

her being purchased into His Majesty's Service. I shall take upon me to direct Commissioner Inglesfield to cause the proper Officers of His Majesty's Dock Yard to value her Hull, Stores, &c. agreeable to their Lordships' Instructions on that Head.

I have the Honor to be, &c.

A. MITCHELL.

*His Majesty's Ship Leander, off St. David's Head, Bermuda, Wednesday 6th March*

SIR, 1805, at Ten A. M.

I HAVE the Honor to inform you, that I proceeded to Sea, and cruized in His Majesty's Ship under my Command, according to your Orders; dated the 13th of last Month.

On Saturday the 23d February, at Twelve o'Clock at Noon, a Sail was seen from the Mast-Head, bearing South of us; the Weather at this Time was hazy, with Squalls of Wind and Rain from the Northward. All sail was immediately made in chace, the Weather becoming still more hazy, in a few Moments we lost Sight of the Chace; at half-past Two o'Clock it cleared away a little to the Southward, and we again got Sight of her. I found we had considerably neared the Chace, and that it was a large Ship under Jury Masts, standing to the South-East. At Three o'Clock we saw another Ship a short Distance from the Chace, steering the same Course, also under Jury Masts, in Appearance a much larger Vessel. As we closed them very fast, we soon clearly saw they were both Frigates; on their making us out to be a Man of War, they closed to support each other, fired a Gun to Leeward, and hoisted French Ensigns from their Main-Stays; at Four o'Clock we were within Gun-Shot of them, they separated, the Frigate nearest to us put before the Wind, the other steered with it, on her Larboard Quarter. By half-past Four o'Clock we got within Mullet-Shot of the smallest Frigate, gave her one of the Main-Deck Guns; when, after a few Minutes Hesitation, she hauled down her Colours, and hove to.

On my hailing this Frigate, I am sorry to tell you, Sir, that I was informed by them, she was His Majesty's Ship Cleopatra, of Thirty-two Guns, lately commanded by Sir Robert Lawrie, Bart. She was taken on Sunday the 17th of February, after having brought to and sustained a most severe and gallant Action for the Space of Three Hours and a Quarter, by a French Frigate nearly double her Force, in Size, Complement of Men, and Weight of Metal.

Observing that the Part of the Crew left on board her belonging to His Majesty's Ship Cleopatra, had come on Deck, and taken Possession of her on the Ship striking to us: I hailed, ordered them to make sail, and steer after His Majesty's Ship Leander. Again made sail in Chace, and in about an Hour's Time got alongside the French Frigate; she hauled down her Colours, and struck to us without a Gun being fired on either Side.

On hailing the French Frigate, you, Sir, may easily judge how happy I must have felt, on hearing I was answered by my Friend Sir Robert Lawrie, who told me he was well, and that the Ship was La Ville de Milan, Nineteen Days from the Island of Martinique, bound to France.

La Ville de Milan is a remarkably fine and handsome Frigate, about one Year old, One Thousand

Two Hundred Tons Burthen, mounting Fourteen long Nine-Pounders on her Quarter-Deck, Six long Nine-Pounders on the Forecastle, Fifteen Ports of a Side on the Main-Deck; when she sailed from France, had Twenty-eight Eighteen-Pounders mounted on it—now Twenty-six; Two were landed from her at Martinique.

When the Action commenced between La Ville de Milan and His Majesty's Ship Cleopatra, she was commanded by Monf. Reynaud, Capitaine de Vaisseau, had on board Three Hundred and Sixty Men as her Complement, besides a Number of Officers and Soldiers of the French Army, going Passengers to Europe.

The Officers of La Ville de Milan agree in saying, that having Dispatches on board for France, with Orders not to speak any Thing during their Passage, every Thing was done in their Power to avoid being brought to Action by the Cleopatra.

Monf. Reynaud was killed by the last Shot fired from the Cleopatra; he was esteemed an experienced and active Officer, and had served in the late King of France's Service as an Auxiliary Officer. He sailed in La Ville de Milan from L'Orient, the 1st of last August, as Commodore of Six of their largest Frigates, with Troops embarked on board them, to be landed on the Island of Martinique; after having performed this Service, he was ordered, as the French Officers express it, to make a Sweep through the Islands.

Monf. Guillet, Capitaine de Frigate, and Second Captain of La Ville de Milan, commanded when she struck to us, and Monf. Carron, her Second Lieutenant, had the Command of the Cleopatra.

It is not possible for Officers to speak in stronger Terms than the French Officers do in Praise of Sir Robert Lawrie's Perseverance in so long a Chace, except it is in the Praise they bestow on him, his Officers, Seamen, and Marines for their gallant Conduct during so long and severe an Action.

It is a very painful Part of my Duty to be obliged to inform you, Sir, that your eldest Son, who was doing Duty as an acting Lieutenant, is included among the Number badly wounded on board the Cleopatra: as soon as the Weather admitted of his being removed, I had him brought on board this Ship, and I have great Pleasure in telling you he is much recovered; and from the Experience, great Care and Attention of Mr. Clifford, Surgeon of the Leander, I have every Reason to believe that you will, in a short Space of Time, have the Satisfaction of finding him once more gallantly exerting himself for the Honor, and in the Defence of his King and Country. Sir Robert Lawrie speaks in the highest Terms of his Conduct, and, indeed, of that of all the Officers, Seamen and Marines of His Majesty's Ship Cleopatra.

Sir Robert has, at my Request, been so kind as to take Charge of the Cleopatra till she arrives in Port. I have given Mr. Nairne, First Lieutenant of His Majesty's Ship Leander, Charge of La Ville de Milan; the Length of Time he has had the Honor to serve under your Flag would make it superfluous in me to attempt to point out to you, Sir, his meritorious Services and Abilities as an Officer; the only Comment I can make on his Conduct on this Occasion, is, that nothing can exceed the Exertions he has made in putting La Ville de Milan in a sea-worthy State.

