

Years and a Half, through a pretty considerable Variety of Services, I well knew the veteran Stuff which I had still left in Health to depend upon, for upholding the Character of British Seamen; and I felt my Mind at Ease as to the Termination of any Action with the Frigate in Sight only.

At Half past Nine she came within Hail, and hauled her Wind on our Weather Beam; and as I conceived she only waited to place herself to Advantage, and to point her Guns with Exactness, and being myself unwilling to lose the Position we were then in, I ordered One Gun to be fired, as a Trier of her Intention. It was so instantaneously returned, and followed up by her whole Broadside, that I am confident they must have done it at the Sight of our Flash. The Action of Course went on, and we soon discovered that her People would not or could not resist our Fire. At the End of about an Hour and Forty Minutes, during which Time we had Twice wore, and employed about Twenty of the last Minutes in Chace, she surrendered. At this Period she appeared most entirely disabled, and we had drawn up close alongside, with every Gun well charged and well pointed. It was, nevertheless, with considerable Difficulty that I prevailed on the Spanish Commander to decline the receiving of such a Broadside by submitting; and from every Thing which I have since learned, the personal Courage, Conduct, and Zeal of that Officer, whose Name is Don Thomas Ayalde, was such during the Action, notwithstanding the Event of it, as reflects on him the greatest Honor, and irresistibly impresses on my Mind the highest Admiration of his Character. After (from the Effect of our Fire) all his Booms had tumbled down, and rendered his waste Guns unserviceable, all the Standing Rigging of his lower Masts shot away, and I believe nearly every Running Rope cut through, and a great Number of his People killed and wounded, he still persevered (though he could rally but few of his Men) to defend his Ship, almost longer than Defence was justifiable Had there been the smallest Motion in the Sea every Mast must inevitably have gone by the Board.

Our Loss (which will appear by the inclosed List) has been less than could have been expected; but our Masts, Sails and Rigging were found to be pretty much cut up.

The spirited Exertions of every Officer, Man and Boy, belonging to the Ship I command, as well in the Action as in the securing Two disabled Ships, and bringing them instantly off from a critical Situation by taking the Prize in tow, and by their incessant Labour ever since, will, I trust, when their small Number is considered, place them in a Light superior to any Praise which I could bestow. I am even unwilling to speak of the particular Conduct of any of the Officers, but the Talents displayed by the First Lieutenant, (Devonshire) who was but just out of our Sick List, during the Action, added to his uncommon Fatigue in taking Care of the Prize, and the very able Manner in which he conducted and prepared to defend her, entitles him to this Distinction, and proves him highly deserving of the Recommendation you gave him, with his Appointment in the West Indies. And although I had rather any other Person should observe the Conduct of a Brother of mine in Action, and speak of it afterwards, yet I feel it to be my Duty, as Captain of the Ship, to state, that I thought Mr. Bowen's

(the Second Lieutenant) Conduct was particularly animating to the Ship's Company, and useful, from the great Number of Guns which he saw well pointed in the Course of the Action; added to which, from the Absence of the First Lieutenant on Board the Prize, the labouring Oar of this Ship has fallen on him; and, in my Mind, the Task we have had since the Action has been infinitely more arduous than that of the Action itself.

The Name of the Prize is the Mahonesa, carrying on the Main Deck Twenty-six Spanish Twelves, (weighing Eighteen Ounces more than our's) Eight Spanish Sixes on the Quarter Deck, and a Number of Brass Cohorns, Swivels, &c.; had on Board Two Hundred and Seventy-five Men, besides Six Pilots, qualified for the Mediterranean as high as Leghorn, and to be put on Board Admiral Langara's Fleet, which she had been sent from Carthageña to look for. She was built in 1789 at Mahon, is of very large Dimensions, measuring Eleven Hundred and Fourteen Tons and a Half Spanish, was before the Action in complete good Condition, and is considered by the Spanish Officers the fastest Sailer, one of the best constructed, and, what they attach considerable Importance to, the handsomest Frigate in their Navy.

Both the Frigates have this Moment anchored in Safety.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

R. BOWEN.

An Account of the Killed and Wounded in the Action between His Majesty's Ship Terpsichore and the Spanish Frigate Mahonesa, on the 13th of October, 1796.

Terpsichore mounts Thirty-two Twelve and Six Pounders; Complement of Men Two Hundred and Fifteen:

Killed.—None.

Wounded.—Mr. Richard Hobbs (Acting Boatswain) slightly in the Foot;
John Roberts (Quarter Master) lost his Left Thigh;
And Two Seamen.

Mahonesa, by the best Accounts I have been able to collect, had about Thirty killed or died of their Wounds the Day of the Action, and about the same Number wounded, several of whom are since dead.

Admiralty-Office, November 22, 1796.

Extract of a Letter from Vice-Admiral King'smill, Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Cork, to Ewan Nepean, Esq; dated on Board His Majesty's Ship L'Engageante, in Cork Harbour, November 14, 1796.

HIS Majesty's Ships and Polyphemus and Cerberus arrived here Yesterday Afternoon, the former not having seen any Thing worth noticing, and the latter having, as intimated in my last, captured L'Hirondelle (late Sans Culotte) Cutter Privateer, of Ten Guns and Sixty Men, and chased the Franklin Brig Privateer into the Squadron under Sir John Warren, who made a Prize of her. These Privateers, with the other Three taken by the Santa Margarita and Dryad, formed a small Squadron which had fitted out and sailed together from Brest to scour the Entrance of the English Channel, but have

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