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German East Africa
Operations War Diary Dec. 21 - Jan. 10

Mr. B. Stone's notes on Trials of Prisoners.

- (1) The unhappy "Lyle" is now blown up
- (2) Germans do not know what became of Force B after Tanga. Leakage of information is being investigated and checked.
- (3) The prisoner von Heydell who is a prisoner has given copious information as to the German dispositions, morale etc. He states he is not sympathetic with the Germans.

These notes are the property of the War Office

[These are the names who escaped with the "bad character" after attempting to blow up the Uganda Rly. with intent on Busse who was captured on 19 of 44990/4 annexed]

Last subsequent Paper

1915 17/1/15

copy).

Command Headquarters, E.E.A. & U.
Nairobi, 29th December 1914.

SECRET.

124-S:

From
The General Officer Commanding Troops
in British East Africa and Uganda,
To
The Private Secretary to H.E. The Governor
and Commander-in-Chief,
British East Africa.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith, for the
information of His Excellency and the Colonial Office,
a Resume of my War Diary from 21st to 27th December
1914 inclusive.

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

(Signed) G.-H. SHEPPARD, Lt.-Col.,
for Br. General,
Commanding Troops in E.E.A. & U.

RESUME OF WAR DIARY.

1st December

Our troops have established themselves on the Uмба River; slight opposition. Everything is reported quiet in the Nairobi and Uganda areas.

Arrangements for the further control of sea-borne trade are being made with a view to the prevention of import of food into German East Africa.

2nd December

In the Uмба Valley we have established posts at Bwagacheti and Vanga.

In the Lake area the 'Sybil' has been blown up and is a total wreck.

The Germans appear to have fallen back from the line of the Mara River, leaving a small outpost at Sherati. Our troops are re-occupying the line of the Kagera River.

3rd December

The G.O.C. left Mombasa for Voi. A report was received regarding the patrol affair near M... when Lieut. Musson on our side was wounded and 2 Germans and 3 askaris out of a total of 6 were killed.

From reports received it is clear that the Germans are ignorant as to what became of 'B' Force after its retirement from Tanga, and they show symptoms of uneasiness in consequence. This shows that the measures inaugurated to prevent the leakage of information are having successful results.

The Germans are showing some activity on the Congo border, but all operations have ended favourably

for

for the Belgians. The Belgian Commander reiterates his willingness and anxiety to co-operate with us in offensive operations.

Arrangements are being made to put the 'water operations' on the lake under a naval officer.

General Tighe has been ordered not to undertake any considerable offensive operations against the Germans beyond our border near Vanga. The Naval operations in conjunction with General Tighe's advance on Umba were entirely satisfactory. Commander Heedlam, who was in charge, reports :-

A demonstration was made off Moa Bay. Two hostile sailing dhows were badly damaged, and two sea-going boats were sunk.

Five natives were taken on board the 'Margara' as they expressed a wish to quit German East Africa, they report great shortage of food.

Two large whale boats were also captured, and another dhow sunk in Mansa Bay.

December 4 G.O.C. returned to Nairobi. Telegram received from the War Office to the effect that the reinforcements asked for cannot yet be sent and that a general offensive in the near future is therefore improbable. There is little enterprise shown by the Germans in the Kisii district, and they appear to be somewhat nervous about Bukoba.

December 4 A message from the 'Fox' confirms report that there are now no big guns at Ras Kasone (Tanga) and that the entrenchments there have all been filled in.

In

3.

In the Kilimanjaro district it is reported that the Germans have a strong position at Ngare Nairobi. German women and children are said to be leaving for Irangi. Some uneasiness was shown in a letter from the Marine Superintendent, Lake Nyanza, stating that active operations by the 'Muanza' were being contemplated. Arrangements have in consequence been made for unarmoured steamers to be escorted in future by armoured ones, and steps are being taken to arm two more vessels - the 'Usoga' and 'Nyanza'.

December

With reference to operations against the Turkhana, the G.O.C. has decided to send Colonel Edwards with 300 of the Nairobi Police. This force will probably start in 4 or 5 days.

The bulk of the troops in the Umba Valley will shortly be withdrawn.

The garrison of Mafia Island is reported to be not more than 50 all told.

The linking of Kilindini and Likoni by submarine cable is under contemplation as an aid to communication with Gazi and Vanga.

December

In the Umba Valley the enemy's picket at Jasin has been driven off. A bayildar of the 101st Grenadiers was killed, and a man of the same unit wounded as well as a private of the King's African Rifles.

In the Kilimanjaro district it is confirmed that the German women and children have been sent to Ngogorrie.

There are reported to be about 1,000 German native

native troops with 50 Europeans in the Bukoba district.

It is evident that the Germans are still apprehensive of an attack from the Coast. Muanza is strongly fortified.

Slight skirmishes between the Germans and ourselves are reported from the Kavera River.

The 'Muanza' is still active on the lake and assisting in communications between Bukoba and Muansa.

(Signed) H. de C. O'GRADY, Major,
Genl. Staff.

Command Headquarters, F.E.A. & U.,
Mairobi, 4th/5th January 1915.

From

The General Officer Commanding Troops,
British East Africa and Uganda,

To

The Private Secretary to His Excellency
the Governor and Commander-in-Chief,
British East Africa.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith a Resumé
of my War Diary from 28th December 1914 to the 3rd
January 1915 for the information of His Excellency
and the Colonial Office.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) R. WAPSHARE, Major General,
Commanding Troops, British East Africa
and Uganda.

RESUME OF WAR DIARY.

914
8th December

Telegram No.120-S to Secretary, War Office, London, was despatched stating that preparation for active operations in the future would be continued unless or until orders were received to the contrary, and departmental officers are working out details with this end in view.

Also No.122-S informing Secretary, War Office, that operations would be undertaken against the Turkhana tribe by a punitive column of 300 Military Police.

Also No.123-S to Senior Naval Officer asking him to spare a Naval Officer to accompany General Stewart, who leaves for Uganda on January 4th, and two 6 pr. guns to Kisumu at once, and if possible a motor boat to assist in work on the Lake.

It has been decided to relieve the Railway Companies, Sappers and Miners, now undertaking the defence of the Uganda Railway, by men of the 98th Infantry, and to turn the former into Field Companies to work on roads, water supply, &c.

9th December General Tighe, having made the necessary dispositions for the defence of the Uмба Valley, as below, returned to Mombasa.

Right Post - Ewagamache, with detachments on the Mwema River.

Centre Post - on the right bank of the Uмба River opposite Jiziwi.

Headquarters

Headquarters and two Machine Guns at Umba Camp
with detachment Jasin; patrols on both sides in
touch.

Four Companies 101st Grenadiers in Reserve at
Mombasa.

The 3 pr. guns (Hotchkiss) are to be returned
to Nairobi, and 1,500 porters to Mombasa.

Some trouble is being experienced in the
Kajiado-Longido area owing to shortage of grazing.
This formed the subject of a letter to the Chief
Secretary. All is reported as quiet on the German
Frontier.

1st December.

All is quiet in the Mombasa area, where we
continue to hold the line of the Umba River.

The forces of the Germans in the position at
Ngare Nairobi is confirmed as 1,000, including about
150 whites.

In the Lake district, Sherati and its vicinity
are reported to be weakly held.

A summary of information received from a German
prisoner is as follows :-

He was one of a patrol and lost himself, event-
ually giving himself up at Maktau.

He gives the dispositions of the German troops
in the Kilimanjaro district as under :-

Taveta

12th Company
6th Reserve Company (1/2 whites)
Hassel's Company (60)
2 machine guns

Chala & Rombo

8th Company
2 machine guns

Old Moshi

11th Company
2 small field guns (probably 1.5")

297
221
3.
New Mogal

5th Company
1st Company
7th Reserve Company (Whites)

Ngare Nairobi

6 Companies, of which two are
reserve (one of the latter being
white)

Arusha

One or two companies

At Taveta, "3 Hills" and Mission buildings are
fortified. There are small posts at Ndai ya Warembu
and El Oldorobo.

Salaita Hill is not occupied.

There are only two small guns at Mashi.

The guns taken from the 'Moewe' are on the
central railway.

The English prisoners are at Tabora, Morogoro,
and Korogwa.

There are not more than 1,500 able-bodied Germans
in the whole district.

The war is not popular among the civil element,
and he considers that the Germans would give in if
we were to win one decisive victory.

Neither Boers nor Masai are fighting for the
Germans.

Lieut. Knorr, who was killed in the outpost
affair on the Voi line, was the German mine expert;
his loss will be felt.

The G.O.C. left Nairobi for Voi on inspection
duty on the 30th December.

On 31st December G.O.C. and Staff Officer visited
Nartau. It was then decided

- (a) to construct a suspension bridge over the Voi
River
- (b) to improve double line of roads as far as the
Voi River

(c) to carry present pipe water supply as far as Maktau

(d) to prolong the present road

(e) to prepare Bura defensive position.

25
January

Reports from Mombasa area continue to show that the enemy are badly informed regarding our movements. Reliable report received that large quantities of barbed wire are on their way to Bukoba, presumably for the defence of that place.

The following is the state of affairs on the Lake regarding our armed boats on it :

'Winifred' with one 12 pr. is now at Sango Bay, but will shortly be relieved by 'Nyanza,' to which the 12 pr. of the former will be transferred, as the 'Winifred' is due to be docked at Kisumu.

The 'Kavirondo' at Sango Bay has one 12 pr. and one 3 pr.

The 'Mackinnon' on the Sherati patrol has one 3 pr. and one 2½ pr.

1 January

The G.S.O. (1) inspected the Tsavo line and found the defensive arrangements there satisfactory.

The Railway Companies distributed along the line from Mombasa to Nairobi have now been relieved by the 98th Infantry. A communication from the War Office was received regarding reinforcements for British East Africa. An Irregular Corps from Region of Frontiers was offered in addition to the reinforcement specified in a previous communication, i.e. one British and one Indian Infantry and a regiment of Canadian Mounted Infantry. And modification of

previous

previous proposals asked for.

Note. It is evident that the offensive can now be resumed in the near future.

Telegram No. 126-S was sent to the War Office. General Stewart's application for transfer was re-considered and his previous request cancelled.

The organisation of the two Irregular Corps mentioned above was asked for.

Details of proposed operations for the future were submitted, advocating attack by land instead of by sea.

It was estimated that the necessary preparations for an advance would be completed by the end of February.

Details of estimated approximate administrative requirements were submitted.

An official despatch on the Umba Valley operations was telegraphed to the War Office (No. 127-S, copy attached).

The complement of British officers with Imperial Service Troops has been doubled and is now 4 per battalion.

General Wapshare received the temporary rank of Major General.

The Frontier generally is quiet, and the Germans show little desire to adopt the offensive.

The actual distribution of our troops in the Umba Valley is now :-

Headquarters at Umba Valley, with detachment at Jasin.

January

4 Companies at Simanya on the Uмба River.

5 Companies at Bwagamacha, with detachment on Mwena.

The Germans are showing some activity in patrolling towards our posts.

At another interview with the German prisoner, Baron von Meydell, the following was elicited, and on the whole may be taken as accurate :-

He explained that he was out of sympathy with the Germans and had been forced into taking up arms much against his will. He expressed a hope that he would eventually live in the Kilimanjaro district under the English flag.

He states that there is a certain amount of enteric among the German troops at Taveta. The German general opinion is that if artillery is brought against them they will be at a serious disadvantage; they are afraid of this.

The Lumi-River does not form a military obstacle.

The 6th Reserve Company is reported to be undisciplined and untrustworthy.

At Mombo, towards Tanga, on the railway, there are about three black companies, finding posts at Korogwe and Pongwe.

His estimate, of which he seems pretty confident, gives the number of able-bodied white troops in the Kilimanjaro district as 300, and a total of 1,000 in the whole Colony.

There is considerable friction between the Civil and Military elements.

When the three transports, connected with the

Umba Valley operations, appeared off Tanga, 3 companies were at once ordered from Moshi to Momb.

The battle of Tanga was fought contrary to the Governor's wishes.

The following estimate of the German forces on the line of the Usambara Railway may be taken as approximately correct :-

2,750 rifles (500 white and 2,250 black)
1 or 2 12 prs. and about 30 machine guns
About 400 Arab levies.

Reports give nothing new from the Longido district and Lake area.

Colonel Ward has returned to Nairobi from the naval and military reconnaissance of Mafia Island. It has been definitely decided to send a force to occupy the Island, and it will probably leave Mombasa about the 8th or 9th instant. Colonel Mackay will remain to administer the Island, after occupation, subject to subsequent requirements of the Civil authorities and arrangements which may be made by His Excellency the Governor.

Paraphrase of a telegram from General Warshaw
to the Secretary, War Office, repeated to the
Chief of the General Staff, India, No. 127-S,
despatched from Nairobi at 5.35 P.M. on 2nd
January 1915.

127-S, 2nd January. Four posts have been firmly
established by us along Umba River. Vanga has been
re-occupied; the Germans occupied this place since
beginning of war. We have taken and are holding
Jassin in German territory. Only slight opposition
during advance; enemy retired and endeavoured to
destroy bridge over Umba but failed owing to rapidity
of their retirement. Loss on our side slight; enemy
suffered more heavily. Natives on our side of border,
who had previously deserted their district seeking
our protection, and who were being fed by us, are now
returning to their villages in large numbers. Dense
bush, transport difficulties, and want of water, made
our advance very difficult. Enemy were known to be
in strength at Duga and Kilulu. Much assistance was
given by Commander Headlam in drawing the enemy off by
making a demonstration of effecting a landing with

Paraphrase of a telegram from General Wapshare
to the Secretary, War Office, repeated to the
Chief of the General Staff, India, No. 127-S,
despatched from Nairobi at 3.35 p.m. on 2nd
January 1915.

127-S, 2nd January. Four posts have been firmly
established by us along Umba River. Vanga has been
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making a demonstration of effecting a landing with

COPY).

SECRET.

C.167.S.

235
Command Headquarters, B.E.A. and U.,
Nairobi, 15th January 1915.

From

The General Officer Commanding Troops,
British East Africa and Uganda,

To

The Chief Secretary to Government,
British East Africa.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith a Résumé
of my War Diary, from the 4th to the 10th January 1915
inclusive, for the information of His Excellency and
the Colonial Office.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) H. de C. O'GRADY, Major
General Staff,

for Major General,

Commanding Troops, B.E.A. & U.,

(on tour).

Copy)
REI.
167-S.
Command Headquarters, B.E.A. and U.,

Nairobi, 15th January 1915.

From

The General Officer Commanding Troops,
^{EB}British East Africa and Uganda,

To

The Chief Secretary to Government,
British East Africa.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith a Résumé
of my War Diary, from the 4th to the 16th January 1915
inclusive, for the information of His Excellency and
the Colonial Office.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) R. de C. O'GRADY, Major
General Staff,

for Major General,

Commanding Troops, B.E.A. & U.,

(on tour).

RESUME OF WAR DIARY.

January 4th

Arrangements for the Nafia Expedition are now complete.

1 Double Company Loyal North Lancers and 1 Section Mountain Artillery were sent to Kagera District to clear up the situation.

In present circumstances Uganda is considered strong enough to defend its Southern border. German activity is probably only an effort to obtain information.

General Stewart left for Kisumu and the Lake district.

January 5th

A 4" gun has been sent for from Zanzibar; it will be mounted on the 'Winifred.'

Two 6 pr. guns and naval ratings have been despatched from H.M.S. Fox to-day.

General Tighe arrived at Nairobi.

January 6th

Voi and Tsavo have now been added to the Mombasa Military Area, and the former will probably be General Tighe's headquarters in future.

The possibility of an attack on Tanga in the near future was discussed, and telegram No. 139-S. sent to the War Office advocating this and pointing out the political as well as the military effect.

In the Kilimanjaro district it is confirmed that there is a shortage of European food.

It is reported that there is a mixed guard of about 45 white and black troops at the Nafia Bridge and

that

that the country South of Jipe Lake is patrolled by the Germans.

In the lake area a hostile force is reported to be on the border opposite Kisii, and some raiding has taken place in our territory.

January 7th There is little doubt, from information received from various sources, that a threat on Tanga does draw troops in that direction.

A letter has been written to the Resident, Zanzibar, strongly advocating the withdrawal of the King's African Rifle Company which is now there.

It is also most essential, in view of the fact of possibility of non-arrival of reinforcements, that the King's African Rifles now in Giriama country should be withdrawn and added to the mobile forces for field operations. A communication on this subject has been forwarded to His Excellency the Governor.

January 8th Telegram No. 2680 received from War Office to effect that the only reinforcement that could be counted on as certain was one Indian regiment and perhaps Canadian Mounted Infantry also. This strengthens necessity for Belgian co-operation, and of course gives rise to necessity for some modification of plans.

The force for operations against Mafia Island sailed from Mombasa.

General Stewart has gone to Sherati.

January 9th A letter was received from German East Africa

thanking the G.O.C. for having sent them some medical stores. The cover also contained a list of prisoners, and showed that 2nd Lieut. Williams, Loyal North Lancs., previously reported as killed, was a prisoner and doing well.

January 10th

General Stewart landed at Sherati and occupied the fort after practically no resistance; it is now occupied by two companies Loyal North Lancs. and 1 section No. 28 Mountain Battery.

Lieut.-Col. Ward landed at Mafia without opposition. The enemy are reported to be about 50 but had not been located at time of reporting.

OPY.

595.

Mombasa.

29th November 1924

From

Brigadier General M. J. Tige, C.B., C.I.E., D.S.O.,

To

His Excellency The Governor,

British East Africa.

Sir,

I have the honour to report that I have cleared the country as far South as the Umba Valley, and have established posts as follows :-

- Headquarters at Umba camp - 1 1/2 miles N.W. of Vanga - with detachment at Jasin.
- 4 companies at Simanya - on right bank of Umba River opposite Jiriw.
- 5 companies at Bwaga Macha, with detachment at the Mwena.

(Signed) M. J. TIGHE,

Brigadier General,

COMMANDING MOMBASA AREA.

Copy to General Staff.

Mombasa,

29th December 1914.

From

Brigadier General M. J. Tighe, C.B., C.I.E., D.S.O.,

To

His Excellency The Governor,
British East Africa.

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(Signed) M. J. TIGHE,

Brigadier General,

COMMANDING MOMBASA AREA.

Copy to General Staff.