

trustworthiness of his men, and sympathy undoubtedly existed between many of our own people and the outlaws. We proceeded to reconnoitre the position from the north side, coming under a lively Martini fire. I could plainly see that the fort was not only much larger than I had been led to believe, but was a really strong one (the description of this fort is given later on), and would, if stormed by infantry alone, cost heavily, especially as the enemy possessed a number of Martini and Snider rifles, and were plentifully supplied with ammunition. The Nazim further informed me that he had besieged the place for fifty-one days, and had lost some men killed and wounded.

On my return to Kalatuk I informed Colonel Yate that I was prepared to assault the place for him at any time, if necessary, but at a heavy loss; and that, in my opinion, it would be wiser to wait for the guns and avoid anything even smacking of a check, which would have a very bad effect in the country.

Colonel Yate quite agreed with me, and the Nazim was directed to redouble his efforts for the next two or three days.

I also wrote to Lieutenant Orton to hurry on the guns.

On the 18th I moved the camp to Nodiz and pitched it about two miles from the fort, and that day and the next were spent by all the British Officers in carefully reconnoitring it. It was difficult to get close to it, as the enemy had the ranges marked and opened fire on any one seen. About 7 P.M. Lieutenant Orton, 26th Baluchistan Regiment, arrived with the 5th Bombay Cavalry escort under Lieutenant Maunsell, having covered 65 miles in 36 hours. On the 20th, at 9 A.M., the two guns, Murree Mountain Battery, under Lieutenant E. G. Hart, and 50 rifles, 27th Baluch Light Infantry, arrived. They had marched 59 miles between 7 A.M. on the 18th and 9 A.M. on the 20th. I gave them a rest of one hour and a half, and then marched into action.

The various small parties left camp timed to arrive at their respective positions, round the fort, simultaneously. A copy of my orders (attached) for the attack shows the necessary detail.

The direction of the attack was kept secret to the last moment.

The gun position, about 550 yards from the fort, was somewhat exposed, but it was the only one from which the battlements of the south-west flanking defences of the fort, and which side was the one selected to be assaulted, could be properly shelled.

The guns came under rifle fire directly they appeared in sight, and which continued till they got into action. The enemy's fire was fortunately high, and the scrub about afforded some shelter from view. The teams were protected in a nullah close by.

At 11.20 the first gun fired. Meanwhile, the Baluchis to the south-west advanced rapidly through the date trees, and coming under fire, trickled up to a karez and some cotton fields within 200 yards of the fort, and which offered good cover. Selected marksmen then fired on the loopholes. The enemy's fire was very heavy, but only two casualties occurred up to this, the men availing themselves of every particle of cover and moving steadily on. The enemy's fire was hard to locate; not only was there no smoke, but they were perfectly protected. Lieutenant Orton's party had also moved to within short range, and engaged the enemy on the east side.

Lieutenant Hart continued firing steadily at the flank defences, demolishing all the loop-holed

battlements on the towers and leaving the walls, which, being very thick, would not have been affected by small guns.

When he had completed this he sounded the battery call and turned his fire on to the main tower. The enemy, who had vacated the loopholes when shelled, finding the gunners' attention directed elsewhere, promptly returned and re-opened a wild fire. The assaulting party, with the sappers, had meanwhile crept closer up under shelter of a *karez*, and I directed Lieutenant Corry to breach the wall with gun-cotton. He and his party advanced under the shelter of some old dilapidated mat huts, covered by a careful fire on the loopholes by Lieutenant Grant's men, but finding that the wall near the south-west tower had been sufficiently breached by gun fire, returned with the information.

I stopped the guns firing and had the charge sounded. The storming party, with bayonets fixed, and splendidly led by Lieutenants Corry and Grant, rushed the breach, Colonel Showers accompanying them. The supports, with Captain Hulseberg, now came up, and secured the outer wall and the south-west bastion, now in ruins. The storming party on rushing in were met with a furious fire and a counter-charge of swordsmen, and a *melée* ensued. The swordsmen were driven back into cover, and both Lieutenants Corry and Grant, as well as several men, fell wounded, shot from the western tower. The men, many of whom were very young soldiers, seeing their officers fall, lost their heads and retired to the breach again, bringing away the wounded and rifles. From my position on the ruined south-west tower I saw this temporary check, and ordered the reserves up to a position under the north-west walls of the fort, and as I could not find the gun-cotton party, who were mixed up with the infantry, to enlarge the breach, I ordered up the guns. The men were distributed round the fort and the south-west bastion occupied, and wherever they could they loop-holed the walls with their bayonets and fired on the enemy's loopholes.

A survey of the interior of the fort disclosed three reduits—the western one a particularly strong one, with tiers of loopholes. I also noted that the shell proof head covers of these buildings, resting on date palm logs, could be brought down by shell fire on to the heads of the defenders, and that they were visible from a date grove about a hundred yards from the south of the fort. It was necessary to press the enemy as hard as possible, and finish with a final bayonet assault.

The guns came into action in the date patch mentioned, and under the enemy's fire one gunner was severely wounded.

Lieutenant Hart worked his guns with the greatest calm and deliberation, and soon not only brought down the roofs of the two centre reduits, but set them on fire. The enemy quitted them and gave themselves up to Lieutenant Orton on the east side.

But the western reduit still held out, and this was shelled and the top blown in. I had the cease fire sounded and the men with Captain Hulseberg swarmed in to the assault, but spared the plucky foe, who threw down their arms and surrendered.

I was well aware of the risk I ran in bringing the guns up so close, but it was the only way in which the persistent riflemen in the reduits could be silenced, and the walls of these were too high to be scaled. The fight ended at 1.25 P.M.