

rapidity with which the operations have been brought to a successful issue with so small a sacrifice of life.

No. 38-L, dated Mandalay, 13th January, 1886.

From Lieutenant-General Sir H. N. D. Prendergast, K.C.B., V.C., Commanding the Burma Field Force to the Adjutant-General in India.

I have the honour to forward a despatch containing an account of the operations carried on by the force under my command from the date of the embarkation of the troops composing it at Rangoon until the date of the capture of Mandalay and surrender of King Theebaw.

2. I have the honour to transmit with the despatch the following reports, returns, &c.:

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Return of casualties at Minhla and Gwegyoun-Kamyo.

Return of ordnance captured.

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3. My thanks are due to many for their assistance during the expedition, and I am only awaiting the lists of those whom the Brigadier-Generals desire to bring specially to notice to submit them for the favourable consideration of the Government of India.

No. 39-L, dated Head-Quarters, Mandalay, 14th January, 1886.

From Lieutenant-General Sir H. N. D. Prendergast, K.C.B., V.C., Commanding the Burma Field Force, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department.

On the 12th November, having arranged the embarkation of troops and departments, and seen a considerable force on board the river steamers and flats, I left Rangoon for Prome.

2. On my arrival at Thayetmyo, on the evening of the 13th November, 1885, I received a message from the Foreign Department, informing me that as the Burman reply to the ultimatum was unsatisfactory, I should advance upon Mandalay when my military preparations were complete.

3. Having heard from the Deputy Commissioner that the Burman outposts had been strengthened on the frontier, that the villagers within British territory were alarmed and deserting their houses, and that a King's steamer with two flats had brought down a great body of soldiers to within six or eight miles of the frontier, and that the intention was to sink the flats as an obstruction, I ordered the armed steamer "Irrawaddy," of the Indian Government, and the launch "Kathleen" to move at daylight on the 14th to reconnoitre the river to a distance of not more than 30 miles, and to capture the King's steamer and flats.

4. On the 14th November I received His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief's orders to carry out operations with the utmost vigour and rapidity possible; and on that day the "Irrawaddy" under command of Commander W. R. Clutterbuck, R.N., of H.M.S. "Woodlark," and the "Kathleen," under Lieutenant F. P. Trench, of H.M.S. "Turquoise," found the King's steamer, with the attendant barges, near Nyoung-ben-Maw, on the right bank of the Irrawaddy, about 28 miles above Thayetmyo; and having accepted and returned the fire of the enemy's shore batteries at close quarters, the "Irrawaddy" cleared the decks of the steamer and flats with her machine-guns, and the crews jumped overboard.

The Italians, Cammotto and Molinari, were among the fugitives. The batteries were repassed at very short range, and the prizes towed

down by the capturing steamers. The operations were rendered difficult by the rapidity of the current opposite the batteries. Commander Clutterbuck, Lieutenant Trench, and the officers and crews of the "Irrawaddy" and "Kathleen" deserve great credit for their courage, and the Indian Marine officers and lascars serving on board the former did their duty with perfect coolness under fire.

5. The little "Kathleen," with her crew of sixteen men, repeatedly engaged the shore battery of nine guns at fifty yards range. Her loss was one man severely wounded, viz., Robert Hutchison, gunner's mate of H.M.S. "Turquoise."

6. The prizes were valuable, not only as an addition to the means of transport for the Expeditionary Force, but also because their loss delayed the retreat of the enemy somewhat, and prevented them from closing the channel near Nyoung-ben-Maw according to the plans of the Italians which were found in one of the flats.

On the afternoon of the 14th, the leading steamers, containing the Bengal Brigade, anchored at Thayetmyo.

7. On the 15th November, in order to give confidence to the villagers near the frontier, and to re-establish telegraphic communication between the frontier and Allammyo, I posted two companies of the 2nd Bengal Infantry at Laingha on the frontier, and steamed 15 miles north of the frontier, with all troops that had come up, detail as per margin.*

8. On the 16th the steamers weighed anchor at daybreak, and at 9.15 a.m. a landing was effected at Zoung-gyan-Doung village on the right bank, two miles below the batteries which had fired on the "Irrawaddy" and "Kathleen" on the 14th. The column commanded by Colonel W. Rowlandson, of the 12th Madras Infantry, consisted of the Liverpool Regiment, the 1st Madras Pioneers, and the 12th Madras Infantry.

9. The country on the right bank consists of a series of small steep hills, covered with trees and brushwood.

The landing-place was selected so that the enemy could not see the debarkation.

10. Colonel Rowlandson was ordered to lead his force so as to attack the rear of the batteries, and prevent the escape of the enemy. During the advance of the infantry the "Irrawaddy," lying 3,000 yards below the enemy's batteries, fired occasional shells into them, to which the enemy replied, but with no effect. Nothing could be more picturesque than the advance of the Liverpool Regiment from hillock to hillock, while the batteries were kept amused by the shells from the "Irrawaddy." The turning movement was remarkably well executed, and would have been successful had not the enemy been warned of their danger by *phoongyees*, or priests, who, protected by their yellow garb, had been allowed to watch the operations of our regiments.

The Burmans fled from their batteries panic-stricken. I caused the eleven guns and carriages found in the batteries to be destroyed, as they could not easily be removed; and I saw the stockade and barracks burnt. While these operations were on hand, the Mule Battery, 9-1st Cinque Ports Division, Royal Artillery, and 1st Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers, under the command of Brigadier-General Norman, C.B., landed, and by a circuitous march reached the

* No. 9-1st Cinque Ports Division, Royal Artillery. 3rd Infantry Brigade, under Brigadier-General Norman, C.B., viz.:—Royal Welsh Fusiliers; 2nd Regiment Bengal Infantry; 11th Regiment Bengal Infantry. 2nd Battalion Liverpool Regiment; 1st Madras Pioneers; 12th Madras Infantry.