

LONDON.

Downing-Street, November 19.

A Despatch, of which the following is a copy, has been this morning received at Lord Liverpool's Office, addressed to his Lordship, by Lieutenant-General Sir John Stuart, K. B. dated Messina, 22d September.

MY LORD.—Early on the morning of the 18th inst. our attention was much occupied by the opposite movements of General Murat, who, by the embarkation of the principal body of his army in the whole of his long range of boats at Scylla and the Punta del Pizzo, and the disposition of these vessels after being cast off from the shore, seemed to indicate a conclusive design upon the part of our line extending towards the Faro.

While the attention of our left was engaged by the above operation, information was brought to me that a division of the enemy, having embarked at Reggio during the preceding night, had been perceived completing a landing upon our right just before dawn, at about seven miles to the southward of Messina.

Reinforcements, which were held in reserve in this garrison to move according to circumstances, marched to sustain our posts at the invaded point upon the first signal of alarm; but the active vigilance of the troops stationed at that extremity of our defences, and their prompt and spirited behaviour, under the conduct of Major-General Campbell, had already happily rendered the presence of these succours unnecessary.

The repulse of the enemy in this partial enterprise, and the equally disgraceful and precipitate flight of the French General who commanded it, with the sacrifice of so considerable a part of his equipment, are more fully detailed in the adjoining report from Maj. Gen. Campbell to myself, on the proceedings of this fortunate day; and I hope His Majesty will be graciously pleased to draw an augur from the relation of this officer of the future conduct of this army at large, in any emergency of service which it may become their duty to encounter.

The zeal, the warmth, exemplified by the neighbouring peasantry in our behalf, and which were not manifested without a loss, and the judgment as well as alacrity with which I have since learnt that those in remoter districts made immediate dispositions to obstruct the progress of the enemy in their possible attempt to penetrate into the country, were far beyond what I could have hoped or expected from their peaceful habits; and so strongly was their animosity marked towards their invaders, that the interposition of our escorts was frequently necessary to protect our prisoners from their fury in conducting them, after their surrender to the citadel of Messina.

A colour inscribed as a gift from Gioachino Napoleon to the Royal Corsican Corps, said to be new for the occasion of the expedition, fell among other captures of the morning into our hands, and I hope His Majesty will be graciously pleased to approve my transmittal of this trophy, to be respectfully laid at the feet of his Sicilian Majesty, as a token of our zeal in support of his royal cause, and as a record that the first effort of a daring enemy to plant the standard of usurpation in this his second kingdom, and which still owns his rightful dominion, was repulsed by a British army.

I cannot close this communication to your Lordship without expressing my official acknowledgments to the great assistance I have derived from Lieutenant-General Lord Forbes, as well as the other General Officers, and indeed every department and rank of this army, during a long period of four months, in which the contiguity and constant menaces of an enterprising enemy have demanded from us a system of unabating vigilance, to which every mind has submitted with cheerfulness, but which your Lordship will believe has not been without its fatigue.

The habitual, cordial, and friendly co-operation which I have received from Admiral Martin and the naval force under his orders during this interval of anxiety, I have before had occasion to mention to your Lordship.—I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) J. STUART, Count of Maida.

Messina, September 18, 1810.

SIR.—Being apprised about a quarter past four this morning, that a detachment of the enemy's boats had approached and fired upon the cavalry piquet at St. Stefano, I deemed it expedient to repair towards that place; and on my way thither discovered, before daylight, a smart fire of musquetry, apparently near Mili. On my arrival at Mili, I found Lieutenant-Colonel Adam, with the 21st regiment, very judiciously posted in that advantageous spot, supported by the 3d King's German Legion, with two six-pounders; and the Riflemen of the King's German Legion in his front, beyond the Mili Fiumera, briskly exchanging shots with the enemy.

Thus situated, and when full day-light rendered all objects distinctly visible, I clearly observed about 40 of the enemy's large boats disembarking troops between St. Stefano and Galati, which, as they gained the shore, pushed on and occupied the crest of the whole ridge of rising ground, extending from the place of their embarkation to the front and right of the Mili Fiumera. Every measure of precaution was adopted to occupy the mountain passes adjacent to the Mili position; and while thus employed and eagerly watching the enemy's further movements, I observed not only an hesitation and period to his further advance upon the heights, but that he was actually hastily re-embarking his troops nearest the beach, occasioned, I have no doubt, by the spirited and unexpected manner in which he was brought to action by the 2d Light Infantry, under Lieut. Col. Fischer, which, moving from its cantonments of Saint Placido, hung upon his rear and left. I had no sooner satisfied myself as to this point, than I directed the 21st regiment, with two six-pounders, to move briskly forward by the great road and beach from Mili, preceded

by the Riflemen of the 3d and 4th King's German Legion, and Flankers of the 21st regiment, which produced the double effect of precipitating the enemy's retreat to his boats, and throwing into our power the whole of the corps which had gained the heights, and others whom their boats had abandoned to their fate.

I understand this corps to have been under the orders of General Cavignac, and to have consisted of two battalions of Corsicans, 1st battalion of the 2d Neapolitan light infantry (six companies) 1st battalion 3d of the line, Neapolitan infantry (six companies), 1st batt. of the 4th of the line Neapolitan infantry (six companies,) in all about 3,500 men; of whom, one of the Corsican battalions, with a stand of colours, a Colonel and Chef de P'Etat Major of Division, a Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant, with forty inferior officers, including an Aid-de-Camp of General Cavignac, and upwards of eight hundred soldiers, have surrendered prisoners of war at discretion.

It is now only necessary for me to add, that the corps which repulsed the enemy were Capt. Joerre's troop of the 20th light Dragoons; the 2d light infantry battalion (to whom every praise is due for the spirited and masterly manner in which it made the first impression upon them); the riflemen of the 3d and 4th King's German Legion; the 21st regiment; and a portion of the 3d King's German Legion; as also a detachment of the Royal Artillery, with field guns, under Lieut. Cotton.

To Lieutenant-Colonel Adam of the 21st regiment I was peculiarly indebted. His thorough knowledge of the country and passes would have enabled us to anticipate and check the enemy, had he endeavoured to move farther than Mili.

I was accompanied by my Aid-de-Camp, Captain A'Court, whose active exertions were conspicuous to all. I have also to mention, in terms of acknowledgments, Captains Hill and Freuller, Assistant Adjutant Generals, and Lieut. Burke, Aid-de-Camp to Major-General Spencer. The whole of the conduct of the troops was cheerful and animated; and the best disposition in aid of us was exhibited by the peasantry of the country, who, with arms, and every other weapon of defence they could collect, flocked to our immediate assistance; and, what is most consolatory, we have not to regret the loss of a single Officer killed or wounded.—Two men of the 21st regiment, and one rifleman, were slightly wounded on this singular incursion of the enemy. I have the honor to be, &c.

J. CAMPBELL, Maj. Gen. and Adj. Gen.

P. S. I have not been able accurately to ascertain the loss of the enemy. Two Officers of the Corsican Battalion are among their wounded of which there were many, as well as killed, upon the field. His most material loss must have been upon his retreat and in the boats, which were completely within the range, not only of our field-guns, but also of our musketry; one boat was sunk, one deserted to us, and many were disabled. Reports have also been received that several dead bodies have floated on shore near the scene of action. The peasantry have likewise brought in as prisoners a considerable number, who concealed themselves in the country.

J. CAMPBELL, Maj. Gen. & Adj. Gen.

ADMIRALTY-OFFICE, NOVEMBER 20.

Copy of a letter from Admiral Sir Roger Curtis, Bart. Commander in Chief at Portsmouth, to John Croker, Esq. dated the 17th inst.

SIR.—I herewith inclose, to be laid before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, a letter from Captain Grant, of the Diana, reporting the sailing from Havre, and subsequent attack under the batteries of La Hogue, of the two frigates of the enemy, which have been some time blockaded in the former port by the ships under his orders; one of the enemy's frigates is on shore on the rocks of St. Vaast, where she lies on her beam ends; and the other aground on the shoal near the fort.

It would be great injustice were I not here to mention the persevering vigilance and correctness of judgment, with which, under the directions of Captain Grant, of the Diana, the blockade of these ships has been conducted, and to which their present situation is to be attributed.

I likewise transmit a letter from Captain Malcolm, of the Donegal, who with that ship and the Revenge joined the Diana and Niobe, in attacking the second frigate, after the first was on shore. A list of men killed and wounded in the several ships on this occasion is also inclosed herewith. I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) ROGER CURTIS.

His Majesty's ship Diana, at anchor, off La Hogue, November 16.

SIR.—I have the honour to inform you, that though the wind was strong from the north east and north east by north on Monday evening the 12th inst. with a very heavy sea, I thought it probable the enemy's frigates might endeavour to push out; I therefore placed the ships in the best position I could suppose, and at half past twelve on Tuesday morning we were fortunate enough to see and found ourselves in shore of them; the wind having backed to north by east threw them considerably to windward of us, but prevented their getting round Barfleur; we were so near as to fire two broadsides at them before they got under the batteries of Marcou. At this time Captain Loring in the Niobe had pushed in shore in hopes of cutting off the sternmost ship, which he had nearly effected, but the wind blowing fresh from the northward and eastward, with a heavy sea, and the flood tide about to make, we could not prevent their getting through the narrow passage on the west end of Marcou. On Tuesday forenoon they weighed, and remained under sail close under the batteries of Marcou for several hours, and in the evening got into La Hogue Roads, we having been driven

to the north of Barfleur by the ebb tide, the wind easterly. On the Wednesday morning I sent Captain Loring in the Niobe to give Captain Malcolm, in the Donegal, information of the situation of the enemy's ships, and made all sail in this ship to the anchorage off La Hogue, and, on my approaching it, had the satisfaction to see one of the enemy's frigates run on shore. I anchored at one P. M. and continued so until morning, when I perceived that the other of the enemy's frigates seemed to be in a position where she might be attacked; I weighed on the first of the flood and made sail for her, but the enemy, on observing our intentions, weighed and went close into the Shoal of St. Vaast, and immediately between the batteries of La Hogue and Tati-liou. I determined, however, to go as close to her as I could, without getting on shore, in hopes something might be done; but after twice standing in close along-side of her, sustaining the fire of the two batteries, together with the frigate, which by this time had received considerable reinforcements of men from the shore, I found the fire so very heavy, that I saw no hopes of doing any thing effectual against her.

At this time, Capt. Malcolm, of the Donegal, arrived with the Revenge and Niobe, and the attack was renewed by the four ships, who continued going in alternately, and made every exertion so long as the tide would permit them to do so; and I have no doubt that the frigate must have received very great injury from it. I am sure I need not tell you how very mortified all on board the Diana and Niobe are, that, after our anxious blockade, we have not been able to do more; but I trust that you will believe, that every thing has been done that was in our power, to get possession of the frigates; and it is some consolation to be able to say, that one of them is on the rocks of Saint Vaast, on her beam ends, and last night fell over on her larboard side, having been before on her starboard, and the other lying apparently on the shoal near the fort, and, I trust, not in a state to go to sea for a considerable length of time.

It now remains for me to say, that nothing could exceed the steady behaviour of my officers and men of the Diana; and to Mr. Rowe, the first Lieutenant, I feel particularly indebted for his assistance and exertions. Captain Loring speaks in the highest terms of his officers and men, particularly Lieut. Simpson.

I am happy to say, that though we were a long time under so heavy a fire, we have only one marine slightly wounded; but the ship has suffered very considerably in her masts, sails, hull and rigging. Unless they dismantle the enemy's frigate, I shall continue on my present station until I have the honor to receive your orders.

I must beg your forgiveness for the length of this, but hope the variety of occurrences necessary to be stated will plead my excuse. I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES GRANT.

Donegal, St. Helen's, November 17.

SIR.—On the 14th inst. being near to Barfleur, Captain Loring, of the Niobe, informed me that two large French frigates had sailed from Havre on the night of the 12th, and had been chased into La Hogue by the Diana and Niobe.

Next morning, in company with the Revenge, I joined the Diana off La Hogue, and observed one of the enemy's frigates aground near to St. Vaast (the day before she had been driven from her anchors in the gale from the southward), the other was anchored very near to the shore, between the forts of La Hogue and Tati-liou; it was impossible to approach her but under the fire of her guns and those of the two batteries which are very considerable. We tacked three times near to her, firing our broadsides whilst going about; the Revenge, Diana, and Niobe did the same; and it is with pleasure I inform you that the ships were manœuvred with precision, although the shot and shells fell in abundance around them, and the guns could only be brought to bear when head to wind.

At one o'clock the tide of ebb drifting us to leeward, obliged us to desist from the attack, and we anchored out of gun shot.

Some of our rigging is cut, and a shot in the head of the main-top mast, but otherwise our damages are not material. The Donegal had three men wounded, and the Revenge seven, two of whom are since dead.

Having on board some of Colonel Congreve's rockets, in the night I sent the boats under the command of Mr. Taylor, first Lieutenant of the Donegal, who fired several in the direction of the frigate.

Whether from their effect or from the effects of our cannonade, I know not, but at day-light we observed her near to the shore, and aground; the other was on her beam ends, and nearly dry at low water.

As they were now perfectly protected by the batteries, it did not appear to me that any further attempt could be made to destroy them; I therefore resumed my station with the Revenge, leaving the Diana and Niobe to watch the port of La Hogue.

Captain Grant will have detailed to you the particulars respecting his own ship and the Niobe; I have only to say, that the conduct of both, whilst acting with me, was such as was to be expected from well appointed English frigates.

One of the frigates I consider to be lost; she was first on her starboard beam ends, and when raised by the tide fell over on it, leaving her on her larboard side; the other must have suffered very considerably from our shot, and where she is aground is exposed to the east winds. I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) PULTNEY MALCOLM.

To Sir Roger Curtis, Bart. &c. &c. &c.

A list of men killed and wounded on board the Donegal, Diana, Niobe and Revenge, off La Hogue, November 15th, 1810.

DONEGAL.—John Rustern, quarter-gunner, severely wounded; James Cameron, landman, slightly wounded; John Halfpenny, private marine, slightly wounded.