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978-1-108-02517-1 - The Dispatches of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, Volume 3

Edited by John Gurwood

Excerpt

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THE
OFFICIAL AND OTHER DISPATCHES
OF
FIELD MARSHAL THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

DENMARK AND THE PENINSULA.

To Lieut. Col. Malcolm.

London, 25th Feb. 1806.

I RETURNED from the Continent only a few days ago, and have not yet had leisure to read the Indian papers which have come into my hands, in order to enable me to form an opinion of the state of affairs up to the latest period. I think it possible, however, that you will have peace; and that may be permanent, or otherwise, in proportion to our own firmness, and the means of the enemy of disturbing our tranquillity. So many principles, however, have been abandoned or overturned, that we must look for peace from a course of accidental circumstances, and not from the steady adherence to any settled system of policy.

I will try to get a living for your brother, but you see that a revolution (commonly called a change) has taken place in the government of this country. *We* are not actually in opposition, but we have no power; and if I get any thing for your brother, it must be by the influence of private friendship.

I don't think that this government can last very long. You can have no idea of the disgust created by the harshness of their measures, by the avidity with which they have sought for office, and by the indecency with which they have dismissed every man supposed to have been connected with Pitt. His friends will, I think, remain connected, and will act together as a body, and a most formidable one they will be to any government on account of their numbers.

I am tolerably well in health, and I shall be quite well if I can continue to spend a few weeks at Cheltenham in this summer. The regiment which they have given me, and the staff, have made me rich.

As soon as I shall have read all the Indian papers, which I have got, I will sit down and write to you a long dispatch upon them.

There is a report about London, which I cannot bring myself to give

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credit to, that you had been kicked by a horse, and that your leg had, in consequence, been amputated. I was employed for two days ascertaining this report, and at last I found that you had been bit by a horse in the arm : I only hope not by *Sultan*.

To Lieut. Col. Malcolm.

Hastings, 31st July, 1806.

I have received your letters up to the 14th Jan., for which I return you many thanks. The subjects to which they relate are too large to be discussed in a letter which must go to the post this afternoon, in order to be dispatched by the ships which will sail in a few days. I shall therefore satisfy myself by telling you that I consider that you have acted a part entirely consistent with your own character, and in strict conformity with my sentiments, in every thing that you have done. The arrangement with Scindiah is precisely that which you and I recommended long before, and which I urged, and, I believe, was ordered when I was in Bengal in 1804. I thought also at that time, and so did you, that the Rajpoots ought to have been subjugated to the control of Scindiah's government, as the only mode of re-establishing it ; the state in which it must exist, if it is to exist at all. This object might with care and justice have been effected at that time, if the state of Scindiah's government had permitted it ; and I am not sufficiently acquainted with all that has passed between the Rajpoots and our government since the period of Monson's defeat, to be able to decide that we ought not to deliver them over to Scindiah, notwithstanding the favorable change which has taken place in the state and dispositions of his councils.

I regret that it has been necessary to allow Holkar to exist, and to be at large. I should be induced to suspect that he will never allow us to be at peace ; and without peace we cannot reduce the debt, which must be the great object at present. However, if it was necessary to allow him to exist, I see but one amendment which could have been made to the treaty with him ; that is, to have kept permanently Umber and Chandore in the Deccan, and some place of similar consequence in Hindustan, either in our own hands or those of our allies, as a perpetual memorial to the whole world that we had defeated him. The powers of India will not now believe that our moderation alone has occasioned the treaty which has been concluded ; and I shall not be surprised if it give ground for a belief, the most erroneous, that Holkar's power and his mode of warfare had been more destructive to us than the resources and the efficiency and discipline of the armies of the other Marhattas.

In respect to the necessity of peace with Holkar, no man can be a judge of it who has not been in this country, who has not sat in the House of Commons, and had means of ascertaining the public opinion at its fountain head. I really believe, that in the opinion of the majority of people in this country, it would have been better to cede the whole of Oude to Holkar than to continue the war with him.

As for myself, I am here in the command of a few troops stationed in this part of the coast, the old landing place of William the Conqueror. You will have seen that I am in Parliament, and a most difficult and unpleasant game I have had to play in the present extraordinary state of

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DEAL.

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parties. I have desired Sydenham to send you a copy of a speech which I made upon the budget.

I have seen your brothers, Pulteney and Charles, both well. The former is in the *Donegal*, off Brest; the other unemployed in London. But Sir Thomas, whom I saw likewise, expects to be able to get a ship for Charles soon. I have tried a job for a relation of yours, * * * * * but without success; but I will not lose sight of him. God bless you, my dear Malcolm; don't stay too long in India.

P.S. Pray remember me most kindly to Wilks and all friends in Seringapatam.

To Lieut. Col. Malcolm.

Deal, 10th Dec. 1806.

I hear that the ships will soon sail from Portsmouth, and I will not allow them to go without a few lines, although I have but little to tell you. I know no more of public news than what you will see in the newspapers, which, indeed, in these days contain every thing. You will read with horror the accounts of the French successes against the King of Prussia; but will learn with pleasure that, considering the line of policy which that government had adopted for some years, those successes are not likely to do us any material mischief immediately, whatever may be the eventual consequence in relation to our ally the Emperor of Russia. Of the truth of this opinion I am thoroughly convinced, from a personal knowledge of facts, as well as because I know it is entertained by some for whose judgment I entertain the greatest respect.

As for India, I know but little respecting it. If I had been employed in North America, I might be informed and consulted on the measures to be adopted in India; but as it is, that is out of the question. Lord Minto will sail soon, I believe early in next month; and Gen. Hewitt, who is appointed Commander in Chief, will go with him, or shortly after him. You will find this to be a sensible and goodnatured gentleman, and well disposed to carry on his business in the manner which experience has proved to be most suitable to the country. I doubt whether his health or his age will permit him to remain long or to be very active in the field.

The last letter which I received from you was dated from Cawnpore, in May, I believe; but I sent it to Lord W., who has kept it. You are already acquainted with my opinion, generally, about your peace with Holkar and your treaty with Scindiah. I only wish that you had kept any thing from the former which might have been held out as a perpetual signal and memorandum to all India that he had been defeated by us; for I am apprehensive that the opinion, to which I know all were inclined, that Holkar's system of warfare was the same with the old Marhatta system, that it was the best against us, and that Scindiah was ruined by his adoption of a more regular system, than which nothing can be more erroneous, may occasion another war with a confederacy. I know that we have no danger to apprehend from this war if we keep up, not so much the strength of our armies as an equipment, and if our troops are commanded by officers who know how to make use of them. But I dread the expense and the effect which the renewal of these wars will have in

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this country; and I know full well that there are many delicate questions to be settled in the Marhatta Empire, the arrangement of which, in peace, will require all the impression from former victories, all the vigor, all the prudence, and all the temper which have brought us through our former difficulties. The fault which I find with the peace with Holkar therefore is, that it has strengthened an erroneous opinion which deprives us of the greatest advantage of our victories, viz., their impression, and that in this manner it will increase the chance of war upon the occasion of the arrangement of every question which remains to be settled in the Marhatta Empire. The want of this impression renders the exercise of a vigorous administration nearly impracticable, excepting in a state of constant preparation for war, which, after all, is nearly as expensive as war itself; and yet I don't see how the government in India is to be carried on excepting with vigor.

I see no material objection to the treaty with Scindiah, and I believe that I recommended that the treaty of peace should be arranged upon the principles of that treaty; and that a treaty to a similar purport should be concluded with Scindiah when the treaty of peace was arranged differently.

You will have heard with astonishment of ——'s attack upon Lord Wellesley. The impudence of this gent. in setting himself up for Westminster has afforded an opportunity of unveiling him to the public, and his character is now well known. Only think of that fellow standing for Westminster, and having been not far from carrying his election!!! He is not now in Parliament, and I doubt whether he will ever come in; and if he should not be in the House of Commons, it is not quite clear that any body will undertake the cause which he will have left. But whether there should be such a person or not, I have some reason to believe that the House will not allow the business to be brought forward again, although from the state of parties I am afraid that it will not be got rid of in the manner which would be most agreeable and honorable to Lord W. and his friends. You, who know him well, will be aware of the impression which all that has passed upon this subject, and the state of the public mind on Indian subjects generally, have made upon him. I shall not pretend to describe it to you in a letter; and I cannot venture to enter into particulars on many subjects on which I should write for your information, considering the danger to which letters are exposed on their passage, and the bad consequences which have resulted, and must always result, from the publication of intercepted correspondence.

Your brother is well, and off Brest in the *Donegal*. Charles has got a ship, and is, I believe, still at Plymouth. I have been endeavoring to do something for ——'s brother, who is to be married to your sister, but hitherto without success. Remember me most kindly to Wilks, Barclay, Symonds, and Piele, and all friends at Seringapatam; also to Col. Close when you write to him.

To Lieut. Col. Malcolm.

London, 23rd Feb. 1807.

I had intended to write to you by Lord Minto, but he left town very suddenly while I was hunting at Hatfield, and he had sailed before I heard

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LONDON.

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of his departure from London. But I hear that the Indiamen are to sail immediately, and I shall not suffer them to go without a letter.

I shall not pretend to give you an account of the state of public affairs, of which you will be enabled to form a better judgment by a perusal of the newspapers than by any thing I could write to you. The minority are certainly very strong in Parliament, and, I think, are getting on a little in the country. But they will never be so popular as Pitt was; and I think that there are symptoms in this country and in Ireland which require the serious attention of every man who wishes for the continuance of the Empire and the prosperity of Great Britain. They are coming to their senses greatly about India, and I know that Tierney has some good principles in relation to that country, and that he would govern it well if he had the power. A revolution is also in progress, slowly but very certainly, in the public mind, respecting the former system of government there, and that according to which affairs ought to be administered there in future. The Court of Directors are certainly less hostile than they were towards Lord Wellesley; and, as for me, I have the most certain proofs that they are desirous that I should serve them again. All this looks well, and I am sanguine in my expectations that all difficulties upon these subjects will soon have been overcome.

You will have been astonished at the career of — — —, — — —, your quondam friend and *protege*. He certainly was nearly being the representative of Westminster, owing partly to the unpopularity of Sheridan; partly to his own impudence; and partly to the power which Horne Tooke and Cobbett have acquired over the public mind. I was the first person who discovered that the characteristics of — — — were perseverance, effrontery, and impudence; and when you conceive such a character, you will not be astonished at all at what he has done, notwithstanding the kicks, cuffs, and buffeting which we gave him last year in Parliament, and all that he still threatens. He is not now in Parliament, and — — —, who was one of his supporters last year, has announced his intention of moving a resolution on the transactions in Oude. He brings no charge, however, and he does not mean to criminate Lord Wellesley; and he has particularly stated that he does not think there is the smallest ground for attributing to Lord Wellesley the waste of the public money. We shall beat him, whatever may be the nature of his resolution. Another gentleman, — — —, has given notice of a day for moving again for the printing the Carnatic papers, with a view to the consideration of the transactions in the revolution in that country. We shall beat him likewise. You will readily believe that Lord Wellesley is much annoyed by all this; but his mind is more composed, and he is more reconciled to his situation than he was last year.

Alas! my dear Malcolm, what has come over the army of Fort St. George? What are we to believe? Is it possible that the Princes at Vellore can have corrupted the detachment at Hyderabad, at the distance of 500 miles? Surely these Princes in confinement, and possessing but limited pecuniary means, could never have had the power of creating a general interest in their favor throughout the whole of the Native army of Fort St. George, dispersed as it is over thousands of miles!!! I am all

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anxiety upon this subject, and yet I have not received a line from a soul. Nobody believes the accounts which are received from India upon this subject, notwithstanding the credit and character of those who have transmitted them; and the mind of every man is filled with suspicion and alarm. Surely those followers who went through the difficulties and dangers of the Marhatta campaigns cannot have broken their allegiance! I can never believe it, till I shall see it proved in the clearest manner.

I wish that you were *now* in England; but I doubt whether it will be of any use to you to come hereafter. Government have some thoughts of sending an embassy to Persia; ——— as the ambassador. I put a spoke in his wheel the other day, I think, in a conversation with ———, and urged him to get Lord Howick to appoint you. God knows whether I have succeeded in the last object, although I made it clear that ——— was an improper man, and that you were the only one fit for the station. I do not recommend it to you to be in a hurry to come to England. Expenses here are very heavy, and fortunes very large. Notwithstanding all the taxes and the rise in price of every article in life, there is more luxury than ever, more appearance of riches in the country, and more persons with large fortunes, and fewer with fortunes of a moderate extent, than there were formerly. You could not exist in the way you would like under a much larger fortune than you possess; and take my word for it, you will lose nothing by staying away from England a little longer. Pray don't forget to remember me to all my friends, particularly to Wilks, Close, Barclay, Symonds, Piele, Cole, if he should be with you, Buchan, &c., &c. Tell ——— that I have endeavored to serve him in his difficulties. The Court of Directors are outrageous against him, for no reason whatever; and I am not sure that I have prevailed with ——— to prevent them from venting their rage in paragraphs in a general letter. God bless you.

To the Duke of Richmond.

London, 24th July, 1807.

You will have heard of the intended expedition from this country, the object of which is to attack the Danish island of Zealand, and to endeavor to obtain possession of the Danish fleet. The success, in my opinion, depends in a great measure upon the possibility of bringing the Danish army over from Holstein. If that should be possible, I think the success very problematical, as it may be depended upon that the Danes will be joined and assisted by the French, and, if the first can pass unmolested by our ships, the last will find no difficulty in passing.

However, whatever may be the chance of success of the expedition, it would not answer for me to allow it to go on without expressing a desire to be employed upon it; I accepted my office in Ireland solely on the condition that it should not preclude me from such service when an opportunity should offer; and I am convinced that, although you may feel some inconvenience from my temporary absence, supposing that it is intended that I should return to you, or from the loss of the assistance of an old friend, supposing that it is not, you would be the last man to desire or to wish that I should do any thing with which I should not be satisfied myself: and I acknowledge that I should not be satisfied if I

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DENMARK.

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allowed any opportunity of service to pass by without offering myself. Under these circumstances, I have desired to be employed, and I understand that, if the expedition should go on, I am to go with it.

I do not know, and I have not asked, whether I am to return to my office when this *coup de main* shall have been struck, or shall have failed. All that I am to tell you is, that nothing will give me greater satisfaction than to assist you so long as I can be useful to you; and that I have been desired by Lord Hawkesbury and Lord Castlereagh to settle with Long to take charge of my business in Parliament whilst I shall be absent.

I shall write to you the particulars of every thing I shall hear or learn upon this subject. In the mean time I tell you that I heard a piece of news this morning, which looks very like a stop to the expedition, viz., that the Danes had already begun to move their troops out of Holstein. If that is the case, we shall probably not go. In this state of uncertainty, I have not written to Lady Wellesley upon this subject, and it is as well not to say any thing to her about it, till it shall be positively settled that we are to go.

To Lieut. Gen. Lord Cathcart, K.T.

Kiøge, 19th Aug. 1807.

According to the intention which I announced to your Lordship on the evening of the 27th, I moved to Roeskild Kroe, and placed Col. Reden at Vallensbrek; and Gen. Linsengen marched yesterday morning to Roeskild: by these different movements his force became the right instead of the left.

Having had reason to believe that the enemy still remained at Kiøge, I determined to attack him this day. I settled with Gen. Linsengen, that he should cross the Kiøge rivulet at Little Salbye, and turn the enemy's left flank, while I should move along the sea road towards Kiøge, and attack him in front.

Both divisions broke up this morning, and marched according to the plan concerted. Upon my approach to Kiøge, I found the enemy in force on the north side of the town and rivulet, and they commenced a cannonade upon the patrols of hussars in my front; they had 3 or 4 regular battalions formed in one line, with cavalry on both flanks, and apparently a large body beyond the town and rivulet. At the time agreed upon with Gen. Linsengen, I formed my infantry in one line, with the left to the sea, having the 2 squadrons of hussars upon the right. There had been some appearance of a movement by the enemy to their left; and I had not had any communication with Gen. Linsengen, and was not certain that he had passed the rivulet: I therefore thought it proper to make the attack in an *echelon* of battalions from the left; the whole covered by the 1st batt. 95th regt.,* and by the fire of our artillery. It fell to the lot of the 92nd regt. to lead this attack, and they performed their part in the most exemplary manner, and were equally well supported by the 52nd and 43rd.

The enemy soon retired to an intrenchment which they had formed in front of a camp on the north side of Kiøge, and they made a disposition

* Afterwards the Rifle Brigade, but at this time, and until the end of the war, known as the 95th

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of their cavalry upon the sands to charge the 92nd in flank, while they should attack this intrenchment. This disposition obliged me to move Col. Reden's hussars from the right to the left flank, and to throw the 43rd into a second line; and then the 92nd carried the intrenchment, and forced the enemy to retreat into the town in disorder. They were followed immediately in the most gallant style by Col. Reden and his hussars, and by the 1st batt. 95th regt., and afterwards by the whole of the infantry of my corps. Upon crossing the rivulet, we found Gen. Linsengen's corps upon our right flank, and the whole joined in the pursuit of the enemy.

Major Gen. Oxholm, the second in command, who had joined the army with 4 battalions last night from the southern island, attempted to stand in the village of Hersolge, but he was attacked briskly by the hussars, with detachments of which were Capt. Blaquiere and Capt. Cotton of the Staff, and by a small detachment of the 1st of the 95th; and he was compelled to surrender, with Count Wedel Jarlsburg, several other officers, and 400 men.

The loss of the enemy has been very great, many have fallen, and there are nearly 60 officers and 1100 men prisoners. In their flight they have thrown away their arms and clothing, and many stands of the former have fallen into our hands. I believe that we have taken 10 pieces of cannon; but I have not yet received all the reports from the detachments employed in the pursuit of the enemy. I have not seen Gen. Linsengen, as he is still out with his hussars; but I understand that the enemy had destroyed the bridges at Little Salbye, which was the cause of the delay of his operations upon their flank.

I cannot close this letter without expressing to your Lordship my sense of the good conduct of the troops; all conducted themselves with the utmost steadiness; but I cannot avoid mentioning particularly the 92nd regt., under the command of Lieut. Col. Napier; the 1st batt. 95th regt., under the command of Lieut. Col. Beckwith; the British artillery, under the command of Capt. Newhouse; the Hanoverian hussars, under Col. Reden, and the Hanoverian light artillery, under Capt. Sympher, as a corps that had particular opportunities of distinguishing themselves: I am also much obliged to Gen. Linsengen and to Brig. Gen. R. Stewart, for the assistance I received from them in the formation and execution of the plan by which the enemy have been defeated. The officers of the Staff have also rendered me much assistance; and I must particularly mention Capt. Blaquiere and Capt. Colin Campbell.

P.S. We have taken a large store of powder and other military stores in this town, which I propose to destroy, if I should not be able to prevail upon the Captain of one of His Majesty's ships to take charge of them.

To Lord Hawkesbury.

Roeskild Kroe, 28th Aug. 1807.

Lord Rosslyn landed at Kioge, and joined the army before Copenhagen, on the 22nd and 23rd, and on that day we found that the battery which had been constructed on the extremity of our left had not been so effectual a protection against the fire of the gun boats as had been expected. In fact, in an engagement between our gun craft and battery on our left on

one side, and the Crown battery and the enemy's gun boats on the other, on the 23rd, the enemy had the best of it, and our boats were obliged to draw off. Lord Cathcart therefore determined to move on his centre and right; and on the morning of the 24th the whole line, with the exception of the extremity of the left, moved forward and established themselves without opposition in a line, at the distance of about 1700 yards from the town; and my riflemen in the centre of the guards on the right were pushed considerably more forward into the suburbs. On the 25th, Lord Rosslyn took up my position on the lines, as I was destined to destroy the collection of Danish troops and peasants which had been making in the neighbourhood of Roeskild; and on the 25th, in the afternoon, there was some appearance of an intention in the enemy to make a sortie to drive in the riflemen and light infantry of the guards, which occupied the faubourgs in front of our line. I went down and assisted Lord Rosslyn, and we soon drove in the enemy entirely, and have established ourselves within 700 yards of the town, on the bank of the reservoirs of water for the supply of Copenhagen. The left made a forward movement at the same time, with the exception of its flank; so that on the morning of the 26th, when I marched, the army was securely established in a position within 700 yards of the works of the town. Lord Cathcart intended to establish mortar batteries at that distance, and then to summon the town. Since my departure I hear that he has given them 24 hours to consider of his propositions; and I learn that our battery upon the left has been more successful against the enemy's craft; that one vessel has blown up, and two have been sunk; and that on the right, where the enemy had brought gun craft, between Amag and the island of Zealand, a battery which has been constructed for the protection of the right flank has been equally successful. Unless the enemy should consent to our terms, I conclude that Lord Cathcart will commence the bombardment to-morrow morning. I acknowledge that I should prefer an establishment upon Amag, as a more certain mode of forcing a capitulation than a bombardment. In fact, the Danes are fighting only for their credit; it would be disgraceful not to bear a bombardment; but no city with a population of 70,000 or 80,000 inhabitants can be expected to hold out when cut off from all supplies of provisions. Besides, I think that it behoves us to do as little mischief to the town as possible, and to adopt any mode of reducing it, rather than bombardment. However, I am aware that no man can judge of the propriety of any particular plan of operations so well as the person who conducts them, and knows every thing; and therefore I conclude that there are some strong reasons against the occupation of Amag, of which I am not aware: one of these is certainly the necessity of sending a detachment to disperse the collection of troops making near Roeskild, upon which service I am now employed with my own corps, and a part of the cavalry under Gen. Linsengen. I made a good forced march upon them yesterday, but they avoided me, and are gone down to Kioge, and I propose to try again to-morrow. But the country is so much against us, that I can get no information excepting from our own patrols, and this deficiency of intelligence may protract the defeat or dispersion of the corps. The troops continue very healthy, and behave tolerably well;

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DENMARK.

they have done very well in the little affair which we have had before Copenhagen. Pray communicate this letter to Lord Castlereagh.

To Lord Hawkesbury.

Bræsenborg, 3rd Sept. 1807.

I marched on the morning after I wrote to you last, and defeated the Danish army at Kiøge; I don't believe they have now a man in Zealand, excepting the cavalry and a few infantry at Vordingborg, endeavoring to escape to the island of Falster, and my cavalry are gone after them. Not a man would have made his retreat if ——— had carried into execution his part of the plan; but, as it is, they have been sufficiently beat to prevent their assembling again. I cannot tell you how the siege is going on; from what I have heard, however, I believe that the mortar batteries were prepared only yesterday. * * * *

We had possession of the ground for them on the 25th at night, and their mortar batteries were not prepared to open till the 2nd Sept. in the morning! Although the success at Kiøge must have some effect upon the garrison of Copenhagen, I conceive that it will still be necessary to occupy Amag, and I have proposed a plan to Lord Cathcart for that purpose, which I am willing to carry into execution myself now that I have nothing more to do in this part of the country, or to aid any other officer to carry it into execution, if he should think it necessary to employ another.

To Lord Hawkesbury.

Head quarters near Copenhagen, 8th Sept. 1807.

Lord Cathcart sent for me the day before yesterday from my detachment in the country,* and in the course of that night I settled with the Danish commissioners the capitulation of the town and citadel of Copenhagen, which, of course, will be sent to England by this opportunity. I have only to observe upon this instrument that it contains the absolute and unconditional cession of the fleet and naval stores, and gives us the possession of those military points which are necessary in order to enable us to equip and carry away the vessels. This was all that we wanted; and in every thing else I did all in my power to conciliate the Danes.

They certainly are much irritated against us, so much so that the

* Lieut. Gen. Lord Cathcart, K.T., to Visct. Castlereagh. Copenhagen, 8th Sept. 1807.

On the evening of the 5th Sept. a letter was sent by the Danish General, to propose an armistice of 24 hours, for preparing an agreement on which articles of capitulation might be founded. The armistice was declined, as tending to unnecessary delay, and the works were continued; but the firing was countermanded, and Lieut. Col. Murray was sent to explain that no proposal of capitulation could be listened to, unless accompanied by the surrender of the fleet.

This basis having been admitted by a subsequent letter, on the 6th, Major Gen. Sir A. Wellesley, whom I had sent for, for this purpose, from his command in the country, where he had distinguished himself in a manner so honorable to himself and so advantageous to the public, was appointed, with Sir H. Popham and Lieut. Col. Murray, to prepare and sign articles of capitulation; and those officers having insisted on proceeding immediately to business, the capitulation was drawn up in the night between the 6th and 7th.†

† See Marten's Treaties, &c.