

*Her Majesty's Steam Ship Vulture, Hong Kong,*  
9th April 1847.

SIR,

HER Majesty's Plenipotentiary having communicated to me, on the afternoon of the 1st instant, that, in consequence of the evasive and unsatisfactory conduct of the Chinese Minister, he had communicated with the Honourable the Major General d'Aguilar, and determined with him on the necessity of proceeding with a force to Canton, to demand certain points on which he had been instructed to insist on by Her Majesty's Government; and having applied to me to co-operate with the naval force under my command, I lost no time in waiting on Major General d'Aguilar, and it was arranged that the troops were to commence embarking with their guns, &c. as soon after 8 P.M. as possible.

The *Espiegle* and *Pluto* being the only men of war available, I was obliged to hire the *Corsair* merchant steamer to ensure the expedition arriving off the Bogue forts with the least possible delay.

At 10h. 0m. I directed Commander Thompson to proceed immediately towards the Bogue forts; after embarking the troops assigned to the *Espiegle*, taking with him nine Chinese boats laden with provisions, &c. for the troops. At 10h. 30m. she sailed.

At 3h. 30m. all the troops were embarked with their guns, stores, &c. when *Vulture* weighed, having two lorches with ordnance stores, sappers and miners in tow, making the night signal to the steamers to follow her motions; the *Corsair* having two cargo boats, with commissariat stores, &c., in tow.

At 9h. 10m. passed the Chumpée fort, where several Chinese men of war and armed junks were at anchor.

At 10h. 0m. the *Vulture* ran within half pistol shot, and anchored off the *Aiungloy* fort, lowered the boats, and his Excellency and the General landed with the troops. The batteries were immediately in their possession, the guns spiked, and the ammunition destroyed.

At 10h. 20m. *Corsair* came up, Colonel Brereton, with the second division in *Vulture's* boats, crossed the river to the Wang Tung forts, which were carried in the same style. The Bogue forts being now secured, I directed the *Pluto* to proceed to Whampoa, and there await my arrival.

At 12h. 0m. anchored off the Wang Tung forts, desiring the *Corsair* to follow *Pluto's* motions to Whampoa, to protect the shipping there.

At 1h. 40m. having spiked upwards of 500 guns, and destroyed all the ammunition, re-embarked the troops, *Vulture* weighed, and proceeded at full speed to enable her to cross the first and second bars before the tide had receded too much. Saw the *Espiegle* in the distance approaching the Bogue forts, she being unable to contend with the strong tide, variable and adverse winds.

At 6h. 30m. anchored at the entrance of Junk River, as the *Vulture* could not proceed further from her great draught of water, and the tide at that time falling rapidly; and as the troops and

seamen were very much exhausted from twenty-hours arduous and laborious duties, the Major General and I agreed that it would be advisable to remain the night, and proceed as early in the morning as our arrangements could be completed. During the night two days provisions were cooked for the troops. Mr. Mundy's (Paymaster and Purser) exertions and zeal in supplying the troops with cooked provisions were very great, and at 4h. on the morning of the 3rd, the boats of the *Vulture* transferred the troops on board the Honourable Company's steamer *Pluto*, and the hired steamer *Corsair*, the tide not answering for passing the barrier with the number of boats in tow, it was deemed expedient to wait till the tide slackened.

At 8h. 0m. His Excellency Sir John Davis and suite, Major General d'Aguilar and Staff embarked on board *Pluto*, as did Commander Thompson, of the *Espiegle*.

Colonel Brereton, of the Royal Horse Artillery, accompanied me on board the *Corsair*. The Major General allowed about two hundred of the troops to remain in the *Vulture* and *Espiegle*, to assist in defending them in the event of an attack from the Chinese men of war, as nearly two thirds of the ships' companies were required in the boats and vessels. I left the ship in charge of Mr. Sanders, First Lieutenant, assisted by Lieutenant Dunin, Supernumerary, and the remaining Officers that were not employed in the boats. I left orders to keep the ship clear for action, and every thing ready for lightening her if required, placing every confidence in Lieutenant Sanders's zeal and energy.

At 8h. 45m. both steamers proceeded up the Junk river to the Barrier's forts, having the necessary boats to disembark the troops in tow, viz:

*Pluto*.—Two large country boats, one containing engineers' stores; the other a party of the 42d Madras Native Infantry. *Vulture's* starboard paddle-box boat, commanded by Lieutenant C. A. D. Pasco, R.N., containing a company of the 18th Royal Irish. Second cutter, Mr. J. Black, Midshipman, and *Espiegle's* gig.

*Corsair*.—Two large country boats, containing ordnance stores, &c. *Vulture's* pinnace, commanded by Lieutenant Robert Cooté, R.N., assisted by Mr. M. B. Fitzgerald, Midshipman, and Dr. Duncan, Assistant Surgeon. Port paddle-box boat, commanded by Lieutenant G. Durbin, Supernumerary, R.N. First Lieutenant F. W. Davis, R.M.A. First cutter, commanded by Mr. P. C. C. M'Dougall, Midshipman, and gig.

At 10h. 30m. passed the barrier, *Corsair* stopped abreast of the first fort, landed a party of the 18th Royal Irish, and a part of the Sappers and Royal Artillery, under Captain Durnford, Royal Engineers, the whole under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Brereton, C.B., Royal Horse Artillery; blew open the gates, spiked the guns, and destroyed the ammunition; at the same time *Pluto* anchored a little above *Rapier's* fort, and performed the same service there.