

John Crowninshield and the Building of the Privateer "Diomedé"

BY HOWARD CORNING

JOHN CROWNINSHIELD was born July 14, 1771, the fifth child and third son of George Crowninshield and his wife Mary, daughter of Richard and Mary (Hodges) Derby, of Salem. This George was the grandson of Johannes Casper Richter von Kronensheldt. The immigrant came to this country when he was about twenty-two years of age, from Germany. He was a physician by profession and married Elizabeth, daughter of Jacob and Elizabeth Allen of Salem. George Crowninshield, the father of the man I am talking about, founded the famous firm of George Crowninshield & Sons, which after the Revolution and up to the time of the War of 1812, made a great deal of money. They traded with India, China, and the Spice Isles. John is a little overshadowed by his brothers, George, who owned the celebrated *Cleopatra's Barge*; Jacob, who represented Massachusetts in the House of Representatives;¹ and Benjamin, who was Secretary of the Navy.

John, while not so flamboyant an individual as George

¹ He was elected as a Democrat to the 8th Congress and re-elected to the 9th and 10th Congress, serving from October 17, 1803, to April 15, 1808; he died while in office. Jefferson had offered him the position of Secretary of the Navy and I quote from a letter written on January 24, 1805, to Thomas Jefferson by Jacob Crowninshield:

"Sir: I received late in the evening of yesterday the letter which I beg leave to enclose for your persual and I have only delayed till this morning to come to a determination on the subject to which it refers, as it would have been improper in me to postpone my final answer a single day after I had obtained what your goodness permitted me to wait for. You will in a moment perceive the delicate situation in which I am placed. On the one side the Chief Magistrate of a great nation is soliciting me to accept an honorable appointment, an appointment too of all others I should most prefer. On the other side an amiable wife, is telling me if she consults her own inclinations she cannot advise me to accept the appointment."

and not as well known in national affairs as Jacob and Benjamin, led an interesting and variegated life. I haven't found anything to indicate just when he went to sea, but there is in existence a book containing problems in geometry and navigation dated 1787 which would make him about 15 years old at the time. It was a suitable age to begin to take an interest in his father's business. He wrote a very good hand and expressed himself well, so that he must have had a fair rudimentary education.

The records of his voyages in his earlier years taken from log books and notations are as follows: in 1789, he went to the Isle de France and Cape of Good Hope in the schooner *Richard and Edward*, James Rob of Boston, Captain. John writes:

She was a fishing vessel of only 63 tons single decked, not sheathed, copper at that time was out of the question. We went to the Isle de France where every thing was very low, we found many Americans there, several Salem vessels. My brother George was there waiting for us having sold the ship he went out in belonging to father with Capt. Michiel Haskel, called the Washington, a privateer during the revolution called the Rambler. He exchanged an old coasting Schooner for her! with Capt. Hugh Hill. He did not know what to do with her. We saw and passed the Cape of Good Hope without stopping, under the lee of the Isle de France, just in sight of it we met a French Brig in distress from Madagasker with slaves, sinking, without water or provisions; 50 of them, one died on board & one was born on board. We delivered them all safe, having fed them on board during four days—they gave us nothing for all this say \$150—we ought to have had a salvage (not less than one third.)

Our cargo out was from Salem £567:11:7d/ The sales of the Washington & the proceeds of her small cargo, with the Schooners, was laid out in coffee, & brought home in the Schooner, George came with us; we stopt at the Cape of Good Hope, sold some Tar on deck which we could not sell in the Isle de France, then sailed for home & arrived safe.

This was followed by five voyages in the schooner *Polly* & *Sally*, covering the years 1791 to 1794.² His next three

² The first voyage in 1790 and 1791 was to St. Bartholomew, St. Martins, Baltimore, and home; again in 1791 he went to Alexandria, Martinique, Santa Lucia, Aux Kayes, and home; and apparently in the same year he made a trip to Alexandria, Philadelphia, Basse-terre, New York, and home. In 1792, he went to Point Peter and home and in 1793 and 4, to Calcutta, Isle de France and back.

voyages were made in the celebrated ship *Bellisarius*, covering the years 1794 to 1798.³

In 1801, he sailed in command of the ship *America*, the third of this name, to India and Sumatra. This boat was originally French called the *Blonde*, and was sold back to the French in 1803, for \$28,000, and took her old name. The fourth *America*, not to be confused with this one, was the celebrated privateer built by Retire Beckett. John arrived at Bordeaux, October 1, 1803. He lived in France for the next two years, spending part of his time in Bordeaux and part in Paris. In Bordeaux, he apparently stayed with a lady who signs herself "Veuve Beauvais," who kept a boarding house frequented by other American captains. There are several letters from her inquiring after his health and giving him some news of his American friends. He went to Paris late in 1803, and stayed at the Hotel de l'Empire. In the summer of that year, he went to the Eaux de Barege; he stayed there from June 30th to September 19th. Whether this was for health or pleasure does not appear in the correspondence.

There is a tradition that he attended the coronation of Napoleon I in Notre Dame Cathedral on December 2, 1804. The sword which he is supposed to have worn on this occasion is now in the Peabody Museum. He might well have been at this pageant as he was in Paris at the time.

His correspondence at this time is largely with agents throughout Europe; in Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Bordeaux, Cronstadt, Archangel, and England. A good deal of his trade was with the neutral ports of the Baltic to which he could bring the produce that George Crowninshield & Sons brought

³ The first voyage was with his brother George; they sailed to India in November, 1794, and arrived back home in August, 1795. The second voyage was also with his brother George and again they went to India, sailing in November, 1795, and arriving back home September, 1796. The third voyage John sailed alone in October, 1796, arriving back home in July, 1798.

back from the Far East. Direct trading with France or England was, of course, subject to the risk of capture by the enemy nations, but they had not yet come to the hard times of the Orders in Council or the Berlin and Milan decrees of 1807-8. Then, no matter where you came from or where you were bound or what the cargo, a ship was liable to search and seizure. A little later, under these various orders and decrees, John lost the cargoes of two ships, the *Margaret*⁴ and the *Golden Age*.⁵

In the summer of 1809, Retire Beckett, of Salem, built for John Crowninshield a brig called the *Diomede*. She made one voyage to Christiansand, one to Archangel, and a third to Madras. She was then captured off Cape Ann by a British frigate and taken to Halifax as a prize. Privateering was the proverbial feast or famine. In the loss of his boats and cargoes, Crowninshield had suffered severe reverses in fortune but he was not discouraged; he was rather anxious to get to sea as soon as possible to make what he could while the war lasted. Accordingly, he decided to build another boat which was also called the *Diomede*. This time, she was a schooner. The correspondence relative to this boat is partly in the Essex Institute and partly in the Peabody Museum.

On July 16, 1813, he wrote his brother Richard, who apparently was in New York, and again on August 16, one month later, he wrote to Messrs. Bailey & Willis, of New York, the agents for the Crowninshields in that city, asking

⁴The *Margaret* had been purchased within a few days of the sale of the third *America*, in 1803. She was built by the Derbys, was almost new and was supposed to be the greatest sailer in the Port of Salem. John Crowninshield owned 5/6ths of her but again lost only the value of the cargo, as the ship was released and later lost at sea. Later, in the '30s, we find John Crowninshield trying to make an adjustment under the French claims, about these two ships.

⁵John Crowninshield owned two thirds of the *Golden Age*, which was taken off Tunis by a French privateer and carried in to Naples, where the cargo was condemned. The other third belonged to the skipper, William Fairfield, and a man named Dodge.

them if they could find out how much the cost would be to build a schooner in every respect like a boat called the *Teazer*. The *Teazer* was contracted for and built at Killingworth, Connecticut. Here is part of their letter in reply, dated August 20th:

We yesterday received your favor of the 16th and on inquiry are informed that the last boat *Teazer* was contracted for and built at Killingsworth, (Connecticut) under the superintendence of one of our Pilots who sold her to the Concern for \$7500. with every spar complete lower standing rigging and Fore and Aft stays, joiners work and painting of the Hull included. She cost completely fitted for the cruise, advance wages to the Sailors included, about 20,000 dollars. The Pivot Gun was a twelve pounder a preference was given to an Eighteen pounder but it could not be had at the time. One can now be had at \$450, without a carriage, they are scarce. The *Teazer* was about 120 tons copper fastened and the concern copped her to deep Ballast Mark after they bought her, they had nothing to do with the copper fastening.

We have seen the Pilot who sold the *Teazer*, he informs us that Mr. Hill (the carpenter who built her) is at Catskill near Hudson.

Two letters of August 23d and August 31st give some idea of the terms of the contract:

We have since writing had some conversation with one of our first rate Master builders and who builds vessels to sail equal with any out of the Port and equally substantial. He will contract to build a boat of 120 to 130 tons, copper fastened, to find all the iron, pay the joiners bill and furnish a full set of spars needfull for such a Vessel, to build the Hull with well seasoned white oak and to finish her in 60 days or sooner, provided the Weather should be favorable; his lowest terms is thirty five dollars per Ton, Carpenters Measurement. He has a beautiful Model for such a vessel and is a person who stands very high among our merchants. He launched last Saturday a very elegant Schooner of about 240 Tons which he sold on the Stocks. She is intended for a Privateer or Letter of Marque. Should you conclude to have a boat built we think this person may probably be able to copy after the Model of the *Teazer* being very ingenious and is now at leizure. We think you could not do better than to employ him and please to write us when you have made up your mind as we have promised to let him know when we receive an answer. We remain very respectfully

Bailey & Willis

Letter of August 31st is as follows:

By yesterdays mail we received your esteemed favor of the 27th and it gave us pleasure to learn that our two letters of the 20th and 23d had reached you. We again (this morning) had further conversation with the master builder and our B. Bailey saw the model spoken of in our last letter which he very much approves of. The Water line forms a curve from Midships to the extremity of the Stem & Stern, consequently the Greatest Breadth of Beam will be in the Middle of the Vessel and the stepping of the Masts to be proportioned as to bring the heavy pressure of the sails to bear on the actual body of the hull, thereby relieving the fore and after Parts free of the usual restraints occasioned by carrying a press of sail. Moreover it naturally appears that a Vessel built on such a Model will be more lively in a sea and able to carry more sail. Was we to contract for ourselves we should be very much inclined to try the experiment, although if you should conclude to have a boat built the Master Builder thinks he will be able to procure the Model of the "Teazer" by writing to the Carpenter who has it. The old rule or usual terms of payment are $\frac{1}{3}$ when the keel is laid and $\frac{1}{3}$ when all the beams are in and $\frac{1}{3}$ on delivery of the Vessel or he says he sometimes contracts to receive or in other words to be paid money when called for. The former would be the most correct way of proceeding. The builder thinks he might possibly build a boat in 45 to 50 days but would not like to agree short of 60 as the former would much depend on the Weather. Copper of 16, 18, 20 & 22 ounce was lately sold to copper a vessel at 54 cents per lb., which is now the fair price on credit. A gang of rigging made of the best Russia hemp could be had at \$17 per Cwt. & made of Kentucky yarns. \$14. and perhaps something lower, best Russia duck is \$33 per bolt. The usual way of shipping sailors here is to advance so much out & take the chance of getting it back. The last crews were advanced (to the prime seamen) \$20. each, ordinary \$10. to \$15. Our agents or owners do not buy shares until the cruise is ended when the advances is refunded if any prizes are made and arrive.

In all his correspondence, there is a note of urgency. On August 27, he writes that "we should want her soon if at all," and again on September 6, offers to pay a good price for the model of the *Teazer*.

The builder of the boat was a Mr. Christian Bergh, a man of some repute in New York as a builder of fast boats.⁶ By

⁶ Christian Bergh's yard was at Corlaer's Hook, the most easterly part of lower Manhattan Island. His father, of the same name, came to this country about 1710 with the Palatine emigration. The father settled near Rhinebeck, on the Hudson, where the ship builder was born. They were Loyalists during the Revolution and went to Nova Scotia, returning after the War. He died June 23, 1843, aged 81 years.—Robert Greenhalgh Albion, *The Rise of New York Port* (New York, 1939), *passim*.

the 21st of September, the keel was laid and part of the floor timbers were up and it was expected that the whole frame would be up by the end of the week. Having the boat on the stocks, the next thing to do was to get an armament which was greatly on his mind, and Crowninshield wrote the Secretary of the Navy and Mr. Richard Cutts, the Representative from Massachusetts in Washington, trying to get an 18-pounder for his boat. The best he could do was 12 pounders, three were bought and set up along the line of her keel, and Crowninshield goes into some detail as to how he wished these guns to be handled. The bulwarks were made a little higher than those of the *Teazer* three feet in all and ports were cut for a couple of six pounders. On October 17, the vessel was pretty well along and he sent Samuel Briggs to New York to supervise the construction. Briggs, who was later to be his first Lieutenant on the *Diomedé* had the following instructions:

Mr. Samuel Briggs, Sir: When you arrive at New York, you will call on Messrs. Bailey & Willis and they will give you charge of the boat which they are building for myself and others; you may for the present only call her the "Diomedé." Hurry her building and get her off as soon as you can; she must be coppered on the stocks with light copper nearly to deep load marks; her bulwarks we think may be high enough to take a nine lb. under the rail by letting the port go up to the rail. Have her well contrived to row, & no doubt but she will be able to bear the circle forward or the builder would not have put it there & it makes a fine bow gun & we insist on the circle abaft the main mast, if it is possible to find room, & it will make a fine stout additional stern chaser as well as a quarter & side gun. The heavy sails also you may get of the best duck, they must be split, sometime they split them twice—if there may be an advantage to her sailing you may do it; the heavy rigging must be of the best kind & you may get that also—it is not necessary for all the sheaves to be bushed only those that they generally do—one pritty good cable and a large hawser may be enough, but these as well as the spare rigging may be postponed till the last. Ballast such as they usually have, & no doubt that pig iron is the fastest but we cant always afford it, nor always get it. There should be some iron hoops on the water casks particularly on the large ones. We think she will sail faster with hammocks, than stiff births. Your own plan for the prison rooms is a good one. They have built so many of these kind of boats there that their contrivences for the

officers rooms below may be better than we can contrive but you will see when you get there. It is not worth while to get the bread & beef yet, the beef should be good, the bread good & well dried, it will keep longer. The Cruise as long as she will bear, say 4 or 4½ months. Respecting the powder & ball &c., you can write how other have been prepared of the same size vessels. She must be fitted well for defense. If you should think she will bear 4 large guns well, in good weather, when you may look out for a 24 lb. or an 18 lb. in addition to the 3 we now already have & also say a pair of 9 lb. for stern chasses &c., but we must not think she will carry too well & thereby deceive ourselves & hurt her sailing. All the upper officers you know are to go from here—shall want some under officers from there, armourer, gunner, boatswain, steady good men, surgeons, see about men. You will stop at New London go on board the Prize there, see their swords, boarding caps, pikes, muskets, pistols. It is not worth while to get any other things then the copper—launch her & rig her as fast as you can & prepare the circles. We have an order for 3 - 12 lb. guns on Mr. Anderson. you can see them, to measure & prepare for them but dont take them. Write soon and often her appearance &c.
Your friend, John Crowninshield.

Briggs writes him that he is very well pleased with the boat, bought the copper for her sheathing at fifty-eight cents a pound three months credit; the rigging seventeen dollars a hundredweight cash and the canvas \$32.50 first quality. He then writes on October 29th as follows:

I went over to the Navy Yard yesterday to look at the Guns, and was very much pleased with them—two of them I think will do to bore out to 18 pounders, the size and weight of the cannon as follows, viz:

	feet	inch	Cwt.	Qrs.	Lbs.
No. 1	8	7 long	33:	0:	21
2	7	8	29:	3:	4
3	7	8	29:	0:	21

I have been down in her hold today, and have been making a calculation about the storage of the water & provisions &c. and the room we shall probably have left, and it appears to me that in consequence of the little room we shall have, it will be best to dispence with the prison rooms untill we get out and let the Sailors have all the room they can, then if we take prizes we shall always be making room.

David A. Neal went from Salem to New York to assist Briggs and on November 6, writes:

Your vessel answers my expectations, rather more tonnage than I expected, 146 tons Carpenters measure. Her bulwarks are not solid,

such being tho't heavy. They are three feet high amidships, two, nine, aft.—the after ports though rather small will allow a 12.pr. if on a very low carriage with iron axletrees & trucks. Capt. B. has engaged the Bread, it is now baking, 7100 lbs. Navy at \$6.—2400 lbs. Pilot at \$9. cash. The Schooner will be launched on Monday next, having been delayed for want of water; rigging is ready to go over the mastheads—spars are made, sails making carriages & circles are making, will be finished next week; Capt. B. has bo't a 4½ inch Hawser, 120 ft. & kedge anchor 336 lbs. also contracted for one 10 inch cable 120 F. and anchor 8 Cwt. All the cordage at \$17.

Capt. B. has bo't 40 water casks, guage 90 gals. at \$6. & 50, guage 55 & 60, second hand @ \$3.50—all iron bound; the difference in price between such & wooden hoops is very trifling—the salt provisions are not bo't. ask Mess. Beef, N.Y. inspec. \$8. Pork do 15. Bread rooms are tinned & will contain all our Bread. Magazine will be coppered. The vessel is handsomely coppered with 18 & 20 Oz.

The *Diomede* was finally launched on the 8th of November, and David Neal again writes on November 28th:

Yesterday I bought the light armament as follows: 35 muskets, at \$12. 20 pairs of pistols at \$14. per pair; 18 carbines at \$7. 60 hangers at \$3. 20 Pikes flat kind at \$1. 20 tomahawks at 75 cents. The above is the same kind that Navy has been supplied with, and as cheap as any of any Description that we could find in the city. The Schooner has all her heavy provisions on board and Stow'd we have been obliged to reduce the quantity as follows:

Beef 7 bbls. Pork 5 do—Water 13 casks of 55 gallons each. We have calculated that what we have, will be full allowance for 80 men, for 105 days.

At that time, it was impossible to find sailors in New York. Briggs writes on December 12:

I am at a loss to know what way we shall procure men; I opened the rendezvous last Monday and have only been able to get one man and a boy—I don't believe there is twenty good sailors in the city.

The local ports and Baltimore skippers had cleaned up the market. Crowninshield even suggested bringing men out from Salem. All this changed when Madison decreed an embargo:⁷ "There appears to be a great prospect of an

⁷ President Madison sent a special message to Congress, July 20th, 1813, asking for an embargo on United States shipping. This bill passed the House but was defeated in the Senate. It was introduced in the next session of Congress and was passed in the House on December 11, and then in the Senate. It was repealed the following April.

embargo today. Should that take place, I think we shall be able to procure sailors in a very short time." By the end of the month, it was perfectly evident that they could get all the men they wanted in New York. According to a detailed account which Messrs. Bailey & Willis forwarded to Mr. Crowninshield, the *Diomedé* ready to sail:

Cost	\$27,789.97
Of this, the contract at \$35. a Ton; for building the Hull	4,550.00
The copper for sheathing and her nails	906.00
Duck	1,590.00
To which could be added a bill for making sails, hammocks, etc.	780.00
The three long twelves that she carried cost her	615.00
The cannon and powder	1,081.00
Muskets, pistols, boarding equipment	1,313.00
Medicine and surgical instruments	247.00
Ship Chandler's bill	2,707.00
Groceries	2,081.00
Mr. McSweeney's bill for a drummer & fifer, crimpage and liquor and a rendezvous	120.00

The instructions to Captain Crowninshield in charge of the *Diomedé* were signed by William Gray,⁸ Nathaniel Silsbee, Robert Stone, Jr., Thomas M. Woodbridge, John Dodge, Jeremiah Briggs, Stephen White, Sr., Joseph White, Jr., William P. Richardson, Jesse Richardson, and William Bailey.

Following is a list of the crew of the *Diomedé*: John Crowninshield, Commander; Samuel Briggs, Jr., 1st Lieutenant; Richard Downing, 2d Lieutenant; John Dempsey, 3d Lieutenant; Samuel Upton, Jr., 4th Lieutenant; Joseph Preston, Sailmaster; Henry Jaques, 1st Mate; Edward Dorr, 2d Mate; Reuben Page, 3d Mate; Obed Hussey, 4th Mate; Johnson Parsons, Surgeon; David A. Neal, Clerk and fifty-four men and petty officers. His account of the first voyage is as follows:

⁸ Mr. Gray says his determination to quit business prevents him from buying a share in the vessel.

Left the hook, Tuesday eve'g. 8 Februa. 1814; light northerly wind then almost a continual gale, untill Wednesday 16: a disguised Gun Brig. to leward, drew us down to gun shot, & even hauled down his colours, the surer to deceive, having fired two shot at him; but he found we suspected him, he took in his cloathes from his waste, & was in a blaze, his shot fell over & all around us, we hauled our wind & beat him very easy, & from 3 P. M. to dark we could hardly see him.

Here are several unimportant and somewhat confusing entries as to dates and then the account of his great victory:

Sunday [supposedly the 20th] in afternoon captured the Schooner Lord Rensonby, Moran Master, from Surinam for Halifax. 71 hhds sugar, 77 hhds Rum, 9 casks coffee, 11 lbs cocoa.

Wednesday, February 23, 1814, moderate breezes & pleasant wind S.W. Diomedes steering SSE. at $\frac{1}{4}$ past 2 A.M. heard the report of a gun to windward say WNW. but could see nothing called all hands all ready & not being able to make it out to be from the station viz. Latt. 29 & Long. 66, no other than a fleet from St. Thomas's bound to Bermuda, Halifax or even Europe or to all three under convoy—stood on $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour to get the wind then tacked—the wind then came West—presuming if we were not deceived in the report of the gun to make them on the Lee bow—& at day light they were sighted off deck on the very point expected viz: N.N.E.—4 Schooners & a Briggt. At first took the Briggt. to be a Gun Briggt. but soon found that she was also a merchantmen—the above view & position was imaginary—tho' it turned out to be correct.⁹

The Brig. held her wind—the Schooners all kept together & kept away a little & feeling perfectly confident of the whole of them prepared accordingly. After taking the Schooners the Capt. all said positively that they had heard no Gun—but said the Briggt had a small one, & when we took him he acknowledged that he fired one a little after two, which proves her position nearly as above viz. of his being to leward of them & to windward of us—& which Gun sold the whole fleet, his sailing a little faster brought him ahead of them all as is shewn in the next & morning view.

The Briggt. Friends, J. Glansen was lost sight off at N.N.W. one half hour. The wind changed in a rain squall from West to N.E. & when having sent off the Hope made sail by the wind on the starboard tacks to seek the Briggt sighted her in 20 minutes from the fore yard, & in 2 hours & 40' more brought her too & dispatched her with prize master J. Cloutman. At sun down all secured & all again clear—we commenced at sun rise, captured the whole fleet four Schooners & one Briggt—& finished & done our work at sun down, the whole loaded with 137 hhds. (10 Ct. ea) & 54 barrels sugar, 265 hhds rum—81 hhds & 4 teirces molasses—27 hhds & 1 bbl. lime juice—from St. Thomas's for Halifax—

⁹ This refers to a sketch Crowninshield drew of the encounter.

belonging to Lunenburg viz. Malagash—hove about to the Eastward, 14 days from New York, 36 prisoners on board & 28 men & boys of our own—next day concluded to proceed for home, they were under the convoy of a Gun Brig which left them the day before!!

He captured on his first cruise five schooners and 1 brig. Of these six vessels, five were captured in one day. The *Hope*, M. Rudolf, Captain, was put in charge of Obed Hussey and arrived off Bristol, Rhode Island, February 13, 1814, with a cargo of rum and molasses. The *William*, J. Reuhland, Captain, S. Upton, prizemaster, arrived at Savannah and I do not know of what her cargo consisted. The *Joseph and Mary*, J. Fault, Captain, in charge of G. Laverty, came into New York Harbor. What became of the schooner *Margaret*, J. Sparling, Captain, J. Strout, prizemaster, I do not know. The brig *Friends*, under the command of Thomas Cloutman, was run ashore near Southampton, Long Island, on or about March 13, with 107 puncheons of rum, trying to escape the British ship that was in the offing. The prize master writes that he landed most of the rum with some leakage because several of the casks were cracked. He saved the rigging and sails and later the boat was sold on the beach where she struck.

An interesting sidelight on the profits of these cruises is a note from Bailey & Willis to John Crowninshield that his proportion as master and 8/20th owner of the *Diomedé* would bring him in seven or eight thousand dollars, exclusive of the prize in Providence, and he himself says, that if any three of the prizes of the first cruise arrive, he will pay for the building of the *Diomedé*.

On his second cruise he left Salem Wednesday, April 27, 1814, and headed down East. The log is so confused and laconic that it is difficult to reproduce but he summarizes it as follows:

Recaptured two Spaniards, manned only and she was recaptured from us—Briggs	2
destroyed three Brig.	3
captured & gave up two Brigs & one schooner	3
captured and manned three ships & one schooner, one of the ships was recaptured, the other have arrived	4
	<hr/>
Twelve	12

He was finally captured during the last of May by the brig *Rifleman*; he was off Cape Breton and taken in to Halifax. The most interesting part of the log is the profiles that he drew of the landfall together with a careful description of the position of the boats when he was captured.

After his capture, Crowninshield stayed in Dartmouth, which is a little village near Halifax. To amuse himself, he drew an extensive plan of the place which is pasted in the back of his log. He had expected to be exchanged for an English officer, but apparently, the Englishman broke his parole and nothing came of it, and he was not released until the end of the war, March 16, 1815.

By the time the war was over, his fortune, which at one time must have been considerable, was very much reduced. He evidently felt that shipping was not going to be the lucrative profession that it had been before, therefore, it is interesting to see that he turned to the West. In 1816-17, he made a trip to Pittsburg, then down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans. He writes enthusiastically about the climate in Louisiana and finally established in New Orleans a distillery for making rum and also set up a saw mill. Both these ventures, after dragging along until the late '20s, resulted in failure. It is not necessary to go into details of his failure. For one thing, I don't believe he appreciated that New Orleans was already a market for West Indies rum which probably could be produced a great

deal cheaper than he could make it in the United States. Another one of his ventures was a tract of land in Montville, Maine.

The steps he took to retrieve his fortune was a policy successfully pursued by other people. As I have said before, he probably felt that the era of quick fortunes in shipping was over. He was, with his brother Benjamin, trustee under Jacob's will and was also with Benjamin a guardian of Jacob's children. The materials for reconstructing his later life are rather scanty and presumably it was comparatively quiet. He was generous as he could be in responding to appeals of his old friends. He was appointed an appraiser of the Port of Boston in 1830. He married between the first and second cruise of the *Diomedé* his cousin, Maria Crowninshield, of Danvers, on April 4, 1814. His house was on the lower side of Derby Street, just below Phillips Wharf. He died in Boston, April 10, 1842.

LETTERS RELATING TO THE BUILDING OF THE "DIOMEDE"

Salem, July 16, 1813

Brother Richard

Will you if not too much trouble, enquire of the same people who built the last Teazer what they would build one of the same everything for, what they found, if copper fastened & coppered how high all her dimensions & all about it.

Your brother

how soon could finish her payments &c. if they dont find everything what she cost for sea &c.

J. C.

Salem August 16-1813

Gent

Presuming the last boat Teazer was built in your city will you pleas inquire for me, of the same builders, what they would build *just such a*

one for—& what is usual for the carpenters to furnish &c.—if only the Hull, the Rigging, & the sails,—if copper fastened—coppered&c—how large she was—particularly how long it would take to complete her, what did the other cost when she sailed—if the large guns can be had,—be good enough to inform me (dont mention this)

& oblige Yrs T.

J. C.

N.B. & their best terms, also of duck & cordage &c.

Messrs. Bailey & Willis

New York

New York Augt 20th 1813.

Mr. John Crowninshield

Dear Sir

We yesterday received your favor of the 16th. and on inquiry are informed that the last boat Teazer was contracted for and built at Killingsworth (Connecticut) under the Superintendence of one of our Pilots who sold her to the Concern for \$7500 with every spar complete lower standing rigging and Fore and Aft stays Joiners Work and Painting of the Hull included. She cost completely fitted for the cruize advance Wages to the Sailors included about 20,000 dollars. The Pivot Gun was a twelve pounder a preference was Given to an Eighteen pounder but it could not be had at the time One can now be had at \$450 without a Carriage they are Scarce.

The Teazer was about 120 tons copper fastened and the Concern coppered her to deep Ballast Mark after they bought her they had nothing to do with the copper fastening.

We have seen the Pilot who sold the Teazer he informs us that Mr. Hill (the Carpenter who built her) is at Catskill near Hudson after stating to him our Ideas he informed us that a Vessel of the size and model of the Teazer could not be built in less than 16 weeks and to furnish the Hull complete together with the Joiners Work spare blocks standing rigging for lower masts halyards Cables & anchors Spars &c. The price would be 8000 dollars he observed that there was but little timber fit for such a Vessel in the Yards and the expence of getting it so soon will be great We found by his conversation that he had and [an] Idea of building a Schooner of a larger size than the Teazer and although we think him a

Candid Man still think this operation will interfere provided he carries it into effect. We mean as relates to time he has the Model and Went in the Country this Morning for a few days. On his return we will enquire further and see whether a boat could not be contracted for to be built here Should the result prove favorable we will write you. We remain very respectfully

Your Obdt. Servts.
Bailey & Willis

P.S. best heavy duck \$34 dull Cordage \$16 to 17 dull

New York Augt. 23d. 1813.

Mr. John Crowninshield
Sir

We wrote you the 20th. in reply to your favor of the 16th. which we hope reached you timely.

We have since writing had some conversation with one of our first rate Master builders and who builds Vessels to sail equal with any out of the Port and equally substantial he will contract to build a boat of 120 to 130 Tons copper fastened to find all the Iron pay the Joiners bill and furnish a full set of spars needfull for such a Vessel to build the hull with well seasoned white oak and to finish her in 60 days or sooner provided the Weather should be favorable his Lowest terms is thirty five dollars per Ton Carpenters Measurement. He has a beautiful Model for such a Vessel and is a person who stands very high among our Merchants. He launched last Saturday a very Elegant Schooner of about 240 tons which he sold on the Stocks She is intended for a Privateer or Letter of Marque. Should you conclude to have a boat built we think this person may probably be able to Copy after the Model of the Teazer being very Ingenious and is now at Leizure. We think you could not do better than to employ him and please to write us when you have made up your Mind as we have promised to let him know when we receive an answer. We remain very respectfully

Your Obedt. Servts.
Bailey & Willis

P.S. The Patriotism of your Brother George is highly spoken of by those who appreciate their Countrys Cause. We were happy to learn that he succeeded at Halifax present him our kind regards.

Salem Aug. 27, 1813

Gent.

Your two polite letters of 20 & 23 duly received with information respecting the boat Teazer.—should want one of the same size & as much like herself if possible & rather think that you might be able to obtain the modle—of the first man, or that the second builder can imitate her likeness!—how would he want his payments & on what terms can the other things be had, such as cordage &c. price of copper. A friend who might be concerned is now out of town but will be back in a few days, then shall be able to conclude soon, in the meantime expect from you the further information—we should want her soon, if at all—what are the terms of advances to the sailors—here the owners have bought a part of there shares—or advance them a small sum to be paid from the first prise & lost if none.

Respectfully Yr Ob Sv
J C.

Mr. Bailey & Willis
New York

New York Augt. 31st. 1813

Mr. John Crowninshield
Sir

By yesterdays Mail we received your esteemed favor of the 27th. and it gave us pleasure to learn that our two letters of the 20th. & 23d. had reached you We again (this Morning) had further conversation with the Master Builder & our B. Bailey saw the model spoken of in our last letter which he very much approves of. The Water line forms a Curve from Midships to the extremity of the Stem & Stern consequently the Greatest Breadth of Beam will be in the Middle of the Vessel and the stepping of the Masts so proportioned as to bring the heavy pressure of the sails to bear on the actual body of the hull thereby relieving the fore and after Parts free of the usual restraints occasioned by carrying a press of sail. Moreover it naturally appears that a Vessel built on such a Model will be more lively in a sea and able to carry more sail. Was we to contract for ourselves we should be very much inclined to try the experiment although if you should conclude to have a boat built the Master Builder thinks he will be able to procure the Model of the Teazer by writing to the Carpenter who has it. The old rule or usual Terms of

payment are $\frac{1}{3}$ when the Keel is Laid $\frac{1}{3}$ when all the beams are in and $\frac{1}{3}$ on delivery of the Vessel or he says he sometimes contracts to receive or in other words to be paid money when called for the former would be the most correct way of proceeding. The Builder thinks he might possibly build a boat in 45 to 50 days but would not like to agree short of 60 as the former would much depend on the Weather. Copper of 16, 18, 20 & 22 ounce was lately sold to copper a Vessel at 54 cents per lb which is now the fair price on credit a gang of rigging made of the best russia hemp could be had at \$17 per Cwt & made of Kentucky yarns \$14 and perhaps something lower. Best russia duck is \$33 per bolt. The usual way of shipping sailors here is to advance so much out & out & take the chance of getting it back. The last crews were advanced (to the prime seamen) \$20 each Ordinary \$10 to 15. Our agents or owners do not buy shares untill the cruize is ended when the advances is refunded if any prizes are made and arrive

We remain very truly
Your friends
Bailey & Willis.

Sept. 6 Monday

Gent

Your several favours have been received, we have concluded to build a schooner, & if it is possible to obtain the model of the last Teaser, (even by paying a pritty good price for it) you must then build her exact, as can be, the same size but if not, on the best model you can obtain of 125 or not over 130 Tons, as near the Teaser as you can get—& all the spars like here—her bulwarks to copy also—on the best terms you can & as soon as you can. We want at present to obtain only the hull viz first contract—& to leave all the other things, for some time yet—please say if government have any long eighteen in the neighborhood—if so they may possibly be obtained of them, it is said the last Teaser is an improvement on the first viz. her harpin is swelled about eight inches on each bow—if so & the first model can be had (& the last cannot) perhaps you can go from that—it is understood the last one was quite roomly of her size when she has progressed some a person will come on, you need not *let anybody* know she is building for any people this way.

Yr Ob St
J. C.

Mess. Bailey & Willis N. Y.

New York Sept. 13th. 1813.

Mr. John Crowninshield

Sir

We duly received your favor of the 6th. and agreeable to your request have engaged to have built the boat not to exceed 130 Tons as near the Teazer as possible provided her Moulds cannot be obtained. You say the Bulwarks to copy her which were entirely too low—It will therefore be (we think) adviseable to raise them something higher. The contractor built the Pilot Boat Trimmer that would outsail the first Teazer and he is well assured that he can with but very little deviation exceed the last. We therefore feel very sanguine of an Improvement. In Point of sailing Mr. Bergh (the Builder) asserts and apparently with reason that the Schooner he lately launched which we spoke of in a former letter will outsail the last Teazer.

We observe that a Person will be on when the boat has progressed some. We consider your request as Confidential. We will enquire if Government has any 18 pounders and let you know though our impression is that they have not. Attention will be paid respecting the boat being roomy. We shall write you again in a few days and remain very respectfully.

Your Obdt. Svts.
Bailey & Willis

Salem Sept 15 [1813]

Gentln

On the 6, having wrote you respecting building a boat like the Teaser &c.—& having not heard from you, fear that it might have miscarried, therefore send you a copy &c.

Lay her deck where the teasers was—& transom also.

Yrs. J. C.

Messrs. Bailey & Willis, New York

Salem Sep 18 [1813]

Sir

The Bark is 157/27 but there must be some kind of a mistake, for she has every appearance of being larger, the Betsey is 120/84.

Yr Ob Sv
J. C.

Mr. P. P. F. Legrand, Boston.

New York Sept 21st 1813

Mr John Crowninshield
Sir

We duly received duplicate to your favor of the 15th by which notice that our answer to the original had not reached you. We wrote the 13th and presume you received our letter by the Mail of the 16th. We should have been more prompt but wished to get the agreement with the Master Ship Carpenter completed. Our B. Bailey was at the yard yesterday and found the keel laid and part of the floor timbers on. It is probable that the whole frame will be up this week (say by Saturday) ready for planking. We should therefore presume that it would be adviseable to have the gentleman who you intend shall superintend the building of the schooner here next Week. The timber thus far is very good. Attention will be paid to your request relative to laying the deck and transom. We have enquired of the Navy agent about an 18 pound Cannon and find it impossible to obtain one from him. We do not know if there is one to be had in the City but shall continue our enquiries. We cannot say whether the one alluded to in our letter of the 20th Ulto is sold the price of it then was \$450. Perhaps there may be some in Philadelphia. Please to write us on the receipt hereof and mention when you shall dispatch the Gentleman.

We remain very respectfully

Your Obt Svts

Bailey & Willis.

Salem Septem. 25, 1813.

Gent.

Yours of 13 & 21 are duly received & thank you for your attention &c. Respecting the bullwark, you will put it for the best, we dont want too many ports—dont tumble it in make as much room on deck as you can—the person will soon come on—you must recollect we expect an elegant model a superior sailor, & a handsome vessel—she will we think bear more spars than the Teaser, respecting the gun, we think if you can find the 18 lb. & if there is much fear of loosing it you had perhaps better buy it right away. But if you can hold it until answers to the enclosed, to the government are received which please to foreward are requests for guns, which may come private—are there any long twelves & price to be

had, we must take them if we cannot do better—what short guns are there with you.

Yr Ob Sv.

J. C.

Messrs. Bailey & Willis, New York.

P.S. One of the letters is requested to be directed to me in it to your care, if it comes. You may open it, then you may know & we shall gain time—if Mr Cutts is in Philadel. please direct it there (private).

Salem Sept 25 1813

Honourable William Jones
Secretary of the Navy, Washington

Sir

Having from necessity commenced building a small schooner as a privateer in *New York*, & finding it very difficult to procure the kind of guns required, therefore take the liberty to ask the favour of the Government if consistant with the loan, of three long eighteen pounders, or two or *even one*—should prefer *them*, if convenient or if not, three long twelves or two or *even one*—as there may be some laying in or near *New York*.

It is presumed there is no impropriety in this request, as it is understood that a similar favour has been granted in this quarter, & the loan will greatly & highly oblige,

very respectfully your

most obedient servant

J. C.

Salem Sept. 25, 1813

Sir

Having from necessity commenced building a small schooner as a privateer in *New York*—& finding it impossible to procure the kind of guns required, have taken the liberty to ask a loan from the government of three long eighteen pounders—or two or even one, should prefer *them* if they can be obtained if not, then three long twelves or two or even one—as they may have some which they may spare in or near *to New York*—where the vessel is. Assuming there is no impropriety in this request as it is understood, that a similar favour has been granted before

in this quarter—& the loan will greatly oblige me, if you will be kind enough to assist this along as the vessel will very soon be ready—if it cannot shall then be obliged to equip her in a less able manner—

respectfully your most obedient

servent

J. C.

Mr Richard Cutts

Washington.

Please direct me New York as there is a possibility of my being there, care of Mr. Bailey & Willis.

Salem Octobr. 4 [1813]

Gent

Yours of 29 received, am glad you saw Mr Cutts—you shall have a remittance soon—the guns being the main object—we think you may hear of some in Philadelphia as soon we ascertain about them—the person will then come on—we have good hopes to get them of Government & think our friend Mr McClain can help you. Capt Ward says there were a pair of fine 9—taken off the G. Armstrong—those you mention appears to be very dear—but think it prudent to wait, to hear of our request first.

Enclosed is a plan of the deck &c. of the schooner, observe it is in point of dimension fancy. The plan is good & cannot be better—perhaps the bullwarks are too high, that you must regulate. You have not given me her dimensions.

Your Obt. Svt.

J. C.

Messrs. Bailey & Willis, New York.

N.B. Perry's victory has made him & his country immortal in point of brilliancy of achievement. It surpasses all, for it is the first whole fleet that every surrendered in toto in the world.

Salem October 5 1813.

Gent:

Having commenced building a vessel in New York & wanting to employ the full amount of the Wine in your hands—will it be convenient

for you to advance nearly or quite to the presumed value of them, say a part now in bills on N.Y. & a part here—& the residue on N.Y. in the course of a month, if you can it will much oblige

respectfully yr obt svt

J. C.

Messrs. Wm B Swett & Co. Boston.

Navy Department

Oct. 5, 1813.

Sir

The only cannon which the Department can dispose of at New York are of 12 Pd/ calibre.

If these will answer your purpose, the enclosed order upon the Navy Store Keeper in New York will enable you to procure three long 12 pounders. Some inconvenience having been sustained by loaning of ordnance stores to private individuals, it has been determined as a general rule to sell such as can conveniently be spared on such terms as will enable the Govt to replace them when required for service.

The price stated in the order is that which we pay to the founders.

I am respectfully

Your Ob't Servt

W Jones

John Crowninshield Esqr
Salem, Massts

New York Octr 5th 1813

Mr John Crowninshield

Sir

We wrote you the 29th Ulto being our Last and are since without any of your favors. We were in hopes the Gentleman would have arrived ere this as the Schooner Progresses tolerably fast. We think she will be a very beautiful boat and sail equal to any thing of her size if rightly managed. Several of our Pilots have been to look & pass their judgment & some of them questioned the Carpenter if she was for sale one of the oldest wanted to be Concerned. The Ports will not be cut out untill the Gentleman comes on. If you have midship guns the Bulwark ought not to

be raised too high. The Sylph on Lake Ontario carries four heavy Guns a Midships and has on deck under the Carriages & Sweep a Stout piece of oak bolted to the deck. Russia duck has risen since we last wrote and the best is held at \$35 & raven is \$19.

This morning a letter is received in Town from a respectable source at Washington stating that the British Ministry had appointed a Minister (Lord Walpole) to meet Ours on the Continent. Judging from Bribery & Corruption which so freely flows in the veins of the ruling Party in Great Britain nothing certain can be calculated on from them. The letter we allude to is from a private character. We remain very respectfully.

Your Obdt Svts
Bailey & Willis.

P.S. We have not much faith in the report from Washington.

October 9

/ Gent

A few days past wrote you, & not having an answer fear it was misplaced. viz, having &c.

respectfully your ob. st.
J. C.

Messrs. Wm. B. Swett & Co.
Boston.

Oct. 11

Gent

Yours of 8 July received, what you say is perfectly correct, & feel myself obliged, for what you have already done &c.

Will you please place in Messrs. Bailey & Willis' hands, New York, fifteen hundred dollars (\$1500) & be good enough to send me per Dale, one thousand dollars & oblige

respectfully Yr Ob St
J. C.

Messrs. Wm. B. Swett & Co. Boston.

October 13 Salem

Gent

Yours of 11, enclosing a check for \$1000 that you had sent to Bailey & Willis \$1500 duly received—it is my wish that you will sell the wine as soon as you can conveniently.

Respectfully yrs

J. C.

Messrs. Wm. B. Swett & Co.
Boston.

October 13

Gent

Yours of 8 inclosing a plan of the deck of Schooner is received which we like very much & must say that had no idea of her *nose* being so long—but it makes good room for a gun before the mast which am glad of but still it is my wish to have one also abaft the M-M if it shall be possible to find room—Mr. Samuel Briggs will set off after tomorrow—have obtained an order for 3 long twelves on Mr. Anderson (private) & we will try to get another for abaft the mast or we think it might be possible to obtain a 24 lb. for the main one if she would bear it.

shall write more per Mr Briggs

Yr Obt Svt

J. C.

Messrs. Bailey & Willis. New York

New York Oct 14th 1813

Mr John Crowninshield

Salem

Sir

We this day recvd from Messrs Wm B. Swett & Co of Boston two drafts at five days sight amtg to Fifteen Hundred Dollars when paid will appear to your credit. The schooner is planked up & her beams laid & we presume they are now laying her Deck.

We are Sir

Your Ob Svts

Bailey & Willis

Salem October 17, 1813

Mr Samuel Briggs

Sir

When you arrive at New York, you will call on Messrs Bailey & Willis, & they will give you charge of the boat which they are building for myself & others; you may for the present only call her the Diomedé.

Hurry her building & get her off as soon as you can she must be coppered on the stocks, with light copper nearly to deep load marks; her bullwarks, we think may be high enough to take a nine lb. under the rail by letting the port go up to the rail—

Have her well contrived to row, & no doubt but she will be able to bear ont the circle forward or the builder would not have put it there & it makes a fine bow gun.

& We insist on the circle abaft the main mast if it is possible to find room & it will make a fine stout additional stern chaser as well as a quarter & side gun.

The heavy sails also you may get of the best duck, they must be split—sometimes they split them twice—if their may be an advantage to her sailing you may do it.

The heavy rigging must be of the best kind & you may get that also—it is not necessary for all the sheves to be bushed only those that they generally do—

One pritty good cable & a large hawser may be enough, but these as well as the spare rigging may be postponed till the last.

Ballest such as they usually have, & no doubt that pig iron is the fastest but we cant always afford it, nor always get it.

There should be some iron hoops on the water casks particularly on the large ones.

We think she will sail faster with hammocks, then stiff births—your own plan for the prison rooms is a good one.

They have built so many of these kind of boats there that their contrivences for the officers, rooms below may be better than we can contrive but you will see when you get there.

It is not worth while to get the bread & beef yet, the beef should be good, the bread good, & well dried, it will keep longer.

The Cruise as long as she will bear, say 4 or 4½ months, respecting the powder & ball &c you can write how others have been prepared of the same size of vessels.

She must be fitted well for defense if you should think she will bear 4

large guns well, in good weather, then you may look out for a 24 lb or an 18 lb. in addition to the 3 we now already have & also say a pair of 9 lb for stern chasses &c.

But we must not think she will carry too much & thereby deceive ourselves & hurt her sailing.

All the upper officers you know are to go from here—shall want some under officers from there, armourer, gunner, boatswain, steady good men surgeons, see about men.

You will stop at New London go on board the Prize there—see their swords, boarding caps, pikes, muskets, pistols.

It is not worth while to get any other things then the copper—launch her & rigg her as fast as you can & prepair the circles—we have an order for 3-12 lb guns on Mr Andersons—you can see them, to measure & prepair for them but dont take them.

Write soon & often, her appearance &c.

your friend &c

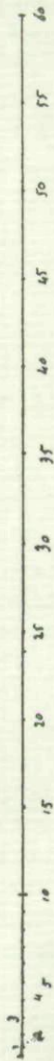
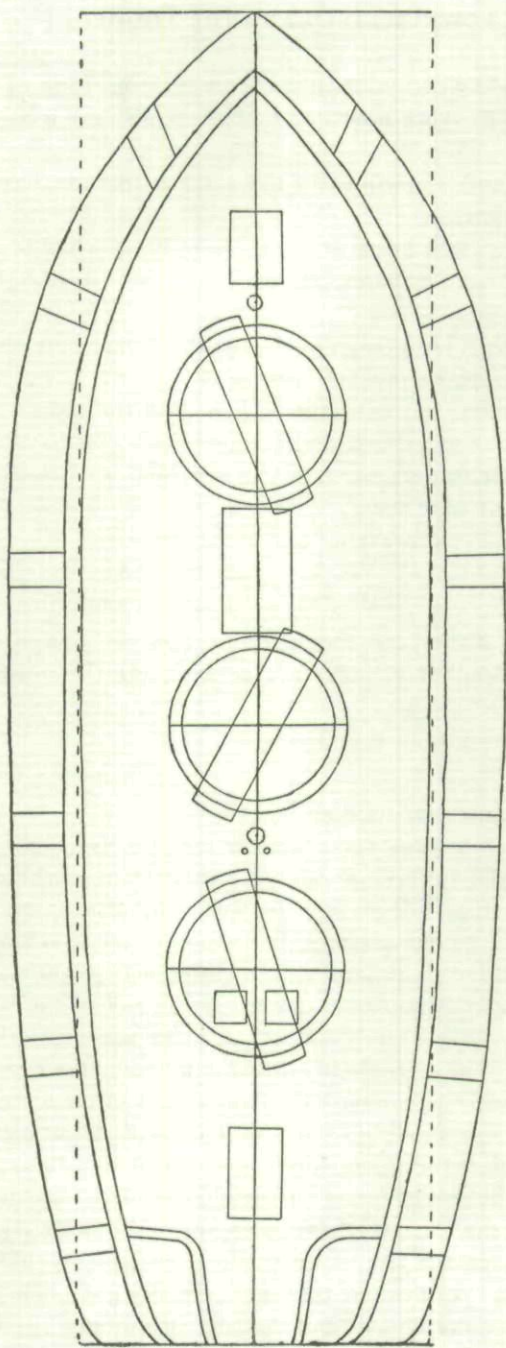
John Crowninshield

Ask Messrs. B. & W. if they can dispose of 3 shares yet, unappropriated but they must be completely under my control, viz the vessel & the cruise as the whole here now is.

She is to be divided into 20 shares—

Remember these dimensions are all fancy.

This gives three heavy guns well placed & port for five fancy ones, & also a bow chase & the stern chase makes a quarter one—there is only place to pass a gun from side to side between the after circle & companion. There should be one certain—it appears to me that there is no necessity for the circle to be so large in circumference, as they are some times made, as the gun is not long at rest on the *end* of the *slide* & it cannot tip—so it will give more room at the sides and on deck—there can be no objection to the after circle as the main boom may be placed as low as you please & will just traverse over the empty circle & the slide—the gun to slip off on to a small false travelling carriage & put away—& a reef in the Main Sail & the boom lifted up, then it will be quite high enough & play over the gun & makes a large quarter or chase gun—this is the best plan for a small vessel—have guessed at the bullwarks viz. & have allowed a foot for the rise or up to the port stills & three above that makes four in all—& of course that will take any gun—whether you can allow so much or no cant say—but dont let this induce you to put it



too high—you must know best what she will bear—the slides may even play over hatch, as they ought not to be pinched but have good length to recoil—& perhaps the after slide may even play over the pumps—so as to get the heft the farther forward—you see if necessary small hatches can even be made in the circles.

New York Octr 24th 1813

John Crowninshield Esqr

Sir I arrived here yesterday and delivered my letters to Messrs Bailey & Willis. From there I went down to see the vessel and was very much pleased with her; she is very roomly on deck for a vessel of her size, and the best model I ever saw, we shall copper her on the stocks, and shall probably launch her this week, I shall Amediately attend to the rigging and sails, I think you will have to dispence with the Circle abaft the main mast, as there will be less room to live below than you have any Adea of but she is very well Calculated for three Circles and the midship one might be for a very large gun, but I should think an 18 lb. would be heavy enough for her, and then you can have as many travelling Guns as you please which will answer either as Stern Chase or Quarter Guns if you have a circle abaft the main mast you must reduce the trunk so as only to have one length of births and she is so very shart that there is only room for one height or one tier, so that I think from all Circumstances it will be best to substitute travelling Guns, Sailors are plenty here, but it is Common to give a bownty, but I shall enquire more particular about that and let you know in season, I shall write you again soon how we progress.

Your Obedient Servent

Samuel Briggs.

New York Octr 27th 1813

Mr John Crowninshield

Sir

Capt. Briggs arrived safe (of which we presume he has informed you) and delivered your favor of the 13th. We do not think it any way practicable to Mount a Pivot Gun abaft the main mast if it was it would very much interfere when firing off with the Foresail Main Shrouds Man at helm & those placed on the after part of the deck in time of action. It is doubtful with us whether she would be able to bear a 24 pounder Mid-

ships. We notice that Capt. Briggs has an order on Mr Anderson for three long twelves.

We bought the copper yesterday & had to pay 58 cents. All who held the other parcels would not sell at less than Sixty. The rise is owing to the Scarcity and a considerable demand of late. We paid for the nails (very handsomely cast & very tough) 38 cents. Everything is in as great a state of forwardness as circumstances will admit & owing to bad weather one side could not be prepared today for coppering which it otherways would have been. Nothing will be wanting on our part to give all possible expedition being anxious. The hammering of the Bulwark "of the religion we profess" *a la mode de Perry* should be continued. Two Baltimore Gentlemen were to view the Diomedé yesterday and wanted to know if she was for sale all Judges think her a *Nonpareil* and we think not without reason. We paid Cash for the Copper. Notice that the concern liked the plan of the deck very much. Please to present them our kind regards. We remain very respectfully

your Obdt Sevts

Bailey & Willis

PS 40 cents is the fair price of Copper Sheathing nails.

PS If practicable we will dispose of the three twentieths though are doubtful whether it can be done subject to your controul.

New York Octr 29th 1813

John Crowninshield Esqr

Sir, Since writing you on the 24 inst. there has been nothing but Continual rains, in Consequence of which we shall not be able to launch her untill the middle of next week. I have however got the Copper at 58 cents pr lb 3 months Credit the nails at 38 cents Do—the rigging at 17\$ pr Cwt Cash. I bought today, likewise the canvas, at 32.50/100 and \$35 most at \$32.50/100 first Quality, likewise we have got 15 tons of Iron Ore, Engaged for ballast, which we think will be enough, as it is as much as any privateer has had of her size, the Circles for the guns are making.

I went over to the Navy yard yesterday to look at the Guns, and was very much pleased with them. Two of them I think will do to bore out to 18 pounders, the size and Weight of the Cannon as follows, viz.

	feet	inch			
No. 1.	8	7 long	33:	0:	21
" 2.	7	8	29:	3:	4
" 3.	7	8	29:	9:	21

I have been down in her hold today, and have been making a Calculation about the Storage of the water and Provisions &c and the room we shall probably have left, and it appears to me that in Consequence of the little room we shall have, it will be best to Dispence with the prison rooms untill we get out and let the Sailors have all the room they Can, then if we take prizes we shall always be making room, and moreover can build them there, you can have no Idea how small she is below. I am sure you would coinside with me if you could see her.

I shall write you again soon—in the meanwhile I Remain

Your H Servent

Samuel Briggs

New York Octr 30th 1813

Mr John Crowninshield

Sir

When writing you the 27th We intended to mention that we made the second payment for the Schooner (being fifteen hundred dollars) on the 18th inst but it slipped our Memory as the Launch will probably take place within a few days say as soon as the copper is put on. Mr Bergh will then be entitled to receive fifteen hundred dollars more. If conveneint on the receipt hereof please to remit us five thousand dollars. Capt Briggs has approved of the three 12 pounders to be delivered by Mr. Anderson & as soon as they are wanted we shall be called on for the money. We have bought the Cordage at \$17 per Cwt made of the best russia hemp the Shrouds and stays of fine yarns the running rope and cables of such as are approved of by Capt Briggs. We furnished the ravens duck at \$19 Ninety days credit on a ratio of discount to be deducted when in Cash. The same will be considered with regard to the Cordage which is at four months credit. We furnished the Russia duck 5 Bolts at \$35 and 24 cts. a little Stained at \$32½ Cash. Please to understand that Capt Briggs and the person who makes the sails United in the examination of the duck & we told them if it was not perfectly sound not to take it. Previous to the examination We went with Capt Briggs to look at several parcels and he concluded ours was entitled to a preference as the quality was very good sufficiently so for the heavy sails and the light stain was not the least detriment. Moreover others asked him fifty cents more per bolt say \$35½. He therefore found ours to be the Cheapest. There are many Articles such as the Blacksmiths Work Blockmakers Carriage Makers Iron Ore for ballast &c. which will be

considered Cash—We shall do every thing in our power to Aeconomize feeling Ambitious to get the Diomedea to Sea as Cheap as possible. As soon as she is launched we shall write you again Unless we find it necessary before. We remain very Respectfully

Your Obt Sevts
Bailey & Willis

Your Merits, & my Confidence in them, dictate to me a wish to become a Brother Adventurer in your Intended Enterprise, and be assured no one concerned wishes more for your personal success & saftey than Your Friend Woodbridge.

ONE SHARE.

Capt Jno Crowninshield.

[on back of page]

Sr

Your polite note has been handed me & can only say am extremely obliged for your sentiments of confidence &c & hope they will not be misplaced & am happy you will take one share.

respectfully Yr Ob S
J C

Novemb. 1 Monday

Gent.

Yours of 29th enclosing a check for a thousand dollars duly received—will you please, send to Messrs. Bailey & Willis, the residue, as was understood. Be good enough in a few days at your leasure to give an a/c sales fo the Wine & the presumed full amount of the remaining & shall want to know how much it may be, so as to give bill on you for it when you shall be in Cash. (as it will add no kind of new responsibility on you) if you will do it—in the meantime, you may sell it for the best you can &c.

Yours respectfully,
J. C.

Mess. Wm. B. Swett & co.

November 3

Gent

Your favour of 30, received, some of the concern are out of Town, but, you will be in cash in time, if not at the moment—it will be perfectly safe—for my own part have been disappointed in some expectations &

also have calculated for a long time, to have received some in threw yourselves, from the underwriters—for they have one would think, persecuted that business, almost as far as they can, the papers went on per Mr Neal. You will of course be good enough to do all you can about it if they shall postpone it still longer, you shall be in funds some other way for mine. Am extremely obliged to you for your attention to the Schooner—am in hopes to sell all the shares here, you may have one if you wish it—the officers will come on as soon as necessary.

Yr. Obt. Svt.

J. C.

Messrs. Bailey & Willis, New York.

November 6, '13.

Gent:

The price of the wine $2\frac{25}{100}$, am willing to take to wind up the bad voyage (please save one cask for a friend here) being anxious to realise the presumed full amount of it—observe you have sent Mess. Bailey & Willis 1000\$ more—can you sell 3 shares in the new vessel in New York of 130 tons divided into 20 shares from 8 to 900\$. A fine boat, to be under my direction if any prizes comes from her to Boston should wish you to take charge of my part & think it quite probable the others would be willing also.

Respectfully

J. C.

Mess. Wm B. Swett & Co. Boston.)

Nov. 3

Gent

There certainly ought to be an apology from me for the gross mistake on my side, viz. without reflection, it was my impression that you would advance \$5400 on the wine, & not until this morning was the mistake observed—(& now it is seen that that is what you valued the remaining wine at) & was willing to advance $\frac{2}{3}$ of that sum—it was on that my false impression that had, requested you on the 1st to remit to Messrs. Bailey & Willis the residue as was understood, you will of course have the goodness to excuse this blunder of mine & place it in your mind as it should be—it therefore is my particular request & wish that you will sell the wine (if possible) as well as you can, so that it shall be in my power to

realise the balance from the notes of the sale, as soon as may be in a few days & you will greatly oblige me at this moment

respectfully Yr Ob St
J. C.

Mess. W. B. Swett & Co. Boston.

New York Novr 6 1813.

Dear Sir

I arrived here this morning. Your vessel fully answers my expectations, rather more tonnage than I expected, 146 tons carpenters measure. Her bulwarks are not solid, such being tho't too heavy. They are three feet high amidships, two, nine, aft.—the after ports though rather small will allow a 12 pr. if on a very low carriage with iron axltrees & trucks. Capt. B. has engaged the Bread, it is now baking 7100 lbs. Navy at \$6. . . 2400 lbs. Pilot at \$9. Cash. The Schooner will be launched on Monday next, having been delayed for want of water—Rigging is ready to go over the mastheads—spars are made, sails making, carriages & circles are making, will be finished next week—Capt. B. has bo't a 4½ inch Hawser, 120 fth & kedge An. 336 lbs. Also contracted for one 10 inch cable 120 F. & anchor 8 Cwt. All the cordage at \$17. There is an 18 Pt. in Newport—have written to know on what terms it can be obtained, delivered here—we think this, with the 3 Twelves, will be sufficient without any other guns—we wish your opinion & what price we should give—Capt. B. has bo't 40 water casks, guage 90 gals. at \$6.—& 50 guage 55 & 60 second hand @ \$3.50—all iron bound, the difference in price between such & wooden hoops is very trifling—the salt provisions are not bo't—ask Mess Beef, N. Y. inspec. \$8.—Pork ditto 15—We will write for the Officers as soon as wanted—Customary Bounty to Seamen \$20 deducted from Prize money—Bread Rooms are tinned & will contain all our Bread. Magazine will be coppered. The vessel is handsomely coppered with 18 & 20 oz. She will probably be ready for sea in 30 days. I have del'd your package to Mr. Willis—We shall look out for a Surgeon immediately—A circle abaft the main mast is out of the question—if we have 4 heavy guns, one must be on a low carriage—The Carpenters entirely discountenance the idea of a sliding traveling carriage, to shift the heavy guns—that plan is given up—the guns must be hoisted out of the sliding into the traveling carriage—the carpenter's reasons have satisfied Capt. B.

Your friend & obt. Servt.

Dav. A. Neal.

Capt. J. Crowninshield.
Salem.

Salem Novemb. 10

Sir

Your two letters were duly received—respecting the gun abaft the mast, of course it must be given up—we think, the three twelves will be pretty well with say 2-6" as if we are fortunate to take prizes, we can take some from them if she will bare them—the prison rooms as you observe must be dispensed with for the present—the provisions should be so stowed, as they are used to keep her in the same trim, & there must be no heft forward & aft to make her dive or fall heavy, particularly forward;—

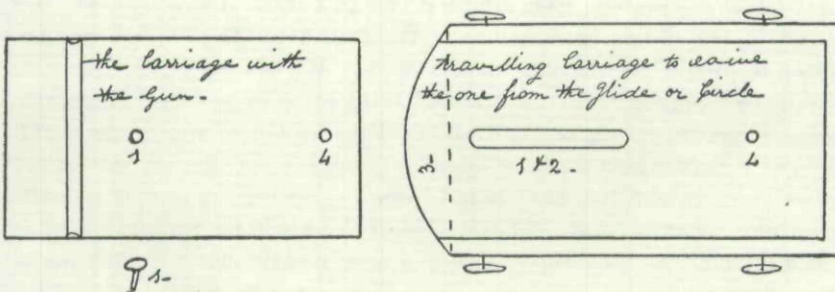
Tell Mr Neal his letter is received, the gun 18" he speaks of may not be a good one &c., but if it was in N.Y. in time & you like it & not too dear you may take it, but perhaps not without you could return one of the twelves, or be obliged to take only two of them for you could not want the three 12" & for my part should like an 18" much, if in time &c. It would be well if all the circles & their appertures were exactly alike, to replace each other in case of accident—there should be a something, a kind of a low carriage to slide the forward one onto, to bring it to the Main hatch, & with low wheels, can be made to go under the rail & for a stern chase enclosed is a plan of one—

Dont forget the surgeon—look out for men & as soon as is necessary the officers will come on, prepair as fast as you can & write me & also Mr Neal as full as his first—

Yr Friend

J. C.

Mr. Samuel Briggs, New York



A bolt threw the upper carriage to play into & 2, to slide out longer for a stern chase, if necessary, & the sweep of 3, may lodge on the stern sill, prevents its tipping up & when for a side gun a bolt in 4 will steady it firmly.

Novemb. 10, 1813

Gent

Capt. Silsbee has just tole me that you expected an answer from me his brother having mentioned it him—he advises me to let you sell, the wine slowly on the best terms at retale &c which of course you will do the best you can with it at retale.

Respecting the shares, there is 3 still on hand & we should be glad if Mr Gray would take them, the Schooner is now ascertained to be 146 tons, we are in hopes she will not cost over 18,000\$. They have orders to have a sufficiency of all the main things but no useless ones but to use economy in all—they have been offered an advance for her, & speak highly of her—Mr. Samuel Briggs, 1st Lieutenant & Mr Augustus Neal, clerk, both speak highly also. But you know the race is not to the swift &c.

Write me as soon as you know of him.

respectfully yrs.

J. C.

Messrs. W. B. Swett & Co.
Boston.

New York Novr 12 1813.

John Crowninshield Esqr
Salem

Dear Sir

Under date 6th inst. I informed you of the then state of our business. The Diomede was launched the 8th. She set on the water precisely as the builder calculated. Everything is now in a state of forwardness. Her lower rigging all overhead & fitted. We shall begin to put on board her water & provisions the first of the week. We waited until to-day to obtain Iron ore for ballast, but none having come in we have reluctantly been obliged to purchase Pig Iron, 15 Tons at \$50 pr ton 60 days. Of the 18 Pr. at Newport we have heard no more—Capt. B. proposes to get a twelve pr. which has been bored from a 9—price \$200—to go on the low traveling carriage & one 4 pr. This I think will be quite as much as she will bear. We have the refusal of a most elegant set of small arms at the following prices. Musquets \$12—Pistols \$14 pair—Cutlasses \$3—Carbines \$7— We have seen all in the city & think these the cheapest. They are the same the Navy is supplied with—The barrels of the mus-

quets are 3x3 in. long. We think to get 40 musquets—20 pair pistols, 18 Carbines & 60 Cutlasses. Boarding pikes a few—Boarding Caps of Com. Decatur's plan cost \$2 each. We shall have 70 made. We shall take the small arms as above unless we receive an immediate order to the contrary—The ammunition must be immediately attended to—Calculating upon an armament of 4 12's & 14 pr. We shall want for 100 rounds—1700 wt of Powder—of shot 100 rounds of round, 100 of grape & cannister & 50 of bar shot for the 12's & a few rounds for the 4 pr. about 1500 musket & 800 pistol cartridges. We have calculated her provisions for a 4 months cruise for 85 men & propose to put on board 6400 galls water, 9500 wt of Bread, 51 bbls of Beef & 25 of Pork. We wish you not to delay any orders of our business here after the receipt of this—we are anxious to hasten her departure—We shall let you know as soon as the officers can be of any use here—When we shall open a rendezvous will depend on circumstances—We have some prospect of obtaining the Surgeon who is attached to the U.S. flotilla here. The sails are all making—the circles will be finished next week. Your baggage by Ames has arrived.

With sentiments of friendship & respect

Yours
David A. Neal.

Boston Nov. 13, 1813.

John Crowninshield Esq.
Salem
Sir

Mr Gray after some deliberation, says his determination to quit business prevents his buying a share in your vessel.

We will continue our application to some other Gentlemen & hope we may succeed.

Respectfully
Your re. O.S.
Wm. B. Swett & Co.

New York Novr 13th 1813

John Crowninshield Esqr

Dear Sir, I received yours of the 10 inst. today, your Plan of the Carriage for the forward gun, is very much approved by the Carpenter,

we shall therefore have it done, the Circles & Carriages will all be Completed in 6 Days—but the Carriage for the slide will not admit of its working under the rail, for when on the Circle it is Calculated to be nine inches above the rail, of Course it must be the same height when on the travelling Carriage.

Agreeable to your direction we shall take only the three twelves, and shall procure two Sixes, we can procure a fine light armament the particulars of which you have had from Mr Neal, we have got the ballast all on board and shall proceed on Monday to take in the water. On the whole we shall proceed as fast as possible to get away we shall write for the Officers soon—you mention having the Circles all of size—they are all made, and will be placed in the Course of next week, the forward is the smallest in Consequence of their being less room than between the masts—

She is a Charming little vessell—every person that sees her is pleas'd with her and the Opinion here generally is that she will sail faster than any vessell of the kind built in New York. We shall be ready for Sea in a fortnight and the Calculation we have made of her cost will be from 22 to 24000\$ at sea. I shall write you again soon every particular.

I remain your Obt Servant
Samuel Briggs.

New York Novr 15th 1813

John Crowninshield Esqr

Dear Sir: I wrote you on the 13 inst. which I hope you have received. I was not very particular as Mr Neal had given you in his letter of 12th every information to that time. Every thing as respects the Schooners getting away, is going on as fast as possable, the Circles will be finish'd and placed this week and I should think it advisable to have the Guns brought over from the Navy Yard, in order to have them fitted. Say the locks &c to them, they can be put on the Gun, and fix'd compleat for 10\$ a piece. I wish your advice on that subject amediately, We have bought 40 Barrels of Prime Beef today, at 8.\$25/100. Pork we shall get tomorrow, probably, we have look'd at some today but did not like it, we shall get 12 Barrels beef put up on purpose for our own use, the boarding Caps are making, I have been thinking of something to wear on the breast in the Act of boarding, made of leather and hardend in the same way that the Caps are, say two pieces of leather sew'd together the

inside piece to come close to the breast the outside piece to bulge out in order to break of the blow of the pike, the cost will be but very trifling, for thiss two days past there has been a snow storm of course but little done. We shall let you know when we want the officers, Sailors are rather scarce here at present, wages have risen within these few days from 17 to 24\$ pr month I hope we shall have no difficulty in getting ours—the Surgeon Mr Neal mention'd has agreed to go—the privateers here have used pattent Camboose in lieu of Gallies, they are much more convenient take up less room and are much tighter and cheaper; the cost for such as we shall want will be from 75 to 100\$—I shall write soon how we progress &c.

I remain your Obedient Servent
Samuel Briggs Junr

Novemb. 16, 1813.
Tuesday

Dear Sir

Your two letters have been received giving a full account, progress &c. of the Schooner. Am glad you seem to like her so well. We think of sending the officers on Monday next, but shall be governed by letter from you in the meantime—have wrote of 10. fully to Mr Briggs—the iron ballast will come dear, but have no doubt but she will sail the better with it, & it makes more room.

Respecting the heavy guns, it appears to me, that the 3 twelves & say 2 & 6 lb. will be well enough—unless you could get say a good 18 on the spot (not one newly bored, they are not so good) & to return one of the 12 lb. would be the best but if you have a 9 bored to a 12" will it not be unhandy to nock about deck—but still do as you all think best.

The price of the musket (they must be good) 12\$. They appear to be cheaper than the pistols, but we must have them & good ones too—as many as is necessary—will you want so many as 20 pr. pistols & 18 carbines & 50 cutlasses, for you know we are in hopes to reduce the crew—then, of course, the call for so many will decrease—am told the cutlasses are very dear—the boarding caps we must have—you say 70, that will be one each, we shall not want so many, as you know we only talked of 70 men, though observe you mention 85 in all—however you well know my intention is to have all the main & necessary things but we want no useless or unnecessary ones—well for defense, with all the economy that prudence shall dictate with safety.

The quantity of powder &c appears to be very well, you can find out how the others of her class have been prepared in that & givern yourselves accordingly.

You must not open the rendezvous, untill notice from here—but you can be looking out for men. We must not get her too deep with stores and mind no heft at the two ends & we think some water in old casks may go on deck.—dont neglect about the surgeon.

All the main provisions must be good, beef, pork, bread & well dried.

Whatever Mr. Briggs & you & Capt. Bailey all together think is necessary & right, you of course will get—for somethings refer to my last to Mr Briggs. The Polly has a good prize into Savanna.

Respect. & friendship

J. C.

Mr. David A. Neal, New York

Give my complement &c to Mr Bailey tell him he is set down for the one share & that there is two left, which we thought Mr Gray would take but he declines—request him to dispose of them if he can.

New York Novr th 23. 1813

John Crowninshield Esqr

Dear Sir, Mr Cloutman & Dempsie have just arrived as respects the Cable we have thought best to have it made 120 fathoms as it is all we shall have to ride by in any weather. I have decreas'd the boarding caps to 55. and them are all made, yesterday I bought the light armament as follows, 35 musketts at 12\$, 20 Pairs of Pistols at 14\$ pr pair, 18 Carbines at 7\$. 60 Hangers at 3\$. 20 Pikes flat kind at 1\$—20 tomahawks at 75 cents—the above is the same kind that the Navy has been supplyd with, and as cheap as any of *any* Discription that we could find in the city, the Schooner has all her heavy provisions on board and Stow'd, we have been Obliged to reduce the Quantity as follows, Beef 7 bbls—Pork 5 Do Water 13 Casks of 55 Gallons each. We have calculated that what we have, will be full allowance for 80 men, for 105 days. We have Calculated so in stowing the vessell that she will have no weight forward or aft, The Circles will be placed tomorrow, I wait your orders to get the Guns from the Navy Yard, She is compleatly rigged and shall bend sails in a few days and haul her into the Stream, *if good Weather*, We have been to look at some powder today, at Dr. Bull's the Navy Agent at 72 Cents pr lb and shall probably buy it tomorrow. We

have seen the Surgeon today that we mention'd to you & think it likly he will go.

I think if you mean to get me here we had better to open our rendezvous very shortly, as Sailors are very scarce indeed, and I certainly think we shall be plagued considerable in procuring men, the usuall Bounty is 20\$ and 30 has been offered in a few instances. Wages 26\$ pr month, would it not be as cheap to get men in Salem giving no Bounty, and pay their passages on here, I have engaged a Gunner & one Quarter master.

With much respect Yours &c
Samuel Briggs Junr

[on back page]

New York Nov. 23, 1813

Capt J Crowninshield

We are in receipt of your favor 16th inst. & have duly noted the contents—The preceding precludes the necessity of further answer.

Respectfully yours,
Dav. A. Neal.

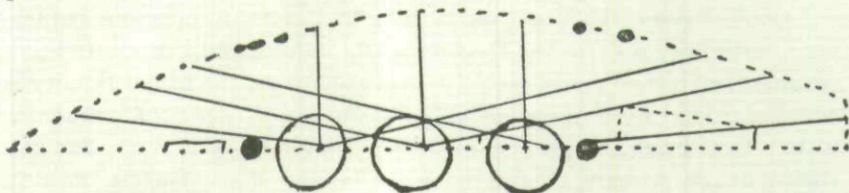
New York Dec. 2, 1813

Capt. J. Crowninshield
Salem

Dear Sir,

We have for some days been anxiously waiting to have an answer from you to our last letters. Today only have we learnt the melancholy cause to which we can now attribute your silence. We have made an alteration in the position of the Pivot forward gun, which meets the ideas of every one here, & which we believe will receive your approbation. Mr Berg, the builder, extremely interested in the success of her sailing has continually regretted your determination of having a gun before the Foremast, believing with every one else that it would very much cramp her sailing—Yesterday he measured & finding there was sufficient room between the masts for the three circles, he therefore proposed to have it there, it not being bolted down forward—This plan required to close the main Hatchway—This we have done & the three guns will be between the masts in the body of the vessel. We have cut out a Hatch before the foremast—The coamings of the Main answers for this & the expense of the whole alteration will not be above 20 Dollars. They may be fired as

nearly forward as they could before & better on a broadside—as follow'g plan



The whole is now finished—The shot is all on board except the cannister which is all made—We have 300 12 lb shot, 16 do. cannister of musket balls, 84 do. of iron balls, & 100 bags do. grape—weight of cannister, iron & grape 18 Cwt. round, grape & canister cost \$6 per cwt. The 6 lb. cannon we have bought without carriages or anything else—cost \$100 for the pair—Carriages are nearly made, will cost \$53. Shall take for them 100 round shot, about 50 cannister & 42 grape—The grape is from the above 1800 Cwt. We have making 3500 musket, 4000 Pistol & 1800 Carbine Cartridges—150 12 lb Flannel cartridges & 50 6 lb do. Carry flannel to make as many more on board, also 20 Hand Grenades at \$2 each—We wait your directions to bring over the Guns from the Navy Yard & open a rendezvous for men, although I do not believe it possible to obtain a crew in this place—Captains of vessels from Baltimore & Philadelphia are here offering 30 or 35 dolls. with 1½ months adv. & passage on paid—to go in their letters of Marque to France—The city is completely drained of sailors—you know our situation & can take what measures you think proper—I regret you sent the officers in so soon, as it is subjecting yourself to a great expence without any equivalent advantage—My opinion is that it would be better to let the remainder continue at home till we write for them—if you should send men from Salem you may want them to come on with them—The Vessel will be ready in two days for sea except her men & the other officers can be of no service here till we get *them*—We have engaged here a gunner & a quarter master—Mr Bailey directs me to say he has used every exertion to dispose of your two shares, but unsuccessfully. A preference is given to the Privateers owned in the Place—he will however continue his endeavours.

The Powder 1525 lbs. as we mentioned in our last, we b'ot of the Navy agent @ \$18 pr. qr. Cask of 25 lbs. Have bo't an 18 ft Boat, cost \$50. We should be glad to know your determination respecting men &c.

With respect & esteem

Dav. A. Neal.

Decemb. 2, 1813.

Dear Sir

All the officers have now gone on & of course you may now open the rendezvous, immediately & we will get away as soon as we can & write as well & Mr Briggs to let me know how you finally progress & shall put off my coming on till the last for you can do full as well without as with me. Sent by Mr. Willington (viz. gave the stage man to give to him) a blank letter to Mess. Bailey & Willis, enclosing a bill on Mr. Osborn for \$2500. Also sent per Mr Downing \$800 on account Mr. Woodbridge to give Mess. B. & W. respecting the bounty. There is not a single vessel from here now that has given any, but you no doubt will be obliged to give it—but if you should offer a high one, it will not always be the means to bring them forward—however, you must do the best you can about it. It appears by Mr. B. last you had not fully agreed with the Surgeon—dont be disappointed in one & that he had obtained the small armament it appears about right—if you haul her in the stream you must take good care when it blows not to loose her, tho' you will have officers enough to look after her. See you have reduced her provisions a little. We expect she may be a little deep on first going out—take good care of the sails &c.

It would be almost impossible to send men on from here as Mr. B. says—Mr Downing may possibly pick up a few men at New Haven—the Lord has been on our side at Halifax—for myself am all ready at a moments warning.

respect & friendship

J. C.

Mr. D. Augustus Neal, New York.

Please inform Mess. B. & W. of the above remittances. Have they disposed of the two shares.

Salem Decem. 4, 1813.

Dear Uncle

Your friendly & polite letter was duly received, enclosing two letters of introduction for Halifax & Bermuda, in case it should be my misfortune to be captured &c.

Believe me sir, it is the more valuable because unasked, for friendship & good wishes in the end are far above riches—the writer of this has been largely in possession of both—he goes now in serch of & with the hope of

renewing only a part of that which has flown & for the other he would always wish to retain & carry it with him to heaven.

Thanks for your letters, good will, for your good wishes—reciprocity for friendship, sincere hopes for your health & peace—& tears for my mother.

respectfully your

Obr. Sevent.

J. C.

John Prince sen'r Esqur. Roxbury.

New York Decr 6th 1813.

Mr John Crowninshield

Sir, Our last respects were under date of the 8th Ulto and our correspondence would have been followed up but we anticipated the pleasure of shaking hands with you some days since. Mr Neal showed us today your last letter to him by which it appears you do not calculate to leave home untill every thing is in a state of preparation for a cruize which is the state of the Schooner except shipping the crew for which arrangements are made and we hope will be attended with better success than is anticipated by Mr. Briggs. He has doubtless wrote you on every subject particularly on that of altering the placing of the Guns and having all three between the masts. We approve of the plan as it will benefit the trim of the Schooner and be no impediment in using the Guns to the same advantage as though one remained forward of the foremast. We are impressed with the Idea that you will on your arrival approve of the plan. We hope the men will be shortly procured thereby affording us the pleasure of seeing you soon.

On the 26th Ulto We received from you under a blank cover Stephen Whites draft on William Osborn for 2500 dollars at five days sight which is paid & to your credit. Mr Douning arrived yesterday and this morning paid us 800 dollars for account of Mr Thomas M. Woodbridge which is credited in Conformity. The two shares to be disposed of remain unsold not being able to find any person who wished to buy them.

We sympathize with you and the rest of the family in the death of your much respected parent with flattering hopes of her having made a happy change. We remain with esteem

Your assured friends

Bailey & Willis

Salem Decm. 7-1813

Dear Sir

Your favour of 2d received—respecting the gun before the foremast, it was not originally my plan—for it came on here in the builders own plan of the deck, & being so it was presumed he thought she would bear it, or he would not have so placed it & it would only have been left there in good weather & in chase of Merchant Vessels who might sail not so fast, as she would &c. but it appears to me if you place the three (by the by it is in fact the most proper place for them to be easy to the vessel) it may make it very ill convenient on mooring to put them below for with the hatch between the two, they would nearly meet & the shears would not have to be moved nor the guns from off their carriages only to swing right down—now they must be viz. not so handy to put down the forward hatch for now they must be hauled aft to get her in the same trim when they are below—if the main hatch should be shut up & also perhaps not so convenient for the peoples—but as you all shall think best it will please me—

Respecting the men, we had no idea that they would be so scarce in N York & therefore sent on all the officers that they might be on the spot when the vessel should be complete so that no time should be lost & to help to facilitate the shipping Men &c. & get used to the vessel and each other—it will be a little more expensive but it will be an advantage & equal to the expence to the cruise, no doubt.

Respecting advance, if you offer a very high price & the thing is not at market, that cannot obtain what is not to be found, therefore you must act your best judgement & they may come along by & by.

It may possibly be best to obtain some & come round this way for the remainder—write often & it will be no trouble for me to come on & bring her this way if we cannot do better & a later winter cruise may in the end be better than an early one.

Respecting the powder shot & small armament no doubt it is about right. Was in hopes Mr. Bailey & W. would have sold the two shares, you must take Mr Baileys advice in all what you do, as he has seen so many of these kind of boats, fitted out no man can be better acquainted, & no doubt he will feel himself particularly interested for her success &c.

Respect & friendship

J. C.

Dont forget to mention if Mr Willington delivered the Mr. David A. Neal letter to Ms. B. & W. J. H. White bill on Mr Osborn. New York.

New York Decr 11 1813

Capt J. Crowninshield

Dear Sir

Your favors of 2d & 6th have been received. I have delayed acknowledging the former in the hope of being able, after a few days trial, to give a more favorable account of our prospect of obtaining a crew but I cannot. We opened our rendezvous on the 7th inst. One seaman, a cook's mate, & a boy are all we have shipped. We offer \$20 bounty for able seamen. Baltimore masters are offering \$30 pr. mo. & give the land-lords \$5 for each man—so you can judge the prospect. One Baltimore Privateer had sailed, & others about to sail for northern ports to obtain men & it is very probable men will be obtained in Boston & sent in by land for their French traders. You speak of taking the vessel to Salem. You are a better judge of the risk than myself. But considering that all our officers are unused to these kind of vessels, & that we shall not have men sufficient either to sweep her, or keep off boats in a calm, I should think it worth as much to ensure her round, as for her whole intended cruise. To go down sound is out of the question—it is too well blockaded. I wish you were here, but if men *must* be obtained & sent by land from Massachusetts. You would probably prefer remaining till they are on—From your observations on the circles I perceive you do not understand how she is stowed—From the wardroom bulk head (about 6 ft. forward the Mn. mast) to the Forecastle bulk head (about 9 ft. abaft the Fore-mast) is the space allotted for her water & provisions, which are there stowed up to the Deck—Aft there will be nothing but the bread, ammunition, some stores, & the officers, forward the Crew. The mn. Hatch was of course chalk'd off & the guns could not have been put down till we had let [?] out room, with regard to the people it is more convenient & equally so in getting out provisions &c. This method of storage was evidently best for sailing, as it kept the ends light & the only way in which so much provisions &c. could have been put into her. We sail'd her yesterday in the River in company with the new pilot boat Sch. Attack of 130 tons & *beat her* our guns all mounted—had the gun been forward the F. mast it would (as was evident from the people on deck walking forward) have retarded her sailing $\frac{1}{4}$ part—She went very fast through the water and is very stiff—in short fulfils our expectations—Her flying jibb did not sett—She is in the stream & the officers will go on board to live today—I believe nothing has been done but with the consent & co-operation of Mr. Bailey. Your letter enclosing Draft on

Mr. Osborn & \$800 pr Mr. Downing are rec'd. & passed to your & Mr. Woodbridge's accts. severally as I presume Mr. Bailey advised you—Mr. W. is set down for one share which I suppose is right—the Surgeon is engaged.

Respectfully yours

Dav. A. Neal.

P.S. Will you have the goodness to say to my Father, that there is a cartel to sail from Amboy for England in a few days & request him to send me a Duplicate of his letter to Saml Williams which he transmitted via Lisbon, that it may go in her—as 'tis possible the first may not reach—

Yours

D. A. N.

Since writing the above I have made every possible enquiry respecting men—It is customary here for a privateer to give the same bounty as merchant vessels give monthly wages—To get them for less is impossible—We must either consent to give 30 Dollars or the men must be procured to the Eastward—for \$30 I believe they may be procured in 10 or 15 days. Something decisive must be done speedily—the vessel now lays here at an expence of about \$10 per day—& nothing progressing—Mr. Bailey's opinion is, we must give \$30—I shall not feel at liberty to do it till ordered by you—of course shall anxiously 'wait your answers.

D. A. N.

December 11, 1813.

Gent

Your polite & friendly letter was duly received &c. & observe the Schooner is all but reddy—except shipping the men—it is presumed there will be plague & detaintion in this, but we may do full as well in the late winter or early spring—refer you to my last to mr Neal on this—respecting the shifting the forward gun aft, it may be attended with much ill convenience in sudden bad weather in putting them down for now they are all got to be moved twice, & before two of them would be put down almost in an instant & the one would always be down before bad weather should have caught us, therefore of course would not have been in its place to hurt her sailing, & now it may perplex us in getting them down & hauling them aft afterwards & foreward again by the galley and mast &c. so much so that they may be neglected & left on deck in hopes it

may not over blow till too late then necessitate us to heave them over-board to save the vessel.

& also by shutting up the main hatch, are you not obliged to put the Galley forward for convenience. If so that may be more injurious with its rubbish because permanent than the gun that would be there only from necessity & moveable—

However, must leave it all to you with the officers & they will make no material alterations without your advice.

But must confess & still think the other plan might have been the best taking everything into view (though the gun before the fore mast was not my plan, still it met my approbation fully) for only from necessity & the advantage of the main hatch no doubt the builder feels interested in her sailing & so shall all of us equally as much—observe you have received \$800. per Mr Downing on a/c Mr. Woodbridge & also (before) a draft from Stephen White on Mr. Osborn for \$2500 on my account which is paid.

The two shares are yet unsold, you may still dispose of them. Perhaps they may be more fortunate in shipping men than Mr. Neal apprehends; there are cartels expected from Halifax with many prisoners, they may then be plenty & come foreward to ship tho' they are now very scarce here—it will be of no service in my being there till nearly ready—

respectfully

J. C.

Bailey & Willis New York.

New York Decr th 12 1813.

John Crowninshield Esqr

Dear Sir, the Schooner is now all ready for sea, and anchor'd in the stream.

I am at a loss to know what way we shall procure seamen. I open'd the Rendezvous last Monday, and have only been able to get one man and a boy. Some are of Opinion that it will be best to increase the bounty but I don't believe that there is twenty good Sailors in the City. Of Course it will be quite useless to go to increasing the bounty at present, twenty Dollars is what the Mars & G Tompkins gave but if they could be obtain'd at 30 Amediatly perhaps it would be best, but I'm of Opinion that they are not to be had at any rate.

The Officers are all now living on board—We try'd her sailing on Friday in Company with a very fast sailing schooner call'd the Attack—we

beat her with a great deal of ease—but I can make her sail much faster than she did then by some little alteration in the masts and sails and shall try her again on Tuesday.

With much Respect
Yours &c. Samuel Briggs Junr

December 13 1813

Gent

Since mine of 12, have received yours of 11, informing of the sale of the wine at 2:75 at 4 months.

It is wished you will deliver it &c. & make out my a/c as soon as you can—as shall soon leave home.

Capt Dodge (John) wishes you to send his cask of wine by land, per the first convenient opportunity—one of the best.

respectfully Yr Ob Svt
J. C.

Mess. Wm B Swett & Co. Boston.

December 13

Gent

Since writing my last of same date have seen Capt. Silsbee or should not so soon have intruded again—he observes that the purchasers will pay the cash on discount &c. This will be an accomodation—so if you will be good enough to square the a/c Cr. & send a check for the balance, it will much oblige me—& receive my sincere thanks for all the trouble you may have had with this cargo.

respectfully
J. C.

Mess. Wm B Swett & Co. Boston.

New York Decr 14, 1813.

John Crowninshield Esqr

Dear Sir—There appears to be a great prospect of an Embargo today, should that take place I think we shall be able to procure sailors in a very short time at the bounty we now offer—I have hauld the schooner into the Warf again as there is some danger of lying any length of time in the stream at thiss season; A Brig came foul of us last Sunday which done some little damage but has all been repair'd at his Expence.

I observe you mention in your letter to Messrs Bailey & Willis some dissatisfaction respecting shifting that Circle gun from before the mast, but you may depend it was not done without the Opinion of all concern'd, and then not without mature consideration, for it was entirely out of the Question putting them guns below in a gale of wind as we thought of doing in Salem, in the first place their could be no room appropriated to that use and the next place the main hatch was not half long enough to admit of one going down, as the two Circles took so much of the deck and I am convinced that you will be pleased with the Alteration when you come to see her, I have got no men yet, and I shan't take on board the Stores nor amunition untill I get them.

Respectfully your obtd. servant
Samuel Briggs Junr.

Salem Decem. 16, 1813

Dear Sir

Yours of 11 & Mr Briggs' of 12 are received & have communicated to your Father respecting letters per cartel, he says it shall be done—now we think it best not to answer strictly your letters respecting a high bounty for a few days, on account of the (Possibility of an Exchange as that may not knowing its probable extent) alter the face of affairs much. Privateers no doubt will go—& if merchantmen & letters of mark neither are permitted, there will be men enough & a few days can make no great difference—we shall soon see—

But at the last, if nothing better can be done & they can be obtained by 30\$. we then shall of course be obliged to give it but Mr. Briggs seems to think that may not do it.

It gives me great pleasure to find she sails fast & is stiff—so that we can run if we cant fight was the attack a vessel that had been proved or a new one—write often.

The mode of stowage is perfectly agreeable to my first ideas & she must be the easier in a sea—there will be nothing lost by a few days delay now—& the Baltimore men will be done in the meantime you will keep on & may get some of them on the first plan. Cartels are expected up daily with many men.

It is presumed the men can be nearly as soon mustered up from forward as a midships—but the guns being so heavy they ought to be as convenient to put below as possible.

The saile must set well, & be very carefull with them—take good care of her & in all the charges, be as economical as prudence will permit.

respect & friendship

J. C.

Mr. D. A. Neal. New York

(Saturday was 25)

New York Decr 24th 1813.

Mr John Crowninshield

We duly received your esteemed favor of the 11th and should have replied before but as Mr Briggs & Mr Neil had shortly after its receipt concluded on going to Salem we naturally concluded they could give you every information relative to changing the position of the Guns as also every other circumstance attending her preparation for a Cruize. We therefore beg leave to refer you to them for a correct statement of facts & presume what has been done will after a full explanation coincide with your Ideas.

We have not been able to dispose of the two shares. The supplies appropriated towards the complete fitting of the Schooner (for particulars of which we refer you to Mr Briggs) swells the aggregate amount We however hope and flatter ourselves that the concern will be amply remunerated by plenty of valuable prizes part of which it would be very pleasing to see arrive at our Fort.

The prospect for getting Men Brightens. Mr Dempsey has just informed us that six able bodied seamen have entered today. Our Mr Bailey has within a few minutes conversed with him and Mr Downing who both agree in opinion that if 15 to 20 able seamen can be brought on immediately there appears no doubt but the residue of the crew can be procured by the time they arrive. You will therefore please to return an answer on the receipt hereof stating what are the prospects relative to this measure and if flattering we calculate having the pleasure of seeing you Mr Briggs & Mr Neil shortly. They the officers say that there are plenty of ordinary seamen to be had.

The embargo act arrived today. We have not had time to read it though understand it is very strict & will operate powerfully on *rascals* who may be caught violating it. We lately sold a few bags of pepper at 50 cents cash respectfully we remain your assured friends

Bailey & Willis.

Respects to Messrs
Briggs & Neil.

Salem Decem. 28

Gent:

Your favour of 24—received & am very glad (as you observe) that the prospect for getting men, brightens & as there appears to be no vessels at present fitting out there, it really seems to me, there will be men in some degree more plenty then here to fore perticularly as the coasting trade is stopt by the Embargo & there must be many in that trade good sailors who will be willing to go for employ—tho' we want as many able seamen as can be had & we now are in good hopes to obtain them as you write in such good spirits—& we can but at the last take a few from here—but am now confident we shall in a reasonable time obtain them there & when they have progressed Mr Briggs & Mr Neal will return instantly & myself without a moments delay—please tell Mr Downing & Mr Dempsey to write often so as to loose not a moment of time—am much pleased with the account they give of the Schooner as they speak in the highest terms of her since their return.

Respecting ordinary seamen, no doubt a few will do (if they are good able men) but we think they ought to be the last obtained—& the more able seamen the better—because the others may be easy to be had, as the last resort.

Respectfully
J. C.

Mess. Bailey & Willis.

New York Decr 31st 1813

Mr John Crowninshield

Sir

We are just informed by Mr Dempsey 48 foremast Men are engaged including four Ordinary Seamen. The prospect is now such that if you have not engaged any men on the receipt hereof it would be adviseable not to as the crew can be made up here in the course of a few days. We therefore hope to see you Mr Briggs & Neill shortly. The embargo restrictions has brought a number of sailors into the market. Mr Dempsey writes you by this mail. We remain very respectfully

Your Obdt Servts
Bailey & Willis.

New York 31 Decr 1813

Sir

I wrote yesterday to Capt S Briggs in his absence to be opened by you. I likewise desired him not to increase the number of ten or 15 provided you had them engaged. I now think however you had not better send any—as it will be attended with some difficulty & I am confident we can procure our full complement by the time you arrive & get ready for sea as men are now very plenty out of the number ship'd which is 40 we have only four ordinary seamen, I think if you are not obliged by any previous engagement I would not send a single man—as it will take some few days to get ready after you arrive which will give us a chance to get all the men we want, the only thing we now have to do is to get the men on board by that time we shall procure all we want, please not engage any petty officers as we have got them all

Yours with respect

Jno Dempsey

PS. We now have 40 men
officers belonging Salem 13
8 men we shall have tomorrow 8

—
61 in all so that if should not send any
from Salem am confident we shall get all
we want.

New York Jany 3rd 1814.

Mr John Crowninshield

Sir

Our last respects were under date of the 31st Ulto to which we refer accounts were received yesterday of the arrival of a British Schooner at Anapolis from England with dispatches for our Government. The rumors of today relate to an Armistice but which we do not rely on as nothing respecting the dispatches has transpired. The Coffee Sugar and tea-holders are however alarmed and sales were made at auction this day at About $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent below the cost.

We wish the Diomedé could be out timely to remunerate you for the losses you sustained by British capture. We hope our Government will demand something more than an armistice for Indemnity for the past and security for the future plunderings of our Commerce.

Mr. Downing has just informed us that thirty five men have received their bounty including the Carpenter Gunner Boatswain Quartermaster & Gunners Mate. There are five more sailors shipped & not taken the bounty. Mr. Downing says if you wish to get away soon it will be best perhaps to bring Fifteen sailors with you. There are not any Colours provided for the Schooner except American. Please in your next say what others you will have made ready & write us by the return mail. We hope to see you soon and remain very respectfully

Your Obed Servts

Bailey & Willis.

P.S. We presume Messrs Briggs & Neal will have left Salem ere this reaches you. We think you had better come on immediately.

(the year came in of a Saturday)

Salem 5 Janua. 1814.

Gent,

Yours of 31 received—am glad that a crew is at last likely to be obtained, & have always felt that the Embargo might bring them forward—we shall not send any on from here—we think you may get as high as 75 or 80 men & officers will be enough—Mr. Briggs will be on in a day or two—& Mr Neal with myself in a few days after.

Respectfully yrs.

J. C.

Messrs. Bailey & Willis, New York

Please tell Mr Dempsey his of 31 is received & that Mr Downing may begin to get the crew on board as soon as they please.

New York 6 Jan'y 1816

Sir

In my last I informed you we could procure what men we wanted without sending any one from Salem. I am now certain we could procure 100 men by the time we are ready to sail, we have 40 men which has taken the bounty & 7 or 8 others engaged to go, making in all including officers 60 & there are 10 or 12 more in the schooner Sabine that have partly agreed to go, so that the number we have engaged will complete all complement before even we are ready to go ourselves, could you come on yourself it would greatly expediate the sailing of Vessel, as you must be aware yourself the necessity of having a commander present & I think myself should you be here we might sail in 3 or 4 days, as every thing is

complete but the small number of men which will be procured before you can possibly arrive here. There are several small things we have to get but no person has any orders to do anything & my situation does not warrant me in taking any charge or giving any orders, that is principal reason I think that your being here would be of service. I should be very glad if you have not sent any men on from Salem but if you have it will not be any harm. Messrs Bailey & Willis has desired me to say that there has no more news transpired concerning the Armistice, & they believe it totally unfounded. Coffee has sold today for 19.50 & sugar at 18 at auction Hyson tea at 1:25 salts at 87 cents pr bushel.

Yours &c.

Jno. Dempsey

Jno Crowninshield Esqr
Salem.

New York Jan'y 7th 1813

Mr Jno Crowninshield

Sir

We address you again on the subject of the Diomedé although we have no expectation of this finding you in Salem. We most respectfully urge you to come on if you do not that Messrs Briggs & Neal may be forthwith sent here. The Crew that are ship'd are getting dissatisfied with the length of time that the vessel lays here the landlords are getting dissatisfied & offer to return the money several of the sailors have run away which might have been prevented had the vessel been hauld in the stream & the superior officers here add to which it is a long time since some of the men have been ship'd they are of course getting in debt to the landlords who will take them out of the vessel & the Schooner will be obliged to pay their debts or loose the advanced money. The business in the present state requires the immediate attendance of a superior officer. We have been looking for Capt Briggs every mail & are daily disappointed. We flatter ourselves that we shall see him tomorrow. We are sorry to add that that some of the officers are rather dissatisfied than otherwise in fact the Schooner (men excepted) is no nearer being ready for sea than when Mr Briggs left here. We again most respectfully solicit your immediate attention to sending on Mr Briggs if not already done.

Your Ob Svts

Bailey & Willis

January 7.

Gent

Yours received, please tell Mr Dempsey his of 4 is received & that Mr Briggs would have set of yesterday but he has had some things to do which he could not do before & will be on in a day or two—Mr Neal & myself comes Monday or tuesday, certain, to be off as soon as possible—the political breezes have blown from every quarter, within these few days past, & in the commercial line, some fair breezes & it is feared from the many squalls, there may be much damage.

Yrs

J. C.

Mess. Bailey & Willis, New York

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