

Directly the enemy saw their escape threatened, they beat a rapid retreat, though fully 150 in number, and effected their escape by a superior knowledge of the paths through the swamps.

Lieutenant Strode then destroyed their posts, which had been recently re-constructed; they were eight in number, and calculated to house 200 men; besides these, eleven fine boats and an extensive fishery were set fire to, near the town of Alti.

The Recruit, Lieutenant Day, at the same time destroyed, in the neighbourhood of Marianpol, two large fisheries and some fine launches, mounted on regular travelling land-carriages, and in the evening we were complete masters of the only portion of the coast the enemy have attempted to re-establish themselves upon; and, as the frosts have already set in, I am in hopes that they will not be able to recover their ground before next spring.

The extraordinary efforts made by the enemy to prosecute their fisheries upon this coast, are the best proof of their importance.

They sometimes move down two or three hundred soldiers, who escort large launches placed upon carriages and arabas drawn by oxen laden with nets and gear, as well as fishermen to work them.

The fish directly they are caught are carted off into the interior; and when it is remembered that we have destroyed some hundred and odd launches upon one spit alone, some idea can be formed of the immense quantity of fish consumed on this coast; and in proof of its being a large item in the sustenance of Russian soldiers, I would remind you that hundreds of tons of salted and dried fish were found and destroyed by us in the first destruction of the military depôts at Ghenitch in May last.

This report is closed at Ghenitch, where I had the satisfaction of learning, as the enclosed letter from Lieutenant Commerell will shew, that he had succeeded in destroying a large collection of forage and corn at the entrance of the Solgar or Kara-Su River.

The zeal and enterprize displayed by Lieutenant Commerell on this occasion, as well as whenever any service has to be performed, is most conspicuous; and his judgment in seizing the only good opportunity that has occurred for some time to cross Arabat Spit, and traverse the Putrid Sea, deserves to be particularly called to your notice. The Quartermaster, William Rickard, praised so highly by Lieutenant Commerell, was one of my boat's crew. I fully concur in the high character given of him.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) SHERARD OSBORN,
Captain and Senior Officer in the Sea of Azoff.

Rear-Admiral Sir Edmund
Lyons, Bart., &c., &c., &c.
G. C. B.

*Her Majesty's steam gun-vessel Weser,
Genitchi, 12th October, 1855.*

SIR,
I HAVE the honour to inform you that on the evening of the 10th instant, I determined, in obedience to your discretionary orders, to launch a boat across the Spit of Arabat, and destroy large quantities of corn and forage, stored on the banks of Kara-Su and Salghir Rivers, on the Crimean shore of the Sivash; the proximity of a guard house and signal station, also the distance the corn lay from the beach, rendered anything but a night surprise impracticable.

Having left the Weser in charge of Mr. Haswell, Second Master, and accompanied by Mr. Lillingston, Mate; a Quartermaster, and two seamen, assisted by a party we hauled a small prize boat across the spit, embarked in her, and at half past four A.M., reached the opposite side.

Landing with the petty officer and one man, I forded the above-mentioned rivers, and at a distance of about two miles and a half from the boat, arrived at the corn and forage we were in search of, stacked on the banks of the Salghir River, evidently for transmission by water, as the river was perfectly navigable for barges, the sides being cut, and towing paths on either bank.

In a short time the forage and corn, amounting to about 400 tons, was totally destroyed, not however without alarming the guard, and from 20 to 30 mounted cossacks, who were encamped in a village close at hand. On our retreating, we were so hard pressed by them, that, but for the circumstance of the last 200 yards being mud, and the cover of rifles from Mr. Lillingston, and a man who remained in the boat, we could hardly have escaped capture. Having re-crossed the Spit, we returned to the Weser by 8 A.M.

I must bring to your notice the excellent behaviour of the small party who accompanied me, more especially that of William Rickard, Quartermaster, who, though much fatigued himself, remained to assist the other seaman who, from exhaustion, had fallen in the mud, and was unable to extricate himself, notwithstanding the enemy were keeping up a heavy fire on us, at the distance of 30 or 40 yards, as we crossed the mud.

Trusting my proceedings will meet with your approval, I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. COMMEREILL,
Lieutenant Commanding.

To Captain Sherard Osborn,
Senior Officer.

*Her Majesty's ship Recruit, off
Berdiansk, October 18, 1855.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to forward you a report of my proceedings since leaving Her Majesty's ship Curlew at this place on the 15th. According to my orders, I steered for my cruising ground between the Dolga Bank and Whitehouse Spit. When off the latter place, observing a number of men and boats engaged in fishing, and also that many large fishing store-houses had been built since my last visit here on the 14th of last month, I hauled close in to the shore, anchoring the Recruit about 700 yards off, with the intention of landing with my boats and destroying all I could, as soon as I had driven back the troops, who were coming down in great numbers, both cavalry and infantry, to prevent us; the former we soon disposed of, but the latter, scattering themselves about in twos and threes, threw themselves on the ground, creeping along so that we could not see them to stop their advance with our shells from the ship; I therefore resolved to land at once, in hopes, by the quickness of our movements, to get our work over before they could possibly close on us. Unfortunately for me, I regret to say, that whilst directing the pointing of an 8-inch gun to where I believed some of these riflemen to be, (just as I was on the point of going into the boat to land) the gun, from some unaccountable cause, went off, and, in recoiling, the whole weight of both gun and carriage came down on my left foot, injuring it very severely and breaking several bones, which I fear will lay me up for some time.

