

Buxflour at Sea March 17th 1782

My dear General

After receiving three different orders for going to Sea and as often contradicted, since my return from the Cne de Sac, I have now the pleasure to acquaint you that I am working up to windward of Martinique, with eleven sail of the Line. I wished much for a few more which with the greatest caution, I took the liberty of suggesting to Sir George, so as not to appear to be obtruding my opinion improperly. It was before General Matthews, upon talking of the Enemy's Convoy from Europe. I observed, it was very likely, that as the Best Armament which sailed in Dec^r last, was to be escorted to Martinique, by nine sail of the Line that the Escort, would probably now be stronger, as the Court of France must know, that fifteen sail of the Line, have since, been sent hither from England now admit that to be the case, which is by no means improbable, should the Squadron be equal only sent to look out for the Convoy, to the men of war by which the Transports + Trade must escape? or should it

it not be stronger, so as to give a fair prospect for
destroying the whole? My opinion my dear General is
when I have the means to perform a service effectually
I will not subject any part of it to the least hazard
I am for doing nothing by halves.

Sir George Rodney has at Gros Islet now 20 sail of
the Line, as ready as the ships I have with me, and
indeed as far as they can be till the convoy arrives
from England - The Centaur & Alfred, are I believe
the only ships, that are not so, in the whole - they
are of my Division, one has been shifting a ~~board~~^{board}
the other a foremast, but both are now gone to the
Cue de Sac to compleat their water, and I dare say
will rejoin the Commander in Chief tonight or
tomorrow - so that I dare say I shall see Sir George
to windward in a very few days - a few ships
will I suppose be left to watch de Grasse in Fort
Royal Bay, to give immediate notice, if he goes to
Leeward. My opinion is he will not move, till the
European Armament, with Stores & Provisions arrive
and I cannot bring myself to think, the Spaniards will
feel

feel bold enough to attack Jamaica, without the aid of
the French. It appears to me therefore, that the most
material & important object to look to, is the intercepting
the expected reinforcement from Mexico; if we are lucky
enough to fall in with it; The Enemy are undone - This
is a language I hold to General Matthews on board the
formidable the two last days before I sailed, and to
which I attribute my having the arrogant added to
my division. The Triton frigate sailed, as escort to the
Paquet, a few hours after me. and as she is coming
near me, I cannot refrain giving you another short letter.

I have the pleasure to assure you, that
the most perfect harmony subsists between
Sir Jervis & me. But it is not so between
him & the Captains; He swears, and makes
use of such coarse language, that they are disgusted with him
almost to a man - They fly to me with their Grievances
I only laugh & tell them, he means to do no harm, and
endeavour all I can to keep them in humour, which
I will most assiduously continue to do; but I do believe
there never was a Commander in Chief, so universally
despised - I have the good fortune to stand high in the opinion
of the whole. They have confidence in me, which gives me hopes I
may be able to do some good most affectionately yours
J. M. Hood

Major General Bude

S. James's
London

By the
P. P. P. P. P.



1756