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Whitehall, January 22, 1799.

**L**ETTERS, of which the following are Copies, were Yesterday received from the Earl of Balcarras, by His Grace the Duke of Portland, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.

My Lord, *Jamaica, Nov. 7, 1798.*  
**O**N the 31st of October I received a Dispatch from the Bay of Honduras.

Lieutenant-Colonel Barrow informs me, that the Settlers had been attacked by a Flotilla consisting of Thirty-one Vessels, having on board Two Thousand Land Troops and Five Hundred Seamen: Arthur O'Neil, Governor-General of Yucatan, and a Field-Marshal in the Service of Spain, commanded in Person. I have great Satisfaction in transmitting the Letter of the Lieutenant-Colonel, by which your Grace will be informed, that this Armament has been repulsed, and the Expedition entirely frustrated.

The Lieutenant-Colonel speaks in the handsomest Manner of the Conduct of Captain Mofs, of His Majesty's Ship Merlin, and of the wonderful Exertions of the Settlers and their Negro Slaves, who manned the Gun-Boats.

The Conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Barrow, and of the Settlers, in putting the Port of Honduras-Bay into a respectable State of Defence, as well as the gallant Manner in which it was maintained, gives me entire Satisfaction, and it is with Pleasure that I report their Services to your Grace.

I have the Honor to be, &c. &c. &c.

BALCARRAS.

To His Grace the Duke of Portland.

My Lord, *Honduras, Sept. 23, 1798.*  
**A**FTER the Date of my last Dispatch of the 11th, 14th, and 21st August, by the Express Boat Swift, I continued to strengthen our Flotilla, which now consists of,

- No. 1. Towler, 1 Gun, Eighteen-Pounder :
- No. 2. Tickler, 1 Gun, Eighteen-Pounder :
- No. 3. Mermaid, 1 Gun, Nine-Pounder :
- No. 4. Swinger, 4 Guns, Six-Pounders, and 2 Guns, Four-Pounders :

No. 5. Teazer, 6 Guns, Four-Pounders :  
 Besides Eight Flat Gun-Boats, carrying each a Nine-Pounder in the Prow.

No. 1 and 2 are commanded by Mr. Gellston and Mr. Hofmer, Masters of Merchant Vessels, who, with some of their Crews, volunteered the Business in a very handsome Manner : to those Gentlemen I am much indebted for their able and active Services. The Masters and Crews of all the other Vessels consist entirely of Volunteers from the Colonial Troops, and together amount to Three Hundred and Fifty-four Men now on float. The Enemy was so well watched by Scout-Boats and Canoes, that not a single Movement could be made by him without our Knowledge ; and finding that he aimed at the Possession of St. George's-Key, the Armed Vessels, No. 1, 4, and 5, were sent to that Place to guard the narrow Channels leading to that commodious Harbour.

On the 3d of September the Enemy endeavoured to force a Passage over Montego-Key-Shoal with Five Vessels, Two of which carried heavy Metal, but was repulsed : he renewed his Attempt on the following Day ; but our little Squadron, being now reinforced by Six Gun-Boats, beat them off with great Ease, and the Five Vessels returned to the main Body of the Fleet, then at Anchor about Two Leagues to the Northward. This Movement gave our People an Opportunity of drawing and destroying all the Beacons and Stakes which the Enemy had placed in this narrow and crooked Channel, and without the Use of which nothing but Vessels of a very easy Draught of Water can pass. On the 5th, the same Vessels, accompanied by Two others, and a Number of Launches, endeavoured to get over this Shoal by another Passage, but were repulsed, apparently with Loss. On this, as well as on the Two preceding Days, the Spaniards expended an immense Quantity of Ammunition to no Manner of Purpose ; while our People fired comparatively little, but with a Steadiness which surpassed my most sanguine Hopes.

Captain Mofs, in his Majesty's Ship Merlin, left his Anchorage at Belize on the Evening of the 5th, and arrived at St. George's-Key about Noon on the 6th of September. The Spaniards having found a Passage through the Leeward Channels impracticable.