

position. It was therefore decided to send Beves' brigade from Mbagui by a more Westerly route through Gitu to Ssangeni on the Mssangassi river, 10 miles West of Handeni, where good water was found on the 17th June, and on the following day the brigade was launched against the enemy's Southward line of retreat from Handeni at Pongwe and another point 4 miles North of Pongwe. At both places the enemy's retreating forces were beaten with heavy loss and driven into the bush, a pom-pom gun being subsequently found abandoned in the bush by the enemy. On the following day Handeni and Nderema were occupied by Sheppard. On the same day Colonel J. J. Byron's battalion (5th South African Infantry) was sent in pursuit of the enemy to occupy Kangata, 8 miles South of Pongwe. They found the enemy in a concealed entrenched position in dense bush, and in the fight which ensued lost heavily, but held on staunchly until night, when the enemy retreated. At Kangata the main column for the first time since leaving Kahe came into a made road (the main road between Handeni and Morogoro) having marched for about 200 miles along routes prepared by themselves, mostly by cutting through the bush.

(22) During these operations General Hannington had occupied Wilhelmstal unopposed on the 12th June, and advanced along the Tanga railway as far as Korogwe on the 15th, where the wagon bridge had fortunately been saved by his special exertions.

From this point he was instructed to move along the Korogwe-Handeni road and to rejoin with all speed the 1st Division, which was now nearing Handeni. He reached Handeni on June 20th, the day after its occupation by Sheppard.

(23) The advance of the main column in pursuit of the enemy continued, and he was next reported as holding a strong position on the Lukigura river. I therefore divided my force in the hope of getting round his position with a flying column and compelling him to stand to fight.

General Hoskins with two South African Infantry battalions, a composite battalion of Kashmir Imperial Service Infantry, 25th Royal Fusiliers, and a small body of mounted Scouts, marched on the night of 23rd June to a point on the Lukigura river, north of the bridge held by the enemy. This force crossed the river the next morning, and then got astride the road behind the enemy's position. The remainder of the 1st Division under command of General Sheppard advanced direct on the enemy's position.

At mid-day on 24th June both columns engaged the enemy on three sides, and after some resistance defeated him, with a loss of 7 whites killed and wounded, 14 white prisoners, 30 *asharis* killed and many wounded and captured, together with the capture of two machine guns and parts of a third, one pom-pom and much ammunition. The Fusiliers and Kashmiris specially distinguished themselves in this action, in which only the dense bush enabled the enemy force to escape from complete capture.

(24) We had now reached the eastern slopes of the Nguru block of mountains, and immediately in our front was the high Kanga mountain. There was every indication that the enemy was massing in great force in both

mountains in front of us, as well as on our right flank, and that any further movement would have to slow down. Our transport had reached the utmost radius of its capacity, and the troops had been on half rations for some time. They also required rest and reorganisation. Several units were reduced to 30 per cent. of their original effectives, owing to the ravages of malaria, and the difficulties of evacuating the sick were as great as those of forwarding supplies and reinforcements.

Since 22nd May the troops had marched considerably over 200 miles in difficult country, often having to cut their way through almost impenetrable bush, and constantly engaging the enemy in his prepared rearguard positions. The march was rendered more arduous by most serious transport and supply difficulties, and, for the last 80 miles since leaving the Pangani, frequent shortage of water for both men and animals. Besides, I deemed it necessary, in view of the ever growing supply difficulties, to repair and restore the Mombo-Nderema trolley line before moving further.

Further, it was necessary for the execution of my plans that the 2nd Division should be more advanced before the combined movement against the enemy's main forces on the Central Railway should begin:

I therefore formed a large standing camp on the Msiha river, some 8 miles beyond the Lukigura, in which to rest and refit the troops prior to the next phase of operations.

Occupation of Coastal Area to Bagamoyo.

(25) The pause on the Msiha river enabled me also to deal with another matter which was rapidly becoming urgent. I had deliberately left the East Usambara area alone while pushing the enemy forces in front of me back as fast and as far as possible. The situation on my left flank towards the sea would either clear itself up by the retirement of the small enemy forces in that area, or, if necessary, they could be dealt with at a more convenient time. The railway line beyond Korogwe and the lower reaches of the Pangani river were, therefore, for the present left unoccupied. Steps were, however, taken to seize Tanga. On 16th June the 5th Indian Infantry, moving south towards the border, occupied Mwakijembe, which the enemy had held strongly for a long time as a base from which to raid and bomb the Mombasa railway. The enemy force of about one company retreated towards the coast north of Tanga. Arrangements were then made by the Inspector-General of Communications for the landing of a force under Colonel C. U. Price, C.M.G., at Kwale Bay, 8 miles north of Tanga, and a simultaneous attack on that port by land and sea. This force, after slight opposition, arrived before Tanga on the 7th July simultaneously with the Navy, and occupied it practically without opposition. The enemy, consisting of two companies, was expected to retire towards Pangani, but did not do so, and continued to hang about in the vicinity, and on several occasions even indulged in some sniping into the town. At the same time the small force of about two companies which had retired before Hannington from Korogwe along the Pangani, returned and showed signs of aggressiveness. Small raiding parties kept interfering with our telegraph