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ADMIRALTY-OFFICE—July 12.

Copy of a Letter from Captain Inman, of his Majesty's Ship Andromeda, to Evan Nepean, Esq. dated off Dunkirk, July 8, 1800.

S I R,

I BEG you will be pleased to inform their Lordships that agreeably to their orders to me of the 17th June to take under my command the fire vessels and others named in the margin*, and endeavour to take or destroy the enemy's frigates in Dunkirk Roads, we joined at the appointed rendezvous the 27th following; but from contrary winds and the tide not answering, could not make the attempt before last night, when I fear the enemy had been apprized of my intention; as we were much annoyed by gun vessels and others lying advanced some distance, which afforded the frigates an opportunity to cut their cables, and avoid our fire ships.

I had directed Captain Campbell of the Dart to get in, if he could, to the easternmost, and lay her on board, at the time I hoped the first fireship would have been entangled with the westernmost.

The handsome and intrepid manner of his completely carrying her in less than a quarter of an hour, and bringing her out, must convince their Lordships of his unparalleled bravery, and the very gallant conduct of his officers and ship's company, as the enemy's frigate was so much superior in force; and had

- * Wasp, Captain Edwards.
- Falcon, Captain Butt.
- Dart, Captain Campbell.
- Comet, Captain Leef.
- Rosario, Captain Carthew.
- Selby, Captain Williams.
- Boxer, Lieutenant Gilbert.
- Teaser, Lieutenant Robins.
- Biter, Lieutenant Norman.
- Stag Cutter, Lieutenant Humphrys.
- Nile Lugger, Lieutenant Whitehead.
- Ann Cutter, Lieutenant Young.
- Kent, Lieutenant Cooban.
- Vigilant Lugger, Lieutenant Dean.

[Price Sixpence.]

it not been so instantly done, the ship could not have been got over the banks, as the water had begun to fall. By Captain Campbell's report to me great praise is due to Lieutenant M'Dermeit, who, I am sorry to say, is badly wounded.

I enclose Captain Campbell's letter to me giving an account of this transaction; and have the pleasure to observe that one spirit seemed to actuate the whole; but am sorry that notwithstanding the steady conduct of Captains Edwards, Butt, Leef, and Carthew of the several fire vessels, in remaining on board till completely in flames, the three enemy's ships, from cutting their cables, escaped before the wind, and ran out of Dunkirk Roads some little distance down the Inner Channel within the Braak Sand—one of them got on shore for a short time, but at daylight we had the mortification to observe her working back on the ebb tide, and, with the other two, regained their anchorage, though not without considerable damage, having received the fire of the Dart, Bitter, and Boxer gun-brigs, with-in pistol-shot, before they cut.

I kept the Selby in the rear to act, had any remained long enough on shore, to have destroyed them by firing carcasses, and have now to regret I reserved her for that purpose, as I am confident, had Captain Williams been directed to lay one of the enemy's ships on board, he would have been successful in bringing her out.

I put Mr Scott, first Lieutenant of the Andromeda, in the command of the boats in a gig, and Mr Cochran, third Lieutenant, in another boat; and as I had all the cutters to attend on the fire vessels except the Kent, directed their Lieutenants in gigs to put themselves under his command, and by which means not any lives were lost; the Kent, Lieutenant Cooban, I directed to attack the gun vessels, who trimmed them pretty handsomely, and prevented any boats from annoying ours that were employed to take out the crews of the fire ships.

I feel particularly indebted to Captains Mainwaring, Baker, and Seater, as also to Lieutenant King, second Lieutenant, who was left in command of the Andromeda, for their perseverance in getting over the banks to render us every assistance by boats, and to be in readiness to meet the enemy, had they ventured over the Braak Sand; which position they maintained for that purpose in spite of fresh gales, and direct opposition to the established pilots, who gave up the charge of each ship

(A.)