

The assistance rendered by Lieutenant and Commander D'Oyly was most opportune, as he covered the landing of my troops by an effective fire from launches, and prevented the enemy holding steep and difficult places on the river banks.

The casualties were 6 Natives wounded, and some considerable damage was done to the launches by the enemy's fire.

28. On leaving Aro-Chuku on January 16th, I appointed Captain J. C. Grahame, Highland Light Infantry, to command the troops in the Northern and Eastern districts during my absence, with orders to open up the country, disarm the population, make roads, and explain to the people the objects of the Government. This duty was performed very satisfactorily.

On January 18th much opposition was met with at Edimma. A messenger from Captain Grahame to Captain Ralph, commanding troops at Bende, had previously been turned back with an insolent message. By another route a message was sent to Captain Ralph to march on Edimma on the 18th with half a company, and on the same day, with a force of 4 Europeans, 65 rank and file, and a Maxim gun, Captain Grahame advanced on Edimma from Esiugu.

On arriving within about a mile of Edimma, Captain Grahame's scouts reported the bush to be full of armed men, and shortly after the enemy opened a heavy fire. Lieutenant A. E. Rastrick, Canadian Militia and Southern Nigeria Regiment, who was in command of the Maxim, used it with great effect, and so good was the fire control and discipline that the enemy was forced to retreat, though he kept up a running fight until within 200 yards of the village. Captain Grahame, on hearing Captain Ralph's Maxim on the other side of the village, ceased firing and rushed the village. The enemy being caught between our two forces suffered badly, and was taught a severe lesson. Captain Ralph's arrival was not expected by the inhabitants, and having taken up a strong position on a ridge overlooking the village, he was able to enfilade all the exits.

Our casualties were—Captain Grahame, slightly wounded; Natives, 1 killed, 10 wounded.

Beyond this engagement Captain Grahame met with no opposition.

29. The active operations of the Aro Field Force ceased on March 23rd, and on March 25th the contingents from Northern Nigeria and Lagos commenced their homeward march.

30. During the operations my columns destroyed 25,000 rifles and cap-guns, which are contraband arms in the Protectorate.

31. The total number of casualties sustained by the Field Force under my command was as follows:—Europeans, 13 wounded; Natives, 27 killed, 140 wounded, 70 died from disease.

The comparatively few casualties sustained was due to the system of throwing out scouts to the front and flanks into the thick bush while on the march, thus preventing the enemy from sniping columns at very close ranges, and exposing his works of defence, which were usually long lines of trenches parallel to, and within 20 yards of, the road.

32. The total expenditure of ammunition was as follows:—

75 Millimetre guns:—

Double common shell, 32.

Shrapnel shell, 180.

Case shot, 55.

Star shell, 60.

Small-arm ammunition:—

40,732, which works out at the rate of 22·3 per man of the fighting force.

This small expenditure of ammunition was also due to the present system of scouting, as commanders of columns were able to make a free use of the bayonet by outflanking and rushing the enemy's positions. This was found to be infinitely more effective than firing into the thick bush on an unseen enemy, and certainly economised the ammunition, and enabled me to make a reduction of 50 per cent. in the amount of reserve ammunition carried by each column.

33. The following are the names of Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, &c., whom I desire to bring to your notice:—

The number of Europeans engaged in the expedition was 134, and though the list of recommendations among Europeans may appear large, I would point out that the peculiar nature of the operations necessitated junior Officers being placed in such positions of responsibility that many were brought to the front, and further, that warfare in West Africa, owing to the climatic conditions, is particularly trying to Europeans.

Officers (Military).

Brevet Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) A. H. Festing, D.S.O., Royal Irish Rifles. A keen and indefatigable soldier; commanded various columns throughout the expedition in a most able manner.

Major G. B. Hodson, I.S.C. Took the initiative in covering the retreat of the water picket at Ikotobo on January 26th, 1902, and for that reason, as well as for his conspicuous gallantry on that occasion (whereby several lives were saved), he is specially brought to notice.

Major H. D. Carleton, West India Regiment. A most tactful, experienced, and energetic Staff Officer. As Chief of my Staff no commander could have been better served than I have been by him.

Captain (local Major) W. C. G. Heneker, Connaught Rangers. A cool and resourceful Officer. He commanded various columns with great success, notably at the taking of Aro-Chuku and the capture of Ikorodaka.

Captain B. Faunce, West India Regiment. This Officer performed the duties of Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General (B) throughout the expedition to my entire satisfaction. The systematic rendering of his accounts speaks for his high qualities as a Staff Officer.

Captain W. J. Venour, D.S.O., Royal Dublin Fusiliers. A hard-working, reliable Officer. He commanded the Advance Guard at the taking of Aro-Chuku, when he handled his men with such skill that I selected him to command a column which did very good work.

Captain W. Gillman, Royal Artillery. Is an invaluable Officer, cool and full of energy. Acted as Staff Officer to various columns, and won the praise of every commander.

Captain (local Major) H. C. Moorhouse, Royal Artillery. I specially applied for this Officer's services as Chief Transport Officer, owing to his previous knowledge of transport work, and I could not have made a better selection. The admirable way in which he performed his arduous duties and his wonderful tact in dealing with natives will do much to facilitate the future enlistment of carriers for expeditions.

Captain (local Major) A. M. N. Mackenzie, Royal Artillery. Commanded the artillery throughout the expedition, and the useful work done by this arm speaks well for his high organizing power. It was for this reason I selected him as a column commander, and as such he invariably did good work, notably in No. 1 objective, when he showed tact and resource.