

EAST AFRIC PROT
24562

CO
24502
16 JUL 13

1913

TRANSPORT IN
THE ISLAND AND NORTHERN FRONTIER DISTRICT.

Memorandum by Captain French.

Mr. J. Ardleria.

See also Doc 113
24576

I had been looking into the question of transport for the Island & Northern Frontier Dist. & Capt. French was good enough to prepare the memo for me. We have now rec'd Doc 113 & shall the Doc deals with the questions referred to in the memo. There is, however, the question of the steel canoes referred to at p 3 of the memo. The officer in charge of transport in the Niger is sending me full details regarding them (There is a little info regarding them in the accompanying pamphlet) & we can send the info out to the off for comment.

July
Last previous Paper
22-88

Subsequent Paper

24816

He

The question of increasing the number
of the troops on the frontier itself to
which Capt. French refers at the end of
his memo: but better be taken
up with the new S-G who is to be
been appointed.

It should be
intended
here

H. J. R.
23/VI/13

Ch. 7/13

H. J. R.

Now see l^r from Comm^r Cross, of the Niger
Maurice Transport Dep^t.

Write to the for^r, with refer to for
24876

Saying that Capt. French has stated
that (as at (A) on pp. 2. + 3. of memo:)
+ has suggested that (as at (B) of memo:),

say that the head of the Niger
Transport Dep^t has furnished the info:

contained in the l^r of which a copy
is enclosed - + ask the for^r for his
views on the matter also the pamphlet
referred to in my previous memo to you
regarding the Niger Maurice Service - copy
in the Niger S-R). Spt. to be passed
this Capt. French at once

toas l^r Drury today (Indian Service) H. J. R.
give him all parcel doc in
+ refer him to Mr. Child. 7/19/13

Room



317

2
August 3rd /13

Dear Sir,

I am sorry to have
been so long in answering
your letter, I only got a
copy to my letter from
Cripps just as I
was leaving home. In
these Nigeria we have
the Mota Cause on the
River, they cost
at £800 with Larry
European Officers with
hauls & baggage (say 6 tons)

all have to be chased
 for any ^{purpose} earnings would
 come. We use ordinary
 at Canoes in Southern
 area for Waterway clearing
 work, we build these in
 at a cost of £270.
 they can either be pulled
 poled & are very useful
 very shallow water, having
 fixed sun deck they are
 suitable for European
 expense depends of
 on the rate of
 which obtain at the
 where they are to be
 employed. In Northern Nigeria
 they have a very useful



2

849

de for deck + 3rd per mile
of class, there are also
long Buses which cost
\$50 about delivered in
series, size poles are the
usual number allowed +
are paid 9th per day
the "a" head man at
They will carry ~~the~~
from 3 to 4 tons of
+ the expense for
keep is very small. It
difficult to give you
at figures without re-
ference to documents +
figures which of course y

the advantage of being
 to start at short notice
 there being no boiler there
 more room but on the
 hand there is the
 of fire, the trouble
 training Nature Drivers
 to keep a stock of
 at various places en
 also the excessive
 of running. The steam
 will burn wood
 can be cut and
 at any place en
 where wood is obtained,
 of course they
 more water than the
 have but being flat-



the conditions which obtain
 the Juba River, whether
 there is as much water
 on the upper reaches
 the Irrawaddy in Burmah
 not but when I was
 Burmah I saw a
 full double decked flat
 topped stern wheel
 the Irrawaddy Hotel
 called the "Kint" which
 is built by Yarrow & Co
 which had accommodations
 for just over four hundred
 only 100 deck passengers
 it would carry about

care.

Yours very truly.

A. Bernard Case

J. Reed Esq. C. M. B.
Colonel Rice

C.O
24562

Recd

Dec 16 11/13

W. Head

Transport, Supply and Mobility in Jubaland and the
Northern Frontier District of British East
Africa.

The problem of Jubaland and the Northern Frontier District of B.E.A. is, broadly speaking, a problem of communications.

And it must be understood that its solution is likely to entail a heavy initial expenditure. The area involved is so large and the natural difficulties so considerable, that there is no advantage to be gained by half measures or temporary expedients.

To avoid as far as possible necessity for reference to other papers it will perhaps be convenient if I recapitulate the transport and supply lines employed until recently.

These were:

- (a) The River Juba from Kismayu to Serenli (300 miles)
 - (b) The road from Serenli to Loyall via Dalwak (300 miles)
 - (c) The road from Wairoa via here to Archer's Post on the Guaso Nyiro River (160 miles)
 - (d) The road from Archer's Post via Lasamis to Kulal (180 miles)
 - (e) The road from Archer's Post to Marsabit (100 miles) and thence to Loyall (160 miles)
- (Total 260 miles)

For various

For various reasons which include natural difficulties, the presence of the tse tse fly and a change in administrative posts, these lines have recently been changed, and it is therefore unnecessary to consider further any details connected with them.

The lines which it is proposed to use in future are:-

- (a) The River Juba from Kismayu to Serenli (300 miles)
- (b) The road from Serenli into the Marrehan country (Serenli - 100 150 miles)
- (c) The road from Nairobi to Archer's Post via Meru (160 miles)
- (d) The road from Archer's Post to Kulal (180 miles)
- (e) The road from Archer's Post to Loyale via Wajheir (340 miles)

(a) The River Juba is navigable by shallow draught steamers for 5 months only - i.e. from June to November. There is one Government steamer on this river; but I understand she is not sufficiently powerful to tow barges and we are therefore dependent on the Emperor Navigation Co. which charges heavily. I am of opinion that there should be a government steamer on this river and that she should be as powerful and up to date as possible.

The banks of the Juba are very rich and the natives (Wagasha) are able, even with their primitive methods of cultivation to get two or three crops of maize in the year.

Some 30 miles above Serenli there are

rapids

(A)

(B)

rapids which prevent further navigation. I understand that these rapids do not extend for any very great distance - about 30 miles - and that above them the river is possible for shallow draught boats - also for some 5 months in the year. It might be worth considering whether it would be possible to use steel canoes on the upper part of the river and so ease the work of the military camel transport from Serenli. The steel canoes might be taken to the highest possible point on the river and thence carried past the rapids for use above them. I would suggest that details about such canoes be obtained from the Crown Agents and sent out to the Governor, B.E.A.; he would then be able to enquire as to the feasibility of using them.

(b) At present the transport employed from Serenli into the Marrehan country are camels. I see no prospect of improving on this form of transport - unless indeed the steel canoes already mentioned would lighten their work. Sanction has recently been given for increase of the number employed from 100 to 200. This should enable the troops to be fairly mobile in normal circumstances.

(c) There is no difficulty about the road from Nairobi to Archer's Post. The supply of native labour in this part of the protectorate is good and there should be no difficulty in maintaining a road for wagon transport.

(d) Once the Quaso Nyira River is crossed transport difficulties become considerable. The country is sparsely populated and badly watered - consequently

consequently road making and repairing is no easy matter - for not only are the natives few in number but they are abused and - certainly in the case of the Somalis - strongly averse to any form of manual labour. Road making therefore has to be carried out by imported or military labour.

It is I believe possible to use waggon transport between Archer's Post and the vicinity of Laxamis but from Laxamis onwards camels are necessary.

(e) The road from Archer's Post to Moyale via Wajheir is an experiment. It is hoped that waggon transport may be used as far as the Lorian Swamp. From there northwards camels will be employed. Wajheir has always been a great camel centre and it is probable that there is no fly on this road. Near Moyale the form of transport must be changed once more, for this station is at the summit of a steep escarpment and if camels are used to carry loads up or down steep gradients they do themselves an untold amount of harm.

On this escarpment donkeys are the best form of transport.

Finally I would mention the employment of mechanical transport. This is a technical subject and I would prefer not to give any opinion as to whether it is practicable over any of these roads. I am, however, strongly in favour of trying it on a small scale and would suggest that the experiment be tried between Hismaya and Yonta. Loads to go up the

Juba

Juba have in any case to be carried from Fismaya to Gebwen and if they were carried to Yente and put on the river steamers there, more than 24 hours would be saved - an important gain when the river is available for only a portion of the year.

With regard to the mobility of the troops on the Northern Frontier of British East Africa, the first essential is that they should possess transport that will enable them to move at very short notice. At the present moment we have garrisons of one company at Kufal and half a company at Moyale. If they are expected to deal with Abyssinian elephant poachers, they must have transport ready so that they can move from their permanent station without the loss of time entailed by depending on the camels or other transport of the indigenous natives.

I am not fully conversant with the conditions obtaining at Kufal: but imagine that the most suitable form of transport is camel transport - that is if the troops there are expected to have a radius of action of more than 30 miles. If their radius is to be of about 30 miles and under, it might be possible to provide them with - say 25 mules - for the troops to ride and with pack mules to carry their supplies.

On the other hand I believe that mules both for men and baggage could be used from Moyale, provided the movements of any mobile column were in the vicinity

the vicinity of the wells found near the escarpment which marks the Anglo-Abyssinian boundary. But this question of making the Moyale garrison effectively mobile may involve reconsideration of the garrison at that place. At present the Moyale garrison consists of 1 British officer and about 60 men, and if a mobile column is to be available there, the garrison left behind becomes very small in view of the fact that Moyale is an international frontier post where the question of prestige is involved.

There is also the question of obtaining mules at all. The Abyssinian mules are excellent but the Abyssinian Government has forbidden their export. It might be that this juncture is a favourable one to press for a relaxation of this regulation.

As regards the mobility of the troops in Jubaland, we have at present a camel company 125 strong and roughly speaking 400 infantry. There does not appear to be any immediate prospect of reducing the total strength of the troops and it is a question whether it would not pay in the long run to increase the number of the camel companies to two.

There is little doubt that apart from their undoubted practical use, troops mounted on camels exercise a considerable moral effect, for the Jubaland Somalis do not use their camels to increase their own mobility and as far as I am aware that trotting camels such as we use for our camel company are unknown in East Africa.

Personally

Personally I would advocate, subject to corroborative local advice, the formation of another camel company, each company to be composed of 5 sections 25 strong each, four sections mounted on camels and one on mules or ponies. Moreover, I consider that there should be 25% of spare camels in order to ensure that each company may be completely mobile.

In the Sudan I understand that each camel company has its own transport and can move unencumbered by baggage animals slower than trotting camels.

CR

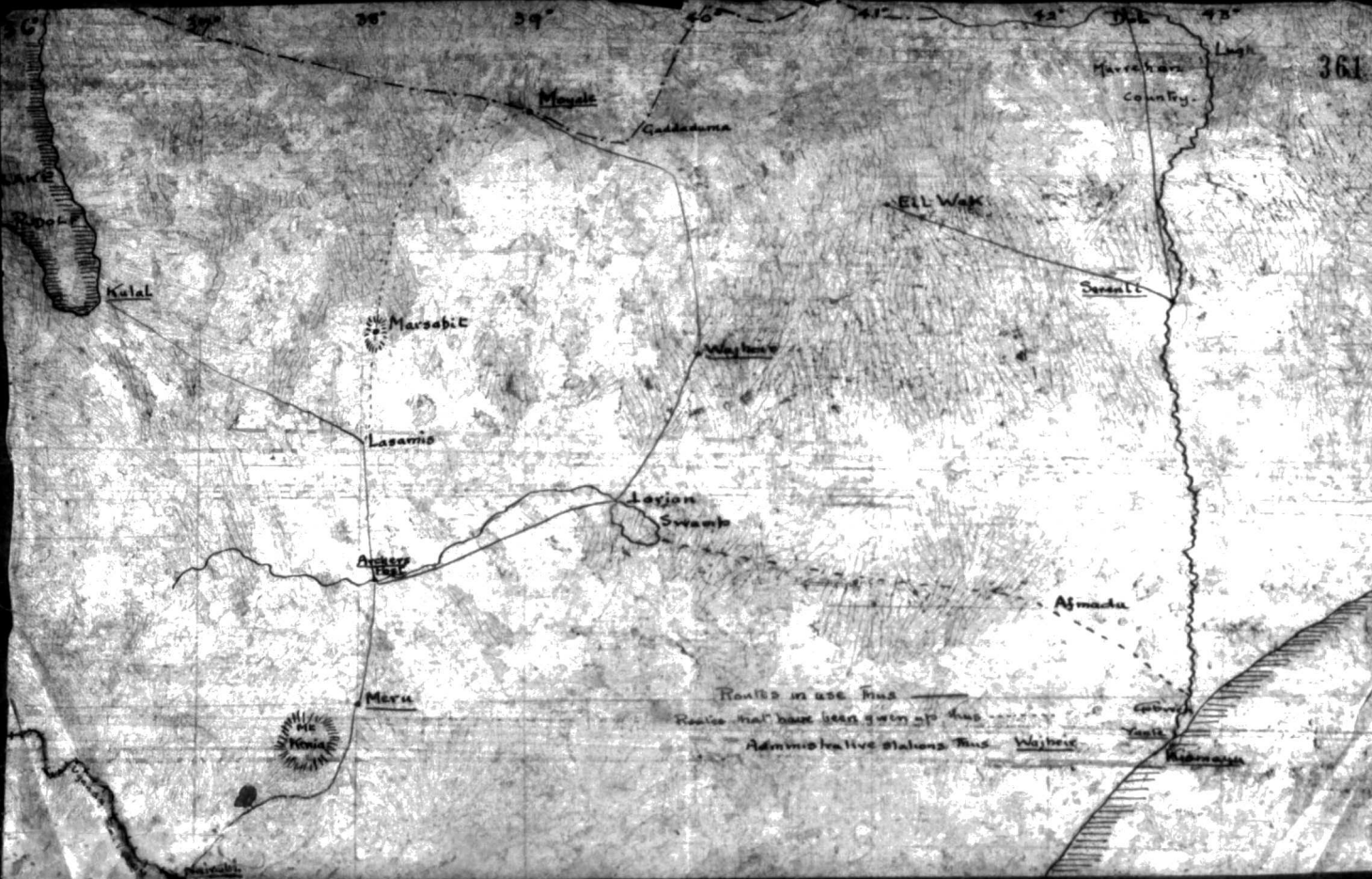
16 7 13

personally I would like to see
 cooperative local effort, and I think of another
 camel company, each company to be composed of 2
 sections, 25 strong each. Four sections would be an
 camel and one on mules or ponies. Moreover, I
 consider that there should be 25 of these animals
 in order to ensure that each company has its own
 mules.

In the Sudan I understand that each animal
 company has its own transport and can move when
 needed by heavy animals slower than mules.

Camels.

1951



60 24562/1913
East

9

11 August 1913

Sir,

DRAFT.

East
No. 607
St. Helmsfield

(for 286)

MINUTE.

- Mr. French
- Mr. Read
- Sir G. Piddes.
- Sir H. Just.
- Mr. I. Anderson.
- Lord Emmott.
- Mr. Harcourt.

A 88.13
D

Ans. 9364/14

With reference to your
despatch, No. 476, of the
23rd of June ~~last~~
on the subject of the
question of transport for
the Jubaland & Northern
Frontier Districts, I have
the honour to inform you
that I am informed
by Capt French, Staff Officer,
King's African Rifles, that
some 30 miles above Serenle
there are rapids which

3 Aug
Piddes 1913

~~Put the copies for use
shown them~~

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2. I enclose a copy
of a letter from Commander
A. B. Grosse of the Niger
Marine Transport Dept.
(on the subject) and
also a copy summary of
the official guide to the
Niger & Senegal Government
Transport.

3. I shall be glad
to receive an expression
of your views on the
suggestions put forward.

L

7. the steel cases
will be in Nigeria,