

East Africa Post
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Dear Sir

German East Africa.

1914

Dec. 24th

Telegraphic correspondence as to
operations

Last previous Paper
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by ~~Dr. B. ...~~
by ~~...~~

Fr. G. Fildes

- (1) Occupation of Mafia Island (opposite Rufiji delta) proposed
- (2) Postponement of offensive against German East Africa
- (? till July or August - see General War Office Telegram of 17 December * 50880 S.)

Fr. G. Fildes

Gen. 16/12/14

H. J. R.

18-12-14 267274

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The Director of Military Operations presents his compliments to

*the Under Secretary of State
Colonial Office*

and begs to forward for his information a copy of *Letters*

which have been received dealing with
operations in *East Africa*

Dec 24 1914

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From: War Office to Brigadier-General, War Office, Mombasa

(No. 95 S.)

23rd December, 1914.

Your No. 95 S. of 17th December. No Indian or British infantry can be sent to you. It is not possible to say when reinforcements will be available. After reviewing all the circumstances, your recommendation in paragraph 4, to defer offensive operations, is approved. Will you state what modifications, if any, are required to the proposals in your No. 87 S. of 14th December, 1914. Understand the Naval authorities are suggesting the occupation of Mafia Island, and will ask you to cooperate. Please state your views as to this operation, which seems a suitable measure if the land forces to be employed to carry it out are not extensive. Your No. 103 P. You can retain Major O'Connell.

From: War Office to Brigadier-General, War Office

23rd December, 1914. 8.5 a.m.

Plan leaving today for Nairobi. General Egbe is established on the Umba river. I propose to send shortly in conjunction with the Navy, a small expedition to annex Mafia Island. This will assist the operations against the "Königsberg" and the destruction of the coast.

From: War Office to Brigadier-General, War Office

(No. 37 B 13.)

23rd December, 1914. 9.50 a.m.

"Muttra" left Mombasa evening 22nd with details for Zanzibar and Bombay.

From: H.M.S. "Chatham", Zanzibar to Aden

(No. 46.)

21st December, 1914. 4.5 p.m.

Situation is as follows off Rufiji:

Germans have removed all the natives from Konia and Kwale Islands to mainland as natives suspected of giving us information. We have destroyed German signal stations on all islands except Mafia Island.

On night of 18th instant I observed searchlights up Rufiji delta, presumably from "Königsberg", flashing signals in air towards Mafia Island. "Chatham" under way off South Uranga, took bearings of this light from different angles, which fixed it approximately at a considerable distance up delta, but exact position uncertain owing to undoubted inaccuracy of chart.

Native reports food supply everywhere is short. Armed tug is being used whenever available to isolate "Königsberg" as much as possible by cutting off supplies and communications by sea.

As soon as any troops can be spared by General Officer Commanding, it is desirable to occupy Mafia Island in order to permanently cut off communications and supplies between Mafia Island and Rufiji, and to use as base for a tug or small steamer to operate from against dhows coasting with supplies. The stoppage of supplies along the coast would indirectly help military in their operations, and capture of Mafia Island will have considerable moral effect, especially amongst the natives. Also, Mafia Island would serve as excellent base for any future hydroplane operations.

Captain of "Fox" fully concurs in this, and he will ask General Officer Commanding to supply troops at earliest opportunity.

With reference to my telegram No. 35. Submit I may be informed if another expedition will be sent as soon as possible, as aerial observation is only means of accurately locating position of "Königsberg" periodically.

Repeated to Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, and Commander-in-Chief, Cape