

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

CONFIDENTIAL.

13th November 1914.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward in original, for your information, a despatch dated November 11 1914, addressed to me by Brigadier General Stewart, General Officer Commanding Troops, British East Africa, and covering a report furnished by Colonel A. B. H. Drew on the action which took place at Longido on November 3.

2. Although the attack did not result in occupation of the enemy's entrenched position, it was the means of securing valuable information regarding his strength and disposition. Our force was eventually compelled to retire not on account of any action taken by the enemy but by the imperative necessity of reaching the nearest available supply of water.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

Alway B. Boyd.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GOVERNOR:

LEWIS HARCOURT, M.P.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWLING STREET, LONDON, S.W.

Information on both points was obtained, but the number of the enemy appears to have been underestimated. It pointed to some 200 Europeans and 800 to 800 Arabs. The estimate now formed, after the attack, is over 800 men - possibly 1200.

4. On 31st October I met General Nixon in Bombay and arranged with him that when he landed at Longa took place on 2nd November an attack should be made on Longa. This took place, as now reported, in the morning of 3rd November.

5. The operation was a difficult one, as there is no water between our camp at Lamunga and the German position, and it was always recognized that unless the water on Longa was secured the column must return.

6. A gallant attempt was made, which I consider reflects the greatest credit on Colonel Law and the officers and men of his force.

It is unfortunate that I had no British Officers with me and gave me no initiative, or what was a very successful proposal which might have been a completely successful result.

7. In a further report I propose to mention the names of officers and men who distinguished themselves.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your Excellency's obedient servant

J. M. Stewart

Brigadier General
Commanding Forces

Copy forwarded, for information, to Chief of the General Staff, Siala, through Major General A. B. ...

J. M. Stewart.

Brigadier General.
Commanding Forces.

Manga R. Camp.

4. 11. 14.

207

C. S. C.

Nairobi.

Report on action at Longido Mt.

Movements took place in 3 columns from Manga River camp. Decisive attack column (Colonel Drew, and party to secure water supply and cut off enemies retirement (Captain Dingley E.A.M.F. left camp Manga River at 8.30. p.m. 2.11.14 and reached position for start of night march (4 miles from Manga River) at 4.50. p.m. Frontal attack column (Major Laverton E.A.M.F.) 5.15. p.m. direct from camp. Left above point at 7 p.m. Captain Dingley's party moving in front guided by Corporal Smith. Main column guided by Lt S.O.'s Wilson and Troopers Grobelaar & Battersby moved direct on the S.E. spur of Longido arriving at the base at 1.30. a.m. November 3rd. Troops less Reserve Ammunition and water mules ascended the hill arriving at a point 5 miles from base and some 3000 feet above it at 4.15. a.m. when a dense mist made exact position of column unascertainable and the desired point of assembly namely the "V" shaped formation in the crest immediately overlooking enemy's camp. At 5.50 a.m. a small party of Masai accompanying column came suddenly on a picket of enemy native askaris and fired a few shots and disappeared into the mist.

At 7.45. a.m. a number of the enemy opened fire in the mist our troops replied with rifle and maxim gun fire, duration five minutes. Casualties 2 men of the 29th Punjabis wounded. Maxim claimed to have killed ^{one} white German and one askari. 8.30 a.m. Captain Skinner, 29th Punjabis, reported twelve of the enemy moving round his right flank and sent section to check them. At 9.15. a.m. the mist cleared and general action began. A

Section of the 27th Mountain Battery opened on the enemy's camp at 2250 yards switching on to a point on ridge from which accurate fire of the enemy was coming at 850 yards range. Lieutenant D. T. Haskard, 27th M.B. and one Indian Gunner being at once severely wounded. During this period the Guns of Major Laverton's frontal attack party were heard. At 9.25 a.m. Captain Wilson, 29th Punjabis, and one Double Company of the 29th moved to secure Main Spur being shelled by our Guns. At 10 a.m. they reached their objective opening enfilading fire.

At 11 a.m. the double Company, joined by Major Haslehurst continued their advanced along ridge by rushes and at 11.45 a.m. half a Company of 29th under Captain Wilson with Captain Sandbach, E.A.M.R. charged and captured enemy's position losing Captain Sandbach, E.A.M.R. killed.

At 11.45. about 10 of the enemy got in to a gap between Major Haslehurst's Double Company and were dislodged by Shell fire. At intervals action North centre of Longid (Frontal attack) was heard and shells seen bursting.

At 11.50 27th Mountain Battery shelled enemy's horses and men about 20 in number retiring up gully towards Signal Hill.

From Noon till 2 p.m. desultory firing continued on both sides. At 2.10. p.m. Captain Wilson of the 29th Punjabis reported reinforcements of the enemy coming up from their water supply high up the middle South of Mountain some of the men having red cap bands and accompanied by porters and spearmen.

4 p.m. enemy's main camp showed signs of life and his troops began to occupy hill to S. of left hand water course opposite. Major Laverton's force which again opened fire with rifles and rifles and ceased firing about 4.30 p.m. when his mounted troops were seen retiring N. across the plain in extended order.

At 5 p.m. O.C. Column decided in conference that owing to no possible means of obtaining water for animals, the shortage of water supply for the men and their rapidly inclining supply of ammunition together with the impossibility of holding on to the position after it had been won, that

retirement was necessary during the night.

5.20. p.m. from 20 to 50 of the enemy gained unobserved a position on our left flank allotted to a platoon of Kapurthala I.S.I. and commenced to fire direct into our main position. One Company 29th Punjab plus E.A.M.F. available drove them back and the engagement became generally all round enemy apparently being largely reinforced.

Our guns opened and kept down enemy's attack in their front but enemy advanced as darkness came on, the guns opening up with their fuses at zero.

6.15. p.m. Retirement of baggage column (Reserve Ammunition and Water) commenced, followed by Ambulance Section under great difficulties since the majority of Stretcher Bearers had bolted. Enemy's attack was checked by the fire of the 29th Punjab, the Kapurthala Infantry being tired out and now unreliable and after the withdrawal of the Section of the 27th Mountain Battery, the Kapurthala I.S.I. retired.

The retirement 29th Punjab commenced 7.15. p.m. a few of the enemy occupied the vacated position and firing into the retiring column.

The retirement of the 29th was carried out with coolness and resource their rear being supplied by a troop of the E.A.M.F. under Lt the Hon. G. Salley, and the various sections in the Gombah returned to the Manga River camp during the course of the night after continuous marching and fighting for 58 hours. At 9.30. p.m. 3.11.1. a rocket was fired by the enemy over the position we had just vacated.

Report of Action of Frontal Column (Major Laverton's)

Column left Manga River 6.15. p.m. 2.11.1. and arrived at a tonga about 1 1/2 miles from foot of Shree Gopur temple in 1 1/2 and 1-1/2 hours water course, on 2.11.1.

The Section 27th M.B. was left with escort on S. side of Longo.
 80 E.A.M.B. with Maxim Gun Section moved up the water course
 on the S.E. of Burnt Kopje (left hand water course) and the
 Boer Squadron at the same time to the next water course on the
 left distant about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

50. Kapurthala I.S. troops were ordered to follow as reserve.
 The action commenced about 9.15. a.m from an isolated Kopje at
 foot of water course (left hand).

A Squadron and the Maxims became engaged with the enemy's
 snipers and two of his maxims.

It was now found impossible to advance on to the hill with the
 small force available since the I.S. troops in reserve being
 ordered up without any British Officers to lead them were
 unwilling to take the initiative.

The decision was arrived at to keep the enemy engaged and
 prevent their joining in against the Main Attack which could
 now be heard commencing. The Section 27th M.B. opened on the
 enemy's maxims slackening their fire temporarily.

About 8 a.m. "A" Squadron was reinforced by a troop of "C" Squadron
 under Lieut Hill who took up a position 300 yards to the right
 rear with Maxim Gun Section.

About 9 a.m. the enemy had four maxims in position but it was
 impossible to say how many rifles were in action against us as
 their cover was good and they made excellent use of it. The
 Maxims were never located throughout the day.

"A" Squadron and the Maxims held their position till 3 p.m.
 when they were retired and since the enemy had located with
 their maxims Lieut Hill's troop retired him to the bush about
 300 yards in rear at 3.30 p.m.

At 4.45 p.m. the column again advanced and made a
 demonstration against Burnt Kopje and the Kopje E of Signal Hill
 supported by the 27th M.B.

At 5 p.m. the column withdrew to isolated Kopje about 5 miles
 N.E. of Longido reaching there about 8.30 p.m. with orders to
 be ready to move to the attack again at 5 a.m. the following

morning.

On receipt of orders during the night the 3rd- 4th November the column returned to the Manga river camp arriving there 9.0. a.m. on the 4th November.

Report of party sent to cut off Water Supply and
Enemy's retirement.

Captain Bingley's command arrived opposite to the enemy's camp known as the small Water Supply on the S. side of Longido at 2 a.m. remaining there till 4 a.m. when they moved about 2 miles W to ascertain if the Main Water Supply was held. They found no water, no signs of the enemy or any camp and then returned to investigate small Water Supply.

"A" Troop E.A.M.R. left on the road which is said to run in the direction of Mera and by which the Germans brought their supplies reported they had cut the telegraph or telephone wire and had seen some men riding up the mountain side in the direction of enemy's supposed camp. This troop went on as advance guard and was soon engaged with the enemy and at 6.30 a.m. were reinforced by the remainder of the 2 Squadrons and opened fire on the enemy at a range of 200 yards till about 9.30 a.m. when the enemy (strength estimated at about 200 men) commenced to outflank and at the same time took up a position on the hill above us.

The 2 Squadrons were then forced to retire doing so in an orderly manner having lost 9 killed and 6 wounded.

The Squadrons retired to a position on a Kopje about 1 mile E of Longido near the road to Mera where they remained till 6 p.m. when retirement on Manga Camp was ordered which was reached about 2. a.m. 3.11.14.

"The enemy's position on Longido is one of great natural strength and all approaches to it are very difficult.

In the interior ridge after ridge is to be found the majority of which can only be turned with difficulty and by a force

largely superior to that of the enemy. The difficulties of water supply for man and beast necessitate a methodical advance securing the water supply before the main objective is undertaken unless an adequate supply can be carried. Operations would in all probability be of considerable duration owing to the difficult nature of the country to be traversed and its extent and it is considered that 3 days should be estimated as the time necessary to complete operations. Water in the interior cannot be utilized until all the main positions have been secured since it ~~has~~^{is} in a large measure commandeered on every side.

As a reconnaissance in force the operation was one of great value the enemy's dispositions having been disclosed. Enemy's casualties are estimated at 38 Europeans and 84 natives killed and wounded. Their European casualties include a Lieutenant and a medical officer who were buried by us. Casualty List enclosed.

I am submitting a separate despatch originally forward the names of officers and men whom I wish to recommend for the consideration of the General Officer Commanding B.E.F. Force.

A. E. H. Drew. Lt Colonel.
29th Punjab.
Ct. Muzail District.

Mansa River Camp.

5.11.14.

Casualty Return.

Dated 10th Nov. November, 1914.

EAST AFRICA MOUNTED RIFLES.Killed.

Captain L. F. Sanibach.

Trooper E. Drake.

" " L. Carlton.

" " W. G. Bellasis.

" " A. J. Drummond.

" " E. V. Hay-Mount.

" " J. Moon.

" " A. Thompson.

" " The Sergeant.

" " V. A. Smith.

Missing.

Corporal E. M. Pirry.

Young.

Lieutenant G. . . Webb (slightly)

Sergeant Major D. C. Luman

Lance Corporal D. E. A. O'Meara.

" " A. I. E. Hurdle.

Trooper P. Allen.

" " P. . . Van der Meer.

" " C. Shaw.

" " W. Newfield.

27th MOUNTAIN BATTALIONYoung.

Lieutenant D.

Sgt. Banner Masahib Khan.

KAPURTHALA INFANTRYKilled

1145. Naik Bagga Singh

Wounded

1128 Havildar Nabi Singh Balshah

1008 Sepoy Khuda Balshah

1641 " " Bata

1301 " " Harman Singh

29th PUNJABIS.Killed

4011. Sepoy Gur Singh

4002 Lance Naik Isor Singh

4193 Sepoy Banta Singh

4086 " Gobinda

4051 " Jawant Singh

4023 " Sohan Singh

4000 " Lajja Singh

3998 " Samraj Singh.

Wounded

100 Sepoy Thakar Singh

3645 Naik Gur Singh

3810 " " Gur Singh

4778 Sepoy Malora Singh

4776 " Harman Singh

4541 " " Gania Singh

4412 " " Gulzar Singh

3762 Havildar Singh Ahira

3688 Havildar Thakur

3973 Sepoy Gajja Singh

4393 " " Maladira

4818 " " Bhagat Singh

89th Punjabis.Wounded (continued).

4593.	Sepoy	Palu
3875	Naik	Mula Singh
3414	"	Daska Singh
4187	Sepoy	Jasant Singh
4777	"	Harnan Singh
4856	"	Bikat Singh.

Manga River Camp.

8.11.14.