
Colonel Chaillé. Long on the Tuba

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COLONEL CHAILLÉ-LONG ON THE JUBA.

The following statement summarizes the work done by the special expedition to the Indian Ocean under the command of Col. Chaillé-Long, despatched by His Highness Ismaïl, Khedive of Egypt, in June, 1875.

It was with the purpose of conquest that Ismaïl adopted the inspiration of General Gordon for the expedition to the Indian Ocean.

In obedience to General Gordon's order, I hastened to confer with the Khedive. At Khartoum he telegraphed me :

"Received your telegram about Mombas to M'Tsé. Study expedition with Gordon, then come to Cairo. It should be kept a profound secret. ISMAÏL."

Arrived in Cairo the 23d of May, 1875, I was welcomed with much enthusiasm by the Khedive.

Early in September the preparations were completed, and on the night of the 16th I left Cairo for Suez.

My orders read to proceed to Berbera, confer with McKillop Pasha, and, with him, sail at once for Juba.

Keith Johnston, the geographer, says in his book entitled "Africa," that "in 1874 the town of Berbera, on the Somali coast of the Gulf of Aden, was occupied by the troops of the Khedive, and the whole coast of the Danakil country, between that and Massowah, with most of its ports, was taken possession of by Egypt. The harbor of Zeilah was made over to Egypt by the Porte in July, 1875, and later in the same year the Khedive's troops marched thence inland and took possession of Harrar.

“Not content with this, the Egyptians grasped the ports of Brava, Juba, and Kismayu, on the east coast, in January, 1876.”

This, in fact, was the work in which McKillop and myself were now actually engaged.

Berbera, opposite Aden, is situated in the arc of a deep bay, bordered by a sandy plain which stretches its locked arms into the sea, forming a breakwater and good harbor. It was here that we arrived on the 25th of September.

On the 30th the expedition, reinforced by two companies of infantry and a detachment of artillery, sailed from Berbera to Cape Guardafui, which we passed on the 4th of October.

Ras Hafoun was reached on the 6th of October. I landed with a detachment of soldiers, and planted upon the highest peak the flag of Egypt. This done, a proclamation announcing the Khedivial authority was read and the flag was saluted.

On October 15th our expedition took position before the fortified town of Brava. Lieutenant Hassan Wassif was sent on shore, and the officer commanding the troops of Zanzibar agreed to capitulate. A company was sent to occupy the fort, which was found already abandoned.

Twenty-four hours later we arrived off the mouth of the Juba River, the objective point of our expedition. A Somali fisherman came off and said it would not be possible to enter the Juba at this season, but that we could find a good harbor at Kismayu, and accordingly we got under steam for that point.

Kismayu is situated fifteen miles south of the equator, in the bend of a land-locked basin half a mile wide, guarded on each side by huge boulders of rocks. In the

afternoon of the 16th we succeeded in entering the port. In the distance was a stone fort, mounting several guns, bearing directly upon the pass.

Daylight the next morning found four companies, with several field pieces and a *mitrailleuse*, in position on the beach in front of the town. The sheiks were bidden to demand the surrender of the place in the name of the Khedive of Egypt. After waiting for some time for a reply, I detached a company, gained the rear of the town, and Kismayu was in our possession. We subsequently learned that Dr. Kirk, Her Majesty's consul, and Mr. Badger, an agent of Saïd Burgash, were hurried away to Aden on the Sultan's steamer, and telegraphed to Lord Derby as follows :

“ The Egyptian pirates are in my land. Have taken my commerce and country,
and massacred my soldiers. Come to my aid. SAÏD BURGASH.”

Kismayu was a great slave-trading port, and I set free the 400 slaves found there.

Dr. Kirk was knighted for his promptness in reporting the Egyptian invasion.

Kismayu was occupied in force on the 17th of October, 1875, and McKillop assumed command of the coast from Berbera to the equator.

On the Juba River I built a fortified town, on an eminence overlooking the plains of Juba and the Indian Ocean.

On the 16th of November the steamer *Mahallah* arrived at Kismayu, with Frederico Pasha and Ward Bey, the latter an American officer, sent down to make a hydrographic survey of the new port. The *Mahallah* brought me a reinforcement of troops. Frederico Pasha

turned over to me a steam-launch, and I determined to make a *reconnaissance* along the river.

The Juba was first entered by Baron von der Decken, on July 29, 1865. He pushed as far as the town of Bordera, a city on the left bank of the river, surrounded by a wall fifteen feet high. The inhabitants were Somali Arabs, of the tribe of Ali, a powerful tribe to the south and west, and occupying also the country between the Juba and the Wobbi rivers.

Baron von der Decken, on the 25th of September, of the same year, in endeavoring to push beyond Bordera, unfortunately ran his steamer on the rocks in the rapids, and he and his party were doubtless murdered by the treacherous Somali.

On the 24th of November we left camp at 6 A.M. It was 6 o'clock P.M. when we arrived at Yerkoi.

Thence we passed, at intervals of two or three hours, the villages of Hinde, Sugwari, Donzoni, and Zanzibar. A three hours' run brought us to Bonini. From Bonini we steamed to Lugeto, two hours distant, and thence to M'Kou M'Wooli, where we anchored for the night.

On the 27th, having received the visit of the sheik and exchanged presents, we steamed away at 4 A.M. At nine o'clock we arrived at a village 150 miles from our camp. It was the limit of friendly territory, and Ali said he dared go no farther. An island five miles in length and one fourth wide here divides the river into two branches. I was quite satisfied with the information obtained, and, after a distribution of presents, the return was ordered. We arrived at camp at 1 o'clock A.M. on the morning of the 28th.

On the 6th of December the monsoon set in, and blew

with violence. The 25th, Christmas Day, brought us a welcome visitor, the *Tantah*, returning from Suez and making her way to Kismayu. During the day I received a dispatch from the Khedive: "Withdraw your command at once, and return to Egypt." Lord Derby had protested against the occupation, and sent a peremptory note.

The rest is soon told. The expedition evacuated the Juba on the 5th. On the 11th it withdrew the detachment from Brava, sailed for Berbera, and thence with McKillop to Suez, arriving in Cairo on the 6th of February, 1876.

C. CHAILLÉ-LONG.