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The Chronicles of the
EAST INDIA COMPANY
trading to CHINA
1635-1834



INDIAMAN SALUTING AT FORT WILLIAM, 1736

The Chronicles of the
EAST INDIA COMPANY
trading to CHINA

1635-1834

By HOSEA BALLOU MORSE, LL.D.

*Author of The Currency of China, The Gilds of China
The Trade and Administration of China
The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*

VOL. V

Supplementary, 1742-74



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PREFATORY NOTE

IN the Preface to Vol. I of these Chronicles I had to lament the fact that, in the middle of the eighteenth century, the Canton records of the East India Company were incomplete, those for the years 1743 to 1753 being in a fragmentary condition, and those from 1754 to 1774 being entirely missing from the archives of the India Office. There were, however, some who held the belief that duplicate records—the Canton office copies—had been deposited in the Legation at Peking, although all precise knowledge of them had been lost in London; and by pertinacity and diligent search they were brought to light and transmitted to London. Through being stored in the dry atmosphere of Peking they had escaped the hot-house air of sixty-five summers in Canton, but were subjected to the grime of Mongolian dust through sixty-five Peking winters.

The affairs of the Company through the seasons to 1754 were managed by the supercargoes coming and returning in the ships, who sometimes formed independent Councils, one for each ship, sometimes were consolidated into two or more Councils, each managing two or more ships, and sometimes were combined into one Council while at Canton, the senior Chief being Chief of the combined Council, but the accounts and commissions of each ship being kept separate, and all the supercargoes at the end of each season returning to England in the ship which brought them out. This state of vacillating methods endured from 1742 to 1754; and for that period all that has come to us from Peking, the earliest of the volumes, is one volume of 372 pages, 18 × 12 inches, containing extracts from the diaries of the ships of thirteen years of such matters as were thought to be useful, as warning or as information, to the supercargoes who should come after. Such of these extracts as are thought to be useful, as warning or as information, to the student of the twentieth century will be found in chapters xciii and xciv.

For the season 1755 there were three Councils at Canton, each managing from two to four ships; one of these Councils, Mr. Pigou Chief, held over to 1756, being resident; Mr. Liell's Council held over from 1756 to 1757; one Council, Mr. Palmer's, managed all the Company's affairs in 1758, and from that time there was one Council for all the ships. Continuity was obtained

at first by three 'residents', who were not invariably the senior supercargoes; but by 1762 the permanent resident Council is fully established with Mr. Thomas Fitzhugh as Chief, continuing in that capacity until the close of the season 1767. The Second of Council, Mr. Henry Revell, then became Chief; and after that the supercargoes moved up the Council, on the departure of a Chief the Second succeeding to his place.

From 1742 to 1757 the records are all more or less fragmentary. Of the seventeen years from 1758 to 1774,

for two there are no records,

for two there are both Letter Book and Diary,

for seven there are Letter Books but no Diary, and

for six there are Diaries but no Letter Book.

I have done the best I could in piecing together the records of the years, but even those which are fragmentary I have found of exceeding interest; and I commit this volume to the tender mercies of the world, trusting that its contents may prove of equal interest to students of the economic history and the over-seas trade of the eighteenth century.

H. B. M.

CAMBERLEY, *Oct.* 1928.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFATORY NOTE	v
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	viii
ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA TO VOLS. I TO IV	ix
CONVENTIONAL EQUIVALENTS	x
XCIII. Sundry Embroilments, 1743-7	1
XCIV. Demand for Extraterritoriality, 1753-4	9
XCV. Monopoly of the Hong Merchants, 1755	21
Appendix AI. Limitation of the Major Operations of Trade to Hong Merchants	36
XCVI. One Council at Canton, 1756	45
XCVII. The Assault on Ningpo, 1755-6-7	49
XCVIII. Trade at Canton, 1757-8	64
XCIX. The Aftermath of Ningpo, 1759	68
C. The Association of Merchants, 1760	85
App. AK. Regulations for the Control of Trade at Canton	94
CI. Captain Skottowe's Mission, 1761	99
CII. The Co-hong well established, 1762-4	107
Trade Statistics, 1764	118
CIII. Measurement of H.M.S. <i>Argo</i> , 1765-7	123
CIV. Relations with Hong Merchants, 1768	133
CV. Dissolution of the Co-hong, 1769-70	144
CVI. The Organization of Truck, 1771	155
CVII. Delay in issuing Grand Chop, 1772	165
CVIII. The Case of Francis Scott, 1773	176
CIX. London Market overstocked with Tea, 1774	186
App. AL. List of Fleet under convoy of H.M.S. <i>Lion</i> , 1794	197
TABLE OF SHIPPING AT CANTON, 1743-74	198
INDEX	208

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

A ship of the Hon. East India Company firing a salute on arrival at Fort William *Frontispiece*
Engraved by G. Vandergueht after Lamber and Scott; published April 19, 1736.

The Engagement between the Hon. East India Company's ships *Suffolk*, *Houghton*, and *Godolphin* and two French Ships of War on the 9th day of March, 1757 *facing p.81*

Designed and painted by R. Paton, and engraved by P. C. Canot; published 1758.

[These three Company's ships were dispatched from Canton on Christmas Day, 1756.]

These two illustrations are given by courtesy of The Parker Gallery, 28 Berkeley Square, London, W. 1.

INDEX

- Ch. = China, Chinese
 Eng. = England, English
 E.I.C. = English East India Company
 incl. = including, included
- Admiral Pocock*: attacked at Turan, 126.
Affleck, Captain Philip, R.N. *See Argo*.
 Allowances (*see also Privilege*): to sup., 22, 114, 141.
 Amoy: trading at, 2.
Argo, H.M.S.: bringing silver, 123, 127; claim to measure, 128; claim acceded to, 129; alleged connexion with opium, 129.
 Arms: surrender demanded, 3, 30, 49, 51.
 Arnot, Thomas: surgeon to factory, 101.
 Assault. *See Homicide*.
 Association. *See Co-hong*.
 Audience of officials: granted, 3, 11, 17, 26, 48, 79, 80, 82, 105; demanded and refused, 5, 6, 8, 10, 77, 78.
- Barton, —: studying Chinese, 27.
 Benkulen: taken by French, 86, 87.
 Benyorsky, Baron M. A. A., Hungarian: ref., 164.
 Bevan, Thomas: interpreter, 27, 49, 76; sup., 107, 123, 130, 133, 144, 149, 165.
 Blake, John Bradby, sup.: ref., 130, 144, 149, 165; death, 176.
 Blount, Samuel, sup.: Chief of Council, 49, 62, 64, 85, 99; ref., 107, 110, 123.
 Bogue: ships kept outside, 79.
 Books, Ch.: sent, 118.
 Borrowing: by Ch. prohibited, 89, 95, 181; by E.I.C. at Macao, 108, 111, 115, 124; by ships' officers prohibited, 181.
 Bradshaw, James, sup.: ref., 144, 149, 165, 176.
 Brown, Charles: killed by French officer, 15.
 Browne, Henry, writer: salary, 165, 192.
 Bruce, Alexander, writer: ref., 165, 192.
 Burrow, John, sup.: of Council, 1, 65, 123.
- Canton: monopoly of, 54, 56, 60; monopoly secured by bribery, 56.
- merch. = merchant
 Port. = Portuguese
 ref. = referred to, reference to
 sup. = supercargo(es)
- Certificates: to captains and officers, 146, 177, 190; ratio to each, 190.
 Chains: linguists in, 90.
 Chaplain: requirement to carry, 69.
 Chetqua, Ch. merch.: affairs of, 136, 161.
 Chinaware, export, 19, 34, 70, 121, 124, 156, 170, 188, 191; for flooring, 87, 137, 147, 157, 158; in private trade, 113, 138, 147, 158, 188; detailed invoice, 34, 168.
 Chinese language: impediments to learning, 28, 76.
 Chop, Grand: threat to sail without, 1; issue delayed, 80, 170, 193, 194; recalled, 173.
 Chusan: anchorage for ships, 50, 53.
 Clements, Capt. John: charters his ship, 179, 186.
 Co-hong (Cong-hong): formed by Ch., 90, 93, 101, 103, 109; combine to raise prices, 109, 115, 126, 142, 152; alleged dissolution, 132, 153, 159, 181.
 Commission: of sup., 33, 71, 161.
 Commodore: of the Road, 73.
 Compradors: to be licensed, 90, 96.
 Corsar, John, private Eng.: warned to leave, 162, 172.
 Cotton piece-goods: import, 159.
 Cotton, raw: import, 134, 139, 145, 155, 166, 170, 176, 189, 191.
 Council: one over all ships, v. 66, 109, 169.
 Council, Chief of: F. Pigou, v, 21, 29, 45; T. Liell, v, 16, 65; H. Palmer, v, 21, 29, 46, 65, 99; T. Fitzhugh, vi, 21, 49, 68, 107, 110, 123, 130; H. Revell, vi, 85, 133, 144; R. Martyn, 1; L. Hide, 2; J. Misenor, 4, 13, 16, 21, 29; S. Harrison, 13, 16, 21, 25, 49; T. Thompson, 16, 65; E. Phipps, 45, 176, 186; T. Shore, 45; S. Blount, 49, 62, 64, 85, 99; M. Walker, 65, 68; T. Lockwood, 68, 85, 99; S. Devisme, 149; A. Hume, 149, 155, 165, 176.
 Cowdie, Walter, private Eng.: warned to leave, 162.
 Crichton, John, private Eng.: ref., 148; warned to leave, 162, 172, 180.

- Crommelin, Charles, private Eng.: warned to leave, 191.
- Cuddalore*: surveying schooner, 75; tender to *Argo*, 127, 129.
- Cuming, George, writer: salary, 165, 192.
- Curiosities: means of extortion, 10, 12, 13, 36, 71, 79, 126, 154; trade forbidden to shopkeepers, 30; carriage forbidden to captains, 71.
- Dallas, William, private Eng.: warned to leave, 162.
- Dalrymple, A.: master of *Cuddalore*, 75.
- Dalrymple, William, private Eng.: warned to leave, 162, 180, 191.
- Danes Island: Eng. sailors restricted to, 19.
- Davis, Sir John: authority for Francis Scott case, 182.
- Demurrage of ship: 179, 180.
- Devisme (De Visme), Stephen, sup.: ref., 45, 68, 110, 123, 130, 133, 144; Chief of Council, 149; death, 149.
- Du Cane, George, writer: ref., 176.
- Dutch Company: ref., 109.
- Duty: illegal, 1, 105; payment deferred, 9, 38; heavier at Ningpo, 54; amount of, 59, 60; Security Merchant responsible for, 10, 38, 77.
- Dyce, —, private Eng.: warned to leave, 162.
- Eastern Passage. See Pitt's Passage.
- Egyptian writing: affinity with Ch., 117.
- Exchange: first bill of, 102; foreign bills not to be bought, 151, 181.
- Exchange, rate of: dollar to sterling, 73, 102, 111, 124, 145, 157, 161, 167; dollar to pagoda, 111, 124, 145, 149, 156; dollar to Arcot rupee, 111; tael to Bombay rupee, 176, 189; dollar to current rupee, 177, 190; between Indian currencies, 140.
- Extortion: by officials, 1, 8, 9, 50, 56, 79, 88, 105, 192; prohibited, 77; concealed, 82.
- Extraterritoriality. See Jurisdiction.
- Factory: freedom of access, 3; E.I.C. rent, 22, 48, 73, 87, 172; order to be kept in, 29, 40, 95; conditions of life in, 186.
- Fire: endangering factory, 173.
- Fitzhugh, Thomas, sup.: Chief of Council, vi, 21, 49, 68, 107, 110, 123, 130.
- Flint, James: interpreter, 1, 6, 9; sup. on Council, 21, 25, 49, 62, 64, 65, 68; on mission to north, 68, 75, 80; punishment, 80, 82, 83, 88, 99, 105, 107.
- Flints: import, 139, 155, 170, 191.
- Fonseca, Sr. B. N. C. de: passenger, 115.
- Foreigners' trade: (1764) 120; (1768) 138; (1769) 147; (1771) 155, 164; (1772) 170; (1774) 191.
- Free trade: demand for, 2, 58.
- Freight: ship let to, 179, 190.
- Freight-free: inducement to send goods, 145, 166.
- French Company: ref., 109.
- French killed Eng. sailor: 15.
- Friction: between Eng. and French, 173.
- Garland, Nathaniel, sup.: ref., 66, 99, 107, 110, 123.
- Gate, Petition: sup. go to, 11.
- Gold: cost, 47, 196; supply, 140, 149.
- Goodere, John, sup.: ref., 21.
- Gordon, Dr. —: surgeon to factory, 161.
- Grievances: complaint of, 5, 9, 105.
- Hadley, Henry, sup.: at Amoy, 2; at Canton, 4.
- Haeslingfield*: illegal duty on, 1.
- Hall, —, sup.: writes warning letter, 2.
- Hallerstien, Father: as intermediary, 10.
- Hamson, William, private Eng.: warned to leave, 191.
- Hardwick*: tries to trade at Amoy, 2.
- Harrington, Joseph, sup.: ref., 45, 65, 68, 86.
- Harrison, John, writer: salary, 165, 192.
- Harrison, Robert John, sup.: ref., 21, 65, 85, 107.
- Harrison, Samuel, sup.: Chief of Council, 13, 16, 21, 25, 49.
- Harrison, William, sup.: ref., 110, 130, 133, 144, 149, 165, 176, 186.
- Hastings, Warren (Bengal Council): ref., 109, 175, 177, 190.
- Hickey, William: passenger, 148.
- Hide, Lascoe, sup.: at Amoy, 2.
- High Commissioner: brings Mr. Flint back, 75, 81, 105.
- Homicide, wounding, assault: Bank-soll Id., 14; *Lord Anson*, 15; *Admiral Pocock* (Turán), 126; *Lord Camden*, 174; Francis Scott, 182.
- Hongage: paid to merch., 51, 61, 71.
- Hornor, Mann, sup.: ref., 65, 85, 107, 110, 130; death, 133.

- Hull, John, sup.: ref., 45.
 Hume, Alexander, sup.: ref. 21, 65, 68, 86, 107, 110; Chief of Council, 149, 155, 165, 176.
 Hutton, Thomas: surgeon to factory, 165.
- Illegal duty. *See* Extortion.
 Impersonation: suspected, 18.
 Impressment: of ships and men, 68, 73.
 Insulting proclamation: 9.
 Interpreter: J. Flint as, 1, 6, 9, 75; T. Bevan as, 27, 49, 76; Ch., inefficiency of, 3, 75, 77; Ch. punished, 4, 10, 76; beheaded, 83, 105.
 Investment: from Canton, 33.
- Jackson, Capt. Robert, private Eng.: warned to leave, 102; rewarded, 148.
 Jurisdiction: waived by Ch., 17; claimed by Ch., 182.
- King's accession: cost of entertainment, 102.
 Kinnersley, Francis, sup.: ref., 21, 45, 68, 85; death, 99.
 Kintlege: landing of, 8; replaced by other ballast, 71.
- Laird, Dr. John, private Eng.: warned to leave, 172.
 Lance, David, writer: salary, 192.
 Lane, Henry, writer: salary, 192.
 Lead: import, 33, 59, 69, 100, 120, 124, 134, 139, 155, 170, 191.
 Leslie, Abraham, private Eng.: warned to leave, 180.
 Letters: not to be sent inland, 90, 96.
 Liell, Thomas, sup.: Chief of Council, v, 16, 65.
 Life for life: maxim, 185.
 Linguist: none obtainable at Amoy, 2; freedom of choice, 3; responsibility of, 29, 39, 90; to be licensed, 90, 96; in chains, 90; payment to, 101.
 Lion, H.M.S.: ships under convoy of (1793), 197.
 Lockhart, Thomas, private Eng.: 72.
 Lockwood, Thomas, sup.: ref., 21, 45, 64, 65; Chief of Council, 68, 85, 99.
 Lord Anson: homicide, 15.
 Lord Camden: homicide, 174.
 Lou Ping-chou, Ch. scribe: beheaded, 83, 84, 105.
- Macao: trading to Ningpo prohibited, 62; temporary residence between seasons, 77, 89, 90, 94, 141, 172, 181; opium market, 129; authorities surrender Francis Scott, 182; status of Port. authorities, 184.
 Mackenzie, William, sup.: ref., 65, 99, 110, 123.
 Mackett, Robert, sup.: ref., 45, 65.
 McClintock, John: passenger, 148.
 Mandeville, George, sup.: ref., 21, 65, 99; death, 110.
 Martyn, Richard, sup.: Chief of Council, 1.
 Measurage: demand to have settled, 3; amount, 6, 22, 46, 50, 59, 61, 114; paid by Security Merch., 22; remitted, 115.
 Medical attention: 101.
 Merchants, Hong (*see also* Security): obstruction by, 5.
 Misenor, John, sup.: Chief of Council, 4, 13, 16, 21, 29.
 Monopoly: of Co-hong established, 31, 36, 57; of Canton, 54, 56, 60.
 Monsoon: affecting movement of ships, 2, 55, 65.
 Morse, Nicholas: provides silver, 123.
 Morton, Dr. Charles: Sec. of Royal Society, 117.
- Nankeen cloth; export, 19, 101, 121, 124, 138, 146, 168.
 Ningpo: trading at, 25, 48, 49; duties heavier than at Canton, 54, 61; trading prohibited, 60, 62, 67, 80, 88; loss of revenue on trade at, 60.
- Obstruction. *See* Merchants, Officials.
 Officials: extortion by, *see* Extortion; direct access to, demanded, *see* Audience; obstruction by, 3.
 Opium: alleged connexion of *Argo* with, 129; sold at Macao, 129; contraband, 154, 164.
 Order to be kept: in factories, 29, 40, 95; over crews, 40, 90, 97.
 Overland route: via Aleppo, 109.
- Palmer, Henry, sup.: Chief of Council, v, 21, 29, 46, 65, 99.
 Passengers: by E.I.C. ship, 115, 148.
 Pay de Casa: intermediary, 1.
 Peisley, Richard, sup.: ref., 21.
 Petition Gate. *See* Gate.
 Philippines: Eng. occupation, 107, 110, 126.
 Phipps, Edward, sup.: Chief of Council, 45, 176, 186; of Council, 144, 149, 165.
 Pigou, Charles Edward, writer: salary, 165, 192.
 Pigou, Frederick, sup.: Chief of Council, v, 21, 29, 45.

- Pigon, William Henry, sup.: ref., 155, 165, 176, 186.
- Pitt*, H. C. ship: ref., 69, 71, 73.
- Pitt's Passage: route, 74, 85, 101, 123, 127, 163.
- Present of 1,950 taels: abatement sought, 8, 58, 79, 81, 105.
- Price current: at Canton (1764), 118; (1774) 194.
- Prices: fixed by Co-hong, 109, 115.
- Private Eng.: warned to leave, 102, 108, 162, 172, 191.
- Private trade: ref., 47, 70, 113, 138, 169, 188.
- Privilege to sup.: amount, 2, 141.
- Privileges: demanded, 3, 5, 26.
- Puan Khequa, Ch. merch.: ref., 132, 135, 137, 142, 150, 159, 165, 168, 183, 192.
- Punishment: inflicted on linguist, 4, 90; on interpreter, 10, 76, 83, 105.
- Raper, Matthew, Jr., sup.: ref., 130, 144, 149, 165, 176, 186.
- Recreation: facilities for, demanded, 5.
- Regulations: to control sup., 89, 94; not usually regarded, 116, 126, 142.
- Respondentia: loan at, 2, 73, 111, 115, 149.
- Responsibilities: defined, 29, 40, 43, 89, 141, 154.
- Revell, Henry, sup.: Chief of Council, vi, 85, 133, 144; ref., 65, 107, 130.
- Roebuck, Abraham, writer: salary, 165, 192.
- Rogers, George, sup.: ref., 165, 176, 186.
- Rous, William, sup.: ref., 99, 107, 110, 123, 130, 133, 144, 155, 165.
- Royal George*: E.I.C. own ship, 104.
- Sailors: impressment of, 73; desertion, 154.
- Samshew: sale of, 79.
- Sandys, Thomas, sup.: ref., 66, 99.
- Scott, Francis: case of, 182.
- Scurvy: effects of, 133, 147, 163, 170, 180.
- Search: impeded, 4, 5; abuse of, 5.
- Searle, John, sup.: of Council, 1, 45, 99, 123, 133.
- Security Merchant: ref., 1, 4, 9, 13; complaint of practice, 9, 10, 77, 79, 105; responsible for duties, 10, 38, 77, 105; difficulty of procuring, 10, 21, 79; monopoly granted to, 29, 36, 38, 92; responsible for wrongdoing, 89, 95, 154; extortion practised on, 192.
- Servants: freedom of choice, 3; native, not to be employed, 90, 96.
- Ships: size of, 170.
- Shooting on shore: prohibited, 46.
- Shopkeepers: restriction on trade, 29, 30, 39, 41, 42, 43.
- Shore, Thomas, sup.: Chief of Council, 45.
- Silk, raw: quantity, 19, 24, 32, 47, 69, 108, 121, 124, 131, 137, 156, 160, 165, 168, 170, 186, 188, 191; price, 19, 24, 27, 32, 47, 60, 64, 69, 108, 124, 130, 137, 150, 160, 178, 188, 189; trade forbidden to shopkeepers, 30; export prohibited, 87, 100, 108; size of bale, 188.
- Silk, woven: export, 19, 32, 70, 121, 131, 137, 156, 170, 191; price, 20.
- Silver: import, 33, 59, 69, 86, 100, 107, 111, 123, 124, 130, 134, 138, 139, 144, 155, 157, 166, 170, 191; fineness of, 131, 139, 191; excuses instead of, 144, 156, 166; unobtainable in Madras, 149.
- Skottowe, Capt. Nicholas: mission from E.I.C., 104.
- Smith, George, private Eng.: ref., 72, 115, 148, 179; warned to leave, 102, 108, 161, 172, 180, 191.
- Smith, Thomas, sup.: ref., 66, 99, 107, 110, 123, 130.
- Soldiers: at Whampoa, 90, 97.
- Spanish: ships of war, 2.
- Spencer, John, private Eng.: warned to leave, 102.
- Standards: claim to have fixed, 3, 50, 52, 57.
- Stock: of Council, 68, 86, 100, 110, 112, 123, 130, 134, 146, 157, 165, 167, 186, 190.
- Stoppage of trade: 16, 128.
- Success, snow: tender to *Pitt*, 74; takes Mr. Flint north, 75.
- Sugar: shipment of, 104.
- Sulu: trade from, 114.
- Supercargoes: relations with Directors, 45, 85, 141; required to leave Canton at close of season, 76, 89, 90, 94, 141, 172, 181; control by Ch., 89; not to send letters inland, 90, 96.
- Surgeon: to factory, 101, 161, 165.
- Sy Anqua, Ch. merch.: affairs of, 181, 192.
- Tea: quantity shipped, 19, 32, 69, 100, 114, 121, 124, 131, 136, 138, 146, 150, 152, 156, 159, 168, 170, 188; price, 19, 21, 24, 32, 47, 60, 69, 72, 87, 100, 108, 112, 125, 130, 136, 147, 250, 152, 159, 168, 179, 188;

- size of chest, 24, 87, 136, 188;
rubbish tea, 24; trade forbidden to
shopkeepers, 30; duty increased,
87; in private trade, 113, 125, 138,
188; market overstocked, 177, 186;
contracts reduced, 187.
- Teachers, Ch.: punished, 28.
- Teowqua, Ch. merch.: affairs of, 181.
- Texia, Ch. merch.: Security, 1.
- Thomas, Thomas, sup.: ref., 68, 123,
133.
- Thompson, Thomas, sup.: Chief of
Council, 16, 65.
- Tin: import, 139, 155, 170.
- Torin, Benjamin, sup.: ref., 49, 68,
107, 130, 133, 144, 149.
- Torriano, Hillary, sup.: ref., 67, 68,
99, 107, 133, 144.
- Touch: of silver, 131, 139; of gold,
140, 149, 196.
- Translations: difficulty in obtaining,
28.
- Translator. *See* Interpreter.
- Truck: necessary to trade, 24, 72, 112,
135, 137, 142, 151, 158, 167, 179,
182, 188.
- Tutenague: shipped as ballast, 71,
113, 138; as cargo, 104, 138, 156,
170.
- Vansittart, Henry (Bengal Council):
ref., 109.
- Venus: observation of Transit, 143,
164.
- Viceroy (Tsongtock): action taken by,
4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 15, 53, 57, 60, 78, 80,
92, 105, 128, 172, 174, 183; render-
ing of title, 7 ♀.
- Walker, Mordecai, sup.: ref., 65, 68.
- Walton, John, sup.: ref. 123, 133, 155.
- War: preparedness for, 31, 72, 101,
164; impressment of ships and men,
68, 73; action of French, 87, 109;
armistice, 109.
- Wayqua, Ch. merch.: affairs of, 161,
172.
- White, —, sup.: ref., 99.
- Woolens: quantity, 23, 32, 33, 47, 59,
100, 111, 120, 124, 134, 155, 166,
170, 189; price, 32, 60, 69, 100, 108,
112, 135, 152, 166, 189; assortment
by colours, 23, 47; import by
foreigners, 23; duty on, 59; loss on
sale, 135, 159, 166; illicit importa-
tion, 148, 159.
- Wood, Francis, Jun., sup.: ref., 65,
68, 85, 86, 99, 133, 144, 149, 155,
165, 176, 186.
- Wood, Richard, sup.: ref., 45, 68, 86.
- Wounding. *See* Homicide.
- Wreck: *Success*, 75; *Muxadabad*, 115;
Dutch Rynsburg, 170.
- Writers: salary, 165, 192.
- Yellow fabrics: import and export
prohibited, 70.