

Rycroft's skirmishers moved rapidly forward from it along the ridge, supported by some of the Camel Corps.

Borrow advanced with half battalion in column. As the first attacking line reached the flank of the position, the dervishes rose from behind the rocks, and under their three mounted leaders swept down on it, forcing it back on the support; Borrow moved to the right and reinforced with Mitford (one company), and then himself (one company). Foot by foot the front line and first support fell back before the well known wild rush, then stood, and as they felt the impetus of reinforcement, immediately began slowly to advance.

At this point lie over 70 dervish fanatics (Jalin, &c., &c.) almost touching one another.

The second dervish line made no attempt to support, and on perceiving they were turned by the Cavalry, dispersed, and swam the river.

The advance continued, and Rycroft's men came leaping down the rocks, forming with Dunning and a few Camel Corps, on the left of the first line.

The reserve of the fighting line fixed bayonets and moved up close to it. Rundle pushing forward the two guns in line with their left; neither were required. By 7.45 the position was in our hands.

Borrow Bey, assisted by Bimbashi Mitford (Lieutenant, the Buffs) and Sergeant Healy (Cameron Highlanders), behaved with great coolness and pluck, the latter being severely wounded. I append Borrow Bey's remarks as to good behaviour of native Officers, two of whom were wounded in hand-to-hand fighting.

The dervishes detached a right flanking party, reported at 6 A.M. as 50 strong; the Cavalry in their turning movement drove these in with heavy loss.

#### 2nd Line Column.

The Halfa force has no pretensions to mobility. The available transport to the south being 12 miles of railway to Abka, in indifferent repair, with a small staff capable of moving 400 to 500 men at a time.

A transport column for supplies, ambulance, and ammunition was admirably organized by Lloyd Bey, D.S.O., who served with distinction on the Line of Communication in the Nile Expedition, 1884-5. It was formed from camels of a division of the 4-gun battery, and from the animals attached to corps for transport of water and stores within the lines. Lloyd Bey reached Sarras with ambulance, and the supplies ordered late on the 28th with escort of 1st Battalion under Coles Bey; but for counter-orders received a few miles from Sarras he would have brought up the 1st Battalion and two days' supplies for 750 men and 250 animals. I attach his report.

Surgeon W. Lewis, A.M.S. (Bimbashi, E.A., P.M.O.), was present during engagement at Sarras, and worked among the wounded as British Military Medical Officers do work. Although the wounded had in almost all cases numerous spear and sword wounds only one death has occurred. I attach his report.

El Kainakam Kempster Bey (Captain, Leinster Regiment) readily accepted the post of Senior Staff Officer to the column, and if it is ever my good fortune to command more extended operations, I wish for no cooler, more ready, or exact Staff Officer. Bimbashi Palmer (Lieutenant, Somersetshire Light Infantry) served as Junior Staff Officer, and accompanied the guns and rear-guard during a trying and difficult night march. I am indebted to him for valuable and voluntary assistance throughout the operation.

Mulaezim Sam Mahomed Effendi Sidki acted as galloper, and showed a coolness very creditable to so young an officer. El Bimbashi Cunningham (Lieutenant, Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry) commanded at Halfa during operation, vide Lloyd Bey's Report.

CHERMSIDE BEY,

Commanding Field Force.

Copy of Telegrams.

Inclosure No. 2.

~~From the Officer Commanding Field Force to the Sirdar, Egyptian Army, and to the General Officer Commanding, Egypt.~~

Sarras, 28th April, 10 A.M.—Received news noon yesterday, a few hundred dervishes, under Nur El Kunzi, had occupied Sarras with outpost, Getmai. Marched from Halfa with column about sundown. Rundle, with Mounted Corps and Rycroft's Irregulars, occupied Sarras by day-break, and held it under fire from enemy at 400 yards till supported an hour later by Borrow with 300 of 9th. Dervishes occupied very strong position. Carried by Borrow most gallantly in hand-to-hand fight. Dervishes fought stubbornly, and, charging, checked first line of attack. Position carried by 7.45 A.M. Irregulars also storming stone block house, which Artillery breached at 340 yards. Dervishes left over 150 dead, including Nur El Kunzi, 10 standards, arms, camp, ammunition, and correspondence. Mounted Corps also killed 40 in pursuit. Our casualties, about 40, including two officers and Healy: details later.

Inclosure No. 3.

From the Officer Commanding Field Force to the Sirdar, Egyptian Army, and to the General Officer Commanding, Egypt.

Abka, 11.30 P.M., 29th.—After engagement, sent native agent Ambigole. While block house on hill was being breached before front attack, cavalry got completely in rear of position. Native reports state first line of about 200 dervish fanatics was almost annihilated, only four escaping on east bank, and Nur El Kunzi's two slaves, posted in rear with two camels and money. On west bank 14 escaped, our small flanking party on that bank killing a few and capturing vessel and cargo of five Greek traders, seized by dervishes, 27th. Greeks were liberated, one slightly wounded and one drowned. Reports add dervish second line consisted of about 300 Dongolese under Sheikh Tahir, and Sheikhs of Ambikol, Akasheh, and Sukkot, &c. When turned by Cavalry, this line dispersed, swimming Nile just below Sarras Castle, as we observed, at 7.20 A.M. A few were brought in later and released. Emir Kunzi and the two other leaders were killed. Greeks state dervishes, west bank, received accurate news from Halfa of move, but only as engagement began. The Mounted Corps, guns, and Reserve Ammunition Column marched 35 miles, carrying 100 rounds, two days' rations, and two days' forage; the Infantry, 12 miles rail and 22 miles night route march, carrying 100 rounds and two days' rations. Five of 9th Battalion were found Nile with dervish corpses. One killed, and missing 21; wounded as stated before. Wounded doing well; only one death. They leave Abka to-morrow early.

Inclosure No. 4.

From the Officer Commanding Field Force to the Sirdar, Egyptian Army.

Your 199. After engagement ordered up Lloyd's force from Abka, viz., 1st Battalion and