

I much regret to say that the Japanese Commander was killed.

Four Destroyers of the Chinese Navy were boarded and captured by Lieutenant and Commander Roger John Brownlow Keyes, of the "Fame," and Lieutenant and Commander Colin MacKenzie of the "Whiting," which was done by towing a boat astern with boarders under the command of Lieutenants John Alfred Moreton and Wilfred Tomkinson of the "Whiting" and "Fame" respectively, who boarded and captured two Destroyers each. I intend handing over three of the Destroyers to the Admirals of our Allies, viz.: the Russian, German, and French.

In the action slight damage was done to the "Algerine" by shell fire, principally to ventilators, &c., and a shell passed through the hull of the "Whiting," which necessitates her being sent to Nagasaki for repairs.

I regret to have to report that during the action William Theodore Bing, Ord. O.N. 188203, H.M.S. "Barfleur," was killed, and Mr. Herbert J. Hargraves, Assistant Paymaster in charge H.M.S. "Algerine," and 12 men were wounded; but, owing to the lack of any communication with the shore to-day (18th June), on account of the weather, I have not received any details.

I have, &c.,
JAMES BRUCE, Rear-Admiral.

The Secretary of the Admiralty.

Enclosure in Letter from Rear-Admiral, China Station.

(Dated 17th June, 1900. No. 4.)

SIR, Taku, 17th June, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to report, that in conjunction with the Allied Forces on shore, the British Force, which I have the honour to command, stormed and assisted to take the North-West Fort of Taku, at 5 o'clock this morning after which the outer North and South Forts were respectively occupied.

I regret to state that in the capture of the North-West Fort, W. T. Bing, O.S., of H.M.S. "Barfleur," was killed, and six other men of the British Force were wounded, the Foreign Forces on shore had also, I am sorry to say, some casualties, including amongst the killed the Japanese Commander.

The North-West Fort was first attacked. Half the British Force, the Russians on the left and the Italians on the right, composed the firing line, the other half were deployed to act as a close support.

The resistance at the North-West Fort was severe, other Forts were occupied with but slight opposition.

On the junction of the Allied Forces this morning, the German and Japanese Commanders were pleased to propose that I should take command of the proceedings of the combined forces, which I did.

At a meeting held by the Foreign Representatives after the operations, it was decided that the several Nations should each occupy a fort; in consequence the British Force, under my command, take charge of the North-West Fort. The entire force has been landed as a result of fears expressed by the conference as to the descent of Boxers on Taku in large numbers at night, and I am endeavouring to place the Fort in such a state of defence that danger of its being rushed by weight of numbers will not be probable.

Machine guns are wanted, and also more rifle and pistol ammunition.

I have, &c.
CHRISTOPHER CRADOCK,
Commander.

Commanding the Allied Forces on shore
at the attack on Taku Forts.
To Rear-Admiral James Bruce.

Enclosure in Letter from Rear-Admiral,
China Station.

(Dated 17th June, 1900. No. 4.)

H.M.S. "Algerine," Taku,

17th June, 1900.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report that after receiving your orders of yesterday's date, I attended a conference of the Allied Squadron of Men-of-War inside the bar, when it was decided that we should take up our appointed positions by 4 a.m., and open fire on the Forts at that hour, should they not be surrendered before then.

I took up my position at once, shifting berth at 8 pm., and prepared for action. At 1.30 a.m., I ordered the Destroyers "Fame" and "Whiting" to seize the Chinese Destroyers alongside the government yard.

At 12.50 a.m., all the forts opened fire, and we engaged the enemy. At about 1.30 Commander Cradock and his landing party were landed on the north bank, and at about 5 o'clock the fire of the North-West Fort was, except for field and machine guns, practically silenced, and the Fort taken by the landing party.

At 6 o'clock the Allied Ships weighed and proceeded down the river, I anchored again, and it was not until 7.10 a.m. that the Chinamen finally abandoned their guns and the Forts were occupied.

No damage has been done to the hull of the ship, but there are several holes in the cowls, and one in the steam cutter.

A list of casualties will follow with a detailed report.

Reports from Lieutenants Keyes and MacKenzie as to their proceedings will be sent in with the detailed report, observing that the Chinese Destroyers are all in our possession.

At a conference of Commanding Officers held this morning, it was decided that the British Forces should occupy the North-West Fort, the Japanese the North Fort, and the Russians and Germans the South Fort.

Our wounded have been landed and the Taku Hotel pretty well taken for them.

Captain Cradock will detail a guard for the hospital.

I have, &c.
R. H. JOHNSTON STEWART,
Commander.

To Rear-Admiral James Bruce,
H.M.S. "Barfleur."

Letter No. 385 from Commander-in-Chief on the
China Station, dated 4th July.

SIR, Tientsin, 4th July, 1900.

I HAVE received from Rear-Admiral Bruce, Second in Command, a copy of his letter of 17th June (No. 4), reporting to their Lordships the taking of the Taku Forts, and of the Chinese Dockyard with four destroyers there on that day.

It is my pleasing duty to inform their Lordships that these operations meet with my entire approval. In my opinion they were skilfully planned and executed in a most gallant manner, worthy of the highest traditions of our Service.

I concur in the Rear-Admiral's commendation of those concerned, and would specially mentio