

The two steam cutters and the three double-banked boats were left anchored in the middle of the stream of Baltia, with a guard on board.

As the distance to be travelled by land was less than by boat, I ordered Lieutenant Ravenhill, with whom were Lieutenant Bird and Mr. Carr, to wait for fifteen minutes after I had started, and then to push on as fast as possible to Hidiomkoma, which he was to attack and destroy; the people of this village being the people who first attacked Mr. Behnke and set fire to his house.

At 1 p.m. I proceeded up the river with my galley and the whaler and gig of the "Cossack," under the command of Lieutenant Greville and Mr. King, gunner, respectively, and the whaler of "Brisk" under Lieutenant Baker.

A short distance above Baltia, the river became so narrow and obstructed with mangroves that the oars could with great difficulty be used.

At about a mile above Baltia, fire was opened on the boats at very short range from the thick mangrove swamp on the right bank, but it was soon silenced by the fire from the boats, and I presume, in consequence of the advance of the party under Lieutenant Ravenhill along the left bank, by a path parallel to the river, no attack at all was made from that side.

At 1.45 p.m., I arrived off Hidiomkoma, and finding the village apparently deserted I left it to be dealt with by Lieutenant Ravenhill, and pushed on to Mansumarabu. At 2 p.m. the boats arrived opposite the village, which stands about 200 yards from the bank of the river, and the boats' crews landed. On landing, a few shots were fired at us from the village, but on our returning the fire and advancing to the attack, the enemy bolted, and on our reaching the village it was found to be completely deserted.

As the chief of this place is the man who was chiefly responsible for the murder of Mr. Behnke, and as it was impossible to capture him or any other of the persons mentioned in the letter of Mr. Friedrich, I determined to destroy the town. It was, therefore, fired in many places and completely burnt, including a considerable store of grain and hides, which was found in the village storehouse—and the house and flag staff of Heri M'katna, the chief.

Shortly after 3 p.m. the party re-embarked and returned down the river. On passing Hidiomkoma the destruction of the village was found to have been completed. The two parties, therefore, returned to Baltia, the one by river and the other by road, without meeting with any attack.

On arrival at Baltia, Lieutenant Ravenhill reported that he had carried out his part of the programme without meeting with any resistance, and had destroyed everything burnable in Hidiomkoma. There still remained the village of Hidiojiza, in which village the murder of Mr. Behnke actually took place, which is situated about a mile to the east of Baltia. I therefore proceeded at once with the party under Lieutenant Ravenhill and Lieutenant Bird to that place, which we reached without opposition, and found deserted, the people having apparently left only a few minutes before we arrived; this place was also entirely destroyed by fire. The party then returned to the boats. On arrival there Lieutenant Baker informed me that while he was getting the boats ready for the re-embarkation of the whole party, a few shots were fired at them from the bush, which struck the water near the boats. He therefore threw out some skirmishers in the direction from which the shots had come. They were, however, unable to find an enemy, and were retired.

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All hands were then re-embarked, and the boats returned to the ships, where they arrived at 9 p.m.

The houses and estate of Messrs. Behnke and Friedrich at Baltia had been reduced to a blackened ruin, and Mr. Behnke had been murdered in cold blood. The three villages nearest to that estate, the people of which villages were all implicated more or less in these misdeeds, have also been reduced to ashes, and I think that this must be admitted to be an appropriate and certainly not excessive punishment for the offence.

I have very great pleasure in expressing my sense of the zeal and discipline shown by all the Officers and men of the Expedition. The actual resistance met with was slight and ineffective, but a good deal of very hard work had to be done in a short time in a trying climate, and this was