

of this small garrison three were killed and one wounded. Two parties of carriers proceeding south under escort from Bekwai, were attacked near Dampoassi on the 26th and 28th May. four soldiers and a carrier being killed and fifteen wounded. Lieutenant Beamish, West African Frontier Force, in command, dispersed the enemy and burnt Dampoassi. This attack showed that the Adansis had now joined the rebellion, and this greatly added to our difficulties.

3. So far, the operations had been conducted without any plan, each officer in command of a party simply hastening up towards the goal (Kumasi) with results anything but satisfactory, and my first object was to stop this, and collecting the scattered detachments to advance on definite lines. On 2nd June, therefore, Lieutenant-Colonel Carter, C.M.G., 3rd (Southern Nigeria) West African Frontier Force, left Fumsu for Bekwai, with eleven Europeans, three Maxims, one seven-pounder gun, and three hundred and ten men. Beyond Sheramasi the column was suddenly attacked and lost four men killed and seven wounded; our fire was very wild on this occasion causing an immense waste of ammunition; the men were then new to this kind of work; I am glad to say it is very different now.

On 6th June Lieutenant-Colonel Carter and Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) Wilkinson, Gold Coast Constabulary, with three hundred and eighty men, left Kwisso to join hands with Hall at Bekwai. I reached Prahsu on the 8th June, and the following day received a despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel Carter, stating that he had been opposed by the Adansis at Dampoassi, and had been obliged to return to Kwisso. The enemy had built five stockades about two hundred yards long and nearly parallel to the road at a distance of only thirty yards from it; lying perfectly still behind the ordinary thick bush, which remained untouched between the stockade and the path, they waited until the advance guard was just opposite, and then opened a terrific fire which staggered our men they also fired from the surrounding trees; the guns and Maxims came into action at once, and a regular duel took place, our men falling fast; no one knew then, as we do now that the enemy were probably behind strong stockades, and there was no indication of it; the officers believed the enemy were firing from the thick bush, and thus swaying backwards and forwards the fight went on for two and a-half hours, by which time Lieutenant-Colonel Carter had received a severe wound, which incapacitated him from command. Lieutenant-Colonel Wilkinson then took command and was himself slightly wounded; Captain Roupell, 3rd West African Frontier Force, was dangerously wounded in several places; Lieutenant Edwards, R.A., West African Frontier Force, received two severe wounds, but continued to work the guns till the entire gun detachment were disabled. It was at this stage that it was found the enemy were posted behind breastworks, as the bush had become partially cut away by the fire. Lieutenant O'Malley, 2nd West African Frontier Force, was severely wounded while working the Maxim, nearly the whole detachment being disabled; Dr. Fletcher, Medical Officer, and Colour-Sergeant Mackenzie (Seaforth Highlanders), 1st West African Frontier Force, were also wounded, a total of seven Europeans hit out of eleven present; three men were killed and eighty-nine wounded (some of whom have since died). Lieutenant-Colonel Wilkinson, seeing that the gun and Maxims were by this time out of action, that his ammunition was run-

ning short, and the enemy's fire did not slacken, determined to retire; but Colour-Sergeant Mackenzie came up to him and volunteered to carry the stockade with the bayonet, if his own company (Yoruba Company, 1st West African Frontier Force) was placed at his disposal. Wilkinson at once ordered up the Company, which was in the rear of the column, and on the arrival of the first two sections, without hesitation, Mackenzie charged at their head, followed splendidly by his own men and all others in the vicinity, their officers of course leading them. The enemy did not wait the rush, but fled in confusion, and never rallied, and it is perhaps not too much to say a disaster to our arms was thus averted, for a retirement under the circumstances might have ended in a panic. For this act of distinguished bravery I consider Colour-Sergeant Mackenzie is deserving of the highest reward a soldier can receive, and am making a recommendation accordingly. It was only last year that Colour-Sergeant Mackenzie earned the medal for distinguished service in the field on the Niger.

The column then returned to Kwisso, being unable to advance owing to the numbers of wounded.

4. To assist Lieutenant-Colonel Carter I sent Captain (local Major) Melliss, 1st West African Frontier Force, with one hundred and fifty men from Prahsu, and followed this by another hundred, my last reserve. Melliss was attacked on 12th June, his bugler killed, and Corporal Philpot (West Yorkshire Regiment), 1st West African Frontier Force, and six men wounded. Kwisso was reached on 13th June, and Carter decided to retire with the combined column to Fumsu. This decision was contrary to my orders, but Carter had just seen a letter from the Governor in Kumasi (which did not reach me till 12th June) asking for urgent help, and he intended with my sanction to move from Fumsu, via. Obuassi Gold Mines, to Bekwai. He therefore used his own discretion and evacuated Kwisso. Unfortunately this led to serious consequences later. It had now become evident to me that not only were our columns being repulsed in all directions, but that the tactics heretofore used were just what suited the enemy. I therefore gave orders that in future the enemy's fire was only to be replied to, to such an extent as was absolutely necessary to give our men time to adopt some open formation, and that then the bugles would sound the charge, and the enemy be attacked with the bayonet. The results I venture to say have justified the orders on every occasion, when adopted, and have given our men immense confidence in themselves besides largely reducing ammunition carriers.

5. On 14th June about twenty of the European miners from the Obuassi Gold Mines ran away to the Coast, leaving their comrades to hold on as best they could. Fortunately for them they were careful to avoid the vicinity of posts where British officers were quartered; their conduct was most cowardly. Mr. Webster, the Manager, with other gentlemen, behaved splendidly and refused to leave, and on the 16th June, I was able to send them a reinforcement of fifty men.

6. On 12th June I received a letter from Governor Hodgson, dated Kumasi, 4th June, in which he stated he had provisions on reduced scale to last until 11th June, and asking for help. This date was already passed, but still hoping that the statement re food supplies might not be exactly accurate, I sent Lieutenant-Colonel Wilkinson at once from Fumsu, via. Obuassi, with three hundred men and all the available reserve