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THE
ASHANTI CAMPAIGN
OF
1900

CAPTAIN C. H. ARMITAGE, D.S.O.
AND
LIEUT.COL. A.F. MONTANARO, R.A.
THE ASHANTI CAMPAIGN OF 1900
HOOVER INSTITUTION
on War, Revolution, and Peace
FOUNDED BY HERBERT HOOVER 1919
THE ASHANTI CAMPAIGN OF 1900
THE
ASHANTI CAMPAIGN
OF 1900

BY
CAPTAIN C. H. ARMITAGE, D.S.O.
AND
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL A. F. MONTANARO, R.A.

WITH MAP, PLAN, AND ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
SANDS & CO.
12 BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND
1901
PREFATORY NOTE

In submitting this account of the operations in Ashanti during 1900, the Authors wish to point out that the chapters dealing with the events which led to the Governor of the Gold Coast being besieged in the Fort at Kumasi, the account of the siege, and the Governor's retreat to the coast, as well as Appendices I., III., IV., and V., have been contributed by Captain Armitage; while the chapters dealing with the Relief of Kumasi and the later punitive operations, as also Appendices II. and VI., are from the pen of Lieutenant-Colonel Montanaro.

The Authors desire to express their thanks to Captain Aplin, C.M.G., Captain Bishop, and Captain Parmeter, for kindly supplying them with accounts of their experiences; to Reuter's Agency for permitting them to reprint Mr Emmet's description of Major Morris's march from Gambaga to Kumasi; and to Messrs Stanford & Co. for permission to make use of their latest map.
# CONTENTS

**Capt. Armitage's Narrative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAP.</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. THE QUEST OF THE GOLDEN STOOL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE FIRST ENGAGEMENT</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE REBELLION COMES TO A HEAD</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. SHUT UP IN KUMASI</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. WITH THE LAGOS HAUSSA COLUMN TO KUMASI</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. OPERATIONS AGAINST THE BESIEGERS</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. A BROKEN ARMISTICE AND ITS SEQUEL</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. RUMOURS OF RELIEF</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. PREPARATIONS FOR CUTTING THROUGH</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. THE MARCH OUT FROM KUMASI</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. THE KUMASI COLUMN'S MARCH TO THE COAST</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lieut.-Col. Montanaro's Narrative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAP.</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XII. PREPARATIONS IN THE GOLD COAST</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII. HOW KUMASI WAS RELIEVED</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV. THE SIEGE OF KUMASI (JUNE 23 TO JULY 15)</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV. FROM THE COAST TO BEKWAI</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI. PUNITIVE OPERATIONS BEGUN</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII. WITH BEDDOES' AND BURROUGHS' COLUMNS</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII. OPERATIONS ROUND KUMASI</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX. AN EXPEDITION AGAINST A FETISH TOWN</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX. A VICTORY IN THE NORTH-WEST</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI. LONGING FOR THE FINISH</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII. THE CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# CONTENTS

**Capt. Armitage's Narrative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAP.</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. THE QUEST OF THE GOLDEN STOOL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE FIRST ENGAGEMENT</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE REBELLION COMES TO A HEAD</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. SHUT UP IN KUMASI</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. WITH THE LAGOS HAUSA COLUMN TO KUMASI</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. OPERATIONS AGAINST THE BESIEGERS</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. A BROKEN ARMISTICE AND ITS SEQUEL</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. RUMOURS OF RELIEF</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. PREPARATIONS FOR CUTTING THROUGH</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. THE MARCH OUT FROM KUMASI</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. THE KUMASI COLUMN'S MARCH TO THE COAST</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lieut.-Col. Montanaro's Narrative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAP.</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XII. PREPARATIONS IN THE GOLD COAST</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII. HOW KUMASI WAS RELIEVED</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV. THE SIEGE OF KUMASI (JUNE 23 TO JULY 15)</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV. FROM THE COAST TO BEKWAI</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI. PUNITIVE OPERATIONS BEGUN</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII. WITH BEDDOES' AND BURROUGHS' COLUMNS</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII. OPERATIONS ROUND KUMASI</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX. AN EXPEDITION AGAINST A FETISH TOWN</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX. A VICTORY IN THE NORTH-WEST</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI. LONGING FOR THE FINISH</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII. THE CLOSE OF THE-CAMPAIGN</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CONTENTS

### Capt. Armitage's Narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAP.</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. THE QUEST OF THE GOLDEN STOOL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE FIRST ENGAGEMENT</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE REBELLION COMES TO A HEAD</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. SHUT UP IN KUMASI</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. WITH THE LAGOS HAUSSA COLUMN TO KUMASI</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. OPERATIONS AGAINST THE BESIEGERS</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. A BROKEN ARMISTICE AND ITS SEQUEL</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. RUMOURS OF RELIEF</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. PREPARATIONS FOR CUTTING THROUGH</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. THE MARCH OUT FROM KUMASI</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. THE KUMASI COLUMN'S MARCH TO THE COAST</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Lieut.-Col. Montanaro's Narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAP.</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XII. PREPARATIONS IN THE GOLD COAST</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII. HOW KUMASI WAS RELIEVED</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV. THE SIEGE OF KUMASI (JUNE 23 TO JULY 15)</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV. FROM THE COAST TO BEKWAI</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI. PUNITIVE OPERATIONS BEGUN</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII. WITH BEDDOES' AND BURROUGHS' COLUMNS</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII. OPERATIONS ROUND KUMASI</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX. AN EXPEDITION AGAINST A FETISH TOWN</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX. A VICTORY IN THE NORTH-WEST</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI. LONGING FOR THE FINISH</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII. THE CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CONTENTS

### Capt. Armitage's Narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chap.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>The Quest of the Golden Stool</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>The First Engagement</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>The Rebellion Comes to a Head</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>Shut Up in Kumasi</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>With the Lagos Haussa Column to Kumasi</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>Operations Against the Besiegers</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>A Broken Armistice and its Sequel</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>Rumours of Relief</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX.</td>
<td>Preparations for Cutting Through</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X.</td>
<td>The March Out from Kumasi</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI.</td>
<td>The Kumasi Column's March to the Coast</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Lt.-Col. Montanaro's Narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chap.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XII.</td>
<td>Preparations in the Gold Coast</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII.</td>
<td>How Kumasi Was Relieved</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV.</td>
<td>The Siege of Kumasi (June 23 to July 15)</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV.</td>
<td>From the Coast to Bekwai</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI.</td>
<td>Punitive Operations Begun</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII.</td>
<td>With Beddoes' and Burroughs' Columns</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII.</td>
<td>Operations Round Kumasi</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX.</td>
<td>An Expedition Against a Fetish Town</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX.</td>
<td>A Victory in the North-West</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI.</td>
<td>Longing for the Finish</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII.</td>
<td>The Close of the Campaign</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CONTENTS

### CAPT. ARMITAGE'S NARRATIVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAP.</th>
<th>THE QUEST OF THE GOLDEN STOOL</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>THE FIRST ENGAGEMENT</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>THE REBELLION COMES TO A HEAD</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>SHUT UP IN KUMASI</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>WITH THE LAGOS HAUSSA COLUMN TO KUMASI</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>OPERATIONS AGAINST THE BESIEGERS</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>A BROKEN ARMISTICE AND ITS SEQUEL</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>RUMOURS OF RELIEF</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>PREPARATIONS FOR CULTING THROUGH</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>THE MARCH OUT FROM KUMASI</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>THE KUMASI COLUMN'S MARCH TO THE COAST</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LIEUT.-COL. MONTANARO'S NARRATIVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAP.</th>
<th>PREPARATIONS IN THE GOLD COAST</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td>HOW KUMASI WAS RELIEVED</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV</td>
<td>THE SIEGE OF KUMASI (JUNE 23 TO JULY 15)</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV</td>
<td>FROM THE COAST TO BEKWAI</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI</td>
<td>PUNITIVE OPERATIONS BEGUN</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII</td>
<td>WITH BEDDOES' AND BURROUGH'S COLUMNS</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII</td>
<td>OPERATIONS ROUND KUMASI</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX</td>
<td>AN EXPEDITION AGAINST A FETISH TOWN</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX</td>
<td>A VICTORY IN THE NORTH-WEST</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI</td>
<td>LONGING FOR THE FINISH</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII</td>
<td>THE CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CONTENTS

### APPENDICES

| I. KUMASI IN 1900 | 217 |
| II. EVENTS THAT LED TO THE RISING | 218 |
| III. CAPTAIN PARMETER'S ADVENTURES | 222 |
| IV. RETURN OF CASUALTIES | 233 |
| V. GOLD AND OTHER NATURAL PRODUCTS | 235 |
| VI. BUSH-FIGHTING IN WEST AFRICA | 241 |

INDEX 265
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

IN SEARCH OF THE GOLDEN STOOL: AN AMBUSH  
Frontispiece

CAPTAIN C. H. ARMITAGE, D.S.O.  
To face page 1

THE FORT AT KUMASI  
34

A GROUP OF LOYAL KINGS AND CHIEFS  
88

LIEUT.-COLONEL A. F. MONTANARO, R.A.  
115

COLONEL SIR JAMES WILLCOCKS, K.C.M.G., D.S.O.  
122

INMATES OF THE FORT AT KUMASI  
132

ON THE ROAD TO BEKWAi: “CHOP” BOXES  
142

THE KING OF BEKWAi AND HIS COURT PAGE  
142

THE KING OF ABUAMU: A PALAVER IN 1896  
180

THE GOVERNOR ENTERING KUMASI  
217

THE KING OF BEKWAi IN PALAVER  
217

PLAN OF KUMASI  
To follow Index

MAP ILLUSTRATING THE CAMPAIGN
The Siege of Kumasi

By Captain C. H. ARMITAGE, D.S.O.
3rd Battalion South Wales Borderers

Private Secretary and A.D.C. to His Excellency Sir F. M. Hodgson, K.C.M.G.,
Acting Resident and Intelligence Officer during the Siege.

---

The Relief of Kumasi

AND SUBSEQUENT PUNITIVE OPERATIONS

By Lieutenant-Colonel A. F. MONTANARO, R.A.
3rd Battalion West African Frontier Force

Officer Commanding Royal Artillery Ashanti Field Force.
From a photo by Lafayette.

Captain C. H. Armitage, D.S.O.
THE ASHANTI CAMPAIGN OF 1900

CAPTAIN ARMITAGE'S NARRATIVE

CHAPTER I

THE QUEST OF THE GOLDEN STOOL

On the 25th March 1900, Kumasi was en fête, and for the first time since the entry of the British troops into Kumasi on the 18th January 1896, the kings and chiefs had assembled from all parts of Ashanti to welcome the Governor of the Gold Coast Colony, Sir F. M. Hodgson, K.C.M.G., on his first visit to their town.

His Excellency was met outside the town by the Acting Resident Captain Davidson Houston, the Cantonment Magistrate Dr Tweedy, and Captain Marshall and Dr Williams, both on their way to the Coast from the Northern Territories, and at 4 P.M. crossed the swamp and entered Asafu* with Lady Hodgson, and accompanied by Dr Chalmers, Mr Wilkinson, Acting Director of Public Works, and myself. Twenty Haussas under a sergeant formed an escort to some 200 carriers. Here he was received by the Rev. F. and Mrs Ramseyer, the former head of the Basel Mission at Kumasi, with his flock drawn up by the roadside and carrying banners, on one of which was inscribed the words, “Kumasi is like

* A suburb of Kumasi, once the residence of the king's war captains, through which, until after the 1874 Expedition, no white man was allowed to pass.
a brand saved from the burning." Lady Hodgson was presented with a bouquet by Mrs Ramsey, and the party then moved on, and passing under a triumphal arch, turned to the left, and proceeded up the broad road leading to the Fort. On either side of this road the kings and chiefs of Ashanti sat in state, each under his umbrella and surrounded by his court officials and followers. The sight was not one to be easily forgotten. The sky was cloudless; the sun shone on the gilded umbrella heads and sword handles carried by the kings' retinues, and as the Governor passed, the sitting figures on either side of the road rose and saluted, and the drums thundered out a welcome, while behind the kings the discharge of Dane guns, soon to be so familiar to us, added to the din.

At last the Fort was reached, and the Governor and his party went on to the verandah of the Residency, in front of which the kings were to pass in procession.

First came the Mampon chiefs and their followers, then the King of Mampon himself seated in his palanquin with an immense state umbrella whirling over his head. Next the Juabin chiefs and king, and then those of Bekwai, Kumawu, Kokofu, and Aguna, followed by the Kumasi chiefs, prominent among whom were the aged Chiefs Opoku Mensa (better known by his title Obo Abassa, "the arm-breaker"), Eshita, and Nentchwi, who formed the native committee under the Resident, and whose followers executed a wild dance as they passed the Fort, and the old blind King of Adansi. Not a sign was there of the storm which was so shortly to break out, and which was to transform the apparently loyal Ashants into a horde of savages thirsting for the blood of the white men imprisoned in the Fort.

It was not until the light began to fail that the last chief and his followers had passed in review before His Excellency, when every one was thankful to turn his attention to the refreshments which had been provided by the Acting Resident.

The Governor and Lady Hodgson were to reside in the medical officers' quarters, a comfortable little three-roomed
bungalow, while I took up my quarters in a large room at the top of the Residency.

The Governor had stated that he would hold a big palaver with the kings and chiefs on the following Wednesday, the 28th March, at 4 P.M., and on that afternoon, long before the appointed time, the Resident's interpreter was busyly engaged in forming the various groups into a huge semicircle facing the marquee, which had been erected in front of the Fort for the Governor and his suite. The kings were finally arranged in their order of precedence, supported on either side by their chiefs, while behind stood a compact mass of dusky humanity awaiting the Governor's arrival.

At 4 P.M. the Fort bugles announced His Excellency. The guard of honour presented arms, and the Governor, dressed in full uniform, and accompanied by Lady Hodgson, took his seat and received each king in turn, shaking hands with them. The old Queen Mother of Ejissu, Ya Asantiwa, whose name has since figured so largely in the rebellion, caused much amusement by carefully examining the Governor's medals. On the completion of this ceremony, the Governor addressed the assembly. He told them how greatly pleased he was to have at last had an opportunity of coming to Kumasi and meeting them in their own country, reminding them that although this was the first time that he had visited Ashanti, he had been in the Colony for many years, when, as Colonial Secretary, he had gained a knowledge of the country and the customs of its people. He then briefly reviewed England's relations with Ashanti during the past thirty years, and informed the kings that the time had now come for their people to do something towards paying off the war indemnity incurred by them in 1874. He read out a list of the sums to be paid yearly by the various Ashanti tribes as interest on the indemnity.

This announcement was received in silence, and the Governor proceeded to ask where the Golden Stool was, and why it had not been given up to him as representative of the
Great White Queen. Although the Ashantis might keep the Stool, we, he said, had still the power. The kings were now asked if they had anything to say, when they expressed their pleasure at seeing the Governor in Kumasi, and told him that they were unable to pay the sums of money he had mentioned. The Governor promised to meet them again and talk the matter over with them, and proceeded to give presents, varying from £20 to £30, to the kings and the principal chiefs, after which he returned to the Fort, while the Ashantis slowly dispersed.

During the next two days the Governor was engaged in hearing several cases relating to lands over which rival chiefs claimed jurisdiction, and in listening to the complaints and grievances, many of them frivolous, which the chiefs are only too ready to bring forward. And even now there was no whisper of the coming rising, and the Governor decided to leave Kumasi for the Obaussi Mines on the following Thursday.

On Saturday morning, the 31st March, I left Kumasi in command of a detachment of 45 men under Captain Leggett, G.C.C., my interpreter Mr Erbyn, a native dispenser, and 50 carriers and hammock men, with instructions to search the villages of N'Kwanta and Bali for guns and powder, which, if found in large quantities, were to be confiscated and brought to Kumasi if possible, and to make an attempt to find the Golden Stool and treasure. A boy, who had promised to guide a party to the spot where the Golden Stool and Prempeh's treasure were concealed, accompanied me.

We stayed the night at Ofinsu, a village consisting of two groups of huts, connected by a broad, well-made road, 500 yards long. This was quite the prettiest as well as one of the largest villages in the neighbourhood of Kumasi, and was ruled over by the Queen Mother of Ofinsu—an old lady, whose son, the Chief of Ofinsu, had been taken to the coast with Prempeh. It may here be stated that a "Queen Mother" reigns in all the large districts of Ashanti, and is a relative of the king or chief—either mother, aunt, or sister. During
the king's absence from his town or country, the Queen Mother is invested with his powers. In the evening I held a palaver with the queen, and presented her with £20 as a present from the Governor.

During the night two Haussas, who had been sent to N'Kwanta disguised as traders and instructed to report on the attitude of the Ashantis there and at the surrounding villages, returned to me at Ofinsu. They reported that several large meetings had been held at N'Kwanta and in the neighbourhood, and that the young men seemed very restless and excited.

Next morning we started at daybreak along a narrow track almost covered with undergrowth and grass. The forest was wrapped in mist, and the dew dripping from the trees added to the discomfort of the march. N'Kwanta was reached at 9 A.M., and was quickly surrounded by the Haussas before a single inhabitant had time to leave the village. The Ashantis, to the number of 50, assembled in the main street while a hut-to-hut search was made, but to my surprise this only resulted in the discovery of a few old guns and a very small quantity of powder. These I returned to their owners, and we parted on very good terms. It was, however, quite evident that all the young men were away from the village—organising a big hunt—so the head man said. The sun was now well up, the mist and dew alike had disappeared, and every one was heartily glad when, after a hot march of three hours, our party at last reached Bali.

On our way we had passed through several villages, at each of which I had noticed a restlessness and air of expectancy among the inhabitants, which somewhat impressed me. At one village the young men were gathered round a native, who was fashioning a large drum out of a solid portion of a tree trunk. All carried their guns, and were singing a weird chant, which stopped as our party marched through the main street. Outside another village we found a chicken running along the path, painted red, and with some cowrie shells attached to its neck by a string. This, the interpreter
told me, was a charm to keep away evil spirits from the village. Again, just outside Bali village, a chicken had been cut open and pegged down in the middle of the road. This latter fetish bears two interpretations: either that the inhabitants are about to fight, or that they are ready to fight for the visitors to their village.

Bali is a large circular village of about 250 huts, with a single broad road bisecting it, planted with shade trees. The village belonged to King Prempeh. A curious feature was that a man could pass through the village from hut to hut without appearing in the main street, for the huts were so built that doors opened from one courtyard into another. The village is surrounded by groves of plantains,* which grow close up to the huts.

I saw at a glance that the inhabitants had been warned of our coming, for, with the exception of four men, the village was deserted. The houses were searched with the same disheartening result as at N’Kwanta, and I proceeded to question the men who had remained seated under the village shade tree during the search. They told me that they had been left in charge of Bali, while the people had all gone to attend a custom at a neighbouring village, from which they would return next day. With this I had to be content, but gave instructions that the men should be watched, and that I should be informed of any one entering the village. As it was now past two o’clock nothing more could be done, so I determined not to make an attempt to obtain the Golden Stool until next day.

On the following morning I made an early start, and by daybreak had left the main road and, led by the boy, had plunged into the dense forest. I had left Captain Leggett with 15 men and some of the carriers at Bali.

The track along which we wound was scarcely discernible, and led us through the deepest recesses of the forest. Even the Haussas and the usually noisy carriers

* Plantains are a coarse, flat-sided variety of banana. Of some thirty-seven varieties bananas are the smaller, finer kinds.
were overawed by the silence. Not a leaf stirred, and our party seemed to walk as noiselessly as possible, as if afraid of disturbing some unseen foe. When the coughing bark of some large ape broke the stillness every one started involuntarily. For over three hours we marched silently in single file until we suddenly entered a large clearing planted with banana and plantain trees and coco, while nestling in the centre were three small huts, which had evidently not been occupied for some time.

Here, according to our guide, under the flooring of the huts, lay the Golden Stool and Prempeh's treasure. The picks and shovels we had brought with us were at once produced, and every one laboured amid great excitement to dig up the floor of the largest hut—no light task, as the flooring itself consisted of hard clay, stamped down and levelled. As the diggers grew tired, others took their places until, after an hour's hard work, a hole some four or five feet deep had been dug. Excitement gave way to disappointment, for there was no sign whatever of buried treasure. Indeed, the ground below the clay showed no traces of having ever been disturbed. The flooring of the other huts was dug up with no better result, and when questioned, the boy said that he must have made a mistake. Nothing more could be got out of him, as he was evidently half mad with fear, so very reluctantly I gave the order to fall in, and we once more entered the gloomy forest.

Tired out and disgusted, we retraced our steps along the wretched track. A heavy fall of rain did not improve our spirits, but the sky soon cleared. We entered the main road not far from Bali at 3 P.M., and were surprised to hear a great noise proceeding from the village, as of men in violent altercation. I pushed on quickly to learn the cause, and on entering the main street was met by a gang of frightened carriers, who gasped out that "the Ashantis live for fight."

I found Captain Leggett standing at the north-east
corner of the village, where a broad road led to a small fetish house, which stood in a cleared space about 60 yards from the village. This clearing was packed with armed Ashantis, who were dancing, howling, and hurling abuse at the stolid Haussas whom I had left behind, and who now stood at intervals facing the howling mob round the fetish house.

Captain Leggett hurriedly informed me that a Haussa who had gone to a plantation to get food returned about 2 P.M. with news that the bush was full of armed men. This statement was soon confirmed by the appearance of the mob at the fetish house, and by the noise which arose in the bush round Bali.

The fetish priest of the village had been trying to hold back the Ashantis, who were growing more violent every minute, and who were, Captain Leggett said, on the point of opening fire on him when I arrived with my party. The fetish priest, a fantastic figure, with long matted locks hanging over his shoulders, now returned from the fetish house, and through the interpreter begged me not to fire upon the Ashantis. I replied that I had no intention of doing so as long as they kept their distance, and that I would meet their chiefs, listen to their grievances, and come to some understanding without useless bloodshed. The priest went off to bring the chiefs, and in the meantime I placed my Haussas round the village, so that it could not be suddenly rushed. Our chief danger lay in the grove of plantains which grew right up to the huts, and through which the enemy could creep unobserved, and to avoid this, I soon had a gang of carriers cutting down the plantains, especially those on either side of the road between the village and the fetish house.

My boy now informed me that he had made some tea, for which I felt I should be most grateful after my seven hours' march, and in order to show the Ashantis that we were indifferent to their demonstration, the camp table was brought out and placed on the road about twenty yards from the village. The fetish priest now came back and said that the chief in command of the Ashantis was at the Oflin River,
one hour's march from Bali, but that he had sent messengers
to him. He asked me not to cut down the plantains, and I
promised to recall the carriers, who were hard at work, as
soon as the Ashantis were withdrawn from the fetish house.
Tea was now ready, so Captain Leggett and I sat down and
were pouring it out, when a sudden roar on our left told us
that the Ashantis had begun the attack. The carriers came
leaping back over the fallen plantains, several of them
severely wounded, but I was glad to see that they had
cleared a belt of about twenty yards between the huts and
the bush. A terrific fire was opened immediately all round
the village, the slugs thudding on the walls and falling on
the thatched roofs like hail.

Our one chance now of getting safely back to Kumasi
was to husband our scanty stock of ammunition—no easy
task, as the Haussa is never so happy as when firing—and we
had left Kumasi with only 60 rounds a man.* Leggett and
I therefore made a round of the village, impressing on the
non-commissioned officers and men the necessity of making
sure of their mark before expending a single round. The
fetish house soon became invisible, as a heavy curtain of
smoke hung in front of it, occasionally rent by a spurt of
flame as an Ashanti, more courageous than his fellows, ad-
vanced into the open to fire his Dane gun.

Our poor tea table was bearing the brunt of the enemy's
fire in this direction. As we looked, the tin of condensed
milk leapt wildly into the air and disappeared into the
bush and undergrowth by the roadside, closely followed by
the butter tin, while the enamelled tin cups and saucers kept
up a continuous clatter until they, in their turn, dived from
the table into the bush.

The carriers had been set to work, and were busy looph-
holing the houses and isolating the eastern portion from the
rest of the village by pulling down a belt of houses.

Mr Erbyn, my interpreter, was the first man wounded—

* Within twenty minutes of the commencement of the fight one
Haussa had fired off 52 of his 60 rounds of ammunition.
in the right heel—and I now withdrew the Haussas into the huts. Few had been wounded; the injuries, for the most part, were scalp wounds. Leggett had received some slugs in the fleshy part of the right and left arms, and the nail of his middle finger had been carried away, as he was in the act of firing at an Ashanti, while a large iron bullet had struck me on the back of the neck, making a nasty wound and numbing the back of my head.

The light had been gradually failing, but directly I appeared in the open with a few Haussas preparatory to rescuing my camp table, I was struck high up on the left thigh. The native dispenser made several ineffectual attempts to extract the slug, which caused me some pain, but I had the satisfaction of seeing the battered remains of the table brought back in triumph by the Haussas.

The enemy kept up an incessant fire until eight o'clock, when a heavy tornado burst over the village, accompanied by torrential rain. They did not, however, relax their vigilance. Their sharpshooters were spread round Bali and fired occasional shots, while bands of the enemy stationed all round made night hideous by raising their infernal war-cry and singing a song, of which the following is a rough translation:—

The Governor came up to Kumasi on a peace palaver.
He demanded money from us and sent white men to bring him the Golden Stool.
Instead of money the Governor shall have the white men's heads sent to him to Kumasi.
The Golden Stool shall be well washed in the white man's blood.

During the evening the non-commissioned officers had begged me to leave the village and endeavour to push on to Kumasi during the night, but not being a believer in night marches when undertaken in a dense forest, and knowing the panic which would surely take place among the carriers, I had refused, and began at once to make arrangements for leaving the village at dawn on the following morning.
DISAFFECTION SPREADING

We must now glance at the events which occurred at Kumasi between the dates of our departure and return.

Dr Williams left for the Coast on the 29th, and Captain Marshall on the 30th March. On the 1st April it was evident to the Acting Resident that some movement was on foot among the Ashantis assembled in the town, but it was not till evening that news was brought to him that Nenchwi and Efifa had left Kumasi, taking with them all their followers. The King of Bekwai, who, during the trying times which were so soon to turn the capital of Ashanti and its neighbourhood into one great war camp, remained unswervingly loyal to the Gold Coast Government, also left for his country. On the following day Captain Houston was informed that my column was to be ambushed on its return at a village called Atchiassi, half way between Bali and Kumasi, and two Haussas were immediately despatched to warn me of the danger. The poor fellows were never heard of again. Beyond doubt they were captured and done to death by the Ashantis, who were assembling from their villages as the news reached them that the time had now come to drive the white man and his troops back to the Coast. The old chief Obu Abassa was brought to the Fort and provided with a room, as it was considered that he would otherwise be spirited away by the Kumasis, among whom he had great influence. Captain Houston held several meetings with the kings, who insisted on their loyalty, and also met Ya Asantewa, Queen of Ejissu, who with her fighting men was encamped at a small village called Abercoom, situated close to Kumasi on the other side of the swamp. The Governor had consulted Captain Houston as to the advisability of sending out a force of Haussas to our relief, but this was out of the question, as a force strong enough to be of any use would have completely denuded Kumasi of its garrison. And so matters stood on the morning of the 4th of April.
CHAPTER II

THE FIRST ENGAGEMENT

At last the weary night came to an end. No one had slept. The carriers sat upon their loads, while the Haussas had been quietly withdrawn from their posts before dawn, and, with the exception of two double sentries, had been brought together into the compound of my quarters, which, like the majority of Ashanti houses, consisted of four three-walled oblong rooms surmounted by thatch roofs and raised on a foundation of earth about one and a half feet high, covered with clay, and smoothed and coated over with red earth, which takes a dull polish. The open side of the rooms faced inwards and gave on to the compound, in one corner of which was a small wooden door leading out into the village.

I divided up my small force as follows:—An advance guard of ten men and a non-commissioned officer (Sergeant Fulani); a rear guard of ten men and a non-commissioned officer; the remainder of the force in two parties as a main body to protect the carriers. Captain Leggett commanded the rear guard, and myself the advance guard.

Everything was now ready, so after finally exhorting the carriers to keep cool, and in the event of our being attacked, to lie down behind their loads until ordered to advance, I withdrew the sentries, and our party moved silently through the village into the main road.

The forest was wrapped in mist, and the Ashantis had
ceased their diabolical war cries. A few stars shone palely through the mist, while away to the east a faint glow heralded the approach of a cloudless day. The road from Bali led down a steep incline, cut up by miniature watercourses, to a stream which flowed sluggishly through a swamp, on the other side of which the road ascended some sixty feet, when it wound through gently undulating, densely wooded country to the Ofin River. We moved cautiously down the incline, and were almost at the bottom when the deafening reports of Dane guns, fired from the bush on either side of the road, warned us that the Ashantis had ambushed us.

Forgotten were all my warnings to the carriers. Crash after crash told of loads thrown down, while down the incline rushed a struggling mass of terrified men. Next moment they were upon us. I was knocked down and my advance guard were swept away. Many carriers bolted into the bush—some into the very arms of the Ashantis—while above the hoarse cries of the carriers, and of the Haussas, who tried to restore order, rose the roar of the enemy's Dane guns, which lit up the bush with spurts of flame.

On regaining my feet, I found my orderly beside me, and with his help managed to collect four Haussas. With these I opened fire on the ambush and soon silenced it; then, crossing the swamp, I found the advance guard formed up at the top of the slope. Captain Leggett sent to inform me of his safety, so we moved quickly on to more advantageous ground, where we halted a moment to pick up stragglers. In this ambush every load was lost with the exception of that which contained specie, and which was picked up and brought on by a Haussa. Nearly all the carriers had bolted down the road, while occasional shots told of those who had taken to the bush and were being hunted down by the Ashantis.

I now gave the order to push on as quickly as possible, as I feared that the Ashantis would hold the far bank of the Ofin River, across which there was no bridge, and which was
sure to be in flood after the downpour of the previous evening. To reach the river we had to pass through a small village which was deserted, and beyond which we found the carriers, who came scampering back like a herd of frightened deer, gasping out that the Ashantis were waiting for us in large numbers at the Ofin River.

The carriers were quickly placed in their original position in the line of march, and we hurried on until the sound of men talking and laughing warned us that we were nearing the river.

I formed the advance guard in two lines, five abreast, across the road. The first line fired a volley in the direction of the river, and reloaded; the second rushed up the path and fired, while the first repeated their tactics. The third rush brought us to the river, where we saw a strange sight. Lying in the clearing by the river bank, beside his chair of wood studded with brass nails, was an Ashanti chief, stone dead, with a bullet through his chest, while scattered about were Dane guns, kegs of powder, cloths, and other effects left by the Ashantis in their flight. The chief had evidently intended to spend a pleasant day by witnessing the shooting down of the fugitives from Bali, but he had made the mistake of selecting the near instead of the farther bank of the river to view the spectacle. The advance guard, without waste of time, plunged into the river, which we found to be neck deep.

On reaching the other side, abundant evidence of the panic flight of the Ashantis, who had thrown away guns and powder belts, lay before us. The guns were collected and thrown into the river, as it would have been dangerous to arm the panic-stricken carriers with them. The passage of the river proved somewhat difficult, and two or three Haussas were carried down stream, and had to be rescued. At last, however, all were safely over, and the column resumed its march.

I had hoped that after crossing the Ofin River the Ashantis would no longer oppose our return to Kumasi, but on nearing
CROSSING THE OFIN RIVER

the next village, the advance guard was again heavily fired upon, and I began to realise the gravity of our situation. I sent back stringent orders that no Haussa was to fire his carbine unless Captain Leggett gave the order, for I had found that up till now the Ashantis had engaged the advance guard only. We were now nearing the large village of Atchiassi, where, as the place had the reputation of being a hotbed of fetish, I expected to meet with a warm reception. Passing quickly through two deserted villages, from the outskirts of which the Ashantis fired upon the advance guard, and badly wounded two or three men, who were replaced from the main body, we at last came in sight of Atchiassi, with its single broad road planted with shade trees and bordered by whitewashed houses. The village seemed deserted, but as we approached it some twenty Ashantis leapt from the bush into the road, and, firing their guns in our direction, disappeared so rapidly that, had it not been for the heavy smoke that hung motionless above our heads as we entered the village, it would have been difficult to believe that we were not dreaming. The sun was now well up in a cloudless blue sky, and our clothes, wet through when crossing the Ofin River, had dried on us.

On entering Atchiassi I saw that a large meeting had been held in the centre of the village. Some hundred small carved wooden Ashanti stools lay about in a rough circle, and it was evident that the men who had fired on us when nearing the village had done so in order to give warning of our approach.

Passing through to the far side of Atchiassi, I halted the advance guard, and sent back instructions to Leggett to close up and to be ready for an attack on entering the forest beyond the village. He sent back in a few minutes to say that the column was closed up, when I ordered the advance.

Ten minutes elapsed as we marched along a path bordered by dense undergrowth, behind which extended plantations of plantain trees, and I was beginning to think that the Ashantis had at last decided that discretion was the
sure to be in flood after the downpour of the previous evening. To reach the river we had to pass through a small village which was deserted, and beyond which we found the carriers, who came scampering back like a herd of frightened deer, gasping out that the Ashantis were waiting for us in large numbers at the Ofin River.

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SURROUNDED BY THE ENEMY

We were now not more than one hour's march from Kumasi, and behind a belt of forest, about thirty yards broad, were immense plantations, from which came the Kumasi food supplies, on either side of the path. These were of great advantage to the enemy, as they could get ahead of us by running through them before creeping into the bush to get a shot at us as we passed. At half-past twelve I recognised that we could go no further. The bush was alive with Ashantis, and our ammunition was almost exhausted. Only four men remained in the advance guard, including Sergeant Fulani and my orderly, while the Haussas and carriers were so utterly fagged and unnerved, that at each discharge of a Dane gun they threw themselves down, and were with the greatest difficulty induced to rise and continue the weary march.

I tried flanking parties of three men in the plantations on either side of the path, but they were useless, and I therefore turned off to the left and entered a large plantation of plantain trees, where we were comparatively safe from Dane gun fire. At first I thought it possible for us to cut our way through the dense bush and undergrowth to Kumasi, and started a gang of carriers to clear a path in the direction in which I knew Kumasi to be situated, but on my return after a few minutes' absence, I found that they had discovered a paw-paw tree bearing ripe fruit, which they had been busily engaged in devouring when the Ashantis opened fire on them. We were, I found, completely surrounded, so there was nothing for it but to remain where we were. The wounded were placed in the centre of the plantation, while the carriers, guarded by Haussas, were set to work to cut down the plantain trees, and so make a clearing in which we could camp.

I scribbled a note to the Governor, and entrusted it to a carrier who knew the country and promised to get through the bush to Kumasi. I afterwards heard that this man was captured by the Ashantis, and was on the point of being killed when he was recognised by an Ashanti who had

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known him on the Coast, and to whom he had rendered some small service. This man stood surety for him, and afterwards assisted him to escape to the Coast.

A large space was soon cleared, the pulpy stems of the plantains being used to make a small circular stockade about two feet high, in which were placed the wounded, whose sufferings were augmented by the want of water. Many of the Haussas had filled their water-bottles at the Ofin River, but this supply had long since been exhausted, as the Haussa drinks a great deal when on the march. As for Leggett and myself, we had drunk nothing since the previous night; our boxes containing provisions were in the hands of the Ashantis, and we could find nothing to eat in the plantation except two unripe pineapples, which we chewed to extract their moisture.

I now had all the remaining ammunition produced, and to my dismay found that we had only 480 rounds left. This was re-distributed among the Haussas; eight men, who, in case we moved, were to form the advance guard, receiving 20 rounds each. At 3 P.M. I sent Sergeant Fulani with four men to reconnoitre the road, and see if the Ashantis were still round us, for our enemies had now learnt wisdom, and no longer betrayed their whereabouts by singing or talking.

The little party had been gone about ten minutes when heavy firing broke out on the road, and a few minutes later Sergeant Fulani and his men returned—happily unwounded—to report that the Ashantis had "cut the road," that is, that they had massed between us and Kumasi. We were, indeed, in a sorry plight. Even if my messenger got through to the Governor, it was extremely doubtful if a force strong enough to relieve us could be collected, while the dense character of the forest killed the hope that the firing of the enemy's Dane guns had been heard in Kumasi.

The Haussas were completely fagged, and Leggett, Sergeant Fulani, and myself, had our work cut out to keep the sentries who had been stationed at intervals round our
camp from dozing off. Parched with thirst as we were, it was pitiful to hear the wounded begging for water which we could not give them. And so night came upon us. White streamers of mist began to curl up amid the trees, and the chill night breezes to play over us as we lay with nothing more than a few plantain leaves as a couch. Suddenly, as though at a signal, the stars rushed out, and later the moon rose and cast a weird light upon the tossing forms of the wounded, and upon the carriers huddled together and shivering under their thin cloths.

It seemed as though the night would never end, although one dreaded the approach of a day which would, in all human probability, be our last. How many plans Leggett and I discussed during that dreadful night's vigil I cannot say, but at last the first flickering gleam of dawn told us that the time for action had come.

The carriers were quietly aroused, the Haussas fell in, and the wounded were examined, when it was found that at least six would have to be carried. I knew, as well as if they themselves had told me, that the carriers would throw down the wounded at the first shot, and bolt to the front or disperse into the bush in the hope of getting into Kumasi. So I made up my mind to adopt a desperate course. Choosing ten men and Sergeant Fulani, I distributed among them all the ammunition with the exception of three rounds for each of the remaining men. I then instructed Captain Leggett to take this small party, and with it force his way into Kumasi at all costs, while I remained in our camp with the rest of our force, the wounded, and carriers.

Leggett, brave fellow, silently wrung my hand, for we never expected to see each other again, and turning, marched quickly away with his Haussas, and was speedily swallowed up in the mist.

How I prayed that we should not hear a shot! To keep the carriers employed, I set them all to collect dew from the plantain leaves, and soon obtained enough to moisten the parched tongues of the wounded. And so an hour passed,
and not a single report of a Dane gun or a Martini-Metford carbine had broken the stillness.

Suddenly the carriers came rushing back from their dew-collecting operations to say that they had heard men talking on the road, and in another minute, four spick-and-span Haussas, in charge of a corporal, stalked into the plantation. The first thing I did was to secure their water-bottles, which were in danger of being torn from them by the thirsty carriers. After the wounded had had a good drink, I questioned the corporal, who stated that he had been sent out at daybreak by the Acting Resident to reconnoitre the road beyond Bantama, and that he had met Captain Leggett and his party just beyond that village.

Leggett had instructed him to go to our camp and let me know that the road was clear. Before starting off I sent the corporal with his men and a few carriers with the Haussas' water-bottles to get water at a stream which the corporal said was not far off, and on their return every one had a good drink, and we started off, making frequent halts to allow those carrying the wounded to close up. The bush bordering the road was here very dense, and had been most carefully prepared by the Ashantis, who had cut long tunnels, down which they could fire with a clear view of the road. We came upon several large clearings dotted with still smouldering camp fires, broken pots, and the outer skins of many plantains and other débris of cooking, evidence of the presence of large bodies of men on the previous afternoon and night.

As we entered the little village of Sinteresu, ten minutes' march from Bantama, I saw Leggett at the other end of the main "street," and behind him Dr Tweedy, with Haussas and carriers, the latter carrying dressings, medical comforts, and hammocks.

It was with very different feelings that Leggett and I again shook hands silently, for we were both too full of gratitude to the Power who had brought us alive out of about as tight a corner as ever men found themselves in, to do any talking. Meanwhile Dr Tweedy was busy transfer-
ring the wounded into comfortable hammocks, and giving them each a little brandy and water, as he thought it better to get them quickly into hospital before examining their wounds.

Then our column moved off again, and soon we were receiving a hearty welcome from the Governor, Lady Hodgson, and Captain Houston. After giving the Governor a brief account of our adventures, and doing justice to an excellent breakfast, which Houston had ready for me in the Fort, I attended a meeting of the Kings of Mampon, Juabin, Aguna, Kumawu, and Kokofu, with the Governor, who addressed them on the subject of the attack upon my force, the kings protesting in reply (and with truth, I believe) that they were ignorant that such an attack was contemplated. After the kings had again insisted on their loyalty to the British Government, the meeting ended, for which I was devoutly thankful, as my wounds, now that the excitement of the fight was over, were beginning to give me much pain. After a tub, they were dressed by Dr Chalmers, who had previously done the same for Leggett, and I turned in. I did not leave my bed again for some days.

Why the Ashantis retired at a time when a determined attack on their part, such as that on Bali, would probably have been crowned with complete success, is a matter of pure conjecture. It may have been either that they thought help would surely come to us from Kumasi, or that one of those panic terrors peculiar to the native, of which I have experienced several instances, spread itself through their ranks.

That we inflicted very heavy loss on them is certain, especially at the Atchiassi ambush, where they were densely massed, and where, I was afterwards informed, a single .303 bullet passed through four men.

The Ashantis themselves afterwards owned to some two hundred dead and many wounded, the force opposed to us being variously estimated by them at from five to six thousand, distributed between Bali and Kumasi.
THE ASHANTI CAMPAIGN OF 1900

I have purposely written a detailed account of this, the first engagement since 1874 in which the Ashantis have come into collision with Government troops, in order to give a general idea of the tactics adopted by them when fighting without the protection afforded by the stockades, which they employed later with such success against the troops besieged in Kumasi, and against the relief columns.
CHAPTER III

THE REBELLION COMES TO A HEAD

On the 5th April and the succeeding days the Ashantis formed large camps on the far side of the swamp which surrounds Kumasi to the north, east, and south, contenting themselves with singing and drumming at night. The Governor had wired to Accra for all Haussas available, and to the Secretary of State, asking that reinforcements should be at once despatched from Lagos and Nigeria, as well as supplies of ammunition and provisions (rice, etc.). He had also sent runners to Major Morris, D.S.O., Commissioner and Commandant of the Northern Territories, with letters instructing him to bring such force as could be spared from the hinterland to Kumasi with the greatest despatch possible.

It was still doubtful whether the Ashantis meant to fight, as although we heard that Captain Parmeter, an officer of the Gold Coast Constabulary, had been attacked on the N’Koranza road by Ashantis, and had only escaped by taking to the bush, traders had not as yet been interfered with, and a supply of food was brought daily to the market by Ashanti women. It is, indeed, most probable that if there had been a strong force of Haussas available to march at once on Kumasi, a general rising of the Ashantis would have been averted. As it was, a force of only 100 men could be sent from Accra. Every precaution had been taken against a sudden attack, and the carriers were formed into gangs of 20, each under a head man, and were daily
employed in clearing grass and bush from the vicinity of
the buildings. The Governor and the Acting Resident
held daily meetings with the kings and chiefs who still
remained in Kumasi.

The Kings of Bekwai and Adansi had returned to their
countries, as well as the King of N’Koranza, who had not
arrived in time to be present at the big meeting held on
the Wednesday following the Governor’s entry into Kumasi.
He and his chiefs had met His Excellency before returning
to his country, and had, as a matter of course, expressed
his loyalty. During the interview the king, a little man
of about twenty-two years of age, was extremely nervous,
and could with difficulty be persuaded to approach the
Governor to shake hands with him. A few days later the
King of Kumawu obtained leave to return to his country
with his followers, as his loyalty was considered to be beyond
question, and he was afraid that the Ashantis might make
a raid on his district. It was afterwards reported that he
had been captured on his way back by the rebels, who
forced him on pain of death to join them against us.
The Governor was also engaged in considering the claims
of two chiefs, Kobina N’Tem and Yow Mafu, to the vacant
Stool of N’Suta. Of the three N’Suta chiefs whose duty it
was to elect a king to the Stool, two favoured Kobina
N’Tem, while the third, an old man whose influence with
the tribesmen secured him a large following, supported
Yow Mafu’s claim. The N’Suta Stool property, consisting
of State umbrella, chairs, gold ornaments, and the stools
of the Kings of N’Suta, had been deposited in the Fort by
the chiefs, pending the Governor’s decision. The rivals could
not be induced to come to any agreement, but Kobina
N’Tem finally settled matters by joining the rebels on the
outbreak of hostilities.

The food supplies brought to market diminished daily,
and we now heard that the old Queen of Ejissu, Ya Asantiwa,
had formed a large camp at Abercoom, a small village
situated within ten minutes’ walk of Kumasi, on the far
side of the swamp. Captain Houston communicated with her, and offered to meet her in palaver near the swamp, but no arrangement was come to. Each side seemed to wait for some move on the part of the other.

I was able at this time to go about again in a hammock, for I was not allowed to walk; and as Captain Houston was about to proceed to the Coast on leave, the Governor appointed me Acting Resident, the transfer to date from the 16th April.

The Governor, who had decided to remain in Kumasi for the time being, and Lady Hodgson, had removed to the Fort, and now occupied the Residency, while Houston and I took up our abode in the doctor's quarters. Lady Hodgson had unfortunately contracted fever and was far from well, which indeed was not to be wondered at, as the noise of the drumming and horn blowing which proceeded nightly from the Ashanti camps was by no means conducive to rest or sleep. On the afternoon of the 14th April news was brought that Osei Kanyasi, an influential Kumasi chief, had crossed the swamp and had taken up his quarters in some native huts in the Ashanti quarter of the town. The Governor determined to arrest him, and Captain Houston and I, with four Hauussas, went down to his quarters.

Houston entered the huts, and presently emerged accompanied by a stout, prosperous-looking old man, whom we conducted to the Fort, where he remained until the following morning, when the Kings of Mampon, Juabin, and Aguna requested an audience with the Governor, and then asked that Osei Kanyasi should be released on parole, they promising to be responsible for him. After consideration the Governor granted their request, and Osei, full of protestations of loyalty, was handed over to them. It was, I think, on the evening of this day that Captain Houston went down to the swamp to interview the Queen of Ejissu, who, however, did not present herself, but sent a message to the effect that she wished for peace.

Captain Houston left Kumasi early on the morning of the 18th, together with Messrs Daw and Gordon, of the
Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, who had spent a few days at Kumasi, and Mr Wilkinson. These were the last white men to leave Kumasi before the rebels closed in around us. The party was without escort, and I have since been told that the natives of Karsi, a small village on the Cape Coast road, one hour's march from Kumasi, turned out to shake hands with Captain Houston, and to tell him how sorry they were that he was going to leave them.

In the afternoon a messenger from the Queen of Ejissu at her camp of Abercrom, was brought to me. He said that the Queen wished the white man to know that she had been misled by the Ashanti kings, who had told her that they intended to take up arms against the white man; that she was an old woman, and that all she prayed for was to live quietly in her town of Ejissu. I told the messenger to return to the Queen and tell her that she had twenty-four hours in which to get back to Ejissu, there to wait with her chiefs until the Governor sent me to palaver with her. Should she fail to leave her camp no mercy would be shown. The messenger departed much impressed, and I went to report to the Governor.

An hour later some friendly Ashantis rushed to my house with the news that the Queen of Ejissu and her war men had abandoned Abercrom, leaving their cooking pots, containing the evening meal of plantains, on the fires, even forgetting in their haste to take some of their drums with them. This is an instance of the panic to which I have previously referred. Later in the afternoon a force of Haussas, numbering 107 rank and file, commanded by Captain Middlemist, and accompanied by Captains Marshall and Bishop, the former having received permission to return from Prahsu, and Dr Hay, marched into Kumasi and formed up before the Fort. This force had met with no opposition, the only indication of an abnormal state of affairs being the presence of a few armed men at Karsi. The King of Bekwai sent his “linguist” and one of his
court officials with an escort of 27 fighting men to announce to the Governor his safe arrival at his town, and to show his loyalty to the Government. These men remained with us during the siege.

On the following day the Governor, after consultation with Captain Middlemist, decided to send Haussas to Karsi, which was to be destroyed, and on the 20th April 100 Haussas, under Captain Middlemist, with Captains Marshall and Leggett, marched from Kumasi. After burning Karsi, they returned with about twenty unarmed Ashantis, who had been found in the village. Next day a column of 100 men, under Captain Marshall, with Captain Leggett, destroyed the deserted camps of Aseni and Abercrom. Neither column met with the slightest opposition. The next camp which the Governor wished to have destroyed was, according to the information he had obtained from native sources, named Kwaman. A column of 150 men, under Captain Marshall, accompanied by Captain Bishop and Dr Hay, left Kumasi by the Mampon road at 6 o'clock on the morning of the 23rd. A loyal Ashanti, named Yow Awuah, who had for some years been detained on the Coast as a political prisoner, acted as guide to the column.

At 7.30 I was sent for by the Governor, who told me, on my arrival, that he was afraid Captain Marshall and his column must have gone in the direction of Ejissu. The only thing to be done was to send off a runner with a note instructing Marshall to return if he was on the Ejissu road. Shortly after the despatch of the runner, who was a Haussa soldier, a native came in to me to say that he had heard heavy firing on the Ejissu road, and at about 10.30 many wounded civilian Haussas straggled into Kumasi. I went off to meet the returning column, which re-entered Kumasi from the Mampon road. I then learnt from Captain Marshall, who was carried in wounded, that the column had nearly reached the village of Fomasua, about one hour's march from Ejissu, and close to Kwaman, when a heavy fire was poured in by the Ashantis, whose camp was situated in and around
the village. Native officer Akkere, a gallant Mahommedan soldier, fell dead, and many Haussas were wounded.

Although Captain Marshall had given strict instructions that no civilians were to accompany the column, a large number of civilian Haussa traders, armed only with spears and swords, had sneaked along the road at some distance behind the rear guard, intent on looting the farms and villages. These men, as the Ashantis slowly enveloped the column in a circle of Dane gun fire, rushed wildly among the Haussas for protection, causing the very greatest confusion. Captain Marshall, after an ineffectual attempt to take Fomosua, retired his column on Kumasi, the Ashantis following it up for some distance, and pouring in effective volleys. In this regrettable collision with the Ashantis, our casualties were as follows:—Native officer Akkere, 3 corporals, and 1 private killed; Captains Marshall and Bishop, and Dr Hay (the last named while bringing in the body of the native officer), and 55 rank and file wounded. In addition to the above, some of the civilian Haussas were killed and many wounded. That night the Ashantis celebrated their success by singing and drumming round Kumasi, and it was evident that matters had now come to a head, and that nothing short of a miracle could avert a rising—whether local or general remained to be seen.

The Governor sent telegrams to the Secretary of State, reporting the serious situation, and requesting further reinforcements from Nigeria, to which replies were received. After this, no telegrams could be despatched over the line, and it was evident that the wires had been cut. The King of Kokofu and his chiefs were still at Kumasi, and as the latter informed me that the king was making preparations to join the rebels, he was arrested and confined in the Fort by the Governor's order. This king, known by the name of Asibi, and placed on the Stool of Kokofu by the Government a few years previously, is a young man of about twenty-five, a typical Ashanti, with broad, receding forehead, and is generally supposed to be the only representative of the
Ashanti Royal Family in whose veins the royal blood is known certainly to flow. It was afterwards learnt that he had accepted the offer of the rebels to place him on the Golden Stool of Ashanti, if he would take command of the rebel forces. Every precaution was taken by Captain Middlemist against surprise, and the Basel Mission Missionaries were warned to be ready to abandon their houses at a moment's notice.

And so matters stood on the 25th, when, early in the morning, I received a note from Mr Ramseyer, telling me that one of his men who had gone to fetch water at the Haussa water supply,* some 200 yards from the Haussa cantonments, had been killed by Ashantis, and that from the Basel Mission buildings noises could be heard denoting the presence of a large body of men in the bush near the cemetery, situated 200 yards beyond the Mission houses on the Bantama road. After informing the Governor and Captain Middlemist, I started in my hammock to visit the Basel Mission, but met Mr and Mrs Ramseyer on the road, who said that the Ashantis were so close that they dared not stay longer. The four other missionaries followed, and all were given shelter in the officers' quarters.

Meanwhile Captain Middlemist distributed the small force under his command across the Bantama road, as far as the prison; a party of Haussas, under Captain Bishop, occupied the Fort; a few Haussas, under a non-commissioned officer, kept watch on the Cape Coast road, and a Maxim gun was brought up to the officers' buildings. The Haussas' wives and children, and the natives from the Cape Coast, Fanti and Saltpond lines left their houses with as much of their property as they could carry, and sat down close to the Fort walls.

The Ashantis commenced their attack at 10 A.M. They occupied the Basel Mission buildings and Saltpond lines, and brought a heavy though ineffective Dane gun fire to bear on the European buildings, while a larger party com-

* See Plan.
menced a wide turning movement through the bush between
the cantonments and the swamp, with the evident intention
of trying to get into the long grass between the Fort and
the officers' quarters. This party was driven back by volley
firing. At noon the King of Aguna and Yow Mafu (one of
the claimants to the N'Suta Stool) offered to lead the loyal
Ashantis against the rebels if I would accompany them, and
having obtained leave, we started up the Bantama road, and
slowly made our way to the Saltpond lines, driving out the
rebels who occupied them in force. A tremendous fire was
opened on us by the Ashantis holding the Basel Mission Build-
ings and the dense bush on the right of the road, and after
returning it for some time without being able to advance,
Captain Middlemist sent me an order to return, as the
Ashantis were creeping up in the bush on our right flank.

The levies, as I shall in future call them (whom I after-
wards commanded whenever engaged), retired slowly, and
Maxim fire was opened on the rebels holding the Basel
Mission. A large body of rebels now poured into the
civilian Haussa town, the inhabitants flying along the road
across the swamp, and up to the Fort, where they surged
round the walls in a panic-stricken mass. Fire was opened
on the town with a 7-pounder, and three or four rounds of
shrapnel sufficed to clear it of Ashantis, who, however,
managed to set it on fire before leaving. Built, as it
was, of wattle and grass, in accordance with the usual
style adopted by the Haussas, the beehive-shaped huts
were soon flaming merrily, and I sent a party of levies
under one of the few Kumasi chiefs who had remained loyal
to us, Kobina Kokofu by name, to try to save, at any rate,
a portion of the town. This he found it impossible to do,
but on his return he reported that our shell fire had
accounted for some of the rebels.

The Ashantis on the Bantama road had, meanwhile,
been creeping closer and closer towards the European build-
ings, and now occupied the far end of the cantonments.
The missionaries were sent down to the Fort, together with
their belongings and those of the officers occupying the Constabulary quarters. Word was now brought that a large body of the Ashantis had appeared on the Cape Coast road, and, crossing the swamp, had occupied the Fanti lines. Captain Middlemist asked me to go and see what had happened, promising to follow me with a party of Haussas. With great difficulty I made my way to the Fort gate through a compact mass of refugees, and saw the Governor on the verandah, but although he shouted to us and pointed towards the Fanti lines, I could not hear a word above the babel of voices. Extracting myself from the howling mass, I found Kwatchi N'Ketia, Chief of Mansu N'Kwanta, a little shrivelled old man, with snow-white hair and beard, who during the siege never wavered in his loyalty to the white man. He was seated on his chair, surrounded by about one hundred and fifty of his war men. I addressed him through an interpreter, and begged him to allow his men to accompany me to the Fanti lines. He said that some had already gone, and that he and the remainder would come with me at once. Off we went, and were soon engaged in a hut-to-hut fight, which ended in the rebels being driven back with loss across the swamp.

While congratulating the old chief on the bravery of his men—he had lost twenty killed and twice as many wounded—we were unpleasantly surprised to hear bullets whistling over our heads, and I discovered that a party of Haussas sent by Captain Middlemist had mistaken us for rebels in the failing light, and had opened fire on us. This little mistake was quickly rectified, and the Haussas turned their attention to some rebels who still held houses in the Cape Coast lines, but who were quickly sent flying to join their friends across the swamp.

On returning towards the Fort, I heard that Captain Middlemist had ordered the retirement of all the Haussas, and that they were to form a cordon around the refugees who clustered round the Fort walls. Darkness came on as we were endeavouring to clear the front face of the Fort
of the hundreds of refugees who had huddled round the gateway, and it was not until past eight o'clock that I found myself, dirty and tired out, seated in the Governor's dining-room, making a very hearty meal. I was also told that Captain Middlemist, when on his way down to join me in the Fanti lines, had been caught in a stream of refugees, mad with terror, who carried him along with them to the Fort gate, almost crushing him to death against its closed portals. He was rescued by the Governor, who, with the help of some Haussas, opened the gate, dragged him through, and closed it again with great difficulty on the maddened rabble outside. Several natives had also managed to reach the Residency verandah by climbing up the posts which supported it at either end. These were quickly driven back.

The scene which was presented from the verandah of the Residency that night beggars description. The blazing houses in the cantonments and Fanti and Cape Coast lines, some of which the rebels had fired, cast a lurid light upon the surging mass of humanity clustering round the Fort walls, from which arose the wailing of women and the pitiful crying of little children, who wept with their mothers out of sympathy, without knowing of the danger realised by their elders. Beyond and around this terror-stricken crowd stood the Haussas, seemingly indifferent to their surroundings, but in spite of their long day's fight, as alert as ever. Occasionally a Haussa woman would force her way through the crowd to bring food and water to her lord and master, while round the cordon walked the white officers, and that fine old native officer, Mr Hari Zenoah, who had grown grey in the Government service, praising here, reprimanding there, while keeping up the spirits of his men. Every now and then, amid a whirlwind of sparks, some thatch roof would fall in, converting the four "swish"* walls of the house into a white-hot

* Swish—a kind of earthy clay which, when softened by mixing with water and kneading with the feet, is used to build the walls of native huts.
furnace. Away across the swamp glowed the embers of the burned civilian Haussa town, occasionally lighting up the Wesleyan Mission buildings, as yet untouched by the Ashantis. Behind all towered the blank wall of forest which surrounds Kumasi, from which were borne the triumphant shouts of the rebels, who had at last caged the white man within the narrow limits of his Fort walls.

It was a night never to be forgotten.
CHAPTER IV

SHUT UP IN KUMASI

I must here give a brief description of the Fort which was to be our home for the next two months. Built directly after the occupation of Kumasi in 1896, it commands the whole of the native town, the only higher ground in its vicinity being that on which stood the Basel Mission buildings about one thousand yards from it.

Square in shape, and flanked at each corner by turrets, which face roughly the four points of the compass, its loopholed walls, 12 feet high, enclose a space about 50 yards square in extent. It is entered by a single broad gateway secured by an iron folding door, on either side of which is a guardroom, while behind these are the Resident's dining-room on the left-hand side, and a room devoted to the treasury work on the right.

Ascending a flight of stone steps, underneath which is a small chamber with a massive iron door, used for specie, one reaches the Resident's quarters, which consist of a bed and sitting-room, a small anteroom and two offices, around which runs a verandah. A flight of wooden stairs leads to a single large room above the Resident's quarters. The building is of stone and brick—the former obtained from the ruins of King Kofi Kalcalli's palace, destroyed in 1874—with a corrugated iron roof. It is flanked by two circular turrets for guns, approached by flights of stone steps, surmounted by conical corrugated iron roofs, and supplied with
MEANS OF DEFENCE

jalousies which can be raised or lowered at will. The rear and left faces of the Fort have each two bastions for guns, with corrugated iron roof and jalousies. Under these are the chambers for storing ammunition. The turrets flanking the rear face are two-storied, the first storey loopholed for rifle fire, the second fitted with revolving jalousies, and capable of being used for Maxim gun fire. Of these turrets the right was used as a post and telegraph office, the left for the storage of property belonging to the Public Works Department. The wall of the right face is unbroken and loopholed along its entire length. It gives on to a garden laid out parallel with the road leading to the European water supply. The defenders of the loopholed walls are protected by corrugated iron roofing, which forms sheds where goods in transit to the Northern Territories could be stored until carriers were engaged to take them on. The kitchen occupies the right corner of the front face behind the turret, near which is a well yielding a fair supply of water. On the left-hand side, as one enters the courtyard, stands a stone corrugated iron-roofed house, consisting of three rooms, one used as an orderly-room, the other two containing the emergency stores, on which so much now depended.

The armament of the Fort consisted of four 7-pounders, four Maxims (two .450 and two small .303), and a Nordenfeldt.

The Governor and Lady Hodgson occupied the Resident’s quarters; in the large room above were Captains Leggett and Bishop, Drs Chalmers, Tweedy, and Hay, and Messrs David and Grundy, mining engineers, who had arrived in Kumasi a few days before fighting commenced. The dining and treasury rooms were given over to the missionaries, Mr and Mrs Ramseyer, Mr and Mrs Yost, Mrs Haasis and Mr Keller, while I took up my quarters with Captains Middlemist and Marshall in the Public Works Turret. The Kings of Mampon, Juabin, and Aguna were given half the shed on the right face of the Fort, the other half being reserved for Opoku Mensa and the King of Kokofu. The loyal chiefs and their
followers camped in the garden and protected the Fort in that direction. The native clerks were given accommodation in the Post Office Turret, and a hospital was formed for the wounded in one of the bastions on the rear face of the Fort.

Our servants were also quartered in the Fort, and my cook celebrated the event by giving a dinner-party to his fellow-servants, for which some of my few stores purchased from Captain Houston were commandeered, including a bottle of gin, two tins of bacon, and four of paté de foie gras. These latter led to the discovery of the theft, for one of the boys participating in the feast became so ill that, under the impression that he would not recover, he made what he thought to be a deathbed confession to his master. Shortly after the cook hurriedly left the Fort.

On the morning of the 26th of April, Captain Marshall and I went up to the European buildings with a party of Haussas, who covered our operations, while with the aid of carriers we removed our belongings to the Fort (for some of mine had been left behind on the previous day, which was, perhaps, fortunate, as the majority of the things carried down by my boys had been lost or trampled under foot by the refugees). We also cleared out the Haussa storeroom, in which were clothing, boots, water-bottles, etc., and the hospital. The Ashantis, now in possession of the cantonments, did not interfere with us, although they watched us from the Bantama road. The Fort gate was kept closed, and a ladder from the Haussa storeroom, raised and lowered from the rear face of the Fort, formed our means of communication with the outer world. Captain Middlemist was very unwell and remained in bed. The refugees hardly moved during the day, and contented themselves with preparing and cooking their food. The supply of water from the well did not nearly equal the demand, so a gang of carriers, escorted by 20 Haussas, visited the European water supply, followed by numbers of refugees, and returned laden with water. In future, during the siege, water was
fetched twice daily, nor were the water parties ever fired upon or otherwise molested by the Ashantis. The doctors were busy ensuring the perfect sanitation of the Fort surroundings, and so passed the first day of the siege.

At 1 o'clock on the following morning a terrific tornado, accompanied by a deluge of rain, burst over the Fort. It was heralded by a long shuddering sigh, which rose from the packed masses of refugees, as they realised the drenching in store for them. Then a howling gale swept over them and the Fort, tearing some of the jalousies of our turret from their sockets, and before we could replace them, the rain flooded our room, while the roar of the downpour silenced the cries of the frightened children, as the full fury of the storm was let loose over Kumasi. All was over in half-an-hour, and in the early morning, a dense steam that rose from the shivering mass under the walls blotted out the surroundings of the Fort. Happily the sun rose in a cloudless sky, and speedily dried the natives, who forgot their troubles as they sat laughing and chatting round their cooking pots.

A great deal of activity was apparent in the rebel camp, although the Ashantis had not yet ventured into the European buildings. A view of the Wesleyan Mission House, standing above the ruins of the civilian Haussa town, could be obtained from my turret, and, with the aid of glasses, it was seen to be occupied by the Ashantis, who were also forming a large camp behind it. Captain Marshall and I fired a few shots from the turret at the rebels standing under the verandah of the building, which had the effect of clearing them from the Mission House. The refugees, after the experience of the previous night, set to work to make themselves shelters round the Fort. Going off to the Fanti and Cape Coast lines, they returned laden with thatch and wooden poles, and soon a miniature town sprang up round the Fort, with the exception of the front face, which was kept perfectly clear. During the night the refugees, after the happy-go-lucky custom of the natives, lit fires in their huts in all directions, the civilian Haussas being the chief
offenders, and Captain Marshall and I had a weary hut-to-hut tramp, seeing that all fires inside them were extinguished.

On the following day orders were issued that all cooking was to be done on the roadside or in open spots well away from the huts, but it was only after several of the shelters had been pulled down as a punishment to the owners for having lighted fires within them that this rule was enforced. At the same time it must be said that the conduct of the refugees during this and the trying times which were to follow was excellent. It is probable that nowhere else in the world, except perhaps in India, could be found a large community of over 3000 souls, who would bear with such patience and resignation the sufferings and privations which were shortly to fall to their lot.

Just before daybreak on the morning of the 28th, a sentry fired off his carbine as a signal that the Ashantis were creeping up. This, however, proved to be a false alarm, and the Haussas, who had commenced to fire into the darkness, were again cautioned not to use their carbines without a direct order from their officers. I think it may be laid down as an axiom that the Ashantis will never attack by night, unless they discover that no watch is being kept.

The day passed uneventfully. Trenches had now been dug round the Fort, and shelters built behind them for the Haussas. Early on the morning of the 29th it was discovered that the rebels had entered the European buildings, and were beginning to remove the wooden beds and shutters from the hospital, and the doors from the officers' quarters, while parties of armed men moved about in the cantonments. A few shots fired from the Fort cleared the European buildings, but a hollow behind the hospital into which the rebels retired hid their further movements. At noon the Ashantis, who had loopholed the swish walls of the cantonments, opened fire on the Fort. Captain Middlemist was still ill, and had been removed from the turret to the Governor's office, which had been cleared for his reception, so the command devolved on Captain Marshall, who put me in charge of the Fort.
THE FORT UNDER FIRE

The command of the Haussas protecting the rear, left and front faces of the Fort, was taken by Captains Marshall, Bishop, and Leggett respectively. The right face was, as before mentioned, guarded by the levies. The rebels, taking advantage of the hollow behind the hospital, occupied all the European buildings and the prison, and from this shelter poured a heavy, though harmless, fire on the Fort. Within the Fort I had my work cut out to prevent the Haussas manning the walls from firing, as they were most anxious to take part in the fight. I fired three rounds of shrapnel from the 7-pounder into the cantonments, two into the prison, and brought Maxim fire to bear on the hospital, but in spite of this and the steady volleys of the Haussas, the rebels clung tenaciously to their posts, their slugs pattering on the corrugated iron roofing, while an occasional "ping" as a bullet passed through a roof, told of a few arms of precision in the enemy's possession.

Firing was kept up on both sides for some time, when I saw the Haussas on the rear face of the cordon suddenly rise to a man, and calling upon "Allah," rush in line across the open space which separated them from the officers' quarters. Instructing the native officer, Mr Zozo, to prevent any firing by the men in the Fort, who were to remain at their posts, I dashed over the Fort wall and, telling Captain Bishop to advance his Haussas to the prison, I made for the hospital with my levies, who had been held in readiness. We reached it simultaneously with the taking of the officers' quarters and prison, and I now had my first narrow escape that day. Passing through the hospital rooms, I went out and found a party of Ashantis standing as if undecided what to do. On seeing me they started down the road in the direction of the prison, and thinking that they were some of my levies who meant to take the rebels in flank as they retreated from the prison, I went with them. Suddenly they turned off into some long clumps of grass above the hollow which I have mentioned as extending behind the hospital, and the next minute were firing on
me. I stood thunderstruck for a moment, and then beat an ignominious retreat to the friendly shelter of the hospital, where my levies awaited me, evidently under the impression that I had taken leave of my senses. The Haussas now came round from the prison, firing on the rebels in the hollow, who, as we now perceived, had there constructed stockades of boards and furniture from the Basel Mission.

Captain Marshall now ordered the Haussas to retire, as he feared an attack from the Cape Coast road, so, with marked reluctance on their part, they returned to their trenches after having driven the rebels from the European buildings and half way through the cantonments. It was two o'clock as Captain Marshall and I re-entered the Fort and went to see the Governor. As we sat on the verandah relating the incidents of the fight, Captain Marshall was taken suddenly ill, having evidently received "a touch of the sun," from which he did not recover until evening.

Shortly afterwards I was told that the kings wished to see me. I went down and found them in a state of wild excitement. The King of Aguna, who acted as their spokesman, said that the levies wished to follow up our success and drive the enemy out of the cantonments and the Basel Mission, as they knew that the Ashantis must be much disheartened by their defeat and losses. He ended by asking me to put myself at the head of the levies, who were waiting outside the Fort. I returned to the Governor and obtained his permission to go, and after arming myself with a carbine and filling my pockets with ammunition, left the Fort with the King of Aguna. This man, a stout, muscular native, about six feet in height, and in the prime of life, made an imposing figure in his short smock-like warcoat covered with charms made by the Mahommedans. His hair, brushed back from the forehead, and full beard, were twisted into little spirals. He was armed with a Martini-Henry carbine, which had been issued to him from the Constabulary Stores.

The levies were drawn up in mass and were for the most
part armed with Dane guns. Those in front wore red cloth caps, which had been left over in 1895, when red caps were issued to all the levies as a distinguishing badge. Behind were the men who had no caps. Yow Mafu greeted me, and we all moved off to the cantonments, followed by levies and carriers, who did not possess guns, but were armed with cutlasses. These, in case we were successful in driving out the rebels, were to bring in such food as they could find. We became engaged when half way through the cantonments, and for nearly half-an-hour could make no progress. I was struck by the marvellous way in which the rebels had prepared the houses of the cantonments against attack. Every house was loopholed, while large manholes had been made in the swish walls, so that when driven from one hut, the defenders could retire to the next.

Leaving the King of Aguna and his men to keep up a heavy frontal fire on the enemy, I, with Yow Mafu and about one hundred levies, made a turning movement, and creeping round the huts, saw the rebels massed behind the houses in the Saltpond lines. They, too, saw us, and decamped after firing a few volleys. I was knocked over by a spent bullet, which struck me on the forehead, stunning me for the moment, but otherwise doing no damage. The King of Aguna and his men now joined us, and having once got the Ashantis on the run, we gave them no time to rally, and swept on to the Basel Mission buildings, which we soon occupied.

Such a scene of wanton destruction as the rooms presented I had never before witnessed. The missionaries seemed to have been well supplied with stores. Hundreds of empty wine and beer bottles lay scattered about, while tins containing preserved meats, vegetables, and groceries had been battered open and their contents either eaten or strewn over the ground. The furniture was broken up into matchwood, and two harmoniums had been disembowelled. Windows, sashes and doors torn from their hinges; books and papers rent to fragments; plates and glasses smashed to bits,
told of the wild orgy enacted during the night of the 25th. The levies spread themselves over the buildings and grounds, and with difficulty the King of Aguna collected a body of men to go on to Bantama, while I remained to bring on a second party. At last I managed to get about eighty men, and with these followed up the King of Aguna along the broad road which leads past the European cemetery to Bantama. Just after passing the former on the right, I was fired at from an ambush on the left side of the road, which dropped the man in front of me. I stood for a moment staring stupidly at the smoke, and wondering whether I was badly hit; but the levies behind me fired into the bush, and so close were the rebels to the road that two were killed. Strange to say, I was not touched, and had to be thankful for a second providential escape that day.

The King of Aguna's party had now entered Bantama village, which the rebels had not defended. At this juncture an orderly arrived with a note for me from the Governor, requesting me to return, as he anticipated an attack by the Queen of Ejissu's war men. The levies were returning from Bantama laden with food and plunder, and accompanied by the King of Aguna, who had discovered some gin, the imbibing of which, combined with the excitement of the fight, had made him delirious with exultation and pardonable pride. He and Yow Mafu danced up to me, repeatedly shook hands, and were at last borne off in triumph on the shoulders of their followers, while I, politely refusing a similar honour, preferred to walk back to the Fort.

As I passed the officers' quarters I noticed a dense crowd collected round the constabulary storeroom. Pushing through the men, women, and children, I entered the room, and the next moment recoiled with horror at the sickening sight which presented itself. Some dozen wounded rebels had sought shelter in this room, and before they could be removed by their comrades the Haussas had swept past the building and into the cantonments, followed by refugees and carriers intent
on plunder. Discovering the poor wretches in the storeroom, the latter at once set to work and hacked and gashed them with their blunt cutlasses, mutilating them indescribably, until the room was a shambles, spattered with blood from floor to ceiling. Not content with this, they had set fire to their clothing. Even as I entered, the brutes, applauded by the women and children crowded round the doors and windows, were hacking at a young man, who, covered with blood from head to foot and propped up against the wall, was feebly moving his maimed arms in a pitiful effort to ward off the blows which rained down on him. Striking out right and left, I soon had the place clear, but was too late to be of help to the wretched rebels, for, as I looked, the young man collapsed with a deep sigh on the floor. I made the bystanders remove the burning clothing, and left this charnel-house after setting a guard over it.

Near the Fort I was met by a band of native women, who, smeared with white earth and singing a dismal strain, meant to be one of triumph, at the top of their voices, surrounded me, dancing and gesticulating. After escaping from their noisy, though well-meant attentions, I crawled up the ladder, and, tired out and overcome with nausea at the ghastly sight I had witnessed, reported to the Governor, when I was able to state that the levies had, besides the capture of Dane guns and powder, brought in over two hundred loads of food (chiefly plantains), and I then asked leave to retire to lie down. Returning to my quarters, I had hardly removed my boots when the Governor himself came to tell me that a relief column was approaching Kumasi, and to ask me, as Captain Marshall was still unwell, to go out to meet it. I dressed and went out, taking with me 20 Haussas, and accompanied by Dr Chalmers and the King of Aguna with his levies.

As we entered Asafu, we heard the sound of firing on the Cape Coast road, and a few minutes later the head of a column came into view at the top of the hill beyond the swamp. Here it halted, and as shots were still fired, I feared that the
levies who danced along with the King of Aguna, waving his gun, at their head, might be mistaken for rebels, so halted them, and with Dr Chalmers went on to meet the column, which was again advancing. Soon I recognised Captain Aplin, and the next minute we were shaking hands and congratulating each other. Captain Aplin has been good enough to furnish me with an account of his march to Kumasi, and the following chapter, which relates it, is based upon his own words.
CHAPTER V

WITH THE LAGOS HAUSSA COLUMN TO KUMASI

On the 14th of April 1900 a telegraphic despatch confirmed the rumours of a serious rising in Ashanti that had been floating round Lagos for several days. Sir William Macgregor, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony, being absent on a tour of inspection, the Acting Governor, Sir George Denton, in accordance with the despatch in question, ordered all available troops to be immediately held in readiness to proceed to Kumasi, and within a few hours 250 Haussas, with one 7-pounder gun and two Maxims, were equipped in readiness to proceed to the scene of the troubles.

The homeward bound mail steamer having, unfortunately, left a few days previously, it was necessary either to await the arrival of the next homeward mail, which would entail a delay of at least ten days, or to charter a special steamer. The latter plan being decided upon, communication was made to the African Steamship Company, and by the courtesy of the Company's Agent, Captain Walsh, R.N.R., the S.S. Lagoon, one of the Company's branch steamers plying between Lagos and Forcados River, and due to arrive at Lagos from the latter port on the following day, the 15th, was placed at the disposal of the Government.

Arriving up to time, strenuous efforts were made to unload the ship's cargo, extra hands were engaged, and by working night and day, this object was successfully accomplished.
On the 16th of April the S.S. Lagoon was moored alongside the quay in readiness to embark the troops, and headed by the band of the corps, the 250 Haussas, with one 7-pounder gun and two Maxim's, under the command of Captain Aplin, C.M.G., Inspector General, with Captain E. C. Cochrane, Captain B. M. Read, Lieutenant J. C. Ralph, adjutant, Dr Macfarlane, medical officer attached, and two native officers, marched down to the wharf, where a large crowd of relatives and friends had congregated.

By 5 P.M. the troops with their full equipment were safely stowed away on board, and a few minutes later, amid the cheers of those who had assembled, the S.S. Lagoon left for Cape Coast, the port of disembarkation for Ashanti.

As the garrison at Accra had been practically depleted, owing to the number of Haussas hurried up to Kumasi, Captain Aplin received orders to call there and land one officer and 50 men. Arriving on the 18th, the officer and men selected to augment the garrison were hurriedly shipped into surf boats and sent ashore—Captain Aplin and the adjutant, Mr Ralph, accompanying them in order to arrange for their disposition, and to obtain from the authorities any further news there might be as to the progress of events in Kumasi.

Besides the invalids and young recruits, the band of the Gold Coast Haussas had been left behind, and being in readiness on the landing-stage, played the Lagos detachment up to the cantonments, which are situated on a range of hills four miles distant from the town.

Having interviewed the authorities and received such information as they were in possession of, Captain Aplin was about to return to the steamer in order to avoid any unnecessary delay, and to make the journey through the boiling surf to the ship before darkness set in, a desideratum which any one who has experience of the heavy breakers which roll unceasingly on the West African Coast can readily appreciate. However, while he was awaiting the launching of a surf boat, a message from the Colonial Secre-
A START FOR KUMASI

Recalled him to the Secretariat. A code telegram had just arrived, and its contents put a more serious aspect on affairs. As a result it was decided that the officer and 50 men landed should return to the ship and proceed with the column, a decision which future events proved to be wise.

To send a message to the cantonments, fall in the men, and march them down to the landing-stage, necessarily took time, and darkness had set in before the men could embark. The steamer was lying fully three miles out in the roadstead, and it was close on midnight when, the last boat-load having arrived, the anchor was weighed, and the detachment steamed away for Cape Coast, where they arrived on the 19th.

In response to their signals on entering the roadstead, surf boats came off to the ship, and the troops, with their guns, ammunition, and equipment, were landed with as much celerity as possible. Telegraphic instructions having been sent to the transport officer at Cape Coast Castle, carriers had been engaged, and were already formed up in gangs in the courtyard of the castle.

Although the men were tired and cramped after being huddled up for several days on the transport, Captain Aplin nevertheless decided to march the same night, and at 9 P.M., the carriers having been told off to their several loads, and the moon being fairly bright, a start was made for Kumasi, the local drum and fife band playing the column out of the town and for some little way along the road.

In spite of all precautions, some of the carriers managed to slip away in the darkness, and deserted, leaving their loads on the ground.

Having made up his mind, however, to make a start, Captain Aplin was not to be deterred. Leaving one non-commissioned officer and 25 men to bring along the loads, the column continued its march, the transport officer promising to obtain more carriers the next day.

Stumbling along the dark, uneven road, with frequent halts to keep the column in touch, it was 3 A.M. when,
tired out, it reached Akroful, a distance of about fifteen miles, and it was close on daylight when the officer commanding the rear guard reported all present and correct. Starting at 1 P.M. after a few hours' rest, the column reached Fanti-Yan-Kumasi at 6 P.M., where it camped for the night.

On the following day it reached Mansu, where Captain Davidson Houston was met on his way down country from Kumasi. This officer had been acting as Resident at Kumasi during the absence on leave of Captain Donald Stewart, C.M.G. Being overdue for leave, and having urgent private affairs in hand, the Governor, Sir Frederic Hodgson, had allowed him to return to the Coast. Although things seemed serious, Captain Houston considered that they would eventually smooth down, but that if hostilities really broke out it would be a big thing.

Continuing its march, and halting at night at the usual camping grounds, the column arrived at Prahsu on the 23rd. Halting for a day to arrange its disposition, and to allow the escort and loads left behind at Cape Coast to arrive, Captain Aplin interviewed several native traders who were passing through on their way to the Coast. These people generally informed him that the Ashantis really meant fighting, and that, although a column of Haussas under Captain Middlemist which had passed up only ten days previously had reached Kumasi without a shot being fired, he would assuredly find the roads closed, and that his advance would be contested. Much to his satisfaction, the loads left at Cape Coast arrived under escort on the 24th, and there being thus no cause for further delay, the column left Prahsu on the 25th.

In spite of the fact that the rains had already set in, the Prah river was fortunately still fordable, and thus the great delay that would have been entailed in crossing the column with its baggage and equipment by driblets in the two ferry boats was obviated.

The Prah being the boundary, on crossing the river the column entered the Protectorate, and during the next few
days, passing through Adansi country, it entered Bekwai territory. On the evening of the 27th, after having been delayed for three hours during the day in crossing the Adra and Suberri rivers, which were in flood, it reached Esumeja, the last village in Bekwai country bordering on Ashanti territory. On entering the village Captain Aplin was informed that “a sick white man live here,” and on reaching the rest hut—a number of which have been erected by Government along the road between Cape Coast and Kumasi as camping-places for Europeans—he found a white man lying on a native couch, swathed in bandages. This unfortunate person was Mr Branch, the Acting Director of Telegraphs, who confided to him the story of his adventures.

Being on a tour of inspection along the telegraph line which passes through Kumasi as far north as Kintampo, Mr Branch reached Prahsu, where there is a telegraph station, and finding the line interrupted, he located the break at a village called Esiagu, on the main road eight miles north of Esumeja, in Ashanti territory. He made Esumeja his headquarters, and leaving his baggage and other impedimenta there, proceeded to Esiagu, taking with him his hammock and eight bearers, and two native linesmen to repair the damage. Just before reaching Esiagu, some armed Ashantis suddenly appeared from the bush and opened fire on his hammock, killing or seriously wounding four of his bearers. The hammock falling to the ground, Mr Branch found that beyond a severe shock, and the fact that a bullet had passed through the top of his helmet, he was practically unhurt. The four relief bearers, who, according to their custom, were wandering aimlessly along some distance in the rear, hearing the firing and discovering the aspect of affairs, did, under the circumstances, the wisest thing they, from their point of view, could have done; for, bolting into the bush, they made their way back to Esumeja, and informed the Bekwai chief of what had occurred.

Extricating himself as soon as possible from the fallen
hammock, Branch scrambled to his feet, when he was immediately seized by the Ashantis. Holding him down firmly, some of their number lifted up his legs, and beat him unmercifully on the soles of his feet with strips of telegraph wire which they had cut from the line alongside the road. Leaving him helpless on the ground, the scoundrels then decamped, and Branch crawled painfully back along the road until, overcome with exhaustion, he crawled into the bush for a short rest. He bandaged up his feet with strips torn from his shirt, and, Possessing himself of a stout stick, continued on his way, and on arriving at the next village, the inhabitants, though not molesting him, jeered and laughed at his condition, while the children amused themselves by pelting him with filth and garbage. Proceeding further, he suddenly met a party of armed natives, and gave himself up for lost. On approaching, however, he discovered, much to his satisfaction, that they were loyal Bekwais, who informed him that they had been sent out to succour him by the Chief of Esumeja on receipt of the news brought in by his escaped hammock men.

Seeing his pitiful condition, one of their number took off his cloth and improvised a hammock by slinging it on a pole; then, placing him inside, they carried him back to Esumeja.

Mr Branch, having somewhat recovered after a week's sojourn at Esumeja, desired to proceed to Kumasi to lay his case before the Governor, so, placing a hammock at his disposal, Captain Aplin agreed to his accompanying the column. The following morning, the 28th, as the force formed up in column of route was about to march, the chief sent desiring another interview, and informed him that, from information received, the Ashantis had despatched a force to prevent his advance, and that his column would probably be attacked somewhere in the vicinity of Esiagu, the village already referred to, where the outrage on Mr Branch had taken place. The chief was thanked for his information, the advance was sounded, and the column, defiling along the
narrow track, entered Ashanti territory on what the troops expected to be their last day's march, Kumasi being only 17 miles distant.

In order to keep the column closed up in the event of attack, frequent short halts were necessary, and it was 11 A.M. before the village of Dede-Sieva was reached. The village was deserted, and a reconnoitring party reporting no sign of the enemy, a short halt was made for refreshments. The march was then continued, the rear guard firing the village before leaving. The dry grass roofs were soon blazing merrily, while the sharp cracks of the burning rafters, sounding like rifle shots, could be heard as the column marched away.

On reaching the Adra River, which was considerably swollen by rains, a halt was made until a reconnoitring party that had been sent out returned, after failing to find any sign of the Ashantis.

The Adra was then crossed, and the march was resumed. This river being in close proximity to Esiagu, the fact that the Ashantis had not disputed the crossing indicated the probability of the column reaching Kumasi unopposed, and it marched steadily on, not neglecting, however, to take every precaution.

Except for the incessant chirping of the crickets, a complete silence prevailed in the dense, sombre forest. The Haussas and carriers, in momentary expectation of attack, marched along in silence, their naked feet making little or no noise on the soft, overgrown track. The sun being now overhead, its rays penetrated here and there through the tops of the mighty trees. Captain Aplin tilted his helmet to shade his eyes from the glare, when suddenly the stillness was broken by the report of a rifle, and the next moment his helmet fell to the ground and he felt a sharp twinge at his throat. An Ashanti, securely hidden in the dense foliage of a huge cotton tree, had fired at him point blank, and the bullet, penetrating the brim of his helmet and grazing his throat, passed through the calf of his orderly's leg, and buried itself in the soft ground.
In an instant, from all sides of the dense bush, a terrific fire was poured on the main body of the column.

Adopting the usual tactics in bush fighting, the Haussas closed up two deep, and, turning outwards, poured volleys into the bush on either side of the path, where the enemy lay securely hidden from view.

The crack, crack of the Maxim with the advance guard, which had been allowed to pass through the ambush, now indicated their coming into action, and the corresponding roll of the rear guard Maxim proved that the enemy, employing their usual strategy, had, by cutting parallel paths in the dense bush, enveloped the column. The 7-pounder gun, which was carried with the main body, so that it might be transferred with the utmost celerity to any point where it would be most effective, was unlimbered, and in response to a message sent by Captain Cochrane, commanding the advance guard, it was hurried to the front. Soon its dull, loud roar, adding to the din of the continuous firing which, re-echoing and reverberating a hundred-fold in the dense forest, turned the place into a regular inferno. After twenty minutes' fighting, the enemy having been driven off, the force advanced, but, after proceeding about five hundred yards, the fire from the bush again became so hot that the column was forced to halt. The Ashantis being again driven back, retired to the village of Esiagu, and from behind the cover of the huts they made a final stand. They probably imagined that the wooden rafters and the thin mud wall would give them cover, but were soon woefully undeceived, for a hail of lead from the Maxim and Martini-Metfords soon shifted them. The order being given to fix bayonets, the buglers sounded the charge, and with loud shouts and yells—the Haussa equivalent for cheers—the troops charged the village, when the Ashantis fled, disappearing into the bush by means of the numerous narrow paths which in every West African village are cut into the forest in order to allow the inhabitants to escape should occasion so require.

It was now 2 PM, and Kumasi being 7 miles distant,
ABANDONED COOKING POTS

Captain Aplin decided, in order to attend to the wounded, to laager for the night. The Haussas were disposed round the village to the best advantage, the Maxims being placed so as to command the main road in either direction, and the 7-pounder the largest of several tracks leading out of the village, which proved, on examination, to lead to the water supply. Attention was then turned to the wounded. A suitable hut was selected as a hospital, and the ammunition having been stacked in an open place in the centre of the village to guard against risk of fire, the carriers were stowed away as closely as possible and ordered to lie down and keep quiet.

The casualties proved to be 3 men killed, and 4 officers and 17 non-commissioned officers and men wounded. Captain Cochrane, who commanded the advance guard while serving the Maxim, had received a severe wound in the shoulder. Dr Macfarlane, while attending the wounded, had a slug through his leg; native officer Dankfi, a slug in his thigh; and Captain Aplin had escaped with a slight wound in the throat.

The enemy had evidently been certain of success in driving back the column, for not only were fires found burning brightly, but there were numerous cooking pots simmering on them containing plantains, which, it is needless to say, were soon disposed of. A number of pots having been left behind, a water party was organised, and proceeded under escort to the stream, fortunately not far distant. The column was thus supplied with sufficient water for its needs. A bottle of whisky diluted with the aforesaid water did not come amiss to the officers, and, lighting their pipes, they discussed during the intervals of going round the guards, the events which the next few hours might bring forth. A number of carriers who had been with the reserve ammunition were now available for carrying the wounded, but extra hammocks had to be improvised, and it was 9 o'clock next morning before the final arrangements were complete, and the column started on what, in any event, must be its last day's march. On reaching the Ordah River, where the
Ashantis made a final stand in Lord Wolseley's Expedition of 1872, a halt was made to reconnoitre, and no trace of the enemy being discovered, the column crossed without mishap, though why the enemy did not make a stand at this point and contest its crossing is incomprehensible.

Arriving at Karsi, the village was found not only deserted, but completely destroyed, and shortly afterwards, when the column was not much more than three miles from Kumasi, firing was suddenly heard in the rear.

Slightly changing their tactics of the previous day, the Ashantis had allowed both the advance guard and the main body to pass, and had attacked the rear guard. Gradually the firing crept along the line, and in a few minutes the whole column from front to rear was engaged. The Ashantis had evidently been heavily reinforced, and not only the bush on both sides of the track, but also the trees on either side literally swarmed with them. The fire poured upon the Haussas from all directions was simply terrific, and had it been less wild and better directed, not one of them would have lived to tell the tale. Gradually driving the enemy back, they advanced, but only for a few yards, when they had again to halt to act on the defensive, and after five hours of continuous fighting the column had only progressed about one mile.

Suddenly the enemy's fire slackened considerably, and rapidly advancing, the relief force reached a sharp turn in the road, when to their surprise they met a formidable stockade, formed of fallen tree-trunks, constructed across the track. The enemy had retreated behind this stockade, which, being placed 50 yards along the track from the turn in the road, enabled them to sweep the entire path with their fire. A Maxim and the 7-pounder were brought to bear on the stockade, but so severe was the enemy's fire at short range, that the men serving the guns were continually shot down, and so narrow was the track that only a few men could be utilised at one time. The rear guard having up till now suffered
the least, Captain Aplin ordered Captain Read, who was in command of it, to bring up as many men as he considered it advisable to spare. This officer with thirty men then led a most gallant charge, and arrived within a few yards of the stockade, when, most of his men being wounded or shot down, and finding himself practically alone and wounded in five places, he was forced to retire to the shelter of the turn in the road. Besides four more or less severe wounds in different parts of his body, Captain Read had his right arm completely shattered. Exhausted as he was from loss of blood, Captain Aplin was handing him the remaining contents of his flask, when a bullet struck him in the head, and he fell to the ground saying: "I am done for this time, any way." Captain Aplin poured some whisky down his throat, and he came to, and scrambled to his feet.

Affairs were now most desperate. The Maxim, whether from becoming overheated, or from the fact that the cartridge belts had become swollen by the action of the damp climate, jammed, while the ammunition for the 7-pounder ran short. There were still, however, some charges of powder, and utilising gravel and small stones lying on the path, and ramming them home with grass wads, the guns still continued to pound the stockade, doing considerable damage at such short range.

Captain Aplin now decided on a flank attack, and taking advantage of a narrow path which was discovered leading from the road into the bush, a flanking party of 25 Haussas, which Captain Cochrane, although severely wounded in the shoulder, gallantly volunteered to lead, succeeded, by creeping in single file, in approaching within 20 yards of the stockade, and, undiscovered, pouring in three effective volleys, which did such execution that for a moment the enemy were demoralised. It was now or never, and the column having fixed bayonets, the men were ordered to charge. Hesitating for a moment, they then rushed forward like an avalanche, and the next moment, amid deafening cheers and yells, they were scrambling over the stockade. Having no stomach for cold steel, the Ashantis fled in all directions
amid a few parting volleys, and the column, proceeding practically at the double, reached the top of the hill leading down to the swamp surrounding Kumasi.

Halting to form up, it once more started. On coming in sight of Kumasi, it seemed as if the place had already fallen. Columns of smoke rose in all directions, and presently a considerable number of natives armed with guns were seen approaching. Thinking them to be Ashantis, the men now considered themselves to be between the devil and the deep sea, so, having only a few rounds left, they prepared to sell their lives as dearly as possible. On a nearer approach, however, it was discovered that two Europeans were leading the force, and they proved to be the present writer, in command of the native levies, and Dr Chalmers.

The casualties sustained by the Lagos column during the two days' fighting amounted to 5 non-commissioned officers and men killed, and 6 officers and 139 non-commissioned officers and men wounded, out of a total of 6 officers and 250 men. The 7-pounder, owing to the wounding of the gun detachment, was left at the stockade, and was subsequently recovered by the Relief Column.

And so, as the light failed, the worn-out column, crossing the palaver square, entered the Fort, where they were to be quartered for the night. The guard on the Fort gate stood with fixed bayonets as between them, and through a narrow lane formed by the packed masses of refugees, filed the officers and men of the Lagos Haussas, some carried, some supported by comrades. On entering the Fort, the Governor, Sir Frederic Hodgson, and Captain Aplin exchanged congratulations.

That night the officers of the Lagos Haussas, with the exception of Captain Read, who was too seriously wounded to be present, dined with the Governor and Lady Hodgson, and we sat till late, listening to the account of the desperate fight at the Karsi stockade, and comparing notes on the events which had crowded themselves into this memorable day.
CHAPTER VI

OPERATIONS AGAINST THE BESIEGERS

Our casualties during the fighting of the previous day had been insignificant—one Haussa killed and Dr Tweedy and two Haussas wounded—while the enemy had lost heavily. Burying parties were sent out through the cantonments, and collected and buried 130 bodies. Many more, which lay in the thick undergrowth, and were then overlooked, were afterwards located by the vultures, which speedily arrived on the scene. The King of Aguna came during the morning to tell me that Osei Kudjoe Krum, a Kumasi chief, was reported to have been killed in the cantonments when we drove the rebels out, and brought me his nail-studded chair as a present.

News was brought me by the spies I had sent out that the rebels had abandoned Karsi and the stockade, and that they had even left their dead lying on the road. In reporting this to the Governor, I asked him whether it would not now be possible for him to go down the Cape Coast road before the enemy recovered from the double blow they had received. My idea was that 100 Haussas should be left in the Fort, while the remainder escorted the Governor and Lady Hodgson to the Prah, when the Haussas were to return and keep the Cape Coast road open until the further reinforcements arrived.

The Governor called a meeting of all the white men in the Fort, with the exception of the missionaries, and, after
making a short speech in which he gave them an idea of my plan, he asked them to give their opinions in turn as to whether it should be adopted or not, the latter alternative meaning that we should await in Kumasi the arrival of reinforcements.

No one voted for leaving Kumasi, so the idea was abandoned, the more readily as there was a general opinion that a relief column was already on its way from Cape Coast, and that its entry into Kumasi was only a question of days. It was decided that the cantonments should be reoccupied, while a trench was dug crowning the hollow where the Ashantis had massed before making their attack, and extending from the Bantama road to the Prison buildings. Trenches were also thrown up round the two outer faces of the cantonments. Messrs David and Grundy superintended these operations, and the next day the Lagos Haussas manned the Bantama Road-Prison trenches, and the Gold Coast Haussas returned to their cantonments, with the exception of those on duty in the Fort and the men protecting the front face.

In the afternoon Captain Marshall and I walked up to the Basel Mission and brought back bunches of roses for the ladies. The missionaries were justly proud of their rose trees, which grew in front of the house and throve wonderfully. The refugees spread themselves over the open spaces, carefully digging up and collecting the roots of the sweet potato, which grew wild over the ground. The leaves of this plant were also used to make a kind of soup, which, although a most unpleasant odour arose from the pots in which the leaves were being boiled, appeared to be much appreciated by the natives. A certain amount of food was still brought in daily from the direction of Bantama, which the Ashantis had not reoccupied, but already hunger began to make itself felt. At the commencement of the siege our live-stock consisted of five cows and two sheep, which were slaughtered at intervals of three days.

The Lagos Haussa officers, with the exception of Captain
Aplin, who was given one of the Residency offices, were quartered in the big room at the top of the Residency, which was now unpleasantly crowded, and it was settled that the European buildings should be reoccupied as soon as all traces of the Ashantis' visit to them had been removed. The floors were thoroughly scrubbed, while that of the Haussa storeroom was taken up. The buildings themselves presented a somewhat dilapidated appearance, the whitewashed walls being pitted with bullet marks in every direction. Every afternoon we were accustomed to walk along the broad strip of road from the market place up to the stockade which had been erected across the road at the far end of the cantonments. The refugees had removed their huts from round the Fort to the open space which extended between it and the constabulary officers' and the doctor's quarters on either side of the main road.

This "town" presented a most animated appearance. The road was bordered on either side by a long line of camp fires and cooking pots, while nearer the constabulary quarters, the civilian Haussas, true to their trading instincts, reclined under the shade of the trees, with their wares exposed for sale in front of them. There was displayed a most heterogeneous collection—white cotton baft, Haussa robes, Kola nuts, needles, common glass beads, and tobacco. The owners seemed absolutely indifferent as to whether they sold their goods or not, and appeared to think that having performed a duty by setting them out for the passer-by to look at, their responsibility ended. Little girls with earthen pots, containing balls made of plantains, dried, pounded and mixed with water, balanced on their heads, wandered in and out among the huts, every now and then uttering the plaintive little long-drawn wail by which they advertise their wares. Upon grass mats spread on the ground lay plantains drying in the sun, jealously watched by their owners. Little naked children frolicked about without a thought for the morrow, while their elders discussed the latest item of news. Looking towards the forest, the rebel
camps could easily be located towards evening by the heavy blue-grey smoke which curled up from the Ashanti camp fires among the trees, over the tops of which it hung and spread like a pall.

About five o'clock a great shouting would rise from the rebel camps, notifying the arrival of the women with loads of plantains, and during the night a constant drumming and horn-blowing was kept up. The rebels had a series of questions and answers which they beat out on their drums from camp to camp, but the idea that they discussed their plans in this manner is erroneous. The Ashantis believe that a buffalo or bush-cow of immense size and supernatural strength haunts the Ashanti Forest, and their conversation, carried on by means of the drums with a neighbouring war camp, was usually as follows:—

_First Camp._—"Do you hear the buffalo moving in the forest?"

_Second Camp._—"We hear him."

_First Camp._—"We are like the buffalo in strength and bravery."

_Second Camp._—"We are also like him."

Then the drums would roar out an order to "Close up, close up!" and the fighting men in the various camps rushed to their stockades and howled in unison. I had a gramaphone belonging to the Resident which helped us through many a long evening, and which served as a set off to the rebels' musical entertainments, although on one occasion, when performing "Rule Britannia," it aroused one of our doctors who had retired to bed early, and who, under the impression that the Ashantis were upon us, rushed out to his post, while the Haussas manned the trenches.

Reveillé was sounded from the Fort at five o'clock every morning, and was taken up by the Lagos Haussa bugler in the trenches and the bugler in the cantonments. This call was usually answered by a blowing of war horns in the rebel camps. The levies had run short of lead and powder for their Dane guns, so boxes of old Martini-
Henry ammunition were issued to them from one of the magazines, when they took the powder from the metal cases and cut the bullets up into slugs, and a visit to their lines, which they kept beautifully clean, would find them thus employed. The king’s wives lived in a green canvas tent pitched outside the wall of the right face of the Fort, and were rarely to be seen.

I was very anxious to make an attempt to drive the rebels from the Wesleyan Mission House, and asked the Governor to let me take the levies out on the morning of the 1st May. Permission to do so was accorded to me, but at the last moment the Governor and Captain Aplin decided that it would be better to postpone the attack until the next day, so I dismissed the levies. The Ashantis must, I think, have got wind of our designs on the Mission House, for during the day they were very active, and although it was not possible to see exactly what they were doing, I felt convinced that they were making preparations to receive us.

Next morning I had all the levies assembled near the prison, where Captain Cochrane was ready to shell the rebel position with a 7-pounder. He made excellent practice, the shells apparently bursting over the rebels on either side of the Mission House. I now started off, accompanied by Dr Chalmers, with the levies, with whom were the King of Aguna, Yow Mafu, Yow Awuah, and old Chief Kwatchie N’Ketia. We crossed the swamp along the broad, well-made road, and spread over the open space which had once been the civilian Haussa town. The rebels began by opening a terrific Dane gun fire, and we now saw that they had built a strong stockade across the road which runs to the left of the Mission House. The site for the stockade had been carefully chosen behind rising ground, and was evidently strongly defended. We got to within 50 yards of it, however, and there stuck, as the levies could not grasp the idea of a charge. Looking back, I saw old Kwatchie N’Ketia calmly seated on his chair, well within range of the enemy’s fire, with both arms upheld above his head. In his left hand he held a small gold-hilted
sword, while the two forefingers of his right hand were raised as if in benediction, and in this attitude he remained as long as firing continued, his arms supported by two attendants.

Captain Cochrane still continued to shell the position, but the defective working of the time fuses rendered it a rather hazardous operation, and I sent back a note to Captain Aplin, requesting that the fire from the prison might be discontinued, and that the 7-pounder might be sent to me with its gun detachment. The levies' casualties had been rather heavy in wounded, and they began to show signs of wavering. I tried to cheer them by telling them that I had sent for a gun, but in spite of the King of Aguna and Kwatchie N'Ketia's appeals, they were on the point of retiring when the gun at last arrived and was brought into action within 100 yards of the stockade. As common shell seemed to have no visible effect on the stockade, we worked the gun to within 60 yards of the enemy's position, when case shot was fired. Each discharge of the 7-pounder momentarily silenced the Ashanti fire, which, however, recommenced more hotly than ever, showing that the rebels had been strongly reinforced from the various war camps.

Thinking that the presence of some Haussas would nerve the levies to make a charge, I sent back for 24 men under Sergeant Fulani, who had been held in readiness in case they might be wanted. On their arrival I ordered them to fix bayonets and got them up to within 20 yards of the stockade. A cry now arose in the rear that the Ashantis were creeping up round the left flank with the intention of cutting off our retreat across the swamp. The Haussas found themselves unable to charge in the face of the heavy fire directed on them by the rebels, whom we could see swarming behind the stockade, so I gave the order to retire, the Haussas forming a rear guard. Firing had lasted for three hours, and although we had not achieved our object, we had evidently shaken the rebels, who ceased firing from the moment we retired.

In this fight our casualties were:—1 levy killed; 50
levies and 5 Haussas wounded. I received two slight wounds.

There was great wailing in the rebel camp that night, and next day the Ashantis were very active at "Krobo," as the rising ground on which the Wesleyan Mission House was built is called. On the morning of the 5th, dense white smoke began to rise from behind the Mission House, and a few minutes later it was seen that the Ashantis had set it on fire. The shingle roof and wooden verandah blazed furiously, and in half-an-hour four crumbling swish walls were all that remained standing. Some levies, who had crept up to get information as to the rebels' movements, found that they had taken down the stockade which they had defended on the 2nd, moved it back about one hundred and fifty yards up the N'Koranza road, and formed a large war camp behind it.

Yow Mafu was now, at the request of the loyal kings, publicly proclaimed King of N'Suta by the Governor, when a most interesting ceremony took place. After Yow Mafu had sworn alliance with the kings and loyalty to the Government, an attendant placed a handful of white clay on the new king's head and then smeared it down his back. The king next visited the Stools of his predecessors, which were kept in the Residency, and poured a little rum on each, talking meanwhile to the ghosts of deceased kings which were supposed to be seated on them. Poor Yow Mafu! He did not long enjoy his newly acquired kingdom, for he succumbed to dysentery at N'Kwanta after having accompanied us thus far on our march out.

On the 6th of May poor Middlemist died in the afternoon. He had made a gallant fight against the fever. He had not been at all well when he left Accra for Kumasi, and it was thought that he must have received internal injuries when crushed against the Fort gate on the 25th April. A grave was dug under the shade of a group of trees situated between the Fort and the officers' buildings, and thither his body, followed by his brother officers and friends, was borne by
Haussas. The sad task of reading the funeral service over
the grave devolved on me, as the Governor remained in
the Fort with Lady Hodgson, who was much overcome.
The loyal kings attended the service unbidden, as a mark
of respect to the memory of one who was liked by white
and black alike, and as the buglers sounded the "Last
Post" over the grave, we turned sadly away from the
place where reposed the first of many gallant officers who
were to lose their lives before the rising was quelled.

The Ashantis had by some means become aware of our
loss, for that night the muffled roar of their war drums
and their triumphant war-crys were heard in all directions
from beyond the swamp. Food was becoming more and
more scarce. The levies and some of those refugees who
knew the surroundings of Kumasi were accustomed to go
out in the early morning, and frequently came back with
loads of plantains or palm cabbages,* but often again the
reports of Dane guns told of some poor wretch who
would never return. My spies reported that they had
heard the rebels had despatched a body of men to meet
Major Morris, who was said to be on his way to our relief,
and this news had the effect of putting fresh life into every
one. We also heard that a white man's head was being
carried round the war camps, and that Mr Branscombe had
been murdered at N'Kawia, a village within a day's march of
Kumasi. The Haussas were now receiving a small daily ration
of beef and biscuit, which they eke out with such plantains,
sweet potato leaves, or other vegetables as they or their
wives could obtain. The refugees continued to keep in
wonderful health, but their pinched faces and the wild look
in their eyes warned us that hunger was already added to
the number of our enemies.

At this time I obtained permission from the Governor to
open negotiations through the loyal kings with the rebels, in
the hope that we might be able to get in some food for the

*The heart of a species of palm which, when boiled, makes an
excellent edible vegetable.
refugees. The King of Kokofu's mother and father were selected as messengers by the kings, and they, accompanied by a youth bearing a gold-hilted sword, and an attendant, went to the war camp situated on the Mampon road, which was the headquarters of Bodu, the Ejissu war captain. The messengers were to deliver a message to the effect that the loyal kings begged the rebels to lay down their arms in order to save their country from being overrun and laid waste by the soldiers who, sooner or later, were bound to come from the Coast. They were also to say that the Acting Resident would meet them in palaver and lay their grievances before the Governor.

The messengers returned next morning with a message to the effect that the rebel chiefs wished the loyal kings to come to their camp and talk matters over, and that at present the Ashanti demands were those which the rebels had previously informed the King of Mampon they had determined to obtain; but now Bodu, while repeating them, said that he intended to call a meeting of the chiefs commanding at the various stockades round Kumasi, and that he would let the kings know the result. He had already sent runners out to call the chiefs together.

The Ashanti terms, five in number, are so quaint that I give them in full:

1. The Ashantis to be in future exempt from carrying loads or building rest-houses.
2. Slavery to be allowed.
3. All Coast traders and civilian Haussas to leave the country.
4. The white men to return to the Coast and not trouble the Ashantis further.
5. The Fort to be destroyed.*

Our messengers returned to the rebel camp to inform the chiefs that far from them dictating terms to the white man, it was for the chiefs to accept the white man's terms before his soldiers carried fire and sword through the land.

* Terms 4 and 5 made numbers 1, 2, and 3 appear superfluous.
of Ashanti. That the sole reason the kings had in communicating with the rebels was to prevent needless bloodshed. They (the kings) utterly refused to enter the rebel camp; in fact, even were the rebel leaders to come and sit by the Fort gates, they would not set foot outside the Fort to see them. They would, however, send their representatives to the camp to hear what the chiefs had to say. The messengers soon returned and reported that the chiefs had decided to receive the kings' messengers and "drink fetish" with them, and when this was done a mutual suspension of hostilities was to take place, while the chiefs assembled to hear the white man's terms; and so anxious did the rebel chiefs appear to come to some arrangement that Yow Setcheri, Chief of Jamasi, and one of the King of Mampon's head chiefs, who had deserted to the enemy at the commencement of the siege, sent word to the King of Mampon, begging his forgiveness, and reminding him that the rebel Mampon chiefs had not thought fit to depose him (the king) from his Stool, as they might have done. We did not then know, however, that the Queen Mother of Mampon, the king's sister, had remained unswervingly loyal, with some of the fighting men, and that when the rebels sent to Mampon to demand 500 kegs of powder belonging to the king, the Queen Mother sent back the following message:—"I have issued 200 kegs of powder to my followers to be used in the defence of the other 300, which, if you want them, you can come and fight for." Strange to say, the rebels did not take up this challenge, although the town of Mampon was within two days' journey of their camps.
CHAPTER VII

A BROKEN ARMISTICE AND ITS SEQUEL

On the following day the men chosen by the kings to represent them (each man being a near relation of the king he represented) set out for the Mampon camp and met the rebel chiefs' representatives on the road crossing the swamp near the Mampon stockade. Fetish was drunk, and an armistice was declared, the Ashantis going so far as to promise to send food up to the market. They were most anxious for the kings to come and interview them in their camp, but the kings themselves refused to have anything to do with the rebels, and considered that if they visited the camp, they would certainly be detained, as had happened in the case of the Chief of Intonsu, who had been inveigled into crossing the swamp by some of his friends, when he was seized and made to join the rebels.

That evening some Ashantis fired on and killed a refugee, who had gone out in search of food. The rebel chiefs sent word to say that the party of Ashantis who had fired were unaware of the agreement, and that messengers were at once being sent to all the camps to notify the rebels of the armistice. Next day, although the Ashantis did not bring any food to the market, the carriers and refugees who went along the Bantama road returned with a large supply of plantains, while the rebels sent word that although afraid to send their women folk into Kumasi, they would bring food across the swamp and sell it on the Mampon road.
It was now beyond doubt that Major Morris was nearing Kumasi, and my spies asserted that he would be with us on the following day. At noon on the 15th of May the rebels began to bring the promised food, but a rush of carriers and refugees to the spot frightened them back across the swamp. With the aid of a few Haussas Captain Marshall and I checked the hungry mob, and allowed only a few men to cross the swamp at a time. The Ashantis sold almost 200 loads of plantains during the afternoon, when about 3 P.M. the sound of the discharge of a 7-pounder fired on the N'Koranza road drove all further thoughts of food from every one's head. In a few minutes the Northern Territory Relief Column appeared at the top of "Krobo," crossed the swamp, and marched up to the Fort amid a scene of wild enthusiasm on the part of the refugees, who thought that at last their troubles were at an end.

The rebels round Kumasi had strictly observed the armistice, and Major Morris's column had found two strong stockades behind the ruined Wesleyan Mission House, which, together with a large war camp, had been undefended.

Unfortunately the civilian Haussa refugees heard of this from the incoming Haussas, and thinking that the rebels had, with the arrival of Major Morris's column, decided to raise the siege, off they rushed to loot the war camp on the N'Koranza road. Ten minutes later heavy firing was heard in the direction of "Krobo," and presently a gang of civilian Haussas came to me to complain that the rebels had fired on them and killed 6 men. In my vexation at finding the negotiations brought to nothing through the looting propensities of these useless civilian Haussas, I told them that I wished the Ashantis had killed them all, and after interviewing the kings, sent off their messengers to the rebel camp to explain that the civilian Haussas had entered "Krobo" camp unknown to the white man. Explanations were, however, of no use, for the Ashantis considered that we had broken the armistice, and refused to have anything further to do with us, telling the messengers
that they would be shot if they came back again. It was indeed most unfortunate that the negotiations were broken off at this stage, for the column which had just entered Kumasi, consisting of 7 white officers, 230 rank and file, and 82 native levies, brought in no supplies of food, and but little ammunition (some 200 rounds a man).

Major Morris, who had been badly wounded and was suffering great pain, was accompanied on his march from Gambaga by Captains Digon, Maguire, and Berthon, and Doctors Garland and Graham, while Captain Parmeter had joined the column at Kintampo.

The story of his march is best told in the words of an officer who was with him, and whose account to Reuter's agent, who has kindly given me permission to use it, appeared in the Times of the 14th August 1900, as follows:—

"On the 18th April the first reports reached the British garrison at Gambaga of trouble with the Ashantis, and immediately Major A. Morris, D.S.O., the Commissioner of the Northern Territories, who was in command at headquarters, began preparations to march to Kumasi, 340 miles to the south. In three days everything was in readiness, and the force, consisting of 4 officers, 170 Haussas of all ranks, a 7-pounder gun and a Maxim, set out for the south, Major Morris in command. In addition to this force there was a troop of Moshi cavalry, a native volunteer force which had been raised by Major Morris, and had been successfully employed in the Northern Territories against unfriendly tribes. During the march to Kumasi the weather was very trying, extremely hot in the daytime, with torrential rains at night. The force marched along the narrow track in single file, the column being about a mile in length.

"Six days after we had left headquarters, urgent despatches were received from the Governor, requesting Major Morris to proceed to his assistance at once. Pushing ahead with all speed, the force reached Kintampo, 238 miles from our starting place and 100 from Kumasi, in thirteen days, really a splendid performance, averaging 17 miles a
day. A halt of two days was necessary at Kintampo to concentrate the force, and advantage was taken of this step to send messages to the powerful N'Koranzas, with the hope of persuading them to remain loyal. This Major Morris succeeded in accomplishing.

"At 6.30 on the morning of the 9th May the reinforced column, which now consisted of 7 white officers and 230 non-commissioned officers and men, with machine guns and 82 native levies, under Major Morris, left Kintampo for Kumasi. During the first 24 hours nothing of any importance occurred, but much anxiety was felt as to whether the N'Koranzas, whose town we were rapidly approaching, would prove to be loyal. The chief, who had previously been friendly to us, had been seized by the Ashantis and compelled to swear that he would fight the British, but his sister the princess resolutely refused to abandon her ancient loyalty. She would probably have been forced to side with the Ashantis had we not reached the town in the nick of time, thus supporting the princess, and enabling the king to defy the Ashantis. The Princess and her followers met us outside the town with great rejoicing. Major Morris, immediately after our arrival, ordered a big palaver, in which he expressed his pleasure at the loyalty of the princess, who was overjoyed when told that the town would not be burnt.

"The loyalty of this great people having been secured, the march was resumed, and soon we got into the thick of the enemy's country. The deserted village of N'Kwanta was burnt, and soon we reached a broad river, where scouts exchanged shots with the enemy, who retired rapidly. Two hours later we encountered their main body in ambush in the grass outside the large town of Sekedumassi. A galling fire was opened upon our advance guard, but on our machine gun coming into action, the enemy bolted. Our march had been so rapid that the Ashantis, who lost heavily, were surprised. Our casualties were only three wounded. We at once occupied their town, where we were glad to find a
large quantity of half-cooked meat. We camped for the night, after forming square round the place.

"The night passed quietly, and early next morning a flying column was despatched to destroy the adjacent unfriendly town of Frantee. This having been accomplished, the column returned to Sekedumassi,* the destruction of which place was then completed. In this town we found a large fetish grove with remains of very recent human sacrifices. The stench was awful, the sacrificial receptacles under the great trees containing fresh human blood, and portions of mutilated bodies.

"An area of deserted country was now crossed, and on the following day, two more villages were burnt to the ground without opposition. In one of the villages we found a woman, who said that all the warriors had concentrated two hours from Kumasi, in order to oppose our advance.

"Rapidly the situation became more threatening, and on the 14th May, two hours after we had destroyed one of the enemy's towns, our native levies became heavily engaged, having walked straight into an ambush. They fell back on our advance column, and after heavy firing, in which we had 12 casualties, the Ashantis were driven off. The ambush had been very cleverly planned behind a great tree.

"During the remainder of that day we entered and burnt three more villages. We found the country deserted, the Ashantis having evidently, in view of our unexpectedly rapid march, fallen back for the purpose of concentrating nearer the capital.

"May 15th, the date of our arrival at Kumasi, was a day of incessant fighting, in the course of which Major Morris was severely wounded in the groin while leading an attack. The previous night the force encamped at Bremen in the midst of dense plantation, and as an extra precaution all sentries were doubled. Early on the morning of the 15th scouts

* Sekedumassi had been destroyed by the N°Koranzas in 1895, and had since been rebuilt.
brought in word that a strong Ashanti ambush had been prepared in front of us, and shortly afterwards we saw an ugly stockade right across the road. The 7-pounder was at once brought into action to draw the enemy's fire, and in a few minutes the Ashantis replied with volleys from all directions. In about an hour the fusillade ceased except from behind the stockade, which Major Morris decided must be rushed without delay. The charge was ordered—Major Morris and Captain Maguire running ahead of their men. The former had not proceeded 20 yards before he was badly wounded and fell in the road. The stockade was eventually taken, with the loss of Major Morris and 15 Haussas wounded, and at 3 o'clock the same afternoon Kumasi was reached, Major Morris continuing to direct the operations from his hammock, although in intense pain, with intervals of unconsciousness. The first stockade taken, the advance was rapidly continued in order to prevent the enemy re-forming. A second stockade was encountered 800 yards to the rear, 6 feet high, on which even the 7-pounders had no effect, and scarcely had this been scaled before a third stockade was discovered. Our rapid advance had, however, entirely disconcerted the enemy, who had evidently prepared to strongly oppose us at this point. Kumasi was still some 12 miles distant. We continued our advance till we reached one of the investing stockades round the capital. To our great surprise this particular one was not held at the moment of our arrival, and we got into Kumasi without further opposition. During the day's fighting we had killed several hundred Ashantis, including a number of important chiefs."

The new arrivals, a fine, well set-up body of men, occupied the Cape Coast lines, while their officers were quartered in the African Syndicate building near the market. Major Morris remained in the Fort.

Next day Major Morris had a long consultation with the Governor on the situation, which, looked at from any point of view, was now most serious. Nothing definite had been
heard of a relief column from the Coast, although my spies insisted that a white man with some troops was at Esumeja. Some levies, however, who had volunteered to take notes through the enemy's lines to the officer commanding the relief column, and who had left Kumasi, had not since returned, and it therefore seemed that the report must have been invented by the natives.

Major Morris decided to attack the Ashantis on the 20th, in order to find out their strength, to take a camp if possible, and bring in a supply of food. The Ashantis had built a stockade up the Dedesuaba road, between the small village of that name (a suburb of Kumasi) and the swamp. This road led to the sacred Lake Busumakwi, and was held by the Kokofu chief of Kwantana and his followers, who, the spies said, were not more than 200 strong. We now knew that the rebels had stockades on all the roads and bush paths leading from Kumasi, behind which they were reported to have cut a broad road through the dense forest completely encircling us. Major Morris made the following dispositions:—A force of 150 Haussas, under Captains Leggett and Bishop, with a 7-pounder, and 450 levies under my command, the whole to attack the Dedesuaba stockade; while 160 Haussas, with four 7-pounders and three .450 Maxims, were to be concentrated at the prison at nine o'clock on the morning of the 20th. As we had only about 180 rounds of ammunition per man, Major Morris impressed on the officers and native non-commissioned officers the absolute necessity for a careful control of fire, the Haussas being only too ready to waste ammunition if not well looked after.

I accompanied Major Morris on the morning of the engagement to the prison, in front of which, on a level piece of ground, the 7-pounders were already trained in the direction of the Mampon road war camp, which was shelled for nearly an hour, when Major Morris sent out two small reconnoitring parties along the Mampon and N'Koranza roads, with instructions to ascertain, by drawing the enemy's fire, if the stockades were held in force by the
Ashantis. That they were strongly held we soon discovered, and Major Morris now ordered Captain Marshall to attack the Krobo stockade with 120 Haussas, a 7-pounder and a Maxim, while I went off to march my force, which waited for me, drawn up outside the Fort, against the Dedesuaba stockade. Preceded by a few levies, who acted as guides, and an advance guard, the Haussas, followed by the levies, made their way past the market until, as we reached the cluster of huts through which ran our road, the heavy firing which suddenly broke out told us that Captain Marshall’s force had become engaged at Krobo.

Our path ran between steep banks covered with dense undergrowth, while overhead the branches formed a thick arch, converting the road into a green tunnel. After marching about a quarter of a mile, the scouts came suddenly upon the stockade and drew the enemy’s fire. As usual, the Ashantis had chosen their ground most skilfully. The path dipped suddenly into a hollow, and passed at a distance of 20 yards over rising ground, behind which the stockade was located.

The first rush of the Haussas was driven back by a tremendous fire directed on us from the stockade and from rifle pits dug in the bush. The path was here very narrow, and the bush on either side of it so impenetrable that only a comparatively small fire could be brought to bear on the stockade. Fortunately the Ashantis fired for the most part rather high, as was evidenced by a continuous shower of leaves and sticks which rained down on us.

The 7-pounder was brought into action, but did not cause the Ashantis, who were in large numbers and had evidently been reinforced from the other stockades, to slacken their fire. The firing at the Krobo stockade had now ceased, and Major Morris sent sixty men and a Maxim under Captain Berthon to reinforce me, and with them a second charge was unsuccessfully attempted. The Maxim was then brought into action, but jammed after a few rounds, and news was brought to me that the Ashantis had adopted
their usual tactics and made a fierce attack on the levies in the rear, but had been beaten off by them.

Instructions from Major Morris now reached me to retire; and although on the cessation of our fire the rebels set up a triumphant shouting, they made no attempt to follow us down the road. Our casualties in the fight were Captain Leggett and 4 Haussas severely, and 21 Haussas slightly, wounded. On our return we learnt that Captain Marshall had been unable to take the Krobo stockade, and that Major Morris had considered it undesirable, taking into consideration our small supply of ammunition, to continue the engagement.
CHAPTER VIII

RUMOURS OF RELIEF

Nothing more was done for the next few days, but it was generally recognised that while we could not sit absolutely idle in Kumasi, it would be impossible to attack the Ashantis in force until such time as the giving out of our food supplies left us no other alternative but to attempt to cut our way through the Ashanti lines. Again, the persistent rumours that a large force, composed of bluejackets and men of the West India Regiment, had crossed the Praah and was hastening to our relief, made it appear unwise to stake all on an attempt, which, if unsuccessful, would mean the fall of the Fort, and a wholesale massacre by the rebels.

At the same time, if we remained inactive, the loyal Ashantis and refugees, to whom we could not of course make known the scarcity of our ammunition, would think that we had become disheartened.

Some of the refugees, as well as a few levies, had lately gone over to the rebel camps. Those who were fortunate enough to return, reported that the men were, in many instances, killed, while the women were made slaves, and desertions became for the time being of rare occurrence, especially after two spies had been shot, after a trial held by the kings of Mampon, Juabin, and Aguna. The rank and file of the rebels were said to be heartily sick of the fighting, and, anxious to return to their villages, which, however, they were not allowed to do, a fine of £60 being
levied by the leaders on any man who left his post at the stockade. Nor was it possible to get into communication with the Ashantis direct, as no messenger to their camps was allowed to hold converse with any except chiefs, who distorted the messages into any form they pleased before giving them publicity. It was thus that the average ignorant Ashanti thought that he was fighting for his life and the lives of his wife and family, for the chiefs assured him that, if the white man was victorious, he would not be satisfied until the Ashantis as a nation had ceased to exist.

Two old men, uncles of Yow Awuah, a loyal Ashanti, who had gone out to find food, discovered, unfortunately for themselves, a clearing in the forest where the rebels had felled some palm trees, and had been extracting the sap, which is called palm wine, and is an intoxicant. Finding some bottles almost full, they sat down to drink, and were surprised by a party of Ashantis. The latter secured them, and, passing knives through their cheeks in order to prevent them from speaking, took them to the Mampon road war camp, where they were beheaded.

On the night of the 23rd of May, Opoku Mensa, who had been ailing since his detention in the Fort, and had been sinking fast for the last few days, passed away quietly. Shortly before his death he sent for me, and told me for the last time that he had known nothing about the rising which had been fomented by Nentchwi and Efifa.

Major Morris considered that it might be possible to gain possession of a stockade, by rushing it on some dark, rainy night, and I was given permission to make the attempt as soon as a favourable opportunity occurred. For this purpose 4 reliable non-commissioned officers and 26 privates of the Gold Coast Haussas were brought to the Fort and there kept in readiness, the idea being that as soon as the stockade had been carried we should be supported by a strong body of Haussas, who would follow shortly after we had crossed the swamp.

The rainy season had now set in, and hardly a day passed
without a heavy fall of rain. During this season, which in the forest belt begins towards the end of May and lasts until the beginning of September, the natives remain in their villages, and the fact of the Ashantis camping out in such weather, barely sheltered by the wretched huts which formed their camps, illustrated their dogged determination to drive the white men from their country to the Coast. Early on the morning of the 24th, the Queen's Birthday, a force, consisting of 100 Lagos Haussas, was sent out by Major Morris to burn some camps situated near Bantama, the road followed by the party being a narrow bush path discovered by one of the levies, who said that it came out behind a small village called N'Timidei. The force returned without having effected its object, owing, it was said, to a mistake on the part of the guide. The enemy had not, however, been alarmed, so Major Morris determined to make an attempt on the N'Timidei stockade and village on the following morning. In the afternoon 300 Haussas paraded under Captain Marshall in front of the Fort. The Governor placed himself at their head after inspecting them. The line advanced in review order, presented arms, and gave three cheers for the Queen. A large royal standard floated from the flag-staff.

The force under Captain Cochrane, who was accompanied by Lieutenant Ralph, was increased to 140 rank and file, and left Kumasi before daylight. At half-past seven it returned. The stockade had been found unguarded, and had been taken with no opposition, but the enemy had defended the village so pluckily that the Haussas could make no headway, and were eventually compelled to retire. This was the more disappointing, as there were extensive plantations surrounding N'Timidei, which would have yielded an ample food supply for the famished refugees. Ntchwi Ejey, Chief of N'Kawia, was, we were afterwards told, in command of the rebels at N'Timidei. He was awakened by his attendants, who told him that the Haussas were upon him. Probably he feared to fall into the hands of the white men, who would exact a
heavy penalty for the murder of poor Branscombe, for he
turned tail and fled into the bush, leaving his command to
fight or run. For this act of cowardice he was sentenced at
a meeting of rebel chiefs to pay a heavy fine, and was in
addition deposed from the Stool of N’Kawia. The casualties
in this engagement were 1 Haussa dangerously, Lieutenant
Ralph and 7 Haussas severely, and 3 Haussas slightly,
wounded. The rebels were reported to have lost heavily, as
at the first alarm many of them ran unarmed from their huts,
and judging by the noise of mourning and lamentation that
came from the N’Timidei camp throughout the night after
the fight, the report was probably true.

During the night of the 26th rain fell heavily, and it was
thought that the time had now come to try to rush the
Mampon stockade. Major Morris made all arrangements
for my support by a large force of Haussas as soon as we
should have taken the stockade, and about an hour before
daybreak I left the Fort accompanied by my 30 men and a
Coast native, named Anderson, who, unlike most of his
fellows, was a remarkably brave and cool-headed man. It
was pitch dark, and a slight rain was still falling as we
quietly crossed the swamp and plunged into the forest.
After walking stealthily along the path for a period of time
which seemed interminable, but which was in reality not
more than ten minutes, Anderson whispered to me that we
must now be near the stockade, and the next moment we
blundered into a cord stretched across the road about two
feet from the ground, from which depended a number of
bells and empty gin bottles, which immediately commenced
a most discordant jangling.

Anderson and I crossed this novel night alarm, and
stepping most carefully, for the ground was strewn with
calabashes and broken pottery, evidently meant to perform
a service similar to that rendered by the bells, we found
ourselves in front of the stockade, when the jangling of
the bells broke out anew, as some clumsy Haussa tripped
over the string. We were immediately challenged by two
sentries. Anderson replied in Ashanti that we were some of the King of Juabin's followers, who had deserted from Kumasi. The sentries ordered us to come over quickly, but on looking round I could see no trace of my men. Anderson and I crept back, recrossed the cord, and found the Haussas round a bend in the road, huddled together, and loading their carbines, while the non-commissioned officers alternately ordered and begged them to advance. The darkness and the bell-ringing had been too much for their nerves, and they still hung back. I spoke a few words to them, and induced some to follow me. Again we got up to the stockade, only to find ourselves again alone.

And now the rebel camp suddenly buzzed like a hive of angry bees. War horns shrilled, drums thundered, and all chance of surprising the rebels was at an end. I rejoined my demoralised Haussas, and we returned to the Fort, meeting Captain Bishop and some 200 Haussas just about to cross the swamp to our support. These turned back with us. Major Morris was bitterly disappointed at this failure, and forcibly addressed the men as they stood in the Fort square in the grey light of daybreak. The non-commissioned officers, who had done everything in their power to induce the men to go forward, almost weeping with vexation, promised to find men among the Haussas who would follow me to the stockade, and I obtained permission later in the day to address the Gold Coast Haussas on parade, and, after explaining what it was that Major Morris wished done, to ask for volunteers. The Haussas stepped forward to a man, and 30 of them were selected and marched down to the Fort. It may here be said that the attempt was not repeated.

All the next day, the 27th May, we received important, and as far as we could ascertain, trustworthy news, to the effect that the relief force was advancing rapidly on Kumasi in three columns—the first up the Cape Coast-Kumasi road, the second through Denkera, and the third through Eastern Akim. Further, that the King of Adansi, whose country
lies to the north of the River Prah, had sent messengers to the rebels round Kumasi to inform them that he had been defeated, and to advise them to come to terms with the white man as soon as they could.

This news produced an excellent effect on the starving refugees, and on the following day Major Morris visited the Basel Mission buildings in a go-cart in order to see what accommodation there was for the quartering of officers and men of the Relief Column.

During the evening a terrific explosion, followed by a burst of flame which momentarily lit up the heavens, took place on the Cape Coast road, about a mile and a half from Kumasi. It was at first thought that the rebels had been drying a supply of powder, which had been accidentally exploded, but we learnt later that the Ashants had exploded the powder out of pure bravado, to show us that they had ample supplies with which to continue fighting. At midnight a war-drum began to thunder, seemingly in the cantonments, and the Governor asked me to go and see what was taking place. Captain Marshall accompanied me, and we went up to the officers' quarters, where we found every one awake. Passing on to the cantonments, we arrived at the stockade, the drum still beating, but now apparently in Bantama. We went on to the Basel Mission, and then located the drum in the Sinteresu camp. We retraced our steps, and as we entered the Fort the drumming recommenced in the cantonments, and I had difficulty in bringing the Governor to believe that the sound was in reality some curious echo of the war-drum in the Sinteresu camp.

Major Morris had decided to make one more attempt on the N'Timidei stockade, and to this end had instructed Captain Marshall, with 120 Northern Territory Haussas under Captains Digan and Maguire, 100 Gold Coast Haussas under Captain Bishop and native officer Hari Zenoah, and one 7-pounder and a Maxim, to attack the stockade at daybreak on the morning of the 29th. Doctors
Hay and Graham accompanied the force. At the commence-
ment of firing I was to bring up my levies, who, in
the event of success, were to follow up the rebels and bring
in food supplies. The force under Captain Marshall reached
the stockade at 5.30 a.m., but the rebels were on this occasion
well on the alert, and opened a heavy fire from the front and
flanks.

The 7-pounder and the Maxim were brought into action,
and a charge was then unsuccessfully attempted. Shortly
after six o’clock Captain Marshall was wounded in the
chest just as he had given the order to retire. Captain
Digan now took command, and a few minutes later Captain
Maguire, while superintending the removal of the 7-pounder,
fell mortally wounded by a slug which had penetrated the
left breast, just above the heart.

As soon as I heard the firing, I set off with my levies
up the Bantama road, and had reached the Basel Mission,
when I met Dr Graham, who was walking beside a hammock
in which lay poor Maguire. A few minutes later I met
Captain Marshall, and from him learnt that the rebels had
followed up his force for some distance. The casualties in
this engagement were Captain Maguire and 1 Haussa
killed; Captain Marshall and 23 non-commissioned officers
and men wounded.

That evening Captain Maguire was buried close to the
spot where lay Captain Middlemist. Maguire’s death cast
a gloom over us all. He was most popular with every one,
and was worshipped by the Haussas; he was always cheery,
so that in his company it was impossible to feel depressed.
His gallant conduct on the march into Kumasi had been
the admiration of all. His death seemed the more sad
as we were now daily expecting to hear the guns of the
Relief Column, the main body of which, we were told, was
at Bekwai.
CHAPTER IX

PREPARATIONS FOR CUTTING THROUGH

The days dragged slowly by, each one bringing a batch of rumours as to the movements of the Relief Column. On the 31st of May the rations were reduced to the following quantities—Europeans, 1 lb. tinned meat, 1 biscuit; native subordinates, \( \frac{1}{2} \) lb. meat, 2 biscuits; servants, \( \frac{3}{4} \) lb. meat, 1\( \frac{1}{2} \) biscuits.

We still invited each other to dinner; the menu, in which attempts were made to disguise the dishes composed of beef and biscuit under high-sounding French names, being the principal item. To these dinners the gramaphone was taken, and enlivened our postprandial smoke. The Governor and Lady Hodgson gave loo and solo-whist parties, but poor Lady Hodgson, in spite of her efforts to appear unconcerned, had become very much depressed, which was not to be wondered at, as her hopes had been raised on so many occasions, only to be dashed to the ground as one rumour after another was disproved. Not a day passed without some one or other thinking he heard the firing of 7-pounders on the Cape Coast road. Then there would be a rush to the top room of the Residency, where every one would stand at the windows listening and looking intently at the tree-tops, far below which the Cape Coast road wound along, as though their gaze could pierce the mass of branches and foliage. After a long interval, one after another would turn sadly away as he realised that the Relief Column was not yet
approaching. We still indulged in our evening walks about Kumasi, but they were far from enlivening, for on all sides there was evidence of starvation in the groups of gaunt, wild-eyed, apathetic natives, who sat speechless and motionless by the roadside, and in the heavy burdens carried past occasionally by men who were themselves almost too weak to perform the last sad office for their friend. Mr Smith, a native in charge of the African Syndicate House, possessed a camera, and took a group of us all in the Fort one afternoon.

Mr Branch had started a soup kitchen for the children of the refugees, in which Lady Hodgson took a great interest. All damaged biscuits and meat were carefully put aside, and these, with the addition of leaves and salt, made a soup which, if not savoury, still kept body and soul together, and it was a quaint but pathetic sight to see some hundred black mites, whose ages ranged from two to ten years, assembling outside the Fort every morning at eleven, each carrying an empty meat tin in which he or she received the soup ladled from an immense iron cauldron, over which Mr Branch presided.

Captain Marshall and I would occasionally contribute one or two black and white crows we shot, the only birds which remained in Kumasi, for the vultures and kites had long since left us to seek their food in the rebel camps, above which we could see them wheeling. Lizards and mice were carefully hunted for by the refugees, and were now practically exterminated.

Major Morris had had a "bomb" made, composed of a large bursting charge packed into a 7-lb. sugar tin with a fuse attached, and this he had entrusted to Anderson, the native who had accompanied me to the Mampon road stockade.

On the night of the 4th of June, Anderson crept up to the Mampon stockade and exploded his bomb. The rebels fired a shot at him, but he got safely away. We did not hear what damage, if any, was done. Later in the night I was aroused by a tremendous uproar which arose from the levies' encampment. On reaching the spot I found that it
was a "food palaver," caused by some Haussas who had seen a few levies returning with plantains and a few roots which they had been lucky enough to find. The Haussas had demanded a share, and on the levies refusing, had tried to take the plantains by force. I soon stopped the noise and pacified the irate levies.

These "food palavers" were now of constant occurrence, the civilian Haussas being the chief offenders, for they, although too cowardly to search for food themselves, were all too ready to pounce upon and despoil any unfortunate levy returning from a successful trip into the bush.

On the 5th, the rations for the loyal kings, the Haussas, and servants were reduced to \( \frac{1}{2} \) lb. meat and \( \frac{1}{4} \) biscuit a day. A box of biscuits was also divided daily among the levies.

I had persuaded the kings to send out a band of levies by night on a foraging expedition, and this evening they set off to the number of eighty, under one of the war captains.

About 11 P.M. we heard firing from the direction of Patasi, and the following morning the levies straggled in by ones and twos, and reported that the rebels had surrounded and opened fire on them, when a *sauve-qui-peut* followed. Thirteen of their number were missing, including the King of Juabin's interpreter. Most of them turned up in the course of the next few days, the last arrival being the King of Juabin's interpreter, who had lurked in the forest for eight days, constantly pursued by Ashantis, who seemed to have brought their system of patrolling to perfection. On this day we sustained a heavy loss in the breaking down of the gramaphone, which had done so much to keep up our spirits. We managed to patch it up for a few days, when, after a spasmodic attempt to play "Rule Britannia," it finally collapsed.

On the night of the 9th, Anderson exploded another bomb at a stockade near the Cape Coast road. On the 10th, two of my spies reported that they had seen wounded men being brought back from the Cape Coast road, and this news gave us fresh hope that the Relief Column would shortly
arrive. The men also reported that the rebels had built a stockade and camp just round the bend of the Cape Coast road at the top of the hill beyond the swamp. In the evening, a couple of shells were fired from a 7-pounder at Asafu in the direction of this camp, and were mistaken by the refugees for the guns of the Relief Column. I shall never forget the scene which followed. Women who, to all appearance, had reached the final stage of starvation, jumped up, clapping their hands and singing triumphantly, and in a moment a horde of men, women, and children, shouting, gesticulating and dancing, rushed down the main road past the Fort towards Asafu, where a cruel disappointment awaited them. It was heartrending to see the poor wretches with every scrap of energy gone from them, creeping back to their huts.

On the following morning, Major Morris sent out Captain Cochrane with 100 Lagos Haussas and a Maxim to locate the rebel camp. The spies' information was correct, for a stockade and camp were found about 400 yards from the top of the hill. Captain Cochrane retired his men after having fired two volleys at the rebels, who returned the fire and slightly wounded six Haussas. I had gone down to Asafu and got a 7-pounder loaded and trained on the hill top. As the Haussas retired across the swamp, a band of Ashantis appeared on the road at the top of the hill, yelling and firing. The 7-pounder was fired, and the shrapnel shell burst over and in front of the rebels, doing tremendous execution.

What we all hoped for now was to have our news of the Relief Column confirmed by a note from the officer commanding, and to this end I offered a large sum of money to any of the levies who, carrying a note from the Governor to the Officer in command of the column, would return to us with a note from the latter. Several men volunteered to make the attempt, and I prepared notes written in French on tissue paper, 2 inches square. These notes, signed by the Governor, stated that we could hold out until the 19th
OBSTACLES TO RELIEF

June, gave information as to the stockades on the Cape Coast road, and begged that plenty of food and ammunition might be brought to Kumasi. The paper was then rolled in a spiral, and carefully sewn into the hem of the messenger's cloth. One or two men got through the rebel lines and delivered their notes, but none returned.

On the 12th, 13th, and 14th of June, news was brought by levies and refugees which left no room for doubt as to the whereabouts of the Relief Column. Its advance guard was, we were informed, at Ordahsu, where it had halted, in order to let the men rest, and let the carriers bring up supplies before the final advance was made on Kumasi. The rebels were concentrating on the Cape Coast road, but were reported to be much disheartened, and only held back from returning to their villages by the rebel chiefs, who were desperate, and knew that their lives were forfeited. History indeed repeats itself, and if one substitutes the word "Ashanti" for "Boer," a very fair idea may be obtained of the reports brought to me daily during the last week of our stay at Kumasi, by reading the news from South Africa in the daily papers.

It must not be thought, however, that these reports caused the fact to be forgotten that we might still be reduced to the desperate expedient of cutting our way through the rebel lines, for those who knew the country fully recognised the almost insuperable difficulties to be overcome by the Relief Column should the Ashantis oppose its advance on Kumasi.

Major Morris was very busy drawing up a plan of the order of march to be adopted in case of necessity, and many hours were passed in discussing the road to be taken. The levies said that the rebels had built seven stockades between Karsi and Esuneja on the Cape Coast road. It was clear, then, that this route to the Coast was closed, for to attempt to force seven stockades with half-starved troops carrying only 150 rounds of ammunition per man, would have been
sheer madness, even leaving the carriers and refugees entirely out of the question. The Kumasi-N'Koranza road was strongly held and stockaded, as were the Mampon and Lake roads, while the slightest check to our column when once on the march would enable the rebels to pour in reinforcements from their other camps.

After looking such facts in the face, our thoughts naturally turned to the Relief Column as our sole hope, and on more than one occasion I heard it remarked at the close of a debate, "Well, but the Relief Column must arrive before we are forced to leave Kumasi." In addition to the roads already mentioned, there was one other way open to us. This was the Patasi-Terrabum-N'Kwanta road, so called—in reality, a narrow bush path winding through dense forest, and passing through the above-named villages. Curiously enough, while the merits of this route were being discussed, Kwatchie N'Ketia, the old Chief of N'Kwanta, came to me attended only by his confidential servants, and told me that if we contemplated breaking through the rebel lines, the one and only way was to take the Patasi road, across which only one stockade had been erected between the swamp and Patasi village, when we could go either to Bekwai or to his village of N'Kwanta, where we should be safe. He said that his people knew the road well, and that he could supply guides.

After having listened to all he had to say, I told him that while the advice of a man of his age and experience was always good, there was no likelihood of our having to leave Kumasi, seeing that the Relief Column was daily expected. Without, of course, letting him know that his idea had already been discussed, I drew him on to talk about the road, the number of villages, the food supplies, and other matters which would be useful in the event of our taking his advice. The old man went away much pleased, promising to send out spies to discover the number of rebels encamped on the road, and I immediately laid all my information before the Governor and
A Group of Loyal Kings and Chiefs.
SECRET DISPOSITIONS FOR MARCHING OUT

Major Morris, who had up till now been rather in favour of making the march out by the N’Koranza road.

The decision arrived at was that the march out should be made along the Patasi-Terrabum-N’Kwanta road. The idea of reaching Bekwai was abandoned—in the first place, because the path to it ran almost parallel with the Cape Coast road, on which the rebels were massed, and from which they could easily despatch bodies of men to intercept us; and secondly, because the levies had informed me that Esamoa Kwame, who commanded the rebel forces on the Cape Coast road, had made a large war camp on the Bekwai road beyond Patasi. A fetish village, called Tradei, was also situated on the path.

Not a word as to the road to be taken on the march out had been allowed to get abroad. It was naturally impossible to hide the fact that such a move was contemplated, as hammocks had to be overhauled, ammunition got out and examined, and a hundred small details attended to, which could not escape the eyes of the observant natives. That the rebels were informed of our movements we were all aware, though we were powerless to prevent it. The information was supplied by the traders, who, while accepting our protection, were nevertheless willing to betray us into the enemy’s hands for a few plantains. Major Morris let it leak out, as though by accident, that we were to march out by the Cape Coast road, and the result was that the Ashantis massed there behind their stockades.

The Governor, Major Morris, Captain Marshall, who acted as staff officer, and myself, alone knew our route. Mr David, who had been along the Patasi road, was consulted, and gave a great deal of useful information, while Major Morris, having completed the plan of the order of march, had copies made for officers commanding portions of the column and the heads of departments. These were issued to them on the evening of the 17th of June. Nothing now remained but to decide on the strength of the garrison to remain in the Fort, and to
detail the officers to be left behind. The Governor at first considered it advisable to leave the loyal Ashanti kings and chiefs behind, and I therefore asked that, as Resident, I might be allowed to remain in command of the garrison. I was, however, told by Major Morris that the Governor wished me to go with the force leaving the Fort, and that the kings and their followers were to accompany us. Finally, Captain Bishop, Lieutenant Ralph, Dr Hay, and native officer Hari Zenoah, with a garrison of 100 men, were selected to remain behind in the event of our marching out.

After dark on the 16th of June we attempted to get into communication with the troops supposed to be at Ordahsu, by firing rockets and star-shells, which had been in the Fort magazine for several years, but in neither case were the results satisfactory. The rockets were damp, and the few which rose to a fair height seemed to have expended all their energy in the ascent, and emitted no stars, while the star-shell gave a still more feeble exhibition in this respect. The war-rockets, however, which we used on the following afternoon against the various camps across the swamp, were a great success. Judging from the yells which arose, some must have fallen into the middle of the camps.

About this time Asibi, the King of Kokofu, who, it will be remembered, had been arrested and detained in the Fort when on the point of leaving Kumasi to join the rebels, made a desperate and almost successful attempt to escape and reach the Mampon road camp. Although continually watched by a sentry, he succeeded in getting out of the Fort unnoticed, and made his way to an unoccupied shelter, where he was seen crouching by a servant, who gave the alarm. Asibi then took to his heels, but was pursued and brought back by some Haussas to the Fort, where he was handcuffed and strictly guarded.

The condition of the civilian population was now truly appalling, the death-rate rose to between 30 and 40 a day,
and it was not an uncommon sight to see a man, apparently in good health, walking along the road, drop as if shot, and lie without further movement. These sudden deaths were the result of heart failure, the doctors said, due to want of proper nourishment. The burying parties were employed from morning to night, and weak as they were, could with difficulty keep pace with the demand for their services. It is, however, a fact that up to the time that the column under Major Morris cut its way through the rebel lines, not a body remained unburied, and, thanks to Drs Chalmers, Garland, Tweedie, Hay, and Graham, the sanitary arrangement, despite the slovenly habits of the natives encamped around the Fort, were perfect, in proof of which it may be stated that, although some cases of smallpox occurred, they were so quickly isolated that this terrible disease did not spread, as undoubtedly it would have done had anything like uncleanness been allowed to exist in Kumasi. The only discomfort experienced in consequence of the herding together of this mass of humanity around the Fort walls was a plague of flies.

A new terror now made itself apparent. A tuber-like root resembling coco, and known to the natives as “epi root,” had lately been introduced as an article of food. The faces and extremities of the natives who had eaten the root became horribly swollen after a few days. These swellings increased, accompanied by violent pains, until death put an end to the wretches’ misery. The kings came to me in the greatest consternation, and begged me to put a stop to the sale of this poisonous vegetable; and that afternoon their criers went through Kumasi forbidding the people to sell or introduce the epi root into the town.

Our chief anxiety was for the unfortunate ladies who would have to accompany us in our march to the Coast, and with a view to protect them against the fire of the rebels, I was instructed to make experiments with some sheets of corrugated iron and sheet zinc which were stored
in the Fort, in the hope that it might be possible to render the hammocks to a certain extent slug proof. I found that slugs from a Dane gun would pass through either the zinc or corrugated iron at a distance of 30 yards as though they were sheets of paper, and was thus forced to give up the idea as impracticable. Meanwhile the hammock-men and carriers were assembled and told off to their various duties.

On the 19th of June, Major Morris met all the officers, and later in the afternoon the native and non-commissioned officers, to whom he briefly explained what was expected of them. The non-commissioned officers were especially warned to restrain the men from wasting a single round of ammunition. Other attempts to communicate with the Relief Column were made at night. A 7-pounder was fixed almost vertically, and common shell timed to explode high in air were fired from it, and I have been told that these signals were on one occasion heard by the garrison at Esumeja, who fired a corresponding number of times by way of reply. Fortunately for us the sound of the answering gun did not reach us, or we might have been tempted to remain at Kumasi, with the result that the Fort would inevitably have fallen.

On the 20th the carriers were made to sleep together in the Fort, so as to be in readiness at a moment's notice. On the 22nd, a final report was made that a number of white men had arrived at Esumeja, but it was now impossible to postpone the march out on the following morning, and that evening we met together, wondering if it would be for the last time, and taking a final look round the now familiar Fort which had stood us in such good stead during the past three months. We all recognised that the last signal gun had been fired, the last note begging for assistance sent, and that nothing remained but to attempt to bring the Governor and the ladies through the rebel lines in safety.

The surviving pony of those brought in by the Northern Territories' officers had shared the fate of the others, and
was killed and distributed among the carriers, and there remained on the night of Friday, the 22nd of June, three and a half days' rations for the whole force, which Major Morris disposed of as follows:—

For the marching-out column: Europeans, 2 lbs. meat, 2 biscuits; Haussas, 1 lb. meat, 3 biscuits; carriers, \( \frac{1}{4} \) lb. meat, 2 biscuits.

For the garrison of 3 Europeans, 109 Haussas (all ranks), 1 dispenser, 1 dresser, 1 clerk, and 25 carriers (including 3 servants), per diem for twenty-four days: Europeans, 1 lb. meat, 2 biscuits; Haussas, carriers, etc., \( \frac{1}{4} \) lb. meat, 1\( \frac{1}{4} \) biscuits.

Some of the traders outside the Fort had until now managed to secrete a few provisions, which they finally sold at the following prices:—A biscuit, 10s.; a 2-lb. tin of beef, £2, 16s.; a 7-lb. tin of flour, £3; whisky (a small spoonful), 2s.; matches (a box), 2s.; a single red pepper, 3d.

The rations for the Haussas and carriers of the marching-out column were issued to them during the early hours of the morning of the 23rd.

After the distribution of rations to the carriers, the work of telling them off to their loads commenced. Each carrier as he received his load took it outside the Fort, where he placed it in line with the others and stood by it. An order had been issued that all carriers should be given a light load, as it was considered probable that if empty-handed they would wander off into the bush in search of food and be lost, and that if a panic occurred there would be more likelihood of their bolting in among the Haussas, as they had done on previous occasions. Every load was made extremely light, and it was hoped that nothing would be thrown away. The loyal kings were warned to be in readiness to move at a moment's notice, and already numbers of the refugees had passed down to the market place, and, with such of their possessions as they could carry, were waiting for the troops to move down the Cape Coast road, along which they supposed we were going. This gave us a clear space in the vicinity of the Fort, where
the various detachments making up the column were to assemble in column of route, in accordance with orders which had been issued by Major Morris late on the night of the 22nd. The column, made up by 600 Haussas of all ranks, and over 1000 non-combatants (carriers, native kings, servants, and other followers), was to march from Kumasi in the following order:—

**ORDER OF MARCH.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corps furnishing Troops</th>
<th>Number of Carriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accra and Kumasi 114 men in the ranks, with native Haussas</td>
<td>officer and company sergeant-major, under Captains Armitage and Leggett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun detachments to be furnished by Gambaga Haussas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 7-pounder</td>
<td>1 Maxim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 loads of double shell</td>
<td>1 load of shrapnel shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 loads of case shot</td>
<td>1 load of powder charges, with sufficient friction tubes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 boxes of .303 Maxim ammunition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambaga Haussas</td>
<td>50 Gambaga Haussas, rank and file, under Mr Berthon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 medical officer (Dr Graham), 3 native hammocks, 1 dispenser, and 1 carrier with dressings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50 Gambaga Haussas, under Mr Iddi Bakanu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Major Morris and Dr Garland, Captain Marshall, and 1 dresser, 1 carrier with dressings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 Gambaga Haussas, under Captain Digan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>His Excellency and Lady Hodgson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Chalmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 Gold Coast Constabulary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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* (H.) = Hammock.
THE COLUMN'S FORMATION

ORDER OF MARCH—continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corps furnishing Troops</th>
<th>Number of Carriers</th>
<th>Number of Carriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50 Northern Territories Haussas, * under Captain Par-</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Brought forward, 130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meter. 220 carriers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Gold Coast Haussas</td>
<td>Reserve ammunition, Northern Territories Haussas. 21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northern Territories' baggage 72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Tweedie with reserve hammocks and medical requirements 39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gold Coast baggage 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Branch (3 loads of picks, shovels, and felling axes). 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spare 45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>220</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Gold Coast Haussas | 20 Gold Coast Haussas | |
| | Maxim gun, furnished by Lagos Haussas 8 | |
| | 10 boxes of .450 Maxim ammunition 10 | |

| Lagos Haussas | 70 Lagos Haussas * (about), under Captain Read 8 (H.) | |
| | Missionaries 52 | |
| | Lagos Haussas' baggage 31 | |
| | His Excellency's baggage, with Private Secretary's 106 | |
| | Dr Chalmers' baggage 21 | |
| | Carriers belonging to Mr David and Mr Grundy | |
| | Spare carriers 50 | |
| | All the clerks and persons belonging to the above baggage, including the Civil Police | |
| **Total** | **260** | |

Native Kings.

| 25 Haussas, under Captain Cochrane | 8 (H.) | |
| **Total** | **644** | |

* These Haussas were distributed among the carriers in parties of 10 under a non-commissioned officer.
**Order of March—continued.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corps furnishing Troops</th>
<th>Number of Carriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brought forward, 644</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rear Guard.**

1 medical officer (Dr Macfarlane) 8 (H.)
3 native hammocks 12
1 dispenser
1 carrier with dressings 1
3 loads of double shell 3
1 load of shrapnel shell 1
5 loads of case shot 5
1 load of powder charges 1
10 boxes of .450 Maxim ammunition 10
1 7-pounder 12
1 .450 Maxim 8
50 Lagos Haussas, under Captain Aplin, C.M.G. 8 (H.)

713
CHAPTER X

THE MARCH OUT FROM KUMASI

A more depressing dawn than that which broke over Kumasi on the morning of the 23rd June it would be difficult to imagine.

The surroundings of the Fort were wrapped in a dense, clammy, white mist, which deadened and rendered uncanny the sounds made by the refugees as they moved about preparing for departure, the loads balanced on their heads and hanging from their shoulders making them assume grotesque shapes as the rays of a lantern fell upon them for a moment before they were again swallowed up in the mist. The carriers sat shivering on their loads, chilled to the bone, while the Haussas stood in silence waiting for the order to march. I had secured my guide, one of Kwachie N’Ketia’s war captains, and now waited for the arrival of the Gold Coast Haussas, who were to form the advance guard, from the cantonments where Captains Leggett and Bishop were serving out the rations. At 5 A.M. they swung round the Fort and took up a position beyond the gate on the road leading to the European water supply. Lady Hodgson and the missionary ladies stood outside the Fort, pale but composed, ready to enter their hammocks and face the unknown horrors beyond the swamp.

Telling Captain Leggett to march the advance guard down to the swamp and there wait for me, I bade a hasty good-bye to those who were to keep the flag flying at Kumasi,
and rushed off to find the guide, who had given the Haussa
in whose charge I had left him the slip, and had gone to say
good-bye to Kwatchie N’Ketia. Having secured him, I
rejoined the advance guard, and we crossed the swamp at
5.15 A.M., and after a final look at the Fort, entered thick
grass and undergrowth, through which ran a narrow, muddy
track. Not a sign of the rebels was to be seen, and we pushed
along silently for almost half an hour, when a turn in the
path brought us in front of the Patasi stockade, which belched
fire and slugs along its length, while a yell of defiance told us
that the rebels were quite prepared for us. We charged up
the path, only to be driven back, the guide wounded in the
right arm, Captain Leggett hit by a slug (which neither
of us thought had penetrated) in the abdomen, and several
Haussas wounded. I instructed Leggett to fire volleys at the
stockade, and taking twenty men with me, entered the bush
on our right flank, and making a wide detour, crept towards
the left flank of the rebels.

I found that after a time we could not advance, as the fire
of the Haussas on the road was not only directed on the
stockade but in our direction also. The men lay down, and
leaving them in charge of a non-commissioned officer, I got
back on to the road, and after giving strict orders that no man
was to fire into the bush, returned with Captain Leggett and
more men. We soon got behind the stockade, which our fire
enfiladed, while I sent back my orderly to tell Sergeant Fulani,
who was in charge of the Haussas firing on the stockade, to
cease fire. As soon as this was done, we rose, and with the
Haussas, who called upon “Allah,” and were answered by the
rebels’ war-cry, charged into the clearing behind the stockade.

As we entered the open space, numbers of Ashantis
streamed back across the camp from the bush at the other
end of the stockade. They had, curiously enough, chosen
our left flank on which to open fire, while we had taken
their stockade from our right flank, and we heartily con-
gratulated ourselves on not having come face to face with
the rebels in the bush, which would have occurred had
FORCING A STOCKADE

The Ashantis chosen our right flank on which to exercise their usual tactics. The Haussas were pushed rapidly through the camp behind the stockade to hold the paths beyond, while the stockade itself was being demolished in the centre to enable the hammocks and guns to pass over.

The Patasi stockade was 6 feet high and 5 feet thick, built of immense tree-trunks with earth rammed between them. A continuous loophole had been obtained by resting the top tier of trunks on cross pieces of wood. Shell-proof lean-to's were behind the stockade, while 20 yards in rear was the camp of wooden huts with bullet-proof roofs. As I superintended the levelling of the stockade, a man came along carrying an immense block of wood 2½ feet square and almost his own height. I recognised him as a man I had known in Kumasi, and was on the point of asking him what on earth he was carrying the log for, when I saw that he was attached to it by a stout iron staple which had been hammered into the wood over his right wrist. He had been captured by the Ashantis when searching for food, and had in this simple yet effective manner been detained by them in their camp.

The taking of the Patasi stockade had cost us 4 Haussas killed, Captain Leggett, 9 Haussas, and the guide wounded. Having seen a passage made through the stockade, the advance guard was again put in motion. Captain Leggett, whose wound was more serious than he had thought, was overcome with faintness, and I sent him back to the main body, at the same time despatching a note to Major Morris asking that another officer might be sent to me. Shortly after, Captain Marshall, Major Morris's staff officer, arrived, and said that the latter had ordered up Captain Berthon, who was some way down the column, but that he (Marshall) would remain with me until Berthon's arrival.

We continued our march to Patasi, and were within a short distance of it when an ambush opened fire on our right flank, and several Haussas fell. We knelt down, and independent firing was commenced by the Haussas. I
jumped up to stop it, and a few seconds later turned round to see poor Marshall lying in the road by the side of a Haussa. I ran and raised him, to find that he had been struck by a slug on the right side of the head, and by another behind the right shoulder. I saw that the wound in the head was a serious one, and sent back at once for Dr Graham, who was a short distance in the rear. The rebels had been driven off, and I sat down and supported Marshall until Dr Graham arrived; then, pushing on, we entered Patasi village, which, we found, had been burned. Here I posted men on each path, and halted for a few minutes to let the column close up.

The column having closed up we resumed our march, and after another short halt in the bush, where Captain Berthon joined me, reached a small village, on approaching which the advance guard had been twice ambushed. Here we found plantains and bananas placed outside all the huts. The wily Ashantis had evidently guessed that these fruits, displayed so temptingly, would delay the advance, and they were not far wrong. A rush was made for the food by the half-starved Haussas, while others ran after fowls which darted from one hut to another, and it was a good ten minutes before I had got my advance guard together, and had again entered the forest. After having been twice fired upon by hidden bands of natives, we reached the village of Tekiman, where we halted, and soon the column was streaming into the village.

Major Morris called a halt here for "lunch," if the meal we indulged in may be dignified by such a name. Fires were lighted, and the pungent smoke which arose in all directions threatened to asphyxiate as well as blind us. The carriers and refugees, happy-go-lucky as ever, appeared to forget that such a thing as a rebel Ashanti existed, and went out into the surrounding plantations, returning with arms full of plantains and green corn, which were speedily roasting on the fires. Presently the kings came in, and we all shook hands. They seemed to consider that we
had been very fortunate in forcing the Patasi stockade so quickly.

As soon as possible I obtained Major Morris's permission to continue the march, as I feared that news of our breaking out would be taken to Esamoa Kwame and the Cape Coast road war camps, when a large force would undoubtedly be sent to intercept us. The Haussas and carriers, who were devouring enormous quantities of plantains and corn, would inevitably suffer by filling themselves to repletion after so long a fast, and would be unable to make a long march next day. At 1.30 I left Tekiman with the advance guard, and soon found that the Ashantis, probably the inhabitants of the village we had just left, still meant to contest our advance. As usual, we became aware of their presence only after they had poured in a volley. As we neared the village of Terrabum, heavy firing broke out in rear of the advance guard, and I afterwards learnt that the Ashantis had let us pass and had then fired into the main body. A few minutes later we entered Terrabum, and were greeted by a brisk Dane gun fire from the huts, which had been loopholed.

The Ashantis did not remain long, as the Haussas, tired out as they were, were in no mood to be kept out of their night's halting-place. The village of Terrabum consisted of some twenty badly-built huts, erected in a clearing about one hundred yards square. The advance guard was marched to the far side of the village, where the rebels were still sniping. A few volleys, with the rain, which now commenced to fall in torrents, drove them off, and as the Haussas of the main body entered the village, they were told off to the right and left faces of the clearing. At six o'clock the rear guard came in, followed by the refugees, who crowded into the already closely packed village. Captain Aplin reported that as soon as the main body had left Tekiman, the Ashantis had shown themselves at the far end of the village. Many carriers who had gone into the plantations had not returned, and after waiting some time, he had been obliged to follow on, leaving
several loads behind. The Ashantis had fired on the rear guard and refugees several times.

The scene which now presented itself beggars description, although it must be branded in the memory of all those who had the misfortune to witness it. Our loads lay about in utter confusion, where they had been dumped down by the carriers, who came staggering in like drunken men. The Governor and Lady Hodgson sat upon boxes waiting for the tent which never came, and finally sought shelter in the wretched hut I had kept for them. The crush was so great that two huts, filled with wounded, collapsed from the pressure on the walls from without, and the occupants were with difficulty rescued. Fires had been lit everywhere, and from them arose suffocating volumes of smoke, as the damp wood spluttered and cracked. The many trampling feet had churned the ground into a sea of mud over ankle deep. And upon this steaming mass of humanity the torrential rain fell silently, pitilessly, as though determined to extinguish the wretched fires, round which squatted shivering groups of natives. To find one's loads was out of the question, and at nine o'clock, after seeing that Marshall and Leggett were as comfortable as circumstances permitted, I crept into a hut 4 feet square, and, drenched through, fell asleep in spite of the babel which arose from all sides, for the carriers and refugees kept up an animated conversation the whole of that night.

Dawn found the natives still talking and the rain falling, while with it came the Ashantis, who appeared to have surrounded the village on all sides, except that from which ran the road we were to take. Hoping probably to stampede the refugees, they commenced a heavy, though ineffective fire, to which we did not take the trouble to reply. The refugees had rushed to the spot where our road entered the forest, with the evident intention of crowding into the column, and Major Morris gave orders that they should be removed, so as to give a clear road to the Haussas and carriers.

As soon as a little order was restored, the advance guard
moved off at 7 A.M., and entered the forest, which was much clearer than that through which we had gone on the previous day. There was comparatively little undergrowth to give shelter to the Ashantis, and after we had passed several fallen trees and masses of creeper, which were excellent positions for an ambush, we all felt much cheered by the thought that the Ashantis had not headed us, which they might easily have done had they been so inclined. We had been advancing very slowly and cautiously, but now the Haussas began to step out, and as they realised that they need no longer fear the fire of an unseen Ashanti at every turn of the path, the silence was broken as they congratulated each other, and joked and laughed, forgetful of their wounds and sodden clothes.

Several times during the march we heard the distant sound of Dane gun fire, and then the crash of a volley as the rear guard replied to the Ashanti fire. After crossing two small rivers, which the rain had not yet flooded to any considerable depth, we reached at 3 P.M. the village of Hiakasi, which we found deserted. I put guards over the huts selected for the Europeans, and then managed to find a few fowls and eggs. Yesterday's scene was soon repeated, with the exception that the refugees did not participate in it, for Major Morris put a strong guard across the entrance to the village, with instructions to keep the civilian element from coming in. The refugees had plenty of room to camp on either side of the road, which was here fairly broad, and they soon had their fires alight. The rear guard did not get in till 5 P.M. They had been attacked by the Ashantis two hours after leaving Terrabum, and had had some hard fighting. Captain Aplin told me that his movements had been greatly hampered by the refugees, who had rushed in among his men, knocking them over in their efforts to race to the front. The casualties in the rear guard had been one man killed and several wounded, while the refugees had also suffered.

Marshall and Leggett were both looking very ill, and we
did all in our power to make them as comfortable as possible. We could not, however, do much, and we had lost nearly all our loads. Lady Hodgson and the lady missionaries had nothing more in the way of clothing than what they were dressed in. Most of the boxes containing the few provisions which we had managed to bring with us to Kumasi had been thrown away, while I had to lament the disappearance of my stationery box containing all my papers, and the whole of my bedding. That night Captain Marshall came to my hut, and asked me to let him share it with me, and seated on the floor we, who had been with each other during the whole siege, ate the last meal which we were to take in each other's company by the flickering light of a palm-oil lamp, which consisted of a cigarette tin filled with semi-liquid yellow palm-oil, into which was stuck a wick of twisted rag, and drank each other's health in weak whisky and water.

The missionaries, Mr and Mrs Ramseyer, had narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the Ashantis during the day's march. They had been abandoned by their hammock men, as had also the two other ladies, who had behaved splendidly under the trying circumstances. Mr Weller was very ill, and had been carried in his hammock almost unconscious.

We were on the move at 6.15 on the following morning. The rain had ceased, and we marched along at a much greater rate now that we no longer feared an Ashanti attack. The road ran over a conical hill, the steep ascent of which punished every one severely. At last, shortly after three o'clock, we heard the distant sound of war drums, and soon after the head of the column entered N'Kwanta, where in the palaver square sat and stood the head men, while great war drums, beaten by perspiring natives, roared out a welcome.

The head men gave me a hearty greeting, and in a few words I explained to them that what we wanted was food, that all such food would be paid for, and that any cases of looting by soldiers or civilians should be reported to a white officer. Soon the head men's servants returned from their plantations
laden with plantains, coco, and green corn. A few minutes later the guide who, though wounded, had stuck to me so pluckily during the march from Kumasi, came up accompanied by the head men, and attendants bearing two fowls, some eggs, and green corn. After shaking hands, he presented me with these. Next arrived more Haussas and Major Morris, and then hammocks bearing poor Marshall and Leggett. The former had most imprudently walked up the hill I have mentioned; the effort had been too much for him, and he was now half unconscious. The noise of the drumming seemed to rouse him, and he begged me to ask the people to stop it, as his head was bursting.

I explained matters to the head men, and begged them to discontinue the drumming until the arrival of old Kwatchie N'Ketia, whom a number of the villagers had gone out to meet, with a hammock, and guns to fire a welcoming salute.

The Governor now entered N'Kwanta on foot, and as he reached the palaver square, overcome by fatigue and perhaps by a sudden revulsion of feeling at the thought that they were now safe after the terrible experience he and Lady Hodgson had gone through, he suddenly fell to the ground unconscious. He revived, however, in a few minutes, and was carried to the hut which had been reserved for him.

Kwatchie N'Ketia now arrived surrounded by enthusiastic natives, and his meeting with his head men was a most touching sight. One old greybeard after another came forward to grasp their king's hand, the tears rolling down their cheeks, nor was the recipient of their congratulations and homage less affected at the reunion. Presently he sat down, and two of the head men rose and enacted the parts played by Kwatchie N'Ketia and his followers at Kumasi. The fights, the search for food, the burial of the dead, were all gone through in dumb show, and then the drums thundered out their welcome, while the people alternately extolled the returned warriors and wailed over the loss of so many brave men, who now lay in their shallow graves at Kumasi.
The Haussas were again formed round the village, from which the civilians were excluded, and I now had time, with Captain Berthon's assistance, to call the roll of the advance guard.

During our three days' march the advance guard's casualties were: 2 European officers severely wounded, 10 Haussas killed, 30 wounded, and 7 missing.
CHAPTER XI

THE KUMASI COLUMN’S MARCH TO THE COAST

After what the Haussas had gone through, to march to Bekwai was impossible, even if the reports of the Relief Column being there were true. The Ashantis were said to have “cut” the road between N’Kwanta and Bekwai, and with our men fagged out, and the few remaining rounds of ammunition, to risk another fight would have been sheer madness. Major Morris decided to remain at N’Kwanta on the 26th in order to let the Haussas and carriers have a much needed rest, and to give stragglers a chance of coming in. The advisability of splitting up the column into two parts was discussed, while the Governor wrote to the Officer Commanding the Relief Column, to inform him of our escape, and that a garrison, which would be able to hold out until the 15th July, had been left behind in the Fort. This letter was entrusted to the King of Bekwai’s linguists, who, after receiving presents from the Governor, set out along the road leading from N’Kwanta to Bekwai, which they reached, we afterwards learnt, without misadventure. In the evening the Governor met Kwatchie N’Ketia and his head men on the palaver ground, and after complimenting him and his people on the part they had played during the siege and march out, presented the old king with £80. The guide also received a substantial present.

Major Morris considered that another day’s rest would be most beneficial to the Haussas and carriers, but the
Governor was in favour of leaving N'Kwanta next day, as the natives reported that the Ashantis meant to bar our way to the Coast at the Ofin River, three days' journey south of N'Kwanta. This report, however, was extremely improbable, and I more than suspected that it had been spread in order to hasten our march to the Coast, as the food supplies of the village were not equal to the demands made on them by our Haussas and carriers. Major Morris's wound confined him to his hut, while the Governor, whose quarters were at the opposite side of the village to those occupied by Major Morris, was also unwell, and in consequence I had to carry messages from one to the other until a late hour of the night, when it was finally decided to remain another day. Next morning I went down with fever, and had to remain covered up all day. Poor Marshall, whose hut I shared, was now unconscious. The wound he had received in the head had seriously affected his brain, and the doctors held out no hope of his recovery. Leggett, too, had periods of unconsciousness, and the two days' jolting in a hammock had told on him sadly.

On the morning of the 27th, the King of N'Kwanta came with another tale that the rebel chief of Aborasu was getting his men together, and begged us to send out a party to burn his village. This, however, Major Morris refused to do. Fortunately the fever left me during the night, and early morning saw us again on the march, along a narrow, muddy track winding through dense forest. The poor old King of N'Kwanta said good-bye to us with tears in his eyes, and ruefully remarked as he surveyed his village and its surroundings, into which it must be remembered some 1500 souls had been packed, that he did not know whether to "tidy up" his village, or to select another site and build a new one. The day was gloomy, and as we neared our halting place, a fine drenching rain began to fall, making the path as slippery as ice, and blotting out the fine view which we should otherwise have had on nearing the little plantation village of Edubia, nestling as it does among a
group of hills, which have been completely cleared of forest
and planted with plantain trees, coco, and corn.

The village itself, which belonged to my guide, consisted
of a dozen small huts, which I proceeded to commandeer for
the Europeans.

Captain Marshall died at 9 P.M. that night, having never
recovered consciousness. His death was a blow to all, and
especially to me, who had been associated with him during
the whole of the siege. I shall never forget the pleasant days
we spent together in our turret at Kumasi. Always cheery
and bright, he had endeared himself to every one, and it was
difficult to believe that he had disappeared from our midst.

Early next morning a sad group surrounded a grave, dug
in a little clearing encircled by palm trees, listening to the
words of the funeral service read by Major Morris; then, after
a last look, each turned away and with a heavy heart took up
his post in the column, which was soon winding its way among
the plantations and carrying in its midst one who, we were
told by the doctors, had but a short time to live, worn out as
he was by the hardships he had undergone on the march
from Kumasi.

Takorasi was our next halting place, and here we met the
natives who had been sent from N’Kwanta to prepare rafts
for the crossing of the Ofin River. These stated that the river
was in high flood, and that the near banks and surrounding
country were flooded for miles. They said it was impossible
for our whole column to cross in a single day, so Major Morris
determined to split up the column and leave the Lagos
Haussas and the missionaries to follow the day after. A
party of twenty Haussas under a native officer was also
despatched to the Ofin River to see that everything was in
readiness for the crossing.

Poor Captain Leggett died during the evening, and before
resuming our march to the Coast, we had again to leave
behind a dear comrade. Than Leggett a braver man never
stepped, and after having been wounded thirteen times during
the siege, it seemed more than hard that he should have
received his death wound at the moment when we were escaping from the clutches of the Ashantis. As we left Kumasi together on the 23rd, he said to me, "Well, Armitage, you and I were together in the first fight, and now we're off together for the last." And so, poor fellow, the engagement at the Patasi stockade proved to be in his case.

After saying good-bye to the Lagos Haussa officers and the missionaries—one of whom, Mr Weller, was dangerously ill—we moved off, and before long came to a sheet of water, which stretched away among the trees as far as the eye could reach. The natives who accompanied me sat down and said it was impossible to get to the Ofin River, as the water had risen during the night. Luckily one of them was a lanky old man of 6 feet 5, and, assisting him to his feet, I pointed out that as I was only 5 feet 10, I should be bound to disappear under water before he did, and said we should go along together. We were soon wading through running brown water, which, never below our knees, was sometimes 5 feet deep.

And so, after an hour's wading, we reached a spot where the natives had felled a tree across an unfordable stream. Climbing along the trunk we reached solid ground, and soon saw the Ofin River boiling down in a roaring brown torrent. Across the river, which was about 70 yards broad, and in the middle of which waved the branches of an uprooted tree, which had stranded at this point, stretched two stout ropes of "tie-tie" or "bush rope" (made from a species of very strong rope-like creeper, which abounds in the forest). Moored to the bank were two heavy rafts, 5 feet square, made of logs the thickness of a man's thigh, and capable of carrying five men each. A raft being loaded up, the native in charge pulled hand over hand along the rope across the river.

I also found a small canoe, which I sent back for the use of the ladies in crossing the stream, instead of attempting the passage by the felled tree. The Governor and Lady Hodgson were, however, informed that it had been sent for
them to cross the river in, which they did, narrowly escaping being capsized on the way. The rafts were soon in full swing, but the progress was slow, owing to the stupidity of the Haussas and carriers, who crowded on to them and constantly capsized them. This happened on one occasion in mid-stream, and the Haussas who were crossing were carried into the stranded tree. Luckily the raft was saved, but I was so incensed with the Haussas who had caused the accident by their clumsiness, that I gave orders that they should be left in their tree for a time, and there they sat among the branches, looking like great birds, until their resting-place suddenly began to move, when I sent a raft to them. During the morning I crossed and re-crossed the river several times and got very wet and cold. My guide must have noticed this, for he sent his wife off to the village of N’Kyinko, where we were to stay the night, and she presently returned with a small bottle of Trade Gin, and insisted on my drinking some.

After superintending with Captain Berthon the crossing of most of the Haussas, I walked to the village, and secured huts for every one. Lady Hodgson arrived shortly afterwards, and said that the Governor had remained behind to see his boxes safely transported across the river. At last we were free from the possibility of an Ashanti attack; our troubles were practically over; our only regret the thought of the brave white men we had left behind us across the river, and of the gallant Haussas who had fallen in the fight.

Next day we made a very short march to the village of Akwabosu. What a pleasure it was to swing along the path through the forest without experiencing the nerve-shattering expectation of hearing at any moment the roar of Dane guns fired by an unseen foe!

At Akwabosu our party was again divided, Major Morris, Drs Chalmers and Garland, and myself, with 80 Haussas, accompanying the Governor and Lady Hodgson. After crossing the Prah River we met numbers of Denkera natives, who had been armed by the Government. Under the
command of Captain Durham Hall of the Gold Coast Police, and accompanied by their king, they were on their way to join the Relief Column at Bekwai.

At Mampon the Governor and his wife were both laid up with fever, and Major Morris left us in order to hasten to Cape Coast to get into communication with the officer commanding the Relief Column. Shortly after he had left, a letter was brought from the officer commanding the troops at Bekwai, in which the Governor was asked to send him all available Haussas. This, of course, was now out of the question, but the letter was despatched by special runner to Major Morris.

On the 10th July our party wound its way over the bush-covered hillocks into Cape Coast, and the following day the Governor, Lady Hodgson, Dr Chalmers and myself embarked on board H.M.S. Dwarf, which landed us at Accra the same evening. The loyal kings and chiefs came to Accra with Mr Erbyn, the interpreter, some days later, and were housed in Christiansborg until the arrival at Cape Coast from England of Captain Donald Stewart, C.M.G., the Resident of Kumasi, to whom I handed them over. They accompanied Captain Stewart to Kumasi. The King of Kokofu, whom we had brought with us to the Coast, was shipped from Accra to Sierra Leone, there to join ex-King Prempeh and the chiefs deported in 1895. Shortly afterwards he and they were removed to the Seychelles Islands, where they now are. The Lagos Haussas and the missionaries reached Cape Coast some days later, and we then learnt that Mr Weller had died and was buried at Akwabosu.

I cannot close this chapter without adding a few words in tribute to the Haussas, the levies, and the refugees and carriers. All alike are accustomed to eat large quantities of not very nutritive food, and the sufferings so patiently borne by them during the siege can, I think, be with difficulty realised by those who were not present to see the rapid wasting away of men and women of splendid physique into walking skeletons. The Haussas, taken as a whole, behaved
splendidly, and when the axiom that “a man cannot fight on an empty stomach” is considered, I feel it is nothing short of miraculous that the column ever reached the Coast. Surely there can be no more nerve-shaking form of warfare than that which was waged in the depths of the Ashanti forest.

And what praise can be too great for the loyal Ashanti kings and chiefs and their followers who threw in their lot with the white man? Certain people have said that they simply chose the winning side; but such a statement is, if not most unjust, at least most uncalled for. Not only were they content to remain in Kumasi with us, but they fought, and fought well, against their fellow-countrymen, and on more than one occasion brought in supplies of food, without which the mortality among the civilian native population would have been doubled.

Of these last, it was said that as soon as the pangs of hunger had made itself felt among them, they would make an attempt to rush the Fort, and obtain possession of the provisions stored therein. Never for one moment was there a possibility of such an event taking place. Patiently, even apathetically, they sat waiting for death without any outcry or murmur. During the last days, I received a letter signed by a dozen native traders, or “scholars,” as they are called. This letter contained the following passages—“We do not ask for food for ourselves but for our little ones.” (They were all married men, and had their families with them.) “As for us, we eat our daily meal of sweet potato leaves with joy and hilarity, but this food will not remain with our children, who are dying. We ask for a box of biscuits. . . .”

Try to imagine these wretched people who were accustomed to better food than the uneducated native, eating a wretched green pap, the smell of which was enough to sicken one, “with joy and hilarity.” I regret to say that it was not in my power to accede to their request, but the children were kept alive by the daily ration of soup.

One cannot help admiring the plucky way in which the
Ashantis fought. A little more dash and cohesion on the part of their leaders would at one time have given them possession of the Fort. What would have been the fate of the Europeans had they fallen into the hands of the rebels it is impossible to conjecture, but when at Cape Coast I heard a most curious tale which I was assured was absolutely true. I give it here for what it is worth.

The Ashantis thought that Lady Hodgson was the niece of our late Queen. Probably they got this idea from seeing Lady Hodgson seated on the Governor's right at the big palaver, and therefore looked on her as corresponding to their "Queen Mothers." I was supposed to be Lady Hodgson's son. So sure were the Ashantis of the ultimate fall of the Fort and our capture, that they had built a small hut somewhere in the depths of the forest, to which Lady Hodgson and I were to have been escorted, and there kept until the Ashantis could send us as a present to the Great White Queen, against whom, they said, they had no quarrel. The Governor, it is said, was to have been put to death.

It is unnecessary to panegyrise the bravery and fortitude displayed by Lady Hodgson and the lady missionaries, Mrs Ramseyer, Mrs Yost, and Mrs Haasis, for to those who read this narrative no further words of mine are needed to emphasise the miseries they bore so pluckily during the siege and, more especially, during the march to the Coast.

Whatever be the results of this, the latest, and, be it hoped, the last Ashanti War, it has again been demonstrated that, while British soldiers were battling to keep the flag flying in South Africa, the Empire possessed in its West African native troops a body of men who, when led by British officers, will cheerfully endure the greatest hardships and privations, and who, at a time when even the elements are fighting against them, are proud to fight and die for the British Empire, whether in struggling forward to the relief of a beleaguered garrison, or when hemmed in and reduced to the last stages of starvation by thousands of bloodthirsty natives.
From a photo by Guttenberg, Bed ford.

Lieut.-Colonel A. F. Montanaro, R.A.
LIEUT.-COL. MONTANARO'S NARRATIVE

CHAPTER XII

PREPARATIONS IN THE GOLD COAST

In the fourth chapter the state of affairs has been brought down to the 29th April 1900, on which day Captain Aplin, with 250 Lagos Haussas, joined Sir F. Hodgson in Kumasi. The garrison troops were then closely invested by the Ashantis, who had erected stockades to block all the roads entering Kumasi from north, south, east, or west, their tactics being to prevent any force from relieving the garrison, or the latter from getting through the cordon investing them.

The unexpected rising of the Ashantis caused a widespread panic throughout the Gold Coast Colony. No communications were received from Kumasi. Rumours of the wildest description were being circulated; the telegraph line was cut, trade was completely at a standstill, and the Coast tribes were paralysed with terror. The rebels sent out messengers warning all the tribes not to assist the white men under pain of coming under the ban of their terrible fetish. Such a state of affairs had not been known on the Coast since the war of 1873, and to add to the anxiety which prevailed throughout the colony, no information could be obtained as to the position of affairs in Kumasi, its provisions or munitions. A defence committee was formed at Accra, the volunteers were called out, and a gunboat was wired for. The Home Authorities ordered 1400 troops to be despatched with the greatest speed to Cape Coast Castle, and appointed
Colonel Willcocks, C.M.G., D.S.O., the Commandant of the West African Frontier Force, to the supreme command of the forces in the Gold Coast.

On the 20th April 1900, 450 troops of the West African Frontier Force left Northern Nigeria in two contingents, the first marching by road from Jebba to Lagos, and the second moving by canoes from Lokoja to Forcados. The first contingent reached Lagos on the 1st May, but was halted there, as the Governor of the Gold Coast had wired to say that further reinforcements were not necessary. On the 3rd May, however, urgent orders arrived that all available troops were to be sent on, and on the 4th May both contingents of the West African Frontier Force sailed from Lagos, arriving at Cape Coast Castle on the 8th. In addition to these troops, who were under the command of Captain W. M. Hall, West Yorkshire Regiment, there were 50 Sierra Leone Frontier Police under Lieutenant Edwards, and 98 Lagos Hauussas under Captains Anderson and Elgee.

Captain Hall, the senior officer, assumed command pending the arrival of Colonel Willcocks, and he at once gave orders for a forward movement on Prahsu. So great, however, was the panic in the colony, that it was next to impossible to obtain a sufficient number of carriers, and the civil authorities dared not pass a compulsory labour ordinance, as this would have been a firebrand to light the beacon of revolt far and wide throughout the length and breadth of the Gold Coast. Captain Hall was, therefore, able to gather together only enough carriers to transport supplies and ammunition for his small force. He trusted, however, that as he proceeded up the road to Kumasi, confidence would be re-established among the Coast tribes, and that the promised reinforcements would bring up convoys of provisions, etc., for the beleaguered garrison at Kumasi. Another factor which had to be taken into consideration was that detached parties of miners were scattered about the country, and fears were entertained as to the safety of the miners at Obuassi, the headquarters of the Ashanti
PROTESTATIONS OF LOYALTY

Goldfields Corporation, and those at the Ahuri mines. It therefore became necessary to push on at any cost.

On arriving at Prahsu definite news was received of the spread of the rising. The Borgire and Abadam tribes had risen, and were threatening Kokofu and Esiankwanta, whilst the Kumasi rebels were encamped at Karsi on the main road. It was also feared that the Adansis might rise at any moment, and news reached Prahsu that the European miners at Ahuri had escaped to Bekwai with their lives only, all their plant, tools, stores, etc., having fallen into the hands of the enemy.

To bluff the wavering Adansis, Captain Hall decided to occupy their country, and after leaving a small garrison at Prahsu under Captain Elgee, and detaching the Sierra Leone Frontier Police under Edwards to garrison the mining headquarters at Obuassi, where the miners were in a terrible panic and hourly expecting to be attacked, he advanced with his remaining troops along the main road. Owing to the want of sufficient carriers, he had to call on his soldiers to carry loads of ammunition boxes and supplies in addition to the 200 rounds of ammunition each man carried in his pouches. But for this loyal support given by his men it would have been utterly impossible for Captain Hall to have made any forward movement.

On the 20th May Captain Hall, with his staff officer, Captain Haslewood of the Gold Coast Constabulary, met the King of Adansi at Fomena, where a great "palaver" was held. At this palaver the king signed a written agreement, in which he reassured Captain Hall as to the great loyalty of himself and his people towards the British Government. In addition he promised, and actually furnished, carriers for the troops and convoys which were coming up the road.

As with other tribes on the West Coast, treachery is inherent in the Adansi nature. So long as troops kept passing through their country, and they thought that more were behind, they remained quite loyal to us; but, as will
be shown later on, their protestations of loyalty were merely bubbles of air.

While all these movements were taking place in the south, the Ashantis had been closely investing Kumasi Fort; but hearing of the arrival of reinforcements, and finding that neither the Kokofus nor the Adansis had acted up to their sworn fetish, they moved southwards on the 21st May, one column occupying Edjimum on the main road; while the other, under Queen Ashantuah in person, occupied Kokofu. This was a smart move on the part of the Ashantis, as it decided the Kokofus and other neighbouring tribes in the south-east to throw in their lot with the Kumasi chiefs. A very critical stage of the rebellion had now been reached, as the Ashantis were doing all in their power to compel the Bekwais to join and swear fetish with them. These Bekwais, like all natives, wished to be on the winning side, and the apathy and double-dealing which they now displayed were due to their doubts as to whether Captain Hall's column would continue its march on to Kumasi, or remain in their country. In the former case they would be left at the mercy of the rebels if they did not join them now. Fortunately for us, however much his people may have wavered, the King of Bekwai was loyal throughout. He not only refused at this critical period to join with the Ashantis, but he gave his protection to the miners who had fled from Ahuri. He sent an urgent appeal to Captain Hall to come to his assistance, and save the Europeans, himself, and his people. He stated that he had had to abandon his village of Esuemeja, that many of his people had gone over to the enemy, and that he hourly expected to be attacked himself.

In reply to this appeal Captain Hall's column occupied Esuemeja on the 22nd May without opposition with his contingent from the West African Frontier Force, the Lagos Haussas, and the Sierra Leone Frontier Police, the last-mentioned having been withdrawn from the Obuassi
ORGANISING THE FIELD FORCE

mines, and their place taken by a detachment of the Gold Coast Civil Police and a few Gold Coast Haussas. A small garrison of 40 Gold Coast Haussas under Lieutenant Slater was left at Kwisa, which lies at the foot of the Moinsi Hills, and the town of Bekwai as well as the villages of Esiankwanta and Ejinasi were garrisoned by our troops.

On the 24th May Captain Hall made a reconnaissance in force against Kokofu. The number of troops at his disposal was 200, and he succeeded in pushing forward his reconnaissance right up to the outskirts of the town, although he was opposed by large numbers of the enemy. He burnt an outlying village, and then decided to fall back on Esumeja, as he knew he was greatly outnumbered, and feared for his lines of communication. This was, I think, a mistake, as had he pressed home his attack, another advance of half a mile would have given him possession of Kokofu, and he would have struck the Ashantis a heavy blow. As it was, by falling back on Esumeja we led the enemy to think that they had won a victory.

On the 26th May Colonel Willcocks arrived on the Coast, and at once commenced to organise the Ashanti Field Force. His staff then consisted of Lieutenant (local Captain) M'Clintock, R.E., and Dr M'Farlane. The latter had temporarily to abandon his medical duties, and to act as secretary. For the next few days it was work, work, work, from 6 A.M. till late at night. The Colonial and Home Authorities nobly responded to all Colonel Willcocks' requisitions, but until his arrival they were unable to send out stores for fear of despatching the wrong articles. Thus Colonel Willcocks had to draw up cablegrams for every article of store from biscuits and beef to quinine and millimetre shells. In addition to requisitioning stores, he had to tackle the all-important question of carriers. The local tribes were very backward in coming forward, and he had therefore to call upon the neighbouring colony of Sierra Leone for help. The Governor of that colony, Sir F. Cardew, quickly collected
and despatched several thousand Mendis and Timmanis from Sierra Leone. Later on in the campaign East Africa furnished large numbers of carriers from Mombasa, Zanzibar, and Zomba. Colonel Willcocks utilised the cowardly Fantees to transport stores as far as Prahsu, where he formed an advance depot, but beyond that place they would not budge. All those preparations considerably hampered any movements of troops.

In the meantime matters were not improving in the north. The Adansis, in spite of their written agreement, thinking that the Government did not intend to send up any more troops, and wishing to act up to their sworn fetish with the Ashantis, treacherously attacked a down-coming convoy at Dompoassi on the 26th May. Hearing of this treachery, Captain Hall sent one company of the 1st battalion West African Frontier Force from Esumeja to Kwisa to join hands with Lieutenant Slater. This company, after a slight engagement with the enemy at Dompoassi, succeeded in effecting the juncture just in time, as the garrison at Kwisa was found to have been sorely pressed. In one engagement with the Adansis, Lieutenant Slater was seen to fall, and without waiting to render him any assistance, though he was only wounded, some of his men bolted from the field and never stopped running till they reached Cape Coast Castle, when they told a terrible tale of how their white officer and all their comrades had been cut to pieces. This news was wired home, and must for some time, until the real facts were known, have caused great grief to Lieutenant Slater's relatives. These cowardly deserters were fitly punished, each of them receiving twenty years' penal servitude.

The Adansis having thrown off the mask and risen against us, the Bekwais were practically threatened on all sides. Assistance was therefore called for from the loyal King of Denkera, who had rendered some help in the 1895-6 Expedition. As fighting men, however, the Denkeras were worse than useless, and their king was always more than
three parts drunk. Still, at this critical stage of the war, when tribe after tribe was going over to the enemy, it was a great consideration to have a powerful tribe like the Denkeras offering to render assistance to the Government. The King of Bekwai mustered all his fighting men and garrisoned the village of Pekki to the north, Esiankwanta to the south-east, and Yakobu to the south of Bekwai, leaving the capital itself and Esumeja to be held by our troops. Esumeja at that time was the key to the whole position, for the Kokofus were assembled in large numbers within a mile of that village, and unless it was well defended, there was nothing to prevent the Kokofus from rushing the town of Bekwai, and that once taken, the whole country north of the Prah would be in the hands of the enemy. Captain Hall has been much criticised for not making a bold dash for Kumasi, but I fail to see how he could have done otherwise than he did. Captain Aplin and Major Morris, by cutting their way into Kumasi, did not raise the siege; by having more mouths to feed, the garrison suffered severely from short rations and even from starvation, whilst one hundred well-fed, able-bodied men could have held the Fort against any numbers of the enemy. It does not require any military education to know that it is useless to relieve a garrison, unless you can either change the garrison and revictual it, or raise the siege, and by so doing open up the lines of communication. Captain Hall, therefore, deserves great credit for standing fast as he did at Esumeja, for the reasons already given, and for others which will appear later.
CHAPTER XIII

HOW KUMASI WAS RELIEVED

Shortly after Colonel Willcocks' arrival at Cape Coast the native troops promised by the authorities began to arrive in the colony, and as soon as he was able to supply transport and stores for them, he ordered a concentration of troops, ammunition, and supplies at Prahsu, and even as far as Fumsu, which was about 20 miles beyond the river Prah. On the 1st June a force of 350 troops, one 7-pounder, and one rocket-tube, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Carter, C.M.G., the Commandant of the forces in Southern Nigeria, had reached Fumsu on its forward march to the North. On the 2nd June, when marching towards Kwisa, Colonel Carter met with serious opposition at Sherimassi, where he engaged the Adansis and defeated them, afterwards continuing his march unopposed to Kwisa, where he found the garrison safe, but with a fairly large number of wounded in hospital. On the 6th June he continued his advance towards Esiakwanta, until, just before reaching the town of Dompoassi, a terrific fire was opened upon his advance guard from the bush on his right flank. Not suspecting more than an ordinary ambush, Colonel Carter ordered his men to face outwards, to lie down on the road, and to return the enemy's fire. The 7-pounder was brought into action, and a hot fire was opened on the enemy. Instead, however, of our fire appearing to make any impres-
Colonel Sir James Willcocks, K.C.M.G., D.S.O.
sion on them, theirs was as strong as ever, and both our officers and men began to drop in all directions. The cause of this was soon discovered, for as the fire from the 7-pounder and the volleys from the rifles cut the leaves of the bush, the dim outline of a stockade came into view, and it thus became apparent to all ranks that they had been wasting their fire on logs of timber, whereas the Adansis had been peppering them with slugs in the open.

On this occasion several officers were severely wounded, including Colonel Carter, Captain Roupell, Lieutenant O'Malley, and Lieutenant Edwards, R.A. The last-mentioned officer had the whole of his gun-detachment either killed or wounded, and he himself had in the end, until he too fell wounded, to load and fire the gun, ramming the charges home with his walking-stick. Amongst other gallant acts performed by the officers, that done by Captain Roupell was most noteworthy. That officer, though shot through both wrists, continued to bring up ammunition with his forearms, though he must have been suffering exquisite torture all the time. Colonel Carter, wounded as he was (he was shot in the eye), and seeing the number of casualties amongst his force, decided on a retreat, which he personally gave orders to be carried out. While the retreat was in progress, Sergeant Mackenzie of the Seaforth Highlanders, who was attached to a company of the West African Frontier Force, asked permission from Lieutenant-Colonel Wilkinson, who had assumed command, to charge the stockade with his company. Sergeant Mackenzie was allowed to do so, and gallantly leading his men, who followed him nobly, he charged up to and climbed over the stockade, clearing out the enemy with the bayonet. Although the enemy had thus been driven off, the orders for the retreat still appeared to hold good, and the whole force retired with more than 50 per cent. casualties on Kwisa.

For some reason or other Colonel Carter evacuated Kwisa and retired still further south to Fumsu, taking with him the garrison from Kwisa.

This was a most unfortunate move, as it led to another
disaster; for Captain Hall, not knowing that the garrison at Kwisa had been removed, had sent down the Nupe Company of the 1st West African Frontier Force under Captain Wilson with carriers to assist Colonel Carter's advance. The company had to fight its way through Dompooassi to Kwisa, encountering large bodies of the enemy, and losing its commander, Captain Wilson, who was killed in action, only to find on reaching Kwisa that the column to whose assistance it had gone had retired to Fumsu three days previously. This necessitated a further harassing march to that place, for the Nupes had not only to bring the body of their dead commander along with them, but had also to fight their way through thousands of victorious Adansis along a narrow bush road for a distance of 17 or 18 miles.

On the 8th June Colonel Willcocks arrived at Prahsu with further reinforcements, but with very few carriers, and realising the serious state of affairs, he wired for more troops to be sent to Cape Coast. In the meantime he ordered another company and a convoy of stores under Major Melliss to advance to Kwisa. At this period matters were getting desperate in Kumasi. Runners had managed to get through to Esumeja with letters from the Governor, saying that he had 700 troops in the Fort, that the health of the troops was good, and that he could hold out till the 19th June, but that the 3000 native followers were in absolute want, and that the supply of ammunition was only sufficient for their requirements in case they should have to cut their way out before relief arrived.

The outlook at Esumeja was indeed black. A serious reverse in the rear had taken place. The forward movement of troops and stores was terribly hampered by the want of carriers and by the torrential rains, which flooded the rivers and swept away all the temporary bridges, converting the roads into bogs. It is not to be wondered at that the Bekwais should at last show signs of wavering in their allegiance to us. They had been told that large bodies of
troops were coming up as reinforcements, but they saw for
themselves that troops were being sent to the rear from
Esumeja, and that the garrison at that place had dwindled
to 120 men. Just, however, as a crisis appeared imminent,
Lieutenant-Colonel Wilkinson arrived at Bekwai with rein-
forcements on the 19th June.

Colonel Willcocks, realising the difficulties of forcing a
passage through the Adansi, who were collected in force
on the main road, hit upon the plan of sending all troops
and stores to the north by the branch road which leaves
the main road just outside Fumsu and proceeds via the
Obuassi mines to Bekwai. The result of this manoeuvre
was that Colonel Wilkinson, who was the first to put the
plan into practice, succeeded in reaching Bekwai without
firing a shot.

On the 21st June the officer commanding at Esumeja
heard ten distinct reports of cannon coming from the direc-
tion of Kumasi, and thinking that this might mean some
signal, he replied with two shots from the 75-millimetre gun,
and notified Colonel Wilkinson at Bekwai. That officer,
leaving a small garrison at Bekwai, marched with the
remainder of his force to Esumeja, with the intention of form-
ing a rear guard to cover the Governor’s retreat, thinking
that he would retire down the main road. After spending
the next few days in a state of great anxiety as to the fate of
the Kumasi garrison, messengers came in to Bekwai, stating
that the Governor and all the soldiers had got out of Kumasi,
and that they were now going down to the coast through
the Denkera country. A few days afterwards this report
was officially confirmed by the Governor himself, who wrote
to say that owing to the non-arrival of a Relief Column, he
had retired on the 23rd June with 600 men to the Denkera
country, and that he had left a garrison of 114 men in the
Fort under Captain Bishop, Mr Ralph, and Dr Hay, with pro-
visions to last them until the 15th July.

All this time Colonel Willcocks had no idea of the
Governor’s retirement from Kumasi, and he was moving
heaven and earth to forward troops to the North. The West African Regiment having landed from Sierra Leone, the commanding officer, Lieut.-Colonel Burroughs, was instructed to make all haste up to the advance depôt at Prahsu with his troops and carriers. Arriving at Prahsu, he was ordered to advance with 500 men and one millimetre gun up the main road as far as Bekwai, when he was to form another advance depôt. Lieut.-Colonel Wilkinson had already gone round to Bekwai via the Obuassi mines, and by sending this strong force up the main road, Colonel Willcocks hoped to clear both roads of the enemy, and so open up his lines of communication. Between Sherimass and Kwisa, almost due east and west, runs a range of hills known as the Moinsi Hills, which continues right across the land owned by the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation. Both Kwisa and Obuassi lie at the foot of the northern slope of the hills. The paths leading over the hills are extremely steep in places, and carriers have great difficulty both in getting up and going down with their loads. This difficulty is intensified when it comes to carrying up heavy pieces of mine machinery, and the several portions of a heavy gun like the millimetre. To mitigate the severity of the climb, the forest thins considerably as one ascends from the plain, and it is possible for the eye to reach as far as 100 yards on either side of the path.

In crossing the Moinsi Hills Colonel Burroughs' column met with a certain amount of opposition from the enemy, but eventually pushed on to Kwisa without fighting any big action. Leaving a garrison at Kwisa, Colonel Burroughs, having Colonel Carter's reverse in mind, commenced on the morning of the 30th June a cautious advance towards Dampoassi, the bush being intensely thick about this part of the country. The soldiers of the West African Regiment, recruited as they are from among the Mendis and Timmanis, who inhabit the Sierra Leone Protectorate, and who are born trackers and hunters—their country being similar to Ashanti in regard to dense forest—make admirable scouts.
A BLOW TO THE ADANSIS

The leading company, forming the advance guard of Colonel Burroughs' column, was commanded by Captain Tighe, D.S.O., an experienced bush fighter. As the column cautiously wound its way through the forest, the pace was extremely slow, and frequent halts had to be made for the rear of the column to close up. Rain began to fall and the light to fail before Dempoassi was reached, but in this way the fates were propitious to Colonel Burroughs, for the Ashantis hate fighting in the rain, as it damps both their powder and their ardour. As soon as it began to get dark, they abandoned the stockade which had given Colonel Carter such a lot of trouble, never realising that the troops were so close at hand, and retired to the town of Dempoassi to cook their evening meal. Just about this time the scouts came across the stockade and reported that it was unoccupied. Captain Tighe, knowing the town was only just beyond the stockade, gave the order to charge, and away raced the soldiers into the town, utterly surprising and defeating the enemy, who were driven helter-skelter out of their huts, losing a number of killed and wounded. This defeat was a great blow to the Adansis, who have a great dread of any fighting at night, and Colonel Burroughs signally avenged Colonel Carter. On the north side of the village another stockade was discovered, and both these stockades, as well as the town, were destroyed and burnt. On the 1st July, without meeting any further opposition, the column reached Bekwai, having done excellent service in thus clearing the road of the treacherous Adansis.

Colonel Burroughs, hearing of the presence of the enemy in large numbers at Kokofu, determined, without waiting for orders, to attack that town with all the available troops at his command. By drawing upon Colonel Wilkinson's and Captain Hall's contingents, he was able to put 700 men into the field, and on the 3rd of July he marched with that force and a millimetre gun from Bekwai. Arriving at the village on the outskirts of Kokofu, which Captain Hall had burnt, his advance guard was opposed by a heavy fire from both
sides of the bush. The millimetre gun was mounted and run up to the front, coming into action in a part of the road which lay just beyond the village, and was in a direct line for the town of Kokofu. In the meantime the Kokofus tried to envelop the whole of the column, working down through the forest on both flanks, and pouring in a deadly fire at close quarters all along the line.

Strenuous efforts were made to deploy the troops outwards to meet this attack, but our efforts to beat the enemy off were made in vain. Companies lost touch of each other, and in one or two cases accidentally fired into each other. Casualties were taking place on all sides; one officer, Lieutenant Brounlie of the West India Regiment, was killed, and several officers, including Colonel Burroughs, were wounded, so that after three hours’ desperate fighting, outnumbered as he was on all sides, Colonel Burroughs decided on falling back on Esumeja. The Ashantis, fortunately for us, made no attempt to cut off our retreat, although they followed us up and harassed the rear, and the column reached Esumeja in safety, but with a large number of killed and wounded. That evening the Kokofus advanced in force close up to Esumeja, and made an ineffectual attack on the village.

On the 9th July Colonel Willcocks, with further reinforcements, reached Bekwai via the main road. He at once turned all his energies into forming a Relief Column, knowing that he had but six days left in which to succour the beleaguered garrison at Kumasi. Bekwai was to be the base from which the column was to start, but the actual road was kept a strict secret.

The advantage of having held Esumeja was now apparent, as the Ashantis would be uncertain up to the last moment as to whether the Relief Column would come up the main road or via Pekki, and the garrison at Esumeja could always hold in check any hostile movement of the Kokofus. There was still another road to Kumasi via Kokofu, and the Ashantis were thus obliged to divide their forces into three: one holding the main road, one concentrated at Kokofu, and the third
THE ADVANCE OF THE RELIEF COLUMN

holding the road leading from Bekwai through Pekki to Kumasi.

Colonel Willcocks, whose staff had been lately augmented by Lieut.-Colonel Henstock, West India Regiment, as Chief Staff Officer, Captain Holford, 7th Hussars, as Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General (B), and Mr Haddon-Smith, Chief-Assistant Colonial Secretary of the Gold Coast, as Political Officer, after working night and day, organised a force sufficiently strong for the purpose of relieving Kumasi.

The Relief Column, which consisted of 64 European officers and non-commissioned officers, 1000 native soldiers, and 1600 carriers, started from Bekwai on the 13th July.

On leaving Bekwai at daybreak on the 13th July, an almost impassable jungle path was encountered. To give an idea of the difficulties of the road, it was five hours before the rear of the Column cleared the village of Bekwai, and it was past midnight before the Column reached the first halting-place at Pekki. Early on the 14th, shortly after leaving Pekki, the advance guard, which was under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Wilkinson, came into touch with the enemy in a village called Trede, and was fired on at an extremely short range. Colonel Wilkinson ordered Captain Eden's company of the 2nd Battalion West African Frontier Force, which is a Yoruba company, to take the village with the bayonet. This was done very smartly, the men having to charge up a steep incline. The village was carried with a loss of only four men wounded, one dangerously so. These tactics rather astonished the enemy, who were surprised, and lost heavily.

On the Column advancing through the dense bush, the enemy allowed the whole of the Column to pass, and then attacked the rear guard under Major Beddoes. The Ashantis, however, were apparently faint-hearted, as a few rounds from a Maxim scattered them. By this time the head of the Column reached a village called Ekwanta, which had to be forced, the enemy having to be driven out before it could be occupied.

At dawn on the 15th, as the Column again advanced, the
main body, with whom were the carriers, was attacked, but the Maxim fire again cleared the bush. The advance of the Column, which was, of course, in single file, owing to the narrowness of the path, was covered by a fringe of scouts thrown out in front of the point of the advance guard, and to either flank, to a depth of about 40 or 50 yards in the bush. When the Relief Column was organised, the 50 Sierra Leone Frontier Police, under the command of Lieutenant Edwards, who were attached to the Ashanti Field Force, were told off as scouts, as they were men naturally accustomed to bush warfare. Major Melliss, I.S.C., volunteered to assist Lieutenant Edwards, and he was allowed to do so.

Scouting through the West African bush is a terribly fatiguing duty. About 20 men are, as a rule, employed at one time, 10 on each side of the path. They advance in line at about five paces interval, keeping in sight of each other and of the officer in command, who has to remain on the path. Each man has literally to cut a path for himself with his machete through the bush, and in the event of a man being delayed in his advance, the next file on either side wait for him, while the others wait for them, and thus the delay is communicated to the officer in charge. Being barefooted, they make little or no noise as they steal through the bush, and on more than one occasion they have effected the capture of a hostile scout.

On the 15th July, about 4.20 P.M., the scouts saw the dim line of a stockade stretching right across the path, and reported the circumstance to Lieutenant Edwards. Hardly had the report been made when the enemy opened a heavy fire from the stockade, wounding both Major Melliss and Lieutenant Edwards. Colonel Wilkinson, who, as advance guard commander, followed just in rear of the point, ordered up three Maxims, two 75-millimetre guns, and three 7-pounders, and as soon as the guns were mounted, deployed them to the front and opened a heavy fire on the stockade. About this time Colonel Willcocks, who had heard the sound
of the firing, came up to the front and personally conducted operations. The guns continued to fire for about twenty minutes, the range being about 100 yards, and under cover of this fire Captain Eden was ordered to work his company round by the left, and Captain Wright his company round by the right flank, clearing the bush as they advanced. The commandant then ordered the "Cease Fire" to sound, and the order was obeyed as if the men were on parade. Curiously enough the Ashantis also ceased fire. The "Charge" was then sounded, and the two above-mentioned companies, with whom were several of the commandant's personal staff, and the personal escort under Captain Holford, charged the enemy, cheering loudly. Vaulting, jumping, and scrambling over the stockade, they would not be denied, and the cold steel was too much for the Ashantis, who fled, abandoning three other stockades, which were taken, one after the other, in the same rush. The largest stockade was 150 yards long, 5 feet high, and 5 feet thick. The behaviour of our men was splendid. The scene behind the stockade was simply awful, and a notable feature was the destructive effect of the 75-millimetre guns, the shells of which had penetrated the stockade and burst beyond, mangling many bodies. Our casualties were few—only two killed and nineteen wounded—the slightness of the loss being due to the high fire of the enemy. The Ashanti loads his gun almost up to the muzzle with powder and slugs, and is naturally chary of setting the butt end to his shoulder. He therefore fires with his gun almost in line with his hip, and this tends to throw the muzzle high.

Behind the stockades an Ashanti war camp was discovered, containing upwards of 1000 huts, which were set on fire and burnt, the stockades being pulled down. The enemy's force was estimated at 4000.

After the action, which was fought about a mile from the Fort, just where the Pekki road debouches on to the main road, the Column re-formed and marched without further opposition into Kumasi, where the Commandant was met by
the European officers who had been left behind in the Fort. They were Captain Bishop, Mr Ralph, and Dr Hay. The scene round the Fort beggared description. Half concealed by the long grass, and lying within 50 yards of the walls, were numbers of corpses in all stages of putrefaction, many of them headless. The stench, as may well be imagined, was awful. On the 16th July, the whole force was occupied in cutting down the grass and in burying and burning the dead. On sanitary grounds it was found necessary to burn all the native huts which remained standing round the Fort.

It was painful to see the emaciated condition of the late beleaguered garrison. The destitute state of the civilians who, being too weak to escape with the Governor, had remained behind under the protection of the Fort, was heart-rending to witness, but in order that my readers may judge for themselves how these poor people suffered, I will go back to the day when the Governor commenced his retreat from Kumasi, and will endeavour to describe the final stages of the siege.
CHAPTER XIV

THE SIEGE OF KUMASI (JUNE 23 TO JULY 15)

On the 22nd June, Major Morris sent for Captain Bishop and told him that he was about to leave Kumasi with the Governor and Lady Hodgson, and most of the garrison, early the next morning, and that he (Captain Bishop) was to be left behind in command of a small garrison, with Lieutenant Ralph of the Lagos Haussas and Dr Hay, Colonial Surgeon, the total force numbering 132, as follows:

| European Officers | . | . | . | 3 |
| Native Officer    | . | . | . | 1 |
| Native Clerk      | . | . | . | 1 |
| Native Dispensers | . | . | . | 2 |
| Gold Coast Haussas| . | . | . | 76 |
| Lagos Haussas     | . | . | . | 39 |
| Officers' Servants| . | . | . | 3 |
| Carriers          | . | . | . | 7 |

Total 132

Major Morris gave him written orders stating that he had left a garrison of 115 to defend the Fort, with rations sufficient for twenty-four days, and that if he were not relieved in that time, he was to try and force his way out, carrying two days' rations with him. Also that the machine guns and specie were to be carefully buried in the Fort, the 7-pounder guns spiked, and all clothing and ammunition destroyed.
Of the 115 Haussa troops who were left behind, with the exception of those men whom Captain Bishop was allowed to select, 90 were unfit to march out with the evacuating force, but were able to man the loopholes in case of need. The native officer was an old man nearly seventy years of age, who had been a sergeant at the time of the '74 Expedition to Kumasi under Lord Wolseley.

Dr Hay was very ill with fever at the time the evacuation took place, and had to be carried into the Fort in a hammock. Although they offered to take him to the Coast, he pluckily volunteered to stay behind, but was very ill most of the time.

During the anxious time that elapsed until the arrival of Colonel Willcocks, the garrison had not any serious fighting, but deaths from sheer starvation occurred almost daily among the garrison. Some time before the Relief Column arrived, they had given up all hope of relief. After about ten days their condition became such that Captain Bishop believed many of them did not care much whether they were rescued or not. One poor Gold Coast Haussa, complaining that death did not come quick enough, blew his brains out just under his window one morning. Fortunately Captain Bishop and Lieutenant Ralph, except for slight touches of fever, kept pretty fit, but all got rather thin, especially Hay, about whom they were most anxious.

When the Column marched out of Kumasi about 5.30 A.M. on Saturday, the 23rd June, the garrison was assured that authentic information had been received that the Relief Force was at Esu-meja, 16 miles from Kumasi, and that they would be relieved in 5 days at the very latest. When left alone, the first task was to take stock of the food supply, and then to tell off the garrison to their various stations in the bastions and at the loopholes, warning them that they were on no account to leave the guns, but always to sleep beside them. Every man had 120 rounds of Lee-Metford cartridges, with a reserve of 50 rounds per man. There was a fair quantity of ammunition for the 7-pounder guns, of which there were five, and a good quantity of Martini-Henry
ammunition for the machine guns (four Maxims, and a naval pattern Nordenfeldt), but the latter ammunition, being old, used to jam continually, the heads of the cases being torn off and left in the barrel.

About two hours after Major Morris had left Kumasi about 30 Ashantis were seen coming towards the Fort from the Bantama stockade. They evidently thought the Fort had been entirely evacuated, for they came along talking and laughing loudly, and walking in the middle of the road. They were allowed to come within about 200 yards (if they had come closer they would have been under cover), and then two Maxims were turned on them. They immediately bolted into the bush and fired their guns off when they had got under cover. About two were killed and several wounded.

All the shelters that had been erected by the friendly population, covering a large area and built closely together under cover of the guns from the Fort, and numbering some thousands, had now to be destroyed. Not only would they have afforded cover to the enemy, but they formed a pestilential spot, the stench arising from which was awful, so Captains Bishop and Ralph with half-a-dozen men went out of the Fort to try and burn them, first examining them all carefully to see that there were no half dead people left in them. All they discovered, however, were 8 or 9 bodies which had evidently been dead some time. They then tried to set fire to the huts in different places, but they were so sodden with the rain that they would not burn. As the bodies were too far gone to be buried, they had to be left, and the stench had to be put up with until the huts were sufficiently dry to be burnt, which was not until the 27th June. Of all the friendly natives about 150 preferred to stay in Kumasi; these all lived in shelters on the south-west side of the Fort.

The day after the Column marched out three of the men of the garrison died from starvation, and almost daily one or more succumbed. The gates of the Fort were only
opened early in the morning and about five in the afternoon, for the purpose of burying any dead there might be in the trenches around the Fort, for the men were too weak to dig proper graves.

For the first five or six days the inmates of the Fort were not unduly anxious, but when no relief came, and they remembered that they had been told a force was only 16 miles off, their spirits began to fall. After a fortnight they began to be doubtful whether they would be relieved in time, for they began to think it must have been a false report as to troops being at Esumeja. Still, Captain Bishop and his subordinates had to keep up an appearance of cheerfulness for the sake of their men, who bore their sufferings with the greatest fortitude. The conduct of the native troops was marvellous; they maintained perfect discipline, and never uttered a single complaint.

The first business every morning was to serve out the day’s rations to the men, who came up to the table one by one. Some were too weak to do this, and simply lay about on the ground. All were worn to mere skin and bone; but there were a few who, to relieve their hunger, had been eating poisonous herbs, which had caused their whole bodies to swell to a great extent.

At first the daily ration consisted of \( \frac{1}{4} \) of a lb. of corned beef and 1½ biscuits per man, but as time went on this had to be reduced to 1 biscuit and \( \frac{1}{4} \) lb. of meat. Occasionally some native women would come outside the Fort and offer certain articles of food at ridiculous prices. These were eagerly purchased, and many would readily have given three times the price asked. A piece of “koko,” usually costing a fraction of a penny, would realise fifteen shillings, and bananas fetched from one shilling to two shillings a-piece. Fifteen shillings was once paid for a small pineapple.

But even these high-priced luxuries were extremely rare, and the value of money can be judged when it is known that the Haussa troops used to be paid 3s. a day in lieu of the half biscuit to which the rations were reduced,
in order to enable them to buy a small ball of green leaves, which the native women living outside used to collect and boil up, and sell to the men.

By this means a number of biscuits were saved daily, for the contents of several of the cases, when opened, were found to be quite rotten and unfit for food. Most of the biscuits contained weevils and grubs, some being coated with mildew, and they had to be well sunned before being served out.

Every few days the anxieties of the garrison were increased by native reports—some to the effect that the loyal Bekwais and N'Kwantas had joined the Ashantis; others, that the Governor's Column had been cut up, and that the Ashantis had a white man's head in their camp. To make matters worse, smallpox broke out in the Fort, but luckily there were not many cases. They had to be removed to a hut outside the walls. Dr Hay, though still far from well, used to go over the wall of the Fort to visit them, and in doing so he contracted another severe dose of fever.

As a last resource Captain Bishop tried to get some messengers through to Esumeja or Bekwai, offering £100 to any man who would volunteer. Two Lagos Haussas volunteered to go, but returned two days afterwards without success. Then a Gold Coast Haussa and one of the Lagos men who went before said they would try to get through. The Gold Coast man managed to do so (though the other poor fellow was caught by the Ashantis), and on his returning with the Relief Column under Colonel Willcocks, he was handed over the £100 promised. Colonel Willcocks also promoted him to be a sergeant for his pluck.

Several times the Ashantis came out from their stockades, once to burn the Basel Mission Chapel, which the garrison tried ineffectually to save, and once to destroy the Wesleyan Chapel, which, being in a hollow, was out of the defenders' line of fire. At night small bands of Ashantis prowled about near the Fort and got round the smallpox hospital hut, which had to be evacuated for another closer in.
On the 14th July the usual native stories were told of distant firing, but these reports, which had at first raised the hopes of Captain Bishop's force by their constant repetition, only made them the more despondent, as they always turned out to be false. Little attention was therefore paid to them. On the evening of this day the native officer came and reported that he was sure he had heard a 7-pounder fired three times, and also that many of the men had heard it; so about 7 o'clock three double shells were fired as an answer. No further firing, however, was heard, and it was believed that the supposed 7-pounder shots were only those from a Dane gun. On the 15th, just as Captain Bishop had finished serving out the rations, about 10.30 A.M., a sergeant came to him and said volley firing had been heard on the Cape Coast road, so he went up on one of the bastions. He certainly heard three or four volleys, but they were so well fired that even then one could not be certain that it was not a Dane gun in the distance, the sound being so deceptive. Still the officers felt more hopeful. Most of the men were quite apathetic, being too weak to care much for anything.

At 4.30 in the afternoon terrific firing was suddenly heard. This removed any doubts the defenders may have had. The officers went up to the top room of the Residency with glasses, to look out for the Relieving Column. It seemed so sad that now, when relief was at length at hand, several of the men should be at the very point of death. The firing lasted about a quarter of an hour, and then cheering was heard, so those watching in the Fort came to the conclusion that one of the stockades had been taken. Nothing more was heard for about another half-hour, when suddenly heavy firing commenced again a good deal nearer, several shells bursting about 300 yards in front of the Fort; one actually passed over it, and burst some distance in rear. Then during a lull in the firing, a Maxim was fired from the Fort to show that the inmates were still alive. When the firing ceased there was more loud cheering. This meant
that the Column had arrived at the last stockade and had taken it. Presently a bugle sounded the halt. At a few minutes past 6 o'clock the advance guard appeared in sight, the way being led by a fox terrier; then came the staff, with Colonel Willcocks just behind. Two buglers on the veranda of the Fort sounded a welcome as soon as they appeared. Then the gates of the Fort were opened, and Captain Bishop, Lieutenant Ralph, and Dr Hay went out to meet them.

On the 17th July the Relieving Force, with the exception of 150 men of the 2nd Battalion West African Frontier Force, under the command of Captain Eden, with Lieutenant Mayne as his subaltern, and Dr Thompson as medical officer, who remained behind to garrison the Fort, commenced its return march to Bekwai. Prior to his departure, Colonel Willcocks "commandeered" all private stores belonging to the officers and European non-commissioned officers of his Column, and these stores were used with the other supplies brought from Bekwai to revictual the Fort for two months, by which time the Commandant expected to raise the siege altogether. The old garrison, together with a large number of women and children in a destitute condition, returned to Bekwai with the Relief Column. The return march was painfully slow, owing to most of the late sufferers having to be carried in hammocks. All villages as far as the Bekwai border at Pekki were burnt, and on the 19th July the Column reached Bekwai thoroughly tired out, having lived for the last six days on half rations. All ranks, from Colonel Willcocks downward, deserve the greatest praise for the cheerful, uncomplaining way in which they bore themselves; and as for Captain Bishop and his gallant little garrison, their noble struggle to uphold the British flag is one of the grandest incidents of British history since the days of the Indian Mutiny.
CHAPTER XV
FROM THE COAST TO BEKWAI

With the relief of Kumasi the first objective of the Ashanti Field Force was brought to a successful conclusion, and by this time a large number of special service officers having joined for duty, Colonel Willcocks proceeded to organise thoroughly the whole force.

To give my readers some idea of the country in which the operations had to be carried out, I will describe my journey to the front.

I shall not weary you with the hackneyed description of a voyage to the West Coast of Africa, but I must mention one incident that rather struck me when touching at Monrovia, the capital of Liberia. In the course of a conversation with one of that republic's most influential citizens, the subject of which was the Boer War, the gentleman, who was as black as the ace of spades, drawled out with a regular Yankee twang, "Wal, I guess there are two Generals whom I do admire, and they are General Jones and Lord Roberts."—General Jones, whom he placed first, being the black Commander-in-Chief of the five hundred or so rag-tag and bobtail niggers who compose the Liberian army.

On board the Loanda there were four other special service officers besides myself, viz., two regulars, Captain Greer, Warwick Regiment, and Lieutenant Graham, Highland Light Infantry, and two Militia officers, Major
SURF BOATS AT CAPE COAST

Weston, 5th Liverpool Regiment, and Captain Sheffield, 4th Essex Regiment.

We reached Cape Coast at 1 A.M. on the 8th July, when very heavy rain was falling. About 7 A.M., the boarding officer, a native, came on board, and in reply to our question, “Any news of Kumasi?” said, “No news.” Later on, however, he incidentally remarked that the Governor and the bulk of his following had managed to elude the Ashantis and escape, leaving a garrison of 100 men in Kumasi. We landed in a surf boat, and to a newcomer this is a funny experience. The boat is manned by 10 men and a coxswain. The men sit on the gunwale and use trident-shaped paddles. They keep wonderful time, singing a weird chant the while, and sometimes pausing on their paddles for thirty seconds, while the leader of the choir gives a short solo; then they plunge in their paddles and join in the chorus. As soon as the boat nears the shore the fun begins. The boat comes in on the top of a roller, rises high in the air, and then suddenly grounds, shooting the unwary passenger out of his seat, and before he has time to reassert his dignity he is ignominiously picked up by two of the boatmen and carried through the surf. I remember once at Cape Coast watching the landing of a distinguished naval officer, who was very stout. A guard of honour was drawn up on the beach to receive him. To see him seized by two Fanti boys, nervously hanging on to their wool, while they marched him through the surf and dumped him down in front of the guard, just as they presented arms, was one of the funniest sights I have ever seen.

On reporting ourselves to the Base Commandant, we were informed that we should start at daybreak the next morning for the front, so we spent the whole of the rest of our first day in drawing rations and taking over our carriers. Each officer was allowed 18 carriers, 8 of whom were to be used as hammock boys, and we drew seven days' rations a-piece. A week's ration for a European consisted of 7 lbs. of tinned
meat, 5 lbs. of wheatmeal biscuits (commonly known as dog-biscuits), 2 lbs. fancy biscuits, half a bottle Worcestershire sauce, 2 tins of jam, 2 tins of milk, ½ lb. of butter, ½ lb. of tea, either ½ lb. of coffee or cocoa, a small bag of salt, 1 lb. of compressed vegetables, 1 bottle of whisky, ¼ bottle of rum, 2 small tins of pea-soup, and 7 lbs. of rice.

At daybreak on the 9th July we started from Cape Coast. It had rained heavily during the previous night, but the day broke fine, and we made our first day's march along an excellent road, sometimes walking and sometimes riding in our hammocks. We halted at Akroful for about five hours, while our boys cooked our "chop," which is the native name for every meal. We utilised the halt to filter our water, which is a tedious process. Each officer had been provided with a portable Berkefeld filter, through which the water is pumped by hand. The water is first boiled, allowed to cool, and then pumped through the filter, as a rule, into empty whisky bottles, which are carried with the greatest care in "chop" boxes, for each bottle of filtered water is worth its weight in gold, metaphorically speaking. Owing to its being the rainy season all the streams were full of muddy water, and though we spent hours in carefully filtering our water, it was always coloured. For making tea this did not matter, but when made into soda water in a sparklet bottle, it looked like ginger ale.

After resting at Akroful we continued our march to Dunkwa, which we reached about 6 o'clock that evening, a distance of about 20 miles from Cape Coast. Though I have travelled through many forests in different parts of the globe, I was simply awestruck at Nature's handiwork in Ashanti. The gigantic cotton trees and bamboos, interlacing and forming a natural and impenetrable archway overhead, with the dense dark bush below, made a deep impression on me.

We had great difficulty at first in obtaining fresh provisions at Dunkwa, though we were in a friendly country, and we had to show a little firmness with the chief, as he would persist in saying that there was no such thing as a chicken or
On the Road to Bekwai: "Chop" Boxes.

The King of Bekwai and his Court Page.
Telephone No.
1219 Holborn.
Telegraphic Address.
Writings London.

With

Moulton & Deans's
Compliments.

37, Chancery Lane, W.C.
an egg in the town. With a little bluffing and a few threats we succeeded in raising two chickens about the size of blackbirds, 6 eggs (half of which turned out “wrong 'uns”), and a basket of fruit and vegetables. The chief declined to receive any payment, became gracious, and we parted the best of friends. Our carriers and hammock boys were thoroughly played out, and slept like dead men all night.

On the 10th July we marched to Mansu. To give our boys a chance we walked the first three miles out of Dunkwa, and afterwards again proceeded at odd times on foot. The road was still in excellent order, but we noticed that it was simply strewn with pieces of mine machinery which had evidently been dropped by the carriers when the war panic set in. Nearly all the pieces were addressed to the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation. I was afterwards told by a high official of the Corporation at Obuassi, that one of the greatest troubles miners on the West Coast had to encounter was the difficulty in getting their machinery up from the coast. In the first place, the machinery has to be divided up into small loads suitable for man transport; and in the second place, if one or two carriers fail to turn up, a whole plant of machinery might be thrown out of gear. Judging from the amount of machinery lying along the road, it struck me as being wonderful that any mine should ever get into working order. All this inconvenience will cease when the country is opened up by railways. The railway from the port of Sekondi to Tarkwa at present feeds the Wassau mining district, and I understand that it will be carried on via Obuassi to Kumasi.

On arriving at Mansu we heard that Colonel Wilcocks was at Esiankwanta, and being anxious to catch up with him as soon as possible, we decided to make a forced march to the next village of importance, a place called Suta. Our carriers had settled into their collars and were coming along much better, but as we heard that owing to the rains the road further on was bad and the bridges of the rivers washed away, we sent for the King of Mansu and asked him to let
us have some carriers to help us on to Suta and so ease our own carriers. After a considerable palaver we persuaded him to assist us in this matter, so, after partaking of our evening “chop,” we made preparations for a moonlight march. At 9 P.M., however, when we proposed to start, it began to rain, and after waiting for an hour in the hope that the rain would cease, we started in the middle of a downpour, and for ten miles endured the most awful discomfort. Our hammock boys were tired with their march to Mansu, so we had to proceed most of the way on foot. The road at some points was flooded more than ankle deep. All the bridges were down, and the rivers required very careful negotiation, the crossing being managed by means of trunks of trees thrown across from bank to bank. Fortunately the moon was nearly at the full, and in spite of the heavy clouds there was just sufficient light to feel one’s way across.

To cut this dismal story short, we reached Suta about half-past one in the morning, wet through and tired out. We made the chief provide us with huts, and as soon as our boys had rigged up our camp beds we threw ourselves on them, boots on and all, and slept soundly till daybreak. Owing to the difficulty of transport it was found impossible to provide Europeans with tents, and great use is therefore made of the native huts to sleep in. Most of them are very clean, but often during the campaign we had to sleep in some filthy specimens. The huts are all of the same pattern, being built of mud walls, the floors raised a foot or two off the ground, while the roofs are made of bamboo, and are thatched sometimes with palm leaves and sometimes with grass. The roofs are seldom waterproof, and the rafters are one mass of spiders’ webs, some of the spiders being bigger than one’s hand, and a great nuisance, for they drop bits of mud and the dead bodies of their victims on you as you sleep, and I have often been awakened by some beast being dropped on to my head. The measurement of these huts is usually about 7 feet by 5 feet. There is not much room, therefore, to make an elaborate toilet.

At daybreak, on the 11th July, we marched the next stage
to Feysu on foot, as our carriers were done up. We left
Feysu on the same day at 6 P.M., once more in a pour of rain.
As usual, the bridges were all down, and when crossing a
small river, by means of the usual tree-trunk, Captain
Sheffield had a narrow escape from drowning, as he slipped
off the tree and fell into the river. Fortunately the flow of
the stream was towards the tree, and he managed to catch
hold of it and hold on till he was pulled out. Beyond the
same discomfort from the rain, from the flooded state of the
roads, necessitating our marching through water up to our
knees, and from the bad accommodation at our sleeping
place, Akrofodi, whence we made an early start for Prahsu in
a downpour, nothing of interest happened till we arrived at
Prahsu.

The Prah was much swollen, having risen 15 feet in three
days. It was fully two hours from the time we left the river
bank before the whole of our party was across the river. The
passage was accomplished partly by means of a pontoon boat
and partly by a canoe. The river had overflowed the opposite
bank, and our carriers were obliged to wade for 200 yards,
sometimes up to their necks in water. Every now and then
the white men who had been taken across in the canoe saw
some part of their kit doused in the water, or start floating
downstream, with the carriers scrambling after it. All my
things escaped except my hammock, which performed a small
voyage down the river until it was rescued by the hammock
boys, and my despatch box, which received a bath that
ruined a lot of papers.

At this period of the campaign Prahsu was a most im-
portant station, as an immense quantity of stores was con-
centrated here. The chief transport officer, Captain Willans,
was very busy forwarding stores of all descriptions as fast as
he could to the front. He was also chief supply officer, and
he established the system of issuing rations once a week to
Europeans. This system worked admirably throughout the
campaign, and was a great boon, not only in saving supply
officers a lot of unnecessary trouble, but to the ration drawers
themselves, for by taking their stores in bulk they were able to keep them in their original tins, which rendered them less liable to damage from wet. The scale which I have already given, though I daresay I have left out one or two things, was a most liberal one. In addition, every European received a medical comfort twice a week in the shape of a pint of champagne or a quart of stout. It was due in a great measure to our liberal scale of rations that we were able to endure all the hardships of a campaign on the West Coast of Africa during the worst season of the year.

The road from Prahsi to Tobiassi was simply villainous. Owing to our being detained so long in crossing the Prah, and to another incident which I am about to mention, our party was very late in reaching camp—in fact the last few miles were marched in darkness, and in the midst of a heavy thunderstorm. What with the heavy rain, the dense darkness, the vivid lightning, and the awful crashes of thunder, accompanied by noises like the discharge of heavy cannon, which proved to be falling trees, we were all thankful to reach camp in safety. About three miles from Prahsi we came across another river in flood, and measuring 60 feet from bank to bank. The bridge had been washed away, and as two of the officers were unable to swim, one of us made a raft, while the other two who could swim stripped and swam across, bringing back a lot of "tie-tie," which is a tendril much used by the natives in lieu of rope. Some of the tie-tie was used to bind the logs of the raft together, while the rest was used as a rope to haul the raft across, one end of the tie-tie being made fast to the opposite bank. The officers who could not swim and the baggage were thus ferried across.

About mid-day on the 13th July we arrived at Fumsu, which was then the advance depot of the Ashanti Field Force. The garrison was under the command of Major Ryde, West India Regiment. A short time before we reached Fumsu, Lieut.-Colonel Morland had marched in with details belonging to the West African Frontier Force,
THE TRANSPORT OF A GUN

the West African Regiment, and a few gunners of the West India Regiment. Captain Bryan, Manchester Regiment, and Dr Grant accompanied him.

Colonel Morland had also brought up from the Coast with his party a 75-millimetre gun and a 7-pounder gun, the former manned by Haussas, and the latter by West Indian soldiers. I had never seen a millimetre gun before, and therefore, as a gunner, I was much interested in learning its mechanism, and in watching the drill, which was held the day following our arrival at Fumsu.

The gun, carriage, etc., are separated into parts which can be carried by man transport, and consist of the following, viz.:—the trail, carried by 4 men; the cradle, carried by 4 men; 2 wheels and an axle, with one man to each; the gun, carried by 4 men, and the spare parts and tools, which are carried by one man. Allowing for reliefs, it requires 32 carriers to transport each gun and carriage, and in addition to these, carriers are required for the ammunition, which is packed in bearers. The ammunition is fixed, i.e., the cartridge and shell are in one, and the bearers are constructed to carry two double common or double incendiary shells, each weighing 18 lbs.; or three common, shrapnel, case, or ring shells, each weighing 12 ½ lbs. The heavier parts of the gun and carriage are carried slung between two bamboos, with cross pieces at each end, which rest on the carriers' heads. These carriers are enlisted Haussas, of grand physique. The gun, cradle, and trail all weigh well over 200 lbs. each, yet these carriers have been known to double for a mile with this weight on their heads. When passing through narrow defiles, or across temporary bridges, they were obliged to allow only two men to bear the weight, which was done without any mishap.

To mount the gun and carriage, the trail, which always leads in column, is placed on the ground, the cradle is brought up and inserted in the trunnion hole in the breast of the trail, the axle and wheels are then brought up and placed in position, and finally the gun is inserted into the
breech end of the cradle, pushed home and clamped. The operation of mounting the gun and carriage in a narrow bush path takes 1 min. 30 secs. This gun is the same as that supplied by Vickers, Sons, & Maxim to the H.A.C. battery which went to South Africa with the C.I.Vs., except that to reduce the weight the length of the gun is 11 inches shorter. This reduces the muzzle velocity of the gun to 958 ft. per second, which is quite high enough for mountain or bush warfare.

The country between Fumsu and Bekwai being in the hands of the enemy, it was three days before Major Ryde would consent to allow us to proceed to the front, but on the 16th July a convoy was sent off, escorted by about 100 men and two guns, under the command of Colonel Morland, whom we special service officers accompanied. As the country was in the hands of the Adansis, an attack was possible, so that the order of march was made with the view of beating off a sudden attack. Colonel Morland was informed that the main road was very unsafe, except for a large body of troops. He therefore decided to branch off by the side road to Obuassi.

We reached the village of Koko after a twelve hours' march, the pace of the column being necessarily very slow. We saw no signs of the enemy, and the only shots that were fired found their billets in the bodies of two sheep, which were found outside the village, and these gave us a fresh meat ration.

On the 17th July we left Koko at 6 A.M., and had a long slow march to Obuassi, having had to negotiate the Dampier Hills, which are a continuation of the Moinsi Hills. The ascent was bad enough, but the downward slope was like the side of a house, and required great care on the part of the carriers to keep their loads on their heads. We were met by Mr Webster and the few remaining members of the staff left after the war scare. Mr Webster was the Acting Superintendent of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, Obuassi being the headquarters of the Company. We heard that, three days before our arrival, the Bekwais of the neigh-
bourhood had had an engagement with the Adansis at a village called Patagora, near Kwisa. Both sides claimed a victory, but as the Bekwais had only just returned with five killed and twenty wounded, I rather fancy they were worsted.

Ouasssi is really a charming place. The staff bungalow was built on a hill which was defended by a stockade, and a small garrison under the command of Lieutenant Beamish. The forest and bush is cleared within a radius of about one mile from the bungalow, and the hill on which it is built commands an extensive view of the mines and the factories. The slopes of the hills are planted with pineapples, yams, etc.

From all accounts the country was full of gold, and I was shown several pieces of quartz which simply sparkled with it. The staff whom we found there, though all work was of course suspended, were looking fit and well, and Surgeon-Major Hickson, the medical officer in charge, told me that with the exception of two cases of black water fever, there had been no sickness for the past three years, except the very mildest form of jungle fever, and the average number of Europeans had been 44. I should say that the good health they maintained was due to the clearing of the forest and the planting of the vegetables. In the former case the sun was admitted to dry up the decaying vegetation, and in the second case the growing vegetables drew the malaria out of the soil. Be it as it may, there was a marked change in the fresh feel of the air at Ouasssi, as compared with the enervating atmosphere of either the coast or the forest, and one seemed to breathe in new life.

On the night of our arrival at the mines we were invited to dine with the staff, and a rare good dinner they gave us, though, of course, the meat was all tinned.

We left Ouasssi on the morning of the 18th July, but before our departure Mr Webster gave each of us a piece of quartz as a memento of our visit.

The march to Yakkobu was uneventful. The distance
was about 15 miles, but this is only guesswork, as neither Obuassi nor Yakobu was then marked on the map. We judged the distance by time. Every soldier is accustomed to know the approximate rate at which he is marching, and by noting the times between halts, he can pretty well tell the total distance he has marched. There must be an immense amount of gold in this country, for we had literally to pick our way between gold holes which had been dug by the natives, and which ranged from 6 feet to 30 feet in depth.

We arrived at Bekwai on the 19th July, about an hour after the Relief Force got back from Kumasi, and we heard all about the series of engagements the force had taken part in before relieving the garrison at Kumasi.
CHAPTER XVI

PUNITIVE OPERATIONS BEGUN

With the return of the Relief Column to Bekwai, and the arrival there of a number of special service officers, the reorganisation of the Ashanti Field Force proceeded apace.

The Personal, Headquarter, and General Staffs were composed as under:—

Commandant.

Personal Staff.
Captain HASELWOOD, G.C.C.  A.D.C.
Captain LELANDS, G.C.C.
Mr RUSSELL, Private Secretary.

Headquarter Staff.
Major (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) HENSTOCK, A.A.G., and Chief Staff Officer.
   Lieutenant (local Captain) M’CLINTOCK, D.A.A.G. (A).
   Succeeded by Captain (temporary Major) BRYAN, D.A.A.G. (A).
   Captain (temporary Major) HOLFORD, D.A.A.G. (B).
   Mr HADDON SMITH, Political Officer.

General Staff.
Major MONTANARO, O.C.R.A.
Lieutenant (local Captain) WILLANS, C.T.O.
Dr M’DOWELL, P.M.O.
Captain CARLETON, Provost-Marshal.
Lieutenant-Colonel Morland was appointed officer commanding lines of communications, but being invalided home shortly after his arrival, this appointment remained in abeyance until the arrival of Major Peyton, C.M.G., the work in the interim being performed by the Headquarter Staff.

The Commandant's second objective was the reduction of the enemy south of Kumasi, and on the 23rd July a strong punitive column was sent against Kokofu. The column left Bekwai at 6.30 A.M., and was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Morland, with Captains Bryan, Holford, and M'Clintock as staff officers. The column was 800 strong, composed of F Company, 1st West African Frontier Force, under Major Melliss; E Company, 1st West African Frontier Force, under Captain Hall; D Company, 1st West African Frontier Force, under Captain Wright; B Company, 2nd West African Frontier Force, under Major Beddoes; E Company, 2nd West African Frontier Force, under Captain Monck-Mason; two companies West African Regiment, under Captain Loch; three 75-millimetre guns, and two 7-pounders, under myself, the guns being escorted by half a company of the West African Regiment, under Lieutenant Greer.

The order of march was as follows:—

_Advance Guard._

Major Melliss, commanding.

½ company West African Regiment, under Captain St Hill, acting as scouts.

E Company, 1st W.A.F.F.

F Company, 1st W.A.F.F.

_Main Body._

50 Pioneers under Captain Neal, transport officer.

The Guns (and escort).

Commanding Officer and Staff.

Personal escort of D Company, 1st W.A.F.F.
Dressing Station, with 2 Medical Officers, and 12 Hammocks and Stretchers, Dr Buee in charge.

½ company, 3rd W.A.F.F., under Lieutenant Shortlands.
One company, W.A.R., under Captain Tighe, D.S.O.
½ E Company, 2nd W.A.F.F., under Captain Greer.
Reserve Ammunition Column.

Field Hospital of 18 Hammocks and Stretchers, with two Medical Officers, Dr Langstaff in charge.

REAR GUARD.
Major Beddoes, commanding.
½ E Company, 2nd W.A.F.F., under Captain Monck-Mason.
B Company, 2nd W.A.F.F.

The pioneers, who were carriers armed with machetes, were for the purpose of clearing the road for the guns.

The whole column, in the above order, marched along a bush path to Amoafual, where a battle was fought with the Ashantis in 1873. At this place the main road to Kumasi was struck, and the column proceeded due north to Esumeja, where it arrived about 8.30 A.M. A halt was made for breakfast, and after Colonel Morland had addressed all the officers and European non-commissioned officers, and explained his plan of operations, the "fall in" was sounded, and at 9.45 A.M. the column was once more in motion.

The burnt village just outside of Kokofu was reached about noon, after an extremely slow, toilsome march. At this place, one of the millimetre guns was mounted and dragged behind the 7-pounders, which were already mounted. Presently a shot was heard, followed by a roar of Lee-Metford carbines, and a scattered reply of Dane guns. I was with the guns on a hill overlooking the scene of the fight, and arrived in time to see the storming party under Major Melliss, with fixed bayonets, charging a stiff stockade. Behind the stockade, which lay at the bottom of the hill, came an incline, and on the slope of this incline were dotted numbers of war huts. The enemy were completely surprised, and had not time to man the stockade. They, however, opened a heavy fire from
the foremost fringe of war huts, but the loud cheer from the advance guard as they scrambled over the stockade seemed to strike terror into the Ashantis, for they suddenly broke and fled through their camp to the rear and flanks into the bush.

The storming party covered the immediate front of the guns, so that they were unable to come into action, but the carriers, led by Sergeant-Major Bosher and myself, doubled down the incline, and, simply throwing their heavy loads over the stockade, re-formed with them, and advanced at the double up to the opposite slope. Bosher and I, keeping about thirty yards in front of the batteries, kept looking for a suitable position to come into action, while Hon.-Lieutenant Halfpenny, R.A., whose men were dragging their 7-pounders, and Lieutenant Phillips, R.A., commanding the millimetre battery, cheered their carriers on to further efforts, and so well did these splendid fellows carry their heavy loads, that both batteries were able practically to keep pace with the advance guard, though the road up to the town was almost knee deep in filthy mud, the stench from which was simply abominable. The enemy, who in the meantime had cleared away to the flanks, kept firing on the gun column as it was rushed along. Their fire was, however, kept down by the gun escort under Greer, and by a Maxim which played on them from the rear. Colonel Morland, who was just in rear of the guns, was obliged to send his personal escort charging into the bush to clear out the enemy, and this duty was splendidly carried out by Captain Wright and Lieutenant Grahame, who, revolver in one hand and sword in the other, led their men crashing into the bush.

The town of Kokofu lay at the top of the slope about half-a-mile behind the stockade, and so keen was the charge of the troops, that it was not long before the town was entered and cleared of the enemy. Melliss threw his scouts into the bush on the east side of the town, while I placed my guns to cover the two roads leading into the town from the northwest and south-east, and the fight was over.

The native soldiers were mad with delight, and showed that,
well-disciplined troops as they are, in moments of supreme excitement they display a recrudescence of their savage modes of celebrating a victory. Waving their arms over their heads, they suddenly started savage war dances, singing and shouting for all they were worth, their British officers standing round, immensely delighted at the spirit their men had shown.

Sentries were now posted round the town, and by the commanding officer's orders, all the houses were thoroughly searched for arms and gunpowder. Two hundred Dane guns, a few rifles, some Martini ammunition, and a large number of Dum-Dum bullets were found, as well as fourteen kegs of gunpowder. Rather a curious cartridge belt was found containing a complete fill of Lee-Metford bullets, each wrapped round with tow to make it fit the larger Martini bore.

The whole of the gunpowder was exploded, and the Dane guns burnt.

After an hour's rest the main body of the column evacuated the town, and the rear guard then proceeded to set fire to the huts, which soon blazed up. After the main body had passed through the war camp and the stockade, the former was burnt and the latter was razed to the ground. Owing to the Ashantis having been completely surprised, there were no casualties on our side, but we counted 30 of their men killed, and there must have been numbers of wounded, by the way in which the leaves of the trees were splashed with blood. Only one prisoner was taken, and he died of sheer fright on the homeward march.

This successful action had an immense effect on the British Force, as on the two last occasions when our troops tried conclusions with the Kokofus, the latter had beaten off both our attacks.

News of the capture of Kokofu was sent to Bekwai, and Colonel Willcocks and the troops there gave the victors a great reception on their return. It was late before the column got back, and both officers and men were very weary, having been under arms for fifteen hours. The Europeans were given a
medical comfort each in the shape of a pint of champagne, which, needless to say, simply "sizzled" down the throats of the "comforted" ones.

Colonel Morland and his chief staff officer, Captain Bryan, deserve great credit for the admirable dispositions which were made, and Major Melliss and his officers for the brilliant and gallant manner in which they stormed and took the place.

On the 24th July, at 6.30 A.M., D Company, 1st West African Frontier Force, under the command of Captain Wright, with Lieutenant Grahame as his subaltern and Dr Grant as medical officer in charge, left for Obuassi, where Captain Wright was to meet and take command of 2000 Denkera levies, and proceed thence through the Adansi country to harry and burn villages, destroy the crops, and generally to do all the damage he could.

This was Colonel Willcocks' great policy. As soon as the troops had given the enemy a blow, he sent the levies to complete the work of destruction and punishment. The forest being so densely thick, it was impossible for the troops, hampered as they were with so much impedimenta, to get at the numerous villages and farms which lay snugly hid in the deep recesses of the forest. The Ashantis never realised that we should ever leave the main road, and imagined that they could place their women, children, and property in safety by sending them away into the bush. How great, therefore, must have been their disgust when they heard that such bitter enemies as the Denkersas and other tribes had raided their fastnesses, and captured and made slaves of their women and children. It has been the custom from time immemorial for the victors in inter-tribal wars on the Gold Coast to make slaves of the women and children of the vanquished. These women would become the wives of the victors, bear them children, and live for years and years with their new husbands and masters, but they never seemed to forget their old tribe. When the British Government take over any part of the country, one of the greatest troubles that the officials have to contend against is the hearing of
complaints on this subject, and their readjustment. A case has been known of an old woman who complained that she had been taken prisoner as a young woman by a certain tribe, and requested that she might be restored to the bosom of her family, though her children, and even grandchildren, were now members of the tribe which had taken her prisoner years before.

On the 25th July Major Beddoes left Bekwai to operate in conjunction with Wright's column against the Adansis at Dampoassi. He was in command of a force comprised as follows, viz.:—E Company, 1st West African Frontier Force, under Captain Hall; B Company, 2nd West African Frontier Force, under Captain Greer; E Company, 2nd West African Frontier Force, under Captain Monck-Mason; A Company, West African Regiment, under Captain Stallard, with one 75-millimetre gun and two 7-pounders, under Lieutenant Phillips, R.A.

During the afternoon of the day on which Major Beddoes' column left for Dampoassi, a sale was held of the effects of poor young Brounie, who was killed at Kokofu when Colonel Burroughs attacked that place. This necessary but painful duty has to be performed by a board of three officers, one of whom acts as auctioneer. All articles which might be valued by the relations of a deceased officer at home are put aside and sent to them, but everything else is put up to auction. To give an idea how badly off we were for luxuries, I quote the prices of some of the articles sold:—One box of Vinolia soap (three cakes), £1, 5s.; one cake of shaving soap, 6s.; an empty tin of Calvert's soap, 6s.; three cotton handkerchiefs, 15s.; a small looking-glass, 15s., etc., etc.

About this time a wave of sickness passed over the camp at Bekwai. Though all precautions were taken to make the place as sanitary as possible, Europeans went down one after the other either with fever or dysentery. The Commandant himself was never well all the time he was at Bekwai, and all the sickness was eventually put
down to our living in the native huts. It is the custom of the Ashantis and neighbouring tribes to bury their dead in the courtyards of their houses, and I cannot help thinking that during our prolonged stay in Bekwai, the corpses must have made their presence felt and caused all the sickness. In several cases, notably that of Lieutenant Edwards of the Sierra Leone Frontier Police, who was very ill from dysentery, the diseases were due to the hardships the white men had had to undergo. The excitement once over, they went down either with fever or dysentery. Edwards had been in charge of the scouts during the whole of Colonel Willcocks' march to Kumasi, and the strain proved too much for him. I was in hospital at the same time with him, being down with fever myself, and as I slept next to him I saw the agony he suffered. We had no nurses but our black boys, for the doctors, who were most kind and attentive, had no time to combine a nurse's duty with that of medico.

A bad bout of malarial fever in the bush is a thing to be remembered all one's life. What with flies by day and mosquitoes by night, a blazing hot skin, a chronic headache, and a parched mouth on which no amount of liquid will make any impression, a fever patient has a very poor time. Up to the time of my attack of fever, I had laughed at the idea of quinine; but it was a lesson to me, and every morning afterwards I took 5 grains, and though like other officers I had to undergo cruel hardships, I never once had a return of the fever.

There are a few simple but golden rules to adopt in order to keep your health in the West Coast of Africa, especially the Gold Coast, where dysentery as well as fever is rampant. They are as follows:—Take 5 grains of quinine daily; but if you have to undergo any undue exertion, or get very wet, then take 10 grains a day; never touch alcohol till sundown, and then don't spare it, but never be intemperate; never take a cold bath, and always take a warm bath when the day's work is done; never go
out-of-doors in the daytime, whether the sun shines or not, without a good broad-brimmed sun-hat; if you feel at all shivery or out of sorts, go and lie down at once; and if there are any signs of fever take 15 grains of phenacetine, and as soon as you begin to perspire take 20 grains of quinine. If you have been taking your 5 grains of quinine daily, the chances are that in a day or even less you will throw off the fever. Always sleep in flannel pyjamas, with a good thick flannel kummerband, and never go to sleep without a blanket wrapped round your middle, no matter how hot it is. If white men were only to use the above simple precautions there would be nothing like the present mortality on the Coast. Dysentery is much harder to ward off than fever, and every one should keep chlorodyne always by him, and at the first symptoms of diarrhoea or dysentery, take 20 drops at once.
CHAPTER XVII

WITH BEDDOES’ AND BURROUGHS’ COLUMNS

On the 27th July Major Beddoes' column having passed through Dampoassi without incident, reached Kwisa, and captured a prisoner. The wretch begged for his life, and offered, if it was spared, to lead the force against a strong war camp. Major Beddoes closed with the offer, and the man was marched off with instructions to his guard to shoot him at the first sign of treachery. The column left Kwisa on the 28th July, and proceeded in an easterly direction under the guidance of the prisoner.

During the 28th and 29th, beyond capturing, looting, and burning every village it came across, the column had no encounter with the enemy, nor did any event happen worthy of narration.

At 5 A.M. on the 30th July, the column started to move in a north-westerly direction towards Kokotru. The country thereabouts was very hilly, and the forest thinner than usual, in fact the column was moving along a continuation of the Moinsi Hills. A fringe of scouts, with the ends of the fringe thrown back towards the flanks of the column, afforded protection against surprise. About 6 A.M. all the line of scouts came into contact with the enemy, and while directing operations at the front, and almost at the outset of the conflict, Major Beddoes was severely wounded in the thigh, and had to relinquish the command to the next senior officer, Captain Greer, 3rd Warwickshire Regiment. Finding that the enemy
was inclined to creep round his flanks, Captain Greer formed his troops into a hollow square, and a running fight for about 200 yards then commenced, with the result that the enemy retired, leaving several killed and wounded behind them.

About 9 A.M., the column having advanced a distance of about two miles, the enemy were discovered by the scouts to be lurking in a hollow. Two Maxim guns were brought up, one at either corner of the front of the square. The enemy were chattering like a lot of monkeys, and, using this as a guide, for they were not then in sight, a cross fire from the two Maxim guns suddenly brought to bear on the hollow, causing a panic and precipitous flight on the part of the foe.

The column again advanced along the position lately occupied by the enemy, and the ravine was full of dead bodies and blood; in fact, for a distance of two or three miles there was a regular succession of blood tracks, showing that our little force was pressing the enemy hard. The country became still more hilly, and the bush still less dense. Captain Greer was thus enabled to increase the distance between the flankers and the column still further, and it was owing to this piece of strategy that a stockade, measuring 300 yards long, and running along the top of a hill, was turned without the enemy attempting to occupy it. The stockade itself lay about 80 yards off the path, and had the usual bush tactics been carried out, the first intimation of the presence of the stockade would have been a withering fire on our flank, but by advancing on such a broad front, the enemy would have found themselves enfiladed by our flankers. They must have attached great importance to this stockade, for it was immensely strong, and was protected by a stiff abattis.

About noon the enemy made a determined stand, and an engagement lasting two hours then took place. The path along which the column was proceeding followed the side of the hill and culminated in the bed of a stream, from which the ground again began to ascend steeply into two hills overlook-
ing the stream. The sides of these two hills were occupied in strong force by the enemy, who tried his best to envelope the whole column by creeping round the top of the first hill and attacking the rear guard. Captain Greer's dispositions were as follows:—The right front and flank were held by E Company, 2nd West African Frontier Force, under Captain Monck-Mason and Lieutenant Swaby; the left front and a portion of the left flank were held by B Company, 2nd West African Frontier Force, under Captain Neal; there was a small reserve from both these companies kept on the path, ready for emergencies; the field hospital, reserve ammunition, and baggage carriers were packed close together along the path; while E Company, 1st West African Frontier Force, under Captain Hall, were extended so as to cover the rear and portions of the flank.

The position was thus an elongated oval, the centre of which was exposed on either flank. Along the front, at equal intervals, were interspersed the millimetre gun and two Maxims, the two 7-pounders being retained with the reserve, and there was a Maxim with the rear guard. Owing to the steepness of the side of the hill, it was found impossible to use the 7-pounders, as they turned turtle after each round, so Lieutenant Halfpenny used his men as infantry, and climbing to the top of the spur, drove off the enemy in a determined effort to break through the right flank.

About half-way through the fight, Lieutenant Phillips, who was busy working the millimetre, was shot in the arm. His arm was dressed, bound up, and placed in a sling, and though suffering great pain, he resumed his duty as staff officer to the column, in which capacity he was acting in addition to running the millimetre gun. Shortly after this, Lieutenant Swaby was shot in the side, and was, of course, rendered hors-de-combat. The engagement was brought to a successful termination by Captain Neal bringing up his reserve, extending to the left, and then sweeping round outside the front and bringing a heavy cross fire to bear on
the opposite hillsides. By this time the enemy had had enough of it, and once more broke and fled.

At 4 p.m., after the column had advanced a few miles further, a murderous fire was opened on it, and had the aim been anything like true, it would have mowed our men down like corn before a hailstorm. As it was, the enemy fired high, and few were hit. The 7-pounders were found of the greatest use, and their shrapnel and case shot did great execution.

The enemy behaved most gallantly, charging up to within 10 yards of the guns, and at times the position was most critical. This fight lasted about an hour, and after the most determined resistance of the enemy, who, it was discovered, were led by Opoku, the second in command of the Ashantis, the combined fire of guns, Maxims, and carbines cleared the front, and then, with drums beating and bugles sounding the charge, a rush was made with a cheer, and the enemy’s war camp was taken.

This little force had some of the toughest fighting in the campaign, for it had marched eighteen hours and fought three stiff engagements, without food. Captain Greer, on whom the command devolved when Beddoes was wounded, deserves great “kudos” for the dispositions he made.

Our casualties were—Major Beddoes, Lieutenant Phillips, and Lieutenant Swaby, severely wounded (all three officers were invalided home); Captain Monck-Mason and Colour-Sergeant Blair slightly wounded; 1 native soldier killed, and 34 wounded. The enemy, who used Lee-Metford, Snider, and Martini-Henry bullets, lost considerably, the various estimates ranging from two to three hundred killed and wounded.

The column returned to Bekwai on the 1st August.

On the 4th August a column under Lieutenant-Colonel Burroughs, commanding the West African Regiment, left Bekwai at daybreak, convoying a supply of European and native rations for the garrison at Kumasi. It was composed of A Company, 2nd West African Frontier Force, under
Captain McCarth Morrogh; a company of the 3rd West African Frontier Force, under Lieutenant Shortland; 63 Sikhs, and two companies of the 1st Central African Regiment, which had lately arrived up at the front, under Major Cobbe, the companies being commanded by Captain Margesson and Captain Stevenson; one company of the West African Regiment, under Captain Loch; and one 75-millimetre gun and two 7-pounders, under myself.

Colonel Burroughs' orders were to march to Kumasi, leave the supplies, bring the garrison there up to 300 men, destroy all the stockades investing the Fort, and endeavour to reopen the lines of communication by returning to Bekwai by the main road.

The column reached Pekki without incident, being strengthened on its arrival by picking up F Company, 1st West African Frontier Force, under Major Melliss, and one 75-millimetre gun.

At 6.0 A.M. on the 5th August the column left Pekki in the following order of march:—F Company of the 1st West African Frontier Force (Major Melliss); advance guard, followed by four guns (myself), escorted by one company, 1st Central African Regiment (Captain Margesson), the rest of the main body being composed of the Sikhs and remaining men of the Central African Regiment (Major Cobbe).

In rear of the main body, and escorted by Captain Loch's company of the West African Regiment, came a long line consisting of the field hospital, ammunition column, and supply column. The rear guard was composed of the 3rd West African Frontier Force, under Lieutenant Shortland.

Colonel Burroughs and his staff officer, Captain Haslewood, G.C.C., marched immediately behind the guns.

Nothing happened until the main body reached Kwaranza, when the enemy began sniping the carriers. The column was halted and delayed for about an hour, during which time the snipers were driven off and the column was able to close up. A mile or two further on, at Ekwamare, the enemy
adopted the same tactics, and fired on the same objective, again delaying the column. On reaching Ademira, two villages out of Kumasi, the enemy began to open a dropping fire on the advance guard and main body. The guns then happened to be in the village with a clear range of 100 yards all round, and seeing twenty or thirty of the enemy darting like rabbits across a path at right angles to the village, I opened a cross fire with all my guns; but as ammunition was scarce, we only fired two rounds of shrapnel from the millimetre guns and three rounds of case shot from the 7-pounders. The Ashantis have a wholesome horror of the noise made by these guns, and from that time till the column reached Kumasi it was left undisturbed. The only casualties were among the carriers, one of whom was killed and five wounded.

Marching with a column through the dense bush is very jumpy work. You cannot see the enemy, who can creep within a yard or two of the path, fire his gun, and then run back through paths known only to himself.

The road leading into Kumasi is a fine open one, and the column was able to close up into a broad front. We then marched up to the Fort with the bugles playing a march and the soldiers singing their native war songs.

The garrison turned out and were heartily glad to see us. They were all well and cheerful, and told us that, within an hour of the departure of Sir James Willcocks, the enemy had made an attack on the Fort, but were easily driven off. They tried another attack the next day with the same result, after which they had left the garrison in peace.

On the 6th August, after a council of war, Colonel Burroughs decided to despatch two columns of 300 men, one 75-millimetre gun, and a proportion of Maxims, under the respective commands of Major Melliss and Major Cobbe, to begin the work of destroying the neighbouring stockades. Local information showed that the two stockades furthest away lay along the road passing through Bantama, and their destruction was left to Major Melliss, with instructions to
march off at 11 o’clock in the morning. Major Cobbe was told off to destroy a stockade near the Wesleyan Mission, which was distant about 1500 yards from the Fort. His column, therefore, did not start till noon, the idea being that the attacks should be simultaneous.

Major Melliss met with very slight opposition at the Bantama stockade, which was made short work of. Advancing about a mile further on, his advance guard (F Company, 1st West African Frontier Force, under Captain Merrick, R.A.), was received by a tremendous fusillade, on which the men were ordered to deploy to either flank, and the 75-millimetre gun under Sergeant Desborough, R.A., was mounted and brought up to the front. When the smoke cleared the stockade was exposed to view, and offered a grand target for the gun at 100 yards range. Sergeant Desborough opened fire with double common, a shell which weighs 18 lbs., and fired 6 rounds at the stockade. He did not, however, give enough elevation to the gun, and all the rounds ricocheted over the stockade.

The stockade was loopholed—the enemy having evidently tried to copy the loopholed walls of the Fort—and as the Ashantis were keeping up a hot fire from the loopholes, Sergeant Desborough changed to shrapnel, firing 4 rounds, while there was a hot infantry fire from the Maxims and carbines.

The “cease fire” was then sounded, and with a cheer Major Melliss, closely followed by Captain Merrick and Lieutenant Bias, with F Company, charged down the incline in the teeth of a hot fire from the stockade, which was assaulted and carried.

Even then the enemy refused to budge, and a hand-to-hand contest took place, Major Melliss running one man through with his sword, and Captain Merrick shooting another with his revolver. By this time D Company of the 2nd West African Frontier Force, under Captain (local Major) Eden, and A Company, 2nd West African Frontier Force, under Captain M’Carthy Morrogh, had arrived to
support, and the enemy was on the run, diving as usual into the bush, and being hotly pursued through their war camp up to their village of Intimidu. Captain Merrick was seen chasing a man with his revolver at the present, Major Melliss shouting, "Shoot the beggar," but it turned out that Merrick had emptied his revolver and had no time to reload, which was lucky for the "beggar." Numbers of the enemy were killed and wounded, and the pursuit was kept up for three-quarters of a mile beyond the stockade. The strength of the enemy was unknown, but the war camp was capable of holding about 8000 men.

Colour-Sergeant Foster of F Company was severely wounded after the company crossed the stockade, but in spite of his wound he kept up with the company till the war camp was reached. Besides him, the casualties were Major Melliss and Lieutenant Biss slightly wounded, one man killed, four severely and two slightly wounded, also two millimetre gun carriers and one Maxim gun carrier wounded. The village of Intimidu and the war camp were burnt, and the stockade was razed to the ground, while large supplies of food were captured. Several officers and European non-commissioned officers had narrow escapes. Major Melliss was hit by a spent slug, Captain Merrick had his revolver lanyard cut, Lieutenant Biss was struck on the belt, and Sergeant Buchanan had the sleeve of his jacket ripped open.

To turn now to Major Cobbe's column. It was composed of one company of the West African Regiment (advance guard) under Captain Loch, one millimetre gun under Sergeant-Major Bosher, R.A., 60 Sikhs under Captain Godfrey, and two companies of the 1st Central African Regiment under Captain Margesson and Captain Stevenson.

As soon as the column left the Fort the enemy fired signal shots, and after marching about half-a-mile the enemy began to snipe the column from the bush, hitting Major Cobbe in the shoulder and Sergeant-Major Rose in the stomach—fortunately only a graze. After the force
had advanced another 500 yards the enemy opened a heavy fire from the front. The Maxim gun and advance guard replied, the latter by section volleys. While this front attack was proceeding the enemy tried to turn the flank of the column, and opened a hot fire from the right flank of the bush on the main body. The millimetre gun, which by this time had been put together, came into "action right," and fired four rounds of shrapnel into the bush in the direction of the enemy's attack.

The advance guard having located the stockade, the millimetre gun was run up to the front, and Sergeant-Major Bosher opened fire with double common, but in this case he could not see the stockade on account of the thick bush, and so the practice was bad.

At this period of the engagement Major Cobbe and Captain Godfrey with the Sikhs, and Captain Margesson with his company and a Maxim, cut their way through the bush, and after some considerable time managed to turn the enemy's left flank, getting in behind the stockade. Here they met with strong opposition. Having fired nearly all his ammunition, Sergeant-Major Bosher retired his gun from the front and withdrew to the rear of the column. This turned out to be a fortunate move, as the enemy had been working round our left flank, and just as the gun reached the field dressing station, the enemy opened fire on the wounded. The gun at once came into "action left," and opened fire with shrapnel, which considerably astonished the Ashantis, who retired precipitately.

When Major Cobbe found that he had turned the enemy's flank he sent word to the advance guard, and a simultaneous front and flank charge was made. The stockade was rushed, and the enemy were driven out of the war camp, Captain Godfrey killing two with his revolver.

The war camp was looted and burnt, and the stockade, which was 5 feet high, 6 feet thick, 300 yards long, and protected by a shelter, was destroyed. I regret to say that our
casualties in this action were serious. They were as follows:—
Major Cobbe severely wounded by a bullet in the thigh;
Sergeant-Major Rose, slightly wounded; Sikhs, one mortally,
one dangerously, seven severely, and ten slightly wounded;
Central African Regiment, one mortally, nine severely, and
seven slightly wounded; West African Regiment, one
severely and two slightly wounded; carriers, one mortally,
two severely, and one slightly wounded. The total casualties
between the two columns amounted to 57.

Major Cobbe’s engagement lasted over two hours, and, severe though their losses were, the Sikhs were delighted. I
had a talk with several of them, and they kept on saying,
“Bahut accha laryi,” which means, “Very good fight.” They
bore the brunt of the engagement, and fully maintained their
reputation as a fighting race.
CHAPTER XVIII

OPERATIONS ROUND KUMASI

On the 7th August another council of war was held, and Colonel Burroughs decided to make a night attack on a strong stockade about a mile to the south-east of the Fort, on the Accra road. There were two important reasons for making the night attack: (1) the time at Colonel Burroughs’ disposal was short; and (2) owing to the expenditure of ammunition on the previous day, and the probability of heavy resistance along the main road on our return journey, the husbanding of the rest of our ammunition was of the highest importance. Colonel Burroughs’ orders were, therefore, on no account to fire a single round during the night attack, but to use the bayonet only.

During the afternoon of the 7th August, Captain Loch with his company was sent out to make a careful reconnaissance of the road leading to the stockade, and within two hours that officer returned, having made an excellent road sketch, and having obtained a sight of the stockade without being seen by any of the enemy’s scouts. The reconnaissance was most ably carried out, and, as was afterwards proved, Captain Loch’s sketch was accurate in the extreme.

Punctually at 8 p.m. the troops forming the column for the night attack fell in in front of the Fort. No bugles were allowed to be sounded, and all orders were given in a low tone by officers commanding companies. While the men were falling in, a scare was created by some officious officer,
who, thinking that the carriers encamped all round the Fort were unnaturally silent, told them to sing and talk as they usually do. Before they could be stopped they burst out into a war song, which, sung as it was by some 2000 or 3000 throats, ought to have warned the Ashantis that something was on foot.

With sticks and fists, however, officers and non-commisioned officers rushed in among the carriers, and, luckily, soon quelled the noise.

The following was the general idea and order of march:—Captain Loch, with his company of the West African Regiment, was to lead the advance. Following the advance guard in succession came F Company, 1st West African Frontier Force (Major Melliss), and A Company, 1st Central African Regiment (Captain Margesson), the orders to each of the company commanders being to charge the stockade in rear of Captain Loch's company, and to form horns round the right and left flanks of the war camp.

In rear of the foregoing companies marched the commanding officer, Colonel Burroughs, with Captain Hazlewood, Captain Faunce, and myself as staff officers. Behind us came D Company, 2nd West African Frontier Force, under Major Eden, this company being held in reserve. In rear again came the field hospital, with a company of the 3rd West African Frontier Force under Lieutenant Shortland, as rear guard.

At about 8.30 p.m. the column marched off, lighted by a misty moon. It looked very ghostlike as it silently marched in single file through the bush, and it struck me as wonderful how a force of over 500 men could make so little noise. Words of command were passed along in hoarse whispers, and the only thing that might have put the enemy on the alert was now and then the glinting of the bayonets in the moonlight.

Shortly after 9 o'clock, when the head of the advance guard was within 10 or 20 yards of the stockade, Lieutenant Greer, who was Captain Loch’s subaltern, stumbled in the
road, and made a slight noise. This was quite sufficient to alarm the enemy, who rushed out of their camp, which was built close up to the stockade (a part of it forming a lean-to from it), and laying their guns on the top row of timbers, poured in a ragged volley. They were, however, thoroughly surprised, for Loch, with his company, cheering wildly, was already over the stockade and in the middle of the enemy; but poor young Greer received six of the rounds fired by the Ashantis in his body, and fell mortally wounded, the only man hit that night. I had just time to shake his hand and tell him to "buck up," when I was carried on by the rush. Fortunately for the general idea, though the lean-to ran all along the stockade, there was a 12-foot opening in the centre. This enabled Major Melliss' company to get round into their place on the right flank, and they managed to bayonet a large number of the enemy, who, driven forward by the advance guard, endeavoured to get out by that flank. They were so utterly taken by surprise that they made no attempt to defend themselves. Owing to the narrowness of the opening into the camp the Central Africans were not able to get round to the left flank in time to stop the escape of the enemy in that direction, so that many got away.

The charge was maintained right through the war camp into the bush beyond, where another smaller camp was found. The halt was then sounded, and Colonel Burroughs ordered me to collect all the loot out of both camps, and to set the whole place on fire. The farthest houses were set alight, and the troops retired, firing the houses as they moved back, so as not to be silhouetted in the light. The stockade was levelled, and by the light of a roaring blaze the troops re-formed on the road, and marched back to the Fort, which was reached about half-past eleven.

Not a shot was fired by our men that night, all the work being done with the bayonet, and a great blow was struck at the enemy, who had never been attacked by night before.

At 8 o'clock on the morning of the 8th August, after leaving all the sick and wounded in the Fort, and bringing the
garrison up to 300 men, with 10 European officers and non-commissioned officers, the column commenced its homeward march down the main road to Esumeja. Three miles out of Kumasi, the advance guard came upon the rear of a deserted camp, and almost immediately afterwards struck the stockade which had given Captain Aplin such a lot of trouble. The stockade was soon levelled, and the road beyond was found to be simply strewn with the empty cartridge-cases fired by Captain Aplin's column. We halted for the night at Edjuabim, a deserted village, with the huts almost hidden away in grass growing about 12 feet high. On the 9th August the march was resumed, and we reached Bekwai without any resistance about two o'clock in the afternoon.

On the 14th and 15th August two columns, under the respective commands of Lieutenant-Colonel Henstock and Lieutenant-Colonel Wilkinson, left Bekwai to operate in the country east of the main road, as far as Lake Busumakwi.

On the 20th August, welcome reinforcements arrived at Bekwai in the shape of the headquarter staff and four companies of the 2nd Battalion Central African Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Brake, D.S.O.; and on the 23rd August, news having reached the Commandant that the enemy were rebuilding the stockade at Kokofu, and that they had constructed a new one at Ejimum on the main road to Kumasi, and about three miles from Esumeja, Colonel Brake was ordered to make a reconnaissance in the direction of Kokofu, while Colonels Henstock and Wilkinson were to make a combined attack on Ejimum. Colonel Brake found that the enemy had built a very strong stockade on the same site as the one which Colonel Morland had destroyed. The length of this stockade was 400 yards, and it was the largest that any one had yet seen.

Colonel Brake had the new stockade pulled down, and he also destroyed and burnt another war camp which the enemy had also reconstructed. It is presumed that the Kokofus, hearing that Henstock's and Wilkinson's columns
were returning from Lake Busumakwi, and meant to take their war camp in rear, abandoned their position.

On the 24th of August, Colonel Brake, with Major Stansfield as staff officer, again marched out of Bekwai, this time with a column of 400 men of his own regiment, and one 7-pounder, to join the other two columns. On arriving at Kokofu he heard news of the presence of the enemy in force at an important town lying north-east from Kokofu, called Dtachi.

Reaching a village called Odum, the advance guard, consisting of a company of the 2nd Central African Regiment, under the command of Captain Johnstone-Stewart, caught the enemy napping, and completely surprised him. The village was rushed, ten of the Ashantis were killed, and the remainder driven out of the village, utterly routed. Our troops followed hard on their heels for a mile or more, when the point of the advance guard came upon two sentries, whom they bayoneted before they could give the alarm, the pursued Ashantis having evidently made for the bush on each side of the road. Just then a large body of the enemy was seen rushing out of a village, which turned out to be Dtachi, and making for a stockade lying across the road. Our men raced for the same stockade, and, arriving first, poured volley after volley into the advancing enemy, who precipitately retired into the village.

A large number of the enemy were either killed, wounded, or taken prisoners, and the road between Odum and Dtachi was simply strewn with property dropped by the Ashantis in their flight. £48 in silver was picked up, and also a bag of gold dust, some valuable papers belonging to the King of Kokofu, many chairs, stools, and other household gods, and curiously enough, an enormous Union Jack, which afterwards graced the Commandant's Flagstaff at Bekwai and Kumasi. It turned out that the stout rally made by the enemy at Dtachi was due to their being led by Opoku, the second war captain, who fought against Major Beddoes, and who was among the killed. We had no
INDICATIONS OF GOLD

casualties on our side. This was due to the excellent scouting of the Sierra Leone Frontier Police, who, as I have mentioned before, are thoroughly at home in the bush, and to the dashing way in which the Central Africans, led by Brake, Johnstone-Stewart and Thorne, charged and pursued the enemy.

In Dtachi an important capture was made of 140 guns, several Maxim belts, and a quantity of .303 ammunition, which must have been picked up by the enemy during Sir F. Hodgson’s retreat from Kumasi. Of course the two villages were burnt, and as much of the loot as could be carried was brought away, the remainder being piled up and burnt.

In the meantime the columns under the command of Lieutenant-Colonels Henstock and Wilkinson had advanced to Ejimum, but found that the enemy had cleared out, leaving only a deserted war camp which showed that they had been there only a short time before, for the leaves of which the roofs of the huts were built were still green, and the ashes of the fires at which they had cooked their food were still warm.

Both these columns returned to Bekwai on the 24th August, having had a long ten days’ march, but no fighting, though the fact that they had laid waste a large tract of country, hitherto unvisited by white men, must have had a terrifying influence on the Ashantis, who until this campaign had never been attacked off the main roads. More than thirty villages and many valuable farms were destroyed.

It struck many of us who made that march that there must be a quantity of gold in that part of the country, as the Moins Hills run through it, and the features are very similar to the Dampier Range, which traverses the land of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation. Since our return to England the whole of the land surrounding Lake Busumakwi has been taken up by concessionaires, and it cannot be long before most of the country south-east as well as south-west of Kumasi is parcelled out into goldfields.
On the 25th August Lieutenant-Colonel Brake's column returned to Kumasi, and three days afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel Burroughs marched from Bekwai in command of a large convoy of stores and ammunition for the garrison at Kumasi, arriving at Pekki the same day.

On the 29th August a fighting column of 900 men with three guns and five Maxims, under Lieutenant-Colonel Brake, who had with him as staff officers, Captains Bryan and Reeves (both these officers afterwards obtained the local rank of Major), and as political officer, Mr Russell, a merchant on the Coast, left Bekwai with orders to attack Ojesu, where Queen Ashantuah was supposed to have concentrated a large force, and to have amassed a quantity of loot. That night the column bivouacked in the forest north of Dtachi, and with no covering but soaking blankets, slept in the pouring rain.

On the 30th the column reached Asoasi and camped there for the night, having during the march come across three unoccupied villages, which were destroyed and burnt. On the 31st, not knowing the exact whereabouts of Ojesu, and the guides having no knowledge of distances or of time, the column advanced very slowly through the bush, scouts being thrown out on both flanks. In spite, however, of the careful scouting, the presence of our troops was discovered by the enemy's sentries, who fired the usual signal guns, and warned their friends. The Ashantis post their sentries in the most ingenious fashion, either high up in the trees, which they ascend and descend by means of a cross piece of wood tied on to the trees, and forming ladders, or behind the broad flanges of cotton trees, notches being cut in the flanges on which they can rest their guns. They wait until the head of a column is about 100 yards off and then take a careful shot at the leading file. The bush is so thick that they can get clear away before there is any possibility of catching them.

Our scouts, who were under the command of Lieutenant M'Kinnon, and with whom were the guides in charge of Mr
Russell, were suddenly fired on shortly afterwards by the enemy, who were lying snugly hidden behind a stockade on the bank of a river bed which crossed the road obliquely. Mr Russell went back and reported the situation personally to Colonel Brake, who hurried to the front with two 75-millimetre guns under Lieutenant Halfpenny of the 3rd West African Frontier Force. The two companies of the advance guard, one under Captain Gordon, Central African Regiment, and the other under Captain Greer, 3rd Warwicks, who was attached to the 2nd West African Frontier Force, extended outwards into the bush towards the front.

While these two companies were cutting their way through the bush, the two guns were mounted, and fire was opened with double common shell on the stockade. Each shell penetrated into the centre of the stockade before bursting, and literally blew it to pieces. A hot fire was maintained by the guns, which prevented the enemy from replying with any effect at all. Their strength was estimated at 2000, and they were under the command of Quassi Bedu, one of the chief war captains of the Ashanti army. Many of them were armed with Snider, Martini-Henry, and Martini-Metford rifles, which they must have captured during the operations round Kumasi previous to the relief, and during the retreat of the Governor to the Coast. Fortunately for us, however, their aim was reckless and high, so much so that during the engagement showers of leaves from the trees kept falling on the troops.

Meanwhile Gordon’s company was steadily and fearlessly advancing, cutting its way through the bush to the left, and firing volleys. Gordon eventually succeeded in turning the enemy’s right flank, when Brake immediately ordered the charge to be sounded. The scouts and men of the West African Frontier Force charged the front of the enemy’s position, and Gordon’s Central Africans the right, the men only using the bayonet. This, as has usually happened in the fights in this campaign, was more than the Ashantis could stand, and badly beaten, they fled pell-mell into the bush.
The scene behind the stockade was sickening. The destructive effect of the 75-millimetre guns was immense; in one part of the stockade ten mangled bodies of the enemy were found lying in a heap. It was impossible to estimate the enemy's losses accurately, as it is their custom to remove their dead during a fight.

The column proceeded about 500 yards further down the road, and entered Ojesu, the famous fetish town of the Ashantis, where it is popularly believed that Governor M’Carthys’s head is kept as a prominent "Juju." Though in 1824 the Ashantis defeated him and cut off his head, so great a respect had they for him as a brave soldier, that they have kept his head ever since, and preserved it as a national fetish.

Our victory was a crushing blow to the enemy, as, owing to the number of big Jujs in the town, they never thought that any white man would ever dare to attack it.

Our casualties, considering the importance of the engagement, were few, but the force had to regret the loss of one British officer, Lieutenant H. C. Burton of the 5th Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers, who was shot through the heart while advancing with Gordon's company. In addition there was one native soldier killed, while Lieut.-Colonel Brake and Sergeant-Major Slattery were slightly wounded, and thirty-four soldiers received wounds, many of them severe.

Queen Ashantuah, one of the prime movers in the rebellion, fled from Ojesu to Ofinsu, while the rebels scattered in every direction.

Colonel Brake's column marched into Kumasi from Ojesu on the 1st September, a distance of 14 miles.

Colonel Sir J. Willcocks, with the headquarters staff and the main body, marched from Bekwai on the 30th August, convoysing another large quantity of supplies, and arrived at Pekki on the same day.

With 400 men and one 75-millimetre gun, I left Pekki at 7 A.M. on the same date, and after halting for a short time at Trede, on the Pekki-Kumasi road,
branched off through the bush in a north-westerly direction to attack the village of Amphibami, where the enemy was reported to be in force. About 11.30 the scouts reported that they had seen two of the enemy’s sentries making off into the bush, and almost immediately afterwards that the village was in sight and apparently evacuated. The column therefore continued its march and occupied the village without any resistance. From the smouldering fires it was evident that it must have been abandoned by the enemy early that morning. The houses were pulled down and the village burnt. Returning by what is now known as Hodgson’s road, the advance guard rushed the village of Potassi, laying waste all the farms on its route.

On the 31st August Colonel Willcocks and the main body arrived at Kumasi, and on the same evening my guns bombarded the stockade and the war camp leading to Ojesu, and again on the two following evenings, as also the Wesleyan Mission House and the village of Bantama, both of which were supposed to be in possession of the enemy.

On the 3rd September a column under Major Melliss reconnoitred Hodgson’s road for a distance of three miles, and discovered a large number of skeletons, many of them headless, lying along the road. The clothes were still covering the bones, and the sight was a gruesome one. They were evidently the remains of some of the Governor’s party, who must have been cut off by the enemy during the flight from Kumasi.

About this time news of a disquieting nature reached Kumasi that a large body of native levies under Captain Benson had met with a serious reverse, that the levies had been cut to pieces, and that Captain Benson had shot himself. It appears that the levies who belonged to the Akim tribe, though numbering 4000, had shown the usual cowardice of the Coast tribes when opposed to the Ashantis. Though the latter numbered only 250, they had met the attack of the levies with their accustomed bravery, and had utterly
defeated them. Poor Benson was obliged to fly with his second in command, Captain Wilcox, of the Gold Coast Volunteers, leaving all his stores, specie, and private effects in the hands of the enemy. This serious loss appears to have affected his brain, for he shot himself.

A relief column under the command of Captain (local Major) Reeves of the Leinster Regiment was sent out to bring in Wilcox and the remnants of the native levies, and this was effectually done.
The King of Abuamu: A Palaver in 1896.
CHAPTER XIX

AN EXPEDITION AGAINST A FETISH TOWN

For two or three weeks the excessive rains prevented any more punitive measures being taken, and Colonel Willcocks employed the time in bringing up supplies and ammunition from the base, and in giving his troops as much rest as possible, which they badly needed after all the privations they had undergone. The climate had begun to tell on many of the Europeans, and several officers and non-commissioned officers were obliged to be invalided home. Their places were taken by fresh officers and non-commissioned officers from home, and the newcomers had to be instructed in all the details of work with native troops.

All this took time, and it was not until the latter end of September that any forward movements were made.

On the 20th September Captain (temporary Major) Holford, 7th Hussars, with a column of 500 men, and Lieutenant Mayne as his staff officer, marched from Kumasi to open up the road to Kintampo, and on the 21st September a strong flying column, under my command, numbering nearly 1000 soldiers with 500 Akim levies, left Kumasi to attack the enemy, who were reported to be concentrated at Ofinsu.

Previous to the despatch of these two columns the principal chiefs of the Ashantis, more especially Queen Ashantuah, had entered into negotiations with Colonel Willcocks with a view to a general surrender, and it was the popular belief that the war was at an end. Colonel
Willcocks told the envoys who were sent by the Queen that he would give the chiefs four days in which they might come in to Kumasi and surrender. The Queen replied that she was willing to surrender, but that she was afraid of our soldiers, and though Colonel Willcocks assured her that he would give her a safe conduct through our lines, neither she nor any of the important chiefs put in an appearance.

It appears that about this time there was much dissension in the enemy's camp. The Adansis, who had been driven out of their country, after sustaining repeated defeats, were most anxious for the war to cease. Food was getting scarce, and many of the minor chiefs were sick of the war. The leaders of the rebellion, however, dreaded the consequences of their audacious attacks on the Great White Queen's representative, and preferred to fight to a finish. Instead, therefore, of surrendering at the end of the fourth day, Queen Ashantuah, Chiefs Kofi Kofia, Nentchwi, Quasi Bedu, and other Ashanti leaders sent a message to Colonel Willcocks to the effect that they would rather commit suicide than surrender. They also informed him with naive simplicity that they no longer intended to fight behind stockades, as they were a bad Juju, but that they would surround any columns sent out against them, shoot down the white officers and slaughter the black soldiers.

The Ofinsu column under my command (with temporary rank of Lieutenant-Colonel), with Captain Godfrey, 1st Central African Regiment, as D.A.A.G. (A.), Captain Gordon, 2nd Central African Regiment, as D.A.A.G. (B.), and Lieutenant Graham, Highland Light Infantry, as orderly officer, was divided into two. The first, the fighting column, was composed of about 700 officers and men, with two 75-millimetre guns, and the second, the supply column, was guarded by 300 officers and men. The second column was ordered to follow close behind the fighting column, but, if unable to keep up, it was to act independently, but was to camp each day at the same halting place as the fighting column.
THE ENEMY CAUTIOUS

When about eight or nine miles from Kumasi, the advance guard, which was under the command of Major Melliss, 1st West African Frontier Force, was nearing the village of Nkakua Buoha. The bush just here was very thick, and Major Melliss threw out his scouts to the front, while, as officer commanding the column, I ordered each company officer to protect his flanks by throwing out four flankers into the bush on either side of his company. The enemy made several attempts to close in on the column and to snipe us, but seeing the flankers, they retired without firing.

Shortly after these precautions had been taken Major Melliss' scouts reported that they had heard war drums beating. Owing to the thickness of the bush on either side of the route, and to the sharp zig-zags made by the road, Melliss continued his advance very cautiously. His presence was, however, soon discovered by the enemy, who began firing signal guns. Major Melliss, hearing this, expected to knock up against a stockade, and in order to locate it and so draw the enemy's fire, he opened fire with his Maxims and slowly advanced.

As the enemy would not be drawn, and as he still heard many voices shouting and drums beating, he decided to charge the position with two companies of the 1st Central African Regiment, commanded respectively by Captain Margesson and Lieutenant Luard. Both companies responded to the call, and led by Major Melliss himself, drove the enemy out of their position and into and out of the village, which was reached at about half-past three o'clock in the afternoon.

Here the column halted for the night. Picquets were thrown out on all sides, but, nothing daunted by this, the Ashantis returned and fired a few rounds, killing one of the levies, but eventually retired without attempting to press home their attack. Owing to the thickness of the bush all round the village, it was impossible to ascertain their casualties, but beyond the levy who was killed, we suffered none.
I ordered Major Cramer, who was in charge of the levies, to endeavour to persuade some of them to try and find out the enemy's position. About fifty or one hundred of them volunteered to go out, and late that evening they returned and reported that the enemy were concentrated at the next village.

At half-past six o'clock on the morning of the 22nd September, the column marched out of Nkakua Buoho, and, with scouts thrown out in front and on both flanks, advanced cautiously through the thick bush. The levies had evidently made a mistake, as two villages were passed with no sign of the enemy. On approaching the village of Danasi, however, Major Melliss heard the hum of many voices about two hundred yards off on his right and left front. The enemy evidently did not expect the column to arrive so soon, or they would not have been talking so loudly. Melliss, bringing up his Maxim, opened fire in the direction of the sound of the voices, and almost immediately there was a roar of guns, and the fight commenced.

Melliss ordered Grahame, who was temporarily placed in command of F Company, 1st West African Frontier Force, the leading company of the advanced guard, to cut his way round to the right through the bush, and ordered the two 75-millimetres up to the front. Captain Crean, who commanded the guns, brought them up at once, the guns being mounted and run by hand along the road. In the meantime Melliss went into the bush after F Company, and, not finding Grahame, ordered the men to charge. This was found to be impracticable, as the bush was like a mat. He therefore ordered them to hold their position and to continue to cut their way through, and returned to the road, whence he sent a company of the 2nd Central African Rifles under Captain Johnstone-Stewart, which had been acting as escort to the guns, to support F Company.

Captain Crean had advanced his guns up to a part of the road where it bent sharply to the left. Here he opened fire with shrapnel and case shot down the bend. At this
stage of the fight, I came up to the front, and leaving Melliss to carry out his own dispositions, sent word to Major Cobbe, who was in command of the main body, consisting of the Sikhs, a company of the 3rd West African Frontier Force under Lieutenant Shortland, and a company 2nd West African Frontier Force under Major Eden, to advance into the bush in echelon of companies towards his left front.

By this time the tactics of the enemy were apparent, the Ashantis having evidently gone back to the system of attack used by them in 1873-74. This consisted of an endeavour to surround the column.

When Major Cobbe was ordered to advance in the above-mentioned formation, the fire of the enemy extended from 200 yards on the right flank round the front, and down to about 700 yards on the left flank. Grahame, with F Company, supported by Johnstone-Stewart with his company of Central African Rifles, eventually succeeded in cutting through the bush into a banana patch, and was thus enabled to charge. Leading with F Company, and followed by Johnstone-Stewart and his company, Grahame charged gallantly through the banana farm, officers and men racing along side by side, and driving the enemy before them, past the right hand side of the village of Danasi. Crean kept pouring in round after round of case shot, which cut the bush on the sides of the road like a scythe cutting hay, and Sergeant Buchanan, with his Maxim, also sent a hail of bullets into the bush on the left of the gun.

Hearing Cobbe’s fire approaching on the left, I ordered the guns to cease fire.

Cobbe, with his main body, had done wonders. He advanced with the Sikhs, the Maxim in the centre, and, firing volleys and using his Maxim most effectively, drove the enemy out of a strong position on the left of the road towards the bend. Melliss then told me that he was going to charge with A Company, 1st West African Frontier Force, under Captain Stevenson.
Orders were immediately sent to Cobbe to cease fire, and all the buglers sounding the charge in every direction, Melliss, followed by Stevenson and A Company, charged down the road, Cobbe doing the same on the left. The enemy, who had opposed Cobbe’s advance, were driven right into Melliss’ arms, and a regular slaughter with sword and bayonet commenced, Melliss killing two men with his sword. A company charged right up through the village of Danasi, and about a quarter of a mile beyond.

Poor Stevenson was killed almost at the commencement of the charge, and as nice a fellow as ever wore the Queen’s uniform was lost to the service. The other casualties were fortunately few, and consisted of one man killed, and five wounded (three severely) in F Company, West African Frontier Force, Major Melliss slightly wounded by the graze of a bullet on the stomach, and one of the scouts in the Sierra Leone Frontier Police severely wounded.

The action lasted for forty-three minutes, and the surprise to every one was the stubborn resistance made by the enemy, who were unprotected from our terrific fire by any other cover than that afforded by the trees. They lost heavily, for thirty-four bodies were found, the bush being saturated with blood, so much so that officers’ gaiters and putties were covered with spots of blood as they marched through the parts of the bush held by the enemy.

The column halted at Danasi, where all ranks partook of a well-earned breakfast. After a rest of an hour, the order to advance was given, and without further incident the column reached the village of Ankua, about four miles from Ofinsu, where it halted for the night, as it would have been impossible to reach Ofinsu before dark. Early next morning, leaving a strong garrison with the supply column at Ankua, I advanced towards Ofinsu, and entered that town at about ten o’clock unopposed.

Five chiefs and many of the enemy surrendered to me. The chiefs were placed under a guard, and told to order their men to bring in their arms. 341 guns were brought in, as
well as supplies. The column halted on the 23rd and 24th, and during this time all the surrounding villages were destroyed and burnt by the levies. On the morning of the 25th, Ofinsu, which is a large fetish town, was levelled with the ground. The sacrificial and palaver trees were cut down, and, finally, the town was burnt, and the troops commenced their return march to Kumasi, which was reached on the afternoon of the 26th of September.
CHAPTER XX

A VICTORY IN THE NORTH-WEST

LATE in the afternoon of 28th September, when all the preparations had been made for my column to proceed on the following day to Berekum, news reached the Commandant that the Ashantis had been reinforced by several thousand Achamars and other western tribes, and that they meant to oppose any advance along the Berekum road. Accordingly the orders given to the column were cancelled, and the Commandant determined to attack the enemy in person.

Amid a thin drizzling rain and under a dull leaden sky, a column of 1200 men and five guns, three of which were 75-millimetre, left Kumasi early on the 29th September. The column was divided into: (1) the advance guard, consisting of four companies of infantry and two 75-millimetre guns, under my command, with Captain Pamplin Green as staff officer; (2) the support to the advance guard, consisting of three companies of infantry and one 75-millimetre gun, under the command of Major Melliss, 1st West African Frontier Force; (3) the main body, guarding ammunition and supplies, and consisting of three and a half companies of infantry, commanded by Major Cobbe, 1st Central African Rifles; and (4) the rear guard, of one and a half companies of infantry and two 7-pounder guns, under the command of Captain Greer, 3rd Warwickshire Regiment. The Commandant,
Sir James Willcocks, K.C.M.G., was accompanied by the headquarter staff, and also by Captain Donald Stewart, the British Resident at Kumasi, and Mr Haddon Smith, Political Officer.

When about two miles from Kumasi the rain came down in a perfect deluge, and, with the exception of two or three bright intervals, the weather remained execrable for the rest of the day. Owing to the enemy being reported in the vicinity, the progress of the column was very slow, and at the close of the day the advance guard only succeeded in getting as far as the village of Adada, where it was ordered to halt to allow the column to close up.

The troops were now well accustomed to rain, and this was only one of the many occasions when they had to bivouac in the mud. But this time the rain was out of all due proportion, even for the rainy season on the West Coast, and amid an awful downpour officers and men had to set to work to construct banana-leaf shelters for themselves. Every one tried his best to be cheery, and, in spite of his recent sickness, the foremost to try and inspire the troops was the Commandant, who went from group to group inspiring all with his hearty laugh. To add to everyone's discomfort the village had been burnt, and there was not a scrap of shelter beyond that erected by individuals, and a banana leaf is not warranted waterproof, as was evidenced by two officers whom I saw catching streams of water from their roof and drinking it, with the remark that it would not require filtering, coming, as it did, straight from heaven.

The morning of the 30th September broke with the rain still falling, and, stiff with the wet and cold, officers and men emerged from their wet blankets and began to set about the business of the day. The bush path was a perfect quagmire, but at 6.30 the column once more advanced. About 100 Dengiasi levies were sent on ahead to scout, with instructions to fall back when the first shot was fired. At 8.5 A.M., when the head of the advance
guard was half way between the villages of Adada and Obassa, the levies were fired on by the enemy, and immediately fell back. They were then about 200 or 300 yards in front of the column, and as they were bearing the brunt of the enemy's fire, and as I was anxious to locate the enemy's position by sight as well as by sound, I pushed the leading companies of the advance guard forward at the double. Fortunately, by the time I reached the enemy's position they had not ceased fire, and I was therefore enabled to make my dispositions without further scouting. The enemy had taken up a position in the hollow of a ravine, fronting the road and overlapping both flanks. I ordered Captain Charrrier with his company of 2nd Central African Rifles, which was following immediately behind me, to take his men into the bush on the right, with his left resting on the edge of the road, and to wheel round towards the enemy's left flank.

Major Eden's company of the 2nd West African Frontier Force then arrived, followed by Captain St Hill's company West African Rifles, and Captain Johnstone-Stewart, 2nd Central African Rifles, with two sections of his company. Major Eden was ordered to take his company into the bush on the left in a similar way to Captain Charrrier's company, only with the right resting on the road. These two companies thus formed a kind of spear-head formation to the rest of the column.

Captain St Hill was sent to support Captain Charrrier, with orders not to fire or extend until he had found and got into touch with Captain Charrrier's right. This movement was beautifully carried out, and with perfect discipline, Captain St Hill's men using their sword-bayonets to cut their way into the bush, advancing steadily in the direction ordered, and singing an inspiring war song the while. The fire of the enemy all this time was very heavy; their position being at the bottom of a slope, their aim was more effective than usual, and instead of the bullets and slugs throwing high, the ground all round our position was chipped
by them. Owing to the spear-head formation described above, only one Maxim could be brought into action, and this was stationed in the centre of the position, originally intended for a millimetre gun, but owing to the badness of the road the guns could not be got up in time. As the enemy was sending a scathing fire right up the road from their centre, I ordered Sergeant Major of the 2nd West African Frontier Force to mount his Maxim there and open fire. Keeping the muzzle of the gun well depressed, Sergeant Major poured in a galling fire down the middle of the road, and slightly into the bush to right and left. He was, of course, unable to do much traversing owing to the presence of our own men in the bush. The millimetre guns now arrived and came into action, but, as already explained, they were unable to fire, and simply remained as a support to the firing line.

About twenty minutes after the action commenced, I ordered the “cease fire” to sound, preparatory to the order to charge being given. Just as in Colonel Willcocks’ fight at the relief of Kumasi, the enemy also ceased fire; but when the bugles sounded the charge they redoubled their efforts, and beyond advancing ten or fifteen yards, our men could not get on further, facing, as they did, a most deadly fusillade, and the orders were given to recommence fire. Finding the enemy’s resistance so stubborn, I decided to call on the support to the advance guard for reinforcements. The message was sent, and in a few minutes Major Melliss arrived, bringing with him at the double Lieutenant Luard’s company of the 1st Central African Rifles, which was sent into the bush to the left with orders to continue the spear-head formation. By this time many of our men had been wounded. Major Melliss returned from the firing line, and reported that the men were losing touch with each other, and that, in consequence, it would be dangerous for Luard’s company to fire, so, knowing the Commandant’s former successes through the use of the bayonet, I ordered the
“cease fire” again to sound, following it up with the “charge.”

The result was a repetition of the first attempt to charge, and we advanced but a very short distance when again the “commence fire” sounded. Lieutenant-Colonel Henstock, the chief staff officer, who arrived on the scene about this time, saw the state of affairs, and, returning to the Commandant, reported that further reinforcements were necessary. Four officers had been wounded, two of them, viz., Captain Pamplin Green and Major Willans, while gallantly carrying my orders to and from the firing line, and the enemy’s fire seemed as strong as ever.

The Commandant now arrived on the scene and at once grasped the situation. With him were the Sikhs, and he immediately gave orders to Captain Godfrey, who was in command, to charge with them straight down the road, and so drive a wedge through the enemy’s centre. The “cease fire” was sounded a third time, and the drums and bugles being massed, Colonel Willcocks gave the order to charge. Away went the Sikhs, followed by the drums and bugles merrily sounding the “charge.” Major Melliss, of course, led this final charge, and he and Captain Godfrey raced down the road, followed by the Sikhs and several staff officers, who, carried away by the excitement of the moment, joined in the charge.

The Sikhs behaved splendidly, but, unfortunately, when the fight was practically over, and the entire line had driven the enemy flying from the right, left, and centre, a gallant Sikh havildar named Kala Singh, of the 36th Sikhs, who had already received the Order of Merit for previous gallantry, was shot dead, and Major Melliss sustained a severe wound in the foot about the same time. Previous to this, and during the charge, he closed in on one of the enemy and tried to run him through with his sword. The man, however, turned, and seizing the sword, grappled with the Major, and over they rolled together. Captain Godfrey, however, was close behind, and putting his revolver to the man’s head, blew
his brains out. Mr Haddon Smith, who was on the commandant's staff, was the first to see Major Melliss's fall, which happened on a rise slightly to the left of the road, and rushed to his assistance. Lifting him up he endeavoured to half carry him and half drag him to the road. I went to his help, and between us he was brought in. To every one's delight, for his bravery had endeared him to all, the commandant publicly told Melliss that he would recommend him for the V.C.

The victory of Colonel Willcocks had given the enemy a blow from which it was impossible that they could recover, and at no time during the campaign had they received a harder lesson. The success was due to the commandant trusting in his sub-commanders to carry on the fight until he himself could by personal observation see how matters stood. At no time during the action did he worry his officers or attempt to alter their dispositions, knowing, no man better, the difficulties of bush-fighting.

The enemy's casualties were many, the prisoners stating that they lost upwards of 150 killed, and more than they could count of wounded. The unwounded and those of the wounded who were able to travel fled precipitately, and never halted until they reached the village of Isansu, where the leaders endeavoured to call a roll. Finding how terribly the day had gone against them, however, a panic seized on them, and they bolted to the north-west, abandoning their wounded and throwing their guns into the river as they ran. Their pluck during the fight was the admiration of our officers, and, though they must have known they were fighting in a losing cause, they stood their ground bravely for more than an hour.

Our casualties were 3 killed and 42 wounded, including the following officers: Major Melliss (severely), Lieutenant Luard (severely), Major Willans, Captain Charrier, and Captain Pamplin Green, all slightly. Among the rank and file there were several severe wounds, but all the men did well. On arriving at the village of Obassa, where the
column halted for breakfast, the commandant promoted several men for gallantry in the field.

At about noon the column proceeded on its march, and continued to throw out scouts, as news had been received that the enemy meant to make a stand at a large tree stockade, which had been felled for the purpose, but, as has already been explained, panic seized on them, and though the stockade was discovered in an excellent position to bring both a frontal and flank fire on the column, it was unoccupied, and the village of Isansu was reached without another shot being fired. The commandant, hearing that there was a large village on the right of Isansu called Ademanqwanta, which he thought might hold some of the enemy, ordered me to take the advance guard and attack the village. We had hardly proceeded 500 yards on the side road, when the scouts were fired on. I ordered them to fall back, the flankers to come in, and two Maxims to be brought up to the front. We then proceeded cautiously, expecting the enemy to disclose his new position, but the alarm turned out to come only from an outlying picquet of the enemy, which retired as we advanced.

After one hour's march the roofs of a large village were seen through the trees, and one of the 75-millimetre guns was ordered up, and the village was shelled. Then, suddenly ceasing fire, the "charge" was sounded, and away went the gallant native soldiers, led by their officers, cheering loudly. The village was taken with a splendid rush, the enemy retiring rapidly. Nothing could stay our rush, however, and no less than three other smaller villages were taken at the charge. I then thought that it was time to sound the halt, which was done, and the column, utterly exhausted, halted in the last village for a short rest. Time, however, would not admit of a long stay, and, retiring slowly, burning the villages as it did so, the column returned to Isansu.

This incident shows two things: (1) the fact that the native troops of both East and West Africa, if led by British officers, will not be denied when charging; and (2) that it
is next to impossible to catch the wily Ashanti when once he gets on the run.

On our way home we were met by Major Cobbe, with two companies to reinforce us, for the commandant, hearing the heavy fire of the guns and thinking the column was hard pressed, had sent out these two companies to render us help if necessary. After the fatigues of the day, the sleep of all was sound that night, but the next morning the commandant, to follow up his success of the previous day, despatched a strong flying column of 800 men and two 75-millimetre guns under Major Cobbe, to follow up the enemy to Fufu.

The flying column arrived at the Ofin River about noon, having seen many signs of the enemy’s complete rout along the road. A Haussa woman who was caught by our levies said she had just come from Fufu, and she told us that the enemy had passed through and left Fufu that morning, that there were hundreds of wounded among them, who were all saying, “Fly, fly, the white man is coming,” and that they had gone off to Inquanta, several marches up the Berekum road. On this bank of the river Ofin was lying a starving Ashanti child, who at once became the centre of interest of all, the Sikhs especially, who fed him with chupatties, while the officers gave him their ration biscuits. The river had then about six feet of water in it, with a fast-running stream and no communication with the other side. A covering party of Sierra Leone Frontier Police and levies was sent across, also a creeper rope, or “tie-tie,” and all hands went to work at felling trees and putting them across the river, which was 80 feet wide. After five hours’ hard work two bridges were thrown across, and all the troops, carriers, and guns were got safely over.

It was then 5 P.M., and the column had to get to Fufu, which was reported by the guides to be two miles away, but which really turned out to be nearly five. Starting off, it traversed the most terrible country it had ever been our lot to pass through, smelling putrid bogs the whole way, and men and carriers stumbling at every
footstep and falling down with their loads. At 6.45 P.M. the point of the advance guard came upon a huge tree lying across the road, and suspecting a stockade, approached it carefully. It was, however, found not to be held—most fortunately for us, for a few hundred Ashantis would probably have delayed the whole column and prevented it from arriving in camp that night. A few minutes after crossing the tree stockade, a fœtid, reeking swamp had to be waded through, and the ground then rose, being evidently an approach to a village. The two leading companies of the 1st Central African Regiment, fixing bayonets, charged into and occupied the village of Fufu, which was found to be deserted. A tornado now commenced, and the lucky ones of the advance guard congratulated themselves on arriving at a place of shelter. The remainder of the column continued to arrive slowly, great delay being caused in getting the guns and hammocks over the large tree and past the terrible swamps.

By 10 P.M. the rear guard had come in. All the troops except the two companies of the advance guard were drenched to the skin, having been floundering in the darkness through the awful bogs on the road. Fortunately the village, being a large one, gave nearly all the troops shelter, as the storm lasted until past midnight. Most of the force did not get any food until midnight, and the orders were to return next day to Isansu. In the morning, before the infantry started, the 75-millimetre guns, under Captain Crean, were sent off to blow up the large tree stockaded just outside the village. Twelve “double common” were fired at it, but as the tree was of the hardest wood the impression made was not great, and it would have taken several more rounds to have effected a breach. A road, therefore, was cut round the tree, and the bush cleared on both sides so as to prevent it from being used by the enemy as a stockade at any future time.

The swamps were now found to be many times worse than they were the evening before, and officers and men had to wade up to their chests in muddy water, so the
A DIFFICULT RIVER CROSSING

progress of the column was terribly slow. Eventually the river, which was in full flood, was reached. Luckily the bridges were still there, though under water, but the roadways had been mostly washed away, and the water was rising steadily. It took the column five and a half hours to get across, the last two companies being above their waists in water. However, not a single load was lost, and the column was safely across by 4.20 P.M. The advance guard of the column reached Isansu at 7 P.M., and the rear guard at 9 P.M., the march on this part of the road being further delayed by trees that had fallen in the tornado of the previous evening. All ranks behaved excellently under most trying circumstances, and were thankful to get in.

On the 2nd October the entire column returned to Kumasi. On the 13th October Major Holford's column returned from Kintampo. This column left Kumasi on the 20th September, and accomplished the journey to Kintampo and back without incident. The greater part of the road passed through the N'Koranza territory, the N'Koranzas, during the war, having remained friendly. The garrison at Kintampo was well, but badly in want of news; for example, they had only heard of the relief of Kumasi a few days before Major Holford arrived. A company of the 2nd Central African Rifles, under Captains Brock and Townsend, with Dr Simonds in medical charge, was left at Kintampo to strengthen the garrison.
CHAPTER XXI
LONGING FOR THE FINISH

The air was full of rumours. First we heard that the war was over, and that the remaining rebel chiefs were all coming in, and then pallid faces would light up, and there was jubilation throughout the camp. Next we heard that the enemy had again collected about eighty or ninety miles from Kumasi, and that they meant to make another stand. Then all was woe and tribulation, and a deep gloom settled down on all of us. As Tommy Atkins would say, we were all “fed up” with the campaign. The rains seemed everlasting, and we were washed out day and night. Our boots and clothes were worn out and in rags, while the soldiers were in even a worse plight. There were over one hundred cases of smallpox in hospital, besides innumerable other cases of disease. It is no wonder, then, that all ranks were desirous of seeing the campaign finish, and of returning to civilisation.

The rainy season appeared to be never-ending, and it seemed that, whenever any columns left Kumasi to carry out any punitive measures, the elements sided with the enemy. Old coasters said that by the 10th October all rains would cease, and that after that date we should be able to march anywhere in comfort. Colonel Willcocks therefore decided to wait a couple of weeks before he sent out any more columns, hoping that by that time the dry season would have set in. Officers and men were, however, not kept idle, for parades were held morning and evening,
A MOMENT OF RECREATION

and everybody was given an opportunity to put all his kit in somewhat shipshape order.

Spies brought in information to the effect that the remaining rebel leaders had fled to the north-west, that Queen Ashantuah had deposed Kofi Kofa from the chief captainship of the army, and had made Kobina Cherri, a powerful chief of Odumasssi, her chief war captain, and that the leaders had but few followers.

Later on more definite news reached Kumasi that the rebel leaders were all living in a town called Bechim. Thereupon Colonel Willcocks, in conjunction with the British Resident, Captain Donald Stewart, sent them a proclamation by the hands of a Kumasi chief called Kauganiassi, calling on them to surrender, and stating that the Great White Queen had graciously consented not to look upon them as rebels but as belligerents. This was a great concession on the part of Her Late Majesty’s Government, as it meant that their lives, at anyrate, would be spared.

Pending the receipt of an answer to the proclamation, the commandant inaugurated a Rifle Meeting at Kumasi, the committee being composed of Captains Greer, Wright, Gibson, Godfrey, and Johnstone-Stewart, with myself as president.

The meeting was a great success, and greatly relieved the monotony of life in Kumasi. There were three cups presented: one by Sir James Willcocks, another by Captain Donald Stewart, and a third by the officers of the West African Frontier Force. In addition to the cups, there were numerous money prizes shot for by the rank and file.

Just at the close of the Rifle Meeting, when enthusiastic sportsmen were talking about getting up a Gymkhana Meeting, news of a disquieting nature reached Kumasi. It was that the rebel leaders had advanced with a large number of followers into the Achamar country, south of the river Ofin, and almost due west of Kumasi.

The morning after this news arrived, two columns, one under the command of Major Eden, 2nd West African
Frontier Force, and the other under Major Cobbe, 1st Central African Regiment, marched out of Kumasi, the objective of Major Eden's company being Inkawe, the capital of the Achamar country, and the aim of Major Cobbe being to advance north-west as far as the river Ofin, and then make a sweep round and attack Inkawe from that direction.

Neither column met with any resistance, and they eventually returned to Kumasi after four days' march, reporting that there was no foundation for the news respecting the movement of the rebel leaders into the south.
CHAPTER XXII

THE CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN

On the 1st November a column of 700 men, with five Maxims and one 75-millimetre gun, consisting of the Sikhs and two companies of the 1st Central African Regiment under Major Cobbe, two companies of the 2nd Battalion of the same regiment under Major Gordon, one and a half companies of the 1st West African Frontier Force, and one company of the 2nd West African Frontier Force under Captain Lyon, the whole under my command, with Captain Carleton, Captain Thorne, and Captain Pamplin Green (orderly officer) forming the staff, left Kumasi on the much-talked-of expedition to Berekum. On the following day another column of 500 men, three Maxims, and a 7-pounder gun, consisting of four companies of the West African Rifles and one company of the 3rd West African Frontier Force, under the command of Major Browne, with Captain Stallard and Captain Neal as staff officers, left for the same destination.

For the first four days the two columns marched separately, but on the fifth day the second column made a forced march and united at Insuta with the first column. Though the weather for a few days previous to the departure of the columns had much improved, no sooner had they started than the rains set in with redoubled vigour, and the troops had once more to face the troubles and trials of
a march through an "impossible" country, and over even more impossible roads.

The rivers were all in flood, which necessitated long halts for bridging purposes; moreover, the country for a few miles south of the river Ofin, to within a short distance of Bechim, was very low-lying and marshy, the result being that for miles the troops had to march through swamps of the most unhealthy description, often up to their knees, and sometimes up to their waists in mud and water. This was bad enough for the soldiers, but the difficulty with which the carriers, with their 50-lb. loads on their heads, negotiated these sloughs of despond can only be imagined. Divided between the two columns there were as many as 2500 carriers, all in single file, which will give some idea of the length of the column.

Prior to the departure of the expedition to Berekum, messengers had been sent to the chiefs at Bechim bidding them surrender, but on the arrival of No. 1 column at Fufu these messengers were found awaiting us. They stated that they had been turned back by Ashanti scouts, and that they were unable to deliver their message. This being contrary to the custom of the Ashantis, who have always respected such messengers and their missions, I ordered one of the messengers to carry out his instructions, keeping the other man in the custody of the quarter guard as a hostage. This news further impeded the progress of the expedition, as it necessitated cautious marching, and obliged Major Cobbe, the officer commanding the advance guard, to throw out scouts in front. Had the enemy had the "nous" to attack us in the swamps he would have had a most distinct advantage, and our force a corresponding disadvantage. Fortunately for us, however, the West African savage is not an enterprising individual, and we were suffered to pass through the swamps unmolested.

In the meantime a worse enemy had made his appearance, and that was the much-dreaded smallpox. Cases broke out daily, both among the soldiers and the carriers,
and this gave Dr Fletcher, the senior medical officer, and myself cause for grave apprehension. Dr Fletcher worked wonders, and soon had a travelling smallpox hospital fixed up. The villages along the road were badly built, small, and very dirty, but on the night of the 4th of November any kind of village would have been a godsend, as the leading column was obliged to bivouac in the forest. The elements, of course, chose that opportunity to vent their spite on us. About 5 P.M. one of the worst tornadoes we had experienced in that country broke over us, and in a very short time every one was drenched to the skin. As we were in the middle of the forest, the danger from lightning was great. Several trees were struck in the vicinity of the camp, and one of them fell across the road and on the very edge of the shelter in which I and my staff were seeking cover. The rain came down in a perfect deluge, and, what with this, the vivid lightning and the crashes of thunder, our discomfort was complete.

This kind of experience had been borne by the Ashanti Field Force off and on for months, but the trials of a march in the rainy season have already been described. Suffice it to say that during this campaign the troops have had three tough enemies to fight—the Ashantis, the climate, and the weather, and of the three I do not know which is the worst. A soldier is prepared to put up with indifferent food, hard beds, and similar discomforts, but when it comes to eating that food and sleeping in that bed in a fetid malarious swamp, inches deep in mud and slime, and with water above and below, it is a little too much. Whatever rewards are given for this campaign will be well earned, and the country need never begrudge them.

Late on the evening of 4th November, the messenger to Bechim returned with the chief’s reply, which was to the effect that they wanted time to consider the matter. I refused to entertain this for a moment, and sent back a letter calling on them to surrender to me at Insuta by 6 P.M. on the 5th of November. I sent word that, failing
this, I would advance on Bechim, and either force them to fight or drive them into the Ahafu Forest. On the 5th the two columns united at Insuta, but No. 2 column, having had to make a forced march under great difficulties, did not reach the village until 11 P.M. I therefore decided to halt a day at Insuta to rest both columns.

On the morning of the 6th the messenger to the chiefs returned with my letter unopened, and brought an insolent message from the head chief, Kobina Cherri, to say that they would fight us. Preparations were therefore made for an advance on Bechim on the following day.

During the afternoon of the 6th a most regrettable incident happened. Two carriers who had been out hunting for "chop" (food) came into camp and stated that, about three or four miles south of Insuta, they had come across a party of Ashantis armed with guns, building an enclosure for sheep and cattle. A company was sent out with orders to surprise the enemy and capture the live stock. Accompanying the Berekum column were some 150 Juabin levies, who were utilised for carrying despatches to Kumasi, and for scouting purposes. On the afternoon of the 6th November they were encamped about three-quarters of a mile to the north of the village of Insuta, but half-a-dozen were told off to do the scouting for the punitive company. The Ashanti, however, is so dreaded by the other tribes on the west coast that instead of going in front of the company they lagged behind in the bush, and were one of the causes of a considerable disaster. The other cause was the dense forest, which prevented the officer commanding the company from noting that he was taking quite a circuitous route, for he actually proceeded to march in a semicircle from the south of Insuta to the north of the village. The afternoon was cloudy, and he had not even the sun to guide him, while the paths in an Ashanti forest wind in so tortuous a fashion that it is extremely easy to lose one's way.

Guided by the two carriers, the company came, sure enough, on what they thought was the enemy, and a volley
was fired on them. The enemy turned out to be the Juabin levies, who had all been given a distinguishing sash of blue and white cloth, which, however, had in many cases either been lost, hidden under their clothes, or dirtied to such an extent that they were past recognition, so that it was difficult 50 or 60 yards off to tell an Ashanti from a Juabin. The levies, thinking they were being attacked by the Ashantis, fell back into the bush, and proceeded to return our fire. After firing two or three more volleys, the company was ordered to charge with the bayonet, which it did most effectually. It was not till our men came to close quarters with the levies that the mistake was discovered. The “cease fire” was at once sounded, and the troops halted. Fortunately there were no causalties on our side, but it is much to be regretted that six of the levies were killed. Two-thirds of them bolted back to Kumasi with fearful stories of a big fight, in which they said thousands of Ashantis were engaged with us, and for a considerable time afterwards no amount of persuasion or threats could bribe a Juabin to return to the front.

On the morning of the 7th November the whole force of 1200 men was divided into a fighting column of 850 men under my personal command, and a supply column of 350 men guarding reserve ammunition, supplies, baggage, etc., under the command of Major Gordon.

The road from Insuta to Bechim, our next halting place, was simply villainous, and, what with having to scout all the way, bridge rivers, and traverse innumerable swamps, it was not until late in the afternoon of the 7th that the two columns succeeded in reaching camp. Major Cobbe, who was in command of the advance guard of the fighting column, sent word back to the effect that on arriving at Bechim he found some messengers with a white flag. The messengers were interrogated by me on my arrival, and it appeared that they came from the Kings of N'Kwanta, Bechim, and Tekimentia, offering to surrender. They were sent back with a message to say that their surrender would
be accepted. On the 8th November these kings came into
camp and gave themselves up. On the same day four
foraging parties, each consisting of 200 men and 300 carriers,
were sent north, south, east, and west of Bechim to raid the
surrounding country, while the remaining soldiers and carriers
were employed in building a zareba for the garrison it was
intended to leave behind at Bechim.

The foraging parties were most successful, large quantities
of “chop” being brought in. In addition, the column under
Captain Johnstone-Stewart burnt an important town called
Jemo, and returned laden with loot and cattle. As the troops
had been kept on half rations since they left Kumasi, this
advent of “chop” was a godsend. Several prisoners who
were in the hands of the Ashantis in Jemo were rescued by
Captain Johnstone-Stewart. Among them was the wife of
a native missionary belonging to the Basel Mission of
Kumasi, who had been taken prisoner in the previous
April, and had therefore been in the enemy’s hands seven
months. I had rather an interesting conversation with the
war chief of the King of Bechim—of course, through the
medium of an interpreter. He had been in command of
the fighting men of his district, and, among other places,
had fought at Danasi and Obassa, and had been in
supreme command at the defence of the Bantama stockade
in the previous August.

In regard to this last fight, it appears that the Ashantis
had loopholed the stockade and were prepared to defend
it to the last, and to pour in a heavy fire when the inevit-
able charge should take place. In the middle of the fight,
however, and to their utter astonishment, they saw one
white man charge by himself straight on the stockade.
The Ashantis thought he was a madman, and this being
too much for their nerves they abandoned the stockade
and ran. The white man whom the war chief so described
was Major Melliss; but he apparently made a mistake in
the number of white men who charged, as Melliss was
accompanied by Captain Merrick.
At Obassa the chief commanded the right wing of the Ashantis, and he stated that when our troops had worked round and threatened to cut off the line of his retreat, he thought that it was time for him to move, but finding that he was too late, and that his retreat had been cut off, he decided with several others to lie down in the bush and hide. He says that several soldiers actually passed over his body without noticing that he was alive, so, playing "possum" until all had passed, he then got up and ran. He expressed great admiration of the white man's fighting qualities, but considered that he did not fight fair in using knives (he meant the bayonet and sword) when the Ashantis only had guns.

A garrison of 350 officers, non-commissioned officers and men, under Major Gordon, was left at Bechim to form an advance depot for reserve ammunition and supplies, and a portion of the town was railed off to form a smallpox hospital, as there were now some fifty or sixty cases, and it was impossible to send them back to Kumasi.

On the 9th November, with 850 fighting men and 1200 carriers, I marched from Bechim to N’Kwanta, which was reached without any incident. During the afternoon Captain Lyon, with F Company of the 1st West African Frontier Force, raided, burnt, and destroyed some villages in the neighbourhood. On the 10th the column continued its march, and after leaving N’Kwanta the forest belt disappeared and we struck open country, though here and there the giant grass obstructed our progress and view. At first every one was delighted to be out of the forest, but when the sun began to make itself felt the much-hated forest would have been gladly welcomed again. On arriving at a village called Terichi news reached us that Kobina Cherri, who had been elected Commander-in-Chief of the Ashantis, was hiding in a village off the main road, close by. I therefore sent a flying column of 200 men, composed of a company each of the 1st and 2nd West African Frontier Force under Captain Carleton, to try and effect Kobina Cherri’s capture. The remainder of
the column proceeded on to Tanosu, which is a great fetish village on the banks of the river Tano, where there were supposed to be some enormous fish, believed by the natives to contain the souls of their departed kings.

At Tanosu, several chiefs surrendered, and rather late in the evening Carleton returned with his flying column. He had surrounded and rushed several villages, but found that twelve hours before his arrival Kobina Cherri had fled towards Odumassi. On the 11th the column marched to Odumassi, where I left a garrison of 300 men under the command of Major Browne. This town was the largest we had met with in this country, the king's palace being quite a handsome building. Its walls, however, were smeared all over, inside and out, with human blood.

During our halt in the town several Krepe traders, who were fugitives from the Ashantis, came in and begged for the protection of the British flag. They were rubber traders, Odumassi being the great rubber emporium of the north-west, and they found themselves, at the beginning of the war, prisoners in the hands of Kobina Cherri, who seized this opportunity to extort all their earnings. He made them "beg" their lives by paying large sums of money to him, and those who either could not or would not pay he put to death with frightful tortures. In all he killed seventy-six.

On the 12th the column, which was now only five hundred and fifty strong, marched to Suatu, a distance of 18 miles, through open country and under a burning sun. About half a mile outside the town the Odumassis had built a stockade, which was blown up by the 75-millimetre gun in three rounds.

The Odumassis offered to pull down the stockade for us, but I told them that I had an easier way of clearing a road through it, and I thus demonstrated the power of the 75-millimetre gun, which was a good object lesson to them for the future.

The column halted for the night at Suatra, which was
the extreme limit of the Ashanti boundary, and on the 13th we marched into Berekum, the king of which town had been loyal throughout the war.

He received us in great state, and at a palaver which was held I thanked him in the Queen's name for having remained so loyal. There was a small garrison of 30 Haussas, under Assistant-Inspector St John, and during the day, Captain M'Corquodale, with 50 Haussas, accompanied by Captain Hobart and Drs Cogan and Dillon, marched in from Parma. He informed us that the whole of the western tribes were loyal. The King of Berekum had never seen so many of the Queen's soldiers before, and when he expressed his surprise, I told him that I had left more than double the number at Odumassi and Bechim, and invited his war chief to come back with me to see for himself how the Queen's soldiers had spread themselves all over the country, and how she punished all subjects who rebelled.

On the 14th the return march began, and it was not astonishing to see the blithe way in which all ranks stepped out, when their faces were turned towards "home." Shortly after reaching Suatru, messengers from Pong Yao, the King of Wam, came in with a message from the king to request permission to send 1000 men against the fugitive Ashanti chiefs in the Ahafu Forest. Authority was given him to do so, and, to avoid any mistake, each man was ordered to wear a white band round his arm, and the Berekum levies, whose uniform was a green band, were cautioned to respect the Wam people as allies. Nothing of further interest occurred until we were nearing Odumassi, when the glad news reached us that Browne had captured Kobina Cherri.

The way in which the capture was effected was this. Browne received information that Kobina Cherri was in hiding at a village called Suinjam, about two hours' march from Odumassi, and he despatched Lieutenant Kingston and Lieutenant de Putron each with two sections of the 1st and 2nd West African Frontier Force. Mr Daniells,
a native officer, accompanied them. On arriving near the village, Lieutenant Kingston ordered the four sections to surround the village, and this manœuvre was carried out without the inhabitants being aware of their presence. Both these officers had accompanied Captain Carleton when he made similar attempts to capture Kobina Cherri, and he had carefully instilled into their minds the principle of caution when surrounding a village. His instruction bore good fruit, for on entering the village, the people running hither and thither were unable to break through the cordon of soldiers, and Mr Daniells, who understood the Ashanti language, heard them shouting to one particular man to hide himself. Suspecting the man to be some one of importance, he gave chase and seized him. The captive turned out to be Kobina Cherri, and he was brought back a prisoner to Odumassi.

When interrogated by me his manner was insolent and defiant, and he harangued the Berekum levies, who were drawn up in the town, calling on them to rescue him. Bloodthirsty savage as he was, I could not help admiring his courage in openly defying us.

On the 15th and 16th, the column halted at Odumassi, and laid waste the surrounding country. Suatru had been levelled and burnt on the 14th, and now began the difficult operation of destroying the large town of Odumassi. It took us two days to do the work. On the night of the 16th, the camp was alarmed by a fire breaking out in the town, and as the walls had all been knocked down, and the thatched roofs were also on the ground, it was hard work to stop the fire from spreading. For an hour or two it was an anxious time, owing to the amount of ammunition and stores in the place. A clear space was made all round the quarter of the town which was alight, and the fire was allowed to burn itself out.

On the 17th, we marched out of Odumassi, the rear guard receiving orders to burn the town when we were clear. One of the houses, however, unfortunately caught on fire, and in a
very short time the whole town was in a blaze. The moment was critical, as the only exit from the town was by a narrow bush path, and the column was much blocked. Had a panic occurred, there might have been a great disaster, as the town was full of ammunition, supplies, hospital hammocks, and stretchers laden with smallpox patients, but owing to the admirable discipline maintained, not only by the soldiers of all ranks, but also by the carriers, every one managed to get away in safety, though the staff and rear guard were cut off, and had to run the gauntlet of the flames.

To give the troops a rest, the column was halted at Tanosu until the morning of the 19th, but small columns were sent out in all directions to burn and lay waste the surrounding country. This halt at Tanosu gave a few enthusiastic fishermen an opportunity of angling for the sacred fish. Several enormous ones were hooked, but the primitive lines and rods were in every case either broken or dragged out of their owners’ hands. One officer assured us that he hooked a fish which had a gold collar round his neck, but whether he was giving his imagination play or not, we were unable to say. The natives declare that four of the fish are so decorated, that they are perfectly tame, and will eat out of the hands of the fetish priests.

On the 19th November, the column marched out of Tanosu, and reached Bechim at noon on the 20th, burning and destroying all villages on or off the road. The garrison at Bechim was picked up, and the force was once more split up into two columns, the first marching on to Insuta, and the second halting at Bechim.

In this formation the two columns marched back to Kumasi, No. 1 column reaching there on the 23rd November, having marched 77½ miles in five days, and No. 2 column arriving on the 24th. Thirty-one kings and chiefs were brought in as prisoners, and 900 guns and 5000 lbs. of rubber, besides a small amount of specie, were taken from the enemy, who had received a punishment the memory of which will be handed down to their children’s children.
Kobina Cherri was tried for murder by a military commission, found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged. The sentence was carried out on the morning of the 25th November, and true to the instincts of his race he marched to the scaffold with a firm step, his head erect, and his eyes glaring defiance at the white men.

With the return of the Berekum column the campaign came to an end. It was an exceptional campaign in that none but native troops were employed, and in that it was carried out during the rainy season, a time of the year in which old coasters said it was impossible to pursue military operations.

To Colonel Willcocks, however, nothing appeared impossible. His powers of organisation were great, for, starting practically with no staff, very few troops, and still fewer carriers, he, ably assisted as he was by the authorities at home and on the Coast, organised the newly-raised troops from both the East and West African Colonies into the Ashanti Field Force, the feeding and transporting of which required a further organisation of 15,000 carriers. He never allowed himself to be hurried, but patiently worked at his herculean task. In this he was well supported by his staff officers, Lieutenant-Colonel Henstock, Major Bryan, and Major Holford, his political officer, Mr Haddon Smith, and more especially by his chief transport officer, Captain Willans.

It has been well said of Colonel Willcocks that he has the gift of being able to exact the maximum amount of work from his officers with the minimum amount of pressure.

I will close my last chapter by giving a few medical statistics of the campaign. The average strength of Europeans was 152, and out of this strength there were, during the seven months, 360 admissions to hospital, 8 deaths, and 53 invalided from wounds or sickness, 6 killed in action, and 40 wounded.

The average strength of the native soldiers was 2804, and out of these there were 4963 admissions to hospital,
54 deaths, 250 invalidated from wounds, etc., and 24 killed in action.

The average strength of carriers was 15,000, and there were: admissions into hospital, 5000; killed in action, 1; and deaths, 200.

These figures do not include the losses sustained by the besieged force in Kumasi, or those sustained during Governor Hodgson's retreat to the Coast.
The Governor Entering Kumasi.

The King of Bekwai in Palaver.
APPENDIX I

KUMASI IN 1900

The Kumasi of 1900 was but a shadow of the former town entered by Sir Francis Scott in 1895. Although never completely re-built after its destruction in 1874, there was still something imposing about it. Among the many ordinary native huts rose steep-roofed, beautifully-built swish houses, decorated with most graceful designs. The king's palace, built between the road leading from the Cape Coast road to N'Koranza and the swamp, towered above all the other houses. On entering it by the great gateway one wandered from one court-yard, surrounded by two-storied buildings, the roofs supported by great swish pillars, the interiors sometimes partly hidden by open-work designs in swish and wattle, to another; from one curious little enclosure, to fetish trees surrounded by the débris of sacrifices; from the king's prisons—ghastly holes in which a man could not stand upright—to the ruins of the stone palace destroyed in '74. Of this immense building nothing remained except a few huts which once housed the king's attendants. The chiefs' houses of '95 had also been destroyed to make way for the European buildings, the Haussa cantonments, and the parade ground. When we marched out of Kumasi, the only native houses which remained standing were a few in the Fanti and Cape Coast lines. The remainder had been pulled down for firewood and to build the shelters which surrounded the Fort.
APPENDIX II

EVENTS THAT LED TO THE RISING

The Ashantis as a nation are brave, cruel, and treacherous, and from time immemorial they have been greatly feared both by the cowardly tribes on the Coast as well as by the braver tribes in the Hinterland. The only race on the West Coast of Africa who can hold a candle to them for pluck are the Haussas. At least this was the case up to the period of the late war, but since then, opinions have varied as to whether the Yorubas do not outrival the Haussas in bravery. Personally I do not think so, but it is an undoubted fact, that whereas the Haussas even in their own country have often been defeated by neighbouring tribes, and have been obliged to allow alien races to settle down in their towns, the Yorubas are still an unconquered race. They are also more intelligent than the Haussas, and though the predominant opinion is that they have not the dash of their rivals, they are more easily taught the art of war, and submit themselves to the discipline exacted by their British officers with more grace than do the Haussas.

Before the late campaign, the Ashantis had never tried conclusions with the Yorubas, but the Haussas and they are old enemies; in fact, I may say that a deadly feud has always existed between them. Religion alone is enough to make them deadly enemies, for the Haussas are Mahomedans, whereas the Ashantis are utter Pagans, as are most of the tribes on the West Coast. All these tribes are fetish worshippers, their gods being various malignant demons of the forest, who are located in some particular tree or river. They believe that the fetish priests have power to entice these demons into any animate or inanimate
APPENDIX II

object, which is then worshipped as a god. The subject is too vast to be dealt with here, but it may be stated that human sacrifices are very prevalent at all "customs" of the nation, such as the anniversary of a king's death, and at all their religious festivals many human beings are offered up as sacrifices. Years ago their kings and chiefs found the drain so great on their own subjects, that they had to look further afield, the result being that they raided all the neighbouring tribes, such as the Dengiassis, Denkersas, N’Koranzas, Kokofus, and Adansis. The terror that the Ashantis inspired was so great that these subject tribes dared not rebel, and things got to such a pass, that it became sufficient for an Ashanti king merely to send word to a village to provide so many human beings, and the chief of that village would have to furnish the necessary number for the sacrifice.

Although the jurisdiction of the Gold Coast Government extended only as far as the River Præh, yet all these tribes, including the Ashantis, were under the British sphere of influence, and all the dominated tribes petitioned the British Government to put a stop to this human sacrifice. This led to the expedition of 1874, which, however, although Kumasi was destroyed and the captive missionaries (including Mr and Mrs Ramseyer) were released, did not accomplish its object of putting an end to the custom. After many appeals, the Government again took the matter up, and in 1895 called upon King Prempeh to put an end to it. Captain Donald Stewart, who was then a Travelling Commissioner of the Gold Coast Colony, proceeded with a small escort to Kumasi, and delivered an Ultimatum to the king. His reception was unsatisfactory; the king's demeanour was haughty in the extreme, and that of his chiefs was, if anything, worse. Prempeh, badly advised by his councillors, refused to listen to the demands of the British Government, and this led to the campaign of 1895-6 under Sir Francis Scott. This campaign was a bloodless one, and overawed, no doubt, by the presence of the British troops, the Ashantis allowed us to enter their capital unopposed. The Ashantis themselves now say that they thought that the troops would simply march to Kumasi, establish a British Resident there, and then return to the Coast. To their dismay, however, they discovered that the Government had a much more deeply laid scheme, and that was the removal
of the royal family and principal chiefs as political prisoners, and their incarceration until such time as the War Indemnity of 1873-4 was paid in full.

To a proud, brave nation, it must have been gall and wormwood to see their king have to make a slavish submission and be removed from their midst, and to find that their hated white foes intended to build a fort in the centre of their capital to protect the Resident from any possible treachery. King Prempeh was sent to Elmina Castle, and by removing him from Kumasi, the Government thought that they had broken the back of the Ashanti power, and assumed a Protectorate over the country, arranging for it to be governed by a native council of chiefs, with the British Resident as President of the Council.

By removing Prempeh, the Government had by no means broken the Ashantis, who still possessed the Golden Stool which to them represented the Ashanti power. Their real king therefore is the Stool, the chief whom the nation places on the Golden Stool being the king for the time being, and as long as they had possession of the Golden Stool, they still looked for the restoration of King Prempeh, who, they believed, had only been taken to the Coast to demonstrate the white man's power. I do not mean to imply by this that the Ashantis do not believe in hereditary succession like other nations and peoples. Hereditary succession is always through the female side of the Royal House, to ensure the future ruler having royal blood at least on one side. The eldest son of the king's sister, and not the king's own son, is always the Crown Prince, and therefore it will be seen at once, that by removing King Prempeh the Government by no means struck the Ashantis the blow it intended. For four years the Ashantis nursed their schemes of vengeance, and during this period the ex-king was removed from Elmina to Sierra Leone. Under the excellent rule of the late Colonel Pigott, D.S.O., and Captain Donald Stewart, C.M.G., the diabolical practice of human sacrifice was prohibited, and justice was administered with a firm hand. The N’Koranza and Adansi tribes were reinstated in their own districts, and could live at peace with their neighbours; trade improved, the gold industry advanced by leaps and bounds, European capital poured into the country, numbers of mining
APPENDIX II

experts prospected the land, and there appeared to be a great future before the Gold Coast Colony.

All this, however, further incensed the Ashantis, and especially the chiefs, who found their power steadily on the wane, but it was not until early in 1900 that observant people saw in the increasing demand for guns and powder the appearance of a cloud, which was soon to develop and burst over the country, letting loose the dogs of war. Several events combined to bring matters to a crisis. First, the Boer War led the Ashanti chiefs to believe that the Government had its hands full, and had no white soldiers to send to the Gold Coast; secondly, their fetish priests told them that the time was ripe for revolt; and thirdly, when the Governor arrived in their midst, accompanied by so small a following, it appeared as if fate was playing into their hands.
APPENDIX III

CAPTAIN PARMETER'S ADVENTURES

The following is an account of how the first intimation of the Ashanti rebellion became known in the district to the north of Kumasi and the Northern Territories, and of the manner in which Captain Parmeter, of the Gold Coast Constabulary, became acquainted with it. Having been invalided from Gambaga, he arrived at Kintampo considerably benefited by the change. After a few days' delay at this station, he set out again on his journey south, reaching N'Koranza on Tuesday afternoon, 3rd April. Soon after his arrival District Commissioner Rainsford came in from the south on his way to Kintampo, having left Kumasi on the previous Saturday. Next day they parted company, the latter going north, and Captain Parmeter south to the village at which Mr Rainsford had slept on the previous night.

At his mid-day halt at the village of Inquanta, a large palaver was being held, and it dispersed almost immediately. The headman left in charge of the village was impertinent when asked to supply a carrier to replace one of Captain Parmeter's men who had broken down; but palavers held in villages are quite common occurrences, and this same headman had behaved in the same manner two months previously, so he thought nothing of these circumstances until subsequent events recalled them.

As soon as his carriers had finished their food they started off again in charge of his orderly, he following in his hammock about a quarter of an hour afterwards. On reaching the stream which forms the boundary between N'Koranza and Ashanti he found them all sitting down. Upon asking the reason of this halt he
was told that they had met two men who had told them they had been robbed on the road by people from Sekedumassi, and that they (the carriers) had seen three men with guns on the path a little way ahead of them. As cases of highway robbery are very frequent, and the sight of hunters carrying guns is a common occurrence, he naturally concluded that this was one of the many devices employed by carriers on the march to obtain a halt. There was, in fact, absolutely nothing to indicate that it was anything else, for laughing, and without the least hesitation, they at once went on again when ordered.

As it was a somewhat longer march than usual they were allowed to halt for water at a river close to Sekedumassi. The headman Shylow, however, went straight on to the village in order to prepare a house for Captain Parmeter, as was his custom. He followed very shortly afterwards, the carriers a little distance in front of his hammock. For the second time he caught them up, this time finding them standing with their loads still on their heads, and all closed up on the path. Upon inquiring somewhat sharply the reason, word was passed down from those in front that they had seen more men with guns on the path in front of them. He got out of his hammock, and, calling Dresser Lampty, started up the line to put a stop to what he regarded as nonsense, but had only got a little way when four guns were fired in front of him in the distance. Even then he did not think anything was on foot, for, when any kind of native “custom” is being held in a village, guns are discharged all day long. This firing, he afterwards learnt, however, was the murder of his poor headman.

These reports scared the carriers thoroughly, and they began coming back, and after passing him a little way they threw down their loads and bolted. He sent his orderly after them to try and head them off and send them back, but he did not see him again. Taking out his revolver and threatening with it those he overtook, he succeeded, with the help of some hammock men, in getting enough of them back to take up all the loads but two, and then got into his hammock and started back to find the orderly and the others. Two men sent back for the loads came running back without them, saying that there were now plenty of men on the road with guns, and that others were going into the bush to the right and left.
A native trader arrived, and Captain Parmeter was getting Lampty to ask him to tell his headman that the carriers were giving trouble, and that he must come and look after them, when Lampty, happening to turn his head, exclaimed, "Here they come, sir!" He jumped out of the hammock, and was greeted with a volley of slugs, which, luckily, were all high. He returned their fire with a couple of shots from his revolver, and they retired out of sight. By this time Lampty and his small boy Micky were the only people remaining with him, for all the others had run. Having reloaded their guns, the Ashantis appeared again in greater numbers. Hoping to keep them off until his carriers had got a good start, he kept pointing his revolver at them, but, seeing that he did not fire, they advanced more quickly and boldly. He therefore fired off his remaining four cartridges at intervals, and they retired each time. He tried to reload his revolver, but it had jammed, for the barrel had burst. There was nothing to do but run, so as no one was in sight they bolted. Round a bend in the road Captain Parmeter fell, and was completely winded. His little boy Micky tugged at him all the time, beseeching him with floods of tears to get up or they would kill him. He ran on a few more steps and then sat down in the bush on the left hand side of the road. This he did twice, but Lampty implored him each time to come on. Finally, being quite exhausted, he staggered about twenty yards into the forest, and lay down behind a fallen tree in the undergrowth, sending Micky to join the others. Lampty, seeing that he really could not go any further, lay down in the bush too.

Next moment the Ashantis, strongly reinforced, rushed down the road past them and could be heard firing for some time. They then returned, and finding footmarks (luckily those on the left hand side, for, when Captain Parmeter finally left the road, it was all rock at that point), they sent some people to search the forest, while the others broke open the boxes, and shared the loot. They could be heard talking quite distinctly, of course, and Lampty afterwards said that they thought the party had gone into the bush somewhere, but that they had no chance of getting to N'Koranza, the only possible place of safety, for the roads were all guarded, and by the agreement made in palaver (that which took place in the village they lunched at) that morning, the three
villages they would have to pass on the way to N’Koranza would see that they were killed.

By this time the sun began to set, the half-hearted searchers returned—they wanted their share of the loot—and all started for the village. Captain Parmeter and Lampty lay still, for they thought this might be a ruse to get them to disclose their whereabouts. At length, very cautiously and quietly, they went deeper into the forest at right angles to the road, and afterwards to the left, hoping to keep parallel with it. The moon rose, and they walked on, for they could hear the Ashantis still searching in the distance. It was a terrible night; their hands, faces, and clothes were all torn, and when they were not being tripped up by creepers they were being strangled by them. Time after time Captain Parmeter stumbled and implored Lampty to leave him, but he would not hear of it, and helped him up every time. At length he could only get along by putting his hands on Lampty’s shoulders, and his head in the small of his back, while the latter used his hands like a swimmer to thrust aside the dense undergrowth. At last they could get no further, for they had reached a spot which seemed to have no outlet, so dark was it and so thick with the upturned roots of trees. They sat down and dozed fitfully, at the mercy of ants and the hundred and one other insects with which the forest swarms. As dawn appeared they saw an opening, and started off again, turning to the left in the hope of striking the road much further down than the scene of their attack. They really crossed it, however, mistaking it for one they had crossed during the night, and it was only by the merest chance, seeing that the bush was so thick on the other side, that they regained it, and saw the telegraph wire among the trees.

They walked down it and reached the river at which the party had halted on the previous afternoon; there they got their first water, and although it was almost stagnant, they drank handfuls of it. While drinking, they heard voices, and had only time to get behind a buttress of a silk cotton tree and hide, when some 80 Ashantis, all armed, came down the road, crossing the river on a fallen tree, and ascending the rocky path on the other side. Lampty whispered that they were tracking them by Captain Parmeter’s boot prints, so the latter said they had better get away, for they would miss them when they got off the rocks. The two,
therefore, stole quietly down to the river. It was very low, and on seeing some sand, an idea suddenly struck Captain Parmeter. Acting on it, he began walking backwards on the sand into the water, and then both waded a short way up-stream until they came to a fallen tree hanging over the water. Swinging himself up into this, he took off his boots and walked along the tree into the forest. This was most providential, for the Ashantis came back in about five minutes, and, picking up the footprints on the sand, began searching in the opposite direction. All that day the fugitives had nothing to eat or drink, while the people were in search of them, sometimes at only a few paces' distance. They moved twice during the day, each time nearer the road, as Captain Parmeter intended to make a dash for it as soon as the sun went down. In the one case it would only mean slowly starving, and in the other being caught and killed outright, but with a run for their money.

At 7 o'clock they started, Captain Parmeter in his stocking feet to avoid being tracked. It was bright moonlight. They started off at almost five miles an hour, and it was very jumpy work, for the shadows in the glades every now and then looked just like figures, but as they proceeded further, things got worse, for there were real figures, though, through a miracle, they were asleep. The Ashantis never dreamt of the fugitives daring to move in moonlight, and, thoroughly tired out with searching for them, had lain down to sleep until the moon went down, leaving sentries, who were also asleep, and who were walked over by the two men. They got a drink of water at about two o'clock in the morning, after having been nearly twelve hours without any. They got an awful scare while resting, for they saw a figure approaching, and Lampty tried to stalk him, but was seen, whereupon the figure fled. Lampty called out in the Accra language, "Who are you?" They then found that it was one of the carriers also trying to escape, and during the night they were joined by four others. They got through two villages safely without being seen, although Lampty trod on a calabash, which broke and made an awful noise.

By this time Captain Parmeter was so exhausted that he was tumbling down at every few steps. The carriers tried to carry him on their shoulders, but were too weak. There was a short-
telegraph ladder by the road, and the carriers tried to carry
him on it as a stretcher, but he could not keep balanced, for
he was constantly falling asleep and tumbling off. His feet
were all cut and swollen, and so tender that it was excruciating
pain to put them to the ground.

Some of the carriers went on ahead, and through talking as
they passed, had aroused the last hostile village through which
the party had to pass. When they arrived, the whole place was
alive with figures stealing about in the shadows, and it looked
as if their time had come. At first they walked straight through
the village, but on getting to the end, as there were three paths,
Lampty asked one of the men gliding about which was the
N’Koranza one. He said he would ask the chief, so the party
returned and lay under one of the village shade trees. Each
person who was asked for anything—water, food, or fire—gave
the same reply, he must “ask the chief.” As there was no
apparent result, Lampty went off in search of him, and soon
returned with that gentleman and a crowd of followers. Some
bananas they brought with them were most acceptable, for they
were the first food they had touched since a light lunch about
seven hours previously. The chief was asked to supply Captain
Parmeter with four men and a native cloth to form a hammock
in which to carry him to N’Koranza, about an hour’s march off.
There was much intentional delay; they talked a good deal,
wanted to know how much would be paid, doubted if a cloth
could be found, or a pole, and so on. At length everything
seemed settled; a cloth was produced and tied on to the pole,
and Captain Parmeter got in, but it split, as it was evidently
intended to do, and he was let down on the ground.

They were then asked to wait until it was light, but this was
only an excuse to gain time to communicate with the last village
they had passed through, for one of the carriers had overheard
the chief express his surprise that they had been allowed to pass
after the message which had been sent by the Inquantas and the
other village, to the effect that they were to be killed if caught.
Lampty set about searching for a cloth. While doing so he
called out, “They are getting out their G-U-N-S, sir.” (He spelt
it as he was afraid some one might recognise the word.) What
he said was true, as men on either side of the village were
slipping into the bush, and, from the direction they took, their intention was only too evident. It was soon confirmed, for a carrier had overheard orders being given that the party were to be shot as soon as they left the village. Lampty having succeeded in getting a stout cloth, the carriers proceeded to rig up a hammock. Lampty began talking to the chief and his people, and although Captain Parmeter kept asking him what he was saying, and begging him not to rouse them further, he paid no heed, doing the finest possible piece of bluff, and thus certainly saving his life again.

"There are plenty more white men and plenty more clerks like myself," he said, "and it is very foolish of you to go and kill us. We know the message you have received, and we have seen your men go out into the bush to shoot us on the road. All right, do so; we are not afraid, my master and I. But you are fools, for remember there are other white men and other clerks, and they will come with soldiers, and who then will get the blame? You in this village, of course. Did those who sent you the message dare to do this thing? No, of course not." When the chief asked if the people in the other villages had seen them, he replied, "Yes, the Chief of Inquanta was at Kumasi, but I saw the headman in charge, and the chief of the other village too," which, of course, he had not.

This staggered the chief, and a consultation took place. Presently men were seen hurrying off into the bush, evidently with orders to recall the armed men, so, about ten minutes afterwards the fugitives set out again, and got into N'Koranza without being molested. They were met just outside the town by Mr Hansen, the native Basel Mission Catechist. From what he said it looked very much as if they had got out of the frying-pan into the fire, for he reported that there had been an attempt to capture the Golden Stool at a village near Kumasi, and that the party had been attacked, one officer having been killed, while two who were wounded had fled into the bush with what remained of their men, 40 of whom had been killed. The Governor and all the white people were then besieged in the Fort, and the whole country had risen. The King of N'Koranza had sent messengers to call up all his war chiefs and fighting men to join the Ashantis, and hundreds of them had already arrived and were
cleaning their guns and getting ready to fight and help the Ashantis to drive the white men out of the country. Such was Mr Hansen's version of the affair.

On arrival at his house Captain Parmeter carefully questioned some other people who had just fled from Ashanti. He also summoned the Princess of N'Koranza, and she arrived with a large following. Her answers were evasive and untruthful. She said that she had not heard of his having been attacked at Sekedumassi, although his head hammock man had escaped and told her, and that she did not know orders had been given to the three N'Koranza villages to kill him. He therefore thought it necessary to send off the following telegram at once:—

"From Captain Parmeter,
N'Koranza.

To D. C. Rainsford,
Kintampo.

6/4/1900. Think you ought to inform Commissioner and Commandant N. T. by special Haussa runners with orders to go day and night until delivery, one via Wa, as he may be there, the duplicate to Gambaga. General Ashanti rising; all roads and mails stopped; lines down; Governor and Kumasi residents, on good native authority, besieged in Fort. N'Koranzas have evidently also joined."

It was very lucky it did go, for the line was cut almost immediately it got through to Kintampo, whence it was despatched direct to Gambaga by runner, and wired to Bole. It was then sent to Wa by runner.

After his palaver with the princess, and after arranging to obtain a full account of a big palaver which the N'Koranzas were going to hold privately that afternoon, Captain Parmeter took some food which Mr Hansen's wife had prepared, and went to sleep on a native-made bed. He was awakened to hear the result of the palaver, and to receive a message from the princess that she wanted to see him. Although he had not at first believed it, Mr Hansen assured him that she was doing her best quietly to keep the war chiefs in hand, and prevent them from taking any active measures. Appearances had certainly been against her at the first interview. She had a very difficult position to fill, as she was left in charge by the king, and she and her own party were not strong enough to dispute his message from Kumasi, as they would have liked to do, being on the side of the English, and not wishing any fighting. Captain Parmeter's arrival, however, had
greatly strengthened her hand, for at the palaver regret and surprise that we should have escaped the Ashantis were freely expressed by the chiefs who approved of fighting, and it had put quite a different complexion on the state of affairs. Their plans had been discovered prematurely, and there was no chance of surprising Kintampo, a place they had evidently set their minds on, there being several thousands of pounds worth of specie and stores there. They were also furious with themselves for not having cut the telegraph wire before. "His white brothers will know all now," they said. The princess began to assert herself a little after this discussion, and many who had been against her now joined her side, and thus the peace party became the stronger. Orders were sent out immediately that things, for the present, were to remain as they had been. The three villages Captain Parmeter had passed through were told to release any of his carriers they might have caught, and send them to N'Koranza at once, and that they need not "close the roads," but await further orders. This was done, and many carriers were released, along with little Micky, who had been caught and was just about to be killed.

While the result of the palaver was being told him, the telegraph clerk came in, and told Captain Parmeter that the wire which had been found cut quite close to the town had been repaired, and that a telegram had arrived from Kintampo, saying that Captain Benson with soldiers had left on the previous day, and would arrive that evening. He therefore informed the princess that he would see her later when Captain Benson arrived. He came a little later, and explanations were exchanged. It appeared that when he started he had only the most meagre information as to what had happened to Captain Parmeter, the telegraph clerk having simply told him—on the word of the head hammock man, who had got in on the evening of the 4th—that the latter had been lost in the bush. Had he not encountered Captain Parmeter, he would probably have gone on, and having only an escort of thirteen men, he must certainly have been attacked, and would have had little or no chance of beating off the enemy.

After dark Captain Parmeter sent for the princess. She soon arrived, carried on a man’s back, and smoking a clay pipe. She
APPENDIX III

was accompanied by all the chiefs, hostile and otherwise. She asked Captain Parmeter to repeat the story of the attack upon him, and expressed surprise that such a thing could have happened in N'Koranza country, that the Ashantis should have failed in their purpose, and that they should have been allowed to search in N’Koranza villages for us as they had been. He pointed out that the N’Koranzas had always been on the side of the English, who had formerly helped them against the Ashantis, and reminded her of the fate of one of their kings who had sided with Ashanti. She said that the king was at Kumasi, and that she was only a woman and could but use her own judgment. He expressed the hope that it would be wisely exercised, and pointed out that, having all her chiefs present, she had a good opportunity to advise them not to mix themselves up in an affair out of which they were sure to come worst in the end. It was, he observed, very easy for their king, who was at Kumasi and among the Ashantis, to be led away by them or forced into sending such orders as he had done, a thing which he would never have dreamt of doing had he been in his own country. She said that they were for the English, and that what she said would be reported to Accra and remembered for or against her, as the case might be. The palaver then broke up after the party had obtained messengers to accompany them next day on their march to Kintampo in case of difficulties. Nothing of this nature occurred, however, and they arrived there safely after two days' march.

For the next month a most trying time was experienced at this station, as the garrison was very small, and there were only four white officers—Benson, Parmeter, Graham, and Rainsford. The country all round was “up,” and the daily reports of murders of traders and advances of huge armed parties against us were disquieting. The whole place was put in a state of defence, and a fort was built on to the guard-room. It was made of iron telegraph poles, and wire entanglements entirely encircling it were laid down. A well was sunk, and food supplies were with difficulty collected. The watches at night, although necessary, were most trying, for the sentries were so tired and worn out that it was almost impossible to keep them awake, although the posts were called out every ten minutes. At first two-hour watches were tried, but it was found that they generally resulted in the
whole four being awake almost all night. Finally each took the whole night, and had the following morning off duty, but they got hard work when Benson and Rainsford went down with fever and only two remained. Captain Digan and Dr Riddle, however, soon arrived from Wa with 30 men, but both had been invalided.

On the 21st of April a telegram was received from His Excellency, Governor Hodgson, which was to be forwarded to Major Morris at Gambaga, ordering him down with the largest force he could bring. It had taken over ten days to come from Kumasi, and it is a marvel how the native who brought it ever got through with his life, for he had had many narrow escapes. This was despatched immediately, only to be brought back again, however, for the roads to the north were closed and said to be impassable, armed men guarding every path. After four futile attempts, a carrier named Matabu got through and met Major Morris, who had luckily acted at once on the first wire, received only a few days out. He arrived in pouring rain on the 5th of May.
# APPENDIX IV

RETURN OF CASUALTIES from the outbreak of hostilities until the withdrawal to the Coast of the greater part of the Kumasi Garrison, including the engagements of the Lagos Haussas in the march up country, and those of the Northern Territories Haussas between Kintampo and Kumasi, but not including those of the Ashanti Field Force.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF PLACE (Lagos Haussas)</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EUROPEANS</th>
<th>NATIVE OFFICERS</th>
<th>HAUSAS</th>
<th>AVERAGE STRENGTH OF GARRISON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ball</td>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ejessa Road</td>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Capt. G. Marshall (slight); Capt. Bishop (slight); Dr. Hay (slight).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumasi</td>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Capt. A. Logget (slight).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Osmann Dankari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eshigo (Lagos Haussas)</td>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Capt. G. O. Aplin (slight); Capt. Ochurne (slight); Capt. Reld (slight).</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Lawani Zoso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Kumasi (Lagos Haussas)</td>
<td>April 29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Capt. J. C. Ralph (slight); Dr. Macfarlane (slight).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumasi</td>
<td>April 29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dr. E. H. Tweedie (slight).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krobo</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Capt. H. Armitage (slight).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghichiri</td>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Maj. A. Morris, D.A.O. (severe).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarmiri</td>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Capt. P. A. Logget (severe).</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Lawani Zoso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumasi</td>
<td>May 20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Capt. J. C. Ralph (severe).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N’Timidel</td>
<td>May 20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Capt. G. E. Maguire (slight); Capt. G. Marshall (slight).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconnoitring Patrol (Kumasi)</td>
<td>June 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March with Governor from Kumasi to Cape Coast</td>
<td>June 28-35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Capt. G. Marshall (killed); Capt. Legget (killed); Dr. Graham (slight).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 27 Wounded; 39 Missing.
RETURN OF DEATHS FROM DISEASE during same period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EUROPEAN</th>
<th>NAMEN</th>
<th>HAUWEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Deputy-Inspector General J. M. Middlemist, Gold Coast Constabulary.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX V

GOLD AND OTHER NATURAL PRODUCTS

Although the Gold Coast has been known to Europeans since the fourteenth century, and in spite of the tales brought home by adventurous traders as to its richness, little has been done until the last few years to exploit the country lying behind the seashore. Traders were content to build forts within sound of the thunder of the surf, and there, protected by cannon, to barter guns, powder, cloth, and beads with the natives in exchange for gold and slaves. Possibly the fear of the deadly climate restrained the more adventurous spirits from penetrating into the dense forests which hid the wonders of the inland country from them. But even then the Gold Coast lived up to its name, and poured a ceaseless stream of gold into Europe.

Not until after the expedition of 1895-96 was any serious effort made to open up the kingdom of Ashanti, with which this account deals more particularly. Protected by its climate and forests, this kingdom had recovered from the blow dealt it in 1874, when the capital, Kumasi, was destroyed by fire, but owing to dissensions among the big chiefs, and to the want of powder, no attempt was made to dispute the advance of the force under Sir Francis Scott, when a Resident was installed at Kumasi, and King Prempeh and his principal chiefs were deported to Sierra Leone.

The rising of 1900, which has just been brought to so successful a conclusion by the complete, and, it may be said, permanent shattering of the Ashanti power, fortunately occurred before many white men had taken up their abode in the country which is now opened up to the prospector throughout its length and
APPENDIX V

breadth, and which furnishes on all sides abundant indications of its mineral and vegetable wealth.

The forest abounds in rubber trees and vines. Of the former I have found seven varieties, of the latter five. The specimens I sent home were examined and reported on by Mr Stapf of the Royal Gardens, Kew.

The following is a list of the native names of the trees and vines, and their probable species:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TREES</th>
<th>VINES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Female&quot; Funtum: Kickxia sp.</td>
<td>Inkontomba Carpodinus, or Landolphia?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(K. Africana)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyedua. Ficus Vogelii.</td>
<td>Dekoro, or Tekoro. Carpodinus (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Male&quot; Funtum: Kickxia (?)</td>
<td>Aman, or Amanbiri. Ficus sp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindura. Alstonia (?)</td>
<td>Edru, or Bodda. Alafia sp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ekurei. Ficus sp.</td>
<td>Mumeromemo, perhaps A. Barteri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akan: (?)</td>
<td>Alafia sp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anomani. Ficus: spec. nov. (?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Owing to so many trees and vines having been destroyed by the natives, the rubber supply from the Ashanti forests has fallen off considerably in late years, but with the maturing of the young trees with which the forest is full, a fresh impetus will no doubt be given to this industry.

The mode of collecting the juice is as follows:—

From trees:—The rubber collector climbs the trunk by means of climbing ropes, cutting a channel in the bark with a gouge, as he ascends. Having climbed as high as possible, he makes small, slanting channels on either side of, and communicating with, the main channel at intervals round the tree trunk, and soon the liquid rubber is trickling down into a receptacle placed for it at the base of the tree. The Nyedua tree is usually cut down before grooving, on account of its many branches, but in any case a tree operated on by a native as often as not dies off.

From vines:—The vines are torn down from their supporting trees, and are then cut into lengths of 10 feet, which are grooved and allowed to drain.

The juices of several of these trees and vines are of little use commercially (that of the anomani, for instance, is only used
APPENDIX V

by the natives as a kind of bird-lime with which to catch the parrots which abound in the forest), but it is quite possible that they may some day be turned to account. Trees yielding either timber for building, or woods for decorative purposes, are plentiful: mahogany, “odum” (an extremely hard wood), and other trees. The silk cotton tree supplies a very soft wood, the immense buttresses of which are fashioned by the natives into doors and window shutters. At present, however, little can be done, except in the vicinity of rivers where the trees (especially mahogany) are felled, the branches lopped off, and the trunk roughly squared. A path is then cleared to the river, and the trunk hauled over roughly improvised wooden rollers to the water. When several logs have been collected, they are lashed together and floated down to the Coast in charge of a native. A species of climbing palm would form an excellent substitute for the “bent wood” used for making light furniture. The oil palm flourishes in certain districts, while north of Kumasi grows the Kola tree, which supplies the famous nut which, since Ashanti became a kingdom, has attracted caravans from every part of Mahomedan Africa.

But the great wealth of Ashanti lies in its gold. A writer has described the precious metal as being an impregnation of the soil of the Gold Coast Colony, and this is hardly an exaggeration. The women of Cape Coast, during the rainy season, make about half-a-crown a day by washing the surface mud carried down the drains, while in the Sefwi districts, £2 a week is gained by them by washing the sand of the streams.

The gold deposits appear to extend in a north-easterly direction, from the Tano river on the west, to the Volta on the east. Alluvial gold has been obtained by the natives in every part of the colony, but the gold-bearing quartz has practically not been touched. The village of Bibianaha in the Sefwi-Awhiasu district is the centre of the only quartz-crushing operations by natives which have come under my observation. The process is most laborious, the quartz undergoing no less than eleven crushings by hand before being washed in shallow, circular, wooden pans, manipulated most skilfully by women, and by hard labour not more than £60 per annum can be made. As a rule, the native sinks a shaft about three feet in diameter, until he comes
to water, when he goes to another spot to recommence operations. The earth thus obtained is washed by the women. Occasionally the natives, after sinking a shaft until water is reached, make another close to it, and then tunnel into the first. The shafts are usually sunk in proximity to the road, and in many spots the ground on either side of the path is simply honeycombed with these “gold holes,” which, overgrown by grass and small “bush,” render walking by day dangerous, and by night impossible.

The almost insuperable difficulties which attend the landing of heavy machinery at the Coast towns and its transport up country, are doubtless the causes which have mainly contributed to the comparative neglect by Europeans of the Gold Coast as a field for profitable mining operations, but these difficulties have been partly overcome, and with the opening of a railway from Sekondi to Kumasi, and the building of a harbour, they will almost disappear.

The colony, which has already sprung into existence in the midst of the dense Ashanti forest, bears witness to the marvellous enterprise of its promoters, and may be taken as a model to be copied by the many other mining communities which are already hard at work in Ashanti.

Early in 1898, Captain Aplin, C.M.G., the Acting Resident at Kumasi, opened the first of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation Mines, as representative of the Governor. The Ashanti Goldfields Corporation’s property consists of 100 square miles of land, situated partly in Bekwai and partly in Adansi country to the west of the Cape Coast-Kumasi road. Marvellous to relate, since the commencement of operations, nearly 700 tons of machinery, stores, etc., at a cost of £44 per ton, have been brought from the Coast in loads varying from 70 to over 400 lbs. in weight by carriers, who have been employed at the rate of from 1000 to over 2000 monthly. Six mines have been more or less worked by over 1600 natives, under the supervision of from 40 to 50 white men. The value of quartz crushed varies generally from ½ ounce to 4 ounces to the ton, but even better results have been obtained.

The superintendent’s house, on Obuassi Hill, is connected by telephone with the Corporation’s office at Obuassi, which
again is in telephonic communication with all the mines. Tram lines are under construction, a church is to be built, while a large clearing has been made which is devoted to gardening experiments. The health of Europeans and natives alike has been excellent, and accidents to miners are almost unknown.

The village of Obuassai contains some 4000 inhabitants, made up of Fantis, Ashantis, Appoloniens, and Krepis. A native council of twelve men, one elected by the Corporation and the remainder by the villagers, presides over the village. Natives charged with minor offences are brought before it, when their cases are inquired into, and afterwards referred to the superintendents, who metes out punishment if necessary. The sale of spirits of any description is strictly prohibited among the natives. This sketch of the development of the Obuassai mines is intended to demonstrate how much can be done even in a country of swamps, flooded rivers, and bad roads, and it is not too much to expect that in a few years' time Ashanti land will be dotted with such communities.

Claude's Ashanti Goldfields, Limited, possess, besides seven other concessions (three in Ashanti and four south of the Prahriver), 8 square miles of land south-west of Kumasi, known as the Ekwanta concession, and to the natives as "King Prempeh's Mine." This mine had been worked by the natives on a different principle from that generally adopted by the Ashantis, who, as before stated, sink pits to an average depth of 60 feet, when they cease working, and sink another in close proximity to the first, sometimes tunnelling into it; for here, in addition to shaft sinking, they have followed the reef into the side of a hill to a distance of from 250 to 300 feet, the tunnel being about 7 by 9 feet in size. The roof of the tunnel is supported by timbers along its whole length. It is quite possible that natives, who had worked in the Coast mines managed by Europeans, had either been captured or employed by the Ashantis, when they had introduced this method. This company has at present four mining expeditions at work on various properties which they are rapidly developing.

The hilly country round Lake Busumakwi, which is reported to be extremely rich in gold, has been exploited by various companies who have obtained concessions from the native chiefs. A
glance at the map will show that an immense tract of country in the Wassau and Tarkwa districts is under mining operations, while towards the eastern end of the colony, the Goldfields of the Eastern Akim Company are on a level with the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation in the progress they have made. An excellent road connects the mines with Accra, along which now runs a traction engine capable of transporting a load of 29 tons from the Coast to Akim. The landing of the engine’s wheels and boiler through the Accra surf was effected by means of huge iron floats, to which the parts were attached—no mean feat, as any one acquainted with the surf will admit.

The development of the Gold Coast Colony during the next few years will be keenly watched, and will, in the opinion of many experts, prove to be one of the (if not the) richest gold bearing countries known in the world.
APPENDIX VI

BUSH-FIGHTING IN WEST AFRICA

For 200 miles into the interior from the coast line of all our West African possessions is one vast belt of forest land, with dense undergrowth. With the exception of the clearings made by the natives for building their towns and villages, or for laying out their farms, all else is thick jungle, through which the sun’s rays are unable to penetrate.

The means of communication is by paths which run from village to village, and so narrow are they that it is nearly always impossible to move in any other formation than single file. So accustomed are the natives to this mode of progression that they continue to walk in this fashion even when moving about in large open roads such as are to be met with in Kumasi, or the other large towns in West Africa.

When marching through the forest, disciplined troops will occupy a distance of 6 feet per man, while carriers and other non-combatants will often occupy double that distance.

On the West Coast of Africa, outside the towns on the sea coast, or up some of the more important rivers, there is no means of obtaining food supplies for Europeans, except an occasional sheep or chicken. It is therefore necessary, before undertaking any expedition, whether of a military or civil nature, to provide supplies on a much larger scale than would be necessary if the field of operations were in almost any other country on the globe. It is, moreover, necessary to supplement the native food products, such as yams, kokos, plantains, bananas, etc., with rice for the native soldiers and followers. As neither horses, mules, nor donkeys will live in the forest belt, the only means of
transport is by carriers, who can manage from 50 to 70 lb. loads, each load being carried on the man or woman's head. It will thus be seen what a number of carriers are required in any expedition, and to what enormous lengths the convoys must therefore run.

Owing to the difficulty of obtaining good tinned provisions for Europeans in any quantity, or rice for the natives in any of the towns on the coast, the particular seaport from which an expedition sets out can only be considered an advance base, the real base being England. We will suppose that stores of food and munitions of war have been concentrated at the advance base, and that a sufficient number of carriers have been enlisted. Though I have made this supposition it by no means follows that the enlisting of carriers is an easy matter. On the contrary, the want of carriers is one of the greatest difficulties which a commander has to overcome. The best carriers are brought as a rule from Sierra Leone, but in the late Ashanti Expedition some thousands were brought from as far away as Zanzibar and Mombassa.

The organisation of the carrier transport is one of the first things that a commander has to see to, and this is best done as follows:

The carriers should be formed into battalions or groups, each numbering 1000—all, of course, of one tribe. These groups should be under the command of British officers and non-commissioned officers apportioned at the rate of two officers and as many non-commissioned officers as can be spared up to four to each group.

The groups should be made up of ten companies, each under a native "captain," and each company should be made up of five gangs of about 20 men, the gangs being under the immediate supervision of a native head man.

Each group should have a distinctive number or letter and badge, the best form being a coloured band with a buckle to be worn round the arm.

As soon as a group of carriers is organised as above, it should then be started off towards the front with stores. Except in the actual field of operations in the enemy's country, a fair day's march for carriers transporting loads of about 50 or 60 lbs. is 20
APPENDIX VI

miles. It is, therefore, advisable to divide each line of communication from the advance base to the advance depot into stages of 20 miles, and, to detail a group to every stage. Suppose, for example, that the distance from the advance base to the advance depot is 100 miles. No. 1 group would transport 1000 loads in five days to the advance depot; No. 2 group would transport 1000 loads to the fourth stage in four days; No. 3 group 1000 loads to the third stage in three days, and so on. When the different 1000 loads were deposited along the various stages, 500 men from each group would return 10 miles towards the base empty-handed, the remaining 500 proceeding with loads towards the front. For example, on the fifth day out from the base No. 2 group would send batches of 500 men each from the fourth stage towards the third and fifth stages, the first 500 proceeding empty-handed for 10 miles, when they would meet the 500 loads brought up by No. 3 group, and carry them to the fourth stage, the 500 men of No. 3 group returning empty-handed to the third stage. There would thus be a constant daily arrival of 500 loads at the advance depot. The above system would require 5000 carriers, but, of course, if more carriers were available a larger number of loads could be transported at one time.

Although the country between the base and the advance depot is outside the danger zone, it would be necessary to send escorts with each convoy, more to keep the carriers from bolting than for their protection.

With the concentration of his stores at the advance depot, the commander would be in a position to commence hostilities.

Supposing that he still had only 5000 carriers, two and a half groups should be employed to pass stores up from the base, while the remaining two and a half groups could be utilised as the transport for flying columns advancing against the enemy.

From experience gained in the late Ashanti Expedition, it has been found much more convenient to issue rations only once a week to Europeans, as it allows of all articles being issued in bulk, one week's rations being a carrier's load. It is necessary to give every European in a campaign in West Africa an exceptionally good ration, such as tinned meat, biscuits, flour,
tinned soups, tea, coffee, cocoa, milk, butter, sugar, whisky, rum, etc., etc., and by issuing these stores in bulk, it both saves the supply officers a lot of trouble and keeps the stores in better condition. For a week's march, therefore, each European will require 3 carriers: one for rations, one for his kit, and one for his bedding.

Each native soldier receives 1 1/2 lb. of rice for his daily ration, and each carrier 1 lb. of rice; but when on flying column only half rations are issued, as the natives can supplement their rations by plantains, yams, etc. For every 10 soldiers 1 carrier is allowed for carrying their kits.

Before, therefore, a flying column moves off, the transport should be carefully worked out. Thus for a column of 1200 men and 60 Europeans, the following would be the detail of carriers required for one week's operations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 Europeans at 3 carriers each</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200 soldiers' kits at 1 carrier to 10</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6300 lbs. of rice for soldiers at 56 lbs. per load</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>412</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With such a force there would probably be about four guns (two 75-millimetre guns and two 7-pounders), six Maxims, and an ammunition reserve of 200 rounds per man.

Each millimetre requires 32 carriers for the gun and carriage, and 30 carriers for a fair proportion of ammunition, while each 7-pounder requires 12 carriers for the gun and carriage, and 10 carriers for the ammunition. Each Maxim requires 8 carriers for gun and ammunition, and the reserve small arm ammunition, at 750 rounds a load, would require 320 carriers.

The total number of carriers, therefore, for guns and ammunition would be about 536.

In addition to the above number of carriers, the Medical Department would require about 300 carriers for carrying hospital hammocks (at 6 carriers per hammock), hospital stores, and medical comforts.

The total number of carriers would therefore be 412 + 536 + 300 = 1248.
Every soldier should carry a machete as part of his equipment, as it would be found most useful for cutting his way into the bush, for building temporary shelters, etc. Owing also to the appalling state of the roads in West Africa due to fallen trees and swamps, one is obliged to cut new roads round the trees in the one case, and to corduroy the roads in the other. Besides bad roads to repair, there would probably be many rivers to bridge, and it would therefore be a necessity for the commander to form a company of pioneers out of the carriers, under a smart, intelligent captain. These men soon learn how to handle saws, picks, axes, etc., and it is simply astonishing to think how soon they can throw a bridge across a river, corduroy a swamp, or open up the bush paths, without causing a column to make a material halt; though it must, of course, be understood that when in the danger zone the progress of a column is very slow at times, often not exceeding five miles a day.

The pioneer company would add 100 carriers more on to the total of 1248, bringing it up to 1348.

Seven days' half rations for these carriers would require about 90 additional loads.

There would therefore be a grand total of 1438, or say one and a half groups of carriers, required as transport for 1260 officers and men on a seven days' march; and out of the 2500 carriers at the advance depot the commander would be able to have one group to transport his supplies to a new advance depot as soon as his flying column had opened up the line of communication. Leaving the necessary garrisons from the base up to the advance depot to guard the stores along the line, orders would then be given for the march of the flying column.

Bearing in mind that the column must proceed in single file, it will be seen what an enormous length it would occupy in column of route.

So lengthy, in fact, would be the column that it could be possible for an advance guard to fight an action without the rear guard being aware of the fact.

The order of march should be arranged as follows:—The force of 1200 men should be divided into a fighting column of 800 men, and a supply column of 400 men. The duties of the supply column would be to guard the field hospital, food
during the action harassed me in any way, or asked for any reports until he himself reached the scene of operations.

He would then be in a position, after ascertaining his advance guard commander's dispositions, to issue the necessary orders to each successive company of the main body, if reinforcements to the front were required, or to the main body commander if he intended other dispositions, to either flank.

Another illustration was the action at Danasi, where Major Melliss, V.C., was in command of the advance guard, and I was in command of the column. Until I arrived up at the front it was utterly impossible for me to give any orders, as I could not see how matters were going. On my nearing the front, however, I noticed that the enemy was pouring in a heavy fire on the left flank of the column. I therefore gave orders to Major Cobbe, who was commanding the main body, to advance his companies into the bush on the left in echelon formation, which manoeuvre drove the enemy back into Major Melliss's arms.

Next in succession would come the main body, which should be about the same strength as the advance guard, and would therefore, in this case, consist of two and a half companies of infantry, one millimetre gun and escort, and one Maxim.

In rear of the main body would be the place for the medical officer and bearer company. The stretcher party with the advance guard could deal with all casualties pending the arrival of the main body at the front, or its deployment into the flanks of the road, and the bearer company could then take up a suitable position anywhere along the road. A rear guard of one company, one 7-pounder gun and escort, and one Maxim, would bring up the rear of the fighting column.

The total strength of the fighting column would be three guns, four Maxims, and six and three-quarter companies of infantry = three guns, four Maxims, and 810 men.

In dealing with the order of march for the supply column a very different procedure would have to be adopted.

A very small advance guard, about one section, is all that would be necessary, as the rear guard of the fighting column would never be too far in front, however much the supply column was delayed.

The strength available for the supply column would be three
and a quarter companies, two Maxims and one 7-pounder gun. Two companies should be broken up into eight sections, and distributed at intervals along the column. For example, the following would be the successive positions of the troops in the column:—

1 section (advance guard).
½ baggage carriers.
1 section.
½ baggage carriers.
1 section.
½ field hospital.
1 section.
½ field hospital.
1 section with Maxim.
½ reserve ammunition carriers.
1 section.
½ reserve ammunition carriers.
1 section.
½ rice carriers.
1 section.
½ rice carriers.
1 7-pounder with escort 1 company with Maxim 1 rear guard.

Total, one 7-pounder gun, two Maxims, and 390 men.

It will thus be seen that the supply column would be sufficiently strong in troops and guns to act on the defensive anywhere along the line of march, and the fighting column would be a compact force unhampered by impedimenta.

On arrival in camp, the advance guard of the fighting column would occupy and guard the front face, the main body and rear guard of the same column would occupy and guard the flanks, while the troops of the supply column would occupy and guard the rear face—the stores, hospital, and carriers being inside the square.

The guns should be mounted and posted in commanding positions, and the gunners should sleep alongside their guns.

It is of the greatest importance in such a bad climate that
officers and men should be spared as much worry as possible, that their meals should be regular, and that columns should arrive at the end of the day’s march in such time as to allow every European to have a comfortable bath. I would therefore lay down two rules: (1) always halt your column about 10 A.M. for one hour’s breakfast; and (2) the advance guard should never reach camp later than 3 P.M. to allow of every one getting comfortably settled down before dark, which is always about 6 P.M. on the West Coast of Africa.

The staff officer to the column should keep a roster of the companies, so that each day every company would move one place higher, the leading company of the previous day moving round to the rear of the supply column. If the march is likely to be only a short one, it would be necessary to move two or more companies up daily.

Before proceeding to describe the tactics to employ against the hostile tribes in the bush, based upon actual experience in bush-fighting, it would not be out of place to give a few further hints on the working of a column in the forest. As has already been explained, the narrow winding paths which are called roads in West Africa, oblige columns to march in single file. Owing to the constant winding of the path, it is often impossible to see more than 20 yards ahead of you, and one of the greatest difficulties which a commander has to contend against is the closing-up of his column.

A column of 1200 fighting men with its proper proportion of carriers will occupy a distance of from 4 to 5 miles, and if the leading portion gets at all away from the rest of the column, huge gaps are the result. The paths in the forest are constantly intersected by fallen trees, some of them of immense thickness. As each man comes to a fallen tree, he delays the man behind him while he climbs over; he then doubles to the front to catch up the man in front of him, and so causes a gap, which gradually becomes more and more accentuated towards the rear of the column. The gaps caused by having to lift guns and other impedimenta over such obstacles are even greater.

A well-trained advance guard commander should, after passing an obstacle, slow down his pace considerably until he thinks the
APPENDIX VI

rear has closed up. A neglect of this principle will cause the centre, and therefore the rear, of a column to be constantly on the double, endeavouring to catch up the front. This utterly wears out officers, men, and carriers, besides weakening the column by unduly lengthening it out.

Several methods have been tried to counteract this evil, amongst others the use of megaphones and bugles. The former were, however, found to be no use whatever, as the dense forest and winding paths prevented the sounds from travelling, and too constant a use of the latter is to be deprecated as being likely to warn enemies in the neighbourhood. On one occasion, for instance, it happened during the late Ashanti campaign that the advance guard of a column was about to make an important capture of some of the enemy’s scouts. Their voices could be plainly heard about 50 yards in front of our scouts, who were cautiously creeping through the bush, when a blare of bugles came rolling up from the rear for the advance guard to halt. The enemy's scouts heard this, as well as the advance guard, and promptly bolted to inform their chiefs of its approach.

It is impossible to keep passing verbal orders or “chits” up to the front by staff officers or soldiers, as the narrowness of the paths makes it extremely difficult to pass freely up and down the line, and it is therefore necessary to devise some scheme whereby these gaps could not occur. The following system has been tried with some success, and ought, if officers and non-commissioned officers are thoroughly trained to it, entirely to obviate the necessity of orders by bugle call or otherwise:

Each company commander should tell off an intelligent native non-commissioned officer to remain in rear of his company, whose duty should be to warn his commanding officer whenever he loses sight of the company following him. By this means the weakest link in the chain of the column will automatically bring back to it any part of the column which is inclined to go too fast. The company has been taken as the example of this scheme, but it will also apply to guns, gun escorts, bearer companies, field hospitals, and to the escorts, including the carriers of the supply column. The warning to the commanding officer of the unit should be passed up to him through the ranks, and each man should drop back towards the non-commissioned
APPENDIX VI

officer at the same time as he passes the warning to the man in front of him.

The above scheme would also militate against another evil which is most prevalent in the march of a column, when the latter is repeatedly halted to allow the rear to close up, and that is that the units become tightly jammed up, and it is necessary to put down all loads, as it takes some considerable time for all to close up. When the advance is again sounded, the column has to open out like a concertina before the rear gets started, and thus a lot of time is wasted.

The proposed scheme and that at present adopted might be compared in the former case to a concertina which is shut up completely, and then gradually opened out to its full length; and in the latter case to a concertina when it is being played. Theoretically, therefore, the proposed scheme is sound, and it only requires drill and intelligence to be of great practical value.

Irrespective of the above, it is a good principle for the advance guard to halt for ten minutes in every hour to rest the carriers. If constant touch has been kept all down the line, every carrier will have his ten minutes' "easy," but unless constant touch is maintained, the rear of a column would always be on the move trying to make up lost ground.

Except when actually marching through the enemy's country in the expectation of immediate hostilities, it is a good plan to utilise the hammocks of the field hospital to carry Europeans during the heat of the day.

A column usually starts off at 6 A.M., and all ranks should march till the breakfast hour at 10 A.M. After an hour's halt for breakfast, half the Europeans might be carried from 11 A.M. to 1 P.M., and the remaining half from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M. This plan was found to answer admirably in the march from Kumasi to Berekum in the late Ashanti Expedition. Though some of the Europeans who were in that march had been through the whole campaign, and were worn out, the short rides in the hammocks each day pulled them together wonderfully.

It is not intended to make the above plan a hard and fast rule, and it should only be adopted on long marches, and then only after consultation with the senior medical officer.
Each hammock has 6 "boys" told off to it, and this makes the number of hammock boys required for a column of 1200 fighting men rather excessive. It is impossible, however, to reduce the number, as fighting may ensue within a day's march of your advance depot; but as only 2 men are required to carry an empty hammock, some of the remainder might be utilised, when there is much scouting to be done by the soldiers, to lighten them by carrying their blankets and greatcoats. In the scheme for transport it has already been shown that 10 carriers should be allowed to each 100 soldiers, but this is not sufficient when these soldiers have to do much creeping and crawling through the bush; the extra carriers allowed for the medical department would, therefore, be a great boon to the fighting men. The senior medical officer would, no doubt, feel aggrieved if his carriers were utilised for other purposes, but the arrangement would only be temporary, for every day a large number of rice carriers would be freed from their original loads as the rice supply diminished. There is one great flaw in this scheme, and that is the possibility of a fight happening shortly after leaving the advance depot, when of course it would be impossible to deplete the number of hammock carriers, for however short a time, from either the stretcher party or bearer company. This flaw would not apply to the field hospital hammock carriers, since, after a fight, it would be possible to take back sufficient blanket and greatcoat carriers to man the hammocks for the wounded. After the first day or two's march it would be unnecessary to take any men from the medical department, as there would be a steady increment of empty-handed carriers from the supply department.

In West Africa, during the rainy season especially, many of the rivers are unfordable, and it is necessary to bridge them.

In the bush a rough bridge can easily be made by the pioneers by felling trees and allowing them to fall across the banks, and to do this it is necessary that the pioneers should be equipped with felling axes, saws, etc. A collapsible Berthon boat is also a most useful and necessary adjunct. Having thrown the trees across the river as closely together as possible, the small branches should be lopped off and the trunks only allowed to lie on the banks. A creeper called "tie-tie" grows prolifically
everywhere in the West African bush, and with this used as rope, the branches are cut into cross pieces and tied on to the trunks, and the bridge is made. Such a bridge is capable of transporting all the personnel and matériel ever likely to be used with a column. If the trunks are very thick it would of course be necessary to make ramps up to the level of the tops of the trunks. The Berthon boat would come in very handy to convey a certain number of the pioneers to the opposite bank, and for working on the bridge in mid-stream.

One “chop” box should be allowed to every two Europeans in the fighting column, so as to be quite independent of food from the supply column for two or three days at least. Should, therefore, a commander wish to push on to the front, or throw out to the flanks a punitive column, or reconnoitring party, he will not have to wait until the evening, when his supply column catches him up. It also enables each European to have a comfortable breakfast on the march. The soldiers ought also to carry enough uncooked rice in their haversacks to last them the same period; but as the West African native never takes any thought for the morrow, it is not advisable to let him carry more than one day’s rice with him, and he must trust to local produce to make up for the rest of his rations, should it be necessary for him to be away for more than one day.

Until Sir James Willcocks proved the contrary, it was never thought possible for troops to travel off from the main roads and follow the enemy into his fastnesses; but now that this fallacy has been disproved, it is all the more important for flying columns to be ready to move in any direction at a moment’s notice. During the march to Berekum, news came in one day that Chief Kobina Cherri was in hiding about two hours’ march off the main road. Without halting the column, Captain Carleton, with two companies, was detached and sent off to bring in the chief. This flying column made a splendid march (though it failed to attain its object, the chief having fled a few hours previously), and rejoining the main column late that night. If the officers and men had not been in possession of their “chop,” this manoeuvre could not have been carried out.

To touch on night marching in the bush, this should be always avoided, as the inky darkness of the forest, the narrowness and
the awful state of the paths, make marching at night next to an impossibility. On the few occasions when night has fallen before troops could reach camp, they have not been able to progress at more than a quarter of a mile an hour, and then only by holding on to the coat of the man in front. The carriers, too, used to seize the opportunity to loot their loads. This is why such stress has been laid on getting into camp early.

As when fighting the tribes on the North-West frontier of India, so in West Africa it is often necessary to punish the enemy by destroying his towns and villages. This should be done by first pulling down the huts and then burning the thatches. Great care should be taken to remove any fires from the inside of the huts, otherwise the falling houses may be set on fire, and a conflagration started before all the troops and impedimenta could be removed clear of the village. This happened at the destruction of a large town called Odumassi, when in addition to the usual impedimenta of stores and ammunition, the hospital was full of smallpox patients. Before any one could leave the town the whole place was in a blaze, and it was only by the exertions of the officers and the coolness of the men that a catastrophe was averted. All this occurred by the non-removal of a smouldering fire in one of the huts.

As soon as the huts have been pulled down and the column has left the village, the rear guard should fire it.

All destruction of towns, villages, and farms should be carried out on the return journey, as they would be required for the quartering of the troops, and the smoke and flames would warn the enemy of a column's approach.

It is a good point to remember that hostile tribes on the West Coast will almost invariably build their stockades and war camps near a town or village, as they do not like living too far from their water supply, and, of course, all towns and villages are built where water is plentiful. The near approach to a village is denoted by the farms which surround it. These farms are generally banana or plantain groves with Paw-paw trees interspersed—at least this is all that is seen by the traveller through the bush. There are, of course, plenty of root crops, but these are entirely hidden by the thick bush surrounding them.

As soon as the scouts see the farms looming through the bush,
they should redouble their precautions, as they might come upon the enemy at any moment. Any withered appearance of the leaves of the trees ahead will be a certain sign of the presence of a stockaded war camp; but there are one or two other unmistakable signs of the neighbourhood of an enemy which it would be well to remember, such as the discovery of observation ladders (made by tying pieces of wood transversely on the trunks of trees), or notches cut in the flanges of cotton trees to form gun rests. Patches of the bush alongside the path may also be found much trampled down. These several discoveries would denote that sentries and picquets had been placed by the enemy to warn him of your approach, and that therefore he might be expected to be met with shortly and to be thoroughly prepared for you. It would be of no use trying to surprise him, as the fact of the observation ladders and cotton tree flanges being unoccupied would show that the sentries had fallen back and given the alarm. A very cautious advance is then absolutely necessary. If, however, your scouts have either managed to cut off the sentries or had approached so near to them that they were obliged to fire their guns as a warning, a much bolder advance is desirable, as the enemy might be found not so well prepared.

Another unmistakable sign of the near vicinity of a town or village is the finding of Jujus placed on the path, consisting sometimes of buried chatties with rotten eggs in them, and at other times of a puppy dog with its head cut off and a stake driven through its body. These Jujus are believed by the fetish worshippers of the West Coast to become a kind of medicine which will stop any hostile person from entering their towns, and they never seem nonplussed when their Jujus are simply kicked aside, but they merely imagine that the "medicine" is not strong enough, and the priests are called upon to discover more infallible remedies.

To give an idea of the superstitious fears of the West African, the following story is told of some soldiers of the West African Regiment from Sierra Leone, who were ordered by an officer to shoot an Ashanti at the battle of Obassa, as he was running away. The Ashanti, who was hung all round with charms, and therefore must have been a big chief, became a target for both
volley and independent fire, but remained untouched. The officer expostulated with the men for their bad shooting, when one of them replied, "Me no fit for shoot, him got plenty too much medicine." The man could not grasp the fact that it was an extremely difficult thing to shoot a running man dodging in and out of thick bush, but he thought that the Jujus which the Ashanti wore were simply turning all the bullets.

When engaged in war with the savage bush tribes of West Africa, and when columns are operating in the enemy's country, there are two important things to guard against: (1) the possibility of being sniped from the thick bush on either side of the path, and (2) ambushes.

In the first case it must be remembered that though the bush is as thick as a mat close to the path, due to the constant clearing of the path, which tends to make the bush grow thicker, a few yards inside the fringe the matted condition of the bush diminishes considerably. This enables the enemy to carry out his sniping tactics with impunity, as he can creep up to within a yard or two of the path, fire his gun, and be off through the thinner portion of the forest before the part of the column which has been attacked can recover from its confusion. There is nothing so nerve-destroying or so harassing to a column as this sniping. Every man goes along the road feeling that at any moment he is being laid for at a range of a couple of yards, and this is enough to unnerve the bravest. During the late Ashanti Expedition, an officer, while being carried in a hammock, saw the muzzle of a gun peeping out of the bush laid straight at his stomach and not a yard off. He could just see the dim outline of a savage pulling the trigger, and was so petrified with astonishment that he simply lay still and watched the man, as he thought, empty the contents of his gun into him. He saw the flash of the priming as the flint struck the pan, and made sure he was a dead man, but by an extraordinary piece of luck the gun missed fire, but before he could draw his revolver the savage was away off into the bush. All this happened in a flash, and it so unnerved him that for the next three days, sleeping or waking, he held a loaded revolver in his hand.

The best way to check this sniping is to throw out flankers
along the whole length of the column. In time of peace the
native soldiers should be regularly drilled to do this systematically
and properly. The drill is simple—on the word "flankers out"
passed down a column, the four leading men of each company
will wheel to the right in single file, and cut a path for themselves
into the bush, to a depth of about 30 yards; they will then wheel
to the left, and continue cutting a path parallel to the road,
which can be used by the flankers of all the companies in rear.
As I have already pointed out, the bush is much thinner away
from the road, and it is not difficult for flankers to keep pace
with the column, which is necessarily proceeding slowly on
account of the scouts thrown out in front. The next four men
of each company would wheel to the left, proceed 30 yards into
the bush, and then wheel to the right. The eight flankers should
so spread themselves as to guard the entire length occupied by
their company. This duty falls more heavily on the supply
column, owing to the lesser proportion of soldiers to the greater
length of the column, but as the companies in the fighting
and supply columns are interchangeable, every man in the whole
force gets a turn of the heavier duty, and it must be borne in
mind that the path made by the several companies gradually
improves as it gets further to the rear, for each soldier, with his
machete, improves the path as he follows the flankers in front.

Flankers should be constantly changed, the old flankers return-
ing to the road, and falling in in rear of their companies, when
their places would be taken by eight fresh men from the front.
An intelligent non-commissioned officer should be told off to
watch the bends of the road, and to call out to the leading flanker,
giving him directions to move to the right or left, so as to keep
him always about 30 yards from the road. The flankers in rear
would follow suit, and thus, however winding the road, the
column would always be well guarded. This system of throwing
out flankers was found to work very well during the late Ashanti
Expedition, and was the means of saving many valuable lives.

We now come to the question of ambushes, of which there are
two kinds—one a purely defensive ambush, and the other
an offensive defensive ambush. In the former case the enemy
conceals himself behind strong stockades, and in the latter case
he chooses some suitable position which will enable him first to
surprise and then envelop an attacking column. The word ambush hardly applies when a frontal stockade is used, as the enemy throws out scouts and sentries, who warn him by signal guns or otherwise of the approach of a column, which therefore in its turn receives a certain amount of warning, as has already been pointed out. Despite this warning, however, it has often happened that officers commanding columns have taken no precautions to throw out either scouts or flankers, and have only been made aware of the presence of a stockade by a withering fire from the front poured into their advance guard.

Sir James Willcocks' attack on the Pekki Road stockade outside Kumasi on July 15th, 1900, is a good example of how a frontal stockade should be taken. On that occasion he kept the whole of his artillery and several Maxims playing for twenty minutes on the front of the stockade, while in the meantime he sent a company on the right and a company on the left into the bush, with orders to cut their way through the bush until they turned the flanks of the stockade. At the end of the twenty minutes, he ordered the cease fire to sound, and a general bayonet charge with the remainder of his troops straight on the stockade. The effect was electrical, and with soldiers advancing on them literally from right, left, and centre, the Ashantis bolted from the position, leaving in our hands the stockade by means of which they hoped to oppose the entry of the relief force into Kumasi.

In addition to the frontal stockades which are built at right angles to the road, many tribes erect stockades parallel with the road about 20 feet or so inside the bush, and these stockades make a formidable ambush. The enemy's tactics are to allow part of the column to pass clear of the whole length of the stockade, a distance of about 200 yards, and then to open fire suddenly on the centre of the column, and so throw it into confusion. The Kairene tribes in Sierra Leone and the Adansi in the Gold Coast Colony adopted these tactics with marked success.

With scouts and flankers thrown out, it ought never to be possible for a column to be surprised. If the scouts do their duty, they ought easily to locate any stockade, whether frontal or parallel, and a stockade once located is not difficult to take.
APPENDIX VI

It is no use, however, to do what some commanders have done, and that is to make their men lie down and fire volley after volley at the front of the stockade, as even the fire of a 7-pounder has as much effect on one as if a hose-pipe were played on it, and how could any one expect rifle-fire to penetrate such a structure? Even though their men were lying down they were still exposed to a tremendous fire from an enemy who was comfortably sitting or standing behind an impenetrable wall, having his guns reloaded for him by others also in perfect safety. No, experience has taught us that a stockade cannot be captured by a frontal attack alone, without great loss of life, and that the only way to go to work is to turn one or both flanks in combination with a frontal attack. Vickers, Sons, & Maxim’s 75-millimetre mountain gun will breach any stockade in from three to six rounds; it is therefore most essential for this gun to be kept well up in front, and as soon as the scouts have located a frontal stockade, the gun should be mounted, run up to the front, and take up a position where either the top or bottom of the stockade can be seen. While fire is being opened with the gun, a company should be deployed to either flank, to a sufficient depth in the bush to outflank the ends of the stockade. Some company commanders make the mistake of not taking their companies sufficiently far into the bush, and often find themselves and their men exposed to the fire from the stockade, and have after all to make a frontal attack.

While these two companies are working round the flanks, the gun is making a breach in the stockade, and with the assistance of the fire from a Maxim or two will keep the attention of the enemy fixed on it. Under cover of this fire another company should be formed up, ready to charge down the road at the right moment, which will be when the commander thinks his flanking companies have done their work. The combined turning of the flanks and frontal charge will dislodge any savage enemy.

In the case of a parallel stockade, the very fact of the scouts locating it dooms it, as it can be easily enfiladed without exposing many men, in fact a couple of Maxims alone could turn out any enemy so placed. The excellent scouting of Captain Tighes’ company of the West African Regiment led to the
discovery of the parallel stockade at Dampoassi, which, fortunately
for the enemy, was not occupied, as, had it been so occupied, they
would have suffered a severe loss. This was the same stockade
which proved such a thorn in Colonel Carter's side some time
previously.

When the West African savage attempts to lay an offensive
defensive ambush, a commander's difficulties are greatly increased.
He is always outnumbered, sometimes by as many as 10 to 1, and
if once the enemy could envelope a column, the weak portions
would suffer severely.

The enemy generally chooses a ravine or other hollow, for
he knows that his guns throw high, and by firing uphill he
gets a certain advantage, which he would not obtain if firing over
the flat or downhill. The reason that his gun throws high
is that he always fires from the hip, the powder charge being
too great to admit of his placing the butt to his shoulder. The
scouts have a far more difficult task to locate the enemy. In the
case of a stockade with the usual war camp behind it, there
are always unmistakable signs of its presence long before it is
actually seen itself, and a good scout will make no mistake;
for instance, the leaves of the trees in a war camp are withered
and brown from exposure to camp fires, and these brown leaves
and creepers stand out prominently in a green forest.

As a rule, the first intimation that a scout has of the presence
of an enemy not protected by a stockade, is a volley of slugs
fired at him. Now comes in the importance of having your guns
and Maxims well to the front, as you must deploy your infantry
in succession as they arrive at the front, and you must place
your guns and Maxims in the front line, in such a position that
they will not fire on the deploying infantry. In a fight of this
sort, then, you would open fire with your guns, using shrapnel
or case, and your Maxims. This fire will hold the enemy in
front, but as he always tries to double round the flanks of your
column for enveloping purposes, this movement must be stopped,
and this is best done by deploying your infantry with their inner
flanks resting on your line of guns, and wheeling them outwards
so as to form a spear-head to the line of guns. As each company
closes up to the front, it should deploy into the bush either to the
right or left, and should not open fire until it has got into touch
with the company preceding it, when it will continue the spearhead formation. All this time the rear of the fighting column and the supply column are closing on the front, and the enemy is prevented from working round your flanks. When a sufficient number of troops are deployed, the wheels should be continued so as in turn to sweep round the enemy's position, and so make him concentrate his men, and offer a better target to your fire. A reserve company should then advance at the charge with the bayonet down the road through the line of guns, and this ought to finish the enemy off. Before any charge is sounded, care should be taken to sound the cease fire all along the line.

The battle of Obassa on the 30th September 1900, is a good illustration of how to meet a hostile tribe in a West African bush, who attempts an enveloping attack.

On this occasion, owing to the necessities of the moment, the advance guard became separated from the main body, and when the commander saw, from the fire of the enemy, that his endeavour would be to surround and cut off the advance guard from the main body, he immediately deployed his 450 men, 200 on the right flank and 250 on the left flank, with orders to drive back any turning movement of the enemy. A Maxim was left to guard the centre of the position, and the deployed infantry forming first of all a spear-head formation, with the Maxim as the point of the spear, gradually wrapped the enemy round (with the exception of a few Ashantis who managed to elude this turning movement, and who opened fire on the main body as it advanced to the support of the advance guard), and prevented them from turning our flanks. The front occupied by the enemy was slowly narrowed, and a charge of the Sikhs down the centre of the position completed their rout.

The West African is a wonderfully imitative creature, and, no doubt, in future campaigns we shall have to guard against new tactics. As an instance of how quick the negro is to grasp new ideas, up to 1895 the only tribes who attempted to defend themselves by stockades were the Mandingoes in Senegambia and the Timmanis and Mendis in Sierra Leone. None of the tribes south of Sierra Leone knew anything about stockades, but in 1895, Major (now Major-General) Baden-Powell, when in command of the native scouts in the Ashanti Expedition of that
year, taught his men how to defend themselves by means of stockades, and it speaks well for the intelligence of our enemies when one thinks how well they turned their instruction to account. Opposite page 106 of General Baden-Powell's work, the *Downfall of Prempeh*, there is a picture showing the scouts hard at work erecting a stockade. The tribes who were on our side in 1895 turned against us in 1900, and utilised their knowledge by building, and instructing their allies the Ashantis how to build, most formidable stockades.

It is quite conceivable that, finding their present tactics are of no avail against black troops led by white officers, the West African tribes may invent new modes of attack and defence in the future; but so long as they are unable to procure arms of precision in any quantity, we need have no fear of being able to defeat them with our disciplined black troops, though they may outnumber us by ten to one.

In conclusion, there is one golden rule to follow in fighting badly armed savages in the bush, and that is, "Don't give your enemy any leisure to reload his gun, but keep him on the move and press home your attack with the bayonet."
stockade, 79, 80; sends notes out to get news of the relief column, 86; accompanies evacuating party, 90; attempts to construct protected hammocks for ladies, 92; on the march to the coast, 97-114
Ashanti, suburb of Kumasi, 1
Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, difficulties of in bringing up machinery, 143, extent of property of, and mines first opened, 238, headquarters of, 116, 238
Ashanti attacks on the fort, Kumasi, 29
—— on Aplin's reinforcements, 52, 54, 55
—— campaigning trials of (see Tropical rains), 203
—— dislike of fighting at night or in rain, 127
—— Field Force, organisation of under Col. Willcocks, 151-3
—— hereditary succession, in the female line, 220
—— high shooting, 74, 131
—— intentions, in event of the fall of Kumasi, 114 (see Loyal Kings)
—— Kings and Chiefs at Kumasi to meet the Governor, 2
—— losses, in first encounters, 21
—— native methods of gold getting, 237-9, negotiations with Col. Willcocks, 181-2, objection to bayonets, 207
—— railway, Sekondi-Tarkwa, value of, 143
—— rising, effects of in the Gold Coast Colony, 115, events that led to, Appendix II, 218
—— speed of, in flight, 195
—— tactics, allowing rivers to be crossed unopposed and fighting soon after, 54, 54
—— attempts to surround the enemy, 161, 182, 185
—— cleverness in choice of ground, 74
Ashanti tactics, as to night attacks, 38
—— patrolling, perfection of, 85
—— posting of sentries, 176
—— stockades, construction of, 99, use of cord with bells, etc., as entanglement and night alarm, 79
—— when fighting behind stockades, 8-32
—— War of 1900, a demonstration of the value of African native troops, 114
—— war-song, at Bali, 10
—— war, of 1874 and 1895-6, incomplete results of, 219-20
Achisasi village, native palaver at, 15, fight near, 16
Bali village, search for the Golden Stool at, 4, 5, the first fight of the war at, 7
Bantama stockade, advance to and return from, 42, destroyed by Mellissa, 116, his casualties, 167, Ashanti account of this fight, 206
Basel Mission and Missionaries, Kumasi, 1, missionaries withdraw to the fort, 29, quarters assigned to, 35; mission house occupied by the rebels, 29, destruction effected by them, 41; missionaries leave Kumasi with the Governor, 91, et seq., arrival of at Cape Coast, 112, illness and death of Mr Weller, en route, 110, 112
Bayonet charges, value of in savage fighting, 194, 263, as shown by effect of on Ashantis, 177, and their objection to the use of "knives," 207
Beamish, Lieut., in charge at Obuasi, 149
Bechim, rebel headquarters, message sent to chiefs at, 199, messengers turned back from, 202, chiefs demand time for consideration, 203, which is refused and surrender demanded, 86, the defiant answer, 204, offers of surrender from, 205, put into effect,
INDEX

206; Major Gordon left to garrison, 207, garrison withdrawn, 211
Bechim, King of, offers to surrender, 205, and does so, 206
Beddows, Major, in Morland's column, 153-3, sent to join Wright's force, 157, operations of and casualties, 110, et seq., wounded after Kwissi, 160
Bekwai, request for troops from, 112, arrival of Burroughs' force at, 127, arrival of Wilcock's at, 128, arrival of relieved garrison of Kumasi, and refugees at, 139, sickness prevalent at, 157, presumed causes, 158; reinforcements arrive at, 173
—— King of, with Chiefs at Kumasi to meet the Governor, 2, loyalty of, 11, 26, 118; returns to his country, 24, active assistance given by, 121
—— natives, assistance given by to Mr Branch, 50, attitude of to Hall's column, 118, wavered of and its reason, 124
Benson, Capt., reverse sustained by, 179, suicide of, 180
Berekum, Montanaro's and Browne's columns sent against, 201, difficulties met with, 203-5, unite at Inuta, 214, re-arrangement of, 205, arrival of Montanaro at, the loyal King thanked and rewarded, 207, return from, operations en route, 210, prisoners brought in by, 211; return of, the close of the campaign, 212
—— road, Ashantis on attacked and defeated by Wilcock's, 188-93, casualties, 193
Berthon, Capt., with Morris's force, 69, in operations near Kumasi, 75, 99, with the retiring party, 106
Bishop, Capt., 27, 80, in attack on the Dedesuaba stockade, 72, and other operations, 81; left in charge of the fort at Kumasi, 90, 125, 132, orders left with on retirement of the Governor, 135
Bishop, Capt., and his garrison, their struggle a parallel to the Indian Mutiny sieges, 139
Biss, Lieut., wounded, 167
Blair, Col.-Sergt., wounded near Kokofu, 163
Bodu, War Captain of Ejisu, terms formulated by, 65
Booth, Sergt.-Major, charge of, at Kokofu stockade, 154; with Cobbe's column, 167, his clever move, 168
Brake, Lieut.-Col., D.S.O., brings up reinforcements to Bekwai, 173, destroys Kokofu stockade, id., further operations of, 174-5; leaves with column for Ojesu, 176, successful operations of, 177, and casualties, 178, march to Kumasi, id., wounded at Ojesu, 178
Branch, Mr, Acting Director of Telegraphs, his adventures, 49, goes to Kumasi after rescue by Aplin, 50, his soup-kitchen for refugees at, 54
Branscombe, Mr, murder of, 64, 79
Bridging rivers in W. Africa, 253
Brock, Capt., left at Kintampo, 197
Brownlie, Lieut., killed at Kokofu, 128, sale of his effects, 157
Browne, Major, in command of the second column for Berekum, 201, left to garrison Oulomasii, 208, effects the capture of Kobina Cherri, 209-10
Bryan, Capt., with Morland's force, 147, 153, at Kokofu, 156; on Brake's staff, 176, on Wilcock's staff, 151, able assistance afforded by to Wilcock's, 212
Buchanan, Sergt., narrow escape of, at Intimidu, 167; with the Maxim gun at Danasi, 185
Buée, Dr, with Morland's column, 153
Buffalo, mythical, of the Ashanti forest, 60
Burroughs, Lieut.-Col., adventures of force under, en route for Bekwai, 126-127; wounded at Kokofu, 128, sent with column conveying food to Kumasi, 163, 176, orders for column
INDEX

commanded by, 164, night attack
planned by, 170, 171, success of, 172
Burton, Lieut., H.C., killed at Ojeau, 178
Bush-fighting in W. Africa, Appendix VI., 241, usual tactics in, 52

CAPE COAST CASTLE, landing at, 141
road from Kumasi, closed by rebel stockades, 87
Cardew, Sir F., Governor of Sierra Leone, assistance given by in providing carriers for Willcocks' force, 119
Carleton, Capt., on Willcocks' Staff, 151, with Montanaro's Berekum column, 201, sent to try to capture Kobina Cherri, 207-8; fruit of his instructions to junior officers, 210
Carriers for Willcocks' force, sources of, 119, 120
Carter, Col., C.M.G., Commandant of forces in Southern Nigeria, fights the Adansis en route to the north, 122-3, 126, casualties, 123, evacuates Kwasi, ill-effects of this action, 123-4
Chalmers, Dr, at Kumasi on arrival of the Governor, r, 21, 43, meets the Lagos relief column, 56; sanitary precautions of, 91; with the retiring party, 111
Charms and fetishes (see Golden Stool) met near Bali, 5
Charrier, Capt., operations of in the Berekum road attack, 190, wounded in this fight, 193
Civilian native population of Kumasi, patience of under starvation, and during journey to the coast, 112-3
Claude's Ashanti Goldfields, extent of, etc., 239
Cobbe, Major, with the food convoy under Burroughs, 164, stockade destroyed by, 165, his column in the attack, 167, success of, and casualties, 168-9, wounded in this fight, 167-9; good work at Danasi fight, 185; with the Berekum road column, 188, sent to Fufu with flying column, 195, sent against Inkaene 200, with Montanaro’s Berekum column, 201, scouting by, 202
Cochrane, Capt., C.E., of the Lagos reinforcement, 46, shelling rebels at Krobo, 61, 62, other operations by, during the siege, 86, wounded near Kumasi, but leads charge, 53
Cogan, Dr, arrival of, at Berekum, 209
Cord entanglement with bells, etc., used as night alarm by Ashantis, 79
Cramer, Major, with Montanaro's column for Oninso, 184
Crean, Capt., with guns of Melliss's column, 184-5, 196
Cruelties of natives, 42-3

DAMPIER HILLS, 148
Danasi village, fight of Montanaro's column at, 184-6
Daniells, Mr, native officer, actual capturer of Kobina Cherri, 210
Dankfi, native officer, wounded at Esiagu, 53
David, Mr, mining engineer, at Kumasi, during siege, 35, superintends entrenchments, 58, consulted on route for retiring party, 89
Daw, Mr, of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, leaves Kumasi, 25
Dedusuaba stockade, Morris’s attack on, 73
Denkera country, retreat of Hodgson's party through, 125, loyal King of and his assistance, 120-1
native levies, 156
Denton, Sir G., lacum tenens to the Governor of Lagos, assistance of in despatching troops to Kumasi, 45
Desborough, Sergt., at the stockade beyond Bantama, 166
Digan, Capt., with Morris's force, 69, at N'Timidei stockade, 81
Dillon, Dr, arrival of at Berekum, 209
INDEX

Dompoassi, the fight at, 122, charged by Sergt. Mackenzie and stockade cleared, 123; casualties, id., town carried by Burroughs, 127; Beddoes sent to, with troops, 157
Dtachi, guns captured at, 175
Dwarf, H.M.S., conveys the Governor and party to Accra, 11

East and West African troops, successes of when allowed to charge, 194
Eden, Capt., 131, bayonet charge under, at Pekki, 129; left with others at Kumasi after Willcocks' first relief of garrison, 139; in attack on Bantama stockade, 166, with reserve column, Burroughs' night-attack, 171, dispositions of troops under in attack on Bekrum road, 196, sent with column against Inkawe, 200
Edubia, death of Capt. Marshall at, 109
Edwards, Lieut., with Willcocks' force, 116, wounded at Dompoassi, dogged gallantry of, 123; with scouts, on the march to Kumasi, 130, wounded, id.; severe illness of at Bekwai, 158
Elifa, a Kumasi Chief, meeting the Governor, 3, leaves Kumasi with followers, 11, a fomentor of the rising, 77
Ejisu, Queen Mother of, (Ya Asantiwa) at the Kumasi palaver, 3, her camp at Abercom, 11, 24, sends word she desires peace, 25, leaves camp in panic, 26
Ekwanta, enemy driven from, 129
Elgee, Capt., with Willcocks' force, 116
Erbyn, Mr., interpreter, 4, wounded at Bali, 9, escorts the loyal Kings and Chiefs to Accra, 172
Esiagl village, Aplin's force attacked at, 53, casualties sustained at, 53
Esumeja, Mr Branch found at, 49, occupied by Hall, 118, importance of in May, 1900, 121, state of affairs at on June 8, 124; advantages of having held, 128

FAUNCE, Capt., with Burroughs' force, 171
Fetish priest of Bali, 8
Fletcher, Dr., fits up travelling smallpox hospital, 203
Fomasua, Marshall attacked at, 27, and badly wounded, 28, other casualties, id.
"Food palavers" during siege, 85
Forests in Ashanti, 142, 209
Foster, Col.-Sergt., wounded in attack on stockades, 167
Fufu, swamps on the way to, 196
Fulani, Sergt., 16, 17, 19, reconnaissance by, 18; at Krobo, 62, at the Patasi stockade, 98
Fumsu, garrison at, 146

GAMBAGA, march of Morris's relief column from to Kumasi, 69, et seq.
Garland, Dr, with Morris's force, 69, sanitary measures of during siege, 91; with the retiring party, 111
Godfrey, Capt., with Cobbe's column, 167, D.A.A.G. of Montanaro's Ofinsu column, 182, with the Sikhs at the Bekrum road attack, 192
Gold and other natural products of Ashanti, Appendix V., 235
Golden Stool, the, request of the Governor for, 3, fruitless search for, 4, 7, significance of possessing, 220
Goldfields of Eastern Akim Company, development of, 240
Gold holes along the road to Bekwai, 150
Gordon, Capt., charge of near Ojesu, 177, D.A.A.G. to Ofinsu column under Montanaro, 182, with the Bekrum column, 201, in command of supply column of same force, 205
Gordon, Mr., of Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, leaves Kumasi, 25
Graham, Dr., with Morris’s force, 69, in operations, 82, sanitary measures of, during siege, 91; during march to Kumasi, 100
Graham, Lieut., 140, leads charge at Kokofu, 154; with Wright on march to Obuasi, 156, orderly officer to Montanaro’s Ofinsu column, 182, 184; charge led by at Danasi, 185
Grant, Dr., with Morland’s force, 147, sent with Wright’s force to Obuasi, 156
Green, Capt. Pamplin, with Montanaro’s Berekum road force, 188, wounded in the attack, 192, 193, orderly officer to Montanaro’s Berekum column, 201
Greer, Capt., 140, 157, takes command of Beddoes’ column on his being wounded, 160; with Morland’s column, 153, praise of, 163; with Brake’s column, 177, 188
—— Lieut., with Morland’s column, 152, mortally wounded at the Accra road stockade, 172-3
Grundy, Mr., mining engineer, in Kumasi during siege, 35, superintends entrenchments, 58
Guide’s thoughtfulness for Capt. Armitage, 111
HALFPENNY, Hon. Lieut., R.A., at charge on Kokofu, 154, at fight near Kokotu, 162, with the guns, Brake’s column, 177
Hall, Capt. W. M., in temporary command of troops for Kumasi, advance of, 116-7, palaver of, with the King of Adansi, 117; subsequent operations of, 118-9, sends help to Slater against the Adansia, 120; action of, in remaining at Esumeja, various views of, 121; with Willcocks’ force, 151; with Beddoes’ force, 157
Haselwood, Capt., staff officer to Hall, 117, do. to Burroughs, 164, 171, do. to Willcocks, 151
Haussa gun-carriers, strength of, 147, 154
—— troops, arrival of at Kumasi, 26
——— location of with families, 29, formed into cordon round refugees, 31, how disposed and commanded during siege, 39, recklessness of with ammunition, 9
——— sent up from Lagos, 45, tribute to excellent behaviour of during siege and retreat, 112-3
Hay, Dr., arrival of at Kumasi, 26, with Marshall’s column, 27, 82, left at Kumasi, 90, 125, 132, 133, illness of during siege and bravery shown by, 134, 137, sanitary efforts of, 91
Health on the West Coast of Africa, simple but important rules for maintaining, 158-9
Henstock, Lieut.-Col., Chief of Staff to Willcocks, 129, 151, operations of column commanded by, 173, valuable assistance afforded by to Willcocks, 212
Hickson, Surgeon-Major, on the healthiness of Obuasi, 149
High firing of Ashantis, 74, reason of, 131
Hobart, Capt., arrival of, at Berekum, 209
Hodgson, Lady, arrival of at Kumasi, 1, during siege, 21, 83, suffers from fever, 25, interests herself in the soup-kitchen, 84; during the retirement, 97, 102, 110, 133, loses her clothing, 104, illness of, 105, 112; arrival of at the Coast, 112, notions held by Ashantis concerning, 114
—— Sir F. M., K.C.M.G., Governor of the Gold Coast Colony, arrives at Kumasi, 1, speech of at the Kumasi palaver, 3, action taken by on outbreak of rebellion, 23, quarters of in the fort, 25, sends to meet reinforcements, 43, welcomes the Lagos force, 56, efforts of to keep up the spirits of the garrison, 82, decides to retire
INDEX

to the Coast, 89, 133; during the retirement, 102, illness of, at N'Kwanta, 105, rewards and thanks Kwatchie N'Ketia, 107; crossing the Ofo river, 110-11; further illness of, 112; news of move received at Esumejia, 124, at Bekwai, 125, arrival of at Cape Coast, 112

Holford, Capt., D.A.A.G., Willcocks’ staff, 129, 151, successful charge on Danaa stockade led by, 131, despatched to open the road to Kintampo, 181, march to and from that place, 197; valuable services to Willcocks, 212

Houses in Ashanti, 12

Houston, Capt. D., Acting Resident at Kumasi, 1, sends warning to Armitage, 11, receives news of the chiefs’ departure, 11, views of on the situation at Kumasi, 48, leaves for the Coast, 45, farewells of Kars’ natives to, 26

Human sacrifice, prohibition of, 219-220, traces of, 7

Isansu, arrival of the flying column at, 194

Imitative tactics of W. African natives, 262

Inkawie, capital of the Achamar country operations against, 200

Insuta, the two Berekom columns unite at, 204

Intimidu stockade, successful attack on, and casualties, 166-7

Jemo, successful operations of Johnstone-Stewart against, and prisoners released at, 206

Johnstone-Stewart, Capt., success of at Odum, 174, 175; with Melliss’s column, 184, 185

Jones, General, of the Libereian army, 140

Juabin, King of, and his chiefs at Kumasi to meet the Governor, 2, palaver with, on outbreak of rebellion, 21, requests release of prisoner, 25, quarters of during siege, 35

— native levies, as scouts, 204-5

Juju or fetishes (see Charm), as indication of vicinity of towns, 256

Kala Singh killed in Berekom road fight, 192

Karsi and other stockades destroyed, 27

“King Prempeh’s Mine,” mode of working in, 239

Kings, loyal, at Kumasi after outbreak of rebellion, 21, quarters assigned to, 35, accompany the retirement and arrive at Accra, 112

Kingston, Lt., sent to secure Kobina Cherri, 209, 210

Kintampo, Morris’s halt at, 70, column under Holford sent to open the road to, 181, garrison at strengthened, 197

Kobina Cherri, appointed general of the rebels, 199, his defiance, 204, flight, 207-8, capture, 209, and fate, 212

Kobina Kokufu, a loyal Kumasi chief, 30

Kobina N’Tem, claimant for the Stool of N’Suta, joins rebels, 24

Kofi Kalcali’s palace, utilization of the remains of, 35

Kofi Kofa, prefers suicide to surrender, 182, deposed from chief captnacy of rebel forces, 199

Kokofu, reconnaissance in force against, 119, unsuccessful attack on by Burroughs, 197-8, casualties, 128, Morland’s column sent against, 152-3, stockade near, successfully carried by charge under Melliss, 153, 154, good consequent results 155; new stockade at destroyed by Brake, 173

— King of, present with his chiefs at Kumasi to meet the Governor, 2, palaver with, after outbreak of rebellion, 21, arrested on good
Gordon, Mr., of Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, leaves Kumasi, 25
Graham, Dr., with Morris's force, 69, in operations, 82, sanitary measures of, during siege, 91; during march to Kumasi, 100
Grahame, Lieut., 140, leads charge at Kokofu, 154; with Wright on march to Obuassai, 156, orderly officer to Montanaro's Ofinsu column, 182, 184; charge led by at Danasi, 185
Grant, Dr., with Morland's force, 147, sent with Wright's force to Obuassai, 156
Green, Capt. Pampin, with Montanaro's Berekum road force, 188, wounded in the attack, 193, 193, orderly officer to Montanaro's Berekum column, 201
Greer, Capt., 140, 157, takes command of Beddoes' column on his being wounded, 160; with Morland's column, 153, praise of, 163; with Brace's column, 177, 188
— Lieut., with Morland's column, 152, mortally wounded at the Accra road stockade, 172-3
Grundy, Mr., mining engineer, in Kumasi during siege, 35, superintends entrenchments, 58
Guide's thoughtfulness for Capt. Armitage, 111

HALFPENNY, Hon. Lieut., R.A., at charge on Kokofu, 154, at fight near Kokotro, 162, with the guns, Brace's column, 177
Hall, Capt. W. M., in temporary command of troops for Kumasi, advance of, 116-7, palaver of, with the King of Adansi, 117, subsequent operations of, 118-9, sends help to Slater against the Adansis, 120; action of, in remaining at Esumeja, various views of, 121; with Willcocks' force, 151; with Beddoes' force, 157
Haselwood, Capt., staff officer to Hall, 117, do. to Burroughs, 164, 171, do. to Willcocks, 151

Hauassa gun-carriers, strength of, 147, 154
— troops, arrival of at Kumasi, 26
— — location of with families, 29, formed into cordon round refugees, 31, how disposed and commanded during siege, 39, recklessness of with ammunition, 9
— — sent up from Lagos, 45, tribute to excellent behaviour of during siege and retreat, 112-3
Hay, Dr., arrival of at Kumasi, 26, with Marshall's column, 27, 82, left at Kumasi, 90, 125, 132, 133, illness of during siege and bravery shown by, 134, 137, sanitary efforts of, 91
Health on the West Coast of Africa, simple but important rules for maintaining, 158-9
Henstock, Lieut.-Col., Chief of Staff to Willcocks, 129, 151, operations of column commanded by, 173, valuable assistance afforded by to Willcocks, 212
Hickson, Surgeon-Major, on the healthiness of Obuassai, 149
High firing of Ashantis, 74, reason of, 131
Hobart, Capt., arrival of, at Berekum, 209
Hodgson, Lady, arrival of at Kumasi, 1, during siege, 21, 83, suffers from fever, 25, interests herself in the soup-kitchen, 84; during the retirement, 97, 102, 110, 133, loses her clothing, 104, illness of, 105, 112; arrival of at the Coast, 112, notions held by Ashantis concerning, 114
— Sir F. M., K.C.M.G., Governor of the Gold Coast Colony, arrives at Kumasi, 1, speech of at the Kumasi palaver, 3, action taken by on outbreak of rebellion, 23, quarters of in the fort, 25, sends to meet reinforcements, 43, welcomes the Lagos force, 56, efforts to keep up the spirits of the garrison, 82, decides to retire
### Index

| Column, 164, with Cobbe's column, 167, valuable reconnaissance by, 170, leads the night attack on stockade, 171 |
| Loyalty Chiefs and Kings, accommodation of during siege, 35, 36, escorted to Accra, 113, return of to Kumasi, 66, tribute to, 113 |
| — Kings, message sent by to rebels, and the reply, 65 |
| Luard, Lieut., with Melliss's column at N'Kakus Buoho, 183, in the Berekum road fight, 191 |
| Lyon, Capt., with the Berekum columns, operations of, 207 |

| McCarty, General, fate of his head, 178 |
| Mc Clintock, Lieut., R.E., on Willcocks' staff, 119 |
| Mc Corquodale, Capt., arrival of, with Hausaas, at Berekum, 209 |
| Mc Dowell, Dr., P.M.O., with Willcocks' force, 151 |
| Macfarlane, Dr., with the Lagos reinforcements, 46, wounded at Esiagu, 53; on Willcocks' staff, 119 |
| Macgregor, Sir W., Governor and C. in Chief of Lagos, 45 |
| Mackenzie, Sergt., leads successful charge on Dompooasi stockade, 123 |
| Mc Kinnon, Lieut., and his scouts, near Ojusu, 176-7 |
| Maguire, Capt., with Morris's force, 69, in operations, 81, killed at N'Timidei stockade, 82 |
| Major, Sergt., with Maxim gun in Berekum road fight, 191 |
| Mampon, King of, with his chiefs, at Kumasi to meet the Governor, 2, palaver with, after outbreak of rebellion, 21, requests release of prisoner, 25, quarters assigned to during siege, 35, steady loyalty of, 65 |
| ——, Queen-Mother of, unwavering loyalty of, 66 |

| Mampon stockade, unsuccessful attack on, under Armitage, 79, 80, bomb exploded at, 84 |
| Mansu, palaver with King of, for carriers, 144 |
| Mansu N'Kwanta, see N'Kwanta |
| March of retiring party from Kumasi, order of, 94-6, account of, 97, et seq. |
| Margesson, Capt., with Burroughs' food-convoy column, 164, with Cobbe's column, 167, with Loch's force in the night attack, 171, with Melliss's advance guard, 183 |
| Marshall, Capt., at Kumasi when the Governor arrived, 1, leaves for the coast, 11, returns with Hausaas from Prahu, 26, destroys rebel camps and is wounded, 27, 38, removes into the fort, 36, disposition of forces commanded by, 39, illness of, 40, 43, unsuccessful attack by on Krobo, 74-75, unsuccessful attack on N'Timidei stockade, 81, wounded during, 82, with Armitage at Patapi, 99, wounded there, 100, 103, at Hiakasi, 104, death of, 108, 109 |
| Maxim guns, jamming of, 74, 135 |
| Mayne, Lieut., on Holford's staff, 181, left with Eden at Kumasi, 139 |
| Medical officers in Kumasi, their efforts to preserve good health, 91 |
| —— Statistics of the Campaign (see Returns), 212 |

| Melliss, Major, sent to Kwiss, 124, assists in scouting and is wounded, 130; with Morland's column, 152, with his scouts at Kokofu, 154, their gallantry, 156; stockade destroyed by near Kumasi, 155-7; joins food-convoy column under Burroughs, 164, wounded, 167; with Loch's force in the night-attack, 171; reconnaissance by on Hodgson's road, 179; cautious advance on Ofinsu, village taken by, 183, operations of his column, 184-5, wounded at Dansasi, 186; with the Berekum |
road column, 188, charge led by, 191, 192, severely wounded, 192, recommended for the V.C., 193, charge of at Bantama stockade, effect of on rebels, 206
Middlemist, Capt., arrives with the reinforcements at Kumasi, 26, destroys Karai, 27, disposition of forces under, 29, in sally from the fort, 30, 31, narrow escape of, 32, illness of, 38, and death, 63
Millimetre gun brought up by Morland, 147
Misrepresentation of white men's views by rebel chiefs, 77
Moinisi Hills, position of, 126, 160, probably containing gold, 175
Monck-Mason, Capt., 153, with Beddoes' column, 157, 162, wounded near Kokotru, 163
Monrovia, an enlightened citizen of, 140
Montanaro, Major, account of his journey and march from Cape Coast to Bekwai, 142, et seq., on Wickeocks' staff, 151, with Morland's column, 152, at the taking of Kokofu, 154, with the guns of Burroughs' food-convoy column to Kumasi, 164, staff-officer, Burroughs' night attack, 171; column commanded by at Amphimani, 178-9, sent with flying column to Ofinsu, 181, organisation of the column, 182, fighting en route, 183-6, leads advance column against the rebels on Berekum road, 188-94; sent in command of one column against Berekum, 201
Morland, Lieut.-Col., troops under at Fumu, and millimetre gun brought up by, 147, marches to Obuasi, 148; with Willcocks' force, 152, column under at Kokofu, 152, 154, praise of, 156; invalided home, 152
Morris, Major A., D.S.O., Commissioner and Commandant of the Northern Territories, sent to, for reinforcements for Kumasi, 23, news of his advance, 64, arrival of at Kumasi, 68, 121, account of the march thither, 68, et seq., wounded en route, 69, 71, his pluck, 72; operations directed by from Kumasi, 72, et seq., attack by on the Dedesua stockade, 73, operations of on June 24, 78, plans for the retirement from Kumasi completed by, 87, 89, and explained by, 92, orders left by on retirement, 133, during the march to the Coast, 100, et seq.
Morogh, Capt. M'C., with Burroughs' food-convoy column, 164, in the attack on the stockades, 166
Native huts and native burial customs, 158; utilized by officers, 144 —— methods of crossing rivers, 110 —— soldiers (see African native troops and Sikhs), excitement of after successes, 154-5
Neal, Capt., with Morland's column, 152, at the Kokotru fight, 162, staff-officer of Browne's Berekum column, 201
Negociations with rebel chiefs, 64, their terms, 65, negociations broken off, 68
Nentchwi, a Kumasi chief, at the meeting with the Governor, 2, leaves Kumasi, with followers, 11, a fomentor of the rising, 77, prefers suicide to surrender, 182
Nigeria, reinforcements requested from, 23 ——, Northern, troops from, sent to Kumasi, 116
Night attacks, no part of Ashanti tactics, 38, demoralizing effect of, on them, 172
N'Kawia, rebel chief of, his cowardice and consequent deposition, 78-9
N'Koranza or Mamsu N'Koranza, the King of, nervousness of, when meeting the Governor, 24, returns to his country, 68, 70 ——, the Princess of, her loyalty and its results, 70
INDEX

N’Koranza road, attack on Capt. Parmeter on, 23
— tribe, friendly throughout the war, 70
N’Kwanta, King of, offers to surrender, 205, and does so, 206
— village, visit to in search of the Golden Stool, 4, 5; arrival of Mopria’s column at, 104, casualties en route, 106, rest at, 107; open country near, 207
N’Sutsa, claimants for the Stool of, 24, Yow Mafu elected to, 63
N’Timidie stockade, Morris’s partially successful attack on, 78, second unsuccessful attack on, under Marshall, 81, casualties, 82
Nupe Company, W. African Frontier Force, disaster to, 124

Obassa fight, Ashanti account of, 207
Obu Obassa, usually called Opoku Mensa, a blind chief, at Kumasi to meet the Governor, 2, brought into the fort, 11, quarters assigned to, 35, death of, 77
Obasssi mines, development of, 238-9, intended visit of Governor to, 4, fears for miners at, 116, garrison left at, 117, afterwards changed, 118-9; march to and destruction of native village, 148-9
Odum, success of Johnstone-Stewart at, and loot found near, 174
Odumasssi, halt of Montanaro at, and garrison under Browne left in, 208, destruction of by Montanaro, 210; centre of the rubber trade, 208
Ofin river, Ashanti ambush at, 13, crossing of by retiring party, 110-11
Ofinsu, the Queen-Mother of, 4; Montanaro’s column sent against rebels at, 181, entered unopposed, guns brought in at, and fetish town destroyed, 186-7
Ojesu, famous fetish town, 176, entered by Brake’s column, 178

O’Malley, Lieut., wounded at Dompoassii, 123
Opoko, second Ashanti war-captain, killed at Douchi, 174
Opoku Mensa, see Obu Obassa
Ordash river, crossed unopposed by Aplin’s forces, 54
Organisation of the retiring force from Kumasi, 93
Osei Kanyasi, Kumasi chief, arrested but released on parole, 25
Osei Kudjoe Krum, Kumasi chief, death of, 57

Palaver of the Governor with the Kings and Chiefs at Kumasi to secure the Golden Stool, 23
Palm cabbages as food, 64
Patasi stockade, taken by Amritgage 97, 99, casualties, 99
Patasi-Terrabum-N’Kwanta road chosen to withdraw from Kumasi by, 89
Paw-paw tree, 17
Pekki village taken by bayonet charge under Holford, 130-1
Peyton, Major, G.M.C., officer commanding lines of communications, 152
Phillips, Lieut., R.A., at the charge on Kokofu, 154, with Beddoes’ column, 157, wounded at Kokotra, pluck of, 162
Plantains, see note, p. 5
Poisonous vegetable (epi-root) eaten during siege, its effect, 91
Powder exploded in bravado by rebels, 81
Prah river, boundary of the Ashanti protectorate, 48, crossed by Aplin’s force, 48-9, crossed by the retiring party, 111, crossed by Montanaro and others, 145
Prahsu, arrival of Aplin at, 48; concentration of Willcocks’ forces at,
122; importance of, during campaign, 145, arrival of Wilcock's at, and operations from, 124
Prempeh, late King of Ashanti, vain search for his treasure, 7; his mine, mode of working at, 239; present place of abode, 112
Putron, Lieut. de, sent to secure Kobina Cherri, 209
Quaasi Bedu, a leading rebel war-captain, 177, prefers suicide to surrender, 182
Queen Ashantorah, supposed stronghold of, at Ojesu, 176, flight of, 178, negotiations of with Wilcock's, 181, 182, her new general, 199
Queen Mothers, status of, 4

Railway and harbour necessary for development of gold industry in Ashanti, 238
Ralph, Lieut. J. C., adjutant, Lagos relief force, 4, left with Bishop in Kumasi, 90, 125, 132-3
Ramsayer, Rev. F. and Mrs., of the Basel Mission, Kumasi, 1, withdraw to the fort, 29, narrow escape of on the march to the coast, 104, rescue of from Kumasi in 1874, 219
Rations for retiring party, 93
Read, Capt. B. M., of the Lagos reinforcement, 46, severely wounded in charge near Esiagon, 55, 56
Reeves, Capt., on Brake's staff, 176, rescues Capt. Wilcock, 180
Refugees, location of in fort and dangers caused by, 57, resignation of during siege, 38, and during retirement, 113-5, trouble caused by on the march, 103
Relief column under Aplin, arrival of, at Kumasi, 43
—— force under Morris, 68
—— Wilcock's (p. 72), routes of advance used by, 80, immense difficulties to be overcome by, 87

"Relieving" a garrison, what it really is, 121
Returns of casualties, Appendix IV,
—— of deaths from disease, 233
Rose, Sergt.-Major, slightly wounded, 167, 169
Ross in Kumasi, 58
Roupell, Capt., wounded at Domposoani, bravery of, 123
Rubber trade, centre of at Odumassu, 208
—— trees in Ashanti, 236
Russell, Mr., Private Secretary to Wilcock's, 151; political officer, with Brake's column, 177
Ryde, Major, commanding at Fumi, 146, 148

St Hill, Capt., with Morland's column, 152, operations of in the Berekm road fight, 190
St John, Mr., Assistant Inspector, and Haussas under at Berekm, 209
Sally of defenders from Kumasi, 59
Sanitary precautions at Kumasi, 59, 91, 135
Scouting and scouts in the W. African bush, difficulties and methods of, 166, 160, 173, 239, 250, 261
Sekudumassu, fetish grove at, destroyed by Morris's force, 71
Seychelles Islands, deported Kings and Chiefs at, 112
Sheffield, Capt., 141, narrow escape of in crossing river, 145
Sherimassu fight, 123
Shortland, Lieut., with Morland's column, 153; with Burroughs' food-convey column, 164, leads rearguard in the night-attack, 171
Siege life in Kumasi, 59, 60, 82, 119
Sierra Leone, assistance from, with carriers for Wilcock's force, 119; place of banishment of King Prempeh, 112
# INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sierra Leone Frontier Police, excellent scouting of, 130, 175</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs with Cobbe's column, 166-9, 185, with Willcocks' force, 192, 195, 247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simonds, Dr., in medical charge at Kintampo, 197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slater, Lieut., false report of his death, 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slattery, Sergt.-Major, wounded at Ojou, 178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slavery on the Gold Coast, 156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smallpox during the siege of Kumasi, 137, in the Berekum column, 202-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— hospital set up at Bechim, 207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Mr., takes photograph of besieged residents, 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Mr. Haddon, political officer on Willcocks' staff, 129, 151, at the Berekum road fight, 189, recovers Melliis when wounded, 193; able assistance given by to his chief, 212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldiers acting as carriers, great value of their service, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— promoted for gallantry, on the field, 194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soup kitchen during the siege, and its constituents, 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spear-head formation adopted by Montanaro in the Berekum road attack, 191-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiders, large, in native huts, 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stallard, Capt., with Beddoes' column, 157; on staff of Browne's Berekum column, 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stansfield, Major, on Brake's staff, 174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starvation during the siege, 134-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stevenson, Capt., with Burroughs' food-convoy column, 164; with Cobbe's column, 167, killed in charge at Dansai, 185-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart, Capt. D., C.M.G., Resident at Kumasi, on leave, 48; return of, with loyal kings and chief to Kumasi, 112; with Willcocks' force in the Berekum road attack, 189; joint message with Willcocks to rebels at Bechim, 199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockades of the Ashantis, construction of that at Patasi, 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swaby, Lieut., in the Beddoes' column, 168, severely wounded near Kokotru, 163-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet potatoes, soup made from, during siege, 58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Swish&quot; built houses, 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANOSU, sacred fish at, 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tekintema, King of, offers to surrender, 205, and does so, 206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telegraph wires cut by Ashantis, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms proposed by rebels, 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrabum village, cleared of rebels by Armitage, 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson, Dr., left with Capt. Eden at Kumasi, 139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorne, Capt., in charge at Datchi, 175; with Montanaro's Berekum column, 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tie-tie creeper, ropes made of, 110, 146, 195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighe, Capt., D.S.O., leads charge on Dompossi stockade, 127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber trees in Ashanti, 237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsend, Capt., left at Kintampo, 197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradei, a fetish village, 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree-trunk bridges, dangers of, 145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tropical rains, delay operations, 198; intense discomfort caused by, 188-9, 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— storms, 146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweedy, Dr., Cantonment Magistrate, Kumasi, 1, cares for wounded, 20-1; is wounded himself, 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WALSH, CAPT., R.N.R., assistance of, in forwarding troops for Kumasi, 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wam, the King of, his operations against fugitive rebels in the Ahafu forest, 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War-Chief of the King of Bechim, on some of the fights of the campaign, 206-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, importance of in W. Africa, 142, large consumption of, by Hausas on the march, 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INDEX

Water supply of Kumasi fort, 36
Webster, Mr., Acting Superintendent, Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, 148
Weller, Mr., of the Basel Mission, illness of during the retirement, 104, 110, and death, 112
Wesleyan Mission House, Kumasi, known as Krobo, Armitage's attack on, 61, casualties, 62, rebel stockade near, 68
West African regiment, value of men of as scouts, 125
Western Ashanti Tribes, loyalty of, 209
Weston, Major, 140-1
Wilcox, Capt., of Benson's column, rescue of, 180
Wilkinson, Lieut.-Col., at Dompooasi fight, 123, safe arrival at Bekwai of, 125, detailed to protect the retirement, 128, operations of, at Petki, 129-30, operations of column commanded by, 173
Wilkinson, Mr., Acting Director of Public Works, Kumasi, 1, leaves Kumasi, 26
Williams, Capt., Chief Transport officer at Prahu, methods adopted by, 145-6; wounded in the Berekum road attack, 192-3; on Willcocks' staff, 151, valuable aid afforded by, to Willcocks, 212
Williams, Dr., at Kumasi, 1, leaves for the Coast, 11
Willcocks, Col., Sir James, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., appointed to command the Gold Coast Force, for the relief of Kumasi, 116, arrival of and preparations under difficulties, 119, advance of to Prahu, 123, 124, unaware of Hodgson's retirement, 125, urging troops forward, 126, arrives at Bekwai, 128, his staff, 129, advances on Kumasi, 125, relief column as organised by, 125, arrives at Kumasi, 131-2, 139, return of to Bekwai, 139, re-organisation of force by, 140, greets the victors from Kokofu, 155, ill-health of at Bekwai, 157, advances to Pekki, 178, second arrival of at Kumasi, 179, negotiations of with rebel chiefs, 181-2, conducts attack on the Berekum road stockade, 189, success of and its results, 193, message sent by to rebels' headquarters, 199, their surrender, 206
— cheerful bravery of, and of his troops, under hardship, 139, confidence of in his officers, 193, inspiring example of, 189, organising powers of, unruffled patience and powers of using his officers without harassing them, 212; policy adopted by to quell the rebellion, 156
Wilson, Capt., killed on the march to Kwima, 124
Women slave-captives, their attitude to their original tribes, 156-7
Wright, Capt., with Willcocks' force, 131, 159, charge led by at Kokofu, 154, sent to harry the Adansi districts, 156

YOW AWOAH, a loyal Ashanti, 27, joins in the fighting, 61, fate of his uncles, 77
Yow Mafu, a claimant for the Stool of N'Tem, 24, during the siege, 41-2, joins in the fighting, 61, proclaimed King of N'Suta, 63, death of, 10.

ZENOAH, Mr Hari, native officer, praise of, 32; in attack on rebel stockades, 81, left with Bishop in Kumasi, 90
Zoso, Mr., 59
Water supply of Kumasi fort, 36
Webster, Mr, Acting Superintendent, Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, 148
Weller, Mr, of the Basel Mission, illness of during the retirement, 104, 110, and death, 112
Wesleyan Mission House, Kumasi, known as Krobo, Armitage’s attack on, 61, casualties, 62, rebel stockade near, 68
West African regiment, value of men, as scouts, 126
Western Ashanti Tribes, loyalty of, 209
Weston, Major, 140-1
Wilcox, Capt., of Benson’s column, rescue of, 180
Wilkinson, Lieut.-Col., at Dompoaso fight, 133, safe arrival at Bekwai of, 125, detailed to protect the retirement, 10, operations of at Pekki, 129-30, operations of column commanded by, 173
Wilkinson, Mr, Acting Director of Public Works, Kumasi, 1, leaves Kumasi, 26
Williams, Capt., Chief Transport officer at Praha, methods adopted by, 145-6; wounded in the Berekum road attack, 193-5; on Wilcock’s staff, 151, valuable aid afforded by, to Wilcock, 212
Williams, Dr, at Kumasi, 1, leaves for the Coast, 11
Wilocks, Col. Sir James, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., appointed to command the Gold Coast Force, for the relief of Kumasi, 116, arrival of and preparations under difficulties, 119, advance of to Praha, 122, 124, unaware of Hodgson’s retirement, 125, urging troops forward, 126, arrives at Bekwai, 128, his staff, 129, advances on Kumasi, 10, relief column as organised by, 12, arrives at Kumasi, 131-2, 139, return of to Bekwai, 139, re-organisation of force by, 140, greets the victors from Kokofu, 155, ill-health of at Bekwai, 157, advances to Pekki, 178, second arrival of at Kumasi, 179, negotiations of with rebel chiefs, 181-2, conducts attack on the Berekum road stockade, 189, success of and its results, 193, message sent by to rebels’ headquarters, 199, their surrender, 206
— cheerful bravery of, and of his troops, under hardship, 139, confidence of in his officers, 193, inspiring example of, 189, organizing powers of, unruffled patience and powers of using his officers without harassing them, 212; policy adopted by to quell the rebellion, 156
Wilson, Capt., killed on the march to Kwame, 124
Women slave-captives, their attitude to their original tribes, 156-7
Wright, Capt., with Willocks’ force 131, 159, charge led by at Kokofu 154, sent to harry the Adans district, 156
YOW AWWAH, a loyal Ashanti, 27; joins in the fighting, 61, fate of his uncles, 77
Yow Mafu, a claimant for the Stool of N’Tem, 24, during the siege 41-2, joins in the fighting, 61, proclaimed King of N’Suta, 63, death of, 16
ZENOAH, Mr Hari, native officer, praise of, 32; in attack on rebel stockades, 81, left with Bishop in Kumasi, 90
Zoso, Mr, 39