

*Admiralty, November 1, 1855.*

**D**ESPATCHES, of which the following are copies, have been received from Rear-Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, Bart., G.C.B., Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Ships and Vessels in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

No. 859.  
Sir,

*Royal Albert, off Kimburn,  
October 18, 1855.*

MY letter of the 6th instant, No. 834, will have informed the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that an allied naval and military expedition was to leave the anchorage off Sevastopol, on the following day, for the purpose of taking and occupying the three Russian forts on Kimburn Spit, at the entrance of Dnieper Bay; and the telegraphic message, which I forwarded to Varna last night, will soon communicate to their Lordships the success which has attended this enterprise.

It is now my duty to give a more detailed account of the proceedings of the expedition.

I have therefore the honour to state, that we arrived at a rendezvous off Odessa, on the 8th instant, but owing to strong south-west winds, which would have prevented the troops from landing, it was not until the morning of the 14th instant, that the expedition was enabled to reach the anchorage off Kimburn.

During the night the English steam gun-vessels, *Fancy*, *Boxer*, *Cracker*, and *Clinker*, and four French gun-vessels, forced the entrance into Dnieper Bay, under a heavy but ineffectual fire from the Spit Fort, and on the following morning the British troops, under the orders of Brigadier-General Honourable A. A. Spencer, together with the French troops, under the command of General Bazaine, were landed about three miles to the southward of the principal fort, and thus, by these nearly simultaneous operations, the retreat of the garrisons and the arrival of reinforcements were effectually cut off.

In the evening the English and French mortar vessels tried their ranges against the main fort with excellent effect.

The wind having again veered round to the southward, with a great deal of swell, nothing could be done on the 16th; but in the forenoon of the 17th, a fine northerly breeze, with smooth water, enabled the French floating batteries, mortar vessels, and gunboats, and the *Odin* and the mortar vessels, and gunboats named in the margin,\* to take up positions off Fort Kimburn; and their fire was so effective, that before noon the buildings in the interior of the fort were in flames, and the eastern face had suffered very considerably.

At noon, the *Royal Albert*, *Algiers*, *Agamemnon* and *Princess Royal*, accompanied by Admiral Bruat's four ships of the line, approached Fort Kimburn in a line abreast, which the shape of the coast rendered necessary, and the precision with which they took up their positions in the closest order, with jib-booms run in and only two feet of water under their keels, was really admirable. At the same moment the squadrons under the orders of Rear-Admirals Sir Houston Stewart and Pelion pushed through the passage between Ochakoff and the spit of Kimburn, and took the forts in reverse, whilst the *St. Jean d'Acre*, *Curaçoa*, *Tribune* and *Sphinx*, undertook the centre battery,

\* Mortar vessels—*Raven*, *Magnet*, *Camel*, *Hardy*, *Flamer*, *Firm*. Gun vessels—*Lynx*, *Arrow*, *Viper*, *Snake*, *Wrangler*, *Beagle*.

and the *Hannibal*, *Dauntless* and *Terrible*, that on the point of the spit.

The enemy soon ceased to reply to our overwhelming fire, and, though he made no sign of surrender, Admiral Bruat and I felt that a garrison which had bravely defended itself against so superior a force deserved every consideration, and we therefore made the signal to cease firing, hoisted a flag of truce, and sent on shore a summons, which was accepted by the Governor, Major-General Kokonovitch, and the garrisons, consisting of 1,400 men, marched out with the honours of war, laid down their arms on the glacis, and, having surrendered themselves as prisoners of war, they will be embarked in Her Majesty's ship *Vulcan* to-morrow.

The casualties in the allied fleets are very few, amounting in Her Majesty's ships to only two wounded. The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded is, I fear, very severe.

In the three forts, which have suffered considerably by our fire, we found eighty-one guns and mortars mounted, and an ample supply of ammunition.

This morning the enemy has blown up the forts on Ochakoff Point, which mounted twenty-two guns, and we learnt from a Polish deserter, who escaped in a boat from them during the night, that the Commandant apprehended an attack from our mortar vessels, which would not only have destroyed the forts, but also the neighbouring dwellings.

I have abstained from entering into the particulars of the proceedings of the squadron under the orders of Rear-Admiral Sir H. Stewart, as he has so ably described them in the letter which I have the honour to enclose, from which their Lordships will perceive that I have received from him on this occasion, as, indeed, I have on all others since I have had the good fortune to have him as second in command, that valuable assistance which might be expected from an officer of his distinguished and acknowledged merits; and I beg leave to add my testimony to his in praise of all the officers, and especially Lieutenant Marryat and Mr. Brooker, whom he recommends to their Lordships' favourable consideration.

To particularize the merit of the officers under my command, where all have behaved admirably, would be a difficult task indeed; but I beg leave to mention that the same officers of the Navy and the Royal Marine Artillery, who were in the mortar vessels at the fall of Sevastopol, are in them now, and that on this occasion, as before, they have been under the direction of Captain Willcox of the *Odin*, and Captain Digby of the *Royal Marine Artillery*. Nor can I refrain from stating what I believe to be the feeling of the whole fleet, that on this expedition, as on that to Kertch, the talents and indefatigable exertions of that very valuable officer, Captain Spratt, of the *Spitfire*, and of those under his command, entitle them to our warmest thanks, and deserve to be particularly mentioned.

I need hardly say that my distinguished colleague, Admiral Bruat, and I have seen with infinite satisfaction, our respective squadrons acting together as one fleet.

I am, &c.

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

*The Secretary of the Admiralty.*