

- Adm 106/3121 List and Description of Ships, 1733-74.
 „ 106/3315 Deptford Yard Letter Books, Series I.
 „ 106/3401 Deptford Yard Letter Books, Series IV.
 „ 111/64 Victualling Board, Minutes, 1768.
 „ 111/68 „ „ „ 1771.
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- ADM/A/2603-10 Admiralty Letters to Navy Board, January-August 1768.
 ADM/A/2645-7 Admiralty Letters to Navy Board, July-September 1771.
 ADM/B/180 Navy Board Letters to Admiralty, July 1767-March 1768.
 ADM/C/590 Admiralty Letters to Victualling Board, April-July 1768.
 ADM/C/591 Admiralty Letters to Victualling Board, July-September 1768.
 ADM/E/40 Admiralty Letters to Sick and Hurt Board, 1765-9.

1768

[15 February.] *Memorial of the Royal Society*.¹ ' . . . Humbly sheweth—That the passage of the Planet Venus over the Disc of the Sun, which will happen on the 3rd of June in the year 1769, is a Phaenomenon that must, if the same be accurately observed in proper places, contribute greatly to the improvement of Astronomy on which navigation so much depends. . . . That the like appearance after the 3rd of June 1769 will not happen for more than 100 years. . . . That the British Nation have been justly celebrated in the learned world for their knowledge of Astronomy in which they are inferior to no Nation upon Earth, ancient or modern; and it would cast dishonor upon them should they neglect to have correct Observations made of this important Phaenomenon. . . . That a correct Set of Observations made in a Southern Latitude would be of greater importance than many of those made in the Northern: But it would be necessary that the Observers who are to pass the Line should take their departure from England early in this Spring; because it might be some time before they could fix upon a proper place for making the Observations within the limits required.—That the expence of having the Observations properly made in the Places above specified [Spitzbergen or

¹ The 'Transactions of the Royal Society relative to the sending out people to observe the transit of Venus in 1769' are recorded in an abstract by Banks covering the period June 1766-June 1768. This is printed above, as Appendix II. 1, and the separate papers are accordingly not calendared here.

the North Cape; Fort Churchill in Hudson's Bay; the South Seas], including a reasonable gratification to the persons employed, and furnishing them with such Instruments as are still wanting, would amount to about 4000 pounds, exclusive of the Expence of the Ships which must convey and return the Observers to the Southwards of the Equinoctial Line and to the North Cape.—That the Royal Society are in no condition to defray this Expence, their Annual Income being scarcely sufficient to carry on the business of the Society.—The Memorialists, attentive to the true end for which they were founded by your Majesty's Royal Predecessor, the Improvement of Natural Knowledge, conceive it to be their duty to lay these sentiments before your Majesty with all humility and submit the same for your Majesty's Royal consideration.'—Royal Society, *Misc. MSS*, V. 39. Undated; approved and signed at a meeting of Council, 15 February 1768.

- 5 March. *Admiralty Secretary to Navy Board*. 'The Earl of Shelburne, one of the Secretaries of State, has signified that, having laid before His Majesty a memorial from the President, Council, and Fellows of the Royal Society of London setting forth that the passage of the planet Venus over the disk of the sun . . . His Majesty has been graciously pleased to express his Royal inclination to defray the expense of conveying such persons as it shall be thought proper to send to make the observations to the southward of the Equinoctial Line, to the place of their destination: and signified his Majesty's pleasure, that a proper vessel be prepared to sail early this spring with the said persons agreeable to the request of the Society in their said memorial. . . . I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their directions to you to propose a proper vessel to be fitted for this service.'—ADM/A/2605; Adm 2/541.
- 8 March. *Navy Board to Admiralty Secretary*. Reply to foregoing, the Tryal Sloop, lately taken into the dock at Deptford to be repaired, would be suitable, but it will be the end of May before she can be got ready and there is no vessel at home to be depended upon for so long a voyage, that can be sooner fitted; suggestions for adapting the said sloop.—ADM/B/180; Adm 106/2199.
- 10 March. *Admiralty to Navy Board*. The trial Sloop cannot be completed before the end of May. Therefore the Rose is to be considered instead as it is necessary the ship should sail this spring.—ADM/A/2605.
- 21 March. *Navy Board to Admiralty Secretary*. † Reply to foregoing. Objects to the Rose that she may be unable to stow the quantity of provisions required. The Board suggests a cat-built vessel, which would be roomy enough for the purpose. One of about 350 tons can be purchased in the River Thames.—ADM/B/180; Adm 106/2199.
- 21 March. *Admiralty Secretary to Navy Board*. The recommendation of a