

Mountains and, although we would have the shorter distance to travel it was going to be hard going through the mountains as there were, we found, some very steep gradients which, on account of the condition of most of our horses, had to be taken gradually..

Our attack on Kasaki was to be from the East and Britz from the West. Well we started off and, as I have mentioned, had to take things very quietly, as many of our horses were suffering from fatigue and sickness. We passed a Mission Station on top of the hill and at the foot was a crucifix and I well remember a number of young natives, very scantily clad, coming down the hill and, as they reached the crucifix, stopped, bowed and crossed themselves. I have often wondered if they really understood the full story of the cross.

During the last night before reaching Kisaki my poor horse, which I had been leading instead of riding, he was so gone in, died. This meant I would have to join the twenty or so footsloggers under Lieut Thompson who were to join us later in the day. We were on the high ground overlooking the valley and the river on which was Kisaki.

There being no wireless in those days we were not able to keep in touch with Britz's column but did the day before hear some very heavy firing in the vicinity of Kisaki which we concluded was Britz attacking. After some time the firing had ceased and we learned later that he had attacked but forced to retire and wait for us.

I should have mentioned that our commander was Col. Nussey "Stomp Nies" as he was called who, I am almost certain was the man who I mentioned earlier had left the Free State during the Anglo Boer War and given refuge by my Dad in Basutoland. I do know that he was a Nussey. My Mother said too that she thought it might be the same. Next morning we started down into the valley towards Kisaki and were at first held up by snipers sitting in trees but these were soon spotted and accounted for. After passing through some fairly thick bush we struck elephant grass which is very thick and about ten feet high and in fact it was so thick that we had to use our rifles to force our way through. This went on for about three or four hundred yards when we suddenly came on the edge of a mealie field which had been reaped and across which the enemy probably thought we would advance and, they would then give us a warm time. Fortunately some of their snipers got the jitters and started firing too soon and with this warning we took what cover we could and kept up a steady fire. As we expected they did once try and charge but did not get far, losing quite a number in the effort. We must have had a frontage of some three hundred yards on the left of which we heard some heavy firing evidently trying to get round us but this was stopped by our machine gunners. As we had no water or food it was decided in the late afternoon to return to the high ground.

Later, under a white flag our doctor and volunteers went out to collect the wounded and dead among whom were Major Cowie and Lieut Thompson. Apparently Thompson and his men arriving at our Head Quarters, were told by Colonel Kuhn to go ahead and join us but unfortunately they passed right through our lines in that thick grass and five were killed and the others taken prisoners. Next morning we buried our dead and then trekked West of Kisaki and crossing the river joined Britz. We then advanced on Kisaki but found that the men who had been taken prisoner included Tffin, the quartermaster. We struck the enemy further down the river holding a very strong position so all we could do was dig in each man digging his own hole in which he could lie and join in the general firing into the bush in which we saw no one except now and again a sniper in a tree and he was soon accounted for.

It was very thick bush into which small parties went scouting for food. There were five hippo in a pool in the river of which we shot three which were soon cut up and rationed. We also found a rice field where we reaped the corn which was very welcome. This had to be

dehusked/