

enemy, who immediately withdrew beyond the defile at Ribera. General Long passed through the defile to the right and left of the town, and attacked the enemy with much spirit, whilst the artillery fired with great effect from the high ground on the Villa Franca side of the defile. The enemy retired rapidly upon Hinojosa, closely followed; from Hinojosa the enemy retired to Leira, and from thence to Valencia de Torres. They were followed as far as Leira. At Hinojosa the two regiments under Major-General Slade joined Major-General Long's brigade, having made a very rapid march at a trot from Los Santos, but from the great distance could not arrive in sufficient time to cut off the enemy's retreat upon Leira.

Major-General Long speaks in the highest terms of all the troops under his command, particularly the horse artillery, who displayed great activity in their movements and precision in their fire, by which the enemy suffered very considerably.

The loss of the enemy on this occasion has been about thirty men and a great many horses killed, eleven men and about thirty horses taken. The loss upon our side has been only one man killed and seven wounded.

I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM ERSKINE,

Lieutenant-General.

Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill,

K. B. &c. &c. &c.

SIR, Villa Franca, July 25, 1812.

I HAVE the honour to enclose Colonel Campbell's report upon the proceedings of yesterday*, at the point where he was more immediately engaged; and his report is sufficiently circumstantial, and, as far as I can judge, correct, to render it unnecessary for me to expatiate on the subject.

I received the report of the enemy's advance upon Ribera too late to admit of my preventing his occupying that town, and the commanding heights on this side. The accounts of his force were so differently represented, that, having three troops of the brigade absent, I thought it not advisable to act against him until they could be recalled; and as the attempt to dislodge him might bring on a serious affair, on ground of which all the advantages were on the enemy's side, I was anxious to secure the support of the 3d dragoon guards stationed at Fuente del Maestre, and to wait for the

report of what might be passing on the side of Usagre, before I commenced any offensive movement.

Finding, upon the arrival of the patrolle from Usagre, that no enemy was in that neighbourhood, I directed the troops under my command (without waiting longer for the 3d dragoon guards) to proceed against the enemy. They retired across the river, which enabled me to bring up the artillery upon the heights they had relinquished, and to employ it with evident and very great effect; and I continued my advance upon and pursuit of the enemy, as rapidly as I thought consistent with the preservation of order and regularity, beyond the defile of Hinojosa; where, from the lateness of the hour, the fatigue sustained by the Portuguese troops, the artillery, and one squadron of hussars, I judged it proper to halt.

Nothing could exceed the steadiness of the 9th and 13th dragoons, the activity of the artillery, and the precision of their fire, or the good countenance and gallantry displayed by those portions of the Portuguese troops, and of my own brigade, that had the opportunity of closing with and engaging the enemy. And I consider myself justified in estimating the loss of the latter, at the very lowest, at forty-five men killed and prisoners. With respect to the horses, so many were left mutilated and killed on the field, and others caught and carried away by the peasants, that I have no criterion by which to judge of the enemy's loss in this respect, but we have only brought away twenty.

I feel myself particularly indebted to Colonel Campbell for his assistance and co-operation; and I should be wanting in justice, if I omitted to express my admiration of the conduct of the artillery under the immediate orders of Captains Lefebure and Whingates, and my approbation of the spirit displayed by a squadron of the 2d hussars, under Major Wissel, supported by two divisions of the 9th and 13th dragoons, under Lieutenant Handley of the former, and Lieutenant Edwards of the latter regiment.

It is equally my duty to acknowledge the services I received from Captain Wemyss and Lieutenant Strenowitz, two of your personal staff, whose zeal, spirit, and exertions were as usual conspicuous; nor are the officers of my own staff (Brigade-Major Dunbar and Captain Dean) less deserving my notice.

* Not sent.