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Letters from William Bruce to Jonathan Duncan

Holding Institution	British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers
Reference	IOR/L/PS/9/76/364
Date(s)	14 Oct 1804-21 Oct 1804 (CE, Gregorian)
Written in	English in Latin
Extent and Format	1 item (2 folios)
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About this record

This item contains copies of three letters:

1. Part of a letter from William Bruce, Acting Resident in Bushire [Bushehr] to Jonathan Duncan, Governor of Bombay, sent from Bushire and dated 14 October 1804. Bruce reports attacks on British ships in the Persian Gulph [Gulf] by the French privateer *La Fortune* and his subsequent actions. The first part of this letter can be found in IOR/L/PS/9/76/363.

2. A letter from Bruce to Duncan, sent from Bushire and dated 20 October 1804. The letter describes efforts by crew members of the ship *Fly*, captured by the *La Fortune*, to recover mail seized during the attack and proceed to India.

3. A letter from Bruce to Duncan, sent from Bushire and dated 21 October 1804. Bruce reports that he has chartered a dhow [dhow] to carry the crew of the *Fly* to India, and reports the movements of the *La Fortune*.

Duplicates of these letters can be found in IOR/L/PS/9/76/355.

①
she struck was destroyed by Captain Manwaring who with his two Lieutenants & a small part of the Crew have been detained on board I sent on to the Isle of France to which place he has sent all his Prizes. -

The Privateers Name is the La Fortune Captain Le Meme altho she has sent off there Prizes to the Isle of France she still has on board 150 Men she is now under weigh along with the Shrewsbury Diving to the South intending to go to the Bar & send her Boats up the River till out any Vessel they are able. I have sent two Expresses one by Land & the other by Sea to inform Mr. Manserly who ere this has Arrived for the person in charge on their Guard I have every Reason to suppose that my Letters will reach them in sufficient time to prevent any Mischief taking place. -

I send this by an express Boat to Muskat as she did not touch there of course they are ignorant of her being in this Quarter I have written to the Pro Vice for him to inform all English Vessels that touch there of the Privateers being up here & for them not to leave that place until they got good Accounts of her having left the Gulph. Captain Le Meme has made all the Captains, Officers & Europeans belonging to different Vessels he has taken & released Sign a paper not to carry Arms against the French Station until regularly exchanged. -

As there is no likelihood of any Vessel offering from the above Circumstances to convey the Crew of the Fly to the Presidency I shall if I can procure a Dow on reasonable terms send them to Bombay. -

Mr. Menshaw with the Command of the Creole was landed on the Island of Kher on the 1st Instant they must shortly be here that is if they come up by Land. -

Shave

Bushire 14 October 1804
Via Muskat. —

I have the Honor to be
Honble Sir,
Your most obedient Humble Servant
Signed / W^m Bruce,

To
The Honble Jonathan Duncan
President & Governor &c. in Council
Honble Sir,

The bearer of this M^r Howre was
a passenger on board of the Fly when captured by the
Lt Fortune Privateer Captain LeMene & when
Captain Manwaring had the Packet thrown
over board he took very particular bearings of
the shore for the purpose in case of being landed
he might endeavor to recover it. —

He was fortunately landed
here along with a Number of other Gentlemen
out of whom M^r Howre, Captain Gould & M^r Loance
have jointly purchased a Botella here to proceed
to the Presidency & as M^r Howre is pretty confident
he can again find the Packet they have determined
to spend some days at the place for the express
purpose of searching for it and I sincerely hope
they may meet with success. —

With due Submission Honble Sir,
allow me to mention that I think M^r Howre's
Zealous endeavours for the benefit of the public
Service is deserving of the favorable Notice to
Government and I hope particularly as he has
been a great sufferer by being captured it will
plead in his behalf & that he may meet with a
reward adequate to the Service he is going to
undertake. —

I have permitted two of the Fly's
Europeans to proceed on board his Boat with him
to assist in steering her. —
Tomorrow.

①

Tomorrow the Dow I have engaged
to convey the crew of the Fly to the Presidency will
leave this at which time I shall again do myself
the Honor of addressing You.

And I have the honor to be,

Wthble Sir,

Your Most obedient Humble Serv^t
(Signed) W^m Bruce

Bushire,
the 20th October 1804.
By Boat. -

To
The Hon^{ble} Jonathan Duncan,
President and Governor of " in Council,
Hon^{ble} Sir.

I had the honor to address
you on the 14th Instant via Muskat I hope it will
have reached you long ere this does but in the event
of its not, I have now the honor to forward a
Duplicate with a Triplicate of my letter of 14th.
I a Duplicate of my letter of yesterday. -

I had the honor to mention in
my Address of the 14th Instant that if I could
procure a Dow on reasonable terms I would send
the Fly's crew to the Presidency. I have much
satisfaction in acquainting that I have now
taken up the Dow Hajee Whispan for 2500 P^{rs}.
Eyn to convey the crew consisting of 66 Persons.
to the Presidency without stopping at Muscat &
have supplied the officer in charge of the crew
with 40 days provisions of all kinds. The enclosed
is a list of their Names and Stations.

My reasons for sending them
away from here so soon was, that in the first instance
they were a great expence to the Company living
on shore & being but part Europeans very liable
to get into some disagreeable dispute with the
Natives & which might turn out very seriously
and ^{dearly} as it was quite uncertain whether any
Company's vessel would be here shortly I was
Merchant

Merchant Ship would take them at so low a
rate, and 3rd, that as they were allowed to quit the
Privateer on their Parole I would be of no service
on board any Vessel they might go on board if as
they could not assist in defending her from a
French Man in case they should fall in with
one, I thought it most adviseable to send them
from here as quick as possible & hope Honble
Sir my conduct in this instance will not be
disapproved of

I enclose the Naguadah's Receipt
for 2500 Piastres Eyn which I have paid him as the
passage Money for the Crew of the Fly.

I have not entered into any Parti-
culars with respect to the Capture of the Fly or the
Vessels by the La Fortune as the Officers of the former
& some Gentlemen of the latter have proceeded to the
Presidency by this Conveyance from whom every
Circumstance may be learnt better than by letter.

I have the honor to enclose you an
Account signed by the Officer in charge of the Crew
of the Provisions & Stores laid in by me for their use.

We had Accounts yesterday from the
Island of Carrack that the Privateer was still there
Watering & Wooding I am very apprehensive that
he will still make another Capture before he leaves this
Gulph as it is most probable that the Vessel which
would leave the Presidency after the Creole, will
fall in with him as he is going down the Gulph
& as it is almost impossible she can have got
intelligence of her being in this Quarter.

I have the honor to be,
Honble Sir,
Your Most obedient Humble Servant

Signed Wm Bruce
Wm Bruce

Brushire
the 21st October 1804.
J. Dow Major Kopain...

A Mr. M...
to South...
of 22...
LPS/9/76/364
Mr. M...
13th...