

# Dolphin

Corvette

Massachusetts Privateer Schooner

Commander Edward Fettyplace, Jr.

26 May 1777-4 October 1777

Commissioned/First Date:

26 May 1777

Out of Service/Cause:

4 October 1777/captured by HM Frigate *Milford*

Owners:

Samuel R. Gerry et al of Marblehead, Massachusetts

Tonnage:

Battery:

Date Reported: 26 May 1777

Number/Caliber Weight Broadside

10/

Total: 10 cannon/

Broadside: 5 cannon/

Swivels:

Crew:

26 May 1777: 61 [total]

Description:

Officers:

Cruises:

Prizes:

(1) Ship *Wilson* (John Johnson), [September] 1777

(2) Snow *Fanny* (Charles Poaug), [September] 1777, with Massachusetts Privateer Brigantine *Gloucester*, Massachusetts Privateer Brigantine *Hampden*, and Massachusetts Navy Brigantine *Massachusetts*

Actions:

Comments: Massachusetts Privateer Schooner *Dolphin* was commissioned on 26 May 1777 under Commander Edward Fettyplace, Jr. of Marblehead, Massachusetts. She was listed as being armed with ten guns and as having a crew of sixty men. Her \$5000 Continental bond was signed by Fettyplace and by William Williams and Samuel R. Gerry, both of Marblehead.<sup>1</sup> She sailed about the beginning of July 1777.<sup>2</sup>

*Dolphin* captured at least one prize, in company with Massachusetts Privateer Brigantine *Hampden* (Commander Benjamin Warren): the 200-ton ship *Wilson* (John Johnson). She was in Boston, Massachusetts by 9 October 1777, when she was libeled for both privateer commanders. Trial was set for 28 October. *Wilson* was presumably captured in September 1777.<sup>3</sup>

*Dolphin* participated in the capture of another vessel, along with the *Hampden* and Massachusetts Privateer Brigantine *Gloucester* (Commander John Colston), and Massachusetts Navy Brigantine *Massachusetts* (Captain John Fisk). This was the 90-ton snow

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<sup>1</sup> Allen, *Massachusetts Privateers of the Revolution*, 117

<sup>2</sup> NDAR, "Master's Log of H.M.S. *Milford*, Captain Sir William C. Burnaby," X, 32 and notes

<sup>3</sup> NDAR, "Libels Filed in the Massachusetts Maritime Court of the Middle District," X, 89-90

*Fanny* (Charles Poaug). She was sent in to Massachusetts, where she was libeled on 6 October, with trial set for 10 October.<sup>4</sup>

On 4 October 1777 *Dolphin* was forty-five miles southeast of Cape Sable, Nova Scotia, continuing her cruise. At 0630 she was seen, to the southeast, by HM Frigate *Milford* (Captain Sir William C. Burnaby), who chased at once. The weather was hazy with fresh breezes. At 0900 *Milford* was gaining on the *Dolphin*, but the schooner then bore away. Burnaby set more sail, and was quickly catching up by 1200. At 1300 one shot brought the *Dolphin* to heave to. The British reported she had been out three months. The crew was removed. *Dolphin* was sent into Halifax, Nova Scotia.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> NDAR, "Libels Filed in the Massachusetts Maritime Court of the Middle District," X, 45-46

<sup>5</sup> NDAR, "Master's Log of H.M.S. *Milford*, Captain Sir William C. Burnaby," X, 32 and notes