

auspicious day. The Fleets steamed rapidly up to Kameish, where the army landed under cover of the guns of the steam-frigates, and immediately ascended the heights without opposition, whilst the steamers of light draught of water pushed on towards Kertch and Enikalé; and the enemy, apparently taken by surprise at the rapidity of these movements, and at the imposing appearance of the expedition, blew up his fortifications on both sides of the straits, mounting not less than fifty guns (new and of heavy calibre), which have fallen into our possession, and retired after having destroyed 3 steamers and several other heavily armed vessels, as well as large quantities of provisions, ammunition and stores, thus leaving us masters of the entrance into the Sea of Azof, without our having sustained any loss whatever.

4. As the disembarkation was unopposed, in consequence of the fire of the steam frigates having arrested the advance of the enemy, there was no field for the gallantry that animated every one in the expedition; but the duties they had to perform were very arduous, and I should be doing injustice to them and to my own feelings if I were not to say that no Commander-in-Chief was ever more ably assisted than I am by the captains and those under their command—one and all follow the admirable example of the zealous and talented second in command, Rear-Admiral Stewart, and they could not possibly do better. There was, however, an incident during the day that called forth the admiration of both fleets, and which deserves to be particularly noticed, Lieutenant McKillop, whose gun-vessel, the Snake, was not employed like the others in landing troops, dashed past the forts after an enemy's steamer, and although he soon found himself engaged not only with her but also with two others who came to her support, he persevered, and by the cleverness and extreme rapidity of his manœuvres, prevented the escape of all three, and they were consequently destroyed by the enemy, and the Snake had not a man hurt, though shot passed through the vessel.

5. Yesterday Admiral Bruat and I accompanied the combined steam flotilla, named in the margin,\* into the Sea of Azof, and despatched them, under the orders of Captain Lyons, of the Miranda, on the interesting and important service they have before them.

6. Had this expedition been deferred but a short time longer, there would have been many and great difficulties to overcome, for the enemy was actively employed in strengthening the sea defences, and in replacing the sunken vessels which had been carried away by the current during the winter months.

Of the 40 vessels sunk last year some still remain, and a French steamer touched upon one of them yesterday. It appears that the enemy did not succeed in destroying the coals, either at Kertch or Enikalé, so that about 17,000 tons remain, which will be available for our steamers.

7. It will be evident to their Lordships, that the rapid operations which I have had the honour and happiness to describe to them, could not have been brought to so satisfactory a conclusion, if the most perfect understanding, and the most hearty good will towards each other, had not prevailed throughout the allied fleets and armies.

I am, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND LYONS,  
Rear-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief.

*The Secretary of the Admiralty,  
London.*

Admiralty, June 6, 1855.

With reference to the above Despatch, Lieutenant Henry Frederick McKillop will be promoted to the rank of Commander, so soon as he shall have completed the sea time required to qualify him for that rank.

\* Miranda, Vesuvius, Curlew, Swallow, Stromboli, Ardent, Medina, Wrangler, Viper, Lynx, Recruit, Arrow, Snake, Beagle, and five French steam-vessels.