

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 501.

The following Further Papers relating to the Military Operations in connection with the Disturbances on the taking over of the New Territory are published in continuation of Government Notification No. 468 of the 25th instant.

By Command,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 5th September, 1899.

(To be read after Governor's Minute to Colonial Secretary of the 19th April, 1899, page 1386.)

*(From General Officer Commanding in China and Hongkong
to His Excellency the Governor of Hongkong.)*

HONGKONG, 20th April, 1899.

SIR,

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that, having found that the troops encamped at Táipó Hú were amply sufficient to cope with the troubles in that neighbourhood, and the surrounding District, and having received reliable information that large bodies of armed rebels were gathering in the neighbourhood of Castle Peak, I hurried back to Hongkong on Monday, the 17th instant, in order to make arrangements to send a small Force to operate in the neighbourhood of Deep Bay. My idea was to clear that District either by surrounding the rebels and force them to lay down their arms, or, should they escape me, turn them in the direction of Kam T'in Hú where the column of troops from the West could operate with effect against them. I accordingly, with the able and hearty co-operation of the Commodore, landed a small and mobile force at daybreak at Ngau-hom in Deep Bay. The difficulties of carrying out this landing in the darkness and in the exceedingly shallow waters of Deep Bay were very great indeed, and I do not hesitate to say that it would have been impossible to carry out without the experienced assistance of Lieutenant GOODENOUGH, R.N. All the arrangements were most carefully planned out and considered beforehand by Captain LONG, my Chief Staff Officer for the time being, and the consequence was that everything worked out without a hitch of any kind and I was enabled to carry out a landing of quite unusual difficulty. The column swept right through the populous valley from Ngau-hom to Castle Peak Bay. The whole District was almost completely deserted. The inhabitants had either fled at our approach or had in some cases moved off the previous day to the neighbourhood of Kam T'in Hú. This was exactly what I had anticipated, and I had sent a Force to Tai Lam Chung to operate up that valley to the North to intercept any bodies of armed rebels who might appear, and endeavour to make their escape eastwards from Castle Peak Valley. The whole of these somewhat complicated arrangements came off successfully and I am happy to say that I am enabled to report that this entire District is absolutely cleared of rebels and that without the necessity for my firing a single shot. On my way back I dropped a small Force under command of Major MORRIS, R.A., at Tsin Wan with orders to proceed at once to Kam T'in Hú to join hands with a Force from the East to whom I had previously sent orders to that effect. I learn from rumour, not yet perhaps completely authenticated, but yet sufficiently so to relieve any anxiety, that these combinations have been successful and that the armed rebels have been intercepted by some of the parties sent out by my orders.

As regards the Forces operating in the East, I will report fully as soon as I have received detailed information.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

W. J. GASCOIGNE,
*Major-General,
Commanding in China & Hongkong.*

(Governor to General Officer Commanding.)

HONGKONG, 21st April, 1899.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 20th instant informing me of the result of your expedition to Deep Bay.

I congratulate Your Excellency upon the thoroughness with which you have carried out your operations in the East and West of the New Territory and upon the able manner in which your orders have been executed.

I earnestly hope that the demonstration given of overwhelming force and rapidity of movement may induce the misguided peasantry of the New Territory to abandon any idea of further resistance and to settle down to their usual occupations. Such a result will be entirely due to the hearty co-operation of the Naval and Military Forces in carrying out the plan of operations so ably conceived by you.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

HENRY A. BLAKE.

His Excellency

Major-General W. J. GASCOIGNE,
Commanding in China & Hongkong.

(To be read before the Report, dated the 6th May, 1899, by
Lieut.-Col. THE O'GORMAN on the Military Operations in the Chinese
Hinterland, page 1406.)

(From the General Officer Commanding in China and Hongkong
to the Under-Secretary of State.)

HONGKONG, 5th May, 1899.

SIR,

As I consider that you should be in possession of full information as regards the recent rising of the inhabitants of the New Territory which has just been added to the Colony so far as the troops under my command were concerned, I have the honour to submit the following report.

At midnight on April 3rd I was informed by His Excellency the Governor that the Captain Superintendent of Police and a party of his men had been attacked by a large number of Chinese at the villages of Táipó Hü, Tolo Harbour, Mirs Bay, where they were guarding some workmen employed in erecting matsheds which were being put up as a temporary police barracks, and His Excellency requested that I would at once send out some troops as the police were understood to be in a position of grave danger. Accordingly, having obtained the hearty co-operation of the Commodore in charge, a company of the Royal Welch Fusiliers were embarked in the Torpedo-boat destroyer H.M.S. *Whiting* and at 3.30 a.m. on the morning of April 4th instant proceeded to the scene of the outrage. I considered it advisable to accompany this small Force myself, as, at that time the territory not having been formally taken over, the Governor was naturally most anxious that no unnecessary force should be used. On arrival at Táipó Hü I found that the matsheds had been burnt down, but that under cover of the darkness the police had escaped and made their way some 12 miles overland to British Kowloon.

The villagers, who appeared frightened at the sudden appearance of the troops, expressed great regret for what had happened, and the incident was considered closed.

After consultation with the Governor, who had decided to hoist the British Flag at Táipó Hü on the 17th April, and with his concurrence, I determined that it would be advisable to encamp half a battalion of the Hongkong Regiment in the District as soon as the flag was hoisted, and the necessary camps were selected accordingly.

On Friday morning, April 14th, I issued orders for one company of the Hongkong Regiment under a British Officer (Captain BERGER) to proceed the following day by march route to Táipó Hü to make the necessary Military arrangements for the hoisting of the flag. On Friday night late I received information from the Governor that a party of police under the Captain Superintendent, who had that afternoon arrived at Táipó Hü in H.M.S. *Fame*, had been driven off by a large body of villagers, and that the matsheds had again been burnt down.

Feeling that the company of the Hongkong Regiment was sufficient to cope with the local rising that this was reported to be, I contented myself with directing Captain LONG, D.A.A.G., to proceed on Saturday, the 15th, to Táipó Hü, with orders that he was to see that the troops gave every assistance towards preparing the ground for the ceremonial of Monday.

Captain LONG arrived at Táipó Hü on H.M.S. *Fame* at 5.30 p.m. and found the position of affairs shortly as follows.

The Company Hongkong Regiment was in position on two small hills near the sea shore, one of which was that selected for the flagstaff and upon which the matsheds had been erected, the other a hill some 150 yards close by; while surrounding them on the hills to the West 500 yards distant and North-West some 1,500 yards were apparently some thousands of Chinese keeping up a continuous musketry fire assisted by artillery fire from guns of sorts, 12 in number. Captain LONG, who was the senior, having asked for and obtained the co-operation of the Officer Commanding H.M.S. *Fame*, and feeling the danger of having a large body of an armed enemy at night in his immediate vicinity, determined that his wisest tactics would be to assume the offensive while daylight still served, with the result that he drove them off without any casualties to the troops, and a small loss to the Chinese, completely clearing the valley and so cowing them for the moment that the following day, Sunday the 16th, I was enabled, on behalf of the Governor, to raise the flag without opposition of any kind. This sudden rising made His Excellency the Governor determine to anticipate by one day the taking over of the Territory. I remained in camp that night and the villagers all appeared perfectly quiet, but suddenly on Monday, the 17th, at 1 p.m. the exact hour originally named by His Excellency for the ceremony of raising the flag, the surrounding hills were found to be occupied by large bodies (several thousands) of armed men, with many pieces of heavy ordnance in position. They commenced firing at a very long range. Again feeling that offensive tactics were the only ones to be adopted, I ordered two companies of the Hongkong Regiment under Captain BERGER to clear the heights, sending forward also No. 3 Company Hongkong-Singapore Battalion R.A. under Captain SIMMONDS to shell the insurgents' position. This work was most efficiently performed by the men of the Hongkong Regiment who not only got over the most difficult country at great speed, but also by making use of cover most efficiently, took the enemy completely by surprise.

The result was that the hills were entirely cleared, the rebels again suffering some loss, and several pieces of ordnance and some flags fell into the hands of the troops. It was at this stage that Major BROWN, R.A.M.C., was struck in the arm by a spent bullet and slightly wounded, the only other casualty being a man of the Hongkong Regiment similarly struck on the wrist.

The insurgents having retired in the direction of Deep Bay I handed over the command of this small column to Lt.-Col. THE O'GORMAN, D.A.A.G., directing him not to lose touch of them and to endeavour to drive them Westward: and myself came back to Hongkong to organize another Force to co-operate from the Deep Bay side. The difficulty of this was to keep it secret, but by the very able assistance of Capt. LONG, who was acting at the time as my C.S.O., I kept every one even the troops themselves in the dark as to my intentions, and starting during the night in small launches, being ably helped by Lieut. GOODENOUGH, R.N., who had

been lent by the Commodore for the purpose, I landed a Force before daybreak on the Deep Bay side, and was completely successful in my operations, as the whole district was cleared at our approach, the insurgents being either driven into the Force operating under Col. THE O'GORMAN or over the border on to Chinese territory. This was really a very difficult operation even by day as the landing was extremely bad, and at night we went aground several times. It could only have been successful by perfect discipline and carefully thought out orders, each man knowing exactly where he was to go. These orders were so carefully conceived beforehand by Capt. LONG, that, although we made one or two false landings in the dark, yet the errors were discovered without confusion and the expedition as a whole resulted in the success I have mentioned.

On my way back on Wednesday, the 19th, I dropped a small part of 200 men under Major M. M. MORRIS, R.A., at Tsin Wan with orders to push North-West to the walled town of Kam T'in Hü, and to complete the destruction of the gates of this turbulent centre of disturbance.

The ubiquitous appearance of the troops, appearing simultaneously from all parts over a most difficult country and at considerable distances from each other, so completely quelled the insurrection that all the inhabitants gave in their submission and surrendered a large quantity of arms, &c., &c.

As I write it is now only a question of Police protection, for which purpose, after consultation with His Excellency the Governor, I have left 100 men under the command of Lieut.-Colonel THE O'GORMAN whom I have directed to remain to assist, with his advice and experience, the Colonial Secretary who is taking up the threads of the Civil Administration of the district.

I have been obliged to write at some length of these apparently somewhat trivial military operations as I felt sure that you would desire a complete knowledge of the situation.

It is not my desire to write this letter as a despatch of great military importance, but I am confident that if this rising had not been so promptly met from all sides as it was, it would have assumed very formidable proportions, as it is now discovered that it had been most carefully planned beforehand, and a small success might have created very serious complications, if not a rising, in the whole Southern Provinces of China, which are always ripe for rebellion. As it is, a grave impression has been created, and that without any serious loss of life. It is only right therefore that I should bring to your notice the names of those officers to whom the credit of this is due. Lieut.-Colonel THE O'GORMAN first of all, who, by his untiring pertinacity in keeping touch with and following up the insurgents, contributed in great measure to the early quelling of the trouble; Captain C. B. SIMMONDS, R.A., and Captain BERGER, Hongkong Regiment, who were acting under command of Lieut.-Colonel THE O'GORMAN, both handled their men with marked ability having considerable dash and yet keeping them well in hand.

Major M. M. MORRIS, R.A., carried out the small operation entrusted to him with considerable tact and judgment; Captain DES VŒUX, R.E., deserves great credit for the rapidity with which he, under the greatest difficulty, laid a telephone line from Hongkong to Táipó Hü—a distance of over 13 miles in a hilly and difficult country.

Lastly, I would mention Captain S. S. LONG, my acting C.S.O., who not only carried out the somewhat difficult duties of supplying the several camps at great distances from each other but to whom the credit of the night operations above referred to is entirely due. I have no more able officer in my Command, and I wish to bring his name to the notice of the Commander-in-Chief.

In conclusion, I would point out that some expense has been incurred, but the extent thereof I will report fully later, as I presume the question will require decision as to who will bear the cost of the same.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. J. GASCOIGNE,
Major-General,
Commanding in China and Hongkong.