Nathanial Sparhawk Letters

November 29, December 16, & December 24, 1754

Letters from Nathaniel Sparhawk, Boston, Massachusetts to Thomas Cutts, clerk to Sir William Pepperell, Kittery, Maine

Maine Maritime Museum Archive, MS 366.5

Annotated transcription by Maine Maritime Museum volunteer, Richard Spear
Herewith I send Sundrys as as P[er] Memo[randum] Inclosed to Mrs Sparhawk w[hi]ch when she has perused you'll take from her. & receive the things by; you'll weigh the Cordage & every thing else that ought to be weighed, & except the Bread pork duck & Cordage get everything up to the House as soon as may be, & what is not for yo[ur] use of the Family, put into my Room. & charge Mother Waldo with what she has, yo[u] may deliver the oyl & Coltors to Mr Walker. But don't deliver the duck & Boltrope to Holbrook 'till yo[u] hear further from me. & as to the Cordage I have desired Capt[ain] Tuckerman to see what of the old will do & to give out as much of the New as will be sufficient, He has promised to get up the Cable & anchor, & to go to the Eastward for a load of Wood to go to Salem. For w[hi]ch yo[u] must deliver him Rum & sugar sufficient make a memo[randum] of it & He has promised me to go immediately, what of the Beef & Mutton he don't want to carry to the Eastward, weigh & send to the Family. Put the Bread in the Shop or the Ratts will eat it, I have Shipped Mr Dering to go either Mate or Master in the Brigt till I come home I cant determine w[hi]ch But he will see her loaded & rigged__ I am content Mr. Me. Gross tarrys aboard
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November 29, 1754

on the Terms I agreed with him; But I believe she will be left in England in which case he must be discharged & receive 2 months pay. But I shall be at Home to adjust this matter, You may pay his order in fav[our] of Bradass[??] less One pound. two shillings sterling or de sire your Brother same. to pay it perhaps he'll take some Hampshire money for it. I am obliged to send back all the Negro Girls—I Hope youl be able to get some body to take them for their victualls which I shall much they must have Cloaths & shoes suffi cient, & more shirts & shifts—what yo[u] cant get put out in such Familys as Mrs. Sparhawk likes, yo[u] must get Mrs. Green: to take care of, But see that they have a good fire & good room & an old Sail to lay upon. & the Ruggs to cover them, Their Victualls must be drissed[??] at the No. By Juba, as usu al, Be sure they don’t suffer; for w[hi]ch end See them 2 or 3 times a day; let John Ark[??] have a pair or two of your Stockings out of the Desk[??]. Your Stockings____ He may have Cloth to make him a Jacket Blue or red____ & desire Mrs Sparhawk to choose w[hi]ch to make. Scipio a large double breasted Jackt. of Mrs Allen or Mrs Buckley[??] will Make them. But mind you don’t deliver more then a pattern; It

<written perpendicularly in left margin>
If Mother Waldo had not the 1/2 of the Sow from the farm she may Have all the hog__
wont do to keep the Schooner till they are done, for Tuckerman must hurry after the Wood, & tell him not to forget to enquire how he can buy long & short layers at the Eastward & the hundred. I shall want to send Capt[ain] Reating to the Eastward for them & for a load wood for my Family & neighbours get the Brigt ready as Soon as possible & take yo[ur] best care of my Interest yo[ur] Friend N S
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December 16, 1754

I have yours the 13th and observe the
Contents. Shall be glad to Know whether Reating will on Tucker mans return go for a load of Wood on the Terms Mr Chauny used to send w[hi]ch was on a share; It will hardly do to pay wage.
I suppose he wants wood as well as J. & co does Brag Scipio; & art may go also- I am glad the Brig is loaded, But am surprised that you should talk of her not being ready in a fortnight, what can detain her, so long The Carpenter & Caulker yo[u] say wont hinder her from sailing_ what can then; when she was new she was Rigged by only a man & a boy in the Month of Octob[er] in 14 days. May get her away as soon as possible, I Have wrote your Brother herewith, w[hi]ch you'l deliver him aug[??] fully about the dispatch of this vessell, which he will Communicate to you, I desired Capt[ain] R[j]char[d] Reating as he went thro[ugh] this Town, to advice you abo[ut] the Sails and Rigging w[hi]ch he promised he would do__He is a good judge__I have wrote to yo[u]r Brother to supply you with small Stores, But then don’t take any thing but what is absolutely necessary, There is no vessell here bound to _<“Boston” crossed out>_ Piscatausay,[??] But if any sb[oul]d offer will cend yo[u] 2bbs beef, in case I don’t yo[u] have 2bbs porke w[hi]ch with 1/4 beef, yo[u] may buy 1 qtt<quartern??> Iame fishe, & 1 Jar oyl & some Tools[?] will be Enough, you don’t tell me whether
Mr Gross will go mate or not, or the Terms I mentioned, if he don’t Its time to look out for another, or we shall be delayed on that and I fear__I hope Mr Walker paints the Brigt handsomely__if you want advice relating to her looks, as well as the sails & Rigging what she will safely carry on deck &c R[ichard]d Reating I say is a good judge__ I shall send the orders &c for the dispatch of the Brigt up next oppo[rtunity?] & I beg she may be got ready immediately__let me Know if I left the Sailors shipping papers with you. & how C[ap]t Dering behaves__Mr. Parker bot Candles for the Polly at 4/ or 4/66 w[i]th Dollars. at portsmo[uth]__at that rate 2 Dollars will buy enough. I have <“bought” crossed out> sold the negro women & the biggest negro Girls, So I hope you have not parted w[i]th them. A Vessell will call for them speedily with my order for them. Pray see that they have good care taken of them, & let me Know if they are well__I sold the negro fellow for 300 this mony__& the 3 Girls for 240 ap[iece] & the least Negro boy but one for 200L. All But the last I sold <“for” crossed out> to One person__. This is better then selling them at Piscata[qua]. I shall send some Bays by the 1[st] oppo[rtunity] for lining Negro & sailors Cloaths__But take care not to advance so much to the sailors as to tempt them to run away__ Reating can tell yo[u] How
much was due to Mr gross, He has had rum
& I paid him a p[ound?] Gold as P[er] rec[eip]t Book__ so
you can settle w[i]th him w[i]th W[illia]m Keating &
your Brothers help. He was at 20 L. Old Fort
Hampt[on] from the time the Vessell was un
loaded of her salt.__I observe yo[u] have got
the Cow from the farm, & 6 q[uar]ts beef & the
staves from Exeter, & my mothers wood, w[hi]ch
I am glad of; I cant add a word more But as
I shall send all papers necessary for dis
Patch of the Brig the next oppo[rtunity] pray
get her ready & take care of my Interest in
all Respects I am y[ou]r assured Friend Nsparhawk
I received yours of the 20th and observed
the contents. I have received also a letter from
your brother Samuel, Mr. Stephens, & Mrs Sparhawk.
Give my compliments to them & acquaint them
that I have been so hurried since the post
came in that I could not possibly write. But
as Sir William sets out to morrow afternoon
I shall by him send the needfull. & write
<"especially" crossed out>
to Mrs. Sparhawk. Which I would have you tell
Her. I don't know what Capt[ain] Dering means
by saying the hands must be shifted, I wont
have one of them dismissed 'till Sir William comes home. When I doubt not He will
prevail on Dering to go with them 5 hands
a Capt[ain] & Mate is pretty well I think if
the hands are not so good. As to Mr. Gross
I agreed with him from the time the Brig[antine].
was unloaded of her Cargo of Salt that He
should be at 20L[Pounds] a month Hamp[shire] mony, *
with I am ready to pay him if He wont go
the Voyage, I wont give 37 /St[erling]g to Him for that
time I assure him, But if he will take
40/St[erling]g P[er] month from the time the Brig[antine] began
to load, & 2 months pay to take his discharge <"in My hand” interlinear>
I am Content, & for y[h]e further time He has
been aboard the Brig[antine] 20L [Pounds] Old Ten[der??] Hamp[shire]
mony. If this wont do hope you'll be able
to Ship another Mate for 40/St[erlin]g P[er] mo[nth] & 2 Months pay. You should have settled this Matter sooner___ & not left it to the last. S[i]r W[illia]m will soon be at home, to advise you in all cases of difficulty, in the mean time consult with your Brother Sam[uel]___ I pray him not to fail of send[in]g me next post The letters of advise; and Mr Plaisteads note w[hi]ch I want exceedingly___You may let Reating go for a load of Wood on Wages___ But tell him he must Make haste. I am surprised the Carpenter should not Have done the Brigantine,* I Hope they have not been at work abo[u]t. The Triffles she wanted for these 6 weekes.__ I think Mr. Holbrook don’t use me well to let me wait for the sails___Inclosed is a letter to Ken[-] wood; & Capt[ain] Dering’s orders. & also two papers. w[hi]ch with the other papers put in the deske that you don’t loose them yo[u] had best as soon as may be in the Evenings copy the letter <“& orders” interlinear>in trhe booke, That yo[u] may be ready, I if Sir W[illia]m don’t come in time pray your Brother to dispatch his m:[?]?the best Man nex[t?]?he can , I have wrote him & you Enough for directions; I am glad the Negro’s are well, do see that they have good care taken of them. Capt[ain] Darling of Piscataqua will sail to night, He has

*N.B. Note the distinction made between “Hampshire mon-"y” (which was perhaps paper bills issued by that colony) and “Sterling”( which is English coinage and of higher value). The British colonies were notoriously short of English currency, and European coins were used on occasion. On the third page of his 16 Dec. 1754 letter, Sparhawk notes that Mr. Parker used (Spanish) dollars (probably acquired in the West Indies) to buy candles.

*N.B. Only in this third letter does Sparhawk happen to write "Brigt" in full as "Brigantine," permitting assurance that he calls the vessel by its rig and not by a name like "Brigit." Of course, there is considerable imprecision in such early references to rig, but one should imagine a small, two-masted vessel whose foremast has two or three square sails, but (unlike a brig) whose mainmast is schooner-rigged with a fore- &-aft mainsail and perhaps a square topsail.
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December 24, 1754

aboard a small Caske for Doctt[or] Winchester
& Sundry things for me, w[hi]ch Mr. Levoret will
advise you off__The Tallow in the beef
Mrs. Sparhawke will want. ___& I would have
you fill two barells of the <“Mutton” interlinear> ordinary
& if there is any left<“send” crossed-out>let it be the
best pieces & send it to the House. Capt[ain]
Darling will have some Bays, if yo[u] want
any for the Negro’s __ Mrs. Sparhawk will
tell yo[u] How much, The Keys I shall send
Per Sir W[illia]m __I desire the Brig[an]t[ine] may not
lay any longer on Expences I cannot add
I am Y[ou]r Assured Friend

Nsparhawke

1 bb pork 2 bbs beef 1qtt fish
lan oyl, 4 o Bread, & Tools is Eno[??] for it [??] Brig[an]t[ine w[i]th 1 Bushl beans
Nathaniel Sparhawk Letters

December 24, 1754

Small bill, enclosed

Acco[unt] sundrys on board Capt[ain] Tuckerman for N Sparhawk

2 Bb.s [barrels] Pork
5 Tarees<??> Bread
4 Cheeses

6 lb Choco[ate][__] for Mad[am] Waldo
12 Coffee 6 l[bs.] for Mad[a]m Waldo
2 L[bs.] Sugar ___1 for Mad[a]m Waldo

10 Bu[shel]s Oysters

1 R[ea]m paper
1/4 Sealing Wax
1 Ivory Comb
2 lb Salt Petre

1 Horn Comb
1/4 Green Tea
for yo[ur] new Negro’s
2 papers Inkpowder

l/ ya[rd]. dark Taffitty__Lady Pepperelle
2 Cannisters Tea q[uar]t[er]: 4 lb__
a hog__½ of it for Mad[a]m Waldo

[reverse side] To
Mr. Thomas Cutt

1 bb.[barrel] Tarr
a q[uan]t[ty] Cordage
1/4 Beef
10 q[uarte]rs. Mutton
100 lb beef in pieces
a neats Tongue
6 Negro’s Girls

One & Collours
as p[er] Walkers Memo[randum]

1 ps. Coarse red Broad Cloth
1 ps. Blue ditto
1 ps. Ticklenburg
3 ps. Chex __2 ps narrow duck
10 ps. Russia duck
A Number of ruggs
for yo[ur] new Negro’s

167 lb.
To learn more about undertold elements of Maine’s maritime heritage and to see these documents in person, visit the exhibit Cotton Town: Maine’s Economic Connections to Slavery, on display at Maritime Museum until May 8, 2022.