

THE HULL-EATON CORRESPONDENCE

DURING

THE EXPEDITION AGAINST TRIPOLI

1804-1805

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EDITED FROM A LETTER BOOK  
IN THE LIBRARY OF THE SOCIETY  
BY CHARLES HENRY LINCOLN

### PREFATORY NOTE.

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It is of interest to Americans to note that the entrance of the United States into world politics dates from an early period in the nation's history. Long before Admiral Dewey sailed into Manila harbor the United States had led the way in settling one of the most vexatious and irritating problems which the commercial world had to face—the treatment to be accorded the corsairs of North Africa who levied tribute on the trade of all nations.

For years Tunis, Tripoli, Algiers and Morocco on the southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea had considered that the world owed them a living and had seized cargoes and crews from ships of all nationalities in their effort to obtain payment of this debt. Busied with war and commercial competition among themselves, the powers of Europe including Italy, Spain, Holland, France and England herself—so-called mistress of the sea—had submitted to this marauding or had paid fixed tribute that their own vessels might be allowed to go on legitimate errands in peace. Strange as it appears to us of the twentieth century, not until the new-comer among the nations of the world took the matter in hand was a stop put to the systematized robbery which invested one of the great highways of commerce with the Orient.

In 1797 William Eaton was appointed United States consul to Tunis and in March, 1799, he reached the capital of that nation. For several years he was engaged in an almost constant series of disputes and altercations with the Bey regarding the manner in which American vessels should be treated, and by his tact and resolution

did much to alleviate the burden placed on United States commerce. Later, as Naval Agent to the Barbary States and supported by an American fleet, Eaton took advantage of the revolution in Tripoli in 1804 to force upon the ruler of that country a peace which gave American trade a security such as was granted no other shipping. Although this peace was negotiated by Tobias Lear, the credit of the achievement belonged in large part to Eaton and the naval force supporting him, for Lear, in his negotiations, but weakened the terms the United States might have obtained. As throwing some light on the situation in 1804 and 1805 the following letters passing between Eaton and Isaac Hull are presented. They are contained in a letter book in the manuscript collections of this Society and were given in 1832 by Lt. George S. Blake of the U. S. Navy. The letters date from Dec. 2, 1804, to Feb. 13, 1805, and almost immediately precede the treaty made with Hamet at Alexandria. They are but a small part of the correspondence relating to the Tripolitan war yet they illustrate the American position in North Africa admirably. Two letters of Eaton relating to his preparation of a history of the war are added to the calendar and eight of the more important letters are printed in full that a more comprehensive survey of the situation may be presented.

CHARLES HENRY LINCOLN.

## THE HULL-EATON LETTERS.

1804. Eaton, William. Rosetta, [Egypt.] Letter to  
Dec. 2. Isaac Hull. Arrival at Aboukir and view of  
battle-field; entered the Nile, Dec. 1; recep-  
tion by the British officials; is about to go to  
Cairo but will return to Rosetta in ten days;  
hopes Hull will come to see him as he needs  
latter's advice; suggestions to Hull as to  
provisions available and men to be trusted.  
Contemporary Copy, 2pp.

1804. Eaton, William. Grand Cairo. Letter to  
Dec. 10. [Isaac] Hull. Reached Cairo Dec. 10; Hamet  
with the Mamelukes but writer expects to  
obtain him; will wait ten days for advice  
from Hamet before descending the river to  
Rosetta; desires Hull to make provision for  
payment of money for which he is obliged  
to draw upon Briggs Brothers. Cont. Copy  
2pp.

1804. Hull, Isaac. Rosetta. Letter to William  
Dec. 16. Eaton. Acknowledges letter of Dec. 10; will  
attend to business therein mentioned; for  
particulars of passage and recent occurrences  
refers him to John Henry Sieorac; leaves for  
Alexandria by first fair wind; remembrances  
to [Presley N.] O'Bannon from all his ship-  
mates. Cont. Copy, 1p.

Lieut. O'Bannon had been detached to lead the American  
land forces in the expedition.

1804. Eaton, William. Grand Cairo. Letter to  
Dec. 17. [Isaac] Hull. Has obtained permission from

French viceroy that Hamet and suite may pass through Egypt and embark at any port; financial matters; can not meet Hull at Rosetta for ten days. Cont. Copy, 1p.

- [1804.] Eaton, William. Grand Cairo. Letter to Dec. 19. [Isaac] Hull. Encloses letters for Navy Department; refers Hull to Sir Alexander Ball for information as to recent events; important men in suite of Hamet; money raised and arrangements made; "if Government should reprove—we will reimburse them from the spoils of Bengazi"; thinks they could take 200-500 men from Egypt. Cont. Copy, 2pp.

Copy is dated Dec. 19, 1805. This letter is printed in full on p. 119.

1804. Hull, Isaac. U. S. Brig *Argus*, Alexandria. Dec. 27. Letter to William Eaton. Acknowledges letters of Dec. 17 and 19; has no means of raising \$4000, the amount desired by Eaton; wishes to see Eaton to make arrangements for passengers latter will have with him as *Argus* can not carry so many; wishes men of ship back. Contemporary Copy. 2pp.

This letter printed is in full on p. 120.

1804. Eaton, William. Grand Cairo. Letter to Dec. 29. Isaac Hull. Is not at ease in making so long a stay in a condition of uncertainty and has no doubt Hull feels the same; has heard nothing from Hamet Bashaw although special couriers have been sent; accounts for this in various ways and continues to think expedition will be a success. Disgraceful behavior of young American officers fighting duels, etc.; formal complaint against some.
- Dec. 30. Forwards packet for Secretary of Navy: inquires as to sale for a sword and carriage. Cont. Copy, 3pp.

1805. Eaton, William. Grand Cairo. Letter to  
Jan. 3. [Isaac] Hull. Nothing of importance since  
writer's letters of Dec. 29, 30 and 31; is more  
certain that Hamet is under restraint by the  
Mamelukes; Mameluke party approaching  
Cairo; American situation the same which-  
ever party wins. Cont. Copy, 1p.

[1805.] Hamet, Bashaw Caramalli. [ ] Letter  
[Jan. 3.] to [William] Eaton. Remains true to the  
American side of controversy in Africa;  
acknowledges letter from Eaton; is about  
starting for Behera; has written his subjects  
and officials that they may treat with Eaton;  
will ratify any conclusions reached; plan of  
operations proposed; hopes peace and har-  
mony may be re-established. Cont. ms. trans-  
lation. 2pp.

Enclosed in Eaton to Isaac Hull Jan. 8, 1805. Printed  
Amer. State Papers, Foreign Relations, 2,703.

1805. Hull, Isaac. U. S. Brig *Argus*, Alexandria.  
Jan. 5. Letter to William Eaton. Acknowledges let-  
ters by [Lt. Richard] Farquhar; latter came  
with [Charles] Goldsborough and party; is  
anxious to leave and hoped Eaton would have  
come in person; if no more information is  
obtainable from Hamet advises that ships  
return and report to Commodore [Samuel?  
Barron;] advises Eaton not to engage [natives  
in revolt] with Farquhar at present; is some-  
what suspicious of F[rench] interests. Cont.  
Copy, 3pp.

This letter is printed in full on p. 121.

1805. Eaton, William. Grand Cairo. Letter to  
Jan. 8. Isaac Hull. Acknowledges letter of Jan. 5; hopes  
to leave Cairo soon but is to try experiment of  
interview with Hamet; [Presley N.] O'Bannon  
goes with him; considers Hull's plan of return-

ing to Commodore [Barron] a good one; is impressed with Hull's suspicions of F[rench]; feels it a duty to secure honorable peace for the United States; the country should pay no price for release of prisoners nor any tribute for future immunity. Cont. Copy, 1p.

This letter is printed in full on p. 122.

1805. Eaton, William. Grand Cairo. Letter to  
Jan. 8. [Isaac] Hull. Received a letter from Hamet after posting earlier letter to Hull; encloses a copy of same; explains locations and considers it probable that Hamet will reach Alexandria before the writer; feels success of expedition is assured; various forces on which reliance can be placed; sends passport of viceroy to Hamet on morrow. Cont. Copy, 2pp.

See Hamet to Eaton Jan. 3, 1805. Eaton's letter is printed: *American State Papers, Foreign Relations, 2,703.*

1805. Eaton, William. Grand Cairo. Letter to  
Jan. 9. [Isaac] Hull. Conditions at present as compared with those set forth in letter of Jan. 8; opportunity for Hull to win glory; needs one thousand to fifteen hundred dollars which he expects to obtain from [Samuel?] Briggs and repay by drafts on Leghorn, Naples or the Navy Department; must make presents before leaving Cairo. P. S. Further conferences with deposed princes; aid expected by Tripoli from Tunis; forces have left Tunis but writer doubts if they are aids to Tripoli. Cont. Copy. 2pp.

1805. Hull, Isaac. Alexandria. Letter to William  
Jan. 11. Eaton. Acknowledges letter of 8th; hopes Eaton will secure an interview with [Hamet] and gain information; sends this letter that Eaton (1) may not forget to forward to writer

receipts and vouchers for money advanced nor (2) to make arrangements for Farquhar and if possible disengage him from the party by whom he is surrounded and (3) to give writer another chance to learn if Hamet has been heard from; is convinced that Eaton has made proper arrangements for the expedition planned; expects to leave on Jan. 20. Cont. Copy. 2pp.

1805. Eaton, William. Rosetta. Letter to Isaac  
Jan. 14. Hull. Left Cairo Jan. 13 and leaves for Alexandria in evening; hopes to meet Hull Jan. 15; presents received from viceroy include "a superb sabre which he intends for you worth \$200"; "all the gentlemen with me received the same compliment." Cont. Copy. 1p.

1805. Eaton, William. Rosetta. Letter to Isaac  
Jan. 15. Hull. Was prevented by unusual storm from leaving Rosetta as planned; tide up the Nile compels their remaining several days; Hamet on march to lower Egypt "accompanied by a host of Arabs"; latter are eager to aid Hamet in recovery of his kingdom; problem is how to make all forces work together for American profit. Cont. Copy, 1p.

1805. Eaton, William. Demanhour. Letter to  
Jan. 24. [Isaac] Hull. Movements of friendly and opposing forces; communication with Hamet; writer is suspected and watched closely; many English spies; can have Hamet on ground in ten days if desired; requests Hull to secure an escort for that leader from the governor. Cont. Copy. 1p.

Demanhour is in the province of Behera, Egypt.



1805. Eaton, William. Demanhour. Letter to  
Jan. 25. [Isaac] Hull. Sends messenger with horses  
engaged at Alexandria; Hull's officers remain  
until he orders otherwise; hopes they may  
remain until return of messenger sent to  
Hamet. Cont. Copy. 1p.
1805. Hull, Isaac. U. S. Brig *Argus*, Alexandria.  
Jan. 26. Letter to William Eaton. Letter of Jan. 24  
received too late to secure favor from governor  
as requested; may succeed later; expects Eaton  
to do all in his power to expedite departure  
from Alexandria; expects [Hamet] Bashaw  
to come when Eaton has arrived; if latter  
can use naval officers they may remain; news  
from Derne that a ship loaded with wheat  
was taken by one of [Yusuf or Joseph Cara-  
malli] Bashaw's vessels to Tripoli. Cont.  
Copy. 2pp.
1805. Eaton, William. Demanhour. Letter to  
Jan. 27. [Isaac] Hull. Acknowledges letter of Jan.  
26, with enclosures; dealings with native  
chiefs; has been assured that Hamet will be  
on hand in five or six days, that 800 men are  
ready to march with him and that 20,000  
to 40,000 can be secured if desired; is glad  
for Hull's permission to retain [naval] officers  
and will keep him informed of all steps taken.  
Cont. Copy. 2pp.
1805. Eaton, William. Demanhour. Letter to  
Jan. 28[?] [Isaac] Hull. Acknowledges letter of Jan.  
20; horses sent to Alexandria; is confirmed  
in opinion that French Commissary regards  
Americans as English spies; Americans there-  
by exposed to infamous death. Cont. Copy.  
1p.
1805. Hull, Isaac. U. S. Brig *Argus*, Alexandria.  
Jan. 29. Letter to William Eaton. Acknowledges let-

ters of Jan. 25 and 27; pleased that horses have been sent; general alarm caused at Alexandria by presence of fleet and news that Eaton has raised the American flag; necessity of caution as eyes of everyone including the Governor are upon them; latter complains of flag raising; imprudent for [Hamet] Bashaw to appear with troops; directs Eaton to send in as many of American party as can be spared Cont. Copy. 2pp.

This letter is printed in full on p. 123.

1805. Eaton, William. Demanhour. Letter to Jan. 29. [Isaac] Hull. Acknowledges letter of yesterday [Jan. 29?]; considers the alarm referred to, and resulting from a few Christian recruits, as coming from French Commissary; considers that Hull has acted wisely but writer has permission from viceroy to take Christians out of country; expects to retain most of them with him; although his instructions have been surpassed all will end well. Cont. Copy. 1p.

1805. Eaton, William. Demanhour. Letter to Jan. 29. [Isaac] Hull. Sends translation of letter from Hamet showing conclusively that latter is in alliance with Americans; with Hamet and his Arab following conquest of Derne and Bengazi will be easy and will give honorable terminus to expedition; recruits at Alexandria will be useful; above news left to Hull's discretion to communicate to other Americans. Cont. Copy. 2pp.

1805. Hull, Isaac. Alexandria. Letter to William Jan. 30. Eaton. Acknowledges letter of 28th and two of 30th; pleased to hear from [Hamet] Bashaw; will write further on 31st. Cont. Copy. 1p.

1805. Eaton, William. Demanhour. Letter [to  
Jan. 31. Isaac Hull.] Acknowledges letter of Jan. 29;  
American flag "not displayed here, nor has  
a proposition been made to any mortal to  
engage in our service since we left you";  
no orders given to open enlistment camp at  
Alexandria; indiscretion of [James] Farquhar;  
expects interview with Hamet Feb. 2, and  
hopes to be with Hull in four days; French  
Consul called writer and companions English  
spies; directs that letter be translated to the  
Governor except portion relating to the  
French. Cont. Copy. 2pp.

This letter is printed in full on p. 124.

1805. Hull, Isaac. U. S. Brig *Argus*, Alexandria.  
Jan. 31. Letter to William Eaton. No occurrence of  
importance since departure of Eaton's mes-  
senger on Jan. 30: secretary of [Hamet]  
Bashaw hourly expected; advises an inter-  
view at some distance from Demanhour if  
Feb. 1. Bashaw has large company with him. Con-  
sultation with others confirms his opinion  
that many of Bashaw's followers should not  
appear with him; acknowledges letter [of  
Jan. 31] and considers the outlook improved.  
Cont. Copy. 2pp.

1805. Eaton, William. Demanhour. Letter to  
Feb. 1. Isaac Hull. Arrival of Hamet's prime min-  
ister and his governor of police at Rosetta;  
has advised them to proceed to Alexandria  
with Hamet and place themselves under  
Hull's protection; hopes latter will see them  
on the morrow. Cont. Copy. 1p.

1805. Eaton, William. Demanhour. Letter to  
Feb. 2. [Isaac] Hull. Further details as to time of  
meeting Hamet; expects the Bashaw and

suite to meet Hull on Monday Feb. 4. Cont.  
Copy. 1p.

Printed: Life of William Eaton; Brookfield, 1813. p. 294.

1805. Eaton, William. Demanhour. Letter to  
Feb. 4. [Isaac] Hull. Has followed directions by  
informing Hamet that he must advance with  
no more than eight men; has had interview  
with messenger from Hamet; needs a thou-  
sand dollars and requests Hull to arrange  
matters; warning against sending cash. Cont.  
Copy. 3pp.

This letter is printed in full on p. 125. See also Life of  
Eaton, p. 294.

1805. Hull, Isaac. U. S. Brig *Argus*, Alexandria.  
Feb. 4. Letter to William Eaton. Acknowledges let-  
ter of Feb. 4; Governor will not allow more  
than four persons to accompany Eaton's  
party entering with Hamet and Admiral will  
not raise this number to more than six; has  
collected five hundred dollars to aid in the  
expedition. (11 p. m.) Authorities will not  
allow Hamet to enter Alexandria without  
permission of the viceroy; has desired [Pres-  
ley N.] O'Bannon to give Eaton particulars of  
recent occurrences; advises him to continue  
his efforts with viceroy; has concluded not  
to send money lest courier be robbed. Cont.  
Copy. 3pp.

This letter is printed in full on p. 127.

1805. O'Bannon, P[resley] N. Brig *Argus*, [Alexandria.]  
Feb. 7. Letter [to William Eaton]. Letter of date  
from [Isaac] Hull will give further notes as  
to Hamet's affairs and the situation in Alex-  
andria; Admiral and Governor at that place  
defer to opinion of Viceroy of Cairo; refers  
Eaton to Hull's letter; urges him to obtain  
terms from Viceroy. Cont. Copy. 2pp.

[1805.] Blake, J[oshua.] Alexandria. Letter to [William Eaton.] Has seen Governor and Admiral and has been given assurance that Hamet may come to Rosetta or Alexandria; courier despatched to Viceroy to secure orders to commanders to that effect; intends to see Capt. [Isaac] Hull; will join Eaton again if possible. Cont. Copy. 2pp.

1805. Eaton, William. [Demanhour?] Letter to Feb. 13. [Isaac] Hull. Permission secured from Governor for Hamet Bashaw to enter city [Alexandria] next morning; has sent Hull money for Hamet; desires an interview with Hull and [Samuel] Briggs as to expediency of having the Bashaw come into the city. Cont. Copy. 1p.

1807. Eaton, William. Richmond. [Va.] Letter to Aug. 25. Charles Prentiss. Wishes assistance of Prentiss in preparation of his "History of the Tripolitan War"; thinks of establishing a newspaper at Brimfield; asks Prentiss his terms for assistance in first work and for services as editor of proposed paper. A. L. S. 1p.

This letter is reproduced opposite in fac-simile.

1807. Eaton, William. Richmond. [Va.] Letter to Oct. 12. Charles Prentiss. Is to be in Boston much of winter; is preparing to offer his [History of the] Tripolitan War to the public. A. L. S. 1p.

Richmond Aug 25<sup>th</sup> 1807

My Dear Sir,

I desire you will have the goodness to signify to me what sufficient inducements I can offer you to pass a few months with me at my seat in Brimfield, and to assist me in preparing for publication A History of the  
Revolutions of the

Republic of the I have also in contem-  
- plation the establishment of a new paper in  
that village - which - if the encouragement should meet your views I could wish you would edit

write me, I pray you, at this place and duplicate at Brimfield - And, as you love me, keep these propositions secret -

I am, Dear Sir, faithfully  
and respectfully yours  
Mr. Geo. Prentice. William Eaton

SELECTED LETTERS FROM  
THE HULL-EATON CORRESPONDENCE.

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*William Eaton to Isaac Hull.*

Sir:

GRAND CAIRO, Decem<sup>r</sup>. 19<sup>th</sup>, 1804.

The letters herewith enclosed for the Navy department, and Sir Alexander Ball, will explain everything I have done or noticed since I saw you, which either you or they have a right to be concerned about.

The interest Major Missett has taken in the success of our expedition entitle him to every confidence. I have no objection but on the contrary a wish, that you should shew him these communications. He is too contious of the justice of the grateful things I have said of him, to suspect me of adulation. If it were not so, acquaintance would satisfy him that I dont deal in that article.

I have this afternoon discovered two other important characters in the suite of Hamet Bashaw, I have no doubt that we may take three to five hundred men from Egypt. Provision must be made for an hundred. I have taken up a thousand dollars of M<sup>r</sup>. Marcharl to be reimbursed to Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Briggs Brothers and advised you we shall have need of four or five thousand more. If Government should reprove our arrangements we will reimburse them from the spoils of Bengazi, which I already calculate upon as ours. Nothing will hinder but unforseen disaster.

I am Sir, with respect,  
faithfully Yours,

Cap<sup>t</sup>. HULL.

WILLIAM EATON.

If occasion offers to forward the letters to Malta and the United States before you sail, beg you will put them under proper seals and additional covers.

*Isaac Hull to William Eaton.*

United States Brig Argus.

*Sir:*ALEXANDRIA, Dec<sup>r</sup>. 27, 1804.

I have been honored with your letters of 17<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Instants. the former of which however did not come to hand till the 20<sup>th</sup> the latter with the accompanying letters came to hand through the hands of Major Missett some days past. I had previous to receiving them placed in the hands of Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Briggs one thousand dollars to meet your draft on them. You inform me that most likely you will want four of five thousand more; if so God knows where we shall get it unless you have the means at Cairo, or Rosetta, for I know of none here. I am anxious to see you that we may make arrangements for the passengers you say you shall have with you, for it will be necessary to hire or purchase some other vessel to carry them in, as the Argus will not carry provisions and water for that number for any length of time, and I should suppose it would be proper to make those arrangements before they are promised a passage, for fear we may disappoint them after they arrive here. I hope on your arrival at Rosetta you will send the gentlemen forward as fast as possible. The purser is wanted, and the other gentlemen had much better be on board than remain at Rosetta for I assure you I am ashamed of receiving their civilities without any chance of returning them, they are too good. I left with M<sup>r</sup>. Patruchi for you, a trunk, dressing case, sword, and hat, and for M<sup>r</sup>. Farquhar a cask of wine, which I hope he intends for the Major.

Our friends Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Briggs are well, and I as sure you we spent a very merry Christmas with them drinking success to your party &c. I pray you will make my respects to the Major and family—

And believe me, to be,

Your friend & Humb<sup>e</sup>. Serv<sup>t</sup>.,W<sup>m</sup>. EATON, Esq<sup>r</sup>.

ISAAC HULL.

P. S. I hope to see the party with you and very soon.



*Isaac Hull to William Eaton.*

United States Brig Argus,  
ALEXANDRIA, Jan<sup>y</sup>. 5<sup>th</sup>, 1805.

Sir:

I have been honored with your letter by M<sup>r</sup>. Farquhar, who has this moment arrived with M<sup>r</sup>. Goldsborough and the party, I must confess I am very anxious to leave this, and was in hopes of having the pleasure of seeing you with them, in fact nothing prevented my writing to you at Cairo, but the probability of your leaving there before my letters would arrive—I am unhappy that appearances are so much against our getting any information from the Bashaw, as we have been so long here and not able to gain the least intelligence from him, I fear that something stands in the way that we are not acquainted with, and I expect that we will find that to be the case. In fact I am lead to believe that F[rench] interest is the cause. I shall send this by express, and should you not learn any thing further by the time you receive it, I should suppose it would be either proper to abandon the expedition & get from this as soon as possible, or for you to remain here, and the Argus to return with such information as you may have for the Commodore: What your prospects of success are &c<sup>a</sup>. which will enable him to furnish you with every thing proper for the expedition, or give us such assistance as he may think necessary. At all events it is time to determine on something soon, for it is impossible for us to remain here long, and have a sufficiency of provisions to carry us down, and you well know if they were to be purchased we have not the means -

I have paid your draft on Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Briggs for one thousand dollars, and am indebted to them about that sum for the brig's expences since we arrived here, which is daily increasing without any means of paying as yet. Should you be in want of any more money, I should suppose it would be more proper for you to draw on the State or Navy Departments, as you may be authorized, and to prevent your accounts interfering with the brig, as I do not think I have any authority to draw any money for any other purposes than paying her disbursements, and no doubt you have authority to draw money for other purposes.

Should you determine to remain here and go in search of the Bashaw, it will be well for you to let me know as soon as you

can, that I may make arrangements accordingly, and leave this as soon as possible, as it will certainly be improper for me to remain here, while you make the experiment, for most likely I shall have time to go down and return before you arrive at this place. Your letters have gone by Cap<sup>t</sup>. Thorn, who sailed from hence on the 28<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup>., and has since had a fair wind, so that most likely they will soon hear from us.

By your letter you do not say that you have absolutely engaged those people, that came with M<sup>r</sup>. Farquhar. If so I think it would be well not to do it at present, but to have them and as many more as can be found in such a situation that they can be collected in a short time without making any further promise than to employ them if you should leave this by land, as they will be only lumber on board a ship.

Should you give up the idea of going in pursuit of our friend, and still wish to remain some time longer in this country to try to hear from him [I ask] whether it would not be best to return to this place, as you will hear from him nearly as soon if not sooner than at Cairo, and we should both be on the spot to act as we might think best. Add to that so large a party at Cairo for such a length of time will be imposing on the goodness of our friends.

I am sure you will pardon the hints I have given in this letter, when you look at the situation we have come here in, the many obligations we are obliged to be under to our friends, and the uneasiness it must necessarily give me, and I am confident your own feelings will not allow you to look back upon their goodness —

Please make my compliments to your party and believe me

Your sincere friend and well wisher,

WILLIAM EATON Esq<sup>r</sup>.

ISAAC HULL.

*William Eaton to Isaac Hull.*

*Sir:*

GRAND CAIRO, Jan<sup>y</sup>. 8, 1805.

Yours by express of 5<sup>th</sup> Ins<sup>t</sup>. came this morning, I had previously resolved to leave Cairo Friday next, but if no direct information come from Hamet Bashaw in the mean time, I shall put the project of an interview with him upon the experiment.

It is certain that 10 days ago he was spoken with in company with Elsi Bey. Your suspicions of F[rench] interest strike impressively; Your plan of returning with communications to the Commodore is certainly judicious. My dispatches in detail will go by Fridays occasion in conformity to that plan. M<sup>r</sup>. O'Bannon will enterprize with me the tour of the desert. We shall have three dangers to encounter; a danger of robbery and assassination by the wild Arabs; a danger of falling into the hands of the Arnaut Turks and being murdered as enemys; and danger of being executed as spies by the Mameluke Beys. If we surmount these perils we shall have carried a point and gained an object.

If we fail of success you will do us the justice to believe us martyrs to a cause in which we feel the honor and interest of our country deeply involved: Release of our prisoners without ransom, and peace without the disgraceful conditions of tribute,-

I am Sir, very respectfully

Yours most truly,

Captain ISAAC HULL.

WILLIAM EATON.

*Isaac Hull to William Eaton.*

United States Brig Argus,

ALEXANDRIA, Jan<sup>y</sup>. 29<sup>th</sup>, 1805.

*Dear Sir:*

Your letters of 25th & 27th came safe to hand. I am happy that you sent forward the horses, but yet you will see by my letter of the 28th that it is the wish of the Governor of this place, that the party return. I have this day been with him to try to do away his fears, but find that he is as much alarmed as ever. He informed me that the Chief of the Village where you are had written to the Tiftidor who had lately arrived from Constantinople, informing him that you had hoisted the American flag at Demanhour, and that we were recruit<sup>s</sup>. at Alexandria, and that our object must be something more than getting the Bashaw. In fact there seems to be a general alarm. I have as I wrote you discharged the men here, and on our visit to the Governor found two of them under examination, but got them released immediately, together with the keeper

of the house where M<sup>r</sup>. Farquhar stayed. He had been put in prison and in chains, after I left the house yesterday, but every thing is at present quiet, yet I fear something may happen to prevent their remaining so long.

You will see by what has happened that it is necessary to act with great caution, for the eyes of every body are upon us. The Governor complains very much of the flags being hoisted, as it appeared at once like enlisting men &c. and I must confess he had some grounds to found his suspicions upon, after the letter to the Tiftedor had been sent to him, and what had taken place though unseen by us.

Should you find the Bashaw approaching with a number of men about him, it will certainly be imprudent for him to come near under the present circumstances, for fear of alarming the people more. It will therefore be necess<sup>y</sup>. to send and meet him, and fix on some place to see him, if possible at a distance to the Westward. In fact take what steps you may, I fear the peoples ignorance will prevent them from seeing our object. I hope you will take the earliest oppertunity to send in such of the party as can be spared, and if you want an escort when you are ready to come we can apply for one from this place. I think from what has passed to day, it will be proper not to show our flag any more, as that seemed to be the grand object with the Governor. I hope in God, you will take such measures as will prevent our having any difficulty with this Government, and that we shall finally convince them that nothing has been done without their knowledge. Pray let me know what steps you take as often as may be, and be assured I will give you every information from here—

In the mean time believe me,

Y<sup>r</sup>. Friend and Obed<sup>t</sup>. Serv<sup>t</sup>.

WILLIAM EATON Esq<sup>r</sup>.

ISAAC HULL.

*William Eaton to Isaac Hull.*

Sir:

DEMANHOUR, Jan<sup>y</sup>. 31<sup>st</sup>, 1805.

Yours of 29<sup>th</sup> came at 12 O'Clock today. The American flag has not been displayed here, nor has a proposition been made to any mortal to engage in our service since we left you. We

have indeed showed our flag but only in our room, and only by way of discrimination. As to recruiting at Alexandria, let the Governor be informed that M<sup>r</sup>. Farquhar never had orders to *open a Rendezvous* there, though I thought it would be violating no rights of hospitality to permit him to enquire if there were any Christians without employ there, who would be willing to enter our service against the Bashaw of Tripoli to be ready at our departure. Had M<sup>r</sup>. Farquhar followed my instructions we should be spared all this difficulty, but even now suspicion will end when truth is known.

We have but three men with us besides our servants and I expect an interview with Hamet Bashaw day after tomorrow. It seems needless to go to the expence and trouble to make two detachments on returning. We shall be with you I hope in four days. I have written the Vice Roy concerning our recruiting, explained to him candidly my object, and have taken on myself the intire responsibility of the measure. Indeed I have asked his permission to take those people away if necessary. I am on good terms with the Ker Chief, have proposed to him to send back the party, but he says it is unnecessary. He confessed to me yesterday that the French Consul had occasioned all this embroil, and that he had in fact denounced us "*British Spies.*" He shall have his hour, be tranquil. Sir, truth is almighty, the more we are examined the better for us.

Yours Respectfully

WILLIAM EATON.

P. S. Translate this to the Governor except what relates to the Frenchman—

*William Eaton to Isaac Hull.*

*Dear Sir:*

DEMANHOUR, Sunday Feb<sup>y</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>, 1805.

By express of yesterday I stated to you my arrangements concerning the two mimisters of Hamet Bashaw at Rosetta. Although I have not yet received an answer to my letter from this place by the Arab Chief, I am assured in positive terms by the Ker Chief of this village that an answer cannot be delayed more than two days longer. It would seem hardly possible

that the Bashaw would lose this opportunity of an interview, but should it so happen, and my messenger returns without him, I am intirely with you in opinion of the Brigs returning with you to the rendezvous. I have anticipated your ideas concerning the impropriety of the Bashaws approaching the Turkish frontiers with a force, and have given instructions to my messenger to signify to him that he can advance with his *suite only* which are not to consist of more than eight men. Am not confident he will yield to these terms for it appears his jealousy and suspicion with those of his Turkish brethern are reciprocal.

3 O'Clock P. M. I had just turned this period in answer to your last, when a messenger from Hamet Bashaw entered my apartment, and to convince me that he was not an imposter he put into my hands my first letters to the Bashaw from Alexandria of 30<sup>th</sup>. November. This was a fortunate occurrence because it assured the Bashaw of our high respect for the grand Seignor, and cautioned him against any step which might go to compromit our good intelligence with that Sovereign, and it having an Arabac translation on the back I went with it to the Kerchief, who bye the bye is a fierce savage Turk, but a good General. This at once did away all suspicions. He took me by the hand for the first time, complimented my candour, and invited me to ride out and dine with him at his camp. This messenger was followed by several Arabs who kept in the back grounds, till they knew whether they might enter with safety, Accompanied by the two Maltese whom I dispatched secretly from Cairo. One of the Arabs is a servart of the Bashaw and accompanied him on his route towards this place as far as Terene. He will be in Demanhour to morrow, and Wednesday morning we shall set off for Alexandria. The Bashaw has only his suite with him consisting of about forty persons which gives no uneasiness to the Ker Chief. On the contrary he has offered us an escort to secure our passage to Alexandria and will go out with me himself tomorrow to accompany our friend into Demanhour.

I shall want a thousand dollars to clear out from this, and request you will arrange the affair with M<sup>r</sup>. Briggs so as to send them safely and if possible in marboobs. This sum I hope and

trust will put an end to our expences of this sort, and it certainly will to our danger and anxiety. If the hazard of sending cash should be thought to great, I must pledge my credit with these people till I arrive with you. On reconsidering I shall wait your answer to this express, before I start from this place—

I beg Sir, You will accept my Congratulations  
and Assurance of Respect and Esteem

Cap<sup>t</sup>. HULL.

WILLIAM EATON.

N. B. I give the courier who carries this letter one marboob, and promise him four if he return tuesday with an answer, and a parcel. I have serious doubts of the propriety of sending cash, unless you can pack it away in some articles of my wardrobe. The courier engages to bring my old Toledo Sword. I shall have need of it, as I intend this I have with me for the Bashaw.

*Isaac Hull to William Eaton.*

United States Brig Argus,  
ALEXANDRIA, Feb<sup>y</sup>. 4<sup>th</sup>, 1805.

*Dear Sir:*

Your letter of 4<sup>th</sup>, came to hand at 12 – this day, but owing to the Governors being engaged we could not see him until nearly four in the afternoon, when M<sup>r</sup>. Briggs and myself called on him to know what number of men he would suffer to enter the town with you. He would not consent that more than three or four beside your party should accompany you and the Bashaw, but at the same time wished to consult the Admiral. M<sup>r</sup>. Briggs and myself went with him to the Admiral, whom we found rather in a bad humour. After making known to him our visit, he agreed with the Governor that three or four were as many as could be allowed to pass through the gates with you, but after talking the matter over and on our leaving him he consented to suffer six beside your party to pass the Cut, and said he would give orders to that effect to the officer commanding at the Cut. Should the Bashaw bring more with him than the eight you mentioned, he had better leave them at Demanhour, until you arrive here, and perhaps we shall be able to obtain permission to get the whole of them on board.

Whilst M<sup>r</sup>. Briggs and myself were with the Governor, I had men out collecting small money to send you. It appears they have only collected five hundred dollars, which I hope will answer your present purposes, had they collected more I should think the risk to great to send the amount by one Courier; should the five hundred not be sufficient, I will send the remainder by another Conveyance, the sword I do not send, for fear it might be an inducement for the Arabs to plunder the Courier of both Sword and money,—

I am, D<sup>r</sup>. Sir, Yours &c<sup>a</sup>,

WILLIAM EATON, Esq<sup>r</sup>.

ISAAC HULL.

11 at Night— I sent M<sup>r</sup>. O'Bannon on shore with this letter to M<sup>r</sup>. Briggs to be forwarded by the courier, but it appears when he got on shore, that the Governor and Admiral had sent for M<sup>r</sup>. Brigg's dragoman to inform him that they had changed their minds, that although they had consented to suffer Hamet Bashaw to pass with six men, they would not allow him to enter Alexandria without the Vice Roy's permission, and that they had sent off an express to the Vice Roy to know whether he would be allowed to pass. In fact I have desired M<sup>r</sup>. O'Bannon to state to you what passed at the Admirals, between him and M<sup>r</sup>. Briggs. I had forgot to mention to you that the Governor produced a letter which he said was from the Vice Roy, limiting the number of men to two or three, that were to be allowed to enter Alexandria with the Bashaw, but it appears that M<sup>r</sup>. Briggs offered to confine them to the Vice Roy's letter, but they refused, so that it is possible no such letter has been sent from him.

I am happy you have wrote the Vice Roy and hope you will receive a favourable answer from him, as then you will be beforehand with the courier they have sent off, but I think it will be necessary to write him again, to do away any difficulties they may make, or any objections they may state to the Bashaws leaving this. If you can place him in a Situation to be safe, it will be proper by all means that you come to this place as soon as possible, and bring with you the Vice Roys firman, and such other papers as you may have, to do away the suspicions that have gone out against us. If the Bashaw



will not part with you, it may be well to send the firman by M<sup>r</sup>. Blake, or some safe conveyance; or if he will remain with M<sup>r</sup>. Blake and let you come here, I have no doubt but we shall be able to convince them, that we have conducted with uprightness and candour. From what I have stated you will perceive it is necessary something is done very soon. You will be astonished to see the sudden change in our affairs, but we must be patient until we can convince them that they have been led away by intrigue.

If any thing further should happen I shall take the earliest opportunity to inform you. I have not sent the money as things have taken such a change, I was fearful of the couriers being stopped.

Yours Truly

I. H.

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