

that she appeared to be suspicious of the chase, I took in starboard steering-sails and hauled up for the *Peacock*. I was still, however, of opinion that the chase was an Indiaman, though, indeed, the atmosphere was quite smoky and indistinct, and I concluded she was very large. Captain Warrington was waiting for me to join him, that we might get together alongside of her. At 3.22 P.M. the *Peacock* made the signal that the chase was a ship of the line and an enemy. I took in immediately all steering-sails and hauled upon the wind, the enemy being then upon our lee quarter, distant about eight miles. By sundown I had perceived that the enemy sailed remarkably fast and was very weatherly." . . .

This letter was dated from San Salvador, June 10th, 1815.

It had been very calm on the morning of the 28th when the great ship had been sighted which, as Biddle has recorded, every one took to be a large East-Indiaman. As the *Peacock* was in advance and to the windward of the stranger, it was feared by the crew of the *Hornet* that she would be first to place herself alongside and secure the rich prize. According to the private journal of one of the officers on the *Hornet*, they had already begun in their imagination to divide the contents of the vessel they expected to capture among them. If she came from the Indies, the sailors declared that they would carpet the berth-deck with costly rugs; while if she hailed from England and was on an outward