

end of page 55-  
I did later bag  
a German ground  
sheet.  
The rain did not  
stop our moving  
but the enemy  
were now using  
tactics  
of ambushing/

56 56

of ambushing us along the road, at some sharp bend. On account of the thickness of the bush we had to stick to the road we had two or three men riding some distance ahead and they had to keep a sharp look out. Suddenly we would hear the fire of the enemy as our scouts were spotted. Fortunately the German Askari is a ver bad shot. They always seemed to fire high, and more often they got scared and fired too soon instead of letting the men come right on.. This gave bower and myself, in my first experience of an ambush, As soon as they fired they ran and we dismounted quickly and fired into the direction they had taken, into the bush, for being on foot they could easily dive into the thick bush. Knowing the country they would probably take short cut and be again waiting for us some miles further on. Later in the day we did run into another ambush but we were now on the look out and travelled more cautiously. Later we had two men on either side of the road moving very slowly through the bush. On the second occasion we were lucky in only having one man wounded and that held up for a while. This ambushing only lasted for a short while until their main body had had time to get on some distance ahead of us.

It had been raining all day and ever one felt miserable so it was decided to stop for the night. How I longed for a brew but what hopes of lighting a fire or even finding dry wood, in that weather.. Every thing in the forest was wet so what hopes, can you imagine, we would have had even trying to light a fire. It was impossible to lie down so I put my saddle against a tree for support. The poor horses looked miserable but they were at least able to eat a bit of grass. The rain stopped suddenly for a while and one could hear the chaps swearing, swearing, wet and cold. Suddenly in the utter darkness one of the troopers with a loud and melodious voice sang- 'I'll sing you the songs of Araby etc ". This stopped all the swearing for a while as we listened. Yes there was dead silence and ones thoughts were far away.. I had a similar experience when, after the fall of Tobruk, I and a number of us were in an Italian P.O.W. camp in Bari, very dejected and homesick, It was a miserable evening and there was nothing to do but talk of might have been the result is so and so had been done when suddenly a chap with a ver fine voice and must have taken part in concerts suddenly started singing extracts from operas with a wonderful voice. A Mario Alenzo. It started many of us singing some old well known songs and the Italians who are very fond of music came and listened. It made a difference.

Well to get on with my story I sat up all night trying to sleep and was glad when the dawn came and then I started trying to make fires as the rain had ceased for a while. The horses I mentioned were having a miserable time, the coats of animals however are so made that they can stand a bit of rain. Yes they can withstand the rain but now poor things were going to have a rough time as this wet brought on the effects of the fly stings and many would be dead in a few days. That is those that had been stung.

The natives about here seem to have wonderful crops. The mealies and kaffir corn all seem to grow to a height of ten to twelve feet, with corn cobs about fifteen inches long and the corn very large heads. As with the rains our supply column had very little hope of catching us we bought all we could from the local natives including even eggs chickens at about a shilling each, ~~that is the chick~~ that is the chickens and sheep as I have mentioned five shillings.

We were not getting nearer Kondoa and into more open country where there were members of the Masai tribe. A tribe of people who live on blood drawn from their cattle and milk. They are very fine looking lot too and look as though they are the aristocrats of the country. They have very low built huts in which apart from themselves they seem to keep some of their cattle even though they are small must be very unpleasant bedfellows. From the Masai we were able to obtain one or two cattle for a very small sum. In fact they even accepted