

Admiralty-Office, July 4, 1812.

Copy of a Letter from Captain Usher, of His Majesty's Ship Hyacinth, addressed to Commodore Penrose, at Gibraltar, and transmitted by the latter to John Wilson Croker, Esq.

His Majesty's Ship Hyacinth, off Almunecar, May 27, 1812.

SIR,

I HAD the honour to inform you, in my letter of the 20th instant, that the Termagant had destroyed the castle at Nersa, and that the Guerillas came down from the mountains and entered the town; I have now to acquaint you that I went on shore with Captain Hamilton, and waited upon the Guerilla leader, who informed me that the French had retreated to Almunecar, seven miles to the eastward, and that they had three hundred men there; and considering himself strong enough to attack them, he proposed marching upon it without loss of time. As I was desirous to render the Guerillas every assistance in my power, I promised him to anchor the ships in a position to place the enemy between our fire, which gave him great satisfaction, and his men great confidence. I accordingly bore up at four o'clock the following evening (20th instant) with His Majesty's ships as per margin*, and anchored at point-blank range before the castle, which we silenced in less than an hour. As the Guerillas were to have arrived at seven o'clock, and there was no appearance of them at eight, Captain Hamilton volunteered to return to Nersa in his gig, to learn if any thing had occurred to prevent their moving forward; and at four in the morning he returned, and informed me that a reinforcement which they expected had not arrived, and that they waited for them before they could advance. At seven o'clock the enemy again opened his fire, having during the night mounted a howitzer in a breach made in the covered way to the castle; but by ten o'clock he was again silenced, and driven with great loss into the town, where they fortified themselves in the church and houses. Desirous of sparing the unfortunate inhabitants whom the French had thus cruelly exposed, I ceased firing; and having destroyed a privateer which lay at anchor under the castle, I at two o'clock weighed and ran down to Nersa, for the purpose of concerting plans with the Guerillas. On my arrival I had the satisfaction to meet a division of Ballesteros's Guerillas, commanded by Colonel Febrien, an officer of the truest patriotism, who, partaking of all the zeal of his General, immediately put himself and troops at my disposal. The roads through the mountains being very tedious, and as no time was to be lost, I resolved to take the infantry, consisting of about two hundred, on board; and I ordered the cavalry to move forward through the mountains immediately, and take a position in the rear of the enemy, whilst the infantry, with all the small-arm men and marines, were to land on his flanks. I am sorry that the delay of a calm gave the enemy time to learn our combined movement, as he instantly fled with great precipitation, and joining a corps of two hundred at Motril, within four miles of Almunecar, he retreated upon Grenada.

As soon as I arrived at my anchorage, I sent

* Termagant, Basilisk.

Lieutenant Spilsbury and a Guerilla officer to hoist the respective flags on the castle; and immediately began to demolish the works, which are exceedingly strong, as it is built on a peninsula of high rock, scarped all round the sea face, and a wall twenty feet high. At the land side the rock is excavated nearly thirty feet deep and sixty wide, with a narrow drawbridge, which is the only entrance into the castle. I intend to fill up as much of the ditch as possible by springing mines under each bastion. I found in the castle two brass twenty-four-pounders, six iron eighteen-pounders, a six-pounder and howitzer, which were spiked by the enemy. He has left a number of deserters, principally Germans and Flemings, who inform me that they were the whole of the foreigners in this battalion of the 32d regiment; they likewise inform me that they have long looked for an opportunity to desert, as they were dragged from their families, and forced into the French service: one of them has been eight years from his country. The enemy's loss was very severe, but cannot be ascertained, as the wounded were carried off in waggons.

I feel greatly indebted to Captain Hamilton for the able assistance he rendered me, and the judicious position he anchored his ship in; likewise to Lieutenant French, of the Basilisk, who opened and supported a warm and well-directed fire upon the enemy, while the ships were heaving in their springs to bring their broadsides to bear.

I am happy to inform you that we have had no loss, except the Termagant one man wounded, and the Basilisk one slightly. The privateer was one of Barbastro's small vessels, armed with two guns, and thirty or forty men. I cannot conclude without informing you that the officers and men wounded so recently at Malaga came to their quarters. Lieutenant Spilsbury, whose wound is still open, and Mr. Bell the boatswain, who lost his arm, did not spare themselves.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) THOS. USHER.

To Commodore Penrose, Gibraltar.

Carlton-House, July 1, 1812:

The Prince of Wales has been pleased to appoint Joseph Jekyll, Esq. of the Inner Temple, one of His Majesty's Counsel learned in the Law, to be His Royal Highness's Attorney General.

The Prince of Wales has also been pleased to appoint Samuel Shepherd, His Majesty's eldest Serjeant at Law, to be His Royal Highness's Solicitor General.

Commissions signed by the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Kent.

Blackheath Regiment of Local Militia.

Adjutant Thomas Payler to be Captain, by Brevet.
Dated June 22, 1812.

Bridge-Hill Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry.

Eaton Monins, Gent. to be Cornet, vice Taylor, resigned. Dated June 27, 1812.