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FROM FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26. TO TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30. 1804.

ADMIRALTY-OFFICE, *Oct.* 27.

Copy of a letter from the Right Hon. Lord KEITH, K.B. Admiral of the Blue, &c. to WILLIAM MARSDEN, Esq. dated off Ramsgate, the 24th instant.

SIR,

I herewith transmit, for their Lordships information, a copy of a letter from Capt. Owen, of his Majesty's ship the *Immortalite*, to Rear-Admiral Louis, detailing the particulars of an action between that ship, the *Orestes* sloop, and *Basilisk* gun-brig, and a division of the enemy's flotilla, passing, yesterday, from the eastward towards Boulogne.

It will no doubt afford their Lordships much satisfaction to observe the very favourable report which Capt. Owen makes on the conduct of his Majesty's officers and men; and equal regret to remark the extent of the loss that has been sustained, and that the shallowness of the water alone prevented that active and enterprising officer from cutting any part of this division off from the shore.

I inclose a list of the killed and wounded on board the *Immortalite*; and have the honour to be, &c.

KEITH.

His Majesty's ship *Immortalite*, off Boulogne, Oct. 23. 1804.

SIR,

Being off Cape Grifnez, and proceeding to my station before Boulogne, I this afternoon, about half past three, discovered a division of the enemy's vessels, consisting of three praam ships, seven brigs, and fifteen luggers, which soon after bore up to the westward, keeping close to the beach, under cover of their batteries, and accompanied by horse artillery, making the best of their way to shelter themselves within the Banc de Laine.

By making all sail to windward, I was enabled to close the praams (which kept together) about a quarter before five, and to open my fire upon them within the distance of grape shot, under the high land of Cape Blanc Nez, the enemy still pushing to the westward, and returning at first a brisk fire, but it latter-

[Price 6d.]

ly slackened much: This running fight continued till near six, when, having been thrice obliged to sheer out into deeper water, we found ourselves still within the end of the Banc de Laine, where the falling tide prevented us from following them, and obliged us to haul off.

Our little Calais Squadron was to windward following the enemy, of which the *Orestes* and *Basilisk* joined me in the first of the attack, giving me every support and assistance during the whole of the action; their Commanders gave me much satisfaction in conducting them. The other vessels of that Squadron did not get within gun-shot; Capt. Brown will of course make his report to Vice-Admiral Holloway; but I spoke him in passing, and was pleased to learn he had sustained no damage.

I endeavoured to close the enemy again as they passed from behind the Banc to round Cape Grifnez, and did get sight of a few of the vessels; but though we passed within half gun-shot of the Cape, the enemy were so effectually screened from our sight by the dark shade of the land, that I could do nothing, and am unable to say whether the whole number got down to Boulogne, or whether (as I suspect) a part of them anchored in Whitford Bay.

Lieut. Payne, though ill, was upon deck, and afforded me, as he has done in every instance, the greatest aid; and it is not possible for me to speak too highly of the conduct of every officer and every man; each, in his station, gave me the fullest satisfaction; but it gives me serious pain to add, that, of these brave fellows, one was killed and ten wounded (three mortally), besides the Third Lieutenant, Charles Burrough Strong, of whose assistance I was deprived before a shot was fired by us, and whose loss I feel the more, as two years service with me in this ship has fully proved to me his worth; his wounds, however, are not dangerous.

My thanks are due to Mr Henry Thornton, our pilot, for his steady attentive good conduct and alacrity, and regretting that the nature of

the coast in that part where we closed the enemy enabled them to skulk from our further pursuit—I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) E. W. C. R. OWEN.

Rear-Admiral Louis, &c. &c. &c.

P. S. From the manner in which our grape-shot covered the enemy's vessels their loss in men must have been very great.—I never saw guns pointed better or so coolly.

List of the killed and wounded men on board his Majesty's ship *Immortalite*, in action with a division of the enemy's vessels off Cape Blanc Nez, 23d of October 1804.

Killed.—James Wilson seaman.

Wounded.—Charles Burrough Strong, third Lieutenant George Barker (since dead), John Dawal (since dead), William Terrent (since dead), David Brown, William Hamilton, Peter Humes, John Watson, and William Robinson, seamen; James Allen and William Gubbett, privates of marines.

(Signed)

E. W. C. R. OWEN.

(A Copy)

KEITH.

Copy of a letter from the Right Hon. Lord KEITH, K.B. Admiral of the Blue, &c. to WILLIAM MARSDEN, Esq. dated off Ramsgate, the 25th instant.

SIR,

I am sorry to acquaint their Lordships that his Majesty's gun brig the *Conflict* has been run on shore, on the enemy's coast, and I fear has fallen into their possession, while endeavouring, under the orders of Captain Hancock, of the *Cruizer*, to obstruct the passage of a division of the enemy's flotilla, proceeding from Ostend to the westward on the night of the 23d.

I herewith transmit the particulars of that unfortunate event, detailed in Capt. Hancock's letter to me, and Lieutenant Ormsby's letter to him, from which it appears, that Capt. Hancock, and Lieutenants Ormsby and Forbes, as well as the other officers and men employed on this occasion, have manifested great gallantry and perseverance, and that their failure has only been occasioned by the construction of the enemy's vessels admitting of their passing closer to the shore than ours. I have no doubt that the case of acting Lieutenant Garland will interest their Lordships much.

I am, &c.

KEITH.

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Jas. Law
Rosen
3 Sept 04

