

and confirmed that the enemy were holding a strong position in the area of Uaddara.

105. On 6th April 12th (A) Division H.Q. moved to Neghelli and took over from 1st S.A. Division, the 21st and 25th E.A. Infantry Brigades and all Divisional troops not proceeding to Middle East. The 24th G.C. Brigade less 3rd G.C. Regiment at Neghelli remained under command of Force in the area Lugh Ferrandi-Oddur-Iscia Baidoa with the task of clearing up and patrolling the area.

The Order of Battle of 12th (A) Division at this time is given in Appendix "H".

PART III.—GENERAL.

106. *Control and Headquarters.*

The problem of control of the operations was intricate. Although originally Force H.Q. was based on a Corps Staff Establishment, it was found necessary owing to the many local problems of supply, personnel, finance, &c., to expand it into a minor G.H.Q. whose dealings were very largely concerned with South Africa, the Government of Kenya and the Governors' Conference. A large portion of my staff, and strictly speaking myself also, had firm roots in Nairobi and many major responsibilities in that place.

In the campaign which has been described it will be remembered that the main advance in the south was, in the initial stages, carried out by two divisions at one time, and it was quite clear to me that it would be necessary either to improvise a Corps H.Q. and place one of the Major-Generals in command, or to go forward and control the battle myself. It was quite impossible for me to give a general directive to 1st S.A. Division in the north and to rely on General Brink to carry it out, but in view of the interplay between the 11th and 12th (A) Divisions which was bound to happen when they reached the Giuba, I was convinced I could not follow this procedure in their case. I did not like the idea of forming an improvised Corps H.Q. as neither the Commander nor the staff would have time to get to know each other. I therefore decided to form an Advanced H.Q. and go forward and fight the battle myself.

107. On 9th February, therefore, Force H.Q. was divided into two, with Rear Force H.Q. at Nairobi and Advanced Force H.Q. at Garissa. Advanced Force H.Q. consisted of the majority of the General Staff and representatives of the branches, while the Rear H.Q. continued to operate with the remaining personnel. As operations progressed, Advanced Force H.Q. moved forward. Moves were carried out in three echelons. The main operational group was air-borne. It was preceded by an advance signal centre and a portion of Advanced H.Q., which went by road two or three days ahead to establish communications. After the departure of the air party the rear echelon of Advanced Force H.Q. followed by road. Owing to the distances involved in the moves and the state of the roads, it was usually a week after the departure of the Advance Party before the Rear Party arrived, and Advanced Force H.Q. was complete again.

The following moves were carried out by Advanced H.Q.:—

10th February. Nairobi—Garissa.
18th February. Garissa—Chisimaio.
27th February. Chisimaio—Mogadiscio.

20th March. Mogadiscio—Gabredarre.

27th March. Gabredarre—Giggiga.

1st April. Giggiga—Harrar.

108. Although the arrangements for Advanced H.Q. worked reasonably satisfactorily, things were not so happy at Nairobi. Many important matters were either neglected or left in the hands of junior officers who had not the experience to deal with them. Heads of services had no one to go to for guidance and control, and, moreover, were out of touch with what was going on in front. I was only once able to go back to Nairobi myself.

Before serious operations began I had always felt that the best solution would have been to add a floating Corps H.Q. to the Force which could have taken charge of any front where two divisions were being employed; my experience during operations confirmed this view.

As Advanced H.Q. got further and further away from Nairobi I asked for a Major-General with the idea of making Nairobi a base area under his command. Before sanction had been obtained, however, Addis Abeba had fallen and a new situation presented itself.

109. I should call attention here to the necessity for rapid, accurate and efficient staff work in all branches which the speed and nature of the operations demanded. Both at my Advanced and Rear H.Q. and in all formations the staffs and subordinate personnel were not found wanting. I wish to mention particularly the work of Brigadier J. K. Edwards, M.C., my B.G.S., as being of outstanding merit. In his cool-headed yet rapid and clear interpretation of my directions he showed himself a staff officer on whom complete reliance could be placed.

Administration was the key-note of the operations, the burden of which fell mainly on the shoulders of the A.Q.M.G.s Colonel A. C. Duff, O.B.E., M.C., and Colonel Sir Brian H. Robertson, Bt., D.S.O., M.C., one of whom was always with me forward and the other at Rear H.Q. I found them undaunted by the magnitude of the demands made on them. That, through all the vicissitudes of bad roads, and ports without appliances, ample supplies were able to keep up with the troops, must be accounted a fine achievement by these two officers and all who worked to the same purpose.

110. It would not have been possible to split the H.Q. into two unless large numbers of male clerks, signallers, cipher personnel and M.T. Drivers had been replaced in Rear H.Q. by women.

Great credit is due to Lady Sidney Farrar for raising a F.A.N.Y. unit from local resources and for the tireless efficiency shown in training and organising it. The work of these ladies was invaluable, and in spite of long and arduous hours always remained excellent.

III. *Intelligence.*

By the end of January, 1941, the small Intelligence Section, which had been formed in September, 1939, had been expanded into a G.H.Q. Section complete, with a total strength of 75 officers and 110 O.Rs. All these, except two officers, were found from South African, East African and West African resources.

Information about the enemy was obtained from many sources. Until Italy declared war, reasons of policy had prevented employment of agents in Italian territory, but after June, 1940,