

from the State of the Weather, and I ordered all the Gun-Boats that had anchored to the Eastward of the Town to get as near the Shore as possible, to cover and assist the Troops in their Embarkation. The Batteries at the Town continued their Fire on the Wolvereene, Asp and Biter, and as the Wolvereene had received much Damage, and the Asp had been laying near Four Hours within 300 Yards of the Battery, I made their Signal to move, and soon after directed the Dart, Harpy and Kite to take their Stations, that the Enemy might be prevented from turning their Guns against our Troops; but it being low Water, they could not get so near as their Commanders wished. At Half past Nine the Minerva came in, and as I thought an additional Number of Troops would only add to the Anxiety of the General, from the little Probability of being able to embark them, I sent Captain Mackellar on Shore to report his Arrival with Four Light Companies of the Guards. In his Absence, Colonel Ward filled Two flat Boats with his Officers and Men, and was proceeding with every Zeal to join the Battalion of Guards, without considering the Danger he was exposed to in crossing the Surf, when Captain Bradby fortunately saw him, and advised him to return immediately to his Ship. At Twenty Minutes past Ten I had the Pleasure of seeing the Exploſion take place; and soon after the Troops assembled on the Sand Hills near the Shore; but the Sea ran so high that it was impossible to embark a single Man, therefore I could only make every Arrangement against the Wind moderated; and this Morning at Day-Light I went in Shore, in the Kite, for the Purpose of giving every Assistance, but I had the Mortification to see our Army surrounded by the Enemy's Troops; and as I had no Doubt the General had capitulated, I ordered all the Ships to anchor farther out, and I sent in a Flag of Truce, by Colonel Boone of the Guards and Captain Brown of the Kite, with a Letter to the Commandant, a Copy of which I inclose for their Lordships Information. At Ten this Morning the General's Aid-de-Camp, Captain Williamſon, came on Board, and though it was very painful to hear General Coote was wounded, after all his Exertions, yet it was very satisfactory to learn, that, under many disadvantageous Circumstances, and after performing a Service of such Consequence to our Country, the Loss, killed and wounded, was only between Fifty and Sixty Officers and Privates; and that the General capitulated in consequence of being surrounded by several Thousands of the National Troops.

I inclose, for their Lordships Information, a Copy of such Minutes as were left me by Captain Wilſon, from which their Lordships will see the Sluice Gates and Works are completely destroyed, and several Vessels, intended for Transports, burnt.

I this Morning learnt that the Canal was quite dry, and that the Works destroyed Yesterday had taken the States of Bruges Five Years to finish.

I hope their Lordships will be satisfied that the Enemy was surprized, and every Thing they wished was accomplished, although the Loss of the Troops far exceeded any Calculation, except under the particular Circumstances of the Winds coming to the Northward, and blowing very hard. If the Weather had continued fine the Troops would have been embarked by Twelve, at which Time the Return of killed and wounded did not exceed Four Rank and File.

I cannot help again noticing the particular good Conduct of Captain Mortlock, Lieutenant Edmond and Lieutenant Norman, and beg to recommend them to their Lordships Protection.

General Coote sent to inform me that he was highly pleased with the uncommon Exertions of Captains Winthrop and Bradby, and Lieutenant Bradby, who had acted on Shore as his Aide de Camp: He also noticed the Assistance he had derived from Captain Mackellar, after his Landing.

I take the Liberty of sending this Dispatch by Captain Winthrop, of the Circe, who commanded the Seamen landed from the different Ships, and as he had the particular Charge of getting the Powder and Mines up for the Destruction of the Works, in which he so ably succeeded, he will be enabled to inform their Lordships of every Circumstance. Captain Mackellar, with the Officers and Men on Shore, were included in the Capitulation: But I have not yet been able to collect an exact Return of the Number of Seamen taken.

I transmit you a List of Killed and Wounded on Board His Majesty's Ships; and I have the Honor to be,

S I R,

Your most obedient humble Servant,  
HOME POPHAM.

*His Majesty's Ship Expedition, Ostend Roads,*

S I R,

*May 20, 1798.*

I Have just heard with Concern that the British Troops and Seamen under the Command of Major-General Coote, and Captain Mackellar, of the Royal Navy, have capitulated to the Troops of the Republic, and I trust they will be treated with that Attention which is due to Officers and Men executing the Orders of their Sovereign.

It has been the invariable Rule of the British Government to make the Situation of Prisoners as comfortable as possible; and I am sure, Sir, in this Instance you will do the same to the Troops, &c. who have fallen into your Hands.

It will not be against any Rule to exchange the Prisoners immediately, but on the contrary add to your Name by marking it with Humanity and Liberality; and I give you my Word the same Number of Troops, or other Prisoners, shall be instantly sent from England to France, with such Officers as you shall Name, or as shall be named by the National Convention, provided no public Reason attaches against the release of any particular Person.

I have sent the Officers what Things they left on Board the Ship, and I am confident you will order them to be delivered as soon as possible.

I beg you will allow the Officers and Men to write Letters to England by this Flag, as a Satisfaction to their Families, it being impossible for me to know who have fallen or received Wounds, which I hope will be very inconsiderable from the Accounts I have received from the Shore.

I beg your Answer to this Letter without Loss of Time, and confiding in your Liberality towards the Troops under Capitulation to you.

I have the Honor to be,

S I R,

Your most obedient humble Servant,  
HOME POPHAM.

*To the Officer Commanding the  
Troops of the National Convention at Ostend.*