



SECOND SUPPLEMENT

TO

The London Gazette.

Of FRIDAY, the 5th of NOVEMBER, 1920.

Published by Authority.

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MONDAY, 8 NOVEMBER, 1920.

*Air Ministry,  
5th November, 1920.*

The Secretary of State for Air has received the following Despatch from Group Captain R. Gordon, C.M.G., D.S.O., in command of the Royal Air Force Expedition to Somaliland, describing events between September, 1919, and February, 1920:—

*Headquarters,  
Royal Air Force,  
in Somaliland,  
Berbera,  
May, 1920.*

Sir,—

I have the honour to forward a report on the Air side of the operations in Somaliland in January and February, 1920.

These operations consisted of:—

(a) An Air Force operation with the assistance of Military Forces.

(b) A Military Operation assisted by the Royal Air Force.

2. Opportunity was taken to test the theory that the moral effect of the new arm, with its power to carry out, without warning, a form of attack against which no counter measures could avail, would so disperse and demoralise the Dervish following that troops would be

enabled to capture the Mullah's stock and destroy his forts.

This object was attained in full.

3. The preliminary plan of campaign, as decided on in late September, was to use Las Khorai as a base to raid the Mullah's Headquarters at Jodali and Medishi. At the same time a subsidiary line of operations through Burao and Eil Dab was also agreed on in case the Mullah broke for the interior of the country.

4. The success of the expedition was so dependent on preliminary measures taken that, after a period spent on organising a force in London, I proceeded on 25th October, 1919, with a large portion of my staff to Egypt. After a short stay in that country, I left with my P.M.O. and Aerodrome Construction Officer for Somaliland, and arrived there on 21st November. Since secrecy was essential, it was given out that we were prospecting for oil. On our arrival at Berbera, I proceeded at once to select a suitable site for the Base aerodrome and camp, and make arrangements for the ground so chosen to be levelled and cleared of stones.

5. On November 24th, 1919,<sup>6</sup> accompanied by my P.M.O. and Aerodrome Construction Officer, I proceeded by steamer to Las Khorai