

posal to go out and attack the Tibetans on the pass before they could attack our line of communication. I had stated, verbally and in writing, to the Chinese and to the Tibetans that we came to Gyantse to negotiate. Since our arrival we had evacuated the jong, and General Macdonald, with the greater part of the force, had returned to Chumbi. There could be no question, then, that we meant to negotiate and not to fight. Yet they still neither sent a negotiator, nor said they had any intention to negotiate; instead they massed troops to attack us; and I felt at perfect liberty to let the commander of the Mission escort take whatever means he liked to secure its safety.

On the same day, in view of the rumours of the hostile attitude of the Tibetans towards Shigatse and of their reinforcement by local levies, I placed the Gyantse Jongpen in custody in the British camp.

Colonel Brander set out on May 3, with three companies of the 32nd Pioneers, one company 8th Gurkhas, two 7-pounder guns and two Maxims, accompanied by Mr. Wilton and Captain O'Connor, to assist him in case Chinese or Tibetan officials were met with.

On May 4 Captain Walton's patients warned him that some kind of attack on us at Gyantse was likely, and Major Murray, 8th Gurkhas, who was in command during Colonel Brander's absence, sent out a mounted patrol some miles down the Shigatse road; but they returned, reporting everything quiet.

At dawn the next morning the storm burst. I was suddenly awaked by shots and loud booing close by my tent. I dashed out, and there were Tibetans firing through our own loopholes only a few yards off. From the Shigatse direction a force of 800 men had marched all night, and many, under cover of the darkness, had crept up under the walls of our post. Then at dawn these suddenly jumped up, and, supported by the remainder, made an attempt to rush our post, a substantial house with a garden at one side, the wall of which we had loopholed. In the first critical moment they almost succeeded. They as nearly as possible forced an entrance, but were stoutly held at bay by two gallant little Gurkha sentries till our