

Yesterday at 6 A.M. the Wind became favorable and knowing your anxiety that the Ship should sail with all possible dispatch we weighed from our Station in Hampton Roads and stood to sea. in Lin Haven Bay we pass'd two British Men of War one of them the Bellona the other the Metampus. their Colours flying and their appearance friendly some time afterwards we observ'd one of the Line of Battle Ships that lay off Cape Henry to get under way and stand to sea. at this time the Wind became light and it was not untill near four in the afternoon that the Ship under way came within hault Cape Henry then bearing N.W. by W. distance 3 leagues The Communication which appear'd to be her Commanders object for speaking the Chesapeake he said he would send on board on which I order'd the Chesapeake to be hoiv'd too for his Convenience, on the arrival of the Officer he present'd me with the enclosed paper ^{No 1} from the Captⁿ of the Leopard and a Copy of an order from Admiral Boscawen which another Officer afterwards took back, to which I gave the enclosed answer. ^{No 2} and was waiting for his reply. about this time I observ'd some appearance of an hostile nature, and said to Captⁿ Gordon that it was possible they were serious and request'd him to have his Men sent to their quarters with as little noise as possible, not using those Ceremonies which we should have done with an avowed enemy, as I fully supposed their arrangements were more menacing than any thing I saw. Captⁿ Gordon immediately gave the orders to the Officers and Men to go to quarters and have all things in readiness, but before a Match could be lighted or the quarters fill'd of any division of a mind, the Board of the Leopard haul'd I could not hear, and was talking to ^{him} ~~him~~ as I supposed, when she commenc'd a heavy fire, which did great execution. It is distressing to me to acknowledge that I stand from the advantage they had gain'd over our unprepared and unsuspecting State did not warrant a longer opposition, consequently our resistance was but feeble, in about 20 minutes I order'd the Colours to be struck, and sent Lieut. Smith on board the Leopard to inform her Commander that I consider'd the Chesapeake her prize to this Message he receiv'd no answer, the Leopards Boat soon after came on board, and the Officer who came in her demand'd the Muster Book I reply'd the Ship and Books were theirs, and if he expected to see the Men he must find them, they call'd on the Purser who deliver'd his Book, and the Men were examin'd and the three Men demand'd at Washington and one Man more were taken away on their departure from the Ship. I wrote the Commander of the Leopard the enclosed ^{No 3} to which I receiv'd the answer ^{No 4} on finding that the Men were his only object, and that he refus'd to consider the Ship his prize, and the Officers and Crew his prisoners I call'd a Council of our Officers, and request'd their opinion relative to the Conduct it was now our duty to pursue the result was that the Ship should return to Hampton

that it not been with a hope of getting the Gun back clear, so as to have made a more formidable resistance

their want your further orders -

Enclosed you have a list of the unfortunate killed, and also
of the Wounded which have suffered on this disgracefull occasion, as also
I have sent this Letter to you by Captain Gordon, in order that you may
have an opportunity to get such information as you may wish

1022

as also a Statement of the damage sustained in the Hull Spars and
Rigging of the Ship

Un

From Com. J. B. Batten
Sent by Capt. Good in
about the Chesapeake

The Monroeth

Wm. Smith

Secretary of the Navy

Washington

Encl