

1781

Affaires relatives à la
prise de St Eustache
& au combat naval de
La Martinique en Avril

1781

Barfleur S. Eustatia Feb^r 7. 1781

My dear General

I have the honor to congratulate you on the Surrender of this Island, the Islands of S.^t Martins & Saba, with every thing in & belonging to them, to the Arms of His Majesty. upwards of 100 sail of Ships were in the Road, and were immediately taken possession of, amongst which were several Rebel Privateers & Letters of Marque fit for the Kings Service, and one Dutch Frigate of 38 Guns. May all His Majestys Enemies receive an equal chastisement to that now given to the ungratefull Dutch. The Blow is great indeed, not only to the perfidious States of Holland, but to France
and

and America. In order to obviate every
 Idea of Jealousy between the Army & Navy
 I took the Liberty of mentioning to Sir George
 Rodney & General Vaughan, that every thing
 respecting I^{le} Eustatia & I^{le} Martins, should
 become a joint concern, and herewith I
 send you an agreement drawn up and
 signed in my presence between General
 Vaughan & the Admiral, for I hope never to
 see any other contention between the two
 Corps, than which shall be most forward
 in Zeal & execution, in the service of our
 royal & much loved Master; and if His
 Majesty should graciously see fitt to order
 Dutch Captures to be divided, as French &
 American

American are, it is only to state the number
 & Rank of each Corps, to make an equal
~~share to every man~~ ^{share to every man}, which is my aim, in order
 not only to prevent the smallest degree of
 Jealousy, but to preserve the most perfect
 and uninterrupted Harmony, and good
 understanding, between His Majesty's forces
 both by Sea & Land

If you can have patience to read it, I
 will give you an account of myself, from
 my arrival in these Seas. My passage was
 fine to Barbadoes, but five weeks & four
 days from St. Helens, though I accompanied
 the Transports Storeships & Trade, to the South
 west of the Island of Corvo, and being then
 persuaded

persuaded. the Convoy was out of all danger
 on the 17th of Dec^r. I left it under the care of
 Captⁿ. Fitzherbert of the *Belligerent*, putting
 under his command the *Prince William*
DeGruy *Troin* Sloop & *Zily* Cutter, and
 made the best of my way, with the *Invincible*
Gibraltar, *Princesa* & *Panther* & *Sybil* frigate
 to Barbadoes agreeable to my orders; where
 I found a letter from Admiral Sir George
 Rodney, directing me to give him the earliest
 notice of my arrival, and saying he would
 come to me immediately - I instantly sent
 away the *Sylph* Sloop to ^{Mr} George, who joined
 me on the 12th of Jan^y with eight sail of the
 Line, and next ^{Day} Cap^t. Fitzherbert came in with
 the

the whole of his convoy. On the 21st I received
orders to proceed & cruise to windward of
Martinique, with nine sail of the Line & two
Frigates. On the arrival of the Chulders with
the very important dispatches, respecting the
States of Holland, Sir George sent a frigate
to me, to join him at Gros Islet Bay S. Lucia
as soon as possible, I immediately bore up
and we arrived within a few hours of each
other on the 29th; and sailed again the
following morning - on the 31st I was
detached with my Division to cruise between
the Islands of Nevis & Montserrat, to intercept
every thing bound to S^t. Eustatia, till Sir George
should join me with the Fleet, which he had
not

not then perfectly collected, ^{R. L. e} Admiral Drake
 being off St. Pierre Martinique - on the 2^d of
 Feb^r. I took a Dutch Sloop, which left this Island
 the night before, from the people of which
 I got an exact state of the situation of the place
 with an account, that a Dutch 50 gun ship
 having a flag on board & 24 sail of rich laden
 merchant ships had sailed for Europe at
 the same time - I immediately dispatched the
 Sylbil with this information to Sir George Rodney
 as I knew within a few leagues where he must
 be - just at sun sett a large ship appeared
 in sight, and made the signal for all Cruizers
 which I concluded must mean my Squadron
 I immediately bore up, and joined the Admiral
 at

at 10 o'clock when I received orders to
 proceed off this place at Daylight with
 eight sail of the Line, to prevent the departure
 of any ship or vessel, which I put in execution
 and stretched in a line at about half a mile
 under along the Road, and stood so far
 to the Southward, as to allow ^{me when I tack'd} to meet the Admiral
 (who was then in sight) in the center of the
 Bay, with the ships under my command
 in such a situation as to allow Sir George
 Rodney to place them asseable to his wishes
 At noon the Fleet anchored, and upon
 the return of the summons to surrender
 the Troops were abandoned - Sir George Rodney
 then

then dispatched the Monarch, /Cap^t Reynolds/ with
 the Panther & Sybil Frigate, after the Dutch Admiral
 and the Convoy, which sailed the first at night
 had wonderfull to say, every one were taken
 the next morning, fortunately the wind proved
 scant, and would not permit the heavy large
 merchant ships, to get through a narrow channel
 called the Dog & quickly near, about 20 Leagues
 from hence. - These ships appeared off from
 the hill, yesterday afternoon, where Sir George
 and I were with General Vaughan, and they
 were supposed to be five sail of the Line
 3 of 70 & 2 of 64 Guns, said to be expected
 here with a Convoy from Europe - Indeed the
 Terrible took 3 very rich ships, full of naval stores
 on

on the 4th in her way from Antigua, which left
 the Teseel under convoy of five sail of the
 Line, in company with several Indiamen &
 Ships bound to other parts, and parted company
 in the English Channel; some of the crew say
 all the men of war, are coming here, others
 that two of them are going to India

Sir George Rodney thought it right, which was
 perfectly my opinion also, that no ship should
 stir till after dark - The Dutch Flag was hoisted
 on shore, and on board some of His Majesty's
 Ships, as a sort of decoy - at 7 I received
 orders from Sir George to put to sea, at such
 an hour as I judged best, with the Marsieur,
 Alped, Invincible & Terrible - I sent to the
 several Captains to gett under weigh exactly
 at

at eight o'clock, without signal of gun or light
 at midnight I spoke to the headmost ship, and
 finding her to be one of the Dutch Convoy
 and that the rest, were the monarch &c
 I returned back with the *Marfleur* & *Invisible*
 leaving the *Alfred* & *Terrible* to assist Captain
 Reynolds in bringing his Prizes in; This is said
 to be one of the richest convoys, that ever
 left this Island valued at upwards of 200,000
 which together with the effects in *S^t. Gustavia*
 must be a most severe blow indeed, not
 only to Holland, but equally so, to our
 other Enemies - It was late last night when
 I anchored, and I knew not till then that
 a vessel would sail for England so soon

I therefore scrawl in a hurry, having many friends to give a line to.

May I beg you will do me the honor to present my most humble & unfeigned Duties to their Majestys. I am impatient to hear how our amiable young Prince does, after his long Cruise, ~~in~~ which I fear must have occasioned short allowance in many articles - and to be told this Royal Highness returned in health, will be joy to me not to be expressed.

I have the pleasure to assure you of my being perfectly ^{well} and that I shall ever remain

my dear General your very much obliged
& most faithful humble servant

James Brady

The Dutch man of war, made a lame defence against the monarch for about 15 minutes - The Dutch Admiral fell, having two musquet Balls through his body, Cap^t Reynolds remonstrated with him some time against a wanton defence, without a possibility of escaping -

If the possession of this Island is settled out of hand & we sail of the line, with as many frigates & smaller vessels, with only a 1000 Troops, were to run down to Curacao. The Amsterdammers would be totally ruined, it is a place of vast consequence & riches, and would I am confident be reduced without difficulty at this moment, by His Majesty's arms, with the above force, and surely it is an object, which I hope & trust the Commanders in Chief will attend to - An opportunity of this sort once lost, is perhaps never to be recovered