

Staff College, Camberley,  
9th February, 1910.

The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.  
Sir,

As the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Battalions, The King's African Rifles, have now left Somaliland, I think it is a suitable moment to forward a Despatch from myself and Lieutenant-Colonel Hannington, giving a short resumé of the work in Somaliland from December, 1908, to December, 1909.

Since August, 1908, the situation in Somaliland has been unsettled, the troops in the Protectorate being practically under active service conditions the whole time. In September, 1908, Lieutenant Rose, of the 6th Battalion, was wounded in an affair with a raiding party in the Ain Valley.

In December, 1908, the Mullah took up such a threatening attitude and there was so much uneasiness amongst our friendly tribes, that reinforcements of King's African Rifles from East Africa, Uganda, and Nyasaland were ordered to the Protectorate.

I took over command of the troops in Somaliland on 20th January, 1909.

On the 22nd January a column consisting of the 1st Battalion (300 strong) and the 6th Battalion (400 strong) left Burao and occupied the Ain Valley, which was at that time threatened with a raid on a large scale.

The 3rd and 4th Battalions, King's African Rifles, did not arrive in the country till about the middle of February. The 3rd Battalion (450 strong) was sent up at once to the Ain column, and the 4th Battalion (450 strong) was kept in reserve at Burao.

Like all operations in Somaliland, the great difficulty to be met was in arranging for supply and transport for the troops.

The local purchase of camels proceeded slowly, but by degrees sufficient camels were purchased to allow of seven days' forage and rations and two days' water being carried in the field on Government transport.

The pushing up of supplies to form a four and a half months' reserve at Burao was arranged for by the Director of Supply and Transport.

With the active assistance of the civil officials of the Protectorate this big reserve was transported up from Berbera to Burao (a distance of 90 miles) by the use of locally hired transport.

In addition to arranging for the supply and transport, an Ordnance dépôt was established at Burao.

When it is remembered that practically nothing can be obtained locally in the Protectorate, except fresh meat and burden camels, it will be realised that the organization of these departments entailed a considerable amount of care and hard work upon the officers of the departments concerned.

Up to the beginning of June, when I was invalided out of the country, we never had to go short of either rations or forage.

On March 22nd, 1909, two companies of the 113th Infantry, under Major Lloyd Jones, occupied Laskhorai. It was found necessary to occupy this place as the Wasangli Somalis were much opposed to the Government, and it was thought that the occupation would bring pressure to bear upon them, and also that it would prevent the Mullah moving up into that neighbourhood. This detachment remained in occupation of Laskhorai until 6th of May, 1909, when it

was withdrawn owing to the monsoon breaking and preventing any landing on that coast taking place. From January, 1909, till June, 1909, the troops were employed on reconnaissances, and were moved about to localities threatened with raids by the dervishes. The regular troops never actually came in contact with the dervishes, but there were constant small affairs between our native scouts and parties of dervishes. In these skirmishes we lost about thirty killed and wounded, and the dervishes probably a few more.

Although the troops had not any of the excitement of active hostilities, they underwent all the fatigues and discomforts incidental to such service. There was not a tent in the force, except four or five for the use of the hospital. The allowance of baggage was limited to the amount that could be carried on the march. The fatigues entailed by the necessity for storing water were heavy and continuous. In April and May the heat was excessive and shade a luxury difficult to obtain. The troops were, except during the rains, on a short allowance of water, the water itself being extraordinarily repulsive. I would particularly draw attention to the fact that, under these somewhat trying conditions, the discipline and spirit of the troops were beyond praise.

The following Officers and non-commissioned Officers did exceptionally good work, and I would wish to draw attention to their services.

Captain The Honourable H. Dawnay, D.S.O., Rifle Brigade, was my Chief Staff Officer. It was mainly owing to his ability and keenness that all the arrangements for organising and maintaining the Force worked so smoothly.

Brevet Major H. Pope-Hennessy, D.S.O., Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, was D.A.A. and Q.M.G. Although he is senior in Army rank to Captain Dawnay, he worked most loyally under that officer. He is a hard-working, capable officer.

Captain Dansey (Reserve of Officers), Political Officer, Somaliland Protectorate, who acted as Intelligence Officer. Captain Dansey had a difficult task in dealing with our so-called friendlies and in arranging for the organisation of the native scouts. He was of the greatest assistance to me.

Major (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) J. A. Hannington, Indian Army. Lieutenant-Colonel Hannington was commanding the 6th Battalion K.A.R., and I handed over command of the troops to him when I was invalided. He always gave me the most loyal support. A good hard-working officer.

Major G. E. Pigott, D.S.O., Army Service Corps, was Director of Supply and Transport, and he was also responsible for the Ordnance Department. Major Pigott had an exceptionally difficult task; his arrangements were excellent.

Captain N. G. Anderson, Army Service Corps, was Assistant Director of Supply and Transport after the arrival of Major Pigott; previous to the arrival of the latter officer Captain Anderson was in charge of the department, and was of the greatest assistance to me.

I should also like to call attention to the good services of the following Officers and Warrant Officer:—

Major Woodall, Army Pay Department.

Captain (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) B. R. Graham, Indian Army, commanding the 4th Battalion, The K.A.R.