

Late U. S. S. Chesapeake Hampton Roads -  
June 23<sup>d</sup> 1807 -

The undersigned officers of the late U. S. Ship Chesapeake, feeling deeply sensible, of the disgrace which must be attached, to the late ~~and~~ (in their Opinion) premature Surrender of the U. S. Ship Chesapeake, of 40 Guns to the English Ship of War, Leopard, of 50 Guns, without their previous Knowledge or Consent, & desirous of proving to their Country, & the world, that it was the wish of all the undersigned to have rendered themselves worthy of the Flag under which they had the honour, to serve by a determined resistance, to an unjust demand do request the Hon<sup>ble</sup> the Secretary of the Navy, to order a Court of Enquiry, into their Conduct, - At the same time, they are compelled by imperious ~~imperial~~ Duty, the honour of their Flag, the honour of their Countrymen, & all that is Dear, to themselves, to request, that an Order, may be issued for the arrest of Commodore James - Bannor, on the Charges herewith Exhibited, which the undersigned pledge themselves to prove true,

1<sup>st</sup> On the Probability of an engagement for neglect to place his Ship for Action,

2<sup>d</sup> For not being his utmost to take, or destroy a vessel, which we conceive it his Duty to have done,

With the highest Respect We are  
Ben. Smith 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Wm Crane 2<sup>d</sup>  
Wm Allen 3<sup>d</sup> Lt J. O. Broughton 4<sup>th</sup>  
Sidney Smith 5<sup>th</sup> Lt Sam Brooke -  
S. Master

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Smith  
Secretary of the Navy

Joi Fugate Chesapeake H. Board June 23 1807

The enclosed is a copy of a letter which I am informed, has been this day addressed to you, it contains two charges against me, both of which I trust I shall confute I will not presume to dictate to you, the line of conduct you are to pursue, on this occasion, an investigation is, I suppose a thing of course, and what every thinking officer would expect on an occurrence of such importance as the present, Capt. Gordon, is charged with a treachery done me in your relative to my vessel on this ground, but was directed not to deliver it, until he knew your determination.

The object of the present is to forward you the charges which those gentlemen wish to prefer against me, and to inform you, that I am perfectly ready to meet them.

It is however probable that I may not for some time be able to travel, any distance as my wounds are becoming very sore.

With great Respects  
James Bauson.

Wm. B. Smith  
1. of the Navy

Abstract. Taken from the U.S. Fugate Chesapeake Log Book J. Bauson, Esq. Command. Char Gordon Esq. - Capt. - & Samuel Brooke Sailing Master -

Tuesday 23 - June, Commences with light Breeze from the South & West, and clear weather a ship in sight apparently standing for us, at 1 p. the wind hauled to the N & E, in Studding Sails, and hauled upon a board at half past 3. the ship came up with us, backed the main Toppail & Spoke her, was boarded by her, she proved to be the British Ship, the Leopard, of 50 Guns. - They came on board to demand some men who had deserted from the English Navy, the Commodore refusing to give them up the boat returned, they ranged along side of us, and commenced a heavy fire, we being unprepared and the ship much lumbered, it was impossible to clear ship for action in proper time, though every possible exertion was made, & we not suspecting an enemy so near, did not begin to clear the decks until after the enemy had commenced firing, in about thirty minutes, after receiving much damage in our hull, rigging & spars, & having 3 men killed & 16 wounded, & having one <sup>gun</sup> ready, fired it, and hauled down our Colours, the Leopard ceased firing, and sent her boat on-board mustered the Ships Company - &c -

*[The page contains extremely faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the paper. The text is mirrored and difficult to decipher.]*