



The London Gazette.

Published by Authority.

From Tuesday September 25, to Saturday September 29, 1810.

Admiralty-Office, September 28, 1810.

Copy of a Letter from Admiral Sir Charles Cotton Bart. Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels in the Mediterranean, to John Wilson Croker, Esq; dated on board His Majesty's Ship San Josef, off Toulon, 24th July 1810.

SIR,

A Continuance of strong Gales from the North West since the 15th Instant, obliged me to take Shelter under the Levant Island with the Fleet, from which, however, we were driven as far to the Eastward as Villa Franca. I have been at length enabled to gain the Rendezvous off Cape Sicie; and having had Communication with Captain Blackwood, the senior Officer in Shore, have received from him an Account of his Proceedings with the detached Squadron under his Orders, upon a Division of the Enemy's Fleet, consisting of Six Sail of the Line (one a Three-Decker with the Commander in Chief's Flag), and Four Frigates, coming out of Toulon on the 20th Instant, for the Purpose of enabling a Frigate and Convoy to get from Bandol, and no less, to endeavour to cut off the Euryalus and Sheerwater; and, in justice to the Captains of His Majesty's Ships named in the Margin*, I cannot desist from transmitting to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the enclosed Copy of Captain Blackwood's Letter on the Subject, and I doubt not their Lordships will view with no small Degree of Satisfaction the Gallantry and Steadiness of these Ships, and, under the existing Circumstances, the determined Measure that Officer adopted by bringing to in order of Battle, with His Majesty's Squadron, against so superior a Force, and engaging the headmost Ships of the Enemy's Line, which had the Effect of completely frustrating their Intentions, as regarded the Euryalus and Sheerwater, though the latter was under their Guns, and received Three broadsides from one of the Line of Battle Ships, besides a Frigate, but without being struck by either.

The Enemy's Ships remain in the same State as usual in the outer Road of Toulon; Five or Six Sail daily stand out off the Harbour's Mouth to exercise

I have the Honor to be, &c.

(Signed) C. COTTON

* Warspite, Ajax, Conqueror, Euryalus, and Sheerwater.

His Majesty's Ship Warspite, off Toulon, 20th of July 1810.

SIR,

IN a former Letter I did myself the Honour to acquaint you of the Enemy having twice come out in great Force, and failing in an Attempt to detach a Store Ship to the Eastward, and liberate a Frigate in Bandol, where we had forced her to take Refuge. This Morning they again came out with Six Sail of the Line, one of them of Three Decks, bearing the Commander in Chief's Flag, and Four Frigates; and as the Weather was light and variable I found it impossible to prevent the Junction of the Frigate in Bandol; I therefore endeavoured to collect the Squadron, and place ourselves without the Enemy in as good a Posture of Defence as I could, but owing to the Situation of the Euryalus and Sheerwater, who were obliged to cross their headmost Ships, and the Wind rather failing them, whilst the Enemy preserved it so entirely as to render the Capture of the Sheerwater certain, if not that of the Euryalus.

It became a Matter imperatively necessary that I should risk an Action, though at the Door of the Enemy, and with a Force so superior; a Step which, without such an Object, I should not have considered myself authorized in taking, particularly as you had been unavoidably blown off and out of Sight by the late heavy Gales.

I therefore brought to, with the Conqueror and Ajax altern of me, in such a Position as evinced my Determination to protect the Frigate and Brig, and I am happy to inform you, that the Result has proved as creditable to the British Flag as I could have wished or expected; for although the Enemy appeared equally as decided to endeavour to cut them off as we were to defend them, the Moment they came within reach of our Fire they hauled up in Succession their headmost Ships, giving us their Broadsides, and then tacked, in which we followed their Example, by also tacking; a Movement for which I am entirely indebted to Captain Otway's Promptness and good Judgement, who being the sternmost Ship in our Line, and perceiving the Enemy began to retreat, became the more anxious to endeavour to disable them, when after a few more Shots passing, and we had some Time previous to this Movement secured the Retreat of the Euryalus and Sheerwater, and the Wind rather failing us, we