

Transcription of MSA SC 5968-1-1

Transcribed by Maria Day and Jean B. Russo, October 18, 2011

Letter, [Autographed Letter Signed], written by Rear-Admiral Pulteney Malcolm, detailing the Chesapeake Campaign, the Attack on Baltimore, and the Bombardment of Fort McHenry. Near Baltimore, at sea. Sept. 10 to 16, 1814.

Addressed:

103 10th Sept.
Mrs. Malcolm
No. 2 Upper Harley St.
London

Letter:

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10th Sept Cescheake [Chesapeake]

My Der [*sic*] Clementia,

I have received your letter of the 6th July by the Packet, the *Newcastle* is not arrived she will have those that you sent to the Admiralty, along with write by Packet, direction North America.

I am much gratified by your account of George long may he be preserved to us. I shall write you a sett of journal[s] of our proceedings free from our private affairs – as no doubt numbers will apply to you for news[.] The Americans must make Peace their country is just defenceless – and if we pleased

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we might destroy as much as was conceived necessary – if the war continues, we must levy contributions for the expence of it on the counties that are exposed - we are now going to Baltimore – my principle objection is the sickly season, and its being to[o] short for a Coup de Main – I wish that we had gone to the North for two months and then returned – the Americans in general are very averse to the war[.] they have nothing to do to animate them, and their only pleasure is railing at each other, which they do to perfection – the wind is fair and I shall be at the mouth of the Patapsco [River] to night. I trust we shall succeed, but I fear our

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information is not sufficiently correct the Admiral [Cochrane] has been over persuaded to change his plan of directions – and I think so has has [*sic*] the General [Ross] by [Rear Admiral] Cockburn and the Quarter Master General, both dashing, sanguine Men, full of Zeal and enterprise but sail rather fast.

16th Sept

I promised you a journal and have not time for a long letter as I [?] from the Admiral to day

I will just give you a succinct view of what has pass'd that you may know the story –

We landed on the 12th fourteen miles from Baltimore at North point – I took leave of the

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General about five or six miles on the road, at two o'clock – at three the Enemy were discovered and just as our Troops were formed an unfortunate Ball struck my esteemed and gallant friend – the only words he spoke – were [“]take me to the *Royal Oak* and if I die request the Admiral to write my wife, [”] I sincerely lament him[.] I had formed a strong friendship for him and it was reciprocal[.] he was not only a brave, but he was a good man[.]

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he was always in the front, at Washington he escaped by miracle, he had two Horses shot under him. I have written to Mrs. Ross[.] she is at Bristol with his Brother. he died on his way to the beach in the arms of a Lieut of the *Royal Oak* who had always accompanied him, I have had his Body preserved, and we propose burying him at Halifax and erecting a Monument.

Our Army defeated the Americans but on their approach to Baltimore they found it

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defended by a strong entrenched Camp with double their numbers to defend it – we had got within shot of the Batteries – but they had sunk ships to prevent our approach – our Bombs could only throw Shells into the Forts[.] they could not reach the Town – Sir. A. Cochrane [Cochrane] was in the *Surprise* and your friend in the *Sea Horse* with [Captain James] Gordon as fine a fellow as ever step'd

It became a question

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with the Camp should be stormed – it was considered that we might force the works, but that our loss would be more than our little Army could stand – it was therefore resolved to retreat which they did and embarked without molestation – If the General had lived he would have retreated, and there is only this to be said that on approaching Baltimore it was found to[o] strong and we [gave up]

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the enterprise having beat a superior force on the road – My own opinion it that if it had be[en] attacked in the night by the Bayonet it should have succeeded but it was a greater risk than Col. [A.] Brooke was authorized to run – he is a very good officer, we have not lost many men – they all did their duty famously – the Seamen were particularly-steady – six hundred of them were on shore

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James as usual got credit[.] he knows his business but his Brigadier is a great fool[,] Col. Paterson of the 21st – it is distressing to see so fine a Regiment in the back ground from the heads wanting that necessary article –

I am just returned to my ship we all find occupation and our ships are generally aground every day –

I neglected my journal ~~but~~ and it is now to[o] late to fill it out – you must be contented with this

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I never was in better health [this] work agrees with me –

I told you in my last that Capt. Dix was appointed to the *Menelaus*, Capt. Crofton who takes charge of this, was my Captain for a few days – he appears a gentleman like man he was only acting – there is an old friend of mine on this station that I hope to get a hold of, Capt. Pearce[.] I have now got half my Lower Deck guns, so that I begin to hold up my head, but this war must not continue[.] we should make Peace as soon as possible[.]

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I shall write you by the Packet my kind Love to the House kiss our der [*sic*] George.

ever yours

Pult. Malcolm

James Pasley commanded the Seamen that were landed from the *Royal Oak*[.] he is a spirited fellow

you will see Capt. Carlton – he was in the Action with James when you have heard his story write Jane –