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New Hampshire Privateer
Ship Minerva

Minerva

Armed Ship

New Hampshire Privateer Ship

Commander John Grimes

18 May 1779-[July] 1779

Commissioned/First Date:

18 May 1779

Out of Service/Cause:

[July] 1779/captured by British Privateer Ship *Terrible*

Owners:

[John Cushing and Samuel White of Boston, Massachusetts]

Tonnage:

Battery:

Date Reported: 18 May 1779

<u>Number/Caliber</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Broadside</u>
20/9-pounders	180 pounds	90 pounds
Total: 20 cannon/180 pounds		
Broadside: 10 cannon/90 pounds		
Swivels:		

Crew:

18 May 1779: 51 [total]

Description:

Officers:

Cruises:

(1) Portsmouth, New Hampshire to Boston, Massachusetts, [20] May 1779-10 June 1779, with Massachusetts Privateer Ship *Cadwallader* and Massachusetts Privateer Ship *Charming Sally*

(2) Boston, Massachusetts to sea, 17 June 1779-[July] 1779, with Massachusetts Privateer Ships *Cadwallader* and *Marlborough*

Prizes:

(1) British Privateer Ship *Revenge* (Sheppard), with Massachusetts Privateer Ship *Cadwallader* and Massachusetts Privateer Ship *Charming Sally*

Actions:

(1) Action with *Revenge*, [5] June 1779

Comments:

New Hampshire Privateer Ship *Minerva* was commissioned on 18 May 1779 under Commander John Grimes of Rhode Island. Her battery was listed as twenty guns and her crew was given as fifty men. She had earlier been commissioned under Grimes as a Rhode Island privateer, but was owned in Boston, Massachusetts.¹ [See Rhode Island Privateer Ship *Minerva*]

Massachusetts Privateer Ship *Cadwallader* was a large vessel under Commander Henry Johnson of Boston, Massachusetts. She carried fourteen guns and a crew of sixty men.² *Cadwallader* probably sailed about 20 May 1779 from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in company with *Minerva* and Massachusetts Privateer Ship *Charming Sally* (Commander Alexander Holmes).³ *Charming Sally* was a 300 ton ship with eighteen guns and a crew of seventy men.⁴ All three vessels were loaded with lumber and bound for the West Indies.⁵

About early June 1779 these three fell in with the British Privateer Ship *Revenge* (Sheppard), mounting twenty-four (or twenty-six) guns, along with assorted swivels and cohorns. Her principal owner was Sir George Collier, the British naval commander there. *Revenge* had sailed from Halifax twelve days before and had already captured one small American privateer brig. *Revenge* was the former Rhode Island Privateer Ship *Blaze Castle*.⁶ The Americans out-gunned the British privateer fifty-two to twenty-four.

The three American privateers ganged up on the *Revenge*, which put up a very stout resistance. A two hour fight followed before Sheppard surrendered, with his ship “much shattered” and five men killed and several wounded. The *Charming Sally* was in the principal action and had one man killed and three wounded, including Holmes. The prize was escorted into Boston, where she arrived on 10 June.⁷

Minerva and *Cadwallader* were now joined by the Massachusetts Privateer Ship *Marlborough* (Commander William Chase), with fourteen guns and forty men. *Charming Sally* stayed in Boston to refit. The three privateers sailed on 17 June 1779, resuming the voyage to the West Indies. The privateer captains separated and each, individually, was captured by the British Privateer *Terrible*, a Liverpool privateer. They were taken into Antigua, British West Indies, and tried and condemned there.⁸ This was likely the British Privateer Ship *Terrible* (Ash), a 250-ton vessel armed with twenty guns and with a crew of 130 men.⁹

Peter and Isaac Wikoff wrote to Cushing & White on 24 August 1779, reporting the loss of the *Minerva* “owing to bad management in the Captains not keeping together.”¹⁰



¹ Claghorn, *Naval Officers of the American Revolution*, 130

² Allen, *Massachusetts Privateers of the Revolution*, 90

³ *The Pennsylvania Packet or the General Advertiser* [Philadelphia], Tuesday, June 29, 1779, datelined Boston, June 14; *The Norwich Packet and the Weekly Advertiser*, Tuesday, June 22, 1779, datelined Boston, June 17; *The Massachusetts Spy: Or, American Oracle of Liberty* [Boston], Thursday, June 17, 1779; *The Independent Ledger, and the American Advertiser* [Boston], Monday, June 14, 1779

⁴ Allen, *Massachusetts Privateers of the Revolution*, 98

⁵ *The Pennsylvania Evening Post* [Philadelphia], June 29, 1779, datelined Portsmouth, June 12

⁶ *The Pennsylvania Packet or the General Advertiser* [Philadelphia], Tuesday, June 29, 1779, datelined Boston, June 14; *The Norwich Packet and the Weekly Advertiser*, Tuesday, June 22, 1779, datelined Boston, June 17; *The Massachusetts Spy: Or, American Oracle of Liberty* [Boston], Thursday, June 17, 1779; *The Independent Ledger, and the American Advertiser* [Boston], Monday, June 14, 1779

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⁸ McManemin, *Captains of the State Navies*, 305C

⁹ Williams, Gomer, *History of the Liverpool Privateers and Letters of Marque with an Account of the Liverpool Slave Trade*, London: William Heineman, 1897, 250-251

[10](#) McManemin, *Captains of the State Navies*, 305C

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