



DESPATCHES FROM THE FRONT

BRITISH  
BATTLES  
*OF THE*  
CRIMEAN  
WARS  
1854-1856



INTRODUCED AND COMPILED BY  
JOHN GREHAN & MARTIN MACE

BRITISH BATTLES OF  
THE CRIMEAN WARS  
1854-1856



# DESPATCHES FROM THE FRONT

The Commanding Officers' Reports From the Field and At Sea.

## BRITISH BATTLES OF THE CRIMEAN WARS 1854-1856

Alma, Inkerman, Sevastopol, Battle of  
The Balaclava - the Charge of the Light Brigade

Compiled by John Grehan and Martin Mace



Pen & Sword  
**MILITARY**

First published in Great Britain in 2014 by  
Pen & Sword Military  
an imprint of  
Pen & Sword Books Ltd  
47 Church Street  
Barnsley  
South Yorkshire  
S70 2AS

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ISBN 978 1 78346 204 9

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Printed and bound in England by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

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# INTRODUCTION

The Crimean War, the most destructive of the Victorian era, was notable for the appalling suffering of the troops, the outmoded and inefficient military organisation and the recognition at last of the courage of all ranks of soldiers and sailors with the instigation of the Victoria Cross. It was also notable for being the first conflict to be extensively photographed and the first to be reported in detail by a war correspondent, William Russell of *The Times*.

With the new steam-powered, propeller-driven ships now able to cross the Mediterranean in a matter of days and the recently-established telegraph system able to transmit a message from the front line to London in twenty-four hours, Russell's reports could be received in London shortly after the events he described had occurred. In past conflicts the commanding officer's despatches were usually the method by which both the Government and the British public were informed of the progress of the war, and this could be a matter of weeks after the event, depending on the weather and the state of the roads in the theatre of operations.

All that changed with the Crimean War. Before the British Commander-in-Chief, Lord Raglan and his successors, could compile a full-length report on a battle, it might already be front page news. No longer could detailed, considered despatches be sent at the end of an operation or engagement, as for example Wellington had from Spain and Portugal in the Peninsular War, instead reports had to be submitted to Horse Guards every few days in order to keep ahead, or at least abreast, of the newspaper reporting.

As a consequence there were a vast number of despatches sent from the Crimea during the two years of war. Many of these are necessarily brief and many contain little valuable information. Large numbers of despatches were also dedicated in part or in whole, to the casualty returns and the hospital reports on the sick and wounded, as well as to the general health of the troops. Though these were important considerations affecting the fighting ability and the morale of the Expeditionary Force, space has not permitted their inclusion in this compilation.

The speed of telegraphic communications also had its effect on military operations, as it meant that government leaders were able to relay their policies to the commanders in the field in a way that had never been possible before. This particularly annoyed the French General Pélissier after he had taken over command of the French army in the Crimea. The Emperor Napoleon persistently urged him to mount field operations against the Russian forces rather than persist with the siege

of Sevastopol, which the general refused to do. Eventually he was forced to write: "Your Majesty must free me from the narrow limits to which you have assigned me or else allow me to resign a command impossible to exercise in co-operation with our loyal allies at the somewhat paralysing end of an electric wire."

\*\*

The war of 1854-6 with Russia was fought on many fronts and when Britain joined France in declaring war on Russia in support of Turkey in March 1854, it was expected that her most significant contribution to the allied case would be naval rather than military. Since the days of Nelson, Britain had commanded the seas and it was the threat to her naval dominance which prompted the despatch of a large force to the Balkans.

Even before the official opening of hostilities a combined Anglo-French fleet sailed into the Bosphorus and entered the Black Sea to assist Turkey which was already at war with Russia. Tsar Nicholas I sought full access to the Mediterranean for his warships and Turkey stood in her way. A Russian naval force in the eastern Mediterranean would seriously disrupt the balance of power in the region and would have the potential to disrupt to Britain's trade routes to India and the Far East, so Turkey had to be supported at all costs.

The aim of the allied force, therefore, was to defend Constantinople and confine the Russian Black Sea Fleet to its own waters. The justification for this move was the destruction of a Turkish squadron by a patrol from the Russian fleet's home port of Sevastopol at the end of November 1853. It was the capture of Sevastopol which would become the focus of the operations in the Crimea. At the same time that the allied fleet was establishing its presence in the Black Sea, another Anglo-French force opened a second front in the Baltic. Under the command of Vice Admiral Sir Charles John Napier, the Baltic fleet was the largest that had assembled since the Napoleonic Wars and in terms of armament was the most powerful naval force that had put to sea. It is unsurprising, consequently, that a considerable proportion of the despatches sent back to Britain from these two war fronts are those from the admirals and officers of the Royal Navy. Other naval operations, in the White Sea and the Pacific, were of a minor nature and have not been reproduced here.

The naval operations in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea were led by Vice Admiral James Dundas, those of the Army by Lord Raglan. The latter commanded 18,000 British soldiers, his French counterpart, Marshal St Arnaud, could count 32,000. The main allied base on the Black Sea was Varna, 180 miles north of Constantinople. From there the allies launched their attack upon Sevastopol, landing at Kalimita Bay in the Crimea on 14 September 1854.

Both the allied commanders were to die in the Crimea, with Lord Raglan being replaced by General Sir James Simpson in June 1855. After being repeatedly criticised in the Press, Simpson stood down, with command of the British forces being taken up by General Sir William Codrington.

Admiral Dundas was also replaced during the course of the war. In January 1855, having completed the usual term of command, he was succeeded by Sir Edmund

Lyons, and returned to England. Admiral Napier also returned to the UK, but under entirely different circumstances. Napier, like Simpson, had suffered at the hands of the British newspapers and had consequently come under pressure from the Admiralty to be more positive in his operations against the enemy. Napier's replies were not well received as the Secretary of the Admiralty explained in a letter sent to Napier on 13 January 1855, "... you have repeatedly thought fit to adopt a tone in your correspondence with their Lordships which is not respectful of their authority." As a result he was relieved of his command, which was handed to another Dundas, Admiral the Honourable Richard Saunders Dundas.

In support of the British Army's efforts to capture Sevastopol, the Royal Navy landed a contingent of sailors and marines. Formed into a Naval Brigade, these men formed part of the defence of the British base at Balaklava as well as manning guns taken from the Navy's warships in the bombardment of Sevastopol. The Naval Brigade operated under its own officers and reported independently back to the Admiralty.

The despatches were not always received in England in their strict chronological sequence and often despatches included enclosures from subordinate officers which related to incidents that occurred some days or even weeks earlier. This at times produces a somewhat confusing and disjointed narrative. In just a few instances the despatches have been moved so that they contiguous with the events to which they refer. This is only for complete despatches and no despatches or enclosures have been separated or divided in any respect.

With the exception of the casualty returns, those despatches, from both the naval and military commanders, on land and at sea, are reproduced here in the same form as when they were originally published. They have not been modified or interpreted in any way and are therefore the unedited and unique words of the commanding officers as they saw things at the time. For instance Sevastopol was sometimes spelt Sebastopol, Balaklava was Bala Clava, Omar Pasha was Omar Pacha, Tchernaya was Techernaia, just to name a few. Any grammatical or spelling errors have also been left uncorrected to retain the authenticity of the documents. These include misspellings of 'a sistance', 'bivouack', 'shrapnell' 'istant' 'Cosaques' and many others. The despatches are presented just as they were when first revealed to the general public more than 150 years ago.

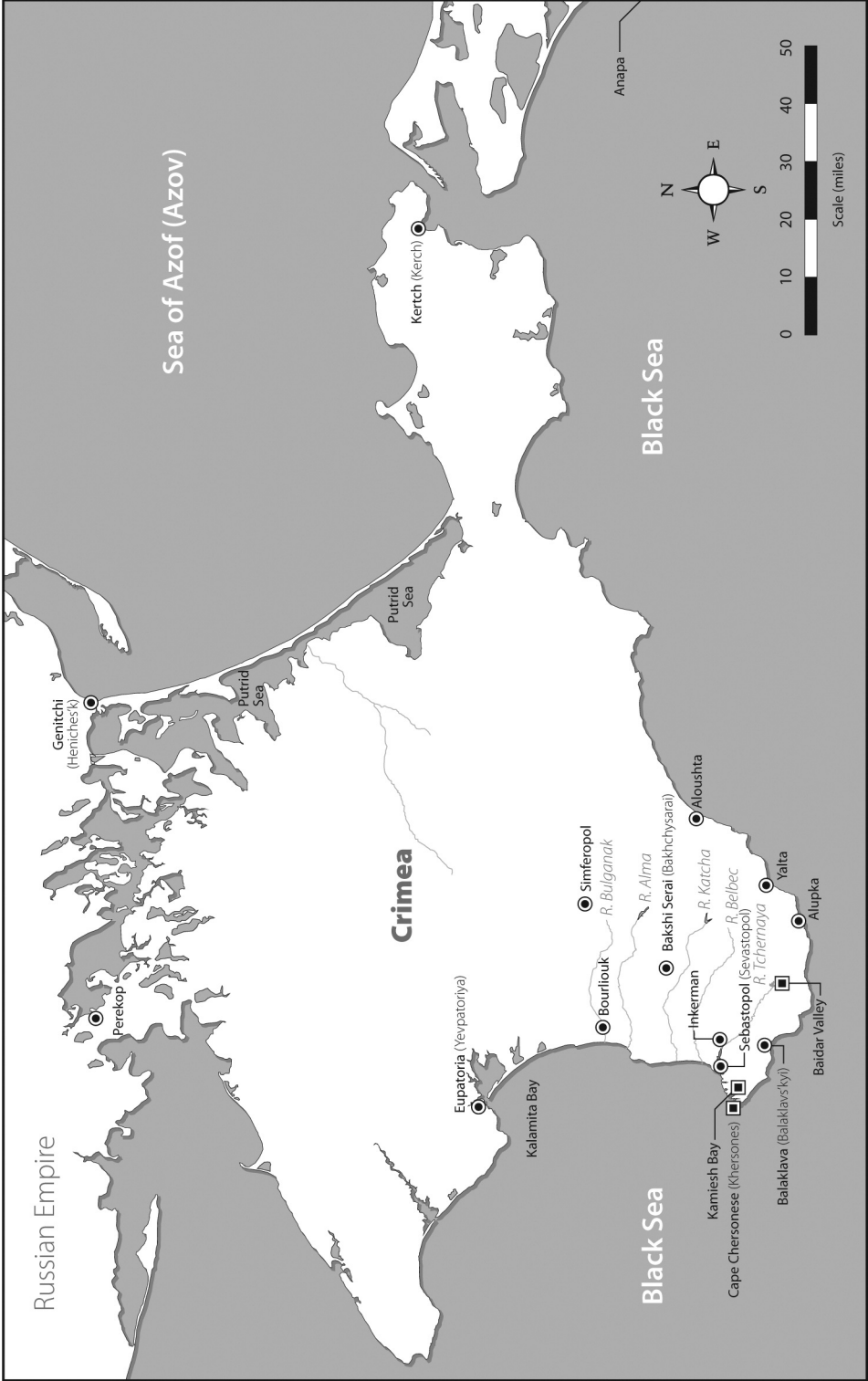
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# CHAPTER 1

## THE BALTIC CAMPAIGN

### 1854

*Admiralty, June 2, 1854.*

DESPATCHES have been received at this Office from Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Napier, K.C.B, Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's ships and vessels in the Baltic, of which the following are copies:

*No 96.  
Her Majesty's Ship Duke of Wellington,  
off Hango Head, May 20, 1854.*

SIR,

I BEG to enclose a letter from Captain Yelverton, of the Arrogant, giving an account of a smart operation he performed at Ekness, 12 miles in the interior of the country. Great credit is due to him for his perseverance in threading up so narrow and intricate a navigation; and it will show the enemy they are not safe even in their country towns.

Captain Yelverton very properly abstained from damaging the town.

He speaks very highly of the gallantry of Captain Hall, of the Hecla (who I am sorry to say is slightly wounded), as also of Lieutenant Haggard, first of the Arrogant, and Lieutenant Crew Read, the senior lieutenant of the Hecla, which gallant officer has received a severe wound, which I fear has endangered the sight of his eye. All the officers and men behaved as British seamen and marines were wont to.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHAS. NAPIER,  
Vice-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief.

*The Secretary of the Admiralty.  
Her Majesty's Ship Arrogant,  
SIR, Skagaedslenden, May 20, 1854.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I came into the inner passage yesterday, in company with the Hecla, for the purpose of examining the channel.

At three in the afternoon, just as I was about to anchor a little beyond Teverminne, a strong force of the enemy's troops opened their fire upon both ships from behind an extensive sand-bank; the effect, however, of a few broadsides from Hecla and this ship soon dispersed them.

No one, I am glad to be able to say, was hurt in either vessel.

I did nothing to provoke this attack on the part of the enemy.

I ascertained from a pilot who lives here that three large Russian loaded merchant ships were at Ekness, eight miles to the northward. I lost no time in proceeding there early this morning; but did not expect to find the enemy so well prepared to receive me. Owing to the Hecla's light draught of water she led the way; a task not easy to perform in a narrow and intricate passage, exposed as she was to the first of the enemy's fire.

In addition to a field battery of five guns (two of which I dismounted) and one mortar, they had erected a strong battery which they supplied very efficiently; Captain Hall succeeded in dismounting and bringing off three of the guns. The engagement lasted longer than I expected, as they returned to their guns twice in the midst of our fire, and were only compelled to leave them when their guns were destroyed by our shot.

On reaching the anchorage of Ekness, I found that two of the merchantmen were aground, but Captain Hall brought out one under the fire of a battery, which my draught of water would not allow me to near sufficiently to completely destroy. I most carefully avoided firing one shot in or near the town of Ekness, directing the whole of the fire of the guns exclusively to the batteries and troops attacking us, which consisted, in addition to the brigade of Horse Artillery, of a considerable body of cavalry and infantry, moving abreast of the ship as she advanced.

I cannot give sufficient credit to Captain Hall for the assistance he rendered me on this, as on all occasions, since he has been under my orders; the admirable way in which he went in and brought out his prize, under a galling fire from the enemy, deserves the greatest praise.

I beg also to call to your favourable notice Lieut. H.V. Haggard, senior lieutenant of this ship, whose most zealous services at all times were particularly displayed on this occasion, and also that of the whole of the officers, seamen, and marines of Her Majesty's ship under my command.

I regret to say that I had one man killed, and five wounded. I must not omit to mention how very highly Captain Hall speaks of Lieutenant Crew Read, First Lieutenant of the Hecla, for the support he had from him, throughout the engagement) until he was unfortunately wounded and carried below), as also from the officers, seamen, and marines, of Her Majesty's ship under his command.

I beg leave to enclose herewith a list of casualties on board the Hecla and Arrogant, in the engagement.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) H.R. YELVERTON,  
Captain.

*Admiralty, June 29, 1854.*

DESPATCHES, of which the following are copies or extracts, have been received from Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Napier, K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Ships and Vessels in the Baltic:-

ENCLOSING Admiral Plumridge's Report of his proceedings in the Gulf of Bothnia.

*No. 151.  
Duke of Wellington, Baro Sound,  
June 18, 1854.*

SIR,

I BEG leave to enclose Admiral Plumridge's Report of his proceedings in the Gulf of Bothnia, from the 5th May to the 10th June, by which their Lordships will observe that he has destroyed forty-six vessels, afloat and on the stocks, amounting to 11,000 tons; from 40,000 to 50,000 barrels of pitch and tar; 60,000 square yards of rough pitch; a great number of stacks of timber, spars, plank, and deals, sails, rope, and various kinds of naval Stores, to the amount of from 3 to £400,000, without the loss of a man. Admiral Plumridge has had to contend with innumerable rocks and shoals, incorrectly laid down in the charts, and met the ice up to the 30th May; nevertheless, though several of his squadron have touched the ground, I am happy to say they have received no damage that he is not able to repair with his own means.

2. The Rear-Admiral, their Lordships will observe, speaks in the highest terms of the captains, officers, seamen, and marines, and particularly of Lieutenant B.P. Priest, the first lieutenant of the Leopard, an old and deserving officer, and of Lieutenant Hammet, his flag lieutenant.

I have, &c.  
CHAS. NAPIER, Vice-Admiral and  
Commander-in-Chief.

*The Secretary of the Admiralty.*  
Enclosure No. 1, in Sir Charles Napier's Letter,

*No. 151.*  
*Her Majesty's ship Leopard, at Sea,*  
*10th June, 1854 – lat. 64° 1' N;*  
*long. 22° 41' E At noon.*

SIR,

IN obedience to your orders of 5th May, 1854, I proceeded with the squadron under my command to examine, as far as practicable, the Island of Aland, but not being able to procure a pilot, I found the hazard too great to proceed further in the execution of that duty; the reports of Captains Buckle and Giffard, numbered 1 and 2, will more fully inform you of the result and termination, for the present, of that service.

From thence I proceeded up the Gulf of Bothnia, and I have now the honour herewith to transmit letters and papers, numbered from 3 to 6, giving a detailed account of the squadron's proceedings up to the date hereof.

The summary of the large amount of mischief done to the enemy by the boats, as per margin, and the paper lettered A.

*Boats of Leopard employed at Brahestad, Uleaborg, and Tornea.*

1st Gig-

Lieutenant B.P. Priest.  
Mr. Terence H. Wall, assistant-surgeon.  
Mr. James Ray, passed clerk.

1st Cutter-

Lieutenant L.U. Hammet.  
Mr. Richard Harington, midshipman.

Galley-

Lieutenant William Graham.  
Mr. H. St. L. Palliser, naval cadet.

Barge-

Lieutenant G.W.E. Lloyd.  
Mr. Arthur Salwey, mate.

1st Launch-

Mr. Henry G. Payne, mate.  
Lieutenant E.D. Thelwall, R.M.A.

Pinnace-

Mr. James Laurence, second master.  
Mr. W.D.M. Dalbin, naval cadet.

2nd Gig-

Mr. J.G. O'Connell, master's assistant.

2nd Cutter-

Mr. Augustus Jacob, naval cadet.

*Valorous' Boats at Uleaborg and Tornea.*

1st Launch-

Lieutenant C.B.C. Dent.

Lieutenant W.S. Davis, R.M.A.

Pinnace-

Mr. R.F. Broadrick, mate.

1st Cutter-

Mr. M.A.S. Hare, midshipman.

1st Gig-

Mr. J.R. Trefusis, naval cadet.

Mr. W. Ray (M.D.) assistant-surgeon.

2nd Gig-

Mr. J. Bailey, cadet.

Vulture's Boats, at Brahestad and Uleaborg.

1st Launch-

Lieutenant C. Wise.

Mr. N.J. Morphy, mate.

Barge-

Mr. C.F. Hill, mate.

Mr. Chapman, master's-assistant.

Cutter-Mr. C.P. Fortescue, midshipman.

Gig-

Mr. J.V.D. Butler, naval cadet.

Mr. George Duncan, assistant-surgeon.

*Odin's Boats at Brahestad and Uleaborg.*

1st Launch-

Lieutenant W. Mould.

Mr. C.F. Montague, mate.

Lieut. A.O. Lewis, R.M.A.

Pinnacle-

Lieutenant Carrington.  
Mr. Long, acting second master.

Barge-

Lieutenant J.H.B. Fellowes.

Cutter-

Mr. Henry Athorpe, midshipman.

1st Gig-

Mr. C. Rice, naval cadet.

2nd Gig-

Mr. H. Salmond, naval cadet.  
Mr. J.C. Hamilton, assistant-surgeon.

From the hindrances the squadron have encountered in this service, it has spread over a greater space of time than I at first contemplated; the intricacies of the ice, navigation, innumerable rocks, shoals, and the imperfect state of the charts as to soundings on the Russian side of the Gulf, together with the difficulties we experienced in disentangling the squadron, up to the 30th May, from the floes and fields of ice (of which we saw the last this morning), could not be surmounted in less time, or with less vigilance, by the officers in command, and that of the captain of my flag-ship, together with the constant perseverance and zeal evinced by Mr. George B.F. Swain, the master of the Leopard; which ship I may here observe, to the credit of these two officers, has led the squadron from leaving the Aland Islands.

I feel it incumbent on me to notice how sensibly I feel the zealous co-operation of Captains Buckle, Giffard, Glasse, and Scott, as well as the good arrangements of their ships' boats for service.

The letters from No. 3 to 6, show the names of the several lieutenants and boats commanded by Lieutenant B.P. Priest, of this ship, and seconded by my flag-lieutenant, L.U. Hammet. To them and the other, officers, those subordinate, the seamen, marines, and their lieutenants (Davis, Lewis, and Thelwall), my thanks are fully due.

Any credit that may arise from such extensive damage having been executed, will, I trust, pardon me for thus bringing to your special notice the name of that steady, old, and deserving officer, Lieutenant B. Priest, who held the boat command from Brahestad to Uleaborg and Tornea.

I cannot refrain from again reverting to the ability and exertions of Captain George Giffard, feeling as I do that it is my duty to take this opportunity of bringing some of his merits before you.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) HANWAY PLUMRIDGE,  
Rear-Admiral.

*Return of Enemy's Property destroyed at Brahestad, Uleaborg, and on the Kemi River, near Tornea, between the 30th May and 8th June, 1854.*

*Her Majesty's ship Leopard,  
June 9, 1854.*

Burnt afloat and on shore, and totally destroyed:

*Brahestad, May 30, 1854.*

1 brig, 250 tons, under repair and empty.  
1 barque, 450 tons, just launched and empty.  
1 topsail schooner, 140 tons, }  
2 F. and A. schooners, 60 to 80 tons, } in ballast.  
5 sloops, 60 to 80 tons, }  
4 large vessels, building, 300 to 500 tons.  
Naval Stores destroyed:  
About 25,000 barrels of pitch, tar, and oil.  
A large quantity of timber, spars, plank and materials for ship building.  
Three building yards, with workshops and storehouses.

*Off Uleaborg, June 1, 1854.*

3 schooners, 60 to 170 tons, 1 empty and 2 laden with tar, but burnt; they sank in the gale of 2nd June.  
5 barques, 300 to 400 tons, building and nearly complete.

*June 1 and 2, 1854.*

8 schooners, 50 to 150 tons, hauled up on shore and purposely damaged.  
Scuttled and purposely sunk:-  
2 brigs, 600 tons, partially laden with tar.  
1 brig, 400 tons, partially laden with tar.  
1 brig, 350 tons, partially laden with tar.  
1 cutter, 100 tons, contents not ascertained.  
1 schooner, 150 tons, contents not ascertained.  
1 brig, 300 tons, just launched and empty.

*Ukovaryakka, June 1 and 2, 1854.*

1 vessel, ready for launching, 204 feet long, about 1200 tons.  
1 vessel, in frame, not measured.  
1 barque, 600 tons, empty, but scuttled.

*Killoncrusit, June 1 and 2, 1854.*

1 schooner, 100 tons, laden with tar, purposely scuttled.  
1 schooner, 70 tons, hauled up and fresh caulked.  
3 schooners, 80 to 100 tons, empty.

Naval Stores destroyed:  
*Uleaborg, June 1 and 2, 1854.*

From 40 to 50,000 barrels of tar and pitch.  
6000 square yards of rough pitch.  
A vast number of stacks of timber, spars, plank, deals, &c.  
A large number of storehouses, containing sails, rope, and all kinds of stores.  
Numerous workshops, with forges.  
Several building yards, and a great extent of wharfage.

*Kemi River, near Tornea, June 8, 1854.*

1 schooner, of about 80 tons, empty.  
80 stacks of timber.  
Being a total of 46 vessels destroyed; and, at the lowest estimate, the enemy has suffered

damage to the extent of-

At Brahestad	£65,000
Uleaborg	£300,000
Kemi River	£15,000
	£380,000

(Signed) GEO. GIFFARD,  
Captain.

Sub-Enclosure No. 1, in Enclosure No. 1, in Sir Charles Napier's  
Letter No. 151.

*Her Majesty's ship Valorous at sea,  
May 15, 1854.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report to you that in consequence of thick foggy weather, I did not reach Grisselhamn until noon of the 6th instant.

On landing to communicate, I found that the commandant was absent at Stockholm, but the officer in command, Captain Billbery, very obligingly afforded me all the information in his power, through the interpretation of Captain Fahnelyelm, the Director of the Electric Telegraph, which was to be in operation in about a week. No pilots for the Aland Islands could be obtained, and I believe they are not permitted to serve in our ships of war. The commandant observed that he believed there were not more than 1000 troops at Bomarsund, and that 300 of them had lately been relieved by 500 from Russia; he did not appear to know anything about the gun-boats.

The only information I could obtain relative to the Aland Islands was, that the inhabitants appeared to be well disposed towards the English, and that they had declined taking up arms to oppose us. He was anxious to know whether their Post-boat, Eckero, would be intercepted by us. I replied it would not, unless it contained military despatches to or from the Russian Government, but that I considered it advisable that a passport should be obtained from the Commander-in-Chief, to be produced when boarded by our cruizers.

2. I proceeded next morning in the direction of Wardo Island and Bomarsund, but in the afternoon found myself near some shoals, with ice on some of the patches; I therefore anchored to sound, and a fog soon came on which prevented my moving until noon on the following day. On standing to the southward, on the 8th instant; towards Wardo Island, I observed a barque running to the southward among the islands, and on my steering to cut her off, she bore up. I therefore stood in cautiously, and finding a good channel close to some rocks and small islands, I proceeded in, anchoring in 15 fathoms, with Vulture in company, within a mile of the barque, in a good harbour formed by the Island of Saggo and numerous others. On sending the boats, the barque was found to be aground and deserted, in a small cove. Russian colours. and a paper found on board proved her to be the Princess of Uleaborg, of 346 tons, with a cargo of salt (part having been landed), from St. Ubes, bound to Abo. Observing a boat pulling away from her, I sent a gig which brought her back, with the master, mate, and three men, the ship's papers and their private effects. I have sent her to Faro, with a prize crew of eleven men from the Valorous and Vulture, in charge of the second master of this ship. The village, consisting of half a dozen cottages, was deserted, with the exception of an old woman. I left a paper in the largest house, on which I caused the master of the captured vessel to state that the English would not molest them, or touch their property, but would pay for anything they had to dispose of, and this was likewise explained to the woman. We also found a cutter, of about 35 tons, deserted and empty, called the Alfred, which the master of the Princess said was a revenue vessel. The barque having been got afloat and brought out during the night, I started the following afternoon with the Vulture, towing the barque, and the cutter not being worth removing I directed her to be burnt.

3. While cutting the anchor, three or four cables' length from where we had been lying, the ship touched on a sunken rock.

4. The prize parted company in the evening, and I proceeded with the Vulture in the direction of Bomarsund. The master of the Princess stated that he had been three weeks at Marsund, and that the Russians had 500 troops there and 1500 at different parts among the islands, but principally at Bomarsund. Some, he said, were in the vicinity of the spot at which we had captured his vessel, and several watch-fires which were kept up during the night on the adjoining hills, which are rocky and covered with pine-trees, supported the assertion, though we saw none.

Next morning, the Vulture in company, I proceeded in the direction of Bomarsund, but found the channels very intricate between the innumerable small islands and rocks, which did not correspond with any of the charts, and which appear to be far from correct. Having no pilot, I proceeded cautiously by the eye and lead, the water

being perfectly smooth. About two P.M. I observed a part of the works of Bomarsund, which proved to be two casemated batteries, one of which appeared to have double loop holes below, and both with embrasures on the summit, with chimneys appearing between them, a sketch of which, as I observed it to be from our mastheads, was taken by Mr. Broadrick, mate, is inclosed herewith, the distance was about five miles from Bomarsund. I was led there by observing the mastheads of several vessels over the land. In standing cautiously towards them the ship touched the ground once, but I succeeded in anchoring, in company with the Vulture, about a mile from the vessels. We made out six or seven, and I sent in seven boats from the two ships; they found them deserted, six being small schooners, and the other was a brigantine, – all empty and scarcely of any value. The boats brought out the brigantine and two schooners, the latter had the appearance of being fitted for gun-boats; I therefore burnt them. The others were apparently unseaworthy, except the brigantine; but as she was very badly found, and not fit for a voyage to England, and belonging apparently to the poorer people of the place, whose good-will I consider it advisable to gain, I left her untouched. The lights of Bomarsund were visible above the trees of the adjoining island from the masthead, and with the assistance of a glass the sketch was accurately made.

We started next morning without meeting with any opposition, only a few of the people of the village being seen at a distance. The channels between the innumerable rocks and islands are so intricate, and so different from the positions on the charts, that I considered it unsafe to proceed further south than Wardo without a pilot, nor could I find the channel track by which I entered; fortunately, the water was very smooth and clear, and the rocks bold, so that I could steer through them by the eye and lead, which generally indicated the approach to shoal water.

5. On the 12th instant I met the Odin, and received the rendezvous from her, since which I have been drawn away to the N.W. by chasing several vessels which proved to be Swedes and Norwegians.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) C.H. BUCKLE,  
Captain.  
*Rear-Admiral J.H. Plumridge.*

Sub-Inclosure No. 2, in Enclosure No. 1, in Sir Charles Napier's  
Letter No. 151.

*Her Majesty's skip Leopard,  
off Uleaborg, June 1, 1854.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to forward the enclosed report, from Lieutenant Benjamin P. Priest (senior lieutenant of this ship), of the operations of the boats of the squadron

under his command, sent into Brahestad harbour on the 30th ultimo; and have great pleasure in reporting the very good conduct of every officer and man employed; the boats having been away upwards of seven hours, immediately after clearing the ice in which the squadron had been blocked up for the previous twenty-four hours.

Lieutenant Priest deserves credit for the able manner he conducted the operations, and I beg leave to bring his services under your notice.

I have, &c.  
GEORGE GIFFARD,  
Captain.

*Rear-Admiral J. Hanway Plumridge.  
Her Majesty's ship Leopard, off Brahestad,  
May 30, 1854.*

SIR,

IN obedience to your orders, I this afternoon proceeded with detachments of boats from Her Majesty's steam frigates Leopard, Vulture, and Odin, into the harbour of Brahestad, where I damaged enemy's property as follows:

*Burnt on shore and totally destroyed, viz:*

Four large vessels, building and nearly complete on the stocks, the largest being about 500 tons burden, and pierced for six guns.

Three detached stores of timber, fit for building ships of large scantling.

Two detached storehouses, containing some thousand barrels of pitch, tar, and oil, a large number of them marked with the imperial crown.

*Burnt afloat and totally destroyed:*

1 barque just launched, not masted, about 450 tons burden.

1 brig under repair.

1 topsail schooner.

2 fore and aft schooners.

5 sloops.

All in ballast.

As the inhabitants yielded immediately to our force, I was very careful not to damage the private houses; at the same time I satisfied myself by personal inspection, that there was no contraband of war within those storehouses, which were situated in the immediate vicinity of and inside the town, which I did not destroy.

Two large stores, on the outskirts of the town, were found to contain flour; these were not destroyed, as I had reason for supposing it to be private property.

All the officers placed under my orders, vied with me in preventing unnecessary alarm to the inhabitants; and I feel it to be my duty to report the alacrity, great

steadiness, and good conduct shown by all the officers and seamen employed on this service.

It is almost superfluous to add that the royal marines under Lieutenants Thelwall, R.M.A., showed their admirable discipline.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) BENJ. P. PRIEST,  
Senior and Gunnery Lieut.  
*Captain Giffard, H.M.S. Leopard.*

*Destruction of enemy's property.*

P.S. Being in all 14 vessels destroyed.

About 25,000 barrels of pitch, tar, and oil.

A large quantity of timber, spars, plank, and materials for ship-building.

3 building yards, with workshops and storehouses.

*Boats employed on the 30th May, 1854.*

*Her Majesty's ship Leopard.*

2nd Cutter-

Lieutenant B.P. Priest.

1st Cutter-

Lieutenant Hammet (next in command)

Mr. Harrington, midshipman.

1st Launch-

Mr. Payne, mate.

Lieutenant Thelwall, R.M.A.

Pinnace-

Mr. Lawrence, second master.

1st Gig-

Mr. Wall, assistant-surgeon.

Mr. Palliser, naval cadet.

*Her Majesty's ship Vulture.*

1st Launch-

Lieutenant Wise.

Mr. Hill, mate.

Barge-

Mr. Morphy, mate.

Mr. Chapman, master's assistant.

Gig-

Mr. Duncan, assistant-surgeon.

Mr. Butler, naval cadet.

Cutter-

Mr. Fortescue, midshipman.

*Her Majesty's ship Odin.*

1st Launch-

Lieutenant Mould.

Lieutenant Lewis, R.M.A.

Mr. Montagu, mate.

Pinnace-

Lieutenant Carrington.

Mr. Long, acting quartermaster.

Cutter-

Mr. Athorpe, midshipman.

1st Gig-

Mr. Hamilton, assistant-surgeon.

Mr. Rice, naval cadet.

2nd Gig—

Mr. Salmond, naval cadet

*Total.*

3 gun-boats, each with 24-pounder howitzer.

3 gun-boats, each with 12-pounder howitzer.

25 officers.

201 seamen.

78 marines.

*Grand Total.*

6 gun-boats.

8 smaller boats.

25 officers, and

279 men.

Sub-Enclosure No. 3, in Enclosure No. 1, in Sir Charles Napier's  
Letter No. 151.

*His Majesty's ship Leopard, off Uleaborg,  
June 4, 1854.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to enclose the reports of the officers commanding the several detachments of boats of the squadron sent from this ship on the 1st and 2nd instant, after the ships had anchored within range of the town of Uleaborg; and I have much pleasure in again bringing the zeal and ability of Lieutenant Benjamin P. Priest, who commanded the principal force, to your notice.

All the officers and men engaged in this trying duty for nearly 12 hours (and during a snow storm of six hours' duration) conducted themselves entirely to my satisfaction, and the destruction of enemy's shipping and property has been very great.

From the enemy having sunk all their shipping, it was found that no vessels could be rendered serviceable to embark any of the valuable property without great loss of time, and it was burnt without a murmur or thought of prize money.

I take this opportunity to report to you the unwearied zeal and ability of Mr. George B. Swain, master of this ship, assisted by Mr. D.M. Jago, the master of Her Majesty's ship Odin, and their assistants, in sounding and buoing the intricate and shallow channels for upwards of 30 miles leading to this port, they being employed day and night for 48 hours, and having no plan of the place.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) GEORGE GIFFARD.  
Captain.

*Rear-Admiral J.H. Plumridge,  
H.M.S. Leopard.*

*Total number of Vessels destroyed.*

Lieutenant Priest's division	13 building, and on shore.
Lieutenant Priest's division	7 afloat, but scuttled.
Lieutenant Graham's division	2 building.
Lieutenant Graham's division	1 afloat, unseaworthy.
Lieutenant Lloyd's division	5 small vessels.
Captured by Lieutenant Young on the 31st May, and burnt	13 schooners.
	31

*Naval Stores burnt.*

From 40 to 50,000 barrels of tar and pitch.

6,000 square yards of rough pitch.

A vast number of stacks of timber, spars, planks, deals, &c.

A large number of storehouses, containing sails, rope, and all kinds of stores, workshops, forges, &c.

Several building yards, and a great extent of wharfrage.

Estimated damage to the enemy above £300,000.

*Her Majesty's ship Leopard, off Uleaborg,  
June 2, 1854.*

SIR,

IN compliance with your orders, I yesterday evening took under my command, the boats of Rear-Admiral Plumridge's squadron, as per margin,\* and proceeded up the river to Uleaborg. Taking possession of the town of Uleaborg, I spent two hours in examining the buildings, of which none appeared to belong to the Russian Government, except the Cossacks' Barracks, situated in the very heart of the town; and as its destruction by fire would have involved the burning of a large number of private houses, if not of the whole town (containing several thousand inhabitants), I judged it better to spare it.

In thus acting I had the less reason to expect your disapprobation, as it was little better than a collection of hovels.

The storehouses within the town were for the most part cleared out; no naval stores were found in any of them, and as their burning would also have endangered the town, they were spared.

I next detached Lieutenant L.U. Hammet, (flag lieutenant) in command of a division to examine both the sides of a river, below the narrows, to recover any of the sunken vessels, if practicable in a short time; otherwise to destroy all the enemy's shipping and naval stores; impressing upon him your orders to be careful not to damage any private dwelling, a service which he performed with discretion and ability.

Proceeding myself with the other division to the island opposite to the town, I fired and destroyed all the ships building, together with the storehouses containing ship-building materials, and workshops, and continuing destroying as I passed down on both sides of the river, I rejoined Lieutenant Hammet and returned on board.

During the performance of this service, the men were exposed to great trials and temptations, both from the almost uninterrupted sleet, with very cold weather, and the large number of spirit stores open; yet, notwithstanding this their general behaviour gave me the greatest confidence in their devotion and daring, had the enemy shown opposition.

16 *British Battles Of The Crimean Wars 1854–1856*

*	LEOPARD'S
1st Gig	Lieutenant B.P. Priest. W.J. Kay, passed clerk.
1st Cutter	W.T.C. Wall, acting-assistant-surgeon. Lieutenant Hammet (next in command). Mr. R. Harrington, midshipman.
1st Launch	Mr. Payne, mate. Lieutenant E.D. Thelwall, R.M.A.
Pinnacle	W.J. Lawrence, second master.

	VALOROUS'
1st Launch	Lieutenant C.C. Dent. Lieutenant W.S. Davies, R.M.A.
Pinnacle	Mr. R.F. Broadrick, mate.
1st Cutler	Mr. Hare, midshipman.
2nd Gig	Mr. G. Trefusis, naval cadet. Mr. W. Ray, M.D., assistant-surgeon.

	VULTURE'S
1st Launch	Lieutenant Wise.
Barge	Mr. C.F. Hill, mate.
Cutter	Mr. Fortescue, midshipman.
Gig	Mr. Butler, naval cadet. W.G. Duncan, assistant-surgeon.

	ODIN'S
1st Launch	Lieutenant W. Mould. Mr. Montague, mate. Lieutenant A.O. Lewis, R.M.A.
Pinnacle	Lieutenant Fellowes. Mr. R. Athorpe, midshipman.
Gig	Mr. C. Rice, naval cadet. Mr. J.E. Hamilton, assistant-surgeon.
Gig	Mr. Salmond, naval cadet.

TOTAL  
 4 gun-boats, each with 24-pounder howitzer.  
 4 gun-boats, each with 12-pounder howitzer.  
 27 officers.  
 203 seamen.  
 98 marines.

GRAND TOTAL.  
 8 gun-boats  
 8 smaller boats.  
 27 officers.  
 301 men.

Of the conduct and discipline of the marines under Lieutenant W.S. Davis, (R.M.A.) I cannot say too much in praise, exposed so much to temptation when sentries in the town.

All the shipping, boats, &c., were found scuttled and sunk; and as considerable time would have been required to weigh and load them, all were burnt and destroyed.

The whole service lasted nearly twelve hours, and the following list shows the loss which has been inflicted on the enemy, which, at a low estimate, cannot be valued under £200,000:



*Captain George Giffard,  
H.M.'s ship Leopard.  
Her Majesty's ship Leopard, off Uleaborg,  
June 2, 1854.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report to you, that in obedience to your orders, I proceeded in the boats of this ship, named in the margin,\* to the Island of Ulkonargaick, and on arriving off the north-east point, I boarded a large barque, which on examination proved to be scuttled, and rendered otherwise unseaworthy. I then proceeded on shore, and searched several storehouses and work-shops, containing pitch, forges, and other materials requisite for ship-building, together, with two vessels on the stocks, one nearly ready for launching, and a second in a less advanced state; also a wharf, built at some distance from the shore, on which were sheers, capstans, &c., for masting ships, the whole of which were disposed of in the following manner, viz.:-

Large Storehouses, containing pitch – burnt.

2 blacksmiths' workshops, having two forges each – burnt.

1 large one-storied building, containing one launch, and apparently used for boat-building – burnt.

1 vessel ready for launching, extreme length 204 feet, breadth 36 feet – burnt.

1 vessel in frame, not measured – burnt.

1 barque lying at anchor, estimated size 600 tons – burnt.

I then searched the village on the adjacent island, but finding no stores contraband of war, I re-embarked and proceeded in search of three schooners, of which information was obtained from the pilot; and after pulling some distance through a creek to the south of the town, I met a division of boats under Lieutenant Hammet, by whom I found the vessel I was in search of had been destroyed.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) W. GRAHAM,  
Lieutenant.

*Captain Giffard, H.M.S. Leopard.  
\* Galley, Lieutenant Graham. 2. Cutter, Mr. Dolben, Naval Cadet  
Her Majesty's ship, Leopard, off  
Uleaborg, June 3, 1854.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report that in obedience to your orders, I proceeded yesterday with the boats under my charge to take or destroy the vessels at Killoon Kraseli, that I found there five schooners, which were disposed of as follows.

Scuttled and aground, one laden with tar – burnt.

Empty, three – one burnt, two destroyed.

One hauled up and fresh caulked, burnt.

I have, &c.,  
(Signed) G. LLOYD,  
Lieutenant.

*Captain Giffard, H.M.S. Leopard.*

*Boats employed.*

1 cutter of Leopard, Lieutenant Lloyd.

1 cutter of Valorous.

1 cutter of Vulture.

1 cutter of Odin.

Sub-Enclosure No. 4, in Enclosure No. 1, to Sir Charles Napier's  
Letter No. 151.

*Her Majesty's ship Leopard,  
off Kemi, 9th June, 1854.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to enclose Lieutenant B.P. Priest's report of his proceedings with a division of boats in the Tornea river and town, which, from the rapid current in the stream, he had great difficulty in reaching.

Also a letter from Lieutenant G.W.E. Lloyd, reporting the destruction of enemy's property in the Kemi River, with a division of boats under his command.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) GEO. GIFFARD,  
Captain.

*Rear-Admiral J.H. Plumridge,  
H.M.S. Leopard.  
Her Majesty's ship Leopard, off  
Kemi, June 9, 1854.*

SIR,

I PROCEEDED yesterday morning with the boats, as per margin\* to Tornea, in execution of your orders.

A strong wind, with extraordinary rapids in the river, delayed us, and it was 7 30

P.M. before the boats arrived off the town of Tornea, 13 hours after leaving the ship; the garrison left on our approach.

Having taken possession of the town I found the storehouses had been cleared out, and their contents conveyed across the barrier to the Swedish territory, and that the inhabitants had destroyed the barracks and public buildings; the purpose for which I was despatched having been thus completed, I therefore returned on board, after being 20 hours in the boats, and have great pleasure in stating every officer and man behaved to my satisfaction.

I have, &c.,  
(Signed) B.P. PRIEST,  
Senior and Gunnery Lieutenant.

*Captain George Giffard,  
H.M.S. Leopard.*

*	<i>LEOPARD'S</i>
<i>2nd Cutter</i>	<i>Lieutenant B.P. Priest. Mr. T. Wall, assistant-surgeon. Mr. Dolben, naval cadet.</i>
<i>1st Cutter</i>	<i>Lieutenant Hammet. Mr. Jacob, naval cadet.</i>
<i>1st Launch</i>	<i>Mr. H.C. Payne, mate. Lieutenant Thelwall, R.M.A.</i>
<i>Pinnace</i>	<i>Mr. Lawrence, second master.</i>
	<i>VALOROUS'</i>
<i>1st Launch</i>	<i>Lieutenant C.B.C. Dent. Lieutenant W.S. Davies, R.M.A.</i>
<i>Pinnace</i>	<i>Mr. Broadrick, mate.</i>
<i>1st Cutter</i>	<i>Mr. Hare, midshipman.</i>
<i>2nd Cutter</i>	<i>Mr. Trefusis, naval cadet.</i>
<i>Gig</i>	<i>Mr. Bailey, naval cadet. Mr. Ray, assistant-surgeon.</i>
<i>TOTAL.</i>	
<i>4 gun-boats,</i>	
<i>5 other boats,</i>	
<i>15 officers, and</i>	
<i>166 men.</i>	

*off Kemi, June 9th, 1854.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report that in obedience to your orders I proceeded yesterday with the boats under my charge,\* up the Kemi River, on the banks of which, and on the adjacent islands, I burnt eighty stacks of timber (covering about two miles of

ground), and the hull of a vessel of about eighty tons burthen. A quantity of timber not fit for ship-building was spared at the request of the inhabitants.

I have, &c.,  
GEO. LLOYD,  
Lieutenant.

*Captain George Giffard,*

*H.M.S. Leopard.*

*\* Boats employed, barge of Leopard, Mr. Salwey, mate; 2nd gig of Leopard, Mr. O'Connell, master's assistant.*

*No. 152.  
Duke of Wellington, Baro Sound,  
June 10th, 1854.*

SIR,

I BEG leave to transmit to their Lordships the accompanying letter from Rear-Admiral Plumridge, enclosing one from Captain Glasse, of the Vulture (which ship arrived here yesterday), giving an account of an unfortunate failure in an attack on Gamla Carleby, in the Gulf of Bothnia, by the boats of the Vulture and Odin.

2. I have expressed to Captain Glasse my disapproval of sending boats to attack a place so far distant from his ship, without any apparent object, which has led to the melancholy catastrophe on this occasion.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) CHARLES NAPIER,  
Vice-Admiral and Commander in Chief.

*The Secretary of the Admiralty.  
Enclosure No. 1, in Sir Charles Napier's Letter No. 152.  
Her Majesty's ship Leopard,  
Oreground, June 14, 1854.*

SIR,

PREVIOUS to leaving the neighbourhood of Uleaborg, on the 4th instant, I gave Captain Glasse, of the Vulture, the accompanying order, and parted company from that ship and the Odin.

After having finished the service I went to perform at and near Tornea, with this