

Ld. Sandwich
(Should precede 4204)

Fortescue 3327

x 4205

Admiralty May 15th 1781

3 quarters past seven a.m.

Lord Sandwich has the honour to send to your Majesty the dispatches received from Admiral Drake containing an account of the Dutch fleet being at sea; in consequence of which, Lord Sandwich proposes to send Admiral Parker immediately to Portsmouth to collect what ships he can & proceed without a moments loss of time to the Downs.

The ships that it is hoped may be in readiness are the

Victory	Magnanime
P/s Amelia	Sultan
Buffalo	Leander
Diligente	

Lord Sandwich thinks that with any five
of these ships Admiral Barker may put
to sea in quest of the Dutch fleet, and
he does not think there can be any
impropriety in borrowing the Sultan
& Magnanime for a short time, as
it will be unadvisable to trust the
India convoy to sea till we have
heard from Admiral Darby, and
know that the channel is clear from
enemies.

Three more small vessels are ordered
to look out for Admiral Darby, and
give him an account of La Motte
Piquets having fallen in with our
S^t Eustatia fleet, in hopes of his being
enabled thereby to intercept him before
his return to Brest.

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Majesty has been already informed of
this unpleasant affair, Lord Sandwich
sends the information received last
night from Ireland.

Your Majesty will have the goodness
to send back these letters & papers,
as they will be wanted in forming
the orders that must be dispatched
this morning to the different Ports.

[Faint, illegible handwriting on aged paper]

15 May 81