

George Washington to Charles Dyar, January 20, 1776, Instructions, The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CAPTAIN CHARLES DYAR

Head Quarters Cambridge, January 20, 1776.

Sir: You being appointed Captain and Commander of the armed schooner *Harrison* in the Service of the United Colonies are to pay all Attention and Obedience to the following Instructions.

1st. You are to proceed immediately on a Cruize, against such Vessels as may be found on the high Seas or elsewhere, bound inwards or outwards to or from Boston, in the Service of the ministerial Army, and to take and seize all such Vessels, laden with Soldiers, Arms, Ammunition, or Provisions, going to or from said Town of Boston, or which you shall have good Reason to suspect, are employed for the Purpose of aiding, or assisting the ministerial Troops or Navy.

2nd. If you should be so successful as to take any of said Vessels, you are immediately to send them to the nearest and safest Port, to this Camp, under a careful Prize-Master, directing him to deliver said Prize unto the Agent by me appointed for the Port into which a Prize is carried (if any there). If none should be in that Port, Notice is to be given to the nearest Agent thereto; at same Time an Account of such Capture to be transmitted to Head Quarters, with all Particulars thereto belonging, by Express.

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3rd. You are to be very particular and diligent in your Search after all Letters or other Papers tending to discover the Designs of the Enemy, or of any other kind, and to forward all such to me as soon as possible.

4th. Whatever Prisoners you take, must be treated with Kindness and Humanity. Their private Stock of Money and Apparel to be given them, after being strictly searched, and when they arrive at any Port, they are to be delivered up to the Agent, if any there; if not, to the Committee of Safety of such Port.

5th. For your Encouragement, and that of the other Officers and Men to Diligence and Activity, over and above their Pay, which will be the same as in the Army of the United Colonies; you shall be entitled to one third Part of every Vessel and Cargo, (after Condemnation in the Court of Admiralty) which shall be by you taken and sent into Port. If she is an arm'd Vessel that resists, as an Inducement for you, your Officers and Men to act courageously, one half of Vessel and Cargo will be allotted to you, which Parts are to be divided in the following Proportion, vizt: Shares: Captain, 6; 1st. Lieutt., 5; 2nd. Lieutt., 4; Ships Master, 3; Steward, 2; Mate, 1½; Gunner, 1½; Gunners Mate, 1½; Privates, 1 each.

6th. As Captain Manley is appointed Commodore of the four Schooners now fitted out, he will fix upon proper Signals by which you may know each other, and you are to obey him as such in all Cases. If it should so happen that a Prize is taken in sight of other Vessels, fitted out at the continental Expense or at the Charge of Individuals, the Rules which take Place among private Ships of War, to be observed in the Distribution of the Prize Money.

7th. You are to be extremely careful and frugal of your Ammunition and other Stores; by no Means to waste any of it in Salutes, or for any Purpose but what is absolutely necessary.

8th. You, your Officers and Men are, from the Date hereof, to consider yourselves as engaged in the Service of the United Colonies, and in every Respect subject to the Rules and Regulations formed by the Congress, for the Government of the Army raised for the

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Defence of American Liberty; or as near as possible, consistent with the Difference of the Land and Sea Service. A Book of the Rules and Articles, you will receive herewith, at the End, of which you, your Officers, and Men must subscribe your Names.

9th. As it is very apparent, that the ill Success which attended the major Part of the armed Vessels in former Cruizes, was owing to the Want of Industry, and the Inactivity of the Officers who commanded; you will, therefore, take Notice, that a Fondness to be on Shore, Indolence, and Inactivity, will meet with their just Deserts. For, if it appears, that the Captain or any of the Officers, do not exert themselves, and do all that they possibly can for their own and the publick Good, they shall be dismissed the Service, and rendered incapable of serving their Country in any honourable Station hereafter in the Army or Navy.¹

¹ee Instructions to Capt. Nicholson Broughton, Oct. 16, 1775, ante.