



## Report to the House of Representatives on the frigate *Chesapeake*

All of the language in the annotated document below is from the original. However, the following edits have been made to allow for the document to be read aloud smoothly:

- Some spelling and punctuation has been standardized to avoid confusion.
- Words in italics are defined in the parentheses that follow. The words in parentheses can generally be substituted for the italicized words, when desired.
- Ellipses represent gaps in the text.

November 17, 1807

Participating deeply in the *general sensibility excited* (widespread anger aroused) by the outrage committed upon the United States frigate *Chesapeake*, by the British ship of war *Leopard*, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June...and feeling it their duty...to present to...this House...all the facts relating to that atrocious act of aggression, *they* (the House committee)...have obtained from the State and Navy Departments the documents...from which they ...make the following statement:

...the U.S. frigate *Chesapeake*...under the command of Commodore James Barron, sailed from *Hampton Roads* (Hampton Roads, Virginia) on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June...having on board a crew of more than 370 men, and completely equipped with every thing necessary for such a ship of war sailing on such a cruise.

That in proceeding to sea...she passed a British squadron. ...The British ship of war *Leopard*, of fifty guns...then at anchor within the limits of the United States...*came up with* (came alongside) the *Chesapeake*. ...Commodore Barron ordered the *Chesapeake* to be *hove to* (brought to a stop). ...An officer was accordingly sent from the *Leopard* to the *Chesapeake*, who...presented to Commodore Barron a note *respecting* (in regards to) deserters from some of His Britannic Majesty's ships, supposed to be serving as part of the crew of the *Chesapeake*, and enclosing a copy of an order...to the captain...to search his ship for the deserters.

...Commodore Barron...knew of no such men. ...The recruiting officers for the *Chesapeake* had been particularly instructed...not to *enter* (sign up) any deserters from His Britannic Majesty's ships. ...He was instructed never to permit the crew of any ship under his command to be *mustered* (inspected, could also mean to have the crew assembled) by any officers but her own.

...The *Leopard*...ranged alongside of the *Chesapeake* and commenced a heavy fire on her.

...The *Chesapeake* made no resistance whatever, but remained under...fire...from 20 to 30 minutes, when, having suffered much damage to her hull, rigging, and spars, and lost 3 men killed and 18 wounded, Commodore Barron ordered *his colors to be struck* (a surrender).

...The commander of the Leopard sent an officer on board who took possession of the Chesapeake, mustered her crew, and carrying off 4 of her men, John Strahan, William Ware, Daniel Martin, and John Wilson, ...abandoned the ship.

...Commodore Barron, ...finding that she was very much injured and had three and a half feet of water in her hold, returned...to Hampton Roads.

The committee might add to this statement that it has been incontestably proven...that William Ware, John Strahan, and Daniel Martin are citizens of the United States.

(Full text is available online on the EDSITEment resource **American Memory** at <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsp&fileName=003/llsp003.db&Page=6>.)