

Date 29th Nov

Regis 4th Dec 1854 K54/13.511

Capt Pasley - Ballaarat Report relative to the riot at that place

K54/13.511 Camp Ballaarat

29th November 1854 12pm Sir, I have the honour to report for the information of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, that I arrived at this camp about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2 o' clock yesterday afternoon. Everything was then quiet-the reinforcements had not arrived, but Captain Thomas 40th regiment was here, and had taken command of the troops. I accordingly placed myself under his orders. At 6pm 106 men of the 40th Regiment under the command of Captain Wise, together with a party of Mounted Police arrived from Geelong. They were much hooted by the populace, and stones were thrown at them, but no serious attack was made. Soon after Lieut. Gardyne with the mounted troops from Melbourne and Gisborne reached the camp and met with the same reception, and some attempt was made to stop them, but they passed through at a canter and without drawing their swords. Lieutenant Hall, with the mounted men from Castlemaine, and police from Sawpit Gully arrived without molestation, having come by Creswick's Creek. About 9 o' clock, a report reached the camp that a company of the 12th Regiment had been attacked and that some of the men were in the hands of the diggers. A party of cavalry and a detachment of the 40th were immediately despatched to their assistance, and the whole returned together. Some of the men were hurt one of them seriously. No disturbances occurred during the night. The meeting which was advertised for today took place at about 2 o' clock a magistrate and two other officers being present. The whole of the troops and Police in Jamieson were under arms, and at their ports, during the afternoon.

The arrangement made by Captain Thomas for the defence of the camp and also for offensive operations should they be required, were not judicious and I am fully of opinion that with the force now at his disposal, the camp is not only quite secure but that the meeting which took place today might have been dispersed by force, had the conduct of the persons present here such as to call for interference. The place of meeting was within sight of the camp, distant about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, and in a portion convenient for military operations; but should His Excellency think proper to authorise active interference. On the part of the authorities, with all seditious meetings, Captain Thomas thinks and I quite concur with him in opinion that further reinforcements will be desirable. The meeting passed off very quietly, and the speeches were not as inflammatory as they have recently been on similar occasions. I am convinced that the presence of the troops is the only cause to which this altercation is to be attributed, and that if the force were materially reduced, the agitation would break but again in full force. I believe that no attack will be made upon the camp, while the present force is here, but that it would not secure with the usual garrison. It is therefore; I think clearly necessary that some steps should be taken to bring the matter to a crisis, and to teach those persons (forming no doubt that great majority of the mining population) who are not seditiously disposed, that it is their interest to give practical proof of their allegiance not only in not giving encouragement to the rebellious movement of the minority, but actively interfering to prevent them.

Taking this view of the case, the Resident Commissioner proposed (with the full approval of the principal officers of Government now here) to send the police for licences tomorrow, with the intention of supporting them (should any rescue be attempted) by a strong body of troops. It is possible that serious resistance may be made, but in my opinion the step is a very necessary and judicious one. I would beg leave to suggest to His Excellency that the suppression of the agitation on this Gold Field would be rendered very much easier were authority given to the Magistrate to arrest and send to Melbourne the Editor of the Ballarat Times, and any other persons who may write or speak sedition. I have no doubt that such a step together with the exhibition of a firm front on the part of the Government would produce the desired effect. For one of two things must happen :- either the disaffected persons "