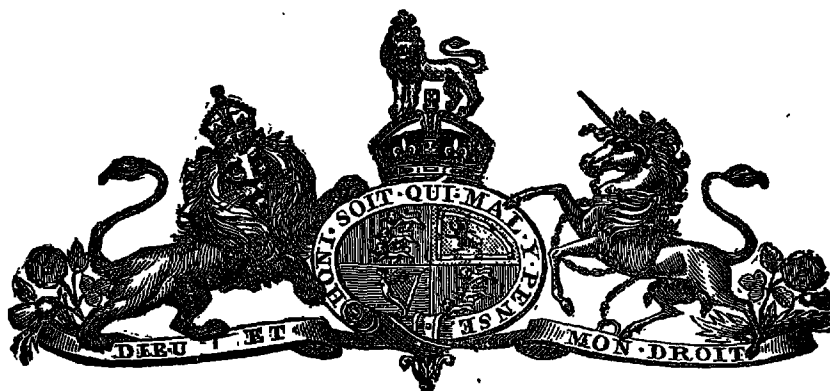




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War Office, 2nd July, 1907.

The following Despatches have been received by the Secretary of State for the Colonies:—

No. 35.

SIR F. LUGARD TO COLONIAL OFFICE.

(Received July 26, 1906.)

July 19, 1906.

Despatch relating to Field Operations.

My Lord,

I have the honour to submit a Despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel J. Hasler, second in command, Northern Nigeria Regiment, covering one from Major R. H. Goodwin, describing the operations near Sokoto in March last. I have also the honour to submit a report by Colonel Lowry Cole, D.S.O., Commandant, Northern Nigeria Regiment, upon the operations at Hadeija. I have delayed the former report until I should have received the latter, since the two formed part of what may be considered a single campaign, undertaken largely by the same troops.

2. The causes which led to the operations in March will be within your Lordship's recollection. A party composed, it would seem, partly of malcontents of the lower orders and partly of a fanatical band of religionists, who lived at a village named Satiru, 14 miles south of Sokoto, under the leadership of Mallam Isa, son of a man who in the previous year had declared himself to be a Mahdi, and of one Dan Makafo, an outlaw from French territory, who boasted that he had killed two French officers, raised the standard of revolt and inaugurated their proceedings by

the massacre of ten or twelve persons and the destruction of the neighbouring village of Tsomo, because they would not join them. The outbreak was as much directed against the Emir of Sokoto, head of the Mussulmen, as against the British, and was, in fact, hostile to all instituted authority, and the Emir was completely unaware of the movement.

3. Lieutenant F. E. Blackwood was at the time in command of the Company of Mounted Infantry at Sokoto, and, at the request of the Acting Resident (Mr. H. R. Preston-Hillary, who, with his assistant, Mr. A. G. M. Scott, accompanied him), he moved out on the morning of February 14th, towards the village of Satiru. Mr. Hillary was eager to settle the matter without bloodshed, and confident that he could do so, and it was probably solely owing to this gallant attempt to give effect to the policy of the Administration by avoiding bloodshed by every possible means, that he lost his life. Arrived at Satiru, he and Mr. Scott left the troops and rode towards the village, shouting that they had not come to fight but to discuss the causes which had led to this disturbance. Lieutenant Blackwood, it appears, fearing for the lives of his comrades, which he judged to be in danger, abandoned the military precautions he would otherwise have taken, and advanced his men at the gallop, and then, after forming square, again endeavoured to advance to their support. A mounted infantry square is not a formation which is easily capable of being advanced at the critical moment of a charge, but, if a tactical mistake was made, it was made with a most gallant and heroic intention, and it may be said that Lieutenant Blackwood lost his life in his endeavour to secure the safety of his comrades. The Satiru rebels took no heed of the invitation to a