

Ministered Apr. 24

My dear General

Barfleur off Alcavala S.^t Domingo
April 22. 1782

After trying every method to induce Sir George Rodney to quit the Ville De Paris, and pursue the flying French fleet, to no purpose - In answer to a note I received from him on the 17th in the morning, I put the following P.S. "As I understand the Royal oak, Alcide & Centaur with the prizes Glorieux & Hector, are gone towards Jamaica, will they not be in great danger, from our being so far astern? This brought me a letter from Sir George of which N^o. 1 is a copy; and N^o. 2 is the copy of my letter to him / public /

Now where my dear General, was Sir George Rodney's judgement, to subject me with only ten sail of the Line, to fall in with twenty at least of the Enemy's; keeping at the same time twenty two with him, to take care of the Ville De Paris, without the smallest prospect of meeting a single French ship of war?

The Enemy's fleet, which that noble one of His Majesty's had put to flight on the 12th to the number twenty six including frigates, chased the Mona papase on the

18th

18th only the day before I was in it. If Providence was not to assist us so very kindly, as it has really done in many instances, what would become of our poor Country! It is dreadful to think of, and I have not patience, to dwell longer upon a subject, so truly mortifying, and, to be lamented; and will only add more, that after the fleet was brought to, at noon of the 13th. I expressed a wish to Sir George to add half a dozen ships of the Line and two frigates to my Division, and let me pursue the flying Enemy, and pledged myself to give him a good account of them; his answer was, we will all make sail as fast as we can; to which I replied you will be too late depend upon it, if you wait for the Ville De Paris. This passed on the 15th in the morning.

I am my dear General, with every sentiment of truth & regard

When I last saw Sir George on the 17th at Sun set, he was laying too with his whole fleet

Your most faithful
and affectionate, but much
mortified humble servant

J. M. H. B.

St. Louis St. Domingo April 24th 1782

You may assure the Friends of M^r. Shillingfleet, that he is well, and behaves so, in every respect, and will make a very excellent Officer

When I left Sir George Rodney on the 17th, he sent me a message that a ship would sail with his Duplicate Dispatches, in five or six days, but not till I rejoined him, and desired me to get my letters ready and upon my going on board the formidable on the 22^d. found the Eurydice, had gone for England on the 18th. This will shew why the Duplicates of my last letters, did not take that conveyance what dependance is there upon the word of such a man! and how is it possible to keep one's temper with him! I will however exert my utmost to do it but he pushes me to death.

I am to wait here till he brings up the Ville de Paris - If I may rely upon M^r. George; the Ceres will proceed to England immediately, upon his coming up; Captⁿ Dornell her Commander, I have long known, he is a Brave, cool, determined, and very intelligent Officer, with an excellent understanding

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I have desired him to wait upon you the moment
he is discharged from admiralty attendance, but to
send your letter immediately.

I have looked into Port Louis, not a ship there, I told Sir
George so, when I recd his order, wherein he expressed his
apprehension, that a part of the routed Fleet was there, after
I had given him most perfect information, that
the whole of it, except the ships I had taken, had gone
through the Mona Channel on the 18. The Caton & Jason
were two of the enemy's Van ships, which made two
attacks upon my Division - ^{on the 9th} no appearance yet of
the Warrior & Prince William, I therefore think the ships
they were in chase of, pushed for the Mona Channel
and as my friend Sir James Wallace would not quit
while he had the shadow of a prospect of coming up
with her, he will consequently be obliged to go on the
north side of St. Domingo - The Chace was the Astrea
Frigate of 40 Guns, and the Marquis de Bouthe was
supposed to be on board her -

I expect to see Sir George at daylight tomorrow

C P M.