DESPATCHES

RELATIVE TO THE

OPERATIONS OF THE SOMALILAND
FIELD FORCE.

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
BY HARRISON AND SONS, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
PRINTERS IN ORDINARY TO HIS MAJESTY.

And to be purchased, either directly or through any Bookseller, from
EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE, EAST HARING STREET, EUST STREET, E.C.,
and 32, ARNOLD STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W.:
or OLIVER & BOYD, EDINBURGH;
or E. PONSONBY, 116, GRANGET STREET, DUBLIN.

1903.

[Cd. 1500.] Price 4½d.
Despatches relative to the Operations of the Somaliland Field Force.

No. 1.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Berbera, 23rd December, 1902.

Sir,

I received your telegram No. 1 of the 18th instant at Berbera on the morning of the 19th instant. I left Berbera by H.M. Ship "Pomone" on the evening of the 19th instant and proceeded to Aden in order to endeavour to obtain sea transport for the Obbia Force, and arrived at Aden at 8 a.m. the 20th instant.

I was fortunate in finding the ss. "Haidari," one of the Haji Kasim line of steamers, in Aden, and leaving for Bombay that evening in ballast. I therefore arranged with the Senior Naval Officer (Captain Bethell, R.N.) to inspect the ship as to her fitness for transport work. She was found suited in every way, being a ship used for the pilgrim traffic to Jeddah from Bombay.

I asked the agent to wire to India that I would charter the steamer for the voyage to Obbia, allowing 1 day to load at Berbera and 4 days to unload at Obbia. A reply was received that evening from Bombay saying that the owners would accept 15,000 rupees (1,000£) for the voyage; with this offer I closed. The charge is very moderate. I left Aden in H.M. Ship "Naiad" at 9 a.m. on the 20th instant, and arrived at Berbera on the morning of the 21st instant. The "Haidari" arrived at 4 o'clock on the evening of the 21st instant, and commenced loading from dhows at once, the dhows having been loaded up during the day. Six months rations, ammunition, guns, and all stores were put on board by noon on the 22nd, and the whole of the troops were embarked at 1 p.m. the same day. The "Haidari" sailed at 5 p.m. for Obbia, which place she should reach by daylight on the 26th December, 1902.

The work of embarkation under difficult conditions in such a short space of time is due to the invaluable help rendered by Captain Bethell, R.N., and the Officers and men of H.M. Ship "Naiad," who took in hand all the arrangements.

At Aden, two lighters have been taken up for disembarkation work at Obbia. These lighters left Aden, in tow of H.M. Ship "Pomone," for Obbia on the evening of the 21st instant, and should reach Obbia the same day as the "Haidari."

I have had a further three lighters prepared in case of necessity at Aden, and H.M. Ship "Speedy" will tow these down to Obbia if they are required.

The Senior Naval Officer, Aden, has wired to the Persian Gulf asking the British Resident there to send to Obbia six large dhows, and I have wired to the Commissioner, Mombasa, asking him to send up the two lighters at Kisnaun in tow of the "Juba," and also 12 dhows from the East Coast to assist in disembarkation. This should be sufficient to deal with everything arriving later at Obbia.

I have already telegraphed my movements. H.M. Ship "Speedy's" return from Obbia will enable it to be decided as to whether further disembarkation facilities are required at Obbia, and since I shall await her return in Aden, I shall be able to arrange these matters before leaving for Obbia.

The base at Obbia will be ready to land troops by the 7th January.

I have, &c.,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

(349)
No. 2.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Obbia,

10th January, 1903.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I arrived at this place on the evening of the 9th instant, and landed on the following morning.

The ss. "Haidar", with the troops from Berbera, arrived at Obbia on the morning of the 26th December, 1902, at 7 o'clock, in company of H.M. Ship "Pomone".

The landing at Obbia is not good. The reports of H.M. Ship "Pomone" were made during the last of two monsoons, and consequently during the present north-east monsoon the conditions are different.

For the landing of the "Haidar" troops, three surf boats, the property of Yusuf Ali were available, and the boats from H.M. Ship "Pomone", and later from H.M. Ship "Persia".

At the time of the arrival of the "Haidar" the monsoon was very strong, for 2 days little or no work was possible.

The troops and stores were however cleared from the "Haidar" by the evening of the 2nd January.

I had agreed with the owners of the "Haidar" that 4 days was to be allowed for landing, and for each day's demurrage after the sum of 500l. (fifty pounds sterling) should be paid.

Consequently 5 days demurrage have been paid to the "Haidar", which will bring the cost of her voyage to 1,150l., which I think is reasonable. That is to say, 1,050l. (one thousand pounds) for the charter of the "Haidar", and 100l. (one hundred and fifty pounds) for demurrage.

Very few stores were lost or damaged, and the landing was very efficiently carried out by the Officers and men of the Royal Navy.

The landing place has been greatly improved, and work is now considerably easier.

Further, two surf boats have been brought by H.M. Ship "Naiad", from a port south of Obbia, El Hur, making a total of five surf boats in all.

On the morning of the 8th instant, the transports "Nowshera" and "Canning" arrived from Bombay.

The troops, baggage, and a considerable quantity of stores, were landed from these steamers by the evening of the 8th instant.

The mules and remaining stores will be landed from the "Nowshera" by the evening of to-day, the 10th instant, and from the "Canning" by the evening of the 12th instant. Since only ships' boats and surf boats can be used, this is a creditable performance, and is due to the good work of the Officers of H.M. Navy.

H.M. Ship "Persia" has proceeded to Aden, for the purpose of picking up and bringing down with her more surf boats. This should improve matters very considerably.

The camp at Obbia is situated at a distance of 1,000 yards from the sea shore, on sandy soil with short grass. The country beyond is open rolling downs for some 9 miles. Water supply is plentiful and good from wells. The climate is very pleasant and cool. Supplies of cattle, sheep and firewood are, so far, sufficient for our requirements.

The Italian officers, Count Lovatelli and Captain Finzi, have assisted me in every way in negotiations with the Sultan of Obbia, Yusuf Ali.

The greatest tact and patience are necessary in dealing with Yusuf Ali. So far matters have proceeded smoothly, and since we are entirely in his hands as regards the supply of meat and firewood, this has been necessary. Exorbitant prices for such commodities are, however, charged. Yusuf Ali has given orders that all supplies are to pass through his hands, and that there is to be no open market. Since, however, supplies are sufficient for our requirements, I have not made any objection to this arrangement.

I have telegraphed that the supply of camels reported in the reconnaissances of H.M. Ship "Pomone" is not available. This is quite clear—that is to say—the camels under the control of Yusuf Ali do not reach the figure I estimated from the reports of Captain Jones, R.N., and Captain Blair, R.C.R., and since tribes further in the interior will not submit their camels for sale through Yusuf Ali, that source of supply is closed to us. I consider it advisable, therefore, to make use of the transports otherwise not employed to proceed to Berbera and to bring down from that place camels which have already been purchased up to 1,000 (one thousand) in number. Cables are obtainable in Berbera in numbers, and those taken can be soon replaced. Yusuf Ali has promised to supply 500 camels by the end of the current month, and with 1,000 from Berbera I shall be able to move forward by the end of January, and I expect to obtain further supplies of camels upon reaching the interior.

The Italian representatives and myself are doing all that can be done to work through Yusuf Ali and to smooth over difficulties—so far with success. It may, however, be necessary to temporarily remove Yusuf Ali to Aden should he become impracticable. The Italian representatives would, of course, decide upon this measure, and will themselves carry it out. His removal would at once facilitate matters, and supplies would become abundant, both of camels and provisions.

From the information of spies I have been able to gather that the Mullah is north of Gallayu, and it is becoming, I think, evident that he will not attempt to proceed south.

As soon as transport is available I shall reconstitute the road from this place towards the Kowe Wells shown on Welby's map. This route, if practicable, will keep the Mullah to the north of this force.

The Mullah's following is reported to be large, and intends to resist our advance.

The health of Officers and men is excellent.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General, Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

No. 3.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Obbia,

14th January, 1903.

Sir,

I have the honour to enclose a copy of a letter addressed by me to Count Lovatelli, the Italian Officer at Obbia, through whom I conduct negotiations with Yusuf Ali, Sultan of Obbia.

I have recommended the temporary deportation of Yusuf Ali, and in this view Count Lovatelli agrees with me, and has so advised his Government. I feel that when communications from the Italian representatives here reach Rome a satisfactory situation will be evolved. At present, however, I am beginning to fear that the delay may cause my advance to be postponed until the end of this month.

I shall, however, make every exertion possible to push on advance supply posts directly the practicability of the route I have selected is ascertained. A reconnaissance with this object in view leaves here to-day. This is possible, since sufficient men transport is available from that landed from the ss. "Canning", "Nowshera", and "Mouna". Camel transport is not available. The formation of advanced posts will probably result in the tribes
from the interior bringing in to those posts camels and supplies for sale; and
should this be the case, I do not think the advance from Obbia will be
delayed, and I shall be able to move out by the end of this month.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

Obbia,
12th January, 1906.

Sir,
I have the honour to inform you, that I consider, that the state of affairs
here will result in my being unable to move my force from Obbia by the end
of the current month, since I was given to understand, both from Yusuf Ali,
through M. Sola, and from his son, Ali Yusuf, through the Officers who
made the reconnaissance at Obbia in November last, that a supply of from
3,000 to 6,000 camels was available. To my knowledge, no camels, fit for work, have been produced for sale. I have agreed to pay Rs. 60 to
Rs. 70 for camels according to class. This price, compared to prices in
Berbera, is very high and ample.

In Berbera camels are obtainable for Rs. 40 to Rs. 45 with herds and
ropes, for the latter Yusuf Ali asks Rs. 6, in addition to the price of the
camel, making the cost here Rs. 68 to Rs. 78, against Rs. 40 to Rs. 45 in
Berbera. I think you must agree that the price offered is ample.

Obstacles and difficulties as regards the purchase of supplies are placed
in my way, everything passing through Yusuf Ali's hands, and the cost of
supplies being very high, and at the same time limited, according to the
capricious of Yusuf Ali.

I have endeavoured to work without friction with Yusuf Ali, and success-
fully, but it is quite evident that it is not his intention to allow this force
to transport sufficient to move from Obbia, and since he will not permit any
outside tribes to bring their camels in for sale, I have considered it advisable
to send to Berbera for camels. The cost of this course is very large.

I am personally of opinion that he himself does not control over more
than 500 camels, but that, were an open market formed, a very large
number could be bought. Since Yusuf Ali will not permit this, I must
ask you whether, in view of the great urgency of the case, it would not
be advisable to remove Yusuf Ali to Aden until the month of May, when
the expedition will have left Obbia, and all stores will have been removed
from this place.

I am afraid, unless such steps are taken, I shall be compelled to abandon
the idea of an advance from this side, to be commenced in the last week
of January, which will cause all plans for the British expedition to be upset.
I further consider that it is very advisable that the Italian Officer, who is
in chief political charge, should be the Officer who is eventually to accompany
the expedition to the interior, a change of control over the natives at the
moment of advance would be most inadvisable.

I must, at the same time, express to you my sincere thanks for the very
cordial manner in which you have assisted so far in all negotiations,
and for the way in which you have endeavoured to make Yusuf Ali keep
his promises.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

No. 4.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Sir,
I have the honour to submit the following report as to progress here since
my despatch of the 10th instant.

On the morning of the 12th instant, the transport "Ichona," from Bombay,
arrived, and was cleared of troops, animals and stores, by the evening of the
14th instant, with the exception of a small quantity of compressed hay which
I decided to land at Berbera for a reserve there.

The "Ichona" left on the 15th instant, for Aden to await instructions to
proceed to Berbera for camels.

The transport "Bance," arrived on the 16th instant at 3 p.m. Owing to
very heavy weather no work was possible on this or the following day (17th);
work, however, was commenced on the 18th instant, and is now continuing
satisfactorily. The landing of camels of the Bikanir Corps is difficult, but by
careful management is proceeding very satisfactorily.

The total number of transport miles landed up to date is 367, of which two
only have been drowned.

On the completion of the landing operations I will cause a report to be
made of the means used in landing animals in a rough sea which have been
found to work so satisfactorily here.

On the 14th instant I despatched a reconnaissance under the command of
Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe for the purpose of reconnoitring routes as far as the Kine
Wells. Strength of force 500 rifles and five Maxim. Male transport only was
taken as no camel transport was available. Should this route be practicable it
is my intention to advance by it, since it places us upon the probable line of
retreat of the Mullah should he decide to fly to the south.

As soon as the practicability of the route has been proved I intend to
establish advanced posts and to commence to push up supplies.

Yusuf Ali has maintained a decidedly obstructive attitude, and the supply
of camel transport has been small; 160 have been purchased up to date; promises
of further supplies, though made, have not yet been fulfilled. To-day, however,
Yusuf Ali has changed his behaviour, having received from the Italian Consul
at Aden a communication threatening him with the loss of his Sultanate unless
he gave every assistance in his power to the force. He is now full of promises
of good behaviour which may or may not be fulfilled.

The arrival of 1,000 camels from Berbera will, however, enable me to get
away on the date I propose, namely, by the 31st instant.

On the 17th instant news of a raid by the Mullah upon Yusuf Ali's camels
was brought in; this news reached me at 2 a.m. The place where the raid was
alleged to have taken place was Goonda, close to El Lahi, and consequently
about 30 miles from Obbia. Since I had no parties available to mount a force
to proceed to the assistance of the tribesmen, I asked Yusuf Ali to lend
me fifty punjis, and said that I would send off fifty Punjije Mounted Infantry
at once. This he would not do, saying that his own mounted men were
of more use than ours. Later enquiries and information leads me to suspect
that no raid took place, and that the occurrence of a raid within a few
miles of the reconnoitring force was most unlikely. I have been able to
obtain no confirmation of the raid, and I am of opinion that the information
of such a report from Yusuf Ali was to enable him to give an excuse for
not supplying camels, which he did not fail to do.

The Italian representative on shore, Count Lovatelli, has given me every
assistance in dealing with Yusuf Ali.

The feeling that the expedition may not accomplish its object is at the
bottom of the proceedings of Yusuf Ali; the prestige of the Mullah is very high,
and I have heard from more than one source that the general opinion is against
our success. It is therefore only natural that the natives should not desire to
be implicated in an affair which may, according to their views, fail in its
objective, in which case they would be left to the mercy of the Mullah, whom
they look upon as invincible. Our advance upon the Mullah will alter this
opinion, and I believe the natives will then willingly assist us. In the mean-
time, the position is a trying one, and requires much patience and tact.

On the 18th instant I despatched a force of sappers and miners to a place
called Daburwein, 10 miles north-west of Obbia, where good grazing for
camels is obtainable, and where there are indications of water. Wells will be
sunk here, and if water is obtained this will form an advanced post on the line
to the Kine Wells and will bridge over a march of 30 miles without water
otherwise.

At the same time I sent out all available camels under a strong guard to
graze at Garabwine, as grazing here is becoming scarce.

The health of the force remains excellent.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

No. 5.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force,
to the Secretary of State for War,

Obbia,
29th January, 1903.

SIR,

I have already in my despatches, dated the 10th and 19th January, referred
to the unsatisfactory state of affairs in regard to Yusuf Ali with which I have
had to contend.

I have treated him with all possible consideration and patience, and the
Italian representatives have done everything in their power to bring him to
reason; I have from the commencement entertained serious doubts as to his
loyalty, and there is strong circumstantial evidence that emissaries of the
Mullah have passed freely in and out of Obbia. He has amassed a large
number of rupees by his system of ordering the tribes to bring all their
supplies to him for sale, and charging the expedition with their cost at
exorbitant rates, and by giving the actual owners a very small sum. This
money he, no doubt, would have converted into rifles and ammunition to further
extend his territory and authority.

His attitude throughout has been obstructive; he has circulated the
information among his people that he has not been able to pay for supplies since
he cannot obtain payment from us, whereas payment has been regularly made for
everything taken.

The “Nowshera” arrived yesterday, the 29th instant, bringing the Italian
Consul-General for this Protectorate (Cherrier F. Sola) from Aden.

The Consul-General paid me a visit yesterday, and after consultation with
the Italian representatives on shore, it was decided to deport Yusuf Ali and his
son Ali Yusuf on board the Italian man-of-war this morning.

This was carried out without any disorder this morning, the town of Obbia
was disarmed; the property of Yusuf Ali has been seized, and an inventory
of it made to be handed over to the Italian representatives. An acting
headman has been appointed, pending a decision as to who shall be placed in charge
of the natives here. This step is an entirely popular one, since I have had
many complaints of the tyranny and exactions of Yusuf Ali.

I have now given orders that all supplies are to be paid for direct to those
who bring them in—this will establish an open market, and I am a very short
time this news will reach the interior and supplies of all kinds will be
abundant. The tribesmen have already gone off to bring in their camels for
sale, and I expect no further delay in pushing forward will be encountered.

I regret that difficulties of communication have so long delayed the
action which has been taken today. The failure of the man-of-war’s arrival
from Aden on the 22nd instant has been the reason.

Things, however, appear now quite satisfactory, and I apprehend no
further difficulties.

The attitude of the Italian representatives has been throughout most
helpful.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

No. 6.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, General Officer Commanding
Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Obbia,
6th February, 1903.

SIR,

I have the honour to report progress made since my last despatch of the
29th January.

The results of the deportation of Yusuf Ali have so far been satisfactory.
The Hawiya, Marehan and Mijarten tribes have sent in their representations
and have promised their assistance in procuring camels without payment.

The near relations and headmen of Yusuf Ali have, however, continued the
exactions practised by Yusuf Ali, and the Italian representatives decided that the
donely course open was to seize these individuals, and detain them as
hostages for the good behaviour of the people, and to deport them, if
necessary.

This has been carried out. The relations and headmen of Yusuf Ali,
who had formed themselves into a council, were seized and placed in custody,
and, at the request of the Italians, are being sent to Berbera for safe
custody.

The camels and cattle, the property of Yusuf Ali, have been driven into
Obbia, and will be kept here pending a decision by the Italians as to their
disposal, since the surrounding tribes have attempted to steal the stock of
Yusuf Ali on hearing of his deportation.

For the purpose of collecting all the available burden camels, the property
of Yusuf Ali, and of preventing them being stolen, I obtained the permission
of the Italians to send a force to El Hur and Harardora to the south of this
place, where Yusuf Ali’s stock is said to be collected. I accordingly
despatched a force of 75 Mounted Infantry, 75 Bikaner Camel Corps, and
100 Infantry, with mule transport, to endeavour to find and bring in the burden
camels said to be at the above places.

The rightful owners will be paid for the camels taken, in accordance with
an agreement made with the Italian representatives.

El Lahelah has been abandoned in favour of Lodabal, 4 miles to the east.

The following posts have been occupied:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Miles from Obbia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lodabal</td>
<td>48° 17'</td>
<td>5° 35'</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Obba</td>
<td>48° 22'</td>
<td>5° 35'</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obba</td>
<td>48° 10'</td>
<td>6° 0'</td>
<td>564</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(493)
At each of these places good wells exist, and advanced posts have been formed. Supplies for 1 month for the whole force are being pushed up. From Dibit reconnaissances towards the west and towards Galkayo will be made in order to decide the route which must eventually be taken to Galkayo.

At Garabwein, 10 miles from Obbia, water has been found at 35 feet, and this will prove a great advantage, both for the final advance and for convoys. A small post is established at Garabwein.

From Intelligence reports the route, via Badho, appears to be impracticable, but if time and opportunity offer, and transport is available, a further reconnaissance will be made in that direction.

From the 1st to 5th February very high wind prevailed, and a heavy sea was running which prevented all work at disembarkation. Both the “Novorak Castle” and the “Ikhona” (which arrived on the 2nd February) have been consequently detained; work, however, is now proceeding, and both steamers should be cleared in 3 days, and should proceed on their voyage.

The “Ikhona,” which brought 2950 camel’s drums from Berbera, should be cleared by the 6th instant, and the camels should be fitted for work by the 11th instant. I propose then to advance on the 15th with the whole force, having previously reconnoitred the routes north of Dibit, and to occupy Galkayo on or about the 22nd instant.

Accurate intelligence of the Mullah’s movements is difficult to obtain at this distance, and until we are actually in touch with the Mullah’s forces, it will continue difficult.

The Mullah, however, is said to be still north of Galkayo in the Galadi district.

I regret the delay in the advance from this place, but exceptional difficulties have been encountered, and difficulties such as the escape of the work of disembarkation, owing to heavy weather, have been beyond my control.

Matters now should proceed smoothly, and I anticipate no further delays.

Chavalleri E. Osi, Italian Consul-General at Aden, who has been unable to land from the “Capreera” for the last 6 days owing to the heavy sea, came on shore to-day; he is most anxious to do all that he can to assist us, and he has assumed political control here.

The health of Officers and men is good, and the horses and transport animals are now in very good working condition.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

No. 7.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Head-quarters, Somaliland Field Force,
Obbia, 16th February, 1903.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward a memorandum embodying the arrangements which I propose to make for the removal of the base at Obbia to Berbera. In the event of a transport being required, I shall telegraph to that effect from Aden not later than the 15th March, 1903.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

Arrangements for the Removal of the Base Obbia.

1. The R.I.M.S. “Hardinge” will remain at Obbia, and surplus baggage and stores will be placed upon her as opportunity offers, and as weather permits.

2. When the accommodation for stores, &c., on the “Hardinge” has been filled, she will proceed to Berbera and discharge there these stores, returning to Obbia. Should a second trip be necessary the same procedure will be carried out, provided that none of these trips shall interfere with her duties, which are primarily those of a hospital ship.

3. The R.I.M.S. “Hardinge” must, however, be in Obbia by the 31st March, and will remain in Obbia thenceforward until it is considered advisable, on account of the near approach of the South-West Monsoon, to remove the base from Obbia.

During this time all stores which it is evident cannot be forwarded to, or are not required at the front, will be gradually placed on the “Hardinge,” and only the troops with their baggage, which form the base, will eventually remain to be removed.

This should be the condition of the base before the 10th of April, as before or about that time it is possible that the South-West Monsoon may begin to be felt on the coast.

4. The posts at Lodubal, El Dibit, Dibit, will then proceed to Galkayo, or wherever the head-quarters of the force shall have been established, using the male transport for their carriage forward. The remainder of the remounts will proceed with this force to the front, unless the Remount Department shall have been previously broken up.

5. There will be at the base at Obbia a coolie corps of 100 Arab coolies, for duty there in reshipping stores on the R.I.M.S. “Hardinge,” and for such other duties as may be necessary.

6. The foregoing arrangements, in so far as they affect the R.I.M.S. “Hardinge,” are however likely to be upset, should it be found impossible for the “Hardinge” to undertake the number of trips necessary to clear the base at Obbia before the end of March (the number of trips to Berbera, it is estimated, will be two, that is to say, one trip by the 7th March, and a second trip about the 21st March, returning at the end of March.)

In such a case the War Office must be asked to arrange for a transport to call at Obbia at the end of March, and this transport must remain at Obbia until, owing to the burning of the monsoon appearing imminent, the removal of the base becomes necessary.

Similar arrangements will be made as regards this transport, all stores, baggage, &c., which it is evident are not required at Obbia, will be gradually shipped on the transport, so that in case the monsoon seems about to burst, the removal of the troops and remaining baggage will be easily accomplished in a few days.

7. Upon the break up of the base, the Officers at the base will proceed as follows:—

Major Ryecroft to England on completion of his duties.
Major Hobbs, to Galkayo, in charge of the troops forming the posts in advance of Obbia on the Lines of Communication.
Base Supply Officer, under instructions of Chief of Staff and Transport Officer.
Base Transport Officer, with transport to Galkayo.
General hospital to Berbera, and thence to Bombay.
Base Post Office to Berbera.
Field Paymaster to Berbera.
Ordinance Department Officers to Berbera.
Upon the removal of the base to Berbera, the Marine Transport Officer with his establishment will proceed to Berbera, and there undertake the duties of Marine Transport Officer, Somaliland Field Force.

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General, Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

MEMORANDUM.
Head-quarters, Somaliland Field Force.

1. The base at Obbia will be closed about the 15th April; by that time all rations, etc., intended for the use of the expedition at the front must have left Obbia, and must be on the way to the front and stored in the various posts, but need not necessarily have reached Galkayu.

2. Directly the base at Obbia is closed, Lodobal will be cleared of rations, etc., and when clear will be closed, and the garrison will move on to El Dibir.

3. Similarly, El Dibir will be closed when all rations have gone forward, and the garrison will move on to Dhib. And so on until the Lines of Communication are closed up to Galkayu.

4. Any remounts remaining will be sent forward to Galkayu as the Lines of Communication move up. This will economise the carriage of grain for their feed.

5. As soon as the Lines of Communication are closed up to Galkayu, and communication with Bohotle having been in the meantime opened, the remaining remounts and the mule transport will cross the Hand to Bohotle, and will proceed as follows:—

Remounts to Upper Sheikh or Lower Sheikh.
Mule transport on the Line between Bibendula and Upper Sheikh or Dubbar.
The European assistants with the Remount Department will leave with the troops forming the Obbia base and will be discharged at Berbera, being given free passage to England according to their agreements.

G. FORESTIER-WALKER,
Chief Staff Officer.

No. 8.

From Brigadier-General W. H. MANNING, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Head-quarters, Somaliland Field Force,
Obbia, 18th February, 1908.

I have the honour to forward a copy of a memorandum which I have this day sent to the Officer Commanding the Berbera—Bohotle Force, in which I have given instructions as to the general nature and extent of the co-operation which I expect from that force.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

MEMORANDUM.

Head-quarters, Somaliland Field Force.
Obbia, 17th February, 1908.

1. The Obbia force will advance to Galkayu as follows:—
A flying column leaving Obbia on the 22nd February, arriving at Galkayu on or about the 3rd March.
A column carrying rations will leave Obbia on the 4th March, reaching Galkayu 13th March.
On the 13th March the whole force will be concentrated at Galkayu.

2. The Mullah's forces are said to be in the neighbourhood of Galadi. As soon as possible after the concentration of troops at Galkayu a force will move out against the Mullah's force at Galadi, this will probably be about the 16th March.

3. The troops of the flying column at Bohotle must move down and occupy Damot, provided that water can be obtained there. For the purpose of ascertaining this, a party, with sappers and miners and pioneers, will move down at once to Damot, carrying water with them to that place, and will then form a strongly entrenched and zaribaed post, and dig a well. Water is to be sent down regularly from Bohotle for this party. (It has been found here that men employed on such labour require at least one gallon of water per diem.) Should water be discovered, the Bohotle Flying Column (or as many men as the water will supply) will occupy Damot.

4. Should water not be discovered at Damot it may still be possible to occupy Damot by forming tanks of sailcloth, in which water can be stored, and conveyons of camels running regularly will keep up the supply. These tanks work well on this side, and, when covered in, little water is lost by evaporation.

5. Messengers, both foot and mounted, will be despatched from Damot, to endeavour to open up communication between that place and Galkayu. Similarly, messengers will be despatched from Galkayu for the same purpose to Bohotle.

6. From native information it is believed that many of the Dubkhanta flocks have been driven into the Nogal, and that the tribesmen are collected with the Mullah in the neighbourhood of Galadi, and are bent on fighting. It is also understood that a number of Mijiraten and other tribes are in the neighbourhood of the Amai wells with their flocks.

The occupation of Galkayu and Damot will bring both forces within 80 miles of one another, and interposed between the two forces of the Mullah.

It is intended to drive off the enemy in the neighbourhood of the Amai Wells as soon as Galkayu is occupied. The Mijiraten will probably proceed west towards Jeriban, and the operations undertaken on the 16th March towards Galadi will probably have the effect of driving the Mullah east. In this event the line between Damot and Galkayu will probably be free of the enemy in any numbers.
7. Should water, therefore, be found in Damot, and should the Bohotie Flying Column be able to occupy that place by the 16th March, and should communication with Galkayu have been opened up, it would be advisable to push out a strong reconnaissance towards Galkayu. The date of this reconnaissance should not be earlier than the 20th March. A similar reconnaissance would be pushed out from Galkayu towards Damot to meet the force coming from that place. The opening up of communications will, however, enable the exact date to be fixed, and every endeavour must, therefore, be made to accomplish this.

8. When messengers are sent through, the latest information of the movements of the Mullah, and all news of importance, must be included in despatches. Despatches should be duplicated, and sent by different messengers, and numbered consecutively.

By Order,

G. FORESTIER-WALKER,
Chief Staff Officer,
Somaliland Field Force.

The Officer Commanding,
Berbera—Bohotie Force,
Berbera.

No. 9.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force,
to the Secretary of State for War.

Obbia, 20th February, 1903.

Sir,

I have the honour to report progress made since my last despatch. The attitude of the surrounding tribes has been very friendly, and they have sent in camels and supplies for sale freely. Over 500 camels have been obtained during the past 3 weeks, since the deportation of Yasuf Ali.

Rations for the force have been sent forward steadily, and the advance post (Obbi) has now a sufficient stock to permit of the force advancing.

I have telegraphed that reconnaissances towards Galkayu have been made in two directions, one to Killadebeha and another to Wargallo.

I have selected the latter route, as it fulfils more the conditions for our advance as desired by the Italian Government, and is also a better watered route, at any rate as far as Wargallo.

Native information states that the Mullah has filled in the wells in the Mudug region. I do not anticipate, however, that the clearing out of these wells will be a very difficult operation.

Wargallo will be occupied as an advanced post on the 27th instant, and the wells on route will be cleaned and made fit for use by the Advanced Force.

I leave on the 22nd instant, with the troops forming a Flying Column, to occupy Galkayu, the centre of the Mudug region. This place will be occupied on the 3rd March.

The remainder of the force, conveying 1 month's rations for the entire force, will march from Obbia on the 6th March, and will reach Galkayu on the 15th March, on which date the whole force will be concentrated at Galkayu.

I have sent instructions to the Officer Commanding, Bohutie Force, to occupy Damot as soon as possible, to dig wells there, and to endeavour to open communication, by messengers and by wireless telegraphy, with Galkayu.

No. 10.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force,
to the Secretary of State for War.

Galkayu, 6th March, 1903.

Sir,

I have already telegraphed the information of our march from Obbia to Galkayu, and the situation as at present. In the course of the next few days I hope to be able to locate the position of the Mullah's force which I believe to be in the neighbourhood of this place. Native spies reported the vicinity of a number of men and animals on the morning of the day of our arrival in camp; this would appear to have been a party who had come down to some neighbouring wells for the purpose of watering animals. I sent out spies a few hours after my arrival here to track these people, and held a force of mounted troops and infantry in readiness to march out at night, if news of their still being close at hand was received during the night. These spies, however, have not yet returned, and it is therefore evident that the Mullah's people have moved off on hearing of our arrival. The occupation of these wells will compel the Mullah's force to break up since the watering difficulties will be very great. The capture of some of the enemy's men by our spies will enable us to discover where the Mullah has fixed his headquarters; at present we have no information on this point whatever, though it is evident that he is at no great distance from this place.

To-morrow, the 7th instant, as most of the transport animals return to Dibi to bring up supplies with the main column, we shall be left with a small number of transport animals until the 17th instant. The interval will, however, be utilized to thoroughly reconnoitre the country round, so that upon the arrival of the main column, an advance will be made at once on any collection of the enemy within striking distance.

I have been obliged to ask for more Supply Officers, as the peculiar nature of operations in this country, and the long lines of communication to be
kept open to Obbia, render it very necessary that this department should be thoroughly well supplied with a staff, and the move of the Flying Column to Galkau has disclosed the fact that the staff of the Supply Department is quite inadequate, so much so, that on the march up here, I experienced much difficulty in carrying out the proper supply duties of the force.

I have addressed a communication to the Italian Representative accompanying the force, asking him to inform me without delay as to the date on which he intends to take over the occupation of this place, in order that he may notify to his Government the occupation of Munding.

The marches up here have been extremely hot and trying, but the troops have borne them well. The mounted troops particularly have had an arduous time, but Major Kemp's good management has so far resulted in the loss of only one Mounted Infantry horse.

The route of our advance is fairly well watered, but considerable organization is necessary at each watering place to make the utmost use of the wells possible.

I shall at once endeavour to obtain communication with Bobotle, via Damot, which place I hope has been occupied by the Flying Column from Bobotle.

The health of both Officers and men remains excellent.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General, Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

No. 11.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Galkau, 14th March, 1903.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward a copy of a letter I have addressed to Count Lovatelli who has been the Representative of the Italian Government with this force.

Count Lovatelli has been most loyal in his co-operation, and it is with great regret that I have heard of his recall.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General, Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

No. 12.

From Brigadier-General Manning, Commanding the Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Head-quarters, Somaliland Field Force, Galalii, 3rd April, 1903.

Sir,

I have the honour to report the progress of this Force since my last despatch.

1. Owing to water and transport difficulties on the Lines of Communication between Obbia and Galkau, the Main Column, under Lieut.-Colonel Fasken, 2nd Sikhs, was delayed on arrival at Dibit for 5 days, and did not reach Galkau until the evening of the 24th March.

2. I had, in the meanwhile, ordered 500 of the 2nd Bu. King's African Rifles, two guns of the Camel Battery, and 50 men of the Somali Mounted Infantry, to cross from Damot to Galkau. This force arrived on the evening of the 24th March, having marched 100 miles in 4 days, a fine performance.
I have already telegraphed my reasons for this move. The Lines of Communication from Obbia to this place now cover 250 miles, and it is necessary to hold the water on this route, and to store it carefully for consumption by convays passing through.

I regret to report that great mortality has occurred amongst the camel transport.

The camels brought round to Obbia from Berbera suffered considerably, owing to the impossibility of landing them immediately on their arrival, since a heavy sea was running for some days subsequent to the arrival of the transport. The camels, though given 10 days' rest and grazing, have never entirely recovered, and the mortality among them has been very great. Grazing at this time of the year is almost non-existent, the whole country being dried up.

This loss of camels has hampered the transport of rations, &c., on the Lines of Communication, and has compelled me to keep back about 100 Mounted Infantry, 50 Bikanir Camel Corps, and the Mountain Battery Section, on the Lines of Communication between Obbia and Obbia.

I have received 200 camels from the Berbera—Roberto Force, and I have asked for a further 1,000. The receipt of these camels should improve matters.

The Somali camel is alone fitted for transport work in this country. Indian or Egyptian camels require water every third day, and this is usually impossible to obtain.

5. I have sent 80 Bikanir Camel Corps to Damot, since their rations are a heavy strain on the Supply Department.

6. The force crossing from Damot brought its own supplies with it.

7. On the night of the 28th March I marched to Berbera on the 20th March. (This place was occupied as an advanced post on the 19th March.)

The force with which I advanced was composed as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank and files</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mounted Infantry</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sappers and Miners</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Sikhs</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Bn. King's African Rifles</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd &quot;</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th &quot;</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,083 rifles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I was compelled to halt a day at Berbera in order to allow the camels, which had arrived from Damot, to rest and graze.

8. On the evening of the 27th a force of 210 Mounted Infantry, under the command of Major Kenna, started from Berbera, with orders to push through to Dudub; but, it was unable to advance without being seriously engaged, Major Kenna was directed to fall back on the Infantry Column, which was to leave on the morning of the 28th.

I had expected to encounter severe opposition in the thick belt of bush between Berbera and Dudub, and although the Mounted Infantry would probably be able to push through by night, I considered it likely that our large camel convoy would be attacked.

9. I picked up at Berbera the detachment of 2nd Sikhs, which had been holding that place since the 19th March, and, after leaving a garrison there, 50 of the 5th Bn. King's African Rifles, and 50 of the 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles, I marched out on the morning of the 28th with a force composed as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank and files</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sappers and Miners</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Sikhs</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Bn. King's African Rifles</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd &quot;</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>867 rifles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. The country, for the first 18 miles out of Berbera, consists of extremely thick bush growing on a stony and loose sandy soil, and the marching was in consequence very difficult.

The open country beyond the bush was reached on the evening of the 28th March, and the column halted on an open grass plain 19 miles from Berbera.

11. I directed Major Kenna to send me back information as to the distance to Dudub, and the extent of the water supply. This information I had hoped would reach me on the night of the 28th March, but owing to the distance to Dudub being 44 miles, or considerably farther than was expected, Major Kenna was unable to communicate with me until noon on the 29th.

12. In view of the uncertainty of the water supply ahead, I decided, on the early morning of the 29th March, to reduce the force with which I proposed to advance to Galadi, by sending back 303 of the 2nd Sikhs to Berbera and Galkayo.

This decision reduced my Infantry to 329 men, a number which I considered to be sufficient to enable me to reach Galkayo, the road onwards being reported to be through open country.

13. I left Berbera, carrying 6 days' water for the whole force. This reduction in my strength gave me, therefore, another day's water, besides allowing a large margin for loss of water from various causes, the chief of which are leakage and evaporation.

With this increase in my water supply, I had no anxiety as to water difficulties, even if Dudub and Galkayo proved to be waterless places incapable of providing for the wants of my reduced force.

14. The number of 2nd Sikhs mentioned above returned to Berbera, for Galkayo, on the morning of the 30th, and I continued my march towards Dudub, accomplishing 17 miles on that day.

Afternoon on the 30th, I received a letter from Major Kenna, stating that he had occupied Dudub without opposition on the evening of the 28th, and had captured a few prisoners and camels.

On the evening of the same day, I received a letter from Major Kenna to the effect that information obtained from prisoners led him to believe that a small force of the Mullah was holding Galadi wells, and that he proposed pushing through to Galkayo on the night of the 29th, and securing the water supply at that place.

15. On the morning of the 30th I reached Dudub, distance 8 miles, the total distance from Berbera being 44 miles.

Dudub proved to have an excellent water supply, sufficient for the requirements of a considerable force.

I halted there until 10 a.m., and then pushed on towards Galkayo for a distance of 12 miles, halting for the night at 4 p.m.

On that evening I received a message from Major Kenna saying that he had occupied Galadi at 8.30 a.m. the same morning, killing several of the enemy, and capturing a few prisoners and a small number of camels, sheep, and goats.

On the morning of the 31st March I arrived at Galkayo at 10 a.m., and camped there.

16. The water supply proves to be fair, and sufficient for a small force.

The country between Dudub and Galkayo is for the most part thinly bushed, and eminently adapted to Somali tactics which, when possible, consist in attacking a column when on the march in bush.

17. From information extracted from prisoners it appears, however, that the Mullah evacuated Galadi immediately after our arrival at Galkayo, and retreated in the direction of Walson, some four or five miles west of Galadi.

18. The march from Berbera to Galkayo has been very hot and trying, but has been carried out without any casualties from the heat or other causes, the troops being in excellent marching condition.

Major Kenna brought his Mounted Infantry through without the loss of a horse.

19. The grazing in the immediate vicinity of Galkayo is very poor, and I have, therefore, sent a portion of the Mounted Infantry and of the transport camels to camp at Yaya Gallo, 5 miles north of Galkayo, where water and better grazing has been found.
18. Prisoners stated that, when the Mullah evacuated Galadi, he directed the greater part of his herds of camels and cattle and of his flocks of sheep to follow after him, but that they have not yet done so, having halted in the district of Gumbarn, some 80 miles distant from Galadi.

I accordingly despatched Lieut.-Colonel Plunkett with 170 men of the 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles and 60 men of the 1st Bn. King's African Rifles, with three Maxim guns, at 2 a.m. on the morning of 1st April, with instructions to endeavour to capture stock in this locality.

19. I likewise despatched, on the evening of the 2nd April, a force of 120 men of the 1st and 2nd Bns. King's African Rifles, under Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe, in a southerly direction towards Gilmore, whence, according to captured spies, a number of camels had been driven off.

20. Walwal and Wardair, towards which places, according to the information in my possession, the Mullah has retired, are estimated to be about 75 miles from Galadi, through a waterless and thinly-bushed country.

I propose, directly I have collected sufficient reasons here, to push on to these places and attack the Mullah.

21. In order to overcome the water difficulty, I intend to establish a post 20 miles from here in the direction of Walwal, and to store there 2 days' water supply for the whole force, plus the necessary amount for the garrison.

A similar post will be established a point some 10 miles further on.

22. As soon as these posts have been established I propose to move out from the furthest post with 5 days' water in tents, and expect to reach Wardair, where the water supply is said to be ample, on the third day.

I think probable that the Mullah will attack the force en route, as the thinly-bushed nature of the country will favour his usual tactics.

23. The bulk of the 2nd Sikhs, which returned to Galkayo will be ordered up to take part in this advance.

24. Simultaneously with the advance on Galadi from Galkayo, I had arranged that flying columns, based on Damot and Badwein respectively, should operate in the country between Boolute, Damot, Badwein and Dudub, to capture stock.

I have not yet heard directly from the Officers Commanding the columns as to the measure of success which has attended these movements, but from the accounts of fugitives who have arrived in Galadi, it would appear that the Damot column, at least, has effected considerable captures of camels and other stock.

25. The health of Officers and men continues to be excellent.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General, Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

No. 18.
From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Sir,
Galladi, 12th April, 1908.

I have already telegraphed to you the situation up to the 10th instant, and I have stated that I consider that the occupation of Galkayo, in the Mudug district, is quite feasible. I have, however, suggested the employment of 100 Indian troops, that is—

50 Indian Contingent, British Central Africa
50 5th Bn. King's African Rifles.

These troops can be spared from the British Central Africa and Uganda Protectorates for the 8 months after the close of the expedition, and until the Italians are able again to reoccupy Oboia from the

I have already telegraphed that in my opinion the Italian authorities in Oboia will have left no permanent Government in Oboia, since, as far as I can learn, no definite policy as regards the natives has been put in hand. I have not received any direct information as to what arrangements have been made in Oboia, and, on application to the Italian Representatives accompanying this force, they have informed me that no communication from M. Solis, the Consul-General at Oboia, has been received.

I have recommended the employment of Indian troops at Galkayo, since I consider that the employment of the Reserve Battalion (2nd Bn. King's African Rifles) for garrison duty in Somaliland, is most desirable. This battalion has already had a former experience of service in Somaliland, and suffered greatly in health, the men consequently view garrison service with great disfavour in Somaliland, and one half of the battalion will have served nearly 1 year in the country on the completion of the present operations.

If it is found necessary, after the completion of operations here, to retain the reserve battalion, they could garrison posts in the British Protectorate, where such food as is most suitable to them can be more easily obtained.

Indian troops will do better upon their Indian rations, and are not so liable to securry as the Central African natives, whose food in their own country consists of Wholesale rations of vegetables.

The operations now in course of being carried out, and those that will be carried out during the next fortnight will, however, enable me to decide as to the provisions necessary in the future for the peace of the Protectorate.

I am hopeful that decisive results may destroy the power of the Mullah for further hostile action.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General, Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

No. 21.

From Brigade-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Head-quarters, Somaliland Field Force, Galkayo, 27th April, 1908.

Sir,

1. I have the honour to report progress since my last despatch.

2. On the 10th instant I decided to utilize the time which must elapse before the arrival of the remainder of the troops and supplies from Galkayo, which were due on the 17th instant, by sending forward a strong reconnoissance to endeavour to discover the road to Wardair, and, if possible, to occupy that place, since, from native information, I gathered that the Mullah had abandoned both Wardair and Walwal and had retired to the west or north-west.

3. In order to make this move, which I had hoped would bring me within striking distance of the Mullah, I had ordered up every available man and all available camels. I felt that this advance was the limit to which I could proceed, since the state of canned transport would not permit of any further prolongation of my lines of communication, and I had hoped, by occupying Wardair, to be able to secure a number of the enemy's camels.

I had arranged for the arrival of 350 of the 2nd Sikhs and 70 3rd Bn. King's African Rifles at Galadi on the 17th instant, so that, on the return of the reconnoissance, I should be able to advance on Wardair with nearly 1,000 men.

4. I ordered Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe with the following troops, taking
6 days' water and supplies, to proceed in the direction of Wardair, starting on the 10th instant:—


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Bn. King's African Rifles</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Bn. King's African Rifles</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Bn. King's African Rifles</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 guns</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mounted Infantry</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>520</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I chose a copy of the instructions issued to Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe.

5. I heard from Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe on the 13th instant to the effect that he had reached Gumbhir, 44 miles distant, without encountering any opposition, but that he believed he was on the wrong road for Wardair, and would endeavor to discover the right road.

On the 14th instant, not having heard from the reconnaissance again, I presumed that Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe had found the right road and had pushed on, or might be retiring. Knowing that his water could only last to the 16th instant, I decided to send after him a water convoy with some extra rations. I therefore despatched to him 1,500 gallons of water under an escort of Captains Vesey and 50 rank and file, 2nd Sikhs, to meet him, or, if he had pushed on, to form a water post at Gumbhir.

6. I heard again from Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe on the morning of the 16th instant to the effect that he had fallen in with some horsemen of the enemy on the 15th instant, and that some skirmishing between his Mounted Infantry and the horsemen of the enemy had taken place.

7. I decided to reinforce Colonies Cobbe and to order him to retire, as I considered it would be wiser to advance by a route to the north, which, according to native information, was the direct road to Waival and then to Wardair. I accordingly detailed a party of Mounted Infantry and Infantry to proceed to Gumbhir to join Colonel Cobbe's party, with directions to Olfert to retire.

8. Before this reinforcement could leave I received on the night of the 17th instant a despatch from Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe, dated the same morning, informing me that he feared an attack had occurred on his detachment under Lieut.-Colonel Plunkett, who had been sent out to bring in a company of the 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles, who were out reconnoitring.

There were no details in this despatch, and I was not aware of the seriousness of the fighting which had occurred, until I decided at once to move forward to Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe's assistance, taking with me all available troops, and to bring in his column.

9. I left Gumbhir shortly after midnight, on the 17th-18th instant, taking with me:

- 320 2nd Sikhs.
- 60 3rd Bn. King's African Rifles.

and sending on ahead 100 Mounted Infantry, under Major Kenn, with orders to endeavour to push on to Gumbhir. With this party I sent instructions to Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe, informing him that I was advancing to Gumbhir and that, if practicable, he should fall back on me on the morning of the 19th instant, by which time I hoped to be within 12 miles of Gumbhir.

10. Successive messengers, despatched by Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe on the morning and afternoon of the 17th instant, reached me on my way out from Gumbhir to the effect that Lieut.-Colonel Plunkett's force had been overwhelmed, and that Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe was holding his zariba with the remainder of his force.

11. I marched 20 miles by the morning of the 18th instant; I halted here for the day, and sent on messengers to Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe.

At 1 a.m. on the 19th instant, I received a message from Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe saying that the Mounted Infantry had reached him at 1 p.m. on the 18th, and that he intended marching out of Gumbhir on the morning of the 19th. Therefore decided to send back the whole of my transport, even water, to Galad, to form a zariba at the camp I was in, and to leave the water there under strong guard, marching myself towards Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe with 250 of the 2nd Sikhs. In case Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe's retirement should be molested, I would then be unencumbered with transport, and able to be of great assistance in effecting the retirement.

12. I marched 12 miles on the morning of the 19th, and halted about 10 miles from Gumbhir, where I received a message from Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe to say that he was on his way and would be up to me shortly.

He arrived about noon with all his transport intact, his retirement from Gumbhir having been unmolested.

13. I at once proceeded to return to my camp of the 18th, sending on all transport animals ahead, and covering them with a strong rearguard of Mounted Infantry and Infantry.

I arrived at the camp of the 18th instant at sundown on the 19th instant, and Galad at sundown on the 20th instant.

14. The camels of Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe's reconnaissance were very weak, having lost 50 for grazing for 10 days, and no water for that time, but nevertheless reached Galad. Had this force been in possession of Indian camels every camel would have died, and the retirement would have been impossible without the loss of all the baggage.

15. From the narrative of survivors of the action, it is evident that the enemy was in overwhelming numbers, and that he fought with a fanatical bravery that he has never displayed before.

It is also evident that the Somalis alone were not engaged in this action, but that troops from the Wadi Shobell, Chellah, and some others, were also engaged. This information has since been confirmed by a telegram I have received from Colonel Rochfort, who states that the Mullah had with him 1,900 Adames.

16. I had heard from prisoners that the Mullah had with him a number of men who had been described to me as "men who would come right up to the troops and take their rifles from their hands."

17. From the report of Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe it is evident that disobedience of orders on the part of Lieut.-Colonel Plunkett, in pushing on to get in contact with the enemy, resulted in an action occurring, in which a small force has been annihilated. Had Lieut.-Colonel Plunkett contented himself with bringing in Captain Oliver's company, I should have been able to reach Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe on the 19th with reinforcements, when the enemy would either have retired or would have engaged me with probably different results.

18. Lieut.-Colonel Plunkett contented himself with bringing in Captain Oliver's company, I should have been able to reach Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe on the 19th with reinforcements, when the enemy would either have retired or would have engaged me with probably different results.

19. It is evident that the Somalis alone were not engaged in this action, but that troops from the Wadi Shobell, Chellah, and some others, were also engaged. This information has since been confirmed by a telegram I have received from Colonel Rochfort, who states that the Mullah had with him 1,900 Adames.

20. I deeply regret the loss of life which had occurred. I consider that Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe acted in the best manner that he could in the circumstances.

Lieut.-Colonel Plunkett had marched so far from the zariba in order to come up with the enemy, that to have sent out more men to him in time to achieve it would have been impossible, and moreover would have so weakened the garrison of the zariba as to render it liable to be taken up by the enemy; and such a reinforcement would have been, in all probability, attacked and overwhelmed on its way.

21. After the withdrawal to Galad, a further immediate advance on Wardair or Waival was now impracticable. The delay caused by the events at Gumbhir had in any case too reduced my available rations and transport, while the knowledge gained of the country to be traversed, and of the military spirit of the enemy, would have necessitated a larger force than I had available at Galad.

I therefore decided to drop back the bulk of my force to Galad.
and Bera, and to employ every available camel on the rolling up of the Obbia base.

In order that this movement should be completed without hostile interference, and for the following reasons, I decided to hold Galadji and Dudub with sufficiently strong garrisons.

By so doing I should cover the rolling up of the base, and the Bohotule—Gallayn route, and, in addition, should the Abyssinians come up with and inflict a defeat on the Mullah, I should be able to prevent the latter from falling back on Galadji.

21. I consequently left a garrison of 370 men, under Lieut.-Col. Cobbe, in Galadji, and 80 men, under Captain Phillips, in Dudub, with a month's rations, and withdrew the rest of my force to Bera and Gallayn, the troops arriving there between the 28th and 27th instant.

I do not think that the enemy will attempt to attack either of the advanced posts, since I believe that the severe punishment which he received in the action of the 17th will prevent his taking the offensive for some time.

In any case the posts are sufficiently strong to prevent any anxiety being felt as to their safety.

22. I have in my telegram, No. 121 of 27th instant, reported very fully on the situation, and have little to add thereto. For reasons which I have therein given, I am of opinion that the force must be withdrawn across the Hand to Bohotule during the next 2 months, and I have given my views, for your decision, as to the retention of a garrison in the Miding.

23. The possibility of further operations at a later date depends entirely on the capacity of the Protectorate to raise a sufficient number of camels, and on the position of the Mullah at that time.

I am telegraphing to Colonel Swan and Gardiens, as to the possibility or advisability of making extensive forced requisitions of camels on payment, and as to the measure of success which is likely to be obtained.

24. In any case I fear that some time will elapse before the necessary transport could be collected, but if by that time the Mullah is still in his position, the resumption of the places which we now hold will not be a difficult matter, with the knowledge which we possess of the country and the water supply.

25. In the meanwhile I am hoping that, before it becomes necessary to withdraw the garrisons of Dudub and Galadji, the Abyssinians will have been driven by the Mullah from his present positions.

In such a case I expect to see an immediate detachment of the Ali Gheri and Dubhabanta, who will be driven by stress of water on to Bohotule or Gallayn.

I should then be able to deal with these tribes, and to obtain a large number of transport animals. In such a case the whole situation as regards this force would be changed.

26. There is, however, another situation to be considered, viz., that the Mullah may signal the Abyssinians. As far as we ourselves are concerned, I do not consider that the situation will be very different to what it is at present. We may expect that the Bohotule—Gallayn route may be visited by a certain number of horsemen, and escorts must therefore be strong, but so long as Galadji and Dudub are held, no considerable body of the enemy will penetrate so far east. The Mullah cannot, even if he so desired, penetrate northwards into the Protectorate until abundant rains have filled the water holes, and in any case he would fear for his communications. I do not consider it to be likely that he will move in this direction.

27. I enclose—

(a) A copy of instructions to Lieut.-Col. Cobbe.

(b) A report from Lieut.-Col. Cobbe, enclosing a list of casualties.

(c) A consecutive narrative of the events of the action on the 17th, compiled from the evidence of the survivors, as taken by a Committee of Enquiry.

28. The recommendations which Colonel Cobbe and Captain Shakerley have made, will be forwarded by me in despatch at the conclusion of the operations.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Soumiland Field Force.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LIEUT.-COLONEL COBBE, V.C., D.S.O., COMMANDING COLUMN DETAINED IN FORCE ORDERS OF 26 INSTANT.

1. All information lately received tends to the belief that Mullah's forces are now in the area of country roughly enclosed within the boundaries Wardair, Sury, Danog.

The Mullah himself, with his personal bodyguard, is believed to be at a spot called Illig, some 18 miles north of Wardair.

Wardair is believed to be 70 to 80 miles north of Galadji.

2. Your object will be to effect a reconnaissance in the direction of Wardair, and, if no strong opposition is met with, to seize and hold that place, thus securing the water supply to the Main Column, which will advance from Galadji on 17th instant.

You will refrain from attacking the enemy if you have reason to suppose that the main body of his force is at hand, but it is probable that you will be in possession of the wells before any important body of the enemy can be concentrated to meet you.

Once in possession of Wardair, and in strong defensive position, you should be able to hold your own without difficulty, and to inflict the severest losses on the enemy if he ventures to attack you.

3. As previously ordered, you will start to-night with that portion of your column detailed to move to-day, and you will reach to-morrow morning the water post which has been established 20 miles towards Wardair.

At this post you will obtain 1 day's water for your column, and on the 11th instant you will proceed towards Wardair, taking with you the detachment 5th Bn. King's African Rifles now at that post, and leaving as garrison one Officer and 10 N.F.R. Sappers and Miners now at the water post.

By the morning of the 12th instant, it is presumed that you will have accomplished some 35 miles from Galadji, and by the evening of the 12th instant, some 55 miles.

4. The Mounted Infantry of your column will, as already detailed, start on the evening of the 11th instant, reaching the water post on the morning of the 12th, and receiving from it 1 day's water.

The Mounted Infantry will start again on the evening of the 12th, and will march until they join your column on the morning or afternoon of the 13th instant, receiving that night the first of the 4 days' water supply carried by you for them.

5. Every endeavour will be made to form a watering post at Gunbarn (40 miles) by the 6th instant, but it is doubtful whether we shall have tins or cans available to store more than 750 gallons, to include water for garrison of 10 men.

6. Your further proceedings must be left to your judgment, bearing in mind the general instructions embodied in paragraph 2.

7. You will keep the General Officer Commanding informed as to your movements, and in the unlikely event of such opposition being concentrated as to compel you to fall back, you will, in addition to reporting on the military situation, state what your requirement will be in the way of water, in order that a water convoy may be despatched without delay.

8. At present arranged, the Main Column will start from here on the 17th instant, and should have accomplished some 65 miles by the morning of the 20th instant.

G. FORESTER-WALKER, Lieut.-Colonel,
Chieft Staff Officer, Southland Field Force.
Sir,

I have the honour to report that, in accordance with the instructions received, I proceeded on the night of the 10th instant from Galadí with a force, strength as per margin, to the watercourse east which I had established on the 19th instant, 20 miles south-west of Galadí. I arrived at the post on the morning of the 11th instant, and found that it had been established there on the wrong road, and too far to the south.

I reported that this was the case, and informed you that it was my intention to strike off in a north-westly direction, until I should reach the proper road, which, according to the information received from the guide, should be the northernmost road from Galadí.

I marched across country, taking with me the detachment, 5th Bn. King's African Rifles. I had garrisoned the water post, and sending scouts to Gumburn and passed the southern road to Gumburn, on the morning of the 11th instant, 11 miles from the water post. At 10 miles I reached the centre road to Gumburn after passing through thick bush, and halted on it.

I forwarded a letter from this camp, through the Officer commanding water post, suggesting the removal of that post, and stating I would send back the empty canoes direct by the road on which I was, also informing you that two of the enemy's horsemen had been seen close to our camp, from where they had ridden away.

As my mounted men had given me no news of a road further north than this, I decided to move by this road to Gumburn. This is the road which Colonel Buckett used when he rode to Gumburn previously.

In the afternoon I sent the Somal Mounted Infantry under Lieutenant Chichester, to the front, with orders to go out 10 miles before dark, and marched myself by moonlight until I reached them. Lieutenant Chichester reported that about seven of the enemy's horsemen had been seen, but that, when approached, they had galloped off. I had sent to Gumburn also reported that they had fired on the enemy's scouts.

I halted here and sent on eight Somal Mounted Infantry with about 120 feet scouts, to go through the night and examine the road; the scouts were sent on ahead, and report to me at daylight, while the Mounted Infantry scouted further to the front.

I started at 4 a.m. on the 13th and marched 10 miles, being met at various points by my scouts, who reported that the road was clear, and that no enemy's horsemen led away to the west. As the guides appeared to be doubtful whether we were on the right road to Wairair or not, I recalled my scouts from the north-west, and sent five mounted men out to the north-east to look for another road further north. They returned and reported that, after passing through thick bush, they had found a path which they estimated to be a much used one than the one on which I was marching, and therefore, decided to keep on the same road.

The British and Burgler Mounted Infantry, under Captain Shakerley, joined me at the middle-day halt, and, on marching, I sent back 70 canoes with empty water-tins under an escort, as I reported that I was extremely doubtful of the road, and that I was about 40 miles west of Galadí, but that I should go on till mid-day on the next day, and, if then, I had found out nothing definite about the road to Wairair and the wells, I should have to return, as I could not afford to go further with the water which I had.

On the afternoon of the 18th, I sent on all the Mounted Infantry in front, with orders to go about 8 miles along the road, which would enable me to march by moonlight. I started at 5 p.m. with the Infantry, but shortly after starting, not seeing the tracks of the Mounted Infantry on the road, I suspected that they had been guided by the Somal Mounted Infantry to the northern road, which the Somalis had previously reconnoitered. I sent two camel scouts to follow their tracks and recall them, who returned without finding their tracks.

As I was now in thick bush, and had no scouts ahead, I halted before dark, after 4 miles, and made a zariba. Three scouts were sent back to the afternoon cavalry to follow on the tracks of the Mounted Infantry, while the second patrol of the Mounted Infantry, which was thicker and the paths dispersed, I decided that I could go no more by mid-day, and so ordered the column to take a rest after retiring for about a mile and a-half, the new advanced guard was fired into by the enemy's horsemen. I was able to collect most of the transport and horses, and some also some of the men, and the two companies, which the enemy's horsemen, who, however, continued to hang about till the Mounted Infantry, hearing our guns, came up and chased them away.

I continued the retirement to a place north of Gumburn hill, about 42 miles from Galadí, and sent back a letter saying that I proposed to make a post there, and to return myself to Galadí. This letter I sent by two Somal Mounted Infantry, who returned saying they had met seven of the enemy. I then sent it by 10 British Mounted Infantry. During the night I sent out my scouts to search for the enemy's scouts; as the enemy had gone, and disposed, some of the enemy's horsemen, who had attacked an outlying post, I decided, on the morning of the 15th, to rest the men, who had ridden a very hard pace. During the morning it rained hard for 1 hour, and, sending men out, I found some pools, where I filled up empty tins and watered the horses, and I decided not to march.

I received a letter informing me that a convey was on its way to Gumburn.

On the morning of the 16th, I sent out half a company to the west, under Captain Morris, and half a company, under Captain Luard, to the W.S.W. to reconnoitre for the enemy, and look for water; also a mounted patrol to the north to look for the northern road and water, and scouts to S.S.E., who returned and reported water.

I sent out a strong escort, with canoes and empty lines, and obtained some water. The patrols came back from the north later, and reported that they had gone out 7 miles but had seen no water or signs of the enemy.

In the morning firing was heard from the direction of Captain Luard's party, and Captain Morris reported the enemy in front, but that they retired and dispersed in accordance with his movements. I sent the Mounted Infantry to him, and when they reached him they saw no enemy, and Captain Morris showed them the direction Captain Luard had taken, whence firing had been heard. They went in that direction, but saw no enemy, and came on some of Captain Luard's men sent back by him with a message, that he had had the order of the enemy's mounted patrols, but had chased them and killed three ponies, captured a rifle, wounded some of them, and was following them, but would be back by 10 a.m. Captain Morris returned and reported that he had seen no enemy scouts since the Mounted Infantry had left him, so I sent half a company to follow Captain Luard's tracks and reinforce him should it be necessary. I also sent the Mounted Infantry out to occupy the enemy on the west.

I am to report of what I was doing, also expressing an opinion that the enemy were collected in the thick bush about 10 to 12 miles distant, where I had been attacked by the horsemen on the 14th, and were sending out scouts towards us; also stating that I wished to hold my post with all my force until the arrival of the main column if my water would last. I also sent a letter to Officer commanding convey to march straight in.

As this letter was leaving I heard firing from the Mounted Infantry, and a messenger came in asking for reinforcements, which I sent out. Very shortly afterwards I received another letter from Captain Shakerley saying that Captain Luard, hearing the firing, had come up on the flank of the enemy, who had galloped off.

From Liet.-Colonel A. S. Colhie, Commanding Reconnaissance towards Wairair, to the Chief Staff Officer, Somaliland Field Force.

Galadí, 21st April, 1903.
Convoy, under Captain Vesey, came in, bringing back my letter, and I added to it another letter, giving the casualties in the Mounted Infantry, i.e., Lieutenant Chichester, killed; Burgier Hill, severely wounded; and two Somali Mounted Infantry wounded (one since dead). I also said that I would send back all the empty camels possible the next day to Gali. In the afternoon I sent out a strong reconnaissance of 200 men, under Major Margesson, to see if any of the enemy were about. He went about 4 miles and saw no enemy.

I decided to send back all except 150 camels next afternoon, with empty water-tins, putting my water into a tank. I ordered a reconnaissance on the morning of the 17th, consisting of one company 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles, under Captain Olivey, which would proceed to the west about 3 miles, and a half company 1st Bn. King's African Rifles, under Captain Walker, to proceed to a hill about 15 miles to the south-west, to see if the country was clear of the enemy.

I made a tank in the zariba for water about 4.45 a.m. After a report from Captain Olivey, despatched at 4.45 a.m., saying that he was 3 to 4 miles out, had seen no enemy, but only the tracks of one foot man, and that he was coming back. Shortly afterwards I received another report, marked 8.15 a.m., saying that the enemy, both horse and foot, were advancing, and that he was retiring slowly and required reinforcements.

I ordered Colonel Plumkett to take out one company 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles and 50 men of the 2nd Sikhs with two Maxim's to bring Captain Olivey in, and a gun was fired to recall Captain Walker.

Colonel Plumkett started about 9.15 a.m., owing to the slight delay occasioned by loading the Maxims and distributing 20 rounds extra per man. As Colonel Plumkett started another report from Captain Olivey arrived, saying that he was within 15 miles of the zariba and was not in action.

This was shown to Colonel Plumkett, whom I had given orders that he was only to bring Captain Olivey back.

I reported the news which had been received to you at 9 a.m., saying that I could not send the convoy back yet, and that my communications might be cut. I also offered a horseman to recall Captain Olivey, and proceeded with increasing and strengthening my zariba and escort.

At 11.45 a.m. Somalis reported that they had been firing; it was scarcely audible, but when it seemed certain that there was firing, I sent out mounted Somalis to report—one of them came back about 12.45 p.m., carrying Colonel Plumkett's guide, wounded, on his pony. This man said that the force had been cut up.

I sent more mounted men to find out more, and sent a report at 1 p.m. to Gali, and another at 2.30 p.m., on which Captain Smithey, King's Royal Rifles Corps, went near my transport before any shots were fired from a black, and the transport happened to be in an open patch, even then a few camels stampeded and some loads were lost.

I think it would be a very difficult thing to protect one's transport by the thick brush, and as the number of camels is bound to be as many, if not more than the number of fighting men when carrying several days' water, a column in square formation in dense brush practically resolves itself into four detached bodies of troops out of sight and touch of each other. The attack was made about 17.30, as they made no attempt to interfere with my retirement on the 19th, after I had received the reinforcement of 100 Mounted Infantry.

I attach the report of the Officer Commanding Mounted Infantry on the action of the 19th, and his recommendation of Rifleman Miller, King's Royal Rifles Corps Mounted Infantry, for the favourable consideration of the General Officer Commanding. I also wish to bring to the notice of the General Officer Commanding the very able manner in which Captain Smithey, King's Royal Rifles Corps, acted. Captain Foster, Burgher Mounted Infantry, collected their men, who were galloping in extended order, when suddenly attacked by a large body of the enemy, and also the very steady behaviour of the British and Burgher Mounted Infantry, which alone enabled them to keep off the enemy until the appearance of the Infantry made the enemy retire.

I also wish to bring to the notice of General Officer Commanding, for his favourable consideration, No. A 750 Private Mandelbume, 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles, who brought in No. 383 Private Genani, who was wounded in the arm, a distance of 6 miles to the zariba.

The following is a list of casualties on the various dates:

14th April—one Somali Guide, slightly wounded.
they were working round my flanks and rear; I retied about 40 yards to a more favourable position and formed a small circle, the enemy were between me and the zariba, and I had wounded men and one killed; a brisk fire was maintained for about 2 of an hour, the enemy showing much courage and persisting, one man and horse being killed within 12 yards of the circle, I despatched a messenger to the Officer Commanding Column informing him of our position. We eventually succeeded in driving off the enemy at, I believe, a considerable loss to them. About 10 minutes after the firing was over Captain Leard, King's African Rifles, came on the scene with his company, and I have no doubt that the approach of this force assisted me materially. A force from the zariba arrived later. I very much regret to report the following casualties:—Lieutenant Chichester, Somali Mounted Infantry, killed. Trooper Hill, Burgher Contingent, and two Somalis wounded; three horses killed, and seven wounded.

Two of the enemy's dead were found on the ground and 13 dead ponies, but I believe they suffered considerably as most of the firing was at fairly close range, and several were seen to fall from their horses. The enemy being round us some time after the firing was over so I presume they were removing their dead and wounded.

I estimate their numbers at about 200. I have brought to the notice of the Officer Commanding Column, in a separate letter, the good services of Rifleman Miller, King's Royal Rifle Corps Mounted Infantry.

I am, &c.,
G. C. SHAKELEY, Captain, King's Royal Rifle Corps Mounted Infantry.

To the Staff Officer to Column under Lieut.-Colonel Cobbe, V.C., D.S.O.

Galadi, 22nd April, 1903.

CASUALTIES LIST OF 17TH APRIL, 1903.

1st Bn. King's African Rifles.

Missing, reported dead—
130 Lance-Havildar Khazan Singh.
41 Corporal Chidwata.
24 Lance-Corporal Kungu.
26 Private Saliati.


Gumburu, 18th April, 1903.

Sir,
I wish to bring to the notice of the Officer Commanding Column the good services of No. 2566 Rifleman Joshef Miller, 4th Bn. King's Royal Rifles (British Mounted Infantry).
On 16th April, 1903, I was in command of a mounted patrol sent out from the Column we came in contact with some mounted derwi and were eventually surrounded by several hundred. Rifleman Miller was standing close to me and heard me say that I was going to send a message to the Officer Commanding Column, he immediately volunteered to carry this message. I gave him a letter; he succeeded in galloping through the enemy's lines at great risk, and delivered the letter to the Officer Commanding Column.

I have, &c.,
G. C. SHAKELEY, Captain, King's Royal Rifle Corps, Commanding British Mounted Infantry.

To the Staff Officer,
The Officer Commanding Column.
Forwarded to Chief Staff Officer for the favourable consideration of General Officer Commanding. His horse was wounded when getting back.

A. S. COBBIE, Lieut.-Colonel,
Commanding Reconnaissance.

NARRATIVE OF THE ACTION OF GUNBARA ON 17TH APRIL, 1903, EXTRACTED FROM EVIDENCE OF SURVIVORS GIVEN BEFORE COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY HELD AT GALADAI AND ELSEWHERE.

The force which marched out of the zariba at Gunbara, under Lieut.-Colonel Plunkett, on the 17th instant, consisted of 48 men, 2nd Sikhs, and a company 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles.

About 1 mile from the zariba this force met a "C" Company of the 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles, under Captain Oliver.

The force then apparently formed square, with the Sikhs in the front face, and marched some 6 miles farther to an open spot, which was surrounded by thick bush.

The distance of the bush from the square is variously estimated from 300 to 600 yards.

The enemy had apparently collected in this bush, and advanced on the square from it.

First horsemen, then foot riflemen, and afterwards spearmen, attacked the square on all sides. The horsemen and riflemen were driven back, but ammunition becoming exhausted, the square was broken by the rush of spearmen.

In spite of the fire of the troops and Maxim's, the enemy frequently came up as close as 10 yards from the square.

When the ammunition was exhausted, Colonel Plunkett gave orders for the troops to charge with the bayonet back to the zariba. Previous to this, however, it appears that many Officers and men had been killed and wounded.

Some evidence points to the front face of the square being first pushed back by a rush of spearmen upon the Sikhs, who fought with the bayonet, but re-formed.

At this period of the fight most of the casualties occurred, and from the evidence of witnesses the whole of the Officers were killed, together with the two men of the King's Royal Rifles who accompanied the force.

Captain Johnston-Stewart, before being killed, told those who could get back to the zariba.

The fight appears to have lasted some 2 hours.

Colonel Plunkett left camp at 9.15 a.m., and at 11.45 a.m. firing was heard in the distance. This would make the scene of the action about 7 miles from the zariba.

The return, at 12.45 p.m., of a Somali, who brought in news that all was over in the square, cannot be accepted as reliable evidence, as he probably escaped early in the fight, and was brought in upon the pony of the scout sent out to see what was happening.

The numbers of the enemy's dead, as stated by witness, vary, but the Somali or Yao cannot be relied upon to estimate numbers with any approach to exactitude. The Yao can only count up to 10.

The evidence of Somalis points to the fact that some outside tribes (Adones, probably) engaged in the attack.

The evidence of Yoa speaks of four men (probably Arab) and others (probably Adones), who are negroes, and Somalis, as having been in the fight.

The whole evidence goes to prove that the fight was a most gallant one, and that the majority of the men had finished their ammunition before the square was broken by an overwhelming rush of spearmen.

Most of the men who returned appear only to have had 100 rounds on the person. These men belonged to Captain Oliver's Company, the Sikhs; the other company took out 150 rounds per man.

G. FORESTIER-WALKER,
Chief Staff Officer.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Bohoto, 29th June, 1903.

Sir,

I have the honour to enclose a despatch from Major J. E. Gough, Commanding the Flying Column of the Berbera—Bohoto Force, forwarded to me through Lieut.-Colonel J. E. Swann, Commanding the Berbera—Bohoto Line of Communication.

After the occupation of Galadai, I instructed Lieut.-Colonel J. Swann to employ the Flying Column in a reconnaissance in the direction of Wardair, to coincide as to time with the movements of the Obbia Force in that direction.

Major J. E. Gough describes in his despatch the operations undertaken by him with this object in view.

I enclose the remarks made by Lieut.-Colonel J. Swann upon the manner in which Major J. E. Gough conducted the reconnaissance to Daratoleh. I consider that his skilful handling of a small force in difficult bush country, when surrounded by superior numbers of a brave and fanatical enemy, is worthy of high commendation.

Major J. E. Gough, in his despatch of the 23rd April, attached to the report of the operations of the Berbera—Bohoto Flying Column, has brought to my notice the names of two Officers whom he recommends for the Victoria Cross for an act of conspicuous gallantry during the action of Daratoleh.

I beg to forward for favourable consideration the names of these two Officers—


Captain G. M. Rolland, I.A., Intelligence Officer, Flying Column, Berbera—Bohoto Force.

Major J. E. Gough also brings to notice the names of the following Indian and African soldiers for acts of conspicuous gallantry on the same occasion, and recommends the honours of the Order of Merit upon the Indian soldiers and the Medal for Distinguished Conduct in the Field upon the African soldiers.

I beg to forward, for favourable consideration, the names as given in Major Gough's despatch—

For Order of Merit—


For the Distinguished Conduct in the Field—


No. 87 Corporal Sarmoni, 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles.

Sowar Umar Ismail, Somaliland Camel Corps, 4th Bn. King's African Rifles.

The behaviour of all ranks during the action of Daratoleh appears to have been excellent. The Somaliland Mounted Infantry and Somaliland Camel Corps of the 4th Bn. King's African Rifles, contrary to expectation, behaved with great steadiness.

Major J. E. Gough also brings the names of the following Officers and
non-commissioned officers to my notice as having performed exceptionally good work on the occasion of the fight at Daratolea:—

Captain (Local Major) H. B. Rowlands, 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles.
Captain A. E. Hughes, 14th Bn. King's African Rifles.
Captain T. N. Howard, 6th Bn. King's African Rifles.
(Attached to 9th Bn. King's African Rifles).
Lieutenant J. H. Horton, Indian Medical Service.
Armourer-Sergeant A. Gibbs, Army Ordnance Corps (attached 6th Bn.
King's African Rifles).
Jenamer Naim Singh, Bikaner Camel Corps.
Indian Contingent, British Central Africa.
Interpreter Ahmad Jibril, 6th Bn. King's African Rifles.
No. 88 Havildar Ahmed Ismail, 6th Bn. King's African Rifles.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

REPORT ON THE ENGAGEMENTS AT BURATOLEA.

From Officer Commanding Flying Column to Deputy Assistant Adjutant-
General, Lines of Communication, Berbera-Boholle.

Sir,—
Boholle, 26th April, 1903.

I have the honour to forward the following report, describing the operations of the Flying Column from 13th to 28th April, 1903:—

After seeing Lieutenant-Colonel Swann, Officer Commanding, Lines of Communication, it was decided that the Flying Column would leave Boholle on 13th April, with the object of operating with the Galash force in a south and southerly direction from Boholle, and if possible to seize the water at Danap and use that place as a pivot for further operations. The information about water at Danap, from Somali sources, was to the effect that there was a pool of rain water there 30 yards by 70 yards, and 2 feet deep, but that the water was not evaporated in the ordinary course of events, but that the Mullah's people had watered much stock there they might have drunk it dry.

The following force left Boholle at 4 p.m.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>Non-commissioned officers, British</th>
<th>Rank and file</th>
<th>Followers</th>
<th>Maxima</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indian Contingent, B.C.A.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Bn. King's African Rifles</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali spies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>347</strong></td>
<td><strong>176</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Major Gough in command, Captain Bruce as Staff Officer, and Captain Rolland as Intelligence Officer.

Transport, consisting of 406 camels, carrying 5 days' water, 12 days' ration, and reserve ammunition.
Halted at 5.30 p.m. Distance of march 4 miles, on the Kunnis—Boholle road.

On the 14th April, 1903, left zariba at 5.30 a.m., marched 14 miles on the Kunnis—Boholle road, where the force halted for the mid-day halt. An issue of water was made, and the spare camels, with empty water tins, sent back to Boholle. Continued march at 2 p.m., on Kunnis—Boholle road, for 2 miles, at which point the column struck off south-west by west. Halted 5.30 p.m. Distance of march, 20 miles.

Three mounted Somali scouts were sent on to try and get information whether there was water at Danap, or if any water in the scales ahead of the column. These men missed the column on their return, and arrived at Boholle.

On the 15th April, 1903, left zariba at 5.40 a.m., the mounted troops of the Flying Column, strength as below, under Major Sharp, caught up the Infantry column, and continued their march, keeping about 2 miles ahead of the Infantry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Followers</th>
<th>Camels or pony.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6th Bn. King's African Rifles</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somaliland Mounted Corps</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somaliland Mounted Infantry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>206</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This force left Boholle at 4 p.m., on 14th April, starting after the Infantry, in order to save water, as owing to their being no water on the road every drop had to be carried in water tins. At 7.50 a.m. the column struck the Boholle—Illik—Walwal road, and continued the march at 8 a.m. Three hours mid-day halt. Left again at 2 p.m.; the Mounted Infantry ponies having been given a 4 gallon drink. Distance of march, 21 miles.

On the 16th April, 1903, as no news of water, either at Danap or near it, orders were given to the mounted troops to continue the Illik—Walwal road for 20 miles, and to make every endeavour to capture a prisoner, and to look out well for any raids holding water.

If no news of water at Danap obtained, the mounted troops to make a march in a southerly direction, as far as possible, and then to fall back on the Infantry column, who would remain at Gareero till the morning of 18th April, when they would fall back towards Boholle to pick up a water convoy. If information was obtained that there was water at Danap, the mounted troops were to seize the place and hold it until the Infantry column arrived.

The mounted troops, under Major Gough, left the zariba at 3.30 a.m., carrying as much water for the men as possible (i.e., Camel Corps, 3 days; and Mounted Infantry, 2 days). This force moved 25 miles along the Illik—Walwal road, and at 11 a.m. the Somaliland Camel Corps brought in two prisoners, who stated that they had met some of the Mullah's scouts 3 days previously, who had told them that there was water at Danap, and that the place was held by a few of the Mullah's mounted riflemen. The mounted troops, therefore, continued their march to Danap from Blidahli, under Major Gough, one of the prisoners being used as a guide. Captain Rolland returned to the Infantry column with orders to Major Rowlands to continue his march on Danap, but if he received no further instructions he was to turn back to Boholle on evening of 17th, as otherwise he would not have enough water with which to make the return journey, and until the mounted troops actually held Danap it was impossible to say what the water supply there actually was.

The mounted troops halted at 6.30 p.m., having marched 32 miles. It was found afterwards that this force was led considerably out of the direct road.
On the 17th April, 1903, the mounted troops continued their march at 3.00 a.m., and met the Bohoto—Megaghifis—Danop road at 6 a.m., some 14 miles from Danop. At 11.30 a.m., when some 10 miles from Danop, the force halted, as the animals were very dry up by the heat and want of water. Ten of the best Somali Mounted Infantry ponies were picked out and a patrol of Somali Mounted Infantry sent on to Danop to report and return with water. At 4 p.m. two of this patrol returned and reported as follows:

"Went to Danop, and found 15 of the enemy's horsemen, chased them, capturing nine ponies. Water there only sufficient for the whole Flying Column for 3 days."

On this information orders were sent out by mounted messengers to Major Rowlands to return to Bohoto, as there was not enough water to fill up tins for the return journey.

The mounted troops continued their march to Danop to water up, and to act on any further information that might be obtained. Arrived Danop, 5.45 p.m., a few shots being fired by the enemy on our left flank. Water was found to be more than expected, although not enough for the whole Flying Column. Orders were, therefore, sent to Major Rowlands, at 6.30 p.m., cancelling previous orders, and ordering up 100 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles, 2 Maxim, 2 Maxim reserve ammunition, 100 water tins, and all available rations, the remainder of the column to return to Bohoto.

A strong zariba was made.

On the 18th April, 1903, patrols of Somali Mounted Infantry were sent out west and south-west at 6 a.m. These returned at noon with 400 loot canes and two prisoners. The latter reported 3 days' heavy fighting between Galadhi and Wardar, and that the Mullah had lost many men. Zariba was strengthened.

At 5.30 p.m. messengers, received from Major Rowlands, dated noon this day, 15 miles east of Megaghifis, saying that up to the time of writing no messengers from Flying Column were received by him, and that he would have to return them if he received orders by early morning of 19th. His own men had been placed on a half issue of water to enable Major Rowlands to stay on an extra day.

Messengers were sent back at once, repeating previous orders re coming on to Danop.

An Ibrahim was sent to Walwal to try and get information, and camel meat was issued to all ranks as rations.

On the 19th April, 1903, an Officers' patrol, under Captain Hughes, consisting of 50 Bikanir Camel Corps and 10 Somali Mounted Infantry, were sent out on Walwal road. This patrol returned at 3 p.m., having marched 15 miles on Walwal road and having seen nothing. At 12.30 p.m. a few of the enemy's horsemen reported in the bush close to the zariba. Fifteen Somali Mounted Infantry chased them out of it, a few shots being exchanged.

At 1.30 p.m. a letter was received from Major Rowlands, acknowledging receipt of yesterday's orders, and saying that he was acting on them. Our two previous messengers were afterwards found to have eventually turned up at Bohoto.

On the 20th April, 1903, with 50 Sikhs and 20 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles, arrived at our zariba at 1.30 a.m., having marched 35 miles, the convoy beingarrisoned at dark about 10 miles from Danop. The Bikanir Camel Corps were sent out at daylight to reconnoitre and escort it into Danop. The convoy arrived all correct at 9 a.m. A false alarm occurred at noon. The zariba was strengthened and bush cleared.

On the 21st April, 1903, a patrol of 25 Somali Mounted Infantry was sent out at 4.30 a.m. towards Wardar with orders to go on till they met the enemy or otherwise obtained information and to bring back a prisoner, if possible.

Another patrol of Somali Camel Corps was sent to Massara (7½ miles south-west by west) to report on water there. This patrol returned at 5.30 a.m., reporting the water there so filthy that the animals refused to drink. The Somali Mounted Infantry patrol returned at 1 p.m. with two prisoners, and reported having met 42 of the enemy's scouts 12 miles from Danop; they killed 15 and brought back 2 prisoners. The prisoners stated as follows:

"Sent out from Daratoleh (25 miles S.S.E. from Danop) to watch the English force and report on its strength. Enemy's force at Daratoleh, 50 mounted riflemen and 500 spearmen, but that they had received further reinforcements yesterday." Also stated that there had been heavy fighting at Gumburna, the Mullah losing heavily; also that there was a fresh rain water fall at Daratoleh.

The Ibrahim who was sent out on 17th returned at 2.30 p.m. and corroborated the above story, but said that the enemy had a large force at Daratoleh, and that the English force had halted at Gumburna and was short of water.

A report of the above was sent to the Officer Commanding Lines of Communication, Bohoto, informing him that the mounted troops would go out to Daratoleh to-morrow (morning of 22nd).

On the 22nd April, 1903, as reported in my letter of 21st to Officer Commanding Lines of Communication, Bohoto, I left Danop at 4.30 a.m. with following force:

45 Bikanir Camel Corps, 2 Officers, with 1 Maxim under Sergeant Gibb. 54 Somali Mounted Infantry 16th Bn. King's 3 Officers. 50 Somali Camel Corps 1 African Rifles 1 Officer. 30 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles, 2 Officers mounted on Bikanir riding camels (behind the camel swarms). 12 Indian Contingent, British Central Africa, 1 Officer mounted on ponies.

Lieutenant Horton, I.M.S.

At 7.30 a.m. we were fired on by the enemy's scouts. The Somali Mounted Infantry chased and killed two men, capturing two rifles (Lee-Enfield's) and three ponies.

We lost one pony shot. One mounted scout of enemy got away. At 9.15 a.m. we again came in contact with the enemy's scouts, and, at 10.20 a.m. Captain Howard of the Somali Mounted Infantry reported a large force of enemy advancing to meet us. The force was dismounted once, animals placed in centre, and the men living the faces.

At 10.30 a.m. the enemy attacked in front, almost immediately developing the attack on all sides. Owing to thick bush and long grass the firing was at very close range, from 20 to 50 yards being the average range. This heavy attack continued till 2 p.m., our men being most steadily and firing well. The Maxim under Sergeant Gibb was moved from place to place as occasion arose, and the enemy always giving way when it opened fire. The enemy attacked in a line in a crescent shape, exposing themselves freely. At 2 p.m. our ammunition beginning to run short, and one of the enemy who was captured by the Somali Camel Corps reporting that the Mullah himself was at Daratoleh, and it therefore being highly improbable that the Obba force were either at Wardar or even threatening the place, I had to decide whether to advance further or return to camp. Principally owing to lack of ammunition for further big fight, I decided to return to Danop. All the wounded were put on riding camels or ponies. About 2.15 p.m. the enemy seemed to be reinforced and firing began again, and at 3.30 p.m. the front face (Bikanir Camel Corps) under Captain Walker, and the left face (2nd Bn. King's African Rifles) under Captain Townsend, charged about 100 yards into the bush, clearing the enemy, who were still keeping up a desultory fire from our immediate neighbourhood. During this charge we met the rear face advanced 200 yards, firing camels, etc., closing on them, and the front and side faces retiring, thus forming an elastic square with the animals in the centre. The retirement was continued in this formation through thick bush until 5.30 p.m.

At 5 p.m. we were short of ammunition and being considerably pressed on flanks and rear by the enemy, who had brought up more rifles and spearmen, I sent four Somali Mounted Infantry to Officer Commanding detachment at Danop to send out ammunition to meet us. (This force, under Captain Barclay, met me 6 miles from Danop about 11.30 p.m. and returned to Danop with the mounted troops.)
Up to 6.30 p.m. the rear guard and side faces were heavily engaged. Our movements were naturally slow owing to our having to lead the wounded on to canals.

Later at 5.30 p.m. I mounted the Somali Mounted Infantry (the then leading face) and they went forward under Captain Dickinson and Captain Howard in a fan shape and then halted, thus clearing the enemy from our side faces on our right moving.

I desired our driver to report the following Officers killed:

Captain C. M. Bruce, R.F.A., Staff Officer to Flying Column.
Captain C. Godfrey, I.A. (Indian Contingent, British Central Africa).

The following Officers are wounded:

Major A. Sharp, Officer Commanding Somali Mounted Infantry and
Somali Camel Corps.
Captain E. M. Hughes, L.A. (Bikani Camel Corps).

Also the following rank and file:

Killed:
- 3 Bikani Camel Corps.
- 1 Somali Mounted Infantry.
- 1 Somali Camel Corps.
- 1 Indian Contingent, British Central Africa.

Total 13.

and the following wounded:

- 4 Bikani Camel Corps.
- 7 Somali Mounted Infantry.
- 5 Somali Camel Corps.
- 7 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles.
- 2 Indian Contingent, British Central Africa.

Total 25.

We also lost 17 riding camels killed and 18 wounded, also 9 ponies killed and 9 wounded.

During the attack on us between 10.30 a.m. and 2 p.m. four hayonet charges were made, two by the 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles, one by the Somali Camel Corps, and one by the Bikani Camel Corps and Indian Contingent, British Central Africa. These were made with the object of clearing the bush, and in all cases succeeded.

The firing ceased at about 5.40 p.m. The force returned to the zariba at Danap at 6.16 a.m. All wounded brought in and most of the dead.

In conclusion I cannot speak too highly of the behaviour of all ranks. It could not have been better, the Somalis surprising African Rifles, by their steadiness and dash, the 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles having both Officers wounded and losing 11 men killed and wounded out of 30, and yet full of dash and fight. At some future time I hope to be allowed to bring forward the names of Officers and men for the consideration of the General Officer Commanding.

It is of course difficult to estimate the force against us, but I think there were 300 riflemen, and probably 400 to 500 spearmen. Their losses must have been very heavy—100 killed would probably be within the mark.

We picked up 11 rifles belonging to the enemy, none of ours falling into his hand.

On the 23rd April, 1903, Captains Bruce and Godfrey were buried close to our zariba in the morning. The zariba was strengthened and all water filled. A letter was sent to the Officer Commanding Lines of Communication, Bambur, saying that the Flying Column would start to come back on 24th April, unless news of the Galadi force was received in the meantime, and asking for a water convoy to be sent out to meet the column.

On the 24th April, 1903, messengers were received from Officer Commanding, Lines of Communication, reporting that Colonel Pilkington's force had been cut up at Gumburn, and the probable withdrawal of our forces to Galadi. Orders were then issued for the return of the column to Bambur, and letter in duplicate was sent to the Officer Commanding, Lines of Communication, reporting this and asking for water a day earlier if possible. The column marched off at 12.30 p.m., the Somali Mounted Infantry forming the rear and right flank some 3 to 5 miles out. Halted 7.30 p.m. (18 miles).

On the 25th April, 1903, left camp at break of day, the Somali Mounted Infantry first sending patrols round the zariba at the radius of 1 to 1 mile. Mid-day halt in the open for 1 hour. Zaribbed at 5.30 p.m. at Bambur 21-mile march.

On the 26th April, 1903, left zaribed at 6 a.m. Same formation. At 7.30 a.m. met messenger from Captain Byrne saying he was at Babri with 150 men, 100 water tins and 12 days' rations. Captain Byrne had told me my messengers to Officer Commanding Lines of Communication, and had moved at once to where I had asked the water to meet me. Zaribbed at 5 p.m. 1 mile from Captain Byrne. (20 miles march).

On the 27th April, 1903, left zaribed at 6 a.m. Joined Captain Byrne. Zaribbed 5 p.m. The Mounted Infantry ponies were watered (4-gallon drink), the Somali Camel Corps being sent straight on to Bambur to water their camels. (Distance of march 19 miles.)

On the 28th April, 1903, left zaribed at 6 a.m. and arrived at Bambur at 10.30 a.m. All wounded doing well. (Distance of march 11 miles.)

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. E. Gough, Major,
Officer Commanding, Flying Column.

From the Officer Commanding, Flying Column, to the Officer Commanding, Lines of Communication, Bambur.

Sir,

I should like to bring the following incident, which occurred during our return to Danap on the afternoon of 22nd April, to the notice of the General Officer Commanding, Somaliland Field Force:

"Owing to the thick bush and the rear-guard having to hold their ground while wounded men were being placed on camels, the rear-guard had got considerably in rear of the column. Captain Bruce, who was with the rear-guard, was shot through the body from about 20 yards and fell on the path, unable to move. With him at the time were Captain Walker, I.A. (Bikani Camel Corps); Captain Rolland, I.A., Intelligence Officer, Flying Column; two men, 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles; one Sikh, and one Somali of the Camel Corps. In the meantime, the column, being unaware of what had happened, were getting further away. Captain Rolland ran back some 500 yards and returned with help to bring off Captain Bruce, while Captain Walker and the men remained with Captain Bruce, keeping off the enemy, who were all round in the thick bush. They then successfully accomplished, but not before Captain Bruce was hit a second time and the Sikh wounded. But for their gallant conduct, Captain Bruce must have fallen into the hands of the enemy."

I beg to submit the names of the Officers for the Victoria Cross, and the men of the 2nd Bn. King's African Rifles and 9th Bn. King's African Rifles for the Distinguished Conduct Medal (names of men attached) and the Sikh for the Order of Merit.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. E. Gough, Major,
Officer Commanding, Flying Column.
The names of the men recommended for the Distinguished Conduct Medal and Order of Merit are—

4. Serowbad Ismael, Somali Camel Corps.
   Tribe Hafir Tofala (Abodr Abdulla), 6th Bn. King's African Rifles.

J. E. Gough, Major, Officer Commanding Flying Column.

The Chief Staff Officer,
Somaliland Field Force.
Bobotile, 21st May, 1908.

I forward herewith Major Gough's dispatch describing his operations from Danop, and the action near Daratoleh; also, in a separate letter, Major Gough's recommendations of certain Officers and men for special marks of distinction.

In forwarding these documents, I desire to place upon record an expression of my high appreciation of the care, foresight, and dash exhibited by Major Gough during the operations which he describes, and in which he proved himself to be an able and trustworthy commander in the field.

J. Swann, Lieut.-Colonel,
Commanding Berbera—Bobotile, Lines of Communication.

Officer Commanding Berbera—Bobotile Force.

The General Officer Commanding desires that this dispatch, which he has read with much interest, shall be written up, so as to include movements from departure of column from Bobotile.

It is at present an inchoate document, for it leaves the reader unaware as to Major Gough's original force, of his march to Danop, and of the force which he left.

Will you, therefore, request Major Gough to make these necessary additions to the commencement of his dispatch, and to return the dispatch through you.

G. Forester-Walker, Lieut.-Colonel,
Chief Staff Officer.

Chief Staff Officer,
Bobotile, 22nd May, 1908.

Major Gough's dispatch, covering operations from 14th April to 28th April, forwarded herewith.

Also his original recommendations of Officers and men for special marks of distinction.

J. Swann, Lieut.-Colonel,
Commanding Berbera—Bobotile Force.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Head-quarters, Somaliland Field Force,
Bobotile, 29th June, 1908.

Sir,

I have the honour to report the progress of events since my last despatch. I had decided to move across the Haul to Bobotile all other troops except the garrisons of Galkaaw, Beru, Dadu, Gallado, and Badwein, retaining hold upon those places until the last moment, and then withdrawing the garrisons of Gallado, Dadu, Beru, and Galkaaw, so as to concentrate at Badwein upon the same day, for the march across the Haul. I carried out this movement, concentrating the whole force at Badwein on the 17th June, the withdrawal from the various posts having been unnecessary.

I had heard rumours from deserters from the Mullah's camp that a move towards the Nogal was contemplated. I did not, however, attach much importance to this rumour, since such a move could not have been made at the time unless the watering places then in our possession had been first captured. However, heavy rain fell late in May and early in June, filling up the waterholes ("ballis") to the south of Bobotile and on the road towards the Nogal. This enabled the Mullah's force to carry out the bold move of crossing our lines of communication between Bobotile and Danop, having first placed the whole of his mounted force in such a position as to contain Bobotile and Danop, and to threaten any force moving from Garrebo to Bobotile.

I heard in Galkaaw on the 13th June that bodies of the enemy's horsemen had been in the neighbourhood of Bobotile and Danop, and that Danop had been fired into by a mounted force of the Mullah. It was not until I arrived at Badwein on the 17th June that I received information which made it evident that the Mullah had profited by the filling of the waterholes to make his move into the Nogal. The chief reasons for which appear to have been to escape from the pressure brought upon him by our occupation of the Mudug and by the second Abyssinian advance on Gerogub, and also to get into touch with his caravans of arms and ammunition being brought to him from northern ports.

The force I had with me in Badwein to cross the Haul consisted of 1,400 fighting ranks, 1,500 followers, 2,322 transport animals, besides a large quantity of fire stock. I had made arrangements for carrying four days' water to cross the Haul, having arranged for sufficient water to be sent from Danop to water the force on arrival, and to enable sufficient water to be carried on for the march from Danop to Bobotile. The whole Mullah's force was carried to within 6 miles of Danop on the 13th June, and the garrison at Danop was not strong. It appeared as though our movement across the Haul would be opposed. I am of opinion, however, that our rapid concentration at Badwein and our movement from thence had prevented the information of our evacuation of the Mudug reaching the Mullah until we were close to Danop and too late for him to make provision to attack the force in the thick bush. I marched out of Badwein on the 18th June, and arrived in Danop on the 21st June.

The only casualties on the march being one man wounded when on picket duty and one man missing, undoubtedly lost in the thick bush, both of the 2nd Sikhs, and one transport driver wounded by our own fire; this man having left the zariba at night, and having proceeded to the encampment of some women who were following the column, endeavoured, together with the women, to enter the zariba at night, and were mistaken for the enemy, and were fired upon—three women were. I regret to say, killed, and the transport driver severely wounded.

Major Hoskins, Commanding at Danop, had been fired into by the enemy's horsemen on several occasions, but no attempt to make a determined attack upon the zariba was undertaken by the devils.

I halted a day at Danop and reinforced the garrison there, bringing up its strength to 720 rifles and three Maxim. I should have brought in this...
post had sufficient transport been available, since the water supply there is precarious, and with the present position of the Mullah in the Nogal, it serves no useful purpose. The route to the Nogal by Baran being waterless in the dry season.

I marched out of Damot on the 23rd, reaching Bohotle on the morning of the 26th June.

The road from Damot to Bohotle was crossed by innumerable tracks of camels and sheep and goats, and while marching into Bohotle some 300 camels and 1,500 sheep and goats were captured on the road. From prisoners taken, the tribesmen at present seem disorganized, the flight from Wadair to the Nogal having scattered them, and our sudden appearance from the Mudug having caused a panic. There is no doubt, however, but that the Mullah, having obtained further supplies of arms and ammunition, will shortly commence raids upon our eastern tribes.

I propose now to leave garrison of 400 Indian and African troops at Bohotle, where rations for 2½ months for such a force are collected. To move down into Garrero and Burao garrisons, to bring each of these posts up to about 500 each, and to concentrate the remainder of the troops at Sheikh pending the arrival of Major-General Sir C. Egerton.

I have sent out a column of 700 rifles to bring in the Damot post; this should arrive here on the 3rd July, and on that day I propose to move out the 2nd Sikhs, British Mounted Infantry, and details to Sheikh. The remainder of the force above and beyond the Bohotle garrison will leave Bohotle on the 5th July for Garrero and Burao, provided sufficient transport is available.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.