

*Commodore G. R. Lambert to His Excellency
Rear-Admiral C. J. Austen, C.B.*

*Fox, in the Rangoon River,
April 9, 1852.*

SIR,

In pursuance of the instructions I had received from your Excellency, I proceeded up the Rangoon River on the afternoon of the 4th instant, taking under my orders Her Majesty's sloop *Serpent*, and the *Tenasserim* and *Phlegethon* steamers belonging to the East India Company, with three companies of H. M. 18th Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Coote. I anchored off the *Bassein* Creek the same evening.

At daylight, on the morning of the 5th, I again weighed and went up the river, having previously given direction to Commander Luard, with the *Serpent* and *Phlegethon*, which I placed under his orders, with one company of the 18th Regiment, to attack and destroy the *De Silva* Stockade; which service he most effectually performed.

I proceeded myself with the *Fox* and *Tenasserim* to the *Dunnout*, and a new stockade that had recently been erected nearly opposite, on the other side of the river; as we approached, the enemy opened an ill-regulated fire on us (two of their shot striking the *Fox*), which was soon silenced by Her Majesty's ship and the steamer. The troops and the marines of the *Fox* were then landed, and by the evening both stockades were burnt, and the whole force re-embarked without any casualty.

I have great satisfaction in stating that the energy and good feeling displayed by both services in performing this duty was such as to meet my highest approval, and I have to express my thanks for the assistance I received from Lieutenant-Colonel Coote and Commanders Tarleton and Luard, as well as from the Commanders of the East India Company's steam-vessels of war *Tenasserim* and *Phlegethon*.

I have, &c.

G. R. LAMBERT.

*The Secretary to Rear-Admiral Austen to the
Secretary to the Government of India.*

*Rattler, at Rangoon,
April 16, 1852.*

SIR,

In continuation of my letter of the 9th instant, reporting, for the information of the Governor-General of India, the proceedings of the naval squadron employed in these waters, I have the honour further to report, by desire of the Rear-Admiral Commander-in-Chief, that on the 10th instant the ships, steamers, and transports commenced an advance up the river, and anchored below the *Hastings* Shoal that evening.

The *Zenobia* had been sent a part of the way up on the day previous, for the purpose of watering, but grounding on the *De Silva* Shoal, was unfortunately unable to get out of her difficulties in time to take a part in the proceedings against *Rangoon*.

A copy of the Rear-Admiral's order to advance is annexed,* by which it will be seen that it was intended on the following morning (Easter Sunday) to anchor above the shoal, but out of the range of fire from the enemy. I have the honour also to enclose a copy of the General Order† for the proceedings of the squadron while off *Rangoon*. Some alteration had, however, to be made in the arrange-

* 10th April 1852.

† 11th April.

ments proposed. It was found that there would not be room for all the ships to anchor above the shoal out of gunshot, without a risk of their grounding, and it was for some time debated whether the squadron should remain below the shoal until Monday, or advance on the Sunday morning to take up their positions off *Rangoon*, and risk the commencement of the action on that day. The tides and other causes decided the authorities on adopting the latter course, and accordingly the shoal was crossed on the morning of the 11th by each ship, as the water served. When the first vessels had anchored above it, the *Dagon Pagoda* fired several guns, apparently with a view to call in the people. Upon the East India Company's steamers *Feroze*, *Moozuffer*, and *Sesostris* taking up their positions, fire was opened upon them from the stockades on either side, which was returned with shot and shell. In the course of an hour an explosion took place, the importance of which was only afterwards discovered. It was that of a stockade mounting nine 18-pounder guns, well planted, and would doubtless have done great mischief to our shipping, if not thus accidentally silenced so early. Upon the *Fox* advancing to take up her position, she poured effective broadsides into the stockades on both sides of the river. After consulting the Lieutenant-General Commander of the Forces, the boats of the *Fox* landed with a party of seamen and marines and a company of the 18th Royal Irish, and under cover of the ship's guns, stormed two stockades on the *Dalla* side. Although a rapid fire of musketry was kept up from many hundreds of the enemy in these defences, yet this service was happily effected with but one man wounded on our side. Her Majesty's sloop *Serpent* and the East India Company's steamer *Phlegethon* then passed up the river, and anchored above *Kemmendine*, in order to capture the war-boats, and to prevent fire-rafts being sent down upon the squadron. The *Rattler* and *Tenasserim* next advanced along the line, and succeeded in silencing three more stockades. The party before alluded to in the boats of the *Fox*, and a few seamen, with thirty of the Royal Irish from the *Rattler*, stormed another on the *Dalla* side, driving hundreds of the enemy out of it into the jungle. All the stockades that had been taken were then set fire to and burnt in succession. The ships returned to their respective positions, in readiness to land the troops, which commenced at four o'clock on the morning of the 12th, without opposition from the enemy. It was discovered that the *Dagon Pagoda* was not so far from the ships as was laid down in the charts, being at a good shelling distance; the ships accordingly commenced throwing shells into it. In the course of the evening a magazine blew up, and the outskirts of the pagoda were set on fire in several directions, creating great confusion among the enemy. Shells were occasionally thrown from the ships on the 13th instant during the day and night, frequently setting fire to the stockades in various places. On the afternoon of that day a large party of men, with two elephants and riders, were seen to leave the pagoda. It was afterwards understood that this was the Governor of *Rangoon*, who had quitted the pagoda in despair of being able to hold it.

It will be the pleasing duty of the Commander of the Forces to report the advance of the troops and the gallant storming of the *White* Stockade, about half a mile from the landing-place, and ultimately the storming and capture of the *Dagon Pagoda*. The Rear-Admiral desires further to observe that he leaves to the Lieutenant-General to report upon the conduct of the small naval