

So far the health of both ships is excellent, and I am endeavouring to get them everything I can in the way of food.

19. In conclusion, I have great pleasure in informing you that the behaviour and steadiness of the Officers and men landed from Her Majesty's ships "Phoebe" and "Alecto" on August 29th was excellent, the exertions and zeal of the 7-pounder and Maxim guns crews especially being beyond praise.

I have, &c.,  
F. POWELL,  
Captain and Senior Officer,  
West Coast of Africa.

Letter from Lieutenant and Commander Heugh, of Her Majesty's ship "Alecto," to the Senior Officer, West Coast of Africa, dated 25th August, 1894.

Inclosure No. 1 in Captain Powell's Letter of 1st September, 1894.

*Her Majesty's Ship "Alecto" at Benin,  
August 25, 1894.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report in continuation of my letter of 22nd instant, that, owing to a large number of natives collecting at night time opposite this ship, I found it necessary to destroy, by burning, three villages at the entrance of Brohemic Creek, more especially as the ship had been fired upon.

2. Various attempts were made, notwithstanding firing from the ship, to rush the blockade. As it was quite apparent to me that Nanna and his people were entirely hostile to the Government, and that, from information received, small canoes were able to go up by other creeks than that off which I was anchored, I considered it necessary to block these by felling trees, having previously interviewed the Consular Authorities, who were quite of my opinion.

3. Nightly a system of patrolling has been carried on to prevent the ingress or egress of canoes to Brohemic.

4. This morning I completely armour-plated my steam cutter against rifle fire, and proceeded to find out if there were severe obstacles in the creek that would prevent our attacking Brohemic by way of it. I proceeded with Major Copland Crawford, of the Protectorate (Consular Agent), Captain James Lalor (Seconded, Royal Marine Light Infantry), of the Niger Protectorate Force, Robert H. Crouch, Chief Petty Officer, 80,830, Charles Chick, A.B., 115,127, George Smallwood, A.B., 146,565, James Jury, A.B., 145,649, Joseph Perkins, Leading Stoker, First Class, 145,395, and Frank E. Lambkin, Stoker, 164,204, with a native as Interpreter, who apparently knew the bends of the creek.

At a distance of about 380 yards (rough survey), hearing voices, I deemed it necessary to turn the boat (being in a place where there was sufficient room to do so), and had virtually done so, when an exceedingly heavy fire from a large battery of guns was opened upon us, the boat was pierced through the stern in several places between wind and water, by shot averaging 7 and 9 lbs. I deeply regret to say that the Coxswain, James Jury, A.B., was mortally wounded, dying on board the ship at 1.45 p.m., Charles Chick, A.B. (serving Nordenfelt gun), virtually mortally wounded, Major Copland Crawford, Captain Lalor, and Joseph Perkins, Leading Stoker, all three very severely wounded. One projectile completely disabled the Nordenfelt gun and the shield and armour protection of the boat was wrecked. I at once took the helm,

the fire being still very severe. I gave an order to go ahead, this was not at once complied with, but a few seconds afterwards, Joseph Perkins, Leading Stoker, First Class, already mentioned, got up from where he had been shot (his foot was hanging by shreds), and I am proud to say that this man, Joseph Perkins, Leading Stoker, First Class, engineered the boat back to the ship under a heavy fire, fainting from a tremendous loss of blood just as we got alongside the "Alecto," the boat from the time when first fired upon gradually making water, and arriving alongside in a sinking condition. Whilst regretting this loss of life, I cannot help mentioning the noble and devoted manner in which every individual performed his duty. Major Copland Crawford, though severely wounded, managed to fire two shots from his rifle at the enemy.

I would also like to mention Robert Crouch, Chief Gunner's Mate, who when called upon by me to fire a rocket at the enemy, did so under a heavy fire as coolly as though it were at mere practice, the result of which discharge caused a cessation of the heavy firing of cannon, tending greatly towards enabling me at a very slow rate of speed to bring the boat out of the creek and alongside the ship.

Captain Lalor also, though so severely wounded, was endeavouring to support me in bringing the boat out of this difficulty.

Again, whilst regretting what has taken, it appears to me that Nanna is a far more formidable enemy than has been supposed, and therefore I consider that to annihilate him force and great caution is requisite, and it will be necessary to flank him, getting at him by land from various points, as evidently his creek is impracticable for a main attack by boats, owing to its narrowness, shoal water, and density of jungle on either hand throughout its entire length, and the evident batteries of heavy ordnance all along the creek.

5. I cannot help thinking that my experience of this day has prevented a general destruction of the force intended to attack the position, as in all probability we should have shelled the town, leaving these batteries untouched, to destroy each boat in turn as the flotilla should proceed on its way up to Brohemic.

The following is a list of killed and wounded:—  
Major Copland Crawford, Captain James Lalor, very severely wounded.

James Jury, A.B., mortally wounded, dead.  
Joseph Perkins, Leading Stoker, Charles Chick, A.B., dangerously wounded.

The address of James Jury (which was taken just before death) is Mr. Babb, Coaling Company, Morley-street, Plymouth.

I have, &c.,  
J. S. HEUGH,  
Lieutenant-Commander.

Letter from Commander-in-Chief to the Admiralty, dated 27th September, 1894, No. 342.

*Her Majesty's Ship "Philomel," Benin,  
September 27, 1894.*

SIR,

BE pleased to inform their Lordships that in accordance with my telegram No. 19, of 7th September, 1894, I left Simon's Bay in Her Majesty's ship "Philomel" on the 8th instant, and arrived at St. Paul de Loanda on 13th instant.

2. Having received 297 tons of coal I left the same day for Bonny, and crossed the bar on the morning of the 17th instant.

3. I had telegraphed to Her Majesty's ship "Phoebe" to send a pilot if possible for the channel joining the Forcados River and the Benue