

the Margin^{*}. were standing in to reconnoitre that Port.

As soon as I could give the necessary Directions to the Gun-Brigs to put themselves under my Orders, &c. I made sail in Pursuit of the headmost Praam Ship, which I brought to close Action at Fifteen Minutes past Five, in which I was very handsomely supported by the Gun-Brigs and Cutters, and continued it with great apparent Effect, till Thirty-five Minutes past Six, the Enemy's Fire being entirely silenced, and for the last Half Hour only keeping up a faint Fire of Musketry.

The Tide was however falling so rapidly, and the Enemy kept in such shoal Water that it was not possible to close with him, to take that Advantage which, by our Fire, we had so manifestly over him.

It falling also dark, and being in less than Three Fathoms Water, I considered it proper to haul off and anchor, having no Person on board acquainted with the Shoals to the Westward of Ostend.

It is with extreme Concern, I acquaint your Lordship, that in Lieutenant Ormsby's gallant Zeal to close with the Enemy, agreeably to my Orders, the Conflict took the Ground, and the Tide left her so rapidly that every Endeavour he used to get her afloat was unsuccessful, and he was under the Necessity of quitting her with his People.

The Darkeness that came on before the Close of the Action, prevented me from being aware of this unfortunate Accident till Lieutenant Ormsby came on board the Cruizer with his People after we had anchored.

I immediately ordered him with his People back to the Conflict, to use every Exertion to get her afloat when the Tide made, or, in Event his not being able to succeed, to destroy her, being then in Hopes that the Enemy were not aware of her Situation.

I sent the Admiral Mitchell Cutter to protect and assist him; and the Cruizer's Boats were also sent under Mr. Fothergill, Master of the Cruizer, who very commendably volunteered his Services.

The Ebb Tide prevented the Boats getting in for a considerable Time; when they got near they had the Mortification to find the Conflict high and dry on the Beach, and in complete Possession of the Enemy.

His Boats accordingly returned to the Cruizer at two A. M. making their Report of the State of the Conflict.

As I considered it my Duty to make every Attempt to save the King's Ship, or at least prevent her falling into the Hands of the Enemy, I determined to attack her with the two Cutters, by laying her on board at high Water, when I knew the Cutters could get close alongside of her. They were accordingly sent, having, in Addition to their own Crews, Lieutenant Ormsby, and the Whole of the Conflict's Ship's Company, to which I added ten picked Men and Half the Marines from the Cruizer, under the Orders of Lieutenant A. Garland, Acting Lieutenant of the Cruizer, the Whole being under the Command of Lieutenant Forbes of the Griffin Cutter.

Lieutenant Forbes proceeded with great Gallantry and Spirit to put his Orders in Execution, but found, on arriving close to her, the Enemy had

winded the Head of the Conflict in Shore, with her Head-sails full to forge her on the Beach, and had besides hove her close upon the Sand, as the Tide rose, it not being therefore possible to carry her in this Situation, he returned to the Cruizer.

It is with great Pain I have to relate to your Lordship the Cutter received very considerable Damage in standing in, from the Howitzers and Field Artillery which the Enemy had collected on the Beach during the Night, by which one Man was killed and seven wounded, amongst the latter, much have I to regret, that Lieutenant A. Garland, Acting Lieutenant of the Cruizer, has lost his right Leg very high up, who was with admirable Gallantry, with his Party, getting into the Boats to board the Enemy, even under the discouraging Circumstances of her being still aground when he received the Wound.

I hope it will not be thought intrusive, although it has not been my Fortune to meet with that Success which the gallant Exertions of the Officers and Men under my Command entitled them to, but only to relate Misfortune, if, in Justice to their Merits, I beg to convey to your Lordship the strongest Testimony of the Zeal and Gallantry with which they closed with the Enemy.

I must also intrude on your Lordship to recommend to your Protection (if he survives his Wound) Lieutenant A. Garland, Acting Lieutenant of the Cruizer, who has served his Time and passed, and whose general good Conduct as an Officer, since he has been with me, entitles him to my warmest Approbation, independent of his late Misfortune, which I trust will plead my Excuse for thus trespassing on your Lordship.

I enclose the Copy of a Letter from Lieutenant Ormsby to me, giving the Particulars of the unfortunate Loss of the Conflict, which leaves me nothing to add, but to repeat my Admiration of his Conduct whilst engaged with the Praam, and to regret the sad Accident by which that Vessel is got into the Possession of the Enemy.

I have directed Lieutenant Hinton, with the Gun Brigs, to watch the Conflict; and, should they succeed in getting her afloat, to attack her; but, from the Appearance of the Weather, and the Wind being to the Northward, I am of opinion she will go to Pieces on the Beach.

I herewith enclose a List of the Killed and Wounded. None of the Gun-Brigs have suffered in their Masts, &c. nor has the Cruizer received any material Injury, except her Sails, standing and running Rigging, which are much cut.

One of the Praams was observed by the Boats to be high and dry on the Beach at Ten o'Clock this Morning, about Three Miles to the Westward of the Conflict, but, she got off, I apprehend, at high Water, and proceeded to the Westward.

I have the Honor to be, &c.

JOHN HANCOCK.

List of Killed and Wounded.

Cruizer.—1 Lieutenant, 2 Seamen, and 1 Marine (badly), wounded.

Blazer.—None killed or wounded.

Conflict.—1 Seaman, killed; 5 Seamen, wounded.

Griffin.—2 Seamen, wounded.

Tigrefs.—No Report.

Admiral Mitchell.—None killed or wounded.

* Blazer, Conflict, Tigrefs, Admiral Mitchell, Griffin, and Escort.