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Admiralty, December 10, 1900.

DESPATCHES, of which the following are copies, have been received from the Commander-in-Chief on the China Station, relative to the siege of the Legations at Peking:—
Enclosures in China Letters Nos. 573, 605, and 613 of 5th, 17th, and 18th September, 1900, respectively.

H.B.M. Legation, Peking,
Saturday, August 18, 1900.
SIR,
I HAVE the honour to forward to you this, my report of the guard of Royal Marine Light Infantry which did duty in this Legation and in the defence of the Legations Settlement in Peking during the late siege.

The guard was under the command of Captain B. M. Strouts, and left Tientsin the 31st May, arriving here the same night. Trouble began with the Boxers in the city the 13th June. An ultimatum to quit the city within 24 hours was received by the Ministers from the Chinese Government. It was decided to remain, and hostilities began the night of the 20th. The active siege continued until the 17th July, when there was a practical cessation of firing until the 5th August, during which period the Tsungli Yamen communicated several times with the Ministers. The siege was raised the afternoon of the 14th August by the allied army.

Captain Strouts having died of his wound the 16th July, and Captain Halliday still suffering from his wound, I have been in command since that date.

I have, &c.,
EDMUND WRAY, Captain R.M.L.I.,
Commanding Guard.

The Senior Naval Officer,
Her Britannic Majesty's Fleet,
North China.

H.B.M. Legation Guard, Peking,
August 26, 1900.
SIR,
I HAVE the honour to forward to you, this, my report of the part taken in the defence of Peking by the Royal Marine Legation Guard. I beg to state that no accurate record of all the details of duties performed by the detachment was kept, as parts of it were daily employed in reinforcing other portions of the concerted defence of the Legations, and no reports were received from the foreign officers commanding those sections of the defence.

The guard arrived in Peking on the night of the 31st May, and consisted of 3 officers, 75 non-commissioned officers and men, 1 bugler, 1 armourer, 1 signalman, and 1 sick-berth steward, the late Captain B. M. Strouts being in command. Ordinary guard duties were performed until the 13th June, on which date some 300 Boxers entered the Tartar City near the Legation Settlement, and it was from this date that the detachment was continuously on the alert and at their posts in the defence. I beg to report the subsequent events in the form of a diary:—

13th June.—A picket of an officer and 12 men was placed and kept on the North Bridge, to prevent Boxers from attacking the Legation.

14th June.—At about 10.30 p.m., some 100 Boxers wishing to cross the North Bridge from east to west, rushed at and attacked the picket, and were repulsed, losing 4 killed and 2 wounded.

15th June.—Captain L. S. T. Halliday, with a combined force of British and German Marines, rescued several hundred Chinese Christians from the Nantung Roman Catholic Mission, who were being massacred by Boxers, some 30 of the latter being killed.

16th June.—I was sent with 20 British, 9 American, and 5 Japanese Marines to rescue a Christian family from the N.E. city. A reputed Boxer Temple, which I intended visiting on my return, was passed on the way. Hearing shrieks issuing from the temple, as of victims being tortured, and seeing signs of Boxers holding their rites, I approached the temple with some men. Bricks were hurled, and spears thrust over the walls, so I decided to force my way in. I succeeded in doing so, and killed about 45 Boxers, none of them being able to escape. The mutilated bodies of two native Christians were found. My native guide having meantime run away, I returned to the Legation, and learnt that the Christian family had come in.

17th June.—Chinese Imperial troops fired on the picket on North Bridge.

19th June.—An ultimatum for all Ministers and foreigners to leave Peking within 24 hours was received by the Ministers that evening. It was decided to remain and defend the Legations.

20th June.—The German Minister was killed; the picket on North Bridge was withdrawn. It was decided that all women and children should be brought into the British Legation, which would be the last line of defence. Our sentries at the Front Gate opened fire for the first time on Imperial troops, who shot an unarmed European on North