night, and surprise people in their beds."<sup>162</sup>

The Delaware Capes were another popular cruising ground. Between Cape May, New Jersey, and Cape Henlopen, lay the entrance to Delaware Bay. The maritime commerce of Philadelphia passed through this narrow twelve and a half mile channel. These capes, like those of Virginia, funnelled British merchantmen through

the slender passage and greatly eased cruising operations for enemy privateers. Pennsylvania vessels laden with bread, flour, other foodstuffs, and lumber for casks, bound for Europe or the West Indies, became easy targets. Philadelphia bound merchantmen with European and Caribbean cargoes ran this gauntlet as well.<sup>163</sup>

In the western Caribbean, privateers from Cap Francois on Saint-Dominque were ideally placed to inflict depredations on the sugar trade of Jamaica, which sailed through the Yucatan Channel, west of Cuba, to the Straits of Florida, or through the Windward Passage between Cuba and Saint-Dominque. Jamaica's valuable Spanish-American trade was also raided in the vital zone between Rio de la Hacha and the Rio Chagre.<sup>164</sup> Governor Handasyd, in a letter to Mr. Burchett, described Jamaica as "infested with French privateers" in December 1709.<sup>165</sup>

## VII

Estimating the effect of French privateering in terms of captures is a difficult task; not only did British colonial authorities and merchants frequently overestimate shipping losses, but French authorities often failed to properly record captures. The *Conseil des Prises* recorded 18 prizes taken into Martinique in 1703, 75 in 1711, but strangely no records at all for the period 1705-6 when the prize war was at its peak.<sup>166</sup> A variety of estimates, both contemporary and modern, do exist to help the historian in assessing the effect of French privateering on British commerce and economic development. The Admiralty acknowledged in 1707 that 1146 English ships had been lost. Ralph Davis has calculated, furthermore, a minimum loss of 2000 ships to French privateers, while John Bromley puts the figure up as high as 4544 prizes, with a further 2118 ships ransomed. Out of a total of 4173 prizes taken by French privateers in the War of the Spanish Succession, the *Conseil des Prises* estimated

only 370 to have been taken into the French colonies in America. (viz. 260 to Martinique, 4 to Guadeloupe, 12 to Cayenne, 18 to Acadia, 63 to Placentia, 7 to Quebec, and 4 simply described as 'Amerique'. The only reference to Saint-Dominique is a single ransom confirmed at Cap Francois.) These figures seem low even when compared against the most conservative of colonial estimates. Indeed, if one combines captures reported by English and French colonial governors, as well as the condemnations registered in Valincour's *Depouillement*, a minimum of 700 colonial prizes is perfectly credible, and there were perhaps as many ransoms.<sup>167</sup> My own data file, which must be considered extremely limited from the French perspective, records 132 English vessels captured by the French, with one source stating that 58 prizes were brought into Martinique between July 1710 and May 1712, when the war was undeniably winding down.<sup>168</sup>

If one takes the value of colonial imports to England as an indication of the effect of the French privateering war, then the period 1702-6 appears to have been the worst years for Jamaica: average imports totaled £151,000, compared with £216,000 for the last six years of the war. A low of £75,000 is recorded for 1705. This fits in with the French resumption of *guerre de course*. By 1709, Jamaica's imports were back up to the level of 1700 - £239,000 and £238,000 respectively. The years 1702-4 appear to have been worst for Barbados, showing an average value of £125,000, compared with £256,000 for the 1704-12 period. A low of £114,000 is recorded for 1702. 1707 was an exception to the general rise after 1704, with imports only totaling £197,000, compared with £303,000 for the preceding year. The effects of French privateering were felt far more sporadically on the colonial imports of Virginia and Maryland than the Caribbean colonies. The worst years were 1702, 1704, 1706, 1708, 1709, and 1711: £72,000, £60,000, £58,000, £79,000, £80,000,

and £92,000 respectively, compared with an average of £174,000 for the five other years of the war.<sup>169</sup>

When comparing aggregate captures between the wars of the late seventeenth century and the War of the Spanish Succession, an increase can be seen over time.<sup>170</sup> According to Nicholas Tracy, however, comparing aggregate captures does not reflect their true effect, for one must remember that the size and relative strength of the English maritime marine and the British navy were also increasing. This meant that the actual losses inflicted on British shipping were gradually diminishing in scale. This trend can be seen throughout the eighteenth century. The 3000 British ships estimated by the *Gentlemen's Magazine* to have been taken by the enemy in the wars of the 1740s did not reflect an increased loss over that suffered in the period 1702-12, in proportion to the expanded British merchant fleet. The 3386 vessels estimated to have been lost during the American Revolutionary War, similarly, represented a loss rate of half that suffered in 1702-12.<sup>171</sup> This fact is true for levels of colonial captures as well. Swanson's estimate of 736 French and Spanish captures in the wars of the 1740s, while marginally higher in aggregate terms than those taken in the War of the Spanish Succession, is in its effect probably a reduction.<sup>172</sup>

Martinique was by far the most active of the French islands in privateering. Its privateers were a frequent source of comment in colonial correspondence. William Burt complained in a letter to Mr. Dummer, in June 1703, for instance, that

...the French from Martinique and Guadaloupe have fitted out 18 sail of privateers chiefly man'd by their mean planters that would otherwise starve. They are so thick amongst these Islands [West Indies], that we can't sail from Island to Island but with more hazard then between England and this place; hardly a vessel in 3 escapes.<sup>173</sup>

Intelligence from former prisoners of war held on Martinique also painted a bleak picture. James Spencer, master of a vessel which had been captured by a French privateer and carried into Martinique, noted that there were 27 privateers fitted out from Martinique.<sup>174</sup> Another English prisoner of war, writing to the Commissioners of Sick and Wounded in April 1705, stated that Martinique "had 23 privateers and 1400 men wholly dependent on privateering. Since the start of the war they had taken 240 prizes and 2,000 prisoners."<sup>175</sup> A number of other reports also talked of large numbers of captures. Charles Farnam, master of the ship *St. Jacob and Philip*, reported that whilst he was a prisoner of war on Martinique the French had captured 130 vessels.<sup>176</sup> Another report in June 1704 put the number of captures at 163.<sup>177</sup> The vast majority of these captures were made in the Caribbean. In response, colonial authorities and merchants frequently called for the suppression of Martinique's privateers. This was to be achieved in two ways: firstly, by the Admiralty providing extra guard ships; and secondly, through the capture of Martinique.<sup>178</sup>

French privateers from the Caribbean were also active off the coasts of North America. Northern bases were a frequent port of call for privateers fitted out and commissioned elsewhere. In an official French dispatch from Acadia in January 1710, Subercase reported that there were two corsairs in port from Martinique; one having brought four small prizes into port, while the other, commanded by the notorious French captain, Morpain, brought in nine prizes. He further claimed that they were responsible for the loss of 35 New England ships alone. Taking into account the other privateers who harassed New England at the time, upwards of 60 vessels from New England and the other English colonies in North America can be estimated to have been captured in 1710.<sup>179</sup> Indeed, such was the threat from Acadia that frequent demands were made for its capture. In October 1709, the governors of

Massachusetts, New England, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, sent an address to the Queen calling for the capture of Port Royal. Acadia was described as having "become the receptacle of all privateers, from Martinico [Martinique], and other French Islands, being near hand to carry in their prizes taken along this shoar, even from Virginia, And we have suffered very heavy losses by them, in our trade, and Navigation, this summer."<sup>180</sup>

While numbers of captures were far fewer off the coasts of North America than was the case in the Caribbean, the effect on commerce appears to have been no less significant. After a visit to the northern colonies in January 1708, Colonel Rhett Quarry, an agent of the Board of Trade, stated that "Boston hath been a place of great trade, but the war have [sic] extremely impoverished them, so that the trade is now 1/3 of what it was." The seriousness of the situation is made clear by considering the importance of Boston's shipping. Massachusetts was one of the major maritime centres of the Atlantic world in the eighteenth century. It was the equivalent of Bristol as a shipping centre, which was itself only second to London. Within Massachusetts, most of the colony's shipping was concentrated in the Boston area, which claimed 76.9% of all ships and 80.1% of all maritime tonnage. Quarry believed that Britain had to act quickly to correct the situation. He advised that unless aid from Britain was forthcoming, Boston and the whole region would be ruined because of the French establishment at Port Royal.<sup>181</sup> Further north, off the coast of British Newfoundland, the threat of French privateers was even more serious, as the relatively isolated and sparsely populated nature of the region meant that attacks were far more daring. The French commander La Grange, for instance, with a force of two barques and a hundred men, sailed into the port of Bonavista in 1704 and captured a ship of 24 guns loaded with a rich cargo of codfish. He also burned two storeships of 200-300 tons each, and sunk another small vessel.<sup>182</sup> St. John's was

also attacked on a number of occasions. In 1705, the town was entirely destroyed by a force of 500 troops from Placentia, with the result that the fishery was very much curtailed, with only 20 ships arriving from England and only 72,000 qtls. of fish exported. In 1708 a similar attack had more devastating consequences, as not only was the town destroyed but the garrison was captured as well.<sup>183</sup>

## VIII

The total value of prizes captured by French privateers did not represent the whole cost of the prize war. Although each belligerent lost hundreds of thousands of pounds sterling in cargoes and vessels, these losses were partially offset at the national level by captures made by their own privateers. Indeed, as Ralph Davis has argued, "it is far from certain...that captures, numerous as they were, inflicted as much damage on the shipowning community as other, less dramatic, features of war."<sup>184</sup> These other features substantially escalated wartime business costs. They included huge increases in freight rates, marine insurance premiums, and seamen's wages.

As numbers of captures built up, and chance and insecurity came to characterize maritime commerce, a decrease in the volume of shipping was witnessed. Fewer vessels meant higher freight rates. These rates rose for both inter-colonial, as well as transatlantic commerce. Freight rates on flour between New York and Jamaica rose from a rate of £6 per ton at the start of the war, to £8, 5 shillings by 1705.<sup>185</sup> Freight rates on tobacco between Maryland and London rose even more violently. This reflected the double jeopardy of having to escape predators in American, as well as in the European waters.<sup>186</sup> From a rate of £6, 5 shillings per ton in 1697, by 1705, the cost had reached £15, rising to a high of £16 in the period 1707-9, then falling to around £12 for the remainder of the war.<sup>187</sup> Homeward freights

from Barbados never reached a similar level. Bromley notes a high of £10 per ton in 1708.<sup>188</sup>

Higher premiums for marine insurance accompanied rising transportation costs. French privateers increased the risks of maritime commerce. As a result, more merchants sought insurance for their cargoes. The increasing demand for policies, and rising incidence of claims, inevitably escalated marine insurance rates. These rates while certainly higher in wartime, did not reach exorbitant levels except during periods of extreme threat, when the cost of insurance might even swallow up the normal profits on the goods if prices could not be pushed up above peacetime levels. William Stout, a Virginian merchant, wrote in his journal in 1707, for instance, "Though at the height of the war, no insurance was then made, which if it had, would have exceeded the profit."<sup>189</sup>

Early eighteenth century insurance was neither a serious threat to the continuation of trade or a particularly secure means of safeguarding it. While ship-owners might have to pay higher premiums during wartime, they were able to raise the cost of freight rates to compensate for their added expenses. When ships were lost at sea, insurance was not such a complete and satisfactory safeguard as it is nowadays. Before 1720, the owners would have had to meet 10-20% of the loss themselves. They were also likely to find the underwriters when faced with the loss, dilatory, obstructive and even at times fraudulent.<sup>190</sup>

Seamen's wages were another business cost that soared during warfare. Peacetime rates from the late 17th century, averaged around 24-25 shillings a month. In the spring of 1702, by contrast, wages rose to 30 shillings and climbed gradually to reach 45-50 shillings in 1708.<sup>191</sup> Higher wages were expected as compensation for the risk of being captured by the enemy, as well as impressed into the navy. When one considers that the navy was chronically short of seamen and that losses from

disease and desertion worsened this situation, one can appreciate the risk merchant seamen took.

## IX

The British navy held a variety of responsibilities in colonial waters. They were required to provide guard ships to patrol coastlines and protect inter-colonial trade, as well as ensure that transatlantic trade was safely convoyed back to England. The distribution of naval resources was determined by the mercantile value of the various colonial colonies. The West Indies, therefore, as Britain's most valuable overseas possession, took the lions share of available ships. More northerly coasts, by contrast, were usually only given one or two vessels, normally a sixth rate or a sloop-of-war. The Chesapeake Bay area was assigned only one cruiser throughout the war. This cruiser was intended to protect 'runners' and the sloops and schooners engaged in inter-colonial trade.<sup>192</sup> To augment these forces, colonial vessels were sometimes fitted out on an *ad hoc* basis to cruise for enemy privateers reported to be off their coastlines. Rhode Island was particularly successful in protecting itself in this manner. In June 1706, for instance:

A sloop loaded with provisions was taken by a French privateer near Block Island. The news reached the governor the next day. Proclamation for volunteers was forthwith issued, two sloops were taken up for the expedition, and within two hours' time were manned by a hundred and twenty men, under the command of Capt. John Wanton, and in less than three hours afterward captured the privateer, retook her prize, and brought them into Newport. The promptness and success of this gallant adventure astonished and delighted the country, and added fresh laurels to the naval glory of Rhode Island.<sup>193</sup>

Caribbean colonies, such as Jamaica and Barbados, had less need for similar measures as a large force was annually sent to the area. This squadron was necessary for two reasons. Firstly, the sugar trade was of far greater value than that of North American products, such as tobacco or timber. In 1699-1701, the average annual value of sugar imports to England amounted to £630,000, while imports of Virginia and Maryland produce amounted to £317,000.<sup>194</sup> The development of rice production in South Carolina from the late seventeenth century, reduced this disparity, but not significantly until the 1720s. The defence and preservation of Jamaica's trade was seen as particularly important. The Lords committee appointed to investigate the conduct of Vice-Admiral Graydon, stated in its report that:

Their Lordships...think it highly incumbent upon them, at this time, to represent of what importance the defense and preservation of Jamaica is to England itself, by its situation, as well for the trade as for the convenience it affords of offending our present enemies the French and Spaniards, as it lies in the centre of the most valuable part of the West Indies, at an easy distance from the Spanish settlements; and more particularly is in the neighbourhood of the Havana, which hath been hitherto the rendezvous of the Spanish gallions and flotas. This island produces the best sugar, indico, cotton, wool, dying wood, etc; and may be yet made more beneficial to England, by being a staple of our English and European product and manufactures, and a mart for negroes, upon a peace or friendship with the Spaniards; which advantage is now enjoyed by the French; who do not only furnish the Spaniards with all their negroes for working in their mines, but almost entirely supply them with all necessaries from Europe, for which they are paid in pieces of eight, or other the richest commodities; which benefit might accrue to this king dominions, to the great discouragement of her Majesty's subjects, who on their part, forboe such trade with the Spaniards.<sup>195</sup>

Secondly, Britain's West Indian colonies were scattered over a thousand miles of sea. They could do little to support each other in emergencies. Communications between the islands were only practical from east to west, using the trade winds. The journey from Barbados to the Leeward islands and on to Jamaica could be completed in just over a week, while from Jamaica to Barbados, in contrast, the journey took at least seven weeks.<sup>196</sup> Petty jealousies and recriminations between the islands also ensured that help was rarely sent, even when it was practicable. According to Ruth Bourne, the governors of Barbados were loath to order any ships to help the Leeward Islands when even the slightest threat existed on Barbados.<sup>197</sup>

At the beginning of the war, the West Indies was afforded nearly a third of the total cruiser and convoy vessels of the navy. This can be explained by the employment of large squadrons under the command of Vice-Admiral Benbow, Vice-Admiral Whetstone, Sir Hovenden Walker, and Rear-Admiral Graydon. Their failure to prevent depredations on trade, to capture the Spanish treasure fleet, or to add to British territory, saw a dampening of home government support for West Indian enterprises, and never again were so many warships sent out. From time to time, naval reinforcements were sent to augment the vessels on West Indian duty, but such additional commitments seldom produced results commensurate with the costs. Between 1703-5, Jamaica normally had four small warships for its protection. Afterwards there were normally six or seven men-of-war stationed at the island. Barbados, by contrast, had only one small cruiser for the first part of the war. Reports of the French squadrons under Coetlogen and Chateau Renault saw a fourth rate added to this cruiser later in the war. Other islands, such as the Bahamas, had no protection at all. Explanation for this disparity again centered on the economic importance of different islands, as well as an underestimation of the threat posed by the French to islands other than Jamaica.<sup>198</sup> Rear-Admiral Graydon, who stopped at

Barbados on his way to Jamaica in 1703, for instance, assured the Admiralty that the island was in little danger and a naval squadron need not be sent to protect it.<sup>199</sup>

Despite the fact that many islands were left almost totally unprotected for much of the war, when one combines numbers of guard ships with those additionally sent as convoy escorts, it is clear that British North America and the Caribbean received a generous proportion of naval resources. Of the entire strength of the navy, between a third to a half were stationed across the Atlantic.<sup>200</sup> Merchants, however, still demanded more. As early as 1703, merchants trading to Barbados asked for a convoy of two ships to sail twice a year, the first pair to leave England in January and return in May, the second to leave England in April and return in August. They specified that two fourth rates, one fifth, and one sixth would be needed as escorts. The merchants also wanted the convoys to return directly to England without sailing to the Leeward Islands and asked for a further small frigate and a fourth rate to guard against Martinique privateers. Merchants trading to the Leeward islands made a similar request, although their crops were far less valuable; three warships to guard their trade and to return with the convoy after 60 days, and a fourth rate and two sixth rate ships to form a permanent guard. Jamaica, on the other hand, asked for only one convoy to leave the Island before the hurricane season in the fall, but demanded six ships to guard the coast. Virginia and Newfoundland, similarly, asked for a yearly convoy. Official requests for convoy escorts, while nearly always effective with the Board of Trade, made little impression on the Admiralty, ever conscious of its lack of ships. Merchant demands amounted to twice the number the Admiralty had been prepared to send to the West Indies in the previous war.<sup>201</sup> The allocation that was eventually decided upon centered around two annual convoys, one departing from the Chesapeake, involving the shipping of the Maryland, Virginia and Jamaica, and a second convoy, departing from the Windward Islands, involving the trade of

Barbados and the Leeward Islands. These convoy arrangements were a source of much delay as the growing cycles of the various crops did not coincide. Throughout the war, the Maryland ships had to wait for the Virginia trade and the Virginia ships for the Jamaican convoy. The Barbados ships had to go up to the Leeward Islands, which assembled in the roads of Nevis.

Sailing without convoy was strictly forbidden unless special permission was granted. This prohibition was first ordered in 1690, as a means to protect the tobacco trade of Virginia and Maryland.<sup>202</sup> This action was thought sufficient to render secure a branch of commerce that was enormously valuable to the kingdom; the annual tobacco fleet consisted of nearly 150 ships, carrying 70-80,000 hogsheads, which produced a revenue approaching £300,000.<sup>203</sup> Only vessels of exceptional armament or speed were granted permits to sail without convoy.<sup>204</sup> Small groups of vessels going home without convoy from the West Indies were escorted through the danger zones of the Caribbean by naval cruisers. The cruisers at Jamaica organised two local convoys, one up the Campeche Coast and the other through the Windward Passage. This service was only feasible over short distances, owing to the time needed to come back to Jamaica against the winds and, furthermore, because the Islanders objected to being left without protection for any length of time.

The performance of naval guard ships and convoy escorts was far from perfect. A variety of problems reduced their effectiveness. Guard ships were rarely relieved in less than fourteen months for instance. Commodore Wager's squadron began to fit out for the West Indies in the fall of 1706 and returned home at the end of 1709. As a result of these extended periods, many ships spent a good deal of time in port, short of naval stores needed for repairs. This problem was worst in the West Indies because of the tropical climate. Intense heat and frequent rain rotted and rusted cordage, cables, canvas, even anchors, while parasites, known as shipworm,

decayed hulls, making it necessary to careen every three months. Tropical storms, furthermore, frequently sprung masts and broke shrouds and spars. Damage to mainmasts was especially problematic, as none of the islands could supply suitable trees for replacements.

The cold and windy climate of the northern colonies also often resulted in damage to ships that were usually unfit for service on their arrival in the colonies. In 1701, Rear Admiral Graydon wrote from Newfoundland, for instance, that his ship “was built at first with great faults and rebuilt with greater, and was no better than a fifth rate ship.” He reported a sprung mainmast and four broken main shrouds and warned that his ship was so fragile that no sail could be carried in a blow.<sup>205</sup> The loss of vessels at sea because of poor construction or repair was relatively common; H.M.S *Seahorse*, *Dunkirk's Prize* and *Child's Play* were lost due to one fault or another. Other vessels such as the *Lewis Hulk*, H.M.S *Coventry*, *Canterbury Prize* and the *Medway Prize* had to be sold out of the service or sank due to damage sustained in bad weather and the inability of the navy board to supply stores for their repair.

Shortages of naval stores were a constant and ever-present problem, for even when ships were relieved, those going home usually had to borrow stores of all kinds from those just arriving, leaving the fresh cruisers crippled in the performance of their duties. The financial instability of the Admiralty also meant that when stores were available, captains were often afraid of drawing bills on the Navy Board in case they were not honoured on their arrival back home. Captain Norbury, for instance, commander of the H.M.S *Larke*, which served in the Leeward Islands, was ruined on his return to England as the Victualling Board refused to pay his repair bills. He was later discharged the service and had his back pay withheld.<sup>206</sup>

Extended periods in port were also caused by shortages of men and disagreements over the control of men-of-war, in general, and prize adjudication, in particular. Service in the navy, despite the higher prospect of windfall profits, held little attraction for seamen. Indeed, if it were suspected that the West Indies was the destination of a squadron in harbour, the men fled from the vicinity and the seamen already abroad tried to run away or mutiny. The chief reason for this, as explained in the last chapter, was the disagreeable nature of the lifestyle that awaited seamen once they were recruited into the navy. Confinement, starvation and death from disease were a common experience of naval tars, especially when serving on foreign stations. Seamen were exposed to a wide variety of deadly diseases, such as malaria, yellow fever, dysentery, dropsy, leprosy, yaws, hookworm and elephantiasis. With every new squadron that arrived out from England, many hundreds, even thousands, of seamen would quickly perish from the tropical, disease-ridden climate. Manpower losses on this scale were almost impossible to replace in the colonies.

Frequent arguments between land and sea officers over the question of prize condemnation encouraged captains to linger in port when they should have been out protecting trade. In the early part of the war, it was not clear whether colonial Vice-Admiralty courts had the authority to condemn naval prizes. In the latter part of the war, it was not clear what was the role of colonial governors in prize affairs. The 'America Act' had to some extent clarified the issue by stripping governors of their responsibility for the administration of prize affairs. The Board of Trade, however, soon afterwards directed governors to supervise the condemnation of naval prizes.<sup>207</sup> Governors were extremely zealous in obeying these instructions, for although they received no share of the prizes captured, they claimed a third of the value of ships and goods seized for illegal trading. Therefore, while governors insisted that all prizes should be brought into port, so as to ascertain their status,

captains protested that under the new laws all ships they captured were to remain in their hands until they were condemned. The upshot of these disputes was that the protection of trade became a secondary consideration behind the accumulation of wealth. Both governors and captains were quick to forget grandiose ideas of military glory, concentrating, instead, on the more available advantages of being stationed in the colonies. Governor Parke, for instance, after discovering that the people of the Leeward Islands could not even defend themselves let alone attack the enemy, resorted to misappropriation of funds, excessive fees for government services, and smuggling, as a means to make a quick fortune.<sup>208</sup> Parke was ruthless in punishing those who got in his way. For the seizure of a flag of truce going to Martinique to trade, John Carnaragan was exposed upon the forecastle of his ship for four days and nights without food or water.<sup>209</sup>

Convoys were expected to return to England within sixty days of their arrival in the colonies. Very rarely did they meet this target, however, as delays were common. These delays were a combination of late crops and bad weather, as well as the conduct of the navy. Occasionally the organisation of *ad hoc* expeditions against the enemy saw the confiscation of escort ships. Following the successful attacks of d'Iberville on Montserrat and Nevis in 1706, for instance, Commodore Kerr was ordered to assemble a squadron to protect any possible attempt on Jamaica. This left the Leeward Islands without ships to convoy their trade home. Once at sea, bad weather was by far the greatest risk to merchant fleets. Virtually all the merchantmen under the protection of Captain Wavell, commander of H.M.S *Colchester*, were lost at sea due to storms off the American coast in 1703. Similarly, the Jamaican fleet convoyed by Captain Huntinton, met a storm in the Gulf of Florida, resulting in the loss of every ship except one. French privateers were only a threat in the initial stages of the voyage, as they were normally only provisioned for short periods. When

privateers were encountered, the attending cruiser would chase them away, although they seldom captured their prey. In 1708, while convoying home 36 Leeward Island vessels, Captain Gray was attacked by two enemy privateers, "but finding us ready to receive them...they clapt close upon a wind and made what sail they could to the northward."<sup>210</sup> When attacked by a large squadron of men-of-war or privateers, convoy escorts could offer little resistance. Once merchantmen fell behind the main fleet they were also easily picked off by the enemy. Despite these facts, American colonists insisted upon convoys for their fleets.

Because of its responsibility to protect colonial trade, the blame for shipping losses was laid at the Admiralty's door. As early as 1704, Lord Haversham stated in an attack on the mismanagement of the navy:

Your disasters at sea have been so many that a man scarce knows where to begin. Your ships have been taken by the enemies as the Dutch take your herrings, by the shoal, upon your own coasts...Your merchants are beggared, your commerce is broken, your trade is gone, your people and your manufactures ruined, while the Queen has lost her customs and Parliament must make good the difficiency; while in the meantime our Allies [the Dutch] have an open and flourishing trade and our enemies make use of both our own ships and seamen against us.<sup>211</sup>

On the whole, however, while the conduct of the navy was by no means perfect, few serious complaints were made until 1707. Merchants were usually over anxious for the safety of their vessels and exaggerated the danger from privateers. So too did colonial governors and agents whose information was regularly passed to the Admiralty and the Board of Trade. Reports of French vessels in the West Indies were habitually followed by hysterical rumours of impending attacks by powerful enemy

squadrons. The vast majority of convoyed vessels completed their voyages unmolested. The increased size of Atlantic convoys during the War of the Spanish Succession, is in itself an indication of the greater feeling of security that they gave to commerce. Those merchants that sent their ships independently before 1700 took advantage of the convoy system thereafter. 'Runners', stragglers from the main convoys, and those vessels involved in inter-colonial trade, were far more vulnerable to enemy attack.

From 1705 an intensification of the French privateering war was witnessed. Smarting after the stalemate at Malaga in 1704, the French resorted to another *guerre de course*, embodied principally by the depredations of d'Iberville's squadron in the West Indies, but also by the increased numbers of privateers fitted out from the French colonies, especially Martinique and Acadia.<sup>212</sup> As a consequence, English shipping losses increased in the middle years of the war and merchant dissatisfaction with naval protection intensified.

The conduct of Commodore Kerr in the West Indies took this dissatisfaction to boiling point. He was alleged by the merchants of Jamaica to have refused to grant convoys for their ships to the coast of New Spain, as well as demanding between £1500 – 2000 from Thomas Wood, a Jamaican merchant, for the said service. In addition to these bribes, Kerr was alleged to have demanded a share in the profits of those trading ships that received convoy escorts. This controversy caused an outcry in the House of Commons, not least because it affected the Spanish trade, which was much esteemed by the government.<sup>213</sup>

This attack on a senior naval commander became a signal for other complaints to be raised about convoy arrangements. Sir Gilbert Heathcote and Sir Bartholomew Gracedieu, merchants interested in the Jamaica trade, complained in May 1707, for instance:

...the following yeares being not able to procure the convoy to sail till April or May, our ships arrived there in the hott, sultry, rainy, sickly season, and our men being fresh out of Europe, it destroy'd almost halfe of 'em, that our ships came out halfe man'd and when they gott through the Gulph of Florida, they alwayes mett with such storms (and will always do so after the last of August), that what by floundering and what by the enemy...we lost halfe of our ships. By these disasters occasion'd by the ill timeing of our convoys, we are quite discouraged and all dependance on promises lost. And these are the reasons why the Spanish trade has been neglected, the vent of so much of our manufactures lost, besides the disappointment of much treasure, which we should have received in returne thereof to our owne as well as the Nations great losse.<sup>214</sup>

A petition presented to the House of Lords on behalf of all merchants involved in Atlantic trade in November 1707, was even more damning, complaining of

...the total lack of convoys for some trades; the insufficient number of warships appointed for each convoy; the late start from both England and the colonies with resulting losses from sickness, bad weather, and the cost of prolonged journeys; the neglect of merchant ships by convoys; the draining of seamen from the merchantmen by impressment; the disastrous extortions and misconduct of commanders; the lack of cruisers in home waters, and finally the general extravagance and inefficiency of the naval administration.<sup>215</sup>

Impressment was a particular cause of merchant anger. Men lost through desertion and death were frequently replaced with merchant seamen. Impressment was often carried out in a high-handed manner. Merchants could only replace their losses by paying exorbitant wages, encouraging naval desertion, and even using French

prisoners of war. Many times masters could not replace men lost in this way and had to set sail for England with weak or elderly crews. Such ships were sometimes lost at sea; the Florida Strait and the North Atlantic were especially perilous in autumn and early winter. To emphasise this point, merchants gave the House of Commons three examples of the ships lost as the result of naval impressment in the Caribbean in 1705: the *Roundburst Gally*, the *Somerset Frigate*, and the *Walthamstow Gally*.<sup>216</sup>

The navy's responsibility for protecting colonial trade grew far more difficult after 1700, for although there were few extra ships available, seaborne commerce had grown not only in size, but also in complexity. The Chesapeake convoy, which annually contained 150-200 ships, was extremely difficult to control, and it is in fact to the credit of naval commanders that they were able to bring so many of their charges safely to port. The Admiralty had foreseen the problems that this growth in trade would produce as early as December 1701, when it protested against ministers demands for the Virginia and St. Helena convoys. The Admiralty was also justified in claiming that it could not spare ships to suppress the Martinique privateers, as "there was no small want of proper ships at home to guard the coast."<sup>217</sup> Indeed, while the Admiralty admitted the scale of shipping losses complained of by merchants in 1707, the blame for the weakness of convoys was laid on the small number of ships available and the superior strength of enemy squadrons in the Atlantic. To ease these shortages, naval commanders were often ordered to hire colonial vessels to act as temporary guard ships. The Admiralty instructed the captain of H.M.S. *Reserve*, which attended on the government of New England to:

...hyre a vessell of ten or twelve guns, either there or in New York, and to cause her to be manned and equipped in all respects in a war-like manner, and then to send her to cruise within the capes of Virginia, to protect the trade passing in and out from the small Privateers of the Enemy.<sup>218</sup>

The Admiralty also saw the closure of Spanish ports to British shipping as another explanation for the scale of French captures, claiming that

During the last war, we had the parts of Spain, as well as those in the Spanish West Indies, always open, to secure our merchant ships and vessels, not only from the enemy, but from bad weather; whereas, during the whole course of this war, our trade hath been entirely debarred from that so essential a countenance and protection.<sup>219</sup>

In 1708, following the petitions, investigations, and inquiries of 1707, two pieces of legislation were enacted which were intended to improve the defence of trade. The 'Cruisers and Convoys Act' was primarily intended to increase the number of naval ships stationed in home waters. It laid down that "over and above the ships of the war for the line of battle and for convoys to remote parts at least 43 ships of war be employed in proper stations" [viz. 6 third rates, 20 fourth rates, 13 fifth rates, and 4 sixth rates].<sup>220</sup> Of these, 15 were specifically allotted to guard the coast and trade in the north-eastern and north-western coasts, though the Admiralty might join any of these ships to the main fleet if occasion arose. A second piece of legislation, the 'America Act', was of far more significance to trade protection in North America and Caribbean waters.<sup>221</sup> Little change was made to the numbers of vessels provided for convoy duty, but a variety of measures were enacted to improve the manning difficulties of the navy. Masters of merchant ships and commanders of privateers were required to make exact lists of all men belonging to their respective vessels. These lists, which contained detailed descriptions of their crew, were to be given to the chief officer of the custom-house in all ports sailed to or from, as well as produced on the request of commanders of Her Majesty's ships in port or at sea. Any men found to be naval deserters were to be confiscated and owners / commanders of the

said vessels would be prosecuted. In another clause of the act, merchant ships and packet boats going to the West Indies were required to carry a number of men above their complement, which were to be delivered over to Her Majesty's ships on arrival. Privateers and merchantmen were further permitted to man their vessels with a greater number of foreigners, thus easing the pressure on the services of English sailors. To encourage foreign seamen, naturalisation was offered after two years of continuous service. Another important result of the 'America Act' was an increase in the profitability of the prize war. This not only helped improve the appeal of the navy to prospective recruits, but also encouraged greater investment in privateers who would hunt down enemy predators that might otherwise molest trade.

## X

In the closing years of the war there were no more serious complaints against the navy or requests made for special protection. While the Caribbean trade had slumped between 1702-7, a slight recovery was witnessed thereafter. Tobacco imports also remained, in general, fairly high, and differences from year to year were the result of crop variations rather than losses at sea.<sup>222</sup> The relative success of naval protection in the closing years of the war is all the more significant when one considers that after 1708, an increase in numbers of French privateers in American waters was witnessed. This can be explained by their exodus from European waters after the failed invasion attempt of England in March 1708, which occasioned a large build up of troops and cruisers intended to blockade Dunkirk and St. Malo. Additional encouragement was also given to French privateering by Louis XIV's decision in 1709 to give up not only the royal warships and all their stores, but also his share of the profits.

French *guerre de course* in the war of the Spanish Succession, was marked by its use of privateers. According to G. N. Clark, between 1702 and 1713, "French privateers reached a zenith, a higher point in strength and numbers than they ever attained again."<sup>223</sup> The French navy played but a minor role, especially in colonial waters. Virtually all the French colonies in the Americas commissioned privateers. Martinique and Arcadia developed as France's principal privateering bases. Their effect on British commerce and economic development was substantial, but not crippling. The British navy's responsibility for protecting trade, on both sides of the Atlantic, meant that it could only spare limited resources to any one area, unless, like the West Indies, the trade was of particular importance. Consequently, French privateers were able to cruise relatively unmolested in search of potential prizes. Growth in British trade and shipping while providing a target for enemy predators, also lessened the effect of their success. Captures made by British privateers, likewise, offset those made by the enemy. The navy, furthermore, by concentrating shipping into organised convoys, was able to bring home a sizable proportion of colonial produce, despite the limited resources at its disposal. As a result of these facts, the growth of colonial trade was merely slowed by the War of the Spanish Succession rather than destroyed by it. Indeed, once peace was signed, colonial output continued to grow at its former rate.

Britain's colonies in the West Indies, particularly Jamaica, fitted out the majority of privateers and captured the majority of prizes. The involvement of North American colonies was small in comparison, although the trade of Acadia and Newfoundland did encourage investment in privateering from New York and Rhode Island. Small provision ships, supplying France's West Indian islands with goods that they could not produce themselves, formed the vast majority of prize captures. Larger merchant vessels, transporting more valuable produce, such as sugar, back to

France, were almost exclusively the prey of the navy, whose ships were unsuited to the capture of localised shipping. The navy enjoyed considerable success throughout the war in capturing the valuable trade of the French Guinea Company.

The start and middle of the war saw the most prizes taken by privateers. Captures made in the remaining years varied widely, until 1712, when a significant downturn was witnessed. This pattern suggests that it took several years for high numbers of shipping captures to be replaced. Information provided by the data file, on the monthly distribution of prize captures, also makes it possible to suggest when privateers were most active. As captures were greatest between June and October, for instance, one can suggest that the summer and autumn appear to have been the best time for privateering cruises. The winter and spring, by contrast, appear to have been worst. Prize captures were consistently less frequent between November and May. Distribution of monthly and yearly captures by the Royal Navy mirrored those of privateers, adding further weight to the patterns detailed above.

British colonial privateering did not only affect French commerce and economic development, for by reducing numbers of available seamen, privateering adversely affected both the operation of British-colonial commerce, as well as its protection. Merchant vessels were often required to sail with elderly or under-strength crews, for instance, because privateers absorbed all the young and skilled sailors. Naval coast guard vessels and convoy escorts, similarly, were forced to stay in port until sufficient men could be pressed from the local inhabitants or transferred from replacement forces. In the meantime, French privateers were able to cruise unmolested, while delayed convoys meant that markets could be missed and produce spoiled.

Despite traditional academic skepticism concerning the significance of privateering, it is clear that during the War of the Spanish Succession, privateering

can be confidently said to have had an important impact on both French and British commerce and economic development. This mirrors more recent colonial and naval historiography, which has emphasised the importance of privateering in the wars of the eighteenth century. Declining French trade statistics suggest that the combined efforts of privateers, and to a lesser extent the British navy, were effective at disrupting French maritime commerce and colonial development. It was not until the 1720s, two or three decades after the British, that the French sugar islands started to produce a sizeable crop. The French, furthermore, lost the right to supply the Spanish Empire with slaves. The capture of French shipping and territory, on both sides of the Atlantic, sufficiently undermined Spanish confidence in the stability of the French Empire that the Asiento contract was granted to the English South Sea Company. The importance of this transfer was huge. English involvement in the War of the Spanish Succession was primarily based on the need to eliminate French influence in Spain. The acquisition of the Asiento contract and the enormous opportunities it offered for illicit trade went a long way towards this end, striking a damaging blow to French influence, both in the West Indies, as well as in the Spanish-American trade.

## Conclusion

British-colonial privateering in the years before the American Revolution is extremely difficult to study because many of the necessary sources have been lost or destroyed. This fact has led many historians to erroneously assume that privateering was a modest business of little significance, employing few merchants, mariners and vessels. If one takes the trouble to delve a little deeper, however, it is clear that privateering played the leading role in America's war effort in the colonial period. Indeed, to properly understand the nature and impact of imperial warfare on colonial America, an examination of privateering is essential.

The War of the Spanish Succession marked a crucial turning point in the history of British privateering. A whole host of instructions from the Crown, as well as legislation enacted by Parliament, increased regulation and made privateering far more financially attractive for investors and seamen. Vice-Admiralty courts, officially established in the colonies in 1702, were responsible for implementing these new regulations and laws. They helped create an effective, uniform system of control over colonial privateering, which represented an unprecedented extension of Crown authority to British North America and the Caribbean. The greater number of officially condemned prize vessels in Queen Anne's War compared with previous conflicts, provided government with higher duty revenue, while at the same time ensuring that the rights of captors and captives were respected.

Greater government control and financial appeal significantly enhanced the impact of privateering on the war effort and colonial society. Where once privateering had been a disreputable enterprise, existing on the margins of piracy, during the War of the Spanish Succession it became a crucial means by which government was able to augment naval forces in the achievement of mercantilist objectives. By capturing

large numbers of enemy vessels and indirectly protecting colonial shipping, privately financed warships helped improve Britain's balance of trade by increasing her proportion of foreign trade, while simultaneously weakening the commercial lifelines of her enemies. They also helped ease the demanding responsibilities of the Royal Navy. Privateering reflected the weakness of the state in this context, for despite increases in governmental power, investment in private warships was encouraged in every inter-colonial war of the eighteenth century; the Royal Navy was simply not able to safeguard Atlantic commerce on its own at this time.

Captures by private men-of-war far outweighed those of the navy. This reflected not only the fact that large numbers of British-colonial privateers were commissioned in the War of the Spanish Succession, but also the circumstance that they could play a far more proactive role in the war effort than the navy, who were barely able to fulfil their responsibilities in protecting trade. As a result, privateers were able to make a marked impact on inter-colonial and Atlantic commerce. The sporadic development of the French sugar islands in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century was in no small part due to the effect of privateering captures and the feeling of insecurity that they fostered in the minds of Caribbean colonists and European investors.

Because privateers could spend all their time chasing prizes, they were an attractive employment prospect. Thousands of seamen risked their lives in the hope that they might make their fortune. These seamen were for the most part young and highly skilled. The navy and the merchant service, offering a far less appealing package, were often left to fight over landsmen and elderly seamen. The financial appeal of privateering also persuaded many of the most affluent and respected members of colonial society to invest thousands of pounds sterling in the business. Merchants saw the prize war as an alternative to normal business activities, which

were made more difficult, if not impossible, by the effects of enemy commerce raiding. The prize war was a useful way to diversify investment of spare capital.

British-colonial privateering did not only benefit those directly involved, for colonial society can be argued to have profited as well. At the most basic level, the fitting out of private men-of-war provided business for a whole host of tradesmen in colonial ports, while prize goods and money provided a means to replace captured provision ships and much needed hard currency. Looking more in the long term, the profits of privateering can be said to have underpinned the continuing development of staple agriculture in the Caribbean. Without this additional source of revenue the effect of French captures would surely have been felt far more severely, and the recovery of British-colonial trade following 1713 would surely have been far more sporadic.

While British-colonial privateers in the War of the Spanish Succession can be confidently argued to have played a more important role in imperial warfare than ever before, one should not overestimate the fact. As a means to decisively win wars, for instance, privateering remained a disappointment. Explanation centres on the fact that privateering captures were for the most part cancelled out by those of the enemy. In this situation wars tended to end because the belligerents were economically worn out, rather than because defeat was forced on one side. Only by devastating military or naval campaigns could one side prematurely end hostilities. Queen Anne's War, therefore, like King William's War before it, and the wars of the 1740s after it, ended because, despite the efforts of privateers in European and colonial waters, military and naval campaigns were inconclusive and financially neither Britain or France could continue. Indeed, it was mainly because Britain strengthened her navy during the War of the Spanish Succession that she came out on top following the diplomatic negotiations of 1713. France, by allowing her navy to

run down in favour of a privateering *guerre de course*, enabled the British to appear as the stronger nation. Successful naval expeditions against Port Royal and Quebec late in the war had after all put Britain in firm control of North America. Economically speaking, the British islands in the Caribbean were also far more developed than their French counterparts. As a consequence, the British were able to wrest from the French the Spanish Asiento contract - arguably the principal reason why Britain went to war in the first place.

In the same way that one should not overestimate the strategic importance of privateering for government, one should also be wary of overestimating the financial returns of privateering for investors and seamen. The small scale and underdeveloped nature of French colonial commerce in the early eighteenth century meant that windfall profits could not be guaranteed for everyone. As a result, investment in privateering was relatively small and short term in Queen Anne's War compared with later wars, when enemy shipping was more abundant. This is not to say that large numbers of privateers were not commissioned, but rather that they were fitted out on the cheap, on a *fairly ad hoc* basis. Privateers 'of force', which became more common in the wars of the 1740s, were extremely rare in the early eighteenth century, when the size and value of French colonial commerce made the costs unjustifiable.

While colonial privateering had existed in the seventeenth century, it was not until Queen Anne's War that it began to be properly regulated. The importance of this change was huge. By placing the prize war firmly within an international maritime code of proper conduct, government helped improve privateering's image and financial appeal to potential investors and seamen, while at the same time ensuring that it became a useful tool of war rather than a costly nuisance. In this context, with government actively encouraging the fitting out of privateers, and its popularity

growing for investors and seamen, one can understand its continuing growth. Indeed, the disruption of an enemy's maritime commerce continued to dominate European and American naval thinking until 1857 when privateering was outlawed.

## Appendix 1

### THE PRIVATEER DATA FILE

The principal evidential base for this study is a data file containing references to prize actions. These references have been drawn primarily from four sources: firstly, Colonial Office manuscripts; secondly, the Calendar of State Papers, America and the West Indies; thirdly, the Calendar of Treasury Books; and fourthly, Howard M. Chapin, *Privateer Ships and Sailors: The First Century of American Colonial Privateering, 1625-1725*.<sup>1</sup> By recording the correspondence of a wide variety of colonial figures with important bodies and persons in England, these sources provided a wealth of information concerning the prize actions of British-colonial privateers, as well as the Royal Navy and enemy predators.

A prize action is defined as an encounter between a predator and an enemy craft. Success was achieved when the latter was captured, whether by armed struggle or by the surrender at the approach of the warship. Each prize action is as far as possible recorded individually in the data file. Each case in the file contains a series of variables pertaining to prize actions.<sup>2</sup> These variables provide information about the most important aspects of privateering.

While my privateer data file provides a reasonably detailed account of the British-colonial maritime prize war, in the period 1702-1713, it has its limitations. Because the file was confined to British sources, it is more complete for British-colonial privateers and the Royal Navy than it is for enemy prize actions. The file has more valid observations on the names of privateer vessels and commanders, for instance, than their enemy counterparts. This is not to say that missing data was only a problem for French and Spanish prize actions, because British sources are far from comprehensive themselves. As a result of the ensuing gaps in my information, it became more difficult for me to record my information on spread sheets, which would have been a more preferable means of representing the data. Access to colonial records, available in North America and the Caribbean, would help fill in these gaps and allow more sophisticated data base analysis.

The following is a complete copy of my data file. It will list references to the captures of British-colonial privateers, first, the Royal Navy, second, British colonial predators of uncertain status, third, and enemy predators thereafter. The references are not an exact transcription of the sources they have been drawn from, but rather a summary of the useful information. Where additional information has been added to the references from other sources, square brackets have been used. Where a source makes reference to a prize capture that has been already recorded, notification will be given. This of course can only be done for those references that offer enough information to be sure that they are talking about the same prize capture. Unfortunately, owing to limitations of the data file, as outlined above, it is inevitable that a certain amount of references to prize captures will not be recognised as repeats. As a consequence, my tabular analysis of British-colonial and Royal Navy prize activity in the War of the Spanish Succession should not be treated as accurate figures, but rather as rough estimates.

## CAPTURES OF BRITISH-COLONIAL PRIVATEERS

***Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies (C.S.P. Col.)****C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703, no. 30 (i)*

Letter from Colonel Dudley of Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire to Thomas Newton, 10 Oct. 1702.

-Refers to French ships captured by Captain Wanton, acting under a commission from Governor Cranston of Rhode Island, condemned Rhode Island.

*C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703, no. 315*

Letter from Governor Dudley to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 11 Feb. 1703.

-Reports that a privateer from Boston had recently captured a French sloop trading to the nearby Indians.

*C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703, no. 1158*

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett of Bermuda to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 19 Oct. 1703.

-Reports that privateers from Jamaican had captured three Dutch vessels for trading with the Spanish, laden with pieces of eight and other 'rich goods'.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 39 (i)*

Letter from J. Warters to Mr. Popple, 20 Jan. 1704, enclosing a letter describing the prizes condemned at the Vice-Admiralty court at Antigua, 19 Aug. 1702.

-Refers to various prizes taken in 1702. Firstly, the sloop *Diligent* of Mary Gallant [20 tons] captured, near Martinique, on the 19 August 1702, by the [privateer sloop] *Seaflower* of Barbados, Captain Pied commander, sank in the harbor of St. Johns. Secondly, the *Mary* of Martinique [20 tons] captured, near Guadeloupe, in July, by *Seaflower* [as above]. Also sank after cargo of goods, money and slaves were taken off. Thirdly, the *Margaret* of Martinique [10 tons] and another sloop [10 tons] captured near St. Dominique by the [privateer sloop] *Margaret and Anne* of Barbados, Captain Hilary Roe commander. Proceeds divided equally between captain and crew. Fourthly, the *Diligent* of St. Christopher captured by the [privateer sloop] *Dispatch* [Despatch] of Barbados, Captain John Smith commander, said to be worth £3,000. Fifthly, the *Jean* of Bordeaux [20 tons] and *Fortune* of Martinique [40 tons] captured by the [privateer sloop] *Marygold* of Barbados, Captain John Gill commander. Cargoes of claret and brandy divided equally between captain and crew. Sixthly, two small shallops captured by the [privateer] *Weymouth* of Antigua, Captain Vallentine Norris commander, condemned Antigua.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 39 (ii)*

Letter from J. Warters to Mr. Popple, 20 Apr. 1704, enclosing a letter from a prize agent, 10 Aug. 1703.

-Refers to three barques captured off Newfoundland and brought into Barbados by Captain John Halsey, [commander of Rhode Island privateer brigantine *Charles*, 100 tons, 8 guns], vessel and cargo value at £1,800.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 257 (iii)*

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett to Mr. Popple, 20 Apr. 1704.

-Account of the capture of the French [ship] *St. Lawrence the Victorious* [from Rochelle, 120 tons, 6 guns, 23 men, captain Pierre Dibon commander], in October 1703, by the *Adventure* of Antigua [condemned Bermuda, valued at £120].

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 436*

Letter from Roger Mompesson to the Earl of Nottingham, 4 July 1704.

-Refers to Captain Tongerlon [commander of New York privateer *New York Galley*, 150 men, 20 guns] having captured five or six Dutch trading vessels from Curacoa.

C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 455

Letter from Governor Dudley to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 13 July 1704.

-Reports that Captain Lawrence [commander of Boston privateer *Charles*, 40 men] had to date captured five French prizes.

C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 566

Letter from Governor Handasyd of Jamaica to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 17 Sept. 1704.

-Refers to [a Jamaican privateer of 60 men and 4 guns, commanded by] Captain Charles Gandy as having captured two French sloops and disabling a third.

C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 902

Letter from Governor Handasyd to Sir Charles Hedges, 27 Feb. 1705.

-Reports that Jamaican privateers had taken three prizes (two French and the other Spanish) since his last correspondence.

C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1018

Letter from Governor Sir B. Granville of Barbados to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 8 Apr. 1705.

-Reports the capture of a small French privateer of 4 guns and 50 men, on the 1 April 1705, by the privateer sloop *Anne* of Barbados.

C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1262

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 18 July 1705.

-Reports the capture of a French trading vessel of 24 guns by a Jamaican privateer.

C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1274

Letter from Governor Dudley to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 25 July 1705.

-Refers to the capture of a Spanish prize by the *Charles Galley*, a brigantine of 100 tons and 8 guns, commissioned by Governor Cranston of Rhode Island, Captain John Halsey commander. Briefly refers to another prize captured by Captain Morrisse.

C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1407 (ii and viii)

Governor and Company of Rhode Island to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 24 Oct. 1705, enclosing a copy of a privateering commission, 8 May 1703.

-Refers to the appraisalment of the condemned Spanish prize *Jesus de Nazareno* [150 tons, 8 guns, cargo of varied goods] captured and brought into Rhode Island for condemnation by the [privateers] *Hanna and Mary* [of Boston], Captain John commander, the *Charles* [of Jamaica], Captain Peter Lawrence commander [40 men], and the *Tyger* [of Rhode Island], Captain Jeremiah Burrows commander. Prize valued at £1,681, 15s, 3d.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 162

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 11 Mar. 1706.

-Reports the capture of a French ship of about 90 tons, 4 guns and 17 men by a small privateer from Bermuda, laden with sugar.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 277 (i)

John Graves to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 19 Apr. 1706, enclosing a petition of the inhabitants of the Bahamas to John Graves, 30 Nov. 1704.

-Refers to capture of two Spanish prizes by Captain Thomas Williams [commander of a privateer sloop] operating under a commission from Governor Sir N. Johnson, condemned Bahamas.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 424 (iii)

Lt. Governor Bennett to Mr. Popple, 9 July 1705, enclosing proceedings of the Court of Vice-Admiralty at Bermuda, 11 and 14 Jan. 1706.

-Refers to the condemnation and appraisalment of the French ship *Alexander* captured, on the 29 December 1705, by the privateer *Dolphin* of Bermuda, Captain John Evans commander.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 511 (i)

Governor Dudley to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 2 Oct. 1706, enclosing a disposition from John Colman, Nov. 25 1706.

-Refers to a prize brought into Newport, Rhode Island, by Captain John Blew [commander of Boston privateer *Hanna and Mary*].

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 526

Letter from Governor Dudley to Mr. Secretary Hedges, 8 Oct. 1706.

-Reports that Boston privateers had recaptured five of the prizes that the French buccaneer d'Iberville had carried from Nevis.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 868

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 21 Apr. 1707.

-Reports the capture of a French ship of 200 tons by a Jamaican privateer.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1128

Letter from Captain Chadwell to Robert Holden, 3 Oct. 1707.

-Reports that a privateer of 20 tons and 35 men, Captain Walker commander, fitted out from the Bahamas in January, has to date captured five vessels, each man making about £50.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1250

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 30 Dec. 1707.

-Reports the capture of a small Spanish sloop, in mid December, by a Jamaican privateer, laden with dry goods.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1423

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 31 Mar. 1708.

-Reports the capture of a French prize of 150 tons by a Jamaican privateer, laden with wine, brandy and dry goods.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1487

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 19 May 1708.

-Reports the capture of two French ships by a Jamaican privateer, one, laden with wine and brandy, and the other, laden with salt.

-Also reports the capture of seven prizes from a convoy of fourteen sail of brigantines and sloops by another privateer sloop of 100 men, Captain Coleby commander, laden with valuable goods from the galleons of Portobello.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 10

Letter from Governor Lord Cornbury of New York to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 1 July 1708.

-Reports that [a privateer sloop] Captain Fane [commander] captured a prize which he carried into New York.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 142

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 24 Sept. 1708.

-Reports the capture of a French prize by a Jamaican privateer, in addition to burning of another three or four prizes which the said privateer was unable to bring into port.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 150

Letter from Governor Parke of Antigua to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 1 Oct. 1708.

-Reports the capture of a Dutch sloop by a privateer, condemned St. Kitts.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 174

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 27 Oct. 1708.

-Reports that privateers from Jamaica had captured and brought in two Spanish vessels with cargoes of cocoa and 'other goods'. Took several more prizes off Campeachy, which were burnt.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 202

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 23 Nov. 1708.

-Reports the capture of a barcolongo off Havana, Cuba [in October 1708], by two privateers (ship and a sloop), laden with between £30,000-40,000 in gold and silver.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 445 (i)

Letter from Mr. Dummer to Mr. Popple, Nov. 4, 1709, enclosing another letter from William Bignall to Mr. Dummer, Jan. 17, 1708.

-Reports the capture of a Spanish vessel by a privateer sloop [Captain Morgan commander], laden with a 'good sum of money'.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 451

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 6 Apr. 1709.

-Reports the capture of a French privateer by a Jamaican privateer.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 649

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 18 July 1709.

-Reports that a French ship of 160 tons was captured, on the 10 July 1709, by a privateer from Jamaica, Captain Pinckerman commander, cargo of dry goods.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 720

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 8 Sept. 1709.

-Reports that the Islands privateers had captured and brought in three prizes since his last correspondence. Another French vessel of 28 guns sank due to damage sustained during battle.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 785

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 20 Oct. 1709.

-Reports the capture of two Spanish ships by Jamaican privateers. The former of these prizes was laden with wine and olives, while the latter was laden with hides and tallow.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 831 (ii)

Letter from Mr. Burchett to Mr. Popple, enclosing another letter from Peter Holt to Captain William Billton, 26 Oct. 1709.

-Reports the capture of a brigantine that was already the prize of a Jamaican privateer by Captain Stone, commissioned by the governor of Carolina, condemned and sold Carolina.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 170

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 25 Mar. 1710.

-Reports the capture of five French privateers, as well as two or three other small prizes by Jamaican privateers, laden with cocoa and tobacco.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 186

Letter from Governor Handasyd to Mr. Popple, 9 Apr. 1710.

-Reports the capture of a French sloop, on the 3 April 1710, by a Jamaican privateer, laden with tobacco, tallow, hides, sugar and wine.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 253

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 4 June 1710.

-Reports the capture of seven vessels by the islands privateers: two French sloops, laden with hides and tallow; two French privateers; two sugar drovers; and finally, a large Spanish ship of 250 tons and 157 men, laden with brandy, vinegar, olives, sweet meats and dry goods.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 415

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 3 Oct. 1710.

-Reports the capture of two French privateers by Jamaican privateers.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 487

Letter from Governor Hunter of New York to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 14 Nov. 1710.

-Refers to the capture of a prize by Jamaican privateers, condemned New York.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 530

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 4 Dec. 1710.

-Reports the capture of three or four French merchantmen by Jamaican privateers, carried into New York for condemnation.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 538 (i)

Council of Trade and Plantations to Lord Dartmouth, 8 Dec. 1710, enclosing a letter from St. Christopher relating to Guadeloupe, Sept. 16, 1710.

-Reports the capture of a small vessel coming from Guadeloupe by a privateer from St. Christopher.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 567 (i-vi)

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 7 May 1711.

-Refers to condemnation of various vessels in the court of Admiralty at Bermuda: sloop *Margaret* (March 1708); brigantine *Industry* (February 1709); French ship *Three Friends* [letter of marque, 2 guns, Captain Giles Davis commander, captured by Bermudan privateer *Rose*, laden with indigo and skins](November 1709); Sloop *Isabella* (September 1709); Sloop *Happy Return* (August 1710); Sloop *Diligence* [4 guns, 23 men, captured, off Hispaniola, by the Bermudan privateer *Rose*, laden with indigo, tobacco, silk cloth and 1400 pieces of eight](July 1710).

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 824

Letter from Lt. General Hamilton of the Leeward Islands to Lord Dartmouth, 26 Apr. 1711.

-Reports the capture of two ships by privateers from Jamaica.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 832 (iii)

Governor Hunter to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 7 May 1711, enclosing another letter from Governor Hunter to the Commissioners of Customs, May 7, 1711.

-Reports the capture of a large ship by two privateers, sloop *Kingston*, Captain John Marshall commander, and ketch *Samuel*, Captain Charles Pinketham commander, laden with cocoa, brought into New York for condemnation.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 18

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 16 July 1711.

-Reports the capture of four rich prizes by a Jamaican privateer [*Charles* of 16 guns], Captain [William] Tempest commander, condemned Boston.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 75

Letter from Governor Lord Alexander Hamilton of Jamaica to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 15 Aug. 1711.

-Reports the capture of four small prizes by privateers from Jamaica.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 82

Letter from Governor Lord Alexander Hamilton to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 29 Aug. 1711.

-Reports the capture of a French privateer sloop from Petit Guavas (120 men) by a Jamaican privateer.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 125

Letter from Governor Lord Alexander Hamilton to the Earl of Dartmouth, 18 Oct. 1711.

-Reports the capture of a Spanish vessel bound for Havana, Cuba, by a Jamaican privateer.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 418

Letter from Lt. Governor Spotswood of Virginia to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 15 May 1712.

-Reports that the *Bedford* galley had captured a French merchant ship laden with sugar, indigo and cocoa, which was condemned on Virginia.

C.S.P. Col., 1712-1714, no. 44

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett of to the Earl of Dartmouth, 15 Aug. 1712.

-Reports the capture of a French ship of 100 tons, 8 guns and 20 men, off Bermuda, on the 19 July 1712, by a Bermudan privateer.

**Calendar of Treasury Books (C.T.B.)**C.T.B., 1702, XVII, part I, 213

Account by John Perrie, Register of the Admiralty court at Antigua, of prizes taken and condemned at Antigua between 19 Aug. 1702 and 6 Feb. 1703.

-*Seaflower* of Barbados, Captain Pied commander, captured and had condemned two small French sloops, *Diligent* of Mary Galant (20 tons) and the *Mary* of Martinique (20 tons) - July 1702. (REPEAT REFERENCE – CSP.Col., 1704-1705, no. 39 (i))

-[Privateer *Marygold* of Barbados] Captain John Gill brought into the port of St. Johns a small corvet or barque, the *Jane* of Bordeaux (20 tons), laden with claret and brandy, and a sloop called the *Fortune* of Martinique (40 tons), laden with Negroes - July 1702. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)

-Privateer sloop *Despatch* of Barbados, Captain John Smith commander, brought in and had condemned the sloop *Diligent* of St. Christopher (25 tons), cargo of Negroes and provisions - July 1702. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)

-Privateer sloop *Margaret and Ann* of Barbados, Captain Hilary Roe commander, brought in and had condemned two sloops or open shells, the *Margaret* and the *Ann* (10 tons each), laden with cattle and horses intended for Martinique - July 1702. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)

-[Privateer *Weymouth* of Antigua] Captain Valentine Morris commander, brought in and had condemned two open French shallops, the *American* (8 tons) and the *Weymouth*, laden with sugar – Aug. 1702. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)

C.T.B., 1703, XVIII, 301

Royal Warrant to John Dodd, Receiver General of the Rights and Perquisites of Admiralty, 15 June 1703.

-Refers to the capture of a French banker ship *Benediction* of Havre de Grace, France.

C.T.B., 1704, XIX, 215

Account of the Lord High Admiral's tenths on Prizes brought into Nevis since the start of the war, 28 Apr. 1704.

-[Bermudan] privateer sloop *Rose* [Captain Lewis Middleton commander] captured on the 28 July 1702 a sloop called *Mary*, laden with a cargo of claret and Negroes, valued at £653, 3s, 3d.

-Privateer sloop *Content* captured the sloops *Francis* and *Mary*, laden with a cargo of sugar and slaves, sold for £312, 5s, 7d.

-Two privateers, the brigantine *Tryall* and the sloop *Ruby*, captured, on the 17 September 1702, a barque St. John the Baptist from Guadeloupe, laden with a cargo of sugar and cotton, sold for £1183, 18s, 8d.

-Privateer sloop *Restoration* captured off Newfoundland, on the 27 March 1703, a ship called *Hope*, laden with a cargo of fish and French salt, sold for £697.

C.T.B., 1708, XXII, 331

Letter from J. Taylor to the Principal Commissioners for Prizes, 22 July 1708.

-Refers to a prize captured by the *New York Galley* [150 men and 20 guns], Captain Reyner Tongrelon commander.

C.T.B., 1708, XXII, 434

Warrant by Treasurer Goldolphin to the Receiver of the Rights and Perquisites of Admiralty and the Comptroller thereof, 12 Nov. 1708.

-Refers to the capture of a French vessel *St. John Baptist* by a Newfoundland privateer *Grand Canary*, Captains Moxham and Hayman commanders.

**Colonial Office Manuscripts (P.R.O. C.O.)**P.R.O. C.O., 28/7, no. 33 (ii)

List of Prizes condemned at Barbados, accounted for by James Hannay, received 5 Aug. 1704.

-Sloop *Mary Rose* of 25 tons captured by a privateer [sloop] from Barbados [Dispatch / Despatch], Captain John Smith commander [condemned 19 August 1702].

-Ship *Phenie* of 140 tons and 4 guns captured by a privateer [Adventure] from New England, Captain John Halsey commander, laden with salt fish [condemned 6 December 1702].

-*Lady Rosario* of 100 tons and 4 guns captured by a privateer [sloop *Seaflower*] from Barbados, Captain Alexander Forrester commander, laden with liquors and dry goods [condemned 8 August 1702].

-*Margaritta* of 140 tons and 2 guns captured by a privateer [Adventure] from New England, Captain John Halsey commander, laden with salt fish [condemned 6 December 1702].

-*Louis* of 150 tons and 2 guns captured by above, laden with salt fish.

-Ship *Duke de Berry* of 120 tons and 10 guns captured by above, laden with liquors.

-Small sloop captured off the coast of Martinique by above.

-Sloop *Charles II* captured off the coast of Caracas in the Spanish Dominions by two privateers, one, a privateer [Dragon] from Barbados, Captain William Peade [Peade] commander, the other, a privateer [Adventure] of New England, Captain John Halsey commander, laden with cocoa and dry goods [condemned 25 August 1702].

P.R.O. C.O., 28/7, 272-4.

Account by Nick Sayers of prizes condemned at Barbados from the start of the war to 4 Feb. 1704.

-French sloop *Mary Rose* of 25 tons captured by privateer sloop *Dispatch* [Despatch] of Barbados, Captain John Smith commander, condemned on the 19 August 1702. (REPEAT REFERENCE – P.R.O. C.O., 28/7, no. 33 (i))

-Spanish ship *Lady of Rosario St. Peter and St. Joseph* of 100 tons, 4 guns and 12 patteroes captured by privateer sloop *Seaflower* of Boston [Captain William Pied commander], condemned on the 8 August 1702. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)

-French ship [Phenie] of 140 tons and 4 guns captured by a privateer sloop of Boston [Adventure], Captain John Halsey commander, condemned on the 6 December 1702.

-French ship *Margaritta* of 140 tons and 2 guns captured by above, condemned as above.

-Spanish sloop *Charles the second* captured off the coast of Caracas by the privateer brigantine *Dragon*, Captain William Peade commander, and the privateer brigantine *Adventure* of Boston, Captain John Halsey commander, laden with a cargo of dry goods, condemned 25 August 1703. (REPEAT REFERENCE – P.R.O. C.O. 28/7, no. 33 (ii))

P.R.O. C.O., 28/13, 596-7

List of Prizes brought into Barbados between July 1711 – Mar. 1712.

-The French ship *L'unique* captured by the privateer ship the *Ambuscade*, Captain Robert Summers commander, laden with beef, claret, Nantes wine, brandy, butter, candles, flour, linen cloth and shoes [condemned 3 Mar. 1712].

P.R.O. C.O., 137/6, no. 42 (v)

List of prizes condemned at Jamaica between 4 May 1702 and 30 Jan. 1704.

-Sloop *St. Patrick* of St. Thomas captured near Curracoa, on the 16 February 1703, by the privateer ship from Barbados *Paradox*, Captain Forrester commander, condemned for illegal trading, valued at £456.

-Sloop *Lady Leah* of Curracoa captured off the coast of Curracoa, on the 27 March 1703, by the privateer sloop *Francis and Sarah*, Captain Francis Johnson commander, condemned as above.

- Sloop *Cotana* of above, captured by above, on the 27 March 1703, condemned as above.
- Sloop *Catherina* of above, captured by above on 29 March 1703, condemned as above.
- Sloop *North Lion* of St. Thomas captured by above, on 26 August 1703, condemned as above.
- Sloop *Cousyns* of above, captured by above, on the 26 August 1703, condemned as above.
- Sloop *Young Dorothy* of above, captured by above on the 26 August 1703, condemned as above. (Condemned value of last six prizes captured by Francis and Sarah amounted to £2330, 6s, 8d.)
- Spanish sloop *Good Success* of Porto Rico captured, on the 5 December 1703, by the [privateer] sloop *Edward and Sarah* [100 men], Captain Thomas Coleby commander, valued at £450, 3s, 6d.
- Sloops *Hope* and *Patience* of Curracoa captured off the coast of Curracoa on the 26 and 29 September 1703 by the [privateer] sloop *Edward and Sarah* [100 men], Captain Thomas Coleby commander, condemned for illegal trading, valued at £284, 6s and £648, 17s, 9d respectively.
- French ship *St. Peter* of Rochelle captured near Hispaniola, on the 6 December 1703, by the [privateer] sloop *Neptune*, Captain Samuel Lyddell commander, valued at £538, 2s, 1d.
- Spanish sloop *Nuestra Senord de Rosaria* of Nicaragua, captured off Puerto Velo captured, on the 2 December 1703, by the Jamaican sloop *Francis and Sarah*, Captain Francis Johnson commander, valued at £89, 1s, 9d.

P.R.O. C.O., 137/8, no. 24 (i)

List of French and Spanish vessels condemned at Jamaica between July 1708 and Sept. 1708:

- Spanish vessel *Paradera* captured, on 18 July 1708, by the sloop *Thompson*, Captain Samuel Lyddell, condemned on the 31 July 1708.
- Spanish vessel *Nuestra Senora dell Rossario San Joseph y' San Antonio* captured, on 17 July 1708, by above, condemned 10 August 1708.

P.R.O. C.O., 152/5, no. 50 (iii)

List of Prizes condemned at Nevis between the 28 July 1702 and the 27 Mar. 1703.

- Sloop *Mary* captured by privateer sloop *Rose*, laden with claret and 20 Negro slaves, valued at £653, 3s, 3d.
- Sloop *Francis and Mary* captured by privateer sloop *Content*, laden with cargo of fifteen casks of sugar, three casks of cocoa, three Negro slaves, parcel of turtle shells, valued at £312, 5s, 7d.
- Bark *St. John the Baptist* from Guadeloupe captured, on the 17 September 1702, by two privateers, a brigantine called *Tryall* and a sloop called *Ruby*, laden with a cargo of sugar and cotton, valued at £1183, 18s, 7d.
- Ship *Hope* captured off the banks of Newfoundland, on the 27 March, by the privateer sloop *Restoration*, laden with wet fish and salt, valued at £697.

**Howard M. Chapin, *Privateer Ships and Sailors: The first Century of American Colonial Privateering, 1625-1725.***

Chapter IX, Massachusetts privateers in Queen Anne's War.

-The *Charles* privateer of Boston (40 men), Captain Peter Lawrence commander, owned by Charles Chambers and Samuel Philips, while cruising off the coast of Cuba, captured several prizes.

-The *Charles* later, whilst cruising in consort with the brigantine *Hannah and Mary* of Boston and the *Tyger* of Bermuda, Captains John Blew and Burrows commanders respectively, captured off the coast of Cuba a Spanish Ship called the *Jesus de Nazareno*. This ship of 150 tons and 8 guns, which was bound for Havana and laden with 100 pipes of Malmsey, 30 casks of Brandy, almonds, raisons, money, plate and silk, was valued at £1681, 15s, 3d and condemned Rhode Island. (REPEAT REFERENCE – C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1407 (ii))

-A Massachusetts privateer [the *Charles* of 60 tons, 90 men and 6 guns], Captain Thomas Larrimore commander, captured, in July 1702, a prize and sent her into Boston for condemnation (arrived late August).

-In December 1702, Governor Dudley wrote that Captain Larrimore had captured 'five good ships'.

-The privateer brigantine *Adventure* of Boston [Captain John Halsey commander] captured three French banker ships, the *Phoenix* (140 tons and 4 guns), the *Margaritta* (140 tons and 2 guns) and the *St. Louis* (150 tons and 2 guns), all laden with salt fish. These three prizes were carried into Barbados and condemned on the 6 December 1702. (REPEAT REFERENCE - Second two prize captures - P.R.O. C.O., 28, 7, no. 33 (ii))

-The *Adventure* [Captain John Halsey commander], later, cruising in consort with the privateer brigantine *Dragon* of Barbados, Captain William Pead [Peade] commander, captured the French sloop *Charles II* for whale trading with the Spanish, condemned Barbados in April 1703. (REPEAT REFERENCE - P.R.O. C.O., 28, 7, no. 33 (ii); and P.R.O. C.O., 28/7, 272-4)

-A Boston privateer captured the French ship *Canada Magazin*, whilst cruising in the Bay de Vert at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, in the summer of 1704.

-A Boston privateer sloop, Captain Harris commander, recaptured a former privateer sloop from the French, Captain Blin commander.

-Three privateers, the *Boston* galley (24 guns and 60 men), Captain Michael Gill commander, the *Neptune* galley (16 guns and 54 men), Captain Henry Penny commander, and finally, the *Whetston* galley (14 guns and 90 men), Captain Henry Green commander captured a ship and a ketch in the harbour of St. Pierre, in August 1702. These two prizes were laden with salt and wine.

-On the 13 August 1702, the above privateers recaptured an English ship the *Michael Galley*, laden with tobacco, formerly commanded by Captain Johnson.

-On the 14 August 1702, the above privateers captured a sloop as she sailed into St. Pierre.

-On the 15 August 1702, the above privateers recaptured the sloop *Ark* of Salem as she sailed out of St. Pierre.

-Earlier, in July 1702, in latitude 48°, 8' N, the *Boston* galley captured a French banker ship of 21 men and 6 guns, ransomed for 350 pistoles in gold.

-The privateer sloop *Adventure* of Antigua, Captain William Ball commander, captured on the Banks of Newfoundland, in October 1703, the French ship *St. Lawrence the Victorious* of Rochelle (120 tons, 6 guns and 23 men), Captain Pierre Dibon commander. Prize ship and cargo valued at £120, condemned Bermuda. (REPEAT REFERENCE - C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 257 (iii))

-The Boston privateer ship *King of Spain* (57 men), Captain William Rows or Rouse commander, fought and captured, in October 1712, the Spanish man-of-war *Gardle Course* (216 men, 20 guns and 8 pateraroes), Captain De Goe Flurintin commander, prize was eventually burnt as there were insufficient men to man her.

#### Chapter X: The Massachusetts provincial navy.

-A privateer sloop, Captain Jacob Fowle commander, while cruising along the coast of Acadia, in early 1705, captured a French prize, arrived Boston on the 20 April 1705.

-The *Province Galley*, a snow of 14 guns, Captain Southwark commander, hired as a coast guard, captured, in August 1703, three small vessels from the Indians in Casco Bay.

-A second purpose-built *Province Galley* of 18 guns and 160 tons, launched on the 2 July 1705, while cruising in consort with the sloop *Flying Horse*, Captain Calley commander, captured, in the summer of 1706, a French sloop of 60 tons, laden with stone and timber for the French forts.

#### Chapter XI: The *Seaflower* and other Rhode Island privateers.

-The privateer brigantine *Greyhound* of 100 tons, 12 guns and 100 men, commissioned by Governor Cranston on the 6 July 1702, Captain William Wanton commander, captured while cruising in the Gulf of St. Lawrence three French vessels. The first of these was a privateer of 260 tons, 20 guns and 48 men, while the second and third were merchantmen, one of 300 tons and 16 guns and another of 160 tons and 8 guns. All three vessels were laden with dried fish.

-The *Charles* privateer sloop of 60 tons, 6 guns and 90 men, formerly of Boston, now commissioned out of Rhode Island, Captain Peter Larrimore commander, captured two prizes off the banks of Newfoundland. These prizes consisted of a pink of 130 tons and 8 guns, as well as a square stern ship of 240 tons. Both vessels were laden with codfish and condemned at Newport, Rhode Island, on the 12 November 1703.

-The sloop *Seaflower*, commanded by Lieutenant Tongerlou, after Captain Stevens had been captured along with a proportion of the crew whilst attempting to raid a Mexican town, captured off Curacao a French sloop of 76 men, 8 guns and 8 pattereroes, Captain Larew commander.

-The *Seaflower* captured a further five vessels belonging to Curacao, laden with cocoa, tobacco and liqueurs. One of these prizes, laden with 10 tons of cocoa, five to six thousand weight of tobacco, eight teares of dry goods and thirty cases of liquor, was condemned at Newport on the 22 April 1704. Another prize, a Dutch brigantine of 90 tons, captured for trading with the Spanish, was condemned at Newport on the 30 June 1704. A third prize, another illicit trader, laden with 600 pounds of cocoa, 40 barrels of flour and some hides, was condemned at New York in September 1704.

-The brigantine *Charles* [100 tons, 8 guns], Captain John Halsey commander, commissioned on the 7 November, owned by the Boston merchants Nicholas Paise, William Clarke, Benjamin gallop and John Coleman, captured a Spanish ship of 130 tons and 8 guns, laden with brandy, wine, sugar, paper, snuff and oil. This capture which was made in company with two privateers from New York and one from Carolina, condemned Rhode Island on the 27 June 1705, valued between £4000-£5000.

-The *Charles*, in October 1705, while cruising off the banks of Newfoundland, captured a ship of 130 tons and 4 guns.

-The *Charles* also captured a Spanish ship of 24 guns from Havana, Cuba, which was sent into Madeira for condemnation.

-Two Rhode Island privateer sloops, commanded by John Cranston and Benjamin Cranston, carrying 120 men in total, captured a French privateer and her prize, three leagues south of Block Island, condemned Rhode Island, on the 6 June 1706.

-Two sloops, commanded by Major William Wanton and Captain Ward, carrying 130 men in total, commissioned out of Rhode Island, captured, on the 8 September 1707, in Vineyard Sound, a French privateer from Placentia which had been molesting shipping off Block Island.

-The privateer *Charles* of Jamaica [Captain William Tempest commander, 16 guns] captured three prizes in the late spring / early summer of 1711. The first of these was the sloop *Santa Rosa* of 50 tons, followed by the ship *La Paix* of 150 tons and 12 guns, both laying at anchor in Port Mahon, laden with sugar, indigo and hides. The final capture was sloop *Nostra Senors del Rosario* of 40 tons captured off the coast of Cuba, laden with snuff, iron and steel. All three prizes were condemned at Rhode Island in June 1711.

## Chapter XII: Bermuda in Queen Anne's War.

-The Bermudan privateer *Fame*, Captain Henry Pulline commander, captured, off Tenerife, a prize laden with corn, arrived at Bermuda for condemnation on the 21 July 1703.

-The Bermudan privateer sloop *Dolphin* of 20 tons, Captain John Evans commander, captured, on the 29 December, in latitude 27°, 40' N, the French ship *Alexandre* of 90 tons, 4 guns and 17 men, Captain Jacques Pacquet commander, bound from Martinique to Bordeaux. Ship and cargo of sugar, ginger and cassia were condemned at Bermuda in January 1706, valued at £1717, 14s, 8d.

-The Bermudan privateer sloop *Rose* of 40 tons and 6 carriage guns, Captain Lewis Middleton commander, captured a Spanish launch, in the Bay of Matanzas, on 7 July 1709, laden with silver and silk.

-The Bermudan privateer sloop *Rose* captured off the north keys of Cuba, in August 1709, another two Spanish launches, laden with candles, sugar, hides, tallow, wax, guns, cables and salves.

-The Bermudan privateer sloop *Rose* later captured, in October 1709, a French letter of marque sloop *Three Friends* of 2 guns, Captain Giles David commander, bound for Rochelle, laden with indigo and skins, condemned Bermuda. (REPEAT REFERENCE – C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, 567 (i-vi))

-The Bermudan privateer sloop *Rose*, operating under a second commission, dated 18 March 1710, captured the sloop *St. James* of Barbados, about a league to the windward of the castle of St. Dominique, on the 2 June 1710. Condemned for illegal trading of iron and steel with the Spanish at Porto Rico.

-The Bermudan privateer sloop *Rose* also captured off Hispaniola, on the 14 June 1710, the sloop *Diligence* of Martinique of 4 guns and 23 men, laden with a cargo of sugar, indigo, tobacco, silk, cloth and 1400 pieces of eight, condemned Barbados July 1710. (REPEAT REFERENCE – C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, 567 (i-vi))

-The Bermudan privateer sloop *Rose*, captain Middleton commander, operating under a third commission, dated 28 September, captured another French ship Jean et Joseph of Nantes, France (4 guns and 24 men), Captain Henri Guillet commander, which was bound from Martinique to Nantes. Ship and cargo of sugar, cotton, cocoa and indigo was condemned at Bermuda.

-The Bermudan privateer brigantine *Industry* of 35 tons and 8 guns, Captain Benjamin Aster commander, commissioned for a second time on February 13 1712, captured, three leagues off Point Spandoe, the French privateer sloop St. Joseph of 3 guns and 39 men from Santo Domingo, condemned Bermuda July 1712.

## Chapter XIII: The New York Galley and the Southern privateers.

### New York:

-A New York privateer of 18 guns and 120 men, Captain Adrian Claver commander, captured, off the coast of New Spain, in the spring of 1704, two Spanish vessels (a sloop and a settee), laden with brandy, wine, oil, dry goods, silks and Negroes, condemned New York in July 1704.

-A New York privateer barque, probably the *Castle del Rey*, Captain Claver commander, captured within sight of Havana, Cuba, a large Spanish ship of 300 tons and 20 guns, bound for Cadiz, laden with wine, brandy, oil, raisins, anchovies, olives and dry goods, condemned New York in August 1704.

-A New York privateer sloop of 70 men, Captain Thomas Peniston commander, captured off Guadeloupe a French privateer of 8 guns and 40 men, condemned Nevis.

-Later, off the coast of Caracas, in February 1705, the New York privateer *Revenge* captured several peviavgers, laden with cocoa, and a France ship of 150 tons, bound from Martinique to France, laden with sugar, indigo and cocoa, prizes condemned Bermuda.

-In the summer of 1705, the New York privateer *Revenge* captured, off the coast of New Spain, a small sloop laden with cocoa, condemned New York on the 31 August 1705.

-In the autumn of 1705, the New York privateer *Revenge* captured another two sloops, laden with wine and brandy, condemned New York throughout September and October 1705.

-In May 1706, the New York privateer *Revenge*, cruising in consort with a Dutch privateer, captured a French sloop, bound from Martinique to St. Dominique, cargo of cocoa, arrived in New York for condemnation on the 4 June 1706.

-The New York privateer *Revenge* captured a Spanish privateer of 4 guns and 30 men.

-In June 1706, the New York privateer *Revenge* captured, off Cape Francois, a small French ship of 60 to 70 tons, which was bound for Petit Guavas, laden with sugar.

-The New York privateer *Cetty* or *Setty* of 100 men, Captain Albert Defrees commander, captured, off Newfoundland, a French vessel of 100 tons, laden with codfish, arrived New York for condemnation in mid-August 1705.

-The *New York Galley* of 200 tons and 18 guns, formerly the prize ship *Cole and Bean*, captured a brigantine of 150 tons, bound from Hispaniola to France, cargo of sugar and indigo

-The *New York Galley* later captured another vessel, bound from Frarice to Hispaniola, laden with claret, glass and earthenware, burnt after cargo was moved to aforementioned brigantine.

-The *New York Galley* captured later still a small sloop, which was converted into a tender of 6 guns and 27 men, placed under the command of Nathaniel Burdett.

-Aforementioned tender forced a west-bound Spanish ship from the Canaries of 600 tons, 24 guns and 250 men, to surrender her cargo, after she had run aground about a league from Baracoa, Cuba.

-The *New York Galley*, in consort with two Jamaican privateers and a brigantine from Curacao, attacked a fleet of French vessels, off Cape Francois. The Jamaican privateers captured three vessels, the Curacao vessel, one, and the *New York Galley*, the largest of the French vessels, the ship *Montserrat Merchant* of 170 tons, laden with sugar, indigo, raw hides and cotton, arrived New York for condemnation on the 19 September 1706.

-The *New York Galley* of 150 men and 20 guns captured two Spanish armed sloops (fitted out to catch him) while cruising off the north coast of Cuba.

-The *New York Galley* captured another Spanish vessel bound from Vera Cruz to Havana, laden with money and goods. This vessel and the two previously mentioned, arrived at New York for condemnation on the 16 July 1707.

-A privateer sloop from New York, Captain Zacharias commander, captured, within sight of Cartagena, a Spanish sloop, laden with sugar, arrived at New York for condemnation on the 29 June 1706.

-The New York privateer ketch *Samuel*, Captain Charles Pinkethman commander, in consort with a privateer sloop from Kingston, Jamaica, Captain John Marshall commander, captured a large Spanish ship, laden with cocoa, sent into New York for condemnation September 1710.

-Privateer *Hunter* of New York, while cruising in the West Indies in 1712, in company with a Jamaican privateer, Captain Lewis commander, attacked and captured a French Guineaman

of 30 guns and 207 men (formerly H.M.S *Sweepstakes* taken by the French off the Guinea coast). Captured cargo consisted of cocoa, elephant teeth, £15-16,000 in gold and silver and 10 guns in her hold.

-New York privateer *Hunter* later, on the same cruise, recaptured from the Spaniards a New England built brigantine, laden with gunpowder and scrap. This and aforementioned prizes arrived at New York for condemnation on the 29 September 1712.

Pennsylvania:

-A privateer sloop belonging to Philadelphia, Captain Hurst commander, captured, on the 17 September 1706, in St. Mary's Bay, a French ship of 120 tons bound for France, laden with dry fish.

South Carolina:

-A small sloop, fitted out by the merchants of Charleston, Captain Thomas Williams commander, captured several Spanish prizes, condemned New Providence, Bahamas.

-A privateer from Carolina captured a French privateer, in January 1705, laden with cocoa and 11,000 pieces of eight, carried into St. Thomas for condemnation, each man sharing £150

-A Bermudan sloop, Colonel Rhett commander, in consort with the *Flying Horse*, Captain Stool commander, captured a French ship in Seway Bay, arrived Charleston for condemnation on the 6 September 1706.

-A privateer, commissioned out of Carolina, Captain Stone commander, captured, in the Bay of Honduras, a Vessel, Captain Peter Holt commander, for illegal trading.

-Captain Stone later captured a brigantine already the prize of a Jamaican privateer, condemned and sold at Carolina.

#### Chapter XIV: Notes on the West Indies.

The Bahamas:

-A privateer commanded by Captain Thomas Williams, commissioned by the Governor of Carolina, captured several prizes and sent them into New Providence for condemnation in November 1704.

-A privateer of 20 tons and 35 men, Captain Walker commander, fitted out by the inhabitants of New Providence, in January 1707, captured five small prizes off the Cuban coast, each man sharing £50.

Jamaica:

-A Jamaican privateer captured the French privateer *St. Denis* and the merchant ship *St. Jean* of Nantes, France, in October 1702.

-Jamaican privateer barque *Francis and Sarah*, commissioned on the 31 August 1703, Captain Francis Johnson commander, captured the Danish barque *Robert and Mathews*, Christopher Akers master, and the Danish sloop *Jean and Mateuwes* for illegal trading.

-A Jamaican privateer [100 tons, 100 men], Captain Thomas Coleby commander, captured three barques, a periauger, and several Dutch illicit traders.

-A Jamaican privateer of 4 guns and 60 men, Captain Charles Gandy commander, captured two French privateers, in early 1704.

-A Jamaican privateer captured a Danish sloop called the *Schutburg*, in 1704, laden with contraband goods for Fort Louis, condemned Jamaica.

-A Jamaican privateer brigantine of 12 guns and 110 men, Captain Balling commander, whilst cruising off Vera Cruz, in late 1704, captured a brigantine and a sloop fitted out by the Spanish to hunt him. Balling burnt the brigantine and sent the sloop to Jamaica for condemnation.

-Another Jamaican privateer captured two rich prizes and sent them into Jamaica for condemnation on the 1 March 1705.

-A privateer brigantine from Jamaica, in consort with a Dutch privateer sloop, captured four French merchantmen, one a ship of between 200 and 300 tons, laden with brandy, wine and dry goods, condemned at Jamaica, on the 20 August of 1706.

-A Jamaican privateer captured a Spanish sloop, in early December 1707, laden with dry goods, condemned Jamaica.

-In May 1708, Governor Handasyd reported that Jamaican privateers had recently captured two French ships, one laden with wine and brandy, and the other with salt.

-A Jamaican privateer sloop of 100 tons [and 100 men], Captain Coleby commander, attacked 14 sail of brigantines and sloops, as well as the Duke of Anjou's guard sloop carrying 70-80 men. Coleby captured the guard ship and six of the merchantmen, ransomed two of them and sent the remaining five into Jamaica for condemnation.

-A Jamaican privateer captured a French prize of small value, in early 1708.

-A Jamaican privateer sloop captured a French vessel, in the autumn of 1708, condemned Jamaica. Another four prizes were burnt at sea.

-Two Jamaican privateers captured, off Campeachy, four Spanish vessels (two of which were burnt as they could not be brought to windward), laden with cocoa and various other merchandize.

-A Jamaican privateer ship and sloop captured a barcolonga with between £30,000 - 40,000 on board, whilst cruising off Havana, Cuba, arrived Jamaica for condemnation on the 2 November 1708. (REPEAT REFERENCE – C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 202)

-A Jamaican privateer captured a French prize, in the spring of 1709.

-A Jamaican privateer captured a Spanish trading sloop and recaptured an English sloop, in the spring of 1709

-A Jamaican privateer captured a Spanish brigantine, laden with corn and earthenware, in the spring of 1709.

-Governor Handasyd reported, on the 8 September 1709, that three French prizes were brought into Jamaica for condemnation. A fourth French vessel of 28 guns sank due to damage sustained during its capture.

-A Jamaican privateer captured the French ship *Vigilant* of 160 tons, Captain Charles Pinckerman commander, laden with dry goods, condemned Jamaica in July 1709.

-Jamaican Privateer *Charles* of 18 guns, Captain William Tempest commander, captured a French vessel bound from Petit Guavas to France that was riding at anchor at Port Maria, laden with sugar and indigo.

-The *Charles* also captured, off the Cuban coast, the Spanish sloops *Nostra Senora del Rosario*, laden with iron, steel and snuff, and the *Santa Rosa*, on which Captain John Lewis was placed as prize master. Captain Lewis arrived with his charge on the 30 May 1711, while the *Charles* arrived with another two prizes on the 2 June 1711.

-A Jamaican privateer of 130 men, Captain Cook commander, captured, in late 1711, a French privateer from Petit Guavas, condemned Jamaica.

#### Barbados:

-Privateer sloop *Dispatch*, commissioned out of Barbados, Captain John Smith commander, captured the French sloop *Marie Rose* of 25 tons, condemned at Barbados, on the 19 August 1702.

-The Barbados privateer sloop *Seaflower*, Captain Alexander Forrester commander, captured the Spanish vessel *Lady of Rosario St. Peter and St. Joseph* of 100 tons, 4 guns and 12 pattereroes, laden with liquors and dry goods, condemned Barbados, on the 28 August 1702. (REPEAT REFERENCE – P.R.O. C.O., 28/7, no. 33 (i))

-In 1703, Captain Forrester [this time as commander of the Barbados privateer sloop *Paradox*] captured the *St. Patrick* of St. Thomas for illegal trading, condemned Jamaica.

-The Barbados privateer brigantine *Curtney* or *Courtney*, in consort with H.M.S *Warwick*, captured a French sloop, which arrived at Barbados for condemnation, on the 2 November 1704.

#### Antigua:

-In the summer of 1708, a privateer from the Leeward Islands captured a brigantine, laden with ginger and sugar, ship and cargo valued at £700.

- A privateer from Antigua called the *Virgin Queen*, Captain Joseph Hall commander, captured a prize.

-Two privateer sloops, owned and fitted out by Governor Parke of Antigua, captured a brigantine bound for France, laden with sugar and ginger, and a small sloop of no great value, which was subsequently converted into a privateer.

#### St. Kitts:

-In 1710, a privateer from St. Kitts captured a small vessel from Guadeloupe.

-A privateer sloop called the *Francis and Mary* of St. Christopher, Captain William Coventry commander, recaptured an English brigantine.

## CAPTURES BY THE ROYAL NAVY

***Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies (C.S.P. Col.)****C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703, no. 123*

Letter from Vice-Admiral Benbow to the Earl of Nottingham, 11 Sept. 1702.

-Refers to captures made by the naval squadron under the command of Benbow: firstly, a ship in the Gulf of Logan, which was later destroyed - July 1702; secondly, four ships (two of 16 guns, one of 30 and a brigantine of 6) in the harbor of the town of Logan, laden with wine, brandy and sugar - August 1702; thirdly, recapture of the *Ann* galley - August 1702; and finally, a French man-of-war of 70 guns, which was later destroyed - August 1702.

*C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703, no. 319*

Minutes of the Council of Jamaica, 11 Feb. 1703.

-Refers to the capture of three ships by H.M.S. *Gosport* [32 guns], Captain Smith commander, while cruising off the coast of Jamaica.

*C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703, no. 737*

Copy of Commodore Walker's journal relating to the expedition to Guadeloupe, 5 Mar. to 25 May 1703.

-Refers to the capture of a small sloop from Martinique by H.M.S. *Yarmouth*.

*C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703, no. 1190*

Letter from Sir Thomas Lawrence to Council of Trade and Plantations, 25 Oct. 1703.

-Reports the capture of a ship from St. Dominique by H.M.S. *Oxford*, Captain Josiah Moore commander, laden with 700 hogsheads of sugar, valued at £3,000.

*C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703, no. 1320*

Letter from Commissioners of Prizes to Mr. Popple, 26 Nov. 1703.

-Reports the capture of the *Neptune* by H.M.S. *Kinsale* [135-155 men, 32-36 guns, Captain Follambe / Folgeambe commander], condemned and sold at Barbados.

*C.S.P. Col. 1702-1703, no. 1329*

Letter from Governor Sir B. Granville to Mr. Popple, 27 Nov. 1703.

-Reports that H.M.S. *Blackwell*, Captain Martin commander, had captured and burnt, on the 22 October 1703, three sloops off the coast of Martinique.

-On the 27 October 1703, H.M.S. *Blackwell* further captured a French merchantman *Duke de Berry* of 130 tons and 10 guns, laden with sugar from Martinique.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 884*

Letter from Mr. Byfield to Mr. Secretary Hedges, 22 Feb.

-Refers to the capture of a French privateer of 41 guns and 200 men by H.M.S. *Advice* [226 men, 48 guns], laden with a quantity of bullion and 60 slaves, condemned Boston.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1264*

Letter from Rear-Admiral Whetstone to the Secretaries of State, 18 July 1705.

-Reports that H.M.S. *Suffolk* had captured a French man-of-war of 46 guns, 10 leagues off Cartagena, as well as a French privateer from Martinique and its prize, a Jamaican sloop.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1343*

Letter from General Sir B. Granville to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 15 Sept. 1705.

-Reports that H.M.S. *Weymouth* [226-280 men, 48-54 guns, Captain Mitchell] had captured a French merchant ship of 20 guns and 80 men, cargo of wine and dry goods, condemned Barbados.

C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1352

Letter from Merchants interested in the Jamaican trade to the Queen, 23 Sept. 1705.

-Refers to the recapture of the *Richard and Sarah* (30 guns and 20 men) by H.M.S Rochester.

C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1459

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 20 Nov. 1705.

-Reports the capture of two French prizes by H.M.S. *Hector* [Captain Grey commander], brought into Jamaica for condemnation on the 18 November 1705.

C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1478

Letter from Governor Lord Cornbury to Sir Charles Hedges, 28 Nov. 1705.

-Reports the capture of a vessel by H.M.S. *Jersey* [Captain Edward Vernon commander], for illegal trading.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 667

Letter from Mr. Dummer to Mr. Popple, 14 Dec. 1706.

-Reports the capture of a French privateer of 24 guns from Havana, Cuba, by H.M.S. *Assistance* [226-250 men, 48-50 guns], laden with various provisions.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 754

Letter from Colonel Cleland to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 10 Feb. 1707.

-Reports that H.M.S *Kinsale* [135-155 men, 32-36 guns, Captain Follambe / Folgeambe commander] had captured two prizes.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 868

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 21 Aug. 1707.

-Reports the capture of a Spanish prize by H.M.S. *Dunkirk* [332-365 men, 60-64 guns, Captain George Purois commander].

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1050

Letter from Governor Lord Cornbury to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 20 July 1707.

-Reports the recapture of a Virginian ship by H.M.S *Trinton's Prize*, Captain Davis commander, 70 leagues off the capes of Virginia.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1180

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 9 Nov. 1707.

-Refers to the capture of four vessels by ships under the command of Commodore Wager.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1330 (viii)

Lt. Governor Bennett to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 10 Feb. 1708, enclosing a copy of the proceedings of the Council of Bermuda, 7 Aug. 1707.

-Refers to the seizure of the vessel *Rose* for illegal trading by H.M.S *Trinton's Prize* [Captain Davis commander].

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1368

Letter from Mr. Burchett to Mr. Secretary Boyle, 3 Mar. 1708.

-Reports the capture of a Dutch ship by H.M.S. *Guernsey* [Captain William Harriot], condemned and sold at Jamaica.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1423

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 31 Mar. 1708.

-Reports the capture of a homeward bound French ship of 200 tons which was laden with a cargo of sugar, as well as a French privateer (formerly the Queen Anne packet boat) by H.M.S. *Scarborough* [135 men, 32 guns].

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1482

Letter from Governor Crowe of Barbados to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 18 May 1708.

-Reports the capture of a French prize from Guadeloupe of 120 tons by H.M.S. *Lowestoffe* [135-145 men, 32 guns], Captain Fane commander, and H.M.S *Greenwich*, laden with sugar.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 69

Letter from Mr. Dummer to Mr. Popple, 2 Aug. 1708.

-Refers to Commodore Wager's destruction of the Spanish man-of-war *El Conde le Cassa* carrying 54 brass guns and reportedly a 'very rich cargo'.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 88

Letter from Council of Trade and Plantations to Governor Crowe, 13 Aug. 1708.

-Reports the capture of a French prize by H.M.S *Greenwich*.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 174

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 27 Oct. 1708.

-Reports that H.M.S *Severn* had recaptured from the French an English ship bound from Barbados to Virginia.

-Further reports that H.M.S *Dunkirk's Prize* [Captain George Purois] had captured a French ship, laden with wine, brandy and dry goods.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 180

Letter from Governor Crowe to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 2 Nov. 1708.

-Reports that H.M.S *Weymouth* [226-280 men, 48-54 guns, Captain Mitchell commander] captured, off Martinique, in early October, a French ship of 120 tons, which was laden with beef, pork, flower, wine and brandy, condemned and sold at Barbados.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 279

Report of a committee of the Assembly of Jamaica to the governor of Jamaica, 3 Jan. 1708.

-Refers to the capture of the French brigantine *St. Nicholas* by H.M.S *Roebuck*, condemned at Jamaica.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 339

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 1 Feb. 1709.

-Reports that H.M.S. *Jersey* [Captain Edward Vernon commander] had recaptured a Guinea ship of 300 tons from two French privateers, who had captured the said vessel on her way to Jamaica.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 396

Letter from Governor Crowe to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 2 Mar. 1709.

-Reports that H.M.S *Trinton's Prize* [Captain Davis / Richard Girlington commander] had taken a French vessel of 80 tons, off Martinique, laden with wine, beef, pork, bread and linings.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 451

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 16 Apr. 1709.

-Reports that H.M.S *Portland*, Captain Hutchins commander, had captured two French ships, off Portobello, one of 50 guns, formerly the English man-of-war *Coventry*, and another vessel of 30-40 guns, laden with a cargo of 75 chests of money (£75,000).

-Further reports that another man-of-war stationed at Jamaica captured a snow and three sloops.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 483

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 1 May 1709.

-Reports that H.M.S *Portland* [Captain Hutchins commander] had captured a ship with 400,000 pieces of eight on board.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 542

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 25 May 1709.

-Reports the capture of a French Guinea ship, off Portobello, by H.M.S *Portland* [Captain Hutchins commander], as well as a sloop, on-route to Cartagena from Cuba, by H.M.S *Roebuck*.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 597 (i)

Letter from Governor Parke to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 26 June 1709, enclosing Governor Parke's answer to 22 articles of complaint against him,

-Reports the capture of a neutral vessel for illegal trading by H.M.S *Hector* [Captain Grey commander].

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 720 (i)

Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade of Plantations, 8 Sept. 1709, enclosing another letter from Pedro Joseph Delaranza, June 20, 1709.

-Reports the capture of seven 'frigates' of great value and several other small vessels by an English squadron of seven ships.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 748

Letter from Governor Crowe to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 25 Sept. 1709.

-Reports that the men-of-war stationed at Barbados had captured a French sloop, which was condemned at Antigua, as well as recaptured an English sloop, laden with lumber from New England.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 909 (i)

Order of the Queen in Council, 15 Dec. 1709, enclosing correspondence from Martinique to the Queen.

-Refers to the capture of the French Flag of Truce *Society* by H.M.S *Hector*, Captain Grey commander, condemned Antigua.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 313

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 22 July 1710.

-Reports that H.M.S *Crowne* had captured a French prize, laden with wines and dry goods.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 857

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 27 May 1711.

-Reports that H.M.S *Jersey*, Captain [Edward] Vernon commander, captured and brought into Jamaica, a French merchantman of 30 guns and 120 men, for trading on the Spanish coast.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 891

Letter from Mr. Littleton to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 20 June 1711.

-Reports that H.M.S. *Sweepstakes* [Captain Thomas Jacobs commander] had captured a French Guinea ship with 160 slaves on board.

-Further reports that H.M.S *Ruby* captured another French Guinea ship.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 42

Letter from Lt. Governor Spotswood to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 25 July 1711.

-Reports that H.M.S *Enterprise*, Captain [Nicholas] Smith commander, captured, off the Capes of Virginia, a French privateer from Petit Guavas carrying 88 men.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 46 (i)

An exact from Colonel King's journal, May to June 1711.

-Reports that H.M.S *Dunkirk*, Captain Butler commander, captured, on the 27 June 1711, a French sloop.

-Further reports the a man-of-war captured, between Cape Britton and Newfoundland, a French vessel of 14 guns and 120 tons, laden with wine, brandy and bale goods.

-Further reports that H.M.S *Chester* [Captain Thomas Mathews commander] took a French sloop belonging to Placentia.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 61

Letter from Brig. General Hill to Lord Dartmouth, 31 July 1711.

-Reports that H.M.S *Chester* [Captain Thomas Mathews commander] had captured a prize on-route from France to Quebec, on the 25 June 1711.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 77

Letter from Governor Lowther of Barbados to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 20 Aug. 1711.

-Reports that H.M.S *Sweepstakes*, Captain Thomas Jacobs commander, captured the *Cupid* of 48 men.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 85

Letter from Mr. Bridger to Mr. Popple, 31 Aug. 1711.

-Refers to a ship captured by H.M.S *Weymouth* [226-280 men, 48-54 guns, Captain Mitchell commander] and H.M.S *Windsor* [Captain Tudor Trevor commander].

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 145

Dudley Woodbridge, judge of H.M court of Admiralty at Barbados, to the Earl of Dartmouth, 27 Oct. 1711.

-Refers to the capture of the French ship *Camwood Merchant* by H.M.S *Anglesea*, Captain Thomas Legg commander, and H.M.S *Joy*, Captain Robert Chadwich commander, condemned at Barbados.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 216

Letter from G. Vane to the Earl of Dartmouth, 16 Dec. 1711.

-Refers to the capture of a small French privateer sloop, in August 1711, by H.M.S *Mountague*.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 251

Letter from Governor Hunter to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 1 Jan. 1712.

-Reports the capture of *St. John the Baptist* for illegal trading with the French by H.M.S *Lowestoffe* [135-145 men, 32 guns], Captain Gordon commander, cargo valued at £8,000.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 418

Letter from Lt. Governor Spotswood to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 15 May 1712.

-Reports the capture of a French privateer of 180 men by H.M.S *Severn*, brought into New York for condemnation.

C.S.P. Col., 1712-1714, no. 114

Letter from Commodore Sir Nicholas Trevanion to the Earl of Dartmouth, 29 Oct. 1712.

-Reports that in the latter part of September, the men-of-war under his command, took five prizes of considerable value.

C.S.P. Col., 1712-1714, no. 291

Letter from Governor Lord Alexander Hamilton of Jamaica to the Earl of Dartmouth, 5 Mar. 1713.

-Refers to the capture of a Spanish trading vessel by H.M.S *Centurion* [226-280 men, 48-54 guns], laden with cocoa and money.

**Calendar of Treasury Books (C.T.B.)**

C.T.B., 1702, XVII, part II, 213

Account by John Perrie, Register of the Admiralty court at Antigua, of prizes taken and condemned at Antigua between 19 Aug. 1702, and 6 Feb. 1703.

-H.M.S *Maidstone*, Captain William Fairborn commander, captured, on the 29 September 1702, a small sloop *Dove* of Martinique, condemned Antigua.

-H.M.S *Maidstone*, Captain William Coney commander, captured a privateer corvett *Victory* of Martinique of 50 tons, 4 guns, 49 men, condemned on the 11 June, valued at £116, 13s, 4d.

-H.M.S *Sheerness*, Captain Thomas Mitchell commander, captured, to the windward of Antigua, the French privateer sloop *La Tripone* of Martinique (140 tons, 4 guns and 69 men). Also recaptured, on the 22 October 1703, the *Bridgewater* of London, Captain Joseph Powis commander, which was the prize of the said privateer. Both prizes condemned on the 27 August, the latter consisting of 226 slaves, which were valued at £130.

-H.M.S *Sheerness*, Captain [Thomas] Mitchell commander, captured, on the 5 December 1702, out of Basse Terre Road on Guadeloupe, a ship *Little Marrian* of Nantes, France (75

tons), laden with brown sugar, cotton and ginger, condemned on the 15 December 1702, ship and cargo valued at £1600.

C.T.B., 1703, XVIII, 322

Letter from William Lowndes to the Prize Commissioners, 30 June 1703.

-Refers to three prizes captured last summer by H.M.S *Oxford* [Captain Josiah Moore commander].

C.T.B., 1703, XVIII, 477-8

Letter from William Blathwayt, Auditor General of the Plantations, to William Lowndes, 13 Dec. 1703.

-Refers to the capture of a French prize by H.M.S *Oxford* [Captain Josiah Moore commander], condemned at Maryland, ship and cargo estimated to be worth £6,000.

C.T.B., 1704-1705, XIX, 137

Report from William Blathwayt, to treasurer Goldolphin, 15 Feb. 1704.

-Refers to the capture, in September 1703, of a prize by H.M.S *Oxford*, Captain [Josiah] Moore commander, carried into Maryland for condemnation, valued at 1600.

C.T.B., 1704-1705, XIX, 266

Letter from William Lowndes to the Prize Commissioners, 7 June 1704.

-Refers to the capture of the French ship *St. Paul* of Rochelle by H.M.S *Oxford*, Captain [Josiah] Moore commander, condemned and sold at Maryland.

C.T.B., 1704-1705, XIX, 318

Order by Treasurer Goldolphin to the Receiver of the Rights and Perquisites of the Admiralty, 24 June 1704.

-Refers to the capture, in May 1702, of the vessel *St. Nicholas* by H.M.S *Oxford*, Captain [Josiah Moore] Morris commander.

C.T.B., 1704-1705, XIX, 512

Letter from William Lowndes to the Commissioners of Prizes, 16 Feb. 1705.

-Refers to an extract of a letter from Governor Handasyd, which reports that, in early November 1704, H.M.S *Mairmaid*, Captain Ryddal commander, captured the French ship *Point Chateron* of 320 tons, 20 guns, 9 patteroes and 130 men, condemned at Jamaica.

-Lowndes letter also refers to another letter from Sir William Matthew to Secretary Hedges, on the 15 November 1704, which reports that since his arrival and appointment as prize agent for Antigua, three prizes have been brought in and condemned. These prizes consisted of one captured by H.M.S *Sherness*, Captain [Thomas] Mitchell commander, another by H.M.S *Lynn*, Captain Martin commander, and lastly, by a New York privateer.

C.T.B., 1705-1706, XIX, part III, 771

Letter from J. Taylor to the Customs Commissioners, 27 Sept. 1706.

-Refers to four prizes captured by H.M.S *Speedwell* [115-125 men, 26-28 guns], Captain [George] Comocke [Cammock] commander, condemned Leeward Islands.

C.T.B., 1708, XXII, introduction, cdlxviii to cdlxix

Declared Accounts: Navy: Prize Ships: General Account, 24 June 1707 to 14 June 1708.

-H.M.S *Nonsuch* reported to have captured *St. William* of Nantes, condemned Newfoundland.

-H.M.S *Kinsale* (135 / 155 men, 32 / 36 guns) [Captain Follambe / Foigeambe commander, reported to have captured *St. William* of Nantes, condemned Newfoundland.

-H.M.S *Centurion* (226 / 280 men, 48 / 54 guns) reported to have captured *Siren* or *Mermaid*, condemned New England.

-H.M.S *Advise* (226 men, 48 guns) reported to have captured the *St. John the Baptist*, condemned New England.

C.T.B., 1708, XXII, 82

Letter from William Lowndes to the Prize Commissioners, 13 Jan. 1708.

-Refers to the capture, off Jamaica, of a French prize called *Aquilon* by H.M.S *Mountaque*.

C.T.B., 1708, XXII, 455

Warrant by Treasurer Goldolphin to the Customs Commissioners, 8 Dec. 1708.

-Refers to the capture, off Newfoundland, of a Portuguese prize called *St. Stephen* (Lisbon) by H.M.S *Hastings*, cargo of fish.

C.T.B., 1708, XXII, 458

Treasury reference to the Customs Commissioners, 13 Dec. 1708.

-Refers to the capture of the French prize *St. John Baptist* by H.M.S *Plymouth*, laden with fish.

C.T.B., 1709, XXIII, part 1, cclxv to cclxvi

Declared Accounts: Navy (Prize ships), 24 June 1708 to 23 Mar. 1709.

Sold and disposed by Robert Gibbs, Prize Agent Barbados:

-H.M.S *Kinsale* (135-155 men, 32-36 guns), Captain Follambe [Folgeambe] commander, reported to have captured *Neptune* of Nantes, condemned Barbados.

-H.M.S *Kinsale* [as above] reported to have captured *La Marguise*, condemned at Barbados.

-[H.M.S *Blackwell*], Captain Samuel Martin commander, reported to have captured *Duke de Berry*, condemned Barbados.

-H.M.S *Lowestoffe* (135-145 men, 32 guns), Captain John Stuckley commander, reported to have captured *Suzanna* or dogger ketch, condemned Barbados.

-H.M.S *Weymouth* (226-280 men, 48-54 guns), Captain [Thomas] Mitchell commander, reported to have captured *L'Amozan*, condemned Barbados.

-H.M.S *Kinsale* [135-145 men, 48-54 guns], Captain Francis Cassella commander, reported to have captured *St. Jermain* and *La Maria*, condemned Barbados.

Sold and disposed by Edward Perrie, Prize Agent at Antigua:

-H.M.S *Greyhound* (190 men, 42 guns), Captain William Herriot commander, reported to have captured a small sloop, condemned Antigua.

-H.M.S *Medway* (346 / 365 men, 60 / 64 guns), Captain Thomas Hughes commander, reported to have captured the *Chance* sloop, condemned Antigua.

-H.M.S *Speedwell* (115 / 125 men, 26 / 28 guns), Captain George Cammock [Camocke] commander, reported to have captured the *Tortelle*, condemned Antigua.

C.T.B., 1710, XXVI, part 1, clxxvii to clxxxvi

Declared Accounts: Navy and Victualling (Prize Ships and Goods), 18 Mar. 1709 to 29 Sept. 1715.

Sold and disposed by Alexander Hamilton and Andrew Brown, Prize Agents at Jamaica.

-H.M.S *Experiment* (135 / 145 men, 32 guns), Captain Robert Bowler commander, reported to have captured *Jesus Nazareno de Nostra Signiora de Rosario* sloop, condemned Jamaica.

-H.M.S *Kingston* [Captain Barrow Harris commander] and H.M.S *Portland* [Captain Hutchins commander, reported to have captured *Elgavillion*, condemned West Indies.

-H.M.S *Dunkirk* (332 / 365 men, 60 / 64 guns) [Captain Butler commander] reported to have captured *Nostra Signore de Candad le Brave*, condemned West Indies.

-H.M.S *Assistance* (226 / 250 men, 48 / 50 guns) reported to have captured *Jesus Maria Joseph*, condemned West Indies.

-H.M.S *Scarborough* (135 men, 32 guns) reported to have captured *Cousin Mary Ruyter* galley, condemned West Indies.

-H.M.S *Suffolk* (440 / 440 men, 70 guns) reported to have captured *Mayflower*, condemned West Indies.

C.T.B., 1710, XXIV, part 1, clxxvi to clxxxvii

Declared Accounts: Arrears of Prizes: Cash Account, 18 Mar. 1710 to 29 Sept. 1715.

Ships reported to have been taken by Royal Navy ships but no name given.

-*St. Hubert*, condemned Jamaica

-*Dragon*, condemned Jamaica.

-*Chartreuse*, condemned Jamaica.

-*Young John of Flushing*, condemned Jamaica.

-*Bonadventure*, condemned Jamaica.

-*Acquillon*, condemned Jamaica.

- St. Peter*, condemned Jamaica.
- L'Herreux*, condemned Jamaica.
- Superbe*, condemned Jamaica.
- La Hardy*, condemned Jamaica.
- Royal Angelica*, condemned Jamaica.
- Jolly*, condemned Jamaica.
- Mathew*, condemned Jamaica.

C.T.B., 1710, XXIV, part II, 436

Treasury warrant to the Receiver of Salvage Money, 5 Sept. 1710.

-Refers to the recapture from French privateers of the English merchant ship *Ruth* by H.M.S Speedwell [115-125 men, 26-28 guns, Captain George Comocke commander].

C.T.B., 1710, XXIV, part II, 483

Custom Commissioners report on the petition of Simon Francis of London, 11 Oct. 1710.

-H.M.S *Oxford* (274 / 280 men, 54 guns), Captain Joshua Moore commander, reported to have captured the *St. Paul* of Rochelle, condemned Maryland.

**Manuscripts of the House of Lords (H.L.M.)**

H.L.M., 1706-1708, 293

Account of the prizes captured by Commodore Underdown's Squadron in the French fisheries at Newfoundland, Aug. 1707:

- Duke of Orleans* of St. Malo (360 tons, 110 men and 30 guns) captured on the 3 August 1707.
- La Pine* of St. Malo (120 tons, 71 men and 20 guns) captured on the 3 August 1707.
- Marina* of St. Malo (340 tons, 120 men and 32 guns) captured on the 4 August 1707.
- Margaret* of St. Malo (200 tons, 100 men and 26 guns) captured on the 4 August 1707.
- Dicouge* of St. Malo (300 tons, 110 men and 30 guns) captured on the 5 August 1707.
- Victory* of Granville (150 tons, 100 men and 20 guns) captured on the 5 August 1707.
- Palm Prize* of Granville (150 tons, 100 men and 20 guns) captured on the 5 August 1707.
- Palm* of Granville, 150tons (100 men and 20 guns) captured on the 6 August 1707.
- Margaret and Francis* of Benik (110 tons, 45 men and 12 guns) captured on the 7 August 1707.
- Marlborough* of Brest (400 tons, 120 men and 38 guns) captured on the 7 August 1707.
- Julie* of Benik (100 tons, 50 men and 10 guns) captured on the 7 August 1707.
- Roberts* of Brest (100 tons, 36men and 10 guns) captured on the 7 August 1707.
- Mourpau* of Norleig (380tons, 150 men and 36 guns) captured on the 7 August 1707.

**Colonial Office Manuscripts (P.R.O. C.O.)**

P.R.O. C.O., 28/7, no. 33 (ii)

List of Prizes condemned at Barbados, accounted for by James Hannay, received 5 Aug. 1704.

- Neptune* of Nantes (180 tons, 16 guns) captured by a Royal Navy ship, laden with wine, dry goods and provisions, value 33616, 9s, 5d, Queen's share £1242, 17s, 1d, Lord High Admiral's tenths £361, 12s, 11d, captors share £1242, 17s, 1d, charges and fees £613, 10s, 1d.
- Marchionese* of Rochelle (50 tons, 2 guns) captured by a Royal Navy ship, laden with sugar, value £1025, 14s, 3d, Queen's share £361, 6s, 1d, Lord High Admiral's share £102, 11s, 5d, captor's share £361, 6s, 1d, charges and fees £200.
- Privateer brigantine *Conquesant* of Martinique (60 tons, 7 guns) captured by H.M.S *Blackwell*, Captain Samuel Martin commander.

P.R.O. C.O., 28/7, 272-274.

Account of prizes condemned at Barbados from the start of the war to 4 Feb. 1704. Signed by Nick Sayers.

- French ship *Neptune* of Nantes captured by H.M.S *Kinsale* [135-155 men, 32-36 guns], Captain Folgeambe [Follambe] commander, condemned as above. (REPEAT REFERENCE – P.R.O. C.O., 28/7, no. 33 (i))

- French ship *Marchioness* of Rochelle (50 tons and 2 guns) captured by above, condemned on the 6 February 1703. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)
- French privateer brigantine *Conquerant* of Martinique (60 tons, 8 guns and 106 men) captured by H.M.S *Blackwell*, Captain Samuel Martin commander, condemned on the 13 September 1703. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)
- French sloop captured off the coast of Martinique by above, condemned on the 5 November 1703.
- French dogger ketch the *Susannah* (80 tons and 7 guns) captured off Tenerife by H.M.S *Lowestoffe*, Captain Charles Fane commander, brought to Barbados by John Clarke (chief mate of said ship), condemned on the 1 January 1704.

P.R.O. C.O., 28/12, no. 53 (xi)

List of Prizes condemned at Barbados between October 1708 and August 1709. Signed by Stephen Alexander, 1 Sept. 1709.

- The French ship *L'vergo de Grace* of Nantes (90 tons, 10 guns and 33 men), Peter Fowey master, captured by [H.M.S *Anglesea*], Captain Thomas Legg commander, laden with French goods and merchandise, condemned on the 2 October 1708.
- The French ship *St. Louis* of Nantes (80 tons, 8 guns and 24 men), captured, off Martinique, by H.M.S *Trinton's Prize*, Captain Richard Girlington commander, laden with French goods and merchandise, condemned on the 18 February 1709.
- The French sloop *Maria* of Martinique, captured off the island of Tabago by H.M.S *Dolphin*, Captain Cesar Brooke commander, condemned on the 23 February 1709.
- The French sloop *St. Michael*, captured by a sloop commissioned a vessel of war, John wells commander, condemned 2 June 1709.

P.R.O. C.O., 28/13, 596-7

List of Prizes brought into Barbados between July 1711 and Mar. 1712.

- The French ship *Cupidong* captured by H.M.S *Sweepstakes*, Captain Thomas Jacobs, laden with Negroes, flour and gunpowder [condemned 14 July 1711].
- The French sloop *Hazardous* of Bonye, captured by H.M.S *Panther*, Captain Charles Constable commander, laden with wine, flour, beef and pork.
- The French ship *Cesar* of Nantes captured by H.M.S *Anglesea*, Captain Thomas Legg commander, and H.M.S *Joy*, Captain Robert Chadwick commander, laden with provisions [condemned 10 October 1711].
- The French ship *St. Peter* captured by H.M.S *Experiment* [135-145 men, 32 guns], Captain Mathew Elford commander, laden with sugar, cotton and ginger [condemned 21 November 1711].
- The French ship *Four Sisters* captured by above, laden as above [condemned 21 November 1711].
- The French ship *Galathee* captured by H.M.S *Panther*, Captain Charles Constable commander, and H.M.S *Experiment* [135-145 men, 32 guns], Captain Matthew Elford commander, laden with flour [condemned 12 February 1712].
- The French ship *L'Terese* captured by H.M.S *Chester*, Captain Thomas Mathews commander, laden with various goods, such as beef, flour, pork, hoops, bread, butter, gammons, olives etc [condemned 28 February 1712].
- The Spanish ship *Rosario* captured by above, laden with beef, sugar, pork and sole leather [condemned 28 February 1712].
- The French ship *St. John* captured by H.M.S *Enterprise*, Captain Nicholas Smith commander, laden with various goods, such as beef, pork, butter, flour, loose casks, hoops, brandy, red and white wine etc [condemned 6 March 1712].
- The French ship *St. Andrew* captured by H.M.S *Shoreham*, Captain Charles Hardy commander, laden with claret, beef, pork, flour, thread for nets, nails, soap, linen [condemned 6 March 1712].
- The French ship *St. James* captured by H.M.S *Enterprise*, Captain Nicholas Smith commander [condemned 12 March 1712].
- The French ship *Marie Galette* captured by H.M.S *Experiment* [135-145 men, 32 guns], Captain Matthew Elford commander, laden with various goods, such as beef, cheese, soap, bread, flour, butter, oatmeal, claret, brandy and whit wine [condemned 17 March 1712].

- The French ship *Victorious* captured by H.M.S *Hector*, Captain William Grey commander, laden with various goods, such as claret, beef, pork, butter, candles, hoops, candles, flour, linen for bags, brandy, cheese, canvas, glasses, and white wine [condemned 17 March 1712].
- The French ship *La Loire* captured by H.M.S *Enterprise*, Captain Nicholas Smith commander, laden with claret, white wine, beef, candles, butter, flour, cotton, bread and cordage [condemned 19 March 1712].

P.R.O. C.O., 28/14, no. 2 (vi)

Account of prizes condemned at Barbados between 14 July 1711 and 28 June 1712:

- The French ship *Cupidong* captured by H.M.S *Sweepstakes*, Captain Thomas Jacobs commander, and H.M.S *Guernsey*, Captain William Harriot commander, condemned on the 14 July 1711. (REPEAT REFERENCE – P.R.O. C.O., 28/13, 596-7)
- The French ship *Cesar* captured by H.M.S *Anglesea*, Captain Thomas Legg commander, condemned on the 10 October 1711. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)
- The French ship *Experance* captured by above, condemned as above.
- The French ship *Camwood Merchant* captured by above, condemned as above
- The French ship *St. Peter* captured by H.M.S *Experiment*, Captain Matthew Elford commander, condemned on the 21 November 1711 (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above).
- The French ship *Four sisters* captured by above, condemned as above (REPEAT REFERENCE - as above).
- The French ship *Galathee*, captured by [H.M.S *Panther*] Captain Charles Constable and [H.M.S *Experiment*] Captain Matthew Elford, condemned on the 12 February 1712. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)
- The French ship *Ferese* captured by H.M.S *Chester*, Captain Thomas Mathews commander, condemned on the 28 February 1712. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)
- The Spanish ship *Rosario* captured by above, condemned as above. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)
- The French ship *St. John* captured by H.M.S *Enterprise*, Captain Nicholas Smith commander, condemned on the 6 March 1712. (REPEAT REFERENCE – P.R.O. C.O., as above)
- The French ship *St. Andrew* captured by H.M.S *Shoram* [*Shoreham*], Captain Charles Hardy commander, condemned as above. (REPEAT REFERENCE – P.R.O. C.O., as above)
- The French ship *St. James* captured by H.M.S *Enterprise*, Captain Nicholas Smith commander, condemned on the 12 March 1712. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)
- The French ship *Victorious* captured by H.M.S *Hector*, Captain William Grey commander, condemned on the 17 March 1712. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)
- The French ship *Marie Galette* captured by H.M.S *Experiment*, Captain Matthew Elford commander, condemned as above. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)
- The French ship *La Louere* captured by H.M.S *Enterprise*, Captain Nicholas Smith commander, condemned on the 19 March 1712. (REPEAT REFERENCE – as above)
- The French ship *Reutoutre* captured by H.M.S *Panther*, Captain Charles Constable commander, condemned on the 28 June 1712.

P.R.O. C.O., 137/6, no. 42 (v)

List of prizes condemned at Jamaica between 4 May 1702 and 30 Jan. 1704.

- French ship *Queen of Angells*, belonging to Bordeaux, captured, near Leoganna, on the 28 July, by H.M sloop *Recovery*, Captain Thomas Longridge commander, value £1200.
- French ship *Generous*, belonging to Port Louis, captured, near Cape Mayees, on the 14 July, by H.M.S *Pendennis*, Captain Thomas Hudson commander, value £424, 5s.
- French sloop *St. Anthony* captured near, Cape Alta Vella, on the 2 August 1702, by H.M.S *Kingston*, Captain Barrow Harris commander, value £40.
- French sloop *Spey*, belonging to petit Guavas, captured, on the 14 July 1702, by H.M.S *Bredah*, Captain Christopher Fogg commander, value £45.
- French ship *Imprudent*, belonging to Port Louis, captured, on the 3 July 1702, by H.M.S *Colchester*, Captain Redman commander, value £1689, 4s, 7d.
- French pinch *St. Nicholas*, belonging to Deipe, captured, near Grand Guiavas, on the 9 July 1702, by above, value £206, 4d.
- French ship *Queen Mary* captured, on the 29 July, by H.M.S *Windsor*, Charles Constable commander, value £406.

- Spanish brigantine of unknown name, belonging to Cuba, captured, in the harbour of Barracoa, on the 16 November 1702, by H.M sloop Recovery, value £376, 9s, 8d.
- French sloop *St. Peter*, belonging to Petit Guavas, captured, near Cape Mayees, on the 17 November 1702, by H.M.S *York*, Captain Smith commander, value £140.
- French privateer ship of unknown name, captured, near cape Fiberoon, on the 15 May 1703, by H.M.S *Canterbury*, Captain Robert Thompson commander, value £4069, 15s, 6d.
- French privateer ship called the *Eagle*, captured, near Guanaboa, on the 24 March 1703, by H.M.S *Colchester*, Captain Hartnoll, near Guanaboa, value £40.
- Spanish sloop *St. Anothony of Soul of Pirgatory*, French sloop and ship, *Vigilent Dogger* and *Ressourse*, belonging to Petit Guavas, captured, near Guanaboa, on the 16 June and the 18 September 1703, by H.M.S *Nonsuch*, Captain Andrew Douglas commander, value £568, 9s, 6d, £40 (last 2).

P.R.O. C.O., 137/8, no. 24 (i)

List of French and Spanish vessels condemned at Jamaica between July 1708 and Sept. 1708:

- Spanish vessel *Santa Cruz y' Nuestra Senera de Atocha* captured, on 29 May 1708, by Admiral Charles Wager, condemned on the 17 of July 1708.
- Spanish brigantine *Nuestra Senora de la Chandad y' San Joseph* captured, on the 16 July 1708, by H.M.S *Windsor*, Captain Tudor Trevor commander, condemned on the 24 July 1708.
- Unknown French vessel captured, on the 12 August 1708, by H.M.S *Jersey*, Captain Edward Vernon commander, condemned on the 19 August 1708.
- Two French vessels *Gally* of Rochelle and ship *Le Marechall de Chammilly* captured, on the 27 August 1708, by H.M.S *Dunkirk's prize*, Captain George Purois commander, condemned on the 16 September 1708.

P.R.O. C.O., 138/12, 201

List of the Prizes captured by Commodore Wager's squadron, 26 Feb. 1708.

- Jesus Maria Joseph* of 160 tons, 60 men and 14 guns, bound to Campeachy, captured by H.M.S *Assistance* [226-250 men, 48-50 guns], laden with cacao.
- Young John* of Flushing (120 tons and 18 guns) captured, on the Spanish coast, by H.M.S *Severn*, laden with diverse contraband goods.
- Santa Rosa* from the canaries, bound to Campeachy (250 tons, 160 men and 20 guns), captured by H.M.S *Kingston* [Captain Barrow Harris] and H.M.S *Portland* [Captain Hutchins commander], laden with wine, brandy, iron, steel, and sundry goods, burnt by accident in the keys of Port Royal.
- El Gravelein* from Canaries, bound to Havana (150 tons, 129 men and 10 guns), captured by above, laden as above.
- Le Brave* of Rochelle, bound to Leogan (200 tons, 60 men and 18 men), captured by H.M.S *Trinton's Prize*, laden with wine and other goods.

## CAPTURES MADE BY BRITISH PRDATORS OF UNCERTAIN STATUS

***Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies (C.S.P. Col.)****C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 160*

Letter from Governor Seymour of Maryland to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 8 Mar. 1706.

-Refers to capture of *Francois* of Rochelle, France, by Edward Ratchdale in the *Elizabeth*.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 164*

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 5 Mar. 1704.

-Reports the capture of three French privateers attempting to land and take off Negroes, condemned Jamaica.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 585 (iii)*

Letter from Governor Seymour to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 29 Sept. 1704.

-Refers to the French bark *L'Ortolant* (70 tons) by Captain Johnson and his crew, after they had been captured and were being transported to France, condemned at Maryland.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 605*

Letter from Colonel Robert Quarry, Surveyor General of Customs in America to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 15 Oct. 1704.

-Reports that, last August, a small ship was brought into Maryland as prize, cargo consisted of 150 hogsheads of brown sugar, 36 hogsheads of white sugar, and a parcel of ginger.

*C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1007*

Letter from Council of Trade and Plantations to Governor Handasyd, 26 June 1707.

-Refers to two prizes brought into Jamaica.

*C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1230*

Letter from Governor Lord Cornbury to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 8 July 1705.

-Refers to the capture of a French privateer by a brigantine bound from Jamaica to Virginia.

*C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 287 (i)*

Letter from Thomas Mackley to his father, John Mackley, 8 May 1710.

-Reports the capture of one of two French privateers that had attempted to board his vessel the *Alexander* galley.

*C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 897*

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 22 June 1711.

-Reports that the sloop *St. James* was seized and condemned at Bermuda for illegal trading.

***Calendar of Treasury Books (C.T.B.)****C.T.B., 1704-1705, XIX, 382*

Letter from William Lowndes to the Commissioners of Prizes, 19 Oct. 1704.

-Refers to Viscount Dursley's capture, off Newfoundland, of a ship called *Sardlnaciuos*.

*C.T.B., 1705-1706, XX, part II, 234*

Treasury Reference to the Prize Commissioners of the Petition of Captain Andrew Douglas, 26 Apr. 1705.

-Refers to Captain Douglas's capture of two prizes in the West Indies, condemned Jamaica.

*C.T.B., 1705-1706, XX, part II, 575*

Warrant by Treasurer Goldolphin to the Receiver of the Rights and Perquisites of Admiralty and the Comptroller of the same, 13 Feb. 1706.

-Refers to the capture of the ship *Vigilant*, in Gnavas Lake in Mounts Bay, by the *Mary* galley, Captain John Cuthbertson commander, and the *Barnstead* galley, Captain George Morris commander.

C.T.B., 1707, XXI, part II, 396

Warrant by Goldolphin to the Customs Commissioners, 30 July 1707.

-Refers to the capture, off Newfoundland, in August 1704, of a French vessel called the *Boon Alliance* by the *Greyhound* galley, Joseph Triggs commander, cargo consisted of 13,800 couple of wet fish.

C.T.B., 1710, XXIV, part II, 483

Custom Commissioners report on the petition of Simon Francis of London, 11 Oct. 1710.

-Refers to the *Fidelle Fanary* captured by the *Grandier* galley of London, on the banks of Newfoundland, ship and cargo ransomed.

**Colonial Office Manuscripts (P.R.O. C.O.)**

P.R.O. C.O., 137/7, no. 24 (i)

List of prizes condemned at Jamaica between 4 May 1702 and 30 Jan. 1704.

-Spanish barquelonga *L'Esprito Sancto Neustro Sonora de Soladade* from Cuba, captured, on the 18 August 1702, by the sloop *Phoenix*, Captain Francis Johnson commander.

-French ship *St. Dennis* of Nantes, captured, on the 2 September 1702, by the sloop *Neptune*, Captain Watkins commander.

-French ship *Jeane* of Nantes, captured, on the 26 September 1702, by above, condemned because French, valued at £958, 5s.

-Spanish sloop *Nuestra Sonara de la Soladade y'las Animas*, captured, near Cape Cateecho, on the 17 September 1702, by the sloop *Royal Mary*, Captain Edward James commander, valued at £113, 10s.

-Spanish sloop of St. Jago from Cuba, captured, near Jamaica, on the 31 October 1702, by the sloop *Blessing* Captain Simon Tristand commander, valued at £564, 8s.

-French sloop *Royal Mary* captured, near St. Mark, on the 11 November 1702, by the sloop *Blenhole*, Captain William Stone commander, value £520, 12s.

-Spanish sloop *St. Francisco* captured, on the 10 December 1702, by the sloop *Diamond*, Captain Ramsey commander, valued at £20.

-Spanish sloop captured, on the 17 August 1702, by the sloop *Mary Gally*, Captain Edward James commander, valued at £90.

-Yatch *Princess* (formerly belonging to the Royal Africa Company) recaptured, near Hispaniola, on the 19 January 1703, by the sloop *Neptune*, Captain Watkins commander, valued at £288, 10s.

-Spanish ship from Lavera Cruz, captured, near Cameachy, on the 10 September 1702, by the sloop *Mary Gally*, Captain Edward James commander, valued at £439.

-British-colonial sloop *Schutburgh* of St. Thomas, captured, off the Isle of Ash, on the 16 September 1703, by the *Gold Frigate*, Captain Josias Doivell commander, condemned for illegal trading with the French, valued at £224, 14s.

-Sloops *Susan Providence* and *New Marriage* of Curracoa, captured, off the coast of Curracoa, on the 5 and 7 of December 1703, by the sloop *Port Royall*, Captain Charles Pinkethman commander, condemned for illegal trading, value £332, 7s, 9d and £169, 1s, 6d.

-French sloop *Margaritte* of Martinique, captured, off Porto Rico, on the 30 January 1704, by the ship *Lever Poll Merchant*, Captain Thomas Lace commander, valued at £141, 2s.

P.R.O C.O., 323/7, no.23 (iii)

List of Prizes which have been captured and carried into North America and the Islands thereunto belonging which have been accounted for to the Prize Office:

In Newfoundland by Colin Campbell, prize agent:

-*Victory*, produce valued at £149

-*Thersa*, produce valued at £366, 10s

-*Prudence*, produce valued at £150

-*Infanta*, produce valued at £169, 12s, 6d.

- Sovereign Medicine*, produce valued at £121, 15s
- Bon Voyage*, produce valued at £148
- St. John Baptist*, produce valued at £163
- Joshua*, produce valued at £199
- Esperance*, produce valued at £135, 7s, 6d
- Vigilant*, produce valued at £105
- Queen of Angels*, produce valued at £9, 7s, 6d.

In Newfoundland by Giles Wheeler, the succeeding prize agent:

- James of Nantes*, produce valued at £126
- Vanquisher*, produce valued at £191
- Catherine or Fortunate Catherine*, produce valued at £204
- Duke of Orleans*, produce valued at £594
- Hopes of Peace*, produce valued at £903, 3s
- Little St. John*, produce valued at £462, 15s
- Prize Palm*, produce valued at £466
- William Prize*, produce valued at £27
- St. William*, produce valued at £474, 16s, 8d.

In Virginia by Nathaniel Harrison, prize agent there:

- Jesus or Name of Jesus*, produce valued at £2664, 14s, 11d.

In Newfoundland by John Coleman, prize agent there:

- Siren or Mermaid*, produce valued at £367, 5s
- St. John Baptist*, produce valued at £1364, 10s
- Sloop Jolly*, produce valued at £146, 8s, 11d

In Maryland, colonel George Plater disposed of a prize called:

- St. Paul of Rochelle*, produce valued at £3253, 6s, 1d.

#### P.R.O. C.O., 324/10, 32-4

Account of prizes taken during Queen Anne's War, 1 Apr. 1713.

Condemned at Newfoundland by Archibald Cummings, prize agent:

- Constant of Honne*,
- Adventure*,
- Mary Protection*,
- Michael of Sable of Honne*,
- Virgin's Grace*,
- Consent of Boston (recapture)*,
- Sister of Three Brothers*,
- Bien Aimee or Wellbeloved*,
- William of St. Malo*,
- William of Nantes*,
- St. Martin*,
- Mary Anne*,
- Ville of Granville*,
- Roy David*,
- Elizabeth of Rochelle*,
- La Paix*,
- Prophet Elie*,
- Cretot*,
- Le Cerse Couronne of Bayon*,
- St. Hilarion of Nantes*,
- Marquis de la Bertreches*,
- Elizabeth of Nantes*,
- King David*,
- L'Amitie of Rochelle*,
- Angelique*,

- Columbier*,
- Mary* of Nantes,
- Seahorse*,
- St. Peter*,
- St. Anthony* of Padua,
- Happy Return*,
- Sage of Sable* of Honne,
- William* of Granville,
- Fontarabie*,
- Mary Heureuse* or *Blessed Mary*,
- Fleece* of Liverpool (recapture),
- St. Martin de Olonne*,
- St. John* of St. John de Luz,
- Providence Gally* (recapture),
- St. Anne* of St. John de Luz,
- St. Christopher of Plaisance*,
- St. Anthonie*,
- Ark* of Salem (recapture),
- St. John Baptist* of Bayon (condemned as perquisite of Admiralty), valued at £401

Condemned at Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York and Connecticut, James and Hercules Couter, prize gents:

- Francis* of Rochelle,
- Ortolant* (condemned as a perquisite of Admiralty) valued at £1688, 17s, 2d.

Condemned at Carolina and Bahama Islands, Nicholas Trot, prize agent:

- St. Michael* (condemned as a perquisite of Admiralty), valued at £214, 6s, 6d.

**Howard M. Chapin, *Privateer Ships and Sailors: The first Century of American Colonial Privateering, 1625-1725.***

- Letter of Marque ship *Reward*, commanded by Captain Benjamin Gillian of Boston, captured, in June 1704, a French pink of 80 tons, bound for Newfoundland, laden with 40 tons of salt, arrived Boston for condemnation on the 4 August 1704.

## ENEMY CAPTURES: FRENCH

***Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies (C.S.P. Col.)****C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703, no. 899*

Letter from Robert Livingston to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 9 July 1703.

-Reports the capture, in the Atlantic, of the *Thetis* sloop (11 men and 2 guns) by a French privateer of 50 men and 6 guns from La Rochelle, France, Captain Francis La Marque commander.

*C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703, no. 1014*

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 9 Aug. 1703.

-Reports the capture of a vessel from Bristol, Captain Bennet commander, near Nevis, bound for Antigua, by two French privateers, on the 16 May 1703.

-Further reports that a French privateer captured a brigantine in the harbor of St. Christophers, laden with sugar.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 380*

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 10 June 1704.

-Reports that the *Granville* of 16 guns and 50 men, Captain Holden commander, was captured, at Exuma, whilst collecting salt by a French privateer of 4 guns and 60 men, on 4 May 1704.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 685 (d)*

Evidence of several spies sent to Placentia and deserters therefrom, enclosing a deposition of Francis Andrew and John Evans of the *Richard and Mary*, 28 Nov. 1704.

-Describes their capture by the French, in April 1704, whilst on-route from Barbados to Bristol. Ship, crew and cargo of sugar and molasses carried to Placentia.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1185*

Letter from Colin Campbell to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 15 June 1705.

-Reports that the sloop *Friendship* of Boston commissioned for H.M. service, Captain Wain commander, was captured by a French privateer and ransomed for 100 guineas.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1230*

Letter from Governor Lord Cornbury to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 8 July 1705.

-Reports that a French privateer took a Bermudas sloop, which was going from New York to Jamaica. Further reports that this French privateer then captured a brigantine that was bound from Jamaica to Virginia.

*C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 1352*

Merchants interested in the Jamaica trade to the Queen, 23 Sept. 1705.

-Refers to the capture of the *Richard and Sarah* (20 guns and 30 men) by a French privateer by a French privateer of 20 guns and 166 men.

*C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 116*

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 16 Feb. 1706.

-Reports the capture of a packet boat carrying mail and a considerable sum of money by a French privateer.

*C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 323*

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett to Mr. Popple, 16 May 1706.

-Reports the capture of five merchantmen, bound for Virginia, by 2 large French privateers.

*C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 517*

Letter from Governor Lord Cornbury to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 3 Oct. 1706.

-Reports the capture of two sloops, belonging to New York and bound for Jamaica, by French privateers.

Letter from Colonel Jennings of Virginia to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 26 June 1707.

-Reports the capture of five vessels, in late May 1707, by a French privateer.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1199

Letter from the merchants of Jamaican to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 17 Nov. 1707.  
 -Refers to the capture of three or four trading sloops - one of which was sunk with 176,000 pieces of eight on board.

C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708, no. 1573

Letter from Colonel Jenings to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 24 June 1708.  
 -Reports that a privateer sloop from Martinique of 4 guns and 70 men, commanded by (Captain) Crapeau, captured a ship from Liverpool and a sloop from the West Indies, to the southward of the Capes of Virginia.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 10

Letter from Governor Lord Cornbury to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 1 July 1708.  
 -Reports the capture of a merchant ship on-route to Philadelphia from Barbados, commanded by (Captain?) Jones, by a small French privateer from Martinique, in early May.  
 -Further reports that the same privateer, about three leagues off Sandy Hook, took another small sloop from New York, and two ships bound from Liverpool to Philadelphia.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 230

Letter from Governor Cranston of Rhode Island to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 5 Dec. 1708.  
 -Reports that a privateer from France captured a sloop and chased a brigantine aground.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 472

Deposition of Captain Edward Holmes, 20 Apr. 1709.  
 -Reports the capture of his sloop, off Harbor Island, by a French privateer, commanded by Captain Martell.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 529 (iii)

Letter from Governor Parke to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 24 May 1709.  
 -Account of the capture, on the 1 March 1709, of H.M.S Adventure (44 guns, 194 men) Captain Robert Clarke commander, by the French man-of-war Valeur (36 guns, 286 men), Captain Du Clair commander.

C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709, no. 691

Letter from Governor Dudley to Mr. Popple, 16 Aug. 1709.  
 -Reports that French privateers had captured several of New England's coasting vessels, this summer.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 47 (i)

Circular letter from the Council of Trade and Plantations to the Governors and proprietors of Plantations, 19 Jan. 1710, enclosing extracts from three memorials, 26 Dec. 1706.  
 -Refers to the capture of the *Tempest* sloop by French privateers, 12 leagues to the leeward of Cartagena, cargo valued at 270,000 pieces of eight.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 263

Letter from Colonel Jenings to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 10 June 1710.  
 -Refers to various captures by French privateers: (1) The *William and Mary* of London which was bound to Virginia. (2) The ship *Lark* of Falmouth, Edward Poor master, burnt after cargo of goods to the value of £600-700 had been taken off. (3) The *James* of Plymouth (9 guns) sent to Petit Guavas. (4) A sloop from Bermuda captured by a privateer from Martinique (30 guns). (5) Two sloops belonging to North Carolina captured, off the Virginia coast, laden with provisions. (6) Another two vessels reported to have been captured and burnt at sea.

C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 849

Letter from Mr. Dummer to Mr. Popple, 22 May 1711.  
 -Reports that the *Frankland* packet boat had been captured by three French privateers and carried into Brest, France.

- Also reports the capture of H.M.S *Gosport* [Captain Smith commander] of 32 guns, while going to Jamaica, by a French ship of 54 guns, on the 28 July 1706.
- Also reports the capture of H.M.S *Serpent* (bomb ketch, 4 guns), while coming from the West Indies, by a French privateer of 24 guns, on the 25 October 1703.
- Also reports the capture of H.M.S *Swift* (sloop, 10 guns), while coming from New England, by a French privateer of 18 guns, on the 18 August 1702.

C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 143

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett to Lord Dartmouth, 26 Oct. 1711.

- Reports the capture of several vessels by a French privateer of 10 guns and 120 men.

***Calendar of Treasury Books (C.T.B.)***

C.T.B., 1703, XVIII, 132

Royal Warrant to Richard Crawley, Receiver of Salvage Money and other Droits and Perquisites of the Admiralty, 5 Feb. 1703.

- Refers to the capture of the ship *Expedition* of Boston, Henry Lowder master, by a French privateer.

C.T.B., 1705-1706, XX, part II, 398

Royal Warrant to Treasurer Goldolphin, 27 Aug. 1705.

- Refers to the capture by French privateers of a sloop called the *Friendship* of Boston, bound from Newfoundland to England.

C.T.B., 1707, XXI, part II, 412

Warrant by Treasurer Goldolphin to John Dodd, Receiver of the Rights and perquisites of Admiralty, 18 Aug. 1707.

- Refers to the capture of the brigantine *Betty*, Richard Johnson master, by a French privateer, cargo valued at £3,500.

***Manuscripts of the House of Lords (H.L.M.)***

H.L.M., 1702-1704, 98

Report of the Council of Trade and Plantations to the House of Lords, 30 Nov. 1704.

- Refers to the capture of a vessel, Captain Nathaniel Cary commander, going from New England to England, by a French privateer, goods valued at £300.

H.L.M., 1702-1704, 189-90

Papers presented to a House of Lords select committee appointed to consider the state of the fleet and the sea service, 4 Jan. 1703.

- Memorial of Captain Benjamin Edward, stating that his merchant ship was captured, in September 1703, off Antigua, by two French privateers and carried into Martinique.

***Colonial Office Manuscripts (P.R.O. C.O.)***

P.R.O. C.O., 28/13, no. 72 (i)

List of Prizes brought in to Martinique between July 1710 and May 1711.

- Ship the *Thomas* of Boston.
- Sloop the *Dragon*.
- Sloop the *Porto Curasseau*.
- Sloop the *Elizabeth* of Bermuda.
- Sloop the *Elizabeth* of Boston.
- Sloop the *Two Brothers* of Montserrat.
- The *Five Sisters* of Plymouth.
- Ship the *Somerset* of Bristol.
- Sloop the *St. Christopher* of St. Christopher.
- Sloop the *Elizabeth* of St. Christopher.
- Snow the *St. James* of Monserrat.

- Sloop the *Tryall for the Proof* of Bermuda.
- Sloop the *Bansbough* of Road Island
- Sarah and Rebecca* of Philadelphia.
- Brigantine *Our Lady of Consumption*.
- Sloop the *Richard* of Pennsylvania.
- Sloop the *Honest Endeavour* of Bristol
- Sloop the *Hope* of Bermuda.
- Brigantine the *Four Brothers* of Bristol.
- Ship the *Success* of London.
- Sloop the *Barbuda* of Antigua.
- Ship the *Dolphin Gally* of London.
- Sloop the *Deborah* of the Dutch.
- Ship the *Exchange* of Philadelphia.
- Ship the *Levan* of New York
- Sloop the *Mary Rose* of St. Christopher.
- Sloop the *Roger* of Antigua.
- Brigantine the *Henry* of Bristol.
- Ship the *Henry* of Boston.
- Brigantine the *Salisbury*.
- Ship the *Wharton Gally* of Dublin.
- Sloop the *Light Foot* of Boston.
- Ship the *Dolphin* of Boston.
- Sloop the *Constantine* of Pennsylvania.
- Brigantine the *Tryall for Proof* of Road Island.
- Sloop the *Egg* of Boston
- Sloop the *Benjamin*
- Brigantine the *Dolphin* of London.
- Sloop the *Hope* of Antigua.
- Ship and Sloop captured by Captain
- Snow the *Mary Gally*.
- Ship the *Spy* of Dublin.
- Ship the *Happy Return* of
- Ship the *Tryall* of
- Brigantine the *Leopard* of Boston.
- Sloop the *Elizabeth and Mary* of Antigua.
- Ship the *Strong* of New York.
- Sloop the *Elizabeth and Sarah* of New York.
- Sloop of Antigua.
- Ship the *Abichael* of London.
- Sloop the *Catherine* of London.
- Ship the *Friendship* of Glasgow.
- Brigantine the *Robert* of Liverpool.
- Ship belonging to Portugal.
- Ship belonging to London.
- Brigantine the *Mary Ann*, Captain Jones commander.
- Brigantine, Captain Levan commander.

**Howard M. Chapin, *Privateer Ships and Sailors: The first Century of American Colonial Privateering, 1625-1725.***

-The privateer sloop *Phoenix*, Captain John Miles commander, hired by the colony of Massachusetts to hunt a French privateer, seen off cape Cod, in February 1709, was captured, in the spring of 1709, by said French privateer.

-The sloop *Hector*, John Pickett commander, was captured by the French, in 1711, whilst serving in the expedition against Canada.

-A Sloop, John Walker commander, laden with provisions from Boston to Connecticut, was captured, on the 1 June 1706, in Long Island Sound, by a French privateer of 30 tons and 37 men, Captain Charles Ferret commander, commissioned out of Petit Guavas.

-A French privateer sloop of 45 men and 4 guns, captured two coasters, on the 9 August 1712, one commanded by Adam Hardin from Pennsylvania and the other by John Picket from New York, both bound for Canada. Another sloop, laden with grain, was captured on the 10 August 1712

-A brigantine, Captain Michael Hicks commander, returning from Antigua to Rhode Island with a cargo of rum, molasses, cotton and wool, was captured by a French privateer of 4 guns and 125 men, Captain Clement commander, within sight of Block Island. This privateer, while cruising in Vineyard Sound, took a further four prizes.

-A French privateer ship of 150 tons, 10 guns and 120 men, Captain Crapo commander, lay off Sandy Hook, in June 1705, intercepting New York's shipping. Said privateer reported to have captured several vessels.

## ENEMY CAPTURES: SPANISH

***Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies (C.S.P. Col.)****C.S.P. Col., 1704-1705, no. 134*

Certificate of owners of *Portsmouth* galley, 27 Aug. 1705.

-Report, that whilst loading salt at Exhuma, the said ship was captured by a Spanish privateer, on the 4 April, and condemned at Havana.

*C.S.P. Col., 1710-1711, no. 897*

Letter from Lt. Governor Bennett to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 22 June 1711.

-Refers to the capture, off the Bahamas, of a Bermudan vessel by a Spanish privateer from Barico, Cuba.

*C.S.P. Col., 1711-1712, no. 544 (i)*

Letter from Lt. Governor Pulleine to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 9 Jan. 1714.

-Refers to the capture of the sloop *Samuel*, Samuel Sherlock commander, by a Spanish privateer, Captain Lewis Martell commander, under commission from Governor of Santiago. Captured cargo consisted of 700 bushels of salt.

*C.S.P. Col., 1712-1714, no. 513 (ii)*

Address of the Governor, Council and Assembly of Massachusetts Bay to the Queen, Dec. 1713.

-Reports the capture of the ship *Marlborough*, Captain Daniel Frizell commander, by privateer sloop from Spain, Captain Monsr. Nell commander, under commission from the Governor of St. Dominique, cargo of salt, condemned St. Dominique.

*C.S.P. Col., 1712-1714, no. 544 (ii)*

Letter from Lt. Governor Pulleine to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 9 Jan. 1714.

-Refers to the capture, off Bonaire, on the 18 October, of a Bermudan sloop called the *Swan*, Francis Jones owner, by a Spanish privateer, cargo of 7 bags of cocoa, condemned Porto Rico.

***Howard M. Chapin, Privateer Ships and Sailors: The first Century of American Colonial Privateering, 1625-1725.***

-A brigantine, purchased by the colony of Barbados as a guard ship, was captured by the Spanish and sent out as a privateer.

## ENEMY CAPTURES: UNKNOWN

***Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies. (C.S.P. Col.)***C.S.P. Col. 1704-1705, no. 1213

Letter from Mr. Dummer to Mr. Popple, 3 July 1705.

-Reports that the sloop *Cotton of Barbados* was captured by an enemy vessel off Nevis.

C.S.P. Col. 1706-1708, no. 431 (i)

Letter from Governor Parke to Captain Kerr, 15 July 1706.

-Reports the capture of two vessels, belonging to Antigua, by several privateers.

C.S.P. Col. 1706-1708, no. 1551

Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 17 June 1708.

-Reports the loss of the *Neptune* sloop and a Guinea ship.

C.S.P. Col. 1708-1709, no. 150

Letter from Governor Parke to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 1 Oct. 1708.

-Reports the capture of a sloop, belonging to Mr. Chester, agent for the Royal Africa Company.

C.S.P. Col. 1708-1709, no. 870

Extracts of letters to Colonel Rhett by his wife, 24 Nov. 1709.

-Reports the capture of a sloop, off the Bahamas, Adrian Wilson master, laden with provisions, bound for Jamaica, by a privateer sloop of 4 guns and 70 men, Captain Pasqueau commander.

## Appendix 2

### ANALYSIS OF ROYAL NAVY PRISE ACTIVITY IN COLONIAL WATERS, 1702-1713

The statistics in the following tables are drawn from my data file. They have been compiled to act as a comparison to the tabular analysis of British-colonial privateer prize activity, 1702-1713, contained in the third chapter of this thesis.

| TABLE A. 2.1<br>Distribution of Royal Navy Prize Nationality, 1702-1713 |            |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Nationality                                                             | N          | %           |
| French                                                                  | 82         | 31.4        |
| Spanish                                                                 | 13         | 5.0         |
| Other                                                                   | 6          | 2.3         |
| Recapture                                                               | 12         | 4.6         |
| Unknown                                                                 | <u>148</u> | <u>56.7</u> |
| Total                                                                   | 261        | 100.0       |

\*Category described as 'other' refers to the capture of vessels for illegal trading with the French and Spanish (includes 5 British and 1 Dutch).

\*Of the 261 prize captures, 71 were made by British vessels of uncertain status (5 French, 1 British, and 65 unknown).

| TABLE A 2.2<br>Distribution of the Condemnation of Royal Navy Prize Captures, 1702-1713 |            |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Colony                                                                                  | N          | %           |
| British West Indies:                                                                    |            |             |
| Antigua                                                                                 | 16         | 6.1         |
| Barbados                                                                                | 25         | 9.6         |
| Jamaica                                                                                 | 33         | 12.6        |
| British North America:                                                                  |            |             |
| Carolina                                                                                | 1          | 0.4         |
| Maryland                                                                                | 5          | 1.9         |
| Massachusetts                                                                           | 2          | 0.8         |
| New England                                                                             | 2          | 0.8         |
| Newfoundland                                                                            | 67         | 25.7        |
| Virginia                                                                                | 1          | 0.4         |
| Unknown                                                                                 | <u>109</u> | <u>41.7</u> |
| Total                                                                                   | 261        | 100.0       |

\*Of the 261 references to naval prize captures, 109 did not refer to a place of condemnation.

\*Of the remaining 152 prize captures, whose place of condemnation was noted, 70 were made by British vessels of uncertain status (67 at Newfoundland, 1 at Carolina, and 1 at Maryland).

**TABLE A 2.3**  
Yearly Distribution of Royal Navy Prize Captures, 1702-1713

| Year    | N         | %           |
|---------|-----------|-------------|
| 1702    | 16        | 6.1         |
| 1703    | 34        | 13.0        |
| 1704    | 6         | 2.3         |
| 1705    | 12        | 5.0         |
| 1706    | 6         | 2.3         |
| 1707    | 28        | 10.0        |
| 1708    | 24        | 9.2         |
| 1709    | 16        | 6.1         |
| 1710    | 2         | 0.8         |
| 1711    | 17        | 7.0         |
| 1712    | 11        | 4.2         |
| 1713    | 0         | 0.0         |
| Unknown | <u>89</u> | <u>34.0</u> |
| Total   | 261       | 100.0       |

\*Of the 89 captures that could not be assigned to a specific year, 70 were made by British vessels of uncertain status.

**TABLE A 2.4**  
Distribution of Types of Vessels Captured by the Royal Navy, 1702-1713

| Type of Vessel | N          | %           |
|----------------|------------|-------------|
| Ship           | 52         | 19.9        |
| Sloop          | 24         | 9.2         |
| Brigantine     | 4          | 1.6         |
| Other          | 5          | 1.9         |
| Unknown        | <u>176</u> | <u>67.4</u> |
| Total          | 261        | 100.0       |

\*Those vessels referred to as 'other' included two galleys, a snow, a corvett, and a Ketch.

\*70 of the prizes included in the 'unknown' category were captured by British vessels of uncertain status.

**TABLE A 2.5**  
Mean Tonnage, Crew Size, and Ordnance of Prizes Captured by the Royal Navy, 1702-1713

| Vessel Type | Tonnage    |             | Crew Size |             | Number of Guns |             |
|-------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| Ship        | 184        | (7)         | 77        | (5)         | 34             | (15)        |
| Other       | 83         | (4)         | 78        | (4)         | 6              | (5)         |
| Unknown     | <u>220</u> | <u>(20)</u> | <u>76</u> | <u>(16)</u> | <u>37</u>      | <u>(19)</u> |
| Grand Mean  | 162        | (31)        | 77        | (25)        | 26             | (39)        |

\*The figures in parentheses include the number of cases upon which the means are based.

\*Those vessels referred to as 'other' included two sloops, a brigantine, a corvett and a ketch, while those vessels cited as 'unknown' included all those references to prize captures which provided information on tonnage, crew size, and ordnance, but not a vessel type.

## Notes

### CHAPTER ONE

<sup>1</sup> Kenneth R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering: English Privateering During the Spanish War, 1585-1603* (Cambridge, 1964), 22.

<sup>2</sup> The efforts of an Italian merchant, Filippo Corsini, to gain restitution for the illegal capture of two wealthy cargoes in 1590, failed after three years of petitioning the Queen, as the Privy Council reversed Caesar's decision supporting Corsini. This intervention reflected the influence of interested parties in the capture, which included, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir George Carey, Henry Seckford (Groom of the Chamber and keeper of the Privy purse), Thomas Middleton, and above all, Lord Charles Howard, Baron of Effingham, the Lord High Admiral of England. *Ibid.*, 25-6.

<sup>3</sup> R.C. Marsden, "The Vice-Admirals of the Coast," *Economic History Review*, XXII (1907), 468-77.

<sup>4</sup> William Jephson to the Attorney Solicitor General and Sir Charles Hedges, 1 Nov. 1689, *C.T.B., 1689-1692*, IX, 293-4.

<sup>5</sup> Commissioners of Prizes to Mr. Lowndes, 20 Nov. 1705, *C.T.B., 1702-1707*, XCVI, 387.

<sup>6</sup> 6 Anne, 1708, c. 37, in Owen Ruffhead, ed., *The Statutes at Large, from the Magna Charta, to the end of the last Parliament, 1761* (London, 1768-70), IV, 334-8.

<sup>7</sup> In 1702, for instance, the Board of trade had to ask Northey if he knew whether the new Vice-Admiralty courts really had a wider authority than "was allowed of or usually exercised in England and what that authority was." Charles M. Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History: England's Commercial and Colonial Policy* (New Haven, 1938), IV, 258.

<sup>8</sup> A.G. Course, *Merchant Seamen: A Social History* (London, 1963), 83.

<sup>9</sup> David Starkey, *British Privateering Enterprise in the Eighteenth Century* (Exeter, 1990), 20.

<sup>10</sup> Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering*, 27-8.

<sup>11</sup> The first license "to annoy the king's enemies" was given by Henry III to Geoffrey Pyper in 1243, master of the ship *Le Heyte*.

<sup>12</sup> Letter from Mr. Addington to Mr. Popple, Secretary to the Council of Trade and Plantations, enclosing a letter from John Foster and Andrew Belcher to Mr. Addington, 8 Oct. 1706, *C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708*, no. 535.

<sup>13</sup> Samuel G. Arnold, ed., *History of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 1636-1790* (New York, 1874), II, 6.

<sup>14</sup> Ruth Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy in the West Indies* (London, 1939), 37.

<sup>15</sup> Howard Chapin, *Privateer Ships and Sailors: The First Century of American Colonial Privateering, 1625-1725* (Toulon, 1926), 207.

<sup>16</sup> 6 Anne, 1708, c. 37, in Ruffhead, *The Statutes at Large*, IV, 334.

<sup>17</sup> Copy of privateering commission issued to the *Brown Gally* by the High Court of Admiralty, 7 Aug. 1711, P.R.O. H.C.A., 25/21.

<sup>18</sup> Instructions from the High Court of Admiralty sent to the governor of Barbados, Apr. 1708, P.R.O. C.O., 28/12, no. 53 (xi).

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Starkey, *British Privateering Enterprise*, 25.

<sup>21</sup> Leo Francis Stock, ed., *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments Respecting North America*, (Washington, 1930), III, 256.

<sup>22</sup> 6 Anne, 1708, c. 37, in Ruffhead, *The Statutes at Large*, IV, 335. Naval commanders had for been for some time bound by these requirements. The Earl of Sandwich was famously disgraced in 1665 after allowing the cargo of two Dutch merchant ships to be looted before they were declared lawful prize. For more information on this case see, R. Latham and W. Matthews, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1920-83), X, 253-4.

<sup>23</sup> Governor Dudley of Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire to Mr. Secretary Hedges, 8 Oct. 1706, *C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708*, no. 526.

<sup>24</sup> Governor Lord Cornbury of New York to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 20 July 1707, *ibid.* no. 1050.

<sup>25</sup> Rear-Admiral Whetstone to the Secretaries of State, 18 July 1705, *ibid.*, 1704-1705, no. 1264.

- <sup>26</sup> Peter Holt to Captain William Billton, 26 Oct. 1709, *ibid.*, 1708-1709, no. 831 (ii).
- <sup>27</sup> Colin Campbell to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 15 June 1705, *ibid.*, 1704-1705, no. 1185.
- <sup>28</sup> Chapin, *Privateer Ships and Sailors*, 144.
- <sup>29</sup> 6 Anne, 1708, c. 37, in Ruffhead, *The Statutes at Large*, IV, 335-6.
- <sup>30</sup> Carl E. Swanson, *Predators and Prizes: American Privateering and Imperial Warfare, 1739-1748* (Columbia, 1991), 35.
- <sup>31</sup> John R. Bartlett, ed., *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England* (Providence, 1858), III, 537-540 and Arnold, ed., *History of the State of Rhode Island*, II, 19-20.
- <sup>32</sup> Section II (Royal Navy) and section III (privateers) of the 'America Act', stated that all captures upon condemnation in a British Admiralty court became the sole property of the captor. 6 Anne, 1708, c. 37, Ruffhead, *The Statutes at Large*, IV, 334-5.
- <sup>33</sup> C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait, *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660*, (London, 1911), III, 66.
- <sup>34</sup> Royal declaration 'For the Incouragement of Her SHIPS of WAR and PRIVATEERS,' 1 June 1702, P.R.O. C.O., 323/5, no. 28 (i).
- <sup>35</sup> Council of Trade and Plantations to the Earl of Sunderland, 16 May 1710, *CSP. Col.*, 1710-1711, no. 239.
- <sup>36</sup> Mr. Warters to Mr. Popple, 6 Dec. 1703, *ibid.*, 1702-1703, no. 1359.
- <sup>37</sup> From 1702, a captain's share was increased to 3/8, unless he was under the orders of a flag officer, in which case he would lose a third of his entitlement. The other commissioned officers and masters received another 1/8, as did the warrant officers with the masters mates, and the midshipmen and the 'pettys'. The residual 2/8 went to the ships' company - a proportion that remained unchanged until 1808.
- <sup>38</sup> Michael Craton, "The Role of Caribbean Vice-Admiralty Courts in British Imperialism," *Caribbean Studies*, XI (1971), 8.

## CHAPTER TWO

- <sup>39</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 2.
- <sup>40</sup> Ralph Davis, "English Foreign Trade, 1660-1700," *E.H.R.*, VI (1954).
- <sup>41</sup> Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1988); Michael Duffy, ed., *Military Revolution and the State, 1500-1800* (Exeter, 1988); Samuel E. Finer, "State and Nation- Building in Europe: The Role of the Military," in *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, ed. Charles Tilly (Princeton, 1975); David G. Chandler et al., "Armies and Navies," in *The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1715/25*, in vol. VI of *The New Cambridge Modern History*, ed. J.S. Bromley (Cambridge, 1970).
- <sup>42</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 20.
- <sup>43</sup> After 1700, when most merchant vessels were no longer of any use as a substitute for a man-of-war, no matter how well armed or manned they might be, only specially built or converted privateers could serve in the navy.
- <sup>44</sup> N.A.M. Rodger, "Sea-Power and Empire, 1688-1793," and Bruce P. Lenman, "Colonial Wars and Imperial Instability, 1688-1793," in vol. II of *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, ed. P.J. Marshall (Oxford, 1998), 146, 169.
- <sup>45</sup> Rodger has been particularly outspoken in his criticism of traditional naval historiography, which he believes "has tended to give non-specialist historians the impression that the navy always existed primarily to support overseas expansion and defend overseas trade." He argues in the first place that "all discussion of British naval strategy in the eighteenth century is anachronistic, in that there was nothing that could be accurately described as naval strategy...British statesmen and admirals knew neither the phrase nor the thing." Rodger states furthermore, that "The navy itself was in no condition to supply the want of any specifically naval policy-making...Eighteenth century navies were not blind to the need to be ready for war, but for many reasons advance planning was both more difficult and less urgent for them." Rodger, "Sea-Power and Empire," *ibid.*, 170-2.

- <sup>46</sup> For useful discussions on mercantilism see, Andrews, *The Colonial Period*, IV; John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789* (Chapel Hill, 1985); C.H. Wilson, "Trade, Society and State," in vol IV of *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, eds. E.E. Rich and C.H. Wilson (Cambridge, 1967).
- <sup>47</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 16.
- <sup>48</sup> Jacob Ernest Cooke, ed., *Encyclopedia of North American Colonies* (New York, 1993), 461.
- <sup>49</sup> Wilson, "Trade, Society and State," 495.
- <sup>50</sup> Andrews, *The Colonial Period*, IV, 323.
- <sup>51</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 134-7.
- <sup>52</sup> Starkey, *British Privateering*, 61-2.
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 62-3.
- <sup>54</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 12.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>56</sup> A leading London merchant warned the Admiralty Board, "...in privateering no man can assure success, and to return without something to pay the change would be a great burden to the owners of privateers and would be contrary to the practice of all other nations." Deposition of Sir Alexander Rigby given to select committee of the House of Lords, 18 Mar. 1696, *M.H.L.*, 1695-1697, II, 350-2.
- <sup>57</sup> The danger posed by French Privateers was frequently complained of by colonial governors in their correspondence with England. The governor of Barbados wrote, in September 1703, for instance, "By the Master of an English vessel taken in June last prisoner to Martinico [Martinique] and since made his escape, I am informed that 90 English prizes have been brought in their since the war, that they have at this time 28 privateers at sea, who are very strongly mann'd having amongst' em 3,000 men." Governor Sir B. Granville of Barbados to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 3 Sept. 1703, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1702-3, no. 1072.
- <sup>58</sup> J.S. Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies, 1660-1760* (London, 1987); and Patrick Crowhurst, *The Defence of British Trade, 1689-1815* (Folkestone, 1977).
- <sup>59</sup> Chapin, *Privateer Ships and Sailors*, 10.
- <sup>60</sup> Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 4 Dec. 1708, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1708-1709, no. 227. Also see extracts from three memorials relating to illegal trade carried on between Curacoa, St. Thomas and the British plantations in America, 19 Jan. 1710, *ibid.*, 1710-1711, no. 47.
- <sup>61</sup> Starkey, *British Privateering*, 73-6.
- <sup>62</sup> Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge, 1987), 119.
- <sup>63</sup> William Bignell to Mr. Dummer, 17 Jan. 1708, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1708-9, no. 445 (i).
- <sup>64</sup> According to Swanson, the average duration of 94 cruises conducted by Newport, New York and Philadelphia privateers in King George's War was seven months. Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 243.
- <sup>65</sup> John Franklin Jameson, ed., *Privateers and Piracy in the Colonial Period: Illustrative Documents* (1923), 337.
- <sup>66</sup> Richard Pares, "Manning of the Royal Navy in the West Indies, 1702-63," *Royal Historical Society Transactions*, XX (1937).
- <sup>67</sup> Daniel Baugh, *Naval Administration in the Age of Walpole* (Princeton, 1965), 19.
- <sup>68</sup> Ralph Davis, *Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London, 1962), 110-3, 119-120.
- <sup>69</sup> Oyer and Terminer Records, P.R.O. H.C.A., 1/53.
- <sup>70</sup> Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 161.
- <sup>71</sup> Some captains administered whippings on 'market day', usually a Monday set aside for discipline, whereas others did so at any time in response to specific events.
- <sup>72</sup> Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 215.
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 216.
- <sup>74</sup> Richard B. Morris, *Government and Labour in Early America* (New York, 1946), 230.
- <sup>75</sup> Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 223.
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.
- <sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 247.
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>79</sup> Cecil Lubbock, ed., *Barlow's Journal of his Life at Sea in the King's Ships, East and West Indiamen, and other Merchantmen from 1659 to 1703* (London, 1934), 540.

<sup>80</sup> Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 94.

<sup>81</sup> It was rare for large ships of the line to be stationed in North American or Caribbean waters. They were normally used for either British coastal defence, the blockading of French ports, or Mediterranean fleet actions. Fourth rate ships were preferred for colonial convoy duty, while fifth or sixth rates cruised for enemy predators.

<sup>82</sup> Kemp, *British Sailor*, 8, 90, 99, 116; G. Hinchliffe, "Impressment of Seamen during the War of the Spanish Succession," *Mariner's Mirror*, XXXXIII (1967), 137-42; Christopher Lloyd, *British Seamen, 1200-1860: A Social History* (London, 1968), 287.

<sup>83</sup> Kemp, *British Sailor*, 60.

<sup>84</sup> Governor Parke of Antigua to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 24 May 1709, *C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709*, no. 529 (iii).

<sup>85</sup> Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 6 Apr., 1 and 25 May 1709, *ibid.*, nos. 451, 483, 542 respectively.

<sup>86</sup> Petition of Captain William Mill presented to the Council of Barbados, June 15, 1703, *C.S.P. Col., 1702-1703*, no. 826.

<sup>87</sup> Daniel Baugh, *British Naval Administration*, 225.

<sup>88</sup> Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 33; E.H.W. Meyerstein, ed., *Adventures by Sea of William Coxere*, (London, 1934), 36, 27-34; J.R. Hutchinson, *Press-Gang Afloat and Ashore* (London, 1913), 304; Kemp, *British Sailor*, 99, 88, 90, 116; Hinchliffe, "Impressment of Seamen," *M.M.*, XXXXIII (1967), 137-142, and Jesse Lemisch, "Jack Tar verses John Bull," and *idem*, "Jack Tar in the Streets: Merchant Seamen in the Politics of Revolutionary America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, XXV (1968), 381-400.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

<sup>89</sup> Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783* (New York, 1957), 121.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> W. L. Clowse, *The Royal Navy: A History from the Earliest Times to the Present* (New York, 1966), 7 vols.; Sir Herbert Richmond, *The Navy in the War of 1739-1748* (Cambridge, 1920), 3 vols.; Julian S. Corbett, *England in the Seven Years War: A Study in Combined Strategy* (London, 1907), 2 vols.; Gerald S. Graham, *Empire of the North Atlantic: The Maritime Struggle for North America* (Toronto, 1950); Kemp, *The British Sailor*; Lloyd, *The British Seamen*; John S. Tilley, *The British Navy and the American Revolution* (Columbia, 1987).

<sup>92</sup> Howard H. Peckham, *The Colonial Wars, 1689-1762* (Chicago, 1964); and Douglas Edward Leach, *Arms For Empire: A Military History of the British colonies in North America, 1607-1763* (New York, 1973).

<sup>93</sup> Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Commerce and Culture: The Maritime Communities of Colonial Massachusetts, 1690-1750* (New York, 1984); Arthur L. Jensen, *The Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia* (Madison, 1963); Jacob M. Price, "Economic Function and the Growth of American Port Towns in the Eighteenth Century," *Perspectives in American History*, VIII (1974); G.B. Warden, *Boston, 1689-1776* (Boston, 1970).

<sup>94</sup> Douglas C. North, "Sources of Productivity Change in Ocean Shipping, 1600-1850," *Journal of Political Economy*, LXXVI (1986), 959.

<sup>95</sup> James F. Shepherd and Gary M. Walton, *Shipping, Maritime Trade, and the Economic Development of Colonial North America* (Cambridge, 1972), 74.

<sup>96</sup> Carl Swanson, a leading historian of American privateering, noted in a recent article that Mahan had "ignored the scope of this speculative pillage, as well as its popularity and potential profitability." He goes on to state, in regard to the arguments of Shepherd and Walton, "Given the widespread coverage of privateering in British and American newspapers, the countless references to private men-of-war in the correspondence of American merchants, and the numerous laws and regulations adopted to regulate privateers, it is difficult to determine how Shepherd and Walton arrived at their erroneous conclusion." Carl E. Swanson, "Privateering in Early America," *International Journal of Maritime History*, I (1989), 260-261.

<sup>97</sup> Kenneth R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering; The Spanish Caribbean: Trade and Plunder, 1530-1630* (New Haven, 1978); *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire, 1480-1630* (Cambridge, 1984); Richard Pares, *War and Trade in the West Indies, 1739-1763* (Oxford, 1936); *Colonial Blockade and Neutral Rights* (Oxford, 1938); "The Manning of the Royal Navy in the West Indies, 1702-1763," in *R.H.S.T.*, XX (1937); Walter E. Minchinton and David J. Starkey, "Characteristics of Privateers operating from the British Isles Against America, 1777-1783," in *Ships, Seafaring and Society: Essays in Maritime History*, ed. Timothy J. Runyan (Detroit, 1987), 251-274; David J. Starkey, "The Economic and Military Significance of British Privateering, 1702-83," *Journal of Transport History*, IX (1983), 50-59; *British Privateering Enterprise in the Eighteenth Century* (Exeter, 1990); J.S. Bromley, "A New Vocation: Privateering in the Wars of 1689-97 and 1702-1713," in *A People of the Sea: The Maritime History of the Channel Islands*, ed. A.G. Jamieson (London, 1986), 109-147. The late Professor Bromley had earlier offered perceptive studies of European privateering, including "The French Privateering War, 1702-13," in *Historical essays 1600-1750 Presented to David Ogg*, eds. H.E. Bell and R.L. Ollard (London, 1963), 202-231; "The Jacobite Privateers in the Nine Years War," in *Statesmen, Scholars, and Merchants: Essays in Eighteenth Century History Presented to Dame Lucy Sutherland*, ed. Anne Whiteman et al (Oxford, 1973), 17-43; Peter Raban, "War and Trade in the Mid-Eighteenth Century," *Transactions of La Societe Guernesiasse*, XXIV (1986), 131-163; A.G. Jamieson, "The Return to Privateering: Channel Island Privateers, 1739-83," in *A People of the Sea*, ed. Jamieson, 148-172; and W.R. Meyer, "English Privateering in the War of 1688 to 1697," *M.M.*, LXVII (1981), 259-272, and "The Channel Island Privateers, 1793-1815," in *A People of the Sea*, ed. Jamieson, 173-194.<sup>98</sup> Baugh, *British Naval Administration*; Julian Gywn, *The Enterprising Admiral: The Personal Fortune of Admiral Sir Peter Warren*. (Montreal, 1974); Fred Anderson, "A People's Army: Provincial Military Service in Massachusetts during the Seven Years' War," *W.M.Q.*, XL (1983); Ralph Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London, 1962), 315.

<sup>99</sup> Swanson's study is based on information contained in eight colonial newspapers: *Boston News-Letter*, *New-York Evening-Post*, *New-York Gazette*, *New-York Weekly Journal*, *New-York Weekly Post-Boy*, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, *Virginia Gazette*, *South-Carolina Gazette*.

<sup>100</sup> For a full copy of my privateering data file, see appendix 1.

<sup>101</sup> While Spain held firm to a policy of commercial exclusiveness, she was paradoxically unable to satisfy the needs of her colonies in the New World. As a result, the involvement of foreigners was grudgingly accepted as a necessary evil in the acquisition of slaves and manufactured goods. These commodities were supposed to be supplied only by the holder of a contract, known as the *Asiento*. In reality, however, remoter settlements, bypassed by the official fleet, which was geared to the needs of the larger markets of Mexico and Peru, became heavily dependent on illegal traders that the Spanish sort to eradicate throughout the war.

<sup>102</sup> William Popple, Jr., to Richard Warr, 11 Apr. 1704, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1704-1705, no. 248.

<sup>103</sup> Memorial from Mr. Dummer concerning the Act for encouraging Trade to America, 18 Aug. 1708, *ibid.*, 1708-1709, no. 100.

<sup>104</sup> Josiah Child, *A New Discourse on Trade* (London, 1692), 135-6.

<sup>105</sup> Finding a regular source of hard currency for British North America and the Caribbean was a problem that the Board of Trade had shown itself perpetually unwilling to solve – it remained attached to the mercantilist ideal that money should come in rather than go out of the realm. According to Charles Andrews, "To mint a special series for America would not only have been an expensive and difficult task in itself, but also a heavy drain upon England's own supply of gold, silver and copper. Because mercantilists wanted the balance to always be in England's favor and the drift of money always in one direction, and that toward England, they saw the colonies not only as a separate commercial group with interests of its own, but a channel through which an additional supply of Spanish and other foreign gold and silver might eventually reach England. For this reason, apparently from the beginning to the end, England refused to deal adequately with the money problem in the colonies, even refusing to meet the many requests that were sent for a small copper coinage for daily use." Andrews, *The Colonial Period*, IV, 351-2.

<sup>106</sup> Nuala Zahedieh, "The Merchants of Port Royal, Jamaica, and the Spanish Contraband Trade, 1655-1692," *E.H.R.*, XXXVIII (1986), 16.

<sup>107</sup> Curtis Nettles, "England and the Spanish American Trade, 1680-1715," in *The Journal of Modern History*, III (1931), 25. The French Board of Trade, furthermore, stated in a Memorial regarding the Asiento trade in 1701, "When this commerce shall be well established...it will not be so very difficult for us to imitate the English in Jamaica in the traffic they have with the Spaniards. We may be way of St. Domingo trade in Negroes. By favour of that trade, we might vend great quantities of our goods and manufactures to the neighbouring islands and on the coast of the continent, and might get them a great deal of gold and silver in exchange." Malachy Postlethwayt, *Britain's Commercial Interest Explained and Improved* (London, 1757), 2.

<sup>108</sup> Letter from Sir Charles Hedges to the Queen, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1706-1708, no. 324.

<sup>109</sup> In 1704 a circular letter was sent to the English colonies declaring that English subjects might import all Spanish colonial products and export anything to the Spanish except ammunitions, stores of war and enumerated articles. Attorney General to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 22 Mar. 1704, *ibid.*, 1704-1705, no. 203. Soon afterwards privateers were instructed not to molest either Dutch or English ships acting in accordance with this circular letter.

<sup>110</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 119-20.

<sup>111</sup> Starkey, *British Privateering Enterprise*, ch. 6.

<sup>112</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 129.

<sup>113</sup> Of those references in the data file which refer to the place of capture, the coastal waters of Martinique, Guadeloupe and Cuba appear most often, closely followed by St. Dominique and Campeachy on the coast of New Spain.

<sup>114</sup> Chapin, *Privateer Ships and Sailors*, 241.

<sup>115</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 170.

<sup>116</sup> Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 195.

<sup>117</sup> Bermudan privateer ship *Fame*, Captain Henry Pullein commander; Bristol privateer ship *Kinsale Galley*, Captain John Richards commander; Barbados privateer ship *Paradox*, Captain Forester commander; Boston privateer ship *King of Spain*; and another ship were reported to have captured a Spanish barcolongo with a cargo of between £30,000-40,000 in November 1706. Letter from Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 23 Nov. 1708, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1708-1709, no. 202.

<sup>118</sup> Starkey, *Privateering Enterprise*, 94-5.

<sup>119</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 71.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 135, 139.

<sup>122</sup> Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 100.

<sup>123</sup> Crowhurst, *Defence of British Trade*, 36.

<sup>124</sup> Chappelle, *The History of American Sailing Ships*, 132.

<sup>125</sup> Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 67.

<sup>126</sup> Kemp, *The British Sailor*, 60-1.

<sup>127</sup> Course, *Merchant Navy*, 100-1.

<sup>128</sup> Regulations applicable to the eighteenth century are included in 1 Anne, c.16, no. 2; 2 Anne, c.6, no. 16; 6 Anne, c.31, no. 2. Ruffhead, *Statutes at Large*, IV, 96, 123, 325-6.

<sup>129</sup> The Lord High Admiral's answer to the report of the committee upon the petition of the merchants complaining of losses for Want of cruisers and convoys, 8 Jan. 1708, *J.H.L.*, 1705-1709, XVIII, 406.

<sup>130</sup> Frank Cundal, *The Governors of Jamaica in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1937), 37.

<sup>131</sup> America and the West Indies: Original Correspondence, P.R.O. C.O., 5/862, no. 91.

<sup>132</sup> A Survey of Canada and a brief consideration of the French dominions on the continent of America, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1708-1709, no. 60.

<sup>133</sup> Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 216.

<sup>134</sup> Disposition of William Coward given to a select committee of the House of Lords, 29 Jan. 1707, *M.H.L.*, 1706-1708, 186-7.

<sup>135</sup> 6 Anne, c.37, no. 13.

<sup>136</sup> Ralph Davis, *English Overseas Trade, 1500-1700* (London, 1973), 35.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

- <sup>138</sup> Richard Sheridan, *The Development of the Plantations to 1750* (London, 1970), provides useful information on the development of the Jamaican plantation system.
- <sup>139</sup> W. A. Claypole and D. J. Buisseret, "Trade Patterns in Early English Jamaica," *Journal of Caribbean History*, X (1972), 14.
- <sup>140</sup> Crowhurst, *The Defence of British Trade*, 176.
- <sup>141</sup> Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery* (London, 1976), 71.
- <sup>142</sup> Crowhurst, *The Defence of British Trade*, 148.
- <sup>143</sup> Graham, *Empire of the North Atlantic*, 84.
- <sup>144</sup> As the French Guinea Company held the Asiento from 1701, they were understandably keen to ensure that the Spanish treasure fleets were well protected on their journey back to Europe.<sup>145</sup> Lloyd, *Nation and the Navy*, 82-3.
- <sup>146</sup> E.H. Jenkins, *A History of the French Navy: Form its Beginnings to the Present Day* (London, 1973), 93.
- <sup>147</sup> Nicholas Tracy, *Attack on Maritime Trade*, 52-4.
- <sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.
- <sup>149</sup> 92 of 400 vessels were captured, amounting to £1 million in coin and cargo.<sup>150</sup> Jenkins, *History of the French Navy*, 100-1.
- <sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.
- <sup>152</sup> G. N. Clark, "Neutral Commerce in the War of the Spanish Succession and the Treaty of Utrecht," *British Yearbook of International Law*, VIII (1928), 139.
- <sup>153</sup> Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies*, 232.
- <sup>154</sup> Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 101.
- <sup>155</sup> Lt. Governor Jennings of Virginia to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 24 Apr. 1710, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1710-1711, no. 206.
- <sup>156</sup> Governor Sir B. Granville to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 18 Sept. 1704, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1704-1705, no. 568.<sup>157</sup> Mr. Holder, several Barbados merchants, and the Governor of the Royal African Company to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 20 Sept. 1704, *J.C.T.P.*, April 1704 to Feb. 1709, 43.
- <sup>158</sup> Isaac Royall to Mr. Ayoan, 22 June 1711, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1710-1711, no. 899.
- <sup>159</sup> Leeward Islands: Original Correspondence, P.R.O. C.O., 152/9, no. 27.
- <sup>160</sup> Arthur P. Middleton, *Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of the Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era* (Newport, 1953), 294.
- <sup>161</sup> Leach, *Arms for Empire*, 136.
- <sup>162</sup> Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies*, 236-7.
- <sup>163</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 154-5.
- <sup>164</sup> William Wood estimated in the year after August 1706, the value of English products sold to the Spanish amounted to £275,000. This was about a third of Jamaica's total import value. Letter from Mr. Wood to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 13 Jan. 1708, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1706-1708, no. 1277.
- <sup>165</sup> Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 17 Dec. 1709, *J.C.T.P.*, February 1708-1709 to March 1714-1715, 128.
- <sup>166</sup> Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies*, 222.
- <sup>167</sup> Davis, *Rise of the English Shipping Industry*, 317; and Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies*, 226-7.
- <sup>168</sup> Barbados: Original Correspondence, P.R.O. C.O., 28/13, no. 72 (i).
- <sup>169</sup> Sir Charles Whitworth, *State of Trade of Great Britain in Its Imports and Exports Progressively from the Year 1697* (London, 1776), 47-71.
- <sup>170</sup> Ralph Davis has discounted official claims that losses in the period 1688-95 amounted to 4000 ships, because the Admiralty only produced the figure in 1707 as 'proof' that its convoy arrangements had improved compared with the previous war.
- <sup>171</sup> Tracy, *Attack on Maritime Trade*, 58-9.
- <sup>172</sup> Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 149.
- <sup>173</sup> William Burt to Mr. Dummer, 25 June 1703, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1702-1703, no. 849.
- <sup>174</sup> H. R. McLwaine, ed., *Executive Journals, Council of Colonial Virginia* (Richmond, 1928), III, 1.
- <sup>175</sup> Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies*, 222.

- <sup>176</sup> Jameson, *Privateering and Piracy in the Colonial Period* 276.
- <sup>177</sup> Col. Lambert to Mr. Clayton, M.P., enclosing a letter from H.M. subjects to the Queen, 27 June 1704, *CSP. Col., 1704-1705*, no. 420 (i).
- <sup>178</sup> The Council of Trade and Plantations to the Queen, 7 July 1707, *ibid.*, 1706-1708, no. 1031.
- <sup>179</sup> Donald F. Chand, "The Impact of French Privateering on New England, 1689-1713," *American Neptune*, XXXV (1975), 161.
- <sup>180</sup> Col. Quarry, Surveyor General of Customs in America, to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 10 Jan. 1708, *C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709*, no. 794 (ii).
- <sup>181</sup> Address of the Principal inhabitants and merchants of Boston, and other adjacent places, to the Queen, Oct. 1709, *ibid.*, 1706-1708, no. 1273.
- <sup>182</sup> D.W. Plowse, *A History of Newfoundland* (London, 1896), 239.
- <sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 235.
- <sup>184</sup> Davis, *Rise of the English Shipping Industry*, 315.
- <sup>185</sup> Shepherd and Walton, *Shipping, Maritime Trade*, 190.
- <sup>186</sup> The European approaches were arguably far more treacherous than was the case in colonial waters.
- <sup>187</sup> Shepherd and Walton, *Shipping, Maritime Trade*, 191.
- <sup>188</sup> Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies*, 240.
- <sup>189</sup> Davis, *Rise of the English Shipping Industry*, 319.
- <sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 320.
- <sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.
- <sup>192</sup> 'Runners' refer to fast sailing merchant vessels that had acquired special permission to sail out-with the main convoy.
- <sup>193</sup> Arnold, ed., *History of the State of Rhode Island*, II, 25.
- <sup>194</sup> Ralph Davis, "English Foreign Trade, 1700-1774," in *The Growth of English Overseas Trade in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, ed. Walter E. Minchinton (London, 1969), 118; and Whitworth, *State of Trade of Great Britain*, 55.
- <sup>195</sup> Stock, *Proceedings and Debates of British Parliaments*, III, 59-60.
- <sup>196</sup> Crowhurst, *The Defence of British Trade*, 170.
- <sup>197</sup> Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 226.
- <sup>198</sup> It was estimated in 1700, of the £300,000 received annually by Barbados land-owners from their estates, only £71,000 was secured by the crown as revenue. Jamaica, on the other hand, produced an annual return of £600,000 to merchants, planters and the crown - £200,000 of which was in bullion. Frank Pitman, *Development of the West Indies, 1700-63* (New Haven, 1917), 148.
- <sup>199</sup> Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 42.
- <sup>200</sup> Out of a total of 150 ships, bearing 40,000 men, 86 ships and over 14,447 men were sent to the British West Indies and North America as act as convoys and cruisers. Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 109. As a comparison of numbers of ships in the Royal Navy, according to Christopher Lloyd, in 1701 and 1710 there were 150 and 313 ships in the navy respectively. Lloyd, *British Seamen*, 261.
- <sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.
- <sup>202</sup> The President of the Council of Virginia to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 11 Mar. 1690, *C.S.P. Col., 1689-1692* (London, 1904), no. 787.
- <sup>203</sup> Middleton, Tobacco Coast, 294; and Council of Trade and Plantations to the Duke of Shrewsbury, 7 Apr. 1697, *C.S.P. Col., 1696-1697*, no. 901.
- <sup>204</sup> Council of Trade and Plantations to Governor Seymour of Maryland, 4 Feb. 1706, *CSP.Col., 1706-1708*, no. 84; and *C.S.P. Col., 1706-1708*, preface xiv.
- <sup>205</sup> Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 71.
- <sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, 84-5.
- <sup>207</sup> Council of Trade and Plantations to Governor Handasyd, 21 Apr. 1709, *C.S.P. Col., 1708-1709*, no. 473; and Governor Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 18 July 1709, *ibid.*, no. 649.
- <sup>208</sup> The fortifications of the British Caribbean colonies were notoriously comic. A report given to the Board of Trade in 1702 noted that all the islands were short of supplies and arms and none had enough fortifications; some had none at all. Barbados was best prepared with 29 forts and

batteries equipped with 308 guns, although only 58 were serviceable. Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 41.

<sup>209</sup> Robert Cunynghame to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 12 Aug. 1712, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1712-1714, no. 36.

<sup>210</sup> Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 124.

<sup>211</sup> Richmond, *The Navy as an Instrument of Policy*, 330.

<sup>212</sup> A summary of d'Iberville's attacks on Nevis and St. Kitts, can be found in Richmond, *The Navy as an Instrument of Policy*, 337-8.

<sup>213</sup> A detailed discussion of the accusations against Commodore Kerr can be found in Manuscripts of the House of Lords, 1706-1708, 108-9; and Stock, ed., *Proceedings and Debates of British Parliaments*, III, 177-8.

<sup>214</sup> Cundal, *Governors of Jamaica*, 44.

<sup>215</sup> Bourne, *Queen Anne's Navy*, 135.

<sup>216</sup> Crowhurst, *The Defence of British Trade*, 180.

<sup>217</sup> Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies*, 238.

<sup>218</sup> Governor Dudley to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 10 Nov. 1707, *C.S.P. Col.*, 1706-1708, no. 1186.

<sup>219</sup> Stock, *Proceedings and Debates of British Parliaments*, III, 170.

<sup>220</sup> 6 Ann. c. 13, Ruffhead, *Statutes at Large*, 289; and *J.H.C.*, October 1705 to April 1708, XV, 543, 598, 601; and *J.H.L.*, 1705-1709, XVIII, 501, 503, 506.

<sup>221</sup> 6 Ann. c. 37, Ruffhead, *Statutes at Large*, 334-338.

<sup>222</sup> Crowhurst, *The Defence of British Trade*, 148.

<sup>223</sup> G. N. Clark, "War Trade and Trade War, 1701-1713," *E.H.R.*, II (1928), 263.

## APPENDIX ONE

<sup>1</sup> The manuscripts of the Colonial Office are housed in the Public Records Office at Kew in London. The *Calendar of State Papers* relating to America and the West Indies, beginning in 1574, were published gradually throughout the first part of the twentieth century, and provide a useful summary of the aforementioned manuscripts. Howard M. Chapin's book on American privateering, while limited in analysis in preference for a narrative approach, provides invaluable information on the activities of British-colonial privateers in the War of the Spanish Succession.

<sup>2</sup> These variables included information on the name, origin, commander, size, strength, and complement of predators and captured vessels, as well as where prize actions took place, the nature of captured cargoes, where they were condemned and their value.

# Bibliography

## PRIMARY SOURCES

### 1. Manuscript

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 Barbados: Original Correspondence, C.O. 28  
 Colonies, General: Entry Books, C.O. 323  
 Colonies, General: Entry Books, C.O. 324  
 Jamaica: Original Correspondence, C.O. 137  
 Jamaica: Entry Books, C.O. 138  
 Leeward Islands: Original Correspondence, C.O. 152  
 Letter of Marque, Bonds etc., H.C.A. 25  
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