

Apr. 1 - 23 1781

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Extracts of Letters from Rear  
Admiral Sir Samuel Hood Bart.  
to Admiral Sir George Bridges  
Rodney Bart. Kn. of the Bath  
&c. &c. &c.

Extract of a Letter  
Dated 1<sup>st</sup> April  
1781

I begin to be extremely impatient for the honor of seeing, and acting immediately under your Flag, as I do not feel myself at all pleasant in being to Leeward, for should an Enemy's Fleet attempt to get into Martinique, and the Commander of it inclines to avoid Battle, nothing but a Skirmish will probably happen, which in its consequences may operate as a defeat to the British Squadron, though not a Ship is lost, and the Enemy suffer most.

If therefore your apprehensions are over with respect to an attempt upon St. Eustatius by a Coup de main, and think the Dutch Convoy safe from the Ships now at Fort Royal,

I most humbly beg leave to Suggest, with all due submission to your better and more enlightened Judgment; Whether it would not be more advisable, when the whole of the very Respectable Force you have done me the honor to commit to my Charge, are Watered,  
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Stored, Victualled and Collected together; was  
stationed to Windward, with a proper number  
of Frigates to look out; The Chance would not  
be abundantly more in my favor, for  
effectually crushing any Squadron of the  
Enemy's coming to Martinique: than by  
Cruizing before Fort Royal, But I most  
readily submit to your superior Knowledge  
and Experience, and shall cheerfully obey  
your commands on all occasions with the  
utmost fidelity.

Extract of a Letter

Dated 6<sup>th</sup> April  
1781.

The Letter that accompanies this  
was sent to Rear Admiral Drake by General  
St. Leger, which I send for your information,  
and though I have not a doubt of a very  
formidable Squadron of Men of War coming,  
I do not believe it is commanded by the  
Count D'Estaing, that Officer, I understand  
by Letters from London, having retired in  
disgust; But let the Squadron be more or  
less formidable, It is pretty certain, it has  
under its protection, a very great number  
of Merchant Ships, from whence it may  
be concluded the Men of War will be numerous,  
probably

Apr. 1 - 23 1781

(618)

probably Twenty, as is given out at Martinique by the Marquis D. Bouillie, which leads me to be very strong in my wishes for the honor of seeing you, with your whole Force, and I trust you will think the most eligible situation to cruise, will be to Windward of the Islands; for with a proper number of Frigates to look out to Windward of your Fleet, it will be impossible for the Enemy not to be seen.

I have expected with great impatience the sight of a Vessel from you, for the last Forty eight hours, having had the honor of writing you by the Sybil Yesterday evening, and two days after by a Schooner.

P.S. This great Convoy that is expected at Martinique, will I imagin be thought an object for every Ship under your Command, that can possibly be spared from other Services.

The Pegasus is probably by this, at Barbadoes, and I think it likely the Aurora may be there also, as I understand the greatest part of the Merchant Ships were with her after the Gale, consequently she must come on with them.

Extract

Extract of a Letter  
Dated 13<sup>th</sup> April  
1781

I am sorry to acquaint you, that the two Frigates are gone from Fort Royal Bay; They were seen yesterday evening, which proves to me, that Ships may get out unnoticed by keeping close under the land; In spite of all I am able to do: For the Squadron was so close in from Sun Set to Sun Rising, that several Shot were fired at, and went over some of the Ships in the course of the Night from the Shore: and at Day light I saw the Princesse and Invincible off the Diamond, and the Terrible and Belligueux off St. Piers.

Extract of a Letter  
Dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April  
1781

I am sorry to acquaint you, that Ships can sail from Fort Royal and St. Piers, and get into the latter Port, in spite of all I can do to prevent it, as they creep close along the Shore which is lined with Batteries.

The Monarch, Terrible and Intrepid have been several times checked in attempting to cut Vessels off from St. Piers; and the Intrepid the other day, had one man killed and eight wounded, four of which are since dead, and I am much afraid some of the Ships

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Ships will be crippled in their lower Masts,  
If they are, it will be a very serious Misfortune.

Having several French Merchants  
and Passengers in the Squadron, and hearing  
that one of the Cork Conway was carried into  
St. Piers; I took the liberty of sending a Flag,  
a Shore at Fort Royal, to propose an Exchange  
of Prisoners, as our Sick in the Squadron  
are very numerous indeed: The answer I got  
from the Marquis D' Bouillie was, That he  
could not consent to any Exchange of  
Prisoners, till he heard from his Court: -  
though he lamented very much the Misfor-  
tunes which the chance of War threw upon  
Individuals.

I send you herewith a French  
Gazette, which corresponds with information  
I have received from other Quarters.

The Princessa is so sickly, and her  
Mending so fast, I was obliged to order  
her to Gros Islet on the 21<sup>th</sup> to put the worst  
of her Scorbutic Men on shore, and after  
taking on board Twenty Seven Men  
Supernumeraries in the St. Vincente, to  
return to me immediately.

I thank God the Barfleur continues  
pretty healthy, I have got Lemons and  
Limes for my Poor fellows from every  
place

place I could, which has prevented the Scurvy  
from taking that root, I am sorry to say it has  
in other Ships.

Extract of a  
Subsequent Letter  
Dated 23<sup>d</sup> April  
1781.

Between ten and eleven o'clock last  
night the Drake Sloop joined me, and  
from Lieutenant Burr her late Commander  
I received the Account, and from Captain  
Curgewen the Letter from Captain Lisice  
of the Thetis, I have herewith the honor to send  
you.

I have dispatched the Drake in quest  
of the Santa Monica, with orders for her  
Commander to join the Thetis, and for the  
Captain of the Thetis to take her under  
his Command, and Cruise off Desada  
for the two French Frigates, which are  
certainly those that sailed from Port Royal,  
and as they did not care to attack the  
Thetis and Drake Sloop; It is pretty clear  
they are upon the look out for the expected  
Squadron and Convoy.

I wish at this time we had half a  
Dozen Frigates to Windward of the Islands;  
I have now only the Paccabunta with me,

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The Cyclops is at St Lucia for Wood,  
Water and Provisions. The former necessary  
article is not to be bought, and it not only  
requires time to cut it, But your Men are  
destroyed by it.

I cannot help repeating my Wish  
to be ordered to Windward.

Copy  
Jami Barty

Extracts from letters  
from Sir J. Wood to  
Sir G. B. Rodney