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## Enclosure in Letter from Henry Willock to the Secret Committee of 29 Mar 1820

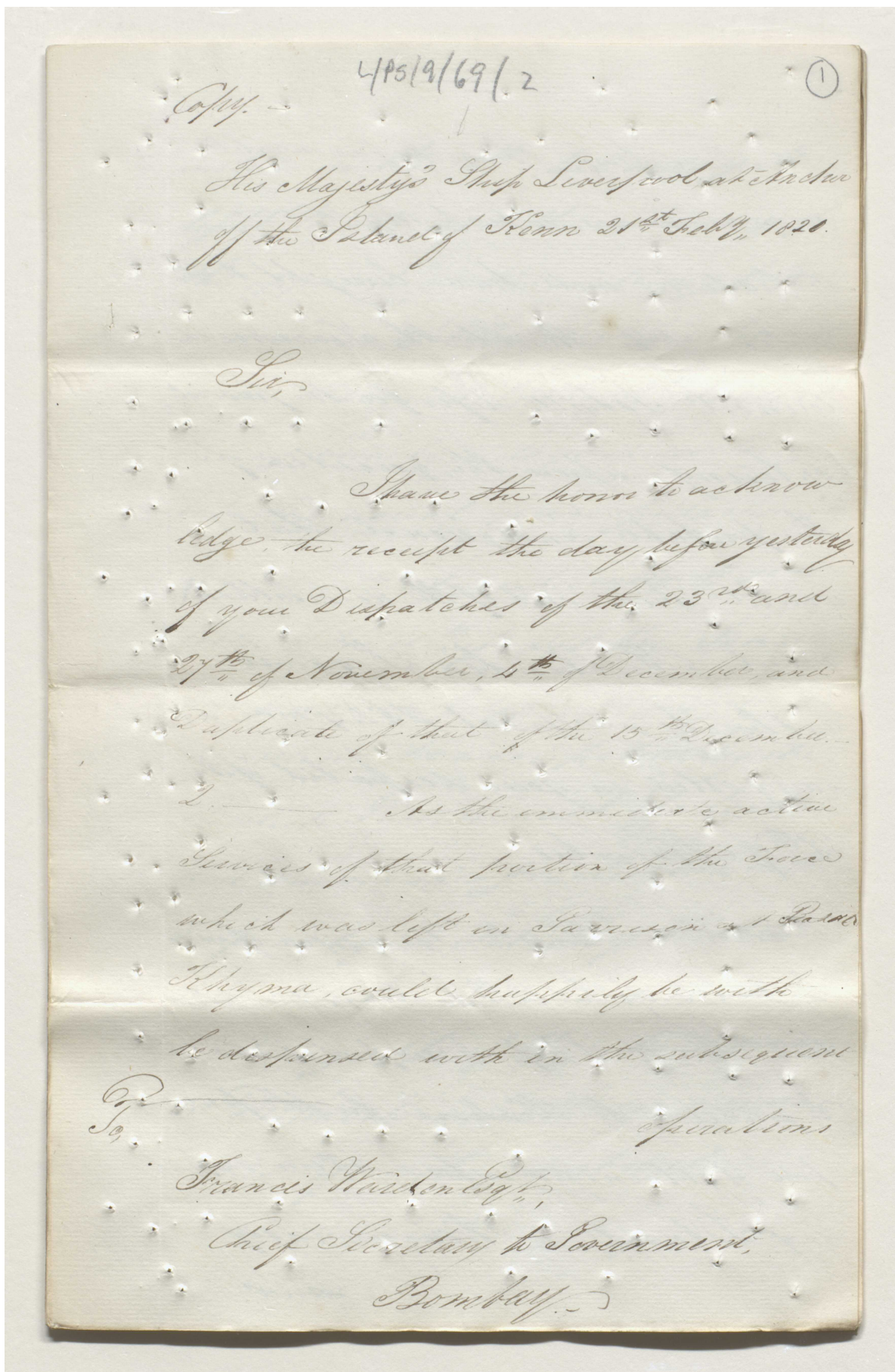
<b>Holding Institution</b>	British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers
<b>Reference</b>	IOR/L/PS/9/69/2
<b>Date(s)</b>	21 Feb 1820 (CE, Gregorian)
<b>Written in</b>	English in Latin
<b>Extent and Format</b>	1 item (8 folios)
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### About this record

A copy of a letter from Major-General William Grant Keir, Commander of the 1819 expedition to the Persian Gulf, to Francis Warden, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay [Mumbai], sent from HMS *Liverpool* off the island of Kenn [Kīsh] and dated 21 February 1820. The letter contains a report on the islands of Kishmee [Qeshm] and Kenn which evaluates the islands as potential British commercial and military bases in the Persian Gulf, discussing the navigability, availability of supplies, and population of the islands. Keir advises against establishing a base on Kishmee, instead recommending Kenn, and proposes that the island should be acquired from the Sheikh [Shaikh] of Charak [Bandar-e Chārak].

The letter was enclosed in the letter of Henry Willock, HM Chargé d'Affaires in Persia [Iran], to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, dated 29 March 1820 [IOR/L/PS/9/69/1].



operations from the very favourable  
circumstances, which my several  
despatches, will have brought to the  
notice of the Honble the Governor in  
Council, I shall defer for the present  
entering upon the question of  
the probable consequence that  
would arise out of the re-establish-  
ment of Sultan ben Suggud's  
authority at Rasal Shyma, as  
suggested in your despatch of the  
29<sup>th</sup> of November.

3. — The 4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph of my  
Despatch of the 12<sup>th</sup> Inst<sup>o</sup>, intimated  
that H. M. Ship, Liverpool was about  
to proceed to Bishmee for the pur-  
pose of obtaining information respect-  
ing Island. — Accordingly  
sailed

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sailed on the 13<sup>th</sup>, but owing to  
 light Winds, and the intricacy of  
 the approach at the watering place  
 and Town of Rasmees, we did not  
 arrive there until the 18<sup>th</sup> Instant,  
 having been four days in working  
 into the usual place of anchorage.  
 In conformity to your  
 letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> of October, I have  
 now proceed to offer my opinion  
 regarding the occupation by the  
 British Government of a Central,  
 and commanding, situation in the  
 Gulf, and of the Island of Rasmees  
 in particular, as noticed in the  
 3<sup>d</sup> Paragraphs of the above mentio-  
 ed Despatch, as well as in communi-  
 cations of a subsequent date.

G.

S. ————— Respecting Fishermen  
in a Maritime point of view, I beg  
leave to refer to the accompanying  
Copy of a Letter from Captain Collier,  
and at the same time to state, that  
the officers of the Transports, which  
have occasionally visited that  
Island, have represented it to be  
very far from eligible for the pur-  
pose of either procuring supplies  
or water. — The difficulty of approach  
and prevailing calms have been  
experienced on my occasions and  
must ever be an important objection  
to, as a Commercial entrepot. — The  
productions of this Island have  
not appeared to be a bountant,  
and there is every reason to believe  
that many supplies of Vegetables, &c  
are

③

are brought from the neighbourhood  
of Pandu. Above the Persian Coast.  
The general appearance of the  
neighbourhood of the Town of Bishmee  
is extremely barren, and unfavour-  
able, the soil, excepting a few incon-  
siderable patches in cultivation, is  
almost entire sand, and in many  
places the bare rock protrudes, evidence  
of many Navigators has proved that  
the water is neither in abundance, nor  
of good quality, although much trouble  
has lately been taking in clearing out  
Wells, many of which were quickly  
drained by the Transports.

Bishmee is represented by  
some people to be fertile in the Interior  
but the general aspect from Seaward  
along the whole Southern Coast  
conspires to

corresponds with the description  
given of the Neighbour hood of the  
anchorage, and the Coast on the  
North side is represented by good  
authority, to be equally barren. —

— There are other objections to Fishmea  
for the purposes now in contemplation  
and Execution amongst the most impor-  
tant the great extent of this Island,  
it being upwards of fifty miles long,  
this would interfere much with its  
speedy rise as a Commercial Settle-  
ment, and render its defence difficult  
from the obvious necessity of scattering  
over so great a space, the small number  
of Troops, that would be appropriated  
to that purpose. — The circumstance  
of Fishmea being so near the entrance  
of the Gulf, will not be reckoned an  
advantage

④

advantage, when it is remembered that  
the prevailing Winds within the  
Gulf is the Northwester, that Island  
is consequently to Seaward of the whole  
Gulf for the greater part of the year  
a very considerable objection, where  
Military ascendancy is necessary, and  
the speedy execution of an enterprise,  
with the means at Command, is the  
great security for its success. —

6 — An attentive consideration  
of the important results likely to arise  
out of the permanent occupation  
by the British Government of a  
Settlement in this Gulf, has impressed  
me with the propriety of profiting,  
as well by diligent enquiry, as personal  
experience, previous to submitting to  
Government



Government any opinion on this inter-  
esting subject, and it is satisfactory  
to believe that by having done so,  
I am now enabled to point out a  
situation that appears in every way  
calculated for the desired purposes.

The Island of Henn, a Suez is the  
place to which I allude, and which  
for the reasons, I shall now proceed  
to give, I prefer to Fishmee, or any  
other situation in the Gulf.

The Island of Henn or  
Suez, is from seven to eight miles in  
length, and four to five in breadth.

It is particularly well situated  
for Naval purposes. Good anchor-  
age is close to the Shore all round  
the Island, and ships can shift at  
any

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any time, to which ever may be the  
Landed side. — For the convenience  
of landing, and embarking in  
blowing weather there is a small  
Cove or basin into which the boats  
of the Transports entered with  
great safety, and facility during  
the prevalence of a severe North  
West Wind, when the weather is moderate  
the boats may be approach a landing  
place. — This Island has the great  
advantage of being easy of access, and  
the Channel between it and the  
East of Persia, is frequently chosen  
by Rebels, proceeding up, and down  
the Gulf. Penn is directly opposite  
to a part of the Persian Coast, which  
has been reported to have been occa-  
sionally Piratical, and it is commonly  
for

for nine months in the year to Wind  
ward of all the Ports on the Arabian  
Side of the Gulf, that have been visited  
by this Expedition, it is also centrally  
and conveniently situated for commu-  
nicating with the other Ports of  
the Persian Gulf.

8. The Water is good,  
as well as very abundant & no great  
depth, and the wells are numerous and  
conveniently situated for the shipping, as  
well as cultivation. — During the time  
the Troops have been on shore at Binn,  
the usual refreshments of an excellent  
quality, have been more plentiful, than  
they were at Seebnee.

9. The population of Binn  
is reckoned about 500, and it subsists  
by agriculture and fishing. — The  
surface

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surface of the Island, is very uneven, but the soil is said to be fertile, producing abundant returns from the seed — The pasture though scanty, is of good quality, and the Wood being more abundant, than in any other Island in the Gulf, affords sufficient fuel to the Inhabitants. — The climate is reputed to be good, and has every appearance of being so, as there are no swamps, or Jungles — Only a small part of the Island is in a state of cultivation, and probably more than half of the land formerly tilled is now quite neglected, in consequence of this said, frequent attacks having been made by people from the Coast of Arabia — The Establishment of a British Garrison would of course obviate the

the latter evil, and the security it would  
afford, would speedily induce the  
Inhabitants, to cultivate every thing  
for the Trade, which could not be  
more conveniently obtained from a  
distance.

10. —. Experience has since proved that  
a small Insular situation, which  
combines the advantages as belonging to  
Senn, is most favourable for a useful  
use in a Commercial enterprise, and  
it is right to observe that this Island  
was not overlooked, by such acute  
Commercial observers as the Ancient  
Portuguese, who appear to have had  
a considerable settlement on it, as  
may be inferred from Ruins, which  
are still visible, and the traditions  
current.

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current among the Inhabitants of  
the Island.

11 The complete exacer-  
tion which obtains in my mind of  
Kien being in every way eligible for  
the proposed settlement, induces me  
strongly to recommend that immediate  
measures may be taken to obtain  
permanent possession of it. It is  
at present occupied by Arabs, and  
is held by the Sheik of Charak, who  
is said to pay a nominal tribute to  
the Russian Government of six or  
seven Tomans per annum, but the tenure  
is extremely loose, for the Sheik  
declared that in the event of the  
Prince of Ghury, visiting Charak  
with his Army, he should abandon  
that.

that place, and take refuge with his  
people in this Island, as the Prince  
has not the means to follow him.

12. As His Majesty's Ship  
Cuckoo, has already been detained one  
day to convey this dispatch, and  
an opportunity of writing will again  
occur immediately by the Transport,  
which will proceed with the European  
Troops, I shall not at present enter  
upon any other subject.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient

humble Servant.

Signed/  
William Grant Pitt.

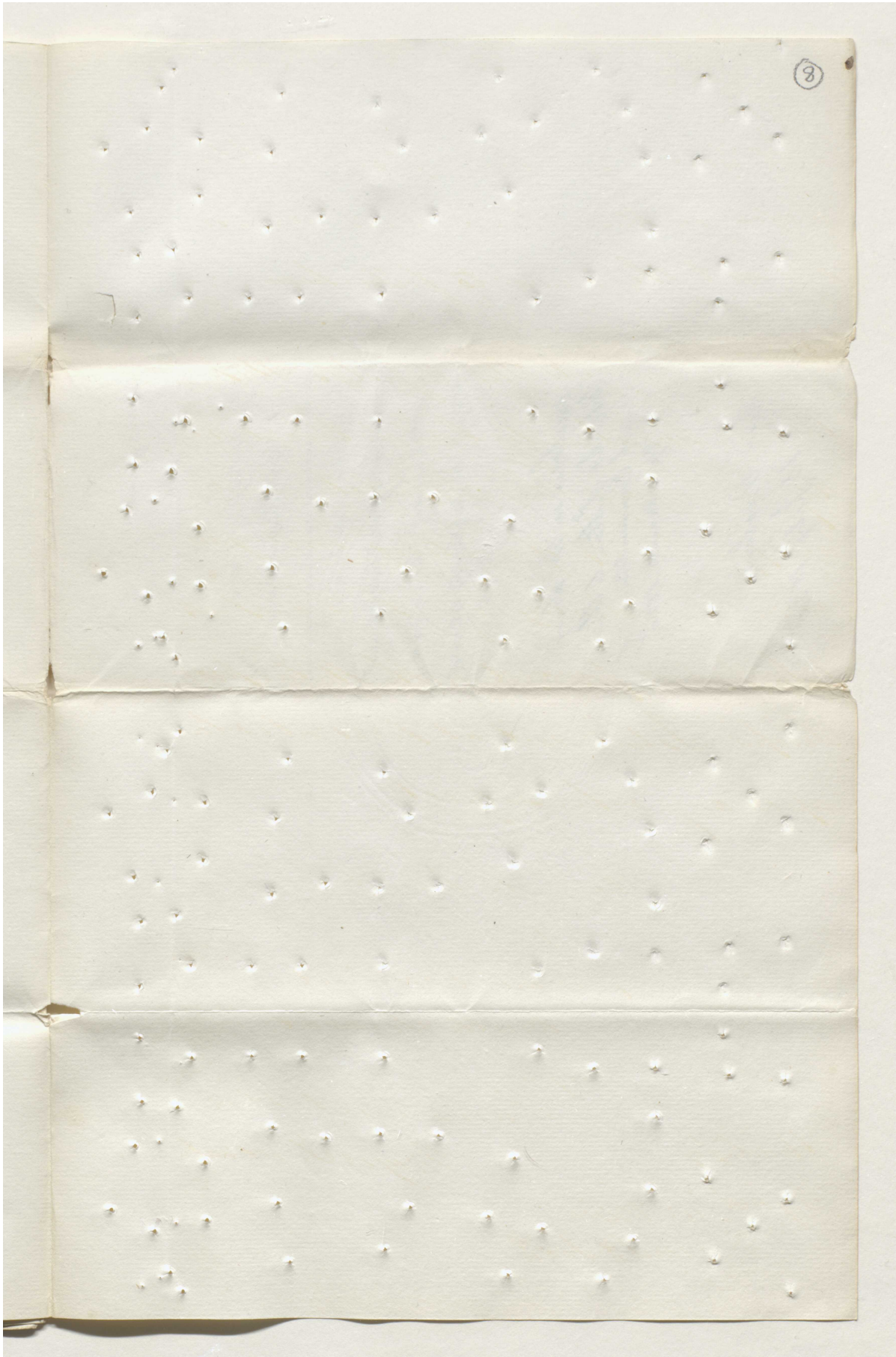
Major General

A true Copy

Signed / W. Wilson.

Major General

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[8r] (15/16)





Enclosure in Letter from Henry Willock to the Secret Committee of 29 Mar 1820  
[8v] (16/16)

