

mentioned of the British vessels hauling off to repair damages. Again, Captain Porter endeavours to insinuate that he was attacked

in a neutral port, although confessing, a dozen lines above, that he was unable to recover the common anchorage.

in the performance of their respective duties and gave an earnest of their value to the service; the three first are too young to recommend for promotion, the latter I beg leave to recommend for confirmation as well as the acting lieutenants, and Messrs. Barnewell, Johnston and Bostwick.

We have been unfortunate, but not disgraced. The defence of the *Essex* has not been less honorable to her officers and crew, than the capture of an equal force, and I now consider my situation less unpleasant than that of commodore Hillyar, who, in violation of every principle of honour and generosity, and regardless of the rights of nations, attacked the *Essex* in her crippled state: within pistol shot of neutral shore; when for six weeks I had daily offered him fair and honorable combat, on terms greatly to his advantage: the blood of the slain must be on his head, and he has yet to reconcile his conduct to heaven, to his conscience and to the world.

My loss has been dreadfully severe, 58 killed or have since died of their wounds; and among them Lieutenant Cowell; 39 were severely wounded, 27 slightly, and 31 are missing; making in all 151, killed, wounded, and missing, a list of whose names is annexed.

The professional knowledge of Dr. Richard Hoffman, acting surgeon, and Doctor Alexander Montgomery, acting surgeon's mate, added to their assiduity and the benevolent attentions and assistance of Mr. D. P. Adams, the chaplain, saved the lives of many of the wounded, those gentlemen have been indefatigable in their attentions to them; the two first I beg leave to recommend for confirmation, and the latter to the notice of the department.

I must in justification of myself observe, that with our six twelve pounders alone we fought this action, our cannonades being almost useless.

The loss in killed and wounded has been great with the enemy; among the former is the first lieutenant of the *Phoebe*, and of the latter captain Tucker of the *Cherub*, whose wounds are severe. Both the *Essex* and *Phoebe* were in a sinking state, and it was with difficulty they could be kept afloat until they anchored in Valparaiso next morning. The battered state of the *Essex*, will, I believe, prevent her ever reaching England, and I also think it will be out of their power to repair the damages of the *Phoebe* so as to enable her to double Cape Horn. All the masts and yards of the *Phoebe* and *Cherub* are badly crippled, and their hulls much cut up; the former had eighteen twelve pound shot through her below her water line, some three feet under water. Nothing but the smoothness of the water saved both the *Phoebe* and *Essex*.

I hope Sir, that our conduct may prove satisfactory to our country, and that it will testify

it by obtaining our speedy exchange, that we may again have it in our power to prove our zeal,

Commodore Hillyar, I am informed, has thought proper to state to his Government that the action lasted only 45 minutes; should he have done so, the motive may be easily discovered—but the thousands of disinterested witnesses who covered the surrounding hills can testify that we fought his ships for two hours and a half; upwards of fifty broadsides were fired by the enemy agreeable to their own accounts, and upwards of seventy five by ours; excepting the few minutes they were repairing damages the firing was incessant.

Soon after my capture I entered into an agreement with commodore Hillyar to disarm my prize the *Essex Junior*, and proceed with the survivors of my officers and crew in her to the United States, taking with me all her officers and crew. He consented to grant her a passport to secure her from recapture. The ship was small and we knew we had much to suffer, yet we hoped soon to reach our country in safety, that we might again have it in our power to serve it. This arrangement was attended with no additional expence, as she was abundantly supplied with provisions and stores for the voyage.

In justice to commodore Hillyar, I must observe, that, although I can never be reconciled to the manner of his attack on the *Essex*, or to his conduct before the action, he has, since our capture shewn the greatest humanity to my wounded, whom he permitted me to land on condition that the United States should bear their expenses, and has endeavoured as much as lay in his power to alleviate the distresses of war by the most generous and delicate deportment towards myself and officers and crew; he gave orders that the property of every person should be respected—his orders, however, were not so strictly attended to as might have been expected: besides being deprived of books, charts, &c. &c., both myself and officers lost many articles of our clothing, some to a considerable amount. I should not have considered this last circumstance of sufficient importance to notice, did it not mark a striking difference between the navy of Great Britain and that of the United States, highly creditable to the latter.

By the arrival of the *Tagus*, a few days after my capture, I was informed that besides the ships which had arrived in the Pacific in pursuit of me, and those still expected, others were sent to cruise for me in the China seas, off New Zealand, Timor and New Holland, and that another frigate was sent to the River la Plata.

To possess the *Essex* it has cost the British government near six millions of dollars, and yet, sir, her capture was owing entirely to accident; and if we consider the expedition with which naval contests are now decided, the action is a