


B. A Personal Point of View, conveying the facts

What was Samuel, a ship builder from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, working desperately to complete in the summer of 1797? Fill in the blanks below to complete the two letters between a son and his mother.

Portsmouth, New Hampshire, July 7, 1797



My Dear Mother

We are working night and day to finish the Crosscut, a _____ be delivered to _____ as part of the _____ America negotiated with its ruler the _____ She was launched last month, and here told she will sail to the _____ Sea as soon as she is equipped and filled with _____, a gift for the ruler. I hate to think that if this ruler's neighbors _____, _____, _____, like the right of his "provent", they might demand such a one for themselves.

We have heard many frightening stories of capture and ruin of our merchant ships sailing along the _____, the northern coast of Africa. Mother, I fear some day this gift we are building with the greatest of care could be used against us.

*Your loving son,
Samuel*

New York October 17 1805

My Dear Son Samuel

Our city has just received news that I thought might relieve your heart after your premonition about the ship you were building in 1797. Ever since that letter I have found myself seeking out the news from that part of the world. As you know four years ago President _____ sent a _____ of warships to stop the raids on American merchantmen but Americans continued to be imperiled. In the city of _____ even our government's official residence the American _____ was captured! No doubt you heard about Commodore _____ expedition and his battles against the fortress at _____. Well now finally there is an end to it as treaties have been signed and American captives released.

I can hardly imagine how our small fleet of only _____ ships could overcome such large forces fighting in their own waters. I understand that the Constitution the commodore's _____ performed as well as ships built by you!

*With heartfelt love
Mother*