

though with much Difficulty and Danger. I had been on Shore to expedite the Sailing of the Convoy, and was not present in this early Part of the Action, for, till now, the Centurion had been under the Direction of Lieutenant James Robert Philips, the First Lieutenant; and, before I proceed any further in this Account, permit me to notice the judicious Conduct of this deserving and old Officer, and his gallant Defence of the Ship against so superior Force as that of the Enemy. I hope, Sir, his Conduct will be thought worthy of a Reward, and that he will be esteemed deserving of Promotion.

On my coming on board I found the Sails and Rigging so very much cut as to render the Ship not in a State to be worked, and therefore anchored at the Back of the Surf, about a Mile and a Half to the North East of the Town; this Situation was the best I had in my Power to take, both for Defence, and to prevent her falling into the Possession of the Enemy if overpowered.

A Battery of Three Guns at the Town, under the Command of Colonel Campbell, of His Majesty's 74th Regiment, had kept a Fire on the Enemy whilst within Reach in the Roadstead, but now we were too far distant to receive any Support from it. I sent on Shore to request Guns might be brought on the Beach nearer us; this was a Thing, I have been since convinced of, totally impracticable, or it would have been done. We prepared again for Action; and, whilst thus employed, the Enemy, in the Offing, wore and stood towards us; the Marengo, after having repeatedly tried the Range of her Guns, came to an Anchor abreast of us, and about a Mile distant; clewed up her Topsails, furled her Courses, and commenced cannonading. This threatening Appearance of being determined to persevere and to succeed only served to animate the Officers and Men of His Majesty's Ship to greater Exertions of Defence with the Lower Deck Guns, the only ones that would reach the Enemy, for she was too far distant for the Carronades, but all the Enemy's Shot reached us. In the mean Time one of the Frigates kept under Sail on our Quarter, and nearer than the Marengo, and annoyed us much by her Fire; the other Frigate carried off the Indiaman from her Anchorage in the Road.

At a Quarter past One P. M. nearly two Hours after this cannonading had commenced, and which had been kept up with Vigour on both Sides, the Marengo cut her Cable, hoisted her Jib, and stood to Sea. By some of her last Shot our Cable was cut, and we made some Sail, and got further off Shore before we brought up with the Sheet Anchor. When the Marengo first made Sail I supposed she intended to make a short Stretch, tack, and renew the Action nearer, and made all necessary Preparation to receive her, but she, Frigates, and Prize Indiaman, stood to Sea, and a little before Sunset bore up to the North-East, towards the Bottom of the Bay.

What Damage the Enemy has sustained, or from what Cause they declined further Contest with us I cannot tell.

After this full Account of the Transactions of the Day, I feel it a Duty incumbent on me not only to repeat the high Sense I have of Lieutenant Philips' Services, but likewise to inform you that the other Lieutenants of this Ship, Lieutenants David Pringle,

Richard Coote, and William Fairbrother Carrol, displayed great Gallantry and Spirit on the Occasion; the last mentioned, Lieutenant Carrol, though a young Officer, has seen much Service, and as his Commission of Lieutenant is not yet confirmed by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, may I request that you will be pleased to represent his great Merit, to induce their Lordships to do it. To the Zeal and Energy of Lieutenant Warring of the Marines, I am much indebted.

To insert any Thing in this Letter in praise of the Behaviour of the veteran and gallant Crew of His Majesty's Ship Centurion, must be needless to you, Sir, who are well acquainted with it, but I cannot refrain from saying that they displayed great Experience, and cool Courage, and the good Discipline of the Ship was conspicuous, and does great Credit to their proper Compauder, Captain Rainier.

His Majesty's Ship has received considerable Damage in her Masts, Yards, and Rigging. The Fore-mast, Mizzenmast, and Mainyard, are badly wounded, as well as several smaller Masts and Yards; several Shot remain in the Bottom between Wind and Water, one came through into the Gunner's Store-Room; but for your full Information of Particulars there accompanies this detailed Reports of Damages sustained in the Gunner's, Boatswain's, and Carpenter's Departments, as far as they have been yet ascertained. It is with Pleasure I acquaint you that very few Men, considering the long Action, have suffered, none were killed, and only nine wounded, one of them is since dead, the others are not in apparent Danger.

I have received all the Assistance that this Place could afford me from Colonel A. Campbell, of His Majesty's 74th Highland Regiment, Commanding Officer of the District, and from all the Company's Servants, both Civil and Military, at this Settlement.

I am, &c. (Signed) JAMES LIND.  
*Peter Rainier, &c. &c. &c.*

SIR, *Trident, Madras Road, Oct. 1, 1804.*  
I AM to acknowledge the Receipt of your Letter of the 19th ultimo, informing Particulars of your proceeding in Execution of my Orders, and of the very noble Defence you made in His Majesty's Ship Centurion, under your Command, in Vizagapatam Road the preceding Day, against the formidable Attack of so superior a Force of the Enemy, as described in your Letter, led on by the French Admiral, Linois, in the Marengo; the gallant and spirited Conduct displayed on this Occasion by yourself, Officers, and Crew, merits the highest Applause, wherein you not only saved His Majesty's Ship under your Command from falling into the Enemy's Hand, as well as from Shipwreck, by running her on Shore, as a very obvious Resource that offered to prevent it, but gave the French Rear-Admiral a complete Defeat.

I shall not fail to forward your Letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty, for their Lordships' Information by the present Opportunity, and have no Doubt but their Lordships will bestow on you some honorable Acknowledgment of their Approbation of your gallant Conduct.

I remain, &c. PETER RAINIER.  
*To James Lind, Esq. acting Captain of His Majesty's Ship Centurion.*