

sion of African artillery personnel was in its infancy.

The sudden transformation of the relative quiet of Mombasa into an active naval base and a station for sea and land aircraft, increased the defensive potential in that area, but accentuated the urgency for adequate land defences. The demands of the three Services for matériel, artisans and transport, most of which had to be provided by the Army, rose to unprecedented heights. The allotment of sites for defence, storage, accommodation and other necessities created the conflicting claims to priority within a limited space usual in circumstances of urgency. Although every wish and every need could not be immediately met, the general spirit of co-operation and give-and-take which prevailed reduced major difficulties to a minimum.

In April the arrival of coast defence and anti-aircraft units, guns, personnel and stores commenced, and the Island of Mombasa and its surrounding territory began to assume an aspect of stronger defence. That improvement has been maintained.

In response to a War Office request made in December, 1941, 21st and 25th (East African) Brigades were selected for service overseas. The former Brigade was located in Kenya, and the latter in Ethiopia where it had recently taken part in the Gondar operations. This was the first time during the war that the employment of East African troops outside Africa had been considered, and the usual number of administrative problems arose in connection with establishments, types of transport, scales of rations, and availability or otherwise of food suitable for consumption by Africans. The 25th Brigade was due to embark at Massawa on 21st February, 1942, but early in that month it became apparent that this brigade would not be in a fit state to be sent overseas on that date or even for several months. I was forced regretfully to cancel its departure and nominated 22nd (East African) Infantry Brigade in its place. This Brigade had fought with distinction throughout the East African campaign, but many of its personnel had been away from their homes and amenities for considerable periods. Leave was an essential preliminary to embarkation, but it required time. Such are the distances, the paucity and condition of communications in East Africa, that it may take as much as four months for the personnel of a battalion to enjoy fourteen days' leave in their homes. In consequence the 22nd Brigade could not be ready for embarkation until the middle of May, 1942.

Early in March, 1942, the 21st (East African) Infantry Brigade completed its preparations and embarked at Mombasa for Ceylon.

Events in Malaya and other parts of the Far East led the Governors of the various territories in East Africa to examine with me how co-ordination between civil and military authorities in the event of invasion could be improved. As a result of this examination, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on 19th April, 1942, increased the executive powers of the Chairman of the East African Governors in matters of common interest when urgent military necessity required. This decision eased many of the difficulties of my task. I am grateful to the Chairman of the Governors' Conference, and to the Governors, for their co-operation in bringing it about.

#### PART V.—MADAGASCAR, MAURITIUS, RODRIQUEZ AND SEYCHELLES.

In the first week of May, 1942, combined forces from Great Britain, acting under the direction of the Chiefs of Staff, attacked Diego Suarez in Madagascar. At the conclusion of this successful operation, certain of the British formations which had participated were required elsewhere. As relief the 22nd (East African) Infantry Brigade Group, already prepared to move overseas, sailed from East Africa for Madagascar on 3rd June, 1942.

On 25th May, 1942, I received instructions that, at a later date, I was to take over command of all British troops in Madagascar. On 1st July, 1942, the occupied area of Madagascar came under my command.

Since the initial occupation of Diego Suarez it had become necessary to extend to the South the area occupied by the British forces as the economic life of Antsirane was dependent on the produce obtained from the country around Ambilobe. British patrols occupied Ambilobe without opposition and a British political officer was established in that place.

In Diego Suarez area, conditions rapidly returned to normal, although trade was restricted since the British blockade had effectively prevented the replacement of trade goods. Warehouses and shops were empty. With the active co-operation of the Union of South Africa, £5,000 worth of goods comprising tea, flour, and cotton piece goods were landed at Diego Suarez on 8th July, 1942. The delivery of these goods created a favourable impression among all sections of local inhabitants, being in strong contrast to the conditions prevailing in the unoccupied area of Madagascar.

On 1st September, 1942, the extent of the Command was further increased by the addition of Mauritius, Rodriquez and Seychelles, transferred from Army Headquarters in India. These Islands, together with Madagascar, were formed into an "Islands Area" under Major-General G. R. Smallwood, D.S.O., M.C., with Headquarters at Diego Suarez.

These Islands provide the Command with outposts in the Indian Ocean but their distance from the mainland, and the uncertainty of shipping and aircraft, render their reinforcement in the event of emergency problematical, and their regular visiting by Commanders and Staff Officers undesirably infrequent. Adequate air communications should be an automatic and immediate corollary to any considerable expansion of an extensive military command.

On 1st August, 1942, my responsibility regarding Southern Rhodesia was transferred to the Union of South Africa.

#### PART VI.—OPERATIONS IN MADAGASCAR SUBSEQUENT TO THE OCCUPATION OF DIEGO SUAREZ.

##### *Events leading up to further operations in Madagascar.*

After the occupation of Diego Suarez, it was hoped that the attitude of Monsieur Annet, Governor General of Madagascar, would become more reasonable and that some degree of collaboration would supervene which would enable us to secure certain military objectives from the threat of Axis aggression whilst still maintaining the machinery of French Government in the Island. The most important military objectives were Majunga and Tuléar on