

5. The two remaining companies of the 1st Battalion West India Regiment, detailed for the expedition, were to proceed to Bendu in the Colonial steamer, on December 2, the vessel not being available earlier on account of His Excellency the Governor having to make an official visit to Tasso Island.

6. The marches from Bendu to Banguma, 139 miles, were as follows:—

- (1.) Bendu to Bauma,  $19\frac{1}{2}$  miles.
- (2.) Bauma to Kambia, including the passage of two unfordable rivers, the Benti and the Little Bum,  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles.
- (3.) Kambia to Mafwe,  $21\frac{1}{2}$  miles.
- (4.) Mafwe to Gendema, crossing the Tabe, an unfordable river,  $15\frac{1}{2}$  miles.
- (5.) Gendema to Tuama, 10 miles.
- (6.) Tuama to Jerahu,  $16\frac{1}{2}$  miles.
- (7.) Jerahu to Baoma No. 1, 12 miles.
- (8.) Baoma No. 1 to Baoma No. 2, crossing the Bum, an unfordable river,  $11\frac{1}{2}$  miles.
- (9.) Baoma No. 2 to Dorpe, 12 miles; and
- (10.) Dorpe to Banguma, 10 miles.

The roads beyond Mafwe were mere tracks through the bush and forest; several streams and swamps had to be crossed each day, and the country between Baoma No. 2 and Dorpe was very hilly and difficult. Only small canoes were available for the passage of the rivers.

7. On December 11 the Head Quarters arrived at Banguma, no halt having been made on the march up, except for one day at Mafwe. A halt was made at Banguma to enable the companies of the 1st Battalion West India Regiment, which had left Freetown on December 2, to close up. One of them, with a convoy of supplies, arrived on the 13th, together with Captain Lendy, Derbyshire Regiment, Inspector-General of the Frontier Police, and 47 men of that force. The strength at Banguma on December 13 was as follows:—

Royal Engineers, 2 officers, 10 non-commissioned officers and men.

1st Battalion West India Regiment, 11 officers, 369 non-commissioned officers and men.

Army Service Corps, 1 officer.

Medical Staff and Fixed Hospital Establishment, 2 officers, 5 non-commissioned officers and men.

Frontier Police, 1 officer, 47 non-commissioned officers and men.

Making a total of 17 officers, and 431 non-commissioned officers and men.

One company 1st Battalion West India Regiment still remained in rear, bringing up a convoy of supplies.

8. At Banguma I learned that the Sofas, after ravaging a populous district of the Bambara country, had returned to Kerra-Yemma, leaving, however, a small force at Yallu, formerly described as Yelladu, to which place they had moved from Kerra-Yemma before invading Bambara, in order to be nearer to the scene of their projected operations.

9. On December 14 the force marched from Banguma to Looma,  $14\frac{1}{2}$  miles, on December 15, from Looma to Konya,  $16\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and on December 16, from Konya to Kommendi, 8 miles, over very hilly country. At Kommendi a flying column, 270 strong, was formed, to advance and attack the Sofas at Yallu, and, if possible, to drive them to the west, and cut them off from the sphere of French influence.

10. The flying column marched from Kommendi on December 17, and entered upon a tract of country, 31 miles broad, that had been ravaged by the Sofas. It crossed the Woa River, a deep stream which was much ob-

structed by fallen trees, and, 7 miles from Kommendi, reached the ruins of Tekwiama. This had been a populous native town of between 3,000 and 4,000 inhabitants, and had been completely destroyed by the Sofas. It had consisted of two stockaded towns, defended one by double, and the other by triple, rings of stockades, and an open town. The larger of the stockaded towns measured 150 yards in diameter, the smaller 120 yards. Human remains were lying about on all sides, and the stench was intolerable. In one place were counted 40 headless corpses, with the hands and feet tied, thus showing that these men had been made prisoners and then slaughtered. Leaving this scene, the column marched on, passing through the ruins of the village of Sumboiyo, and bivouacked for the night in the forest, 16 miles from Kommendi. On the 18th the column marched 15 miles over hilly country, passing through the ruins of Sengekor, and bivouacking for the night near the ruins of Kranko. These villages had been destroyed by the Sofas.

11. On December 19 the column marched through the ruins of Bondao, and commenced the ascent of the Kore Range, to the south side of the peak, by a little-used bye-path. The main path lay to the north of the peak, but it was hoped that it would be possible to surprise the Sofas at Yallu by adopting the bye-path. The passage of the range was exceedingly difficult, but it was effected by noon, and the enemy were met at the Mofwi River, about half a mile from Yallu, at 2.50 p.m. The alarm had been given as the column debouched from the foot-hills about an hour before, but the enemy had not time to organize any defence; and though they attempted to dispute the passage of the Mofwi, which was unbridged and waist deep, they were driven from it without difficulty, our only casualties being Lieutenant Gwynn, R.E., and one private 1st Battalion West India Regiment, wounded, both slightly. I had appointed Lieutenant Gwynn Intelligence Officer to the expedition, and he had headed the advance throughout. A few shots were fired after crossing the river, and the town of Yallu was occupied without further opposition.

12. Most of the enemy retired to Sedu, a town which I now found to be only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the north of Yallu, and which we occupied next morning, December 20. The enemy did not defend the town, but attacked the rear-guard as it was drawing into it. They were dispersed with a loss to ourselves of Second Lieutenant Margesson and three privates 1st Battalion West India Regiment, wounded, all slightly.

13. Next day, December 21, the column re-crossed the Kore Range by the main path to the north of the peak, and occupied Waima,  $14\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-west of Sedu. The enemy attempted to bar the way, firing upon the advanced guard from ambushes in the tall cane grass, and from the further side of the mountain streams that were met with. Occasional shots were also fired into the column throughout its whole length. A few rifle shots were heard, but the enemy's fire was chiefly from flint-lock muskets, and was delivered at too long a range, for, though many men were struck by slugs and fragments of iron, only eight non-commissioned officers and men of the 1st Battalion West India Regiment were wounded; two severely. Lieutenant Gwynn, R.E., who again headed the advance, received a gunshot contusion: The enemy probably lost heavily, but as most of those