

---

was all random shooting, and one was [as] liable to be struck in bed as on the streets, more so as the insurgents made the headquarters and the adjoining houses the central point of attack.”<sup>1</sup>

The firing continued for the next hour, but Colonel Hardin and his guests finished their breakfast before taking a stroll around the town. During their walk the three men saw a number of pock marks made by insurgent bullets - including one that had struck the road right between the legs of a sentry. “Someone will be hit soon,” observed Colonel Hardin. “The law of probabilities must come into force sooner or later. We will not be bothered any more today, however, so Captain you can land your stuff with safety. They will open up on us about retreat time this afternoon.”<sup>2</sup>

Captain Butt and Captain Lovell returned to the *Port Stevens* and decided that it was unsafe to unload the ship’s cargo in the inlet where the ship’s launch had come under fire, so they moved the transport closer to the town but farther away from the hills from which the insurgents had opened fire. At that point, though, a heavy rainstorm broke over the city and forced the discharging of cargo to be postponed until the afternoon.

The last of the horses was swum ashore at 6:30 p.m., but Captain Butt was very disappointed that the insurgents had not opened fire again, since he wanted to spot their locations from on board the *Port Stevens*. The unloading process had not been accomplished as quickly as had been hoped, though, so at 7 o’clock Captains Butt and Lovell went ashore again to try and hire additional boats from the natives.

“It was almost dark, but we could easily be discerned from the beach,” Archie recorded. “When within a quarter of a mile from shore, we were somewhat shocked by hearing the Mauser again and became more so when we comprehended our own danger. We had decided to land nearer the headquarters, which made our course nearer the posts of the insurgents. Several bullets whizzed over the boat, and two splattered in the water near our stern. The men pulled faster, but the bullets came likewise faster as if they were intent upon getting one of us at any rate.”<sup>3</sup>

For the next ten minutes Captain Butt had an opportunity to analyze his own feelings in the full knowledge that a Mauser bullet fired at such short range would strike a human body with its full devastating force if it happened to find its mark. “I was angry but not frightened,” Archie admitted later. “I told Lovell that they ought to hit us, for we made a fine target on the water.”

“They will,” opined Lovell, “and God knows which [of us] it will be.”

“I don’t much care,” replied Archie, who was so angry that he was “careless of consequences.” (“I felt as if I would like to shoot the man next to me merely to hit back,” he admitted later. “We had not even brought our pistols ashore with us, a precaution that we always took after that.”)<sup>4</sup>

The boat finally reached the beach, but one young soldier who had been pulling an oar immediately jumped out onto the damp sand with a definite purpose in mind. “Captain, let’s go for them,” called out the excited young man as he started running up the beach in the direction of the gunfire.

“Stop, you fool!” Captain Butt ordered. “You haven’t even got a gun.”<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> AWB transport diary.

<sup>2</sup> AWB transport diary.

<sup>3</sup> AWB transport diary.

<sup>4</sup> AWB transport diary.

<sup>5</sup> AWB transport diary.