

Letter from the Commander-in-Chief to the Admiralty, dated 17th March, 1894.

No. 117. "Raleigh," at Bathurst, March 17, 1894.

SIR,
BE pleased to acquaint their Lordships that I have closed the temporary hospital established on shore at Bathurst, eleven patients having embarked in steamship "Teneriffe" for England, and the remainder discharged to their ships.

2. I wish to call attention to the services of Fleet Surgeon White, who, although wounded himself, has been unremitting in his attention to the wounded; also Surgeon Collingwood, lent from the "Widgeon," who has had care under the Fleet Surgeon of the patients remaining on board.

3. The speedy recovery of many men in Hospital I ascribe to the care and attention given by Surgeon Fyfe, whom I placed in charge of the Sick Quarters, where some of the most critical cases were treated.

4. I enclose also a letter I have received from Colonel Corbet bringing forward the services of Surgeon Bowden.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) FRED. G. D. BEDFORD.
Rear-Admiral.

Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Corbet, Royal Marine Light Infantry, to the Commanding Officer of the "Raleigh."

Enclosure to Commander-in-Chief's Letter of 17th March.

"Raleigh," at Bathurst, March 11, 1894.

SIR,
I BEG to bring to your notice the meritorious services rendered by Surgeon W. Bowden, R.N., in medical charge of the column under my command lately operating in British and Foreign Combo. Cool under fire, this Officer's services were especially useful during the action at Sabbajee, where, owing to various circumstances, there was but one Combatant Officer besides myself present.

Seeing the vital importance of having every available man in the ranks, the wounded, none of whom fortunately were injured in such a way as to prevent them from using their rifles to a certain extent, were rapidly attended to, and assisted back to their places in the fighting line.

In this Officer's care I placed the reserve ammunition, and charged him with the duty of issuing it as required. To his practical care I attribute the fact that during the operations, extending over about fourteen days, no man was incapacitated from marching, through sore and blistered feet—a detail of no small importance.

Useful aid was also rendered in assisting to clear the ground and destroy, by burning or otherwise, all cover that might afford shelter to the enemy, in performing which duty Surgeon Bowden was, on one occasion, somewhat severely scorched.

In conclusion, I have the honour to bring forward this Officer's conduct for your favourable consideration.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) A. D. CORBET,
Major and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel,
Royal Marine Light Infantry.

Forwarded for the favourable consideration of the Commander-in-Chief.

C. GRAVES SAWLE, Commander,
Commanding Officer,

Her Majesty's Ship "Raleigh,"
March 12, 1894.

Commander-in-Chief to Admiralty, dated 13th March, 1894.

No. 101. "Raleigh," at Bathurst.
Forwarded with reference to my Letter, No. 100, of 13th March.

(Signed) FRED. G. D. BEDFORD.

Enclosure to Cape Letter, No. 101, of 13th March, 1894.

Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Corbet, Royal Marine Light Infantry, to Commander-in-Chief, dated 2nd March, 1894, giving further report of proceedings from 23rd to the 26th February. (See also Enclosures to Commander-in-Chief's Letters of 26th February and 13th March, 1894.)

Fort Britannia, Jeswang,
March 2, 1894.

SIR,
I HAVE the honour to report that on Friday, the 23rd February, in compliance with your instructions, I moved out of Bakotti at 6.30 A.M. with the following force, viz.:—50 men of the Royal Marines, 50 men of the 1st West India Regiment, under Captain Westmorland and Lieutenant Cowie, and one 7-pounder field gun (Royal Marine Artillery), Surgeon Bowden, R.N., in medical charge, for the purpose of destroying the stockaded village of Busamballa. Passing through the village of Yundum, I searched it for arms and powder, destroying all found, and informing the Headman, who expressed himself desirous of British protection, that he must consider himself as under British rule. Yundum is not stockaded.

From Yundum I pushed on through very dense bush, allowing a view of but a few feet on either side of the path barely two feet wide, the advanced guard firing volleys into the bush at intervals. On arriving at the edge of the bush, I brought forward the 7-pounder gun, and came in view of the village of Busamballa, 300 yards distant, standing in a clearing of some extent.

A somewhat feeble fire was now opened from the stockade, but a much heavier fire from a party of men lying in the grass in skirmishing order on our left front. Firing a common shell through the stockade and a shrapnel, timed to burst over the centre of the village, to dislodge any of the enemy who might be lurking in the rear of it, the village was speedily in flames. Swinging round my right, we advanced on the party in the open, who retired firing. Seeing that their desire was to draw us away from the village, I did not pursue them far, but returned to the village, and after taking precautions against a return of the enemy, proceeded to destroy the stockade as far as time would allow. After blowing up the chief gateway with gun-cotton, we retired, leaving the English flag flying over the ruins of the stockade.

Heavy firing was heard during the day in the direction of Kembujeh.

Busamballa has a double stockade, the outer of bamboo, the inner of trunks of trees two and three deep, embedded in the ground; a trench two feet deep inside, with the earth thrown up against the stockade; a gateway well flanked in the centre of each side. Each stockade was about 15 feet high.

At 8 P.M., we reached Abako, where we bivouacked, having marched from nineteen to twenty miles through a little known country, the Marines dragging a 7-pounder gun, which added much to the difficulty of the march. Not a man of the whole force fell out during the day.

I should have mentioned that Lieutenant Fitz-Maurice, R.N., Flag Lieutenant, accompanied the expedition, and rendered every assistance in his power.