

to Samuel Mifflin at Cadiz, Oswald described local events such as the arrival of American ship *Hercules* with Lucien Bonaparte and family on board. The ship was detained by the frigate HMS *Pomone*, and Bonaparte, who had been trying to escape to America, surrendered to British authorities.

The letters in Series I are written in English with two exceptions: one in Italian from Lambro Nacco in Livadia [Greece] on December 22, 1812, details the purchase and delivery of wheat for 2000 tallari (a local currency), and expresses his hopes that the transaction will be finalized. The second of the two letters is in the third subseries, Miscellaneous, and was probably received by Oswald as an enclosure. Also in Italian, it is from Gio (possibly Giorgio) Bonfort to Theophilus Richards Jr., and is marked at the top "copia" (copy). Written from Scalanova [Anatolia, now Turkey] on January 17, 1812, it declares him to owe 11628 [pieces of currency] to Richards, and acknowledges the difficulties of repaying such debt in a short-term period. Bonfort's letter suggests the following plan: if "la fortuna aiuterà" (good luck assists) he will repay the debt as soon as he can with any proceeds he earns. And to assist him, Richards will provide job orders to Bonfort who should recognize the commissions earned from these services as credits to be applied towards his debt. The second letter in the subseries is a copy, in Oswald's hand, of a letter from the British merchant Jameson Hunter to an unknown colleague; in it Hunter, as a former employer of Oswald, recommends Oswald's service and reputation.

Series II, Documents (1809-1816), is arranged in four subseries, one each for Eleazer Oswald, John Holt Oswald, and William Hunter Oswald, and one Miscellaneous. The series holds documents related to the personal and lives of the Oswalds, including a diary, passports, and business agreements.

John Holt Oswald's subseries holds an 1808 passport issued to him by the United States government, signed by James Madison as secretary of state. It also includes a set of documents covering the sale of the schooner *Nancy* to Florimond Dusar, a Philadelphia merchant, in 1809, as well as some records of shipping on the *Nancy* during that period and in January 1810.

Perhaps the most remarkable writing in the Oswald Family Papers is the journal kept by William Oswald from May 16, 1809, when he left Philadelphia for Malta, through December 1810. Oswald periodically notes the events and places he observed during those eighteen months, writing of local politics, ships captured by privateers working on the Mediterranean, various blockades, and the types of merchandise being forwarded to Cadiz, Naples, Russia, the Levant, England, and America. He writes also of the personalities he encounters, from the arrivals and departures of British and American merchants including Philadelphians Mifflin, Walker, and Lewis, to the death of another Philadelphian, Captain William Smith of the Brig *Dolphin*, washed overboard in a local gale. Oswald himself traveled to Palermo, Messina, Girgenti [Sicily], Catania, and Syracuse, and made notes of those trips. The subseries also includes an 1811 agreement between Oswald and Nuttall, in which Nuttall agrees to pay Oswald's expenses and 5 per cent of any sales he makes in Sardinia and Madelena; an 1812