

1912

~~1911~~

EAST AFR. PROT.  
5640

C O  
5640  
22 FEB 12

Journal

Date

S Abyssinian Frontier

Feb.

Letter from Col. Haughey re: unsatisfactory  
state of affairs especially re regards transport.

Last previous Paper

30  
30/4/12

minutes within

Bring up when Sir P. Girouard arrives.

Has.

Feb. 20

at once

Disposed of on

C.O.  
155-14

Has

July 1.

Disposed of by C.O. 155-14

Next subsequent Paper

30/8/12

W. Reber,  
Sir G. Fiddes.  
Sir J. Anderson,  
Lord Exmouth,  
W. Harcourt.

52  
C O  
5640  
22 FEB 12

Please see the marked passages in this letter from Colonel Theriger. The outlook on the northern frontier of the G.A.P. is far from pleasing. Sir P. Gironard will be home in March, & Colonel Theriger will be here early in April. A very early opportunity should, I think, be taken to bring them together, to discuss the northern frontier question in all its bearings, and to get a clear line of policy laid down.

As to transport, we have just heard from Sir P. Gironard by telegraph, (~~and~~ ~~death~~ as the result of Colonel Theriger's representations on reaching Nairdi), that he wants permission to spend £1500 on the purchase of camels early in the coming financial year. We have applied to the Treasury (proposing a method of finding the money). If we have any difficulty with them over it, we must

use the information in the latter part of  
the letter.

HAB.

Feb. 16.

I agree what seems to be mainly  
required is a resourceful transport  
officer of the type of Capt. Condon,  
who was Asst. Transport Officer in  
N. Virginia & accompanied Major  
Jurgens on his survey of the Abegweit  
frontier.

H. J. R.

16/II

Assuming Col. Thieriger's statements to  
be even approximately correct, the whole  
business is discreditable to the Gov. He can  
ask readily enough for money for other things,  
and here, for want of small expenditure waste  
in a large order is being incurred. Moreover  
in a matter the cause for which he has  
nothing of the things reported here.

M.

This, certainly, seems unsatisfactory, but  
we must hear what the Gov. has to  
say before we make up our minds.

6 19. 2

But would  
there have  
at all  
M. 17

I am very anxious and I don't  
like even waiting till Col. Thieriger  
return in the middle of April.  
Give the Treasury all the information  
and press strongly (though it cuts  
badly across my unfinished fight  
with them on E. A. P. estimates).  
I expect we shall have to act as  
at A. on p. 2 of Thieriger  
all this is very discreditable to  
Sir P. Girouard.

19. 2. 12

Er. G. Fuller.

~~the Gov.~~

The Treasury have given us authority  
to spend the £1500 on candles without  
our having to use his letter (See Treaty  
5210)  
Perhaps it would be well to register  
his letter for record, pending Sir P.  
Girouard's arrival. When he comes, the  
question can be taken up in advance of

Col. Thayer's remark

2/13

Feb 20 N. J. L.  
20/11

W. J. L.

21.2

6.21.2

This lightens my load in the  
general struggle - which  
threatens to become a Waterloo.

Napoleon - Disbrow

Wellington - Hancock

Bliicher (late) - St. George

But it may be the other way round  
and then I hope my old office will  
give me orders for leave in St. Helena!

H 21.2.12

Sam 9.9. KAR

1/10

2/13

April 19

Dear Father As I am now busy of how I  
will write in continuation of my previous letter from  
Berwick and send it off in mail at Mayale.

1. The reason for our being stranded here is, that with  
our English eyes with their transport could have  
deserted and presumably gone back to their own  
country. We had previously had difficulties with  
them further back, but <sup>tried enough</sup> tried it over. The situation  
might have been very serious indeed, as they might  
quite well have deserted when we were in a waterless  
trout or the tracks around us might have been  
actually hostile. The whole difficulty has arisen from  
having no organized transport, though the necessity  
for this has been repeatedly pointed out. To allow  
troops to look about in such countries as this  
and to be dependent on unorganized and unreliable  
Sumbas, is deliberately to invite disaster. Some of us  
hope to push through with a few animals and  
leave the troops and as many stores as possible  
here.

2. We left Berwick 6<sup>th</sup> November & reaching approximately  
10-15 miles E of us having reached this place on  
November 21<sup>st</sup> having stopped at various places en  
route in order to interview Chiefs.

3. The Murchison country runs approximately from  
Hole Rapids (Suba?) to some point between Logh  
and Dala from there in a line towards EL WAK  
(they come to about 2 days from EL WAK) & thence  
to Hole Rapids.

4. The country is undoubtedly in a very bad state  
constant raids are carried on against English  
to the south, from to the north, full of war parties

Date. In part we can thoroughly enquire all quagmire sand about them in his report. The whole trouble arises from the Galt's section of the mountains, who have come from Northern Saskatchewan with rifles and powder, and

the remainder of the Mountain who estimate them but all the neighbouring tribes. These Galt's men are subdivided into two sections the worst of them are under a gentleman called Shiver, one of the Mountain men, he is the only chief who refused to have anything to do with us either by interview or battle, and everyone is afraid that nothing but force will appeal to him. The next worst are under three Chiefs who all came in to see us. As they rightly put it the Government have never occupied the country & they are only doing what has been done to them. They themselves say they would welcome government control but it is no use sending less than 100 men into the country otherwise they could not ensure for the consequences. The third section would probably welcome peace. The remainder of the Mountain would not welcome a settled government but state they would help us with men & supplies. The situation therefore is in some respects a great deal more satisfactory than we have a right to expect for

The Galt's  
part of the  
country that is  
regards the  
Mountain section  
is all at  
stays

1. The Galt's do not seem to have increased their followers though they have probably increased their rifles.
2. They are confined to a comparatively small but good area of the country, which they would probably be very averse to leaving.
3. There is still in the country a distinct belief in the power of the government and they are open

that although they may kill other Indians they would not touch a soldier.  
45. They are a very intelligent quick people, they beg supplies and are very likely to be satisfied with the Mountain supplies. They would therefore be more likely to realize about the game war of  
58. At present the religious element is in favour of peace  
59. Each section of the Galt's is about 200-400.

If we now do nothing I think there is a very grave chance of despair setting in amongst our supplies, and of their being driven to join the lawless element. Things cannot stay as they are, they must inevitably get worse or better. I think it quite possible that if a Political Officer with a company of infantry and a section of the Cavalry was to patrol the country for a year or so, everyone would come into line. To send him with a very few men would be deliberately to invite trouble. If this was done I believe it possible to avoid an expedition. The Officer both Civil & Military would have to be specially selected as he must know just how far to go; he must necessarily have a very free hand, and everyone must realize that in the end force will be used if peaceful methods fail. I can see no other way, short of abandoning the country (which is untenable) by which you can avoid a very dangerous situation. This is the view I shall put before the Governor if he asks for my opinion. It is the view not only of myself but also of the other members of our party, as



Marsabit Dec 27th I was unable to send this letter from  
Moyale so will close it here. Our Government Sapeis was held  
up on the main road just outside Moyale by 8 Abyssinian  
soldiers, we marched them off & put them in the Moyale  
guardroom. That such a thing can occur says little  
for our prestige up there and though undoubtably the  
march will expose exhibition it shows how they  
will try things on. The transport arrangements, or  
such as they were have completely broken down in  
this country. They have entirely had had luck as  
regards disease but the main factor may be put  
down to ignorance of everything to do with camp  
& lack of organization and supervision. Out of  
200 fowls here about 190 have died in the last  
month or so and this is the third time that the  
transport has been completely wiped out. At  
present time we have officers scattered all over  
country setting down working for transport &  
cannot be obtained except at a tremendous  
expense. As far as we know the following are some  
necessities.

1. The Kibabai garrison should most certainly be  
in January; if they can supply them with  
about even which there will be some difficulty  
it is all they can do.
2. Loder Symonds with one original escort is  
wandering somewhere on the frontier, we have  
heard nothing since we left him at Dada.
3. Fitz Gerald at Soronle is due to rejoin his  
& go on leave. Owing to lack of transport we  
have to send a Libysian through Naivale &  
tell him to buy camels & return by Subahau.

- 57
4. Ginnshaw who was to have relieved  
Fitz Gerald by now, has to the best of our  
belief been waiting at the Gasso River but doing  
nothing for a month. He will now have to be  
pressed via Subahau.
  5. Moyale post was to have been relieved in January  
from Soronle and they have only a few weeks  
respite in any case.
  6. They have called on Moyale garrison to furnish  
troops for Wajeir, this means leaving Moyale  
with no officers at all, and another one  
cannot get through from Naivale.
  7. Garrison at Wajeir should be relieved & sent  
home almost immediately there is no prospect  
of being able to do this.
- The heart of the matter is that the transport question  
here is one of the most difficult and complicated  
in the whole Empire and would tax the  
ingenuity and organizing powers of an expert  
staff. As it is it is done by the DC or ADC  
who happens to be here. Moore knows better  
than myself how hard they have worked;  
but as they have neither the time nor the  
expert knowledge required, it has got to  
cost nothing, the result is what might have  
been expected. There is not I believe a Veterinary  
Officer in the country with a specialist knowledge  
of camels. It is no uncommon thing, in fact  
it is the general rule to find members of  
8, 10 or even more hours a day being continuously  
carried out and officers spend most of the  
short time they have taken in long distances  
The camels in the world will stand the end



they must give out. I reckon that the mortality of camels  
of business regards percentage has exceeded anything  
that has ever occurred in active service where the  
transport cannot generally be the first consideration  
that this is an economical method in the long run as  
I think out of the question; we have already taxed  
the Rendile in Camels to the utmost limit and must  
now buy which really means compulsory purchase.  
Last year in order to feed Sardinia, the Det Corps had  
to suddenly purchase camels in Svalaland at a  
cost of about 20,000 for the whole Empire; we have  
just had to buy outright 4,000 Camels to buy at  
down here, this was in order that there should  
be a few camels available here. In 1910 Mayala  
was in half a year quite practically all  
through the year, the Camel Corps had no gear  
for the Camels and practically starved Sardinia  
until the above mentioned Convoy was sent up  
was leaving us what they could purchase from  
the Italians & had about no clothing. Things took  
like expecting themselves unless a big outlay is  
incurred - Although the transport arrangements are  
nominally purely a civil affair I consider that they  
come well within my province to report on; it is  
no use explaining to starving soldiers that their  
officers are not responsible and soldiers must be  
kept properly supplied when it is only a matter  
of spending money and not owing to active  
service conditions. After all it is not for any  
military consideration that they are kept in these  
places and you cannot say you were not  
warned that to starve the east before embarking  
on the new scheme. There are many most serious  
military problems in this country which must

be fairly and quietly faced. All of them are  
probably capable of solution without any great  
difficulty, but some of them can be lightly brushed  
aside without the risk of complete breakdown. I  
shall of course report fully in my official report but  
but as this will be some time reaching you I wish  
to place before you my opinion. —

58

Yours truly

G. H. Murray

I expect to be at Mainali about January 26<sup>th</sup> and  
home about the middle of April.

W. Fiddle, ~~Sir J. Anderson~~  
 Mr. Faircourt

These are ~~two~~ rather disquieting  
 letters from Colonel Chesiger. You  
 will see that a copy of the longer  
 one has been sent to Mr. Read.  
 Between the two of them, I hope  
 that we shall get a trustworthy  
 account of the military situation  
 in the E. A. P. It is impossible to  
 feel comfortable about it at present.

I gather that Col. Chesiger was  
 at the time of writing just starting  
 up to the Abyssinian frontier.

WAB

Nov 11.

WAB 13

Sir J. Anderson

Mr. Fiddle

This is not pleasant:

I should like to discuss it  
 with you both

WAB  
 Nov 14. 11

WAB  
 Nov 14

Galwan  
October 16<sup>th</sup> 1911

Dear Butler

Since writing my last letter to you I have received official information from the O.C Nairobi saying that owing to trouble with the Wakamba all available troops in Nairobi have been ordered to Machakos. Out of these companies, namely three; i.e. the Abyssinian, Kavirondo, Nyasa, they are able to muster 100 men; this is what makes the matter serious, as if we had had two properly trained companies I would have felt no anxiety. I am leaving Broadway here in case any more news turns up; and if all be well he can follow me in three or four days. Something will have to be done in this country unless we are going to be content to sit on a powder magazine & smoke pipes until something

at 40 miles  
of Nairobi.  
HAB.

See Vane  
to me  
HAB

Detached companies in South Africa and the  
Telegraph lines cut.

W. J. ...  
M. ...

happens. I have asked for 1200 immediately to  
buy ammunitions for the armed corps. I know one of  
our chief suppliers at Sereniti has been  
murdered, and we are apparently to take  
no steps to assist justice but are to look  
on with 200 troops. I have at last got  
written instructions from the Provincial  
Commissioner for the D.C. & D.C. Sereniti. I  
enclose a copy for your information. I  
think Mr. Billi Ibrahim of the Aulika is  
going to give trouble; from all accounts he  
is a thorough-paced scoundrel and is  
beginning to discover that we are afraid  
of him. I know the prigon of the Wakawala  
trouble was one of these careless matters summed  
against a white man's troopers battle & hunting  
himself; they always seem to be doing  
these silly things. From this place to Sereniti it  
takes the same time as from Southampton  
to the Cape, how funny it would be to  
have headquarters of a Battalion in London with

In being sent  
separately to  
S.A. W. J. ...

No language  
clearly clear in  
W. J. ...  
J. J. ...

Yontl.

October 15th 1911.

Dear Butler,

It may interest you to hear my views as to how things military are going on out here. When I was at Kisumu I received a letter from Girouard dated Sep. 27 giving his views on the N. Frontier question and enclosing a Memorandum on the subject from Breeding; you will have got this at the C.O. as Girouard says it was originally sent home to me.

The tenor appears to me to imply that he has been urged

forward in a policy of expansion by the C.O. He states that since his return to the Protectorate he has become aware of the large number of arms coming into the country; but we have known of this for the last two years and before a man was moved, it is therefore no new problem complicating the situation. A year ago you will remember that the Governor guaranteed that no trouble could occur in the country, and that on this point I differed from him; no fresh situation has arisen, and yet now he seems to realise that the contingency is not only possible but indeed probable on a large scale if we try to disarm our Somali tribes. He states that there are two courses open: (1) Continue our policy of observation. (2) To withdraw. The second is clearly impossible. The first is what we have been doing and is what is gradually drifting us to the dangers of operations on a large scale for which we are totally unprepared. What is this policy of observation? As far as I can make out it is the placing of an officer in an isolated position where he has no means of enforcing any advice he may give. If the officer is a good one and has influence with the Somalis he may keep things quiescent for a considerable time, but some time a situation must come when he has either to take strong measures or climb down. It is all very nice talking of not interfering with tribal customs, but when

303  
 of 3  
 always  
 this  
 taking  
 2/16

These customs consist chiefly of raiding, slave owning, and importing rifles. I do not see how an officer with troops at hand can sit still and permit things to go on without seriously impairing our prestige elsewhere.

One of our officers, Bois by name, has been observing for over a year at Serenli, he will shortly be home and probably knows more about the Merehan and Aulihan than anyone else. He is a thoroughly level headed capable man.

As far as I can gather it has now been left to me whether I move troops to Banissa and Dolo, I shall however not move in the matter until I have seen the Governor.

The troops, considering what they have been doing, are better than I expected. The Camel Corps will however require at least 75 camels immediately to put them in an efficient condition, and on this point I am writing to the Governor; in men all except one company are seriously below their strength. They nearly had trouble again with the Abyssinian Company in Nairobi; however they have now sent back some 22; ten months <sup>ago</sup> ~~ago~~ recommended ~~it~~ it. Two Companies, the Kavirondo and Nyassa, are all or nearly all recruits.

The difficulty of finding suitable officers of sufficient seniority and experience to command all these different detachments (there are now 6) is almost insuperable.

In Girouard's letter nothing is said about how Abyssinian raiding is to be stopped, Moyale with  $\frac{1}{2}$  a company of infantry can clearly not do it, and you can scarcely kill a camel corps every year. What answer are we to make to

the Italians when our tribes raid theirs? merely that this is a tribal custom with which we do not interfere; and are we to make the same answer to our friendly tribes who have been compulsorily helping us with transport, when they in their turn are raided?

You must remember that our situation here is <sup>23</sup>troublesome is more serious than even it was in Northern Somaliland; there we were based on the sea with the whole of the resources of India, Aden and England at our disposal at short notice. Here our sea base would be three weeks away under favourable

favourable conditions, i.e. Kismayu to Serenli, and that in an unfavourable time, i.e. when the river was low, we should be cut off altogether. In Northern Somaliland <sup>in a safe position</sup> to put ourselves was and is still merely a question of spending money, here you might spend as much as you liked and not be able to hasten things by a day.

I do not think there is any special immediate danger, there is however probably more than last year, as the tribes are naturally getting restless when they see that we have troops there and do nothing; you ought not however be surprised if you are forced into action.

I am now informed unofficially that the Governor has promised the settlers that three companies shall remain at Nairobi; you will remember that at the Conference he stated that no troops at all were required there; I know of nothing in the military situation which has necessitated any such complete alteration of view.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Read at Nairobi and I would be much obliged if you would let Mr Fides see it, as I think that C.O. should thoroughly realise the situation.

*J. H. ...*  
*J. H. ...*