

TRANSCRIPTION of the last letter from Captain James Robert Mosse RN, written in HMS Monarch four days before the Battle of Copenhagen, in which battle he lost his life.

March 29, 1801

My dearest love,

The Fleet being anchored conventionally for forcing a passage by Cronenberg Castle, as soon as the wind favours a little more; and as I judge there may be a Cutter dispatch'd as soon as We are through I embrace the leisure moment to tele you I am well, (at a later date), and that We are all in high spirits in having the Honour of leading the Van Division under L^d Nelson into the Sound – and I hope afterwards up to Copenhagen Roads.

The Danes at present not entirely on the defensive – and have strengthened Copenhagen much, both by Sea and Land. They also expect very soon 12 sail of Russian Line, under our Old Acquaintance Adm^e Hennikoff; who on this occasion has been received into favour by the Emporor. – There will likewise be some Swedish Men-of-War, but know not how many to join the Russians. However, whatever We can do, must be done immediately, and I am persuaded that no time will be lost, on our Part's, by making a most vigorous Attack against Copenhagen, before the Combined Forces can beat (?) against us. – “Such is the Object We have to surmount”! And I hope in my next to give you a favourable account of.

The Van consists of Monarch, (to lead), Bellona, Elephant (bearing V. Admiral L^d Nelson's Flag), Ardent, Isis, Agamemnon, Polyphemus, Defiance, Russel & Glatton – the other ships follow under Admiral Smith Parker.

The above is our situation and State, & all I can speak to and state at present. – I have given a letter into the propulsion of my friend, Wallace, should any Accident happen to me, and I hope you will duly receive my last Letter, by the Kite.

If any Man of War comes out, send me ½ hund^d Sugar & 6 or 8 lbs more Tea; which I fear We shall soon turn short in. – Mr Wallace writes to Mr Taylor to get a Quarter of Beef salted down, which Mr Harvey can get as a Charge to the Ship – and you must use your influence with any Captain to bring it out – for as We are to fight hard, We must live Well!

We have Col. Hutchinson with near 100 of the 49th Reg^t on board which gives Us more mouths to feed – The Colonel is vastly well, & desires his best Comp^{ts} to You – also to Dr Snipe in which I cordially join likewise to other enquiring friends.

30th March.

We yesterday entered the Sound, passing the Castle of Bronenberg, without there striking a single ship; an what was still favourable, the Sweeds' did not fire a Shot, but from what cause We know not. (“This circumstance we hope will lead to keep up the natural Aversion they have to each other & may disunite them”) – So that the Van division proceeded under L^d Nelson, to the Anchorage near Copenhagen; and Adm^e Sir Hyde's Anchored about 2 miles below Us.

Ap^l. 1st

These two Days has been employed reconnoitring the Enemy's force – A council has since been held & the Mode of Attack fixed. – The Enemy are very strong, far beyond expectation, and will, I fear, make the success of our

*Attack doubtful – at all events, there is full Work enough for
“All our Force”.*

*Tomorrow it is likely, We shall approach
nearer, in readiness for the most serious Battle; - which induces
me to Write while I can Write – confirming all my affections on
You & the dear Children, hoping they will resolutely fix to live
after God’s Commandments, which will ensure em His Grace at
the last. – So God bless you, should it be my Lot to fall – “God’s
Will must be done”!!!*