

Copy of a Letter from the
Hon^{ble} Augustus Keppel,
Admiral of the Blue,
to Mr. Stephens. dated
the 23^d Decem^r 1778.

I have received your Letter of the
21st Inst^d in which you inform me that
the Lords Commissioners of the
Admiralty had acquainted Lord
Weymouth, One of His Maj^{ty}s Principal
Secretaries of State, with the contents
of my Letter to you of the 16th; That his
Lordship has in return informed them,
"that it is His Majesty's Pleasure
"they should signify to me that I must
"be sensible there are many parts of
"my Instructions which cannot be
"divulged without great detriment
"to the State;" and that the Lords Com-
missioners of the Admiralty had
ordered you to inform me, "that they
"cannot consent that the whole of my
"Instructions and Correspondence with
"you should be laid before my Council
"or be produced at the Court Martial,
"but that if I will point out any part
"of the said Instructions or Corres-
"pondence, which in my opinion
"has any relation to the Operations
"of the Fleet on the 27th & 28th of July
"last, I shall be permitted to make
"use of them in the manner I desire,
"if there be no objection of the nature
"above-mentioned."

I am also to acknowledge the
receipt of your Letter of the 18th in
which

which you informed me, "that it was
"necessary their Lordships should
"receive His Maj.^{ty} further Commands
"before they could with propriety give
"me a full answer to my Letter, &
"that their Lordships were persuaded
"that in the mean time I would not
"communicate those Instructions
"to any person whatsoever;" In an-
swer to which I must desire you
will acquaint their Lordships
that I neither have made, nor will
make any unnecessary communi-
cation of my Instructions, nor are
even my Council yet apprized of
any part of them.

But in answer to your Letter
of the 21.th I must beg of you to in-
form their Lordships that they
have totally misunderstood my
Letter of the 16.th, if they imagined,
that when put upon my Trial for
the defence of my Life & Honour,
I could think of asking any per-
mission to produce before the
Court which is to try me, any
Circumstances, which in my own
opinion, or that of my Council,
may in any degree be useful for
my defence, No Sir, My Letter
of the 16.th was not to ask leave to
do, what by every rule of Justice,
is my right.

In respect to the last paragraph
of your Letter of the 21.st Insistent, "that
"if I will point out any part of such
"Instructions.

"Instructions or Correspondence which
 "in my opinion has any relation to
 "the Operations of the Fleet on the 27th
 " & 28th of July last, I shall be per-
 "mitted to make use of them in the
 "manner I desire, if there shall ap-
 "pear no objection of the nature above
 "mentioned"; I can only say that I
 conceive that my Instructions &
 every part of them must necessarily
 have relation to the Operations of the
 Fleet on the 27th & 28th of July last, &
 on every day it was under my Com-
 mand, and that I was acting under
 those Instructions. - As to my point-
 ing out the particular parts that
 I conceive may be most useful to me
 and opening my defence to that
 Board of whose conduct towards me
 in this business, I have reason to
 complain, where the accusation
 against me originated, and
 where my Accuser has a Seat;
 It cannot on reflection be expected,
 nor can I believe their Lordships
 intend that when they put me on
 my Trial, that they are to limit
 me by their discretion, in the use
 of such means as I may think ex-
 pedient for my defence, and that
 they propose to distress me by such
 an alternative, as that I must ne-
 cessarily, according to their State-
 ment, either bring detriment on
 the State, or prejudice to my Justifi-
 cation

Copy of a letter from
The Hon. the Aug. Justice
Wright, Governor
of the Isles, to Sir
Stephens, dated
the 23rd Dec. 1778.
