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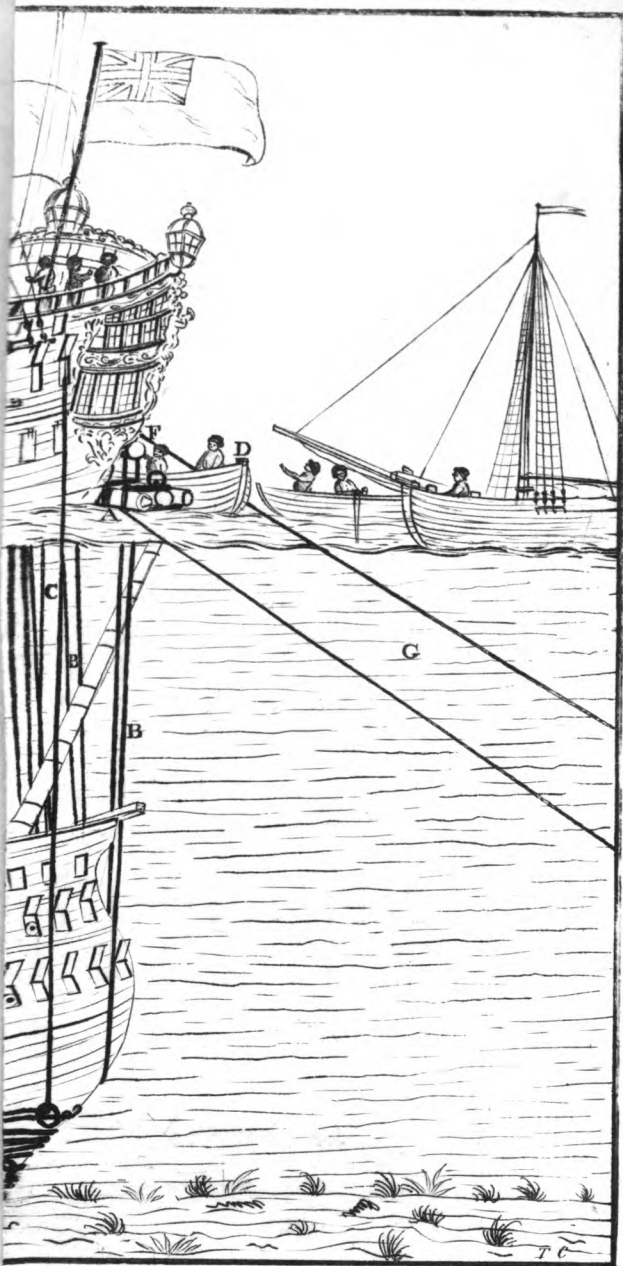
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ment. for raising **HIS MAJESTY'S**
 in the Year 1783 shewing the
 Subscribed to his Royal Highness's
 Highness's hble & Obed. Serv: *W. Tracey*

A
CANDID AND ACCURATE
NARRATIVE
OF THE
OPERATIONS

USED IN ENDEAVOURING TO RAISE HIS

Majesty's Ship ROYAL GEORGE,
In the Year 1783;

With an ACCOUNT of the CAUSES and REASONS
which prevented the Success;

AND ALSO,

Copies of the Affidavits, Vouchers, Letters,
Documents, and other Correspondence, relative
to that unfortunate Transaction.

By WILLIAM TRACEY.

" In great Attempts 'tis glorious even to fail."

PORTSMOUTH:

Printed for the AUTHOR, by W. MOWERAY.

M.DCC.LXXXV.

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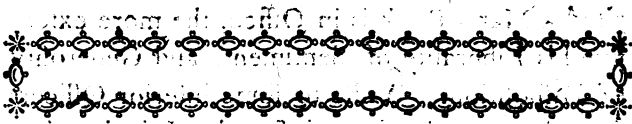
A short Reference to the foregoing ... te.

A. A. **T**HE two long Stages, made of three first and second Rate Main-masts, secured by a Number of strong Pieces of Oak Timber, both above and below, bolted thro' with large Iron Bolts, and otherwise secured and lashed in a very strong Manner, and are of immense Strength—Length 113 Feet, and 10 broad; their Use were in Conjunction with three other Stages of 46 Feet long, made in the same Manner as the above, and were to be placed over the Wreck, between the two Ships, in equal Distances with the long Stages, and have large Bundles of old Rope, Shakings, &c. in strong Rope Nettings at each End, in order to make an easy Pressure on the Ships' Sides, when the Extension of the two Ships was necessary, which would not be until the Ships were removed into shoal Water; and then, with the Addition of other Pieces of Masts, a great Number of empty Leagers and Butts, all ready, strongly lash'd, and could be affixed with the greatest Ease, to a certainty of nearly floating the Wreck, if found necessary. Those Stages were likewise of great Service in slinging the Ship, and laying the Cables down, and keeping their Ends clear above Water, inasmuch, that it was impossible to have done without them, or some similar Substitute. The long Stages had likewise very large Swivel Rings affixed, of near half a Ton Weight at each End, for the Cables to pass through, to secure the Ships' Heads and Sterns apart, when in shoal Water.

B. B. Shews in what Manner the Cables come up in each Ship, viz. 4 Cables ahead at the Hauzes, 2 on each Side; 4 Cables at the third Port from forward, 2 on each Side; 4 Cables a Midships, 2 on each Side; 4 Cables in the third Port from Aft; and 4 Cables into the Stern Port, which are raised and properly bolstered to receive them; all of which Cables have four-fold Purchases to receive them within Board, secured by leading Blocks, &c. The Falls are led to the Capstane in such Order, that by racking them, the whole Cables in both Ships (with due Assistance) can be
hove

hove taught down in less than half an Hour, which at low Water the Tides cannot flow so much in that Time as to hinder the Cables from bearing equal Strains ; and as the Tide flows, after all is brought to bear, the two Ships must be forced bodily to sink, or the Wreck must lift (which she actually on Trial did.)

- C. C. The four Cables affixed to the Chain which was put round the Stem and Stern-post of the Royal George, just above the other slinging Cables, to prevent any flying up, &c. Their Ends came up two to each Ship.
- D. D. The two large mooring Lighters, upwards of 100 Tons each, which indeed ought to have been four, had they been allowed, and bears their Burden on the Royal George, by 14 Inch center Cables from the Slings below.
- E. The Space between the two Ships where the three short Stages were placed, and Casks lash'd (as before described at Letters A.)
- F. Large Pieces of half-rounded Mast, 6 Feet in Length, bolted to the Ships' Side for the Cables to pass over into the Ports, and to prevent the Weight to bear on any particular Timber or Place; that at the Stern, Pieces of very large Masts of 30 Feet length, well lashed and secured to the Body of the Ships above for the Cables to pass over into the Stern Ports.
- G. G. The mooring Cables which held the Ships to the East and West. There were likewise the same to the North and South, which do not appear in the Plate.
- N. B. The Sling Cables are made, in a great Measure, similar to Jar Slings, and jamb to the Body of the Ship below, in the Part intended to bear on, with the greatest Exactness. This Invention is entirely new for such Purpose, and can be depended on to a certainty, as the greater the Weight the more sure to hold fast ; and they are constructed with this peculiar Utility, that if any one End of the four, or the two opposite Ends give way, the remaining Ends will preserve their Power as if no such Accident had happened.



INTRODUCTION.

THE following Narrative is not intended for Amusement but Conviction.—'Tis a Justification of a Plan which met with the Approbation of the first Characters in the Kingdom, and excited the most sanguine Hopes of Success.—Particular Care has been taken to advance no Assertion but for which Documents are or can be produced; and a simple Stile was thought preferable to the Harmony of polished Periods; for Truth needs not the foreign Aid of elegant Language.

I have pointed out many Obstacles which tended to prevent my Success in raising the Royal George. Personal Picque, private Animosity, or the Effects of Disappointment and Resentment, have had no Weight with me in the Investigation of this Matter. If I have ventured to blame particular Individuals, I have not done it without Cause, though I have always censured with Reluctance and Regret. In the Prosecution of my Plan, I have been convinced, that the more ex-

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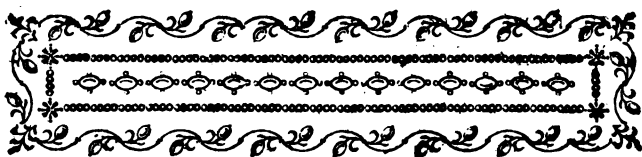
alted a Man's Rank is in Office, the more extensive his Liberality of Sentiment, and Generosity of Disposition. While to some inferior Officers I tender my Forgiveness for the Injuries they have done me, to their Superiors in Character and in Station I know not how to express my Thanks. The assiduous Attention of Admiral Montague to my Intreaties and my Interest, the friendly Interposition and Aid of Commissioner Martin, the Patronage and Protection of the Honourable Captain James Luttrell, Sir Hyde Parker, and the generous Exertions of many other Captains and Officers in the Navy, claim the warmest Returns of the sincerest Gratitude. The Testimonies they have voluntarily produced in my Favour will, I hope, have their Weight, and sufficiently convince the World that the Failure of my Attempt was entirely owing to the Want of the promised requisite Assistance, and the other Causes I have mentioned in the following Pages.

My Acknowledgments are particularly due to the Builder, Store-keeper, Clerk of the Survey, Assistants, Master Caulker, Master Mast-maker, and Boat-builder, and indeed to every Officer and Gentleman in their respective Departments in Portsmouth Dock-yard. They were ever ready to afford me their Assistance, and to forward my Operations, as far as was consistent with my Agreement with Government. But, as the following Pages will evince, the Master-attendant behaved

haved in a Manner totally opposite, and by every Means in his Power prevented and frustrated my Designs. Mr. Mofely, the second Master-attendant, merits no blame—had his Power been equal to his Inclinations, I am conscious his Support would not have been withheld. For their obliging Attention, the Agent Victualler, Mr. Thomas, and his Officers at Weyvill, will be pleased to accept of my Acknowledgments.

When I first made Application to the Honourable Navy Board, I was asked how many Men would be requisite or necessary at the last Effort I should make. I told them 1000 or 1200. A Clause was made in my Agreement with that Honourable Board, that I should pay all extra Assistance; but it was certainly consistent with Reason to imagine how impossible it was for a private Person, without Authority, to collect together such a Number of Men. I had not the least Doubt but Government would have supplied me. Indeed, had I been furnished with half the Number, I would have succeeded. Let me then ask every generous and humane Mind, after perusing the following Pages, whether it does not plainly appear, that my Failure arose merely from a Want of the proper Supply and Support which had been promised me? Are there not the most sufficient Testimonies of the Propriety of my Plan? Can the Want of Success be attributed to any Thing but accidental Causes? Shall the Generosity of

the English Nation suffer an Individual to go unrewarded for the many laborious, anxious Days, and sleepless Nights, he has passed in torturing Fatigues and Suspence for the Success of his Plan? Shall no Compassion be shewn him for the repeated Disappointments he received from those whose Duty it was to assist him? And, in short, shall one who not only risked his whole Property in a national Concern, but involved himself and Family in the greatest Difficulties, be injured and oppressed in the highest Degree? After having exerted his utmost Abilities in the Service of the Public, shall he be deserted and abandoned by those whose Cause he espoused, and whose Honour he endeavoured to promote?



A

STATEMENT OF FACTS, &c.

* I N September, 1782,* I first presented
I to the Lords of the Admiralty a Plan
for raising the Royal George, which
was referred to the Commissioners of
the Navy, with Orders for my Attendance at that
Honourable Board. In Consequence I did at-
tend, and was informed by Commissioner Hunt
that my Proposals, with many others, were sent to
Portsmouth Dock-yard, for the Inspection of
Master-attendants and Masters, who were to hold
a Board, and determine what Plan was the most
eligible. To stay longer in London, I was told,
would be of no Effect, as Information should be
given me, if any Thing material was done. Ac-
cordingly I returned to Portsmouth, where I used
B 3 every

* See Letter No. I.

every Means to make myself acquainted with the State in which the Royal George lay. I repeatedly went to Spithead, founded her, and got informed of the Nature of the Tides, &c. After acquiring this necessary Intelligence, I found *the Plan I had then delivered* would not answer my Expectations, perceiving it impossible to manage six or more Ships in such strong Tides as run on the Springs where the Ship lays. Disappointed in my first Attempt, I was not, however, entirely dismayed. The Failure of my Hopes only excited the Ardour of my Endeavours; and, after much Consideration and Reflection, in October 1782, I completed the Plan I have since carried into Execution by Approbation of the Admiralty and Navy Boards, in Preference to at least an hundred Projectors. This Assertion is confirmed by Letters bearing Date the 7th of January, 1783.* I returned to London, in 1782, in the Month of November, where I lived, as may be supposed, at an Expence increased by procuring Diving Machines, and other necessary Apparatus, in order the more effectually to discover the State the Royal George lay in, &c. The Articles of Agreement were not signed before the 15th of May, when I then came to Portsmouth to execute the Plan I had proposed.

Government

* See Letter No. II.

Government agreed " to supply me with two
 " Ships of the third Rate, together with such other
 " Vessels and Seafaring Craft, and sufficient Stores
 " as might be requisite and necessary for the Pur-
 " poses aftermentioned, *without Prejudice to his*
 " *Majesty's Sea Service.*" I was accordingly pro-
 vided with the Royal William and Diligente,*
 which I took in their then state. I brought the
 Diligente from her Moorings from off the Hard-
 way to the Dock Jetties at my own Expence.
 I set to work in getting the necessary Stores and
 Casks on Board. At my own Expence too I
 brought the Royal William from the Fountain
 Lake to the North Jetty. The Condition of the
 Ships was well-known. The Royal William had
 neither Mast nor Boltsprit: the lower Mast, how-
 ever, of the Dragon was put into her by my own
 People, at my own Expence. I rigged the Ships
 in a proper Manner, and made the necessary Pre-
 parations to carry them to Spithead. My Rig-
 gers were employed at the same Time in getting
 the Sweep Cables ready to sling the unfortunate
 Ship, and Carpenters engaged in erecting the re-
 quisite Rafts and Stages. Every possible Exer-
 tion was used on my Part. On the 5th of June,
 Mr. Gilbert, Master-attendant, ordered me to
 take the Diligente from the Jetty in the Dock-

* See Letter No. III.

yard to the Moorings off the Common Hard.— This Command was equally unnecessary as expensive. The Stores were removed, and the People separated; and on the 7th of the same Month a Pilot (Mr. Lawford) was put on Board. He conducted the Diligente to Spithead on the 9th, which unwarrantable Authority of Office was a peculiar Prejudice to my Interest. My People were thereby divided, and the Stores prevented from being got on board to Advantage. Nay, so effectually was I distressed, that, notwithstanding all my Endeavours she was not properly moored till the 19th of June.

It is almost preposterous to observe what needless Expences this Removal occasioned. People employed at Spithead with the Diligente could be of no Service to the Royal William, and additional Hands were requisite to get Stores on board the latter Ship. This unnecessary Trouble eventually cost me more than three hundred Pounds. On the 13th of June, the Royal William was also ordered from the Dock Jetty to the northernmost Moorings, opposite the New Ground, by the Master-attendant.—To me no previous Notice was given, and therefore all my Stores were obliged to be conveyed by Lighters at great Trouble, and at great Expence. I submitted with Patience to these peculiar Hardships, and persevering in this Duty amidst the Horrors of rigid Rains and heavy Winds, I had nearly sacrificed

ficed my Life, and was confined to my Bed for several Days. On the 21st of June, the Royal William was likewise ordered to Spithead, by Mr. Gilbert, the Master-attendant, before it was possible for me to get the requisite Stores on board. The two Master-attendants had, in May, assured me of their Interest in my Favour; and, when I shewed them my Plan and Method of raising the Royal George, I was told they would give me their Assistance, and that even the Forrester and sailing Lighters should be given me till the very last Day they could be spared, which would happen in the latter End of July, when they would go a Ship Launching. These Vessels were the fittest for my Purpose.

The most solemn Affeuerations to serve me were made on the Part of the Master-attendants, and that they should strain every Nerve in my Favour. Had the Practices been equal to the Professions, the Royal George, long before now, would have been safe in Portsmouth Harbour. Buoyed up with such official Declarations, I did not apply for any large Craft till I was ready to use them, certain in my own Mind that I would be provided on the shortest Notice, they not being in Use.

On the 21st of June, the Royal William was moored at Spithead. I then asked for Lighters, and was ordered one by Mr. Mosely, second Master-attendant. In Consequence of this my People went up the Harbour, as far as the Hard-
way,

way, and, after much Trouble, brought a Lighter down to the North Jetty. I was then accosted by Mr. Floyd, a Boatswain, at the Request of Mr. Gilbert, one of the Master-attendants. His Intelligence was by no Means of an agreeable Nature, for he told me, the Lighter that I was getting down, No. 4, *would not swim at Spithead, her upper Works being so very bad, independent of other Defects.* Unwilling to trust to this, I went and examined her, and found her perfectly sufficient to Appearance. I was, besides, informed by the Lighter-keeper, that she was the best they had in the Service. I ordered my People immediately to proceed and get her down, and instantly informed Mr. Mosely of her being quite adequate to my Purpose, offering at the same Time to abide by the Consequences. That Gentleman then told me, he was the Junior Master-attendant, and but young in Office, and Mr. Gilbert's Order being contrary, he could not allow me the Lighter. He politely added, I must go to him and fight it out with him. After many Visits at his House, I at last found Mr. Gilbert at the Pay-Office, to whom, as to Mr. Mosely, I told the Mistake relative to the Lighter. He immediately answered me I should not have her, but must *hire Vessels at my own Expence.* I expostulated, but in vain.—Government, I told him, had agreed to supply me with proper Craft, and I could neither find nor hire any fit for my Purpose in this Part of the Country.

Country. The Cabot Brig, he tartly replied, had been lately sold to some Merchants at Gosport, and I had better apply for her.—I could not help observing, that if he meant to deprive me of the Lighters, he might with equal Propriety take the Stores and Ships from me, for they could be of no Use unless I had proper Lighters or Craft to sling the Royal George with. Barely heaving the Cables overboard could be of no Service; and, deprived of Lighters, I plainly told him, I must give up the Attempt, though my Sweep Cables were nearly all ready to lay down. He then informed me, I should have the Truelove Sloop, and a Lighter, when he could spare me one. On this, I asked Permission to acquaint Commissioner Martin, and obtained it; but he, however, waited himself immediately on that Gentleman, who swore he could spare no Lighters, for they were all employed in getting Stores out of the Ships, &c. which was not then the Case; nor, till after my Application to Mr. Gilbert, was there even one employed in that Service. Upon the strictest Enquiry, I found this was the first Time in Memory that these large decked Lighters were used in receiving Stores from Men of War going to be paid off. Where Men, in such Cases, throw great Weights, even from the Decks, the Tops, and Masts, their Decks, which are only of thin Planks, must be greatly destroyed. It appears plainly that those Lighters were so employed by Mr. Gilbert

Gilbert purposely to prevent my having even one of them to assist me in my Operations on the Royal George. I informed the Commissioner, I could not proceed without Craft, and that for some Time past I had done my Work at a very great Disadvantage. I represented to him the Hardships under which I laboured: Nearly all my Sweep Cables and Purchases were ready to lay down, and being so much in the Way, I told him, I could do nothing in the Ships but with the utmost Difficulty. I mentioned to him the Impossibility of proceeding without Lighters, and, notwithstanding the amazing Expence at which I stood, no Work could be effectually done. Commissioner Martin coolly replied, that he was sorry for it; but you hear, continued he, what the Master-attendant says. He advised me, however, to write to the Board. I expressed my unwillingness to give Offence, either to the Board, to him, or to the Officers, as the Master-attendant had then promised me a Lighter when one could be spared. On leaving the Pay-office, I met with Mr. Mesely, the second Master-attendant, who informed me, that next Week he would be on Duty, and would then endeavour to serve me.— It must be particularly remarked, that *at this Time I only wanted one Lighter, which, with the Truelove, was to weigh the Sloop that lay close along-side the Royal George, ready slung.* Till she was removed
I could

I could not proceed in my Operations on the Royal George.

I went on with the Business, though at much Disadvantage, till the 29th of June, when I again waited on Mr. Gilbert at his House. At my Interview with this Gentleman, I told him I had called in Consequence of his and Mr. Mofely's Promises, without troubling the Board with any Application, nor did I entertain a Doubt but he would let me have a Lighter. To my utter Astonishment, he denied me, adding, that he would never allow me one without an express Order from the Navy Board, and again advised me to hire the Cabot Brig. I told him, that he had already an express Order to supply me with all Vessels and Craft fit for my Purpose in the general Order to the Yard, and that the Copy of my Agreement with Government fully expressed it, which Agreement was in his Office, as well as in every public one in the Yard—a *Fact that is undeniable*. I could not help observing, that I had met with very bad Treatment; for had I not been deluded and deceived with his and Mr. Mofely's Promises, I certainly should have wrote to the Board before, who would doubtless have complied with my Request. Picqued at this Disappointment, which was a truly material one, I wrote immediately, in the mildest Manner, to the Commissioners of the Navy, who were pleased to send an Order, by which I obtained only one Lighter, and that not before

fore the 7th of July.* Mr. Gilbert then picked me out the oldest and most improper for my Service in the Port. She was rotten, and in a very leaky Condition; her upper Works were greatly decayed, her Decks stove in with getting Stores from the Ships, and she actually sunk on the 11th of October following. Commissioner Martin informed me, when any others could be spared, I should have two more to lay down my Sweep Cables with, and hoped the Sloop might be got up with the one I had already, and with the True-love. This I effectuated on the 11th of July, in the Afternoon, and got her clear from the Wreck on the same Night. In Consequence of so polite an Assurance on the Part of the Commissioner, I again applied to Mr. Gilbert, the Master-attendant, for two other Lighters, in order to sling the Royal George with; but he said he could spare none, though at this Time, it is notorious, there were three large ones not in Use. Nay, when I first applied, and was told they were employed in getting Stores out of the King's Ships, &c. there were actually three Lighters fit for that Purpose in the South Dock, entirely out of Use. I believe, as I before observed, it was never known before to employ the large mooring Lighters in such Business; for it does them much Damage to
have

* See Letter No. IV.

have great Weights thrown upon their Decks.— The Harbour Duty, Mr. Gilbert added, must not be stopped for that of the Royal George, and he repeated the Necessity of hiring Craft myself. I was now in a very disagreeable Situation: having so lately wrote to the Commissioners of the Navy,* I could not think of again troubling that very respectable Board. I had also every Reason to fear that Mr. Gilbert (in whose Power alone it was) would not so readily comply with an Order from them as from the Admiralty. I saw the precarious Ground on which I stood; I was unwilling to retreat, though I knew not well how to advance. I little thought the narrow Prejudices of interested Men and partial Individuals would have stopped the Progress of a national Concern, nor could I imagine that the Servants of the Public could impede the Business of their Country. The Cause was not mine alone.—The Honour of England was at Stake. Having by the Bravery of her Tars established her Fame in the Annals of Glory, I fondly hoped to add to her Renown by experimental Knowledge.—How my anxious Wishes were disappointed remains yet to be told.

The Royal William and Diligente were so lumbered, that the Hands I employed could do nothing

* See Letter No. V.

thing material. Was it possible to work with Advantage when the Ships were full of the Purchase Cables and other requisite Stores? Had they Room to stow the Casks or to stow them? or in fact to do any Thing properly? Indeed, had I not stowed the Purchase Cables, and moved them from Place to Place, I could not have had them so soon ready as they were, for they were nearly all fit to lay down in the Month of June. But being thus circumstanced, I was at the Trouble and Expence of doing my Work two or three Times over. Despairing of Assistance from the Yard by the Authority I had already received, I wrote to the Admiralty for Lighters on the 5th of July.* In Consideration of their Lordships Order and Answer,† Mr. Gilbert told me on the 13th of the same Month, that I could not have two Lighters, but that the old Sherborne Cutter was at my Service. He politely added, that a Lighter should be repaired for me, *though at that very Time there were two proper mooring ones in the Dock Camber, actually out of Use.* In my distressed Situation, I accepted of the Sherborne, though she was very unfit for Service; she was rotten and crazy, without even a Capstane, and had just been returned from the Admiral as totally unfit for Service. It was with the greatest Difficulty I could keep

* See Letter No. VI.

† See Letter No. VII.

keep her above Water, being obliged to pump her Night and Day. A Cutter-built Vessel cannot be supposed to carry a heavy Purchase against a mooring Lighter; in my Case, however, I had no Room for Choice; I had suffered already too much, by unwarrantable Delays: the Disappointments I had already received damped my Scheme in the Beginning, and entirely ruined it in the End. With such a miserable Apparatus I resolved, therefore, to make the best Attempt. My Carpenters were set to Work, a Crab was fixed for a Capstane, and Rollers at her Bows. I patched her up the best Way I possibly could; but after all, she was very unfit for my Service. Nay, it was even dangerous to make such Use of her. Mr. Gilbert refused to let me have either of the two Lighters which were *unemployed*, but told me, that one laying at the Pitch-house Jetty should be repaired for me. That was accordingly done, with every Dispatch, by Order of the Builder; but I could not get her to Spithead, before the 23d of July. For want of proper Support and Supply, my Business was delayed for nearly five Weeks in June and July, *the very best Times of the Year for carrying my Plan into Execution.*—

What Reasons the Master-attendant could have to throw every possible Obstacle in my Way are best known to himself: It is a Fact, which Hundreds can attest, that allowing me the Lighters at first could have been of no Hinderance to his

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Majesty's

Majesty's Service; but private Picque, and the most malicious Resentment, are often found in proud Man, when "clad," as the Poet has it, "with a little brief Authority."

I cannot help remarking, with Regret, what peculiar Distress Mr. Gilbert's obstinate Refusal, and unnecessary Delay, occasioned. Had he complied with my Request, I should have been *ready for the grand Attempt by the latter End of July*. In that Case, I would have had little Doubts of Success; the Weather was remarkably fine; the Length of the Days, and Shortness of the Nights, were greatly in my Favour. My Plan had been approved by Men, not more eminent in their Profession, than distinguished by their Rank, whose Letters and Affidavits will justify my Assertions, while they greatly honour my Endeavours. In being withheld the Assistance, *I had every Reason, every Right to expect, originated my Failure and Destruction in raising the Royal George*, as, at that Time, I had, and was enabled to have, Men, in my own Pay, nearly sufficient to have made the grand Attempt; at least they would have done me more effectual Service than any Aid I had from Government.

Notwithstanding these Obstructions and Delays, by the 26th of July, I had got eight Cables fixed down on the Royal George. It continued to blow very fresh for four Days afterwards. By the 2d
of

of August, I had twelve fixed ; from that to the 7th, it blew so very hard that no Work could be done ; it then remained fine Weather to the 12th.

On Wednesday, the 15th Instant, the King's People, who always slept in the Truelove, [her Crew] and whom I *paid and victualled* as my own, either by Negligence, or Design, fouled a Pair of my principal sweep Cables. To take these up, and replace them, was the Labour of six Days. Notwithstanding such discouraging Circumstances, I still persevered, and, by the 23d of August, I got the last Cables down on the Royal George, and all hove taught in their proper Places. Had the Weather continued moderate I should have been quite ready for making the Attempt by the 29th or 30th, as I had advertised. I had applied to the Board for Assistance for that Purpose.*

On the 24th, it began to blow hard, and continued a constant Gale of Wind till the 1st of September, when I got the Chain and Cables in a proper Manner again in their places. On the 2d, I had the *first Assistance of some of the King's Men from the Ships at Spithead, &c.* but not till I had fixed all my Sweeps and Purchase Cables down on the Royal George. On the 23d, I was proceeding to anchor the Ships properly in their Places, when

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* See Letters No. VIII, IX, X, XI.

it began again to blow so violently, that I was obliged to run the Sherborne Cutter, and True-love, into the Harbour for Safety; the Gale did not cease till the 20th. During two or three Days the Weather was moderate. These I employed in putting the Cables, Stages, &c. to right, after the Gale. It began again to blow very fresh.— On the 25th, at Night, one of the Lighters broke a large Cable, exclusive of her own mooring Cables, and drove on Shore near Haslar Hospital, without any further Damage. On the 26th, I got the Diligente along-side the Wreck, but had nearly got her *on*, the same, owing to the King's Men leaving their Work at twelve o'Clock; and, indeed, the Danger would have been very great, had not the Officers of the Ganges, Mediator, and Diadem obliged the respective Boats Crews of these Ships to assist my People. The 27th, got the Royal William moored along-side. October the 1st, had all the Cables in the two Ships.—3d and 4th, employed in heaving on the Cables.—5th, they began to strain equal, and, *at high Water, the Royal George was observed to move and swaddle in her Bed.*

As I could obtain no Assistance of any Kind in the Night, I continued every Day-light, at low Water Tide, to heave and strain the Geer; *and the Royal George positively lifted every high Water.* On the 9th, *she was hove a-head at least 30 or 40 Feet to the Westward.* The Tides were increasing
to

to the Top of the Spring Tides, which would have been on the 12th or 13th. I should have weighed the Wreck before this Time, but was prevented by the following Circumstances: "High Water happened about the Middle of the Night, as well as Day. At Night I had not sufficient People on Board to heave the Cables and Purchases taught down at low Water. In the Mornings, about four or five o'Clock, when I should have had the Advantage of the next high Water by Day-light, in the Middle of the Day, then indeed it would have been possible to have seen all clear for the Purpose. But, unfortunately for me, I was *indispensably* obliged to heave all taught down at low Water, in the Evening, and let the Geer strain; weigh the Ship in the Night high Water, and sustain her Weight till the Tide ebbed, and then suffer her to ground again in the Night, not having Men on Board to heave in the Slack of the Cables, and possibly they did not bear equal on the next Tide of Flood, after sustaining the Weight of the Royal George, and the uncertainty of the Cables rendering and slipping at her again grounding."

Previous to the 9th, I had no Officers on Board with the King's Men, excepting Boys of Midshipmen, and *some Mates*. These could enforce no Obedience, the Ganges Men excepted, nor would the Men pay the least Regard to my Directions or Orders, or those of my Officers; but, on the contrary, tore, cut, and destroyed every Thing they

could to retard my Operations. Conscious of the Necessity of strict Discipline among Seamen, in my great Distress, I had respectfully solicited Admiral Montague for some Lieutenants, whose Rank in the Service would command Attention, and whose Orders would keep the Men to their Duty. The Admiral expressed his Willingness to give me every Assistance in his Power, but seemed to think he had no Authority to send Officers on such a Service. With my Request, however, he afterwards complied, but unfortunately too late for my Purpose.

On the 10th, it was agreed, by the Officers of the Commodore, and others, that upon my making Signal of three Lights at the Ensign Staff, the Men should come on Saturday Morning, the 11th, in Time, to heave the Purchase Cables down all taught, at low Water in the Morning, and have the Advantage of the first Strain on the Geer. I hoped to have got the Royal George away, as none of the Officers, who witnessed my Operations, entertained a Doubt of my Success. Sanguine in Expectations, which experienced Seamen thought were well founded, I made the Signal accordingly; but, to my great Surprise, not half the Men necessary came till it was too late to make any Efforts. I was therefore forced to wait for the second Strain as before, and at High Water moved her again a very little to the Westward. The Geer still all held fast and well. I agreed with

with the Officers to defer heaving down again till next Morning. As the Tide fell out later and later, it was concluded, if the Men should come by break of Day, my End might be obtained. The same Afternoon, the 11th, however, it suddenly came on to blow very fresh at S. E. so heavy a Sea was rolling, that one of the Lighters being leaky, and rotten in her upper Works, was filled with Water almost in a Moment. Every possible Means were used to save her; but before she was got half a Cable's length from the Royal William, she went down. I had caused a nine-inch Hawser to be made fast to one of her Beams, and a Buoy fastened to it. While I was busily employed, in order to prevent this unfortunate Accident, the other Lighter had nearly shared a similar Fate, having with the great Swell suddenly struck against the Cap of the Boltsprit of the Royal George; but by the Exertions of the Carpenter of the Royal William, and my People, I got her safe on Shore, bailing her all the Way from Spithead to Stoke's Bay. The Wind increased in the Night, and all next Day. I was now destitute of every effectual Help. None of the Ships Crews were left on Board. The Master-attendant had taken on Shore the twenty Riggers and four Boatswains,* the only People he supplied me with for the Trial.

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* See Letter No. XII.

My Situation was now truly distressing, and my Anxiety inexpressible. At high Water, with the great Sea, and the pitching and ascending of the Ships, I found several of my dependent Cables broke forward in both Ships; every Thing was in a truly dreadful Confusion. I immediately wrote to the Commissioner* for the Assistance of the People the Master-attendants had taken away. In consequence of my Letter, they were sent again on Board, on the Sunday Evening, but too late, to save the Cables, or render me any Service in that Respect. On the Day following, Monday, the 13th, it was more moderate, and I perceived it impossible to substitute fresh Cables in Time; I was, therefore, determined to make the last Effort with what Cables I had left, and to start my Water, which amounted to about 1000 Tons in Casks, and set all my Pumps to work, to throw out the Water purposely let in. On Monday Morning I made the Signal agreed on for Assistance before Day-light; but, to my great Mortification, not more than 137 Men were sent in all, and very few of these came in Time. I did, however, every Thing that was in my Power; I hove the Cables down in the best Manner I could, tho' very imperfectly, and before high Water I found the Royal George on float forward. Even then,
with

* See Letter No. XIII.

with proper Assistance, I would have succeeded. On starting the Water, I perceived it had great Power, and that it lightened the Ships very much. Unfortunately, owing to the Cables being unequally hove down, two more gave way in the Dili-gente, the one in the Starboard Gun-room Port, and the other on the Larboard Bow; notwithstanding, *all the Midship Cables still held fast*. Those that were broke, were in a great Measure occasioned by the Ships pitching and ascending in so heavy a Sea. There now remained no Hopes of Success till more were bent, and some other necessary Steps taken. But no Time was allowed me. The Officers took the Charge of the Ships from me, and though I could only procure 137 Men from the Fleet, four Boatswains, 20 Riggers, and a Dozen Caulkers, which I victualled while with me, to make the last Trial, yet 600 Men were easily found to carry the Royal William into Harbour.

After this unsuccessful Attempt, I was ordered to London by the Lords of the Admiralty,† by Letter, bearing Date the 24th of October. I remained there above a Month, at a considerable Expence, waiting the Determination of their Lordships, and the Navy Board. At much Cost too,
I was

* See Letters No. XIV, XV, XVI,

† See Letter No. XVII.

I was obliged to keep Possession of the Ships, and Care of the Stores, during the Winter; and had to pay for that Purpose Mens Wages and Victuals to a very considerable Amount.

After this plain and unadorned Narrative, the Right Honourable and Honourable Boards, and the Public, will judge for themselves; and every humane Reader must sympathize with me in my Distress and Disappointment. Even my Enemies allow the Practicability of my Plan; but the Obstacles thrown in my Way would have frustrated the compleatest and most perfect Design.

Even from the very Beginning of this arduous Undertaking, I had Reason to fear the calamitous Consequences, which afterwards ensued. While the Diligente lay at the Jetty, she had only one Capstane fit for Service. I therefore applied for another to the Builder, who, I verily believe, gave Orders to serve me with one proper for my Purpose. One was accordingly looked out, and ordered to be put in. Fortunately, however, some of my Carpenters observed it was not only of an improper Size, but entirely rotten and totally usefess. I got the Carpenters of the Royal William and Diligente to Survey it: they found it much worse than it was even represented. The Disappointment I met with might have been presaged from this Circumstance, which evidently arose from Design, as will plainly appear by my Narrative. But undoubtedly the Person who meant to impose upon me was

was not aware of the Consequences which might have ensued; for, had the Capstane been put in, and ever a heavy Strain hove on it, it might have occasioned the Loss of many a Life or Limb. What was astonishing to me, and must strike every Observer, is, that all the rotten and faulty Places, which were visible on the Outside, were filled up with new-made Putty, and afterwards rubbed over with soft Dirt, and dried on so as to make it seem sound. I shewed it to several Officers of the Yard, and also a Quantity of the Putty I had taken from the faulty Pieces. Mr. Collier, one of the Foremen or Quartermen of the Capstane-house, to whom I mentioned this Circumstance, assured me, notwithstanding, *it was very sound*. The Builder, however, ordered me another, which was taken out of a Ship in Dock, I believe the Trident. When it was putting in its Place in the Diligente, there were upwards of 200 Men employed in the Ship, and most of them upon Deck working. While some were heaving up an Anchor, a Block broke, and the Sheaf fell and split the Head of this very unfortunate Foreman, or Quartermen, who had so short a Time before, through Ignorance, or Inattention, affirmed so glaring a Falsehood. It is somewhat remarkable, that among such a Number he alone should suffer; and, in an Age more Superstitious than the present, this fatal Accident might have been attributed to a peculiar Interposition of Providence, whose
Ways

Ways are too dark and intricate to be explored by frail and feeble Man.

From the Experiments I formerly made, were I properly supported, I cannot entertain the least Doubt of still accomplishing the raising of the Royal George. My Failure last Year can be attributed, with Justice, to nothing but want of the requisite and promised Assistance. In the most ample Manner did Government undertake to provide me with Lighters and proper Vessels. How I have been served, I have already mentioned. Allowing, for a Moment, that the large Lighters were wanted to return Stores from Ships, can it ever be maintained, that this would be detrimental to *his Majesty's Sea Service*, when at the very Time I was refused them, there were three fitter for the Purpose, laying uselefs in the South Dock? This Service was certainly *Harbour Duty*, as the Ships were going to be paid off. Will any one skilled in the least in naval Affairs (Mr. Gilbert excepted) maintain that the Truelove, and Sherborne Cutter, were proper Vessels for heaving such heavy Purchases as this great Business required? The Capstane of the Truelove contains but six short Bars, not six Feet long. It is fixed on a narrow Pink-stern Deck. The Sherborne has already been described. Her inutility is obvious and glaring. Indeed, between these two Vessels and the Lighters, there is as much Difference as between the Strength of a Man, and the Weakness of

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of a Child. With them, however, I made the best Shift I could; and did effect, in the End, the placing properly my Sweep Cables, by the temporary Means of raising double Purchases, shifting the Vessels, &c. though at great Expence, my Labour, Time, and incredible Fatigue; for, had there been four Lighters, the whole Cables would have been properly fixed round the Royal George in about ten Days, and in a Manner far superior to what I could possibly do with such Vessels as the Sherborne and Truelove. The Want of proper Craft not only caused superfluous Expences, but undoubtedly occasioned the Failure in the End, as I have before observed.

The peculiar Hardship of my Case appears sufficiently plain, from the following Circumstances:

1. I have been kept in an anxious Suspence, and have expended a deal of Money in procuring Diving Machines, and other necessary Articles. The loss I sustained, by leaving all my other Business from October, 1782, to the present Time, was very considerable, and this certainly arose from my Plan obtaining a Preference superior to all others.

2. After Government had agreed to supply me with the necessary Stores, *and Craft and Vessels fit for my Purpose*, could any Thing be more wantonly cruel, more uncandid and unjust, than to furnish me with Vessels totally inadequate to the Service for which they were intended? Nay,
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was I not peculiarly unfortunate to be kept out, even of these leaky, crazy, and improper Vessels for five Weeks, in the prime Season of the Year, by the artful, insidious Designs of an obstinate and determined Man, who, abusing the Power he possessed, drove me from Place to Place? He went, indeed, so far as to send Pilots on Board, to carry the two Ships to Spithead, before I had the half of my Stores on Board; and, in short, exerted himself to the utmost to increase my Expences, and retard my Operations; for had it not been for the unnecessary Obstructions he threw in my Way, I should have been ready for the grand Trial by the End of July. Of the Truth of this I can produce sufficient Vouchers.

3. At the Time of the Trial, and on the Failure of my Attempt, the Admiralty interfered, and seemed to have taken the Matter upon themselves, as appears from Admiral Montague's Letters of the 8th and 11th of October.* I was ordered to acquaint him with my daily Proceedings, for the Information of their Lordships, and another Letter commanding the same for *his Majesty*.† Add to this, that when Admiral Pigot came down to inspect into these Matters, I naturally concluded, that, in my then Situation, I could not apply with more Propriety than to the Lords of the Admiralty.

* See Letters No. XVIII. XIX.

† See Letter No. XX.

Admiralty. Accordingly, I wrote to their Lordships, which I much fear gave great Offence to the Commissioners of the Navy. In my Letter, I made a Statement of Facts, and fresh Proposals. I also communicated the Method I was to adopt, and delivered the Vouchers I had, certifying my having moved the Royal George. A Part of these I had formerly left at the Navy Office. I wrote on the 14th and 17th of October, 1783. On the 24th of the same Month I received an Answer, and was ordered to London. On the 7th of November following, I waited at the Navy Board, left fourteen Affidavits, and a Letter from Thomas South, Esq; all in Proof of my having moved the Royal George;* but I got no satisfactory Answer. On the 26th of November, I wrote a third Time† to the Admiralty, but receiving no Return, I inclosed, for that Right Honourable Board, Copies of fourteen Affidavits and References,‡ and Letters of several Naval Officers,§—all of which were Vouchers of my having moved the Ship. Being favoured with no Answer, I wrote again to their Lordships on the 1st of May, and on the 5th|| was referred to the Navy Board.

Flattered

* See Affidavits and Letters, A, B, C, &c.

† See Letter No. XXIV.

‡ See Letter No. XXI.

§ See Affidavits and Letters, A, B, C, &c.

|| See Letters No. XXII, XXIII.

Flattered by my former Success, and no decisive Answer being given to my Request, I had, till of late, little Doubt of being again employed.— In this, I now fear, I have been deceived, as the Navy Board have sent Orders for a Person to attempt getting up the Guns and other Stores; and others are employed in Preparations to raise the Ship. They remained silent till the 18th of May, when I received a Letter, which, while it strengthens my Fears, excites my Astonishment. Could it be supposed, that after the Distress and Fatigue I had undergone, both in Body and Mind, I should be refused a second Trial? Could any one imagine, that after having expended near £4000, my Misfortunes, which in Fact were occasioned by the Faults of others, should be heightened by the distressing Letter which follows; a Letter which will involve myself and Family in Ruin, having given my all in Security to a worthy and respectable Gentleman, who was bound for me in a thousand Pounds to the Navy Board for the Wear of his Majesty's Stores.

C O P Y.

Navy Office, 17th May, 1784.

Mr. TRACEY,

“ WE have received your Letter of the 11th Instant, and acquaint you that no further Assistance can be given you by this Board, with Respect to your raising the Royal George, and

your Security will be prosecuted as soon as the Time elapses.

We are,

Your affectionate Friends,

Signed { CHARLES MIDDLETON,
EDWARD HUNT,
GEORGE MARSH.

The foregoing Letter needs no Commentary. I shall only make a few Observations more, as I fear I have already been too prolix on the Subject. It probably may be argued, that the Undertaking, in which I have been so unfortunate, was a Contract.—Allowing it to be so, it is of that particular Nature, that never before happened, and Heaven avert a similar one from ever falling to this Country's Lot again! It is too of a Nature which can neither be effectuated or compleated without the Aid and Assistance of Government, particularly, that most essential Part, *a sufficient Number of Men at the last Trial, and the necessary Vessels fit for such uncommon Purchases.* It may likewise be asked, why did I not stop, and give up the Business, before I had made such Progress? Why did I not make a public Charge to the Board, and complain of the Usage I had received, and of the Obstructions which were thrown in my Way? My Answer is, that I had expended many hundred Pounds, which I should never have it in my Power to recover; for my Enemies would say, despairing of Success, I had given up the At-

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tempt, of the Success of which I never could entertain a Doubt, if Assistance was afforded me.— Again, rather than make disagreeable Complaints, or give my Superiors trouble, I submitted with the greatest Patience, thinking such a Conduct would procure me the Countenance of a Man who had so much in his Power ;—with such a Person, I was willing to bear, amidst innumerable Insults and Affronts, rather than give any Occasion for meriting Delay or Disappointment. This accounts for my Silence in my Letters to the Board, as I never preferred a single Complaint against him, though such a Conduct would have been highly justifiable. I had many Reasons for acting in this Manner. I thought, when I had proceeded so far as to convince his Superiors in Authority, that I was not to be deterred by trivial Obstructions, but was determined, with Fortitude, and unremitting Perseverance, though at great Trouble, Fatigue, and Expence, to surmount every Difficulty, that then some higher in Office would have proved my Friends.

Secondly, my Agreement with Government was on a generous and liberal Plan, and my Reward would have been truly bountiful. The Ship and Stores were to be valued by the Officers of Portsmouth Dock-yard, and of Consequence, Mr. Gilbert, by his Profession, would have been the principal Person in the Valuation. The damaged Stores were likewise to be estimated, and a Clause

Clause for giving me the Preference in the Purchase, after the first Valuation was inserted. On the whole, I had much to fear, by making a Man, less in Power than Mr. Gilbert, my Enemy, and every Thing to expect by preserving him my Friend, as, from my never having given him Offence, I fondly considered him.

The Circumstances which have been laid down in this Narrative, in the most respectful Manner; the Documents, Vouchers, and Authorities, which I have had the honour to produce, are a sufficient Justification, I flatter myself; for my Perseverance: and, I humbly presume, the impartial Reader will pity, and the powerful and affluent will assist in obtaining some Compensation for the Losses of the unfortunate Author, who, in endeavouring to perform a public Service, has unavoidably plunged himself and Family in Poverty and in Misery.

Notwithstanding these Circumstances, the Time elapsed, the Failure of fresh Projectors, and various other Obstructions, I am even now ready to undertake, and am conscious of accomplishing the raising of the Royal George, could I be certain of obtaining the Assistance I respectfully require in my Proposals to the Lords of the Admiralty.*

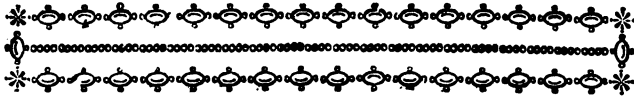
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* See Letters No. XXI, XXIV.

The raising of the Royal George was an Object of great Magnitude, and of the highest Importance. While all Europe was struck with Pity at the doleful Tale of her unhappy Fate, they were anxious to know what Steps would be taken to recover her, by a Nation not less renowned in Arts than in Arms. They could never think that the peevish and contracted Disposition of an Individual could thwart and overthrow the Designs of a public-spirited Projector; nor will it be believed, that a Country, celebrated for its Generosity, should abandon a Man whose Plan, even now, is allowed to be superior to any yet offered to public Inspection. Of its Practicability and Efficacy I have honourable and sufficient Vouchers, and, amidst the Dangers that surround me, it affords me no small Consolation, that to the Testimonies I have already adduced, I can add the respectable ones of Captains Payne, Hill, Gayton, Kingmill, and many others.

SINCE



SINCE writing the preceding Pages, I am enabled to make a few Observations relative to the Operations used this Summer, 1784, in raising the Royal George. On a Case which so nearly concerns my Credit and my Character, it can hardly be thought improper for me to dwell at some length, especially as I have received fresh Instances of undeserved Oppression.

I have already pointed out the heavy Charges I incurred in my Attempt to raise the Royal George; I have also shewn what unnecessary Expences were occasioned by Delays and Disappointments; I have produced the most undeniable Testimonies of the Propriety of my Plan; and, to a Demonstration, have proved that nothing but the Want of the promised Assistance could have prevented its being finally efficacious. Yet, feebly as I was supported, my Efforts, methinks, should have shewn me not unworthy the Confidence of my Right Honourable and Honourable Employers.

In my Articles of Agreement with the Navy Board, it was provided by a Clause therein insert-

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ed, that, in case I did not raise the Ship, I should be permitted to recover whatever Guns, Stores, &c. I possibly could. Notwithstanding which, before I received any Notice to the contrary, an Order was sent down to Portsmouth Dock, so early as the End of April or Beginning of May, 1784, to supply Messrs. Brathwaites with a proper Vessel, of 50 Tons burden, and every other Thing necessary for the Purpose of recovering Stores, &c. On these ingenious Gentlemen I throw no Reflection; but in the Beginning of my Operation last Summer, I had got hold and fixed a Purchase on the very Sheet Anchor they have since got up, after full three Months labour; whereas, had I not been more anxious for the Success of my grand Object, to which every other Motive was a secondary Consideration, than the Profits which might arise from the Anchor, I think, I may say without Vanity, I would have raised it in a Day or two. But I wished not to lose even an Hour of infinitely more Importance.

When I reflected on the partial Respect shewn to these Gentlemen; when I considered the alarming Nature of the Letter from the Commissioners of the Navy, dated the 17th of May; when I revolved within myself that I had been the immediate though innocent Cause of reducing my Family to the greatest Distress, my Mind was tortured with the most poignant Pain. Nothing could assuage, but every Thing heightened, my
 Misfortune.

Misfortune. I had been obliged to give up the Ships and Stores, after a long and expensive Winter, and denied a second Trial: I found myself succeeded by Projectors, whose Appearance bespoke the greatest Affluence, whose Plan was not only almost idolized for its Ingenuity, but whose Success was seemingly secured by the Protection and Patronage it received. I thought such Gentlemen, supported by such Assistance, would doubtless succeed. At first my Heart glowed with the Thoughts of again seeing the poor old Royal George above Water, though I was not allowed the Honour of accomplishing so desirable an End. I was flattered in my fond Hopes, by seeing these Honourable Gentlemen caressed and protected in the most effectual Manner, not only by the chief Officers of the Port and Yard, but by many respectable Officers of his Majesty's Navy. All were unanimous in their Praise, and each strove to outdo another in Offers of Services, in giving Assistance, and in Efforts to render that Assistance effectual. Even the long Stages, part of my Apparatus, which had cost me 150l. in making, were immediately ordered from the Dock-yard, and taken out to Spithead, by the King's People, for the Projectors' Use. Though I was never permitted to have one of the *sailing Lighters*, yet they had the very best Vessels: Riggers, in a Launch, also attended them, and all the Boats from the

Fleet ; nay, the Ship's Company of his Majesty's Ship Grampus, which lay near the Royal George, was likewise ordered to assist;—and, in taking out these great Mens' Apparatus to Spithead, with Anchors, Cables, Stores, &c. without the Expence of Man or Means to these Adventurers. When I, who was only a poor Individual, could not obtain even a Boat's Crew to assist me, in taking his Majesty's two Ships, Royal William and Diligente, to Spithead. I was obliged, myself, to get Men sufficient to work them out, and moor them. It must be supposed a considerable Number were requisite, when nearly 600 were actually assisting in getting the Royal William again into Harbour after my Failure. Had I been fortunate enough to have met with such Assistance as these Gentlemen received, they would never had any Trouble about this Matter, as undoubtedly, in that Case, I should have succeeded, and, of Consequence, prevented them from being so elated at the Beginning, and so disappointed at the End of their ingenious Procefs. Great, however, as their Pretensions were, I will venture to say, no Agreement whatever was made at the Boards to assist them more than myself.—It is my Duty, however, to resign myself to my adverse Fate.

I would wish the two Plans, that of my own Invention, and the other, which is not the Invention of these great and affluent Adventurers,
 Commissioner

Commiffioner Hickes and Samuel Remmat, Esqrs. to be fully investigated, and ftrictly examined, by the beft Judges, by whose Decifion I will chearfully abide. The one has been experimentally tried at Spithead, and found to be practicable and effectual for the Purpofe; the other has proved the reverfe, although it muft be allowed it looks very ingenious and pretty on a Table, or in a Cabin.

As thefe Projectors have in Public endeavoured to fhew the Impracticability of my Plan, I truſt I ſhall not be thought either envious or malicious in ſaying, that I defy their Affertions, and will prove, either to themſelves, or Friends, that their Plan, or any Part of it, cannot be effectual or practicable at Spithead. I cannot help obſerving, that this Plan, of which Meffrs. Hickes and Remmat availed themſelves, was offered me laſt Summer,* by a Mr. John Jackſon, who now declares himſelf the ſole Inventor, and that he is very ill-ufed, and would be glad to be concerned with me.

I will not longer tire the Reader's Patience, further than obſerving, that the Event of their Plan ſpeaks for itſelf. I muſt acknowledge they have been more fortunate than I was; for putting

* See Letter No. XXV.

ting travelling Charges aside, a very small Sum would refund the Money that has been really paid for their Operations. The honest Tradesmen, and others, who supplied the Materials for their Apparatus, &c. and supported them thro' the whole, from the generous Payments they have received, will be the best enabled to ascertain the Expences of these ingenious Gentlemen.

AFFIDAVITS



A F F I D A V I T S

Referred to in the preceding Narrative.

A.

*Borough of Portsmouth, in the }
County of Southampton. }*

WILLIAM TRACEY, of Portsmouth Common, in the Liberties of the said Borough, and County of Southampton, Broker; John Brinehead, of the same Place, Ropemaker; Robert Stangroom, of Portsmouth, of the said Borough, Master and Mariner; William Bell, of Portsmouth Common aforesaid, Carpenter of his Majesty's Ship Royal William; Thomas Wallace, of the same Place, Ship Builder; Joseph Pink, of the same Place, Joiner; Edward Brine, of the same Place, Brazier; William Robertson, of Gosport, in the said County, Rigger; William North, of Portsmouth aforesaid, Mariner; Richard Hoare, of Portsmouth Common aforesaid, Victualler; Robert Green, of Portsmouth Common aforesaid, Butcher; John M^c Daniel, Gunner

ner of his Majesty's said Ship Royal William; and Thomas Dorfet, Boatswain of the said Ship; and Jonathan Prefcott, of Gosport aforesaid, Foreman of Riggers, severally make Oath and say; and first, this Deponent, the said William Tracey, for himself, saith, that having been employed, by Agreement with Government, to weigh and recover his Majesty's Ship Royal George, he, this Deponent, on Thursday the ninth Day of October last, being then on Board His Majesty's said Ship the Royal William, and it being then high Water, did clearly observe and see the Royal George move, and go a-head; and the Royal William and Diligente move and go a-stern, in one Body, upwards of thirty Feet from the Place where the Royal George lay; and that he, this Deponent, from Sunday the fifth Day of October last, to Monday the thirteenth Day of October last, at High Water, did actually perceive the Royal George to be quite lively, and on float, in the Bed she lay; and this Deponent further saith, that he did not, at any Time, see the Cap of the Boltsprit, Jib-boom, and Traveller, belonging to the Royal George, so far above the Surface of the Water before she was so moved, as aforesaid, as he did after she was moved.— And these Deponents, the said John Brinehood and Robert Stangroom, for themselves, severally say, that these Deponents being on board his Majesty's said Ship the Royal William, and having the
the

the Charge of the said Ship, and of the Diligence, and of the Men on Board them respectively, under the Direction of the said William Tracey, they, these Deponents, the said John Brinehood and Robert Stangroom, on Sunday the fifth Day of October last, at the high Water, were alarmed by the People in the Ship, that the Royal George moved and swaddled in her Bed; whereupon, they, these Deponents, the said John Brinehood and Robert Stangroom, on their respective Oaths, solemnly declare, that the Royal George was then very visibly on float, and lively in the Bed she lay; and these Deponents, the said John Brinehood and Robert Stangroom, further severally say, that at several high Waters, between Sunday the fifth Day of October last, and Monday the thirteenth Day of the same October, the Royal George was on float; and, that on Thursday the ninth Day of the same October, they, these Deponents, the said John Brinehood and Robert Stangroom, being then giving Directions to the Men who attended the Bits of the Royal William, a general Cry arose on Board the Royal William, that the Royal George was going a-head; at which Time, they, these Deponents, the said John Brinehood and Robert Stangroom, observed, that the small Bower Cable, which held the Ship to the Eastward, was very taught, whereas, before it was slackened; and they, these Deponents, immediately saw the Stoppers cast off the small Bower; that

that the Royal William then went a-stern, and took Cable very fast; that is to say, about five or six Fathoms of Cable, and then the Royal William stopped, and would not take any more Cable; and these Deponents, the said John Brinehood and Robert Stangroom, further say, that on their going aft on the lower Deck, on board the Royal William, they observed, that about six Fathoms of Cable had been hove in by the Captane, on the Cable that moored the Royal William a-stern, which they, these Deponents, the said John Brinehood and Robert Stangroom, knew was very taught before; and these Deponents, the said John Brinehood and Robert Stangroom, further say, that they verily believe, that at the Time the general Cry was given as aforesaid, the Royal George was moved upwards of thirty Feet, at the least, to the Westward, from the Place where she lay; and these Deponents, the said John Brinehood and Robert Stangroom, further say, that they did not at any Time see the Cap of the Boltsprit, Jib-boom, and Traveller, so high out of the Water before the Royal George was moved as aforesaid, as they did afterwards.— And this Deponent, the said William Bell, for himself, saith, that he being on board the Royal William, on Thursday the ninth Day of October last, and, having taken Marks and Observations by the Land, he, this Deponent, the said William Bell, at about high Water, clearly observed and saw

saw the Royal George, Royal William, and Diligente all move in one Body to the Westward, at the Time the People were heaving at the Capstane for that Purpose ; and this Deponent, the said William Bell, for himself, saith, that for several Times, at high Water, between Sunday the fifth, and Monday the 13th Day of October last, the Royal George was lively and a-float in the Dock she lay in ; and this Deponent, the said William Bell, verily believes, that the Royal George hath been removed thirty Feet a-head, at least, from the Place where she lay in, and saith, that he never saw the Cap of the Boltsprit, Jib-boom, and Traveller of the Royal George so high out of the Water before the Royal George was moved as he did afterwards.—And this Deponent, the said Thomas Wallace, for himself, saith, that he being on board the Royal William, on Thursday the ninth Day of October last, and having previously taken two Marks, or Observations, in a Parallel Line, with one Mark on the Shore, did clearly observe, that the Masts of the Royal George did not, at the Time she moved, as aforesaid, separate from the Royal William and Diligente ; but saith, that all the three Ships moved in one Body together ; and saith, that from Sunday the fifth, and Monday the thirteenth Days of October last, the Royal George was lively and a-float in the Bed she lay in ; and verily believes the Royal George hath been
 been

been removed, from the Place where she lay in, thirty Feet a-head; and that he never saw the Cap of the Boltspit, Jib-boom, and Traveller, of the Royal George so high out of the Water before she was moved as he did afterwards.—

And this Deponent, the said Joseph Pink, saith, that he being on board the Royal William, on Thursday the ninth Day of October last, observed that the Masts of the Royal George did not separate from the said Royal William and Diligente, but that all moved in a Body together; and further saith, that from Sunday the fifth, and Monday the thirteenth Days of October last, the Royal George was lively and on float, in the Dock she lay in, and verily believes the Royal George hath been removed thirty Feet a-head from the Place where she lay in, and that he never saw the Cap of the Boltspit, Jib-boom, and Traveller so high out of Water before she was moved as he did afterwards.—

And this Deponent, the said Edward Brine, for himself, saith, that he hath made frequent Excursions to Spithead, to see the Endeavours made in raising the Royal George, since the fifth Day of October last; that on Tuesday the seventh Day of October last, he staid on board the Royal William to be convinced of the Fact as to the Royal George moving in her Dock; that he sat himself down on the Fore-top of the Royal George, and observed a perpendicular and starboard and larboard Motion,

Motion, sufficient to convince this Deponent, that the Royal George was moved from the Bottom of her Dock ; that he attended several Times at high Waters, and, in particular, on Wednesday the eighth Day of October last, he passed from the Gangway of the Royal William to the Mainmast of the Royal George, and there observed the same Motions, if not greater, than the Day before, owing, as he supposed, to the Augmentation of the Spring Tides ; that he also observed the Marks made on the Rails of the Quarter-deck of the Royal William, to an Observation on the Land, by which it clearly appeared that the Royal George had been moved about thirty Feet to the Westward.—And this Deponent, Ralph Robinson, upon his Oath, saith, that he being on board the Diligente, on the ninth Day of October last, he took particular Marks by the Masts of the Diligente and Royal George, and a Building in the Isle of Wight, which he brought to his View in a parallel Line ; that on the same Day, when the People in the Diligente and Royal William were heaving at the Capstanes to move the Royal George, he clearly and distinctly saw the Masts of the Royal George, Royal William, and Diligente, all move in one Body to the Westward ; and saith, that the Royal George was moved to the Distance of its Breadth, or thirty Feet and upwards ; and that for several high Waters, between the fifth and ninth Days of October last, he perceived the

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Royal

Royal George was lively and on float in the Bed she lay in.—And this Deponent, the said William North, on his Oath, faith, that he being in a Boat on the ninth Day of October last, at the Jib-boom End of the Royal George, he clearly perceived and saw by the Motion of the Jib-boom that the Royal George was on float; that finding the People on Board the Royal William and Diligente beginning to heave at the Capstanes, he was very attentive, and clearly saw the Royal George's Jib-boom and Masts, the Royal William and Diligente, all move in one Body to the Westward; and verily believes, by the Marks he had observed on the Land, the Royal George was moved at least thirty Feet to the Westward. And this Deponent, the said Richard Hoare, on his Oath, faith, that he being on board the Diligente on the ninth Day of October last, and having the Charge of the People at the Bits, forward, he observed the Diligente to go a-stern, about six Fathoms, by the Cable he caused to be veered out, and faith it was utterly impossible for the Diligente and Royal William to go a-stern, without the Royal George going a-head, as the Cables were all hove taught in the Diligente and Royal William at the same Time; and faith, he verily believes the Royal George was hove a-head to the Westward thirty Feet and upwards.—And this Deponent, the said Jonathan Postgate, on his Oath,

Oath, saith, that he was on Thursday the ninth Day of October last attending at the Capstane in the Diligente, and that about six Fathoms of the Cable, which held the Diligente to the Westward, was hove in, and saith it was impossible for the Diligente and Royal William to go a-stern so far without the Royal George going a-head; and verily believes the Royal George to be moved thirty Feet to the Westward.—And this Deponent, the said Robert Green, on his Oath, saith, that he was on board the Royal William on the ninth Day of October last, that he, by the Orders of the said John Brinehood, cast off the Stoppers forward in the Royal William, and that the said Ship took about six Fathoms of Cable, and verily believes the Royal George to have gone a-head about thirty Feet to the Westward.—And these Deponents, the said John M^r Daniel and Thomas Dorset, on their respective Oaths, say, that they, on the ninth Day of October last, attended the Capstane of the Royal William below, and found upwards of six Fathoms of Cable to have been hove in; but they say, as they were below, they could not perceive by the Land whether the Royal George moved or not, but that they observed at the high Waters, between the fifth and thirteenth Days of October last, that the Royal George was lively and a-float in her Dock, and verily believes her to have been moved.

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Signed

Signed { WILLIAM TRACEY,
JOHN BRINEHOOD,
ROBERT STANGROOM,
WILLIAM BELL.
THOMAS WALLIS,
JOSEPH PINK,
EDWARD BRINE, Junior,
RALPH ROBINSON,
WILLIAM NORTH,
RICHARD HOARE,
JONATHAN POSTGATE,
ROBERT GREEN,
JOHN M'DANIEL,
THOMAS DORSET.

Sworn at Portsmouth, in the said County, the
first Day of November, 1783, before me,

R. G. TEMPLE, MAYOR.

LETTERS.



L E T T E R S.

B.

Copy of a Letter from the Honourable
JAMES LUTTRELL.

Ganges, Portsmouth Harbour, 16th Dec. 1783.

S I R,

I Received your Letter of yesterday's Date. I am glad to understand by it, that my Officers and Men gave you every Assistance in their Power for raising the Royal George, pursuant to the Orders of the Admiral and Admiralty.

The Support which Government gave you; the Stores which they allowed to be issued; the Ships and Men employed in that Service, stamps a Credit upon the Merit of your Plan, beyond that of my Opinion in its Favour. I freely confess I think the Defect was not in your Plan, but the Execution of it. I believe the same Mode of slinging the Royal George with Cables, properly stretched, for each to bear on equal Strains,

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would

would raise the Royal George, if it was a *public Work*, that the Men might act under regular Discipline, to be able to heave all the Purchases taugt in Time for the Tide. But an Individual, vested with so little Authority as yourself, was not likely to carry command enough for the Exertions required of so many Men.—And your Geer was hardly stretched for your Purpose before you left off. And I believe that, with the Assistance you had, if the Attempt had been made earlier in the Year, you would have succeeded. Though I was often on Board the Royal William, I was not there when it was generally reported the Royal George had floated in her Bed. I understood, from the Report of my Officers and Men, when they came on Board from Work, that the Royal George was certainly moved in some Degree. I think you undertook too extensive a Work for an Individual, and that the moving the King's Ship out of the King's Roadstead ought to be the Business of the public Service.

Your Agreement will best shew how far Government have pledged themselves to reimburse you if you failed in your Undertaking. But, at the same Time, I am of Opinion, that your Attempt was meritorious, your Plan ingenious and practicable, and deserving of Reward and Encouragement from the Public. Though Men improving on your Plan, and by it inventing another
ther

ther and better, might make it improper to adopt your's the ensuing Season.

I am,

S I R,

Your humble Servant,

JAMES LUTTRELL.

C.

Copy of a Letter from Capt. HUMPHREYS.

Southampton, Nov. 4, 1783.

S I R,

IN answer to your Letter, I am happy to assure you I shall, without Reluctance, relate, for the Satisfaction of any Body you wish, what I saw on Board on Thursday the 9th of October, or at any other Period, if necessary, during my frequent Visits to see your Operations at Spithead. What I relate you may know many on Board that heard me repeat; but, being a Stranger to all, I cannot say whom.

When the Cables a-head had been veered out, and the Men were heaving on the opposite ones a-stern; I was in the Quarter-gallery of the Royal William, and from the Object which I fixed my Eye on, I could distinguish clearly the Diligente gained considerably on it. At last, a Frigate, in particular, after losing, by slow Degrees, the Port-

E 4

holes,

holes, &c. was quite out of my View. What led me to think that the Royal George must go likewise, was, that her Main-top lay along-side a Port-hole of the Royal William, and did not during the Time of my Observation change its Position.— Whether this may go far enough to prove the Points in Question, those that are better Sailors than myself may better judge; they, however, led me to be very sanguine in my Expectations of your Success; and I regret very much that your Disappointments and Misfortunes occasioned the Loss of that Time and Opportunity which would, in all probability, have secured it.

I am,

S I R,

Your most humble Servant,

RICHMOND WEBB HUMPHREYS.

D.

Copy of a Letter from THO. SOUTH, Esq;
late High Sheriff of Hampshire.

Bossington, 1st November, 1783.

BELIEVE me, Mr. Tracey, of the numerous Spectators that your Undertaking invited to Spithead, no one looked on with more Anxiety, no one heard of your Misfortune with more Chagrin, or more sincerely laments your Failure than myself,

myself, who scrutinized into, and observed all your Operations with a Degree of Pleasure and Admiration unknown to others.—As the Poet says, “ ’Tis not in Mortals to command Success,” but, this I will aver, you deserved it. Your Plan is both rational and philosophical, and was in a great Measure well executed ; your Sweeps were laid down and fixed with judgment, would have borne twice the Weight of the Royal George ; and your buoyant Powers were equal likewise to the Task of floating her. All this is manifest, because you failed only in not having secured a more than sufficient power of Falls to support the Weight for a Continuance. I believe the united Strength of your Cables, drawing in single Lines, to have been about one-third more than the Resistance ; whereas they should have been more than double, for the different Angles they drew in must make it next to impossible they should all strain alike. I too well foresaw, as I can bring Proof, the Calamity e’er it happened.

I rejoice to hear, that you are likely to undertake the Business afresh. If properly supported, with the Experience you now have, there remains not a Doubt of Success. That she was actually on float on the Saturday, I would make Affidavit, for I saw the three aggregate Bodies move together with one uniform steady Motion. But you don’t know the Nature of Cordage so well as I do, who have broken many Pounds worth of the best
 manufactured

manufactured Hemp London could produce, with dead Weights, and have found what must strike you as the Case, " That a Rope, capable of suspending a Ton to-day, breaks with it if it hangs to-morrow ; for when, by the continued Strain, the Elasticity of it is exhausted, snap it goes. So that the Power ought at least to be a Ton and an half to secure the Support of a Ton for a *fortnight*, particularly where the Swell of the Sea may cause the Action to be unsteady.

As I still survey your Prints with Pleasure, in full Assurance that the Business, in some future Day, will be effected as there described, I will desire you to send me the other plain and the coloured one, by the Gosport Coach, to the Bell, at Romsey, where my Servant frequently goes with Parcels to my Son, who is now at the Royal Academy, and shall have a Commission to pay you what remains due for the Prints when I receive them. I truly wish you Success in the Spring, and am,

S I R,

Your's, &c.

THOMAS SOUTH.

P. S. Let me desire you to mark in the Plan, as nearly as possibly you can, the Cables that gave way.

Copy

E.

Copy of a Letter from Lieut. EDGE, of
his Majesty's Ship Goliah.

Goliah, 24th January, 1784.

S I R,

YOUR Letter of the 13th of this Month I got only to Day, being on Leave of Absence, with the Print you mention, which I am very much obliged to you for, and will keep it as a Remembrance of that great Undertaking you took in hand last Year. The little Assistance I could possibly be to you, you were very welcome to: I wished it had been in my Power to have been more so. With regard to the Royal George being moved in her Bed, I am well convinced she was so; and had the People you employed exerted themselves, and the Weather had not proved so bad, I am of Opinion you would have succeeded.—Nothing was wanting on your Side.—You made every Exertions Man could do. I make not the least Doubt but you will succeed, if employed on that Business, in the Spring.

I am,

S I R,

Your's, &c.

WILLIAM EDGE.

Copy

F.

Copy of a Letter from Lièut. RIOU, of
his Majesty's Ship Ganges.

Portsmouth, 7th February, 1784.

S I R,

I Acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 18th of January last ; and in Answer to which, if it will be of any Service to you to know my Opinion concerning the weighing of the Royal George, I will give it you truly, because the Theory of your Plan, together with so much of the practicable Part as lay in your Power, appeared to me to be founded on Judgment, and worthy the Support of every Individual, but particularly that of the Officer, who could with a little Attention and Trouble to himself and Ship's Company, be of infinite Service to you and your Undertaking. What I have maintained to every Body with whom I have conversed on the Subject of the Royal George, I now mention to you : It is my firm Belief, that had you had a sufficient Number of Men on the Spot ready to all Calls, and under the Order and Discipline of Naval Officers, also co-operating with you, and on your Principles, the Royal George would have been weighed. Instead of which, during the few Nights that I was on board the Royal William, on which Time, as I understood from you, you
so

so chiefly depended, as to call it your last Effort, and for which Reason I attended with seventy Men, I remarked, that the total Want of Obedience, good Order, and Discipline, together with a Scarcity of Men, was the only Thing, in my Opinion, which frustrated your grand Undertaking. I lamented it at that Time, not chiefly on your Account, but for public Motives. And I do verily believe, that the Royal George was moved in the Bed she lay; and had it been a plain Surface, instead of the hollow Bed, out of which you had to move her, your Attempt, in spite of the Want of Discipline, &c. before-mentioned, would have proved successful.

I am,

S I R,

Your's, &c.

EDWARD RIOU.

G.

Copy of a Letter from Lieut, SHORT, of
the Goliah.

Goliah, 7th Feb. 1784.

S I R,

YOUR Letter, with the inclosed Print, I received, for which I return you my Thanks. As to the little Assistance I was to you in that very arduous Undertaking of your's, you are welcome

welcome to, and I wish it had laid in my Power to have been more so, as I am convinced that great Attempt only failed for want of proper Officers and Men to second your unremitting Attention. I am well convinced the Royal George was moved, and was very sorry when the Gale came from the S. E. Had it not come on, I think you would have been able to have moved her into shoal Water before the Winter Season was too far advanced. I have only to add, that should the Attempt be made again, I wish it may be put in your Hands, as I am certain, no Person would pay more Attention, and none, in my Opinion, more deserving; and, with proper Assistance, I doubt not but you will succeed.

I am,

S I R, &c.

J. SHORT.

H.

Copy of a Letter from Lieut. WHEATLEY,
of the Goliah.

January 3d, 1784.

S I R,

I HAVE received your Letter of the 16th Instant, wherein you have asked me to acknowledge, providing I saw the Royal George to move or fall in her Dock or Bed, when on Board of

of you the 9th of October. I could perceive her both to sally and lift ; and, if proper Assistance had been given you, your Purchase, in my Opinion, must have answered your Expectations. It was very unfortunate the Wind, on the 11th and 12th, blowing so intensely from the S. E. which occasioned some of your foremost Cables giving Way that you so much depended upon, and put it, of course, past all Hopes of raising her before others were substituted.

I am,

S I R, &c.

FRANCIS WHEATLEY.

I.

Copy of a Letter from Lieut. WHITE, late
of his Majesty's Ship London.

Portsmouth, 10th Jan. 1784.

S I R,

I Received your Note of yesterday's Date, and have to acquaint you, that the little Service I could possibly render to you, on your great Attempt to weigh and recover his Majesty's Ship Royal George, you are welcome to. I think I should have done no more than my Duty, had it been in my Power to have done much more.

As

As to the Royal George, I am conscious to myself of her being on float on the 6th, 8th, and 9th of October last : On those Days, at the high Waters, I stepped from the Royal William's Gun-whale on the head of the Royal George's Main-mast, where I felt, and perceived a perpetual Motion, and, at different Periods, I felt the Royal George to strike on the Ground. I went from thence on the Head of the Foremast, where I found the Motion to be much greater, which convinced me of her being a-float in her Dock. I went on Board several Times to view your Operations, &c. which I think were well founded, but your Men wanted to be under more Discipline on such a heavy Undertaking. I was not on Board the Morning it was generally reported that the Ships were gone to the Westward, but was shortly after. By my Marks, which I had previously taken on the Isle of Wight, I found they were altered by the Ship's moving some little Distance to the Westward, as also canted a little to the Northward. I was also glad to find you had 38 Feet of your Stern Cables in, which was a convincing Proof of her having been moved. I am sorry the Gale should come and increase so hard from the S. E. as I was fully persuaded, you would have removed the Ship into shoal Water, with a proper Assistance of Men ; but you could not half man your Capstane ; 137 were too few a Number. If Government would think proper
to

to employ you again in the Spring with proper Officers, and a sufficient Number of Men, make no Doubt but you will succeed.

I am, &c.

THOMAS WHITE.

K.

Copy of a Letter from Lieut. WHITAKER.

Portsmouth, Jan. 10th, 1784.

S I R,

ON the Receipt of your's, of the 9th Instant, I must, in Answer thereto, acknowledge, that being on board the Royal William on Wednesday the 8th, and Thursday the 9th of October last, to view the Operations carrying on by you for the recovering his Majesty's Ship Royal George; that on the high Water of these Days I observed the Royal George to be in Motion, and on float, and am of Opinion she was moved to the Westward, some small Distance from the Place where she first lay. I am sorry it came on to blow so hard, otherwise I have no Doubt but you might have succeeded in your Attempt; and if you attempt it again, I sincerely wish you Succeeds.

I am,

S I R, &c.

JOHN WHITAKER,

Lieutenant in his Majesty's Navy.

F

Copy

L.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. HUGH FALCONAR, late Lieutenant of his Majesty's Ship Bedford, now belonging to his Majesty's Ship Ganges.

Ganges, Portsmouth Harbour, 10th Feb. 1784.

S I R,

WHEN your Note came on Board, I was on Shore, otherwise would have answered it by the Bearer. I was extremely sorry, as were all the Officers of the Ganges, to see the Wind come on so foul from the S. E. on the Saturday, 11th October, in the Afternoon, and its continuing so to do all Night and Sunday. As to the Royal George being lively and a-float in her Bed, at the high Water, from Monday the 6th of October to Saturday Noon, 11th October, I am very well convinced and positive of; and believe to have been moved some small Distance to the Westward, on Thursday the 9th, when it was generally reported she was moved. But being between Decks, in the Royal William, at the fore Capstane, which was entirely manned by the Ganges Men, and under my command, I could not see by the Land to any particular-Distance; but this much I am certain of, that several Fathoms of Cable were hove in, which moved the Royal William

William to the Westward. I lament your Failure, as I was very sanguine of your having Success; and if you attempt it again, I have little Doubt of your Success, provided you have proper Help, and the People to be victualled on board the Ships.

I am, &c.

HUGH FALCONAR.

M.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. WM. FROST,
late Lieutenant of his Majesty's Ship
Egmont.

Goliah, 7th Feb. 1784.

S I R,

I Received your Note: in Answer to which, I am happy to have it in my Power to certify, if necessary, that on my being sent from the Goliah, on Sunday the 5th Day of October last, when about high Water, I most distinctly observed the Royal George to move, and swaddle in her Dock or Bed. And, that on Thursday the 9th of October following, did more distinctly see the Royal George on float, or lively in her Dock. At ten at Night I went under the Jib-boom, and saw an Officer get on the Boom, but could not keep his Seat she jumped so hard. I verily believe you

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moved her in some Degree to the Westward.—
I was very unhappy, as were all our Officers, to
see the Wind come on so fresh at S. E. when you
were so precariously situated. I think it a thou-
sand Pities you had not the Men to lay on Board
a few Nights before, to have hove your Purcha-
ses down at the Morning Low Water, as I think
there would have been but little Doubt of hav-
ing moved the Ship. I wish you every Success,
and fine Weather for your next Attempt,

And am, &c.

WILLIAM FROST.

In



IN Addition to the preceding Testimonies in my Favour, I flatter myself I shall be pardoned for mentioning the following Circumstance, as a further Proof of my having actually moved the Royal George. The Fact can, if necessary, be attested by respectable Evidence. The Abilities of the Gentleman I allude to, in his Profession, are unquestionable, *and, in the present Case, his Veracity will hardly be doubted.*

When it was known the Royal George was moved, it consequently became the general Topic of Conversation. At one of them, Mr. Gilbert was heard to declare, he had taken particular Marks to bear with one of the Masts of the Royal George, and by his subsequent Observations, he said, he was convinced she had been moved fifteen or sixteen Feet to the Westward, as far as he could judge, by the Distance, which was about four Miles.

On receiving so agreeable an Information from such a Quarter, I took the earliest Opportunity of waiting on Mr. Gilbert, and accosted him in the Dock-yard. I enquired of him, if he had taken Marks, and was sensible of the Ship's being

moved. He answered me, he had, in the Manner above related; and candidly acknowledged the same before two Captains of a Man of War, and several other Gentlemen.

A few Days after my Failure, Admiral Pigot, one of the Lords of the Admiralty, came down to see the State in which the Royal George lay. I had wrote to the Right Honourable Board on the 14th and 16th of October.* Before I had an Opportunity of receiving an Answer, Mr. Gilbert, sorry am I to say it, not only deprived me of the Advantage of the Position of the Ships; but sent a Number of Officers and Men to cast off the Cables, Geer, &c. which was done in such Confusion as put it past my Power to take up the most valuable Part of his Majesty's Stores, the Cables, Chains, &c. Of these I had taken the most particular Care, and had the Precaution of keeping a proper marked Tally to each Cable's End, by which Means I could have taken them up one after another, as I had put them down, and placed them in my Operations. Thus I should have saved Government some thousands of Pounds, which were lost by a wanton Act, not more detrimental to the Public than oppressive to an Individual.

As I have already observed, a very few Days after Mr. Gilbert had thus publicly declared his
certainty

* See Letters No. XIV. XV.

certainty of the Royal George being moved, I was ordered by Admiral Pigot to meet him at Spithead, in order to see the State and Condition of the Royal George. The Admiral was accompanied by Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Mosely, the two Master-attendants. On having viewed the Wreck, the Admiral asked me many Questions, respecting the Ship being moved, and the Practicability of raising her, &c. My Answers were according to the strictest Truth. Among other Authorities, I mentioned that of Mr. Gilbert, and to him I referred the Admiral for Information. That Gentleman, however, refused me, in this Respect, common Justice ; for, instead of giving a positive Answer, he made equivocal Evasions, by asserting, in the general, that my Plan was inadequate to the Purpose ; that, supposing I had got her away, I could not carry her in Shore ; that possibly his Marks were altered by the Royal William and Diligente being hove to the Westward, and the Royal George left behind, with many other Reflections unjust and uncharitable ; Reflections I by no Means deserved, and which could serve no Purpose but that of prejudicing the Admiral against me. I told himself, plainly, his Aspersions were uncandid and untrue. But against Mr. Mosely I do not reflect : he spoke nothing to my dispraise, nor did he make an ostentatious Attempt to prove an Improbability,—for it was morally impossible for the two Ships to move to the West-

ward without the Royal George, in the Manner all were hove and secured in: o one Body.* Let me ask any reasonable Person, who knew the Situation in which the Ships were, if there was the least Shadow of Possibility that the Royal George could be left behind? Will Mr. Gilbert assert seriously the contrary? No: nor can he deny, that on Thursday the 9th of October, when on the Quarter-deck of the Royal William, an Hour or more before high Water, he then perceived the Royal George was lively and off the Ground, and actually said so to me.—“ I believe,” says Mr. Gilbert, “ you will get her away; but I would advise you not to attempt getting her a-shore to the Northward, but to carry her down, out of the Anchorage Ground, in the deep Water of Stoke’s Bay, and leave her there. He was certain Government would be well satisfied with my Conduct, and would amply reward me.”—He added a deal more to the same Purport. I then observed to him, that I had Anchors and Cables ready arranged; that the Truelove was loaded with several sixteen-inch Cables for the Purpose, and I should endeavour to get the Royal George in on the Hospital Shore. He then said, “ if I wanted any Thing from the Yard I should have it;”—but he never realized his friendly Professions.

* See the Affidavits, Captain Humphrey’s and Mr. South’s Letters.

fections. This Offer was made on the Thursday preceding that Saturday, when the Gale unfortunately happened. The next Intelligence I had of his *good Intentions* towards me, and to his Country's Interest, was, his sending, when in the midst of my extreme Distress and Danger, a Vessel, and taking away from me the twenty Riggers and four Boat-swains, at a Moment's Warning. I have already remarked, this was the only Assistance I had from his Department.

I could recount many other distressing and aggravating Circumstances; but, I presume, sufficient Proof has already been given of Mr. Gilbert's having abused the Power with which he was entrusted. Had he had private Views to gratify, his extraordinary Conduct might be accounted for; but as it is, no Ingenuity can devise the Motives by which he was actuated, nor the most Benevolent frame an Apology for a Man who has thus betrayed the Confidence of his Country, and occasioned the Ruin of an Individual and his Family.

LETTERS



L E T T E R S

REFERRED TO IN THE

STATEMENT OF FACTS, &c.

No. I.

Copy of a Letter to Lord Viscount
KEPPEL.

Sept. 1782.

MY LORD,

HAVING this Day waited on the Navy Board, thinking it the proper Place to apply, and meeting the Approbation of Commissioner Hunt, who advised me to wait on your Lordship, to give in a Plan of my Invention, in order, should it meet your Lordship's Approbation, to weigh and get up the unfortunate Ship, the Royal George, in her now State; and relying on your Lordship's Goodness in giving my Plan an equal Privilege of being examined into, with others that I find have been laid before your Lordship for that Purpose; and though, my Lord, it might seem

seem simple in some Respects, I could venture my Life, with Safety, on the Event of getting her up; and as I would not desire a Farthing for my Trouble in arranging every Thing necessary for getting her up, unless it fully succeeded; and as the Expence would be very trifling, except Men, which would be but little, as Ship's Men would be the most proper People to assist in weighing her.

I remain,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's, &c. &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

No. II.

Copy of a Letter from the NAVY BOARD.

Navy Board, 7th Jan. 1783.

Mr. TRACEY,

WE desire you will attend us here on Tuesday next, and are,

Your affectionate Friends,

CHARLES MIDDLETON,

J. WILLIAMS,

GEORGE MARSH.

Copy

(72)

No. III.

Copy of a Letter from the NAVY BOARD.

Navy Office, 21st May, 1783.

Mr. TRACEY,

WE have received your Letter of yesterday's Date, and for the Reasons you have given, we have order'd Portsmouth Officers to let you have the Diligente and Royal William, instead of the Dragon and Warspite, to raise the Royal George.

We are,

Your affectionate Friends,

CHARLES MIDDLETON,

E. HUNT,

G. MARSH.

No. IV.

Copy of a Letter from the NAVY BOARD.

Navy Office, 2d July, 1783.

Mr. TRACEY,

WE have received your Letter of the 29th past, and acquaint you, that we have sent a Copy thereof to the Officers of Portsmouth Yard, with Directions to give you such Assistance as they can, consistent with the King's Service;
but

but we cannot put a Stop to carrying on the Service of the Port to assist you.

We are,

Your affectionate Friends,

CHARLES MIDDLETON,
J. WILLIAMS,
GEORGE MARSH.

No. V.

Copy.---To the COMMISSIONERS of the
NAVY.

Portsmouth, 29th June, 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

I AM sorry to be under the real Necessity of troubling the Honourable Board again; but, having the Honour to acquaint you, that I have, with great Trouble and Expence, fitted the Royal William and Diligente, for the Purpose of attempting to weigh the Royal George, safe moored at Spithead; and having likewise prepared and got all the Purchase Cables and Tackle fixed ready to lay down round the Wreck, and nearly all the Stores and Rafts, and every Thing necessary for the Purpose at Spithead; and having about two hundred Men that I cannot keep employed to Advantage, for Want of some Purchase Vessels to assist me in fixing the Tackle round the Wreck, and
heaving

heaving the Purchases taught, I therefore most humbly pray, that your Honourable Board will be pleased to order me the Use of two of the unrigged mooring Lighters, with Capstanes, for a few Days, as it is entirely impossible for me to proceed on the Undertaking without such Assistance; and as it is likewise impossible for me to hire such Craft, there being none of the Kind at Portsmouth, but those belonging to his Majesty, most humbly trust the Honourable Board will take it into Consideration, and grant my real necessitous Request. I have the Honourable Commissioner and Master-attendants leave to acquaint the Honourable Board of my Distress. Those Vessels, the Master-attendant, Mr. Gilbert, says, are chiefly now employed in getting the Stores out of the Ships going to be paid off; and had not my Lord Hood's Fleet arrived at this Juncture, the Master-attendant had promised to let me have two such Vessels for the above Purpose; but now he says, he cannot, without an Order from the Honourable Navy Board, as they are wanted to bring Stores on Shore, and to take up the Ship's Anchors, &c. &c. I take the farther Liberty to acquaint the Honourable Board, that I have flung the Sloop that was sunk along-side the Royal George at the Time she went down, but I fear I shall not be able to weigh her up without the Assistance of two Lighters; and, as the Sloop now lays, it is not in my Power to fix the Purchase Cables to the Royal George,

George, till the Sloop is taken out of the Way, which I am certain of doing, as soon as I have a Lighter or two; I flatter myself of being able to acquaint the Honourable Board of having every Thing entirely fixed and ready for Trial in about a Fortnight, when I farther hope, on the Day of Trial, that the Honourable Board will be pleased to order me the Assistance of Men for that Day, from his Majesty's Ships and Ordinary, &c. and as I have spared no Expence in making the most essential Preparations for the Purpose, most humbly hope still to meet the Honourable Board's Countenance and Pardon for this Liberty.

And am,

Honourable Gentlemen,

Your most humble Servant,

WILLIAM TRACEY,

No. VI.

Copy of a Letter to PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;

Portsmouth, 5th July, 1783.

S I R,

PLEASE to acquaint their Lordships, that I have taken every possible Means in my Power effectually to prepare every Thing in Readiness, to make the Attempt to weigh the Royal George, which would have been nearly ready for the Attempt by this

this Time, had I been so fortunate as to have been supplied with Lighters to have laid down and have taught the Purchase Cables round the Wrecks, as they have been ready to lay down these twelve Days past; and by which I have not been able to employ my People to Advantage, although I am obliged to pay and victual them at a heavy Expence, as I hire them by the Month, and pay them weekly; and, after making Application to the Navy Board for two Lighters only, the Navy Board sent Orders to the Officers at Portsmouth, to give me what Assistance they could, consistent with the Service, as I was told; but I could not obtain but one, which is not sufficient for so heavy a Work; and I cannot, with Safety to the Undertaking, proceed without one more unrigged mooring Lighter, as there is no Possibility of hiring any such Kind of Vessels here; that I pray their Lordships Interposition in my Favour, as I have been at a very enormous Expence in rigging and fitting out the Royal William and Diligence, and making the other necessary Preparations, &c. and I am still in Hopes, with the Assistance of a Lighter or two more, to have all Things ready by the next Spring Tides, Weather permitting, to make the Operation; that I farther beg their Lordships Indulgence, of granting my Brother, Mr. Thomas White, one of the Lieutenants on board the London, should it be consistent with the Service, Leave to be at Portsmouth at the Time to assist me, he
 having

having offered his Services ; and is a Person of Abilities, and in whom I can place a Confidence, it will be of essential Service to me. I am, Sir, begging your's and their Lordships Indulgence and Condescension, in granting my real Necessities,

Your most obedient, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

No. VII.

Copy of a Letter from PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;

Admiralty Office, 8th July, 1783.

Mr. WILLIAM TRACEY,

HAVING read to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Letter of the 5th Instant, setting forth your Want of the Assistance of another Lighter, in your Attempt to raise the Royal George: I am to acquaint you, that their Lordships have sent your said Letter to the Navy Board, that they may give such further Directions as to them shall appear necessary.

I am,

S I R,

Your humble Servant,

PH. STEPHENS.

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Copy

No. VIII.

Copy of a Letter to PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;

Portsmouth, 24th Aug. 1783.

S I R,

I Thought it a Duty incumbent on me to acquaint you, for their Lordships Information, that I had most effectually secured all the Cables round the Royal George, in their proper Places, and that the Ships, and every Preparation, are ready for the Attempt to weigh her; and that, Weather permitting, I hope to make Trial the latter End of next Week. And, at the same Time, to solicit their Lordships Indulgence of giving Admiral Montagu Leave to let me have the Assistance of Seamen from the Ships at Spithead for that Purpose, being well informed, that the Admiral and Captains wish to assist me.

I am, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

Copy

No. IX.

Copy of a Letter to the COMMISSIONERS
of the NAVY.

Portsmouth, 24th Aug. 1783.

Honourable Gentlemen,

I TAKE the earliest Opportunity to acquaint your Honourable Board, that all the Cables are effectually secured in their proper Places round the Bottom of the Royal George ; and that the Ships and all other Preparations are ready to raise her, Weather permitting, this Week ; and as I have been at an immense Trouble and Expence, beyond what I ever could have expected, most humbly trust to meet your Honours Approbation and Assistance with Men for the Trial. Admiral Montagu's Officers came off to me, and acquainted me, the Admiral wished to give me some Assistance from the Ships at Spithead, provided he had an Order for the same ; and that I should acquaint your Honourable and the Admiralty Boards, which I hope will meet your Honours Approbation, as the Ships at Spithead are so handy to work.

And am,

Honourable Gentlemen,

Your, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

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Copy

No. X.

Copy of a Letter from PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;

Admiralty Office, 25th Aug. 1783.

Mr. TRACEY,

I HAVE communicated to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Letter of yesterday's Date, requesting, as every Preparation is ready to make the Attempt to weigh the Royal George, that you may have the Assistance of some Seamen from the Ships at Spithead. I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you, that they have sent your said Letter to Admiral Montagu, and have given him Permission to comply with your Request, if he has no Objection thereto.

I am, &c.

PH. STEPHENS.

No. XI.

Copy of a Letter from the NAVY BOARD.

Navy Office, 25th Aug. 1783.

Mr. TRACEY,

I N Answer to your Letter of yesterday, we acquaint you, we have submitted to the Lords of the Admiralty, whether Admiral Montagu may not

not be directed to assist you with what Men can be spared from the Ships at Spithead and Portsmouth.

And are,

Your affectionate Friends,

CHARLES MIDDLETON,

J. WILLIAMS,

GEORGE MARSH.

No. XII.

Copy.---Memorandum from Mr. GILBERT,
Master-attendant.

THE Master-attendant acquaints Mr. Tracey, that he has Directions from the Commissioners to lend him twenty Riggers and four Boat-swains, on the Day he shall make an Attempt to weigh the Royal George ; therefore, requests he will send for them on that Day, as they will be kept in Readiness for that Purpose.

J. GILBERT.

6th Oct. 1783.

No. XIII.

Copy of a Letter to COMMISSIONER
MARTIN.*Royal William, Spithead, 12th Oct. 1783.*

S I R,

THE Master-attendant having sent a Vessel, and taken away the Riggers and Boatswaines, and as to-morrow we mean, if Weather permits, to heave all down at low Water, and to start the Salt Water, in Order to heave the Royal George over the Bank of her Dock, and as at that Time it will be almost impossible to do without them, hope you will be pleased to let them, or if more agreeable, to let one of the mooring Gangs come off this Evening, to be in Readiness at five o'Clock to-morrow Morning, as the Seamen are ordered by the Admiral to attend at that Time.

I am sorry to inform you, that the Lighters which had two Cables to each of them to weigh on the Royal George, one a-head, the other a-stern, by the great Sea, occasioned by the Wind blowing hard from the S. E. the oldest, which was in a very rotten Condition, and after using every Means in our Power, sunk to the Southward of us; the other we had the good Luck to get on Shore near the Kicker Point, having started a Butt under a Rider, which we cut away, but could not stop the
Leak,

Leak, she struck against the Top of the Boltsprit, endeavouring to get her clear of the Ship. Hope you will excuse my not waiting on you, as I cannot leave the Ship in my present Situation.

And am,

With due Respect, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

No. XIV.

Copy of a Letter to PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;

Oct. 14, 1783.

S I R,

PLEASE to acquaint my Lord: Commissioners of the Admiralty, that I had completed the Preparations for the weighing the Royal George, and had properly moored the Ships along-side for that Purpose, got all the Purchase Cables into their proper Places, and hove on them so as to bear alike; when, on Sunday the 5th Instant, it blowed fresh from the S. W. The Royal George was, at High Water, observed to be in Motion, and appeared to be a-float in the Dock she lay in.— When the Weather, became more moderate, I began to heave and strain the Cables to get the Stretch out of them. The Tides falling out late, I could only take the Advantage of the Night's high Water, which I thought dangerous; but at

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the different Heavings, hove her a-stern about six Fathoms, so as to bring the under Part of the Cap of the Boltspirit entirely out of Water. At low Water also, the two Travellers which were on the Jib-boom, and which had, never since she sunk, been perceived so high out of the Water. As the highest Tide was expected on Sunday last, I thought to have made the great Attempt, and start all the Water that was in Cask, and use every Means to heave her over the Bank, clear out of her Dock, which I made no Doubt of effecting; but, unfortunately, on Saturday Afternoon, it came on to blow hard from the S. E. which hove in a great Sea, still increasing in the Night, and then continued blowing hard all Sunday. The Royal William was in Danger of carrying away the Mast of the Royal George, and getting on the Wreck; but, by every Exertion in my Power, thank God, all remained safe, except the breaking of six dependent Cables forward, three in the Royal William, the same Number in the Diligente, also 4 fourteen-inch Cables, that the two mooring Lighters were moored to. I had also the Misfortune to lose one of them, which was very old, and in a rotten State; the other, with Difficulty, I got safe a-shore in Stoke's Bay, in the Night, and have since got her safe into the Harbour, with the Stores that were in her. As it was impossible to substitute the Cables broke, to be in readiness for these Spring Tides, I thought it most prudent to

to use every Effort to weigh the Ship with the remaining Cables, and had appointed to heave both Ships taugt down, at low Water, on Monday Morning at five o'Clock, and start the Water, &c. at four o'Clock. I made the Signal for that Purpose, with three Lights at the Ensign Staff, and for the Assistance of a Number of Seamen; but, unfortunately, some of them did not come on Board till six o'Clock, and some not till nine or ten, and then the total Number of Seamen at last, that were on Board from the different Ships, were only 137, to man the two Capstanes in each Ship, 20 Riggers, and 12 Caulkers from the Dock-yard, exclusive of my own People; and with that little Assistance hove all down in the best Manner in my Power, and started the Water to the Quantity of seven or eight hundred Tons. Sometime before high Water, perceived the Royal George to be a-float forward, and she remained so for a considerable Time, till two other Cables broke on board the Diligente, one on the Larboard Bow, the other in the Starboard Gun-room Port, which made the Royal George settle down again in her Dock, and put it past Hope of again moving her till three Pairs of Sweeps are laid down, to substitute those that are broke, which could be effected in the Course of ten or twelve Days, Weather permitting, and with proper Assistance, as the Ships and Stages, with Calks and other Apparatus, are on the Spot, which I could chearfully undertake to effect.

effect. Except the hindrance of Weather, I have not, nor is there a Doubt of weighing the Ship. I am under the distressed Situation of acquainting their Lordships, that it is not in my Power to be at that very heavy Expence, having already advanced above 3000l. and thereby greatly distressed myself and Friends, who have supported me thro' this long and heavy Undertaking. And let me assure their Lordships, but for a few Enemies, the raising the Ship would have been effected two Months ago; and as I have most strictly performed so far what I undertook; even to put it out of the Power of my Enemies to deny, by bringing my Cables and other Apparatus to bear in their proper Places, for every Thing having holden fast and secure below, nothing in the least having given Way, for every Thing broke far above the Royal George's Bottom, therefore I intreat their Lordships will be pleased to consider the Accident as an Act of Providence, and owing to the Storm coming on so critical at the Moment all was ready for the Push, and not to any Imprudence or Neglect of mine. I trust their Lordships will take my hard Case into their Consideration, and order me Cables to replace those that are broke, Craft, and Seamen to work and remain on Board the two Ships, under the Direction of two Lieutenants, with victualling for the same, and what other Articles may be found necessary to assist; and then I shall not have the least Doubt of raising the Ship
the

next Spring Tides, notwithstanding the advanced Season, Weather permitting, and thereby of convincing Mankind that this Country's Power in Maritime Affairs exceeds the whole World.— I again beg to repeat, that there is not a Doubt of my Success, if their Lordships will be so kind as to give me a helping Hand. I refer their Lordships to the Admiral and Commissioner for my Conduct and Attention, &c. during the arduous Undertaking, and to whom I acknowledge the greatest Obligations for the Kindness and Services they have at all Times done me.

And am,

Your most obedient Servant, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

No. XV.

Copy of a Letter to PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;

16th Oct. 1782.

S I R,

PLEASE to acquaint their Lordships, in Addition of my last of the 14th Instant, if they will indulge me with 400 Men, and victual the same, and appoint two commissioned Officers, one in each Ship, to hoist a Pendant, that the Men may be under proper Discipline; and, upon the grand Day

Day of Trial, order as many Men as may be found necessary to assist,—(if I am successful, will have no Objection to settle with Government for the Wages and Victuals), I will undertake, and am certain to raise the Royal George; this there cannot be a Doubt of, as she was actually raised from the Ground, and is now upright.

I am, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

No. XVI.

Copy of a Letter to the NAVY BOARD.

Portsmouth, 22d Oct. 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

MY great Distress and Disappointments, after actually raising the Royal George from the Ground, and moving her a-head above 30 Feet, by the Storms coming on so critically a few Hours before I intended making the grand Effort, will, I hope, plead my Excuse for not writing your Honourable Board sooner, especially as I was assured you would immediately be made acquainted with the Contents of what I wrote to the Admiralty. I will, God willing, raise her, and bring her a Shore in the Spring, of which there cannot be a Doubt; and, I trust, the Admiralty Board will

will assist me with the Men I require ; and when the Time comes for the Push, order me Boats, and a Number of Men, from the Ships in the Harbour, and thereby enable me to show, this Kingdom can do more in Maritime Affairs than all the World.

I am, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

P. S. Admiral Pigot has been down to view the Royal George, and has ordered me to attend, which I shall immediately do when the Diligente comes into Harbour and I have properly secured his Majesty's Stores.

No. XVII.

Copy of a Letter from PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;
Admiralty Office, 24th Oct. 1783.

S I R,

MY Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having sent to the Navy Board your two Letters of the 14th and 17th Instant, respecting the Royal George, with Directions to take the same into their Consideration, and to Discourse with you upon the Subject Matter thereof ; I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you therewith, and to desire you will attend the Navy Board for that Purpose.

I am, &c.

PH. STEPHENS.

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No. XVIII.

Copy of a Letter from Admiral MONTAGU.

Queen, 8 Oct. 1783.

Mr. TRACEY,

MY Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having desired me to acquaint them of the Progress you have made in weighing the Royal George since her floating, I am to desire you will acquaint me in Writing thereof, and inform me every Morning of the Progress you made the preceding Day.

I am,

S I R, &c.

J. MONTAGU.

No. XIX.

Copy of a Letter from Admiral MONTAGU.

Queen, 11th Oct. 1783.

Mr. TRACEY,

I AM am to desire you will send me, by the Bearer, for the Information of the *King*, the Progress you have made in the last twenty-four Hours, in weighing the Royal George, without the least Exaggeration, as I am informed by several Captains who have attended to this Service, that
you

you have represented your having made much greater Progress in this Business than is really true.

In future, I desire you to send a Progress every Day by Noon.

And am, &c.

J. MONTAGU.

I would advise your making good Use of your Time, as most of the Ships will sail next Week.

No. XX.

Copy of a Letter to Admiral MONTAGU.

Royal William, Spithead, 11th Oct. 1783.

S I R,

IN answer to your's of this Date, I take the Liberty to acquaint you, that my Progress in weighing the Royal George, for the last twenty-four Hours, was in substituting a Cable to bear on the Starboard Bow of the Royal George, in the room of the Royal George's best Bower Cable, which, by laying so long under Water, and being exposed to the Sun, &c. this Summer, proved rotten, which I effected; and in heaving the Purchases at low Water on all the Cables in the Royal William and Diligente; and in fixing the long Stage and lashing Casks on it, to bear over the Wreck. Attended the high Water yesterday
Noon,

Noon, last Night, and this Noon, and have hove the Royal George by two 74 Bower Anchors ahead in the Hole, about thirty-six Feet, and her Head more to the Southward; and she appears, at low Water, by the Boltspirit End, to be higher out of Water than she has ever been since she sunk.—I am now flitting all the Purchases ready to heave the Ships down to-morrow Morning, at low Water, Weather permitting; and shifting a Cable to bear where the Cable broke last Night, that was cut by some Iron about her Stern; and am in great Hopes to clear her entirely out of her Dock to-morrow's Tide. Must hope the Admiral will reserve censuring my Conduct, as it can answer no good Ends my exaggerating any Thing; and as I cannot do any Thing of this arduous Task in Private, I cannot help what People will say of me. I will acquaint the Admiral of my further Proceedings, as much as my present Situation will admit.

And am,

With due Respect, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

Please to observe, I had not wrote or sent in any Manner, either to the Admiralty or Navy, or did I write on that Subject, further than the Letters herein contained, and the Facts were so publicly known of the Ship's being moved, that others had wrote to the Boards, and not me.

Copy

No. XXI.

Copy of a Letter to PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;

Portsmouth, 19th March, 1784.

S I R,

UPON the 16th October and 26th November last, I had the Honour of transmitting you a Letter, with 14 Affidavits, of the Royal George being actually moved from the Ground, and moved a-head thirty Feet, (Copies herein) and which I flattered myself would not have left a Doubt with their Lordships and the Honourable Navy Board of the Fact. But I am more than unhappy to find, that Orders have been sent down from the Honourable Navy Board to the Officers at Portsmouth, to demand from me an immediate Return of the Stores delivered for the Trial of raising the above Ship, as by Copy of their Letters inclosed, and my Answers, from which it appears, that after sinking the whole, as I may say, of my private Fortune in the public Service, and actually moving the Royal George from her Bed, and should have carried her where she would have been safe and well, had it not been for the Will of the Almighty in bringing on a violent Storm, at the Instant, I may say, of the grand Trial taking Place. I was also given to hope I should have had as many Men as I wanted at that Time, whereas, instead of 600 Men, or more, I received from the

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Dock-yard 36, and from the Men of War but 137 in all; and that, Hours after the Time for the grand Push. Added to this, when I applied early last Summer to the proper Officers for two Lighters to assist in letting down the Cables to sweep and cradle the Royal George, I was actually amused and refused the same, and lost from one Month to six Weeks of the best of the Season, for want thereof, altho' they were not in Service, and having expostulated, all in my Power, that without them I could not possibly proceed. These are real Facts, which I cannot avoid laying before their Lordships, to shew them the Difficulties I encountered with, and yet I should have succeeded without any the least Doubt with the Aid only of my own People, had not Providence so critically frustrated my Attempt.

I beg Liberty to hand you, with this ten Letters, from different Officers of King's Ships who were attending with me at the Trial, and thereto I refer their Lordships and the Honourable Navy Board as to the Facts of the Royal George being raised; but should any further Proofs be still necessary, I refer their Lordships to Captain Paine who was present when the Royal George was raised in her Bed, and who will, I am sensible, do me common Justice in proving the same. I must also beg to refer their Lordships to Captain Gayton and Captain Hill, of the Britannia, for their Opinion of me and my Proceedings, who,
I am

I am certain, wish to be called upon by their Lordships, and when done, I entreat the Boards will take my hard Case into Consideration, and assist me with from four to five hundred Men, from six Weeks to two Months, to remain on Board, Night and Day, his Majesty's Ships Royal William and Diligente along-side the Royal George, with proper Officers to command them from the End of next Month, and about sixteen second-hand Cables, and a small Matter of second-hand Cordage, with Lighters, and some other small Articles, the other being now Necessaries on board the Royal William and Diligente in the Harbour, and ready to be brought along-side the Royal George without any Expence, but just bringing the Vessels to Spithead, and for all which I will be answerable to allow whatever Damages may be sustained, out of my Part of the Royal George, and her Stores, when raised, which I hereby undertake to compleat, on Forfeiture of my Head; and should their Lordships direct the Mens' Labour required to be deducted also from me, I am satisfied to have it done. I need not point out to their Lordships the Necessity and great Advantage that will arise to the Public by the Removal of the Royal George, or the Credit and Relief it must bring me after the Loss of so many thousands of my Property. I again entreat their Lordships will take my hard Case into Consideration; and should they think proper not to employ me, and give me

an Opportunity of raising the Ship this Summer, which I assure their Lordships, with the Experience I am now Master of, there cannot be a Doubt of, I pray their Lordships will direct my Engagements and Securities to be returned me by the Honourable Navy Board, and not suffer me, an Individual, to be totally crushed for my Endeavours to serve the Public, by removing the greatest Obstruction and Nuisance to the Anchorage at Spit-head. I beg to remark, I was obliged to protest against the Manner of acting by me when the Dock-yard Men were sent out to bring the Royal William and Diligente into Harbour. I entreated a little Time might be given my own People to secure properly the Cables that were round the Royal George to her Masts, so as to preserve them, provided even that they were not to be used further in the Trial; but, contrary to all Persuasions and Rules of Propriety, the Cables were wantonly and wickedly cast off from the Royal William and Diligente, and left in such a State, that the Art of Man cannot recover them without raising the Ship. I must entreat the Favour of you to lay my Letters and Proofs before their Lordships, and favour me with their Lordships Answer, as the Season is advancing fast, which will much oblige,

S I R,

Your's, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

Copy

No. XXII.

Copy of a Letter from PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;

Admiralty Office, 5th May, 1784.

Mr. TRACEY,

IN return to your Letter of the 1st Instant, relative to the Royal George, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, that if you have any Propositions, to make them to the Navy Board, to whom your former Propositions on that Subject were referred.

I am,

S I R, &c.

PH. STEPHENS.

No. XXIII.

Copy of a Letter to PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;

Portsmouth, 22d March, 1784.

S I R,

IHAD the Honour of writing you the 19th, with sundry Affidavits and Letters from Officers of the Navy, to prove the Royal George being raised and moved last October, and to acquaint you, that this Day, Mr. Gilbert, the Master-attendant

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dant here, informed me he had Orders from the Navy Board to unload all the Casks and Stores now in the Royal William and Diligente, and that I must attend. Shall I entreat that you will lay my cruel Case before the Admiralty Board, and to beg their Lordships will please to give Orders to stop this Order to the Master-attendant, until their Lordships determine whether they will or not suffer me to raise the Royal George; for, by letting the Stores remain in the above Ships, no Expence of any Moment can arise, provided the Board chooses to have the Ship raised; whereas, if the Stores are put on Shore now, a heavy Expence and loss of Time must arise by unshipping the same. I beg your Interest and Friendship with the Lords of the Admiralty, &c.

And am, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

No. XXIV.

Copy of a Letter to PHILIP STEPHENS, Esq;

London, 26th Nov. 1783.

S I R,

A GREEABLE to your Letter with the Lords of the Admiralty's Order for me to attend upon the Navy Board, I came from Portsmouth and

and waited upon these Gentlemen the 7th of November, and laid before them such undoubted Proofs as I thought would not admit of the least Doubt of my having raised the Royal George, and carried her upwards of thirty Feet a-head.— But not having heard since from the Navy Board, I am to entreat you will acquaint the Lords of the Admiralty that I have put six honest capable Men on Board the Royal William and Diligente to take Care of their Stores till Spring, when I hope and believe their Lordships will assist me with a few second-hand Cables, and a small Matter of Cordage, with 400 Seamen, under the Command of proper Officers, to work and lie on Board the above Ships for about six Weeks to two Months, as I mentioned in my last Letter to their Lordships, and by the End of June, or Beginning of July next, I will have the Royal George up without any Manner of Doubt, under the Penalty of losing my Head ; and I am bold to say, had I been assisted, as I was given to understand I should, upon the last Trial in October, she would now have been safe in the Harbour of Portsmouth.

When the Fleet returns, I will procure further clear and convincing Proof from several of the Officers, if needful, of the above Facts. I shall return to Portsmouth, and wait their Lordships Commands for proceeding, whenever their Lordships

ships may think the Season will admit of the Work.

Being, with great Respect,

S I R,

Your, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

No. XXV.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. JOHN JACKSON,
received *October 3, 1783.*

Mr. TRACEY,

I 'V E discovered a Principle for raising the Royal George, if your Plan for raising her should unhappily miscarry, though I trust you will succeed. You may command my Principle, 'tis at your Service. I most willingly offer it gratis, if you'll please to accept of it. I've drawn this Conclusion, viz. What Degree of Power is required, as near as can be ascertained, and whether the given Power is in the Principle.—Now, in my Principle, any Degree of Power can be produced, which, I am fully persuaded, is more than sufficient to raise her. If you'll honour me with a Line, it will be esteemed a particular Favour, by

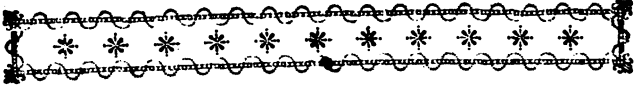
Your humble Servant,

JOHN JACKON.

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The Reason of this Address is wholly owing to the earnest Importunity of several respectable Gentlemen, whom I could not in Honour oppose. Please to direct your Address, if you choose to write, to be left at the Bar of the Woolpack, St. Peter's Alley, Cornhill, London.

I cannot



I CANNOT conclude this Narrative without making a few Observations on the preceding Affidavits and Letters, which indeed require but little Commentary. They contain such a Series of Proofs as must convince every candid Mind. No Evidence can be stronger. For can it be supposed that 13 Persons, unconnected and uninterested, would all concur in the same Assertions, were not the Facts to which they depose obvious and incontrovertible? But on the Oaths of impartial Men I rest not the whole of this Affair. The Gentlemen who have given me Letters in my Favour are of eminent Abilities, and their Testimonies establish the Propriety and Practicability of my Plan, above the Reach of Rancour and the Shafts of Malice:

None will venture to dispute the Candour or Capacity of the Honourable Captain James Luttrell, who observes in his Letter,* that "if the Attempt had been made earlier in the Year, I would

* See Letter B.

would have succeeded." Why that Attempt was not made I have already explained; and to the Reasons I have mentioned in my Narrative, I beg to add, that shortly after the fatal Catastrophe of the Royal George, the two Master-attendants gave it as their Opinion, in Writing, to the Navy Board, that the raising of that unfortunate Ship was both impracticable and impossible. It is by no Means a strained Conjecture to suppose that one of these Gentlemen, now at Portsmouth, threw every Obstruction in my Way to establish his *superior* Judgment with the Honourable Navy Board. But how he can reconcile his Conduct with that Duty he owes to Government is a Problem which I leave to others to determine. Of my being withheld Craft I made my Complaint to Captain Luttrell, in Presence of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, at the Time his Royal Highness and the Captain condescended to bring me a-shore with them, from the Royal William, in the Captain's Barge. Of his generous Assistance I shall ever retain the most grateful Sense. Had four Ships more followed his Example, I flatter myself, in spite of the Obstructions I received, I should in the End have succeeded. To Lieutenant Riou, and the Officers and Crew of the Ganges, I owed great Obligations, for they were of great Assistance. Sir Hyde Parker has my best Thanks; to him and his Officers I was greatly

greatly indebted. I am happy to think I met with the Approbation of these Gentlemen.*

Thomas South, Esq; and Captain Humphreys, are Gentlemen of Rank and Character, and totally unconnected with me. Their Letters do me particular Honour. Mr. South says, “ that she was “ actually a-float on the Saturday: I could make “ Affidavit; for *I saw the three aggregate Bodies “ move together, with one uniform, steady Motion.*”† He adds, that “ I failed in the End, by not having “ procured a more than sufficient Power of “ Falls, &c.” I hope that Gentleman will pardon my remarking, that on the Saturday he refers to, the Weather was so bad he could not get well on Board, therefore he had not the Satisfaction to see to what Perfection I had placed either of a 3 or a 4 fold Purchase Fall to each Cable in both Ships, at the last. These Mr. South had not an Opportunity of seeing.— Captain Humphreys is very positive in his Letter‡ “ that the Royal “ George did not alter her Position, but her “ Fore-top kept in the same Place, by a Port in “ the Royal William, while the Ships moved to “ the Westward.”—In short, the Testimonies of every Gentleman are one uniform Line of corroborating

* See Letters from Messrs. *Edge, Short, Wheatley, and Frost.*

† See Letter D.

‡ See Letter C.

borating Facts, of particular Assertions, that strengthen one another. No doubtful Ambiguity, not the least Shadow of Contradiction. I might easily produce a numerous Collection of similar Vouchers, if necessary; but those I have now offered will, I doubt not, convince the most scrupulous Mind.

To those Gentlemen who have thus favoured me with such Testimonies, and honoured me with such Approbation, I shall beg to tender my sincerest Thanks. To Captain Paine, of the Navy, I know not how to express my Gratitude. That Gentleman was present, and saw the Royal George actually a-float: He generously offered to attest the same when and where he should be called.— To Captains Kingsmill, Gayton, Wainwright, and Hawker, I offer my Tribute of Thanks. They acknowledged the Practicability of my Plan, and the Propriety I used to carry it into Execution.

On the Whole, after producing such positive Testimonies, after adducing such undeniable Proofs of the Success, of the Eligibility of my Plan, after narrating, with Candour, and with Truth, the Obstructions and Delays which occasioned my Failure, I hope every sympathizing Mind will feel for my Disappointments, and the candid and humane will join, I flatter myself, without

without Vanity, with my honoured Correspondent, Mr. South, in the Language of the Poet :

'Tis not in Mortals to command Success ;

But I've done more—I've deserv'd it.

To conclude : This Narrative was not originally wrote for Publication, nor is it now ushered into Light through lucrative Motives, or pecuniary Views. In my Petition, therefore, to my Lord Howe, when at Portsmouth last Year, as well as in that to the Lords of the Admiralty, I omitted inserting many Letters, Vouchers, and Documents relative to this important Undertaking, and briefly, in the most submissive Terms, confined myself to state the Causes which impeded my Progress, and prevented finally my Success. In Consequence of such Application, I attended at the Admiralty many Days, flattering myself with the fond Hopes of receiving some Redress, or at least an Answer to my Request. But I was unfortunate enough to obtain neither. Nourished for a long Time with the delusive Fancy of procuring Relief, and meeting with Distress and Disappointment, I have at last ventured to submit my Transactions, in a *national Concern*, to the Inspection of a *candid Public*. By such a Conduct I mean to convince the great and powerful, whom Prejudice may have deceived, or Partiality misled, that my Plan was not more sufficient than its Execution (if Obstructions had not prevented) would have been effectual.

I am

I am still persuaded the Right Honourable the Lords of the Admiralty, and the Honourable Commissioners of his Majesty's Navy, will, on fairly investigating my Case, condescend to do me that Justice it merits; and I hope their Determinations will prove rather favourable to an unfortunate Individual than to a national Saving, which cannot in the smallest Degree affect the Public, but greatly assist me, who, in the Prosecution of an arduous Undertaking, endangered my Life, ruined my Family, and sacrificed my Fortune; who, entirely owing to the Circumstances I have pointed out, and to no Error of my own, was prevented from accomplishing so laudable an End.

In the fullest Confidence therefore I rely upon a generous Public, and flatter myself, the great and powerful will not view with callous Indifference the Hardships of a distressed Individual; nor that any feeling or benevolent Person will refrain from pitying my Misfortunes, and affording Candour to my Case. The Approbation of my Fellow Subjects will be no small Consolation for the Disappointments I have had, and the Hopes of such a Recompence principally occasioned this Publication. To the Generosity, therefore, of the Great, the Strictures of the Candid, and the Benevolence of the Humane, the preceding Pages are respectfully presented.

F I N I S.

FEB 7 - 1935

