

On the 7th two Spanish Sloops were brought into Jamaica, loaden with Tobacco and Sugar, bound from St. Jago to Carthagena, and had been taken by the Greenwich and Adventure.

*Extract of a Letter from Captain John Ambrose, of his Majesty's Ship the Rupert, to Vice-Admiral Mathews, dated Sofa Bay, 4 March 1742.*

WE were very unlucky on our first Coming here, as we did all that was possible for Men to do to intercept their Fishing Boats, or take some Person from the Shore, to gain Intelligence, but to no Effect. We landed on the small Island to the Southward of St. John's; we had our Men under the Protection of our Guns, as nothing could pass to hurt them; but could gain no Intelligence, a Party of Horse and Foot, of about 200 Men, constantly patrolling along Shore, from the Bottom of the Bay of Sofa to Vineros, alarming the Shore by continual Fires. The 1st of March, at Twelve at Night, we saw a small Vessel; I imagined it was a Decoy, that they thought we would send our Boats after her, and then they would man the Barks and Boats that lay at Vineros and Alcanaria, and cut our Boats off: We kept Sight of her till Three, and found she stood away to the S. E. and the Wind coming off the Land, I could prevent any other Boats going to her Assistance. I then made the Signal for the Boats, mann'd and arm'd, to chace; at Five, proving little Wind, my Barge came up with her, and did intend to lay her on Board; on which the Chace fired some Guns at them, one Shot went through the Barge, but hurt nobody. I made the Signal for the Boats to leave off Chace. Captain Hughes and I got under Sail as quick as possible; as all our Boats were out, and there being but little Wind, it was a great Hindrance to the Ships Sailing to keep them in Tow: I let slip all my Boats, and made the Signal for Captain Hughes to take them up; at Nine I came up with the Chace and took her, she proving a Spanish Barco Longo, called the Nostra Senora del Carmen, Bartholomew Savorido, Master, four Carriage and ten Swivel Guns, and 33 Men, bound from Malaga to Barcelona, in the King of Spain's Service, laden with 1000 Quintals of Lead for Musket Ball, and 300 Pieces of Timber for the Use of the Artillery; the Taking of this Vessel will be a good Piece of Service, as it will be a great Disappointment to the Enemy. Captain Hughes not bringing too, to take the Boats in Tow, as he was to Windward of me, and fear'd the Chace would eat me out of the Wind, my Boats were a great Way a Stern by the Time I took the Vessel. I soon after saw another Sail, I made the Signal for Captain Hughes to chace and leave his Boats, which I would take in Tow, as I was obliged to stand back for my own, and desired, when he had done his Chace, to join me in Sofa Bay. At Twelve o'Clock he run his Chace ashore at the West End of the Town of Vineros; he anchored and kept firing his Guns on the Bark and Town, to prevent the Peoples unloading or burning of her, till the Boats came down which were all with me.

Whilst this was doing he observed a Barco Longo and two large Sattees under the Castle of Penicola, and believing such Information might be got from the Spaniards on board me, with Regard to the Strength and Situation of that Place, as might make the Destroying of them very practicable, if both Ships were toge-

ther, made the Signal to speak with me. I was then at an Anchor in the Bay of Sofa; I weighed immediately, and by Four got to him with all the Boats, and came to an Anchor half Gun Shot of the Town and Vessel, in a Foot less than five Fathom Water. We sent all the Boats to take the Vessel off, but did not fire a Gun from our Ships until we first saw whether they would fire upon our Boats: On the Boats boarding the Vessel, they kept a smart Fire with Small Arms from little Intrenchments they had made from behind the Walls and Corners of the Streets and Houses, that were contiguous; upon which we both played with our Batteries below and aloft, against the Town, and where we saw the Fire come from, and in a little Time silenced them; but growing dark, with a great Surf on the Shore, we could not destroy her effectually that Night. There happened to be a French Tartan at an Anchor in the Road, which Captain Hughes ordered to come from between him and the Enemy, and place himself without him. When we left off Firing, I sent for the Master of the Tartan, and desired he would go on Shore with a Message to the Governor or Commanding Officer of the Place, to tell him, that he must ransom the Town next Morning; or that we should lay it in Ashes. They sent to beg that we should give them Time till Six next Morning; that they had sent an Express to the Intendant General of the Province, and were certain they would be able to give us a satisfactory Answer; accordingly, at Six in the Morning, I sent the Master of the Tartan on Shore, who brought me Word, that they had thrown 200 Troops more into the Town to prevent our Landing, and that they desired us to do what we pleased; that the Inhabitants would ransom the Town, but the Soldiery would not let them. Upon which we warped our Ships in a proper Station against the Town, sent our Boats and burnt the Vessel effectually, and then brought a Spring upon our Cables, and began to batter the Town at half an Hour past Nine, which we continued without ceasing till One: I fired 520 Shot, and Captain Hughes almost as many. We saw we had done considerable Damage to the Town; but the Wind coming out of the Sea, we were obliged to get away as fast as we could, our Ships being so near the Shore, it was not safe to lie there longer. Before I weighed I sent the Master of the Tartan ashore, not as a Messenger from me, but to learn what Damage we had done, that I might be the more particular to you; and left Captain Hughes to ply off and on till he came off from the Shore to bring the Account: He told him, that we had destroyed thirty Sattees that were haul'd up at the End of the Town for Security; that the Spire and Belfrey of the Great Church were knocked down, the Roof and some Part of the Walls entirely demolished, most of the Houses ruined, and the Street filled full of Rubbish; that 50,000 Dollars would not repair the Damage, for which the Inhabitants were loading the Military with Imprecations and Curses.

We understand by all Accounts, that there is a Battery of five Cannon to defend the Town: We saw the Fort and Embrasures, and knocked some of them down; but whether they have Guns, or through Fear from our constant Fire upon them, that they deserted the Fort, I cannot as yet inform you; but we had no Shot from any Battery fired at us. We came to an Anchor in the Bay of Sofa, in order