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Since the punishment meted out the previous year proved insufficient, the Spanish fleet now appears before Algiers. This time Spain has brought allies with Her (Sicilians, Portuguese and some Knights of Malta), but in spite of their help, this year the attempt proves more difficult and the results less effective (12th to 20th July). They make six assaults before eventually withdrawing

1784

'Don Antonio Barceló, Vice-Admiral of the Royal Fleet, writes to the Comptroller of the Navy in the following terms:

... at four-thirty this morning (12th July), I gave the signal for my men to prepare the attack without further delay and instructed them to man the cannon and the boats that were to carry them and to occupy the positions we had pointed out to them so as best to silence the enemy cannon during the encounter. At five, the enemy in the city fired a salvo and revealed their launches which were all in position ... at eight-thirty I gave the order to open fire, and the whole line thereupon burst into action, maintaining a steady fire on the enemy, as I directed, until twenty minutes past ten when I gave the order to stand off, as the launches had by then run out of ammunition.

The action was most properly conducted by our lines, and they had the full support of the galleys of the Knights of St John, the galliot San Antonio, and all the sloops, Xebecs* and brigs of the Spanish and Neapolitan fleets which covered our flanks to right and left, many of them affording ample proof of their coolness, dash and bravery, as indeed did the officers in charge of the launches and small boats attached to the fleet and all the lighter vessels involved in the attack, and as indeed did that gallant gentleman, Rear-Admiral Forteguerni, who had command of His Sicilian Majesty's forces attached to this expedition.'

(*Gaceta de Madrid*, 20th July 1784.)

* Small three-masted vessel with some square and some lateen sails.