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MONDAY, 16 DECEMBER, 1918.

War Office,
16th December, 1918.

The Secretary of State for War has received the following Despatch from Lieutenant-General Sir J. L. van Deventer, K.C.B., C.M.G., Commanding-in-Chief, East African Force:—

Dar-es-Salaam,
30th September, 1918.

My Lord,

In my last Despatch I brought the narrative of operations in East Africa down to the escape across the Rovuma into Portuguese East Africa of the German Commander with the residue of his force, consisting, according to recent figures, of about 320 Europeans, 2,000 askari, two guns and thirty to thirty-five machine guns. The askari were organised in fifteen companies, of 120-150 rifles each.

When the German force crossed the Rovuma, in the last week of November, 1917, it was short of ammunition and food, wearied by the close pursuit, and depressed by the success of the operations which had cleared German East Africa.

The engagement at Ngomano on November 25th had, however, resulted in the capture of

a considerable quantity of rifles, ammunition and food; and these were, shortly after, supplemented by the further capture of isolated Portuguese posts at Nanguare and in the Mkula Hills.

These successes naturally revived the morale of the force. Colonel Von Lettow Vorbeck's remaining troops, both European and African, were the survivors of the fittest. The askari were all veteran fighters; and, as I noted in my last Despatch, such men, backed by well-served machine guns, are, in their native bush, worthy opponents for the best troops.

2. It was evident that the difficulties of operating in Portuguese East Africa would be considerable.

The portion of Portuguese East Africa bounded by the Rovuma and Zambesi Rivers, Lake Nyasa and the sea, is but little smaller than France. Much of this vast area was a terra incognita to Europeans, and no accurate maps were available. In some parts, the natives were as yet unsubdued, while in others they were in more or less open rebellion.

There were but few roads, and no railways except 30 miles of 3 ft. 6 in. gauge starting

from Lumbo, on the mainland west of Mozambique.

Little was known about the rivers; but the Lujenda and Lurio proved to be of considerable volume, especially in the rainy season; and the Licungo and Melela, flowing into the sea north of Quelimane, were only passable by a few fords.

The central districts (which the enemy would naturally make for) were reported to be well elevated, healthy and fertile.

In fact, Portuguese East Africa appeared an ideal theatre for the operations of a commander of a compact and mobile force, tied to no base, independent of lines of communication, and adept in the art of "living on the country," whose aim would probably be to avoid encounters with superior forces and to remain in being as long as possible.

It was therefore clear that the forthcoming operations, though on a much smaller scale than those of 1917, would be arduous and exacting, and had to be considered in the light of a new undertaking.

My own aim was twofold: to prevent the enemy in any force returning to German East Africa and to get to grips with him as soon and as often as possible, for though he might enlist new askari he could not replace his Europeans.

The campaign of 1916 and 1917 had shown that it was practically impossible to round up a mobile enemy in the difficult terrain of East Africa, and, from the character of the German Commander, it did not appear probable that any general surrender would take place until his forces had been so reduced as to be innocuous. The campaign had therefore perforce to be one of virtual extermination, and I ordered my commanders to miss no chance of fighting, and thus cause enemy casualties, whatever the risk.

3. The enemy, after the engagement at Ngomano, travelled very rapidly southwards up the Lujenda River, followed by the 25th Cavalry and part of the Nigerian Brigade; but when our cavalry patrols reached Nanguare on the 19th of December, they found the enemy had already gone, apparently heading for the fertile area between Muembe and Mtarica. He was thus completely out of reach of my forces from the Lindi area. Meanwhile, General Northey moved the 1st King's African Rifles Column to the southern end of Lake Nyasa, and landed the 2nd Cape Corps at Mtengula, on the eastern shore of the lake.

At the request of the Portuguese I arranged to despatch a force to Port Amelia, and the leading troops of the Gold Coast Regiment disembarked at that port on the 14th of December, by which time the Portuguese reported that a detachment of the enemy had occupied Medo, some 130 miles westward of Port Amelia.

The gradual rise of the Rovuma signalled the advent of the rainy season, when my troops on the southern bank would be in danger of being cut off from their supplies; I therefore withdrew them, leaving the Nigerian Brigade on the north bank opposite Ngomano, with one battalion at Massasi. The 3rd/4th K.A.R. was despatched to Tunduru, and General Northey held the Songea area in strength. The rest of the troops in the Lindi district formed a reserve at Ndanda. These measures put me in a good position to deal with any attempt on

the part of the enemy to recross into German East Africa.

4. On the 19th December a detachment of the 2nd Cape Corps left Mtengula to occupy Unango, 50 miles eastwards, with a view to developing a line towards Mtarica; and on the 21st December, Colonel Hawthorn's Column (1st/1st and 2nd/1st K.A.R., with 3rd/1st in reserve) had reached a point 15 miles north-north-east of Namwera, and was heading for the Upper Lujenda about Luambala.

The Gold Coast Regiment completed their landing at Port Amelia by the end of December, and began to develop a line towards Medo. As it was evident that this would be one of our main lines of advance from the sea, I despatched the 4th/4th K.A.R. and one section 22nd Mountain Battery to Port Amelia, forming the whole into a column under command of Colonel Rose, Gold Coast Regiment.

Between the Port Amelia-Medo line and the Rovuma the Portuguese Forces, based on Mocimboa-da-Praia, held the Mocimboa-do-Rovuma-Chomba line.

My intention was thus to form a barrier to the north of the Rovuma, and to close in on the enemy from east and west simultaneously. Operations were to be continued throughout the rainy season, as far as possible, without intermission.

The enemy's dispositions at the beginning of January were approximately as follows:—Headquarters and five companies, Mtarica; about Muembe, three companies; near Luambala, three companies; Medo and eastwards, four companies.

5. By the end of the first week in January 750 rifles of the 2nd Cape Corps had reached Unango, and Colonel Hawthorn had about 1,300 rifles on the line Katuli to Luambala. Heavy rain was being experienced, which greatly impeded operations.

On 7th January Colonel Hawthorn attacked an enemy force holding both banks of the Lujenda River and Luambala and drove it northwards. Heavy floods in the Lujenda temporarily hindered his advance, but by the 15th he succeeded in reaching and occupying Luambala after some opposition. On the 14th the 2nd Cape Corps, advancing from Unango, occupied Likopolue.

Meanwhile, Colonel Rose, from Port Amelia, had pushed his advanced troops inland to Pamune, some 50 miles south-west of Port Amelia, the enemy's activities being confined to patrols, and raiding parties to the coast. In this area, too, the rains seriously hindered operations.

On 21st January the 2nd Cape Corps occupied Muembe unopposed, the enemy retiring towards Mtarica, while the enemy opposing Colonel Hawthorn also fell back down the Lujenda.

At Port Amelia the main body of Colonel Rose's force had, by the end of January, occupied Ankuabe, with patrols well forward to Meza, 23 miles to the west, where the enemy was reported to be in position.

6. From the middle of January onwards rain had been constant, and it was clear that the wet season had set in with full violence. This meant that operations would necessarily be slow, and might occasionally be at a complete standstill for days on end. The use of motor transport could only be intermittent, and the length of the lines involved made it very difficult to maintain adequate forces, by

porter transport only, in the central area occupied by the enemy. The enemy advanced posts could, however, be driven back in order to limit the area available to him for foraging purposes, to inflict damage on his force, and to keep it constantly harassed; while tired units could be rested, and preparations made for a rapid advance as soon as the rains should moderate. Operations continued steadily on these lines.

7. The 2nd Cape Corps occupied Mtarica on the 3rd February after some opposition by the enemy rearguard. The enemy retired towards Lucinje and Nanungu, and this general direction was also followed by the enemy force from further up the Lujenda, which was retiring in front of Colonel Hawthorn. Thus, by the middle of February, General Northey had completed the clearance of the left bank of the Lujenda. The enemy's opposition had been constant, but not severe. The enemy's intention was apparently to proceed to the Mwalia-Medo area and into the districts along the Lurio River. Here he would be in the centre of Northern Portuguese East Africa, and at the greatest possible distance from either Lake Nyasa or the sea.

General Northey's pursuit continued, and by the 22nd February Colonel Hawthorn's advanced troops reached Mtende, some 75 miles east of Luambala Boma, and engaged two enemy companies, which retired eastward again during the night.

On the Port Amelia side Colonel Rose occupied Meza on the 26th after slight opposition.

Early in February I visited the Acting Governor-General of Portuguese East Africa at Lourenco Marques in connection with the decision of our respective Governments that the Senior Officer of the Allies should command all forces operating against the Germans, and that a combined Headquarters Staff should be formed. I met with a most cordial reception, and Major Perry da Camara, of the Portuguese Cavalry, joined my Staff. After meeting General Northey at Beira, and inspecting the Port Amelia line, I visited Colonel Rosa, Commander-in-Chief of the Portuguese forces, at Mocimboa-da-Praia, and formally assumed command of the Allied forces.

8. By the end of February the enemy was concentrated in the Medo-Msalu-Nanungu area, with active foraging patrols pushed up the Lurio River to the south-west. The native population in the Lurio district was giving the enemy considerable assistance with supplies, etc.; in this particular area, however, this was more from fear than choice, and the natives afterwards helped us in the same manner when we advanced.

The main object of both General Northey's and Colonel Rose's forces was to bring the enemy to bay, if possible, in his present area, or, failing this, to drive him south across the Lurio. In the latter eventuality, it seemed possible that many of his askari would desert, as it was known that they were most unwilling to go further south. In fact, an appreciable number of desertions had already taken place.

In preparation for a possible move southwards, General Northey was directed to send a battalion from Nyasaland into the fertile Namule district, 60-70 miles east of Lake Shirwa, while reconnaissances were taken in hand with a view to the despatch of a battalion

to Mozambique, to proceed thence into the districts round Nampula in support of the Portuguese forces in that area. One company, 3rd/2nd K.A.R., was sent in advance from Lindi via Mozambique with this object, and reached Nampula on March 17th.

The Portuguese Commander-in-Chief was asked to prepare a mobile column of some 1,500 rifles at Chomba to co-operate from the north against the enemy in the Medo-Msalu area; he was also concentrating Portuguese troops south of the Lurio on the Kibaue-Inagu line, to hold the central sector between General Northey's battalion and the battalion from Mozambique. In addition, he was arranging for the pacification of the Barue country south of the Zambesi, which was reported to be suffering from unrest as a result of the action of enemy emissaries.

9. The enemy showed no sign of moving, and evidently intended to pass the rainy season in the area north of the Lurio. The exact position of his main body was not at the moment certain, but it was clear that it could be brought in a few marches against any threatened point.

By 10th March General Northey reported that no enemy had been found up to a point about 100 miles east-north-east of Luambala, and that Malokotera, where his advanced troops from Lake Amaramba had arrived on the 5th, was clear. On the same date Colonel Rose's advanced guard drove an enemy detachment from Poluvu, about 27 miles east of Medo Boma. The latter was reported to be occupied in some force, and it seemed probable that the enemy would offer considerable resistance at such an important road centre.

I decided therefore to despatch the 1st/2nd and 2nd/2nd K.A.R., and the other section of the 22nd Mountain Battery, from Lindi, to form a second column at Port Amelia, and placed both columns under Brigadier-General Edwards, whose services had become available on reduction of line of communication headquarters. These additional troops were accordingly sent to Port Amelia during the last fortnight of March, and the remainder of the 3rd/2nd K.A.R. was sent to Mozambique.

During the 9th and 10th April General Edwards closed on Medo, the enemy advanced troops gradually falling back on their main position, held by about six companies. The centre of this position was formed by a rocky outcrop some hundreds of feet high and over a mile long (known as Chirimba Hill), running east and west about half a mile south of the main road; the enemy main camp lying just west of this ridge.

By the evening of the 10th the advanced guard of Colonel Rose's Column had reached the eastern end of Chirimba Hill, and during the night they seized the low knoll forming the extreme end of the ridge.

On the afternoon of the 11th April the 2nd K.A.R. Column under Colonel Giffard was despatched with orders to get astride the Mloco road running south from Medo, and thence move on Medo early on the 12th.

This movement was carried out successfully, but had been anticipated by the enemy, who kept half his force well to the west of Chirimba Hill in readiness to meet the turning movement.

Colonel Giffard, on reaching the Mloco road on the morning of the 12th, turned north to attack Medo, but was counter-attacked. In

thick bush, by three enemy companies, which were later joined by another. From 1.30 p.m. onwards fighting was heavy and close, but all enemy attacks were repulsed. Meanwhile, Colonel Rose, driving back the two companies holding Chirimba Hill, occupied Medo. At 5.20 p.m. he joined hands with Giffard, but the enemy got away before further attacks could develop. Casualties had been fairly heavy on both sides.

10. General Northey's troops from the west and north-west were advancing simultaneously with the eastern movement on Medo, in spite of heavy rains and difficulties of supply (the Lujenda River being now 250 yards wide, deep and swift). On the 5th April, Mahua was occupied, and on the 9th a detachment of 2nd/1st K.A.R., under Captain Debenham, completely dispersed an enemy company about 40 miles south-east of Mtarica, capturing both its machine guns. A smart bit of work. On the 11th, two companies of the 3rd/1st K.A.R., advancing from Mahua on Nanungu, had a sharp engagement some 25 miles south-west of the latter place.

General Edwards continued the pursuit from Medo, though much hampered by the inclement weather. On the 17th April the enemy was found in an entrenched position some 18 miles west of Medo, and fighting continued all day, the enemy retiring during the night. The country was exceedingly difficult, the jungle being so thick that roads were mere tunnels through bamboo thickets and elephant grass, while long stretches of track appeared more suitable for boats than for motor transport. Successive positions flanking the road had to be cleared, and progress was slow. Mwalia was occupied on the 20th, and by the 22nd it was evident that the enemy intended to retire to Nanungu, where the bulk of his force was now reported to be. I accordingly ordered General Edwards to push on towards Nanungu, and General Northey to direct his Mahua troops on that place, while maintaining and strengthening his detachments to the north-west to prevent a break-back in that direction.

I asked the Portuguese Commander-in-Chief to advance the Portuguese Mobile Column further south to Msalu Boma, to close the gap between Lucinje and Balama. I also ordered the remainder of the 3rd/3rd K.A.R. from the Lindi area to cross the Rovuma and support the company of the same battalion already sent to Nanguare.

A successful attack on an enemy convoy was made by a detachment of the 2nd/2nd K.A.R. between Balama and Koronje, all spare rifles and ammunition of Kohl's command (six companies), and important documents being captured. The enemy retaliated by capturing a small post at Kanene on the Mahua line of communication on 30th April.

11. At the end of April I had an interview with the Governor-General of Portuguese East Africa at Mozambique, and after inspecting the Mozambique line of communication, went inland from Port Amelia to Medo and Balama, to discuss the situation with General Edwards, and co-ordinate plans.

By the 1st May General Edwards had pushed on to Koronje Hill, 25 miles beyond Mwalia. The enemy had taken up a strongly entrenched position at the foot of this hill, from the summit of which he obtained excellent observation of our movements. Close fighting took place

throughout the 1st May, our troops finally occupying the hostile position on the 2nd.

The enemy continued their retirement along the Koronje-Nanungu road.

For supply reasons it now became necessary to halt General Edwards' main force for a few days. His advanced troops, however, continued to press the enemy, and, by the 8th May, had occupied Milinch Ridge, about 10 miles west of Koronje.

On the 2nd May a detachment of General Northey's Cape Corps moved on Chisona, and on the following day their patrols down the Msalu River gained touch with General Edwards' patrols.

On the 4th May Colonel Barton (3rd/1st K.A.R. and half 2nd/1st K.A.R.), who was advancing on Nanungu from Mahua, engaged an enemy company about five hours west of Nanungu. The enemy were dispersed and retired eastwards. Colonel Barton pursued, and, on the 5th May, his leading company surprised and most pluckily attacked a large enemy camp west of Nanungu. The enemy immediately counter-attacked vigorously, with a force of from four to five companies. Sharp fighting at close quarters lasted throughout the whole day, the enemy finally withdrawing under cover of night, over 30 Germans and 100 askaris having been killed and wounded in this engagement. Colonel Barton was also wounded, and Lieutenant-Colonel Griffiths took over command of his column.

12. So far no enemy movement to the north had been observed, but all evidence of prisoners tended to show that Von Lettow intended to move in that direction. I therefore ordered General Edwards to divert one of his columns to the north bank of the Msalu River, retaining the other on the Koronje-Nanungu road.

If the enemy remained at Nanungu I intended to attack him simultaneously from the west and north-west with General Northey's force, and from the east and north-east with General Edwards' force; the whole under General Edwards, who was on the spot.

In accordance with these plans, Colonel Rose moved north-west from Koronje, crossed the Msalu River, and continued his movement up the left bank until he established touch with General Northey's troops at Chisona on the 19th May.

On the 17th May Colonel Giffard resumed his advance westwards, encountering little opposition, and on the morning of the 19th he entered Nanungu unopposed, the enemy having moved further south-west along the Mahua road. A hospital containing 11 German, 33 askari, and 43 porters was found in Nanungu.

The enemy's main force was now concentrated in the vicinity of Korewa, 24 miles south-west of Nanungu, and, on the 20th May, Colonel Rose recrossed the Msalu River, advancing on Korewa from the north.

On the 22nd May severe fighting took place amongst rocky hills and thick bush in the vicinity of Korewa. The enemy's rearguard was attacked from east and west by Colonels Giffard and Griffiths respectively, whilst the latter was, in his turn, attacked from the south-west by part of the enemy's main force, which had already drawn off to southward of the Nanungu-Mahua road.

The enemy were roughly handled in this engagement. Eleven Germans and 49 askari

were killed or taken prisoner. One field gun, one machine gun, large quantities of shells and small arms ammunition, several hundreds of porters, and the complete baggage of four companies were also captured.

Owing to the exceptionally difficult country to the north, Colonel Rose was unable to participate in this action, but took up the pursuit on the following day, while Colonel Griffiths moved west to anticipate any enemy move in that direction. The enemy retired rapidly in a southerly direction towards the Lurio River, leaving only a rearguard in touch with our pursuing troops.

13. A new stage of the campaign had now begun. Colonel Von Lettow Vorbeck had still some 240 Europeans and 1,300 to 1,400 askari, with 30 or more machine guns and one gun. He was, however, entirely without food depôts in any part of the country, and there were indications that his small arms ammunition was beginning to run low.

As it was essential to deny him the respite which he needed in order to exploit fresh food areas, and to replenish his failing supplies, I decided to press the pursuit with all vigour, and at the same time to hold the line Fort Johnston-Mahua-Medo-Port Amelia sufficiently strongly to prevent a break northwards on his part.

The Gold Coast Regiment were now worn, as their men had been on almost continuous active service since August, 1914. I decided therefore to withdraw them to the above line, with a view to releasing them from service in East Africa as soon as possible, while General Edwards organised a mobile column under Colonel Giffard (1st/2nd and 2nd/2nd K.A.R.), which immediately took up the pursuit.

Colonel Griffiths, who, after the action at Korewa, had again been placed under General Northey's command, also pursued vigorously on a line to the west of and approximately parallel to Colonel Giffard.

On the 28th May an enemy hospital, containing 15 Germans, 47 askaris and 31 porters, fell into our hands at a point 35 miles south of Korewa. It was a considerable advantage to the enemy that, when inconveniently hampered by sick and wounded, he could simply leave them behind for us to pick up.

By the 31st May the enemy's main body was on the Lurio River, near Vatiwa, while their advanced guard was already pushing forward towards Malema and their rearguard was engaged with Colonel Giffard between the Lulumwana and Lurio Rivers.

By the 1st June the enemy, except for a few patrols, had crossed to the south of the Lurio River.

14. The terrain of Portuguese East Africa, between Vatiwa and the sea, is curiously diverse. As far south as Inagu the country is extremely difficult; rugged heights rise in every direction out of a sea of almost impenetrable bush; paths are few, and cultivation scarce, while the inhabitants are a wild and only partially subdued race, bitterly hostile to their masters, and therefore ready temporarily to help any enemy of the latter. South of Inagu cultivation gradually increases, and the country gets richer. On approaching the sea coast, one of the most prosperous parts of Portuguese East Africa, where the numerous

Praza Companies have their valuable holdings, is reached.

The enemy had now definitely committed himself to a move south of the Lurio River, and it was probable that, unless I could cut him off near Malema or Inagu, he would make for this rich southern area, and might even approach Quelimane.

I therefore asked the Portuguese Commander-in-Chief to withdraw his mobile column from the Chomba area towards his base at Mocimboa-da-Praia, and to transfer sufficient troops to Quelimane to ensure the safety of the port, and also to form a mobile column for operations inland if required. He cordially agreed with this plan, and further details of the scheme were worked out when he visited me at Dar-es-Salaam on June 8th.

15. It now appeared certain that the Mozambique-Malema line would assume considerable importance. To save shipping, it was essential to avoid the transfer of troops, motor-cars, etc., by sea from one line to another as much as possible; work was therefore commenced on a lateral road from Medo to a crossing over the Lurio near Nanripo, whence it would be continued through Mcuburi to Nampua.

The Portuguese authorities afforded us valuable assistance in the Mozambique harbour with tugs and lighters; they also gave us liberal transport facilities on the Lumbo-Mnapo Railway; and the Portuguese Engineers carried out most useful work on the motor road running westwards from Mnapo.

In order to endeavour to block the enemy at or about Malema, the 2nd/4th K.A.R., who were in the rich Regone area, were ordered to proceed to Inagu; a combined column of British and Portuguese troops concentrated at Ribaue en route to Malema, and the 1st/4th K.A.R. were moved to Malokotera. Our troops following the enemy southwards from Nanungu were delayed on the Lurio River, the few fords on the line of the enemy's retreat being held by his rearguard, and it was not until the 5th June that a passage was forced. Colonel Giffard then pushed southwards against constant and stubborn opposition, the dense and difficult country affording very great facilities for rearguard action.

The enemy's main body had travelled with great speed after crossing the Lurio, and, evading our converging columns on the Malema line, reached Alto Molocue on the 12th, an advanced party entering Ille on the 15th. So rapid had been the enemy's movements that he captured valuable stores and supplies which the Portuguese had not been able to remove in time at Alto Molocue and Ille.

A brief halt on the Malema line was necessary in order to complete my arrangements for switching my main line of communication from the Port Amelia to the Mozambique line; but on the 16th three columns pushed southwards. General Edwards also moved south from the Port Amelia line, and on the 19th assumed command in the Mozambique theatre of operations.

Towards the end of June Major-General Northey left for England, preparatory to taking up the Governorship of British East Africa; and Brigadier-General Hawthorn assumed command of the troops operating from Nyasaland.

16. The first Portuguese troops for Quelimane, accompanied by Colonel Rosa, left

Mocimboa-da-Praia on the 15th and arrived on the 20th. I had meanwhile offered Colonel Rosa the services of some British troops for Quelimane, and, on his acceptance of this, I arranged to send down headquarters and three companies of the 2nd/3rd K.A.R., then at Lindi.

The port of Quelimane is only accessible to ships of small draught, owing to the shallowness of the bar; but the Portuguese very kindly placed two of their vessels at my disposal, and the Senior Naval Officer greatly assisted me by detailing the collier "Hebburn" to take down the first detachment of K.A.R. By the end of the month, one company of K.A.R. and 600-700 Portuguese native troops had been pushed out to Nhamacurra, which covers an important sugar factory, and is the terminus of the tram-line running towards Lugella. Another company of the 2nd/3rd was en route to Nhamacurra; and the rest were due at Quelimane on the 6th July. Major Gore-Brown, 2nd/3rd K.A.R., was in command of the combined force at Nhamacurra. The Gunboats "Thistle" and "Adamastor" were covering the town of Quelimane, and a couple of hundred British and Portuguese marines had been landed to reinforce the garrison. Meanwhile, the enemy was steadily pushing south, capturing further valuable stores and supplies at Mujeba and Lugella. One party was known to have crossed the Licungo River at Lugella, but the whereabouts of the main body was not known. Reliable information was extremely hard to obtain, as the enemy had suborned many of the native Chiefs and headmen by lavish presents of cloth and other goods captured by them between Alto Molocue and Lugella. Thus the enemy not only denied information to us, but was able to depend on early and accurate news of our movements. The same difficulty was experienced by us during the whole time that the enemy was in the coastal zone. Our columns were doing everything possible to get to grips with the enemy but were frequently led astray by false reports. On getting to the southward of Mulevalla they were occasionally completely out of touch with their Headquarters and with one another as the rapidity of their movements made it impossible for cable parties to keep up with them and pack wireless has a very small and uncertain range in thick bush. The difficulties of concerted action always great in bush country were thus very greatly enhanced.

17. On the afternoon of July 1st a sudden attack was made on the Western sector of Nhamacurra by three enemy companies. The enemy had undoubtedly received accurate information about the position as the attack was pushed straight in between the Portuguese Western flank and the river. The garrison of about 500 native troops was surprised; and, though the Portuguese Officers and N.C.O.s fought bravely, the whole of this sector of the defence, including two Q.F. guns (one rendered useless), was in the enemy's hands within a very short time. The enemy consolidated his position, and the Portuguese garrison of the centre sector retired by order to the British position on the east, which was now held by about 300 K.A.R. The enemy attacked on the 2nd July and again on the 3rd, but was repulsed. At 3 p.m. on the 3rd, however, fire was opened from one of the captured guns, seconded by a large number of Maxims, under cover of which a determined assault was pushed in, which carried the defences on the north-east face. The gar-

risson then retired, maintaining good order until they found themselves penned in an angle of the river, when a considerable number were drowned in crossing. Subsequent information showed that the main enemy force had marched down the eastern bank of the Licungo River, and, crossing at or about Maley, arrived at Nhamacurra on the third, in time to carry through the final attack.

At this time, our columns were on the line Mulevalla—Mujeba—Mugella—V. Esperanca; and all were ordered to converge, on Nhamacurra, in hopes of pinning the enemy between our troops and the sea.

False reports, however, diverted the bulk of our pursuing troops too far to the west; and by the time we had closed on Nhamacurra, the enemy had slipped away to the eastward, and, evading a force at V. Maganja, was temporarily lost touch with in the area bounded by Mujeba—Murrua—Muatama—V. Maganja.

18. Steps were at once taken to re-distribute our forces. Quelimane was secured; the line of the Licungo strongly held between Lugella and Nhamacurra; and parallel columns sent from V. Maganja towards Ociva, and from Mujeba towards Murrua.

The enemy crossed the Melela River on the 13th, and held up our V. Maganja column there for three days, holding all available fords in strength. He then moved north-east, and, crossing the Molocue River at Tibe, advanced with great speed on Namirrué, which was held by a small garrison of about 100 men to cover our road-making parties from Murrupula and Alto Ligonha.

After a gallant resistance of two days, the post was taken on the 23rd, many of the garrison having been killed or wounded. An attempt at relief by a small column from Alto Ligonha was held off; and our main pursuing columns were unable to arrive in time, chiefly owing to the difficulty of getting accurate information as to the line taken by the enemy.

19. Meanwhile, I had been visiting Port Amelia and Mozambique; and arrived at Quelimane, where I had arranged to meet the Governor-General of Portuguese East Africa, on July 22nd.

At our conference it was suggested that it might be desirable to allot separate zones of action to the British and Portuguese forces; and it was finally decided that the Portuguese should hold the sea-ports from Quelimane to Antonio Annes, and operate inland from them as required, while the British operated south of the Mozambique—Malema line. It was probable that Antonio Annes would assume considerable importance in the near future, and I requested that it should be strongly held and heavily entrenched.

At Quelimane, as at all times, my relations with the Governor-General of Portuguese East Africa were marked by the utmost cordiality.

20. On the 29th July I arrived at Mozambique, and thence went to Nampula to meet General Edwards.

After the Namirrué fight the enemy made a rapid move to the north-west, but a couple of battalions of General Northey's force had by this time been moved to the Alto Molocue—Alto Ligonha line; the enemy, probably hearing of these, turned on his tracks and went almost due east, and by the beginning of August he had established himself near Chalaua, in the rich country lying between the

Ligonha and Meluli Rivers, and was raiding in every direction.

The whole of this district was practically in rebellion, and the enemy, partly because of this, and partly on account of lavish presents of stores looted from Lorde, Guorne and other places, was very actively helped by the natives, who brought in large quantities of food and willingly provided guides and information.

Since the enemy crossed the Malema line, about June 10th, desertions had practically ceased. This was doubtless due in some measure to the very great distance which now lay between their homes and the theatre of operations; for most of the askari were of the Wanyamwezi tribe, living in the neighbourhood of Tabora. A weightier reason, perhaps, was the attraction of the loot of the sea-board areas.

21. As soon as the enemy definitely moved south of the Lurio, I began to transfer the bulk of my technical troops to the Mozambique line in order to construct the numerous motor-roads necessary to enable me to supply my troops, and to move them by motor transport in case of emergency.

The lateral road from Medo to Nampula was soon completed, and mechanical transport was transferred by this route to the Mozambique line. The Mnapo-Chinga road was pushed forward to Ribaua and Malema, Engineers of General Northey's force at the same time extending the road from Nyasaland through Malokotera to link up.

The Portuguese were making a motor-road from Ngomano through Chomba to Medo. By the end of August it was therefore possible to go by car from the Rovuma through Medo, Nampula and Malema to Zomba in Nyasaland.

Subsidiary motor-tracks were constructed from Nampula to Corrane, and thence through Nametil and Calipo to Murrupula, whence other roads were made to Chinga, Namirrua, and Alto Molocue.

Telegraphic communication was also pushed on rapidly, and, by making use of existing Portuguese lines, repairing those that had been destroyed by the enemy, and erecting new lines when necessary, through communication with Nyasaland was established via Alto Molocue and Ille, and Quelimane was linked up with Mozambique via Mulevalla and Mucubella.

22. Thanks to my improved communications I was able to transfer my troops rapidly to meet the new situation caused by the enemy's move to Chalaua.

A column was moved through Corrane to Mezeze to link up with the Portuguese at Antonio Annes, and thus block any eastward move towards my line of communication between Nampula and Mozambique. Other columns were concentrated at Murrupula and Calipo, while the more tired troops were brought temporarily into reserve.

These distributions were completed by August 8th, and on the 9th our columns commenced a converging movement on Chalaua.

For a moment it really looked as if the enemy was going to fight, for his whole force moved north on the 10th as if to meet us; but we were again disappointed, and closed on Chalaua only to find an evacuated camp. The enemy first rapidly moved southwards to Metil, then turned westwards via Tibe and Ape (abandoning a 75-mm. Q.F. gun at Tibe), and by August 20th was west of the Melela River, in the Ille-Napari-Mulevalla triangle, which

was a fertile area. The advanced guard entered Ille on the 22nd, the main body passing through that place on the following day.

Meanwhile, I had ordered General Hawthorn to place a column at Regone, to flank any attempt against Nyasaland; a battalion was moved to Malokotera; the 2nd K.A.R. Column (1st/2nd, 2nd/2nd, 3rd/2nd K.A.R.) marched rapidly to Alto Molocue; while the nearest troops to the enemy followed him in direct pursuit.

By the evening of August 24th the enemy had reached Numarro, and drove the advanced troops of the Regone column back towards the latter place.

On the night of the 26th the enemy demonstrated against Regone, and, under cover of this, worked his force round to the north, and on the morning of the 27th was on the Lioma road heading northwards.

By the evening of the 28th his advanced troops were near Mogomo, the Regone Column being closely engaged with the rearguard. By this time the 1st/1st K.A.R. had been moved from Malokotera to Lioma, while the 2nd K.A.R. Column had one battalion at Inagu and two at Muanhupa.

On August 30th the main enemy force attacked the 1st/1st K.A.R., who were entrenched south of Lioma. The fighting was close, and the enemy's attacks were pushed in with determination, but all failed before the stubborn defence of the 1st/1st, who were reinforced during the day by the 3rd/2nd. The enemy drew off at 10 p.m., and was followed up by our troops.

On the morning of August 31st the enemy's force was located five miles south-east of Lioma moving in a north-easterly direction, and was at once attacked. It was hoped that the enemy might have been cornered, but the rugged country and thick bush made operations very difficult, and he finally broke away to the northward.

In the two days' fighting the enemy lost 17 whites killed and 11 captured, while several more were known to have been wounded. His known loss in askari was about 200. Nearly 100,000 rounds of ammunition, much baggage and stores, and a small hospital fell into our hands.

23. The known casualties inflicted on the enemy since he crossed the Rovuma have been:

Europeans, killed and captured	... 140
Askari, killed and captured	... 1100

A good many other casualties from sickness and wounds have certainly occurred.

Some of the enemy's German East African porters, who are mostly of fighting tribes, may have been enlisted to replace casualties; but I do not consider that Colonel Von Lettow Vorbeck's force, at the present time (August 31st, 1918) consists of more than 170 Europeans and about 900 askari.

This force is very mobile; for a small body of men can live in country where a larger force would starve without lines of communication. It has also considerable powers of defence, owing to the number of machine guns still in its possession. It may yet, therefore, take some time, and a good deal of arduous marching, before the enemy is finally accounted for.

It may appear extraordinary that the enemy should so often have succeeded in evading our

converging columns: But the German force, well guided, generally avoided the regular tracks, and moved by native paths through the heart of the bush, which is often so thick and difficult that troops may march and counter-march within a few miles of one another without gaining touch. And there were over 100,000 square miles of such bush between the Rovuma and the Zambesi.

24. Except for a small body of K.A.R. Mounted Infantry, which did sterling work throughout, the whole stress of the campaign was borne by Infantry, of whom certain battalions of K.A.R. and the Gold Coast Regiment were the most prominent.

The distances covered were tremendous. To take a by no means unique example, a column composed of the 1st/2nd and 2nd/2nd K.A.R. marched, between May 23rd and July 15th, 450 "map" miles. The actual distance covered must have been very much more. Columns frequently out-distanced their supplies, and had to supplement their scanty rations by country produce—a difficult matter when following the enemy. For where the German reaps, there is little left to glean. In spite of all hardships and disappointments, the spirit of the troops never flagged; and I wish to express my sincere appreciation of their fine work.

The following immediate rewards have been granted by me during the period 1st December, 1917, to 30th September, 1918:—

Bars to D.S.O.	...	...	...	...	2
D.S.O.	...	...	...	...	8
Bars to Military Cross	...	...	...	...	4
Military Cross	...	...	...	...	26
Imperial D.C.M.	...	...	...	...	24
Bars to K.A.R., D.C.M.	...	...	...	...	2
K.A.R., D.C.M.	...	...	...	...	23
W.A.F.F., D.C.M.	...	...	...	...	5
Military Medal	...	...	...	...	66
Indian Distinguished Service Medal	...	...	...	...	5
Imperial Meritorious Service Medal	...	...	...	...	6
Monetary rewards (to Porters, etc.)	...	...	...	...	38

25. While the forces in the field were engaged in their ceaseless pursuit, much work was being done behind the fighting line, not only in giving the troops adequate support, but also in effecting the reduction and economy demanded by the decreasing size and importance of the campaign.

The release of all European and Indian combatant units (except Mountain Artillery and Engineers) was carried out as speedily as shipping arrangements permitted, from the end of November, 1917, onwards; this was followed by the despatch of the Nigerian Brigade to the West Coast in February. A very considerable reduction in the force was thus effected; and I was then in a position to make corresponding reductions in Headquarters and Staffs, both at General Headquarters and in subordinate formations. The Headquarters of the line of communications was abolished, and its functions carried on direct from General Headquarters. Civil administration was gradually extended to the whole of German East Africa, with the exception of the Lindi and Songea districts. The permanent garrison was installed and distributed to its respective stations. The principle of administering the King's African Rifles direct from K.A.R. Headquarters in Nairobi was extended and developed. Final evacuation of sick, and consequent closing down or concentration of hospitals and posts was steadily proceeded with.

Later in the campaign, it was further decided to release the Gold Coast Regiment, the 24th Mountain Battery, the 2nd Cape Corps from General Northey's force, and the West India Regiments. In short, every possible effort was made to consult Imperial interests, and to release every man that could possibly be spared for service in other theatres of war.

26. The task of conducting a campaign in the territory of an Ally must always be a delicate one; and I hold myself singularly fortunate to have had the valued and whole-hearted assistance of His Excellency Pedro Francisco Massano de Amorin, Governor-General of Portuguese East Africa, who helped me in every possible way. I also owe Colonel Sousa Rosa, the Commander-in-Chief of the Portuguese Forces, my sincere thanks for his cordial co-operation.

My relations with the Royal Navy have always been most happy; and I wish to express my grateful thanks to Vice-Admiral E. F. B. Charlton, K.C.M.G., C.B., and Rear-Admiral The Honourable E. F. Fitzherbert, C.B., for their constant and ready co-operation.

I also wish to record my appreciation of the services of the Officers and Men of the Naval Transport Service, whose work was considerably increased by the necessity for opening new ports in Portuguese East Africa.

Intelligence work has maintained a high standard in spite of the difficulties of a little-known country, and much pluck and fortitude has been shown by our intelligence agents in the field.

The task of maintaining communication over such a vast area has thrown a great strain on the Signal Service; but all difficulties have been cheerfully met, and the results have been highly satisfactory.

Much credit is due to the technical units, whose work on roads and bridges made the wide radius of our motor-transport possible. On the eastern side of parallel 37°-30', no less than 850 miles of new motor-road were constructed south of the Rovuma, while 240 miles of existing routes were improved and maintained. The engineering work in general, both in the field and behind the lines, has been carried out most satisfactorily.

My grateful acknowledgments are due to the Staff of the Royal Red Cross for their ungrudging work, and generous gifts of comforts and extra supplies for the sick, which have been highly appreciated.

The administrative work during the period under review did not diminish in proportion to the reduction of the number of fighting troops in the field.

The diminution in the number of mouths to be fed was more than counter-balanced by the greatly increased distances from our main bases over which supplies, equipment, medical stores, etc., had to be conveyed.

There were periods when the transport and supply situation caused anxiety, and great credit is due to the D.D.S. and T., Colonel Christie, O.B.E., D.S.O., A.S.C., on whom the main burden of supply fell, for the successful solution of such difficulties as arose. Aided by energetic buying of local native supplies, the troops at the front were for the most part well fed and supplied. All branches of the trans-

port service met and overcame the difficulties inseparable from a tropical country most cheerfully.

To maintain an adequate supply of properly trained motor drivers, training schools were started at Dar-es-Salaam for training of Chinamen, Indians and West Africans, and at Nairobi for men enlisted in East Africa and Uganda. These schools have proved a great success.

The apparently large establishment of the Military Labour Corps fully justified itself. In addition to recruiting large numbers of porters and generally supervising porter transport, the officers of this corps were largely employed in collecting local foodstuffs.

Great efforts were made to keep the hospital accommodation, and all health and sanitary conditions, up to the high standard which the Pike Commission and the visit of Major-General Scott indicated as being aimed at in other theatres. The result has been highly gratifying. The sick rate among the troops, and particularly among Europeans, must always be heavy in a tropical climate, but it is satisfactory to know that everything possible has been done to alleviate suffering and restore health. Among the porters there was an enormous improvement both in the sick and death rates; in fact, the latter is now very little in excess of peace rates.

A school for training natives as hospital attendants and dressers was started at Dar-es-Salaam, and has proved an unqualified success, and great credit is due to the officers responsible for it. After the completion of their military service the natives thus trained should prove a distinct asset to their respective Protectorates.

The opening at short notice of new sea bases, and the maintenance of several such bases at the same time, made the question of shipping arrangements a serious problem. By consigning cargo direct to sub-bases whenever possible, and by the expeditious discharge of ships, often in spite of an unavoidable shortage of the usual harbour services and landing facilities, the tonnage available was utilised with the greatest possible economy. For this satisfactory result great credit is due to my Q.M.G. Department, while the Department of Inland Water Transport, during its comparatively short period of activity, also contributed appreciably to the success obtained.

The supply of Ordnance Stores has been adequately kept up, and the D.D.O.S. has shown care and foresight in his demands. In addition to supplying troops in the field, arrangements have had to be made for supply to K.A.R. depôts and training battalions in British East Africa, German East Africa and Uganda, all of which have been most efficiently carried out.

The Governments of India and of the Union of South Africa have continued to render me the same valuable and ungrudging assistance as in the earlier stages of the campaign; while I have to thank the Administrator of conquered territory, Sir Horace Byatt, K.C.M.G.; the Acting Governor of British East Africa; the Honourable Mr. C. C. Bowering, C.M.G.; and the Governor of Uganda, the Honourable Mr. R. T. Coryndon, C.M.G., for their ready help and co-operation. The Native Medical

Corps recruited in Uganda was of special service to us. I have included in my recommendations for recognition the names of certain officials and residents in B.E.A. and Uganda who have given the Force particular help in various ways, outside the scope of their regular duties.

I desire to record my appreciation of the excellent work done by my own Staff, and by Commanders and Staffs in the field, as well as by all Services and Departments, and their representatives at the front; and in particular I desire to bring to your Lordship's notice the names of the following officers:—

Brigadier-General S. H. Sheppard, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., who, as Chief of my General Staff, continued to give me the most loyal and valuable assistance. By his ability and unflinching tact he ensured the closest co-operation between all branches of the staff and the troops in the field; and, after nearly four years of active service in a tropical country, he still showed unabated enthusiasm and energy.

Major-General R. H. Ewart, K.C.M.G., C.B., C.I.E., D.S.O., continued to do very valuable work as Deputy-Adjutant and Quartermaster-General up to the time of his departure from East Africa in March, 1918.

Brigadier-General C. P. Fendall, C.M.G., D.S.O., who succeeded Major-General Ewart as Deputy-Adjutant and Quartermaster-General, has filled that post to my complete satisfaction. The administrative work entailed by the opening of new sea bases in Portuguese East Africa, and successive extensive lines of communication inland was very onerous, but the results were most satisfactory, and reflect great credit on General Fendall.

Major-General E. Northey, C.B., who, while in command of the Forces in the western area, has given me ready and unstinted support. He has shown much skill and resource in conducting and co-ordinating the operations of forces scattered over a wide area of action.

Brigadier-General W. F. S. Edwards, C.M.G., D.S.O., who, while in command of the Port Amelia and Mozambique Forces, displayed the same energy, push, and organising ability, with which he had filled the position of Inspector-General of Communications at an earlier stage. He has done very good work in the field.

Brigadier-General G. M. P. Hawthorn, D.S.O., is a very capable commander in the field. He has lately taken over the command of the Forces in Nyasaland from Major-General Northey, C.B.

Brigadier-General Llewellyn, D.S.O., who as Commandant, King's African Rifles, rendered valuable services in meeting promptly the ever-increasing demands for trained drafts for the field, and garrisons for occupied territory.

Lieutenant-Colonel (temp. Colonel) R. A. de B. Rose, D.S.O., Gold Coast Regiment, commanded a column in the Port Amelia operations. He proved himself reliable and capable, and both he and his regiment have done consistently good work in East Africa.

Major (temp. Colonel) G. J. Giffard, D.S.O., has done fine work as Commander of a King's African Rifles column. He has shown both dash and staying power, and no column has marched further or fought more than his.

Colonel G. W. Tate, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.B., Army Medical Service, who deserves great credit for the very efficient manner in which the work of the Medical Services has been carried out, in spite of the difficulties inseparable from active service in a tropical country.

And of the other officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and men included in

the list which I am forwarding with this Despatch.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

J. L. VAN DEVENTER,

Lieutenant-General,
Commander-in-Chief, East African Force.

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