



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

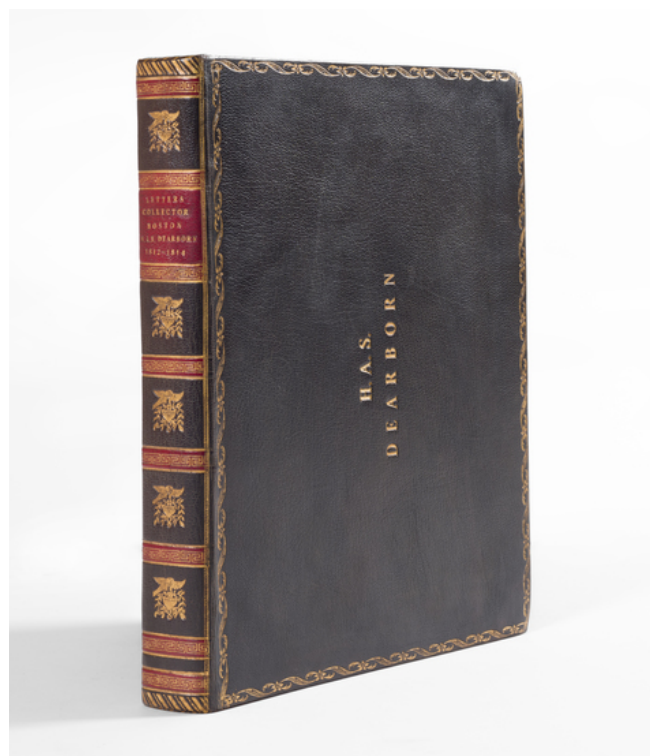
[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

**Stock#:** 88210  
**Map Maker:** Dearborn  
**Date:** 1812 - 1814  
**Place:** Boston  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 8 x 9.25 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



**Description:**

***Henry A. S. Dearborn's Letterbook as Collector of the Boston Custom House.***

***Firsthand Record of Events in Boston Harbor during the War of 1812.***

***Enforcing the Non-Intercourse Act and Providing Albert Gallatin and James Monroe with Intelligence during the War.***

A remarkable artifact for the War of 1812, being the letterbook of retained outgoing correspondence by the Collector of Customs at Boston Harbor, Henry Alexander Scammell Dearborn (1783-1851). The son of major early American military leader General Henry Dearborn, and an important public figure in his own right, the younger Dearborn was a 29-year-old lawyer when he took over from his father as Collector at the Boston Custom House in 1812. This letterbook records crucial details about the effects of the War of 1812 on shipping, as well as recording Dearborn's near-constant communication with Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin (and his successors William James, George W. Campbell, and Alexander J. Dallas) about a



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

### **(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn, Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

host of matters far beyond the usual business of collecting duties. Topics discussed include: wartime ship movements in Boston, seizures of goods and vessels during the war, problems stemming from enforcing the nearly unenforceable Non-Intercourse Act, prisoner exchanges, and other interesting items such as managing New England lighthouses and their keepers as they transitioned to using Winslow Lewis's patented lamps.

The letterbook covers the period from July 21, 1812 through December 28, 1814, marking the first years of Dearborn's tenure as Collector of Customs in Boston. Dearborn continued in this post until 1828. It is important to point out that at this time, Dearborn was also a brigadier general in the Massachusetts militia, commanding volunteers charged with protecting Boston Harbor. As the son of General Henry Dearborn, erstwhile Secretary of War under Jefferson and, at the time of this letterbook, the military commander of the northeastern sector encompassing most of the New England coast, Dearborn was certainly alive to the importance of harbor defenses during wartime, and, based on correspondence in the letterbook, he did everything in his power to inform the Madison administration on matters of national security interest.

The letterbook reveals that Dearborn was much more than a customs officer during the war, as many of the letters transmit intelligence information to members of President Madison's cabinet, especially Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin (Madison's original choice for Secretary of State) as well as to Secretary of State James Monroe. Notably, there is an entry relating to the HMS *Shannon* in 1813, just one month before the famous Battle of Boston Harbor in which that Royal Navy frigate captured the USS *Chesapeake* in a key early British victory of the war. Other letters relate to prisoner exchanges on cartels under flags of truce, while others concern cases of impressed American seaman and the conditions of American seaman in general, as well as the smuggling of British goods to New England, including many cases involving the seizure of cargo.

As an archive and record of commercial shipping activity in Boston harbor during this critical time, the present volume would seem to have few rivals. But the volume's greater significance stems perhaps from its detailed record of internal official correspondence during the War of 1812, including letters to cabinet officers containing intelligence in the form of fresh reporting on prisoner movements, movements of foreign vessels, communication with British officers, and the like. One of the important aspects of Dearborn's role was the enforcement of the controversial Embargo Act and the Non-Intercourse Act and the various wartime extensions such as the Enemy Trade Act of 1812. These acts throttled American overseas trade and were hated by large swaths of the population, particularly in New England commercial centers such as Boston. There is, of course, also the regular business of a Collector of Customs, including reports on duties collected, communications with the other collectors in New England, and quite a bit



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

### **(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn, Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

concerning lighthouses and their keepers, including a delightful description of the planned dwelling house for the keeper of the Nantucket lighthouse. Several letters mention Winslow Lewis and problems concerning his patented lighthouse lamps, whose design was adopted by the U.S. government in 1812.

The notice of the HMS *Shannon* in Boston Harbor in late March 1813 is notable as a record of the haughty (and to Dearborn quite offensive) conduct of her famous Commander, Philip Broke. Dearborn pokes facetious fun at Broke as one of the "most perfect & all accomplished gentlemen" whose "big talking & chivalrick endorsements...beat our officers all hollow," but given time our "rough seamen" who have "learnt the fighting part of their duty...shall learn... these Belligerents refinements." See below for a fuller transcription of this letter.

The first item recorded in the volume is a July 21, 1812 letter addressed to Richard Rush, Comptroller of the Treasury, about one month after the Declaration of War with Great Britain. Dearborn, who was about 29 years old at the time, writes:

*I feel highly honored for the mark of confidence which the President of the United States has thought proper to place in me by the very acceptable appointment of Collector.*

#### **H. A. S. Dearborn**

Henry Alexander Scammell Dearborn (1783-1851) of Roxbury, Massachusetts, was a politician, militia officer, author, and horticulturist. Born in Exeter, New Hampshire, he was the son of Henry Dearborn (1751-1829), a Revolutionary War veteran and Secretary of War under Thomas Jefferson as well as a commanding general during the War of 1812 in command of the northeast sector from the Niagara River to the New England Coast.

Trained as a lawyer, the younger Dearborn held various important public, military, and civic posts during an intensely active career. When his father was called to military service during the War of 1812, Dearborn took over his father's post as Collector of Customs at Boston and continued in that position until 1829. Dearborn was appointed brigadier general in the Massachusetts militia (also in 1812), commanding volunteers at Boston Harbor defenses. He was a delegate to the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention of 1820-1821, and a member of the Massachusetts legislature, 1829-1830, and served in the House of Representatives, 1831-1833. In 1835 he was appointed Adjutant General of Massachusetts but was dismissed in 1843 for loaning state arms to the government of Rhode Island to suppress the Dorr Rebellion in 1842. Dearborn was the author of several non-fiction works and wrote extensively on historical, horticultural, and other topics for newspapers and periodicals. He collaborated with his father to transcribe and edit the latter's Revolutionary War journals; he wrote sketches of his father's life and



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

### **(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn, Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

military career and prepared materials for publication on his behalf. One of his serially published works was *History of Navigation and Naval Architecture, with an Account of the Survey of the Coast of the United States* (1848), which appeared in installments in the *United States Nautical Magazine* and in *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine*. A noted horticulturist, Dearborn served as the first president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, founded in 1829. He also helped found the New England Society for the Promotion of Manufactures and the Mechanical Arts, which existed from 1826 to 1868. In 1847 the Native American Party, later known as the American Party and popularly as the Know Nothing Party, nominated him to run for U.S. Vice President. H. A. S. Dearborn was Mayor of Roxbury from 1847 until his death in 1851.

#### **Society of the Cincinnati**

After the death of his father in 1832, Dearborn was admitted to the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati. In 1848 he was elected President General of the Society, the first President General to be a hereditary member rather than a veteran of the Revolution. As President, General Dearborn proposed changes in the Society's membership rules, specifically the Rule of 1854, to allow for descendants of other than original members to join.

#### **Dearborn manuscript holdings**

Several institutions have archival collections of Dearborn papers and correspondence, however, with the exception of the American Antiquarian Society, these holdings mostly relate to his later (post-1820s) political interests and historical and horticultural pursuits. AAS reports having some correspondence relating to the same early period of Dearborn's career covered in the letterbook, when he was Collector of Customs at Boston during the War of 1812.

American Antiquarian Society: 40 items, including correspondence from the period 1810-1846, mostly relating to Dearborn's public life as collector of the port of Boston and adjutant general of Massachusetts. Dearborn was a member of the American Antiquarian Society.

New York Public Library: six scrapbook volumes of manuscript material covering the period 1844-1849, including historical works intended for publication. Also, four importation certificates dating from Dearborn's tenure as Collector of Customs at Boston.

Library of Congress: 20 items, mainly correspondence relating to local affairs during Dearborn's years as mayor of Roxbury, Mass.



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

### **(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn, Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

Duke University: 12 items of assorted correspondence on national and state politics.

Chicago History Museum: 300 items. Mostly letters to Dearborn and papers relating to business, political, and personal matters, with only a single folder devoted to the period 1805-1820.

#### **Rarity and historical importance**

The original outgoing letters by Dearborn recorded in the present letterbook are at best scattered in various private and institutional collections but mostly no longer extant. At least some of the original letters to members of Madison's cabinet are held by the State Department. Such a dense and complete record of Dearborn's outgoing correspondence for this important period during the War of 1812 is certainly a rich and unique historical source not available elsewhere.

#### **People to whom letters are addressed (selection):**

James Monroe, Secretary of State

Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury. Part of President Madison's inner circle, and Madison's original choice for Secretary of State.

Richard Rush, Comptroller of the Treasury. A noted War Hawk, from his seemingly subordinate position Rush functioned as one of President Madison's closest friends and confidants throughout the War of 1812.

Isaac Hull, Captain, USS Constitution, and Commander of the Portsmouth Navy Yard

William Jones, acting Secretary of the Treasury, 1813-1814

Commodore Stephen Decatur

George W. Campbell, Secretary of the Treasury, 1814

Alexander J. Dallas, Secretary of the Treasury, 1814-1816

Geo. Swain, Keeper of Nantucket Light House

Samuel Ney, Keeper of the Chatham Light House



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

**Names of ships (selection):**

*American Hero* (ship)

*Eliza Haley* (brig)

*America* (ship)

*HMS Shannon* (ship)

*USS Constitution* (ship)

**Excerpts from the letterbook:**

Aug. 10, 1812, to Albert Gallatin:

*The owners of a number of Ships belonging to this port, have called on me, and stated that they did receive information, they were taking in goods in Great Britain for the United States. They wished to know what would be done with them, & their cargoes on their arrival, as the order in Council had been repealed. Will you please to inform me what course I shall pursue, or whether any other measures are to be adopted in relation to such vessels, other than those which have been taken heretofore under the nonintervention laws. They are expected in the course of ten or fifteen days.*

Aug. 14, 1812, to Albert Gallatin:

*A Schooner has arrived here from Halifax, as a Flag of Truce with twenty or thirty American Prisoners on their Parole of Honor - She has a Passport signed by the Governor & admiral. Mr. Parker of this place came up in the vessel & has made the following statement, viz. That he had in Halifax Fifteen thousand pounds Sterling worth of British goods, which had been there nine months before the Declaration of War, he went to Halifax & after much difficulty, got permission, from the Governor, to purchase an English vessel & bring his goods to Boston. He was obliged however to take out the Register in a British subject's name. The Master is an Englishman, the crew were the passengers. The Passport was given to the vessel to protect the property from capture. I have seized the vessel, taken the cargo into custody, & stored it, to wait your instructions. Mr. Parker wished to carry his property in the vessel to the master of her, & let her go back to Halifax as a Flag with her Passport. The master was, before the Nonintercourse commander of a regular Packet from Halifax to this Port, for many years. A few weeks since he was captured by one of our Privateers off St.*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*John's & sent into Salem.... I have told Mr. Parker that I would not libel the vessel or cargo, until I heard from you, but should keep them in custody.*

Aug. 22, 1812, to William Otis, Collector of Barnstable:

*The owners of the ship American Hero, which they expect has arrived in your district from India, called on me this morning, & after stating the situation of the vessel, desired me to give my opinion as to what can be done with said Ship. By the Act of Congress of July 5th, 1812, such Ships are admisible to an entry on payment of the Duties, & the goods being landed, & deposited in Public Stores under the care of the Collector, it therefore follows, that all such vessels, are so far relieved from the provisions of the Nonintercourse act, as, that they are not subject to seizure under its provisions, but may be allowed to report in any District...*

Aug. 28, 1812, to the commanding officer of the Revenue Cutter Massachusetts

*You will immediately on the receipt of this; order, Lieut. Hopkins, on board the Schooner Hope a British Flag of Truce, there to remain until further orders. He is not to suffer any person to land from said Schooner, or go on board of her without an order from Col. Boyd, or myself, except the Lieut. who has now a Passport from Col. Boyd. You will every day go along side said Schooner, & enquire if they are in want of provisions, or any necessaries for the crew or vessel & afford them all the assistance they may require. & report to me whatever the officers may require - no articles of any kind, neither Papers or letters, must go on board the Flag of Truce.*

Sept. 7, 1812, to Com. Rogers [i.e. Commodore John Rodgers]

*The Seaman from your Squadron, who are at the Hospital in Charlestown, are so inclined to wander beyond prescribed limits & get intoxicated, that it is abosolutely necessary, that an efficient midshipman should be with them, to prevent improper indulgencies, which cannont without such assistance be prevented. They are recovering rapidly ... I shall see that every possible attention is paid to their discourse, cleanliness, & diet, & nothing shall be reglected which may tend, to advance their convalesance [sic] & recovery.*

Sept. 8, 1812, to David Gelston, Collector of Customs, New York

*I hereby send you a commission, which was granted by you to the Schooner Scorpion. It was surrendered, at this office as the vessel is dismantled & her cruise at an end. A man by the name of Elisha Morrell of New York has written me to know whether a large ship which has arrived recently*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*in your District was not the Dromo of this Port, & if she did not violate the Embargo laws of 1807. The ship Dromo of this port did not violate the Embargo. All I know of her is, that she cleared for Havana in 1810 or 1811 & then surrendered her Register which has been returned to this office. She was there sold to a Spaniard & I understand went to Africa after a cargo of Negroes, which were carried to Havana. This is all I know in relation to said ship since she left this Port.*

Sept 8, 1812, to Albert Gallatin:

*I herewith forward a copy of a letter which was this day received from John Mitchell, Esq. the United States Com. of Prisoners residing in Halifax. Some months since I informed the Secretary of State, that such practices as one therein detailed, I was confident would be attempted, & noticed the absolute necessity of some law being passed immediately on the meeting of Congress, which would prevent such treasonable evasions of existing law. As Congress do not appear inclined to prohibit the exportation of provisions and munitions of War, would it not be politic to prevent by law during the War, any citizen of the U.S. either native or naturalised from shipping on board any foreign vessel. By such an act that class of vessels which have & are now almost the only ones which go direct to the ports of the enemy, would be prevented from procuring a crew & thus could not depart from our Ports. The manner in which the Swedish, Spanish, Danish, & Portuguese Flags are made to protect American vessels & property not only from the armed vessels of the Union, but those of the enemy is thus. Some agent, or one of the Consuls of the above Nations, purchase from a citizen of the United States a vessel & produce a bill of Sale at the Custom House, as evidence of the transfer & obtaining a certificate from the Consul declaring the character & ownership of the vessel and cargo, they are laden & cleared as a foreign vessel, for some Neutral port, but most of them go direct to the Colonies in North America on the West Indies. In such cases all the persons composing the Crew are Americans, except the Master (who is generally a nominal character [?] a real acting master who is a citizen of the United States). Such a law together with that, now before the Congress to prevent the use of British Licenses, would tend most effectually to brake up that disgraceful traffic which has been carried on, to a vast extend since the declaration of War.*

Oct. 20, 1812, 6-page letter to James Monroe, wherein Dearborn sets forth the legal measures he devised for prisoner exchanges involving Cartels and Flags of Truce.

*Your communications under date of the 13th relative to Cartels, was received this morning & I have had an interview with the Marshal for the purpose of concerting the necessary measures for complying with the directions therein contained.*

*Herewith you will receive a Schedule marked A of all the British Cartels which have arrived at this*





**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*Port, since the Declaration of War, & copies of the Lists of Prisoners, marked B., C., &c. which have embarked from this District, for the Dominions of the King of Great Britain in the return English Flags of Truce & the American Cartel Fawn.*

*On the return of the Cartels I have furnished the Master with a Passport in the form of that, herewith transmitted - mark G. Not having received any particular instructions in relation to such vessels, I drafted the Passport & submitted it to the inspection of the the U.S. Attory, the Marshal, & General Boyd, who approved the form.*

*On an application by A. Allen, Esq. British Consul, for a Cartel to transport a number of Prisoners of War to Halifax in conformity to the arrangements agreed upon by the President of the U.S. & the British Charges des Affaires at Washington, I gave permission for the Ship Fawn to sail under a Flag of Truce & granted the enclosed Passport marked F. the owners giving bonds, agreeable to the 7th article contained in your instructions of the 13th Augst. She has since returned to this port.*

*I have made it a rule to comply with the various articles in the aforesaid instructions as far as they were applicable to the Cartels of the enemy. No citizen of the U.S. or any nation other than those of the King of Great Britain, have been permitted to embark from this Port, in any of the Flags of Truce....*

Oct. 26, 1812, to Albert Gallatin, with mention of wounded British prisoners from the HMS Guerriere, arriving on the Frigate Constitution, after the noted America naval victory off of Halifax which made the Constitution a household name. With Dearborn's comments on the treatment of prisoners of war:

*The Marine Hospital accots. for the quarter ending the 30th Sept. last, is unnecessarily large from the following circumstances. On the arrival of the Frigate Constitution, I was requested by the Marshal to receive the wounded Prisoners of the Gurriere [i.e. Guerriere] into the Hospital ... I have made every exertion to alleviate the distress of all, & from motives of humanity as well with a view to meet the wishes of government in the well treatment of Prisoners of War have with the advice of the Hospital Surgeon, made the required expenditures for those purposes.*

Nov. 6, 1812, to Daniel Coffin, collector at Nantucket:

*I will thank you to enquire of your mechanics on Nantucket, what will be the cost of a Wooden Dwelling House to be built, near the Beacon, for the Keeper, of the following dimentions [sic]: Length on the outside 30 feet; Width on the outside 15 ft.; Heigth of Posts - 8 ft.; Heigth of roof - 8 ft. The House to be divided into Rooms &c. &c. as in the enclosed Plan [not present in letterbook]. A*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*Porch in front - 7 feet wide & six deep, 8 feet high, with one small Window in it, with 12 squares of glass. Three windows in each room on the ground floor, a fire place in both, with an oven in one of them, & a closet back of it, in the other. Stairs to go up into the Garret in the front entry. The Garret to be finished into two lodging chambers. The Rooms to be plastered & painted, with one Window in each, in the end. The outside to be shingled, or clapboard, & painted twice. A Cellar under the whole of the ground will admit of, or under a part, seven feet deep, stoned and painted with lime mortar. The Windows to contain 16 pains of Glass - 8 by 10 - I wish you to give me an answer, as soon as possible, that I may make a report thereon to the Secretary of the Treasury.*

*Please inform Jonathan Coffin that the President has increased his salary as Keeper of the Beacon on Nantucket to [166 67/100](#) per annum to commence from the 1st of October last, & that he will render his accounts, for the last quarter of this year for [41 66/100](#)*

Nov. 24, 1812, to Albert Gallatin, concerning depredations of the British privateer Liverpool Packet and Dearborn's suggestions to deal with same:

*The coasting vessels between this & the Southern Ports, have been for some weeks depredated upon by a Privateer from Nova Scotia, called the Liverpool Packet & such has been the severe consequences of her success in captures to many of the Merchants, that a general meeting of them has been called to take the subject into consideration... From a full discussion of the subject with some of the first Nautical and other characters, I am induced to believe, that the best protection which can be offered for the Coasting trade, will be armed Brigs or Schooners with 75 or 100 seamen to be fitted out from the principal sea ports in New England. If a vessel of the above description was authorised to be fitted out in this Port, to cruise from Cape Cod to the Vinyard the amount of property which would be thereby saved from capture, during this Winter & Spring, would be immense.*

*There are now here two fine new Brigs but for Privateers which could carry ten or sixteen guns - might be bought at a fair price & would either of them answer every purpose required, & could be put to sea for about 15 to 20,000 Dollars....*

Nov. 30, 1812, to Albert Gallatin, discussing Winslow Lewis and his patented lighthouse lamps, whose light house lamp design was adopted by the U.S. government in 1812. Mentions monies owed Lewis for various lighthouse related expenses:

*Herewith you will receive the accounts of Winslow Lewis for the 3d qr... for the clock for Point Judith Light House... The 90.53 paid Bruce was agreeably to an arrangement on the part of my*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*predecessor & Capt. Lewis as the then keeper was not deemed able to give the proper attention to the new Lights.... I shall attend to the instructions relative to contracting for the proposed alterations in Portland Light House as recommended by Capt. Lewis.*

*I presume that the keepers of the Light Houses, which have been fitted up with Patent Lamps, for three months would be able to state what oil would be consumed annually, but the quantity which Capt. Lewis has assigned to each Light House in his Schedule, must be considered as principally derived from calculations made from what had been consumed in those first fitted up...*

Dec. 21, 1812, to James Monroe, Secretary of State, concerning the possibility of forwarding sensitive dispatches out of Boston:

*I have it in my power very often to forward dispatches to the places mentioned in your letter of the 14th inst., but it is seldom known, when vessels are to leave this Port, more than six or eight days, before they sail, as merchants do not wish to give publicity to the voyage intended, for fear the information should reach the cruisers of the enemy.*

*On the morrow a Pilot boat leaves here, for Riojanario [Rio Janeiro] dispatched by some Merchants who have vessels there. Mr. Gray has a ship which will sail on the 24th for Denmark. We have had three vessels sail for France within ten days & to Cadiz & Lisbon - some go every week. If dispatches are sent to me, they shall be forwarded the first opportunities, but I am apprehensive that it will rarely be in my power to advise you of the intended departure of vessels in time to be verified thereby.*

Feb. 19, 1813, to James Monroe, Secretary of State:

*That the provisions of your instructions relative to alien enemies may be rigidly enforced, I have adopted the following regulations to be observed by the Masters of vessels bound from this Port. Unless such a course is pursued it will not be possible to prevent alien enemies from going from one port in the U.S. to another as often as they have an inclination. From the nature of the Instructions I have received & the importance of keeping a strict watch over the conduct & movement of the subjects of Great Britain, during a State of War I shall feel it my duty to adopt such legal measures as may best tend to answer the expectations of Government.*

*Although I am not positively [sic] ordered to demand the above mentioned list, still I feel authorised from general principles to enforce a compliance with said regulations, as I do not thereby violate any law or put the masters of vessels to unnecessary trouble.*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*The Cartel from Quebeck which brought the prisoners, captured at Queenstown & another from Halifax, which has been here for some days, I have ordered to leave the U.S. as there are no prisoners for them to take back. Knowing that many improper practices injurious to the best interests of the Nation, result from their being in this Harbor, after a consultation with the Marshal have conceived it my duty to order them to depart.*

*I have allowed them, all the priviledges which humanity & justice required, having a regard to that policy, which may tend to produce a reciprocal line of conduct on the part of the enemy toward vessels from the U.S. under like circumstances.*

*(Regulations referred to in the foregoing letter)*

*No vessel will be permitted to leave this Port for any Port or Place in the U.S. or elsewhere, until the Master has exhibited to the Collector a list of the Passengers & Crew of said vessel, designating each by his name the place of his birth & residence.*

*The Object of the above regulation, is to prevent Alien Enemies from passing from one port in the U.S. to another by Water without Passports which may be furnished by the Collector agreeably to Instructions from the Secretary of State.*

Feb. 22, 1813, to Albert Gallatin, describing a smuggling system by which goods and provisions were being carried between the U.S. and Canada.

*On the night of the 20th inst. I ordered the Revenue Cutter with two Inspectors, down to the outer Harbor, to take possession of a Schooner under Swedish Colours, which had cleared & sailed for Fayal. By information from Capt. E. Mix we learned all the Papers & Letters relative to her destination were concealed in a jug then packed up in a cask. Then the officers boarded the vessel, knowing where the cask containing the Jug was concealed they took it on board of the Cutter & in it found a large number of letters, bills of lading, &c. a Passport or License from Sir John Sherbrook to be inforce for two months, giving permission for the importation of provisions in any but the vessels of France from the U.S. into the Ports of Lower Canada, New Brunswick & St. Johns.*

*By the letter found we got information that a Brig was laden in port with a full Cargo of Provisions for Halifax & have seized her. The officers & crews of both vessels, will this day, be taken into Custody to be proceeded against, according to law. This disclosure had made me acquainted with a series of outrages upon our laws, which has been carried to a great extent & was to be continued & increased. It appears that smuggling goods from Halifax into the U.S. & sending provisions there,*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*has been reduced to a system, by the parties concerned.*

*In a day or two I will send you copies of all the papers found, & a more particular account of this treasonable transaction. Being as much occupied in the prosecution of the offenders, and preventing other contemptible violations, prevents my now transmitting the interesting documents.*

March 5, 1813, to Richard Rush, 4-page letter detailing a seizure of goods brought in by the Frigate Constitution:

*On the arrival of the United States Frigate Constitution, Com.e. Bainbridge informed me that he had on board goods, which he captured from the enemy; amounting to 10,000 pounds sterling & desired me to inform him, what he had to do relative to them, at the Custom House. I informed him of the tenor of your Circular of July 13, 1812, & agreeably to the provisions of the 3d section of that letter "had them placed in Stone, there to remain until the articles subject to duty advalorem shall have been duly appraised & the duties paid or secured, according to law."*

March 1, 1813, to Daniel Coffin, Collector at Nantucket:

*John Jenkins proposals to build a Dwelling House for the Keeper of the Beacon on Nantucket have been accepted & herewith you will receive the Contract & Bond for his signature... I will thank you to inform Mr. Jenkins that the work after it is finished will be examined by some person sent by me for that purpose & if it does not appear to be well & faithfully done the remainder of the sum will not be paid but the penalty of the Bond exacted.*

*Your attention to the execution of the work will much oblige me, to see that he does not slight any part; & I wish you to give such directions from time to time as circumstances may require.*

March 13, 1813, text of a circular sent to the Light House Keepers in Massachusetts, concerning Winslow Lewis's patented lighthouse lamps:

*Since the Government has contracted with W. Lewis Esq to put up the Light Houses with his Patent Reflectors & Lamps, it has become indispensibly necessary that the Annual Report of the Keepers should be accurately made out & punctually transmitted.*

*Heretofore but few of the Keepers have complied with the instructions, contained in the Circular of March 17th 1809, & those who have, their Reports were rendered in such a confused & unintelligible manner as that but little information could be derived therefrom. To obviate those*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*difficulties & establish a uniformity in the system, you will herewith receive Printed Blank Annual Reports, which are to be filled up, like the one enclosed, in a neat & correct manner annually on the first day of June & without delay transmitted to this office. You much make accurate Returns of the quantity of Oil on hand, received & consumed & be very particular in the quantity consumed in the old Lamps & what is used in those fitted up by Winslow Lewis, stating the difference under the proper head...*

March 31, 1813 to James Monroe, Secretary of State, regarding prisoner exchanges, and mentioning a note by the Commander of the H.M.S. Shannon (i.e. Philip Broke) "now cruising in this Bay" just one month before the famous Battle of Boston Harbor when the USS Chesapeake was captured by the Shannon after a brief but intense action in which 71 men were killed:

*This morning the American Sch[ooner] Anson, Theophilus Storer, master, arrived from Madeira as a Cartel under a Flag of Truce with the prisoners & passengers mentioned in the accompanying Schedule [not recorded in the letterbook]. On the bottom of the last sheet of which is a very polite & dignified endorsement by the Commander of his M. Frigate Schannon [i.e. Shannon] now cruising in this Bay [this endorsement is recorded in the letterbook]. The Cartels he refers to are the Regulus & Royalist, which I wrote you on the 19th of Feb'y had been ordered by me to leave this port for the reasons therein mentioned, but previous to their departure a number of prisoners were brought in & their sailing was postponed until the receipt of your letter of March 2 informing me, that the Cartel Ship Bostack was coming to Boston to take all prisoners from thence to Halifax then I immediately ordered the two above mentioned Cartels to sail & at the request of the Masters of them, gave a certificate that they were by me ordered to depart the first wind, as there was a Cartel ordered from the South to take all the prisoners here.*

*It is a noble subject for the gallant commander to swagger about & with his ship all Cartels are to be stoped [sic] coming to Boston. It is a great pity, that the omni presence of this British cruiser could not be transferred to our ships, for then at the same moment & by one Frigate all the Ports of the enemy could be invested, blocked, or battererd down. Those most perfect & all accomplished gentlemen beat our officers all hollow in big talking & chivalrick [sic] endorsements. But we shall learn in time these Belligerents refinements & being young it cannot be expected that perfection should at once characterise our rough seamen, they have learnt the fighting part of their duty, like apt schollers [sic], but among "Bastards & outlaws" those highly refined characteristics of the most polished, most learned & most thinking people in the world, are not so soon attainable.*

*Herewith you will receive a British License, which Capt. Storer handed me to read as a protest &*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*when I had read loud a few lines, he said he had handed me the wrong Paper, I told him, I would read that first, which I did & put it in my pocket. He wished it returned to him, but I told him you would to read it.*

*The Protest will develop the base conduct of a Capt. Sheed who has most inhumanely violated the Act of July 28th 1803, vol. 6, page 206.*

*(endorsement)*

*On board H. M. Ship Shannon, Mar. 28, 1813. The treaty for exchange of prisoners having been broken by an arbitrary order of the President of the U.S. & the British Cartels sent away empty from Boston, though 150 B. subjects were prisoners there, & waited to return in them. I give notice, that no more cartels shall pass to Boston, with American citizens until the Exchange be fairly restored - or any American Prisoners liberated.*

August 21, 1813, to Capt. Isaac Hull, Portsmouth:

*There is not any vessel of the description you mention owned in this port. There is a Schooner Fox of Portland now here which arrived from thence a few days since.... By the laws of the United States vessels laden with the produce or manufacture of the United States are not compelled to clear out from Custom House, when bound from a District in one State to a District in the same or an adjoining State on the Sea Coast or on a Navigable River. Thus such villains as are disposed to carry supplies to the enemy cannot be detected in part, unless some one concerned turns States evidence, or the destination of the vessels are discovered in some other way.... It is true Collectors have a right to seize and detain vessels laden with the munitions of war, or provisions, destined for any enemy's port or the Ships of Great Britain... I am much obliged to you for the information you have given; and will thank you when any facts or hints in respect to such vessels as the Fox come to your knowledge to communicate them, for it is at all times, & more particularly so at the present, to check the career of men who are lost to the best feelings of Citizens, and devoid of patriotism - and thus stigmatize their Countrymen by the commission of crimes which strike at the vitals of the Republic.*

August 24, 1813, to Edward Wyer, U. S. Consul at Riga:

*Agreeable to your request I have made enquiry whether there were any vessels about to sail from this port for the mouth of Europe, & find are none... I think you had better take passage in some neutral vessel for Lisbon or Cadiz - from either of those ports you can proceed to the place of your destination. I have written the Secretary of State on the subjects which were agitated this morning. I*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*have despatches which are to be sent to the Public Agents of the United States in Russia, Sweden, Denmark, France, Spain, Portugal, and the Barbary powers; if it should be convenient from the route you may take to receive & transmit them you will confer an obligation on the government, and the gentlemen to whom they are addressed. While you are absent it will be extremely pleasing to receive from time to time notes of the passing events - and in return similar acts of courtesy will be reciprocated.*

August 28, 1813, to John Foster Williams, Commander of the Revenue Cutter Massachusetts.

*The Cutter will proceed down the Harbour, & cruise continually in Broad Sound, the Light House chanel & among the Islands, until you receive positive orders otherwise. During the night you will anchor either between Fort Warren & Fort Independence, or to the North West of Fort Warren, and keep a vigilant look out Night & Day. No boats or vessels usually employed in the Bay, other than mere pleasure Boats must be allowed to go out or come in without being examined strictly; and if there are any circumstances which induce you to believe the Laws have been violated you will detain them & make report to me. Boats laden with flour - fresh or salted provisions, are to be very attentively watched, and should there be sufficient reason to convince you they are bound (destined) for the enemy, you will detain them. The Cutter must never come to Town unless expressly ordered; or for some particular sufficient cause - and in either case report must be made without delay to me, of her arrival and the reasons therefor. You will keep a watch every night on Deck of one of the Lieutenants and two or four men - the guns loaded - small arms clean & ready for service - the whole crew should be exercised as Marines every night and morning with muskets, under the command of the 3rd Lieutenant. The Cartridge Boxes must be kept in good order - you will have a sufficient number of Boarding Pike made - there are two Blunderbusses in the Custom House Store, which you will take on board the Cutter, and have cleaned to use in the Boat or Cutter as circumstances may require. You will have the officers - men & equipments of the Cutter in such a correct & perfect state of preparation, that at a moment's notice you can be ready for action. You will furnish a copy of this Letter to the Senior Lieutenant, or give him the Original for his government.*

August 31, 1813, to Capt. Isaac Hull:

*Since I wrote you on the 21st, I have examined your letter of the 20th, and believe I do not perfectly understand the meaning of the Extract from the Log Book of the Enterprize - which is as follows "At 11 brought too & boarded the Amn. Schooner Fox from Boston bound to St. Johns with a License; ordered her to proceed on being loaded with Flour & Bread." When I wrote you I was under the impression that the License was for coasting; but now think you meant a British License, which, if*





**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*that is the fact, by the 2nd & 7th sections of the Act of July 6th 1812 - the vessel and cargo are forfeited and the owner liable to a forfeit equal to twice the value of the vessel & cargo - to be imprisoned twelve months and fined One Thousand Dollars. I presume you left out in the extract from the Log Book, the word "not" between "her & to" that it should be, "ordered her not to proceed."*

Sept. 2, 1813, to Richard Rush, Comptroller of the Treasury

*I herewith transmit a Copy of a Letter from Captain Hull, & my answer thereto.*

*Congress not having passed such Laws as would induce our Citizens to abstain from treasonable violations of existing ones; it is next to impossible to check abuses which grow out of the existing state of things. I have used all means in my power, to prevent the exportation of Provisions to the Enemy, and shall at all times be zealous in detecting the characters, who are engaged in this base traffic. Such are the means employed by those who are disposed to have intercourse with the Ships or ports of the enemy, and so regardless are they of all ideas of Patriotism, that until some Laws are passed which will operate directly on the exportation of Provisions, by Neutrals or Citizens, either to foreign ports, or Coastwise; it is not possible to prevent supplies going to the Enemy...*

*A Pilot Boat was stopped yesterday in the Harbour, which I have caused to be Libelled & for which I am threatened with prosecution in our State Courts; but I shall do my duty let the consequences be what they may. I am not to be deterred by the threats of any other means. One board of her was two quarter casks of wine, boxes of cider & Segars, beef & vegetables which the Pilot said he was hired to put on board a vessel in the Bay, which he was to know by her exhibiting a White Flag. I understand that she was from Halifax last - wether British, Neutral, or American is yet uncertain, or what her character or destination. A number of letters were found, some of no consequence, & others, written in such an unintelligible manner as not to enable me to make out their contents exactly, being part in Cypher - however sufficient evidence can be produced on trial to cause a condemnation...*

*If the sentiment I expressed to Captain Hull, & the order to the Commander of the Cutter, in relation to my power in seizing vessels, are not correct, or should it be thought any additional measures can be taken, will you please to advise me thereon. I am anxious to not only do my duty, but all that can tend to check abuses, or benefit my Country.*

September 9, 1813, to James Monroe:



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*Application has been made to me by Ebenezer Stocker of Boston for a Flag & Passport to go to Halifax for the purpose of claiming in behalf of Spanish Merchants in Havana, for whom he is Agent & Consignee - the Greek Ship Jerusalem of 700 tons, which had been laden in Havana by Spanish subjects with a cargo consisting of 2700 boxes of sugar, a quantity of coffee and pigs of Copper destined for the port. Said ship was captured in Boston Bay on the 3d inst., by the British Ship of War Majestic, and sent to Halifax. Mr Stocker has ever been one of the most respectable men in this State, & it will be a great loss not only to him but to the Spanish Merchants if he cannot go to Halifax for the purpose of claiming as agent, the Ship & Cargo; which if he gets, will give to the United States in Duties upward of Seventy Thousand Dollars. I informed Mr. Stocker that I had not the power to grant passports for Flags of Truce, & that application must be made to you...*

September 13, 1813, to William Jones, acting Secretary of Treasury:

*The Ship General Knox owned by Cornelius Coolidge & Francis J. Oliver of this Town, arrived from Burmuda in Ballast on the 9th inst. This vessel was laden with flour in Alexandria last winter for Cadiz - captured by the British Squadron in the Chesapeake, sent to Bermuda; there libelled, tried and released; she having a License from Lord Sidmouth to carry a cargo of provisions to Cadiz to protect her back to the United States. The Captors appealed and the Cargo was bonded by order of Court to wait the final decree. The vessel landed on appraisement and permitted to come home.*

*This being the first instance of a vessel sailing under a British License, which came from an enemy's port, that has arrived in this District, I have refused her an entry until the facts have been made known to you.*

*There being no Law of the United States which renders the vessel liable but understanding the Courts of the United States have in some cases decided all such subject to forfeiture under the general Laws of Nations, applicable to a State of War, I have thought it my duty to ask for instructions in this case...*

*On the 11th the Ship George arrived from Gibraltar under precisely the same circumstances as the General Knox....*

September 18, 1813, to James Monroe:

*I have delivered E. Wyer Esqr., Consul for Riga, all the Letters & Packages for our Public Agents in the North of Europe which you have transmitted from time to time, and he will sail on the morrow in the Wolfherst, a Swedish vessel, for Lisbob, or Gottenburgh....*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*He might sail for France in ten days from this in the Firefly which is now loading but the danger of capture, & the delay, gave a preference to the mode he has taken.*

*I shall send the dispatches for France in the above vessel.*

September 21, 1813, to William Jones, acting Secretary of the Treasury. 5 page letter concerning the case of the Swedish Schooner Nysted.

*On the morning of the 17th instant, a young man informed me that there were secreted in a log of Fire Wood which was in the steerage of the Swedish Schooner Nysted - a number of papers which would shew that the vessel and cargo were owned by British Subjects or Citizens of the United States, and that she was bound direct for Halifax altho' she had cleared out on the 15th for Saint Bart's with 713 barrels of flour. I immediately ordered one of the Inspectors to go on board of her & makes search which he did, but reported that her cabin steerage & forecastle were stowed so full that she must be unloued in port, I then directed the Revenue Cutter to haul alongside of her & proceed with the Crew to take on Deck so much of the Cargo as would permit a thorough search - which was done, but no discovery made, and on the 18th, I discharged the vessel from arrest about 12 o'clock.*

*At one o'clock a foreigner & a stranger, who I had never before seen, called on me, & asked what I would give him if he should give such information as would enable me to arrest a British Agent and his Papers on baord the above mentioned Schooner. I told me he could be entitled to one quarter part of the vessel & cargo if the documents which might be found would prove her destination & ownership to be different from what she purported to be, he then said he would call at half past two & give me such information, as would make the thing certain. I immediately sent an order to the Cutter not to suffer the Schooner to proceed to Sea if she attempted; and designated an Inspector, as to the person to carry into effect such measures as might be necessary on the information given to take the agent and his papers. I waited until three, and the foreigner not appearing, gave directions to the Officer to wait for him until Dark, and how to proceed in case he came, but he did not come....*

*This instance most clearly shews what infamous & treasonable practices prevail; and I am sorry that my exertions are not more frequently crowned with success - but nevertheless they shall be unceasing.*

September 22, 1813, to Commodore Stephen Decatur, U.S. Frigate United States, New London:



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*The bearer James Blish, visits your place for the purpose of obtaining from you a Flag to go on board the British Squadron off New London, to endeavour to get Daniel Parkins, an impressed citizen of the United States.*

*Mr. Blish has all the necessary Documents to prove the place of his Birth &c &c. Parker has been a Slave nearly six years, and his parents are very anxious to get him clear. You will do a great favor to the parties by giving such aid as you may think proper for effecting the release of the Young Man.*

October 7, 1813, to James Monroe:

*Enclosed are four duplicate protections for Seamen detained on board the Nassau British Prison Ship, near Chatham, England and refused their exchange for want of proof that they are Citizens of the United States. Twycross is a native of Dresden, he has commanded vessels many years out of this port, & has a family (out) in Charlestown. At the commencement of the War, he was in the British Merchant Service - was taken up in London and is detained on the ground of his being a British Subject. Frank is a native of Beverly, Massachusetts, was impressed in Lisbon in 1810 out of Brig Henry. Hadney of Philadelphia gave himself up as a prisoner of war January 19th 1813. Martin is a native of Charlestown. Packard is a native of Bridgewater, Masstts. Martin & Packard do not give the particulars of their impressment.*

October 30, 1813, 4 page letter to William Jones, acting Secretary of the Treasury

*On the 28th inst. I received information that a large quantity of goods were sold at Auction in a Store on India Wharf, which were supposed to be of British produce & manufacture, as the persons who attended the sale declared openly, there could be no doubt of the fact. I immediately sent for the person who offered them for sale, and desired he would inform me, from whence they came, where they were entered & by whom shipped. He said they were from Gottenburgh, entered at Plymouth, & shipped in a Swedish vessel, by a Merchant residing at the former place... From the representation of my Officers who had been sent to examine the Goods, I understood on the Linens when unfolded the Irish stamp of the Harp, the makers name and number of yards, were to be seen, and although they had been new folded in a different form, and other stamps & marks put on them, on the outside; the quality & whole appearance on proper inspection was such, as to leave no room for conjecture as to their origin. The Woolens had the British marks, lead &c taken out, or cut off with a piece of the cloth, and new Leads & Marks in words and Letters, which an approved interpreter said were unintelligible, as they were not of the German or Dutch language although the fabrics were obliged to be of these Countries. On the end of many of the pieces "London" was still distinctly to be seen, from the impression of the threads which had been sewed into it, as is the*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*custom on such cloths, but which had been picked out....*

*From all these circumstances I felt justified and bound by the following clause in the Circular Instruction from the Treasury under date of October 7th 1811, to cause a regular inspection of the goods to be made... Agreeably thereto I issued a Warrant for an examination...directed to twenty of the first importing Merchants in this Town, fifteen of whom attended to the duty assigned them agreeably thereto, this day handed me a Report which they signed & swore to... The facts being so clear & the fraud so apparent, I immediately on the receipt of their report ordered the goods to be seized. The person who shipped them is alleged to be a Burgher of Sweden, but I am well informed he is a native of Great Britain, and one of a large firm in that Kingdom.... The goods were sold previous to the seizure, at public Auction, for about \$130,000 Dollars....*

*A most shameful system of this nature is in operation, and it requires an energetic & prompt interference, of the Officers of the Customs to prevent its success... This being a novel attempt in this District to introduce the manufactures of the Enemy, I deem it highly important to make a firm and decisive stand, not only for the due enforcement of the Laws & consequent punishment of the parties, now interested, but to deter others from making similar attempts to evade the provisions of the non-intercourse...*

*I seized on the 27th one of the Chebacco Boats mentioned in the Letter from John Mitchell, Esqr. a Copy of which I sent you a few days since. I have likewise prosecuted the Captain and had him imprisoned, as I have a Witness, a paroled prisoner of war, who was on board the vessel in Halifax, and saw the Cargo, consisting of Turpentine, sold there, & was told by the Captain "he was too cunning for the Damned Custom House Officers" &c &c.*

December 13, 1813, to William Jones, acting Secretary of the Treasury:

*Some anonymous villain has transmitted to the Editor of the Aurora, a communication in which the officers of the Customs of this state are most grossly defamed and insinuations in relation to this District which I conceived it my duty to notice & have sent to the publisher of the Aurora, an answer a Copy of which I transmit. I despise the idea of Newspaper controversy, but in this instance I think it necessary to state my feelings.*

*From the imperfection of the present Law many people think the Officers do not perform their duty, as they're what ought to be prevented. I have made it a point to state to the Treasury what was doing by Smuglers & traitors, & the means which I had taken to prevent violations of Law. I hope that this rascally attack will not tend to my injury in the mind of my superiors. God knows I have*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*ever wished and in fact, have done all that man can do as an officer - during the time I have been Collector, it has been my pride & study, so to perform my duty as would not only prevent the evils which recently I have fully represented to you, but satisfy the wishes of my Government. When slander is barbed in this assassinlike manner, those who it is intended to strike have no redress; but I have the satisfaction of believing that you who well knows the imperfections of existing Laws, & what I have done will not think me neglectful or remiss in my duty. If ever I deserved credit, I was certain that my vigilance & rigid enforcement of the Laws entitle me to it; but in that very point "where I had garnered up my hopes," I am abused.*

*My pride revolts at an explanation but justice to myself compells me to speak my feelings.*

December 11, 1813, to the Editor of the Aurora, Philadelphia:

*I have observed with astonishment and indignation in the Aurora of the 6th Inst., an extract of a Letter from some anonymous writer under date of "Boston November 25th 1813": in which the Custom House Officers of this State are most wantonly defamed*

*I conceived it my duty to notice those parts which reflect on this Office, through the medium of a News Paper, as the author has not the magnanimity & independence to attach his name to a communication which like the dagger of the midnight assassin is intended to wound, without giving to those attacked the opportunity of personal redress. My superiors in the Treasury Department are well informed of the measures warranted by Law & their instructions, which have been taken for a rigid enforcement of existing Statutes. I have the satisfaction of having so discharged my duty as to meet their approbation - that of every person who is familiar with the present inadequate Laws necessary for a state of War, and the feelings of conscious rectitude from the faithful performance of every act which as a public officer I am bound to execute. I received positive information that the Sloop Vulture had arrived in the Harbor from Halifax, & probably had on board British Goods. Officers were immediately sent to find & seize her. It was dark when at the extreme end of the Town she was discovered; three men were put on board of her, with orders to bring her down opposite the Custom House, as soon as the tide would permit, she being then aground. Before she was moved, a large number of men in Boats & from the Wharf forcibly entered her, & it was supposed, took out a few pieces of what appeared to be Duck, which were secreted under the Ballast. The next day I gave notice to the United States Dist. Attorney to prosecute the Captain & Libel the vessel & put the [blank space] which was done - the Master arrested - put into Jail, and is now under trial before the District Court. Every means were used to discover some of the persons who dispossessed the men of the vessel, but it being very dark, & the vilians [sic] disguised the men who had the Sloop in charge,*



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*could not discover who they were. The infamous insinuations against the characters of the Officers of this Dist. being general, precludes me from taking a legal method of redress; but if they are intended for me, I pronounce the writer a slandering scoundrel - a malicious liar - and a villian [sic].*

January 31, 1814, to Richard Rush:

*I have been requested to transmit the enclosed representation to you for an answer.*

*From an examination of the Embargo Act, & the instructions thereon, I presume a Neutral vessel which puts into a port other than the one for which she is destined, is not obliged to there unlade, but may proceed to the port of her destination by giving Bond and complying with all the other provisions of the 23d & 24th sections of the Revenue Act. The District Attorney has been consulted on the subject, in consequence of some Neutral vessels bound to this port from the Havana which put into the Vineyard & were there detained by the Collector, under the Emargo Act...*

February 28, 1814, to George W. Campbell, Secretary of the Treasury:

*On the 5th Inst. the Master & Owners of the private armed Schooner Cossack, belonging to this port called on me & observed she had arrived at Castine on Penobscot River, in the District of Maine, with a Cargo of Coffee from Saint Domingo, destined for Boston, that she had put in there, it being the first port she could make, and wished to know whether she could proceed from thence to Boston. I informed them it was the opinion of the District Attorney, she could by giving Bonds agreeable to the 33d & 34th sections of the Revenue Laws, and that my impressions were the same, but as it was not perfectly clear in my mind, I had written the Comptroller on the subject under date of the 31st of January...*

April 2, 1814, George W. Campbell, Secretary of the Treasury:

*It was been represented to me that there is a most shameful traffic with the enemy in the Vineyard Sound. Boats on the appearance of a ship immediately push off laden with provisions, which are with impunity put on board her. The Collectors of Barnstable & New Bedford have conversed with me on the subject of a Revenue Cutter being fitted out to Cruise in the Sound, to prevent such treasonable practices, but I think such a vessel would not answer; because if she did not fail much faster than the vessels of the Enemy, she would be caught, and if she was becalmed the Barges would capture her...*

June 10, 1814, to General John Mason, Commissary General of Prisoners, Washington:



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

*There are great numbers of Seamen who every day call on me to know whether they have been exchanged, who are out of employ, and dare not ship on board our public vessels, Privateers or Merchantmen for fear if they are not exchanged, of the consequences.*

*If it is compatable you will do them a great favor by transmitting to me a List of the exchanged Officers & Seamen in the privateer & Merchant Service which I can hang up in the Office, or refer to when enquiries are made. Now it is impossible to know the fact, whether they are exchanged or not, & of course many fine Seamen are thus prevented from serving their Country....*

Nov. 1, 1814, to Alexander J. Dallas, Secretary of the Treasury:

*Pursuant to instructions from the Treasury Department under date September 21st 1812, the Treasury Notes have been received at this Office in payment for Bonds given for Duties, whenever they have been offered, which has been generally the case; and on payment of Debentures, issued in virtue of these Bonds, "Current Money" has been invariably claimed by & paid to those hold Debentures, agreeably to said instructions...*

Nov, 29, 1814, to Alexander J. Dallas, Secretary of the Treasure:

*On the 29th of August last information was given me that a Boat or Boats were on their way from Halifax laden with British Goods, and that an attempt would be made to land them at some place along the shores of an outer harbor, and thus get the property into our market without the payment of duties, and that such practice had for a long time existed without detection, to the prejudice of the public revenue. I immediately despatched the Revenue Cutter with instructions to her Commander to man his boat, and keep a look out at the places where they might probably attempt a landing. At about 8 o'clock on the same evening they discovered a boat of Schooner construction at Anchor, with a fair wind and tide for Boston, in a small creek about 9 miles from the Town, which they landed with all possibly despatch. On enquiring whither she was bound and what she had on board? The officer of the Revenue was answered "bound for Boston in Ballast" - he however made search, and finding a number of packages of English goods on board, ordered the Schooner alongside the Cutter, by whom she was immediately conveyed to the harbor, and the next morning reported to me.*

**Detailed Condition:**

Small quarto. Beautifully bound to style in rich full dark blue morocco, antique. Spine gilt, divided into six compartments, with red leather label, and repeated bird and fountain device in five of the compartments.





**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

**(War of 1812) [Boston Custom House Letter Book kept by the Henry A.S. Dearborn,  
Collector of Customs, 1812-1814]**

Gilt scroll tooling around outer perimeter of covers, with diagonal stripe tooling along board edges all-around. Hand-sewn headbands. Stamped in gilt on upper board: "H. A. S. Dearborn." Endpapers renewed with proper laid paper from the period. [10], 256 pages of laid paper containing neat manuscript text. First leaf of index possibly lacking (the index begins with the letter B). First leaf in the volume slightly dust soiled, with evidence of old scotch tape repairs, but tape no longer present), also minor paper loss to this first leaf in upper gutter corner. Otherwise the leaves are generally crisp and clean.