

and asking if the Navy would take the town, as its earliest occupation was essential. I replied that this would be done and issued orders accordingly.

Although the information given me indicated that the enemy force was small, I knew that it would be strongly entrenched and would have Maxims, and I therefore decided to land what force I could raise from the ships immediately available, together with all machine guns, and to have a strong covering force of light-draught ships inshore with heavy-draught ships outside.

As it turned out the intelligence was very much at fault, the enemy having one 4.1-in. gun, one five-barrelled pom-pom, and two Maxims, their total force being more numerous than the landing party.

At 5.0 p.m. on the 14th August, "Vengeance" (Flag), with "Challenger" (Captain A. C. Sykes) and "Manica" (Commander W. E. Whittingham, R.N.R.) in company, left Zanzibar, anchoring at 3.24 a.m. on the 15th off Bagamoyo, the landing party leaving "Vengeance" at 4.40 a.m., under the command of Commander R. J. N. Watson.

There was a slight swell, little wind, and a bright moon, so that a complete surprise was not to be expected; but the landing turned out to be as near a surprise as was possible in the circumstances, and it is believed that the boats were not seen until they had left the monitors at 5.30 a.m.

Owing to the skill with which the advance was conducted by Commander Watson and Commander (acting) W. B. Wilkinson, and an alteration of course when some little way from the shore, the enemy were completely deceived as to the point of landing, and found themselves under a heavy fire from the monitors and motor boats, which effectually prevented them from firing on the landing party.

The latter proceeded and landed close under the 4.1-in. gun position to the left of the town, at a point where the gun, owing to its position some 30 feet back from the ridge on which it was sited, could not be sufficiently depressed to bear on them.

On the other hand this gun came under the enfilading fire of the 3-pounders, one each in my steam barge, "Vengeance's" picket boat, and the tug "Helmuth." This fire, at from 800 to 500 yards, so seriously discomposed the enemy that they abandoned the gun as soon as attacked by the shore party. This gun had come from Tanga in tow of 500 coolies, and had arrived at the position in which it was taken on the 9th August. Its capture was, in my opinion, a most remarkable piece of work, reflecting the greatest credit on the boats and the attacking section.

Meanwhile the "Manica" had got up her kite balloon and was spotting, but her seaplane had engine trouble and was forced to come down in the breakers at the mouth of the Kingani River, returning undamaged. I accordingly called on "Himalaya" (Captain Colin Mackenzie, D.S.O.), which was just leaving Zanzibar, and at 6.0 a.m. her seaplane flew across from Zanzibar, and at once dropped bombs on the enemy in trenches, afterwards spotting. "Himalaya" herself followed and took a useful part in the subsequent bombardment.

At 6.30 a.m. it was reported from three sources—kite balloon, portable W./T. set

ashore, and W./T from seaplane—that the enemy were retiring between the French Mission and the sea, and were around the Mission.

The cause of this retreat was the endeavour of Captain von Bok to rush his troops round to the opposite side of the town to oppose our landing. About this time the pom-pom gun was hit by a 6-in. shell from "Severn" (Commander (acting) W. B. C. Jones) and nearly pulverised, Captain von Boedecke being killed. Shortly after Captain von Bok was also killed, and with both leaders gone all initiative on the part of the enemy was lost, and our men were able to firmly establish themselves in a small but important quarter of the town, from which they subsequently spread and gathered in all the Arabs, Indians, and natives. Beyond slight damage from shell fire and a fire in the native village—where an occasional fire is beneficial—the town is intact.

The importance of the capture of this town on the native mind was very great, as it is the old capital of the slave trade and the starting place of the great caravan routes into the interior.

The result from a military point of view was immediately apparent in the demoralisation of the enemy forces, particularly the native portion, and in the evacuation of the Mtoni Ferry, a strategic and strongly-defended position about six miles above the town over the Kingani River, thereby giving our troops moving south from Saadani and Mandera an open road.

It is with deep regret that I record the death of Captain Francis H. Thomas, D.S.C., Royal Marine Light Infantry, whilst gallantly leading his men. He had taken part in all recent operations and was a most promising officer. Our other casualties were two seamen and two marines wounded, while the Zanzibar African Rifles had one sergeant and one Askari killed and one Askari wounded. Two native porters were also wounded.

The enemy casualties were estimated at two officers, one white soldier, and eight Askaris killed, three white and eight Askaris wounded, and four white and fifteen Askaris taken prisoner.

On the 20th August the naval forces were relieved by the military and re-embarked in their ships.

On the 21st August, in continuance of the policy of harassing Dar-es-Salaam, "Vengeance" and "Challenger" bombarded various gun positions; and during that night "Challenger" carried out a further bombardment, firing 50 rounds of 6-in. over the town into the railway station. On the 23rd, 26th, 28th, 30th and 31st August, and on the 1st September, other limited bombardments took place, and on the 3rd September the whalers "Pickle" (Lieutenant H. C. Davis, D.S.C., R.D., R.N.R.), "Fly" (Lieutenant D. H. H. Whitburn, R.N.R.), "Childers" (Lieutenant V. C. Large, R.N.R.), and "Echo" (Lieutenant C. J. Charlewood, D.S.C., R.N.R.), under Flag Commander the Hon. R. O. B. Bridgeman, D.S.O., simulated a landing at Upanga and attacked the front at short range from West Ferry Point to Ras Upanga. They were received with shrapnel fire from a field battery, but escaped injury.