



SUPPLEMENT

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War Office, April 4, 1879.

DESPATCHES, of which the following are copies, have been received at the War Office from the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Forces in South Africa:—

From Lieutenant-General Lord Chelmsford, K.C.B., to the Adjutant-General to the Forces.

Pietermaritzburg, Natal,

SIR,

February 28, 1879.

I HAVE the honour to bring under the notice of His Royal Highness the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief the accompanying report received from Colonel Glyn, C.B., commanding No. 3 Column, showing how the Queen's colour of the 1st Battalion 24th Foot, which had been lost on the 22nd January, has since been recovered, and giving an account of the gallant behaviour of Lieutenant and Adjutant Melville and Lieutenant Coghill, of that regiment, until they met their deaths in the endeavour to save this colour from falling into the enemy's hands.

I have, &c.,

CHELMSFORD,

Lieutenant-General Commanding.

Rorke's Drift, Buffalo River,

February 21, 1879.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 22nd January last, when the camp of Isandlwana was attacked by the enemy, the Queen's colour of the 1st Battalion 24th Regiment was in the camp, the head-quarters and five companies of the regiment being there also.

From all the information I have been since able to obtain, it would appear that when the enemy had got into the camp, and when there was no longer any hope left of saving it, the Adjutant of the 1st Battalion 24th Regiment, Lieutenant Teignmouth Melville, departed from the camp on horseback, carrying the colour with him in hope of being able to save it.

The only road to Rorke's Drift being already in possession of the enemy, Lieutenant Melville, and the few others who still remained alive, struck across country for the Buffalo River, which it was necessary to cross to reach a point of safety. In taking this line, the only one possible, ground had to be gone over which from its ruggedness and precipitous nature would under ordinary circumstances, it is reported, be deemed almost utterly impassable for mounted men.

During a distance of about six miles Lieutenant Melville and his companions were closely pursued, or, more properly speaking, accompanied by a large number of the enemy, who from their well-known agility in getting over rough ground, were able to keep up with our people though the latter were mounted, so that the enemy kept up a constant fire on them, and sometimes even got close enough to assegai the men and horses. Lieutenant Melville reached the bank of the Buffalo, and at once plunged in, horse and all; but being encumbered with the colour, which is an awkward thing to carry even on foot, and the river being full and running rapidly, he appears to have got separated from his horse, when he was about half way across. He still, however, held on resolutely to the colour, and was being carried down stream when he was washed against a large rock in the middle of the river. Lieutenant Higginson, of the Natal Native Contingent, who had also lost his horse in the river, was clinging to this rock, and Lieutenant Melville called to him to lay hold of the colour. This Lieutenant Higginson did, but the current was so strong that both officers with the colour were again washed away into still water. In the meantime, Lieutenant Coghill, 1st Battalion 24th Regiment, my orderly officer, who had been left in camp that morning when the main body of the force moved out on account of a severe injury to his knee, which rendered him unable to move without assistance, had also succeeded in gaining the river bank in company with Lieutenant Melville. He too had plunged at once into the river, and his horse had carried him safely across;

but on looking round for Lieutenant Melville, and seeing him struggling to save the colour in the river, he at once turned his horse and rode back into the stream again to Lieutenant Melville's assistance.

It would appear that now the enemy had assembled in considerable force along their own bank, and had opened a heavy fire on our people, directing it more especially on Lieutenant Melville, who wore a red patrol jacket. So that when Lieutenant Coghill got into the river again, his horse was almost immediately killed by a bullet. Lieutenant Coghill was thus cast loose in the stream also, and notwithstanding the exertions of both these gallant officers, the colour was carried off from them, and they themselves gained the bank in a state of extreme exhaustion.

It would appear that they now attempted to move up the hill from the river bank towards Helpmakaar, but must have been too much exhausted to go on, as they were seen to sit down to rest again. This, I sorely regret to say, was the last time these two most gallant officers were seen alive.

It was not for some days after the 22nd that I could gather any information as to the probable fate of these officers. But immediately I discovered in what direction those who had escaped from Isandlwana had crossed the Buffalo, I sent, under Major Black, 2nd Battalion 24th Regiment, a mounted party who volunteered for this service, to search for any trace that could be found of them. This search was successful, and both bodies were found where they were last seen, as above indicated. Several dead bodies of the enemy were found about them, so that they must have sold their lives dearly at the last.

As it was considered that the dead weight of the colour would cause it to sink in the river, it was hoped that a diligent search in the locality where the bodies of these officers were found might lead to its recovery. So Major Black again proceeded on the 4th instant to prosecute this search. His energetic efforts were, I am glad to say, crowned with success, and the colour, with the ornaments, case, &c., belonging to it, were found, though in different places, in the river bed.

I cannot conclude this report without drawing the attention of His Excellency the Lieutenant-General Commanding, in the most impressive manner which words can command, to the noble and heroic conduct of Lieutenant and Adjutant Melville, who did not hesitate to encumber himself with the colour of the regiment, in his resolve to save it, at a time when the camp was in the hands of the enemy, and its gallant defenders killed to the last man in its defence, and when there appeared but little prospect that any exertions Lieutenant Melville could make would enable him to save even his own life. Also, later on, to the noble perseverance with which, when struggling between life and death in the river, his chief thoughts to the last were bent on the saving of the colour.

Similarly would I draw His Excellency's attention to the equally noble and gallant conduct of Lieutenant Coghill, who did not hesitate for an instant to return unsolicited, and ride again into the river under a heavy fire of the enemy, to the assistance of his friend, though at the time he was wholly incapacitated from walking, and but too well aware that any accident that might separate him from his horse must be fatal to him.

In conclusion, I would add that both these officers gave up their lives in the truly noble task of endeavouring to save from the enemy's hands

the Queen's colour of their regiment; and, greatly though their sad end is to be deplored, their deaths could not have been more noble or more full of honour.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) R. T. GLYN,
Colonel, Commanding 3rd Column.

From the Lieutenant-General Commanding in South Africa to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for War.

Pietermaritzburg, Natal,
March 2, 1879.

SIR,

1. DURING the past week no movements of the Zulu forces have been reported beyond that some regiments are said to be near Etshowe, watching Colonel Pearson's column; on the other hand, Captain Barrow, with a force of mounted infantry, patrolled by the lower or coast road as far as the Inyazane River without meeting any Zulu force.

2. It is reported that the Zulu King is anxious to attack Colonel Pearson's entrenchments.

3. H.M.S. "Shah" left Simon's Bay yesterday, and I trust the reinforcements to the Naval Brigade may be at their posts within a week or ten days from now.

4. Admiral Sullivan informs me that Captain Bradshaw took upon himself the responsibility of coming to this station on hearing of the state of affairs, and apparently the Governor of St. Helena, in the same spirit, sent me all the available troops he had. In bringing this to your notice I wish to record my grateful appreciation of the manner in which these reinforcements have been diverted to South Africa. As I explained by last mail, their arrival will enable me at a critical moment to take the offensive on the Lower Tugela line, a course from which I am precluded, as at present situated, as long as Colonel Pearson finds it necessary or desirable to retain his whole force at Etshowe.

My last communication from him is dated the 24th.

5. From Colonel Wood, commanding No. 4 Column, I have received constant reports; he is holding an entrenched position at Kambula Hill (vide Durnford's map), and patrolling as far as his force of mounted men will permit.

6. Oham, Cetywayo's brother, has been for some time past in communication with Colonel Wood; he did not, however, surrender himself on the day he arranged to.

Colonel Wood believes he is sincere in his desire to do so, and I do not think it is likely he will be deceived by any subterfuge on his part.

7. The health of the troops has not changed since I last reported. I regret to say that Second Lieutenant Reg. Franklin died at Helpmakaar of fever.

I enclose supplementary and corrected casualty reports.

8. I am informed by the Lieutenant-Governor that he has given directions for the additional force of natives to be sent to the frontier which I recommended.

9. The natives of the 1st and 2nd Regiments of the Natal Native Contingent are with their battalions, and the officers report that an excellent spirit exists in their ranks, and that they are anxious to cross the border; it is right I should add that the spirit of the 1st Regiment has not yet been tested, and that of the 2nd Regiment when they were with Colonel Pearson's (No. 1) Column a month or five weeks ago was not such as it is now stated to be.

10. By the Lieutenant-Governor's directions the natives constituting No. 3 Regiment (Commandant Lonsdale's) are not to return to the European cadre, on which they were grafted during Colonel Glyn's advance into Zululand, and I am not at present aware of the arrangements made for that regiment; in the meantime, the officers and non-commissioned officers of the cadre are doing useful service in patrolling that part of the frontier.

11. I am in communication with gentlemen in the Free State for the raising of 800 mounted men, and in a few days I shall be in a position to report the result.

12. From the Cape Colony very little material assistance has been received. The hopes I had been led to form on this head have not been realized, the reason of it would appear to be the anticipation of disturbances in the Cape Colony; indeed, from the last accounts it seems troubles have already arisen in Basutoland, and the colonial forces have been set in motion against the Chief Morosi.

13. I myself during the past week have visited Greytown and the frontier near Krautzkop, and was satisfied with the state in which I found the defences.

14. Since writing the foregoing I have received an express from Krautzkop, by which I learn of the arrival of messengers from Cetywayo suing for peace.

I have the honour of enclosing a copy of the report received from the Lieutenant-Governor, which is rather fuller than that received from the Officer Commanding.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) CHELMSFORD,
Lieutenant-General.

Special Border Agent, Umvoti, to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

March 1, 8 P.M., 1879.

THE natives who have been expected from Entumeni for some days arrived about two hours ago, and I and Bishop Schröder have had an interview with them.

They bring a message from Cetywayo, which they have delivered informally, two Zulus who accompany them being still on the other side of the Tugela. I have sent to have them brought up to the Bishop's house, and to-morrow morning we will receive the message in regular form in their presence.

I now proceed to give the substance of the message:—

Cetywayo begs that the Bishop will explain to the Government that he never desired this war; he has never refused the terms proposed at the Lower Tugela; he had already collected 1,000 head of cattle to pay the demand made on him. Sirayo's sons had escaped, and he was looking for them when he heard the English armies had crossed the Tugela; they attacked and killed many of Sirayo's people, but even then he did not despair of peace, for he then succeeded in arresting Sirayo's sons. He sent them bound with his army under Unvumengwana's charge to be delivered up to the General at Rorke's Drift; three men were sent on to try and obtain a hearing, but they were fired at and returned. The fighting at Sandhlyana was brought about accidentally; the English horse attacked outlying

parties of Zulus who returned their fire, more came up and joined in the fray, until the battle became general. The King protests that he never ordered his army to attack the English column, and his Indema Unvumengwana is in disgrace for having permitted it.

As regards Inyezani, Cetywayo contends that Colonel Pearson provoked the attack made on him by burning kraals and committing other acts of hostility along the line of march.

He now asks that both sides should put aside their arms and resume the negotiations with a view to a permanent settlement of all questions between himself and the Government.

The King also states he would have sent in a message some time since, but was afraid, because the last time when he sent eight messengers to Lower Tugela they were detained; and he now begs they may be sent back.

I only asked the Entumeni men one question, viz., whether the Zulu Army was assembled. They say it is not; the men are all at their kraals.

As soon as I get the formal message to-morrow morning, I will write more fully; in the meantime I send this on by special messenger.

(Signed) JNO. EUSTACE FANNIN,
Special Border Agent.

RETURN of such Casualties as have been officially reported up to date, from 20th January to 2nd March, 1879.

20th January, 1879, at Yungin's Nek.

WOUNDED.

Trooper J. Berry, Frontier Light Horse, severely.
Trooper J. Randall, Frontier Light Horse, slightly.

22nd January, 1879, at Rorke's Drift.

WOUNDED.

Private J. Waters, 1st Battalion 24th Regiment, severely.
Private Beckett, 1st Battalion 24th Regiment, dangerously.
Private Desmond, 1st Battalion 24th Regiment, slightly.
Sergeant T. Williams, 2nd Battalion 24th Regiment, dangerously.
Corporal Lyons, 2nd Battalion 24th Regiment, dangerously.
Corporal Allen, 2nd Battalion 24th Regiment, severely.
Private Hitch, 2nd Battalion 24th Regiment, dangerously.
Private Jones, 2nd Battalion 24th Regiment, slightly.
Private Tasker, 2nd Battalion 24th Regiment, slightly.
Corporal Scammell, Native Contingent, dangerously.
Private Scheiss, Native Contingent, slightly.
Storekeeper Dalton, Commissariat Department, severely.

15th February, at Laluka Hill.

WOUNDED.

Swazie Mlongene, Fairlie's Native Police, dangerously.
Swazie Inyadi, Fairlie's Native Police, severely.

Swazie Wilderman, Fairlie's Native Police, severely.

Swazie Luka, Fairlie's Native Police, severely.

Swazie unknown, Fairlie's Native Police, slightly.

Swazie unknown, Fairlie's Native Police, severely.

20th February, at Eloya Mountain.

WOUNDED.

Swazie Esaw, Fairlie's Native Police, slightly.

Swazie Kushlan, Fairlie's Native Police, slightly.

21st February, at Ekowe.

DIED.

Private W. Knee, 99th Regiment.

Private J. Shields, 99th Regiment.

Lance Corporal T. Taylor, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Regiment.

21st February, at Eloza.

WOUNDED.

Two Natives, Fairlie's Horse.