

Majesty's Italian ship "Staffetta," came on board and offered most ready and hearty assistance, and also to remain as long as I wished. I may add this was courteously acknowledged, but not accepted, the first reason being there was no occasion to do so.

Letter from Lieutenant Lewes to Senior Naval Officer reporting proceedings at Kismayu.

Enclosure in Commander-in-Chief's Letter of 3rd September, 1893.

*Steamship "Kenia," at Gobwen,
August 25, 1893.*

SIR,

IN pursuance of orders received from the Senior Naval Officer at Zanzibar (the Captain of Her Majesty's ship "Blanche" being sick in Hospital at Zanzibar, and the Senior Lieutenant being on the sick list), I have the honour to report as follows:—

2. I left Zanzibar at 7 A.M. on Tuesday, the 22nd instant, and proceeded with all despatch to Kismayu, where we arrived at noon on Wednesday, 23rd.

3. On arrival here Mr. Farrant, the representative of the Imperial British East African Company, and Count Lovatelli, came on board and informed me that 54 of the Hyderabad Contingent had mutinied, joined the Somalis, and attacked Turki Hill Fort, killing Mr. Hamilton, of the Imperial British East African Company, who was in charge, and which was totally destroyed.

On the 18th the Somalis attacked Kismayu; after three hours' hard fighting they were driven back by Count Lovatelli and Mr. Farrant with the small friendly force at their disposal.

Further, that the two Englishmen, viz., Captain Tritton and Mr. McDougall were still alive and on board the steamship "Kenia" up the River Juba, but they were in the greatest danger, and were unable to leave the ship. I received information that the mutineers and Somalis were going to attack on Thursday night, 24th, or Friday, 25th.

Count Lovatelli most kindly offered to guide and assist the rescue of these two officials, if I could help him with a small force.

As there were 40 bluejackets and marines, and three executive officers on the sick list with fever, the result of previous operations on shore, and the enemy's force was known to consist of 150 rifles, 600 spearmen, and the surrounding Somalis hostile to all Europeans, and the two cannon they had obtained from Turki Hill Fort, I decided to call for volunteers, and obtaining 38 men, left at 7.30 P.M. for Gobwen, to endeavour to rescue these officials.

After a forced and trying march, owing to the anticipation of attack at any moment, under the guidance of Count Lovatelli, we retook Turki Hill Fort at 1 A.M. (midnight), the enemy running off as we entered. We found some of the late Mr. Hamilton's remains, which we buried, and a few of his effects.

Reaching Gobwen, 1½ hours afterwards, we embarked on board the steamship "Kenia," where we found Captain Tritton and Mr. McDougall well, but worn out, as they had been expecting an attack at any time for ten days.

The men, being tired out after the march, it was impossible to return with the Europeans at once as was first anticipated, and the men were housed on board the steamship "Kenia."

Next morning, after a consultation with the representatives of the Imperial British East African Company and Count Lovatelli, and the

men not being fit for the long march, I proceeded up the River Juba, with Count Lovatelli and the Company's officials, in order to strike an immediate blow at the enemy, who were responsible for Mr. Hamilton's death.

I placed the ship in a state of defence by means of iron plates, cut up canoes, sand bags, and bales of piece goods, placed two Maxim and one Hotchkiss gun in position, and took 14 Keribitos and eight Zanzibar Askaris on board; steam was raised, but it was unfortunate that after proceeding a short way we had to draw fires, on account of the donkey feed pump breaking down, which caused a delay of four hours off the enemy's shore, and gave warning of our approach.

Proceeding up the river we shelled and destroyed Magarada village; thence, at Count Lovatelli's request, after shelling and firing war rockets, I landed, with 30 men, and took Hajualla, a town in the river, after one hour's fighting.

After killing 18 men, and having burnt and destroyed the town (population about 1,000 inhabitants), capturing one prisoner, we crossed the river, landed with every available man, and, after one and a half hour's fighting, took Hajawen, in the British sphere (consisting of about 700 houses and huts).

The mutineers were outside this town, together with some hundreds of Somalis, who being armed with Sniders and plenty of ammunition, responded actively to our fire.

Numbers of the Somalis fell to volley firing, but owing to the smallness of the party and the distance of the town from the steamship "Kenia," I could not ascertain the number killed, but fully 70 went down; this was corroborated the next day by a friendly Chief, who stated there were over 100 killed.

I then returned to the town, which was burnt and totally destroyed.

Two villages about three miles from where we left the "Kenia" were treated in the same manner.

Several of the late Mr. Hamilton's effects, including a tin case with his name painted on it, were found in the town (Hajawen), proving these people to be implicated in his murder; they were much damaged but brought back to Gobwen.

The ivory could not be found, but cattle, sheep, and donkeys, which could not be transported, were shot.

About ten rifles were found and brought away, but the two cannon had been carried away in the bush.

These two towns had been the great annoyance of the country owing to the raids of extortionate customs levied by the inhabitants on all dhows passing up and down the river, and although they have often been attacked by the neighbouring tribes, they have never before been effectually punished. Mr. McDougall and Count Lovatelli inform me that a great blow has been given to their power in that district.

My reasons for attacking them were:—

1st. To deal a decisive blow *at once*, so that I might have a chance to get back with the Company's Officers without my being attacked by the enemy on the road to Kismayu, which is particularly suited, owing to the bush and surrounding hills, for their style of attack.

2nd. To punish the culprits for murdering an Englishman.

The enemy are supposed to have retired on Yonti, about four miles higher up the river; but owing to my small force and defective state of the boilers of the "Kenia," I decided not to follow them up; I therefore returned to Gobwen.