

Dolphin

Corvette

Massachusetts Privateer Schooner

(1) Commander David Ropes

9 September 1780-

(2) Commander William Gray

12 December 1781-

(3) Commander William Chaple [Chapell]

25 May 1782-

(4) Commander Francis Benson

13 August 1782

Commissioned/First Date:

9 September 1780

Out of Service/Cause:

Owners:

(1) Samuel Ward et al of Salem, Massachusetts; (2) Nathan Goodale et al of Salem, Massachusetts; (3) John Tucker et al of Salem, Massachusetts; (4) Henry Rust et al of Salem, Massachusetts

Tonnage:

Battery:

Date Reported: 9 September 1780

Number/Caliber Weight Broadside

8/

Total: 8 cannon/

Broadside: 4 cannon/

Swivels:

Date Reported: 12 December 1781

Number/Caliber Weight Broadside

6/

Total: 6 cannon/

Broadside: 3 cannon/

Swivels:

Date Reported: 25 May 1782

Number/Caliber Weight Broadside

8/

Total: 8 cannon/

Broadside: 4 cannon/

Swivels:

Date Reported: 13 August 1782

Number/Caliber Weight Broadside

8/

Total: 8 cannon/

Broadside: 4 cannon/

Swivels:

Crew:

(1) 9 September 1780: 21 [total]

(2) 12 December 1781: 21 [total]

(3) 25 May 1782: 19 [total]

(4) 13 August 1782: 19 [total]

Description:

Officers:

Cruises: (1) Salem, Massachusetts to Salem, Massachusetts, -12 March 1782

Prizes: (1) Sloop [unknown], 19 February 1782

Actions:

Comments: Massachusetts Privateer Schooner *Dolphin* was commissioned on 9 September 1780 under Commander David Ropes of Salem, Massachusetts. She was listed as being armed with eight guns and having a crew of twenty men. Her \$20000 bond was executed by Ropes, Joseph Sprague and Samuel Ward, all of Salem.¹ Although Ropes left the *Dolphin* by March 1781,² her next commission was on 12 December 1781, under Commander William Gray of Salem. *Dolphin's* battery was now listed as six guns and her crew as twenty men. Her new \$20000 bond was signed by Gray, Nathan Goodale, and Miles Ward, Jr., all of Salem.³

Under Gray the *Dolphin* took a sloop and escorted her into a harbor in New Jersey on 19 February 1782. The next day Gray sighted a brig laying near the bar, and sent a boat and seven men in pursuit. The sea upset the boat and all the men aboard were drowned. Gray returned to Salem on 12 March 1782.⁴ When Gray returned to Salem, he evidently left the *Dolphin* to take the Lieutenantcy aboard the Massachusetts Privateer Ship *Jack*, commanded by David Ropes.⁵

The *Dolphin* was recommissioned on 25 May 1782 under Commander William Chaple (or Chapell) of Salem, Massachusetts. She was listed as being armed with eight guns and having a crew of eighteen men. *Dolphin's* \$20000 bond was executed by Chaple, and John Tucker and Samuel Ward of Salem. *Dolphin* was recommissioned on 13 August 1782 under Commander Francis Benson of Salem, listing the same battery and crew. The new \$20000 bond was signed by Benson, Ward, and Henry Rust of Salem.⁶

¹ NRAR, 272. This may be the same schooner as the *Dolphin*, owned by the same group, which was first commissioned in 1775. If so, the battery may be understood to be swivel guns. Also listed in Allen, *Massachusetts Privateers of the Revolution*, 118

² Claghorn, *Naval Officers of the American Revolution*, 264

³ NRAR, 273; Allen, *Massachusetts Privateers of the Revolution*, 118

⁴ Allen, *Massachusetts Privateers of the Revolution*, 118

⁵ Claghorn, *Naval Officers of the American Revolution*, 126-127, 264-265. Claghorn lists two William Grays sailing out of Salem. I assume they are the same person.

⁶ NRAR, 275; Allen, *Massachusetts Privateers of the Revolution*, 119