



SUPPLEMENT TO The London Gazette

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War Office, February 18, 1876.

THE following Despatch and enclosures have been received by the Secretary of State for War from the Major-General Commanding Her Majesty's Forces in China and the Straits Settlements:—

*Camp, Qualla Kangsa,
January 5, 1876.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report that yesterday morning the force as per margin* was taken by me for the purpose of disarming the village of Kota Lama, 1½ miles distant, on the opposite side of the Perak River.

This village, in July last, was visited by Mr. Birch, when the inhabitants came down in considerable numbers, loading their arms, and warning him not to come near. Having no force with him, he was obliged to withdraw.

For long this village has been the haunt of all the worst disposed and turbulent Malays. The Queen's Commissioner, deeming it necessary to disarm the inhabitants and to destroy the houses of certain known leaders, I made the following arrangements.

The village of Kota Lama is on the left bank of the river. Lieutenant-Colonel Cox crossed with his party in boats, and moved up the bank a little more than a mile, when he extended the men, the left of the line keeping close to the river, and skirmished through the village.

Mr. Maxwell, Deputy-Commissioner, accompanied Lieutenant-Colonel Cox.

Captain Young moved his party in a similar manner up the right bank, to a village of the same

name; his orders were to collect any arms, but not to destroy or injure houses or property, as the inhabitants have been well disposed.

Captain Speedy, Assistant-Commissioner, accompanied Captain Young.

Major McNair, I, and my staff went with Captain Garforth's party of the Naval Brigade.

We landed on the left bank just above the village, and, leaving a few blue jackets in charge of the boats, we moved in the direction of the village, expecting there to find Lieutenant-Colonel Cox's party.

Twenty blue jackets landed with us, and we were joined by Lieutenant Hare, R.E., with 4 Goorkhas, who had been assisting him to measure the distance along the bank.

We proceeded some distance before we came to some houses which I desired should be searched for arms they were, with few exceptions, deserted; after about an hour and a half we came upon several houses close to each other, the largest being occupied by women and children.

It being necessary to ascertain whether any men also were in it, Major McNair sent in two of his Malay followers, and himself looked in.

After satisfying himself that there were only women and children, he had just got down from the steps, telling those inside not to be alarmed as they would not be harmed, when we heard several shots, and from a jungle close by some 50 Malays rushed out upon us, a few with fire-arms and the rest with spears.

The attack was so sudden that we were almost surrounded and had to retire.

The conduct of the marines and sailors was deserving of all praise. If it had not been for their steadiness few if any of us would have escaped.

As it was I regret to say that our loss was heavy in proportion to the numbers engaged. A report with return of casualties is attached.

Just before this attack was made several officers moved away in the direction of the river, two

* Left bank, under Lieutenant-Colonel Cox.—Royal Artillery, 12 men and 1 gun; the Buffs, 10 men; 1st Goorkhas, 25 men.

Right bank, under Captain Young.—The Buffs, 50 men; 1st Goorkhas, 20 men.

In three boats, under Captain Garforth.—3 officers and 20 men.

hundred yards distant. Major Hawkins was, it is supposed, following them when he was fatally wounded with a spear. No one seems to have seen him fall, but Captain Garforth reports that William Sloper, A.B., came up to him on the ground, shot two Malays who were coming towards him, and stopped with him until Major Hawkins said "Save yourself; you can do me no good now."

Major Heathcoate, who with Captain Badcock, Lieutenant Preston, and Major Twigge, had gone on in front of Major Hawkins towards the river, turned back with these officers and tried to move them, but they had to fall back to the river, before the superior numbers who were getting round them.

Surgeon Townsend was the first to be assailed, he being a little advanced; three Malays assailed him with spears, the centre one he shot with his pistol, and the man falling forward upon him knocked him down. The other two Malays were driving at him when Harry Bennett, A.B., and William Thompson, A.B., rushed forward and killed them both.

The conduct of the three blue jackets above-named has been specially brought to my notice, but all behaved admirably in a very difficult position, and very great credit is due to the three officers, Captain Garforth, Lieutenant Wood, and Sub-Lieutenant Poar, who directed and led them.

Lieutenant-Colonel Cox's party had gone all over the ground on which this occurred, and it is supposed that our opponents must have made for the jungle on the approach of the skirmishers, and returned after they had passed. Lieutenant-Colonel Cox returned through the village in the same order, and having destroyed every house that he passed, arrived here about half-past two o'clock, without firing a shot.

Captain Young's party returned about the same time without having met with any opposition.

The bodies of five Malays were found, and I have reason to believe that their loss must have been greater.

The close and hand-to-hand nature of the engagement is shown by all the casualties having been caused by spear wounds.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. ROSS,
Brigadier-General, &c.

P.S.—A large quantity of arms, spears, muskets, and small wall-pieces were taken, and a large iron 12-pounder gun was spiked and thrown into

the river. A list of arms taken shall be forwarded.

(Signed) J. ROSS,
Brigadier-General.

*Major-General the Honourable
F. Colborne, C.B., &c., &c.*

*Head Quarters, Camp, Qualla Kangsa,
January 4, 1876.*

SIR,
I HAVE the honour to forward for your information a list of the killed and wounded at the assault on the village of Kota Lama:—

Killed.

Major Hawkins, Brigade Major, spear wound two inches below the apex of heart; spear transfixing the chest and lungs, passing downwards and wounding diaphragm and liver, passing out below 10th and 11th rib at right side.

Seaman Gunner William G. Loam, H.M.S. "Philomel," spear wound of right side of spine, transfixing chest, and having its exit five inches below the right nipple.

Sumber Bisananth, Sepoy, 1st Goorkhas, spear wound left side, wounding spleen and transfixing the abdomen a little to the left of the uniform cartilage.

Wounded.

Surgeon Townshend, A.M.D., severe spear wound middle thira of right arm; slight spear wound of right leg.

Private Jasper Ball, R.M., double spear wound at epigastrium, protrusion of intestines and omentum, spear wound at middle of left arm, and another of left hand.

Sujoo Mappa, Sepoy, 1st Goorkhas, severe spear wound of right fore arm.

Serwick Sing Tappah, Sepoy, 1st Goorkhas, severe spear wound of right fore-arm.

The severity of the spear wounds, in all the fatal cases completely transfixing the body, and the fact of the men having been wounded in several places, show the close quarters that the force fought at, and the determined resistance of the Malay.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) WILLIAM COLLIS,
Surgeon-Major, the Buffs,
P. M. O. Larut Field Force.
*To Brigadier-General Ross, C.B.,
Commanding Larut Field Force.*