

marching his men to the gate of the castle that Richard Cœur de Lion had captured, and demanding its surrender.

It was held by less than a dozen men, whose officer, being without instruction touching such an unforeseen contingency, gave it up. His orders had been to avoid hostilities, therefore he marched out with his little company, and took the road to Blois, and thus the action of Epernon came within an ace of turning Cardillac's victory into defeat, had the officer suspected who travelled in the carriage he met.

The officer asked Cardillac if war had been declared, and was assured that it had not. This confirmed the officer in the belief that he had done right in surrendering the stronghold; a belief which he found was unshared by his superior in Blois, who, however, was now immersed in his own troubles, for Blois was panic-stricken in the morning, when it was learned that the Queen had escaped.

Her Majesty rested for several hours in the castle at Montrichard, and then the imposing procession crossed the bridge and rode for Loches, where it was received with great acclaim.