

LESSON TITLE: PATRIOT OR PIRATE?

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DATE: May 2011

COURSE/GRADE: Social Studies, Grade 4

UNIT: American History

TIME NEEDED: One 45-minute class period

LESSON OVERVIEW:

Students will learn about the role of privateers in the War of 1812 by using primary sources to follow the activities of the clipper ship *Chasseur* during the early months of 1814. They will also learn why the *Chasseur* was later to be known as “The Pride of Baltimore”.

OUTCOMES: At the end of this lesson, students will be able to tell why privateers were important to the United States during the War of 1812.

OBJECTIVES:

Focus Question for the Lesson: What do the activities of the Baltimore clipper ship *Chasseur* tell us about privateers and their role in the War of 1812?

Historical Thinking Skill Targeted: Historical Analysis and Interpretation

Maryland State Curriculum Content Objectives:

1.C.2.b. Analyze how government needs to provide more protections and order during times of crisis, such as natural disasters and threats to national security

5.C.2.a. Describe Maryland’s role in the War of 1812

Maryland State Curriculum Skills and Processes Objectives:

6.F.1. Interpret information from primary and secondary sources

Common Core State Standards for Literacy: Reading, Informational Text (Grade 4):

RI.4.2. Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

RI.4.3. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

RI.4.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 4 topic or subject area*.

RI.4.10. By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Lesson: Patriot or Pirate?

From “Long May It Wave: Fort McHenry and the War of 1812,” A National Curriculum by the Friends of Fort McHenry in collaboration with Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail.

Generously funded by the National Park Service, Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network.

MATERIALS:

Student Resource Sheet 1 – The *Chasseur*

Student Worksheet 1 – Pirate . . . or Privateer?

Student Resource Sheet 2 – Extract from the Journal of the Private Armed Schooner *Chasseur*

Extension Student Resource Sheet 1 – Proclamation Issued by Thomas Student Boyle

PRIMARY SOURCES:

Privateer Logs: 1812-1815, Extract from the Journal of the Private Armed Schooner *Chasseur*, January 19, 1814 to April 21, 1814. Transcribed from June 2, 1814 edition of the Baltimore American. Unknown transcriber. N.d. Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore.

“By Thomas Boyle, Esq., Commander of the private armed brig *Chasseur*, &c, &c.” The Shamrock (New York), November 5, 1814.

SELECTED VOCABULARY:

privateer

letter of marque and reprisal

merchant fleet

pirate

blockade

chase (in the context of the *Chasseur* extract)

PROCEDURE:

1) Motivation

Write the word *pirate* on the board. Ask students to define the term. Allow for some discussion. Have students read Student Resource 1 (clear vocabulary words listed above) and then have them complete Student Worksheet 1. Discuss the responses from Student Worksheet 1. Revisit the term *pirate* and ask the students if *privateers* were *pirates*. Allow further discussion if there are students who still do not understand the difference between *pirates* and *privateers*.

2) Guided Practice

- Write these 3 headings on the board or on chart paper.

| <u>Escaped</u> | <u>Attacked/Captured</u> | <u>Cargo Seized</u> |
|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| | | |

- Electronically display or give the students hard copies of the “Extract of the Private Armed Schooner *Chasseur*”. Hard copies would be helpful for students who need to manipulate instructional materials.

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Beginning with January 19th, read the journal entry line by line, clarifying unfamiliar or nautical terms (U.S. frigate Adams, three sail, etc.). Model “think aloud” strategies to help the students understand what happened to the *Chasseur* as described by this entry.

- After reading the January 19th entry, tell the students that two things could have happened: the *Chasseur* could have escaped an attack by an enemy ship or the *Chasseur* could have attacked and captured a merchant ship. If it captured a merchant ship, cargo would have been seized. Based on what happened in the entry (for January 19th the *Chasseur* eluded enemy ships), record the date and the action in the appropriate column on the chart. List any captured cargo in column three. If necessary, read another journal entry and repeat the activity. Explain that throughout these entries, a “chase” is the ship that the *Chasseur* is chasing after.

Note: The journal entries have been transcribed in “student friendly” language. Point out to the students that the original journal entry has misspelled words, incorrect grammar and other errors. However, the purpose of the activity is to gather information from real life accounts.

3) Independent Practice

- Assign pairs of students one or more of the journal entries. (*Select the most appropriate journal entries for the ability level of your students. Many of the entries contain nautical terms that could be problematic for some students. Some of the entries have been “translated” into age appropriate language for students who need additional support.)
- Have students read their assigned entry (or entries) and determine if the *Chasseur* escaped attack or captured an enemy ship and identify any cargo that was taken.
- Once the students have completed the activity for their assigned entry (or entries), record all findings on the chart. Allow time for discussion.

4) Assessment

Students will prepare a newspaper article reporting on the activities of the schooner *Chasseur* using the template provided for this lesson. The article should include a definition of “privateer,” briefly describe the role of privateers in the War of 1812, and reflect the various encounters and the success or failure of the *Chasseur* in completing her voyage. Students with writing difficulties may represent their findings in pictorial form.

5) Closure Have students read their articles and display the articles and pictures on a bulletin board.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS:

Enlarge the print on the Primary Source “Journal” for students with visual difficulties.



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LESSON EXTENSIONS:

In this lesson, students learned that one of the actions of the *Chasseur* was to avoid blockades by British ships so that she could reach various ports. Thomas Boyle, commander of the *Chasseur*, issued his own proclamation stating that he was declaring a blockade on Great Britain. Have students read the primary source “Proclamation” in order to answer the following questions.

1. Why did Boyle say that he was declaring a blockade?
2. In his proclamation, Boyle mentioned all of the land and waters bodies that were to be included in the blockade. Name those bodies.
3. Did Boyle expect the friends of the United States to honor the blockade? Write the sentence from the “Proclamation” that answers that question.
4. Do you think Boyle was successful in his attempt to blockade the British Isles?
(accept any reasonable answer)

Note: Boyle captured or sank 18 British ships during his “blockade” of the British coast. His proclamation forced the British to assign warships to protect merchant vessels, effectively taking them out of the war effort. (Information gathered from “Privateers from the Chesapeake,” a publication of the Pride of Baltimore, Inc. 2001.)



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PIRATE . . . OR PRIVATEER?

Write each phrase in the Venn Diagram depending on whether it describes a pirate, a privateer, or both.

Attacked Ships for Personal Gain

Attacked Ships to Help Fight a War

Attacked ANY Ship

Attacked Only ENEMY Ships

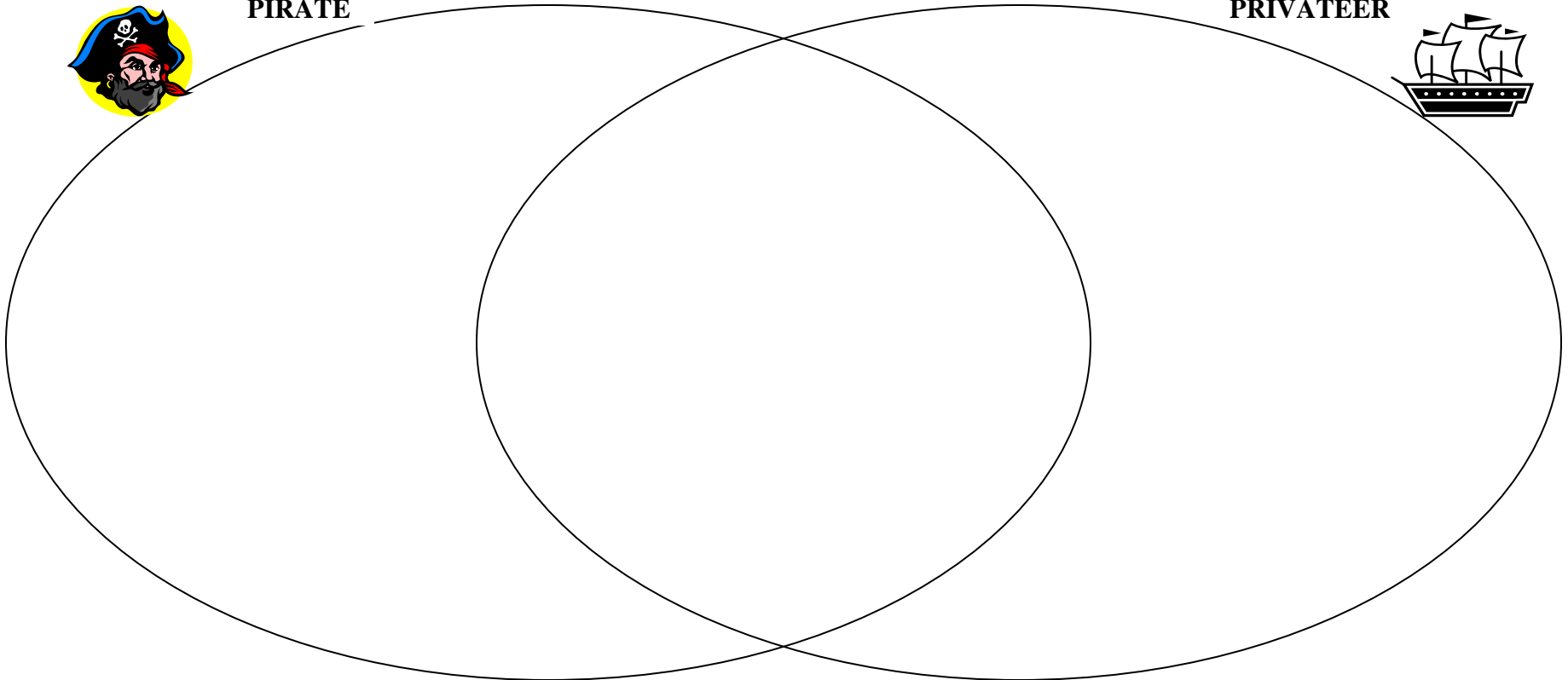
Had Permission from the Government to Raid Enemy Ships

Ships Owned by Private Individuals

PIRATE



PRIVATEER



What is a Privateer?

Ships that are used to attack other ships, take their cargoes, and sink them are usually called pirate ships. Usually this activity is illegal, but sometimes governments in the past have wanted to use ships for this purpose during times of war. Ships that were owned and sailed by private citizens and given permission by their government to take the cargo from and sink enemy merchant ships were called privateers. Privateers had to have a special license (or permission from the government) called “letters of marque and reprisal”.

War of 1812

Privateers had been used by governments for many years before 1812. However, with the outbreak of the War of 1812, Baltimore merchants began seeking letters of marque and reprisal in order to attack British merchant shipping for both national pride and personal gain (the owner and crew of the privateer ship could keep the cargo that was taken from an enemy merchant ship). It is thought that over 500 privateers were in use during the War of 1812.

The Chasseur

The most famous of all the War of 1812 privateers was Captain Thomas Boyle of Fells Point. Boyle commanded the schooner ship Chasseur. While in command of Chasseur, Boyle sailed to the shores of Great Britain and announced a one-ship blockade of the British coasts in response to the British navy’s blockade of the United States coast. Boyle was so successful that the proud citizens of Baltimore began calling Chasseur “The Pride of Baltimore.”

Adapted from the Maryland Online Encyclopedia

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Student Resource Sheet 2 – Extract from the Journal of the Private Armed Schooner *Chasseur*

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January 22nd

At half past 11 A.M. latitude 31, 48. Longitude 70, 20 discovered a sail from mast head, distant about 15 miles; made all sail in chase, it blowing fresh and squally. At 5 P.M. the chase hoisted the Emergency ensign . . . and continued under a press of sail in chase, coming up very fast, the chase at this time being distant about two and a half miles. At half past 9, lost sight of her in a squall, when about to fire a chase gun.

Feb. 1st.

Latitude 25, 29, Longitude 57, 40. Captured the British ship *Galletea*, from Liverpool to Pensacola, cargo hardware, how glass, white lead and claret wine; ordered her in.

February 11th

Latitude 12, 46, Longitude 57, 7, at half past 5 P.M. discovered a sail from the mast head, made sail in chase, at 7 wore ship and shortened sail to keep the chase in sight, made her out to be a large ship. At 8, jibed ship and stood from the chase, a few minutes after we fired a gun over us. Brailed our foresail up, backed our maintopsail and returned the fire; during the night she kept up an incessant firing; we occasionally returned it. In the morning, being about one and a half miles to windward, made her out to be a frigate. At half past 7 wore ship and stood of N. by W. The chase immediately tacked and stood after us, under a crowd of sail.

February 12th

At half past 1 p.m. saw 3 sail from mast head, bearing n. e. immediately in light sails and hauled by the wind in chase, soon made them out to be three ships standing to the westward. At half past 2 the headmost ship fired a gun, hoisted her English ensign with the private signals, which was immediately answered by the other frigate in chase. We now discovered the headmost ship to be a frigate, the other two merchantmen, made all sail off, the two frigates under a press of sail in chase, the former in our wake, the latter to windward about 3 and a half miles, soon found we had the advantage in sailing. At 10. p.m. lost sight of the frigates.

February 13th

Latitude 12, 49, Longitude 57, 35, captured, after a chase of 5 hours, the British schooner Miranda, from Cork to Guadalope, laden with dry goods, flour, butter, soap, beef, etc; took out the dry goods and some other articles necessary for ship's use, and burnt the balance.

February 14th

Latitude 12, Longitude 57, 55 at 6 A.M. discovered a sail to the SE made all sail in chase. At 8, when within one mile and a half, hauled our wind, as we made her out to be a frigate, she immediately made sail in chase of us, but we soon lost sight of her.

February 18th

Latitude 10, Longitude 58, 17, captured the British sloop Martha, from Barbadoes to Demerara, laden with government stores; took out what suited our convenience, destroyed the balance and sent the sloop off as a cartel, sending her 25 prisoners upon parole.

February 19th

Captured the British government schooner Harriet Elizabeth, laden with coffee, etc. From Demerara to Barbadoes, ordered in. Island of Montserrat bearing e. n. e. distance 8 leagues. Captured the American schooner Ann Maria of Boston; she had been to Bermuda and sold a cargo of flour; had been captured by HBM brig Elipse, on her passage to St. Barts; took out the prize crew, consisting of 1 midshipman and 5 men, and burnt her.

February 24th

Nevis bearing NNW, distance 6 leagues discovered several sail standing in different directions. Made on out to be a ship standing to the westward; gave chase. At 2 P.M. made the chase out to be a frigate when within one and a half miles of her; tacked ship and stood to the southward, the chase immediately bore after us under a press of sail. At half past 5 the chase hauled her wind to the s and e of seeing a brig come out from under the land of Montserrat, which we perceived her to bring to.

February 26

West end of St. Croix bore nnw 6 leagues. Boarded the Swedish schooner Legina, Capt. James Leveric from Aux Cayes for St. Barts, who informed that he had been boarded 4 days before, off the Mona, by the U. S. frigate Constitution; that she had taken and destroyed several vessels.

March 2nd.

Arrived at Cape Henry, Hayti, where we went for the purpose of watering. Paroled 16 prisoners.

March 9th

Sailed From C. Henry in col with the P. A. Kemp, Capt. Jacobs, of Baltimore. At 4 P.M. made a sail from our mast head; made a signal to the K and both gave chase. At 5 perceived the chase to be a frigate standing for us; we then tacked. At 6 we had the frigate in our wake; at 8 lost sight of the frigate and K, being both 3 or 4 miles to leeward and astern of us.

March 10th

Grange bearing s w by s distant 30 miles. At daylight found ourselves in the midst of nine sail. Immediately tacked ship to get the wind of them. At 6 tacked again and made sail after them, made them out to be a aze frigate, a brig and 6 merchantmen, supposing a chase would result in a loss of time, at 6 hauled our wind and stood to the N and E

March 11th

Grange bearing s w half w. at 6 a m made two sail from our mast head; gave chase, at 9 hove out a signal which was answered and proved to be the K, with a schooner her prize, formerly the Eldridge Gerry. At half past meridian, spoke the K.

March 13th

Latitude 20, Longitude , captured the American schooner William of Bristol, R. I. form Martinique to Havana took out a quantity of cash in gold, and burnt her.

March 19th

Latitude 2, 8, Longitude 61, 45, boarded the Spanish brig Salvador, from St. Johns, Porto Rico, to Vigo, who informed us, that the Comet, Captain Boyle, sailed from St. Johns about the 26th February . At 4 P.M. parted company with the Kemp.

March 23rd

Latitude 28, 22. Longitude 53, 55, captured the British schooner Lark from Halifax to Barbadoes, ordered in.

April 8th

Off Madeira, Funchall in sight, captured the British brig Britannia from Teneriffe to London, a frigate at the same time in chase to windward, hull up. The frigate continued in chase of us 5 hours, when we lost sight of her, leaving the brig sufficient time to get off.

April 18th

Latitude 35, 43 Longitude 1, 30, captured the British ship London Packer, mounting 19 guns, and schooner Melpomene, mounting 6 guns, in company, from Gibraltar to Brazil with a cargoes of wine, brandy and corks. They at first indicated by their maneuvers a disposition to resist, but surrendered without firing a shot.

April 21st

Cape St. Mary's bearing NE. distant 18 miles, captured the Maltese poladre rigged ship Joanna from Constantinople, to Lisbon, mounting 6 guns, with a cargo of wheat and barely, supposed to be worth 80,000 dollars; scuttled her and kept her boats in tow until morning. At 8 A.M. the town of Lago bearing n. n. e. distant 3 miles, gave them up to the prisoners. 40 in number, and permitted them to proceed. Came into Sandy Hook on Sat. night and passed a aze under the three topsails. The C has been chased during her cruise, ten different times, by British ships of war all of which she outsailed with ease. Sloop Polly Allen, 2 days from N. haven. Sloop Susan, Miles, 3 hours from N. haven. Sloop Hornet, Grimes, 24 hours from N. H.

*By Thomas Boyle, Esq., Commander of the
private armed brig Chasseur, &c. &c.*

PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS, it has become customary with the Admirals of Great Britain, commanding a small force on the coast of the United States, particularly with Sir John Beresford Warren, and Sir Alexander Cochrane, to declare all the coast of the said U. States, in a state of strict and rigorous blockade, without possessing the power to justify such a declaration, or stationing an adequate force to maintain said blockade:

I do, therefore, by virtue of the power and authority in me vested, (possessing sufficient force) declare all the ports, harbours, bays, creeks, rivers, inlets, outlets, islands, and sea coast of the United Kingdom of G. Britain and Ireland, to a strict and rigorous Blockade. I do further declare, that I consider the force under my command, adequate to maintain strictly rigorously and effectually the said Blockade. And I do hereby require the respective officers, whether captains, commanders, or commanding officers under my command, employed, or to be employed on the coast of England, Ireland, and Scotland, to pay strict attention to the execution of this my Proclamation. And I do hereby caution and forbid the ships and vessels of all and every nation in amity and peace with the United States from entering or attempting to enter, or from coming or attempting to come out of any of the said ports, harbours, bays, creeks, rivers, inlets, outlets, islands, or sea coast, under any pretence whatsoever. And that no person may plead ignorance of this my proclamation I have ordered the same to be made public in England.

Given under my hand on board the Chasseur,
day and date as above.

THOS. BOYLE.

By command of the commanding officer.
J. J. STOUSBURY, Sec'y.

The Shamrock, New York, November 5, 1814

“By Thomas Boyle, Esq., Commander of the private armed brig Chasseur, &c. &c.” The Shamrock (New York), November 5, 1814.

Transcription of Proclamation by Thomas Boyle

PROCLAMATION

Whereas, It has become customary with the admirals of Great Britain, commanding small forces on the coast of the United States, particularly with Sir John Borlaise Warren and Sir Alexander Cochrane, to declare all the coast of the said United States in a state of strict and rigorous blockade without possessing the power to justify such a declaration or stationing an adequate force to maintain said blockade;

I do therefore, by virtue of the power and authority in me vested (possessing sufficient force), declare all the ports, harbors, bays, creeks, rivers, inlets, outlets, islands, and seacoast of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in a state of strict and rigorous blockade. And I do further declare that I consider the force under my command adequate to maintain strictly, rigorously, and effectually the said blockade. And I do hereby require the respective officers, whether captains, commanders, or commanding officers, under my command, employed or to be employed, on the coasts of England, Ireland, and Scotland, to pay strict attention to the execution of this my proclamation. And I do hereby caution and forbid the ships and vessels of all and every nation in amity and peace with the United States from entering or attempting to enter, or from coming or attempting to come out of, any of the said ports, harbors, bays, creeks, rivers, inlets, outlets, islands, or seacoast under any pretense whatsoever. And that no person may plead ignorance of this, my proclamation, I have ordered the same to be made public in England.

Given under my hand on board the Chasseur.

THOMAS BOYLE

By command of the commanding officer.

J. J. STANBURY, Secretary.