

from which the enemy opened a heavy but ill-directed fire upon the boats from jingals and musketry. About half a mile up the creek, beyond the second row of stakes, the angle of a stockade was visible.

Arrangements being made for landing the troops as early in the morning as possible, to benefit by the flood tide, the distance from the vessels to the landing place being about four miles, by halfpast nine, A. M. nearly the whole force was landed without opposition.

I immediately formed a column, of the strength specified in the margin\*, with the view of attacking the enemy in the flank, and driving him from the breast-work which defended the creek, to enable Captain Hardy to proceed up with the gun-boats, to remove the stakes, and to accompany the troops to the principal stockade, leaving Captain Skardon with the reserve of about one hundred and eighty men, and the two brigades of guns, under Captain Hall, to act in concert with Captain Hardy as circumstances might render necessary.

The column of attack, I regret to say, was led by the guides in quite a different direction to the place I wished to carry, and had to surmount obstacles never contemplated from the information received. The gallantry of the party, however, overcame every difficulty which presented itself, and drove the enemy from all his entrenched positions at the point of the bayonet, obliging him to take shelter in his usual place of resort, the jungle, from which a galling fire was kept up until he was dislodged by our troops.

It being now half past three P. M. the detachment quite fatigued and exhausted for want of water, and finding that it was totally impracticable to advance by the road pointed out, the jungle being so very close as not to admit of a file of men abreast, and lined by the enemy who had now opened a fire upon our rear, and being about five miles distant from the boats, without any possibility of communication, and it appearing evident that we had been most treacherously deceived, it was deemed prudent and advisable to return to the boats so as to arrive in sufficient time to recross the nullahs, which had so greatly impeded our advance.

The enemy reoccupied every hill and plain as we quitted, and continued firing on us from jingals and matchlocks, until checked by the arrival of the reserve, when a few well directed rounds from the six pounder field pieces dislodged them from their lurking places, and effectually silenced their fire, which enabled us to re-embark the whole force by six P. M.

* H. M. 54th Regt.	-	-	-	-	6
Marines of the Hastings	-	-	-	-	30
Seamen	-	-	-	-	60
40th Regt. Native Infantry	-	-	-	-	330
					426

However much it is to be lamented that our enterprize has not been crowned with that success, which the information I had received gave me every reason to expect, as well as the loss we have sustained, yet I trust his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief will view it as trifling, compared with the information which has been acquired respecting the harbour of Ramree and its localities by the zealous and indefatigable exertions of Captain Hardy, and which no doubt may prove of the utmost importance should Government deem it expedient hereafter to send an adequate force to take possession of, and occupy it.

From my own personal observation, if I may be permitted to offer an opinion, the island is particularly strong; and from the localities of the country its natural defences and means of resistance, it will require a force of at least fifteen hundred or two thousand men including five hundred European troops, with a due proportion of artillery and pioneers to take and maintain it.

When every man composing the force did his duty, it is difficult to discriminate individual merit, but I should consider myself wanting in duty were I not to bring to the notice of his Excellency the gallant conduct of Lieutenant Bell, of the Bombay European regiment, commanding the marines, and of Lieutenant Cox, commanding the light company of my own regiment, who were conspicuously forward on every occasion, shewing an example to their men, which did them honour and credit.

To Captain Hardy, who commanded the naval part of the force, and who was engaged with the gun-boats during my absence endeavouring to remove the stakes and force a passage up the creek to the enemy's breast work, and whose Officers and seamen exerted themselves to their utmost, my sincere and grateful thanks are due, as well as for his cordial cooperation and assistance on every occasion wherever the public service required it.

Herewith I do myself the honour to inclose a return of killed and wounded.

I am, &c.

R. HAMPTON.

*Return of Killed and Wounded during Operations on the Island of Ramree, on the 3d of February 1825.*

H. M. 54th Regt.—1 killed; 1 wounded.  
European Regt.—1 killed; 3 wounded (1 since dead).

Seamen—4 wounded (1 since dead).  
40th Regt. N. I.—3 killed; 12 wounded.  
Total—5 killed; 20 wounded.

1 master's mate killed, and 1 seaman and 1 lascar wounded, in the gun-boats.

ROBERT MARGRAVE, Lieutenant.