

addressed to you by Colonel Sir J. Willcocks, asked to be considered for a commission in Her Majesty's Regular Forces. I trust that it will be found possible to accede to his request.

6. Dr. Hay is a civilian officer whom the exigencies of service in West Africa drew temporarily into a post involving military duties. He is a very excellent and efficient officer, and I cannot say too much in his praise. He it was who was instrumental in rescuing under circumstances of considerable peril the body of Native Officer Akkere, Gold Coast Constabulary, when that officer was killed in the reconnaissance of the 23rd April, as reported in my confidential despatch of the 14th July. I should have been glad to have recommended this officer, who is now doing duty with the Ashanti Field Force, for the receipt of a military reward, but as he is a civilian I presume that I am precluded from doing so. I therefore ask that his probationary period as an Assistant Colonial Surgeon may be considered at an end, and that he be placed on the establishment of medical officers from the 23rd June, with the higher rate of pay granted to such officers.

7. Native Officer Harri Zenuwa, Gold Coast Constabulary, is thoroughly deserving of consideration at your hands. He has been for 24 years in the Gold Coast Constabulary and is respected by all ranks. He is a Mohammedan of high caste, and has considerable influence over the rank and file of the Constabulary, an influence which he has always brought to bear for the good of the force. I beg leave to ask that this officer's meritorious conduct throughout the siege of Kumasi may be recognised by the grant of the medal for meritorious conduct in the field.

8. I do not overlook the gallantry of the men of the Gold Coast and Lagos Hausa forces who formed the garrison, but I have not been placed in a position to single out any one or more for special recognition. They all did their duty as soldiers of the Queen should, and I venture to ask your consideration to the question of the distribution of a special medal or star for all whose duty it was to maintain the honour of the British flag at Kumasi in circumstances of much hardship and privation, and in the face of a savage and relentless foe.

I have, &c.,

F. M. HODGSON.

Governor.

Colonel Sir James Willcocks, K.C.M.G., D.S.O.,
Commanding Ashanti Field Force, to the
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Despatch Relating to Field Operations.

Camp Bekwai, Ashanti Field Force,

SIR,

August 14, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to make the following report on the military operations connected with the relief of Kumasi, and the suppression of the rebellion in Ashanti, written up to date. I trust that the report will not be thought too long when it is considered that it embraces operations extending over four months, and includes details of several engagements with the enemy, which in my estimation deserve to be recorded. I enclose two reports* from Captain (temporary Major) Morris, D.S.O., Royal Irish Regiment, Commissioner and Commandant of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, which detail the operations around Kumasi; the first reinforcement of Kumasi by Captain Aplin, C.M.G., Lagos Constabulary, from the south; the second by Major Morris himself from the Northern Territories; and finally the march from

Kumasi to Cape Coast, which commenced on the 23rd June, when Sir Frederic Hodgson, K.C.M.G., and six hundred men left the fort, owing to want of provisions. These reports speak for themselves, and, as the troops they relate to never came directly under my personal command until after the relief of Kumasi, I forward them in original.

1. I landed at Cape Coast on 26th May and remained there until 4th June, during which time I arranged for food supplies, carriers, reinforcements, got together a staff, and generally carried out the preliminary work of organising a field force. Aided by the few officers I then had and who worked right well, everything seemed to come right somehow, even when for a short period, owing to many reverses in the front and the forces of nature acting against us, it sometimes looked as if the relief of Kumasi might prove a task beyond the powers of the small column at my disposal. Scarcity of carriers, shortness of food, impassable roads, torrential rains, unfordable rivers and no means of bridging them, seventy miles of the lines of communications practically in the hands of the enemy, these were some of the obstacles which had to be overcome, with a young force limited in numbers; but, owing to the heroic conduct of all ranks, they have been overcome, and are now things of the past.

2. When I landed the position was as follows:—Kumasi was closely invested by the rebels, reported to number some forty thousand, and was cut off from all communication with the outer world. Relief columns had entered the place after severe fighting, but this had only added to the numbers to be fed, and the supply of food and ammunition was fast reducing. They were calling for help; but help then was impossible, for, whereas the force in Kumasi numbered seven hundred men and three hundred levies, with many guns and Maxims, the total numbers of the relief column spread along one hundred and forty miles of lines of communications numbered but seven hundred men, also with three field guns, the different units of which were continuously having to fight their way against heavy odds, depending for transport upon carriers, mostly marched by force across the Prah. Moreover, Sir Frederic Hodgson, in his telegram dated Kumasi, 4th April to Secretary of State, had remarked as follows: "In any case active operations could not be carried out till after the rainy season ended—September." Nevertheless it was in this very rainy season that the force under my command was battling to reach the garrison at Kumasi.

Captain Hall (West Yorkshire Regiment), West African Frontier Force, with some four hundred men, was at Bekwai and Esumeja, and it was his presence alone which kept the Bekwai King from fleeing south, as having once cast in his lot with us, his country would have been overrun by the Ashantis immediately our troops left his town. On 23rd May Captain Hall attacked Kokofu but being opposed by vast numbers of the enemy was unable to capture it; his troops behaved well, but he was attempting a task which more than double the numbers were unable to effect later. On this occasion Lieutenant Edwards, Sierra Leone Frontier Police, Sergeant Griggs, R.A., West African Frontier Force, and six men were wounded. On the same day the Bekwai levies attacked and destroyed Abadom further south, and which was only held by a few of the enemy.

Kwissa was held by three Europeans under Lieutenant Slater, Gold Coast Constabulary, and twenty soldiers, and surrounded by the enemy;