

SIR, *Shark, Port Royal, October 24, 1803.*
 THE accompanying Letter from Captain Bissell, of the *Racoon*, exhibits fresh Marks of his Gallantry and professional Ability, which I am confident will secure him the Honor of their Lordships' Notice and Protection.

I am, &c. J. T. DUCKWORTH.
Sir Evan Nepean, Bart.

SIR, *Racoon, Port Royal Harbour, Jamaica, October 20, 1803.*
 I BEG Leave to inform you, that in the Afternoon of the 13th October, when standing in for the Coast of Cuba, I observed several Vessels to Windward coming close along Shore, all of whom hauled in towards Cumberland Harbour before Sunset; having heard of the Evacuation of Port-au-Prince, I anchored in a small Bay, in Expectation of seeing them coming past us in the Night; Daylight of the 14th discovered to us Nine or Ten Sail, a few Miles to the Windward of us nearly becalmed; I got under weigh with a fine Land Wind, and chased them, at half-past Six, a Brig, Schooner, and Cutter, (full of Men,) hoisted French Colours, and fired Guns to Windward. The Brig attempted to get in Shore of us, while the other Two, with the Assistance of their Sweeps and Boats, endeavoured to join her. The Land Breeze however carried me within Gun-Shot of the Brig, and after firing a Broadside or Two at her, she struck. I had only Time to send an Officer, and a small Party of Men to secure her, before my Attention was called to the Schooner and Cutter, who had by this Time got nearly within Gun-Shot, and were firing at us. Calms and baffling Airs prevented me from getting nearer to them till Ten o'Clock, when the Sea Breeze set in; at Eleven they bore up together, evidently with a Determination to board us. The Cutter steering for our Bows, and the Schooner hauling out to pass astern, I shortened Sail to receive them, keeping the Brig under sufficient Command to counteract their Design; when within Pistol-Shot I fired a Broadside at the Cutter (which was as speedily returned with long Guns and Musquetry), then wore round, and fired the other into the Schooner, and so on alternately keeping up a running Fight, and preventing either of them from raking us. This Kind of engaging lasted more than an Hour, both Schooner and Cutter keeping up an incessant Fire of Musquetry; nor was it until the Cutter was literally beaten to a Wreck, and had many Men killed, that she struck her Colours. The Schooner seeing her Companion fall, made off under all Sail. Lieutenant Lawrence took Possession of the Cutter with peculiar Alacrity, and I then made Sail after the Schooner with a fresh Breeze. At One P. M. I again got within Gun-Shot of her, and after firing a few Shot she surrendered without further Resistance. After gaining Possession of the Schooner I chased another Brig (which proved to be an American), then stood in Shore to rejoin the Brig I had taken in the Morning, but had the Mortification to find, that while I was engaging the Schooner and Cutter, they had overpowered the Officer, and had run her on Shore on the Rocks, where they had all landed with their Arms. I have however got all my Men back safe. The Brig was called *La Petite Fille*, National Gun Brig, commanded by Monsieur Piquet, Lieutenant de Vaiffeau, and had on board One Hundred and Eighty Troops, including about Fifty Officers of all

Ranks. The Schooner *La June Aele* of Six small Guns, commanded by M. Serin, Lieutenant de Vaiffeau, and had on board Eighty Troops. The Cutter *L'Amelie*, commanded by Monsieur du Puy, Ensign de Vaiffeau, and carrying Four Long Guns and many Swivels, with upwards of Seventy Troops. The Two latter were also National Vessels, and had on board Twenty-two Officers.

The Commanders of these Vessels have since told me that they were apprised of our being on the Coast, and that they had planned their Mode of Attack in Cumberland Harbour, having determined on boarding us; their Loss is about Forty killed and wounded, I feel great Pleasure in informing you that I had not a single Man killed; the only Person hurt was Mr. John Thompson the Master, who received a violent Contusion, in the early Part of the Business, which deprived me of the farther Services of a truly brave and meritorious Officer. The active Conduct of Lieutenant Lawrence, throughout the Day, has fully established the Character you gave him, with his Commission. From the perfect Satisfaction the Crew had given me on former Occasions, and their steady and resolute Behaviour on this, I have no doubt if the Three Vessels had succeeded in boarding (which, had the Calm continued, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible to prevent) they would have met with a Resistance worthy of British Seamen, and that they would have had only to boast of a very dear bought Conquest.

The Damage the *Racoon* has sustained is immaterial, being principally in her Sails; but the very disabled State of the Prizes, and having expended nearly all the Shot on board, will, I hope, plead my excuse for returning to Port before I was regularly recalled. I have the Honor to be, &c.

(Signed) AUSTIN BISSELL.

To Sir John Thomas Duckworth, K. B.
 Rear-Admiral of the Red, and Commander
 in Chief, &c. &c. &c.

SIR, *Shark, Port Royal, Nov. 30, 1803.*
 THE Caracol Passage, the Eastern Entrance of the Harbour of Cape Francois, having afforded the Enemy the Means of obtaining Refreshments from Monte Christi, and the former Spanish Part of St. Domingo, which I was convinced must protract the Blockade, I directed Captain Loring to place a Frigate at the Entrance of Manchineel Bay, with the Hope of checking effectually that Intercourse; which I have Pleasure in being able to acquaint you, for the Information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, has been completely performed by Captain Mudge in the *Blanche*, and the Boats of that Ship, having taken and destroyed Twenty-four Sail of small Vessels in less than a Month, amongst which are the two recited in the accompanying Letters, wherein I feel their Lordships will think great Enterprise and Gallantry has been displayed, and most conspicuously in Mr. John Smith the Master's Mate, who I shall directly give an Order to act as Lieutenant till their Lordships' Pleasure is known.

I am, &c. J. T. DUCKWORTH.
Sir Evan Nepean, Bart.

His Majesty's Ship Blanche, Manchineel Bay, 4th Nov. 1803.

SIR,
 THIS Morning an armed Schooner was seen coming out of the Caracol Passage, which was instantly attacked by the Launch, under the Com-