

At a Meeting of the West India Merchants, held at the
Marine Society's Office, March 28. 1794.

Present

Richard Seave Esq. in the Chair

Mr. Beeston Long	Mr. George Gilbert	Mr. Hunt
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Davidson	Mr. B. Vaughan
Mr. H. Jackson	Mr. Bettesworth	Mr. Lushington
Mr. Allan	Mr. S. Turner	Mr. H. Vaughan

Mr. Beeston Long reported that the Convoy
for the West Indies having sailed from Portsmouth the 8th
Instant, that Mr. Seave and himself had waited upon
the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the 19th Instant,
and requested that another Convoy might be appointed to
sail from Portsmouth the 29th of April, with the Merchant
Ships destined to the West Indies, waiting 24 Hours for the
Ships from the Downs, and that this Convoy may stop
at Madagas.

That, in respect to the extraordinary Charges
incurred upon the Cargoes of those Ships which have been
landed and housed at the Sufferance Wharfs, it is the
opinion of this Meeting, that all extraordinary Charges
of landing Warehousing, beyond the customary charges
at the Legal Quays, shall be borne by the Ships which
have been so discharged: and that the extraordinary
charge

Charge for Cartage, from the said Sufferance Wharfs, (if any) be chargeable on the Goods. And that it will be therefore proper that the Wharfingers, at the Sufferance Wharfs, make out their Bills accordingly. But, if there should be cases wherein the Consignees of the Goods may have been compelled to pay such extraordinary charges of Landing and Housing, they shall be reimbursed for the same from the Husbands or Agents of the respective Ships out of which the said Goods were landed.

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Ordered

That the above Resolution be printed and distributed to the Wharfingers at the Sufferance Wharfs; and for their Information be subjoined Schedules of the several charges upon Sugars landed at the Legal Quays.

Lighterage	gross	Heights under 3	.....	4 ^d	Cask
		from 3 to 8	.....	6 ^d	ditto
		8 to 13	.....	9 ^d	ditto
		13 to 18	.....	12 ^d	ditto
		18 and upwards	.....	15 ^d	ditto

Wharfage 6^d of Whitt, or Fierce

And upon all such as are carted away upon Landing, 3^d extra of Whitt, or Fierce for the Use of the Cranes.

Casks

	Landing	Housing	Weighing	Total
Casks of Sugar under 8	2 each,	2 each,	3 each,	7
Ditto from 8 and under 10	3 each,	3 each,	4 each,	10
Ditto from 10 and under 16	4 each,	4 each,	5 each,	13
Ditto from 16 and upwards	6 each,	6 each,	7 each,	19

Resolved,

That Fifty Guineas be paid out of the Fund of this Meeting to the Committee of Merchants of London, towards defraying the Expences in the Prosecution of the Measures necessary to remedy the Inconveniences of the present Legal Quays.

The Draft of a Bill respecting the safe deposit of Rum after the expiration of Thirty days from the Entry thereof, during the farther space of Three Months, should the same be necessary, which was communicated by Mr. Charles Long on the part of the Lords of the Treasury to the Chairman of this Meeting, having been read.

Resolved,

That this Meeting do approve of the same, with such alterations only as they have taken the liberty of suggesting in the Margin of the same, and on a separate paper accompanying it. Viz.

with liberty to the Proprietor or Proprietors thereof to withdraw the same out of the Custody of such Officer or Officers at any time within the space of Three Months from the time the same shall have been so conveyed to such Warehouse or Warehouses, upon paying the said Duties respectively for and in respect of such Rum.

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or Spirits, or with respect to the Duties of Excise
giving Bond for the payment of such Duties of
Excise agreeable to the provisions of 6 Geo. 3. c. 47
intituled "an Act for laying additional duties on
"certain Spirits imported, and for prolonging the
time allowed by Law for lodging and keeping in
Warehouses Rum and Spirits imported" and
also the Costs, Charges and Expences

Here introduce what stands lower
down on this Subject, in the ^{draft} of the
Bill,

Resolved, That it appears expedient to this Meeting, that
provisions similar to those proposed respecting Rum by the
above Bill, should be extended to the case of Coffee; and that
the same should be suggested as the Opinion of this
Meeting to Mr. Charles Long, in order that the same
may be submitted to the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury.

At a Monthly Meeting of the West India Merchants,
held at the Marine Society's Office, May 27, 1794.

Present

Deiston Long Esq^r, in the Chair

Mr Hunt

Mr Innes

Mr W Vaughan

Mr Jackson

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and
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Mr Beeston Long reported that the last Convey for
the West Indies had sailed from Portsmouth the 26th Instant
and was to call at Madaira, and the Convey from Cork after
having been detained by contrary Winds had sailed the 1st
Instant

Mr Beeston Long laid before the Meeting the
following Letter from Charles Long Esq.

Treasury, April 12th 1794.

I send that the Commissioners of the
Excise have a great many objections to the Clause
which I submitted to the consideration of the West
India Merchants; these objections do not apply to
the principle of the Clause which in general they
seem to approve but to the practicability of complying
with that which it enacts. they say among other
Things that they have neither Quay Room or
Warehouse Room sufficient for the purpose of landing
the Rum and Coffee in such quantities as would
probably be required of them, they have also other
objections not to the thing proposed, but to the
execution of it in the manner required; under
these circumstances I have been under the necessity
of deferring the introduction of the Clause into the
House of Commons until we can give that
accommodation to the Trade in this point, which
seems

seems to me to be absolutely necessary, without incurring the difficulties in point of execution which the Commissioners of Excise think the proposed mode liable to - I trust that this delay will not put the Trade to any inconvenience and I shall be happy at all times to render any Assistance in my power for its accommodation

Signed Charles Long

The following Letter from Richard Neave Esq^r & Preston Long Esq^r was laid before the Meeting of William Fawkener Esq^r May 13. 1794

In consequence of the Acquisition to the British Possession of the New Colonies in the West Indies, we think it right to submit to the consideration of the Lords of the Privy Council for Trade whether the Quantity of Corn Grain &c. which is allowed by the present Acts of Parliament should not be increased to double the Quantity otherwise whenever we have occasion to apply for Liberty to export Corn &c. to those Colonies the Quantity usually allowed may not be sufficient for the supply of the whole of His Majesty's Sugar Colonies

We beg you will be pleased to communicate this Circumstance to Lord Hawkesbury and we shall at any time be ready to wait upon his Lordships

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in case he wishes to converse with us on the
Subject.

Signed } Richard Neave
 } Boston Long

And in answer to the above, the following was
received from Mr. Fawkenor

Mr. Fawkenor presents his Compliments
to Mess^{rs} Neave and Long, and acquaints them that he
has received and laid before the Lords of the Committee
of Council for Trade and Foreign Plantations their
Letter of the 13th Instant on the subject of increasing
the quantity of Corn &c. for the Supply of the West
India Islands.

Mr. Fawkenor is sorry that he has not
been at leisure before this day to inform them that a
Bill has been submitted to Parliament for the
purposes mentioned in their Letter. — Mr. F takes
it for granted however that they have not been till
now unacquainted with this Circumstance

Office for Trade
Whitehall ^{the} 16th May 1794.

Resolved, That in consequence of the increased Quantity
of Rum imported in the course of last Year, and the
difficulty at present in the Sale of that Article it be
submitted to the Consideration of His Majesty's Ministers,
whether

whether Rum may not be included in the Contracts for the supply of the Forces in His Majesty's Garrisons

Resolved, That the above Resolution be transmitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer

Ordered, That Thomas Hunter the Constable Bill for One Quarters Wages, and Prosecutions be paid amounting to £ 24. 10. 6

Ordered, That Charles Wood be paid the Reward of Forty Shillings for the apprehension and Conviction of James Smith stealing 27 lbs W^t Sugar out of a Mth marked S^o 5 of Tortola Planter Entered by M^r James Dicks

At a Meeting of the West India Merchants, June 27 1794

Present

Beeston Long Esq^r in the Chair

Mr. Geo. Hibbert

Mr. James

Mr. Bettesworth

Mr. Mulligan

Mr. Douglas

Mr. H. Davidson

Mr. Aislabe

Mr. Webster

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed

Mr. Beeston Long acquainted the Meeting

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Meeting that Mr Allen (their Secretary) had received
some Letters from Mr Todd relative to the destination of
the Packets, and after consulting several of the West India
Merchants, had returned the following Answer to Mr
Todd.

Sir

I have laid before the West India Merchants Your
Letters of 28th April, 3, & 10th Instant and the papers enclosed
they are of Opinion that the Route of the West India Packets
and Schooners should be continued in the same manner as
settled on the 7th October last; That is that the first Packet
of the Month should call at Barbados, and afterwards proceed
to Jamaica, and return home from thence - The second packet
of the Month should go to Barbados, and proceed from thence
with the Letters for Dominica, Antigua, Montserrat, Nevis
& Kitts & Nevis - Upon the Arrival of the first packet at Barbados
Two Schooners should be dispatched with the Letters one to
Tobago, St. Vincents, Grenada, Nevis & Kitts, and the other
to Dominica, Antigua, Montserrat, Nevis & Kitts.

Upon the Arrival of the second Packet, a
Schooner should be dispatched with the Letters to Tobago, St.
Vincents, Grenada, Nevis & Kitts - both these Schooners to
return afterwards to Barbados - The West India Merchants
are likewise of Opinion that the Schooner & Packet should
call at St. Lucia, Martinique, & Guadeloupe in their Way
to Kitts as recommended by the Captains of the Packets at
Falmouth in their Letter of 3rd Instant - I am &c.

Stephen Todd Esq. (Signed) James Allen Secy
Secretary to the General Office

Mr. Beeston Long reported that Mr. Neave and himself had written to Mr. Stephens requesting Information respecting Protection that might have been ordered near Home for the Leeward Island Fleet, they were afterwards informed that Admiral Cornwallis had Orders to proceed to Sea directly, with a Squadron from Plymouth.

Mr. Beeston Long likewise reported that Mr. George Hibbert and himself had by desire of Mr. Dundas waited upon him when they were informed that in consequence of the Embargo, which the Americans had laid upon all Ships, in their Ports to the 25th May; it would be necessary for the West India Gentlemen to consider in what Manner the Islands could be supplied with Provisions and Lumber particularly in case that Embargo should be continued, they recommended that in the first place the Order of Council preventing Ships loaded with Corn from sailing without Convoy should be revoked, or at least suspended; which upon Consideration was not thought right to be granted, it was however agreed that upon specific Application Ships loaded with Corn &c should be permitted to go without Convoy.

Resolved, That as there is not at present any Convoy about to depart for the West Indies, and it being understood that

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That single Ships, may upon Application to the Privy Council
be permitted to carry out Corn, Flour, and other dry Provisions
to the West Indies.
Resolved, That it is expedient at present to make Application to
the Board of Trade requesting that no general Order for the
Exportation of Corn &c. be at present sent down to the Custom
House, but that the Permissions granted on particular application
for the ensuing three Months be considered in lieu thereof.

A Letter from Mr. Ogle Chairman of the
Wharfingers of the Legal Quays dated 18th Instant, enclosing
the following Resolutions being read viz.

London, June 18th, 1794.

At a Meeting of the Wharfingers of the Legal
Quays, in the port of London, held this Day it was

Resolved, that in consequence of their
becoming liable to the Importers of all Goods from the West India
Islands, and which are landed upon their respective Quays by Lighters,
or other Craft to be employed by them, and in consequence of the
great increase of the size of the Hogheads of Sugar now imported,
they shall in future make the following Charges for each separate
Business, to commence from the 1st day of July next.

Viz Lighterage on Sugar, One penny p^d

Warehouse Rent on all Hogheads of Sugar under
 8^{cwt} Two pence p^d Week

Warehouse Rent on all Hogheads from 8^{cwt} and
under 12^{cwt} , Three pence p^d Week

Warehouse Rent, on all Casks of Sugar, from 2^{cwt}
and upwards, Four pence p^d Week

The Rent to commence as heretofore from the second day after the Ships are reported.

Resolved, That as the Rates of Lighterage were considerably raised last Year, on application from the Wharfingers upon the plea that the Value of Sugar was so exceedingly increased and consequently their Risque; and as the price of Sugar is now very considerably fallen, that there can be no reasonable grounds at present for another advance in the charge for Lighterage.

That, as the alledged motive for the presents application of the Wharfingers is the extra size, of some part of the Whds imported; this Meeting do not object to proportioning the Charges to the relative size of Whds, by a Scale hereafter to be agreed upon, but should there be upon the whole any addition ^{to the present} Charges at the Legal Quays, that in that case the Wharfingers shall not be entitled to charge Rent as heretofore, but from the Day on which the Sugars have passed the Kings Beam.

That this Committee will be ready upon proper Notice, to meet the Wharfingers and confer with them, upon the subject of the above Resolutions.

Resolved, That One Hundred Guineas be paid out of the Fund of this Meeting, to the Committee of Merchants Bankers

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Bankers & for giving Bounties to Seamen and Landmen
Volunteers.

At a Meeting of West India Merchants held
at Mr. Long's, Bishopgate Street July 4th 1794

Present
Richard Neave Esq^r in the Chair.

Mr. Vaughan	Mr. Rucker
Mr. W. Vaughan	Mr. Duffell
Mr. G. Hibbert	Mr. B. Long
Mr. Manning	Mr. Long
Mr. Douglas	Mr. Jackson
Mr. Hunt	

The Minutes of last Meeting were
read and confirmed.

Mr. B. Long read sundry Letters
from Mr. Chalmers, relative to the Export of Horn,
to which he returned the following Answer

Dear Sir, I have communicated to several of
the West India Merchants the Letters you have done
me the favour to write to me, and I send you enclosed
a List of those who usually export to and import from
the West India Islands, it certainly will be right as
much as possible to limit the Quantities that may
be necessary for each Exporter. The Quantity of two
eights, which you propose, seems requisite in the present
Quarter, and that the permission for Ships to go without

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"Convey should only be granted to the real Exporter."

"I am very sorry it will not be in my power to attend the Board of Trade to day, and I am desired by the West India Merchants to assure you how much they are obliged to you for your immediate Attention to this Business."

A Letter from W^o Ogbe, Chairman of the Wharfingers of the Legal Quays, dated June 28 enclosing the following Resolutions, being read

"At a Meeting of the Wharfingers of the Legal Quays in the Port of London, held this day June 28. 1794"

"It was resolved"

"That in consequence of the Committee of West India Merchants refusing to allow one penny per Cwt for Lighterage on Sugar Land at their respective Quays, they do agree to abandon that Branch of Business to the Management & Direction of the Importers themselves

"That with respect to any Alteration in the Charge of Warehouse Rent, as stated in their Proposals of the 18th Instant they cannot after the most mature and deliberate reconsideration of the Matter deviate therefrom, and therefore the same stands as before stated, confirmed

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" That from and after the first Day of July
 next they shall consider themselves perfectly
 at liberty in closing with the Offers now
 made them for the housing of Sugar and
 Coffee, upon the Terms they have stated in
 their former Proposals to the Committee of West
 India Merchants."

Resolved,

That in consideration of the great accession
 of Business, which may be expected in the present
 Year, at the Port of London and of the Incompetency
 of the Legal Quays, and the Lighters at present in use
 for the proper performance thereof.

Resolved,

That this Meeting think it expedient
 to offer to the Wharfingers the following Terms for the
 present Year, provided they will undertake the
 Business as usual, and make these Changes general
 thro' the Year.

- 1st p Cent. for Lightuage
 - 2^d p Cent. p Week for Casks under 6 Cent
 - 3^d p Cent. for Casks ^{of 6 Cent} under 15 Cent
 - 4th p Cent. for Casks of 15 Cent & upwards
- and the Rent to Commence as at present.

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Mr. Boston Long and Mr. George Hibbert
proposed that Messrs. Thelleyson Brothers should
be members of the Meeting.

At a Meeting of West India Merchants held
at Mr. Long's, Bishopgate Street July 15th 1794

Present

Boston Long Esq. in the Chair.

- Mr. Bellerwoth
- Mr. George Hibbert
- Mr. Hunt
- Mr. Rucker
- Mr. Turner

The Minutes of last Meeting were
read and confirmed.

The following Letter from Mr. Ogilby
Chairman of the Wharfingers of the Legal Quays
was read.

City Chambers 5th July 1794

"I am requested by the Wharfingers
at the Legal Quays to inform you, that it
was having been their Disposition to meet
the Wishes of the respectable Committee of
West India Merchants; they have agreed
to accept of their Proposals respecting the Rates
of Lightwage and Warehouse Rent upon Sugar

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landed at each of their respective Quays.

Mess^{rs} Rowlatts & Co. Wharfingers
at Botolph Wharf desire me to state, that
as they have no Lighters or Connection with
any Lightermen they will not be responsible
for any Loss or Damage that may arise
upon any Goods in their Conveyance from
the Ships to their Wharf.

Resolved,

That as the Wharfingers of the Legal Quays,
by the Letter from M^o Cogle their Chairman of 5th July
have consented to accede to the Terms offered by this
Meeting of 4th July, the Charges therein mentioned
be allowed for the present Year viz^t

1^a p^{er} Cwt for Lighterage
Wharfmen Rent 2^a p^{er} Cask p^{er} Week for Casks under 6 Cwt
3^a p^{er} Cask . . . 5^o for Casks of 6 Cwt. and
under 15 Cwt.
4^a p^{er} Cask . . . 5^o for Casks of 15 Cwt & upwards

Resolved,

That it is not necessary for this Meeting to
take any further Notice of the Determination adopted
by Mess^{rs} Rowlatts & Co. at Botolph Wharf, and which is
communicated in the above Letter than to confirm the

James

former Resolutions of this Meeting, holding the Wharfingers as the Legal Quays liable for Dopes, in Lighters conveying Goods to their respective Quays, and to repeat that this Meeting cannot consider any Treaties which in Moments of Emergency, Individuals may be constrained to enter into with Mess^{rs} Rowlatts & Co, or any other of the Wharfingers as forming a Precedent for the Conduct of this Meeting, or as overruling the Usages of the Port of London, confirmed by Legal Authority.

Resolved,

That these Resolutions be printed and transmitted to Mr. Ogle Chairman of the Committee of Wharfingers, requesting he will be pleased to communicate the same to Mess^{rs} Rowlatts & Co.

Mr. Beeston Long reported that in the absence of Mr. Neave, Mr. Hibbert and himself had waited upon the Lords of the Admiralty and had requested that Protection might be granted to the Jamaica Fleet that sailed from thence the 23rd May, as they were soon expected.

19

A Meeting of the West India Merchants, held at
Mr. Long's, September 16, 1794

Present

Richard Neave Esq. in the Chair

Mr. Hunt

Mr. B. Long

Mr. Lyon

Mr. Bettsworth

Mr. G. Hibbert

Mr. Manning

Mr. Milligan

Mr. Duffell

Resolved,

That Application be made to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the first Convoy for the West India Trade Outward bound, ^{is now considerably increased} may sail from Portsmouth the first fair Wind after the 16th November waiting 24 Hours for the Ships from the Downs, that the second Convoy may depart Six Weeks after the sailing of the first, and the third at the same distance of Time after the departure of the second, the latter to call at Madeira.

That a Convoy may be in the Downs the 15th December to take the Ships to Cork, and that a Convoy from Cork may be ready to sail from thence the Middle of the Month of January.

[That sufficient Convoys for the increased home ward bound West India Trade be ready to sail, Three from Jamaica between the Months of April and 20 July, and from the Leeward Islands between the Months of April and 1st August, the time of their departure to be regulated by the Commanders of the Squadrons in concert with the Inhabitants of those Colonies.

That

That a Convoy may be ready to sail from Jamaica between the Months of August and January and another on the 1st January, and One from the Leeward Islands also on the 1st January.]

Resolved,

That Mr. Neave and Mr. Beeston Long be desired to transmit the above Resolutions to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty and to request a Conference with them on the Subject.

At a Monthly Meeting of the West India Merchants, held at Mr. Long's, September 23. 1794.

Present

Beeston Long Esq^r in the Chair

Mr. Jones

Mr. Jackson

Mr. Bellasworth

Mr. Allan

Mr. Milligan

Resolved,

That instead of the 16th of November for the appointment of the first Convoy for the Jamaica and Leeward Islands, the 9th November be inserted in the Minutes of the 16th Instant.

A Petition from Captain M. Namara of the Ship Commerce, employed in the Mountserrat Trade, was read, soliciting this Meeting to defray his Cost and Expences amounting to about £100 for an Action preferred against him by Spens, Custom House Officer the Plaintiff, and Verdict given in his favor at the last Kingston Assizes, for obstructing him in taking out of the said Ship a small

Bag

Bag of Sugar, which he conceived was concealed by the
Lumpers.

Resolved,

That the said Petition be deferred to the Consideration
of the next Meeting.

The Petition of James Hill Trinity House Officer was
read praying that this Meeting would take his Case into
Consideration, to defray his Expences of £16. 3. 10 for detecting two
Men with Sugar at Wapping Stairs, employed by James Sheldrake
a notorious Receiver of stolen Goods; when the said James Sheldrake
rescued the two Men and the Sugar out of Hill's Custody; whereupon
he applied to Justice Staples who made him find Bail for the
Affault — Sheldrake has since served the Petitioner with a
Copy of a Writ from the Marshalsea Court, for the Value of the
said Sugar, which he defended, but the Jury found for the
Plaintiff on the Idea that Hill was authorised to act as an
Officer Only on the River Thames, The Petitioner therefore is
unable to pay the above Costs; now in Concealment for fear of being
lodged in a Goal, thereby deprived the Means of obtaining
Labor to provide for himself, Wife, & Five Children

Ordered,

That upon Consideration of the above
Circumstances, James Hill's Expences of £16. 3. 10. be
paid, at the same Time to desire he will in his Capacity
persevere with Exertion, and Vigilance, to detect Thieves
committing Plunder on the River Thames.

At the Requisition of the Right Honorable
The

The Lord Mayor Paul Le Mesurier Esq^r, a Petition of the Wardens and Assistants of the Fellowship of Carmen of London, on behalf of themselves and the Rest of the Carmen of London, soliciting an Increase of the present Rates of Cartage was read.

Resolved,

That the Thanks of this Meeting be conveyed to The Right Honorable the Lord Mayor for having directed the Communication to ^{be made to} this Body by the Fellowship of Carmen.

Resolved,

That in consequence of the confined state of the Legal Duays the Article of Sugar in particular, not only sustains considerable Losses, but is subject to additional Charges—The West India Merchants therefore cannot under such Circumstances, agree to the requested increase of Cartage.

Ordered,

That Thomas Hunter the Constable's Bill, for one Quarter's Wages and Prosecutions be paid, amounting to £28 2 6

Resolved,

That Mess^{rs} Thelluson & Co. be elected Members to this Committee.

Samuel Long Esq^r Treasurer laid before this Meeting, Account Current of the West India Trade whereby it appeared that a Balance remained in his Hands, of £220. 1. 3—

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At a Meeting of the Monthly Meeting of West
India Merchants, held at the Marine Society's
Office, November 25, 1794

Present

Richard Neave Esq. in the Chair

Mr. W. Vaughan

Mr. Allan

Mr. Hunt

Mr. Turner

Mr. B. Long

Mr. B. Long reported that Mr. Neave
having received very pressing solicitations from
several of the West India Merchants, requesting
that the Convoy appointed for the 9th November
might be delayed, had desired the Lords of the
Admiralty to postpone the departure till the
13th; which was granted, on that day Mr. Neave
received a Requisition signed by some of the prin-
cipal West India Merchants, for a further delay
of the Convoy till the 16th Inst.; stating that upwards
of 50 Vessels were prevented by the Holidays
from clearing out, this Requisition Mr. Neave &
Mr. B. Long transmitted to the Admiralty, and
received for Answer that no further delay could
be granted, as among other reasons that by the
long prevalence of Westwardly Winds the West
India Convoy was become so connected with other
convoys that the detaining of one must considerably
hazard the safety of the other, on the 20th Instant

finding

finding the Convoy ^{was} still at Portsmouth, altho' the Wind had been fair ever since the 16th Instant, they applied to the Admiralty to know whether their detention was likely to continue, and received an Answer that the Lords of the Admiralty had not ordered the Convoy to be detained.

The Petition of Captain M^r.
M^r. Namara was again taken into Consideration; pursuant to the Resolution of a former Meeting

Ordered;

That Seventy Guineas be paid to Captain M^r. Namara towards the Expences incurred in a Prosecution against him for obstructing Spens a Custom House Officer, taking out of his Ship the Commerce a Quantity of Sugar which he had seized.

Ordered,

That Thomas Hunter the Constable's Bill for Prosecutions & Wages amounting to £26.18..6 be paid.

Samuel Drake & William Green soliciting the Committee for a Reward of Forty Shillings on the Conviction of Thomas Ford, whom they detected stealing Ginger at Brewers Quay, landed out of the Unions of Gilbert Thompson from Jamaica, consigned to Fuhr & Hibbert.

Ordered,

That the Reward of Forty Shillings be paid to Samuel Drake, and William Green.

At a Monthly Meeting of the West India Merchants, held at the Marine Societys Office, January 27th, 1795

Present

Richard Neave Esq^r in the Chair

Mr B Long
Mr G Hibbert
Mr Maitland
Mr Milligan
Mr Plummer
Mr Jackson
Mr Davidson
Mr Lushington

Mr Manning
Mr W Vaughan
Mr Bettsworth
Mr S Turner
Mr Duffell
Mr Hunt
Mr T. Neave
Mr Mitchell

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read, and confirmed.

The Petition from the Ticket Porters being read

Resolved,

That this Committee cannot with propriety interfere in respect to the complaint.

complaint therein stated.

Resolved,

That the Treasurer do pay
Twenty Guineas to the Marine Society for
the Use of the Committee Room, Three
Guineas to M^r. Newby their Secretary, &
two Guineas to M^r. Walker their Messenger.

Resolved,

That One Guinea each be given
to Robert Austin, William Footman
William Davis & William Eddington as a
Compensation for their loss of time in
attending the old Bailey on the Prosecution
of Edm^d. Oldfield for Stealing Sugar, at
Brewers Quay.

That the expences of Swearing
the Constables at the Legal Quays be defray'd
by this Committee.

M^r. Buston Long acquainted
the Meeting that M^r. Neave himself had
transmitted to the Admiralty since the
last Meeting a Letter signed by the
owners of several Ships in the Downs re-
questing the Convoy at Portsmouth to be
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detained till those Ships had an opportunity
of joining, & they had received an answer that
no delay could be granted, but that a Frigate
should be ready to Convoy them to a certain
Latitude. Mr Long likewise acquainted the
Meeting that finding the Convoy for Cork had
sailed the 15 December, Mr. Neave himself
had applied for another Convoy to be ready to
sail from Portsmouth the 10th January to de-
part for the West Indies fourteen days after
their arrival at Cork, which had been granted
& they had represented to the Admiralty that
in consequence of the delay in the departure of
the Convoy, a Number of Ships ^{were} at Plymouth, &
the Ports near there, and they requested direc-
tions to be sent to the Commander of the
Convoy to collect them before his departure.

Resolved,

That the first Convoy for the
West Indies being still in the Channel the
consequence of which may be very fatal to the
West India Islands, & to the Merchants and
Ship Owners connected therewith, it does not
appear to this Meeting proper at present to

name

name an exact time for the departure of a second Convoy, but that the Chairman be requested to inform the Lords of the Admiralty, that a Convoy for the West Indies, will be wanted about the beginning of March, and that the time of its departure may be fixed immediately on the departure of the present Convoy; that the Chairman be requested at the same time to represent in the most urgent manner to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the necessity that immediate measures be taken for enabling the Ships now detained in the Channel, to depart the first fair Wind.

Mr B Long reported that in consequence of a Letter from Mr Pitt he had waited upon him on Thursday last, with the Chairman of the other Bodies of Merchants when they had an Interview with Mr Pitt, Mr Dundas, & Lord Spencer & were informed that a Plan was in agitation to raise a Number of Seamen for the Navy by obliging the Owner of every Ship engaged in the Commerce of this Country to find a certain number of Seamen before the Ship should

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be suffered to clear out either in proportion
to the number of those they usually carry or ac-
-cording to the rate of Tonnage, & that as soon
as the owner of the Ship had delivered the num-
-ber of Men required for the Use of the Navy,
a Certificate should be granted to protect the
Crew of that Vessel during the Voyage outwards,

Resolved,

That it does not appear to
this Meeting that Merchants & Ship Owners
possess any exclusive or peculiar advantages
for the discovery or engagement of Seamen
excepting such as depend upon the Nature
of the Service in Merchant Vessels in respect
to extra Wages; opportunity of coming home
by the Run, & what is called Monthly
Allowance to Wives & Families; & that not-
withstanding these inducements which it
appears to be impossible to counterbalance in
the Naval Service, yet that the Vessels in
the West India Trade are in time of War
for the most part manned by Foreigners.

That the Comparative Facility
with which Merchants & Ship Owners in
time

time of War are enabled to Man their Ships, depending on the Causes above mentioned, has no Connection with their ability to provide Seamen for the Navy, but that it is much to be apprehended that any attempt to make them direct Agents in the Recruiting of the Navy may produce Jealousies & fears in the minds of the Seamen, Foreigners as well as Natives, & impede the Merchant Service without benefit to the Navy.

That admitting there be no peculiar means of obtaining Seamen for the Navy, possess'd by Merchants & Ship owners, the Regulation proposed, appears to this Committee in the light of a Tax upon the Mercantile Shipping Interest: a Tax Partial inasmuch as it must fall entirely upon the immediate Instruments of that Commerce which distributes its beneficial Influence among all His Majesty's Subjects of every description - a Tax which may prove moreover particularly oppressive by exciting a Competition among those concerned in the outfit of Ships anxious

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for Mercantile Purposes to get them cleared out, on any terms, & may then raise the Bounties to Seamen & other Charges of obtaining them to an intolerable height, & prejudice the more solid means of Recruiting the Navy; a Tax in fine tending to discourage that large Portion of the Mercantile Shipping of this Country, which depends solely upon freight for its support, & on the other hand to occasion an Advance of freight & add new burthens to trade at a time, when it is least able to support them.

That this Meeting anxious in Common with every trading Body to promote the Naval Service, will willingly cooperate with other in any measures wherein it may appear on reasonable Grounds, that the Mercantile Bodies can contribute with justice to themselves and with due consideration to the Commercial Interests of the Country, to the Marring of the Navy.

Resolved,

That in consequence of the Impediments which arise to the expeditious discharge of Shipping at the Port of London
from

from the confined space of the Regal Quays,
the want of Lighters and Warehouse Room
which Inconveniences are particularly felt
in time of War, when Ships arrive in large
Fleets, and at one Season of the Year it
will happen that with the utmost Diligence
on the part of the Importer, and the
Ships Husband, the Articles of Rum &
Coffee (having been hastily stow'd perhaps
in loading the Ship) must become liable
to seizure by their not being landed and
weighed within the time allowed by act
of Parliament, that when so seized ap-
plication has been made by Petition to
the Commissioners of Excise, stating the
facts whereby it might appear, that neither
fraud nor negligence was justly imputable
in the case; that under such circumstances
it should seem reasonable considering
the present difficulties of the Port of
London (measures of Remedy for which
it is hoped may be speedily adopted) that
the Property should be restored without
delay & without charge, unless indeed
some small Gratification to the seizing
officer

33

officer should be judged necessary; that it has however been experienced by Members of this Committee, that Petitions on such Subjects to the Commissioners of Excise, whatever be their merits, are rejected when they do not contain an offer of Satisfaction to the seizing officer, and payment of other Charges, & sometimes when they do, and the Ground on which Petitions are Rejected at the Excise office not being imparted, Merchants are left in uncertainty as to their further Proceedings; that moreover the Charges of Re-delivery when a Petition is the most favorably received are become excessive that ^{Besides} a fine of five to ten Guineas, Saw expences, Cost of Appraisalment, Warehouse Charges, & Rent at the Rate of Sixpence p Week are added; that there have been Cases where these Accumulated Charges have amounted to a third of the Value of the Property seized, that in every Case they exceed the late Customary Charges, and bear very hard upon the Ship or the Importer of the Goods.

That the Chairman be requested to take an early opportunity of communicating

communicating the above Statement to the
 Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury
 praying that their Lordships will be pleased
 to interfere by instruction to the Commission-
 ers of Excise, in order that so long as the
 Port of London shall labour under its
 present obstructions the Cases of Rum
 & Coffee seized as not landed, or not weighed
 in one time may be treated with Indul-
 gence, and the Property be speedily re-
 stored whenever fraud and negligence are
 not clearly imputable, upon the easiest
 possible terms. -

Resolved,

That Mr. Hunter's Bill of
 £27. 8. for various Prosecutions and Wages
 be discharged.

Mr. Meave & Mr. Beeston Long
 proposed that Sir Francis Baring, and
 Wall be Members of this Meeting

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At a Monthly Meeting of the West India Merchants, ³⁵
held at the Marine Society's Office London 24 February 1795

Present

Beeston Long Esq^r in the Chair

Mr Maitland

Mr Manning

Mr Milligan

Mr Bettlesworth

Mr Allan

Mr T^r Vaughan

Mr J Turner

Mr Hunt

Mr Jackson

Mr J Neave

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read
and confirmed

A Letter from Mr Stephens to Mr Neave,
dated the 5th Instant, desiring a day to be fixed for the sailing
of the next Convoy, for the West Indies having been read.

Resolved,

That Mr Neave and Mr Beeston Long be
requested to signify to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty,
that it is expedient to have a Convoy appointed to sail from
Portsmouth, for the West Indies the first fair Wind after the
25th of next Month, waiting as usual Twenty four Hours for
the Ships from the Downs; in order that the Ships may have
time to take their Cargoes on board at the several Islands, so as to
return from Jamaica on or before the 26th July, and from the
Leeward Islands on or before the 1st of August.

Resolved,

That it be particularly requested that Orders be
given for the Convoy to proceed direct from Portsmouth,
and

and not to touch at any other Port in the Channel,

The Bill for requiring Owners and Masters of Ships to furnish a certain number of Men in proportion to the Tonnage for the Service of His Majesty's Navy being read.

Resolved, That Mr. Beeston Long and Mr. Manning be requested to wait upon Mr. Pitt to confer with him upon the subject of the said Bill.

At a Meeting of the West India Merchants, held at the Merchant Seamen's Office. March 26th 1795

Presents

Richard Neave Esq^r in the Chair

Mr. Plummer

Mr. Hunt

Mr. Higgin

Mr. Wedderburn

Mr. Gwland

Mr. Blackman

Mr. Davidson

Mr. Mitchell

Mr. DeFell

Mr. Boddington

Mr. Wildman

Mr. J. Turner Mr. Thelluson

Mr. Jackson Mr. Long

Mr. Maitland Mr. Anderson

Mr. Milligan

Mr. Allan

Mr. B. Long

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read

Mr. Neave reported that he had transmitted to Lord Spencer the Resolutions of the last Meeting relative

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relative to the Appointment of a Convoy Outwards, and had
received an Answer that the Convoy would be ready as desired.

The following Note from Mr. Nepean was
read

Mr. Nepean presents his Compliments to
Messrs Neave & Long, and acquaints them that Vice
Admiral Sir John Laforey will have Orders to take
under his Convoy, the Trade bound from Spithead, to
the West Indies, and to proceed with them as soon
after the 25th Instant as possible."

Admiralty Office
19th March 1795

Resolved,

That Mr. Nepean be informed that under
the present Circumstances of the Embargo, the Ships for the West
India Islands, cannot take the Benefit of the Convoy now
appointed.

Mr. Beeston Long acquainted the Meeting,
that he had written a Letter to Mr. Cottrell, of which the following
is a Copy.

As it is very material that the West India Ships
now ready to clear out, should have the Benefit of the Convoy
appointed to depart from Portsmouth immediately in order that
the Ships may have time to take their Cargoes on board at the
several Islands, so as to return from Jamaica on or before the 26th
July, and from the Leeward Islands on or before the 1st August.

I beg you to submit to the Consideration of
the

The Lords of His Majesty's most Honorable Privy Council
 whether the West India Ships now ready to clear out should
 not be released from the Embargo upon condition that the
 said Ships shall not take on board and carry out any
 Seamen His Majesty's Subjects who are under the Age of
 50 Years or above the Age of 16 Years, except the Master
 two Mates, the Boatswain, and Carpenter and one
 Apprentice for every 100 Tons. This is agreeable to Act of
 Parliament which provides that no British Ship in
 time of War shall take more than $\frac{3}{4}$ Foreigners
 March 25th 1795. (Signed) Beeston Long

And he likewise attended the Lords of the
 Privy Council and stated to them the necessity of releasing
 the West India Ships from the Embargo as it was very
 material that the Supplies now on board the Ships should
 be sent out immediately - Mr Long informed the Meeting
 that he had not received an Answer to his Letter.

Mr. Beeston Long likewise laid before the
 Meeting the following Letter to Mr King

Sir;
 As great Inconvenience was arisen
 from the detection at Falmouth of the Letters
 by the last Sacket from Jamaica I submit
 to you whether to prevent any future delay;
 an

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an Order should not be sent to Falmouth, that in case of the Apprehension of any Danger of Infection from Fever, or any other cause, the Letters may be ferrugated immediately upon the Arrival of the Packets, and afterwards transmitted directly to London.

March 24th 1795

Jam^s B^e
(Signed) Beeston Long

John King Esq^r

At a Meeting of the West India Merchants held at the Marine Society's Office March 28th 1795

Richard Neave Esq^r in the Chair

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Mr Jackson | Mr Hunt |
| Mr B Long | Mr Allan |
| Mr Blackman | Mr Wildman |
| Mr Bettesworth | Mr Doddington |
| Mr Douglas | Mr G Douglas |
| Mr Hummer | Mr Turner |
| Mr Aislabic | |

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read

Mr Beeston Long acquainted the Meeting that he had received a Note last Night from Mr Cottrell informing him, that an Order has been sent to the Custom House to release from the Embargo the Ships bound to the West Indies

Resolved, That Application be made to the Lords Commissioners

Commissioners of the Admiralty requesting that as the West India Ships are now released from the Embargo, the Convoy may be appointed to sail from Portsmouth the 5th April, waiting 24 Hours for the Ships in the Downs.

The Importation of Sugar, and Rum imported into the Port of London, from the 25 March 1794 to 25th March 1795.

	Ships	Casks Sugar	Casks Rum
Jamaica	179	63.620	13.152
Antigua	25	8.797	937
S ^t . Kitts	25	9.224	366
Barbadoes	23	7.822	83
Granadoes	40	12.233	1.594
Mountserat	11	2.612	162
Nevis	2	1.429	47
Dominica	15	4.263	240
S ^t . Vincents	19	6.777	286
Sertola	6	1.793	136
Sundry Places	88	21.568	700
	<u>433</u>	<u>140.138</u>	<u>17.703</u>

Sundry Places enumerated viz.	Ships	Casks Sugar	Casks Rum
Guadaloupe	3	844	"
Martinique	34	10.606	"
S ^t . Domingo	14	2.410	"
S ^t . Lucia	5	714	2
Tobago	19	6.088	698
New Providence	7	229	"
Bermuda	4	85	"
S ^t . Thomas	1	347	"
S ^t . Croix	1	245	"
	<u>88</u>	<u>21.568</u>	<u>700</u>

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At a Monthly Meeting of the West India Merchants¹¹¹
held at the Marine Society's Office, April 28th, 1795.

Present.

Sir Richard Neave Bart., in the Chair.

Mr. Bettlesworth

Mr. Blackman

Mr. Douglas

Mr. Aislatic

Mr. D. Long

Mr. Hunt

Mr. Turner

Mr. F. Neave

The Minutes of the last Meeting were
read.

Mr. Beeston Long laid before the Meeting
the following answer from Mr. King

"Mr. King presents his Compliments to
"Mr. Long, and acquaints him that an Order of
"Council has been passed, for immediately fumigating
"and forwarding to London all Letters from the
"West Indies"

"Whitehall 17 April 1795."

Mr. Beeston Long reported that the
Resolutions of the last Meeting had been transmitted to the
Admiralty, and Mr. Nepean had by desire of the Lords
Commissioners, acquainted Sir Richard Neave, and himself,
that the Convoy would be ready at the time desired, they had
afterwards Letters from the Admiralty, of 11th & 14th April,
requesting to know whether the Merchant Ships were
ready

ready to take the Benefit of the Convoy, under Sir James Saforce, then waiting at Portsmouth; Sir Richard Neave, and Mr. Beeston Long wrote in consequence the 16th April to Mr. Nepean, requesting that the Convoy for the Ships destined to the West Indies might have Orders to sail the first Wind; waiting 24 Hours for the Ships in the Downs, the change of Wind having enabled the Ships to proceed there from the River.

Mr. Beeston Long acquainted the Meeting that he had made Application to Lord Spencer, for particular attention to be paid to the Protection on the Coast of America, of the Homeward bound West India Trade; as he was apprehensive the Enemy might send Cruizers to intercept them, on their Passage home, and he was assured, that particular orders would be sent to Admiral Parker, in the West Indies, and Admiral Murray, at Halifax, on that Subject.

Ordered, That Twenty Guineas be paid to the Committee of Ship Owners, towards defraying their Expences incurred in opposing the Bill as first introduced into Parliament, for raising of Seamen

Ordered, That Thomas Hunter the Constable's Bill

Bill for Wages to the 28th Instant, and Prosecutions, ⁴³
paid amounting to £25 16

At a Monthly Meeting of the West India
Merchants, held at the Marine Society's Office September 29th
1795

Present
Dreeston Long Esq^r in the Chair.

Mr G. Hilbert

Mr Allan

Mr Long

Mr Davidson

Mr Plummers

Mr Vaughan

Mr Maitland

Mr Jackson

Mr Driffell

Mr Lee

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read
and confirmed.

The following Letter written by the Chairman
to W Fawkener was read.

Sir, As several of the Ships are now preparing
to go out to the West Indies, and I understand that there has not
lately been any Order of Council issued for the Export of Corn &c to
those Colonies, I am directed by the West India Merchants to request
you will make Application to the Lords of His Majesty's privy
Council for Trade, that an Order of Council may be issued immediately
to allow the usual quantity of Corn &c to be exported in the Months
of September, October and November to the Sugar Colonies for the
Subsistence

Subsistence of the Inhabitants

I beg leave to submit to the Consideration
 "of the Lords of His Majesty's Council whether on Account
 "of the high price of Wheat it may not be expedient for the
 "present to limit the Quantity of Flour to one third of what
 "is usually exported in these Months, which for the other
 "Articles of Corn &c. hitherto allowed, has been three
 "of the whole Quantity"

Bishopgate Street
 16th September 1795

Mr Long the Treasurer laid before this Meeting
 his account Current for Monies received under the head
 of West India Trade, whereby a Balance appeared in his
 Hands in favor of the Fund of £ 301. 12. 5.

An Extract from the Minutes of the Committee
 of Merchants of London, stating that the formation of Wet
 Docks and Wharfs on their Borders at Wapping, had appeared
 to a numerous Meeting of Merchants, a measure of great
 commercial Expedience, and that Application should be made
 to the principal Commercial Bodies and Houses in this City,
 requesting their further Contributions

Resolved, That One Hundred Guineas be paid
 out

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out of the Fund of this Meeting, into the Hands of the
Treasurer, of the Committee of Merchants of London appointed
to take into Consideration the State of the Legal Duays.

A Letter from Mr. Matthias Lucas, Lighterman
being read, requesting to be allowed some part of his Expences
in prosecuting several of his Servants for Robberies committed
in his Lighters of Goods Outwards.

Resolved, That Twenty five Guineas be paid towards
defraying his Expences.

A Letter from Mr. Beeston Long to Mr. Nepean
dated 17th September, and Mr. Nepean's Reply thereto dated the 18th
September being read.

Resolved, That in order to obviate the necessity of an
Application for an immediate separate Convoy for the Merchant
Vessels, not engaged in the Transport Service, and now preparing
to depart for the West Indies - Mr. Beeston Long be desired to
make application to the Lords of the Admiralty requesting that their
Lordships will be pleased to take measures that such Ships of the
Description abovementioned, as may avail themselves of the Convoy
about to depart with the Transports, may have a sufficient provided
and ready to conduct them from that part of the West Indies where
their original Convoy may stop, to their respective destined Ports

Resolved,

Resolved,

That in case the above Application be complied with - It will not be necessary until this Meeting shall see how far the Merchant Vessels can avail themselves of the Convoy appointed for the Transports, to request any separate Convoy for the Trade of the Port of London - and that the Consideration of the time of Departure of the Merchant Vessels not yet arrived whether from this Port or from Cork, be upon these Accounts deferred.

That the Plan exhibited by Mr. Wyatt for rendering the Allion Mills the Warehouses for all the Coffee imported into the Port of London, appears to this Meeting to promise as much conveniency and Oeconomy as could be found in any one Place, but that this Meeting have great doubts whether it will be for the benefit of Trade to prevent Importers from warehousing the Coffee consigned them in premises of their own, which may be situated conveniently for His Majesty's Officers, and that Mr. Beeston Long be requested to take an early opportunity of informing himself from His Majesty's Ministers whether such a Restriction is meant to be insisted upon.

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Mr. W
Mr. M
Mr. G
Mr. J
Mr. A
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Mr. M
Mr. M
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confirmed
and Mr.

Resolved,

of the 11th
the Ships
the 10th Jan.

Downs, at

Resolved,

to be read
West India
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At a Monthly Meeting of the West India Merchants, held
at the Marine Society's Office November 24th 1795.

Present

Sir Richard Neave Bart., in the Chair

Mr Meddemburn

Mr Manning

Mr Gowland

Mr G. Douglas

Mr Allan

Mr Davidson

Mr Mulligan

Mr Mitchell

Mr H. Vaughan

Mr Plummer

Mr. Roddington

Mr. A. Douglas

Mr. B. Long

Mr. Deffell

Mr J. Neave

Mr Webster

Mr Hibbert

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and
confirmed

Several Letters that passed between Mr Neave
and Mr Beeston Long relative to the Convoys Outwards being read.

Resolved,

That Application be made to the Lords Commissioners
of the Admiralty, requesting that a Convoy may be appointed for
the Ships destined to the West Indies, to sail from Portsmouth
the 15th January next, waiting 24 Hours for the Ships in the
Downs, after the Wind comes fair.

Resolved,

That Application be likewise made for a Convoy
to be ready at Portsmouth, the 20th December to take the
West India Ships to Cork, and that a Convoy be appointed
to sail from Cork the 31st January, with the Ships destined
to the West Indies

That the Chairman be requested to make
Application

application to the Lords of the Admiralty, respecting the Homeward bound Convoys from the West Indies, adopting the purport of the Resolutions of 16th September 1794, upon that Subject, only particularly urging their Lordships to provide a sufficient Force to cover three Convoys from Jamaica, in the Months of May, June, and July, since experience has shewn that the Convoy which may be ready to depart in June, cannot be delayed till July, without manifest and very considerable Injury to the Trade.

Complaints having been made to Members of this Meeting, respecting the Conduct of Commodore Norman, in conveying the last homeward bound Jamaica Fleet.

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed for the purpose of collecting evidence from the Captains of the Merchant Ships, who composed the last Jamaica Convoy, and of reporting to this Meeting, their general Opinion as to the degree of Protection afforded them, by Commodore Norman.

Resolved, That Mr. Beeston Long
 Mr. Defell
 Mr. Milligan
 Mr. Wedderburn
 Mr. G. Herbert
 be of the said Committee, which will be an open Committee

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An Application from the Owners and Commanders
of Ships trading to the Leeward Islands, soliciting an Increase
of Freight Outwards was read

Mr. Plummer reported that in consequence
of a Communication made by Mr. John Naylor (that Plunderage
of Sugar on the River was carried on to a greater extent than ever, and
that he could bring proof of the same) <sup>Mr. Melman, Mr. Daniel, & Mr. Thomas, were appointed
to enquire into the same</sup> and that in consequence several
Meetings were held, at which Mr. Naylor and Mr. Solbery attended.
That Messrs. Crowther and Peale were appointed to take measures to
bring any delinquent to Justice, and that they had obtained the
cordial Cooperation of the Watermen's Company, and the Land
Coal Meters, whose Men were stationed at the several Coal Wharfs
below London Bridge, and Limehouse, and the Commissioners of
the Customs were also pleased to convey by Letter their determination to
assist in preventing and suppressing this Evil, and that they would
discharge any Officer upon Proof, that the Ship was plundered with
his Privy, Knowledge, consent or criminal Negligence, and in
order to check this extensive and alarming Evil, we caused Bills
to be printed and distributed in the most conspicuous places,
offering a Reward of £50. - to be paid upon Conviction, and in
conformity to the recommendation of Mr. Justice Bond, an
additional Sum of Five Guineas upon the commitment.

That a Complaint was exhibited to the Commissioners
and proved by the Oaths of three Witnesses before the Surveyor General,
that they saw a Boat laden put off from the Ship Kingston, and
on the Officers coming on board they found 2 Bags of Sugar containing
near 3 slung to a Gasket in the Hold, ready to be drawn up, the
main Hatchway open - 2 empty Bags near those filled - Tools
calculated for opening the Casks and 10 other empty Bags near
the Cabin, and that no Person was then on board the Ship, but the
three

the three Officers of the Customs, and the Mates Assistant and a Watchman who said his Business was to look after the Lighter. No Report has yet been made upon this Case, but one Person has been committed for Trial at the ensuing Assizes for the County of Surrey, and a Waterman and a Receiver at the next Sessions at the Old Bailey

That upon an application to His Grace the Duke of Portland, he has been pleased to obtain His Majesty's promise of Pardon to any Offender who should be the means of convicting a receiver.

Resolved, That this Meeting approve the Steps which have been taken, and that the Expenses incurred be reimbursed by this Meeting, and that they be requested to continue their exertions for the punishment & detection of the Gloucers of ^{the} ~~the~~ Richard Meave, and Mr. Beeston Long proposed Samuel and Benjamin Roddington Esqrs, John Procter Anderson Esq, and Charles Bosanquet Esq. to be Members of this Committee.

A Letter from Mr. Crisp's being read, That the Chairman be requested to transmit the same to Mr. Nepean.

Ordered, That Thomas Hunter the Constables Bill for Prosecutions and Wages to the 27th October be paid amounting to £31. 5. 6

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At a Meeting of the West India Merchants, held
at the Marine Society's Office, December 9th 1795.

Present.

Sir Richard Neave Bart, in the Chair.

Mr Sewell	Mr D Long	Mr Davidson
Mr Allan	Mr Plummer	Mr Jackson
Mr G Hibbert	Sir F Baring	Mr Duffell
Mr Hunt	Mr Milligan	Mr Manning

The Minutes of the last Meeting were
read, and Confirmed.

A Letter from Mr Hume dated 4th
December, to Mess^{rs} Crowther & Peale relative to a
Complaint made against three of the Officers of the
Customs.

Resolved,

That the Chairman be requested to
transmit the Thanks of this Meeting to the Commissioners
of the Customs, for their ready Attention to this Business,
in which the West India Merchants were so
materially interested.

The following Letter from Evan Nepean
Esq^r, to the Chairman, was read.

"Admiralty Office 2 Decem^r 1795
"Sir,
"Having laid before my Lords Commissioners

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" of the Admiralty, your Note of the
 " 25th Ult., transmitting by desire of the
 " West India Merchants, Extracts of their
 " Minutes on the Subject of Convoys to the
 " West India Trade; I am commanded by
 " their Lordships to acquaint you that
 " proper attention will be paid thereto

I am
 Sir

Your most humble Serv^t
 ("Signed") Evan Nepean

Sir Richard Neave Bart

A Report was read as follows -

" The Committee, appointed 24 November
 " for the purpose of Collecting Evidence respecting the
 " Conduct of Captain James Norman, of His Majesty's
 " Ship Medusa to the Fleet which sailed from Jamaica,
 " under his Convoy and that of the Triton Frigate, on
 " the 26th July last, made the following Report -

" That your Committee has proceeded
 " to take in writing from several of the most
 " experienced Commanders of Merchant Vessels, in the
 " said Fleet, Particulars of the Chief Accidents of
 " the Voyage so far as relate to the Protection
 " afforded them by Commodore Norman, and
 " has also met and examined *Nova Voce*, many

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" of the Commanders of Merchant Vessels in the
 " said Fleet, from whose connected Report, the
 " following brief Statement of facts has been made
 " out, In Confirmation of which the Commanders
 " consulted have given their Signatures, and altho
 " it is impossible that any one of them should have
 " witnessed all the unfortunate Events, of the
 " Voyage, yet your Committee has been very careful
 " to state nothing which cannot be fully verified
 " by the Commanders now here, and who were in
 " a Situation to give competent Evidence thereof

Brief State of Facts

On the 26th July 1795, the Fleet
 from Jamaica, were under Heigh in number about 130
 Sail, And on the 28th being collected off the West End of
 that Island, finally bore away for the Gulph, - and on the
 5th August then off Cape S^t Antonio, the Fleet were well
 together. - On the 6th August came on a smart Squall,
 and from that Day forward the Fleet diminished in
 Numbers.

On the 14th August, about 112 Sail
 could be seen from the Center of the Fleet, the whole then
 greatly scattered, in so much that the Ships to Windward
 and Leeward could not be discerned from the Center.

On

On that Day 7 P.M. Point Sacco, or the Keys of that Point, in the Island of Cuba bearing South, distant about 2 leagues, the Fleet being much scattered, and a great proportion of them so far to the Westward or Leeward of the Medusa, Captain Norman, that they could not distinguish his Signals, or see the Land (the Commodore instead of either collecting the Fleet, as it is usual off the Pan of Matanzas, previous to standing over for the Gulph or bearing up earlier, and collecting the Fleet before dark; or if that could not be done conveniently laying to all Night, making the Signal for that purpose, and giving the Ships of the Convoy all possible opportunities of seeing it made the Signal for hauling the Wind on the Starboard Tack, by which those that did see the Signal, and could not afterwards see his Light, were mistak'd to keep close hauled, the Wind about E by S and permitting them to lay up N E by N whereas he steer'd North, until after day-light the next Morning, and those Ships which were so far distant from him as neither to see his Signal in the Evening, his Lights afterwards, nor the Land before dark, also keeping their Wind a great part of the Fleet were in consequence separated from the Convoy, & some of them never again joined it

From the 14th August, till the 13th Septem^r
 the Commodore was for the most part, from 6 to 10 Leagues
 a head of the Center of the Fleet, which was extended at
 times upwards of 20 Leagues, from Van to Rear. the Wood
 bottomed and heavy sailing Ships carrying all the Sail
 they could set, and many of them carrying away their
 Spars, and sustaining other Damage, from so great a
 press of Sail, and altho' the Commodore occasionally
 shortened Sail, in Consideration of the Stemmost Ships,
 yet he never let them up far enough to ease their Sails
 by Night. - During this period a considerable part of the
 Fleet, perhaps three fourths of it was so far astern that
 it was impossible to discern the Commodores Signals;
 the Commodore going a head out of Sight of the Center
 Ships, while great part of the Fleet was out of their
 Sight astern, some Ships were actually left to separate
 from the Convoy, notwithstanding they were carrying
 their Steering Sails for several Days together to get up,
 During this period also, the Fleet sometimes consisted
 of 120, and at other times of about 90 Sail, as the
 Medusa carried more or less Sail.

On the 13th September in Lat 39: 49
 Long 47: 2 W. the Fleet consisting of 110 Sail, and the
 Stemmost Ships carrying every Sail possible, about 4
 A.M. the Wind shifted from the Southward and a

heavy

heavy Squall came on from the N. N. W. It continued to blow strong through the Day, many of the Ships however carrying their close reefed top sails. At Noon the Weather cleared up, and several Vessels were discovered to have lost their top Masts, and split their Sails from being taken suddenly with the profs of Sail they were obliged to be carrying. During this Gale the Medusa carried so much Sail that only 35 of the Convoy, and these chiefly copper sheathed and the fastest sailing Ships could keep up with him, and neither the Commodore, nor the Triton were to be seen by the greater part, or Body of the Fleet.

On the 11th, the Convoy was increased to about 50 Sail. During the 13th & 14th the Wind continued from the Northward, so that every Ship being close upon a Wind, no Separation could have happened from any Alteration in the Course. But not only the Commodore by the Sail he carried on the 13th during the Gale separated himself from 50 or 60 Sail, but during the Remainder of the 13th and the whole of the 14th, he never lay to, nor took any other means to collect the scattered Ships, which as well from the suddenness of the Squall & probability of damage thereby sustained, from observing that only the Coppered and fastest Ships were with him, & from the judgment expressed to

to him by several of the Masters of their probable
 Situation, there was every reason to believe were all astern.
 From the 14th to the 16th there were, from 45 to 50 Sail in
 sight of the Commodore, and many of these astern. On
 the 20th that Number had diminished full 10 Sail & on
 the 30th it was farther diminished to about 30 Sail, in
 sight of the Ships near the Medusa. - After the 13th & 14th
 of September many of the best sailing Ships which had
 kept with the Commodore found great difficulty to continue
 to do so.

Especially on the 18th & 19th, when the Commo-
 dore made so much sail ahead that several of the few
 Ships that had so remained with him, could neither see
 his Lights in the Night, nor distinguish the Medusa
 from the deck, during the Chief part of those Days, altho'
 they had a Distance on the Log of 184 Miles, or upwards
 on each of those Days, & afterwards on the 20th although the
 Signal of Inability to keep up, was flying on board the
 Sternmost Ships, and altho' the Triton at the same time
 made Signal that the rear of the Convoy was overpressed,
 yet, nevertheless the Commodore continued to stand on,
 keeping out the Signal for the Sternmost Ships to make
 more Sail.

On the 2nd of October in the British Channel
 the Fleet fell in with the Roselle, Captain Liddle, whom
 the Commodore knew by answering Signals. - The next
 Morning

Morning the *Roselle*, tho' doing her utmost to keep up, was near out of Sight, and no further Notice was taken of her.

On the 4th October the Fleet then consisting of 21 Sail (having previously parted with the Ships bound up *S. George's Channel*) the Commodore made so much Sail ahead, as to leave ten of his then Fleet so far astern, that tho' several of them made Signal of inability to keep up, yet the signal either could not be seen at that distance, or was not regarded by the Commodore.

The Weather was sufficiently clear every Day, during the whole passage for the Commodore to have collected his Convoy had he thought proper. He neglected however to do so, and suffered his top light in general to be obstructed by carrying his Mizzen top sail, & that too, notwithstanding the inconvenience had been noticed to him by some of the Masters, who had experienced it.

Between 50 and 60 Sail which had separated from the Commodore on the 13th September, kept their Course, making all the Sail they could with a view of coming up with him ahead. None of these however saw any thing more of the Man of War, & Sixteen of them were captured by the

Enemy

Enemy

We the undersigned Commanders of
 Merchant Vessels in the Fleet, which left
 Jamaica, 26th July 1795, in Company with
 His Majesty's Ships, Medusa and Triton,
 do verily believe the above written Statement
 to be true and exact, and we are ready re-
 spectively to confirm upon Oath such part
 thereof as came to our personal knowledge.

Jonathan Wilson Ship Tulloch Castle

David Robertson - Esther Lindo

John Carr . . . Ship Ceres

Robert Wilson - Ship Spooner

Goland Burton Ship Elizabeth

Alex^r Russell . . . Ship Jane

Hen Douglas . . . Ship Mary

Thomas Hullah . . . Ship Friendship

William Cook - Ship Orient

Geo Young . . . Turner

John Ritchie - Ship New Lioness

James Burn . . . Ship Oracabessa

William Steel . . . Ship Catharine

Robert Lowrey . . . Ship Aurora

Cha^r Coldstream - Union Island

Sinclair Williamson Emerald

Sa ^s Foot	Ship Beekford
Thomas Harden	Ship Leviathan
James Norrie	Ship Beaufoy
Rob ^t Brown	Ship Martha
Thomas Barnes	Ship Clarendon
Robert Cusling	Ship Alligator
Henry Liddle	Ship Union
Med ^r Goodwin	Harriett
Mountain Davis	Prinsep Mary

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No
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Resolved,

That the said Report be received.

Resolved,

That the Chairman be requested to lay the said Report, and State of Facts before the Lords of the Admiralty, for their Lordships Information.

Letter
Six
Golon

Resolved,

That Sir Richard Neave, Mr B Long
Mr Milligan, & Mr G Hibbert, the Committee
nominated on the 28th September 1790 to attend to the
business of obtaining a Supply of Foreign Herrings
for the West India Islands, through the medium
of this Country, be requested to renew their attention
to that object, which it is presumed may now be
seasonably brought forward, and that they be
requested

61

requested to call in the Assistance of the Agent for
Jamaica, or any other Gentleman who may be disposed
to co-operate with them, in carrying the proposed measure
into effect --

. At a Meeting of the Committee appointed on the 24th
November, held at George Hibbert Esq^r December 10th 1795

Present -

. Mr C Hibbert . Mr Milligan . Mr Sewell
. Mr Wedderburn . Mr B Long

. Mr B Long laid before the Meeting a
Letter from Mr Nepean Secretary of the Admiralty, to
Sir Richard Keave, dated 11th Instant of which the
following is a Copy -

"Admiralty Office 11th Decem^r 1795

Sir,

I have received and laid before my
"Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, your
Billet of the 9th Instant, transmitting a
Resolution of the West India Merchants accom-
panied with a brief State of Facts, relative to
the conduct of Captain Norman of the Medusa
in conveying the Merchant Ships from Jamaica
on the 26th July last; And I am commanded

by

" by their Lordships to acquaint you that
 " they have ordered the conduct of Captain
 " Norman to be enquired into, at a Court
 " Martial, and you will therefore please
 " to send hither a List of the Persons who
 " are intended to be brought forward as
 " Evidences to substantiate the Charges
 " exhibited against him."

"I am, Sir,

"Your very humble serv^t,"

(Signed) "C. van. Teyear"

"Sir Richard Neave Bart."

Mr ~~Pat~~ Long also reported that himself
 and Mr C. Hibbert, yesterday saw Mr Neave at the
 Admiralty, and understood from him, that it was
 absolutely necessary that the Proposed Court Martial
 should be held at Plymouth; but that any Day
 the Committee might chuse to name at a short
 interval, should be appointed for the Court Martial.

Resolved,

That Sir Richard Neave be requested
 to represent to the Lords of the Admiralty, as the
 greater Part of the Captains of Merchant Ships who
 have

have signed the State of Facts, upon which the Accusation against Commodore Norman is founded, are at present necessarily employed in the outfit of their respective Ships, that they may be loaded and ready to depart with the Convoy appointed to sail from Portsmouth, on the 10th January next; it will be impossible for this Committee to command their Attendance at Plymouth at this Juncture of time, and that had the Court-Martial been appointed to be held at Portsmouth, it would have enabled the Committee to have collected a greater body of Evidence without so considerable an inconvenience to the Trade, as must result from the present arrangement, but that understanding that the objections to such a Removal of the Court-Martial are insuperable, this Committee will obtain the evidence of such of the following Persons as they may be able, provided that any day between the 25th and 31st Instant, be appointed for the Trial.

- Jonathan Wilson Ship Fullock Castle
- David Robertson Esther Lindo
- John Carr Ship Ceres
- Robert Wilson Ship Spooner
- Goland Burton Ship Elizabeth
- Alex^r Russell Ship Lane
- Hen^r Douglas Ship Mary
- Thomas Hullah Ship Friendship

William

William Cook Ship Orient
 Geo^e Young Ship Turner
 John Ritchie Ship New Lions
 James Burn Ship Oracabessa
 William Steel Ship Catharine
 (Not sailed up) R^t Lourey Ship Aurora
 included in the Copy transmitted to the Admiralty
 Cha^s Goldstream Union Island
 Sinclair Williamson Emerald
 Jas. Peel Ship Buckler d
 Tho^s Warden Ship Leviathan
 James Norrie Ship Beauty
 Rob^t Brown Ship Martha
 Thomas Barnes Ship Clarendon
 Robert Curling Ship Alligator
 Henry Liddle Ship Union
 Med^r Goodwin Harriott
 Mountain Davis Princess Mary
 James Atterbury Thames
 William Nicholson Urania
 Henry Liddle Roselle
 Robert Gill Scill. Malcolm
 Thomas Bryden Jesse
 Robert Brown Louisa
 John Simons Satisfaction
 John Rennick Abwin
 David Lyon Esq.

Resolved
 the Com.
 at 3 o'clock
 Resolved
 At the
 for the
 At a
 24 Nov
 18th Dec
 Jamaica
 Committee
 were read
 Plymouth
 his Reply

Resolved,

That the Captains who have signed the Statement, and also Mr David Lyon be requested to meet the Committee at the Jamaica Coffee House, on Friday, at 3 o'clock precisely

Resolved,

That Mr Sewell be requested to engage Mr Shave as Solicitor, and also some eminent Council for the prosecution of this business

At a Meeting of the Committee, appointed on the 24 November, held at the Jamaica Coffee House, 18th December, 1795.

Present

Robert Sewell Esq^r in the Chair

Mr Hibbert

And several of the Commanders of Jamaica Ships.

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee of West India Merchants of the 10th Inst, were read.

A Letter from H. U. Stokes Esq^r, Plymouth Dock, to Sir Richard Neave Bart^t, with his Reply thereto were read, as follows.

Admirals

"Admirals Office, Dock"

"15 Decem^r 1795

Sir,

"The Right Honorable the Lords
 " Commissioners of the Admiralty having issued
 " their Order for the Trial of Captain James
 " Norman, of His Majesty's Ship Medusa, by a
 " Court Martial on Charges exhibited against
 " him in (what is called) a Statement of Facts,
 " which accompanied the Report of a Committee
 " of West India Merchants of the 9th Instant,
 " signed by a number of Masters of Merchant
 " Vessels. As soon as the Evidences on the
 " part of the Merchants and such Evidence
 " as Captain Norman shall judge proper
 " to produce in his behalf shall be ready;
 " And it being intended that I shall officiate
 " as Deputy Judge Advocate, on this Occasion.
 " I have to request you will be pleased to cause
 " me to be furnished with a List of the names
 " of the Persons to be produced on the part of
 " the Prosecution and to hasten them to
 " Plymouth as soon as possible, with directions
 " to call on me at this Office; where I will give
 " them regular Notice, when, and on board
 " what Ship, to attend the said Trial

"I have the Honor to be"

"Sir" Your most obedient
 "humble Serv^t"

"to Vice Admiral Boscawen" J. M. Stokes
 "Dec 17"

"J. M. Stokes"

"Esq^r,"

67
London 17th December 1795

Sir,

"I have been favored with your Letter
" of the 15th Instant, in reply to which I beg
" leave to enclose you a Copy of the Minutes
" of the Committee of West India Merchants
" who attend the Charge against Commodore
" Norman, at their last Meeting, and at the
" same time to assure you that when in Conformity
" to these Minutes, the time and Place of Trial
" is named by the Lords of the Admiralty, the
" utmost diligence shall be used in hastening
" that part of the Evidence which can possibly
" be brought to attend the Trial, and they
" will be instructed to call upon you, on their
" Arrival at Plymouth."

I am, Sir,

Your obedient

humble Serv^t

(Signed) "Richard. Neave"

"Mr Stokes Esq^r Sec^y to Vice Admiral Vandeput"

The following Letter from Evan Neave
Esq^r to Sir Richard Neave Bart. was read,

Admiralty Office 17th Decem 1795

Sir

"Having laid before my Lords

Comm^{rs}

„ Commissioners of the Admiralty your Note
 „ of the 10th Instant, enclosing an Extract
 „ of the Minutes of a Meeting of the West
 „ India Merchants relative to the assembling
 „ a Court Martial on Captain Hornor;
 „ I am commanded by their Lordships to
 „ acquaint you, that in order that the
 „ Trade may not suffer inconvenience,
 „ their Lordships will order Capt^t Verman
 „ and his Evidences to be brought to
 „ Portsmouth, so as to be there early in
 „ the Month of January. I am

Sir

Your most obed^t
 humble Serv^t
 Evan. Nepean

Sir Richard Meave Bar (Signed)

Resolved,

That Sir Richard Meave be requested
 to Reply to the Letter of Mr Nepean, dated 17th Inst^t,
 returning the thanks of the Committee for the Accom-
 modation granted by the Lords of the Admiralty
 in appointing the Court Martial of Commodore
 Verman at Portsmouth, and informing their
 Lordships thro' Mr Nepean that it will be most
 convenient for the Trade that the day of trial
 should be fixed as early as possible in January,

Es

Reso

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and that Sir Richard be desired to request leave to add the names of the following Witnesses proposed to be called.

- John Hutchinson Lord Sheffield
- Henry Watson Successor
- Master of the Triton
- Harris Passengers in it
- at Sir John's Plymouth Dock.
- Pilote Brig

At a Meeting of the Committee of West India Merchants, for conducting the Charges against Commodore Norman, January 2nd 1796.

- Mr Sewell
- Mr Medderburn
- Mr Webster
- Mr Milligan
- Mr George Hibbert

Resolved, That in order to bring home by evidence, the Charges exhibited against Captain James Norman, it is proper that the Solicitor, Mr Shawe, should summon immediately such Witnesses as he may think will be necessary for that purpose, assuring each of them on the Authority of this Committee, that their expences upon that occasion shall be defrayed out of the Fund of the West India Trade, and also intimating that such as shall fail to obey with punctuality the Summons, will be considered by the whole Body of West India Merchants,

as