

EAST AFR. PROT  
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C. O.  
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REC'D  
FEB 14

REPORT 197  
Warfield  
1914  
January  
previous Paper.

DEATH OF MR GORDON  
OF MERU TRADING SYNDICATE

Submit report as to death in N.E. District.  
Encloses letter from Mr Kitchener and asks Mr  
Gordon's mother may be informed.

Letter from Mr G. Ford

Wakha Utta is near where the  
Gusso Nyero enters the Loria swamp,  
& as doubt Wakha Utta is near it  
Archer's Port is perhaps 130 miles  
higher up.

There is a great deal of gossip  
about these reports & I do not think  
we should send them to the mother if  
it can be avoided. There is nothing, by  
the way, to show that she can be  
prepared for the loss of her son's  
death. Yes

[You will notice the reference in  
W. Hope's report to the Rev. Mr. W.  
Lacey against the African. We have

subsequent Paper  
8555  
14

recently heard of a Reed Boman  
and a Reed village ]

? Tell Mrs. Gordon that the S. H.  
has received with much regret reports  
from the Gov. of the S. H. that leave  
no room for doubt that she was dead  
about Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> at a place on the  
Gyano Gyano River about 6 hours  
from Baker's Post [That she was  
~~missing from Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> & that~~  
~~careful search was made but without~~  
~~success, & the remains, being~~  
~~eventually discovered on Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup>]~~  
say that the only evidence of a death  
of death is that a dog which had been  
with her was seen on or about Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>  
about 3 hours distant from the  
place where the remains were  
found.

See the  
substance of  
the despatch  
and say

~~S. H.~~ Vol. 2. 3. 14.

There have been questions in the House  
about the destruction of a Reed  
village by Boman.

H. J. R.  
2<sup>nd</sup> [unclear] 14  
Pr. 23. 14

at once  
Vol. 3. 3. 14

7554 623

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
BRITISH EAST AFRICA

January 29th 1914

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE

No. 97

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that some weeks ago a report was received from outside sources of the death in the Northern Frontier District of a Mr. Gordon, who was connected with the Leru Trading Syndicate.

Mr. Kittermaster  
Dec. 13th. 13

2. Enquiries were accordingly instituted but owing to the deceased gentleman being in an inaccessible part of the Protectorate at the time of a week's delay naturally ensued in obtaining information of a reliable nature.

Mr. Kittermaster  
Jan. 9th

3. The cause of his death is uncertain though I am given to understand that military records the fact that an attack was made on his camp one night by natives after which his servants deserted and left him quite alone. After that it appears that he left his camp at Melka Gada about the 25th of November last with the object of proceeding to Archer's Post. His remains were subsequently found on the 6th instant at a place less than six hours march from the Post and it is, therefore, more reasonable to suppose that he fell a victim to privation than to violence.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
LEWIS HARCOURT, P.C., M.P.,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,  
DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.

4/4

(2)

I transmit copies of letters with enclosures from Mr. Kittenmaster, the Assistant District Commissioner at Archer's Post, should be glad to inform Mr. Gordon's mother, whose address is

59 Cradock Street,

Wolverhampton,

could be informed.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,

*Alfred W. Dyer*

GOVERNOR.

INCLOSURE 107

In Despatch No 97 of 27 1914

695

Ascher's Post.

28.12.14.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary,

Nairobi.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt by the Officer in Charge. I regret to say that Mr. Gordon has not arrived at this Post. I am afraid that we can no longer hope that he is alive. The Safari mentioned by the Officer in Charge saw no sign of him along the river. I followed two days later and also saw no sign. If, as we suppose, he was making for the post in a panic fear of the natives he would naturally keep in the river bush and signs of him would be almost impossible to find. Certain marks in his diary suggest the theory that he had gone off his head with anxiety. Otherwise he has either been killed by the natives which I think regrettable or has fallen a victim to one of the many dangers attendant on a solitary safari along the Uaso Nyiro River.

I have etc.

Sd/- H. B. Kittermaster.

A. D. C.

Gordon's address in England (his mother's)

is 50 Grosvenor Street,

Wolverhampton.

## MELKA GALA,

December 1st 1913

<sup>9</sup> *November*  
 On 25th December Mr. Butler arrived at Boran villages 10 miles from Melka Gala. Boran came to the village in the evening and said they had been to Gordon's camp at Melka Gala and it was deserted. On 26th Mr. Butler sent an askari and a Boran to Melka Gala to investigate and they did not get back till late at night.

On that day Mr. Butler heard I was in the neighbourhood and rode to my camp which was 3 hours off. I told him to move his camp over to mine first thing in the morning, unfortunately they lost their way and did not reach my camp till 1 p.m.

The askari who had gone to Melka Gala the day before there reported that Gordon's boma was deserted and goats had apparently broken out of the boma. There were no signs of people or any struggle and everything looked normal. One rifle was lying on ground by the door of the <sup>tent</sup> hut and two other rifles were in the tent.

In order to show he had been there he brought the rifle which was on the ground to camp.

On enquiring from the Boran I could find out nothing except that some Boran who were spying for Rendile had seen the European and his dog out on the plains by himself on the 24th.

Note. The Rendile have got a war party out against the Boran and small parties of Rendile or "Korre" as the Boran call them have been in the neighbourhood for the last ten days. )

(2)

I then sent off Sergeant Yusuf and six men to look after the camp and have a thorough search. This was on the 27th.

At daylight on 28th Mr. Castle Smith went down and his report is attached.

I also sent search parties all over the plains but as rains were on no traces were found. The Boran who went down with the askari on 26th left his shield, shoes and spear in the camp which he recovered when he went down on 27th again with Sergeant Yusuf.

On going through Gordon's diary it appears that two nights people tried to get into his boma and I should put this down to wandering bands of Rendile and on 27th he cleared out for day and night and went back on 28th and found sheep gone and shield and shoes of Boran. He was of course out in his dates as after 5 p.m. on 27th I had people always at his camp. He could not have known of the Rendile being about as he could not understand <sup>what</sup> the Boran meant by talking of Korre. He had been alone some days, as his Meru had run away.

I think that he went back to his camp on morning of 27th and saw the Boran shield though why he did not see the other rifles I cannot understand. He was probably in a very nervous state and made his entry in the diary and then decided to make for Archer's Post.

I knew Mr. Kittermaster was on the road to meet me and thought he might come on him.

On 29th I moved the whole camp to Malika Gala and searched all the bush thoroughly but no traces of anything could be found. On the night of 29th the terrier dog arrived back but as she had a litter of pups she would

(3)

would naturally have returned, I think.

Mr. Kittenmaster arrived on 30th. He had not seen any signs of Gordon but early on morning of 29th had seen a terrier dog near his camp which was about 20 miles West of Melka Gala.

This makes me think Mr. Gordon was trying to reach Archer's Post and the terrier had left him to return to her puppies.

Several empty .303 cartridge cases were found near the door of the house but no .303 rifle, so I conclude Mr. Gordon must have taken it with him.

On 30th after Mr. Kittenmaster's arrival a safari was sent along the river with orders to search for any traces.

30/- J. G. Hope

Officer in Charge  
Northern Frontier Dist.



Wajheir,

November 28th, 1913.

The Officer-in-Charge,  
Northern Frontier District,  
Velka Gala.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit to you the following report of my observations on reaching Mr. Gordon's camp according to your instructions.

I found the camp situated about half an hour from the river on the north bank and surrounded on all sides by bush which latter was not dense.

Taking two Somali eskaris I then proceeded to make a detour outside the Boma first taking a small circumference and then gradually increasing it till we reached a radius of about 300 yards or more. No spoor of sheep or footprints of men were visible however, probably owing to obliteration by rain, which seemed to have fallen recently and with some force.

I then entered the Boma and went straight to Mr. Gordon's tent finding some disorders of papers on the ground and general untidiness, dust lying heavily on newspapers etc., on the ground. This disorder I should say was not caused by persons looting but by natural slovenliness on the part of the owner whom I have met on a previous occasion and in a similar camp at Nana Gala. The dust I should put down to a goat which was feeding in the bath room and not to signs of the owner having been absent for any length of time. The bed was as usual and I should

should say had been made after a nights occupation. A pair of boots were side by side at the foot of the bed (These I have reason to suppose were the only footwear in possession of Mr. Gordon) (Note. Mr. Castle Smith's supposition is not correct. H. B. Rittermaster) and opposite leaning against the walls of the tent were two rifles - one a Winchester, the other a .22, an empty gun case-sheet was also in the back of the tent. Both rifles were dirty and had not been recently fired as corrosion had set up in the barrels (like H. G. O<sub>2</sub>, which is caused by using nitro powder and leaving the weapon uncleaned.

In the gun case was a cleaning brush for use with a revolver but no revolver present which points to the fact that the owner probably had one and had it on the person at the time of his disappearance. On the box serving as a table was a diary written up to the 28th instant, also a mouth syringe with lanyard and two boxes of Winchester cartridges, one of which was half empty and both of which had the tops torn off as one would do if in a hurry. Clothes etc., were unusual and showed no signs of strife. White ants were eating a blanket in a box at the back of the tent.

Outside the Verandah and in the immediate proximity were 7 new suffurians obviously put out to display to natives.

Going over to the store I found that everything appeared to be in good order and that the bales of trade goods, sacks of tobacco etc., were untouched and sewn up, obviously as left by owner. The hides also in bundles of 45 were carefully piled and showed no sign of having been tampered with. A sack of Bun, one of tobacco and a jora of blue cloth were open, the former being half full and  
the

the latter having had one cloth removed: this being normal and what would be the case in the normal course of events. The Boma showed no signs of destruction. Both the doors of the outer and inner boma were open, the inner zariba being used for counting sheep at night.

I have &c., &c.,

Sd/- G.F.Castle Smith.

Assistant District Commissioner.

In Despatch No. 97 of 29 / 1914

Archer's Post,

January 9th, 1914.

Sir,

I regret to have to inform you that all doubt as to Mr. Gordon's death is now at an end. You will remember that Mr. Kope notified you that he was missing from a boma at M'ika Gala on November 28th. Nothing more was heard of him till January 4th when a Government safari from Moyali passing along the river found his rifle and haversack leaning against a tree close to the path not six hours below this Post. Two days later another safari found his skull and other remains 150 yards from where the rifle was found. Mr. Deck in passing examined all these remains but was unable to arrive at any conclusion. A handkerchief, belt and shorts had blood on them. Mr. Deck estimated that he had been there about 14 days and of course hyaenas had played havoc with everything. A further indication as to date is given his pointer dog which was with him having joined one of my askaris going down the river about December 18th at a point about 5 hours below where the remains were found.

It is a most inexplicable case. The rifle was found resting against the trunk of a tree within a few feet of the road. The remains were found about 150 yards away as though the man had been trying to get down to the river. Since November 28th the road has been traversed 7 times either up or down by

Government

Hon. Chief Secretary,

Nairobi.

Government safaris as far as Melka Gala and there have been at least four big hunting safaris with their crowds of porters to a point below where he was found. It is inconceivable that the rifle was leaning against the tree all the time. It is possible that the remains were first found by natives, perhaps a trading party of Meru who were afraid to bring in the rifle and left it in a prominent place to be found. I have asked District Commissioner, Meru, to institute enquiries.

The presence of the dog on December 18th seems to point to his having got there about then. Had he been long dead the dog would probably have come on the remaining six hours to his boma here. If he did not get to this point before December 18th it means that he took 20 days to do what is an 8 day journey. The blood on his things point to an accident.

My own theory is that he was wounded some time after leaving Melka Gala and crawled along slowly to this point and there died either of starvation or the result of the wound. How he came by the wound it is of course impossible to say, whether from natives or wild beasts.

I have &c., &c.,

Sd/- H.B. Kittermaster.

Assistant District Commissioner.

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Gov. 7552/1914 East

704

4 March 1914

Ch. 8555

DRAFT.

Mrs. Gordon,  
59 Craddock Street,  
Wolverhampton

MINUTE

- Mr. Harper 3/3/14
- Mr. Bottomley 3/3/14
- Mr. Read
- Mr. G. Fildes.
- Mr. H. Just
- Mr. J. Anderson.
- Mr. Emmott.
- Mr. Harcourt.

3  
*[Signature]*

Madam,

I am to inform you that he has received great ~~very much~~ regret a report from the fore of the East which leaves no room for doubt that your son, Mr. Gordon, of the Mercu Trading Syndicate died on or about the 18<sup>th</sup> of Dec last at a place on the Guaso Nyiro River about six hours journey from Archer's Post.

2 The fore states that a report was received from native

P.T.O

sources that Mr Gordon's  
 camp at Melka Gala  
 was deserted and  
 enquiries were accordingly  
 instituted, but owing  
 to the Gordon being in  
 an inaccessible part  
 of the Post at the time  
 of his death some  
 delay ensued in obtaining  
 information of a reliable  
 nature.

3. The Governor adds  
 that the cause of Mr  
 Gordon's death is uncertain,  
 but that his diary records  
 that an attack was  
 made on his camp one  
 night by natives after which  
 his servants deserted and  
 left him quite alone.

Search was made from  
 the 28<sup>th</sup> of Nov. onward,  
 but without success, as the

After that it appears that  
 he left his camp at  
 Melka Gala about the  
 25<sup>th</sup> of Nov. last with  
 the object of proceeding

to Archer's Post. His  
 remains were subsequently  
 found on the 6<sup>th</sup> of Jan'y  
 at a place less than  
 24 hours march from the  
 Post, and it is, therefore,  
 more reasonable to  
 suppose that he fell  
 a victim to privation  
 than to violence.

4. The only evidence  
 as to the date of Mr  
 Gordon's death is that  
 obtained from the post that  
 a dog which had been  
 with him was seen on  
 or about the 18<sup>th</sup> of Dec.

about three hours  
distance from the  
place where the  
remains were found

JH

(Signed) H. J. READ  
for the Under Secretary of State