



SUPPLEMENT

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Admiralty, February 27, 1846.

DISPATCHES were this day received at this Office from Rear-Admiral Inglefield, addressed to the Right Honourable Henry T. L. Corry, of which the following are copies:

H. M. Ship Vernon, off Monte Video,
SIR, 30th November 1845.

MY letters of the 30th October, No. 78, and 25th November, No. 85, will have informed the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that the French and English combined expedition, consisting of the vessels named in the margin,* respectively commanded by Captain Hotham, of H. M. steam frigate Gorgon, and Captain Tréhouart, of the French frigate Erigone, had commenced the ascent of the river Parana, agreeably to the decision come to by the Mediating Ministers at a Séance, held on the 5th October,

* *French.*

San Martin, 8 guns, Captain Tréhouart.
Fulton, steam vessel, 2 guns, Lieutenant Mazerés.
Expeditive, 16 guns, Lieutenant de Miniac.
Paudour, 10 guns, Lieutenant Du Paie.
Proceda, tender, 4 guns, Lieutenant de la Riviere.

English.

Gorgon, steam frigate, Captain C. Hotham.
Firebrand, steam frigate, Captain J. Hope.
Philomel, surveying brig, Commander B. J. Sullivan.
Comus, 18 guns, Acting Commander E. A. Inglefield.
Dolphin, brigantine, Lieutenant R. Levinge.
Fanny, tender, Lieutenant A. C. Key.

for the purpose of opening that channel of commerce ; successive strong gales, and various other circumstances, prevented the expedition from assembling at the appointed rendezvous off the Guassu (one of the mouths of the Parana), so soon as was intended, and consequently the entering the river did not take place till the 8th instant, when it began to ascend, and on the 18th instant arrived within three miles of the defences. General Rosas had caused to be thrown up at Punta Obligado (on the right bank of the river, about 100 miles from the entrance, and 30 miles below the city of San Nicolas), to oppose their passing, which it appears were constructed with great military skill, and the position of the batteries admirably selected on advantageous ground, being supported by the presence of at least 3500 troops of all arms, every appearance indicating a determined resistance, which, however, did not deter the gallant commanders of our little squadrons from deciding on an immediate attack ; and I have now the gratification of transmitting to you, for their Lordships' information, a copy of the report I have received from Captain Hotham, detailing the successful issue of the conflict that ensued on the 20th, ending in the complete destruction of the enemy's batteries;—a schooner of war (mounting 6 guns), the 24 vessels chained across the river, all the guns found on the fortifications, except 10 brass guns, which were taken off to the ships.

The judicious plan for the attack, and the persevering bravery displayed by all concerned in its execution, notwithstanding the disadvantage some of the vessels were under in not being able to attain their assigned positions, owing to the wind failing, and a strong adverse current of three knots, and the landing of the little band of seamen and royal marines, in the face of so large a force, will, I am persuaded, call forth their Lordships' admiration of the skill that directed, and the undaunted courage that achieved, this brilliant exploit. Captain Hotham's letter brings the merits of the contest so fully to the mind, that I feel it now only remains for me to express to their Lordships the high sense I entertain of the gallantry, zeal, and ability which animates that excellent officer, who has, on every occasion, given me perfect satisfaction in the performance of his various duties; and I beg to recommend his services most strongly to their Lordships' favourable consideration, as also those officers serving in command under his orders on this occasion, which, I conceive, reflects so much honour and credit on themselves and the service.

I am convinced their Lordships will experience as much pleasure as I do, in learning from Captain Hotham that he had great reason to be satisfied with the good conduct of all the officers, seamen, and royal marines engaged on this service; and I trust I may be permitted to call their attention to the circumstance of Captain Hope's cutting the barrier chain, and to the merits of the officers and men; Captain Hotham has specially brought to my notice (particularly Commander Sullivan and Lieutenant Levinge), as also the case of Mr. Andrews' family, who have lost, in him, their main support.

I sincerely regret this gallant achievement has been attended with such a loss of life; but, considering the strength of the enemy's position, and the obstinacy with which it was defended, we have reason to be thankful to Divine Providence that it was not greater. Among the killed is to be lamented, Lieutenant C. Brickdale, an officer of great promise.

It is very gratifying to me to add, that a perfect unanimity and cordial co-operation has subsisted throughout between Captains Hotham and Tréhouart, and the vessels under their orders; and their Lordships will perceive that the gallant bearing of the latter has called forth unqualified admiration from Captain Hotham. I also beg to remark the full confidence Captain Hotham felt in the support of his French Allies. The official report of Captain Tréhouart to Admiral Lainé gives a long list of killed and wounded (seventeen of the former and sixty of the latter), sufficiently proving the share the French division took in the contest, and which must have essentially contributed to the success of the day.

I enclose a copy of the return of the killed and wounded, and an account of the damages sustained by the vessels engaged, so far as can be obtained from the logs and demands I have received. A more detailed report I will transmit to their Lordships when it reaches me.

Nothing positive is known as to the exact loss of the enemy, but it must have been very great, from the number found dead in the batteries, estimated at several hundreds.

I have the honour to be, &c.

S. H. INGLEFIELD,

Rear Admiral and Commander in Chief.

To the Right Honourable H. T. L. Corry,

M. P. Secretary of the Admiralty.

*H.M. ship Gorgon,
Obligado, 23rd Nov., 1845.*

SIR,—I HAVE the honour to inform you that the combined English and French force, under the command of Captain Tréhouart and myself, anchored on the 18th instant, at the distance of 3 miles from the batteries of Punta Obligado, in the river Paraná. At daylight the following morning we reconnoitred the position of the enemy, and soon discovered that great military skill had been evinced, both in the ground chosen and the plan of defence pursued. Four batteries had been erected, —two on heights 60 feet from the water-lieu, and two in the intervening valley; the whole mounting 22 pieces of ordnance, 32, 28, 24, 18, and 12-pounders, and, with the exception of a small open space, were backed by thick woods; three heavy chains, supported by 24 vessels, were extended across from the main land to an island; astern of these lay 10 fire-vessels, and the west end of the chains was defended by an Argentine schooner-of-war, carrying 6 guns. The river at this point is 800 yards wide, and the current runs 3 miles per hour.

From various sources we learnt that 3500 men, cavalry, infantry, and artillery, were assembled; in short, everything indicated a determined resistance. The reconnaissance being completed, my colleague and myself resolved on the following plan of attack:

To form the ships into two divisions, the north, under the direction of Captain Tréhouart, to be composed of, San Martin, Captain Tréhouart; Comus, Acting Commander Inglefield; Pandour, Lieutenant Du Paie; Dolphin, Lieutenant R. Levinge.

The south, under the direction of Commander Sullivan, to be composed of,—Philomel, Commander B. Sullivan; Expeditive, Lieutenant de Miniac; Fanny (hired armed), Lieutenant Key; Procida, Lieutenant Maria de la Riviere.

These divisions to be anchored on the north and south shores, at a distance of 700 yards from No. 1 battery.

The steamers, Gorgon, Captain Charles Hotham; Fulton, Lieutenant Mazeret; Firebrand, Captain James Hope, to anchor at a distance of 1500 yards from the farthest battery; the morning of the 20th was foggy, but about 8 A.M., the weather cleared, and a southerly breeze sprung up. At 8h. 45m., the southern division weighed, and were afterwards followed by San Martin and Comus, Dolphin and Pandour having previously anchored on the north shore.

About 9h. 50m. A.M., the batteries opened fire on the Philomel and southern division, on which

Dolphin weighed; but as some of her sails were shot away before she reached her appointed station, the current drove her astern, and obliged her to anchor; she was however admirably placed; the remaining ships of the north division were most ably led by my brother officer in command, whose brig succeeded in reaching her appointed station.

The general cannonading unfortunately caused the wind to fall light, and the remaining ships of the north division having to contend with the current of three knots per hour, were obliged to anchor two cables short of their stations.

At this period the fire-vessels chained together were cast loose, and until they had drifted past, the steamers were prevented from anchoring or opening their fire.

About 10h. 50m. the action became general, and the effect of our gunnery was soon apparent in the unsteadiness of the enemy's fire; still they fought most stoutly. No sooner were one set of men swept from the guns than they were replaced; the enemy's cavalry hovered round the wood and drove back those who attempted to quit their posts. At 12h. 30m., the Republicano schooner blew up, and my gallant friend Capt. James Hope volunteered to pull up in his boat and cut the chain; success attended his endeavours, and a passage being cleared, at 1 P.M. the Fulton passed through and flanked the batteries, and was speedily followed by Gorgon and Firebrand.

But prior to this, the enemy's fire had told most fearfully on the San Martin and Dolphin; the cable of the former being shot away she dropped astern, with upwards of 100 shot holes through her side.

To assist the flanking fire of the steamers, the Expeditive and Comus were ordered to place themselves within musket shot of the batteries. At 4h. P.M., finding that the batteries fired only occasional shots, I made the signal for boats of squadron, manned and armed, to rendezvous alongside Gorgon and Firebrand, and sent to propose to my colleague, that the remaining part of our plan should be carried into execution; the officer bearing the message, found Capt. Tréhouart occupied in moving the French squadron close in to cover the landing; so, placing entire confidence in the fire of his ships, and knowing full well that his division of seamen would, *as soon as possible*, support us, at 5 45 I landed with 180 seamen and 145 marines, and giving three cheers, formed on the beach; the skirmishing party and light company of seamen under the command of Commander Sullivan led up the hill.

On reaching the crest they were received by a smart fire of musketry, but the speedy arrival of the Marines, under the command of Captain Thomas Hurdle, R.M., drove the enemy back, and the light company of seamen, under the command of Lieutenant A. C. Key, completed the work, by carrying and holding the wood, the key of the position.

Very shortly afterwards the French Brigade landed, and the guns of Nos. 1, 2, and 3 batteries were spiked and dismantled. On the following morning, the English and French Brigades again landed, and completed the work of destruction;

carrying off all the brass guns, 10 in number, and retaining unmolested possession of the grounds and woods the whole day.

It was not to be expected that a contest lasting from 10 A.M. until nearly sunset, could do otherwise than cause the loss of several Officers and men; and accordingly I have to lament the death of Lieutenant C. Brickdale, who fell early in the day. He was an Officer of great promise, and would have been an ornament to his country had he lived. Mr. George Andrews, Clerk-in-Charge of the Dolphin, was also killed whilst assisting the Assistant-Surgeon; he was a valuable Officer, and one of a large family, who mainly depended upon him, and I trust their case may be laid before the Board of Admiralty.

Lieutenant Charles Doyle* is, I fear, mortally wounded, and ere many hours must terminate his existence. Although suffering dreadful agony from his wounds, his mind appeared bent on the result of the action. Such a spirit must necessarily carry the sympathies of all his brother Officers. Lieutenant Levinge reports most highly of the conduct of Richard Rowe, Gunner's-Mate, and Walter Ross, Caulker's-Mate, of the Dolphin; although severely wounded, they remained at their quarters until the day was won.

The aggregate loss of officers, petty officers, seamen, and marines, amounts to

Officers	2 killed	..	6 wounded.
Seamen	3	..	9
Petty Officers	2	..	6
Marines	none	..	1
Boys	2	..	2

The noble behaviour of my brother senior officer Captain Tréhouart excited the admiration of all on board; it was evident that his brig was especially selected for the enemy's fire, and I consider myself very fortunate in having such an officer for my colleague.

I have great reason to be satisfied with the good conduct of all the officers, seamen, and marines of the squadron you did me the honour to place under my orders.

I have already mentioned the services rendered by Captain Hope in cutting the chain, and I have to thank him for acting as my Aide-de-camp when on shore. I should be unmindful of the ability and continued zeal of Commander B. Sullivan, did I not bring him particularly to your notice; by his exertions, we were furnished with a chart, which enabled us to complete our arrangements for the attack.

First Lieutenant J. E. W. Lawrence, R.M.A., also acted as my Aide-de-camp, and has a strong claim on my gratitude; principally through his instrumentality a brigade of seamen has been formed capable, I am quite satisfied, of resisting cavalry.

It is impossible to conclude this despatch, without recommending to your favourable consideration Lieutenant Reginald Levinge; his little schooner

* 17th December, 1845. Lieutenant Doyle has since arrived at Monte Video, and appears to be in a fair way of recovery. He has lost an arm.

occupied a berth better suited to a frigate, and I sometimes trembled when I saw the shower of shot, shell, grape, and rockets flying over her.

As soon as the damage sustained by the combined squadron shall have been repaired, Captain Tréhouart and myself intend to proceed in the execution of our instructions, leaving two vessels of war here to prevent the enemy offering any further obstruction to the free navigation of the Parana.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) CHAS. HOTHAM,
Captain and Senior Officer.

Rear-Admiral S. H. Inglefield, C.B.,
Commander-in-Chief, &c.

Report of casualties that occurred in the Squadron under the command of Captain Charles Hotham, while taking and destroying the batteries, &c., at Point Obligado, in the River Parana, on the 20th November, 1845.

Officers' Names.

Lieutenant Chas. Brickdale, H.M. sloop Comus, killed.
Mr. Geo. Andrews, Clerk-in-charge, H.M. brigantine Dolphin, killed.
Lieutenant Charles Doyle, H.M. ship Philomel, very severely wounded.
Mr. R. Warren, Second Master, H.M. brigantine Dolphin, slightly wounded.
Mr. John Gallagher, Assistant Surgeon, H.M. brigantine Dolphin, slightly wounded.
Mr. T. Ellstob, Assistant Clerk, H.M. brigantine Dolphin, slightly wounded.
Lieutenant A. C. Key, Fanny tender, slightly wounded.

Gorgon—1 seaman, 1 marine, 1 boy 1st class, slightly wounded.
Firebrand—1 seaman, killed; 1 seaman, severely wounded.
Philomel—1 seaman, killed; 2 seamen and 1 boy, severely wounded; 2 seamen, slightly wounded.
Comus—1 boy, killed; 2 seamen, slightly wounded.
Dolphin—3 seamen and 1 boy, killed; 6 seamen, severely wounded; and 2 seamen, slightly wounded.

Her Majesty's Ship Vernon, off Monte Video, December 19, 1845.

I ENCLOSE for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, a further report from Captain Hotham, detailing the proceedings of the squadron under his orders, since the destruction of the batteries at Obligado; by which their Lordships will learn, that the Chacabuco has been

blown up, and the probability of our expedition meeting no further resistance on its passage up the Parana. I have the honour to be, &c.

S. H. INGLEFIELD,
Rear Admiral and Commander in Chief.
To the Right Honourable H. T. L. Corry,
M.P. Secretary of the Admiralty.

H. M. S. Gorgon, Rosario,
4th December 1845.

SIR,

HAVING received intelligence on which I could depend, that the Chacabuco schooner and two gun-boats were at anchor in the Arroyodel Pabou, I have the honour to inform you that Captain Tréhouart and myself determined to despatch two vessels to destroy them; but, owing to there being no French man-of-war at that moment ready for sea, the execution of our plan was postponed until the 24th, when the Firebrand took the Fulton in tow, and proceeded on that service.

On arriving at the mouth of the Pabou, Captain Hope discovered that there was not sufficient water for his ship, so, taking three boats and forty men, he started in pursuit: most fortunately they obtained more information from an intelligent native, and learnt that the whole force accumulated amounted to 250 men, that a chain was stretched across the river, placing surprise out of the question. As any further attempt would have been madness, he most properly returned; acting, however, on his suggestion, I had previously despatched Firebrand by another channel, to intercept the schooner, and this manoeuvre had its desired effect.

The windings of the river enabled the enemy to desecr the approach of the Firebrand at a considerable distance. Accordingly, they commenced hauling the Chacabuco up a narrow creek, by means of warps, manual labour, and horses, closely pursued by Firebrand. At the end of a chase of sixty miles the steamer grounded, but the enemy had seen enough: in the night a fire and explosion took place, and in the morning no Chacabuco was visible.

The squadron reassembled at Punta de las Piedras; during the night of the 2d the enemy brought down four field pieces, which however did no injury, and on the 3d instant the squadron passed the strong point of the Rosario unmolested by the enemy; a number of women and country people collected on the beach to see the ships pass, not an armed man was to be seen, hence it would appear that orders had been given to offer no further resistance to our passage up the Parana.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES HOTHAM, Capt.
To Rear Admiral S. H. Inglefield, C.B.,
Commander in Chief.

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