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PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 18.

OFFICIAL.

Extracts of a letter from Capt. Murray, of the Montezuma sloop of war, to the Secretary of the Navy, dated,

On board the Montezuma, January 15, 1799, 10 leagues East of Guadaloupe.

We separated from the fleet we had convoyed on the 5th Dec. and made sail to gain our windward station, but we had such variable and blustering winds, that we could only fetch the Santero passage—we then cruized up leisurely by St. Martin's, St. Bartholomews, St. Eustatia, and all that chain of islands, up to the west side of Guadaloupe, and saw nothing but a few Danes and Swedes, which we chased and boarded. We then played about there and off the north end, and in the very tract we had before seen so many privateers, without seeing any vessel whatever, but one American schooner by which I wrote to you a few lines, which was, indeed, the first opportunity I have had of giving you any intelligence about us, and the Cyane sloop of war, that was in Antigua, when we were there. We run into their bays and searched in every direction for them, but without effect. Not finding it of importance to remain there any longer, we beat up to windward of Antigua, as far as the long. of 59 degrees, and there cruized for ten days; chased and boarded several American vessels, bound to different islands, likewise had some long chases after two privateers, which we boarded, and turned out to be British from Antigua, none of which had seen any French vessels, or their prizes—then we stood further down to the southward, to the windward of Martinique; off which island we fell in with Admiral Harvey, in the Prince of Wales of 98 guns—were recognized by our signals, which, in my former letter, I informed you I had wrote to him about. He gave me a polite invitation to go on board of him, which I did, and met with a very friendly reception. He informed me, he had fully complied with the request I made him, and that he had distributed the signals to all the men of war on the station, which I found was the case, having met with several of them that had repeated and answered them, so that we are now as well known by them, and by most of their privateers, as their own ships, which saves me from a great deal of trouble and anxiety.

The admiral offered me every friendly assistance we might stand in need of, and seemed glad that America and Great Britain stood upon such fair terms, and wondered much at our long forbearance, in the harassment of our commerce, which I told him proceeded from the lenity of our government, ever inclined to peaceable measures—that our executive had always been firm, but kept the door of conciliation open as long as there was a shadow of hope, in avoiding the last alternative—that I believed we should have been earlier with our energetic measures, but that we had hard materials and obstinate parties to work upon. He enquired where I had cruized generally—I told him particular my different routes, which he said were very proper, and agreed with me that he thought few of their cruizers were out, as he had most of his ships watching the motions of the French ships in Basterre.

Thus, Sir, you may assure the public of the high estimation we stand upon in this quarter of the globe, and whatever cruizers you send this way may be sure of a polite reception, and that our commerce stands upon a more favourable situation, than it has hitherto done, at least in these seas, for we have chased and boarded almost every vessel we have seen

(and ran from none) without meeting a foe.

I verily believe our few cruizers have given the French here a serious fright; they know the quality of our vessels, and they know our industry. If we have not succeeded in taking them we have answered as good a purpose, that of keeping them in port, which I flatter myself we have contributed in effecting.

After leaving the admiral, we stood back to the northward, and cruized off Desada for a week, and this day fell in with a Danish ship from Hamburg, bound to St. Thomas, had run upon that latitude without seeing any thing but one American. Capt. Williams now informs me that he has sustained a serious injury in his masts, and thinks they cannot be secured, but by going into port. I send my master and carpenter on board of him, to examine them, and we have determined to secure them as well as possible, so as to enable us to keep out as long as we can. Indeed we have a most blustering time of it here.

I never counted upon so much bad weather, as we have had, upon this station: We have scarcely had two following days good settled weather for near a month, but a constant succession of hard squalls and rain, frequently blowing so hard, we could scarcely carry a rag of canvas, which has feverly tried both our vessels and crews; and altho' our people have been generally able to stand the deck, yet I find many of them very much inclined to be on the Doctor's list.

5th—OF DOMINIGO.

Capt. Williams being still fearful of his masts; his tops, trunks trees, &c. being in a bad condition, and not able to carry the sail we are often obliged to press in a chase, and the weather still tempestuous, in squalls, which, as well as from the absolute need of reinforcements that our crews both stand in need of, my crew especially, having been confined on board ever since the 20th of September, I deem it necessary to give them a few days relaxation in port, to hearten them up; nor have I been out of the ship ever since I left Annapolis; but for a few hours at Norfolk; we therefore, after having just boarded a government brig of 14 guns who gave us the same accounts, of meeting with no Frenchmen, on the station, determined to avail ourselves of their quiet, to run down for the harbour of Bofcau, on the S. W. side of Dominigo, for information to direct our future movements, and to enquire for an opportunity of sending this letter.

My boat has just arrived with the agreeable intelligence of the arrival of the United States, in Prince Rupert's bay we therefore set all sail to join her.

PRINCE RUPERT'S BAY, Jan. 10, '99.

We arrived here on the 9th, where I met with my old friend Commodore Barry, in the United States, and the Washington, Captain Fletcher. The next day they failed to cruise a few days off Guadaloupe.

From the conversation I have had with Commodore Barry, I am happy to find I have anticipated a part of your instructions to him, viz. setting the signals, laying a train for the exchange of prisoners, and in meeting your plan for a deposit of provisions in some convenient place: this place I conceive the most eligible of any in the windward islands. The garrison officers seem delighted with the plan, and show every civility, and this day I have finished all my business of wooding and watering, and in putting my ship in complete order for sea, to-morrow I expect the whole of them to dine on board with me, having passed this day with them, principally with a view of bringing about a friendly and happy communication for those who may come after me. On the 12th, I shall leave this; to endeavour to

join the two frigates, and cruise a few days till Captain Williams is ready, and hope by that time the provision vessels may arrive, as I shall want a small supply: I shall then take off a large convoy now collecting here (twenty sail now being in port) and shall call off Antigua, Nevis, Morisserat, and St. Christophers, and proceed with them to a safe lat. After that, I shall return to cruise among the Southern islands, for a while leaving the Commodore on this station as I am informed he means to cruise here.

After I have tried that station, I presume it will be time to look towards America, as I find you have sent ships to where I intended to cruise.

Off Dominico, Jan. 13.

P. S. I have strong reasons to believe, that many of our countrymen run off Guadaloupe and Cayenne, to be taken, they being furnished with a proper counter sign: when carried in they leave their vessels behind, and then set off for America with a tale of having made their escape, and soon go back with another; I fear their art is beyond discovery.

A. MURRAY.

Letters from Capt. Tingey!

Ganges, at St. Thomas, 27th Jan. 1799.

SIR,

I had the honor to address you the 26th December by the ship Charles of Bolton, copy of which, No. 1. is herewith enclosed. The weather continuing fine, and progressing on our course; on the morning of the 30th, we gave chase to, and spoke the brigantine Mermaid, captain Lowers, on and from Baltimore, for St. Vincent's—and on the 2d instant made the land of Hispaniola, at or near Old Cape Francois—steering along the coast, at noon of the 3d, we had passed Monte Christo, and in the afternoon, being only a few leagues to windward of the harbour of New Cape Francois, we discovered three sail, to whom we gave chase, till night rendered our sailing in with them very uncertain. On the morning of the 4th, however, we were near them, and soon discovered them to be two British line of Battle ships, and a sloop of War.

After receiving and answering the private signals of that flag; I went on board the Hannibal of 74 guns, having been particularly and politely requested thereto; by her captain, E. W. Smith, Esq. commander of the Squadron; from whom I received the most friendly and marked attention, virtual informing of it being the particular order of the Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, for a like regard to our ships, public and private, to every captain in his fleet.

Captain Smith having also intimated (though in the most pleasing terms, and scarce to be understood as other than spontaneous discourse) that, as I had arrived, on a station, pre-occupied and so closely invested by them, it would be pleasing to him, and he assured also that it would be much so to the Adm. if I would write to the latter at Jamaica—offering also to be the bearer, or at least to forward my communications. Conceiving no impropriety in this, I addressed the admiral; a copy of which you have herewith No. 2. and which I hope will not meet the disapprobation of the President or yourself.

I also understood from Capt. Smith, and the other two captains who were on board the Hannibal at the time, that an almost total stagnation to the French privateering had taken place, in consequence of a heavy penalty for their behaviour having been decreed, that very few were able or willing to comply with, and that not more than one in twenty of the prizes they took were French vessels: from this I found not but private, little hauls for the Ganges. I continued to cruise off St. Francis, till the morning of Sunday

the 6th, when I steered to the leeward to come more immediately in the station assigned me, and hoping there also to meet the vessels ordered to join me from Charleston. In the afternoon, sailing down the North side of the Island of Tortugas, we discovered a sloop beating to the windward, expecting from the situation, that he was an American homeward-bound and willing to transmit you intelligence of a being well, we made sail and brought him to. It proved the sloop Ceres of Warren, Rhode-Island, David Saunders' master.

He was from Baltimore loaded by John M. Faxon & Co. with 500 barrels of flour, some wine, and dry goods, cleared out for Baracou in the island of Cuba, (and consigned to the captain) where also he declared he was bound; insisted that he had overrun his port and was beating off Key Malay, which he pretended to take for the Isle of Tortugas, for I detained him on board during the night, and in the morning sent for his mate and log book, but their business was too well concerted; the Mate, mate and log book were in uniform, and all his papers clear and regular, for his purposes.—No doubt remained with me of his being bound for Cape Francois: But as I could obtain no light to substantiate proof thereof, at nine on the morning of the 7th, I dismissed him, causing him to steer for Baracou, where I had intended to see him put in, but soon after two sail appearing in the S. W. quarter, I quit him and gave chase, approaching them, I by signal discovered them to be two British frigates, on the 8th I fell in with another of the Platorm, in succeeding days others, and in short during my stay there, scarce an hour passed but what one, two, or more British cruizers were in sight.

On the 10th the trade wind began to blow with more violence than it had heretofore done and the ship having lightened considerably by the expenditure of water and provisions, proved too tender to bear a press of sail. I had not been without apprehension and expectation of this, previous to leaving Philadelphia; and indeed it had been more than once intimated by Capt. Dale. But my endeavours to obtain a sufficient quantity of shingle ballast, had been rendered abortive, unless I had been determined to let other material business remain: in which case it is evident, the ship would have been detained in the Delaware by the ice.

On the morning of the 19th the weather proved mild, we stood out to the northward of Cape Nicholas, determining to try again for Henegage or some of the Keys; but about noon the wind springing up from the N. N. W. we weathered the Isle of Tortugas by the wind; it just veered sufficient for us to weather the whole island of Hispaniola; and on the morning of the 19th we were in with the island of Porto-Rico, a few leagues to the leeward of the city and harbour of St. Johns. The wind now resumed its usual direction from the E. N. E. and being doubtful of the reception I might meet at Porto-Rico, as also being totally unacquainted with its coast or harbor, I determined to endeavour for this port; and succeeded in getting in on the evening of the 24th. Early on 25th I waited on the governor who politely requested I would obtain whatever I might be in need of.

On the coast of Porto Rico we saw and chased several vessels; but all those we were enabled to bring to, belonged to this port and were trading under Danish colours to and from different ports of Hispaniola.

I found here several American vessels; and one French privateer schooner of 14 guns, of which however, I have heard, that there are very few now in these seas; this schooner is commanded by an Irishman named Williams, and sailed from this yesterday on a cruise!