

by the filling of the waterholes to make his move into the Nogal. The chief reasons for which appear to have been to escape from the pressure brought upon him by our occupation of the Mudug and by the second Abyssinian advance on Gerlogubi, and also to get into touch with his caravans of arms and ammunition being brought to him from northern ports.

The force I had with me in Badwein to cross the Haud consisted of 1,480 fighting ranks, 1,554 followers, 2,232 transport animals; besides a large quantity of live stock. I had made arrangements for carrying four days' water to cross the Haud, having arranged for sufficient water to be stored at Damot to water the force on arrival, and to enable sufficient water to be carried on for the march from Damot to Bohotle. The whole Mullah's force was reported to be within 6 miles of Damot on the 15th June, and the garrison at Damot was not strong. It appeared as though our movement across the Haud would be opposed: I am of opinion, however, that our rapid concentration at Badwein and our movement from thence had prevented the information of our evacuation of the Mudug reaching the Mullah until we were close to Damot and too late for him to make provision to attack the force in the thick bush. I marched out of Badwein on the 18th June, and arrived in Damot on the 21st June.

The only casualties on the march being one man wounded when on picket duty and one man missing, undoubtedly lost in the thick bush, both of the 2nd Sikhs, and one transport driver wounded by our own fire; this man having left the zariba at night, and having proceeded to the encampment of some women who were following the column, endeavoured, together with the women, to enter the zariba at night, and were mistaken for a number of the enemy, and were fired upon—three women were, I regret to say, killed, and the transport driver severely wounded.

Major Hoskins, Commanding at Damot, had been fired into by the enemy's horsemen on several occasions, but no attempt to make a

determined attack upon the zariba was undertaken by the dervishes.

I halted a day at Damot and reinforced the garrison there, bringing up its strength to 250 rifles and three Maxims. I should have brought in this post had sufficient transport been available, since the water supply there is precarious, and with the present position of the Mullah in the Nogal, it serves no useful purpose. The route to the Nogal by Baran being waterless in the dry season.

I marched out of Damot on the 23rd, reaching Bohotle on the morning of the 26th June.

The road from Damot to Bohotle was crossed by innumerable tracks of camels and sheep and goats, and while marching into Bohotle some 300 camels and 1,500 sheep and goats were captured on the road. From prisoners taken, the tribesmen at present seem disorganized, the flight from Wardair to the Nogal having scattered them, and our sudden appearance from the Mudug, having caused a panic. There is no doubt, however, but that the Mullah, having obtained further supplies of arms and ammunition, will shortly commence raids upon our eastern tribes.

I propose now to leave garrison of 400 Indian and African troops at Bohotle, where rations for 2½ months for such a force are collected. To move down into Garrero and Burao garrisons, to bring each of these posts up to about 500 each, and to concentrate the remainder of the troops at Sheikh pending the arrival of Major-General Sir C. Egerton.

I have sent out a column of 700 rifles to bring in the Damot post; this should arrive here on the 3rd July, and on that day I propose to move out the 2nd Sikhs, British Mounted Infantry, and details to Sheikh. The remainder of the force above and beyond the Bohotle garrison will leave Bohotle on the 5th July for Garrero and Burao, provided sufficient transport is available.

I have, &c.,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

War Office, August 7, 1903.

The KING has been graciously pleased to signify His intention to confer the decoration of the Victoria Cross on the undermentioned Officers, whose claims have been submitted for His Majesty's approval, for their conspicuous bravery in Somaliland, as stated against their names:—

	Name.	Act of Courage for which recommended.
Bikanir Camel Corps	Captain W. G. Walker, Indian Army	During the return of Major Gough's column to D-nop on the 22nd April last, after the action at Daratoleh, the rear-guard got considerably in rear of the column, owing to the thick bush, and to having to hold their ground while wounded men were being placed on camels. At this time Captain Bruce was shot through the body from a distance of about 20 yards, and fell on the path unable to move. Captains Walker and Rolland, two men of the 2nd Battalion King's African Rifles, one Sikh and one Somali of the Camel Corps were with him when he fell. In the meantime the column being unaware of what had happened were getting further away. Captain Rolland then ran back some 500 yards and returned with assistance to bring off Captain Bruce, while Captain Walker and the men remained with that Officer, endeavouring to keep off the enemy, who were all round in the thick bush. This they succeeded in doing, though not before Captain Bruce was hit a second time, and the Sikh wounded. But for the gallant conduct displayed by these Officers and men, Captain Bruce must have fallen into the hands of the enemy.
Berbera Bohotle Flying Column	Captain G. M. Rolland, Indian Army, Intelligence Officer	