

South for Iringa. It was some time before we struck the enemy, quite a strong force who made several attempts to over run our position but were eventually driven off with a few casualties. Here we lost six men, killed.

Our old trouble with horses was starting again and we lost horses every day and towards the end many of us were walking. I finished up walking. My horse which was in fair condition has disappeared probably stolen by some chap. However, I was given a mule carrying two boxes of ammunition to lead. This is no light weight and the poor animal had to be rested every few miles. The column, or rather the Regiment for it was just a case of follow on as the horses were dying off in numbers and those left were getting very worn and tired trekking through that hilly country.

Before reaching Iringa we crossed a fairly large fairly full, the Rusha, across which the Engineers were trying to build some sort of a bridge or causeway for the motor vehicles, mostly one ton trucks. From the Ruaha, which I should think is in the Rift Valley we had to climb out onto a very high plateau on which Iringa was built. It was indeed a very stiff and steep pass and rough going on the way up which my poor old mule had to be rested every few hundred yards and this suited me too.

We eventually reached Iringa where we thought we would have a break but were ordered to move further South towards Mahenge and took up a position on the high ground overlooking the deep valley of the Refugi River. On the way we had to cross another fair sized river the Kilambo.

Our troop was eventually stationed on the very high ground from which we were to send out patrols on foot, for we no longer had horses. Here there were quite a number of natives and, as they are adept at making huts and shelters, we got one with his panga to cut branches of trees and build Bower and I a lean to and in this he made a bed with a grass mattress. We were quite comfortable and would be protected from rain.

We were very short of food except what we could get from the natives until our quartermaster eventually turned up with a number of carriers with a fair amount of rations. I well remember how we measured out each mans sugar with a teaspoon. I eat mine as I found that it was a commodity for giving a bit of energy. Earlier we had found sugar cane very good, for the same reason.

One day Bower and I decided to go out after some game we hoped we might find. We eventually shot a large buck which was a welcome addition to our rations.

There was an elderly native woman who used to come to the camp every day with a few items, sweet potatoes, corn, monkey nuts etc, to sell. She was always accompanied by her two daughters, well built, who wore nothing but a string of beads, no I think there were three strings. One would have not been enough. Well it is nothing worse than some of the girls wear today, a bit of cloth to cover the top portion and a 'G' string. For all we knew they may have been spying for the enemy for one day we were advised by our scouts that the enemy were approaching. Well they did get right down below our camp but as they tried to make ground by running from bush to bush we, looking down on them were able to pick them off and finding it hopeless this small group eventually retired and left us in peace. We saw them no more. On one occasion I remember on a patrol, when we had to sleep out and it was raining, we took shelter in some old huts. Boy we had a hell of a time as the huts were alive with fleas. Here too we came across some of those little tomatoes and of course ate as much as we could. We were sorry for we had real tummy aches - a real purgative they were. One thing I have not yet mentioned is, that apart from fever, one of our greatest troubles was lice. Have you ever had your clothes full of lice and had to sit and undress and then wage war on them. Their greatest hiding place was in the riding trousers round the knee. The big brown ones were not as bad as those very tiny little red ones.

Now and again/