

Sotheby's Institute of Art

Digital Commons @ SIA

MA Theses

Student Scholarship and Creative Work

2020

Appalling Aftermath : The idealization of sympathy in battle paintings of the Great Siege of Gibraltar

Sean F. Galvin

Sotheby's Institute of Art

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.sia.edu/stu_theses



Part of the [Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque Art and Architecture Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Galvin, Sean F., "Appalling Aftermath : The idealization of sympathy in battle paintings of the Great Siege of Gibraltar" (2020). *MA Theses*. 65.

https://digitalcommons.sia.edu/stu_theses/65

This Thesis - Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship and Creative Work at Digital Commons @ SIA. It has been accepted for inclusion in MA Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ SIA. For more information, please contact nylibrary@sia.edu.

Appalling Aftermath:
The Idealization of Sympathy in Battle paintings of the Great Siege of Gibraltar

by

Sean F. Galvin

A thesis submitted in conformity
With the requirements for the
Master's Degree in Fine and Decorative Art and Design
Sotheby's Institute of Art

2020

Word Count: 14,910

Appalling Aftermath:
The Idealization of Sympathy in Battle paintings of the Great Siege of Gibraltar

By: Sean F. Galvin

The failed siege attempt by French and Spanish forces on the British stronghold at Gibraltar from 1779 to 1783 provided several episodes of national commemoration for the defenders. This thesis focuses on three such paintings which take place at the end of their respective battles. In the first chapter, *Gibraltar relieved by Sir George Rodney, 1780* by Dominic Serres idealizes victorious British might personified by the commander George Rodney. It serves to assure the possibility of British victory under competent command at a moment during the uncertain time of war. The second chapter focuses on John Singleton Copley's *Destruction of the Floating Batteries at Gibraltar*, a highly celebrated event. Rather than showcase the garrisons' victory, Copley focuses on the widespread enemy suffering resulting from conflict. Likewise, the third chapter highlights John Trumbull's *Sortie Made by the Garrison at Gibraltar* which heroizes a gesture of aid to a small group of enemy combatants in the aftermath of conflict. The thesis argues that the latter two paintings constitute an idealization of tender action resulting from sympathy. This behavior subverts the common embellishment of active command in battle paintings exemplified in chapter one.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations	ii
Introduction	1
Chapter I - Victorious Command in Serres' <i>Gibraltar</i>	3
Chapter II - Suffering and War in Copley's Guildhall Commission	
i - The Guildhall and War	11
ii - Spectacle of Suffering	19
Chapter III - Sympathy and Military Restraint in Trumbull's <i>Sortie</i>	
i - Universal Sympathy	29
ii - Triumphal Aid	40
Illustrations	52
Bibliography	74

List of Illustrations

Fig. 1.1. Dominic Serres, *Gibraltar relieved by Sir George Rodney, 1780*, 1780-1782, oil on canvas, 88.5 x 145 cm. Royal Academy of Arts, London.

Fig. 1.2. Robert Pollard after Dominic Serres, *Gibraltar, 1780*, ca. 1780, etching and engraving, 46.8 x 58.6 cm. Royal Collection Trust, Windsor.

Fig. 1.3. Dominic Serres, *The Moonlight Battle: the Battle off Cape St Vincent, 16 January 1780*, 1781, oil on canvas, 106.6 x 183 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.

Fig. 1.4. Richard Paton, *The Moonlight Battle off Cape St Vincent, 16 January 1780*, 1780-1782, oil on canvas, 124 x 167 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.

Fig. 1.5. Francis Holman, *The Moonlight Battle off Cape St Vincent, 16 January 1780*, 1780, oil on canvas, 106 x 166.5 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.

Fig. 1.6. Thomas Luny, *The Moonlight Battle: the Battle off Cape St Vincent, 16 January 1780*, 1781, oil on canvas, 27.9 x 43.1 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.

Fig. 1.7. John Cleveley the Younger, *George III reviewing the Fleet at Spithead, 22 June 1773, depicting the 'Royal Oak, 1773*, watercolor, 40.4 x 60.9 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.

Fig. 1.8. John Cleveley the Elder, *The 'Royal George' at Deptford Showing the Launch of 'The Cambridge', 1757*, oil on canvas, 121.9 x 187.9 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.

Fig. 1.9. Dominic Serres, *The Capture of Chandernagore, March 1757*, 1771, oil on canvas, 114.3 x 182.8 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.

Fig 2.1. John Singleton Copley, *Defeat of the Floating Batteries at Gibraltar, September 1782*, 1783-1791, oil on canvas, 544 x 754 cm. Guildhall Art Gallery, London.

Fig 2.2. Joshua Reynolds, *Lord Heathfield of Gibraltar, 1787*, oil on canvas, 142 x 113.5 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.

Fig. 2.3. Thomas Rowlandson, *Common Council Chamber, Guildhall, 1808*, etching and aquatint, 27.3 x 23.5 cm. Metropolitan Museum, New York.

Fig 2.4. Thomas Whitcombe, *Destruction by Night of the Spanish Batteries Before Gibraltar, 1783*, oil on canvas, 92.39 x 153.99 cm. Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee.

Fig 2.5. Archibald Robertson after William Hamilton, *DESTRUCTION OF THE SPANISH BATTERING SHIPS, BEFORE GIBRALTAR, ON THE NIGHT OF THE 13TH SEPR. 1782*, 1783, engraving, 66.2 x 47.1 cm. Brown University Library, Providence.

Fig 2.6. J. Emes & E. Wollett after William Jeffreys, *The Scene Before Gibraltar on the Morning of the 14th of September, 1782*, 1789, engraving, 73.5 x 54 cm. Brown University Library, Providence.

Fig 2.7. Raphael Lamar West, *Destruction of the floating batteries before Gibraltar*, 1783, oil on canvas, 160.9 x 234.7 cm. Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston.

Fig 2.8. Thomas Whitcombe, *Destruction of the Floating Batteries at Gibraltar, 14 September 1782*, 1782, oil on canvas, 76 x 122 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.

Fig 2.9. George Carter, *The Siege of Gibraltar*, 1782, 1784, gouache on millboard, 41.9 x 55.9 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.

Fig 2.10. Francis Jukes after Dominic Serres the Elder, *A view of the destruction of the Spanish floating batteries during the siege of Gibraltar, 14 September 1782*, 1783, aquatint with etching and engraving; laid down on paper, 45.6 x 57.5 cm. Royal Collection Trust, London.

Fig 2.11. George Frederic Koehler, *General Elliott on the King's Bastion, Gibraltar, Sept. 13, 1782*, 1785, aquatint, 64.9 x 51.3 cm. Brown University Library, Providence.

Fig 2.12. Thomas Davies, *Gibraltar on the morning after the great Franco-Spanish attack*, 1783, watercolor. Royal Ontario Museum, Ontario.

Fig 2.13. John Singleton Copley, *The Siege of Gibraltar (sketch)*, 1788, oil and pencil on canvas, 100.3 x 125.7 cm. The Foundling Museum, London.

Fig. 2.14. Peter Paul Rubens, *Christ on the Sea*, c.1610, oil on oak, 99.5 x 141 cm. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Dresden.

Fig 2.15. John Singleton Copley, *The Death of the Earl of Chatham*, 1781, oil on canvas, 228.5 x 307.5 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.

Fig 2.16. B. McMillan after John Singleton Copley, *Key to the principal figures in John Singleton Copley's painting of 'The Siege and Relief of Gibraltar'*, 1791, engraving with etching, woodcut, 27.5 x 43.1 cm. British Museum, London

Fig 2.17. W. Nutter after John Graham, *The death of General Simon Fraser at the Battle of Bemis Heights, Saratoga*, 1794, stipple engraving with etching, 42.6 x 58.8 cm. Wellcome Collection, London.

Fig. 2.18. Benjamin West, *The Death of General Wolfe*, 1770, oil on canvas, 151 cm × 213 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Fig 3.1. John Trumbull, *The Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, 1789, oil on canvas, 180.3 x 271.8 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Fig. 3.2. John Trumbull, *The Battle of Bunker's Hill, June 17, 1775*, 1786, oil on canvas, 65.1 × 95.6 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.

Fig 3.3. John Trumbull, *The Death of General Montgomery in the Attack on Quebec, December 31, 1775*, 1786, oil on canvas, 62.5 × 94 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.

Fig 3.4. John Trumbull, *The Death of General Mercer at the Battle of Princeton, 3 January 1777*, ca. 1786-1788, oil on canvas, 66 × 94 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.

Fig. 3.5. Benjamin West, *The Death of General Wolfe*, 1770, oil on canvas, 151 cm × 213 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Fig. 3.6. John Singleton Copley, *The Death of Major Peirson, 6 January 1781*, 1783, oil on canvas, 251.5 × 365.8 cm. Tate Britain, London.

Fig. 3.7. John Trumbull, *Head of Sir Thomas Lawrence, Study for the Dying Spaniard in the Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, 1786, chalk and crayon drawing. Boston Athenaeum, Boston.

Fig. 3.8. *Dying Gaul*, 1st or 2nd century CE, marble, 94 x 187 x 89 cm. Musei Capitolini, Rome.

Fig. 3.9. John Trumbull, *The Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, 1788, oil on canvas, 51.3 x 77.6 cm. Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati.

Fig. 3.10. John Trumbull, *Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, May 23, 1786, ink wash sketch, 4.4 x 7 cm. Boston Athenaeum, Boston.

Fig. 3.11. John Trumbull, *Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, 1786, pen drawing, 12.7 x 19 cm. Boston Athenaeum, Boston.

Fig. 3.12. John Trumbull, *Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, 1786, pen drawing, 15.6 x 23.3 cm. Boston Athenaeum, Boston.

Fig. 3.13. Anthony Cesare de Poggi, *A Key, or index plate to a view showing the various states of the daring sortie made by British and Hanoverian troops on the Spanish lines of Gibraltar on 27 November 1781*, 1792, etching and engraving, 38.5 x 53.6 cm. Royal Collection Trust, Edinburgh.

Fig. 3.14. John Trumbull, *The Death of Paulus Aemilius at the Battle of Cannae*, 1773, oil on canvas, 62.2 × 88.4 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.

Fig. 3.15. Francis Hayman, *Robert Clive and Mir Jafar after the Battle of Plassey*, 1757, ca. 1760, oil on canvas, 100.3 x 127 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.

Fig. 3.16. Francis Hayman, *The Charity of General Amherst*, 1761, oil on canvas, 91.5 x 71 cm. Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

Fig. 3.17. Robert Wilkinson after James Gillray, *John Howard ('The triumph of benevolence')*, 1788, stipple and line engraving, 64.6 x 50.6 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.

Introduction

The idea of sympathy greatly permeated eighteenth century society as an ideal mechanism for social cohesion. As Sarah Knott points out, “sympathy made man a social creature.”¹ Not only did it serve as an impetus for humane actions, its display professed the ideal of refined elite masculinity.² For the British, the global war against America, France, Spain, and the Netherlands spawned by the American Revolution threatened to undermine the ideal behavior regulated by sympathy. The vengeance and anger of conflict inherently contradict actions spawned by such sentiment. Countering the threat of global losses required active destruction rather than sympathetic restraint. The reinforcement of celebrated victory through triumphal literature and art necessarily precluded a discussion of sympathy for the enemy. The ideal of the able commander capable of destructive victory took precedence over the displays of sympathy celebrated in society.

This thesis explores the contradictory behaviors of sympathy and wartime valor through three paintings of the Siege of Gibraltar that took place continuously from 1779-1783. The three victories allowed the British to hold onto their Mediterranean base and became omnipresent examples of ideal active behavior to be commemorated. Breaking from commemorative expectation of violence, the paintings idealize sympathetic behavior even within the extreme conditions of war.

The first chapter focuses on *Gibraltar relieved by Sir George Rodney, 1780* by the marine artist Dominic Serres. While this genre does not fall into the elevated history

¹ Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (UNC Press Books, 2009), 8.

² Sarah Knott, “Sensibility and the American Revolution,” *The American Historical Review* 109, no. 1 (February 2004).

painting category of chapters two and three, the widespread proliferation of contemporary naval actions perpetually emphasized victorious action. Serres' idealized relief serves as a metric against which the later works can be measured.

The second and third chapters focus on John Singleton Copley's *Destruction of the Floating Batteries at Gibraltar* and John Trumbull's *Sortie Made by the Garrison at Gibraltar* respectively. These paintings fall into the category of grand contemporary history painting popularized by Benjamin West's *Death of General Wolfe*. Both paintings challenge the idealization of their victories by emphasizing the enemy's suffering in the aftermath. The widely known heroic behavior of the officers in these works becomes instead an idealization of sympathy.

Chapter 1: Victorious Command in Serres' *Gibraltar*

In 1781, Dominic Serres presented his *Gibraltar Relieved by Sir George Rodney, 1780* to the Royal Academy (Figure 1.1).³ An advertisement for a print of the work the next year claimed that it had “met the unanimous approbation of the best judges in Marine Paintings” (Figure 1.2).⁴ Born in Gascony, Serres fled from the life of a clergyman as a young man eventually captaining a Spanish ship in the West Indies.⁵ After his capture and imprisonment in England, likely in the War of Austrian Succession, he settled for the rest of his life as a painter.⁶ During his career, he helped found the Royal Academy where he ultimately exhibited 108 paintings.⁷ These subjects ranged widely from full naval battles, small duels, and tranquil scenes of commerce. The Seven Years' War coincided with his rise as an artist and provided many victories for his brush.⁸ By contrast, the drawn fleet battles of the early years of the American Revolution concluded at best in stalemate.⁹ On January 16th, 1780, George Rodney's fleet sailing to relieve Gibraltar defeated the Spanish Admiral Don Juan de Lángara at the Battle of St. Vincent.¹⁰ He captured the Admiral himself and five of his ships without the loss of any of his vessels.¹¹ The presence of the young Prince William Henry symbolically elevated the victory.¹²

Seizing the opportunity to depict a major victory, Serres painted Rodney's successful arrival at Gibraltar with the captured prizes. In *Gibraltar*, Serres idealizes the

³ *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, March 6, 1782.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ David Cordingly, *Marine Painting in England 1700-1900* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1974), 83.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Anthony Preston, David Lyon, and John H. Batchelor, *Navies of the American Revolution* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1975).

¹⁰ Richard Kemp, *The Great Age of Sail* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1992), 82

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *The Remembrancer; or, Impartial Repository of Public Events* (London: J. Almon, 1780), 344.

behavior of assured total victory in the traditional mode of a marine painting. Naval battle painting, while documentary, was inherently idealizing in subject matter particularly aggrandizing the commanders in the midst of action. While focusing on the calm aftermath of total victory, Serres manages to idealize the triumph through a composition and perspective that maximize order and safety. Additionally, he heightens the sense of victory with a display of naval pageantry adopting the extreme realism of ceremonial ship portraiture.

The significant importance of naval victories around the American Revolution can be seen in how Royal Academy reviewers described their documentary function. One noted how “Mr. Serres has recorded some of our most brilliant naval achievements.”¹³ Likewise, a published review in 1780 observed, “this Artist is always fortunate in his subjects, and there never was one which deserved more to be transmitted, by his pencil, to posterity, than the present.”¹⁴ These comments underscore how the subjects of great victories themselves called for commemoration. A reviewer in the *Morning Chronicle* noted how the Battle of the Saintes was “a subject, worthy of the pencil.”¹⁵ While commemorative in nature, the subjects themselves had been preselected for idealization as only the most deserving events.

In the process of depicting the most notable victories, success became tied specifically to heroizing commanders themselves. The *Morning Post* celebrated Serres’ exhibited series depicting the vastly outgunned Captain Luttrell of the HMS *Mediator* taking on French vessels.¹⁶ In particular, Serres had “so faithfully recorded” an

¹³ *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, April 27, 1784.

¹⁴ *A Candid Review of the Exhibition (Being the Twelfth) [...]* (London: H. Reynell, 1780), 17.

¹⁵ *Morning Chronicle*, May 11, 1784.

¹⁶ *Morning Post*, May 2, 1783.

engagement that “does such honour to the Commander.”¹⁷ Another celebrated Luttrell’s “very honourable conduct” taking on the more powerful foe, a feat that “well merits every commemoration that can be given it.”¹⁸ The reviewer saw painting as a vehicle to “aid his progress in fame” and added that for the task Serres could “safely be depended on!”¹⁹ Likewise, prints after naval paintings emphasized the leading officer’s command. One after Serres’ the *Battle of Dogger Bank* dedicated the work “to Vice. Admiral Parker by whose Signal Bravery & Conduct the honour of the British flag was ably Asserted in the above Memorable Action.”²⁰ The print of Serres’ *Gibraltar* highlighted Rodney as the central actor, describing, “ADMIRAL RODNEY relieving the Garrison, and bringing in the five Spanish Ships of War, several Transports, &c.”²¹ While serving a documentary function, marine battle paintings continuously celebrated the idea of national victory brought about by a single commander. One theatrical performance of Rodney’s victory featured naval battle paintings in two scenes followed by an “exact View of the Rock of Gibraltar.”²² The conclusion moved from the descriptive to fantasy, revealing an emblematical representation “in Honour of PRINCE WILLIAM and the brave ADMIRAL.”²³ The scenes coincided with tunes such as “Britons Strike Home,” “God Save the King,” and “Rule Britannia,” which provided an atmosphere of national triumph in which Rodney is the harbinger.²⁴

¹⁷ *Morning Post*, May 2, 1783.

¹⁸ *Morning Chronicle*, May 17, 1783.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Robert Pollard after Dominic Serres, *Battle of Dogger Bank, 1781*, 1782, etching and engraving, 47 x 58.4 cm, Royal Collection Trust, Windsor, <https://militarymaps.rct.uk/other-18th-19th-century-conflicts/battle-of-dogger-bank-1781-the-representation-of>.

²¹ Robert Pollard after Dominic Serres, *A View of Gibraltar [...]*, 1782, etching and engraving, 48.5 x 61.7 cm, British Museum, London, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1877-0609-1874.

²² *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, March 31, 1780.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

Reversing the active role victorious commanders such as Rodney had been celebrated for, Serres places him in the calm aftermath of the lauded battle. The choice breaks from the written commemorations which emphasized the dramatic conditions that he willingly faced. A contributor in the *Morning Chronicle* listed, “a lee shore, a dark night, a heavy sea, and a hard gale of wind, and without water for his ships to swim, and a flying enemy.”²⁵ One poet contrasted the threatening conditions with Rodney’s daring: “No dangers RODENY’S soul appal, / Amidst the dreary gloom of night.”²⁶ Another focus of celebrants highlighted the action of the fight itself. The hours-long contest involved a great amount of firepower and destruction. Captain Uvedal of the *Ajax*, for example, fought seven ships and expended sixty-seven gunpowder barrels.²⁷ One poet glorified Rodney as a warrior in the midst of battle, describing, “Resolv’d to conquer, -- or to fall, / He looks, a lion in the fight.”²⁸

Given how the battle itself had been idealized, it is significant that Serres’ scene takes place after the stormy chaos. His calm picture provides a sequel to the St. Vincent works by artists such as himself, Richard Paton, Francis Holman, and Thomas Luny (Figures 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6). The complete victory immediately inspired artists, the latter two exhibiting their versions at the Royal Academy in 1780 and 1782 respectively. Serres also exhibited a version titled “Part of the engagement between Sir George Rodney and the Spanish squadron” in 1780 which may have been similar to his 1781 version (Figure 1.3).²⁹ All these works present the immense drama of tumultuous conditions. Luny, for

²⁵ *Morning Chronicle*, May 24, 1782.

²⁶ Benjamin West, *Miscellaneous Poems, Translations, and Imitations* (Northampton: Thomas Dicey, 1780), 133.

²⁷ *Morning Chronicle*, March 1, 1780.

²⁸ West, 133.

²⁹ *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy, The Twelfth* (London: T. Cadell, 1780), 10

example, alludes to the close shoreline threatening the fleet at left. All four works heavily contrast the darkened sea blocked by clouds with the light emanating from the explosion of the *Santa Domingo* and a small gap in the otherwise dominating clouds. The choppy waves and heavily tilted ships emphasize the storm. Underscoring the action, Luny, Holman, and Paton show simultaneous cannon volleys in plumes of smoke that merge with the clouds. Though Serres' battle does not present the dueling fleets in line, he emphasizes action through the central British two decker poised to broadside the rightmost Spanish ship, and the ship at left chasing Lángara's close ahead (Figure 1.3). All of these present concentrated dramatic action with numerous ships firing while in motion at the moment of the *Santa Domingo's* explosion and the threatening gathering storm. Serres' relief instead idealizes the calm stillness immediately after a successful battle. The clouds have passed except for a floating cumulonimbus revealing a light blue sky far different from the reddish-pink of the battle skies. Unlike the St. Vincent paintings, the fleet in Gibraltar anchors vertically with sails furled in tranquil waters.

Despite the stillness, Serres importantly still idealizes the triumph that has just occurred. One means by which he celebrates the victory is through the composition of the ships which evoke complete order and control. Serres paints the three largest warships in a pyramidal composition with Rodney's *Sandwich* flanked by the *Prince George* and the *Royal George*. The grouping emphasizes Rodney's command in the tallest ship towering over those of his Rear Admirals Digby and Lockhart-Ross. In turn, their ships tower over all others. The central grouping reveals the captured Spanish prizes before the three flagships as part of the dense collection, but importantly visually subordinate to the three both in height and distance. This pyramidal hierarchy is echoed in the intersecting

rigging, the pennants floating at the same forty-five-degree angle, and the distant mountain of St. Roche. The dense grouping emphasizes Rodney's command over the bay, as all boats not facing the background point to him. The lesser vessels of the British fleet at left face Rodney in their own ordered line receding to the background. The hierarchy and organized composition differ from the more chaotic battle scenes, where the disorder of battle and the storm have spread the fleet out in different directions and lack the immediate certainty of the fleet's organization. While the *Sandwich* formed the important central subject of Holman and Paton's versions, Rodney takes a subordinate role in Luny's work (Figures 1.5, 1.4, 1.6). In Paton's, Rodney's sails are peppered with holes, and in Holman's, the *Sandwich* tilts at a precarious angle from the gale. In *Gibraltar*, Serres leaves no doubt as to Rodney's command in a position of complete ordered controlled in an unscathed vertical ship.

Additionally, Serres places the viewer in a position to maximize the sense of relief for Gibraltar. For the besieged garrison, the long-awaited arrival of the fleet spawned euphoria. One anonymous diarist noted, "our bay from lying empty for so many months past is now become a wood."³⁰ Likewise Samuel Ancell described the mass of ships as "so thick I cannot number them with any precision."³¹ Serres' perspective provides that sense of protection that countered the garrisons' months-long vulnerability. The slightly elevated location of the viewer places the pyramid of Rodney's ships in comparison with Gibraltar towering at the right. By not including the full view of Gibraltar to its peak, and by placing the viewer close to the fleet, Rodney's flagship nearly rivals the rock in

³⁰ *Journal of the Late Siege of Gibraltar* (London: T. Bensley, 1785), 17

³¹ Samuel Ancell, *A Circumstantial Journal of the Long and Tedious Blockade and Siege of Gibraltar* [. . .] (Liverpool: Charles Wosencr, 1784), 30.

height. The cloud connecting both peaks forms a space in which the town within is completely safe at the moment from any naval bombardment by the Spanish. The great distance to the mainland from this position blocks any access to the enemy's boats farther in the bay. Rodney's smaller ships are cut off by the left end of the canvas so that the entire view is of British ships and land fortifications.

Another celebration of British force is Serres' incredible realism in the three main ships. These detailed portraits heighten the wider patriotic connotations of the victory. The ability to draw ships accurately had been an important prerequisite for naval painting. The *London Chronicle* praised Serres' rendition of George III's 1773 Naval Review at Portsmouth included in a theatrical presentation of *Alfred* where a magician reveals the future glory of England to the medieval king.³² The reviewer described, "every ship of the line is a beautiful perfect model, with rigging, &c. Compleat, dressed with their proper suits of colours, and carrying their regular number of guns."³³ This reveals Serres' understanding of the firepower and appearance of particular ships, and that some collective expectation existed for such particularities. The detail of ceremonial depictions can be seen in John Cleveley the Younger's drawing of *George III Reviewing the Fleet at Spithead* and John Cleveley the Elder's *'Royal George' at Deptford* (Figures 1.7, 1.8). These ceremonial events reinforced the might of the navy through displays of pageantry rather than act of battle. From such ubiquitous ship portraits, viewers would have recognized the wider feats of these symbolic ships with their individualized detail and visible painted names. The *Royal George*, for example, had been the flagship at the

³² *London Chronicle*, Oct. 9, 1773.

³³ *Ibid.*

Battle of Quiberon Bay in 1759 which saved Britain from mainland invasion.³⁴ Unlike naval battle paintings, these port scenes allowed the aesthetic beauty of the embellished sterns of famous vessels to be seen close up, unhindered by other ships competing for canvas space. Additionally, brightly lit ship portraits avoided the common problem in naval battle paintings where the shadow cast by a background light shrouded details. The limitation can be seen particularly in Luny's *St Vincent* and Serres' *Capture of Chandamogore* where, though detailed in their rigging, the ships' hulls are hidden (Figures 1.6, 1.9). In *Gibraltar*, gilt carving and galleries are clearly illuminated as in the dockyard scenes of the Cleveleys. Much like these ceremonial scenes, small individuals can be seen in the galleries of the *Sandwich* and *Royal George* in state of observation. The emphasis on the three main ships through the detail of their decorative hulls celebrates naval might without conflict borrowing instead from the language of patriotic naval ritual.

³⁴ Richard Kemp, *The Great Age of Sail* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1992), 74.

Chapter 2: Suffering and War in Copley's Guildhall Commission

i. The Guildhall and War

On March 21, 1783, the *Daily Advertiser* stated, “The Committee appointed to consider of a suitable Mode for the Court to adopt relative to the Defence of Gibraltar, made a Report that a Picture would be the most proper, and that Mr. Copley had agreed to paint a Picture of large Dimensions..”³⁵ After several proposals, John Singleton Copley won the City of London Corporation's contest to cover the west wall of their Common Council Chamber with a commemorative history painting of the battle. In recent years Copley had established his reputation as a painter of contemporary subjects after exhibiting his *Watson and the Shark* (1778), and *The Death of the Earl of Chatham* (1781) at the Royal Academy. By the time he completed *The Defeat of the Floating Batteries at Gibraltar, September 1782* in 1791, he had changed his original plan to include portraits of officers fulfilling the original wishes of the committee to “testify the gratitude of the citizens of London to General Elliott and his brave assistants” (Figure 2.1).³⁶ It is noteworthy that the Council chose to commemorate an event that took place in a recent war that they themselves had detested. While the work certainly pays tribute to the officers, it treats the event with a particular emphasis on suffering. This constituted a specific political message by the City of London Corporation denouncing the ministerial corruption that had both threatened its rights and led to a needlessly destructive war.

The Council's commission came at a time of wide celebration for a victory that many viewed as an opportunity to leave a lost war on decent terms. George Augustus

³⁵ *Daily Advertiser*, March 21, 1783.

³⁶ *Whitehall Evening Post*, Feb. 4, 1783.

Elliott (Lord Heathfield), had led the garrison at Gibraltar during a four year long siege by Spanish and French forces (Figure 2.2).³⁷ The Spanish entered the war in 1779 in part hoping to take back this important gateway to the Mediterranean that had been ceded to Great Britain in 1713.³⁸ The resilient siege, and particularly the defeat of thirteen Spanish floating gun batteries on September 14, 1782, brought his troops praise for their ability to keep Gibraltar against overwhelming odds. These ships had been purpose-built to withstand close range fire and had been thought to be indestructible with their thick hulls and covered roofs.³⁹ In the course of the battle, the British used furnaces to heat iron shot that ultimately smoldered in the ships' sides, causing them to catch on fire and explode.⁴⁰ In the immediate aftermath, Sir Roger Curtis led a daring rescue mission to assist the Spanish prisoners, saving as many as 354 though hundreds more perished.⁴¹ General Elliott had supposedly commanded throughout from within the King's Bastion, which had taken the brunt of the fire.⁴² The episode represented a stark contrast to the overall loss of the colonies and a perceived decline in British valor. The *Morning Herald* noted, "While detraction has reached almost every naval or army officer in this war, there is one character which it has never, even in the least degree, dared to sully, that of General Elliott;-- not even a whisper has been heard against him--a singular circumstance, and a contradiction of the common saying, that he cannot be good whom every body speaks well of."⁴³ With rampant parliamentary division, Gibraltar seemed "the only remaining

³⁷ James Falkner, *Fire Over the Rock: The Great Siege of Gibraltar* (Great Britain: Pen and Sword, 2009).

³⁸ *Ibid*, 17.

³⁹ Roy Adkins and Lesley Adkins, *Gibraltar: The Greatest Siege in British History*. (United States: Penguin Books, 2018), 17.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 328.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 337.

⁴² *Ibid*, 321.

⁴³ *Morning Herald*, Nov. 15, 1782.

monument of Britain's greatness."⁴⁴ While some saw Gibraltar as a useless base that only encouraged frequent wars with Spain, after the battle any thought of ceding the rock in exchange for better colonies seemed unpatriotic.

Copley's work received an incredible amount of praise and attention in itself, so much so that it became its own historical event. In 1788, for example, *The World* anticipated that, "Taken altogether, it will be a magnificent work, worthy of the Artist and his Art--A Record, fit to be given and received by the FIRST COMMERCIAL CITY in the World, to the best EXERTIONS of BRITISH ARMS!"⁴⁵ The important subject evoked patriotic and civic language equating the grandness of the project with the greatness of London as "the first City in the universe."⁴⁶ The Times observed in 1785 that it "promises to be one of the greatest ornaments of modern art."⁴⁷

The project attracted such attention in part because Copley would be fulfilling the ideal of a civic project for history painting. Up to that point, the Guildhall had occasionally ordered portraits of Lord Mayors and members of the royal family, but never projects of great expense and scale.⁴⁸ By the end of the eighteenth century, London's governing body took an increased interest in art as a model for behavior. In 1779, Alderman Townsend had restored the paintings of judges who had managed the city smoothly after the Great Fire of 1666, "so that they may remain another century."⁴⁹ Alderman Boydell presented a group of history paintings in 1794, shortly after Copley

⁴⁴ *Morning Herald*, May 5, 1783.

⁴⁵ *World*, March 28, 1788.

⁴⁶ John Drinkwater Bethune, *A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar: With a Description, and Account of that Garrison, from the Earliest Periods*. (London: T. Spilsbury, 1790), 320.

⁴⁷ *London Times*, Oct. 26, 1785.

⁴⁸ W. H. Pyne, *The Microcosm of London* (London: R. Ackermann, 1808).

⁴⁹ *Of London*, (London: Robt Paulder, 1790), 373.

finally presented his work.⁵⁰ He included Copley's Gibraltar in the preface of his pamphlet describing the donated paintings even though it was already in the Guildhall.⁵¹ Referring specifically to depictions of military valour he noted, "I hope they will be the cause of similar works, which may beautify our public buildings."⁵² The commissioning of Copley's Gibraltar can be seen as not only a way to show respect to the officers, but as an example of virtue for people in the Guildhall to be passed down. For example, in a debate four years after the commission as to whether Eliott should also be given the Freedom of the City, the Council decided that even that great gesture would be insignificant.⁵³ The project was a sufficient honor as "a Painting, to hand down to posterity and future ages, was the best mode of shewing the high regard and esteem the Court entertained for so brave and able an officer."⁵⁴ The painting was meant to be seen by current and future Council members to emulate the virtues on display.

For most members, the despotic tendencies of the administration of Lord North had led to the war, and its ineptitude had led to the loss. Representing the commercial interest of the city, the body naturally despised the war in terms of the loss of trade. The Court not only detested North's policies for their economic consequences, but also for infringing on its independence as a governing body since the time of William the Conqueror. When one Lord Mayor suggested raising troops to support the war effort, a council member observed that he had been "closetted with the K--g, in order to exert his

⁵⁰ John Boydell, *A Description of Several Pictures Presented to the Corporation of the City of London*, (London: John Boydell, 1794), viii.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Whitehall Evening Post*, July 14, 1787

⁵⁴ *Whitehall Evening Post*, July 12, 1787.

private influence.”⁵⁵ Any support of “the present ruinous and destructive war” would both “reflect dishonour upon their humanity” and hurt “the commercial interests of this great City.”⁵⁶ The Council voted against a resolution to congratulate the King after the capture of Charleston, South Carolina in 1780, and voted instead that thanks be given to its representatives in Parliament “For their steady and uniform opposition to the measures of a weak and wicked administration.”⁵⁷ By adding a “foreign war”, the ministers had “tarnished the glory which English virtue and English valour had acquired, in every quarter of the globe.”⁵⁸

Besides resolutions and participation in Committees of Correspondence with other city bodies calling for reform, the Council often cloaked its criticism through the commissioning of art. In 1770 for example, they set up a committee to commemorate Alderman William Beckford, who had famously delivered a petition to the King with fourteen points including preserving habeas corpus, to be mindful of the effects of trade with America, and limiting use of military force.⁵⁹ The statue would show him in the act of delivering the petition surrounded by Britannia and Commerce.⁶⁰ Eight years later after the death of William Pitt, the Earl of Chatham, the Guildhall set up a committee to determine a proper memorial for the great statesman.⁶¹ They had unsuccessfully petitioned the King to have the remains of Chatham buried at St. Paul’s Cathedral, then

⁵⁵ *Westminster Journal*, Jan. 24, 1778.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *St. James’s Chronicle*, July 27, 1780.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *The Conference*, 1769, etching, 9.8 x 13.8 cm, British Museum, London, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1868-0808-9803.

⁶⁰ *Public Advertiser*, July 6, 1770.

⁶¹ *London Chronicle*, March 21, 1782.

petitioned to at least allow the aldermen to attend the funeral to no response.⁶² In their resolution to erect a statue, they pointed out that in the time of Pitt's administration, "the Citizens of London never returned from the Throne dissatisfied," referring to their ancient right to direct petitioning unhindered by ministers.⁶³ The City thus began a pattern of selecting exemplars of good government who contrasted the current state of affairs. The statue would face Beckford's and honor the same notable attributes, namely Pitt's "Care of the Liberty of this Country", and his "Attention to Commerce."⁶⁴

Another way the Council indirectly criticized the administration was by presenting the Freedom of the City in a gold box to distinguished individuals. In 1777 they voted the Freedom to Sir Fletcher Norton, the Speaker of the House of Commons for delivering "an act for the better support of his Majesty's household, and the honour and dignity of the Crown of Great-Britain."⁶⁵ Norton had put "in manly terms, the real state of the nation to his Majesty on the Throne."⁶⁶ Interestingly, the Speaker refused the honor, politely chastising the City for "meddling in Politics."⁶⁷ The criticisms of administration in this case were all too direct.

Presenting the box to military officers provided an opportunity to veil criticism under the guise of simple thanks for service. For example, in 1779 the Council gave the Freedom to Admiral Keppel who had been court-martialed after the Battle of Ushant, a largely indecisive clash in the English Channel.⁶⁸ The trial was widely seen as baseless

⁶² *St. James's Chronicle*, May 19, 1778.

⁶³ *London Evening Post*, June 6, 1778.

⁶⁴ *St. James's Chronicle*, Dec. 16, 1779.

⁶⁵ *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, May 15, 1777.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Dec. 13, 1779.

and a shallow attempt at libel by a Tory administration against a commander who was a known Whig.⁶⁹ City mobs celebrated the acquittal by burning the house and effigy of Sir Hugh Palliser, who had brought on the charges.⁷⁰ The Guildhall carefully selected the design for the box, specifying that a medallion with London's St. Paul's Cathedral be included.⁷¹ Above this they demanded the name Harland to be placed, one of the trial witnesses.⁷² It is significant that they paid to publish an account of the box which included a print of this medallion, clearly intending the box to be seen publicly.⁷³ During the war, officers began to be placed in contrast with ministers, regardless of the actual politics of particular generals. General Boyd for example, one of the heroes who would be included in the finished work, had been left out of some accounts of the battle.⁷⁴ One member of Parliament noted, "Ministers wished to keep the house in the dark."⁷⁵ Similarly, the City voted the Freedom to Lord Hood in 1782 for a victory in the West Indies, though some claimed he had not actually taken part in the defeat of the French Ship depicted.⁷⁶ In many ways this can be seen as the City supporting Hood as a parliamentary candidate for Westminster against Charles James Fox, the long-time critic of North who had recently allied with him.⁷⁷ The reform society known as the Firm and Free, for example, met "to nominate either LORD HOOD, or GENERAL ELLIOT, to

⁶⁹ Tessa Murdoch and Michael Snodin, "Admiral Keppel's' Freedom Box from the City of London," *Burlington Magazine* 135, no. 1083 (June 1993): 404.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 409.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 405.

⁷³ *A Description of the Freedom Box Voted by the City of London to the Hon. Augustus Keppel, Admiral of the Blue* (London: Wm Charron, 1779).

⁷⁴ *London Chronicle*, Dec. 12, 1782.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Morning Herald*, Jan. 8, 1784.

⁷⁷ *Morning Herald*, April 5, 1783.

represent you in Mr. FOX's room."⁷⁸ Years earlier, the club had advertised its resolution to reward Elliott with a gold medal, along with several toasts including peace with America, "universal liberty", and "disgrace and punishment" to ministers "deaf to the petitions of the people."⁷⁹ Critics of the ministry saw officers as convenient mascots to rally around. Their perceived aversion to politics made them attractive symbols of virtue, above the fray of party. Member of Parliament Charles Turner painted Elliott as an ideal model of the non-partisan veteran, noting that he "always retired in time of peace to the plough, and...would never go into Parliament, from an opinion that it was an improper place for military men, by influencing their minds."⁸⁰

At a time when the Council's autonomy and traditional rights seemed threatened and the war had destroyed much of its manufacturing and commerce, the City craved heroes who could represent an opposition to ineptitude and corruption. Copley's commission can be seen as part of a larger pattern in which reformers contrasted past and present heroes with the administration, particularly military figures. In the Guildhall, the Aldermens' bench would literally be within the King's Bastion, directly below the model life-sized officers (Figure 2.3). Their red robes would echo the officers' uniforms. Spectators would be forced to measure the virtues of Council members against the backdrop of the flawless leaders. Beyond, both the officers and the viewers would behold the suffering consequences of an unnecessary war brought on by a corrupt ministry.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ *Morning Chronicle*, Nov. 15, 1782.

⁸⁰ *London Chronicle*, Dec. 12, 1782.

ii. Spectacle of Suffering

At the same time that the Council's committee selected Copley, several other artists prepared for the following month's Royal Academy exhibition. Thomas Whitcombe, William Hamilton, William Jeffreys, and Raphael West all glorified the battle that year (Figures 2.4-2.7).⁸¹ Whitcombe may have also shown his daytime version of the scene (Figure 2.8). One reviewer felt "literally worn out" by the subject.⁸² It is likely that Copley would have seen these pieces given that he exhibited two portraits that year.⁸³ Additionally, Copley may have observed George Carter's painting in his 1785 solo exhibition, given that the two had travelled together in Italy eleven years earlier (Figure 2.9).⁸⁴ Jeffreys, Dominic Serres (Figure 2.10), George Frederic Koehler (Figure 2.11) and Thomas Davies (Figure 2.12) would also circulate printed versions of the battle. Whether or not Copley used these works in his preparations, it is revealing to note the differences between his depiction and these glorified representations.

One significant difference is Copley's limiting of celebrated particular features that centered the battle in place and time. Serres' advertisement highlighted shared features of many of these idealizing works, marketing a "most-striking view of the Floating Batteries" and the "dismayed besiegers of the impregnable Rock saved by the humanity of Britons."⁸⁵ The rock itself had become a geological metaphor for defensibility, and a visually recognizable symbol in print and theatrical productions. It is therefore telling that Copley chose to shift the perspective away from the famous rock

⁸¹ *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy, M.DCC.LXXXIII. The Fifteenth* (London: T. Cadell, 1783).

⁸² Jane Kamensky, *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016), 346.

⁸³ *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy, M.DCC.LXXXIII. The Fifteenth* (London: T. Cadell, 1783).

⁸⁴ *Morning Post*, April 29, 1785.

⁸⁵ *Morning Herald*, Feb. 14, 1783.

and towards the suffering figures in the bay. By downplaying the visual prominence of the rock, the officers and the viewer can only look outwards. Without the rock, Copley divorces the scene from the battle that has just taken place. While West, Jeffreys, and Whitcombe showed towering pyramids of tremendous slope from the perspective of the bay, Copley painted only a small and gradually sloping section of wall hiding any features of Gibraltar's terrain or its peak (Figures 2.7, 2.6, 2.4). Carter's similar composition reveals how Copley could have maintained a King's Bastion perspective without abandoning a significant treatment of the rock (Figure 2.9). Instead, Copley lessened the sense of place with its connotations of the triumph that has just occurred. The section of wall he does show is not immediately recognizable as Gibraltar. He treats it with a flat earthen tone, smoothing most of its three dimensionalities into a distant background feature. In doing so he isolates the viewer and officers from Gibraltar itself and the wider event.

Another way Copley shifts the focus to the scene in the bay is by limiting the importance of the King's Bastion. One means by which he does this is reducing its visual impact. Copley casts much of the foreground wall in shadow, most of the light blocked by the officers themselves. Their bold red uniforms completely overtake the cold olive green and brown fortress. Additionally, Copley reduces the perceived scale of the fortress space. Though the King's Bastion takes up around a fourth of the painting, the life-sized officers themselves occupy most of this area. Copley does not show the feature in its entirety because the officers block its continuation, only revealing part of another disparate protrusion beyond the group. While his preparatory sketch indicates an original intention to have a much wider foreground wall, larger background bastion, and much

more space between the two, Copley ultimately diminished these (Figure 2.13). Besides reducing the area, Copley also altered the perceived height of the bastion. The rounded cornice in the background bastion divides roughly two layers of stone from around nine below to the base. In the foreground, however, the viewer only sees down to the cornice, giving the illusion that the water meets the stone much closer than in the background. The cornice seems to be about or just below the ground the officers stand on, so that two entire layers of stone only reach the height of Major Vallotton's knee. This creates an effect where the background bastion appears not much taller than the officers themselves. Realistically, such a zoomed in perspective should have included the massive arrow-shaped space shown in Carter's depiction, where dozens of figures stand with space for artillery and the furnace (Figure 2.9). Samuel Ancell noted the King's Bastion in his journal as "able to contain one thousand men, being bomb-proof, and is of a noble construction."⁸⁶ Like his downplay of the rock, Copley's lack of scale and particular features in the King's Bastion removed the officers from any signifier of the preceding nightlong bombardment. Koehler's print highlights the impossibility of showing a realistic King's Bastion while maintaining a clear line of sight for the officers (Figure 2.11). An artillery officer steps on a platform and must use a spyglass to peer above the battlement. At the expense of its defensibility and historical specifications, Copley opened up the scene for the officers and viewer to see the bay uninhibited.

Copley completely focuses on figures by painting a screen of smoke beyond them. The black, orange, and white plumes merge in a pyramid directly above the scene,

⁸⁶ Samuel Ancell, *A Circumstantial Journal of the Long and Tedious Blockade and Siege of Gibraltar* [. . .] (Liverpool: Charles Wosencr, 1784), 189.

drawing the eye directly below. The triangular composition echoes in the intersecting pieces of broken mast and rigging in the sinking boat of the drowning group. He achieves this covering effect by condensing the burning ships into a single line spanning the left of the painting. While his preparatory sketch had isolated the middle ship into a larger background, the final version reduced all three ships into a single wall (Figure 2.13). By contrast, other depictions separated burning ships throughout the water, and individualized each smoke plume. Copley's single congealed mass of smoke blocks what would be a very large bay. Instead, Copley isolates the figures in a relatively small space between smoke, water, bastion, and ships.

In addition to its visually isolating impact in space, the smoke signifies the moment in time of gruesome aftermath rather than the preceding victory. Colonel Lindsay later noted this aspect of the scene, writing, "the cloud which it formed was beyond all description, rolling its prodigious volumes one over another, mixed with fire, with earth, with smoke, and heavy bodies innumerable, on which the fancy formed various conjectures while they rose and fell; till the whole arriving at its height in a gradual progress of near ten minutes, the top rolled downwards, forming the capital of a column of prodigious architecture, which the first-rate painter must have been eager, though perhaps unequal to have imitated."⁸⁷ It is noteworthy that Lindsay not only emphasized the visual covering effect of the smoke's dense scale, but its spiraling longevity over time. The compounding build-up occurred after the immediate explosion of the ship. Picton as well contrasted the celebrated explosion that shook the sea "for some short continuance" with the "enormous column of smoke of variegated colours

⁸⁷ *The Monthly Review; or, Literary Journal, Enlarged* (London: R. Griffiths, 1794), 264-265.

which ascended at the same time, expanding itself gradually to an immense height, [which] was really most astonishing.”⁸⁸ Significantly, Copley chose to depict the voluminous clouds that both Lindsay and Picton recognized as gradually expanding in the aftermath of the explosion rather than an explosion itself. This places the viewer at some length of time after battle, downplaying its triumphalism. One glorifying theatrical representation, for example, advertised the “blowing up the Spanish Floating Batteries” with the curtain falling “at the moment of victory.”⁸⁹ The immediate explosion for Picton had, “exhibited one of the most magnificent illuminations that the most fertile imagination could form an idea of, and resembled, from its apparent symmetry and uniformity, a most perfect artificial firework.”⁹⁰ The ordered explosions of Hamilton, Serres, Whitcombe, Carter, and Davies capture this picturesque aspect from a safe distance (Figures 2.5, 2.10, 2.8, 2.9, 2.12). By pausing at the split second of explosion, these artists had emphasized the moment when the tide had turned towards assured victory. In doing so, they avoided having to show any individualized suffering figures in the aftermath. Instead, Copley places the viewer long after flames have engulfed the exploded ship. To indicate the live continuation of the destructive process, he rapidly shifts from shades of black to dark orange dynamically surrounding a central glow which illuminates several Spanish bodies on a burning mast.

Like the fire smoke, the nearby white gun smoke surrounding the officers both directs attention to the individuals by confining them in a small space and indicates that

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Eleanor Sian Hughes, “Vessels of empire: Eighteenth-century british marine paintings,” PhD diss., (University of California, Berkeley, 2001), 209.

⁹⁰ Roy Adkins and Lesley Adkins, *Gibraltar: The Greatest Siege in British History*. (United States: Penguin Books, 2018), 323-333.

the battle is finished. The dense screen of smoke blocks most of the access to the Spanish mainland, instead drawing focus to the contrasting red of the group. The smoke's brightest point centralizes Elliot and echoes the hair of his horse, but smoke also hovers behind every officer even conforming its shape to do so. Like the figures in the bay, the officers are covered by the mixture of white, black, and orange, which reverses and overpowers the original outward direction of the white smoke. This stands in contrast to most depictions which tend to show smoke only from the destroyed batteries moving away from the bastion or at a far distance. For example, Koehler and Whitcombe show garrison artillery smoke, but only plumes shooting out from the fortress clearly in the midst of battle (Figures 2.11, 2.8). Carter showed smoke coming from the celebrated forge heating the iron shot (Figure 2.9). Such representations emphasize British might in the heat of battle, in which each gun fired an unprecedented one hundred rounds. Instead, Copley fused the gun smoke from unseen cannon into a single mixture. Like the fire smoke, this dense cloud indicates that enough time has passed for all the individualized cannon plumes to collect. Covering the officer group in gun and fire smoke, Copley forces them to confront the effects of their own force in the battle's aftermath. The choice to place them as inactive spectators after the hours-long battle subverted the typical narrative of active heroism. Edmund Burke noted that Gibraltar had been the "great theatre where he [Eliott] had acted--there the Princes of Bourbon had been spectators."⁹¹ Copley downplays Eliott's active role, instead placing him "in conversation with General Boyd, General Delamotte, and General Green...pointing to a display of valor exhibited by

⁹¹ *London Chronicle*, Dec. 12, 1782.

a number of British seamen.”⁹² A reviewer similarly observed “the Principal Officers stand beholding the dreadful disorder before them.”⁹³

By confining the perspective to the bay and the moment to after the battle, Copley focuses solely on the rescue effort itself. He limited the glorification of this central episode by eliminating conflict with enemy gunboats highlighted in Serres and Hamilton’s works (Figures 2.10, 2.5). Instead, he emphasized the moment immediately before rescue, but after any fight between gunboats. Sir Roger Curtis recalled this moment, witnessing that the Spanish “expressing by speech and gesture the deepest distress, and all imploring assistance, formed a spectacle of horror not easily conceived.”⁹⁴ Drinkwater similarly recalled them “imploring relief with the most expressive gestures and signs of despair.”⁹⁵ While Hamilton’s drowning group formed an insignificant background to the central gunboat conflict, Copley’s Curtis directly faces the suffering figures as a spectator to the aftermath.

Placing the rescue in the immediate future, Copley leaves no assurance that it will be successful. One way he limited the definite expectation of an orderly rescue was by heightening the total scale of people. Not counting the men on the burning ship, at least forty-five span the water. A commentator in the *Morning Chronicle* noted, “no room in London would contain the multitude of figures.”⁹⁶ In order to pack his isolated section of the bay, Copley shrunk the size of each drowning body from his original sketch of only

⁹² *Morning Post*, Jan. 3, 1788.

⁹³ *Oracle*, June 10, 1791.

⁹⁴ *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure [...]* (London: Stephen Austen Cumberlege, 1782), 271.

⁹⁵ John Drinkwater Bethune, *A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar: With a Description and Account of that Garrison from the Earliest Periods* (London: T. Spilsbury, 1785), 294.

⁹⁶ *Morning Chronicle*, April 28, 1791.

three larger figures on the sinking boat (Figure 2.13). In this version, Copley had kept a space between them and the people around its broken mast. In the finished work, he filled this space and also shrunk the bastion's corner which had blocked the mast group. Most other depictions showed only a few victims on a small scale, instead focusing on the rescue boats heading towards the ships. While Jeffrey's included more figures, he placed the overwhelming majority in the boats with a wider space between groups (Figure 2.6). By contrast, Copley's group contains many more sufferers who outnumber the rescuers, and who certainly will not fit in the two boats. In his final version Copley actually removed a boat trying to assist the background ship, completely resigning the burning group to hopelessness (Figure 2.13). By filling the small bay with figures, Copley brings attention to the scale of their plight. He densely piles the survivors over the sinking boat, desperately clinging to each other and the unstable wreck just to stay afloat. Not only does he pack the group, he treats each of them with elongated, unnaturally arched poses that stretch their individual size. By comparison, Hamilton's tiny figures float much more calmly, partially submerged with space between each person.

Copley reflects the desperate instability of the drowning figures in the exaggerated poses of the sailors. To exhibit great exertion, Copley borrowed heavily from the charged poses of Rubens. *The World* prophesied this dynamic treatment noting, "Mr. Copley makes the tour of Flanders; and it is presumed that his view of *Rubens's* great works may not prove unserviceable in his destruction of the floating batteries before Gibraltar."⁹⁷ Several of his figures mirror the struggling disciples in Rubens' *Christ on the Sea* (Figure 2.14). For example, the single oarsmen in both pictures lean precariously

⁹⁷ *World*, Aug. 30, 1787.

backwards after finishing a long stroke. Both the figure in Rubens' bow and the sailor pulling the rope in Bradshaw Smith's boat lean at an extreme forty-five-degree angle. The ruffled folds and bulging neck muscle highlight the desperation of the sailors to control the situation, much like the exaggerated bodies in Rubens' boat. The disorderly attempt at rescue contrasts heavily with the regimented sailors rowing in perfect harmony in the prints of Serres and Hamilton (Figures 2.10, 2.5). These figures sit calmly in vessels that rest flat in the water unlike Copley's unstable figures standing and kneeling on a tilted boat. In his own preparatory sketch, he had included rows of parallel oars held by celebrating figures with hats off (Figure 2.13). In the final work, Copley reduced this sense of a triumphant and orderly rescue.

Copley mirrors the chaos of the rescue in his officers' physical reactions (Figure 2.15). Though in a passive state of observation, several poses reflect the struggling individuals in the bay. For example, Colonel Trigg leans his head to the right in a similar way as the priest on the sinking wreckage and the middle sailor in Curtis' boat. Captain Drinkwater at the top right extends his hand much like the figures gesturing for relief. Major Vallotton turns his head in the opposite direction of his torso, echoing the shirtless figure clinging to the boat mast wreckage. Furthermore, the officers cling to objects much like the bay figures grab hold of whatever they can. Sir William Green, Lt. Colonel Hardy, and Robert Boyd clench their grounded swords reflecting the sailor grasping the bow for stability. Major Vallotton and Colonel Lewis rest on the cannon for support. By comparison, Carter's officer group all stand straight and orderly, and much less huddled (Figure 2.9). Their statuesque poses evoke an unconcerned stoicism in how they process

the scene. By physically echoing the dynamic figures in the bay, Copley reveals the intense emotional reaction of the leaders.

The officers' bodily reaction to the suffering also mimics poses from depictions of mourning. Several of the figures stand in the same manner as those of lamenters in depictions of the death of a hero. For example, Major Vallotton's position can be seen in Copley's *The Death of the Earl of Chatham*, where the seated figure leans forward on a table while his opposite leg spreads away from the scene (Figure 2.16). Nearby, Granville Leveson-Gower rests his arm against his side similarly to Colonel Lindsay at the right of the officer group. Lindsay tilts slightly to the ground in a contrapposto stance much like General Burgoyne in John Graham's *The Burial of General Simon Fraser after the Battle of Saratoga, 1777* and the rightmost figure in Benjamin West's *The Death of General Wolfe* (Figures 2.17, 2.18). The downward facing pose evoked a sense of reflective mourning while gazing at a deceased hero. The same downward pose with bent elbow can be seen in the melancholic Spanish prisoner in Curtis' boat. Additionally, the grouping of the officers en masse appears much like the concerned mourning figures in *The Death of the Earl of Chatham*. Colonel Schleppegrel, for example, leans on the back of Picton much like the concerned MPs lean on one another. By turning the officers into mourning figures, Copley subverts the expected glorification of the event instead prompting a recognition of the reality of war. Rather than downplaying enemy casualties as incidental to the larger theme of victory, the officers mourn them as they would a great statesman or patriot.

Chapter 3: Sympathy and Military Restraint in Trumbull's *Sortie*

i. Universal Sympathy

In the spring of 1789, John Trumbull held a solo exhibition within Ansell's Auction room in London's Spring Gardens presenting his *Sortie of the Garrison at Gibraltar* (Figure 3.1).⁹⁸ For the past four years, the artist had adopted a project abandoned by his teacher Benjamin West to commemorate scenes of the American Revolution. By 1786 he had finished his first contemporary battle paintings: *The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker's Hill, June 17, 1775*, and *The Death of General Montgomery in the Attack on Quebec, December 31, 1775* (Figures 3.2 and 3.3). In this period, he also began contemplating most of his later battles, namely *The Death of General Mercer at the Battle of Princeton, 3 January 1777* of which an early unfinished version survives (Figure 3.4). Because of this project and his own service in the war, Trumbull came to be seen as part of a wider process of national commemoration as a fundamentally American history painter. When John Adams introduced Trumbull to French clergymen in 1786 he noted that "he has the noble ambition of immortalizing the events of our history with his paintbrush. You will see his Warren and his Montgomery."⁹⁹

Significantly breaking from his series of American subjects, the *Sortie* celebrated an action on November 27, 1781 during which the British garrison at Gibraltar destroyed the foremost Spanish works on the isthmus.¹⁰⁰ The siege continued on, and the event became overshadowed in national memory by the destruction of the floating batteries

⁹⁸ *Oracle*, June 11, 1789.

⁹⁹ John Adams to the Abbés Chalut and Arnoux, July 8, 1786, *Founders Online*, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-18-02-0206>.

¹⁰⁰ Roy Adkins, and Lesley Adkins, "COUNTER-SIGN STEADY," in *Gibraltar: The Greatest Siege in British History* (United States: Penguin Books, 2018), 241-255.

months later. According to Trumbull in his largely self-aggrandizing 1841 autobiography, he felt inspired to choose this minor victory by an account of the story told to him personally by the artist Antonio de Poggi who had sketched the site.¹⁰¹ He chose as the central subject not the action of the battle, but General Eliott and his officers offering aid to the dying Spanish artillery Captain Don José de Barboza in the aftermath. By honoring a British victory, he hoped “to show that noble and generous actions, by whomsoever performed, were the objects to whose celebration I meant to devote myself.”¹⁰² With this unique central subject, Trumbull departed from the battlefield history painting genre by playing up the heroization of an anonymous sympathetic figure and by showing a successful act of relief to the enemy.

The process of the memorialization of dead officers in newspapers, eulogies, poems, and histories circulating during and after the war celebrated dying heroes as national figures. Trumbull took part in this broad project beginning with his *Bunker's Hill* and *Quebec* to commemorate “eminent men, who had given their lives for their country.”¹⁰³ Notably, his first attempted American Revolution scene had been a now lost sketch of the death of General Fraser indicating that he himself did not strictly view martyrdom in partisan terms.¹⁰⁴ He paid significant tribute to the dying British Major John Pitcairn in *Bunker's Hill* and included British Captain William Leslie in *Hugh Mercer* as a secondary but prominent martyr (Figures 3.2 and 3.4). These early conceptions of history paintings before the Sortie indicate his respect for general sacrifice

¹⁰¹ John Trumbull, *Autobiography, Reminiscences, and Letters of John Trumbull from 1756 to 1841* (New Haven: B.L. Hamlen, 1841), 148.

¹⁰² Trumbull, 149.

¹⁰³ Trumbull, 93.

¹⁰⁴ Theodore Sizer, "A Tentative “Short-Title” Check-List of the Works of Col. John Trumbull," *The Art Bulletin* 31, no. 1 (1949): 21-37.

beyond strictly his own country's figures. In the *Sortie*, Don José de Barboza forms the central dying military officer in the place of the national heroes seen in West's *Death of General Wolfe*, Copley's *The Death of Major Peirson, 6 January 1781*, and his own aforementioned subjects (Figures 3.5 and 3.6). Besides the sublimity of a moonlit battle and an opportunity to honor the British, Trumbull "was pleased with the subject, as offering, in the gallant conduct and death of the Spanish commander, a scene of deep interest to the feelings."¹⁰⁵ The centrality of the death of Barboza as the focused martyr in the *Sortie* broke from precedent by highlighting a figure unknown to both the intended British audience and Trumbull's nation. Trumbull maximized sympathy by painting Barboza with several aspects that had threatened a strict national commemoration during the war. As will become clear, the idea that Providence had fated the dead officer allowed each side to empathize with figures across lines, particularly with the young. Trumbull heightens the sympathy for his dying youth by portraying Barboza with virtues that had been universally admired, particularly elite sociability, the prescient abilities of young officers, and the total acceptance of death.

Trumbull was able to elevate an anonymous martyr in part because national dead figures had been seen largely in terms of their death alone. Specific character traits of the deceased officers' lives melted into the general category of the dead martyr in a roll of heroes spanning time and nationality. Authors took a sweeping view of history where modern figures paralleled the historical in the act of sacrifice. One published elegy on the death of Hugh Mercer was "an exact transcription" of that of Wolfe's, merely substituting names and places.¹⁰⁶ Memorialists could sum up the lives of modern heroes in a sentence

¹⁰⁵ Trumbull, 148.

¹⁰⁶ *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, Feb. 1, 1777.

with a swift comparison to the deaths past dead martyrs. A poem recited after a production of Addison's *Cato* noted, "Like *Pompey* -- WARREN fell in martial pride, /And great MONTGOMERY like *Scipio* dy'd!"¹⁰⁷ Perez Morton's oration at the reinternment of Joseph Warren months after the battle stated simply that "like HAMPDEN he lived, and like WOLFE he died."¹⁰⁸ The single repeating act of battlefield death took precedence over the specific characteristics of their lives. When Congress authorized a cenotaph in memory of General Montgomery the inscription noted, "Hampden's glorious death, brave chief! Was thine."¹⁰⁹ The fact that Barboza's life was unknown did not preclude his celebration, since the act of dying in battle had become a recurring general historical event worthy of celebration.

The perpetuation of the general dying hero as an archetype coincided with the view that they had been destined victims of fate. This historical lens particularly influenced Trumbull from his New England Congregationalist upbringing.¹¹⁰ Trumbull recalled his friend Rufus King moving from a breakfast table shortly before a cannon ball entered the room during the Rhode Island Campaign.¹¹¹ He noted, "surely there is a providence which controls the events of human life, and which withdrew Mr. King from this misfortune."¹¹² Eulogizing poetry perpetuated the narrative of victims falling to the hand of fate. The *Providence Gazette* mourned, "On Bunker's height great Warren is no

¹⁰⁷ *Freeman's Journal*, Mar. 31, 1778.

¹⁰⁸ Perez Morton, *An Oration; Delivered at the King's Chapel in Boston, April 8, 1776* [. . .] (Boston: J. Gill, 1776), 12.

¹⁰⁹ *The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, for the Year 1775* (London: J. Dodsley, 1776), 189.

¹¹⁰ Irma B. Jaffe, "FORTUNA FAVET AUDACI," in *John Trumbull: Patriot-Artist of the American Revolution* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975), 1-22.

¹¹¹ Trumbull, 53-54.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

more, / The brave Montgomery's fate we next deplore."¹¹³ One poem described General Fraser's fall as a direct consequence of General Burgoyne disregarding his advice to abandon the Saratoga campaign.¹¹⁴ The poet imagined the moment when "Brave FRASER saw the Fate he soon might share."¹¹⁵ The tragedy of fate allowed for each side to forget that the fallen had been enemies, instead lamenting their providential misfortune. A supposed statement by Colonel Von Donop serving under the British published in the American writer Hugh Brackenridge's *Eulogium* to fallen patriots deemphasized his agency.¹¹⁶ Brackenridge quoted, "I fall a victim to my own ambition, and the avarice of my prince, but deeply sensible of the kind treatment I have received from my generous enemy!"¹¹⁷ The thanks for humane treatment prompted a mournful reflection on fate. Brackenridge continued, "for this penitential sigh, and the just tribute of thy praise, O Donop, I will mix thee with the fame of heroes, and on thy memory drop a tear."¹¹⁸

As a dying youth, Barboza would have been seen as a particularly sympathetic victim of fate. The *Morning Post* emphasized the tragedy of the young spy John André executed "in the bloom of life."¹¹⁹ One poet mourned Montgomery's young aide, noting, "McPherson is no more, as when a rose, in ever vernal bloom, / Nipt by chilling frosts, droops its languid head."¹²⁰ Similarly, a British elegy lamented that eighteen year old

¹¹³ *Providence Gazette*, Jan 31, 1778.

¹¹⁴ *Public Advertiser*, Jan 2, 1778.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ Hugh Henry Brackenridge, *An Eulogium of the Brave Men who Have Fallen in the Contest with Great-Britain* [. . .] (Philadelphia: F. Bailey, 1779), 15.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Brackenridge, 15.

¹¹⁹ *Morning Post*, Dec. 22, 1780.

¹²⁰ *Virginia Gazette*, Feb. 24, 1776.

George Rogers had just begun to show his promise.¹²¹ The admirer noted, “But all this worth, just opening into bloom, / Is clos’d, for ever, by the ruthless tomb.”¹²² The tragedy of the fallen youth drew sympathy across lines. One American poem commemorating the Battle of Princeton bemoaned the death of British Captain Leslie, “a noble youth!”¹²³ The poet viewed the British officer as a victim of “false honor for his King.”¹²⁴ Because of this internationally tragic category, viewers would have instantly sympathized with Barboza as a fated youth. In the exhibition advertisement, Trumbull describes him as a “young man.”¹²⁵ Much like the more familiar Francis Peirson in Copley’s *Peirson*, and Montgomery’s dead Captains John MacPherson and Jacob Cheeseman in *Quebec*, Barboza’s smooth, pale face contrasts the wrinkled countenances of older surrounding officers (Figures 3.6 and 3.3). The nineteen-year-old artist Thomas Lawrence served as a model for the head of Barboza (Figure 3.7). His curling brown hair varies from the largely grey-haired and balding British officer group.¹²⁶ Trumbull’s emphasis on Barboza’s youth maximizes the audience’s pity for his early destined fall.

Another means by which Trumbull augments sympathy for Barboza is by emphasizing the social manners expected of his rank. The general martyred youth in national commemorations had been lauded for their prescient social abilities despite their early fall. An admirer in the *Morning Herald* observed that Francis Peirson could instantly shift from the active martial drill to social events with the people of St. Helier.¹²⁷ The memorialist described the rapid transformation when “the soldier softened

¹²¹ *Morning Chronicle*, Nov. 20, 1781.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Pennsylvania Mercury and Universal Advertiser*, Mar. 30, 1787.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *World*, Apr. 23, 1789.

¹²⁶ Jean Lambert Brockway, “Trumbull’s Sortie,” *The Art Bulletin* 16, no. 1 (1934): 5-13.

¹²⁷ *Morning Herald*, June 23, 1781.

with peculiar dexterity into the gay, the polite, the agreeable companion!”¹²⁸ Peirson tempered this praiseworthy ability to exist in genteel society by selective companionship of only “the good, the wise, and the worthy,” notably the Minister who favored only “the sons of virtue.”¹²⁹ Similarly, the *Public Advertiser* praised John André’s days at Westminster School as a boy where he cultivated “easy Manners, and that associating Temper, which afterwards made him live with such general Acceptance.”¹³⁰ Trumbull shows Barboza expressing genteel behaviour through his polite interaction with Elliott. In the advertisement, Barboza politely refuses the Governor’s aid with the exclamation “No, Sir.”¹³¹ Barboza’s prefix Don, and his description as “elegant” place him in an elite social rank.¹³² Trumbull drew Barboza in the classical pose of what was at the time called the Dying Gladiator, now known as the *Dying Gaul* (Figure 3.8).¹³³ In his earlier version, Trumbull had shown him facing away from the officers towards the batteries (Figure 3.9). By his own account, the “Spanish hero seemed to express something approaching to ferocity.”¹³⁴ By adopting the Dying Gladiator form, he moderated the Captain into a more graceful pose echoed in the officer group, namely Elliott’s manner of the Apollo Belvedere. William Hogarth described the Dying Gladiator as an example of the elegant line.¹³⁵ The *Modern Traveller* likewise noted “the elegance of the limbs” in the sculpture.¹³⁶ The physical portrayal of grace emphasized a polite interaction between

¹²⁸ *Morning Herald*, June 23, 1781.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Public Advertiser*, Nov. 23, 1780.

¹³¹ *World*, Apr. 23, 1789.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ Trumbull, 149.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty: Written With a view of fixing the fluctuating Ideas of Taste* (London: W. Strahan, 1772), 128.

¹³⁶ *The Modern Traveller: Being a Collection of Useful and Entertaining Travels, Lately Made Into Various Countries* [. . .] (London: T. Lowndes, 1776), 131.

gentlemen of rank. In the final version, his arm curves gently and respectfully refusing aid. Where an early sketch shows Barboza's sword draw pointing in the direction of the group, Trumbull ultimately reduced Barboza's intensity to a polite gentility (Figure 3.12).

In addition to sociability, Trumbull maximized the military abilities associated with Barboza's rank. For known younger heroes, the process of commemoration had played up their predisposed talent cultivated through study. Captain Charles Campbell's "conduct and abilities afforded the most flattering prospect that he would be an honour to his country."¹³⁷ Though younger figures did not live to build a long list of accomplishments, their early promise gave evidence of their natural military skills. The *Royal Gazette* noted that André "was a Briton born to astonish" with great abilities "even in the youthful walk of life."¹³⁸ André's memorial at Westminster Abbey celebrated that he had been "raised by his merit at an early period of his life to the rank of adjutant general."¹³⁹ Similarly the *Morning Herald* emphasized Major Peirson's disciplined military study.¹⁴⁰ The contributor testified, "I have seen him on a field day, active, indefatigable, as if war was his only occupation; its awful charms, his only delight."¹⁴¹ Though an unknown character, viewers would have associated Barboza with this talented youth archetype. Trumbull's advertisement describes Barboza as "known from his uniform to be captain of artillery."¹⁴² Despite his youth, the officer had been placed in charge of the entire work. Trumbull emphasizes his rank by illuminating his epaulettes

¹³⁷ Banastre Tarleton, *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces of North America* (Dublin: Colles, Exshaw, White, H. Whitestone, Burton, Byrne, Moore, Jones, and Dornin, 1787), 118.

¹³⁸ *Royal Gazette*, July 7, 1781.

¹³⁹ *Continental Journal, and Weekly Advertiser*, July 14, 1785.

¹⁴⁰ *Morning Herald*, June 23, 1781.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² *World*, April 23, 1789.

and the detailed embellishment of his sword hilt echoing the decorated officer group. Additionally, he featured Barboza's large officer hat with bold red insignia just beyond his left leg.

Another important sympathetic feature of Barboza is his mode of death leading in the front. Memorialists universally celebrated dying heroes' voluntary self-exposure to danger. For example, British Lieutenant Colonel Henry Monckton "gloriously fell in front of that battalion, nobly exerting himself in the cause of his country."¹⁴³ The imagined accounts of Warren's death emphasized that he did not leave his post until the end, urging on his peers to continue fighting with fictive oratory.¹⁴⁴ The British poet George Cocking described, "Aloud he call'd, rouze, and shake off your fears: / Partners in fame, my friends, and volunteers."¹⁴⁵ General Frazer was likewise praised for continuing to fight by himself.¹⁴⁶ A correspondent in the *Morning Post* witnessed the moment when, "deserted by all his men, he stood alone, at the distance of three hundred yards from any aid, and in the midst of the enemy's thickest fire, waving his sword, and calling to his astonished *corps* to renew the conflict."¹⁴⁷ Trumbull describes Barboza as having the same active behaviour at the moment of death. His advertisement noted "that he had maintained his ground, until his men, finding themselves overpowered, threw down their arms and deserted him."¹⁴⁸ Like Warren and Frazer, Barboza tried to urge his companions on through speech. Trumbull's advertisement described how "he reproached their baseness, exclaiming, 'At least one Spaniard shall die honourably,' rushed down

¹⁴³ *London Chronicle*, Sep. 19, 1778.

¹⁴⁴ George Cockings, *The American War, A Poem in Six Books* [. . .] (London: W. Richardson, 1781), 26.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Morning Post*, Jan. 4, 1778.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ *World*, Apr. 23, 1789.

from the top of his work, among the British column, and fell where he was found, at the foot, and in front of his battery.”¹⁴⁹ Trumbull signifies Barboza’s gallantry through his position directly in front of the works, his body facing the enemy. He places him directly in front of the dead British private both of whom had wounded each other. Though he includes both after combat, he shows Barboza holding his sword still in the side of his adversary who he looks directly towards. In his earlier conception, Trumbull had not included the soldier, then considered placing him upside-down mostly covered by Barboza (Figures 3.11 and 3.12). The final version shows the private’s dead face engaged with Barboza’s. The soldier has just let go of his pistol, the instrument of Barboza’s death. By alluding to their one-on-one combat, Trumbull emphasizes the active state of Barboza’s last moments voluntarily fighting as his men deserted him.

Like the voluntary fight up through the moment of their fall, memorialists admired martyrs’ total acceptance of death after the mortal wound. The popular military song “How Stands the Glass Around” widely circulated the fictional words of Wolfe shortly before his fate emphasizing total resignation.¹⁵⁰ The song asks, “why, soldiers, why, / Should we be melancholy, boys? / Whose business ‘tis to die.”¹⁵¹ The dying hero was not supposed to show any signs of pain or melancholy. A poem in the *Providence Gazette* imagined the dying General Nash urging his men on “Tho’ ‘tortur’d, weltring on the hostile ground.”¹⁵² Similarly to Wolfe, the idealized Nash accepts the inevitability of death exclaiming “‘tis but the fate of war.”¹⁵³ Montgomery likewise “was neither heard to

¹⁴⁹ *World*, Apr. 23, 1789.

¹⁵⁰ Frederick Pilon, *The Siege of Gibraltar: A Musical Farce, in Two Acts* [. . .] (London: G. Kearsly, 1780), 5.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² *Providence Gazette*, Jan. 31, 1778.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

groan nor sigh, till he sighed his last.”¹⁵⁴ The stoic acceptance of death received incredible sympathy from the other side as well. American James Thatcher recalled John André bandaging his own eyes and slipping the noose on himself which “melted the hearts and moistened the cheeks.”¹⁵⁵ Charles Pettit noted that this “firmness” led Americans to forget that he was an enemy instead feeling “sympathy for a fellow creature.”¹⁵⁶

The artist maximizes Barboza’s acceptance of death by emphasizing his resignation from the ongoing scene. He described this moment in his advertisement when “the fire was communicating rapidly toward the spot where he lay: the Spaniard endeavoured to raise himself from the ground, and with the most expressive action returned, ‘No Sir; no, leave me; let me perish amid the ruins of my post.’”¹⁵⁷ Trumbull shows the approaching danger by placing the flames directly above him in a completely longitudinal rightward sweep. His arm completely rejects the aid, while he looks at the ground completely disengaged from the battle. In his earlier conceptions, Barboza had been looking at the officers, then at the batteries (Figures 3.11 and 3.9). In the final work, Barboza is completely dissociated from the world around him except for his dead killer whose fate he soon must share. Trumbull emphasizes the rejection of aid by showing Barboza alone. While Warren, Montgomery, Wolfe, and Peirson had been held, Barboza completely supports himself (Figures 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6). Though he initially considered two assistants holding Barboza, then later one figure while Barboza rested on a body,

¹⁵⁴ *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, Mar. 2, 1776.

¹⁵⁵ James Thatcher, *A Military Journal During the Revolutionary War, From 1775 to 1783* [. . .] (Boston: Richardson and Lord, 1823), 273-274.

¹⁵⁶ Sarah Knott, “Sensibility and the American Revolution,” *The American Historical Review* 109, no. 1 (February 2004): 23.

¹⁵⁷ *World*, Apr. 23, 1789.

Trumbull ultimately abandoned this grouping (Figures 3.11 and 3.12). By focusing on the captain's rejection of aid, he highlighted his complete acceptance of death.

Trumbull shows Barboza at the moment of dying emphasizing that while he could still seek help, he instead deliberately meets his fate. The description importantly states that the officers found him "almost expiring." While Warren, Montgomery, Wolfe and Peirson had been shown with prominent wounds clearly unconscious, Barboza is completely alive with some color still in his face (Figures 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6). The lifeless pose of these figures with their head sinking backwards had been considered in his first conception (Figure 3.10). The expression of figures with tilted head had been blank with their mouth opened and eyebrows raised. Trumbull shows Barboza instead with a furrowed brow completely alive and conscious in his decision.

Ultimately Trumbull portrayed Barboza as the ideal sympathetic martyr. The idea of the fated hero, particularly the youth, allowed for sympathy across lines. His portrayed social and military abilities tragically came to a swift end when the young officer gallantly met his fate with complete acceptance. By painting Barboza in a completely sympathetic light, he heightened the British officers' act of mercy. Just as Barboza is the perfect universal hero, the British extension of aid to a deserving figure is an idealized celebration of international rules of prisoner treatment carried out within a battle painting.

ii. Triumphal Aid

In choosing a British victory, Trumbull hoped to resolve the problem of his identity as an American patriot particularly after his *Bunker's Hill* and *Quebec* "had given offense to some extra-patriotic people in England."¹⁵⁸ The Sortie had been a significant counterpoint

¹⁵⁸ Trumbull, 149.

to defeat at Yorktown one month earlier that largely ended the American war.¹⁵⁹ Countering such “disgraces”, the *Public Advertiser* emphasized the battle as evidence of the continuation of “British valour” when “directed by men who have skill and courage.”¹⁶⁰ It is significant that Trumbull centered the painting not in the violent midst of battle like in his own previous works and Copley’s *Peirson*, but during an act of relief. The proper adherence to the rules of prisoner treatment had been threatened by the realities of the war, namely an escalating level of retaliation that affected the artist himself. Trumbull countered the problem by showing an ideal instance of successful prisoner treatment taking place even in the midst of conflict. He did so by including the active but bloodless destruction of the batteries as a secondary but significant part of the composition to show that relief can take place even during a battlefield victory. As will become clear, he centralized the successful rescue of Baron von Helmstadt alluding to the ideal example of prisoner treatment offered to Barboza. Finally, he reversed the officers’ roles as active battlefield leaders instead borrowing from the visual language of subjects where an authority figure offers aid.

During the war, the treatment of prisoners had been an extremely important point of national pride. In Parliament, the Duke of Richmond inquired into the treatment of Prisoners of War on British soil to “prevent the British character for liberality from being injured.”¹⁶¹ As important as battlefield victories, the British reputation for restraint had to be upheld. One observer in the *Morning Herald* noted, “England has ever been as famed for her humanity and generosity to the vanquished as for her courage in subduing her

¹⁵⁹ *Public Advertiser*, Jan 5, 1782.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Morning Chronicle*, July 3, 1781.

enemies.”¹⁶² The contributor contrasted the expectation of English tenderness with the reality that the conditions of Spanish prisoners had been “reduced to a worse situation even than a common felon.”¹⁶³

The optimal treatment of prisoners did not go unnoticed across lines. Trumbull admired General Carleton’s orders to his surgeons to treat the enemy wounded after the Battle of Valcour Island “with the same care as they did his own men.”¹⁶⁴ The future artist quickly sent released prisoners away from Fort Ticonderoga to prevent active soldiers from seeing the enemy in too humane a light.¹⁶⁵ Each side particularly recognized when the enemy treated their prisoners with respect beyond basic physical comfort. The surrendered Hessians admired George Washington as “a very good rebel” after allowing them to keep their personal baggage after the Battle of Trenton.¹⁶⁶ The Spanish likewise recognized General Elliott himself as an ideal example of “tenderness and humanity” to prisoners.¹⁶⁷ The *Public Advertiser* republished intelligence from Madrid of ten Spanish officers attesting to his treatment “in the most kind and hospitable Manner.”¹⁶⁸ Even during a siege they had enjoyed fruit, vegetables, meat, and Spanish newspapers.¹⁶⁹

Maintaining an ideal model of civil prisoner treatment could lead to the other side’s officers adopting the example. Colonel Henry Lee wrote to British Colonel Simcoe admiring his generous treatment of one of his dragoons, which “made an impression on

¹⁶² *Morning Herald*, Dec. 27, 1780.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ Trumbull, 34-35.

¹⁶⁵ Trumbull, 35-36.

¹⁶⁶ Thatcher, 85.

¹⁶⁷ *Felix Farley’s Bristol Journal*, Oct. 19, 1782.

¹⁶⁸ *Public Advertiser*, Nov. 6, 1782.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

my mind.”¹⁷⁰ During the Siege of Minorca, The Duc de Crillon dined with one captured officer for two hours showing him “numberless civilities” after hearing of the “noble and generous Manner” with which English General Murray had acted to his own men.¹⁷¹ The British likewise admired that the Spanish behaved “nobly” to captured British seamen in response to the “noble example set them by the gallant Rodney.”¹⁷² It was important to perpetuate this civility to prisoners not only as a point of national honor, but to ensure one’s own prisoners would be well handled.

If the unwritten laws of prisoner treatment remained observed, both sides could avoid retaliation. After provincial prisoners from the Battle of Bunker Hill were thrown in Boston’s common jail, Washington threatened General Thomas Gage with such escalation.¹⁷³ He noted that the “Rights of Humanity, & Claims of Rank, are universally binding and extensive, except in Case of Retaliation.”¹⁷⁴ General Burgoyne likewise warned Horatio Gates of the “dangers of retaliation” after hearing of loyalist soldiers receiving no quarter after the Battle of Bennington.¹⁷⁵ Both sides saw retaliation as necessary. After the execution of loyalist recruiter John Roberts, American Tories emphasized the expectation of justice. The *London Chronicle* observed that “when acts of cruelty, contrary to the laws of nations, are introduced on one side, a neglect on the other side to retaliate, is *impolitic, inhuman, and criminal*.”¹⁷⁶ The Board of Loyalists in New York called for a prison for Americans at the Loyalist refugee camp at Lloyd’s Neck to

¹⁷⁰ John Graves Simcoe, *Simcoe’s Military Journal* [. . .] (New York: Bartlett & Welford, 1844), 267.

¹⁷¹ *Public Advertiser*, Nov. 21, 1781.

¹⁷² *Morning Herald*, Dec. 27, 1780.

¹⁷³ George Washington to Lieutenant General Thomas Gage, Aug. 11, 1775, *Founders Online*, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-01-02-0192>.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ *London Evening Post*, Dec. 16, 1777.

¹⁷⁶ *London Chronicle*, July 27, 1782.

mimic the miserable conditions of the American loyalist camp converted from a mine.¹⁷⁷ They added, “We ardently wish, however, that a stop might be put to the practice of retaliation, but we know not how it can be done.”¹⁷⁸ Likewise, a congressional committee reporting on the horrid condition of Americans on British prison ships concluded that the “law of retaliation has become necessary.”¹⁷⁹ After years of war, the back and forth escalation had risen to uncontrollable levels.

The most widespread wish for retribution came after the hanging of John André. Calls for retaliation came not strictly from the execution itself, but for the perceived treatment considered below a man of his rank. The *Public Advertiser* disgraced Washington for hanging André as a spy rather than granting his request for a more honorable death by firing squad.¹⁸⁰ The observer fumed that “had he the least pretensions to the character of a hero, he might have found sufficient reasons in this case to make him exhibit a glorious example of Moderation.”¹⁸¹ Another condemned the “Frenchified Washington” for executing André “without the least ceremony.”¹⁸² Commander in Chief Henry Clinton reacted to the news supposedly declaring that if Washington were ever to surrender, “he would hang him on the Instant, and bury him without a Coffin.”¹⁸³ The widespread call for André’s revenge threatened to upset the tenuous balance of prisoner treatment. *The Morning Herald* noted that in Virginia soldiers had permission to “take few or no prisoners, but to put all to the bayonet, in retaliation for Major André.”¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁷ *Morning Herald*, July 30, 1782.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *London Courant*, Mar. 8, 1781.

¹⁸⁰ *Public Advertiser*, Nov. 18, 1780.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² *Whitehall Evening Post*, Aug. 2, 1781.

¹⁸³ *Adams’s Weekly Courant*, Nov. 23, 1780.

¹⁸⁴ *Morning Herald*, Nov. 30, 1780.

Trumbull himself nearly became a victim of retaliation in the wake of André when he was arrested for suspected espionage shortly after stepping foot on British soil in 1780.¹⁸⁵ One officer who had “suffered every hardship and cruelty” of Americans treating British prisoners could not believe the leniency of Trumbull’s confinement.¹⁸⁶ He added, “Trumbull would certainly [. . .] be a fit sacrifice to appease the manes of the much lamented and deserving André.”¹⁸⁷ One pamphleteer likewise hoped to see all of Trumbull’s friends “dragged headlong to the block of vengeance.”¹⁸⁸ Throughout his seven months of imprisonment, Trumbull continuously faced serious threat, though Benjamin West’s influence with the King and Secretary of State George Germaine’s personal assurances ultimately saved him.¹⁸⁹ The subject of offering aid to Barboza and Helmstadt offered an ideal counterpoint to the realities of prisoner treatment that had escalated to such retaliation. Like Trumbull, the vanquished Barboza and Helmstadt were completely at the mercy of an absolute authority. The extremely dramatic moment allowed for an opportunity to pictorially restore the balance of ideal restraint to prisoners.

Trumbull heightens the idealization of successful aid in the *Sortie* by focusing the action solely to the destruction of the works rather than combat. He celebrated the action of a national battlefield victory without showing British soldiers in the act of killing. One means by which he heightens the bloodless victory is by giving prominent attention to the works themselves. For fourteen months the “best engineers of France and Spain” had constructed the works with extraordinary “care and ingenuity.”¹⁹⁰ The British estimated

¹⁸⁵ Trumbull, 69.

¹⁸⁶ *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Dec. 6, 1780.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *The Patriotic Mirror, or the Salvation of Great Britain in Embryo* (London: R. Faulder, 1781), 85-86.

¹⁸⁹ Trumbull, 76; Trumbull, 323.

¹⁹⁰ David Ramsay, *The History of the American Revolution*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: R. Aitken & Son, 1789), 207.

that one million dollars had been spent to bring them to a “state of perfection.”¹⁹¹ To emphasize the works, Trumbull studied detailed drawings by George Koehler.¹⁹² He also had access to Antonio Poggi’s drawings that he exhibited along with the painting, and that would form their own print in 1792 (Figure 3.13).¹⁹³ The descriptive focus on specific military features diverged from his previous battle paintings. In *Bunker’s Hill*, and *Quebec*, Trumbull directed the viewer away from the redoubts on Bunker Hill and the walls of Quebec focusing solely on the figures themselves. An intense screen of smoke had isolated the figures from background features in these paintings and in his earlier *The Death of Paulus Aemilius at the Battle of Cannae* (Figure 3.14). In the *Sortie*, Trumbull concentrates the smoke above the works allowing the distant battery to be seen. In the foreground, he emphasizes the dense timber beams illuminated by the central brightest point of the blaze. The great height of this foreground battery rivals Gibraltar itself in height and echoes its slope. The heightened detail and scale of the works dramatize the celebrated feat of their destruction rather than the preceding skirmish.

An important feature of the destruction is that Trumbull shows the soldiers in the activity of “battle” while directing their energy at the inanimate batteries. One way Trumbull adopts from battle paintings is by showing the figures in staggered active poses. The artificers and sailors stand with tools wielded much like the spear bearer in the center left of *Paulus Aemilius* (Figure 3.14). The pose of holding a destructive instrument with one hand over the other can also be seen by the bayonet-wielding soldiers in *Bunker’s Hill* and *Mercer* (Figures 3.2 and 3.4). Like these figures, the artificers in the *Sortie* are

¹⁹¹ Samuel Ancell, *A Circumstantial Journal of the Long and Tedious Blockade and Siege of Gibraltar* [. . .] (Liverpool: Charles Wosencr, 1784), 177; *Morning Chronicle*, Dec. 31, 1781.

¹⁹² *World*, Apr. 23, 1789.

¹⁹³ Jean Lambert Brockway, "Trumbull's Sortie," *The Art Bulletin* 16, no. 1 (1934): 5-13.

shown at a moment of heightened potential energy, where their tools are wielded high above with full force about to be applied. Trumbull displaces this energy to a nonviolent eradication of the batteries. Another feature Trumbull adopts from battle paintings is the placement of figures in a dense triangular grouping. Trumbull echoes the confusion of a packed body of figures in different states of action seen particularly in *Bunker's Hill*, *Peirson*, and *Mercer* (Figures 3.2, 3.6, 3.4). The pyramid of bodies emphasizes their collective action. At the same time, Trumbull maximizes the density by showing a variety of colors in the various uniforms of artificers, sailors, and grenadiers. Adopting the features of a battle painting in this scene allowed his British audience to admire their soldiers in action without showing the killing of Barboza.

Removing the show of force away from the moment of killing significantly reduced the violent realities which would have prevented a successful act of restraint. In *Mercer*, Trumbull shows two British soldiers with vengeful smiles about to bayonet the martyr (Figure 3.4). Americans accused the British of various dishonorable acts including battering Mercer's face and continuously bayonetting his corpse "deaf to the voice of humanity and the law of nations."¹⁹⁴ Similarly, Trumbull shows the already shot Joseph Warren about to be bayoneted by a soldier in *Bunker's Hill* (Figure 3.2). He portrays British Major Small attempting to restrain the soldier, a moment told to Trumbull by Small himself.¹⁹⁵ The officer supposedly "flew to the spot" too late to save his dying friend from this act of aggression.¹⁹⁶ By removing Barboza from the violent action,

¹⁹⁴ *Norwich Packet*, Mar. 17, 1777.

¹⁹⁵ Kim R. Stacy, "1480. MAJOR-GENERAL SMALL," *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 76, no. 306 (1998): 134-137.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Trumbull avoided showing the lack of restraint with which the British had treated Mercer and which Small could not prevent to Warren in the reality of battle.

Aside from placing the scene after the moment of killing, Trumbull reduces the casualties to the central group of Barboza, the British private, and Helmstadt. This arrangement idealizes the victory as minimally violent while focusing completely on the aid provided to the central figures. The British had prepared for many more casualties given the isolation from the garrison but celebrated when “the loss sustained was very small.”¹⁹⁷ On the British side, only four privates, one officer, two serjeants had been killed, with twenty-two rank and file wounded. Elliott noted that many Spanish soldiers had been “killed on the spot” but could not ascertain exact numbers because of the darkness.¹⁹⁸ Trumbull idealizes the low casualties even further by showing only the central three figures. In a sketch for his earlier version, Trumbull contemplated showing at least three more wounded figures below the distant battery, but ultimately left this plain open (Figure 3.12). This significantly reduced the carnage seen in other battle paintings. In *Bunker’s Hill* for example, he had shown four dying or dead British and at least two dying Americans in addition to Warren and Pitcairn (Figure 3.2). In *Mercer*, three dying figures span the foreground in addition to the bayoneted Mercer, Neil, and Turnbull (Figure 3.4). By showing only the central three casualties, Trumbull idealized the possibility of a nearly complete victory with almost no casualties.

Another way Trumbull centralizes the act of relief is by including the successful rescue of Baron von Helmstadt. The frame formed by the hands of Barboza, Elliott, and Mackenzie prominently directs the eye towards him. Initially, Trumbull considered

¹⁹⁷ Walter Gordon, *History of the Blockade and Siege of Gibraltar* [. . .] (Aberdeen: s.n., 1784), 17.

¹⁹⁸ *Morning Chronicle*, Dec. 31, 1781

placing him at a farther distance on a stretcher, but ultimately centralized him as an important if distant feature of the composition (Figures 3.11 and 3.12). Abandoning the stretcher, the final pose of Helmstadt is clearly meant to echo Barboza lying on the ground. While Trumbull shows Barboza nobly refusing aid, directly beyond Captain Witham carries the wounded Helmstadt with great effort as a counterpoint to Barboza. Including Helmstadt, Trumbull celebrates the daring and successful rescue later detailed in John Heriot's account.¹⁹⁹ According to Heriot, two artillery soldiers found Helmstadt shot in the knee with flames rapidly approaching. They ran into Lieutenant Cuppage who "bestowed the warmest encomiums" on them "for their humanity."²⁰⁰ The group took so long to transport Helmstadt "with every possible tenderness" that they were thought lost by the time they arrived back at the garrison.²⁰¹ The successful rescue effort directly beyond Barboza symbolizes what he might have enjoyed if he had not refused. Heriot celebrated the strenuous triumph in terms of a battlefield feat noting that, "generosity of a conquered Enemy is a distinguishing feature in the Military Character of this Country; and it seems indeed to be an axiom established by the stamp of Omnipotence itself, so that the most generous are invariably the most brave."²⁰² By featuring Helmstadt's rescue, Trumbull celebrates a daring act of humanity as a key component of the victory.

The care for Helmstadt assures that the ideal model for prisoner treatment that had been threatened by war can still take place. Viewers would have understood the kind future treatment of Helmstadt from John Drinkwater's popular account.²⁰³ Elliott allowed

¹⁹⁹ John Heriot, *An Historical Sketch of Gibraltar* [. . .] (London: B. Millan, 1792), 83-84.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ John Drinkwater Bethune, *A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar: With a Discription and Account of that Garrison from the Earliest Periods* (London: T. Spilsbury, 1785), 213-216.

Helmstadt's friends to send him money and fowl at which point the Spanish thanked the Governor for "the humanity shewn to the prisoners."²⁰⁴ He convinced Helmstadt to allow himself to be amputated by showing him surviving convalescents.²⁰⁵ When Helmstadt died of an unrelated "inward malady," Elliott returned the unused items "even to the minutest article."²⁰⁶ In a grand procession, the British "brought him to the new mole with every mark of Military Honour" including three small arms volleys.²⁰⁷ By including Helmstadt, Trumbull alluded to a perfect example of prisoner treatment. He had been well provided for in a besieged garrison and treated with the tenderness due to his rank. Helmstadt's example heightens the aid offered to Barboza signifying the wider treatment the officers would bestow if he accepted.

Trumbull emphasizes the offering of aid by showing the officers standing together in an idealized grouping. This reverses their expected active roles that would have just taken place. Elliott's published letter described how the Sortie's leader General Ross, "conducted the attack with so much judgement."²⁰⁸ Colonel Hugo gave up command of his own regiment in order to volunteer as the first out of the garrison, and "signalized himself very much in the sally."²⁰⁹ Likewise, Colonel Picton "exerted his most strenuous efforts to maintain good order."²¹⁰ By placing the officers after the victory, Trumbull avoids having to show the officers in an act of bloodshed. Instead, the leaders focus completely on Barboza fully disengaged from their respective regiments. Initially, Trumbull had considered showing more foot soldiers in line, but ultimately reduced them

²⁰⁴ Drinkwater, 213.

²⁰⁵ Heriot, 84-85.

²⁰⁶ Drinkwater, 216.

²⁰⁷ Heriot, 86.

²⁰⁸ *Morning Chronicle*, Dec. 31, 1781.

²⁰⁹ *A Description of Gibraltar* [. . .] (London: B. Cornwell, 1782), 40.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

to a few in between Colonel Trigge and Sir Roger Curtis. By still including the troops destroying the batteries at the left of the composition, he heightens the importance the officers place in engaging solely with Barboza and not with the ongoing dismantlement. In reality, the officers would have been in various points along the isthmus directing their individual regiments, as seen in Poggi's bird's eye view (Figure 3.13). Instead, Trumbull shows the officers in the foreground completely inattentive to the ongoing destruction of the batteries.

To maximize the officers' focus on Barboza, Trumbull borrows from a tradition of compositions and poses seen in subjects where an authority offers aid or assurance to a defeated enemy. British officers offering assurance to the defeated can be seen in Francis Hayman's *Robert Clive and Mir Jafar after the Battle of Plassey, 1757*, and in his *The Charity of General Amherst* (Figures 3.15 and 3.16). In both, Clive and Amherst lean forward gesturing towards surrendered figures much like Elliott and Mackenzie in the *Sortie*. This gesture can also be seen in James Gillray's *The Triumph of Benevolence* where the prison reformer John Howard visits an imprisoned soldier (Figure 3.17). In his earlier sketch, Elliott had been leaning back engaging with the viewer and Mackenzie had had his sword drawn (Figure 3.11). In another drawing, Trumbull considered facing Elliott's head away from Barboza (Figure 3.12). Ultimately, the Governor is completely facing and gesturing towards Barboza much like Clive, Amherst, and Howard.

Illustrations



Fig. 1.1. Dominic Serres, *Gibraltar relieved by Sir George Rodney, 1780*, 1780-1782, oil on canvas, 88.5 x 145 cm. Royal Academy of Arts, London.



Fig. 1.2. Robert Pollard after Dominic Serres, *Gibraltar, 1780*, ca. 1780, etching and engraving, 46.8 x 58.6 cm. Royal Collection Trust, Windsor.



Fig. 1.3. Dominic Serres, *The Moonlight Battle: the Battle off Cape St Vincent*, 16 January 1780, 1781, oil on canvas, 106.6 x 183 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.



Fig. 1.4. Richard Paton, *The Moonlight Battle off Cape St Vincent*, 16 January 1780, 1780-1782, oil on canvas, 124 x 167 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.



Fig. 1.5. Francis Holman, *The Moonlight Battle off Cape St Vincent, 16 January 1780*, 1780, oil on canvas, 106 x 166.5 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.



Fig. 1.6. Thomas Luny, *The Moonlight Battle: the Battle off Cape St Vincent, 16 January 1780*, 1781, oil on canvas, 27.9 x 43.1 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.



Fig. 1.7. John Cleveley the Younger, *George III reviewing the Fleet at Spithead, 22 June 1773*, depicting the 'Royal Oak', 1773, watercolor, 40.4 x 60.9 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.



Fig. 1.8. John Cleveley the Elder, *The 'Royal George' at Deptford Showing the Launch of 'The Cambridge'*, 1757, oil on canvas, 121.9 x 187.9 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.



Fig. 1.9. Dominic Serres, *The Capture of Chandernagore, March 1757, 1771*, oil on canvas, 114.3 x 182.8 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.



Fig 2.1. John Singleton Copley, *Defeat of the Floating Batteries at Gibraltar, September 1782*, 1783-1791, oil on canvas, 544 x 754 cm. Guildhall Art Gallery, London.

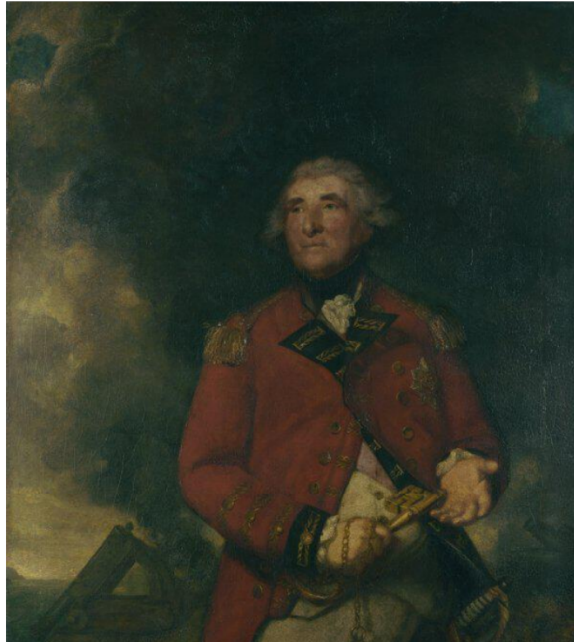


Fig 2.2. Joshua Reynolds, Lord Heathfield of Gibraltar, 1787, oil on canvas, 142 x 113.5 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 2.3. Thomas Rowlandson, *Common Council Chamber, Guildhall*, 1808, etching and aquatint, 27.3 x 23.5 cm. Metropolitan Museum, New York.



Fig 2.4. Thomas Whitcombe, *Destruction by Night of the Spanish Batteries Before Gibraltar*, 1783, oil on canvas, 92.39 x 153.99 cm. Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee.



Fig 2.5. Archibald Robertson after William Hamilton, *DESTRUCTION OF THE SPANISH BATTERING SHIPS, BEFORE GIBRALTAR, ON THE NIGHT OF THE 13TH SEPR. 1782*, 1783, engraving, 66.2 x 47.1 cm. Brown University Library, Providence.



Fig 2.6. J. Emes & E. Wollett after William Jeffreys, *The Scene Before Gibraltar on the Morning of the 14th of September, 1782*, 1789, engraving, 73.5 x 54 cm. Brown University Library, Providence.



Fig 2.7. Raphael Lamar West, *Destruction of the floating batteries before Gibraltar, 1783*, oil on canvas, 160.9 x 234.7 cm. Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston.



Fig 2.8. Thomas Whitcombe, *Destruction of the Floating Batteries at Gibraltar, 14 September 1782*, 1782, oil on canvas, 76 x 122 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.



Fig 2.9. George Carter, *The Siege of Gibraltar, 1782*, 1784, gouache on millboard, 41.9 x 55.9 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig 2.10. Francis Jukes after Dominic Serres the Elder, *A view of the destruction of the Spanish floating batteries during the siege of Gibraltar, 14 September 1782*, 1783, aquatint with etching and engraving; laid down on paper, 45.6 x 57.5 cm. Royal Collection Trust, London.



Fig 2.11. George Frederic Koehler, *General Elliott on the King's Bastion, Gibraltar, Sept. 13, 1782*, 1785, aquatint, 64.9 x 51.3 cm. Brown University Library, Providence.



Fig 2.12. Thomas Davies, *Gibraltar on the morning after the great Franco-Spanish attack*, 1783, watercolor. Royal Ontario Museum, Ontario.



Fig 2.13. John Singleton Copley, *The Siege of Gibraltar (sketch)*, 1788, oil and pencil on canvas, 100.3 x 125.7 cm. The Foundling Museum, London.



Fig. 2.14. Peter Paul Rubens, *Christ on the Sea*, c.1610, oil on oak, 99.5 x 141 cm. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Dresden.



Fig 2.15. John Singleton Copley, *The Death of the Earl of Chatham*, 1781, oil on canvas, 228.5 x 307.5 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.

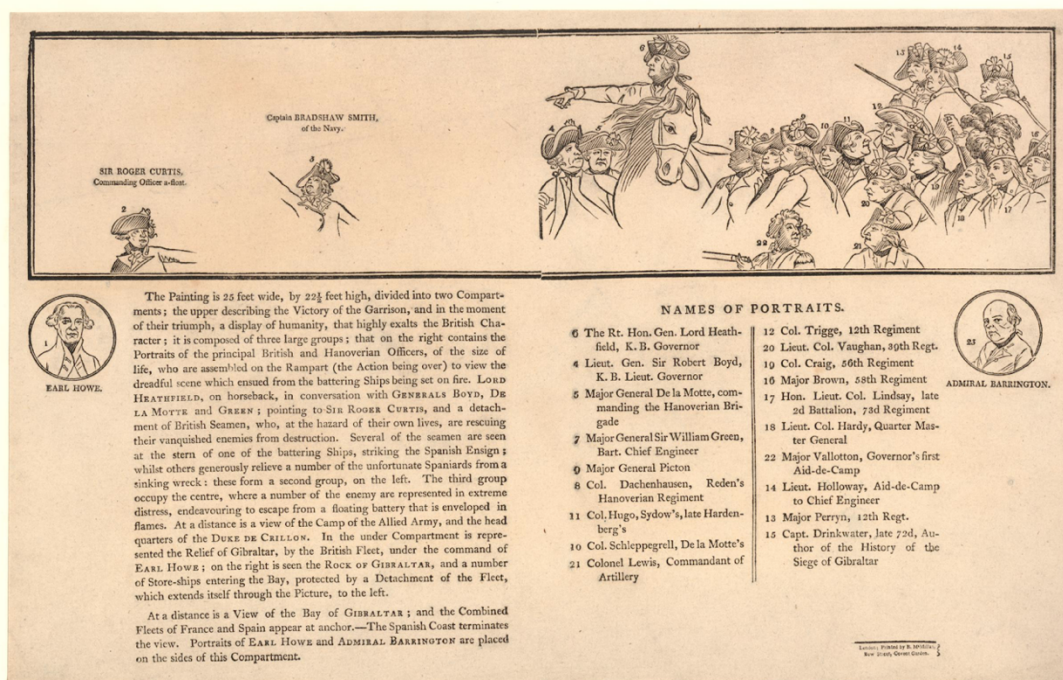


Fig 2.16. B. McMillan after John Singleton Copley, *Key to the principal figures in John Singleton Copley's painting of 'The Siege and Relief of Gibraltar'*, 1791, engraving with etching, woodcut, 27.5 x 43.1 cm. British Museum, London



Fig 2.17. W. Nutter after John Graham, *The death of General Simon Fraser at the Battle of Bemis Heights, Saratoga, 1794*, stipple engraving with etching, 42.6 x 58.8 cm. Wellcome Collection, London.



Fig. 2.18. Benjamin West, *The Death of General Wolfe*, 1770, oil on canvas, 151 cm × 213 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.



Fig 3.1. John Trumbull, *The Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, 1789, oil on canvas, 180.3 x 271.8 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 3.2. John Trumbull, *The Battle of Bunker's Hill, June 17, 1775*, 1786, oil on canvas, 65.1 × 95.6 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.



Fig 3.3. John Trumbull, *The Death of General Montgomery in the Attack on Quebec, December 31, 1775*, 1786, oil on canvas, 62.5 × 94 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.



Fig 3.4. John Trumbull, *The Death of General Mercer at the Battle of Princeton, 3 January 1777*, ca. 1786-1788, oil on canvas, 66 × 94 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.



Fig. 3.5. Benjamin West, *The Death of General Wolfe*, 1770, oil on canvas, 151 cm × 213 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.



Fig. 3.6. John Singleton Copley, *The Death of Major Peirson, 6 January 1781*, 1783, oil on canvas, 251.5 × 365.8 cm. Tate Britain, London.



Fig. 3.7. John Trumbull, *Head of Sir Thomas Lawrence, Study for the Dying Spaniard in the Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, 1786, chalk and crayon drawing. Boston Athenaeum, Boston.



Fig. 3.8. *Dying Gaul*, 1st or 2nd century CE, marble, 94 x 187 x 89 cm. Musei Capitolini, Rome.



Fig. 3.9. John Trumbull, *The Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, 1788, oil on canvas, 51.3 x 77.6 cm. Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati.



Fig. 3.10. John Trumbull, *Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, May 23, 1786, ink wash sketch, 4.4 x 7 cm. Boston Athenaeum, Boston.



Fig. 3.11. John Trumbull, *Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, 1786, pen drawing, 12.7 x 19 cm. Boston Athenaeum, Boston.



Fig. 3.12. John Trumbull, *Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar, 1786*, pen drawing, 15.6 x 23.3 cm. Boston Athenaeum, Boston.

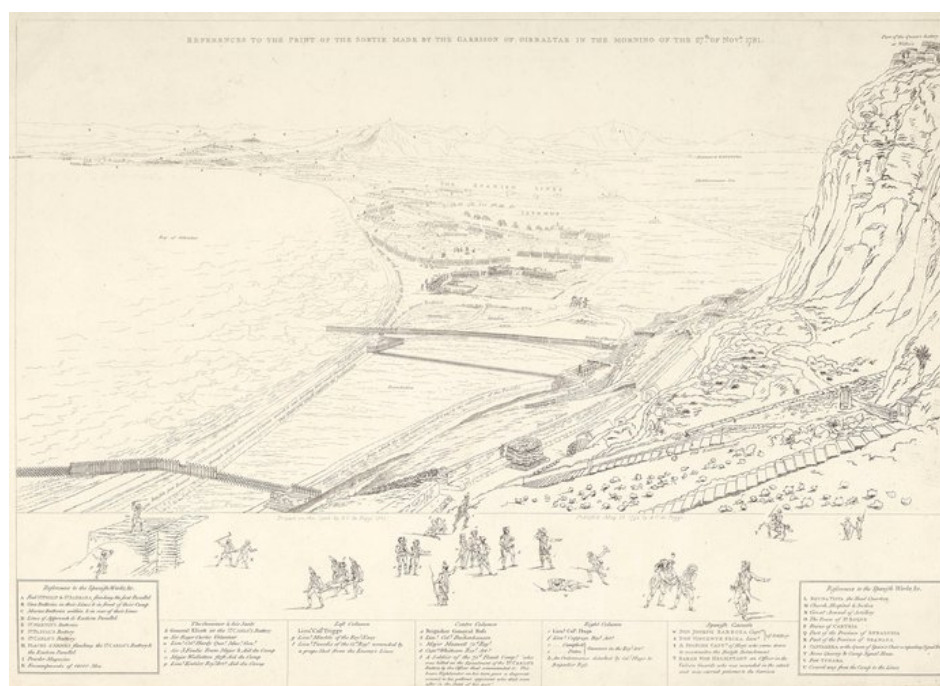


Fig. 3.13. Anthony Cesare de Poggi, *A Key, or index plate to a view showing the various states of the daring sortie made by British and Hanoverian troops on the Spanish lines of Gibraltar on 27 November 1781, 1792*, etching and engraving, 38.5 x 53.6 cm. Royal Collection Trust, Edinburgh.



Fig. 3.14. John Trumbull, *The Death of Paulus Aemilius at the Battle of Cannae*, 1773, oil on canvas, 62.2 × 88.4 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.



Fig. 3.15. Francis Hayman, *Robert Clive and Mir Jafar after the Battle of Plassey*, 1757, ca. 1760, oil on canvas, 100.3 x 127 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.16. Francis Hayman, *The Charity of General Amherst*, 1761, oil on canvas, 91.5 x 71 cm. Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.



Fig. 3.17. Robert Wilkinson after James Gillray, *John Howard ('The triumph of benevolence')*, 1788, stipple and line engraving, 64.6 x 50.6 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.

Bibliography

- Adams, John. John Adams to the Abbés Chalut and Arnoux, July 8, 1786. *Founders Online*, National Archives. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-18-02-0206>.
- Adams's Weekly Courant*. Nov. 23, 1780.
- Adkins, Roy, and Adkins, Lesley. *Gibraltar: The Greatest Siege in British History*. United States: Penguin Books, 2018.
- Ancell, Samuel. *A Circumstantial Journal of the Long and Tedious Blockade and Siege of Gibraltar* [. . .]. Liverpool: Charles Wosencr, 1784.
- The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, for the Year 1775*. London: J. Dodsley, 1776.
- Bethune, John Drinkwater. *A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar: With a Discription and Account of that Garrison from the Earliest Periods*. London: T. Spilsbury, 1785.
- Bethune, John Drinkwater. *A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar: With a Description, and Account of that Garrison, from the Earliest Periods*. London: T. Spilsbury, 1790.
- Boydell, John. *A Description of Several Pictures Presented to the Corporation of the City of London*. London: John Boydell, 1794.
- Brackenridge, Hugh Henry. *An Eulogium of the Brave Men who Have Fallen in the Contest with Great-Britain* [. . .]. Philadelphia: F. Bailey, 1779.
- Brockway, Jean Lambert. "Trumbull's Sortie." *The Art Bulletin* 16, no. 1 (1934): 5-13.
- A Candid Review of the Exhibition (Being the Twelfth)* [. . .]. London: H. Reynell, 1780.
- Cockings, George. *The American War, A Poem in Six Books* [. . .]. London: W. Richardson, 1781.
- The Conference*. 1769. etching, 9.8 x 13.8 cm. British Museum, London, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1868-0808-9803.
- Continental Journal, and Weekly Advertiser*. July 14, 1785.
- Cordingly, David. *Marine Painting in England 1700-1900*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1974.
- Daily Advertiser*. March 21, 1783.

A Description of the Freedom Box Voted by the City of London to the Hon. Augustus Keppel, Admiral of the Blue. London: Wm Charron, 1779.

A Description of Gibraltar [. . .]. London: B. Cornwell, 1782.

The Exhibition of the Royal Academy, M.DCC.LXXXIII. The Fifteenth. London: T. Cadell, 1783.

The Exhibition of the Royal Academy, The Twelfth. London: T. Cadell, 1780.

Falkner, James. *Fire Over the Rock: The Great Siege of Gibraltar.* Great Britain: Pen and Sword, 2009.

Felix Farley's Bristol Journal, Oct. 19. 1782.

Freeman's Journal, Mar. 31. 1778.

Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser. May 15, 1777.

Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser. Dec. 6, 1780.

Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser. Dec. 13, 1779.

Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser. March 31, 1780.

Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser. Dec. 8, 1780.

Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser. March 6, 1782.

Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser. April 27, 1784.

Gordon, Walter. *History of the Blockade and Siege of Gibraltar* [. . .]. Aberdeen: s.n., 1784.

Heriot, John. *An Historical Sketch of Gibraltar* [. . .]. London: B. Millan, 1792.

Hogarth, William. *The Analysis of Beauty: Written With a view of fixing the fluctuating Ideas of Taste.* London: W. Strahan, 1772.

Hughes, Eleanor Sian. "Vessels of empire: Eighteenth-century british marine paintings." PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2001.

Jaffe, Irma B. *John Trumbull: Patriot-Artist of the American Revolution.* Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975.

Journal of the Late Siege of Gibraltar. London: T. Bensley, 1785.

Kamensky, Jane. *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley*. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016.

Kemp, Richard. *The Great Age of Sail*. London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1992.

Knott, Sarah. "Sensibility and the American Revolution." *The American Historical Review* 109, no. 1 (February 2004): 19-40.

Knott, Sarah. *Sensibility and the American Revolution*. UNC Press Books, 2009.

Of London. London: Robt Paulder, 1790.

London Chronicle. Oct. 9, 1773.

London Chronicle. Sep. 19, 1778.

London Courant. Mar. 8, 1781.

London Chronicle. March 21, 1782.

London Chronicle. July 27, 1782.

London Chronicle. Dec. 12, 1782.

London Evening Post. Dec. 16, 1777.

London Evening Post. June 6, 1778.

London Times. Oct. 26, 1785.

The Modern Traveller: Being a Collection of Useful and Entertaining Travels, Lately Made Into Various Countries [. . .]. London: T. Lowndes, 1776.

The Monthly Review; or, Literary Journal, Enlarged. London: R. Griffiths, 1794.

Morning Chronicle. March 1, 1780.

Morning Chronicle. July 3, 1781.

Morning Chronicle. Nov. 20, 1781.

Morning Chronicle. Dec. 31, 1781

Morning Chronicle. May 24, 1782.

Morning Chronicle. Nov. 15, 1782.

Morning Chronicle. May 17, 1783.

Morning Chronicle. May 11, 1784.

Morning Chronicle. April 28, 1791.

Morning Herald. Dec. 27, 1780.

Morning Herald. June 23, 1781.

Morning Herald. July 30, 1782.

Morning Herald. Nov. 15, 1782.

Morning Herald. Feb. 14, 1783.

Morning Herald. April 5, 1783.

Morning Herald. May 5, 1783.

Morning Herald. Jan. 8, 1784.

Morning Post. Jan. 4, 1778.

Morning Herald. Nov. 30, 1780.

Morning Post. Dec. 22, 1780.

Morning Post. May 2, 1783.

Morning Post. April 29, 1785.

Morning Post. Jan. 3, 1788.

Morton, Perez. *An Oration; Delivered at the King's Chapel in Boston, April 8, 1776* [. . .]. Boston: J. Gill, 1776.

Murdoch, Tessa and Snodin, Michael. "Admiral Keppel's' Freedom Box from the City of London." *Burlington Magazine* 135, no. 1083 (June 1993): 403-410.

Norwich Packet. Mar. 17, 1777.

Oracle. June 11, 1789.

Oracle. June 10, 1791.

The Patriotic Mirror, or the Salvation of Great Britain in Embryo. London: R. Faulder, 1781.

Pennsylvania Evening Post. Mar. 2, 1776.

Pennsylvania Evening Post. Feb. 1, 1777.

Pennsylvania Mercury and Universal Advertiser. Mar. 30, 1787.

Pilon, Frederick, *The Siege of Gibraltar: A Musical Farce, in Two Acts* [. . .]. London: G. Kearsly, 1780.

Pollard, Robert after Serres, Dominic. *Battle of Dogger Bank, 1781.* 1782. etching and engraving, 47 x 58.4 cm. Royal Collection Trust, Windsor.
<https://militarymaps.rct.uk/other-18th-19th-century-conflicts/battle-of-dogger-bank-1781-the-representation-of>.

Pollard, Robert after Serres, Dominic. *A View of Gibraltar* [...]. 1782. etching and engraving, 48.5 x 61.7 cm. British Museum, London.
https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1877-0609-1874.

Preston, Anthony, David Lyon, and John H. Batchelor. *Navies of the American Revolution.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1975.

Providence Gazette. Jan 31, 1778.

Public Advertiser. July 6, 1770.

Public Advertiser. Jan 2, 1778.

Public Advertiser. Nov. 18, 1780.

Public Advertiser. Nov. 23, 1780.

Public Advertiser. Nov. 21, 1781.

Public Advertiser. Jan 5, 1782.

Public Advertiser. Nov. 6, 1782.

Pyne, W. H. *The Microcosm of London.* London: R. Ackermann, 1808.

Ramsay, David. *The History of the American Revolution, vol. 2.* Philadelphia: R. Aitken & Son, 1789.

The Remembrancer; or, Impartial Repository of Public Events. London: J. Almon, 1780.

Royal Gazette. July 7, 1781.

Simcoe, John Graves. *Simcoe's Military Journal* [. . .]. New York: Bartlett & Welford, 1844.

St. James's Chronicle. May 19, 1778.

St. James's Chronicle. Dec. 16, 1779.

St. James's Chronicle. July 27, 1780.

Stacy, Kim R. "1480. MAJOR-GENERAL SMALL." *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 76, no. 306 (1998): 134-137.

Sizer, Theodore. "A Tentative "Short-Title" Check-List of the Works of Col. John Trumbull." *The Art Bulletin* 31, no. 1 (1949): 21-37.

Tarleton, Banastre. *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces of North America*. Dublin: Colles, Exshaw, White, H. Whitestone, Burton, Byrne, Moore, Jones, and Dornin, 1787.

Thatcher, James. *A Military Journal During the Revolutionary War, From 1775 to 1783* [. . .]. Boston: Richardson and Lord, 1823.

Trumbull, John. *Autobiography, Reminiscences, and Letters of John Trumbull from 1756 to 1841*. New Haven: B.L. Hamlen, 1841.

The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure [. . .]. London: Stephen Austen Cumberlege, 1782.

Virginia Gazette. Feb. 24, 1776.

Washington, George. George Washington to Lieutenant General Thomas Gage, Aug. 11, 1775. *Founders Online*, National Archives.

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-01-02-0192>.

West, Benjamin. *Miscellaneous Poems, Translations, and Imitations*. Northampton: Thomas Dicey, 1780.

Westminster Journal. Jan. 24, 1778.

Whitehall Evening Post. Aug. 2, 1781.

Whitehall Evening Post. Feb. 4, 1783.

Whitehall Evening Post. July 12, 1787.

Whitehall Evening Post. July 14, 1787

World. March 28, 1788.

World. Aug. 30, 1787.

World. Apr. 23, 1789.