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Copy of the Official  
Documents Relating to the  
Destruction of the Gaspee.  
June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1772.

See Proceedings 1890-91

VAULT

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RHODE-ISLAND  
**HISTORICAL SOCIETY.**  
PRESENTED BY  
*John R. Bartlett.*  
*October 30, 1883.*

*Examination of Witnesses and  
 Official Reports, etc.*

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Colony of Rhode-Island &c.

~~Thayer~~ The Examination of Capt. William Thayer, of Mendon, in the County of Worcester, in the Province of <sup>the</sup> Massachusetts Bay, Ironholder, taken in Providence, in the Colony aforesaid, this 15th Day of January, in the 13th year of His Majesty's Reign, Anno Domini 1773 by Darius Sessions, Deputy Governour of said Colony. —

Question. — Do you know any circumstances relative to the attacking, plundering, and burning His Majesty's Schooner, called the Gaspee, and to the assembling, arming, training, & leading on the People concerned therein, and to the concerting & preparing said Attack?

Answer. — No. —

Question. — Where was you when said Schooner was destroyed, which was on the 10th Day of June last?

Answer. — At Home, in Mendon. —

Question. — How far is that from Providence?

Answer. — About twenty-two Miles. —

Question. — How long a Time, after the Schooner was destroyed, before you was at Providence?

Answer. — I was not there until the latter end of June or the Beginning of July last. —

Question. — Did you ~~not~~ hear any person say, when you was in Providence, or at any other Time or Place, that they knew any of those Persons that were concerned in that affair?

Answer. — No. —

Question. — Did you ever hear the Names of any Persons sus

pected to be concerned in that Matter?

Answer. — I heard the Names of one Potter, and Brown or Browns; but did not know them, nor where they lived. — I don't recollect any other. —

Question. — Do you remember who mentioned those names?

Answer. — No. — It being only some Rumour which I heard among People in my House, it being a public One. —

William Thayer. —

On the Day and year above-said, William Thayer, the subscriber to the above Examination, made solemn oath to the Truth of the several answers annexed to the foregoing Interrogations, before, Darius Sessions. —

The Examination of William Dickinson, late Midshipman of His Majesty's Schooner, <sup>the</sup> Gaspee, taken on Oath, at Newport in the Colony of Rhode-Island, this first Day of June, A. D. 1773. —

Who saith, ~~that~~ That on the tenth Day of June, in the year One Thousand seven hundred & seventy two, between the Hours of Twelve & ~~Two~~ One O'Clock in the Morning, the said Schooner then working in her Dock, ~~and~~ upon Nanquit Point, about Two Miles below Pawtucket, and not able to get off, the Watch being on Deck, as he supposed, gave the alarm that a Number of Boats were coming down the River, upon which Lieutenant Dudingston went on Deck, and hailed the Boats, & ordered them to keep off; —

They answered that the <sup>Head</sup> Sheriff was in one of the Boats, & that they must come on Board; Lieutenant Dudingston again ordered ~~them~~ <sup>them</sup> to keep off or he would fire into them; but as they refused to keep off, we fired at them, & they returned the Fire whereby Lieut. Dudingston was wounded in the left Arm, and in the groin; —

They then boarded us, and used us with ill beating and knocking down the People, and afterwards by tying them and throwing them into <sup>their</sup> Boats, the Capt. of the Gang swearing he would give no Quarter. — The Captain of the Gang ordered Lieut. Dudingston on his knees <sup>and</sup> to beg his ~~parton~~ Life; he said he could not, he was wounded; whereupon the said Captained answered, "Damn your Blood, you are shot by your own People"; They then took him into his Cabin where two Men dressed his Wounds, who, by their behaviour, appeared to have some Skill in Surgery: —

And this Examinee further saith, that while Lieutenant Dudingston's Wounds were dressing, those two Persons, who assumed to be the Head Sheriff and Captain, demanded the Papers belonging to the Vessel, which he delivered by Lieutenant Dudingston's Orders to them, consisting of the Lieutenants Commission from the Lords of the Admiralty, Admiral Montague's Instructions, Letters, and other Papers, and upon his particularizing ~~these Papers~~ those Papers as he delivered them, they damned him and told him they did not come there to receive any Instructions from him, but would examine the Papers at their Leisure which they put into their pockets, and then carried Lieutenant Dudingston on Shore, about two Miles from the Schooner. —

The Examinee after this continued on Board <sup>said Schooner</sup> about three Quarters of an Hour, and was told by the Captain of the Gang that unless he quitted the Schooner, he would ~~throw~~ throw him overboard: — During this Time they continued plundering the Schooner. —

The Examinee was landed in one of their Boats on <sup>the</sup> Shore, opposite to the Schooner where he remained some time ~~long~~, and that within an Hour after he was landed he ~~saw~~ saw <sup>the</sup> said Schooner on

on Fire, & it being then Daylight, he saw three of their Boats put off from the Schooner full of ~~men~~ Men, one of which landed the People at Pawtuxet, and the other <sup>two</sup> rowed toward Providence. —

This Examinee further saith, that the said Schooner, when she was burnt, lay about Eight or Ten Miles, to the best of his Judgement, from the North End of the Island of Providence, and <sup>that</sup> several Negroes were on Board <sup>the</sup> said Schooner, <sup>and also rowed the Boats which boarded said Schooner</sup> but he does not know their Names, & he cannot recollect <sup>that</sup> he saw any of those Negroes enter the Cabin; — & he also saith, that he does not know the Names of any of the ~~common~~

~~the~~ Persons who boarded and destroyed said Schooner, or wounded Lieutenant Dudingston but that the Person who was called the Captain of the Gang was a well set Man, of a swarthy Complexion, full Face, hoarse Voice, & wore a white Cap, was well dressed, & appeared rather above the common Rank of Mankind, <sup>and</sup> that the greatest part of those he saw on Board the Schooner & in the Cabin ~~among~~ were Persons well dressed, many of them with Ruffled Shirts, and appeared as Storekeepers, Merchants, <sup>or</sup> Masters of Vessels. The Person who was called the Head-Sheriff, was a tall genteel Man dressed in Blue Cloaths, his Hair tied behind, and had on a ruffled shirt. — One of the Persons who acted as surgeon in dressing Lieutenant ~~Dudingston's~~ Dudingston's Wounds, appeared to be about Eighteen years of Age very much marked with the Small Pox, light brown Hair, tied behind, about five feet, five or six Inches high. —

The other was a very genteel Man appeared to be about Twenty two years of Age, his Hair tied behind, ~~was~~ a thin Person, & about Five feet, Eight or Nine Inches high. — This Examinee further saith, That after he returned from Boston to Providence a few days after the Schooner was destroyed the first described sur-

yeon met him in one of the Streets of Providence, and asked him whether he knew how Lieutenant Dudingston did, but the Excuminate does not know his Name. — And further saith not.

Sworn at Newport ~~on~~ on the Day W<sup>m</sup> Dickinson.

and year aforesaid, Before,

J. Wanton.

Dan. Horsmanden.

Fre. Smyth.

Peter Oliver.

William Dickinson Midshipman of His Majesty's Schooner Gaspee Bayeth. That the said Schooner was at single Anchor about 3 Leagues below Providence in Rhode-Island Government the 10th June, 1772. and about 1/2 past 12 o'clock in the Night or Morning, the Watch gave the Alarm that a Number of Boats were coming down the River, and very near us (being an exceeding dark Night;) We hailed them, and ordered them to keep off; they instantly gave us three Cheers, on which we fired at them with Musquets, which they immediately returned with half a dozen Musquets: (or thereabouts) We then fired our Pistols, on which they boarded us upon the Starboard Bow and fired a Number of small arms: Immediately Capt Lieut. Dudingston (her Commander) cried out Good God I am done for, and was wounded in his ~~arm~~ ~~and~~ ~~groin~~ Groin and Arm. —

While we were disputing forward relative to their boarding three other Boats boarded us upon the Quarter. In the ~~the~~ ~~three~~

Three Boats which boarded us upon the Quarter, there were thirty or forty Men at least, and in the whole I suppose about 150 in Number on which we thought proper, the Lieutenant being wounded, to surrender. — When they had got possession of the Schooner they used the People very ill by pinning<sup>ing</sup> them and throwing them into their Boats, and refused the Lieutenant and Officers any necessaries but what they had on, and not even suffered the Commanding Officer to have his papers, and robbed his servant of several silver spoons, and Threwed his Linen and Apparel overboard. — We were then sent ashore in two different Boats, the Lieut. and part of the Men in one boat and myself <sup>with</sup> the Rest of the People in the other Boat, at the distance of about two miles asunder as we found at Day-~~break~~<sup>light</sup>. — I remained on the Beach, and about 1/2 past 3 o'clock saw the Schooner a fire and about 1/2 past 4. I saw three boats put off from her, full of Men and rowed up towards Providence, and an Hour after~~ward~~, another Boat came by her & landed her Men at Pawtuxet. —

#### Questions by Admiral Montagu. —

Q. How long had you been laying in Providence River?

A. We came to ~~an~~ anchor there at 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the 9th of June.

Q. Had you sent any Boat ashore?

A. No, but employed sounding the Harbour. —

Q. Had you been at Providence before during the time you were upon that Station?

A. No. —

Q. Do you imagine the people who boarded you <sup>came</sup> from Providence?

A. Yes, I believe the most part, but cannot say all as our boat landed her Men at Pawtuxet.

Q. What distance is Pawtuxet from Providence by Land?

A. Five Miles. —

Q. What distance were the Boats from the Schooner when they were first seen?

A. I was not upon deck at first, myself, but when I saw them they ~~were~~ <sup>were</sup> about 100 Yards.

Q. Why did not you fire your great Guns at them?

A. They boarded us upon the Bows and were so near to us that we had not time to get our Guns out at the Bowports. —

Q. Did any of the People <sup>which</sup> boarded you appear like gentlemen?

A. Yes, many of them appeared like Men of Credit and Tradersmen — and but few like common Men. —

Q. Did they make use of any opprobrious Language?

Ans. Yes, by ~~their~~ threatening to put the Lieutenant to death, & calling us Piratical Rascals. —

Q. Where did you leave the Beaver?

A. Off Golden Island in the Mouth of Seaconnet Passage.

Q. What distance from you?

A. About Twenty five Miles.

Q. Could she be in sight when this happened?

A. No, the Main Land is between. —

Q. Is there any thing more that you ~~can~~ can recollect?

A. Yes, one of the People took me by the collar and said,

Damn you, where is your Pilot to get? To which I answered he was discharged six Weeks ago; he answered,

Damn your blood you lie and said they would find him and flee him alive. —

Q. Did they suffer the Lieutenant to put on any Cloaths after he was wounded?

A. No, he was in his shirt, with his <sup>great</sup> ~~green~~ coat over his shoulders and a blanket round his Body. —

Q. Was any other person wounded except the Lieutenant?

A. Yes, one in the head. —

And I further declare that when Lieutenant Dudingston came on deck, I saw him go and stand <sup>by</sup> before the Starboard foreshrouds in his shirt, with a pistol in one hand and a hanger in the other.

After he was wounded, he got aft, and sat down by the Cabin Companion, when the two ringleaders with a Number following them, came to him and said, Now, you Piratical Rascal, we have got you, damn you, we will hang you all by the Laws of Great Britain; damn you what made you fire, when we answered you that the Head Sheriff was in the Boat; the Captain,

(N. B. The Head Sheriff and Captain are fictitious Names that the <sup>two</sup> Ringleaders went by) said stand aside and let me dispatch the Piratical Dog — He then lifted a Handspike over Mr. Dudingston's Head who asked if they would give no quarter; they answered no. — He then desired they would let me bind up his wounds for he was shot and shewed them the Wound in his left Arm, they said damn your blood you are shot by your own people; he was then taken down into the Cabin by some of the Mob; they then pinioned me and put me into the boat where I remained for 1/2 an Hour, when one of the Mob called to ~~their~~ <sup>their</sup> People to their People in the Boat to lose me, for the Lieutenant wanted me. — I went down into the Cabin to him; he was laid on the

after lockers and one of the Mob washing and binding up



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 Procks on my Body. — A list of Five Mens Names that <sup>was</sup> ~~was~~  
 concerned in destroying his Majesty's Schooner Gaspee. — — —

John Brown & Joseph Brown } principal Men of the Town of Providence

Simion Potter — — — — — of Bristol

Doctor Weeks — — — — — of Warwick

Richmond — — — — — of Providence

A. B. One of the Gaspee's Men declared as soon as he saw the Negro  
 Negro, that he was the Man that rowed the Bow Oar in ~~that~~  
<sup>the</sup> Boat which he went on shore in, and that he assisted the Negro  
 to row the Oar. — — — — —

The Examination of Aaron, a Mulatto, upon Oath, taken this  
 14th Day of January, A. D. 1773. — — — — —

Aaron Biggs, <sup>aged</sup> eighteen years, or thereabouts, declares, That  
 at ~~at~~ the Age of Five years, he was bound, by Town of Portsmouth,  
 an Apprentice to Captain Samuel Sompkins, of Providence 55b  
 and until he should arrive at the age of Twenty four Years, —  
 from which time until he went on board the main of War, he  
 was constantly in the Service of the said Captain Sompkins,  
 as a labourer on his farm: that his Master kept a two Mast  
 Boat to transport his farm produce to ~~the~~ Market, which was the  
 only Sail Boat within five Miles of his Master's Farm, at the  
 time the Gaspee was burnt. — That at that time one Reming-  
 ton who lived about one Mile from where the Deponent  
 lived had a row boat large enough for six Hand Hands

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 to row. — Also one Ephraim Pierce, <sup>at</sup> ~~at~~ about a mile  
 & a half distance, had a two Mast Boat, & that the sails of his  
 Master's Boat had been taken off his Master's Boat, ~~for~~ sometime  
 before the Night on which the Gaspee was burnt, and she leaked in  
 such a manner that she could not sail. — That a little after sun-  
 set, on the Night on which the Gaspee was burnt, he left the Island  
 of Providence, but does not know the day of the Week, or day of the Month  
 that he went off the Island, in a little fishing Boat of two Oars,  
 which Boat lay just before below the House; that before sunrise  
 and about an Hour <sup>before</sup> ~~after~~ sunrise after Day break he returned  
 to his Master's House, from the shore where they landed the people  
 belonging to the Gaspee, which shore was about a Mile above the  
 Gaspee, & the Gaspee about six miles from his Master's House, &  
 that it was about four or five miles from his Master's to the place  
 where they landed the Gaspee's people — That he found the oars  
 in the Boat that he went off the Island in — That the Reason  
~~why~~ he went off the Island was to carry the Boat round to the  
 East side of the Island to carry a Man named Samuel Faul-  
 kner a hired man to Bristol the next night, & that this young  
 Man told the Deponent that he would ask his Master's Leave for  
 that Purpose — That going round the Island at about half a  
 mile from the shore of <sup>the</sup> ~~said~~ Island, he met a boat and one Potter  
 whose Christian Name he does not know and whom he in Com-  
 pany of with Faulkner abovementioned had once seen on a  
 Wharf at Bristol and there heard him called by the name of  
 Potter, and further says, that said Faulkner told him that that  
 Person <sup>was the man</sup> who owned the Rope walk at Bristol which they had been

That when he met said Potter as above mentioned, He was in a boat which was rowing with eight oars - That the time he met the said Potter was about half an hour after he, this deponent, left the Island, and he said Potter was then about five miles from Bristol.

That there were eleven Men in said boat and Potter was in the stern sheets - That the weather was cloudy - That when Potter hailed him, they were about fifteen Rods ~~distance~~ distance. The first Words Potter spoke ~~was~~ was by asking who was in that Boat? The deponent ~~then~~ answered he was in there. - Potter told him to come that way, he wanted to speak to him - Upon which he went to him, and Potter told him he wanted this deponent to <sup>go</sup> up with him about a mile and that he would be back in an hour; this deponent said he could not, he was in a hurry to go home - To which Potter replied he must go with him -

The deponent answered he could not, ~~go~~ he must go home or his Master would punish him, and this deponent then began to row away - That after he began to row away, Potter told him he wanted this deponent to go with him to fetch something down which this deponent has forgot and that he would pay him for so ~~do~~ing - This deponent said he had rather go home for if his Master should miss him he would say he was out all night and flogg him - Upon which Potter said, there is no Cant in the matter, you must go along with me, we shall be back in an hour & further said give me your Painter, you need not row, we will carry you up there - Upon which this deponent gave them the Painter - That he this deponent being in his own boat was towed up by Potter's Boat till they came within half a mile of the Schooner. Potter then said to this deponent "get into my Boat" - That he got into the Boat - Potter then told him they were going to burn the Man of War Schooner and that <sup>he</sup> this deponent must

go with him: To which he replied, that it was hard for him to be brought there, where he might lose his Life: - Potter then said, they were all upon their Lives; this deponent still repeated, it was hard for him to go, but Potter said, he must go now he was there, that they would give him a ~~staff~~ Weapon, he must do as they did, knock them down, and not let them kill him if he could help it, and gave him a handspike: the rest were armed, some with Cutlasses, some with Muskets: this happened about <sup>ten</sup> ~~three~~ o'clock at Night. - Potter further told this deponent, that <sup>they</sup> expected 16 or 17 more Boats from Providence; - in about an hour a forewards, they met eight Boats, about half a Mile from the Schooner, which appeared to be pretty full of ~~Men~~ Men People. - Upon their meeting, Potter and two Men, called Browns by the People, whom this deponent did not ~~know~~ know, talked about <sup>how</sup> they should board the Schooner; one of these Persons, called Browns, got into Potter's Boat, on which they were hailed from the Gaspee, & told them to stand off, upon which Brown said, Row up. - Immediately after, he, the deponent, saw the Captain of the schooner come upon deck, in his Breeches, & fired a pistol into one of the Boats, and wounded one of the Men in the Thigh. - That he saw a Man who was in the Boat with Potter, & who was called Brown, fired a Musquet, which wounded the Captain; after which there was no more firing, but they instantly boarded the Schooner. - That the Captain of the Schooner, when he was wounded, <sup>he is</sup> ~~is~~ stood by the fore-shrouds, upon the left hand side. - When they got on Board, there were about 24 of the Schooner's Men on deck, & the rest were coming up out of the Hold, and somebody said, knock em down, kill <sup>them</sup> ~~em~~, no matter what you do with them. - That this deponent did not know the Browns, nor heard them called by their Christian names, and further declares, it was John Brown that shot the Captain, and that he hath never seen either of the Browns since. - That after they got possession of the vessel, they took the Hands belonging to the Schooner, and threw them down the Hold; - and this happened about 3 o'clock in the morning. - Then the people searched the vessel, took the Captain's Papers -

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 Papers, which he desired they would give him, but they refused, tore them and threw them overboard. — Then they took the Gaspee's People, tied their hands, and put them into the Boat, & carried them ashore, this Deponent going with them. — ~~That~~ by the time they got half way ashore, the schooner was on Fire: that before they went ~~to~~ ashore a ~~man~~ whom they called Weeks from one of the Boats dressed the Captains Wounds. That when they had landed the People, they untied their hands, and let them go, & the Captain of the schooner they carried up to a house. — After they had landed the men they put off to return, & Potter told him he would give him two Dollars for what he had done, which he accordingly did. — Upon which this Deponent set off in his own Boat, & rowed home. That it was about 4 o'clock when they had landed the schooner's people. — That it was a moon light night, but sometimes cloudy. — That soon after the people had boarded the schooner, they hoisted ~~the~~ her Top Sails, her head laying up towards Providence & he saw nothing further done to her or her sails: That the schooner when they boarded her was aground: That the person who acted as ~~surgeon~~ surgeon he thinks he has seen at his Master's House, but is not sure it was the same person. — This Deponent further says, that the person to whom he first gave an account of the above affair of burning the Gaspee was Captain Linzee of the Beaver. — Sometime after the burning of the ~~Beaver~~ Schooner, he went on Board the Beaver in his <sup>said</sup> Master's Boat — That immediately ~~after~~ upon his going on Board they put him in Irons because they imagined he intended to run away from his Master. — It was about ten o'clock at Night when the Deponent was put in Irons, and was released about ten o'clock the next day, and then they were going to flogg him. — After he was tied up to the Mast, one of the <sup>Gaspee's</sup> Men called Paddy Ales, jumped up and told the Captain, that he thought, he, this Deponent, was one that was aboard the Schooner Gaspee — At this time the Deponent had said nothing about the <sup>burning of the</sup> Schooner, & nor had made no discovery relating to what he <sup>knew</sup>

knew thereof: the Captain asked ~~them~~ ~~him~~ the Man if he was sure of it; he said yes: — The Captain asked what clothes he had on: the Man said two Frocks; then the Captain told the Man to examine what clothes he had, which they found were two Frocks: there was no mention made of any other clothes. — Next day Paddy Ales and the Deponent were called up before the Captain, who asked the said Paddy if he was sure that this Deponent was one concerned in the attack of the Schooner? he said yes: — He further asked him if he could swear to it? He answered, yes. — That the Captain then administered an Oath ~~to~~ to the said Paddy upon the Bible, who swore that this Deponent was there. — Captain then said ~~to~~ to this Deponent, My Lad, you see this Man has declared you was there, & if you do not tell who was with you, I will hang you at the yard Arm immediately, & if you do, you shall not be hurt: upon which this Deponent told the Captain all the Heads ~~of~~ that were there; the Captain saying, ~~that~~ he did not want to hear any thing about the poor people, but about ~~only~~ the Heads. — This Deponent further says, that he never spoke to any of the Beavers Crew till he got on board. — That his Masters Boat, in which this Deponent went on Board the ship, his Master went on Board and received again. — That this Deponent went on Board said Man of War with an Intention not to return ~~again~~ again to his Master — That, he this Deponent, was never Christened, and that he should have told Captain Linzee all he knew relating to the Gaspee, immediately upon his going on board, if they had not put him in Irons — The Deponent further says, that the Morning after the burning the Schooner, when he returned to his Master's, ~~there~~ he went to bed with two Black servants with whom he usually slept. He lay there a little while, & upon his Masters knocking, he got up, and went to fetch the Cows. That when he first returned to his Master's House, he got in at <sup>a lower</sup> ~~the~~ Window, on the S. W. part of the House which opens into the middle Room — That during the whole transaction on that Night the Schooner was burnt, no man called this Deponent by <sup>his</sup> name or knew him. — — — his

Aaron <sup>his</sup> Biggs

Mark

Sworn this 14<sup>th</sup> day of January  
A.D. 1773 at the Council Chamber  
in Newport before us.

- J. Wanton.
- Sam. Hornamnden.
- Fre. Smyth.
- Peter Oliver.
- Robt. Archmuty.

The Examination of Patrick Carles taken on oath this 16<sup>th</sup> of January  
A.D. 1773.

Patrick Carles, of full age, a Mariner, on Board his Majesty's Ship  
the Lizard, commanded by Captain Inglis, being duly sworn, & deposeseth  
& saith, That he was a sailor on board the Gaspee Schooner on the 10<sup>th</sup>  
of June last, when she was run aground on a spit of sand, called ~~Ston~~  
~~quait~~ That between one & two o'clock, the Captain called all hands on  
to Deck; upon this Deponent coming up with the rest of the Seamen  
where he saw Numbers of ~~Arms~~ with two or three Musquets & Clubs.  
That he saw those persons, <sup>break open</sup> ~~break open~~ ~~upon~~ ~~upon~~ the armed Chest, & furnish-  
ed themselves with Cutlasses: soon after this the Deponent was  
knocked down & with Club, & pushed into the Hold, & in about a  
quarter of an Hour <sup>upon</sup> called ~~to~~ Deck & where his arms were  
tied behind him, and ~~thrust~~ <sup>thrust</sup> into a boat which, with about six  
others, ~~were~~ <sup>were</sup> then laying alongside the Schooner. — That as soon as  
the Deck was cleared of all the <sup>Officers &</sup> Sailors belonging to the Gaspee  
& put into Boats, they were rowed to a small Village toward  
Providence, about three miles Distance from the Schooner  
where they were landed. — This Deponent further saith, that  
Lieutenant Dudingston was placed in the Stern of the same  
Boat in which this Deponent came on shore & that he, in their passage  
to

to the shore continued to unloose his Arms & ~~that~~ ~~he~~ took an Oar from  
a Negro ~~whom~~ Man, then on the Bows of the boat whom he verily believed  
to be <sup>the Negro</sup> Aaron now on board the Lizard and helped him to row the Boat  
and that to the best of his belief it was about ~~four~~ <sup>three or</sup> four o'clock in the  
Morning when he with the Captain and <sup>the</sup> others were landed —  
This Deponent also saith, that he well remembers, that while the persons  
were attacking the sailors on board the Schooner, he heard the Name  
Potter mentioned. — He also saith, that after he was landed, he saw  
the Boats return toward the Schooner, and in about half an hour after  
he saw the Schooner on fire, and the Guns blowing of f. —

That it was cloudy and calm weather — That one of the people said  
potter it <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ ~~was~~ the the best way to set the Men on shore for that it  
was not their fault but the Officers, to wit a person <sup>then</sup> standing on  
the quarter Deck to whom the above Expression was directed, who was  
a tall, thin man, with a long sharp nose, in light coloured long  
Clothes, his hair tied behind, who looked more like a shoreman than  
a seaman, answered, let it be so. — And this Deponent further saith  
that on the <sup>morning</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>after</sup> the Negro Aaron came on board Beaver  
about <sup>eight</sup> ~~six~~ o'clock, he saw him in Irons in the Gully and im-  
mediately recollected him as the same person whom he assisted to  
row the Boat as above mentioned but did not speak to him but  
directly told one John Johnston the Boatwain of the Schooner  
that he well knew the Negro was one of the persons who rowed  
the Boat on shore with him — That on the next day, Captain  
Lindsey Commander of the Lizard, gave directions to the  
~~Boat~~ Boatwain to get some spun yarn to tye up the Negro  
and give him two or three dozen to find out what he ~~came~~  
came

19  
 came on board ~~the Gaspee~~ for, or ~~what~~ he knew any thing concerning the burning the Schooner - That he was stripped in order to be punished upon which the Boatswain ~~ordered~~ of the Gaspee then called out one of the Men knew him to be one of the Persons who rowed the Captain <sup>on</sup> ashore and was concerned in burning the Schooner - Upon which the Captain asked which ~~of the Men~~ <sup>he called</sup> knew him was answered, that ~~the~~ out to this Deponent and asked him if he knew any thing of the Negro and cautioned him to be careful what he answered - That the Negro was then ordered into from again, and this Deponent called in to the Cabin and ordered by the Captain to describe the Negro's dress when on board the Boat, which he did, to wit, a spotted or checked Handkerchief round his head, a frock, a pair of long trousers, no shoes and his hair tied ~~to~~ behind, not longer than an Inch, or an Inch and an half - Soon after the Captain sent <sup>for</sup> a Justice from the Town, which Justice ~~soon after~~ swore him, and he confirmed the above account he had given under oath, relative to the Negro. - The Deponent <sup>first</sup> saw the Schooner <sup>first</sup> afire, about Breakfast Time, which was about six o'clock, when he was ashore, and heard ~~at~~ the Guns of the Schooner blow off, but did not see her from the time he first <sup>left</sup> her till he saw her on fire - He set along side of the Negro in the Boat, from the Time the Boat put off from the Schooner until she struck the shore where he landed, and that while rowing ashore he was cold and asked the Negro to let him row to warm himself which he did, and as they sat together, <sup>the Negro</sup> asked him ~~the Negro~~ for a Chew of Tobacco, which he gave him, and this Deponent further saith that he never saw the said Negro before he saw him in the Boat.

Sworn at Newport on the sixteenth  
 Day of January A. D. 1773.

Patrick <sup>his</sup> + Carle  
 mark  
 J. Wadston  
 Jno. Smyth  
 Peter Oliver  
 Robt. Auchmuty

20  
 The Deposition of Patrick Carle of Lawful Age late belonging to His Majesty's Armed Schooner Gaspee commanded by Lieutenant Wm Dudington, but now to his Majesty's Ship, Beaver, commanded by John Lindsey Esq. - This Deponent saith, that after a Number of Boats boarded the said Schooner as she lay aground, and the Peoples Hands were tied, he with several others, was put into the same Boat, that the Captain was carried ashore in, and that he helped a Negro Man, called Aaron Biggs, to row the Bow Oar which Negro is now on board his Majesty's Ship Beaver; who hath sworn that he did row ashore with the Bow Oar and further saith not. Sworn in Newport this 16th of July 1772 } The mark  
 Before me, Charles Barding } of +  
 Justice of the Peace } Patrick Carle.

Samuel Thurston of the Island of Providence, in the Township of Portsmouth, in the County of Newport, of Lawful Age, declareth & saith, That Aaron, a mulatto lad, of about 18 years of Age, now on board his Majesty's Ship the <sup>Swan</sup> ~~Swan~~ commanded by Captain Hycough, is an indentured servant to Samuel Tompkins, of Providence aforesaid, Son in Law to the said Saml. Thurston, which Saml. Tompkins hath lived in the same House with the Declarant for many years past and have jointly managed a Farm together. That he is fully persuaded ~~that~~ the said Aaron hath not been off from the said Island for <sup>more than twelve months</sup> ~~many years~~ more preceding the 2<sup>d</sup> Day of July instant in the Night of which said Aaron stole their Boat and went on Board His Majesty's Ship, Beaver; that particularly on the Night after the month of June last, being the same night that his Majesty's Schooner the Gaspee was burnt he is well assured that the said Aaron remained in his House the whole of the Night, he having seen him <sup>in the Evening and early</sup> ~~the Night~~ <sup>of the 1<sup>st</sup> of July</sup> ~~in the Morning~~ at his Work: That at that time there was, <sup>but</sup> one Boat at that End of the said Island which was then so much out of repair that the said Declarant thinks she could not ~~have~~ swim, and then

21.  
 lay ~~at~~ bottom upwards in order to be refitted: being the same Boat that  
 the said Aaron stole <sup>after she was repaired:</sup>: that he the Declarant thinks it absolutely impossi-  
 ble that the said Aaron should have been that Night any where <sup>near</sup> the place  
 where the said Schooner was burnt: and that the said Aaron remained at Home  
 from the 10<sup>th</sup> month of June until the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July and never during that  
 time gave him the least ~~hint~~ information, suggestion, Hint of his having  
 any knowledge of the burning of the said Schooner. —

Samuel Shurston. —

Colony of Rhode-Island &c. Newport July 10<sup>th</sup> 1772.

Personally appeared Samuel Shurston (son of the  
 people called Quakers) and on his solemn Affirmation declared that  
 the above written Declaration is true, Before,  
 J. Wanton, Gov<sup>r</sup>

Samuel Shurston, of the Island of Providence, in the Township of  
 Portsmouth, in the County of Newport, of Lawful Age, declareth &  
 saith, That Aaron, a Mulatto Lad, of about 16 years of Age, <sup>now on</sup> ~~now~~  
 board His Majesty's ship the Swan, commanded by Capt. Ayscough,  
 is an indentured servant to Samuel Tompkins of Providence  
 aforesaid, son-in-law to the said Samuel Shurston, which Samuel  
 Tompkins hath lived in the same House with the Declarant  
 for many years past, and have jointly managed a Farm to-  
 gether; That he is fully persuaded the said Aaron hath not  
 been off from

22  
 Samuel Tompkins, of the Island of Providence, in the Town-  
 ship of Portsmouth, in the County of Newport, on oath, declareth &  
 saith, That Aaron, a Mulatto Lad, of about 16 years of Age, now on  
 Board His Majesty's ship the Swan, commanded by Captain Ayscough,  
 is an indentured servant to the Deponent; ~~his father in law Mr. Saml.~~  
~~Shurston~~ That he is fully persuaded, the said Aaron hath not  
 been off from the said Island more than once or twice for 12  
 Months preceding the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July instant, in the Night  
 of which the said Aaron stole a Boat, belonging to the Deponent  
 & his Father in Law Mr. Samuel Shurston, and went on board his  
 Majesty's ship the Beaver: that particularly on the Night after  
 the 10<sup>th</sup> month of June last, being the same night that his Majesty's  
 Schooner called the Gaspee was burnt, he is well assured the said  
 Aaron remained in his House <sup>the whole of the Night</sup> he having seen him <sup>about</sup> at 9 o'clock that eve-  
 ning with the rest of the servants in the Family, about which time  
 they retired to bed, and also very early in the morning of the  
 11<sup>th</sup> day, said Aaron according to his usual Custom brought  
 the Cows into the yard to be milked: That at that time there  
 was but one Boat at that end of the Island which was  
 then so much out of repair that the Deponent is confident  
 she could not swim, and then lay Bottom upwards in order  
 to be refitted, being the same Boat the said Aaron stole after  
 she was repaired: That the Deponent thinks it absolutely  
 impossible that the said Aaron should have been that Night  
 any where near the place where the Schooner Gaspee was  
 burnt: And that he the said Aaron remained at Home from  
 the said month of June until the said second <sup>day</sup> of July  
 and never during that time gave him the least Informa-  
 tion, suggestion or Hint of his having ~~any~~ the least  
 knowledge of the destruction of the said Schooner. —

23  
Colony of Rhode-Island &c.

Sam. Tompkins  
Newport July 11. 1772

Mr. Samuel Tompkins personally appears, and made solemn Oath to the Truth of the above Deposition, Before,  
J. Wanton Gov.

The Examination of Bartholomew Cheever, Mariner, ~~and~~ late a Seaman, on Board His Majesty's Schooner, <sup>The</sup> Gaspee, taken on Oath, at Newport, in the Colony of Rhode-Island, on the first Day of June 1773. Who saith, that on the ninth Day of June last, past, the Schooner Gaspee ran aground, on her Passage to Providence, on a point of Sand about two or three Miles below a small Town, and about five Miles from the Town of Providence: That about Three Quarters after Twelve o'clock the next Morning, being the Tenth of June, as he was standing upon the Quarter Deck of said Schooner, as a Centry, every other person belonging to said Schooner being below, he saw a Number of Boats coming <sup>towards</sup> ~~from~~ <sup>the</sup> said Schooner, which he hailed, but no answer was returned: he then gave notice to Lieutenant Dedingston, and the Midshipman, who instantly came upon Deck; the Boats were again hailed, and the answer, returned by the some of People in said Boats, was, "Damn your Bloods, we have you now" — The Captain ordered them to keep off, and told them if they did not, he would Fire into them: They answered, they did not care, they would be on Board directly: The Captain then ordered all Hands on Deck, but the People who were in the Boats boarded the Schooner, and as they were entering said Schooner they, shot the Captain; and afterwards tied the People belonging to said Schooner, and carried them on shore, nearly opposite to the Schooner: they also broke open the Arm Chest, and took possession of the Small arms, and after they had landed all the Gaspee's People, he saw the said Schooner on Fire, but he knoweth not the Names of any <sup>of the</sup> Persons who were concerned in destroying said Schooner, and that those who acted as principals were called the ~~Head~~ Head Sheriff, &

24  
the Captain, and one of them was called Constable. — And this Examinee further saith, That while he was attending upon Lieutenant Dedingston, at a Town called Pawtuxet, he saw two of the persons who were concerned in destroying said Schooner, <sup>but</sup> he did not know their Names. — Sworn at Newport the Day and Year aforesaid, Before,  
Bartholomew <sup>mark</sup> & Cheever's.

J. Wanton

Sam. Horsmanden

Fre. Smyth

Peter, Oliver.

The Examination of Samuel Falkner of Bristol in the Colony of Rhode-Island &c. — Labourer taken upon Oath at Newport the Eleventh Day of June 1773 — Who saith, That he lived with Sam. Tompkins of the Island of Providence in said Colony from the first of April 1772 to the last of July following, <sup>and</sup> knoweth a Negro Fellow named Aaron who lived with said Tompkins part of said Time & as understood is was an ~~indes~~ indentured servant to said Tompkins — That several persons come over from Bristol to said Island & said that the Schooner Gaspee was burnt two or three Days before which was the first Time he heard of it — That he never requested the said Aaron to go with him from Providence to Bristol in any part of the aforementioned Time of his living with the said Samuel Tompkins having then no occasion to go to Bristol — That when the people from Bristol gave an account of burning said Schooner, Aaron was present and did not at that Time or at any other Time afterwards discover he had any knowledge of destroying said Schooner — — — That when the people from Bristol gave said account, they mentioned the particular Night on which <sup>said</sup> Schooner was burnt, and to the best of his Recollection Aaron mistook the Cows after sunset that Night and was at Home early, <sup>the next</sup> Morning and therefore concluded that Aaron was at his Master's House the whole of that Night — That he does not remember <sup>his</sup> telling said

25  
 Aaron he would ask his Master to let him go with him to Bristol in any part of the above mentioned Time of his living with said Tompkins, <sup>but well remembers that the summer before when he was living with said Tompkins,</sup> that he ~~never~~ <sup>was present</sup> was in Company asked him once or twice to let Aaron go with him to Bristol - That he never was in Company with Aaron when Mr. Potter of Bristol <sup>was present</sup> but he has been in Mr. Potter's Rope walk ~~at aforesaid~~ <sup>in</sup> Bristol in Company with Aaron, neither was he ever on a Wharf in Bristol with Aaron, nor at any Time <sup>said</sup> sent out Mr. Potter to Aaron, and he does not recollect, that when he was in Mr. Potter's Rope walk as aforesaid, that he told said Aaron whose it was, and that when they went to Bristol together the summer before the Gaspee was burnt they landed on the shore - That when Aaron ran away from his said Master he stole his small Boat which lay on the shore, and went away in her, and that when the People from Bristol brought the News of the Gaspee's being burnt, she was then lying on the shore with her seams much opened: That some Time after this, and before Aaron stole her, she was repaired - That he does not remember that the people from Bristol mentioned the Names of any persons concerned ~~in~~ in destroying said Schooner, and that he does not know any of the Persons who burnt said Schooner, and the Examinee further saith, that the said Aaron was looked upon by the People where he worked as a person much addicted to Lying  
 Samuel Faulkner -

Taken and sworn to at  
 Newport on the Day and  
 Year aforesaid Before,

J. Wanton,  
 James Smyth  
 Robt. Auchmuty

26  
 Somerset, a Mulatto, & Jack, a Negro, indentured Servants, living with Samuel Thurston & Samuel Tompkins, on the Island of Providence, in the Township of Portsmouth, in the County of Newport, of lawful Age, on Oath, severally depose & say, That to their Certain Knowledge, Aaron, a Mulatto Lad, who is also an indentured Servant, to the said Samuel Tompkins, now, as they are informed on Board a Man of War, has not been off from said Island for many Months preceding the 20 day of July Instant; in the Night of which the said Aaron stole a Boat belonging to the said Samuel Tompkins & Samuel Thurston, & went on Board a Man of War: That the said Aaron has slept with the Deponents in the same Bed for <sup>several</sup> ~~many~~ years, & particularly on the Night the Schooner called the Gaspee was burnt, the said Aaron was at Home at the Dwelling-House of the said Thurston, & Tompkins, & that he, the said Aaron lay in the same Room & Bed with the Deponents the whole of that Night, he having retired to Bed together between nine & ten o'clock ~~to~~ Night in the Evening: & the Deponents severally say that they have never had the least Hint or Information from the said Aaron of his having any knowledge of the burning <sup>of the</sup> said Schooner: & they are well assured he knows nothing of that ~~whole~~ Transaction.

The Mark of + Somerset  
 Colony of Rhode Island &c

The Mark of + Jack

Newport July 11<sup>th</sup> 1772

In their proper Persons came and appeared the abovesaid Somerset and Jack, & after being cautioned to tell the Truth and nothing but the Truth, made solemn Oath to the above Deposition to which they have made their respective Marks, Before

J. Wanton, Gov.

The Examination of John Johnson Boatswain of His Majesty's Schooner Gaspee, Commanded by William Dudingston, Together with the Examination of William Capel, a Seaman on Board said Schooner; taken this tenth Day of June in the twelfth Year of His Majesty's Reign, A.D. 1772 before the Hon. Darius Sessions Deputy Gov. Severally say that on the Ninth of June Inst. being bound with said Schooner to the Town of Providence, in Order to take on Board some of his Majesty's Seaman, which was expected from Boston, in order to replace them on Board his Majesty's Ship to which they belonged. About three o'clock, afternoon of said day the Schooner grounded on a point in Narraganset Bay, about six Miles southward of the Town of Providence. And about the Middle of the Night following, the Schooner still being on Ground, there being <sup>but</sup> one hand on Deck, he discovered seven or eight long-Boats, with a Number of persons on board them, — on which the person on deck informed the Commander Wm. Dudingston, who hailed the Boats & ordered them to keep off; but the persons on Board said Boats not regarding the Commander's Orders, came near in in order to Board said Schooner; on which the Captain or Commander called all Hands. But before we was on Deck we heard two small Arms or Pistols fired; and when coming on Deck, the Schooner was boarded, and being in the Hatchway, said Johnson received several Blows with a stick, and as soon as we was on Deck, we was bound, and all the rest of the Seaman bound likewise, & put on Board their Boats and landed on the West side of said Bay, together with the Captain or Commander, who was much wounded.

Question. — Have you any Knowledge of the Persons that board<sup>ed</sup> the Schooner?

Answer — No. —

John <sup>his</sup> Johnson  
 Wm. <sup>mark</sup> Capel

Marwick June 10<sup>th</sup> 1772.

Colony of Rhode Island &c.

The within John Johnson & Wm. Capel made solemn Oath to the Truth of the within <sup>or foregoing</sup> Declaration to which they have subscribed, before, Darius Sessions Dep. Gov.

The Examination of Peter May taken upon Oath this 19<sup>th</sup> Day of January A.D. 1773. —

Peter May of Lawful Age being duly sworn, deposed & saith that he was late a Mariner on Board his Majesty's Schooner Gaspee, and that sometime last Summer as they were going in said Schooner towards Providence, about two or three o'clock in the Afternoon they struck aground upon a point of Sand about a Musquet shot from the Land: that she lay so dry that they walked around her and scraped her Bottom, the Water being about one foot on one side, and about two feet on the other; that they got an Anchor out, and endeavored to get her off but after striving till sunset they desisted from any further attempts; — All, <sup>by the Lieut. striking down</sup> but the Watch, which consisted of ~~six~~ three men, were ordered to go to sleep — That between twelve and one o'clock the Schooner was attacked by a Number of Boats with people on Board, being armed some with Clubs, some with other Weapons. — That this Deponent was below at the time they boarded the Schooner, and when he came upon Deck, he saw Lieutenant Dudingston discharge a Pistol but whether it ~~wounded~~ wounded any Body he cannot tell. — Immediately after he saw a man in the Bow of one of the Boats fire a Musquet and wound the Lieutenant — Upon which the Lieutenant cried out "Lord have Mercy upon me, I am done for —" That immediately after this the Deponent was knocked down the Hatchway, and recovering himself went into the Sheerage in order to get some Cloathing and from thence slipped into the Cabin and there heard the Lieut. desire the people not to ~~pull~~ haul & pull him about by force as they did, but to assist him, on which they said they had no doctors, but would stave him as soon as they could to

29  
 to a place where they could get one. he soon after when the Lieutenants  
 was on Deck heard several people ask him whether he would make  
 amends for the Rum, which he had ~~on Board~~ seized out of  
 of the Sloop and if he would they ~~soo~~ would return him the  
 Schooner. - One of which people <sup>near</sup> named Green, whom he  
 saw in the Cabin of the Gaspee, and this Deponent had  
 before seen him on Board the Gaspee the day after they had seized  
 a Sloop of which he appeared to be the owner, and out of  
 which he took some Vases - This Deponent saith that the  
 said Green is a tall slender Man wearing his own hair of  
 a brown Colour - This Deponent further saith that after  
 they had taken possession of the Gaspee, <sup>the Hands belonging to the Gaspee</sup> was put into a  
 Boat & rowed ashore at a place about a mile dis-  
 tant, between three and four o'clock in the Morning  
 & that he saw the Schooner a fire when they were  
 about half way to the shore & the fire began upon  
 her quarter Deck - and further this Deponent  
 saith not -

Peter <sup>Lin</sup> & Mary  
 March

Sworn at Newport this 19<sup>th</sup> of January at the Council  
 Chamber in Newport

Before,

J. Wanton  
 Jan. Hornsander  
 Fre. Smyth  
 Robert. Archmuty -

30  
 Daniel Vaughan, of Newport, in the Colony of Rhode-Island, being  
 of lawful Age, do depose and say; - That some Time in the Summer  
 last past, being in a Sloop, taking out some old Iron from the ~~wreck~~  
 of the Gaspee, and afterwards going down to Newport, in said Sloop, in  
 Company with Captain Linzee, in his Majesty's Ship, the Beaver; - One  
 Morning, not far from the Island of Providence, I saw a small Boat  
 alongside the Beaver, and immediately told the people on Board  
 the Sloop, that somebody had gone on Board the Beaver that Night. -  
 A few Days afterwards, as the Beaver lay at Newport, near the Fort,  
 I was ordered to <sup>visit</sup> the Sloop I was in, alongside a Schooner,  
 which then lay alongside the Beaver, in order to take out some  
 Sugars; and going on Board the Beaver, I saw a Mulatto Fellow, under the  
 Forecastle, in Irons - I said unto him, <sup>so</sup> you are one of the Rogues  
 that have bin burning the Gaspee - He replied, he never saw her, nor knew  
 any thing <sup>about</sup> her - I then asked him what he came there for - he answered  
 his Master had used him badly, and he was determined to leave  
 him - - Two or three Days afterwards, being on Board said Schooner,  
 I heard Captain Linzee order said Mulatto to be carried out of the Beaver,  
 on Board said Schooner and then to be tyed up to the Mast and whipped, &  
 after he was laid hold on, and they were about to tie him up to the Mast, he  
 began to declare he knew some of the people that burnt the Gaspee, and that  
 Simeon Potter, John Brown, and others, whose Names I have forgot were concerned  
 therein. - Upon this Confession, he was released from a Whipping, sent on Board the  
 Beaver, where I afterwards saw him, in Irons, on the Quarter Deck. -

Daniel Vaughan -

Providence 15.

Providence 15<sup>th</sup> 1773.

Daniel Vaughan appeared in person and made solemn Oath to the Truth of the  
 foregoing Declaration, unto which he has subscribed, before,

Darius Sessions Deputy Governour

31  
 The Examination of Bartholomew Cheever, Seaman, lately belonging to his Majesty's Schooner, <sup>the</sup> Gaspee, taken by Davies Sessions, Deputy Governour of the Colony of Rhode Island, &c. is as followeth, viz - That the said Schooner being bound from Newport up to Providence, to take on Board some of his Majesty's Seaman that were expected from Boston, did, on the 9th of this Instant at about 5 o'clock in the Afternoon of said Day, run aground on a point of Land about six Miles below the Town of Providence, where she, the said Schooner, lay, until twelve o'clock at Night, at which Time he, the said Cheever, was called upon Deck to take the Watch; about three quarters of an hour after which, the Schooner yet being aground he observed some long Boats, about 6 or 7 in Number, full of Men, drawing near to the Schooner, upon which he informed the <sup>Captain</sup> Commander - ~~James~~ Buckingham, who immediately came upon Deck, and ordered him to hail them and bid them stand off on their peril, to which they answered, Samn you, we have you - The Captain then ordered him to call all Hands on Deck, which he did, but before many of them got up, the Boats were alongside, and their Crews getting on Board, and as they were entering the Schooner he saw the Flash, and heard the Report of a Musquet, and heard the Captain cry out, he was a dead Man. - We were then ordered into the Hold, and taken out separately and put into the Boats alongside, the most of us being pinioned, and then put on shore on the Main Land, where we had not been long before he saw the Schooner on Fire; where she continued burning till the Fire reached the Water Edge.

Question. - Did you, or do you know, or do you remember, ever to have seen before any of those persons that boarded the Schooner at that Time?  
 Answer. No.

Bartholomew <sup>in</sup> Cheever -  
 Warwick, 10th June 1772.

The above named Bartholomew Cheever was solemnly sworn to the truth of the foregoing Declaration, to which he has subscribed as above before,  
 Davies Sessions Deputy Governour.

32  
 Newport Is. Colony of Rhode-Island &c. January 13th 1773.  
 Joseph Borden, of Portsmouth, in the County of Newport, in the Colony of Rhode-Island &c. Ironholder, of lawful Age, appeared before the Hon. Commisioner for enquiring into the Circumstances of burning the Gaspee &c. and being sworn upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God deposed and saith, - That sometime in the beginning of last Week, a Man came to his House in Portsmouth, who called himself Stephen Gully; he appeared to be in liquor, and requested that he might have Supper and Lodgings, which the deponent told him he might have; before Supper he went from the deponents House, in company with one Thomas ~~Aylesbury~~ <sup>Aylesbury</sup>, and as they had both been very, and used very bad Language, the deponent fastened the Doors of his House in order to keep them out; after sometime this Stephen Gully returned, and knocked at the Door, upon which he let him in and told him his Supper was ready, <sup>in the back Room</sup> and while he was eating his Supper, ~~Aylesbury~~ <sup>Aylesbury</sup> returned, and said to Gully, My Friend, I believe you are upon some bad Design, as I understand by your talk, you are going to Newport to give Information, about burning the Gaspee, to which, Gully replied, that was nobody's Business but his own; ~~Aylesbury~~ <sup>Aylesbury</sup> told him, he would not get to Newport, as there were a Number of Indians with Drafts pistols in the Road, who would take care of him; but this deponent saith, that he did not know, neither has he any reason to believe there were any Indians in the Road leading to Newport, and the deponent supposed, that ~~Aylesbury~~ <sup>Aylesbury</sup> told this story to Gully with some other Design but to frighten him; After ~~Aylesbury~~ <sup>Aylesbury</sup> left the ~~Room~~ <sup>Room</sup>, Gully asked the deponent what he should do, and as he recollected, ~~Aylesbury~~ <sup>Aylesbury</sup> was in liquor, and did not know but there might be some disturbance ~~between~~ <sup>between</sup> him and Gully, he, the deponent told him there was a lower Road, that he might go in, by which he might avoid that which ~~Aylesbury~~ <sup>Aylesbury</sup> had before told him the Indians were in, and if he would pay his reckoning, he would go and direct him to that Road; on which he asked the deponent if he would take a Weapon with him, whereupon he replied, that he should not take any Weapon, as he did not <sup>believe</sup> anybody would hurt him the deponent or the said Gully, and then immediately proceeded to shew

31  
 The Examination of Bartholomew Cheever, Seaman, lately belonging to his Majesty's schooner <sup>the</sup> Gaspee, taken by Darius Sedgwick, Deputy Governour of the Colony of Rhode Island, &c. is as followeth, viz - That the said Schooner being bound from Newport up to Providence, to take on Board some of his Majesty's Seaman that were expected from Boston, did, on the 9th of this Instant at about 5 o'clock in the Afternoon of said Day, run aground on a point of Land about six Miles below the Town of Providence, where she, the said Schooner, lay, until twelve o'clock at Night, at which Time he, the said Cheever, was called upon Deck to take the Watch; about three quarters of an hour after which, the Schooner yet being aground he observed some long Boats, about 6 or 7 in Number, full of Men, drawing near to the Schooner, upon which he informed the <sup>captain</sup> Commander - ~~Lieut~~ <sup>Lieut</sup> Durlington, who immediately came upon Deck, and ordered him to hail them and bid them stand off on their peril, to which they answered, Stand you, we have you - The Captain then ordered him to call all Hands on Deck, which he did, but before many of them got up, the Boats were alongside, and their Crews getting on Board, and as they were entering the Schooner he saw the Flash, and heard the Report of a Musquet, and heard the Captain cry out, he was a dead Man. - We were then ordered into the Hold, and taken out separately and put into the Boats alongside, the most of us being pinioned, and then put on shore on the Main Land, where we had not been long before he saw the Schooner on Fire; where she continued burning till the Fire reached the Water Edge.

Question. - Did you, or do you know, or do you remember, ever to have seen before any of those persons that boarded the Schooner at that Time?  
 Answer. No.

Bartholomew <sup>his</sup> Cheever -  
 Colony of Rhode-Island &c. -  
 Warwick, <sup>mark</sup> 10th June 1772. -

The above named Bartholomew Cheever was solemnly sworn to the truth of the foregoing Declaration, to which he has subscribed as above before,  
 Darius Sedgwick Deputy Governour.

32  
 Newport Is. Colony of Rhode-Island &c. January 13th 1773.  
 Joseph Borden, of Portsmouth, in the County of Newport, in the Colony of Rhode-Island &c. Ironholder, of lawful Age, appeared before the Hon. Commissioner for enquiring into the Circumstances of burning the Gaspee &c. and being sworn upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God deposed and saith, - That sometime in the beginning of last Week, a Man came to his House in Portsmouth, who called himself Stephen Gully; he appeared to be in Liqueur, and requested that he might have Supper and Lodgings, which the deponent told him he might have; before Supper he went from the deponents House, in company with one Thomas <sup>Aylebury</sup> ~~Aylebury~~, and as they had both been very, and used very bad Language, the deponent fastened the Doors of his House in order to keep them out; after sometime this Stephen Gully returned, and knocked at the Door, upon which he let him in and told him his Supper was ready, <sup>in the back Room</sup> and while he was eating his Supper, <sup>Aylebury</sup> ~~Aylebury~~ returned, and said to Gully, My Friend, I believe you are upon some bad Design, as I understand by your talk, you are going to Newport to give Information, about burning the Gaspee, to which, Gully replied, that was nobody's Business but his own; <sup>then</sup> ~~then~~ <sup>Aylebury</sup> ~~Aylebury~~ told him, he would not get to Newport, as there were a Number of Indians with Brass Pistols in the Road, who would take care of him; but this deponent saith, that he did not know, neither has he any reason to believe there were any Indians in the Road leading to Newport, and the deponent supposed, that <sup>Aylebury</sup> ~~Aylebury~~ told this story to Gully with some other Design but to frighten him; After <sup>Aylebury</sup> ~~Aylebury~~ left the <sup>Room</sup> ~~Room~~, Gully asked the deponent what he should do, and as he recollected, <sup>Aylebury</sup> ~~Aylebury~~ was in <sup>Aylebury</sup> ~~Aylebury~~ was in Liqueur and did not know but there might be some disturbance ~~between~~ between him and Gully, he, the deponent told him there was a lower Road, that he might go in, by which he might avoid that which <sup>Aylebury</sup> ~~Aylebury~~ had before told him the Indians were in, and if ~~he would~~ <sup>he would</sup> pay his reckoning, he would go and direct him to that Road; on which he asked the deponent if he would take a Weapon with him, whereupon he replied, that he should not take any Weapon, as he did not <sup>believe</sup> ~~believe~~ anybody would hurt him the deponent or the said Gully, and then immediately proceeded to shew

33 him the ~~the~~ Road, by going with him as far as his Barn, which is about twenty Rods from the Depo<sup>n</sup>'s House, and shewed him a Pond, near to which was a Road, and directed him to take that Road, and steer Southward till he came into the Main Road, which he would soon do. — The Depo<sup>n</sup>ent then left Gully, and returned to his Dwelling House, where he saw nobody but his own Family, either in the House or about it, and every thing remained quiet. —

And this Depo<sup>n</sup>ent further saith, that while he was in the Kitchen, soon after Gully came into his House, and before Aylesbury had told Gully he believed he was upon some bad design, he heard a person reading the King's Proclamation for discovering the person who burnt the Gaspee Schooner, upon which Gully said, it was a fine Reward and he intended to have it, and the Depo<sup>n</sup>ent believes that Aylesbury was <sup>then</sup> in the Room. And further saith not.

Joseph Borden —

Sworn at Newport the Day & year before written before ~~the~~ us,

- G. Wanton
- Sam. Hornmanden
- Fre. Smyth
- Peter Oliver
- Robert Anshmuty —

Darius Sessions, Esq. of Providence on oath declares and says, <sup>of that</sup> In the Month of March AD. 1772, or thereabouts, sundry of the principal Inhabitants of the Town of Providence made application to the Depo<sup>n</sup>ent, in Writing, representing that there was, and had been for sometime past, a Schooner cruising in the Narraganset River, that disturbed all the vessels & Boats ~~all the vessel~~ that were passing therein by chasing, firing <sup>at</sup> & searching them, and often treating the people on Board of them with the most abusive Language, and that the Commander

34 shewed no Commission to support such proceedings. — They therefore requested me to inform the Governour thereof, that if he knew who he was, or if he had not been acquainted with his Commission and authority, he would be pleased to make Enquiry therein — Soon after I received said Writing, knowing the Chief Justice was in the Court House nearby, I wrote a line <sup>on the back of said paper, & sent it to him, desiring his opinion on</sup> on the Behaviour of the Schooner, and how it was best to conduct in the Affair — It was ~~very~~ soon returned, with something wrote under mine to this purpose, viz — That it was his opinion, that for any Person whatever to come into the Colony, <sup>and</sup> in the Body thereof, to exercise any Authority ~~thereof~~ by Force of Arms, or otherwise, without shewing his Commission to the Governour, and, if a Custom-House Officer without being sworn into his Office, was guilty of a Treason, if not Piracy. — All which Proceedings, to the best of my Remembrance, were afterwards sent to the Governour. — And to the best of his Remembrance, the aforesaid Complaint was signed by the following Persons: —

- Geo. Brown
- Ambrose Page
- Nathan Angell
- Geo. <sup>Junis</sup> Clark
- Joseph Nightingale
- James Lovett
- Job Smith
- Nicholas Brown
- Thomas Green

Darius Sessions.

Newport June 12<sup>th</sup> 1773.  
Sworn before,

G. Wanton Gov.

The Examination on oath of Stephen Gully before the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners,  
 this 12 day of January Ad. 1773.

Question. What is your Attendance & Occupation?

Answer. Stephen Gully is my name and a Husbandman <sup>my</sup> Occupation.

Q - What Age are you?

A - Aged 41 years.

Q. Where is your Place of Inhabitation?

A. At Smithfield in the County of Providence in the Colony of Rhode-Island.

Q. Have you been on board any of His Majesty's Ships; what Ships, & how long have you been on Board?

A - That <sup>he</sup> has been on board his Majesty's ship the Lizard, ever since Tuesday last, and that he went voluntarily on board for his own personal safety.

Q. - What Reason had you to suppose you was unsafe?

A - On Monday Night the 5th instant, he went into the public House at <sup>the</sup> Ferry on the Rhode-Island side, where he set down & called for some drink, which they gave him: He then called for Supper & had it. Afterwards he rose from the Table & set down near the Fire by the master of the House, when a man unknown to him, came in, & set down by his side, & asked him where he was bound; ~~he told him~~; he told him, to Newport; the Man told him he would not get there; he asked him, for what Reason he thought so; he replied there were about 20 armed men <sup>in</sup> the Road one of them with two brass Pistols, who he said were come to take him away, alive or dead to carry him back to Providence, that he the Man <sup>then</sup> went out into the other Room - The Landlord then spoke to the deponent & told him he would give him a word of advice, he said there were about twenty armed men, that said they would have him the deponent, & that he did not

know but they would hear him ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~pieces~~ you stayed there: He then called his Children, & he believes, his Wife, into the Room, and gave them a strict Charge, to tell the Men, if they enquired after this deponent, that he was gone out with the Landlord, to talk together & that this happened about 8 of Clock in the Evening: - The Landlord then told him he would shew him a ~~Way~~ <sup>Way</sup> ~~he would shew him~~ where he might escape their Hands, that <sup>they</sup> might know nothing where ~~where~~ he was gone. The Landlord then went with him ~~a little ways~~ about a quarter of a Mile, he thinks about S. E. from the House in sight of a Pond, & they then parted, the Landlord first directing ~~to~~ him the Road to Newport.

Q. What do you know relative to the attacking & burning the schooner Gaspee, on the 10th of June last?

A. - As to my own knowledge, I know nothing about it, but that sometime about the last of Dec<sup>r</sup> last, he was told by Captain William Thayer of the Massachusetts, that Saul Ramsdale late of Mendon who was a Shoemaker at Work at Providence at the Time the Gaspee was burnt, told him & one of his Sons, he knew who the persons were who were concerned in that affair, and that he the said Ramsdale was in Company with them before they <sup>went to</sup> Providence, but did not go himself: - Upon which this deponent went immediately to Ramsdale who was then at Mendon - He found a young fellow with him, but upon this deponent telling Ramsdale that he wanted a private conversation with him, the young Man went away - This deponent then asked him about the Burning the Gaspee schooner, & whether he had any knowledge of that Matter - Ramsdale then asked him who told him, that he Ramsdale, knew any thing of that Matter - He told him, <sup>he</sup> did not chuse to say who gave him that Intelligence - He the deponent, then told him ~~that~~ if he would give him any Intelligence about burning the Gaspee, <sup>schooner</sup> he would be a good friend to him - Ramsdale then told him he did know something about the thing, that he knew the Heads of the Gang that went down the River with that in-  
 tention

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Kirkow: That he saw two men with Guns under their Arms, & one of them swore with a very high oath, that he would be revenged of <sup>the</sup> that affair he was going upon before he returned, and that he, the said Ramsdale, was picked for one of the Gang to go with them but being fainthearted & discouraged he did not go - This Depoent then asked him whether some of the Promis were not concerned - Ramsdale answered, yes, Joseph Brown & John Brown of Providence - The Depoent then asked if there was not one Potter with them - He answered yes but does not remember that he mentioned his Christian Name - He ~~the~~ this Depoent then asked how ~~many~~ many in Number there was, if <sup>there</sup> two hundred? he said yes, he then asked him if there was four hundred? he said not so many - He then asked him if there were three hundred? he said yes - He then asked him if any more? he said, yes, something upwards -

He then parted with said Ramsdale & this Depoent then went to Boston - This Depoent further saith that he has been acquainted with said Ramsdale many years - That he told said Ramsdale that he would be sent for & Ramsdale begged he would not discover him -

Newport 12th of January 1773 }  
sworn before us, - }

Stephen Gulley -

J. Wanton

Dan. Horsmanden

Fre. Smyth

Peter Oliver

Robert Archmuty.

38  
The Examination of James Helme of South Kingstown, in the County of Kings County, & Colony of Rhode Island &c. Esq. taken on oath at Newport in said Colony this fifth day of June A. 1773. - Who saith, That in Oct. following the burning the schooner Gaspee the Superior Court of Judicature &c. for said Colony sat at East Greenwich in the County of Kent & which Court I presided, being the eldest Justice of the same there present. Before the sitting of said Court I had heard of the said Schooners being burnt & of Lieut. Dudingston being wounded. I did not give any Charge to the Grand Jury, of that Court, nor is it usual in this Colony to give either general or special Charges to Grand Juries. - But before the Meeting of said Court, I informed my Brethren that if I presided at said Court, I fully intended to ~~the~~ give the affair of burning the <sup>said</sup> Schooner and wounding said Lieutenant in Charge to the Jury - But having been near two months on the Circuit, it entirely went out of my Mind, when the Grand Jury was impanelled, and there being no business laid before said Jury, they were soon dismissed - Immediately after I recollected <sup>of the</sup> the omission of what I intended, and then mentioned to some other Judges of the Court, that I had intirely forgot to give the business of destroying the Gaspee and wounding Lieut. Dudingston in Charge to the Grand Jury which I had designed, and further this Depoent saith not.

taken and sworn at Newport,  
on the Day & year first within written.  
Before, J. Wanton

Ja. Helme

Dan. Horsmanden

Fre. Smyth

Peter Oliver

Robert Archmuty -

39 The Hon. the Commissioners appointed by Royal Commission, for examining into the attacking & destroying his Majesty's Armed Schooner the Gaspee commanded by Lieut. Dudingston & wounding the said Lieutenants, having laid before us, Justices of the <sup>Superior</sup> Court of Judicature, Court of Assize &c. within & throughout the Colony of Rhode-Island, two Examinations of Aaron Biggs, two Examinations of Patrick Earle, the Examination of Peter May, the Examination of William Dickinson, the Depositions of Samuel Tompkins, Samuel Thurston, & of Somerset & Jack Underwood servants for our advisement thereon.

It appeareth unto us, from ~~due~~ <sup>due</sup> Consideration had thereupon, that no particular persons are made mention of as being concerned in that atrocious Crime, except in the Examination of Aaron Biggs a Negro, and of Peter May one of the Gaspee's people — The Examination of Confession of the sd Aaron upon his first Examination, was made in consequence of illegal Threats from Captain Linzee of hanging him (the said Aaron) at the yard arm, if he would not discover who the persons were, that destroyed the Gaspee &c. — besides, most of the Circumstances & Facts, related in both his Examinations, are Contradictions repugnant to each other, and many of them impossible in their Nature. — It is evident from the Depositions of Tompkins, Thurston, & Aaron's two Fellow Servants, that he was at Home the whole of that Night on which the Gaspee was attacked &c. — Especially, as there was not ~~any~~ <sup>any</sup> Boat on that part of the Island, in which he could possibly cross the Bay, in the manner by him described. — In short, another Circumstance which renders the said Aaron's Testimony extremely ~~im~~ suspicious, is Captain Linzee's absolutely refusing to deliver him up, to be examined by one of the Justices of the <sup>said</sup> Superior Court, when legally demanded.

40 Peter May in his Deposition mentions one person only by the Name of Greene, whom, he says, he saw before on board the Gaspee: but the family of Greene being very numerous in this Colony, and the said Peter not giving <sup>the</sup> his Christian Name or describing him in such a manner as he could be found out; it is impossible for us to know at present the person referred to —

Upon the whole, we are all of opinion, that the several Matters & things contained in said Depositions do not induce a probable Suspicion, that the persons mentioned therein, or any, or either of them are guilty of the Crime aforesaid — It is however the fixed determination of the Superior Court to exert every legal Effort in detecting and bringing to condign punishment the persons concerned in destroying the Schooner Gaspee —

And if the Hon. Commissioners are of a different Sentiment we should be glad to receive their opinion for our better Information Rhode-Island }

June 11<sup>th</sup> 1773 {

S. Hopkins, J. Justice  
 Ga. Helme } Assistant  
 M. Bowler } Justices.  
 Col. Bennet }

I Rufus Greene Junior of East Greenwich in the Colony of Rhode-Island. Mariner, depose and say, That sometime in February last, I was on Board of and commanded the Sloop Fortune, lying at anchor in the Narragansett Bay, of North Kingstown, having a Quantity of Rum on Board, belonging to Nathaniel Greene & Company; when one Sunday, an Officer of the Schooner Gaspee, under the Command of Lieut. Dudingston, came on

Board, and asked this Deponent if he'd take any Freight on Board: To which this Deponent answered No. - He then ordered this Deponent to unlatch the Hatch, and this Deponent telling the said Dundass, that said Hatch were unlatched, he then ordered him into the Cabin; and being demanded by what Authority he thus did, replied, "If you do not go into the Cabin,

I'll let you know," drawing his Sword; he then caught this Deponent by the Collar, & pushed him into the Cabin; This Deponent then came out of said Cabin jammed the Companion Leaf upon his Head and went forward to prevent the Anchor being weighed, he then clenched upon this Deponent again, thrust him into the Cabin jammed the Companion Leaf upon his head knocked him down upon a Chest in said Cabin, & confined him there for a considerable Time. - After this Deponent's entreating ~~him~~ the said Dundass to let him ~~rise~~ free, he did so, & made a Seizure of the said Vessel, & Cargo, (as he said) and put the Letter "R" upon the ~~Hatchways~~ her Hatch; <sup>then</sup> The towed said Sloop to said Schooner (it being calm) with three Boats. - This Deponent being commanded aboard the Schooner aforesaid, obeyed; went before said Lieutenant Dudingston, and after some Conversation, was ordered from ~~his~~ his presence and confined ~~amongst~~ in the Gangway. This Deponent asked said Dudingston if he had a Commission to seize &c. to which said Dudingston answered, that he had a good Commission from his <sup>Majesty</sup> Majesty but shewed none. The next day this Deponent was put on board another Vessel, & further saith not. Rufus Greene Jr.

Kent Is. East Greenwich the fourteenth day of January Ad. 1773,

personally appeared the above Deponent, Rufus Greene Jr. and being cautioned to speak the Truth, made solemn Oath upon the

Evangelists of Almighty God, that the before going Narration is true in all its parts. - Coram, Hopkins Cooke, Justice Peace. I do hereby certify, that the above Deponent is of a respectable Family, sober Life, and ought to be credited. H. Cooke, Justice Peace

Joseph Warton Esq. Governour of the English Colony of Rhode-Island, on Oath, declares and says, That at an Interview he had with Lieutenant Dudingston, late of the Schooner Gaspee, he asked him, whether he had any Authority, from the Commissioners at Boston, or from Admiral Montague, to which he replied, he had not, but received his Authority from the Lords of the Admiralty, and, that he was come into the Colony of Rhode-Island by Virtue of that Power, and no other whatever: The Deponent then asked him, how long it was probable he should continue in the Colony, to which he answered, at present he was in the Colony, but how long he should continue was uncertain: - And this Deponent saith, that he does not remember, that he hath, since that Time, seen the said Lieutenant Dudingston. -

On or about the 20<sup>th</sup> of March last, a Complaint was transmitted to the Deponent, by the Deputy-Governour of the Colony, signed by sundry Persons, residing in and near the Town of Providence, that an armed Schooner was cruising in the Narraganset Bay, interrupting their legal Commerce, by searching and unnecessarily detaining their Freight Boats &c, and therefore requested the Deponent to make such Inquiry, as was necessary for obtaining Information, whether the Persons, belonging to said Schooner, were duly authorised to exercise that Power in the Body of the Colony: Upon receiving this Complaint, the Deponent

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 conceived it was his Duty, in order to satisfy the Complainers, and, at the same Time, to give the Persons complained of, an opportunity of exculpating themselves, from the several Charges and Accusations which were exhibited against ~~him~~ them, to pursue such Measures as were prudent and legal, and thereupon wrote a Letter to the Commanding Officer of said Schooner, advising him of the Information the Deponent had received, respecting his Conduct and Proceedings since his Arrival, <sup>with</sup> in this Colony, and requesting <sup>that</sup> he would produce his Commission and Authority; This Letter was answered by Lieutenant Dudingston, which, not being satisfactory, the Deponent wrote him another Letter on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March, in consequence whereof, Lieutenant Dudingston sent the Deponent, by one of his Officers, <sup>whose</sup> <sup>was</sup> named Dundas, an Order from the Lords of the Admiralty, for his Commanding the Schooner Gaspee, also their Letter to the Commissioners at Boston, requiring them to give him a Deputation in the Customs, and Admiral Montague's ~~papers~~ orders, directing him, the said Dudingston, to put himself under the Command of the said Admiral Montague; And also a Deputation from the Commissioners at Boston, directed to the said Dundas, all which, the Deponent, after he had read and examined, returned to the said Dundas, who had the Charge of them, without the least Delay or Interruption whatever. The Deponent took this Opportunity, to remonstrate to the Officer, against the Impropriety of Mr. Dudingston's Proceedings, in sending a Quantity of Rum he had seized in the County of Kent within this Colony, for illegal Importation, to Boston for Trial, it being, in the Deponent's Opinion, repugnant to an Act of Parliament, made and passed in the eighth Year of His Majesty's Reign, as there was a Court of Vice Ad-

miralty

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 miralty established within the Colony; and, that if he persevered in such Measures, he must expect that a Process would be issued against him.

A short Time after this, another Complaint was brought against Mr. Dudingston, by one Faulkenor, of Portsmouth in this Colony, & Proprietor of a certain Island, called Gold Island within the said Colony, who alledged, that the People belonging to the said Schooner Gaspee, had been upon said Island, and committed a Trespass & waste there ~~in~~ on, by cutting down Thirty or more Trees, & ~~by~~ <sup>in</sup> carrying the same from and off the said Island; the Deponent recommended to the Complainant, to make application to said Dudingston, and demand such satisfaction as was adequate to the Damage he had sustained; and if possible to avoid a Law-suit, which he said he had <sup>been</sup> urged to commence; after which, he was informed by said Faulkenor, that Lieut. Dudingston had paid him <sup>about</sup> 15 Dollars, on Account of the aforementioned Trespass and waste, with which he appeared satisfied.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of June, the Deponent received from Durie Sessions, Esq. of Providence & Deputy Governour of the Colony, an Account of the Destruction of his Majesty's Schooner the Gaspee, upon which, he immediately called together such of his Majesty's Council, and the Members of the General Assembly, as could be reasonably notified; and communicated to them the disagreeable Intelligence; who unanimously recommended a Proclamation with a proper Reward for discovering the Offenders; which was thereupon issued and sent into the several Towns within this Colony.

Admiral Montague, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July, transmitted to the Deponent the Declaration of a Mulatto Lad called Aaron, impeaching sev-

43  
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44  
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 eral Persons therein named of being concerned in ~~the~~ burning the  
 afore said schooner = As this Declaration was not made before  
 any <sup>of the</sup> civil Authority either in this, or any other, Colony, the Deponent  
 was of opinion, it was highly necessary, <sup>that</sup> Aaron should be taken into  
 Custody, and therefore directed One of the Judges of the Superior  
 Court, to issue his Warrant for Aaron, that he might be legally  
 examined; and as he was then in <sup>the</sup> Care of Captain Linzee, wrote  
 him a Letter dated <sup>the</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> July, (which Letter accompanied the  
 Warrant) requesting, that he would deliver the said Aaron  
 to the Sheriff, that he might be examined, respecting what he  
 knew of attacking & burning the Gaspee; But Captain Linzee  
 refused to deliver up the Witness, and treated the Letter and  
 Warrant with the highest Contempt, as the deponent was inform-  
 ed by James Brenton Esq. who waited upon ~~the Letter~~ Captain  
 Linzee with the Letter, at the Deponents Request. If Aaron  
 had any Knowledge of burning the said Schooner, it was out of  
 the Power of the Deponent to obtain it, through the unjustifiable  
 Conduct of the said Captain Linzee.

The Deponent communicated to Admiral Montague, in a Letter  
 dated the 25<sup>th</sup> of July, the steps he had taken for obtaining Aaron's Declaration,  
 in full Expectation that he would have given positive orders, for the delivery  
 of Aaron, into the Custody of the Civil Authority, especially as the  
 Deponent had assured Captain Linzee, that after his Examination  
 he should be returned on Board the King's Ship.

The Deponent cited Mr. Samuel ~~Samp~~ Thurston, and Mr. Samuel Samp-  
 kins, of the Island of Providence, the Gentlemen with whom Aaron has  
 lived as an <sup>indentured</sup> ~~indentured~~ servant, to give Evidence of what they knew  
 of the Destruction of the Gaspee &c. and also Two servants, who

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 lived in the same House with Aaron at the Time <sup>the</sup> said Schooner  
 was burnt, who agreed in their several Testimonies, that Aaron  
 was a Runaway, and could not, for the Reasons given in their  
 Depositions, have any Knowledge of that Transaction; Copies  
 of which Testimonies, the Deponent transmitted to Admiral Mon-  
 tague. — The Deponent further declares, that the several Letters  
 and papers he has delivered to the Commissioners contain a full  
 and particular Account of all the Knowledge he hath of the  
 of the Destruction of <sup>the</sup> said Schooner Gaspee, and the Measures ~~to~~  
 which have been pursued for discovering the Offenders.

Sworn at Newport on the  
 twenty-first Day of January 1773.

Before,

Geo. Smyth  
 Peter Oliver

Robert Auchmuty.

J. Wanton.

James Brenton, now residing in Newport, in the Colony of Rhode-  
 Islands in North America, Esq., of full age, being <sup>legally</sup> sworn  
 upon the Holy Evangelists, deposes and ~~says~~ saith, That upon  
 the seventeenth day of July last, He was requested by the  
 Hon. Joseph Wanton Esq. Governour of the Colony of Rhode-  
 Island aforesaid, to attend Robert Lillibridge, one of the  
 Deputy Sheriffs in the County of Newport in the said  
 Colony who was ordered with a Warrant from Metcalf Bow-  
 ler Esq. one of the Justices of Assize, in said Colony, to  
 repair on Board his Majesty's ship the Beaver, & to  
 make diligent search for one Aaron, a Mutatto Lad,

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Civil Power. To which Captain Linzee replied, that he knew no civil Authority in said Colony; that in regard to the Governour he was a damned Bascal, and that Admiral Montagu's power was the only power he knew in America and without his orders he should not deliver the said Mulatto. This Deponent then asked him the said Captain Linzee, if he had any doubt about the legality of the Warrant which this Deponent held in his Hand; to which Captain Linzee, looking carelessly upon it, said, It might be good for what he knew, but that he did not regard it any more than if it was a piece of Blank paper. — The Deponent further saith that the Deputy Sheriff (who was with this Deponent at Sabel Brenton's Farm) did not go into the House, where Capt. Linzee was, but waited <sup>with</sup> out of doors, as Captain Linzee (being at that Time suspicious of being arrested by civil Power proceps on account of some seizures which had been made by him) would not suffer consent the said Deputy Sheriff should see him, and further this Deponent saith not.  
Newport January 8th 1773  
sworn before the Commissioners —

G. Brenton

G. Wanton

Dan. Hornmanden

Fre. Smyth

Peter Oliver

Robert Archmuty.

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The Examination of John Andrews, of Cranston in the Colony of Rhode-Island, taken on oath at Newport in said Colony on the 5th day of June 1773 — Who declares and says, that he was in the Town of Providence the Night that the Schooner Gaspee was destroyed, at a Tavern where he spent the Evening with a Number of Gentlemen, and after supper he heard a Drum beat beat in the street, and inquired into the Cause thereof, and ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> informed for Answer, that it had been a Draining Day, and the people were breaking up their frolick. — About twelve o'Clock he repaired to his Lodgings, it being very dark, and went to bed. The next Morning the sun about half an hour high was surprised with hearing some persons say to each other that the said Schooner was burned, upon which ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> opened the Window, and saw on the other side of the street two black fellows and one white man talking together: He inquired what was the Matter, received for answer from the white man, that some people in the Night had burned the said Schooner, upon which he immediately dressed himself, and waited upon the Deputy Governour, and he informed him that he <sup>had</sup> heard the News and sent for his Horse in order to repair to the spot, and enquire of Captain Sadington and his people, and find if possible the persons that had done the Mischief: — He procured a Horse as soon as possible, and went to Pawtucket, where he found Mr. Sadington badly wounded, and he saw the said Schooner on shore about a Mile and a half distance, which appeared by the smoke to be on fire, and burned down almost to the Water's Edge. — The Deputy Governour in his hearing enquired of Mr. Sadington, if he had any knowledge of the persons that had committed the Treaspass: — He made answer, that he should render no account about the Matter, untill he appeared before a Court Martial where he expected to be tried, if he survived his Wounds, and such account might be made use of to his disadvantage, but was willing that his people should be sworn, and had them called in and cautioned them to swear the Truth; then as his Majesty's Commissary for the Colony, conferred with Mr. Sadington concerning saving <sup>such</sup> the Guns and stores as could be saved, and agreed to save all that was possible to be saved, and procured a Man to undertake the Business, and he likewise requested that his people might be taken Care of, and sent on Board his Majesty's Sloop of War, <sup>called</sup> the Beaver then at Newport, and procured a small vessel to carry them on purpose: — He visited Mr. Sadington several Times, and requested of him

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 if he had any Knowledge of such persons as had done the Mischief that he would inform him thereof, that the persons might be brought to condign punishment, but he always declined saying any thing in the affair. And further saith that early in the Morning after the said Schooner was ~~burnt~~ destroyed, he met with Samuel Denches Esq. Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in the County of Providence who ~~said~~ said that he had informed the Deputy Governor of what had happened the preceding Night respecting the Gaspee, and urged that the Deputy Governor, and this Examinee would repair immediately to Pawtucket and examine such of the Gaspee's Men as could be found while it was fresh in their Memories, that the Villains might be discovered and not the whole Colony blamed. —

The foregoing Examination was taken and sworn to at Newport }  
 on the Day and Year aforesaid, Before, } John Andrews

J. Wanton

Sam. Horsmanden

Peter Oliver

Robert Auchmuty

The Examination of George Brown of Providence, in the Colony of Rhode-Island Esq. taken on Oath at Newport in said Colony this fifth day of June A. D. 1773. Who saith that the Evening preceding the Burning of the Schooner Gaspee, he with several other Gentlemen met at the House of Mr. James Sabin in Providence aforesaid, it being a public House, to spend the Evening together. — About 10 o'clock as I suppose, I heard a Drum Beat in the street and asked the Reason of said Drum's Beating, on which some one of the Company, <sup>but</sup> whom I do not recollect, answered that there was some Boys beating the Drum which was common for two or three years past in summer Evenings

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 in said Town. — It is also been usual for the young people to assemble to learn to beat a Drum and other Military Exercises. Before sunset that Evening I had heard the said Schooner was aground, but had not then the least suspicion that any mischief was intended to be done to said Schooner or any any body on Board her, not having heard any Intimation to that purpose. — And I further declare that I have not any knowledge directly or indirectly, of any plan being laid to burn or otherwise destroy said Schooner, or of any person concerned in perpetrating so vile a Crime, or surrounding Lieutenant Deringston. — Sometime after I heard the Drum, I had occasion to go to the door, when I plainly saw ten or a dozen Boys, with a Drum and am confident there was not at that Time one Man among them, nor had I, during ~~the~~ that Evening, any Conception of any Mischief intended. — The place where said Schooner was burnt is in the Township of Warwick, in the County of West, in the Colony of Rhode-Island & Providence plantations. From the dwelling of House of Mr. Samuel Thompson to the place where said Schooner was burnt is, according to my Judgement, about nine Miles. and further this Deponent saith not. — G. Brown.

Taken and sworn at Newport on the Day and year aforesaid, Before,

J. Wanton

Sam. Horsmanden

Fre. Smyth

Peter Oliver

Robert Auchmuty

The Examination of John Cole of Providence in the Colony of Rhode-Island Esq. taken on Oath at Newport in said Colony this third day of June 1773 — Who saith that the Evening preceding the burning of the Gaspee I spent at Mr. James to Sabin's Tavern in Providence aforesaid, in Company with several Gentlemen, about seven or eight o'clock hearing a noise in the street I pulled back

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 the shutter of one of the Windows next the street & saw several Men, about twelve as I apprehend, but did know one of them, collected together. Upon which I made enquiry of the Gentlemen in the Room, if they knew the Occasion, and was answered by one of the Company; but whom I cannot particularly recollect, that he hoped they were not upon any design of Mischief, to which I replied, I believe not, if they were on such a design, they would not be so public. — ~~some~~ some short time after, I heard a drum beat in the street, upon which I again opened the shutter, and saw three or four Boys passing along with <sup>the</sup> drum, & no other persons. — Between 11 & 12 o'clock of the same Evening, I left the said Tavern, at which time I found the Street clear & still. — I then observed, that I believed if any Mischief was intended, they had thought better of it & gone home. — Early in that Evening and before I first opened the shutter, I heard, but whether after I joined the Company, or in the street going to said Tavern, I cannot recollect, that the Gaspee was run on shore. — Neither do I remember the person giving me such Information. — I never heard any Intimation of an Intention to burn the Gaspee, nor do I know any person or persons concerned in <sup>yt.</sup> Transaction or ever heard who they were. — The place where the said Gaspee was burnt, is in the Township of Warwick, in the County of Kent in the Colony of Rhode-Island. — From the Cove near Mr. Samuel Tompkins House, to the place where the Gaspee Schooner was burnt is, according to the best Judgement I can form, near, if not quite, four Leagues. — And further this Deponent saith not.

521  
 Taken and sworn at Newport on the Day and year aforesaid,  
 Before,

S. Wanton

Jas. Horsmanden

Fre. Smyth

Peter Oliver

Robert Auchmuty.

Newport June 5th 1773

I William Mumford Junior of Newport, in the County of Newport, & Colony of Rhode-Island &c. being employed by the Hon. the Commissioners for enquiring of into the Circumstances relative to the burning and destroying the Schooner Gaspee schooner, do testify & say, that I repaired to Providence with a summons directed to Arthur Fenner Junior of said Providence directing him to attend the Hon. Comms<sup>rs</sup> at the Council Chamber in Newport to give his deposition with regard to what he knew relative to the burning and destroying said schooner — & that on the third day of this Instant June, I delivered the summons to the said Arthur Fenner Junior, at Providence aforesaid, and received his Answer in the following words. viz. That he could not obey the said summons for <sup>his</sup> Business was such that he could not possibly attend it. —

William Mumford Junr.

sworn at Newport on the Day  
 & year aforesaid, Before,

Robert Auchmuty

Fre. Smyth

J. Wanton

53-  
By the Hon. Joseph Wanton Esq. Governour Captain general  
and Commander in Chief, of and over the English Colony of Rhode-  
Island & Providence Plantations in New-England in America.  
A. Proclamation.

Whereas on Tuesday the 9th Inst. in the Night, a Number of people  
unknown boarded his Majesty's Armed Schooner the Gaspee as  
she lay at anchor on a point of land called Naugusset, a little  
to the Southward of Pawtuxet, in the Colony aforesaid who danger-  
ously wounded Lieutenant <sup>William</sup> Dudingston, the Commander, and by force  
took him with all his people, put them into Boats, landed them  
near Pawtuxet, and afterwards set Fire to the said Schoon-  
er whereby she was entirely destroyed. — I have therefore thought  
fit by and with the Advice, of such of his Majesty's Council  
as could be seasonably Convened to issue this Proclamation  
strictly charging & commanding all his Majesty's Officers within  
said Colony both Civil & Military, to exert themselves with  
the utmost ~~the~~ Vigilance, to discover and apprehend the  
Persons guilty of the aforesaid atrocious Crime, that they  
may be brought to Condign Punishment. — And I do here-  
by offer ~~to~~ a Reward of One Hundred Pounds  
Sterling Money of Great-Britain, to any person  
or persons who shall discover the Perpetrators of the said  
Villainy to be paid immediately upon the Conviction of  
any one or more of them. — And the several Sheriffs in the  
said Colony are hereby required forthwith to Cause the Procla-  
mation to be posted up in the most Public Places in each  
of the Towns in their ~~several~~ respective Counties. —

58,  
Given under my Hand & Seal at Arms at Newport  
This 12th Day of June, in the Twelfth Year of the Reign  
of his most Sacred Majesty, George the Third, by the Grace  
of GOD King of Great Britain &c. Annoque Domini  
One Thousand seven Hundred & seventy two.  
By His Honours Command }  
Henry Ward Sec'y. } J. Wanton.

God save the King.

George R.

L. S.

By the King.

A Proclamation

For the discovering & apprehending the Persons who plundered & burned  
the Gaspee Schooner; & barbarously wounded & ill treated Lieutenant  
William Dudingston, Commander of the said schooner. —  
Whereas we have received Information, that upon the 10th Day of June  
last, between the Hours of Twelve & One in the Morning, in the Provi-  
dence or Narraganset River, in our Colony of Rhode-Island & Providence  
Plantations, a great Number of Persons, armed with Guns & other  
offensive Weapons, & led by Two Persons, who were called the Captain  
& Head-Sheriff, in several armed Boats, attacked & boarded our Vessel  
called the Gaspee Schooner, then lying at single Anchor in said River,  
commanded by our Lieutenant William Dudingston, under the Orders  
of our Rear Admiral John Montagu, & having dangerously wounded  
& barbarously treated the said William Dudingston, took, plundered, &  
burnt said Schooner: — We, to the Intent that such outrageous & hei-  
nous Offenders may be discovered & brought to just & condign Punishment,

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 have thought fit, with the Advice of our Privy Council, to issue this our Royal Proclamation: And we are hereby graciously pleased to promise, that if any Person or Persons, <sup>shall discover any other person or persons</sup> concerned in the said daring ~~Outrage~~ & heinous Offences, above mentioned, so that he or they may be <sup>apprehended &</sup> brought to Justice, such Discoverer shall have & receive, as a Reward for such Discovery, upon Conviction of each of the said Offenders, the Sum of 500 Pounds. — And if any Person or Persons shall discover either of the said Persons who acted as, or called themselves, or were called by their <sup>said</sup> Accomplices, the Head-Sheriff or the Captain, so that they, ~~he~~ or either of them, may be apprehended & brought to Punishment, such Discoverer shall have & receive, as a Reward for such Discovery, upon Conviction of either of the said Persons, the <sup>further</sup> Sum of 500 Pounds, over and above the Sum of 500 Pounds, herein before promised, for the Discovery & apprehending any of the other common Offenders, above mentioned; and if any Person or Persons concerned therein, except the Two Persons who were called the Head Sheriff & Captain, and the Person or Persons who wounded <sup>our said</sup> Lieut. Dudingston shall discover any one or more of said Accomplices, so that he or they may be apprehended and brought to Punishment, such Discoverer shall have & receive the said Reward or Rewards, of 500 Pounds, or One Thousand Pounds, as the Case may be; & also our gracious Pardon for his said Offence. — And the Commissioners for executing the Office of Treasurer of our Treasurers, are hereby required to make Payment accordingly of <sup>the</sup> said Rewards. — And we do hereby strictly <sup>command</sup> Charge all our Governours, Deputy-Governours, Magistrates, Officers, and all our other loving Subjects, that they do use their utmost

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 Diligence in their several Places & Capacities to find out, discover & apprehend the said Offenders, ~~in~~ in Order to their being brought to Justice. — And we do hereby Command, that this our proclamation be printed & published in the usual Form, and affixed in the principal Places of our Town of Newport, and other Towns in our said Colony, that None may pretend Ignorance. —  
 Given at our Court at Saint James's, the Twenty-sixth Day of August, 1772, in the Twelfth Year of our Reign.  
God save the King.

George R.

Instructions to our Trusty & Well beloved, Joseph Wanton, Samuel Horsmanden, Frederick Donnyth, Peter Oliver, & Robert Auchmuty Esquires, our Commissioners for enquiring into the Circumstances, relative to the attacking, plundering, & burning <sup>two</sup> our armed Schooner called the Gaspee Schooner, within our Colony of Rhode-Island, in America, on the 10th of June last, and into the Causes thereof, & of the Violence & Insults offered upon that occasion to our Officers employed in our Service. — Given at our Court at Saint James's, the Fourth Day of September 1772, in the 12<sup>th</sup> Year of our Reign. —  
 Article 1<sup>st</sup>. With These our Instructions you will receive our Commissions under our great seal of Great Britain, constituting & appointing you our Commissioners for inquiring into & making Report to us of all the Circumstances relative to the attacking, plundering, & burning the Gaspee Schooner on the Tenth of June last in the Narraganset River within our Colony of Rhode-Island within our Colony of Rhode-Island and to the

assembling, arming & leading on the people persons who made the said Attack, and to the concerting & preparing the same; — together with all such other persons powers & Authorities as are judged necessary for that purpose; you are therefore to take upon you the Execution of the Trust reposed in you, and so soon as three or more of you shall have been assembled at Newport within our said Colony of Rhode-Island, you are there to cause our said Commission to be read & published in such manner & Form, and with such Solemnity, as are due to the Authority from which it proceeds, & the Important Occasion on which it is issued, using your own Discretion as to all such other Times & Places of your Meetings, according to what shall appear to you, or the major part of you, to be most fit and proper.

Art. 2<sup>d</sup>. — You are to use your utmost Care and diligence pursuant to the Authorities & Directions contained in our said Commission, in making a very full & particular Inquiry into all the Circumstances relative to the attacking, plundering & destroying our armed Schooner the Gaspee on the tenth of June last in the Narraganset River within our said Colony of Rhode-Island, & to the assembling, arming, & leading on the Persons who made the said attack, as also into the Causes & occasions thereof, and into all the steps that have been taken by the Civil Magistrates in their respective Stations, for the Discovery & punishment of the perpetrators of those heinous Offences, and to those Ends you are to summon before you all such persons, as you shall think may be able to give any Information touching the said objects of En-

quiry, and likewise to order all Informations, Depositions, or Examinations which may have been taken or made in writing touching those Matters, or Authentick Copies thereof, to be laid before you, and to make Report to us, by one of our principal secretaries of State, of all your proceedings, and of what shall appear to you respecting the Conduct of the Magistrates & people of Rhode-Island on that Occasion.

Art. 3<sup>d</sup>. — And whereas the Civil Magistrates & officers within our said Colony of Rhode-Island are entrusted with the power & authority to arrest & commit to Custody such of the persons concerned in the plundering & destroying the Gaspee Schooner, in the inhuman Treatment of our Officers, who commanded her, against whom any Information shall be taken in order to the said offenders being sent to England to be tried for that offence; It is therefore our Will & pleasure, that you do from Time to Time, communicate to the said Civil Officers & Magistrates such Informations as you shall be able to collect touching the persons concerned in that driving attack upon our authority & Commission to the End that they may be accordingly arrested & delivered to the Custody of the Commander in Chief of our ships & vessels in North America pursuant to such directions as we have thought fit to give for that purpose.

Art. 4<sup>th</sup>. And whereas it is of Importance with Regard to the Mode of Proceeding against the said offenders, that they should be exactly informed of the place where the offence was committed, it will therefore be your duty to take care in all your proceedings upon this Inquiry as well as in

your Reports thereof to us, by one of our principal Secretaries of state, to ascertain with the greatest precision whether the offence was committed & done within the Body of the Colony, and if so within what County or District thereof, & if not so, in what other place the said offence was committed & done.

Art. 5<sup>th</sup> And whereas there may be Reason to apprehend, from the outrages which have been committed within our said Colony of Rhode Island by numbers of lawless persons, that Insults may be offered to you, it is therefore our will & pleasure that if any disturbance shall arise with a View to obstruct you in the Execution of your duty, & any Violence should, in consequence thereof, be offered to you, you do, in such Case give immediate Notice thereof to the Commander in Chief of our Forces in North America, & require of him to send such a Military Force into the Colony as you shall judge necessary for your protection, & for aiding the Civil Magistrates in suppressing any Tumults or Riots, & preserving the public Peace.

Lastly — It is our Will & pleasure that you do take an Account by Way of Journal of all your Acts & proceedings in the Execution of the Powers & Directions given to you, and that the Reports, which you are to make to Us, by one of our principal Secretaries of state, of those proceedings be in Writing, & signed by any three or more of you.

G. R.

To the Kings most Excellent Majesty,  
May it please your Majesty,  
~~in and Instruction, & for~~ In Obedience to your Royal Commission & Instructions, & from a due Sense of the Duty therein enjoined us, we have used our utmost Care and Diligence for the purpose of enquiring into & reporting to your Majesty all the Circumstances relative to the attacking, plundering, & burning the Schooner Gaspee wounding Lieutenant Swington, <sup>now</sup> & all other Matters in the same Commission & Instructions: We beg leave, most humbly to report to your Majesty, That on the earliest Intelligence of your Majesty's Commands, We, with the utmost Dispatch in our power, repaired to Newport, where on the Fifth of January last your Majesty's Royal Commission was published in the presence of a large Number of People, who, on the occasion, behaved with great propriety. — We next proceeded to give public Notice of the subject Matters of the Commission, & our being assembled for the Execution thereof requesting <sup>all persons</sup> who could give us any Information Relative to such Matters, forthwith so to do. — We beg leave to observe to your Majesty, that the place where the Gaspee was destroyed is at least Twenty three Miles from Newport, & the Accident of her running aground a few Hours before the Attack, take away all probability of the Inhabitants of your Town being instrumental, or privy to, the destruction of her; nor have we any Evidence, even of the slightest kind to induce a Suspicion to the contrary. — We further beg leave humbly to present to your Majesty, that in the Part of our

Duty contained under the Inquiry into the assembling, arming & leading on the people to attack the Gaspee also the concerting & preparing the same, we have been particularly attentive: But after our utmost efforts, we are not able to discover any Evidence of either & therefore are humbly of opinion, both from the unforeseen Event of the Gaspee's Running on Shore, the suddenness of the undertaking, & its accomplishment, & the total Want of an Evidence of even an Intention to destroy her, though many Witnesses of Credit as well as Inhabitants of Providence as other places were strictly examined on this Head, that the whole was conducted suddenly & secretly. - On the 10th of June last about one in the Morning, a Number of armed people, many of whom, by their dress, appeared much above the Rank of common people & were accompanied by several Negroes & others, boarded the Schooner Gaspee, then on shore, on a point of Land called Naragansett, which is in the Township of Warwick & County of Kent in this Colony & about six Miles from the Town of Providence, and after wounding the Lieutenant & using the Crew with great Barbarity, first plundered & then burnt the Schooner taking the Lieutenant & his people on shore to a place called Pawtuxet, about two miles distant. - With Respect to the Conduct of the Magistrate, <sup>in</sup> the Morning of the Eleventh of June, the Deputy Governour being informed of the Destruction of the Gaspee, the Lieutenant being wounded & on shore at Pawtuxet first enquiring if any offenders were known, and receiving no Information of such, immediately

repaired to that Place & finding the Lieutenant in a dangerous Condition offered him every proper assistance to which the Lieut. Replied, he wanted no Favours for himself, but desired his people might be taken care of & sent on Board the Beaver which was accordingly done the Deputy Governour then told the Lieutenant the Design of his Visit was not only to afford him any assistance, but to procure such a declaration from his own Mouth respecting the Transaction that the Offenders might be brought to Justice: To which the Lieutenant answered he would not give him any account of the Matter, first, because of his Indisposition, & secondly, it was his Duty to forbear any thing of that Matter, until he had done it unto a Court Martial: The Deputy Governour then asked the Lieutenant, if he was willing that his Officers and men should be examined, to which after some Refusal he consented. - They were accordingly examined on Oath <sup>Person</sup> but were not able to give Information against any <sup>in</sup> particular. - Mr. Andrews Judge of the Court of Vice-Admiralty in this Colony attended the Deputy Governour & behaved very properly on the occasion. - The same Day the Deputy Governour informed by letter informed the Governour of what had happened & of every step he had taken as a Magistrate, & sent him all the depositions. In another letter of the 12th of June he further informed the Governour, it was the unanimous opinion of a great number of the most respectable Inhabitants

63.  
 of Providence, that a Proclamation with a proper Reward  
 should by the Government be issued for the apprehending & bring-  
 ing to Justice the persons concerned, which was accordingly done.

In July following a Warrant was granted for the apprehending  
 one Aaron Biggs, a Negro, then on Board your Majesty's Ship the  
 Beaver commanded by Captain Simms, for being concerned in burn-  
 ing the Gaspee & wounding the Lieutenant. The same was delivered  
 to a Sheriff who after making his Business known was refused  
 admittance into said Ship, but the Captain was not then on Board.

Very soon after such Refusal the Captain was informed of said  
 Warrant, & requested to deliver up the Negro, whom he acknowledged

was on board <sup>but</sup> & very obstinately refused it. neither would he  
 permit the Sheriff to go on Board but treated the Civil Authority in  
 a contemptuous & unjustifiable a Manner. Here the Civil  
 Magistrates cease their Endeavours to discover the Offenders

for though there was a superior Court held in & for the County  
 of Kent in October following the burning of the Gaspee, at which the  
 Chief Justice presided, the Chief Justice being absent, not any

Charge was given to the Grand Jury, to inquire into that atroc-  
 ious breach of Law, nor any Information thereof, by the then  
 acting Attorney General, nor was there any thing done

thereon, that we can discover. — Having now laid before your  
 Majesty the substance of the Proofs relative to the destruction  
 of the Gaspee, the Barbarity & insolence exercised upon the  
 Commander & Crew belonging to her, with other necessary  
 Matters, we proceed in obedience to your Majesty's direction  
 to assign some probable Causes which we conceive might  
 lead to so bold a Violation of your Majesty's Law & Authority.

64.  
 The great Impatience of some People in this Colony,  
 under any Restraint of Trade, however illicit — The  
 Check which your Majesty's Navy-Officers have put to  
 such Trade, by the necessary Aid & Assistance, which  
 they have afforded the Revenue-Officers — The  
 Plundering & burning a Sloop, called the Liberty, in  
 this Harbour, in July 1769, then employed in your Majesty's  
 Revenue Service, & commanded by W<sup>m</sup> Read — ~~for~~  
 Liberating a Vessel & Cargo, then under seizure by said  
 Commander, & in a violent & outrageous Manner,  
 assaulting & detaining in this Town, & in Dureff, till the  
 Accomplishment of the above Facts — The same Night,  
 dragging two Boats, belonging to said sloop, through the Streets, &  
 burning them — And yet the Perpetrators of the above Outrage escaped  
 with Impunity, not one Person being so much as apprehended on this  
 Occasion. — It must be further, with humble submission to your Majesty,  
 remarked, that it does not appear to us, that any Complaint or  
 Information was given to any <sup>Police</sup> Officer, or other Magistrate,  
~~except~~ against any Person whatsoever, as concerned in the above  
 Transaction, ~~excepting~~ four Depositions taken before a single  
 Magistrate, & which do not appear to have been laid before the  
 Governour & Council, or to have had any Effects. — Certain  
 Persons, principal Inhabitants of the Town of Providence, in  
 March preceding the burning of the Gaspee, complained to the  
 Deputy-Governour, also an Inhabitant of that Place, against the  
 Conduct of Lieutenant Budingston, for disturbing & obstructing  
 their Vessels & Boats, firing at & scorching them, neither showing  
 any Commission for so doing; And requested the Deputy-Governour

to inform the Governour thereof, <sup>from the Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, MSS 454 Gaspee Papers.</sup> <sup>66.</sup> ~~then~~ he might enquire into the said Lieutenant's Authority. On which the Deputy-Governour laid the same before the Chief Justice, also an Inhabitant of the Town of Providence, in for his Opinion, how to conduct in the Affairs;— to which he soon returned an Answer to the following Purpose: It was his Opinion, That for any Person whatsoever to come into this Colony, & in the Body thereof to exercise any Authority by Force of Arms, or otherwise, without shewing in his Commission to the Governour, & if a Custom-House Officer, to without being sworn into his Office, was guilty of a Trespass, if not Piracy. But what Effect such an Opinion might have on the Minds of the People, Perpetrators of the Crime, we must most humbly submit. — — —

If Lieutenant Dudingston, on his first Arrival in the Harbour of Newport, had waited on the Governour, acquainting him with his Power & Authorities, & thereby have early made his Duty a Matter of Notoriety, he would, at least, have acted, <sup>prudent</sup> Part. — But whether his Duty obliged him so to do, we do not presume to determine. — There is also too much Reason to believe, that in some Instances Lieutenant Dudingston, from an intemperate, if not reprehensible, Zeal to aid the Revenue Service, exceeded the Bounds of his Duty. —

After exerting ourselves to the Utmost of our Abilities, to collect Evidence against the Persons concerned in burning the Gaspee, & wounding the Lieutenant, & judging we had got all there was any probability of obtaining; we laid such before the Deputy-Governour, the Chief Justice of this Colony, & three of his Associates; among which Testimonies were Aaron's the Negro, wherein, some Persons are expressly named & charged, as guilty and Mr. Dickinson's, late Midshipman of the Gaspee, & on Board at the Time she was destroyed, very particularly described others. The Justices were then informed, that the same Witness was now ~~not~~ present, & might be

by them re-examined. Soon afterwards, at the Request of the Judges, we also delivered them other Depositions, which had been laid before us by the Governour, & which tended to discredit the Testimony of said Aaron. — The Day following we received their Report in the Words following.

The Honble the Commissioners appointed by Royal Commission, for examining into the attacking & destroying His Majesty's Armed Schooner, the Gaspee, commanded by Lieutenant Dudingston & wounding the said Lieut. Having laid before us, Justices of the superior Court of Judicature, Court of Assize &c. within & throughout the Colony of Rhode-Island &c. — two Examinations of Aaron Biggs; two Examinations of Patrick Carls; — the Examination of Peter May; the Examination of William Dickinson; the depositions of Samuel Tompkins, Samuel Thurston, & of Somerset & Jack, indentured Servants, for our Advice thereon. —

It appeareth unto us from due Consideration had thereupon, that no particular Person or Persons are made mention of as being concerned in that atrocious Crime, except in the Examination of Aaron Biggs, a Negro, & of Peter May one of the Gaspee's People. — The Confession of the said Aaron upon his first Examination was made in Consequence of illegal Threats from Captain Linzee of hanging him the said Aaron at the Yard Arm, if he would not discover who the Persons were that destroyed the Schooner Gaspee &c., & besides, most of the Circumstances & Facts, related in both his Examinations are Contradictions repugnant to each other, & many of them impossible in their Nature. — It is evident from the Depositions of Tompkins, Thurston, & Aaron's two fellow Servants, that he was at home the whole of that Night on which the Gaspee was attacked &c., especially as there was no Boat on that part of the Island, in which he could possibly cross the Bay, in the Manner by him described. — In short, another Circumstance which renders the said Aaron's Testimony extremely suspicious, is Captain Linzee's absolutely refusing to deliver him up

to be examined by one of the Justices of said Superior Court, when legally demanded.

Peter May, in his Deposition, mentions one Person only, by the Name of Greene whom, he says, he saw before on Board the Gaspee: But the Family of Greene being very numerous in this Colony, & the said Peter not giving his Christian Name, or describing him in such a Manner as he could be found out, it is impossible for us to know at present the Person referred to. Upon the Whole, we are all of Opinion, that the several Matters & Things contained in said Deposition do not induce a probable Suspicion, that the Persons mentioned therein, or any or either of them, are guilty of the Crime aforesaid. - It is however the fixed Determination of the Superior Court, to exert every legal Effort, in detecting & bringing to condign Punishment the Persons concerned in destroying the Schooner Gaspee. - And if the Honourable Commissioners are of a different Opinion we should be glad to receive their ~~Commons~~ Opinion for our better Information. -

To the latter part of which, we answered, that by our Instructions, we were commanded to lay before the Civil Magistrate all such Information as we should receive; And as it was their proper Office to act thereupon, in such Manner as they conceive most likely to answer the Ends of public Justice, we declined giving any Sentiment or Opinion in the Matter. -

Touching the Depositions of Aaron the Negro, we humbly conceive it our Duty to declare to your Majesty, that the Conduct of ~~some~~ Captain Linzee tended too strongly to extort from a weak or wicked Mind, Declarations not strictly true; That some Parts of such Depositions fabricate others; That allowing the Account he gave of the Time he left the Island called Providence, the Place of his Residence, on the Night the Gaspee was burnt, & his Return thither to be true, or even near the Truth, must render his being at the taking & destroying her totally -

impossible, the Distance being so great, between Naugit Point & said Island. In Addition to all which there is full & satisfactory Evidence to prove him the whole of that Night, to have been at Home. - And the Request, which he deposed, was made him to carry a person off said Island that Night, & which he declared was the Occasion of his going from Home, proved, on the Examination of the very Person, to be an absolute Falsehood. - And therefore, we are most humbly of Opinion, no Credit is due to the said Aaron's Testimony. -

May it please your Majesty, the Civil Magistrate, being intrusted with the Power of apprehending & committing, & being having determined against both, upon the Evidence before them, & there being no probability of our procuring any further Light on the Subject, & - determines our Inquiry. - All which is most humbly submitted to your Majesty's Royal Wisdom. -

Newport, Rhode Island  
June 22. 1773. -

Witness,  
James Clarke Sec'y. -

J. Wanton  
Daniel Horsmanden  
Frederick Smyth  
Robert Archmuty.

We do sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify, & declare in our Conscience, before God & the World, that our Sovereign Lord George the Third, is lawful & rightful King of the Realm, & all other his Majesty's Dominions thereto belonging. -  
& We do solemnly & sincerely declare, that ~~we~~ we do believe in our Conscience, that not any of the Descendants of the Person who pretended to be Prince of Wales during the Life of the late King James the second, & since his Decease pretended to

to be, & took upon himself the Title & Title of King of England, by the Name of James the Third, or of Scotland by the Name of James the Eighth, or the Title & Title of King of Great-Britain hath any Right or Title whatsoever to the Crown of this Realm, or any other Dominions thereto belonging: - And we do renounce, refuse, & abjure any Allegiance or Obedience to any ~~one~~ of them. And we do swear, that we will bear Faith & true Allegiance to his Majesty King George the Third, & him will defend to the utmost of our Power against all traitorous Conspiracies & attempts whatsoever which shall be made against his Person, Crown, or Dignity. And we will do our utmost Endeavour to disclose & make known to his Majesty & his Successors, all Treasons & Traiterous Conspiracies which we shall know to be against him or any of them. And we do faithfully promise to the utmost of our Power, to support, maintain, & defend the succession of the Crown against the Descendants of the said James, & against all other Persons whatsoever; which succession, by an Act, entitled, "An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown, & better securing the Rights & Liberties of the subject," is & stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress & Dutchess Dowager of Hanover, & the Heirs of her Body being Protestants. - And all these Things we do plainly & sincerely ~~and~~ acknowledge & swear, according to these Express words by us spoken, & according to the plain & common Sense & Understanding of the same Words, without any Equivocation, mental Evasion, or secret Reservation. <sup>whatsoever</sup> And we do make this Recognition, Acknowledgement, Abjuration, Renunciation, & Promise, heartily willingly, & truly, upon the true Faith of a Christian: So help us, God.

J. Wanton

Dan. Horsmanden

Fre. Smyth

Peter Oliver

Robert Auchmuty -

We do solemnly & sincerely, in the Presence of God, profess, testify, & declare, that we do believe, that in the Sacrament of the Lords supper there is not any Transubstantiation of the Elements of Bread & Wine, into the Body & Blood of Christ at or after the Consecration thereof, by any Person whatsoever: And that the Invocation or Adoration of the Virgin Mary, or any other Saint, & the Sacrifice of the Mass, as they are now used, in the Church of Rome, are superstitious & Idolatrous: And we do solemnly, in the Presence of God, profess, testify, & declare, that we do make this Declaration & every Part thereof, in the plain & ordinary sense of the Words read unto us as they are commonly understood by English Protestants, without any Evasion, Equivocation or mental Reservation whatsoever, ~~or without~~ ~~without~~ thinking that we are or can be acquitted & without any Dispensation already granted us for this Purpose by the Pope, or any other Authority ~~or~~ Person whatsoever, or without any Hope of such Dispensation from any person or Authority whatsoever, or without thinking that we are, or can be, acquitted before God or Man or absolved of this Declaration or any Part thereof, although the Pope, or any other Person or Persons, or Power whatsoever, shall dispense with or annul the same, or any part thereof or declare, if it was null & void from the beginning. -

S. Wanton

Dan. Horsmanden

Fre. Smyth

Peter Oliver

Robert Auchmuty. -

John Andrews Esq. Judge of the Court of V<sup>c</sup> Admiralty  
in the Colony of Rhode-Island.

Mr. Arthur Fenner Clerk of the Supreme Court,  
in the County of Providence.

Messrs. John Cole } Attornies at Law in the  
George Brown } Town of Providence  
Daniel Hitchcock }

James Babins Vintner in the Town of Providence.

It is the Desire of Admiral Montague that the above-  
~~mentioned~~ <sup>named</sup> Persons may be summoned & examined before the  
Commissioners relative to the assembling of People in the Town  
of Providence in the Evening of the 9<sup>th</sup> of June last,  
as a Measure necessary towards a Discovery of the Persons  
concerned in destroying his Majesty's Schooner Gaspee.  
J. Montagu.

Sir,  
Newport July 16<sup>th</sup> 1772.  
Having received Information from the Hon. Admiral Montague  
that Aaron, a Mulatto Lad, on Board his Majesty's ship the  
Beaver under your Command has confessed that he was con-  
cerned in destroying his Majesty's Schooner the Gaspee as she  
lay aground on Nanquett Point in the County of Kent, within  
this Colony; & as it is highly necessary that this Lad should  
be examined by the Civil Authority concerning what he

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knows of that Affair, I have directed the Sheriff to wait upon you  
& request that you would deliver Aaron into his Hands, Custody, in  
order to be brought on shore, that <sup>such</sup> Proceedings may be had & done in this  
Matter as are agreeable to Law. - The Kings Attorney General will allow  
the Examination, & I should be glad if you or either of your Officers  
would likewise attend; If you are of Opinion that it is most for His Majesty's  
Service to return Aaron on Board your Ships after he has been examined  
instead of committing him to Jail, you may be assured it shall  
be done. - Mr. Brenton also waits on you, whose opinion on Matters  
of Law may be of Service to you in this Important Affair. -  
I am, Sir, your humble servant,  
To John Lincoln Esq,  
Commander of H. M. Ship the Beaver. } J. Watton.

Sir,  
Newport July 22, 1772  
Your Favor of the 8<sup>th</sup> Instant I have received together with the  
Information given by one Aaron, a Mulatto servant relative to the De-  
struction of the Gaspee; on receiving of which I pursued every Measure  
in my Power to investigate & find out the Truth of the various  
Assertions comprized in his declaration, for which End I caused to be  
examined, on Oath, some of the Family with whom this ~~deponent~~ <sup>declarant</sup>  
lived as a Servant, Persons of Credit & established Character, who  
~~was~~ were separately examined, & whose Testimony perfectly agreed  
in every Circumstance on such Examination, & from the general  
bad Character of the ~~deponent~~ <sup>declarant</sup> I was fully convinced that no  
Regard could be had to his Information; that the declarant  
could not be present at the Time when this Offence was com-

mitted, as it is fully proved that he was at Home, on an Island  
 near seven Miles from the Place where the Disaster happened.  
 However being very solicitous, that every Enquiry should be made, that  
 might reflect Light in this unhappy Affair, I had a Conference with  
 one of the ~~superior~~ Judges of the superior Court, before whom this  
 Matter must finally come, & be adjudged, who gave it as his ~~own~~  
 opinion, that it was absolutely necessary, that this Declarant should  
 be delivered up to the Civil Authority to be properly examined: —  
 he therefore issued his Warrant in order to take Aaron into Custody;  
 at the same Time, I wrote Captain Lincoln a Letter, requesting  
 him to deliver him to the Sheriff in order to his being examined:  
 both which were ~~not~~ treated by Captain Lincoln with great Contempt  
 & <sup>by him</sup> utterly disregarded; what could be his Motives or Reasons,  
 for such his Conduct, I am ~~not~~ not able to account for:  
 It certainly is a great Contempt of the Civil Authority of this  
 Colony (who hath the only Power & Jurisdiction to try all & every  
 Offence committed within the same,) to refuse delivering up an  
 Offender, who, by his own Confession has acknowledged his guilt  
 & what is sufficient for his Conviction, supposing what he  
 hath declared to be true, & if otherwise, he ought to be proceeded  
 against agreeable to Law & punished according to his Offence.  
 I have transmitted to you the several Depositions by which I  
 apprehend you will agree with me in opinion that no Dependence  
 can be ~~placed~~ had on the Declaration given by the Informant, but must  
 wholly be disregarded. Villainy of this kind is not new, we  
 have a recent instance of this sort at Home; Britain &

others conspiring ~~conspiring~~ in the most horrid Manner to charge  
 the Officers of State with a Crime the whole World knew they could  
 not possibly be guilty of. — The Schooner when she was destroy-  
 ed lay aground in a narrow River near thirty miles from  
 the main Sea, and all Ports & Havens are infra Corpus Com-  
 mitatus; I am of opinion that in this Case the Admiralty hath  
 no Jurisdiction: His Honour the Chief Justice has favoured  
 me with his Opinion on the Matter which I herewith  
 enclose. —

When Aaron is delivered into the Hands of the Civil  
 Authority, whatever is legal & necessary will ~~undoubtedly~~  
 undoubtedly be done. —

I have advised with the King's <sup>Attorney</sup> whose opinion & Advice  
 coincides with what I have written on the subject of Aaron's  
 Declaration. I am, Your Honour's

most obedient

The Hon. Admiral Montagu —

humble servant  
 J. Wanton

Sir,

Newport June 12. 1772

I have <sup>this moment</sup> just received your Honour's ~~most~~ Letter  
 of Yesterday upon the Destruction of his Majesty's Schooner  
 the Gaspee. —

Upon the first information of this unhappy affair,  
 which gives me & every Friend to Government the highest  
 Concern, I called together all the Members of the

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General Assembly that I could conveniently who unan-  
imously advised me to Publish the Proclamation of which  
I enclose you a Copy. —

I have not as yet been able to collect all the Circumstances  
of this daring Insult upon Authority so as to give you a per-  
fect Idea of it; But by the Evidences of three or four  
People of the Gaspee taken before his Honour the Deputy-  
Governour, Copies of which I transmit; you will perceive  
that there is a material Difference between them & the account  
given by Mr. Dickinson. —

You may rely upon the utmost & continued exertions  
of the Officers of this Colony to detect & bring to Justice the  
Perpetrators of this Violent Outrage.

I have the Pleasure to inform you that Lieutenant  
Dudington is in a fair way of Recovery, & am,  
Sir,

Your Honour's

most obedient and

most humble servant,

J. Wanton.

His Honour Admiral Montagu.

My Lord,

Newport June 10<sup>th</sup> 1772. <sup>R.I.</sup> 76

I did myself the Honor to write your Lordship on the 20<sup>th</sup> <sup>inst.</sup> <sup>mt.</sup>  
I am now reduced to the Necessity of addressing your Lordship upon a  
most disagreeable subject; the destruction of the Schooner Gaspee  
under the Command of Lieutenant Dudington, by persons un-  
known: The particulars relating to this unwarrantable Transac-  
tion, so far as I have been able to collect, them are ~~very~~ as follows:  
On the 9<sup>th</sup> Instant she ran aground on a point of Land called  
Nauquit, a little below Pawtuxet in this Colony the Narraganset  
River within this Colony; about 3/4 of an Hour after 12 o'Clock  
at Night, there being but one ~~star~~ <sup>said</sup> Hand on Deck, six or  
seven Boats full of Men were by him discovered drawing to-  
wards ~~the~~ <sup>said</sup> Schooner, & before many Hands could have time  
to get on Deck, was boarded by the People in the Boats, who,  
as soon as they had secured possession of the Schooner, took  
out the Captain, & all the People & set them ashore on the  
main Land, after which they put Fire to the Schooner; —  
In the Attack Mr. Dudington was wounded by a Ball  
~~through~~ <sup>through</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> Arm through his Arm, from whence it passed & lodged  
in some part of his Body — Mr. Dession, the Deputy Governour  
of this Colony, immediately upon hearing of this unhappy  
affair, went to Mr. Dudington ~~the~~ & offered him all the Help  
& assistance in his Power; but Mr. Dudington said, he wanted  
no Favours for himself; the Deputy Governour then told him  
he came not only to afford him any Relief his distressed Cir-  
cumstances might require, but also, to gain a Declaration  
from his own Mouth respecting the destruction of the  
Schooner.

Schooner under his Command, that proper & rigorous Measures might be pursued, to discover & bring the Perpetrators to Justice: Mr. Dudingston Answered, he would give him no account because of his Indisposition, & also because it was his duty to forbear any thing of that kind till he had done it to his commanding officer at a Court-Martial, to which, if he lived he must be called; but if he died, he desired it might all die with him: — The Deputy-Governour ~~is~~ now, with the Consent of Mr Dudingston, then proceeded to examine a Number of his ~~sent~~ <sup>of the</sup> ~~11th~~ transmitted Copies of the most material examinations to me, upon the Receipt whereof, I immediately convened such of his Majesty's Council & the House of Deputies, as could be seasonably notified, & laid before them the proceedings of the Deputy Governour, which they highly approved of, & unanimously recommended my issuing a proclamation with a Reward of £100 — sterling for the discovery of any of the Persons concerned ~~in~~ in this violent Insult upon Government, which I cheerfully complied with & sent them into the several Towns in this Colony.

This Transaction gives me the utmost uneasiness & your Lordship may be assured, that the utmost vigilance of the Civil Authority will not be wanting to bring the Perpetrators to exemplary <sup>& condign</sup> punishment; and, in Justice to the Inhabitants of the Colony, I must not omit mentioning, that the Conduct of

those persons who committed this outrage, is, by them, universally condemned. —

I wish, my Lord that those officers, who have lately been sent into this Colony, under a pretence of assisting Trade had conducted with that Temper, prudence & discretion, which persons entrusted with the Executions of the Laws, ought, upon every occasion, to manifest. —

~~For~~ In my last I informed your Lordship that the Inhabitants had been insulted without ~~any~~ any just Cause & I ~~to~~ am extremely sorry, that I have still Reason to say, that the Trade of this Colony is interrupted in a most unprecedented & oppressive manner, without contributing in the least to the Service of the Revenue; inward bound vessels have been detained several days without the least colourable ~~pretence~~ pretext, & then delivered up; one was from South-Kingstown, for having on Board a small Quantity of Tobacco of the growth of this Colony, which the owner was transporting to Newport for a Market. —

Another for having only 3 or 4 Box. Wine laid in by the Captain for sea-stores. — The small Freight Boats, plying between the several Towns with the Produce of the Colony, are by the severity of these officers, subjected to great Inconvenience, which <sup>very</sup> sensibly affects the whole Colony, & particularly the Town of Newport its Metropolis, <sup>where</sup> ~~where~~ Inhabitants are principally supplied with the Necessaries of Life by Water, & the obstructions they now experience have contributed not a little to enhance the price of Fuel & provisions to the great disadvantage

of the Town, & in my humble Opinion, if such measures are permitted to be pursued, the Colony will, ere long, be involved in the deepest Calamity. - These, my Lord, are serious & important Truths, & as your Lordships, from your thorough knowledge of the Colonies, must be perfectly acquainted with the Nature & Extent of our Trade; the profits of which ~~will~~ ultimately centering in Great-Britain, for the <sup>purchase</sup> ~~purpose~~ of her Manufactures, I have no Room to doubt of your Lordships Interposition, in behalf of this Colony, that all Cause of Complaint against any of the King's Officers stationed here may be removed, & the Inhabitants of treated with that Respect, which is due to the ~~sub~~ Subjects of his Britannian Majesty.

As a Proof, my Lord, that the Trade of the Colony stands upon as fair and legal a Footing as the Trade in any part of his Majesty's Dominions, out of 200 sail of vessels, which have entered this Port since the 1st Day of March last, only two in that number have been prosecuted & condemned for Breach of acts of Trade one of which belonged to Massachusetts Bay, notwithstanding they have been searched & rummaged with the greatest Severity. - These two vessels, although seized & condemned here, were sent by Captain Luman of the Beaver, & Lieutenant Dudingston to Boston, for sale, in direct opposition to the orders of the Court of vice Admiralty, within this Colony, & the Marshall of said Court

prevented by Force from libelling one of those Vessels for payment of the Mariners Wages.

These, my Lord, are but a few of the many Grievances, which the People of this Colony, have been for months past, harassed & perplexed with; but, as the General Assembly will soon be convened, I make no doubt they will order a more particular Remonstrance to be made; in the mean Time, permit me, my Lord, to implore your attention to the Complaints of a much abused & injured People whose Loyalty & affection to their Sovereign, claims your Lordships Countenance & Patronage. - I am, with the greatest respect, - My Lord - your Lordships,

most obedient  
humble servant,  
J. Stanton.

The Right Honourable the Earl of Hillsborough.

Sir, Newport June 21/72  
Mistake. Honors  
I have this Moment received your letter of yesterday upon the destruction of His Majesty's Schooner, <sup>the</sup> Gaspee. - Upon the first information of this unhappy Affair, which gives me & every Friend to Government the highest Concern

Sir, Newport R. I. March 22. 1772  
A considerable number of the Inhabitants of this Colony have complained to me of your having in a most unjust & illegal & unwarrantable

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 Manner interrupted their Trade by searching & detaining every little Packet Boat, plying between the several Towns — As I know not by what authority you assume this Power, I have sent off the High Sheriff to inform you of the Complaint exhibited against you & expect that you do, without delay produce me your Commission & Instructions if any you have; which was your duty to have done, when you first came within the Jurisdiction of this Colony. I am Sir, &c  
 To the commanding officer of a Schooner near Brentons Point. } Your Humble Servant,  
 J. Wanton.

Sir,  
 Newport R.I. Mar. 23. 1772  
 Yours of this day I have received & which does not give me that Satisfaction I had a Right to expect; neither was the Bearer of the Letter qualified to give me any authentic Information, respecting the Legality of that Authority you have presumed to exercise within this Colony; — I expect that you do without delay comply with my Request of Yesterday, & you may be assured that my utmost Exertions shall not be wanting to protect your person from any Insult & outrage on coming ashore. I am  
 Sir,  
 your humble servant,  
 J. Wanton  
 To Mr. W Dudingston }  
 of the schooner Gaspee }

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 Gentlemen,  
 We, the Commissioners appointed by his Majesty for enquiring into the attacking, plundering & burning <sup>this subject's</sup> ~~the~~ Schooner, Gaspee, & wounding the Lieut of said Schooner, received your Report on the Examinations by us laid before you: In the Conclusion of the same Report you are pleased to say, if we differ from you in sentiment, you should be glad to receive your opinion for our better Information. —  
 By our Instructions we are commanded to lay before the Civil Magistrates all such Information as we shall receive, & as it is your proper office to <sup>in such manner as you shall conceive most likely to answer the</sup> judge & act thereupon, & therefore we must <sup>End of Public Justice</sup> decline giving any sentiment or opinion in the matter & are with much respect, Gentlemen  
 your most obedient  
 humble servants  
 Newport June 12<sup>th</sup> 1773. —  
 To the Hon Stephen Hopkins Esq. & the other three assistant Justices. —  
 N.B. A fair Copy of this was on the 15<sup>th</sup> June aforesaid delivered Justice Helmes not sealed up.

83 George the Third, by the Grace of God, of France  
of Great Britain, France & Ireland King, Defender  
of the Faith &c. To our trusty, & wellbelov'd Joseph  
Wanton Esq. Governour of our Colony, the called  
the English Colony of Rhode-Island & Providence  
Plantations in New-England, in America, our  
Trusty & wellbelov'd Daniel Horsmander, <sup>was</sup> our  
Chief Justice, of our Province of Newyork,  
our Trusty & well belov'd Fredericks Brought  
Esq. our Chief Justice of our Province of New-  
Jersey, our Trusty & wellbelov'd Peter  
Oliver Esq. our Chief Justice our Province of  
Massachusetts Bay, in New-England, & ~~our~~  
our Trusty & well belov'd Robert Auchmuty  
Esq. our Judge of our Vice Admiralty Court  
established at Boston with Jurisdiction  
in all Causes ~~with~~ arising within the  
Circuit of our Colonies of New Hampshire  
Massachusetts Bay, Rhode-Island & ~~Connecticut~~  
Connecticut, Greeting, Whereas our  
armed Schooner called the Gaspee Schooner,  
Commanded by Lieutenant <sup>Wm</sup> Dudingston  
under the ~~the~~ order of Rear Admiral Montagu  
was stationed in Providence or Narra-

84 ganset River, in or near to our Colony of Rhode  
Rhode-Island & Providence Plantations in  
New-England, the said William Dudingston  
having proper Commission & Authority to seize  
to our Use such prohibited & accustomed  
Goods, as he should find carried in & on board  
any Ship, Bottom, Bot Boat, or other Vessel  
Contrary to Law whereby the same are forfeit-  
ed. & Whereas we have been informed that very  
many ill disposed persons, have <sup>been</sup> ~~carried~~ from  
time to time in defiance of our Laws, &  
Authority to insult & otherwise hinder, obstruct,  
the said Lieut. Wm. Dudingston in the Performance  
of his Duty & their Boldness in that Respect  
grew to so desperate an Height, that on or about  
the 10th Day of June Last, great Multitudes  
assembled of People were assembled in our  
Town of Newport & the places adjacent in  
our said Colony by beat of Drum, armed  
with Guns & other offensive Weapons & led  
on by two persons whom they called the  
Head Sheriff & the Captain & so proceeded  
in warlike Manner with armed Boats to at-  
tack our said Schooner, & having dangerously  
wounded the said Lieutenant, overpowered the

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 Crew, took plundered & burnt our said  
 Vessel, we being desirous to be perfectly in-  
 formed how so daring an Attempt could be so  
 concerted prepared & carried in to Execution  
 in the Chief Town of our said Colony, the  
 Residence of the Governour, & principal Magis-  
 trates thereof, not only for the Purpose of bringing  
 the said Offenders & their Maintainers, ~~Advers~~  
~~Aides~~ Aiders & Abettors to condign Punishment  
 but also to the End that fit & speedy Orders  
 may be taken for securing the Peace, obe-  
 dience, & well Government of our said Colony  
 & having much Confidence in your  
 Wisdom Diligence, Loyalty & Integrity  
 do by these presents appoint you the  
 said Joseph Wanton, Daniel Horsmanden  
 Frederick Smyth, Peter Oliver, & Robert Auch-  
 muty our Commissioners to inquire into  
 & Report to us a full & true Account of  
 all the Circumstances relative to the attack-  
 ing, plundering & burning our said schooner, & to the  
 assembling, arming, training, & leading  
 the people concerned therein & to the concerting  
 & preparing the said Attack & of all other

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 Offences or Obstructions which have been  
 given to the said Lieutenant Dredgington or  
 to our Service in general in our said Colony  
 of Rhode Island & Providence Plantations & of  
 the Causes which have occasioned & during  
 a Violation of our Laws & Authority & also  
 to inquire & report what Measures have  
 been taken or used by the magistrates of our said  
 Colony & other our good subjects therein, respecting  
 the same, & for the better Execution of our  
 Royal Will & Pleasure therein, we do hereby  
 give unto you the said Joseph Wanton, Daniel  
 Horsmanden, Frederick Smyth, Peter Oliver  
 & Robert Auchmuty or any Three of you  
 full power & Authority to receive all such  
 Informations & Advertisements as shall be  
 brought unto you by or from any of our loving  
 subjects or others touching the Premises &  
 also to enquire by the Examination of Witnesses  
 or Oath, which we do hereby give you or any of  
 you full power Warrant & Authority to ad-  
 minister, or by such other ways or Means as you or  
 any three of you shall in your Discretion think fit  
 into the Premises ~~any~~ or any of them, And We  
 do further give you or any three of you full power  
 & Authority to send for such Persons, Papers, &

Records, as shall be useful to you for the better carrying on the Service hereby intended willing & requiring you the said Governour the Deputy Governour & all other our Magistrates Officers, & loving subjects within the said Colony to be in all things helpful, aiding & assisting to you & every of you in the Execution of this our Royal Commission and We do further strictly command you & every of you that in the Execution & Performance of the Powers & authorities to you hereby given you & every of you do carefully observe & conform yourselves to such Instructions as shall be given & sent unto you in Writing under our Sign Manual & to report to us a full & true account of your proceedings herein, in Witness whereof we have caused these our Letters to be made Patent. Witness, ourself at Westminster the 2<sup>d</sup> Day of Sept. 2 in the 12<sup>th</sup> year our Reign.

By the King Himself.  
York.



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