

appeared of great Force; however the general Chase was continued, and the Signal made for a close Engagement; but our utmost Endeavours could not effect that, the Enemy industriously avoiding it, by always bearing up when our Ships got near them; and I was sorry to observe, that their Superiority over us in sailing gave them the Option of Distance, which they availed themselves of, so as to prevent our Rear from ever getting into Action; and being to Leeward they did great Damage to the Masts and Rigging, when our Shot would not reach them. The Ships that suffered most were those the Action began with, and the Grafton, Captain Collingwood, the Cornwall, Captain Edwards, and the Lion, Captain Cornwallis. The spirited Example of Vice Admiral Barrington, with the former Three, exposed them to a severe Fire in making the Attack; and the latter Three happening to be to Leeward sustained the Fire of the Enemy's whole Line as it passed on the Starboard Tack: The Monmouth likewise suffered exceedingly, by Captain Fanshaw's having bore down in a very gallant Manner to stop the Van of the Enemy's Squadron and bring it to Action; but from the very smart and well-directed Fire kept up by these Ships and others that were engaged, I am convinced they did the Enemy great Damage, although their Masts, Rigging and Sails appeared less injured than ours. The Four Ships last mentioned, with the Fame, being so disabled in their Masts and Rigging, as to be totally incapable of keeping up with the Squadron, and the Suffolk appearing to have received considerable Damage in an Attack made by Rear-Admiral Rowley upon the Enemy's Van, I took in the Signal for Chase, but continued that for close Engagement, formed the best Line which Circumstances would admit of, and kept the Wind to prevent the Enemy from doubling upon us, and cutting off the Transports, which they seemed inclined to do, and had the Latter very much in their Power, by means of their large Frigates, independent of Ships of the Line. The French Squadron tacked to the Southward, about Three o'Clock in the Afternoon; and I did the same, to be in Readiness to support the Grafton, Cornwall, and Lion, that were disabled, and a great Way astern: But the Lion being likewise much to Leeward, and having lost her Main and Mizen Topmasts, and the rest of her Rigging and Sails being cut in a very extraordinary Manner, she bore away to the Westward when the Fleets tacked; and, to my great Surprise, no Ship of the Enemy was detached after her. The Grafton and Cornwall stood towards us, and might have been weathered by the French if they had kept their Wind, especially the Cornwall, which was farthest to Leeward, had lost her Main Topmast, and was otherwise much disabled; but they persevered so strictly in declining every Chance of close Action, notwithstanding their great Superiority, that they contented themselves with firing upon these Ships, when passing barely within Gun shot; and suffered them to rejoin the Squadron, without one Effort to cut them off. The Monmouth was so totally disabled in her Masts and Rigging, that I judged it proper to send Directions in the Evening for Captain Fanshaw to make the best of his Way to Antigua; and he parted Company accordingly.

When we were close in with St. George's Bay, the French Colours were seen flying upon the Fort and other Batteries, which left no Doubt of the Enemy being in full Possession of the Island. To dislodge them was impracticable, considering the State of the two Fleets; I therefore sent Orders to

Captain Barker, the Agent, to make the best of his Way with the Transports to Antigua or St. Christopher's, which ever he could fetch, intending to keep the King's Ships between them and the French Squadron, which at the Close of the Evening was about three Miles to Leeward of us, and I had no Doubt, would at least be as near in the Morning; for although it was evident, from their Conduct throughout the whole Day, that they were resolved to avoid a close Engagement, I could not allow myself to think, that with a Force so greatly superior, the French Admiral would permit us to carry off the Transports unmolested; however as his Squadron was not to be seen next Morning, I conclude he returned to Grenada.

It is my Duty upon this Occasion to represent, that the Behaviour of the Officers and Men of His Majesty's Squadron was such as became British Seamen, zealous of the Honor of their Country, and anxious to support their national Character. The Marines likewise, and Troops that were embarked with their Officers in the King's Ships, behaved as brave Soldiers; and from the exemplary good Conduct of those who got into Action, from the visible Effect which their brisk and well directed Fire had upon the Enemy's Ships, and from that cool determined Resolution and very strong Desire of coming to a close Engagement, which prevailed universally throughout the Squadron, I think myself justifiable in saying, that the great Superiority in Numbers and Force would not have availed the Enemy so much, had not their Advantage over us in Sailing enabled them to preserve a Distance little calculated for deciding such Contests.

You will herewith receive a List of the Killed and Wounded: Vice-Admiral Barrington is among the latter, but his Hurt is slight, which is happily the Case with a considerable Part of the Wounded.

I am, SIR,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

J. BYRON.

LINE OF BATTLE.

The Suffolk to lead with the Starboard, and the Grafton with the Larboard Tacks on Board.

Hon. Vice-Admiral Barrington's Division,

		<i>Men. Guns.</i>	
Suffolk,	Rear-Admiral Rowley	617	74
	Capt. Christian		
Boyne,	Capt. Sawyer	520	68
	Capt. Fitzherbert		
Prince of Wales,	Hon. Vice Admiral Barrington	617	74
	Capt. Hill		
	Capt. Elphinston		
Magnificent,	Capt. Elphinston	600	74
Trident,	Capt. Molloy	500	64
Medway,	Capt. Affleck	420	60

Hon. Vice-Admiral Byron, Commander in Chief, his Division.

[*Ariadne Frigate to repeat Signals.*]

		<i>Men. Guns.</i>	
Fame,	Capt. Butchart	600	74
	Capt. Griffith		
	Capt. Gardner		
Sultan,	Capt. Gardner	600	74
	Hon. Vice-Admiral Byron		
Princess Royal,	Capt. Blair	770	90
	Capt. Bowyer		
Albion,	Capt. Bowyer	600	74
Stirling Castle,	Capt. Carkett	500	64
Elizabeth,	Capt. Truscott	600	74

Rear-