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*Downing-Street, December 13, 1808.*

A DISPATCH, of which the following is a Copy, has been received by Viscount Castlereagh, One of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, from Lieutenant-General Sir John Stuart, commanding His Majesty's Forces in Sicily.

MY LORD, *Messina, September 20, 1808.*

HAVING been apprised that a large Convoy of the Enemy, consisting of a Number of Coasting Vessels, said to be charged with Contributions in Kind from the Two Provinces of Calabria to the Neapolitan Government, were assembled at Diamante, near the Gulf of Policastro, under the Protection of Four Gun-Boats and heavy Batteries on the Shore, I detached Lieutenant-Colonel Bryce, of the Royal Engineers, with the Troops mentioned in the Margin \*, to co-operate with the Commanders of His Majesty's Sloops Halcyon and Weazel, and with a small Naval Equipment of His Sicilian Majesty, in the Endeavour to take or destroy them.

Inclosed I have the Honour to transmit to your Lordship the Report of the above-named judicious Officer, stating the entire Success of the Enterprize entrusted to his Conduct.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

J. STUART.

*Right Honourable Viscount Castlereagh.*

\* The Regiment of Malta, commanded by Major Hammill; 150 Rank and File of the 58th Regiment, under Captain O'Brien; a Detachment of 50 Men of the German Legion; a Detachment of Artillery, with Two Six-Pounders and One Howitzer, under Captain Campbell.

SIR, *Off Diamante, Sept. 8, 1808.*

I DO myself the Honour to acquaint you, that the Detachment you were pleased to put under my Orders has successfully executed the Service in View, by capturing, in Conjunction with Captain Pearce of the Royal Navy, a Flotilla of Thirty-eight Sail of the Enemy's Vessels, of which Four are large Gun-Boats, under the Town of Diamante, where they had been blockaded with much Perseverance by Captain Prescott of His Majesty's Brig the Weazel.

We were baffled by Calms during Five Days on the Passage from Milazzo, on Three of which we must have been distinctly seen from the Enemy's

Coast. And on examining the Position taken here, I found it very respectable, as the Town of Diamante, which covered the Vessels ranged on the Right and Left of it, stands on a Peninsula nearly inaccessible on Three Sides, the Fourth is protected by difficult Inclosures, and there is, besides, a Building of considerable Strength commanding the whole.

Under these discouraging Circumstances, augmented by the Non-Arrival of the Sicilian Gun-Boats, and the Absence of Two of the Transports, it required the fullest Confidence in the Conduct of Major Hammill, and the Troops intended to be landed, to induce me to hazard an Attempt on the Town, without the Possession of which I saw nothing effectual could be done. After the strong Building abovementioned had been successfully cannonaded for several Hours by Captains Pearce and Prescott of the Royal Navy, and the Chevalier de Balsamo, commanding a Galliot of His Sicilian Majesty, who were indefatigable in their Exertions, Two Hundred and Fifty Men of the Regiment of Malta, under Major Hammill, and One Hundred of the 58th Regiment, under Captain O'Brien, were landed at Daybreak this Morning, about Half a Mile to the Northward of the Town, accompanied by a Howitzer and Two Three Pounders, commanded by Captain Campbell of the Royal Artillery. The Enemy, who consisted of about Four Hundred Men of the Civic Guard, with a Proportion of French Troops, were gradually forced back through the Underwood upon the Town, which, however, they did not attempt to defend, but took to the Mountains; and we were enabled to turn their Batteries, of Four heavy Guns, on the Beach to the Southward of the Town, without sustaining any Loss, when the whole of their Vessels fell into our Hands. I beg Leave to express great Satisfaction with the judicious Conduct of Major Hammill; and Thanks are due to Captain Campbell, commanding the Artillery, Captain O'Brien, commanding the 58th, and Lieutenant Lawson of the Engineers, who did me the Favour to attend me on Shore.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

ALEX. BRYCE,

Lieutenant Colonel, Royal Engineers.

Lieutenant-General Sir John Stuart, K. B.

Commander of the Forces.