



# MYSTERIES OF SUDAN

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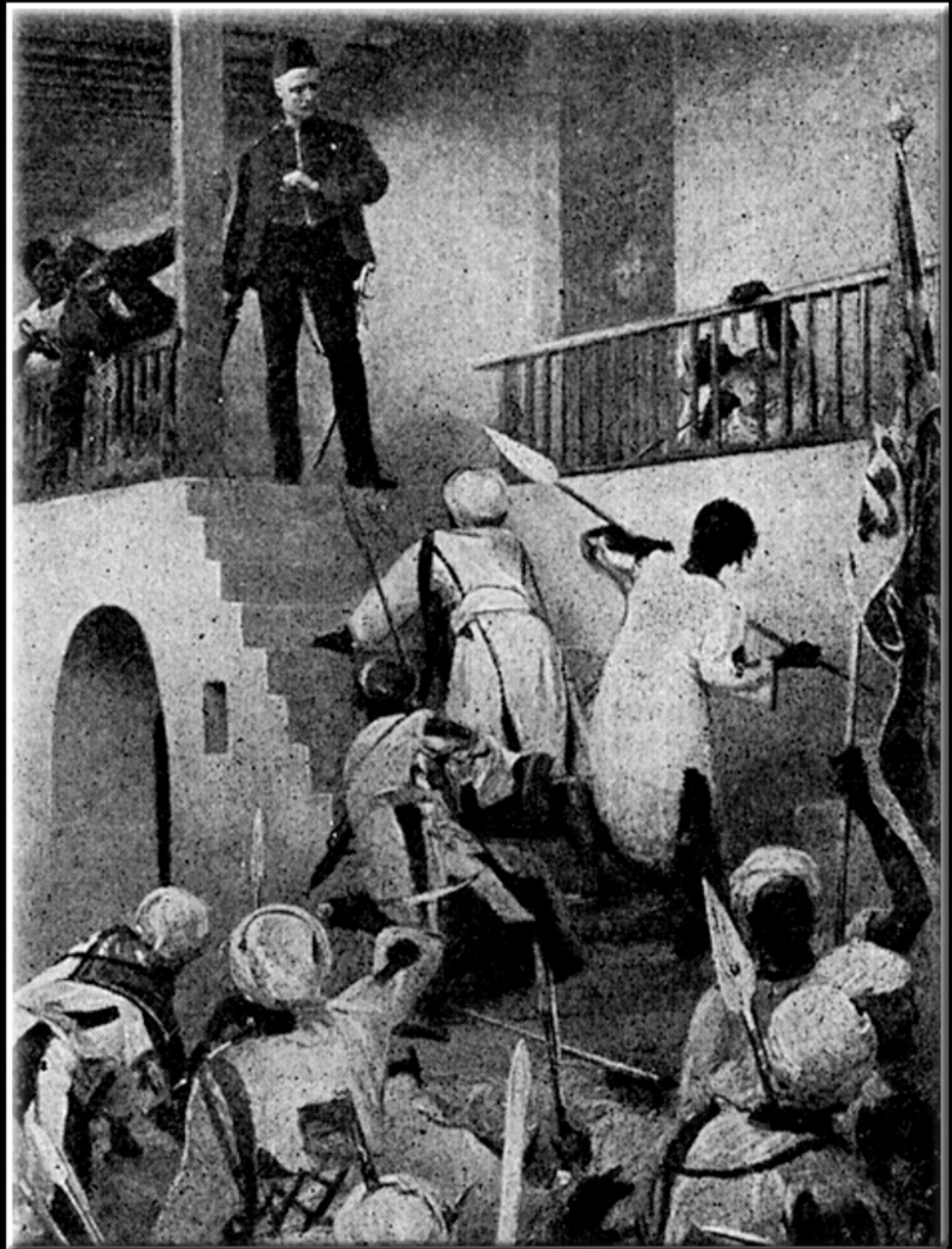
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# MYSTERIES OF SUDAN

**A monograph for Chaosium's Call of Cthulhu Game  
By Jason Williams**

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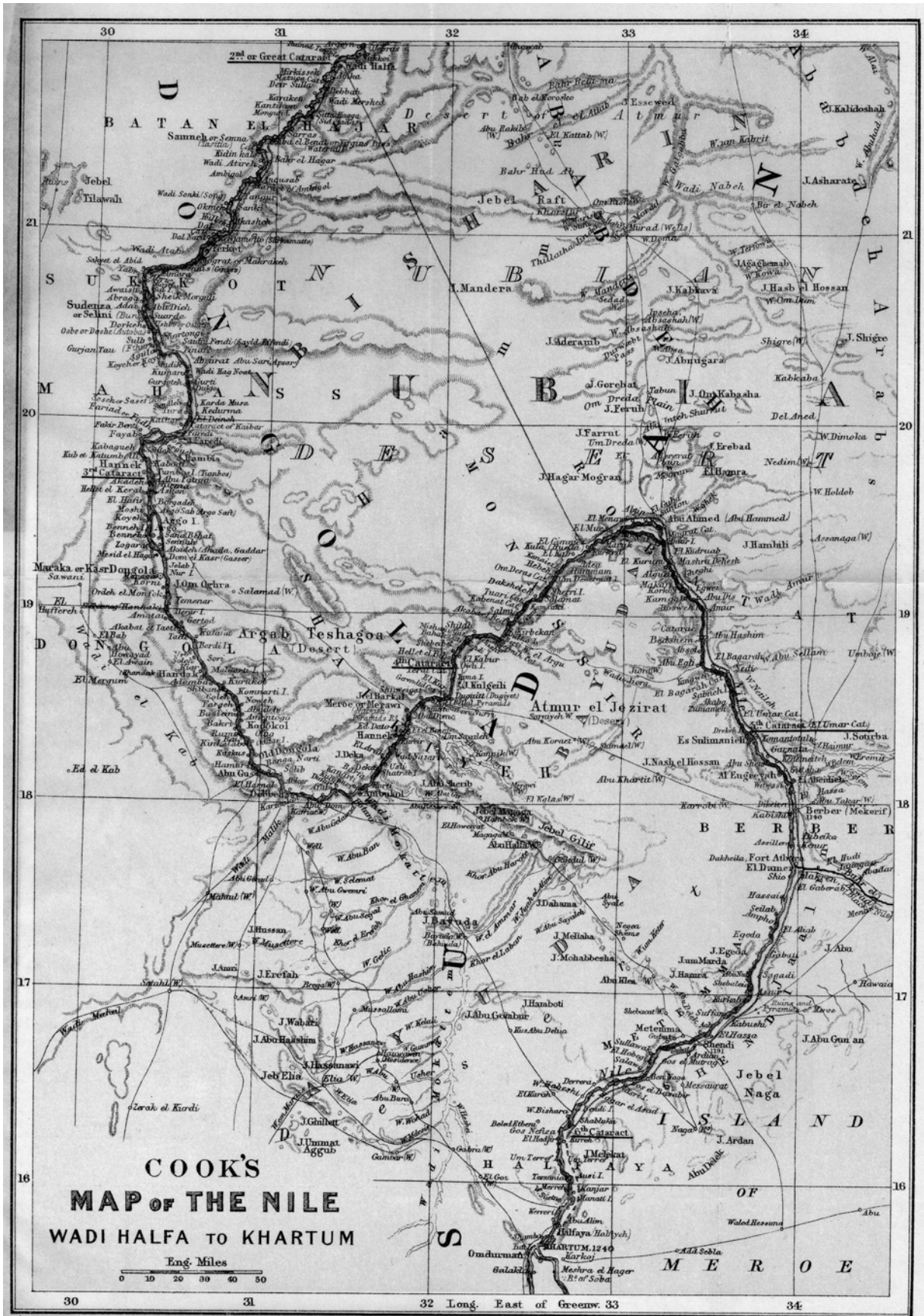
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## Introduction

The late gaslight period for Call of Cthulhu is a fascinating time. The world is rapidly advancing technologically and modern cultures are coming into contact more frequently with the people in other countries. Unfortunately for some explorers, this leads to grisly and shocking events along with exotic diseases ending with a horrific demise, crippling disfigurement or madness.

Communication through telegraph lines has given the ability to imperialist nations to closely manage their holdings in Africa and Asia. This has resulted in a race by many European powers to stake out territories where they can exploit labor and resources. In some cases they have done this through diplomatic means but in most cases military conquest and occupation has become the norm.

It is recommended that a keeper obtain a copy of Chaosium's Cthulhu by Gaslight. As of the time when this monograph is being written, that particular book is out of print but is being offered as a PDF on the <http://www.rpgnow.com> web site.

Recently Chaosium have started offering PDF downloads on their web site.

One other publication that keepers might find handy to use for a Cthulhu by Gaslight reference is The Gaslight Equipment Catalogue by Rod Basler. This monograph can be purchased on the Chaosium web site in both a printed form or as a PDF file.

## FORWARD

Sudan is the largest country in Africa and also one of the most inhospitable. A year when the rains are light famine reigns. The average lifespan in Sudan during the Gaslight period was 33, which is similar to modern times. Widespread famine led to desperation, theft, murder cruelty and, in some cases, madness.

It was a time when the simple son of a boat builder, who grew up to become a charismatic Sunni Muslim scholar named Muhammed Ahmed, became a self-proclaimed Mahdi. He led Sudan into a rebellion against its Egyptian and British occupiers and plunged the country into years of fanaticism and bloodshed. In short, this is a perfect setting for a Call of Cthulhu scenario or campaign.

Contact with the outside world throughout its history has been sporadic and mainly from invaders pushing through from Egypt up the Nile valley to gather slaves and ivory. Sudan also has a long tradition of trade with many countries including merchants from China dating back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Records indicate

that the early Chinese traders called the country of Sudan Molin-guo. In the early 1800's the area was unmapped and as unknown to Europeans as the uncharted areas of central Asia. Much of the early exploration was dedicated to finding the source of the Nile. If it could be dammed, and the flow regulated, an area greater than the size of Europe could be controlled.

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century noted Egyptologist E.A. Wallis Budge found evidence that the Egyptians had contact with Sudan and the people of the upper reaches of the Nile as early as 4300 B.C. Tomb paintings indicate trade for elephant ivory, slaves and what may have been central African pygmies brought before the Pharaoh to dance for him. The pygmies would have been captured by slave raiding parties from Sudan into the area known today as the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The closing years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a great deal of turmoil throughout the British Empire. One of the major events of that period that is not widely remembered today was centered in Sudan. An Englishman named Charles "Chinese" Gordon became a darling of the British public who followed every news report. He had been sent to Sudan to arrange for the evacuation of Egyptian and British citizens before a fanatical Muslim group took total control of the country. Gordon was a very devout Christian and did not want to see an extreme form of Islam take over and dominate Sudan. He also felt a strong sense of duty towards the people that he been sent to evacuate and could not bring himself to leave just to save his own life.

After his death at the siege of Khartoum at the hands of the forces of the Mahdi, Sudan was plunged into thirteen years of chaos. Gordon's death was finally avenged after a long military campaign led by Major-General Horatio Kitchener that advanced through the Nile valley all the way to Omdurman.

Within this monograph I will present historical information and will denote Cthulhu mythos information in distinctive text boxes.

The focus of this monograph will be on the gaslight era of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. A keeper should have sufficient information to set adventures in this area during this era with a minimum of research on their part.

## People of Sudan

Sudan is derived from the Arabic bilad as-sudan which means Land of the Black. The majority of the population of Sudan is black with the remainder being mainly of mixed-Arabic descent. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century most of the Arab population

centered in the northern regions was of mixed race and considered Arabic only through tribal birth and affiliations.

The southern equatorial regions of Sudan were primarily populated by black tribal groups. Many Europeans who had contact in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with these southern tribes noted that the people were above average in size with many being well over six feet tall.

In the northern areas from the Ethiopian border westward across Kordofan and Darfur, the people of Arabic descent were mainly nomadic livestock herders or settled in small farming communities to raise hardy grains such as sorghum and millet. Farmers not living near the Nile, where they could irrigate their lands, were at the mercy of seasonal rains. If it was a dry year, people starved or raided their neighbors and the tribes with the best warriors survived. This tribal history of hundreds of years of fighting to survive made the northern Sudanese some of the fiercest warriors in the world.

These Baggara tribesmen of Darfur and Kordofan were the core of the Mahdist forces that drove the Egyptians and British out of Sudan. To these tribal groups the uprising was a holy jihad against the occupiers of their country ordered by the self-proclaimed Mahdi (the redeemer whose return is prophesized by Muslims). Recognizing that not all could be recruited through religious motivations, the Mahdi also exempted the Baggara tribes from having to pay taxes.

When the Mahdi and, after his death in 1885, the Khalifa, set up their capital in Omdurman, Baggara tribesmen from all over the country flocked to their black banner. This left large areas of the country unpopulated and farmlands barren without the manpower to work it. Years of famine and pestilence followed, reducing great swaths of the country to a barren wasteland.

In the 1960's Sudan recognized a total of fifty-six tribal groups consisting of 597 separate tribes. There were 115 languages spoken in Sudan with the majority of people speaking Arabic as a common language. Many languages in Sudan are distinctive enough that neighboring tribes might not be able to communicate except in Arabic.

## **C**limate

Sudan is a tropical country with arid desert in the north and thick jungles in the south. Temperatures throughout the year do not vary by great amounts but in the northern desert regions, even along the Red Sea, they can reach 140° Fahrenheit. The summer from the first of May to early September brings

heavy tropical rains from the moist region of the Congo basin. These rains bring heavy flooding in the dry areas, as far north as Khartoum, where some of the hard baked ground funnels the water into low laying areas.

When the seasonal winds shift, hot dry air moves into the country from the Sahara Desert located to the northwest of Sudan.

In late June and early July the dry hot winds can make the temperatures in the Khartoum area reach as high as 112° Fahrenheit. At that time of the year the people of Sudan look forward to the heavy rains from the south that cools down the average daytime temperatures.

## **G**eography of Sudan

There are four distinct geographical divisions of Sudan. In the north is a desert region with the only fertile areas along the banks of the Nile River that runs on a northward course through the country into Egypt. In the east are the rich grazing grasslands rising into Ethiopia through which the Blue Nile descends in deep gorges from Lake Tana in Ethiopia. The southern region is from south of Khartoum through the marshlands of the Sudd into the thick equatorial jungles of the upper White Nile River. The west of the country is on the edge of the Sahara desert with some grass covered highland areas that receive seasonal rainfall. These heavy rains cause dangerous flash floods along dry watercourses called Wadis.

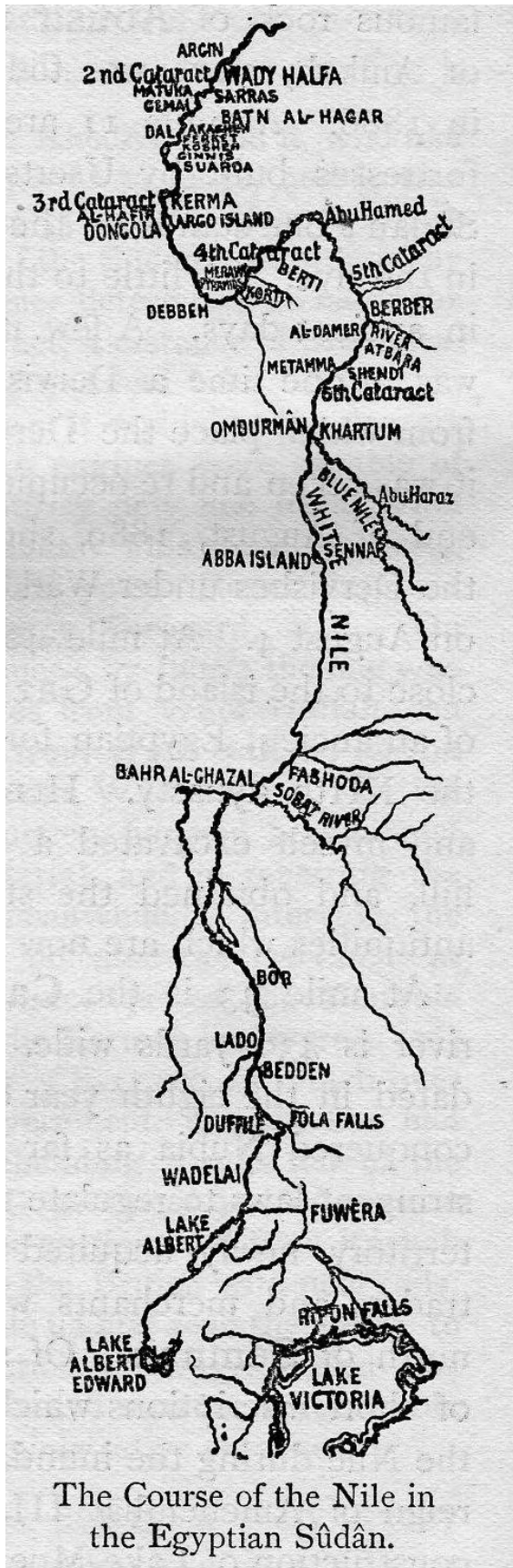
Portions of the country have been known by other names throughout history, but the names of two of these areas, Darfur and Kordofan, are still in common use.

In 1899 the boundaries of Sudan were defined in the north by the 22<sup>nd</sup> parallel of North Latitude, on the south by the Lado Enclave on the Congo border and east of the Nile by the 5<sup>th</sup> parallel of North Latitude, on the east by the Red Sea and Abyssinia, and on the west by the line running through the Libyan desert established by the Anglo-French agreement of March 1899. Sudan's length is 1,250 miles and width is 1,080 miles. The area of the country is approximately 950,000 square miles.

There is a quote from General Gordon used as a footnote in Alford and Swords book:

*“From Wady Halfa southwards to Hannek, a distance of 180 miles, an utter desert extends, spreading also for miles eastwards and westwards on both sides of the Nile. For the same length the river is also encumbered with ridges of rock... It was therefore this boundary that kept the warlike and*

independent tribes of the Soudan quite apart from the inhabitants of Egypt proper, and has made the Soudanese and Egyptians two distinct people.”



During the years of the rule of the Mahdi and the Kalifah, the northern border of Sudan that bordered Egypt was at Wadi Halfa and heavily guarded. The Frontier Field Force was led by British officers and had a mix of British, Egyptian and Sudanese soldiers. The Sudanese were mainly from the south of Sudan and were no friends of the Dervishes, many of whom were involved in the slave trade.

During the period of British rule until Sudanese independence in 1956, there were several subdivisions of the original states plus additions from a partitioning of Equatoria in 1948.

For administrative purposes in 1899 Sudan was divided into twelve provinces. There are two classifications with eight of them listed as First Class and the other four as Second Class. (From *The Nile – Notes for Travellers in Egypt and in The Egyptian Sûdân* by E. A. Wallis Budge which uses the period spellings and accents).

#### First Class Provinces

- **Bahr al-Ghazâl** – Capital is Wâw and the major towns are Mashra‘ ar-Rîk, Dêm Zubêr, Shak Shak, Tông, Awrumbîk (Rumbek) and Shâmî.
- **Berber** – Capital is Ad-Dâmar and the major towns are Rubâtâb, Berber Town, Berber District and Shendî.
- **Dongola** – Capital is Marawi and the major towns are New Dongola, Khandak, Dabbah and Kûrtî.
- **Fâ-Shôda** (also Upper Nile or Kôdôk) – Capital is Kôdôk and the major towns are Rank, Tawfikîyah and Sobat.
- **Kasala** – Capital is Kasala and the major towns are Kadâref and Kallâbât.
- **Khartûm** – Capital is Khartûm and the major towns are Omdurmân and Wâd Ramlah.
- **Kordôfân** – Capital is Al-Ubayyad (Al-Obêd) and the major towns are Bâra, Khûrshî, Nahûd, Tayyârah, Tandik and Dillin.
- **Sennaar** – Capital is Sengah and the major towns are Rusêres, Dindar, Dâr Fûng and Abû Na‘âmah.

#### Second Class Provinces

- **Blue Nile** – Capital is Wâd Madani and the major towns are Abû Dulêk, Kâmlîn, Rugu‘a, Masallamîyah and Manâgîl.
- **Halfah** – Capital is Halfah and the major towns are Kôshah and Dulgo.
- **Mongalla** (Created on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1906) – Capital is Mongalla.
- **Red Sea Province** – Capital is Port Sûdân and the major towns are Sawâkin and Tôkar.





- **White Nile** – Capital is Dûwêm and the major towns are Katênah, Kawah and Gadîd.

**Blue Nile** – This river flows from Lake Tana in the Ethiopian highlands and joins the White Nile at Khartoum. The flow of the river is heaviest from June to September and during that period accounts for almost two thirds of the volume of water that eventually reaches the Nile River in Egypt. During peak flows the river gushes through mile deep gorges bringing large quantities of rich sediment into the Nile River system from Khartoum northward to the Nile Delta on the Mediterranean.

It should be noted that there may still be much that can be learned about the history of Nubia and Kush. Many of their monuments have been quarried over the centuries to be used as building materials. In addition, many of the carvings and hieroglyphs have been defaced to make way for information about subsequent kings.

In some cases temple decorations have been copied from other monuments at Memphis and Thebes. It is likely that the stonecutters and artists did not know the meaning of the decorations which they were applying to the Nubian/Kush monuments. There was one instance of artisans including names and other information which was over 1300 years old by the time they were carved at approximately 700 BC.

## Nubia

The origin of the word Nubia is still a debated subject but the leading theory is that it is based on the ancient Egyptian word for gold ‘nub’. Nubia was the source of gold, ivory and slaves for Egypt.

Since the time of the Ancient Egyptians, Nubia also mined emeralds. The mines were located in what today are the eastern desert regions. In 1822 Muhammed Ali Pasha, the leader of Egypt, after Napoleon’s army returned to France, hired Frédéric Cailliaud, a French mineralogist, to search for the emerald mines. Cailliaud reported on the location of many emerald pits and a site called Emerald Mountain. While travelling through the Nubian area he also made many sketches of ruins that he came across. These drawings, which he published when he returned to France, provided Europeans their first glimpse of the Meröe ruins.

The sandstone cliffs along the Nile in lower Nubia are so close to the river that many ancient temples were carved directly into the rock.

Philae, which is located above the 1<sup>st</sup> cataract south of Aswan, was one of the main cities of the Nubian kingdom. There is some evidence that the Blemmyes

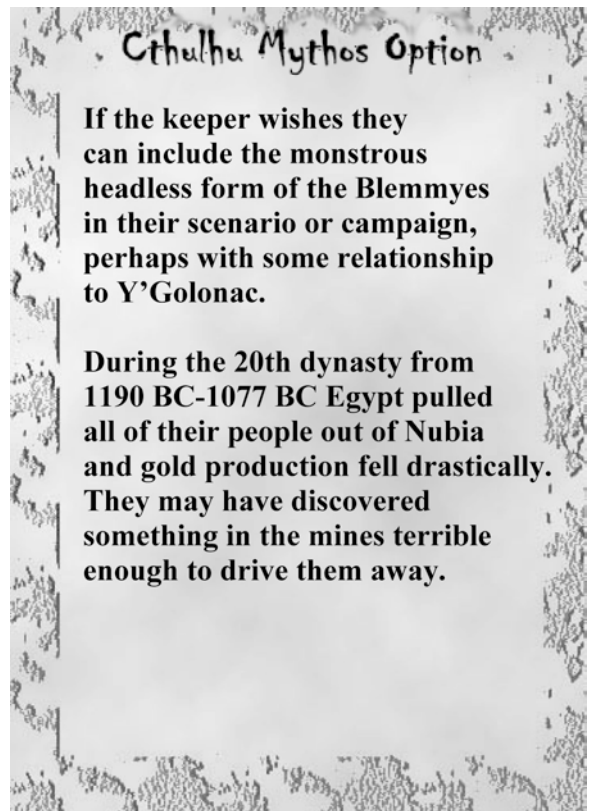
conducted human sacrifices within their temples there between 250 and 550 AD.

The Blemmyes were a nomadic Nubian tribe that resisted the Roman army when it advanced southward from Egypt. There were legends throughout Europe about the Blemmyes that described them as being headless creatures with their facial features located on their chests or bellies.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, excavations were conducted at various locations in the north of Sudan. These have indicated that the area where the Nubian kingdom covered was far more fertile during the Ancient Egyptian period. The land from Atbara all the way to the Ethiopian foothills was heavily forested and home to animal species that are now found only in the southern equatorial region.

During the winter of 1895-96 the Egyptian government arranged for excavations of the ruins at Philae under the direction of Captain H.G. Lyons of the Royal Engineers and Herr Ludwig Borchardt who was a noted German architect and archaeologist.

According to the noted Egyptologist E.A. Wallis Budge, some of the Nubians worshipped the stars and the inscriptions that they left behind included histories of *The Dream*, *The Enthronement* and *The Excommunication*.



From 1907 to 1909 an assistant professor of Egyptology at Harvard University named George



Reisner was hired by Egypt to survey the Nubian area of northern Sudan. Reisner had led the Hearst Expedition from 1899 to 1905 in Qift which was located roughly 45 miles north of Luxor. In 1905 he edited a translation of an Egyptian work called The Hearst Medical Papyrus. The authenticity of the source papyrus is stated as being dubious. It currently resides at the Bancroft Library of the University of California at Berkeley.

The majority of the research and documentation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are reflective of racial attitudes during that period. There was a refusal to believe that any of the great monuments, tombs and temples in Nubia was constructed by anybody of the black race. Popular theories of that time revolved around Caucasian races constructing the buildings and over the centuries the blacks taking over through miscegenation. It is now recognized that there was cross-cultural exchanges between the people of Egypt and of Nubia with both adopting each others engineering and art techniques. Most of the documentation for the updated outlook comes from the excavations of the Qustul cemetery during an expedition by the University of Chicago in 1964. These findings indicate that in the period between 3800-3100 B.C. both the Nubian and Egyptian Kingdoms had a strong influence on each other.

Along with evidence of ancient habitation along the Nile in Nubia, there are also traces of mining operations as much as 80 miles inland. It also appears that as the Sahara Desert began spreading into western Nubia that there was a great migration towards the Nile of the tribes from that region plus from southern Libya. It is believed that this migration was partially responsible for Egypt closing their outposts and withdrawing below the 1<sup>st</sup> cataract. They either could not deal with the influx of refugees, or the sheer number of the warrior tribes moving into the area made the Egyptian commercial expeditions unprofitable.

A surviving document from the reign of Ramesses III called the Papyrus Harris tells that during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Egyptian Dynasty gold production in Nubia sharply declined.

## **K**<sup>ush</sup>

In the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC the Kushite kingdom covered the area between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> cataracts. This area would later be known as Upper Nubia. The Egyptians referred to this Kush region at different times as Miu and Irem.

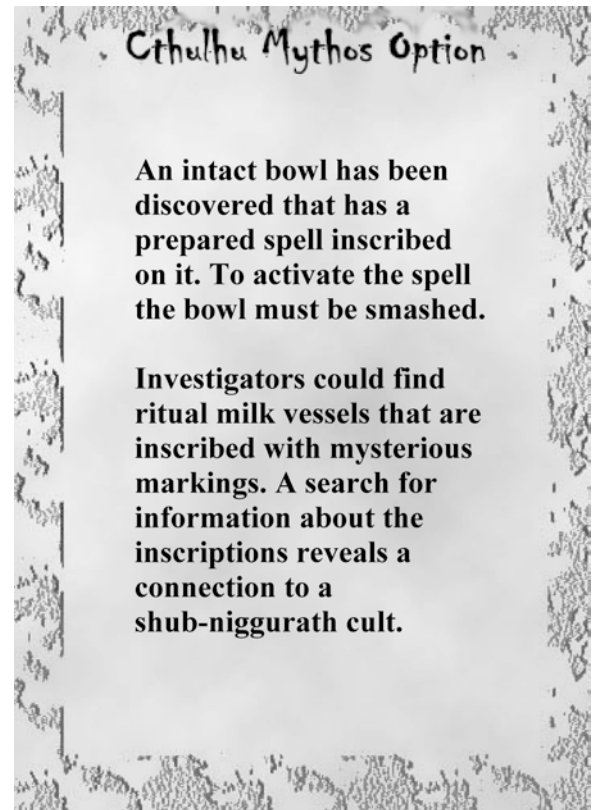
One of the main cities of Kush was Napata which was near the 4<sup>th</sup> cataract. Napata was at its apex during the Egyptian 25<sup>th</sup> Dynasty from 780-656 BC.

It was during this period that Kushite King Piye led his army in an invasion of Egypt

The time when Kush was at its richest is estimated to be from 1650–1600 BC when the royal city of Kerma, with a population of over 2,000 people, was fortified by a 33 foot high wall having four gates.

Kush managed to occupy Egypt for nearly forty years until they were driven back into their own country during the reign of King Taharqa (690-664 BC).

The priests of Kush practiced a form of sympathetic magic using objects that are called Execration Texts. These objects were either bowls or small statues of bound captives. Hieroglyphs were inscribed on these objects containing the name(s) of the spell target and what the spell caster wished to happen to them. Many fragments of these ceremonial objects have been excavated within the grounds of temples leading archaeologists to believe that at the culmination of the spell the bowl or statue was smashed.



Situated near the foot of the 4<sup>th</sup> cataract on the Nile is Jebel Barkal. It is a flat topped mountain rising approximately three hundred feet above the surrounding desert floor. It was first examined by George Waddington from Trinity College at Cambridge and his associate the Reverend Barnard Hanbury from Jesus College also at Cambridge in 1821.

*Note: Jebel Barkal is mentioned in Chaosium's Secrets of Kenya.*

At the foot of the mountain is located the royal cemetery of Kushite royalty. Excavations indicate that the cemetery was in use until the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.

One of the artifacts found amongst the tombs of Jebel Barkal was a spouted vessel that has been associated with milk offerings. The shape of the container symbolizes a breast and the divine milk consumed from the vessel was symbolic of rebirth.

As with the early research into the excavation of Nubia, those writing about Kush in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries reached their conclusions from a European ethnocentric viewpoint. It was believed that the Kushite Kingdoms consisted of a group of frontier barbarians or 'noble savages' who took advantage of the weaker and effete Egyptians that had become a decadent culture consisting mainly of scholars and clergymen. This may have been an interpretation of archaeological findings based on what was known during that period of existing African tribal chieftains and kings.

**M**eroë One of the earliest Sudanese kingdoms was Meroë which was established around 750 BC.

Frédéric Cailliaud first mapped the site of Meroë from 1815-17 and published the information in Europe in 1827.

The Prussian Egyptologist Karl Richard Lepsius claimed that the word Meroë meant either 'white rocks' or 'white stones'.

Following the advance of the British and Egyptian forces being led by General Kitchener, noted Egyptologist E.A. Wallis Budge performed excavations during 1898-99 at Meroë using the maps of Lepsius. Only a cursory examination of the site could be conducted due to the shortage of local labor.

It was during this period in Meroë that Budge wrote:

*"...there were hardly any people to be seen, no cattle existed, only here and there was a water-wheel at work, and only here and there were a few sheep or goats to be seen; the gazelles in the desert were almost as numerous as the sheep. Not a donkey could be obtained for many miles, and the very dogs had been exterminated by the dervishes."*

**K**ordofan This is the name of the central Sudan area,

bordered by Darfur in the west, the Nile on the east, desert in the north and the dense jungles of the equatorial regions in the south. The area that it covers is approximately five times the size of Great Britain.

Most of Kordofan is rolling plains with the southeast area covered by the Nuba Mountains. This province has the best grazing area in the country and is populated by a mixture of fierce Arab-descended nomadic herdsmen known as Baggara and the agricultural peoples in the north of Kordofan called Kababish who raise camels.

In the south of the province are many tribes of black descent mainly of the Dinka and Nuba. These black tribes became prey for several hundred years to Arab slave traders. The tribes in south Kordofan raise cattle and cultivate grains, cotton, tobacco and groundnuts (peanuts).

In the 1880's this was the region where the Mahdi initially recruited the followers that became his dervish army.

**D**arfur The kingdom of Darfur (Arabic for Land of the Furs) existed for approximately 300 years from 1596 to 1916 as an independent state ruled by a Sultan. It is located on the western edge of Sudan and covers an area of approximately 190,000 square miles. The north of Darfur is dry and desert-like where it borders Libya and the central region is mountainous with some ridges rising to nearly ten thousand feet above sea level.

The soil in Darfur is quite sandy and in years of drought much of the region is prone to a dustbowl effect. The sandy ground dries up and blows away leaving poor soil to plant crops in during subsequent years. These periods exacerbates the long-term famine problems to which this region is prone.

British officers and soldiers that had faced the forces of the Mahdi noted that the warriors from Darfur had a preference for medieval weapons and armor. In some cases they would take to the field of battle wearing polished plate armor and helmets from the period of the crusades. They were proficient with swords and pole arms and some would go into battle with sword and shield.

Following the campaign by Kitchener to retake Sudan, Sultan Ali Dinar was given control of Darfur in exchange for a yearly tribute to the British Governor-General in Khartoum.

**K**hartoum

The famous British explorer and big game hunter Samuel Baker and his wife travelled through central Africa in the 1860's and described Khartoum as being:

*"A more miserable, filthy and unhealthy place can hardly be imagined."*

Khartoum had a population of over 30,000 living in burnt brick huts. The town was surrounded by barren desert and the streets were littered with the rotting bodies of dead animals.

Being constructed at the confluence of the Blue and White Nile Rivers, portions of the town were prone to seasonal flooding. The streets were open sewers and the only drinking water was drawn by water wheels from the two rivers. During the season when the Nile was at its highest level, July to September, the risk of disease from drinking the water was greatly elevated.

The Egyptian forces occupying Sudan brutally enforced their rule with daily public floggings in the town squares and nothing could happen without the proper authorities being bribed.

By 1850 under the rule of Latif Pasha, Khartoum had grown to over 3,000 homes. There were European luxury goods readily available to those who could afford them in the bazaar. A Roman Catholic mission had been built and representatives from other Christian faiths were beginning to establish missions in various parts of Sudan.

The first bridge to be constructed across the Nile between Khartoum and Omdurman did not open until 1910. Until that time river crossings were made by boat.

## **O**mdurman

Before the rise of the Mahdi this town was a small market community located on the western shore of the Nile at the confluence of the White and Blue Nile Rivers. Before the invasion and occupation by the Egyptians in 1821 it was much larger than Khartoum.

Omdurman had a large market for the trading of camels, horses, livestock and produce along with other trade goods. Soon after the coming of the forces of the Khedive, Greek and Syrian merchants began to arrive and started importing and selling European luxury items. During the reign of the Mahdi and the Khalifa many of the merchants professed their adherence to the Islamic faith and continued running their businesses but many items were outlawed such as tobacco, makeup and alcoholic beverages. During

the reign of the Mahdi and the Khalifa smoking was made illegal and punishable by public flogging.

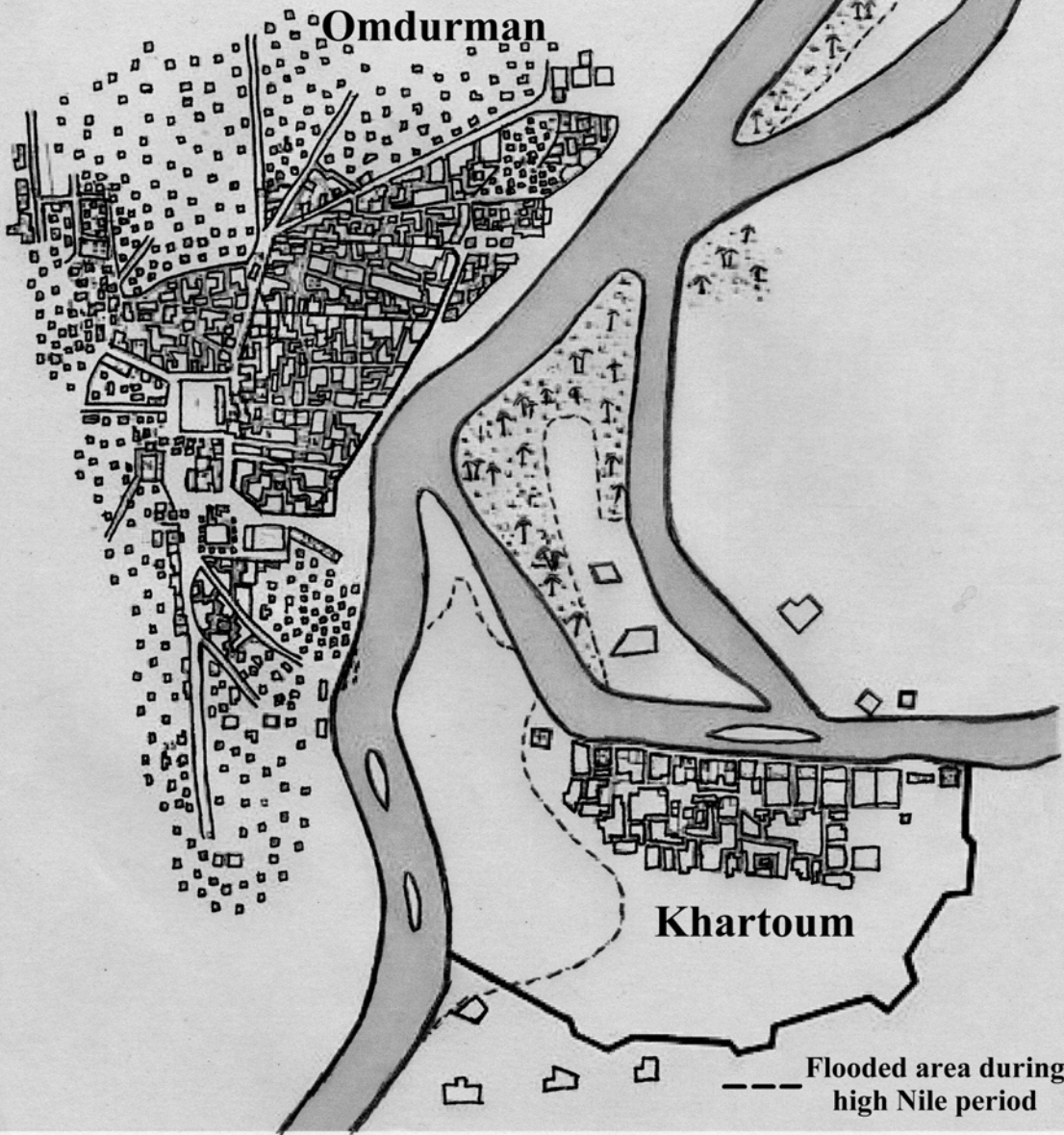
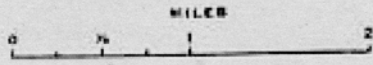
The town had a reputation of being filthy with open sewage running through the streets, and animal carcasses left to rot wherever they fell. Frequent dust storms filled the town with choking clouds of sand and the houses built closely together were subject to frequent fires that would burn entire neighborhoods.

Mud brick structures were common but others were constructed with thin poles and palm leaf roofs. The prison called the Umm Hagar (House of Stone) was a one story building with no windows where all of the prisoners were driven at night. If there was too many to fit, the guards forced them in with clubs and torches. Overnight the prisoners would fight for space and the dead would be removed in the morning. Those in charge of Umm Hagar provided no food to the prisoners and those without family or friends to bring meals would either starve or have to steal from their fellow prisoners.

The only building that was taller than one story was the Khalifa's harem, everything else was one story. After the death of the Mahdi a tomb was constructed in his honor to house his body. This building was the tallest structure in Sudan.



# Khartoum and Omdurman



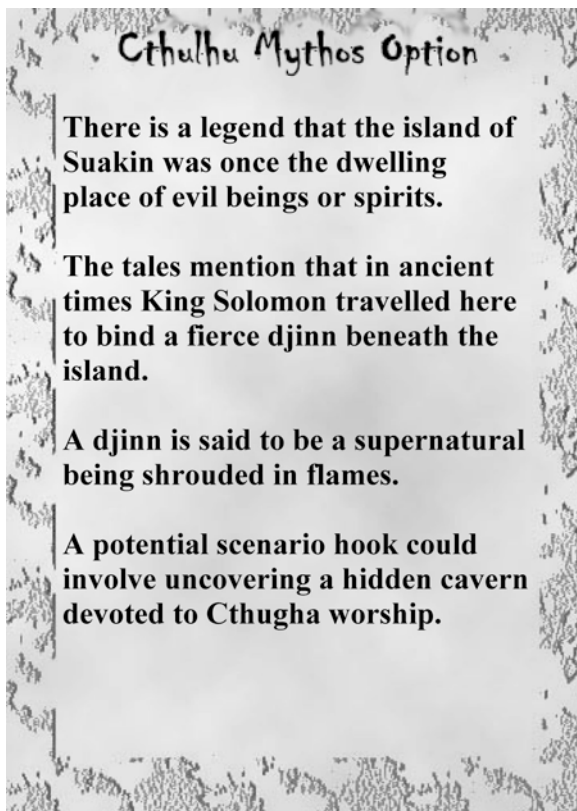
## Suakin

The seaport of Suakin is located on the Red Sea approximately thirty miles north of present day Port Sudan.

Throughout the history of Sudan and especially in the 19<sup>th</sup> century this was the main point-of-entry for trade with other countries, primarily in slaves and ivory with merchants from Yemen. It was also the major departure point for pilgrims on their way to Mecca across the Red Sea.

In 1896 when the British forces reached Suakin they found that most of the buildings were located on a small barren island connected to the mainland by a narrow causeway. From a distance the structures looked imposing, many of them five stories tall stood next to tall condensation towers that supplied most of the fresh water for the town.

Travelling through the narrow streets revealed that much of the town had been abandoned. The larger structures were constructed using coral from the Red Sea but next to them stood small mud brick huts.



From previous years of attempts to industrialize this coastal town, there were piles of rotting railroad ties and rusting steam engines and other equipment.

On the mainland end of the causeway stood a high defensive wall a mile and a half long, six feet thick

and fifteen feet high. All along the wall were gun positions and holes for rifles. The desert tribes in this area of Sudan were notorious for raiding small towns and most if not all had built defenses against them.

During the years of the Mahdi and the Kalifah legitimate trade to the outside world had faded to almost nothing. In 1896 the remaining traders in Suakin consisted of smugglers of illicit goods such as drugs and alcohol along with Arabs and Yemeni's who were still doing a thriving business in slavery.

The British soldiers that were assigned to the defense of Suakin soon discovered how inhospitable that it could be. The heat of summer can reach over 120° Fahrenheit and the infection rates of some tropical diseases can be very high. The highest recorded temperature at Suakin in the late 1800's was 139°.

## Timeline of Sudan

**552 BC** – King Cambyses of Persia marches his army into Kush after conquering Egypt. While advancing towards Napata and Meroë through the desert the majority of his soldiers died and the survivors had to retreat back to Egypt.

**Circa 450 BC** – Herodotus writes about the Sudan area in his *The Histories*. He claimed that during that period that Egypt was maintaining a large number of garrisons along the Upper Nile to protect their interests and trade routes. By Herodotus' calculations these garrisons numbered a total of 240,000 men. The only city in the Upper Nile (Sudan) region that Herodotus mentions is Meroë above the 1<sup>st</sup> cataract. He mentions during that period there was widespread worship of Zeus and Dionysus in Meroë. The city also had an oracle of Zeus who was responsible for making decisions about war.

**750-900 AD** – Chinese merchants travel regularly to the Sudan port of Suakin. They carry silk and pottery and exchange it for ivory, shark fins and other exotic goods. The Chinese had established trading enclaves in many coastal areas throughout Asia plus they had well travelled trade routes along the famous Silk Road.

**1517** – Turkish invasion led by Salim through the Red Sea port of Massawa (Port Sudan). The goal was to establish permanent bases for the ivory and slave trade.

**1770's** – In 1768 the Scottish scholar and merchant James Bruce travelled into northern Africa to explore and reached the city of Gondar on the northern end of Lake Tana in late 1770. He then set out to follow the flow of the river from Lake Tana to determine if it emptied into the Nile. When he reached the location where Khartoum stands today, his notes indicate that



there was a small town called Halfaya situated somewhat south of the present city. Although he faced many difficulties travelling the length of the Blue Nile, he finally reached Aswan at the end of November 1772. Bruce finally reached London in 1774. His journals provided some of the earliest documentation of the peoples and country of Sudan. Much of what he wrote was not believed until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when other explorers had the opportunity to visit some of the sites that he had recorded.

**1821** – The Khedive of Egypt, Muhammed Ali, sent an army to Sudan led by his son Ismail. After defeating the opposing Sudanese forces, the Egyptian government annexed the provinces of Dongola, Kordofan and Senar. The Sudanese were so lawless that it was impossible to impose Egyptian rule over them but the Khedives forces were able to collect tribute as a form of taxation. The Khedive was hoping that by taking control of the ivory and slaves trades that he would be able to boost the failing Egyptian economy. During the Egyptian military campaign nearly 50,000 Sudanese were killed. This heavy handed approach to the invasion and subsequent occupation led to many generations of Sudanese who had an absolute hatred for anything even associated with the Turks or Egypt.

**1860's** – Khartoum was the center of the slave and ivory trade in Sudan. Egypt had over 15,000 troops stationed to maintain order and to collect taxes. Sometimes the troops would be ordered to raid Sudanese villages to gather tribute in the form of food and cattle.

**1860's** – After the finish of the American Civil War in 1865 many veterans came to Sudan looking for fortune and adventure. There was work for skilled riverboat pilots, mechanics and engineers as well as military veterans and skilled officers.

**1870's** – In the provinces of Bahr-el-Ghazal, Darfur and Kordofan there were approximately 5000 traders in ivory and slaves. Each had their own security forces and used techniques of either brutal raids or building relationships with tribal leaders through diplomacy and bribery. The most infamous slave trader in Sudan was Al-Zubayr Rahma Mansur. Born in the Jaalin tribe in northern Sudan, Al-Zubayr, started in the slave trade in 1856 and by 1873 had a network of thirty trading forts called zeribas and thousands of men working on his behalf. In 1873 the Khedive of Egypt granted Al-Zubayr the title of Pasha along with the governorship of the province of Bahr-al-Ghazal. Charles Gordon maneuvered to have Al-Zubayr summoned to Cairo in 1878 where he was detained and not permitted to return to Sudan. Gordon's forces then systematically attacked the slavers to stop the trade and they even killed Al-

Zubayr's son who had taken over the trade in the absence of his father. This made a later meeting in Cairo between Al-Zubayr and Gordon somewhat awkward.

**1870** – Samuel Baker received a commission from the Khedive of Egypt to lead a force of Egyptian troops into the South of Sudan to suppress the slave trade. Since many of the slavers were Egyptian, it is presumed that the Khedive was taking this action in an attempt to curry favor with his European patrons. Egypt was greatly in debt and attempting to have the bulk of its loans forgiven but this move was being blocked by France and Russia.

**1873** – Construction of a telegraph line was completed between Khartoum and Cairo.

**1877** – Colonel Charles Gordon was appointed as the Governor General of Sudan. His first act was to suppress revolts in the provinces of Darfur and Bahr-al-Ghazal and annex those provinces on behalf of the Khedive of Egypt. Darfur never acknowledged the authority of the Egyptians and taxes had to be collected by armed expeditions.

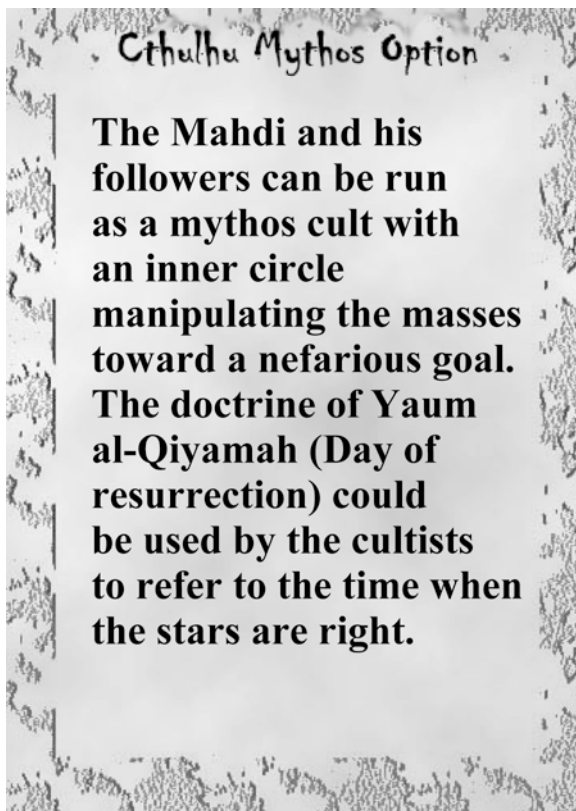
**1877** – On the 4<sup>th</sup> of August Great Britain and Egypt signed an agreement that prohibited the business of the slave trade. All traffic in Egypt was to be halted by the end of 1884 and in the annexed provinces of Sudan by the end of 1889.

**1878** – Gordon's forces in Sudan begin stopping slave caravans, under orders from Egypt, and in a one year period capture a total of 63 caravans. One of Gordon's military officers was an Italian named Romolo Gessi who was a veteran of the Crimean War. Gordon sent Gessi with a large force aboard the gunboat Bordein to the Bahr-al-Ghazal province. Their mission was to put down an insurrection led by Suleiman who was the son of the notorious slaver Al-Zubayr Rahma Mansur. Young Suleiman and the sheikhs that he was leading were put to death and over ten thousand slaves were freed. Gordon personally led a follow-up force behind Gessi to clear out the isolated pockets of resistance.

**1880** – Romolo Gessi was recalled to Cairo while governing the province of Bahr-el-Ghazal. On the return trip his ship was blocked off for three months in the Sudd. Most of the 400 men on board died of starvation and the survivors were reduced to resorting to cannibalism in order to survive while waiting to be rescued.

**1881** – On the 12<sup>th</sup> of August Egyptian authorities sent 120 soldiers and 6 officers aboard the Nile steamer Ismailia to arrest the troublesome Mahdi and his followers. They were situated on the island of Abba where the Mahdi had made his home in a mud

bank several years earlier after denouncing his Islamic Sufi spiritual teacher as being too liberal and permitting singing and dancing at his son's wedding. The ragtag bunch of fundamentalists overcame the armed Egyptian soldiers with nothing more than sticks, stones and a few spears. A few of the Egyptian troops managed to escape by swimming through the crocodile infested waters back to the Ismailia. A second even larger group of soldiers were sent out, but the Dervishes ambushed them and once again nearly all of the troops were killed. With each successful battle, the Dervish forces were also capturing rifles, pistols and ammunition. When the third group of Egyptian soldiers was sent out, they actually managed to capture some of the Mahdi's spies. These spies were brutally executed in front of the Egyptian troops by having their arms and legs chopped off. This was done to demonstrate to the soldiers that the followers of the Mahdi were not under divine protection from Allah. The demonstration had the opposite effect since each of the spies died bravely while shouting defiantly at the executioners. Morale was so bad that when this third large group of troops finally met the Mahdi's forces, they panicked or froze during battle and were massacred almost to the last man.



**1881** – Muhammad Ahmad who was to become known as the Mahdi, declared that he was “The Expected Saviour” and began to attract followers throughout Sudan. In the religion of Islam the Mahdi heralds the Yaum al-Qiyamah (Day of resurrection). The concept of the Mahdi is one that is not agreed

upon by all Muslim sects and is a serious cause of schism, doctrinal disagreement and sometimes violence.

**1882** – To many in Sudan the Mahdi was beginning to appear invincible and entire tribes began to join with him. His military might was bolstered greatly when the fierce Baggara warriors from the Abdullahi tribe became followers. By this time the large group was based at Jebel Gedir in the Nuba Mountains of Kordofan province and the logistics were becoming more difficult as their number grew. The Mahdi appointed four Khalifas (successors) to help him with administration and organizing the followers into a coherent body.

**1882** – When it became apparent that the Dervishes were going to continue spreading across Sudan, citizens in Khartoum and the larger communities began stockpiling weapons. In the bazaars a new American made Remington rifle was trading for two young female slaves.

**1882** – The consolidated forces of the Mahdi marched on the city of El Obeid which was a major center for trade and administration by the Egyptian occupying force. The defenders managed to hold off the Mahdi's forces by making effective use of their American made Remington rifles killing over 10,000 of the fanatical attackers who were armed with swords and spears. The Mahdi then ordered the town to be surrounded and the defenders starved out. This medieval style siege took several months but eventually El Obeid was taken.

**1884** – After having returned to Britain for a brief period, Gordon was asked to go back to Sudan to make arrangements for the evacuation of all Europeans and to actively suppress the slave trade. He established himself in Khartoum where he directed the forces of the Egyptian Khedive against the Mahdist army with the intention of holding them back until the evacuation was completed. The forces under Gordon's command suffered from a lack of training and it was uncertain which units might break and run under fire. The primary mounted unit was the Bashi-Bazouks who were noted for their ferocity in battle. Most of them were of Balkan descent and they had earned a reputation for cruelty to their enemies. Gordon also had a 100 man mounted unit of Cuirassiers wearing a mixture of chain and ring mail and armed with two handed swords and lances.

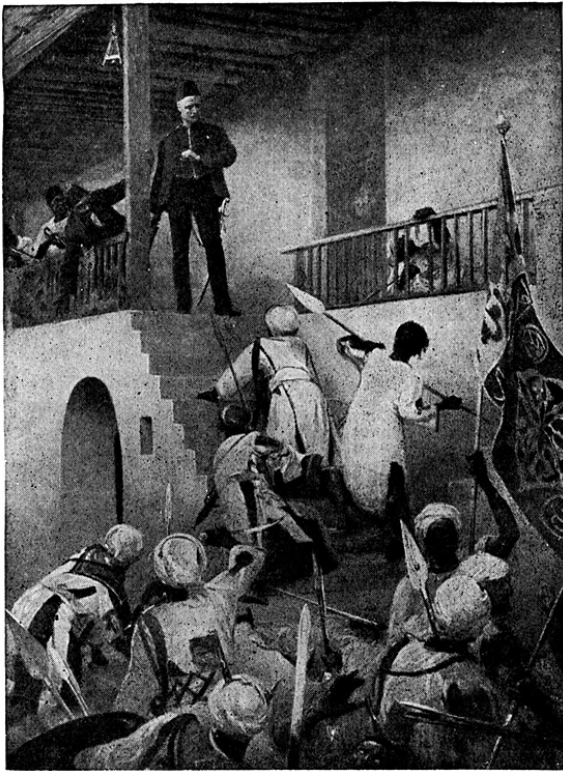
**1884** – Near the end of the year the Mahdist army captured Omdurman and then surrounded Khartoum, interdicting traffic on the Nile. The city was under a siege intended to starve the people into yielding. Through Gordon's leadership and force of will, he kept the people from surrendering. Some did manage to slip out of the city and join the enemy, providing





the Mahdi with valuable intelligence about the conditions in Khartoum.

**1885** – Information reached Omdurman that the British were sending a rescue mission up the Nile to rescue Gordon. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of January the Dervish army stormed the city walls and overran Khartoum. The starving defenders could do little to defend against the massive assault. Gordon was speared to death on the steps of the Governor General's mansion as he confronted the Arab forces that had taken the city. His head was hacked from his body and taken to the Mahdi in Omdurman and shown to the European prisoners being held by the dervish forces. This occurred two days before the gunboats on the rescue mission came within sight of the city. Seeing that the flag had been removed from the roof of Gordon's headquarters made them realize that the city had fallen, so they turned back and the mission was aborted.



**1885** – Throughout the year, the various remaining Egyptian outposts were cut off and attacked with many Europeans becoming prisoners of the Dervish forces. Eventually they were all conveyed to Omdurman where they were subjected to imprisonment and torture. Some escaped but others remained captive until the country was recaptured by the British and Egyptian forces led by the Sirdar Lord Kitchener.

**1885** – On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June Muhammad Ahmad, who is known simply as the Mahdi, died in Omdurman and was eventually succeeded by his second-in-

command Abdallahi ibn Muhammad in 1891 after a five year struggle amongst the Dervish leaders. There are conflicting reports as to the cause of death of the Mahdi with one story attributing it to typhus and the other to smallpox. A large monument was constructed at Omdurman to house the remains of the Mahdi. Those crossing the desert could see its silver dome 3 days ride away. It soon became a site of pilgrimage in the Muslim world drawing visitors from as far away as Samarkand in Central Asia.

**1885** – With the growing force of the Dervish army at Omdurman, patrols would regularly range outward from the city to raid neighboring towns for food. The Dervishes would ruthlessly slaughter those that opposed them and then enslave the survivors into their army. There seemed to be little or no thought put into these tactics that if they wiped out the communities that was growing food and raising animals, the following year there would be even less resources available.

**1885** – Throughout the year there were rumors about a strange European wandering through Sudan. It was eventually discovered that Oliver Pain, a French freelance journalist for several radical newspapers, was seeking to broker a deal between the forces of the Mahdi and France. He was brought before the Khalifa to present his case. The Khalifa dismissed him saying that he had no need to make deals with a nation of infidels. Pain was held with the other European prisoners in Omdurman and eventually died of an unknown wasting disease.

**1885** – There was a great draught during the year that destroyed most of the harvest. To make matters worse, at harvest time there was a great plague of locusts. The people were reduced to killing and eating the locusts. Many travelers died along traditional routes as watering holes dried up and caravans ran out of water. Survivors described Omdurman during this period as bodies filling the streets. Desiccated corpses could be seen *moving* as their insides were eaten by mice and rats. One of the European captives of the Khalifa in Omdurman described seeing three starving women gathered around a baby donkey and eating it alive. One woman was brought to trial before the Khalifa for eating her own baby. Children and lone individuals were in danger of being dragged away and devoured by small groups of hungry men banding together.

**1889** – On the 9<sup>th</sup> of March King John of Abyssinia led 130,000 infantry and 20,000 horsemen into Sudan to attack the Khalifa at Omdurman. The fanatical Dervish army, using weapons that they had captured from the Egyptians and British managed to defeat this large force. This battle weakened the Khalifa's ability to attack neighboring countries and, in all

probability, prevented Egypt from being overrun by the Dervish army.

**1890's** – Although the Egyptian government of the Khedive recognized that there was a need to deal with the growing threat of the Dervishes in Sudan, part of the delay in doing anything was financial. Egypt had a large debt load to begin with and most of their existing budget was going towards the public works projects being directed by Sir William Garstin. Garstin was the Under-Secretary of State for Public Works in Egypt and was designing and overseeing construction of flood control systems, dams (including the Aswan), along with providing his engineering expertise on the irrigation system known as the Barrage near Cairo. The Sirdar of the Egyptian army, Major-General Herbert Kitchener, had several plans designed to launch an attack up the Nile into Sudan, but the Khedive would not approve the funds. It was not until later in the decade that Kitchener came up with a plan that would spread the expenses out over several years. Kitchener made provisions to fight the war on a tight budget and the Khedive agreed to the proposal.

**1890** – This was another severe famine year. There were reports that entire districts between Omdurman and Berber became totally depopulated. In Kordoran and the north the camel breeding tribes were reduced to eating most of their camels. Along the Nile the agriculture based tribes were forced to eat their seed grain so the famine affected them for the next several years. In his book, *The River War*, Winston Churchill reported that in the east of Sudan, near the Ethiopian border, many villages saw a death rate as high as 90% due to the famine. Part of the reason for the famines during the years of the Mahdi and Kalifah rule were their insistence of transferring large amounts of the population to the Omdurman area. This did not leave sufficient manpower to work the land and harvest the grains and produce. In many cases the food that did grow rotted unpicked in the fields.

**1895** – Wad el Bishara, one of the most prominent Emirs of the Khalifa, is given command of the Dongola province.

**1896** – Egypt and the British became increasingly worried about the growing threat of the Muslim army in Sudan and the possibility of the Mahdist movement spreading through the Middle East. British politicians also looked at the consequences of having their other colonies in Africa and Asia look at how the Sudanese drove them out and perhaps be inspired to follow suit. The two countries decide to invade Sudan to occupy it and set an example to other occupied areas of Africa. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of June the first battle of this war is fought at Ferket with 1000 Dervishes killed or wounded and 500 more captured

and held as prisoners. The casualties to the Egyptian and British forces were 20 killed and 80 wounded.

**1896** – In an event that would further destabilize the northeastern area of Africa, the Italians were driven out of Abyssinia by a large native uprising. An international political outcry was caused when it was revealed that Russia and France had secretly supplied the weapons to the Abyssinian forces.

**1896** – On the 29<sup>th</sup> of March the British army travelling toward Sudan was joined by Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle and his friend Mr. Corbett. Dr. Doyle at the time was a special correspondent for the Westminster Gazette. Doyle did not stay with the army for long and returned to England by the end of April.

**1896** – During the march by Kitchener's forces towards Dongola, the land force was supported by 4 Nile gunboats (Tamai, El Teb, Abu Klea, and Metemmeh) and 3 unarmed post boats (Kaibar, Dal, and Akasheh). There was a great deal of difficulty in getting them beyond the 2<sup>nd</sup> cataract which over a nine mile stretch descends more than sixty feet. As many as five hundred men pulled on each of five cables from shore. This was required to guide these heavy boats through the roughest areas of the river and prevent them from holing their hulls on rocks.

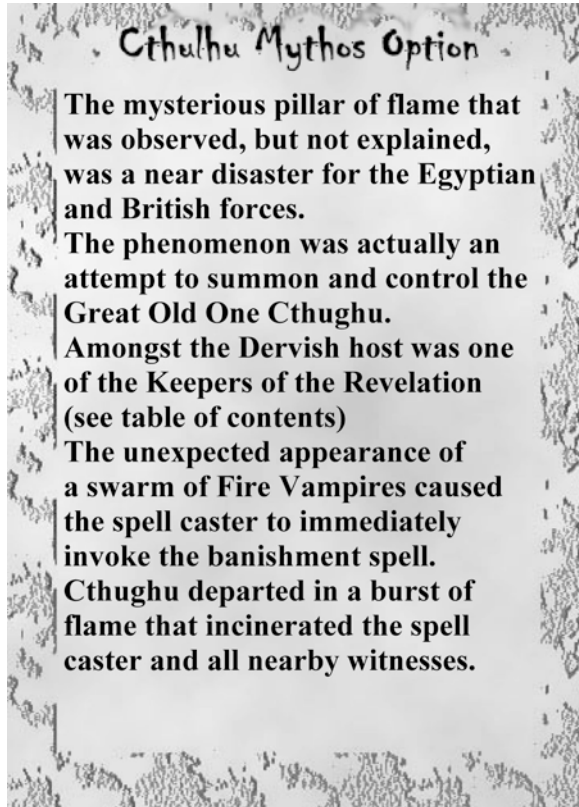


*Image of Nile River cataract*

**1896** – In December, France attempted to weaken the Egyptian government by calling in some large loans that had been outstanding. This would have interfered with the British re-entering into Sudan and left the south of that country open for France to advance into from their African foothold in West Africa. The British Consul-General in Egypt Evelyn Baring, later to become 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Cromer, manipulated the situation with France through a clever series of diplomatic maneuvers that resulted in the payment to France being blocked and any influence that it still had being negated.



**1898** – On the 8<sup>th</sup> of April British and Egyptian forces defeat a large Dervish army at the battle of Atbara. The majority of them were from the Hadendowa tribe. When the Egyptian and British forces were within a mile and a half of the Dervish forces they could see a strange pillar of fire moving between Mutrus and Nakheila. This phenomenon remained unexplained.



**1898** – On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September the largest battle of the war in Sudan took place just north of Omdurman. This marked the last battle in British history where large cavalry charges were used to break through enemy lines. A young Winston Churchill was amongst the 21<sup>st</sup> Lancers in this massive battle, and at one point their 320 man unit charged a force of over 2,500 Dervish infantry. At the end of the day, the Dervish forces were broken with over 9,700 killed, 13,000 wounded and over 5,000 captured. The British and Egyptian forces had 47 killed and 340 wounded, mainly due to the overwhelming firepower from Maxim machine guns, artillery, rockets and support from the heavily armed and armored Nile gunboats. The advanced British military tactics also played a major role in keeping their casualties to a minimum, but their protective square formations were almost overwhelmed several times by human wave attacks of Dervish troops wielding broad headed spears, scimitars, along with some muskets and captured British rifles. British forces used hollow point ‘dum-dum’ bullets in all of their firearms to cause maximum damage to anybody that was struck. This type of ammunition was still permissible in

combat since the Hague Convention that was signed on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 1899 for the ban on the military use of any type of expanding bullet did not come into effect until the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 1900.

The Khalifah, with his bodyguard and a number of loyal followers, managed to get away from the battlefield at Omdurman and travel to El Obeid in Kordofan.

**1898** – 19<sup>th</sup> of September the two gunboats Sheikh and Hafir, filled with troops led by General Hunter, launched from Omdurman to travel up the Blue Nile. Their mission was to search for remaining Dervish forces and attempt to force their surrender or kill them. Three days out on the 22<sup>nd</sup> they encountered a force of approximately 2,000 of Osman Digna’s followers. The Sheikhs and Emirs negotiated an unconditional surrender to General Hunter and in turn were given safe conduct passes if they would return peacefully to their villages. The Dervishes laid down their arms and gratefully headed for their homes.

**1898** – 22<sup>nd</sup> of October Colonel Lewis accompanied by a small unit of 460 men sets out through the center of Ghezira with the authority of the Egyptian Khedive to appoint village Sheikhs as representatives of Egyptian authorities for their regions. There is reference that Colonel Lewis was being accompanied by some non-military personnel that Winston Churchill referred to as “A few other unclassified scallywags.”

**1899** – In the predawn hours of the 25<sup>th</sup> of November a 2,300 man force led by Sir Reginald Wingate advanced towards Shirkela. This was a small town in Kordofan where the Khalifa and the last of his loyal followers had prepared to make their final stand. The British attack began at dawn. After a short, but fierce, battle with an estimated 5,000 Dervish troops the British and Egyptian army accepted their surrender. The Khalifa, most of his bodyguards and loyal Emirs were all killed. As with most of the battles that he had been involved in, Osman Digna escaped once again. Digna was finally captured in the Tokar area on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January 1900. He was sent as a prisoner to Egypt where he remained until his death in 1926. During the march on Shirkela the British noted that the surviving people in Kordofan were so famished that if a camel fell and was left behind, groups of natives could be seen emerging from their huts to tear the meat from the animal, sometimes before it was even dead.

**1900-1901** – During the winter months the British Consul-General of Egypt Evelyn Baring, toured through Sudan and made his recommendations. Back in Britain Sudan had become largely ignored as the attention of the press, public and politicians had shifted to the Boer War in South Africa.

1902 – 8<sup>th</sup> of November the Gordon Memorial College opened. It is a combination trade school and college for schoolteachers and judges. Many contributions were received to expand the school and by 1904 Mr. Henry S. Wellcome had donated a full biological and chemical research laboratory to the college. A primary school with boarding facilities was soon opened at the college along with a military school to develop young Sudanese officers.

1925 – Colonel R. E. Cheesman, while travelling through northwestern Ethiopia, realized that the Blue Nile was not fully mapped. He decided that he would do it and over the next eight years spent time travelling and surveying around Lake Tana and along the Blue Nile gorge. Cheesman travelled by mule and would descend to the bottom of the gorge wherever it was accessible. He is also noted as the first European to circumnavigate Lake Tana in Ethiopia where the Blue Nile begins its flow. After spending the time and effort to explore these uncharted regions he returned to England to write a book. Before he could have his manuscript published it was stolen from his parked car.

## **A**ncient History

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century E.A. Wallis Budge wrote about the earliest record of an Egyptian invasion into Sudan. During the IV<sup>th</sup> dynasty Seneferu led an army up the Nile and brought back 700 slaves and 200,000 cattle. The next recorded major contact with Sudan was during the VI<sup>th</sup> dynasty when Egyptian officials were sent on a series of trade missions.

In 66 AD during the reign of Emperor Nero an expedition was sent into Sudan in an attempt to discover the source of the Nile. It was led by two of his trusted centurions but they only reached the northern Sudd area before they had to turn back. They reported that the vegetation in the river was too thick to navigate either by boat or on foot.

## **G**aslight/Victorian Period

In 1898 before the defeat of the Mahdist forces the southernmost British outpost was located at the 2<sup>nd</sup> cataract which is just south of Wadi Halfa. The Thomas Cook travel company would regularly conduct Nile excursions to a point where the tourist could stand at the British fort and look towards the Blue Hills of the Dongola province.

With the ongoing war with the Mahdists, Egypt, with the aid of the British, had their southern border closed tightly and guarded. If travelers had a need to travel into Sudan they had to obtain permission from the authorities which would only be granted for extraordinary cases. Travel permits were granted with

the condition that if they managed to return to Egypt they had to be debriefed by Egyptian and British intelligence officers.

## **M**odern

The years following the defeat of the Dervish movement continued to see trouble rise up in various parts of Sudan. In 1900 the Ansar, who had been the warrior followers of Osman Digna, caused much trouble when they had expectations that the Prophet Jesus would return by the end of the year. The leaders of this group were sentenced as heretics and banished by an Islamic council. Another Mahdi appeared on the scene in eastern Kordofan in 1903 but both him and his followers were quickly suppressed. The following year of 1904 saw yet another Prophet Jesus appear near the town of Sinja located on the Blue Nile towards the Ethiopian border. In 1908 a former Dervish quietly put together a group to revolt against the British occupiers and had to be put down with another military expedition. During the year of 1912 yet another Prophet Jesus appeared, this time in Kordofan. Once again the British forces had to intervene to stop an uprising.

During the first thirty years of the British occupation of Sudan they had to engage in approximately 170 military actions to put down religious movements, tribal uprisings and revolts. Clearly, defeating the Mahdist forces did not create a lasting peace.

In 1956 Sudan was granted their independence from the British-Egyptian forces that had occupied the country since the time of the Kalifah. One of the first political parties that was formed, and rapidly became the leading party, was the Umma party led by the grandson of the Mahdi.

## **C**thulhu Now Information

There has been much news coverage over the last several years about the turmoil within the borders of Sudan. This tends to be in the remote areas to the west and south but there are other issues involving government opposition groups in other areas as well.

Internationally the staunchest supporter and business partner of Sudan has been China. They have joint ventures in development of oil and other natural resources. China is also using their expertise learned on the Three Gorges Dam development to develop hydroelectric projects along the Nile.

Since the 1960's there has been continuous conflict between various districts of the country and the Islamic government based out of Khartoum. Travelers are required to obtain passes to enter various parts of the country and must register with



the local police station to obtain a permit before they are allowed to check into a local hotel.

Much of the country near urban centers is unsafe to travel through due to land mine hazards and more recently groups such as the Janjaweed, Sudan Liberation Movement and Justice and Equility Movement. In the south of the country the primary rebel movement is the mainly Christian Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M).

Keepers that wish to use Sudan in a modern setting are encouraged to obtain the excellent travel guide *Sudan The Bradt Travel Guide by Paul Clammer ISBN 9781841621142*.

The book covers all areas of the country with travel tips, bits of history, and locations of ferry's, hotels, markets and security issues. There is also an informative section about the current political situation in Sudan. It includes details about the various factions in the north and south, information about border crossings, guerilla groups and about how and where travel permission can be obtained.

#### Leaders of Sudan

Year(s)	Name
1825-1826	Osman Bey
1826	Maho Bey
1826-1839	Khurshid Pâshâ
1839-1844	Ahmed Pâshâ Abu Udn
1844-1846	Ahmad Pâshâ Al-Minikli
1846-1850	Khalid Pâshâ
1850-1851	'Abd al-Latif Pâshâ
1851-1852	Rustam Pâshâ
1852-1853	Isma'il Pâshâ Abu Gebel
1853-1854	Salim Pâshâ
1854-1855	'Ali Pâshâ Sirri
1855-1857	'Ali Pâshâ Sharkas
1857-1859	Arakil Bey
1859-1862	Hassan Bey Salamah
1862-1863	Muhammad Bey Rasikh
1863-1865	Musa Pâshâ Hamdi
1865-1866	Ja'far Pâshâ Sadik
1866-1871	Ja'far Pâshâ Mazhar
1871-1873	Mumtaz Pâshâ
1873-1877	Isma'il Pâshâ Ayub
1877-1879	Gordon Pâshâ
1879-1882	Ra'uf Pâshâ
1882-1883	'Abd al-Kadar Pâshâ
1883-1884	'Ala ad-Din Pâshâ
1884-1885	Gordon Pâshâ
1885	Mahdi Mohammed Ahmed
1885-1898	Khalifa Abdallahi ibn Muhammad
1898-1899	Kitchener Pâshâ
1899-1916	Wingate Pâshâ

## Tribes of Sudan

By the late 1800's contact between Europeans and the natives throughout Sudan was widespread in the north and along the Nile River as far south as Gondokoro.

For centuries the Arab population of northern Sudan had engaged in the slave trade by raiding villages in the southern and western regions of the country.

Some of the first British explorers in those areas reported that if they were spotted by villagers their white skin marked them as slavers and the natives would flee into the jungle.

## Northern Tribes

The native tribes in the north of Sudan lived primarily along the narrow strip of fertile land that borders much of the Nile north of Khartoum. These people primarily lived an agrarian existence, planting and harvesting with the seasons and using the Nile for transportation and fishing.

Throughout the history of the country this region represented the frontier between Sudan and Egypt with a history of continuously shifting borders through many wars of conquest and retribution.

In 1821 Muhammed Ali of Egypt ordered his troops into Sudan where their rifles and training allowed them to prevail over the poorly armed native Sudanese. Their goal was to enrich the depleted treasury of Egypt by looting the gold and ivory from Sudan and engaging in the slave trade. Egypt then acted swiftly to establish many outposts along the Nile and through the northern region. The Sudanese called these invaders Turks and those in the north soon learned to coexist with them. In many cases the natives were drawn to the Egyptian outposts in exchange for food, shelter, work and protection. The northern Sudanese were left to farm and provide transport along the Nile in their sturdy feluccas which were the same design as the boats used during the time of the Pharaohs.

The desert areas of the north, which lay beyond the fertile riverbanks, were largely unpopulated with the exception of occasional merchant caravans, Bedouin tribes and smugglers of ivory and slaves. Along known desert routes were several small oases. Occasionally there were wells near the wadis which are formed following the seasonal rainfalls and ensuing flash floods.

The largest portion of the slave trade in Sudan flowed to the small seaports along the coast of the Red Sea. Many slaves were destined for Yemen to be sold throughout the Arab world while others were loaded like cordwood in the dark holds of Arab dhows and taken to the great slave market at Zanzibar. Very few east African slaves were shipped to the Americas. Those that were had a large percentage die during the long transit around the Cape of Good Hope all the way north to the Caribbean and on to the Americas.

The army of the Khedive established Khartoum in 1821 as a strategic military outpost at the junction of the Blue Nile and White Nile. It soon grew in size to accommodate the traders looking for new markets and to engage in the slave trade. The population was a mixture of nationalities with the predominant population being native Sudanese.

At the battle of Ferket, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1896, approximately 75% of the Dervishes belonged to the Baggara tribe with the remainder coming from the Jaalin and Jehadia tribes which were also from the northern region.

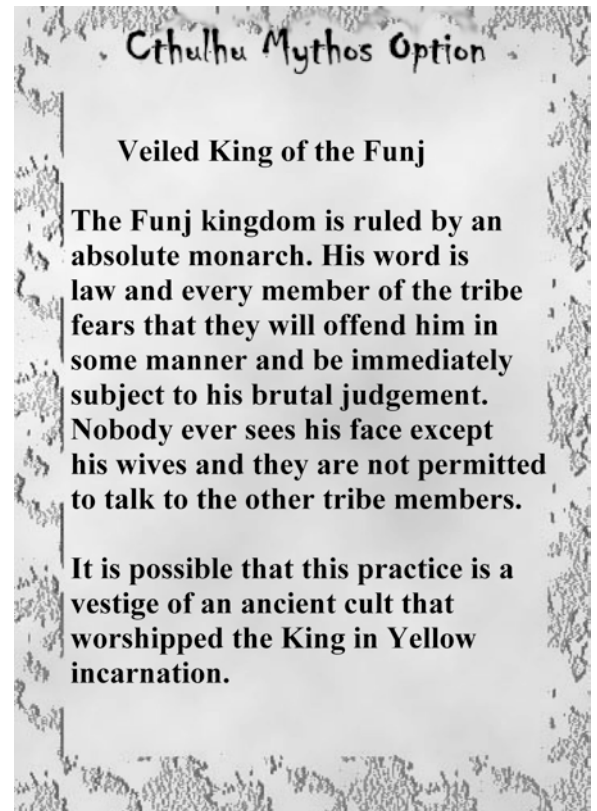
The people of the Nubian region were fiercely independent, especially on the Nile islands. Europeans were appalled when witnessing women drowning their children in the Nile rather than risk them being captured by slavers.

**Beja** – An ancient tribe located between the Red Sea coast and the Atbara River. There are records that they came into conflict with the Romans as they pushed into Nubia from Egypt. Although the Beja are animal herders and plant crops, their warriors are famous for fighting against anybody that intrudes onto their land from the Nubians to the British.

When Islam was spreading through the Arab world and East Africa the Beja adopted the religion immediately.

**Funj (Fung) Dynasty** – This mysterious tribe was a group of people who lived along the Blue Nile from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. They were neither of Arab descent or Muslim and had their own distinct language. Their capital was at Sennar and they constantly struggled against the Arabs for control of the area. Some information about the origins of the tribe indicates that they travelled north from the Sudd region in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century after a long war with the Shilluk/Cholo tribes. The Funj people were fully assimilated into the Arab population of Sudan by the early 1800's. It was said the Funj was a wealthy tribe and had become rich from the gold mines at Fazughli which is situated on the Blue Nile near the Ethiopian border. Another interesting note about the Fung is that their king would never appear in public without a piece of colored gauze covering his face. Only his

wives would know what he looked like. The King had absolute authority and when he pronounced a death sentence on someone they would be immediately thrown to the ground and beat to death with clubs.



**Hadendowa** – Located around the town of Adarama on the north side of the Atbara River which flows out of Ethiopia to the Nile River. Their tribal name is thought to mean either *Lion Clan* or *Children of the Lion*. This was the tribe that the dervish leader Osman Digna came from. The fierce warriors of the Hadendowa were the only native force that ever broke through the closed ranks of a British military square formation. The tribe was the focus of the Rudyard Kipling poem *Fuzzy Wuzzy*. Egyptian troops greatly feared the Hadendowa because of their tendency to mutilate their enemies. It is thought that the motivation under the command of Digna, to fight the Egyptians and British, was not motivated by religious fervor but rather by economic necessity. Their tribal lands were located along the routes where slave caravans travelled and with slavery coming to an end, the Hadendowa lost most of their means of making a living. Had the British implemented some programs to develop the area and replace the slave trade industry, the Hadendowa would have been less motivated to fight against them.







*Member of the Hadendowa tribe with the distinct fuzzy wuzzy hair style.*

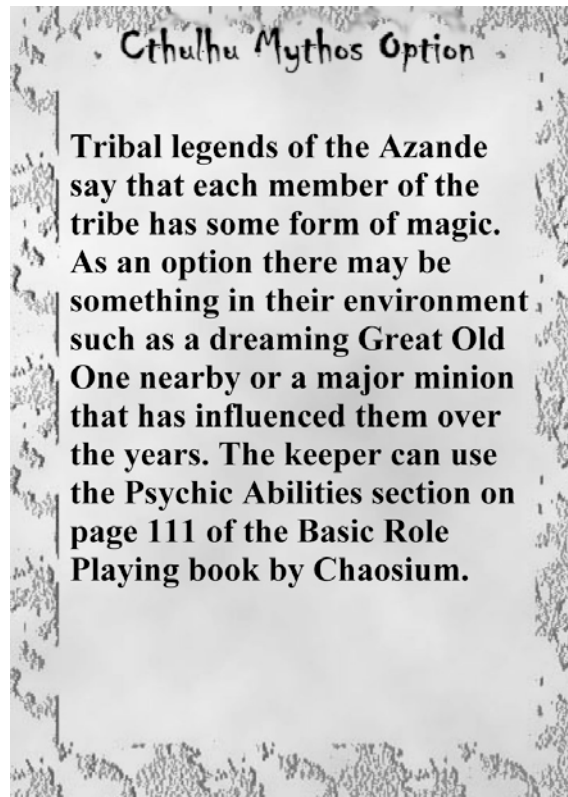
**Jaalin** – This northern tribe was located in the vicinity of the town of Metemmeh. During the spread of the forces of the Mahdi, the tribe joined with him. When they received word that Kitchener's forces were advancing up the Nile, the tribe revolted and would no longer provide support for the Dervish movement. In retaliation, the Khalifa sent out a large force of his men to kill as many of the Jaalin as possible. It is believed that he ordered this action to prevent the tribe from assisting the Egyptian and British forces as they moved towards Omdurman.

**Dongolawi** – Descendants of the ancient Nubian tribes in the north of Sudan. The town of Debbeh along the Nile marked a boundary between the tribe and Arab settlers who migrated from Saudi Arabia and Yemen around 700 AD and settled near Omdurman. The Dongolawi speak their own Nubian dialect with very few fluent in Arabic.

**Shaigiya** – A tribe that is centered on the confluence of the White and Blue Nile Rivers. As a consequence they were the dominant tribe in the area of Khartoum. The tribe is a mixture of nomadic and agricultural with their communities along the banks of the Nile. They were also a warrior people and could easily field 10,000 warriors including 2,000 camel mounted cavalry.

## **S**outhern Tribes

**Azande** – Also known as the Niam Niam tribe they are spread over southern Sudan and into the Congo. They were an agricultural tribe that did not raise animals. Their religion was a form of animism and much of each tribe's legal authority was controlled by an oracle



Every person was thought to have some sort of witchcraft powers that could operate autonomously from the individual's wishes. In this manner a victim could be struck unknowingly by a neighbor or passer-by. Everything bad that happened was attributed to witchcraft, including somebody falling and hurting themselves or dying of a disease. It was up to the village oracle to use their magic to determine who was responsible and what punishment would be bestowed. This gave the oracle a great deal of power since it was hazardous for an individual to oppose him. You could easily be put to death if the blame was placed upon you for your neighbor being killed by a wild animal.

Another unusual attribute of the Azande was their ancient tradition of homosexual marriage. Unmarried warriors would take a boy-wife, usually between the age of twelve and twenty. The warriors would purchase the boys in exchange for spears or other trade goods. This was one of the first practices that European missionaries worked to eliminate.

**Bari** – Located in the area of Gondokoro near the Ugandan border. During the Baker expedition to

suppress the slave trade, this tribe attacked Baker and his men using poisoned arrows. The poison was likely derived from the sap of the Euphorbiaceae plant which are small shrubs resembling cacti. The sap of this plant contains a variety of toxins including alkaloids, a variety of glycosides which release hydrogen cyanide and another substance similar to ricin which is a protein based neurotoxin. The sap can cause blistering and numbness on bare skin and blindness if splashed into a persons eyes.

**Dinka** – This is the largest tribe in the southern region of Sudan. They are found from the swamps of Bahr-al-Ghazal to Kordofan and the Upper Nile district. Traditionally they are cattle herders who grow millet and other grains. Historically they have no political structure and operate with neighboring clans forming relationships through marriages.

Unlike many other Sudanese tribes the Dinka are not animists. Their belief system includes a supreme creator god named Nhialic who is present everywhere and controls the destiny of all things. Their sky god who controls rain and fertility is called Deng. Many Dinka males are given the name Deng for good luck. The Dinka pantheon also includes Abuk who is the mother of Deng and the goddess of agriculture and women. Abuk is represented as a snake.

In addition to their gods the Dinka also have a complex system of ancestor reverence. These spirits are divided into the Yieth (clan spirits) and Jak (independent spirits). The clan spirits protect the members of the tribe and the independent spirits roam free and are largely destructive.

Dinka also have great regard and reverence for their surroundings and the animals that live there. Traditional practice is that the men of the tribe become relatives to these objects after which they must not hurt them.

Young Dinka men are given what is called a 'personality ox' to take care of. They groom them and make sure that they are well fed and healthy. Those who see these young men with the ox on a daily basis can tell much about them. If they are careless or not attentive it will be reflected in the appearance of their ox. In the long term this serves as a subtle mating display whereby the young women can gauge the reliability, skill and compassion of potential husbands.

The title of tribal chief is hereditary and the man is considered to be descended from the gods. Ancient stories are handed down to the next generation to reinforce the chief's divine claims. In times of trouble such as drought and famine there are stories that tribal chiefs have sacrificed their own children on behalf of the tribe.

Younger Dinka tribesmen are kept in line through the belief that the elders have to ability to place curses on them. The Dinka recognize the existence of evil magic including the evil eye which they call 'Peeth' and evil-medicine called 'Wal'. These are considered to both be non-Dinka in origin. For these two evil magic spells use the *Evil Eye* and *Cause Disease* spells from the Call of Cthulhu rule book. Only five percent of the elder Dinka tribesmen know the spells and will not teach them to outsiders.

There is one trait of the Dinka that leads to many deaths by starvation in lean years. There is a cultural aversion to storing quantities of food beyond a family's immediate need. Storing food or goods is viewed by the Dinka as being miserly and ungenerous. This causes tribes to either trade away their extra food or just grow what they need.

The Dinka were in contact with Arab traders for many years before Europeans started their exploration of the African continent. Once the Arabs started capturing the Dinka to sell them into slavery the tribes naturally became hostile towards anybody with light skin color. The Dinka chieftains and elders living on land bordering the areas where northern Sudanese Arabs lived had established diplomatic relations with them. Although there was no solid alliance between the two peoples, they lived as friendly neighbors.

The Dinka tribes resisted against the slave traders even though they were outgunned by muskets and rifles. When the Mahdist forces took over Sudan the Dinka regarded these fanatical Islamic extremists as being far more dangerous than the slavers.

When the British and Egyptian forces defeated the Mahdists, and formed what they called the Condominium, advancement of the Dinka people or modernization was blocked. The British established a policy to allow the 'Noble Savages' to develop at a natural rate. There were no plans to establish schools or medical facilities in the south and any efforts towards those goals were left in the hands of eager missionaries.

**Korongo** – Based in the northern area of the Nuba Mountains they are skilled hunters and usually show no interest in any form of warfare. When there are conflicts with neighboring tribes they are resolved with stick fights with the winner being the first combatant to draw blood from his opponent. The sticks are wielded saber-like and are approximately one yard long. Each combatant also defends themselves with an animal skin shield.

The Korongo women are very skilled at pottery making with each tribe's decorations having

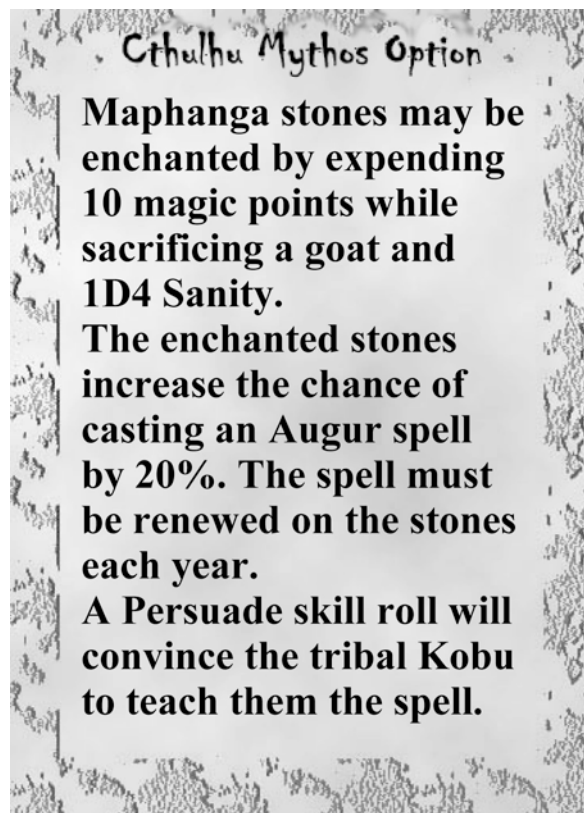


distinctive shapes and patterns. Men of the tribe are continually getting in trouble with the authorities for cattle theft. One of their customs is to steal cattle from their Arab neighbors to accumulate a large enough herd to be eligible for marriage.

Tribal rainmakers amongst some of the Korongo are called Kunjur. If there is a drought the villagers lead the man to a freshly dug grave, place him in it alive, cover him with dirt and trample it down until he is dead. The sacrifice of the Kunjur is supposed to bring an end to the drought.

**Lotuka** – The Lotuka have their own language group and are made up of several small tribes with similar characteristics. The unmarried girls of the tribe wear only a beaded belt with rows of beads in the front covering their pubic area and a small bandana sized piece of goatskin covering their rear. Tribal laws prohibit any man from touching the beaded areas of the young unmarried women. Heavy fines are levied even if the touching is accidental. Married women wear goatskin skirts.

As with most of the other tribes in Sudan both men and women bear ceremonial scars with each having a specific meaning such as their age group, clan affiliation and marks signifying any enemies that they have killed. Most of the men among the Lotuka wear a star shaped scar on their cheek.



Within the tribe the Kobu are their tribal magicians who predict the rainy season and lets the tribe know

when planting season starts. The Kobu practices his rituals in secret but it is said they keep sacred maphanga stones (powerful ruler) in pots to protect other tribe members saying that the mere sight of them is enough to cause blindness. Other elements of the Kobu's rituals involve the sacrifice of a black goat, mixing beer with the contents of the goats' intestines and then concocting a mixture to pour over the maphanga stones. The other duty of the Kobu was to announce the best day to begin the hunting season in December or January.

Their tribal god is named Ajok. The main legend about their god is that a Lotuka woman pled with the god to restore life to her dead son. The god intervened but the woman's husband argued about it with his wife and killed the resurrected son. This enraged Ajok who declared that no Lotuka would ever again be raised from the dead and that death would be permanent for all members of the tribe.

The Lotuka are an agricultural people who grow millet, peanuts, sesame and castor beans to create oil used to soften animal skins.

**Masakin** – Located in the Nuba Mountains of central Sudan this people is divided into two distinct groups. The Masakin Qisar (short Masakin) and the Masakin Tiwal (tall Masakin). In the 1960's these tribes were still resisting the custom of wearing clothing. Travel in the area was always restricted by the Sudan government along with the local tribes and permits were required to enter the region. The local chiefs required that travelers check in with him upon arrival. At that time he would assign one of his warriors to travel with them to act as an interpreter and oversee their actions. The warrior was required to report back to the king when the travelers left the area and report on their activities.

The Masakin are warlike and have a tribal custom where, at the age of five or six, their children are sent to live in a neighboring village. They claim that this is intended to strengthen family bonds but it also serves the purpose of exchanging hostages to ensure good behavior. Waiting until the children reach this age range ensures that they are beyond the age where childhood diseases typically claim lives. This is done to reduce the chances of accusations of murder.

**Nuer** – These tribes are located in southern Sudan along the Ethiopian border. They lived in proximity to the Dinka tribes and have a history of raiding their neighbors to steal cattle. A Nuer man's status within the tribe was judged on the number of cattle that he owned. Without an ample herd a young man was unable to marry or attain a position of importance. Cattle are so important to the way of life of the Nuer that they name them and then assume the name of their favorite animal.

The Nuer was very hostile towards the Arabic slavers and would fiercely fight against them. When the slavers obtained firearms, the balance of power shifted in their favor and in the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, many Nuer were captured and shipped away on slave ships throughout the middle east.

Europeans who first came in contact with the Nuer were shocked by the lack of modesty amongst them. They went about their daily lives without clothing except for some women who would wear small cloth or leather skirts.

In 1906 the explorer A. Henry Savage Landor travelled through Abyssinia and came into contact with the Nuer in the south. He recorded in a National Geographic article that the Nuer covered their bodies with white or grey ashes and plastered their hair with red mud. The men had self-inflicted scars on their bodies to signify the number of 'love affairs' that they had.

Their belief system does not include an afterlife but they believe that the spirits of their ancestors can intercede on their behalf. To honor these spirits and to call upon them they will sometimes sacrifice cattle that once belonged to the deceased.

The Nuer does not have what could be considered a God but they refer to a creator as Kwoth. That term is interchangeable with ancestor, father and friend so their creation concept ties in with ancestor reverence.

There is no central tribal leadership but when decisions are required to settle differences between individuals or tribes a group called the Leopard-Skin Chiefs is convened to offer their wisdom. When a decision has been reached after all parties have presented their cases, the group issues a formal judgment. This is usually in the form of payment in cattle which diminishes the wealth and status of the guilty party. This is usually enough of a deterrent that most issues can be worked out without summoning the Leopard-Skin Chiefs.

Housing is temporary since entire tribes move, depending on where the cattle are grazing, and where the low areas are flooded during the rainy season.

**Shilluk/Cholo** – Centered near Fashoda, which was renamed Kodok after the British and French nearly started a war over the possession of this malarial infested region. The town of Fashoda was a group of mud brick buildings on the banks of the upper White Nile inhabited by the Priest-Kings of the Shilluks.

The Shilluks are typically very tall and wear nothing more than a string of beads. Their only industry is raising cattle which serve as their currency. A Shilluk

man could purchase a wife at a trade value of six to eight cows. These transactions were complex inter-tribal deals complete with "money-back guarantees" if the wife was unsatisfactory.

By 1906 European missionaries had moved into the area to seek converts, attempt to convince the Shilluks to start wearing clothing and teach them how to farm.

The health of the tribe is believed to be intertwined with the health and physical appearance of their Reth (king). At one time if the Reth became sick or disfigured through disease or battle he would be put to death as a sacrifice and a new Reth would be selected. Cause for replacing the Reth could be as simple as him chipping a tooth.

Much of the Shilluk society is centered on raising cattle. A man and the tribes wealth was determined by the number of cattle in their possession. Young men looking for a wife would travel around with their cow to show how well they could take care of an animal.

***Following are some traits of southern tribes in the Nub Mountains and equatorial regions bordering Uganda and the Congo.***

**Beer** – Each tribe used a portion of their harvested grain to brew a type of beer which was commonly called merissa. This was not a type of beer that would be recognized by modern day drinkers. Travelers who sampled it reported that it was a mildly alcoholic beverage with a consistency of pea soup. Merissa is high in vitamin B and is much safer to drink than the local water which sometimes comes from the same water hole that people wash in and animals drink from.

**Cicatrization** – Also called ritual scarring is part of the coming-of-age ceremonies of many tribes including the Baggara, Dinka, Nuba, Nuer, and Shilluk.

Distinct patterns can denote the tribe and family that the individual comes from and individuals proudly display the markings as status symbols.

Noted explorer Samuel Baker did not understand the significance of the tribal scars as exhibited by his following quote from his book *The Albert N'Yanza, Great Basin of the Nile*.

*"He exhibited his wife's arms and back covered with jagged scars, in reply to my question as to the use of the spiked iron bracelet. Charming people are these poor blacks! as they are termed by English sympathisers; he was quite proud of having clawed his wife like a wild beast."*

**Clothing** – Many of the tribes wear very little in the way of clothing. Members of each sex wore belts to carry tools on and in some tribes the men and women would wear narrow strips of cloth or leather to cover their genitals. In some tribes the men wore penis sheaths. Those tribes that did wear clothing used either animal skins or pounded certain tree barks until they were pliable and cloth-like.

The nakedness of the natives was difficult for some European travelers to get used to. One of the first goals of the traders and missionaries was to attempt to make the Sudanese ashamed of their bodies so that they would cover their nakedness. These naked tribal people were favorites of some of the early National Geographic photographers and provided titillation to their early 20<sup>th</sup> century readers.

### **Behavior of Some Tribes in the Equatorial Region and Other Parts**

Some of the early explorers looking for the source of the Nile documented “uncivilized” behavior amongst the tribes which they encountered. These of course did not apply to all tribes since some were quite cowed by their brutal neighbors.

The following list summarizes some of the observations which were recorded in various sources including journals and National Geographic reports.

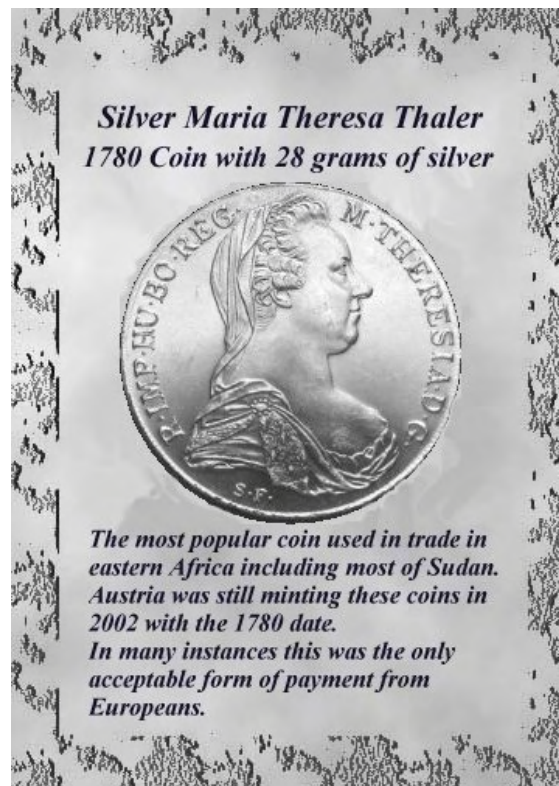
- There were tribes to the west of Darfur that would capture as many Sudanese as they could to butcher and eat.
- One European observed a tribe that had a ‘lion man’ who was mentally deficient. During ceremonies he would wear a lion skin and walk on all fours, roaring and leaping. The tribal elders who were also witch doctors would gather around and offer the ‘lion man’ a child as a sacrifice. They would watch as the child was torn to pieces and finally killed with a knife. This ritual was supposed to placate evil spirits.
- The Fung tribe in the Nuba Mountains was ruled by a mysterious king who never appeared in public without a piece of colored gauze covering his face. The king’s word was law and when he convicted anybody brought before him, his men would immediately throw the criminal to the ground and beat them to death with clubs.
- In some cases a simple breach of etiquette or failure to be subservient enough would enrage the tribal chief or king. With a wave of his hand or nod of his head the offender would be dragged off to be executed.
- Several tribes would bury the living wife with her dead husband.
- Some tribal leaders were absolute despots and their wish would be carried out instantly.

Victims were burned alive, had body parts cut off or were disfigured. If they did not keep their tribe and neighboring tribes in a constant state of fear they would be soon overthrown by somebody even more ruthless.

### **Commerce and Trade**

Prior to the Mahdist movement much of the trading between Sudan and Egypt took place at Aswan. The primary trade goods coming from Sudan were slaves, ivory, gum Arabic, ostrich feathers, tamarinds, animal skin, horns and rubber.

During the years of the Mahdi and the Khalifa many of the northern tribes continued moving goods across the border into Egypt. Many of these tribes were not in favor of the Dervish movement and cooperated with the Egyptian and British forces to carry messages, guns and provide information about Dervish troop dispositions and patrol areas.



During the period of the Khalifa he made an attempt to eliminate the use of the Thaler in Sudan by issuing the Omla Gedida also known as the Dervish Dollar. There was at least nine different mintings of these coins.

The exchange rates were set at:

8 Gedida Dollars = 1 Turkish or Egyptian dollar  
5 Gedida Dollars = 1 Maria Theresa Thaler

**Sample Prices in Gedida Dollars**

Calf	30-50
Camel, Baggage	60-80
Camel, Riding	200-400
Concubine	180-700
Cow	100-160
Girl (8-11)	110-160
Horse	60-120
Middle Aged Woman	80-100
Old Slave	50-80
Sheep	5-20

**N**ames in Sudan

With the number of tribes in Sudan with each having their own traditional names, it is impossible within the scope of this monograph, to cover all aspects of people’s names. Following is a cross-section of names that travelers during the Gaslight period might encounter.

**Northern Sudan Arabic-Tribal Names - Male**

- Abd al-Rahman Wad Nejumi
- Abdul Rahman
- Abdul Shakour
- Abdullah Wad Ibrahim
- Abu Anga
- Afifi Wad Ahmed
- Ahmed Sharif
- Ahmed Wad Ali
- Al Qurashi
- Ali bin Mohammed Helu
- El Messellimiya
- Hamed Ibn Hussein
- Hassen Wad Saud en Nur
- Ibrahim Wad Adlan
- Ishak el Abd
- Mohammed esh-Sherif bin Hamid
- Mohammed Farag
- Mohammed Nur al Barudi
- Mohammed Sherif
- Mohammed Wad el Taka
- Musa Wad Helu
- Sayed Abdel Kader
- Sayed Mohammed Ibn Khaled
- Sayid Abdullah
- Tahir el Majzub
- Wad Kabbashi
- Wad Nejumi
- Zeki Belal

**Northern Sudan Arabic-Tribal Names – Female**

*It is difficult to create a list of women’s names from Sudan. Islamic customs means that travelers rarely meet the women of a community so very few names are recorded in the historical records.*

- Adila
- Aisha

- Destia
- Farida
- Fatma
- Hassanieh
- Hasseena
- Maryam
- Samia
- Zenoba

**Southern Sudan Black-Tribal Names**

- Abu
- Adau
- Ageer
- Aliem
- Allor
- Anga
- Arob
- Biong
- Chol
- Deng
- Dengdit
- Gai
- Garang
- Kiir
- Kongor
- Kulang
- Kwol
- Luol
- Madut
- Manute
- Nhial
- Nyuot
- Pedak
- Shatta
- Thiik
- Tongyiik
- Wal
- Wek

For many of the southern tribes there is no family name. Instead a patronymic system is used where a lineage is employed to identify an individual such as: *“Kwol, son of Arob, son of Biong, son of Allor”*.

There are also occasions when a person comes of age that they adopt another name which they will be known. The Dinka tribe has a tradition where a young man adopts the name of his “personality ox” which he decorates with tassels, leather decorations and bells. The teenager then walks about the village proudly showing off his animal and demonstrates his poise and grace to attract the attention of the girls.

Other names can be bestowed on individuals much like nicknames and can be descriptive of a deed, trait or event such as Mighty Hunter, Flat Face, Big Head, or Narrow Bottom.



Some Dinka tribes have the father giving up his name upon the birth of a son. If the son is called Adau, the father would henceforth be known simply as Adau's Father.

Nuer tribes have a tradition where children who have not come of age are known as Neeya (daughter of) or Gat (son of) followed by the father's name. A common adult male name of the Nuer is Nhial.

Within each tribal group there are further variations on naming convention. During the Gaslight period there had been enough exposure to other tribes that it would not be uncommon for non-traditional names to be used as well by the southern Nilotic tribes.

### **Egyptian Names – Male**

The keeper might wish to name some of the Egyptian army NPC's that the investigators might encounter. Naming conventions within their Arabic culture includes the following points:

- Usage of 'abd which means "servant" followed by another word which is typically one of the 99 recognized names of Allah.
- The insertion of ibn meaning "son" or bint which means "daughter".
- Usage of what is called a laqab which is a description of the individual. This would be comparable to a nickname that a person would earn during their lifetime but in Islamic culture might consist of "the just" or "the holy" such as "Ahmed the just".
- Another component in Arabic names is called the nisba which can be the name of their tribe, home town or province, or their profession. This would be equivalent to the old English form of an individual being called by their Christian name plus their profession such as "John the Miller".

Following are some sample Egyptian names derived from the current heads of their various government departments.

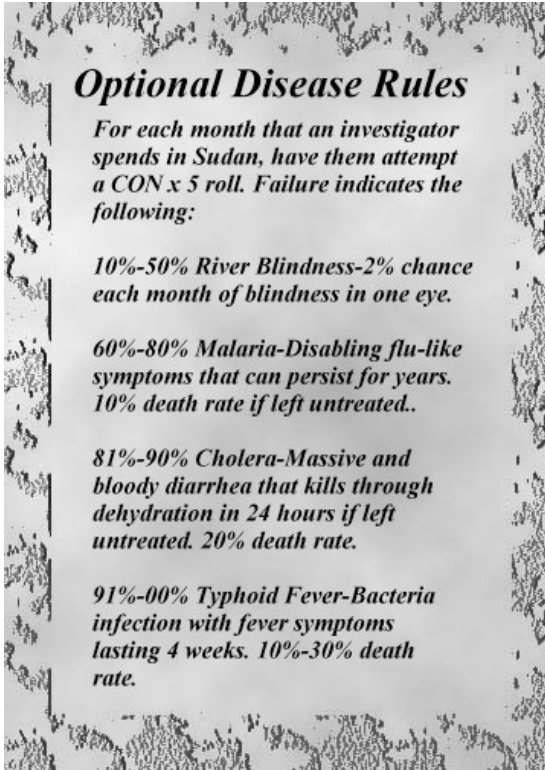
Abdel Salam Mahgoub  
Ahmed Alaa E-Din Amin El-Maghrabi  
Ahmed Ali Ahmed Abou Elgheit  
Ahmed Mahmoud Mohammed Nazif  
Ahmed Mahmoud Osman Darwish  
Ahmed Mohamed Shafik  
Ali El-Sayed Al-Moselhi  
Amin Ahmed Mohamed Othman Abaza  
Amin Sameh Samir Fahmy  
Anas Ahmed Nabih El-Fiky  
Farouk Abd El-Aziz Housny  
Habib Ibrahim Habib El Adly  
Hany Mahfouz Helal  
Hassan Ahmed Youness  
Hatem Mostafa Mostafa El-Gabaly

Maged Elias Ghattas  
Mahmoud Abd El-Halim Abou Zeid Abou Zeid  
Mahmoud Hamdy Zakzouk  
Mahmoud Safwat Mohyee El-Din  
Mamdoh Mohie E-Din Marie  
Mohamed Hussein Tantawi  
Mohamed Zohair Mohamed Wahid Garana  
Mufid Mahmoud Mahmoud Shehab  
Othman Mohamed Othman  
Rachid Mohamed Rachid  
Sayed Abdou Mustafa Meshal  
Tarek Mohamed Kamel Mahmoud  
Yousef Boutrous Ghali  
Yousry Saber Hussein El-Gamal

### **Natural Hazards of Sudan**

**Cholera** – In the middle of June when the level of the Nile rises, it carries larger amount of vegetation and also higher levels of infectious diseases. Primary amongst these is cholera which spreads along the Nile throughout the hot summer months. The British forces in Egypt were also affected by cholera which killed almost as many soldiers as actual warfare. Cholera bacteria infect humans through contaminated water or food and manifests as severe bloody diarrhea that can kill the sufferer within a day of the first symptoms. The only treatment during the Gaslight period is keeping the victim hydrated with plenty of water. Unfortunately, in many areas of Sudan clean drinking water is not plentiful and a diagnosis of cholera is considered a death sentence.

**Malaria** – Confined to the southern jungle areas for most of the year but there are periodic outbreaks in the north of Sudan during the rainy season. Malaria is caused by protozoan parasites and transmitted through mosquito bites. Malaria causes flu-like symptoms including fever, chills, nausea, light-headedness and respiratory problems. If left untreated the victim can slip into a coma and eventually die. The cause of malaria was not understood until after 1880 when the parasite was first detected. Treatment with quinine proved to be effective although the mechanics of how it worked was not understood. Quinine is a crystalline alkaloid derived from a South American tree bark and used to create a tonic.



**River Blindness** – A roundworm transmitted through the bite of the black fly. They can live up to fifteen years in a human host, but when they die they cause a severe immunological response that destroys soft tissues such as eyes. During the Gaslight period there is no known treatment for this parasitic infection. As apparent from the above description it can strike and blind the victim many years after they have departed from the area of infection.

**Typhoid Fever** – A bacterial infection transmitted through water and food infected with human feces. Once it has been ingested it grows rapidly since its ideal incubation temperature is 98.6 ° (Normal human body temperature). Symptoms include high fevers leading to delirium and potential brain damage. There is no treatment for the disease during the Gaslight period and 10%-30% of victims die through deterioration of their lower colon and the ensuing complications of septicemia or peritonitis. Those that die from it usually have the organs and flesh of their abdomen rot from the inside out while still alive.

## **W**eapons Used During the Sudan Wars

**Swords** – The swords used by the Dervishes varied in quality with the majority being of high quality steel imported from Portugal, Spain and Germany. Swords forged in Omdurman tended to be brittle and shattered easily in combat. There were a few ancient swords, some of Damascus steel and others with heritage blades acid etched with quotations from the Koran. Native craftsmen would individualize each

sword with customized hilts, grips and scabbards of exotic skins and leathers and highly decorated with objects such as shells.

**Spears** – Ranged from six to ten feet in length with leaf-shaped blades. The longest were typically used by the fierce Baggara warriors who were mounted on camel back. Many of the blades were barbed so that they would do as much damage being drawn out as they did going in. The spear shafts were made of bamboo and mimosa and were carefully balanced for the owner with bands of iron. British soldiers fighting against the Sudanese reported that a spear could completely penetrate a man's body. In battle the Dervish infantry typically carried two spears along with a melee weapon.

**Knives** – These were typically curved blades and usually of high quality and were effective at cutting the tendons on the legs of horses and pack animals. The straight blades were simply made and tended to be of lower quality steel. As with the Sudanese swords each knife had customized hilts, and scabbards with some having etchings along the length of the blades.

**Axes** – Most of the axes used in battle by the Dervishes were wood axes of European manufacture. The only modification on most of the axes was leather wrapping around the handle to provide a better grip in combat.

**Shields** – Many of the swordsmen would also use a buckler sized shield made from a wicker framework with thick elephant, hippopotamus, or rhinoceros hide stretched over it. It was reported that shields with exceptionally thick hides were capable of deflecting some bullets.

**Trombash (Throwing Stick)** – This was one of the main weapons used by Dervish infantry. It was a short, but heavy, curved stick that was capable of knocking down horses and camels.

**Knobkerries** – This weapon is the African equivalent of a mace. The handle is usually two feet or less in length with the impact end consisting of a weighted knob, sometimes with an iron band or spike. Many of these were found amongst the dervish bodies after the battle of Omdurman.

**Dervish Firearms** – Native made rifles were simple flintlocks and large caliber muzzle loading elephant guns. During the period of the rise of the Mahdi and the years of the Khalifah up to the time of their defeat at Omdurman, the Dervish forces managed to capture many Egyptian and British weapons. They did not have the training or skills to properly maintain their weapons and as a consequence they had a much lower reliability in battle.

**Captured Weapons of the Dervishes** – In the many conflicts that the Dervishes were involved in they managed to capture the weapons which the Egyptian forces were using in garrisons and on the field of battle. The list of captured weapons included cannons, Gatling, Krupp and Nordenfelt guns. Fortunately for the British and Egyptian forces facing the Dervishes, the Sudanese did not have the training to use these weapons effectively. The only time that the Dervishes made use of them is when they had captured Egyptian soldiers who were skilled in their use. There were reports that captured Europeans and Egyptians would sabotage many of the weapons captured by the Dervishes so that they were rendered ineffective.

Nordenfelt. The weapon was still in use with the Egyptian-British forces until the late 1890's when they were replaced by the Maxim.

**Krupp Guns** – These are also called mountain guns and are carriage mounted 75 mm breech-loading weapons. It was designed to be disassembled into smaller components that could be carried by four pack animals. The assembled weight of the Krupp was 850 pounds. It was designed by Alfred Krupp and built in Germany starting in 1895.

The British purchased the Krupp for use in the Sudan campaign partly because of the variety of ammunition available for it (Shell, shrapnel and canister). This versatility allowed it to be used against

Hand-to-Hand Weapons	Base % Chance or Starting Skill	Damage Done	Base Range	Attacks per Round	HPs Resistance	Cost £
Axe	20	1D8+2+db	Touch	1	15	6
Dervish Sword	15	1D8+db	Touch	1	20	20+ *
Knife	25	1D4+2+db	Touch	1	15	4
Knobkerries	25	1D8+db	Touch	1	15	-
Spear, Cavalry	15	1D6+db		1	15	6+ *
Spear, Infantry	15	1D10+db		1	15	6+ *
Trombash, Throwing Stick	Throw %	1D6	See Throw Rules	1/2	8	-

\* = Cost is for the lowest grade of Omdurman steel

**Flails** – In many of the agricultural areas of the country the men were very skilled in the use of this implement. It is designed and intended for the use of threshing grain but can be easily used as a makeshift weapon with damage of 1D6+db. The normal starting skill for a flail as listed in the Chaosium Basic Role Playing book is 10%.

### British Weapons

**Nordenfelt Guns** – This weapon was developed in the 1870's by Swedish inventor Helge Palmcrantz. These guns were an early machine gun style with multiple barrels (3, 5, 10, and 12) and usually chambered for .303 rifle bullets for the Egyptian army. The largest version of this weapon had twelve barrels and was mounted on a gun carriage.

With a two man crew the weapon was capable of firing over 1000 rounds per minutes. One gunner was required to crank a handle on a two stroke mechanism. The first stroke would open a breech and extract a spent round and the second would load a fresh round into the breech and fire it. The second gun crew member was required to remove empty magazines and add new ones. The magazines were top mounted so that gun crew member had to stand up in plain view, making himself a target, to load the

both enemy formations and their fortifications.

The Krupp has a range of 4200 yards with a rate of fire of six to ten rounds per minute. The canister rounds were the heaviest and were filled with 316 steel balls separated by layers of clay.

Canister shot is essentially a giant shotgun shell with the shell casing disintegrating as soon as it is fired and spreading out in a cone shaped pattern.

The shrapnel shell was filled with 225 steel balls wrapped around an exploding core. It was designed to attack enemy troops at a distance. The shell would be fired and when it detonated near a target, the balls would spread outwards from the impact point doing damage in a radius proportional to the size of the explosion and number of fragments. The shell had the same anti-personnel effect as canister shot and grapeshot but effectively extended the range for that type of attack.

**Maxim Machine Gun** – This was the first fully automatic machine gun that used the force of a bullet firing to eject the spent casing and load the next round. It was water-cooled and therefore bulky and awkward and usually serviced by a small gun crew, although it could be fired by a single operator. The fact that it was fed with 250 round belts meant that it

was more efficient to operate with a gunner and a loader.

The weapon was developed by an American from the state of Maine named Hiram Maxim. It first saw use by the British army in Singapore in 1889 and was adopted as an infantry support weapon in the Egyptian Sudan campaign of the Sirdar Kitchener. Even the Nile gunboats were fitted with a number of Maxim machine guns to increase their ability to attack Dervish fortifications and troops along the riverbanks.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century slavery was still the most lucrative business in Sudan. Egypt had invaded and was occupying the country to make as much money as possible from the sale of the black tribal people. The country was being ruined under the Egyptian occupation. People's property was being confiscated, women were being ravished and seized as personal property, and those that spoke out or acted against the oppression were flogged or executed.

International pressures were mounting against Egypt in the late 1800's to stop the slave trade especially

Firearms	Base % Chance or Starting Skill	Damage Done	Base Range	Attacks per Round	Bullets	HPs Resistance	Malfunction
Nordenfelt .303 MG	15	2D6+4	110 yards	Burst	24-200 <sup>1</sup>	12	96
Krupp Cannon	01	8D6 / 2y <sup>2</sup>	500 yards	1/4	1	30	98
Maxim MG	15	2D6+4	120 yards	Burst	250	12	98
Rocket (tube & trough)	01	4D6 / 3y <sup>2</sup>	120 yards	Burst	1	3	96
Remington Rifle .40 cal	15	1D8+1D6+3	150 yards	1	5	10	98

1 = the number of rounds available varies depending on if the weapon is magazine fed (24) or hopper fed (200)

2 = as per the Call of Cthulhu rule book: "damage radius of explosion in yards; damage done in each yard beyond radius decreases by 1D6 per yard"

Maxim machine guns used by the British were chambered for the .303 standard rifle round. British military studies concluded that the firepower from just one Maxim was equivalent to thirty riflemen conducting rapid fire. The weapon acted as a force multiplier plus it provided psychological intimidation amongst the opposing forces. Despite this, at the battle of Omdurman, eyewitness reports indicate that the Dervishes conducted several charges against the Maxim positions, in some cases nearly overrunning the machine gunners.

**Rockets** – Although these weapons were capable of doing great damage in the vicinity where they exploded, 19<sup>th</sup> century rockets were not accurate.

The army fired them from v-channel troughs and the navy fired them from tubes to contain sparks and flame.

The effective range of these nine pound rockets was 1200 yards. They were designed to detonate upon impact and were originally intended to be used as an anti-cavalry weapon, along with an intention of spreading fear through any enemies who had never seen them.

## Mahdism/Dervish Movement/The Ansar

From 1821 to 1883 Egyptian forces occupied Sudan at the order of the Khedive. The success of the Governor-Generals placed in charge was based on how much annual tax they were able to collect.

after the United States Emancipation Proclamation of 1865. In response to this the Khedive arranged for the appointment of Charles Gordon, a highly regarded British military officer, to the position of Governor-General of Sudan. Gordon traveled through the country organizing the defenses of outposts, setting up supply stations along caravan routes and dealing directly with tribal leaders to settle disputes.

Gordon's direct actions in suppressing the slave trade created many economic hardships amongst the Arab tribes in Sudan who depended on that business for their living. There was no attempt made to assist these people and as time went by they became more desperate. Some switched to the ivory or gum Arabic trade to make a living but some slavers attempted to continue on with their business. They just had to be more cautious and ruthless.

By this time, Sudan was primed for a full-scale revolution and had just been waiting for the right leader under whose banner to gather.

Muhammad Ahmad was perceived as the holiest man in Sudan. He was a devout and very orthodox Muslim, a mystic and a student of Sufi teachings. His followers proclaimed that he exhibited all of the signs of the redeemer who would appear during the end times. He had the distinctive nose, a gap between his teeth and a mole that was spoken of in the prophecies of the Mahdi. In addition, the family of Muhammad Ahmed claimed that they were descended from the prophet Muhammad.

In 1881 Muhammad Ahmad proclaimed that he was the Mahdi sent to prepare for the second coming of

the Prophet Isa known in Christian lands as Jesus. The Egyptians declared that the 'Mahdi' was a dangerous heretic and sent their military to arrest him. Ahmad's followers drove off the Egyptian soldiers with rocks, sticks and a few spears. After this incident the Mahdi declared a jihad against the 'Turks' declaring them to be infidels and ordering all Sudanese to stop paying taxes. In addition, Ahmad also declared that since all 'Turks' were infidels that they should be killed as an affront to Islam. This effectively declared war on all Egyptians and foreign nationals within Sudan. The jihad was invoked by Muhammad Ahmad as having been inspired directly from Allah.

The Mahdi and his Ansar (followers) then traveled to the province of Kordofan recruiting more followers along the way from the Baggara tribes.

By 1882 the Egyptian government realized that they had a major problem with the Dervish movement and began looking for a solution to the problem. They appealed to the British government for solutions, but Prime Minister Gladstone and his government were reluctant to commit the British military into a conflict in Sudan, even though it was becoming clearer with each report that the Dervish movement was beginning to be a serious threat to the surrounding countries.

In 1883 the Mahdi led his Dervish followers to attack and defeat a large Egyptian force killing nearly 4000 troops. Following this they attacked the Egyptian garrison city of El Obeid. The defenders repelled the initial attack but the city was encircled and starved for nearly four months. With each victory, the Mahdi's forces was capturing rifles and ammunition and becoming more formidable.

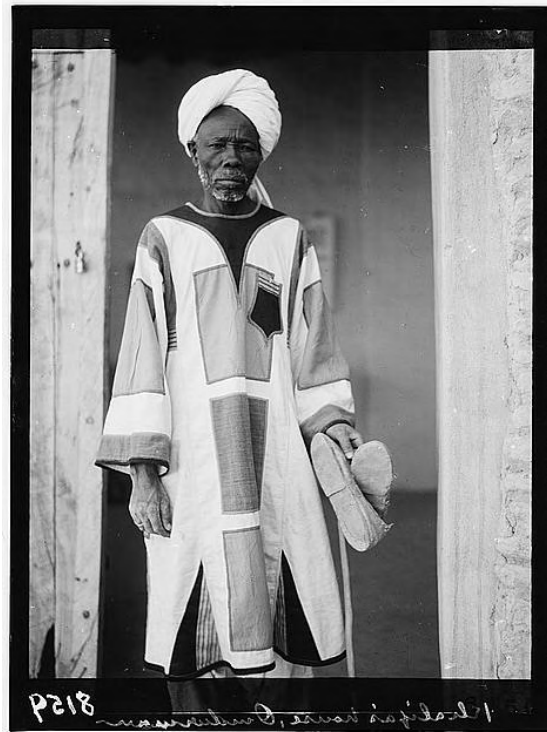
The Dervish forces by the end of 1883 had grown to over 40,000 and defeated an 8,000 man Egyptian army group led by Colonel William Hicks of the British Army.

After these striking victories by the Dervish forces in the west of Sudan, Osman Digna recognized the growing power of the Mahdi and threw his support behind the movement. Digna also had a grudge against the British who had forced him out of the slave trade.

The Mahdi sent Digna letters which he presented to the leaders of the fierce Hadendoa tribes. They immediately joined with the cause of the Mahdi to fight against the Egyptian and British occupiers.

The Hadendoa were very distinct in their appearance by combing butter through their hair which gave it an upright 'fuzzy' appearance. They are referred to in a poem by Rudyard Kipling titled 'Fuzzy Wuzzy.' The

British officers had a great deal of respect for the fighting prowess of the Hadendoa after they were able to break through a British infantry defensive square formation.



*Follower (Ansar) of the Mahdi wearing the Jibba with the distinctive color patches*

By the end of December 1883 the British government ordered the Egyptians to abandon Sudan and withdraw all of their military garrisons and civilian support staff. There was a great deal of civilian pressure on the Gladstone government to send General Gordon back to Sudan to resolve the problem. After some reluctance to do so, Gladstone gave the orders to re-enlist Gordon to go to Khartoum and do nothing more than oversee the evacuation of all Egyptian and European personnel. Gordon arrived in February 1884 and managed to evacuate nearly 2,500 people downriver to Egypt before the forces of the Mahdi laid siege to the city.

Khartoum was cut off from the outside world except for notes that General Gordon managed to have smuggled to Egypt. Britain did not want to get involved in a costly military campaign in an African nation from which they had little to gain and much to lose in the way of money and lives. As 1884 progressed, public pressure grew to send a rescue mission to retrieve Gordon from Khartoum where he was now trapped. Months went by with debates about the situation in Parliament and in the press. A further complication to the problem was that Gordon was refusing to try to flee from Khartoum. Instead he was strongly urging the British government to deal with the Mahdist movement before it spread beyond the

borders of Sudan and caused a Muslim uprising in Egypt and other nearby countries.

By August 1884, the Gladstone government in London bowed to pressure and ordered that a rescue mission be put together. The relief mission was commanded by General Garnet Wolseley with a mixed force of British and Egyptian troops along with a contingent of nearly four hundred Canadian Voyageurs, who were enlisted for their expertise to handle the expedition's boats through the difficult portions of the Nile. Wolseley began the advance southward along the Nile from Egypt in early October 1884. They met with great opposition from harassing forces of the Mahdi who were intent on slowing or stopping the British.

By the middle of November Gordon sent out a message that Khartoum would not be able to hold out beyond the early part of January 1885. The garrison of Khartoum had to be led by Gordon through rewards and swift punishment. Lawbreakers were shot and those that showed unwavering loyalty were rewarded with medals and promotions.

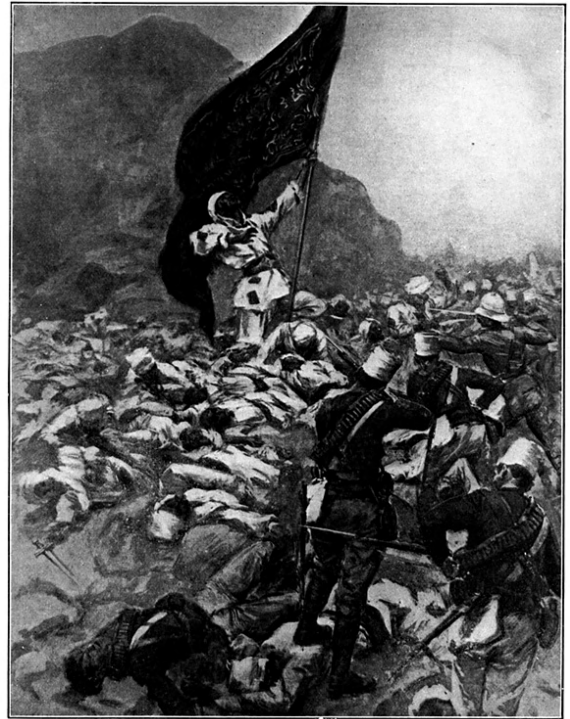
When the expedition was within two days travel of Khartoum the Dervish force of over 50,000 stormed the city on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 1885, taking heavy losses but overwhelming the defenders. Gordon confronted the Muslim fanatics as they entered the courtyard of the Governor-Generals mansion where they speared and hacked him to death, then chopped off his head and sent it as a trophy to their leader.

The relief expedition withdrew after a gunboat approached Khartoum close enough to confirm that the city had fallen to the Mahdi's followers. The flag had been removed from the Governor-General's mansion and the crew could see the Dervishes inside the city. This effectively meant that the Muslim fanatics had taken over all of Sudan. To avoid further loss of life, the relief expedition returned to Wadi Halfa and the mission was declared over. The Egyptian government and the British Consul-General Evelyn Baring, the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Cromer, both agreed that trying to hold Sudan in the face of the Dervish uprising was futile.

There was much criticism of the earlier delays of the Gladstone government to approve the relief mission and many British saw that as the primary reason why Gordon was killed. The loss of the election in June 1885 by Gladstone's Liberal party was partly attributed to the scandal caused by the failed mission.

With the taking of Khartoum by the Mahdist forces, their power was consolidated under a theocratic council. It was led by fundamentalist Muslims who had little education other than rote memorization of the Koran. This led to a full implementation of Sharia

laws and oppression of whatever freedoms that the people of Sudan had wrested from their Egyptian occupiers.



*Egyptian soldiers in combat with Dervish warriors under the black banner of the Mahdi and Khalifa.*

The black Jehadia, who had been the irregular troops of the Egyptian government in Sudan, were adopted as the regular army by the Khalifa. Most of the members of this unit had some training with firearms and fighting in formation. All of the members of this unit were drawn from the southern tribes of Sudan and were physically imposing individuals with an average height of well over six feet.

To further his control over his followers and to make sure that none of the tribal chiefs could conspire against him, the Mahdi insisted that all of them show up before him five times a day for the traditional Muslim prayers.

The Hadendoa under the leadership of Osman Digna had overwhelming victories with the defeat of Baker Pasha at Tokar and the siege of Khartoum which led to the death of General Gordon. The Hadendoa Dervish forces under Digna were also involved at the Battle of Tamai in March of 1884 where they lost but inflicted heavy casualties on the British and led them to abandon several garrisons that were cut off and surrounded.

In 1888 Osman Digna led an attack against the British forces that had established a series of defensive positions around the Sudan seaport of Saikin, which is on the shores of the Red Sea. The British defense was led by General Francis Grenfell





and during the heavy fighting Digna was badly injured. After this defeat, Digna joined the Dervish forces in Omdurman.

After the Mahdi died and the Khalifah assumed control of Sudan, he limited the carrying of firearms to his personal bodyguards and the armies along the frontier such as the Taaisha tribe in Darfur where he was born. All others were armed with swords, spears and bows.

During the next few years news continued to flow out of Sudan about atrocities being committed by the forces of the Kalifah. Several small covert rescue missions to free captive Europeans were conducted and some were successful. Father Joseph Ohrwalder managed to reach Egypt in 1891 and the former Governor of Darfur Rudolph von Slatin escaped from Omdurman and reached Egypt in March 1895, after having spent over eleven years in captivity.

### **I**ntelligence Service of the Egyptian Army

When the Egyptian government and the British advisors accepted that the Dervishes posed a military threat, the need for solid intelligence about Sudan became urgent. Colonel Reginald Wingate was appointed as the head of the Intelligence Service of the Egyptian Army and, under his direction, the organization became extraordinarily efficient.

Shortly after the fall of Khartoum, and for the following ten years, a network of spies and secret agents were developed. Their mission was to gather as much information as possible about the background of all areas of the country, weather information, and to produce maps with estimates of garrison sizes and patrol areas. Many of the agents regularly entered the major Dervish cities such as Omdurman, Dongola and whatever other areas that was accessible to traders and merchants.

Wingate realized that the people of Sudan were not a monolithic block of followers devoted to the Mahdi and the Khalifa. He knew that his agents could easily gather much information that would have long term benefits to either defend against a Dervish attack or would be required, should Egypt and Britain decide to attack Sudan.

The spies were variously disguised as merchants, tribal warriors or as women. Omdurman being the center of the Dervishes was conversely the easiest area to penetrate. Since there were so many people gathered in one spot, there was a daily need for food and other supplies to be delivered to the docks and markets of Omdurman to be later sold at the bazaar. There was regular boat and caravan traffic along the Nile to which many spies attached themselves. The greatest dangers was the wild desert nomad tribes that made their living by attacking weaker caravans

and the far ranging Dervish patrols from some towns along the Nile. These patrols would impose a 'tax' on merchants to take a portion of the goods for their own needs.

Much of the information available came from Charles Neufeld who became a captive of the Khalifa in 1887. He was venturing into northern Sudan as a merchant to purchase ivory and gum Arabic from the local tribes. To secure permission to cross into Sudan he made a deal with the commander of the Frontier Field Force, General Sir Frederick Stephenson. Neufeld would obtain the permission he required if he would make contact with a friendly Sudan tribal leader to tell him where a cache of rifles and ammunition had been concealed. General Stephenson was actively trying to organize a tribal revolt against the Khalifa by providing material and support to the tribes which were not followers of the Mahdi.

One of the most important pieces of information that the intelligence service put together was estimates of the Dervish troop levels throughout Sudan. In his book *The River War*, Sir Winston Churchill provides much of the information which was known about the Dervish forces in 1896. This information is presented along with the map on the following page.



## Major Dervish Garrisons

#	Location	Infantry	Spearmen	Cavalry	Guns	Bodyguards
1	Suarda	250	1,000	100	-	-
2	Dongola	2,400	5,000	500	8	-
3	Abu Hamed	400	200	100	4	-
4	Berber	1,600	1,300	500	6	-
5	Adarama	450	1,000	350	-	-
6	Kassala	800	1,400	400	-	-
7	Gedaref	4,500	1,000	600	4	-
8	Omdurman	4,000	45,000	3,500	72	11,000
9	Darfur & Kordofan	6,000	2,500	350	4	-
10	Gondokoro	1,800	4,500	-	3	-

## **N**otable Individuals

### **Muhammad Ahmad – the Mahdi**



The Mahdi was born on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November in 1845 as the son of a carpenter on a small Nile island near Dongola situated between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> cataracts. His family claimed a lineage that could be traced back to the Prophet Mohammed. A few years later the family moved to the island of Abba which is south of Khartoum. Abba was a major site along the Nile for repairing boats. It was there that the young Muhammad Ahmad became exposed to a cross section of humanity including ivory traders, slavers and government officials.

He was raised in a very religious household and at an early age he was sent to study with religious scholars. By the age of nine he could recite the entire Koran from memory.

During this time period the agents of the Egyptian Khedive, who were in Sudan to collect taxes, were seen as occupiers and oppressors. The Sudanese called all of these occupiers ‘Turks’.

In 1861 at the age of 16 Muhammad Ahmad became a Dervish and a student of Islamic mysticism and Sufism. After trying out a number of sects Ahmad settled on the Summaniya Tarika (sect) led by Sheikh Mohammed Sherif wad Nur al-Dayim who was a

well regarded holy man in Khartoum. The Sheikh’s son came of age and when the celebration was being planned Muhammed Ahmad protested that the singing and dancing at the feast did not conform to orthodox Muslim practice. The Sheikh expelled him from the Tarika for rebelling against his spiritual master. Ahmad was no longer part of any established order and had become disillusioned by his experience with what he had thought was a strict sect.

He dressed humbly in a white jibba robe covered with patches of many colors. On his head he wore a Mecca taqiyah, or skull cap, wrapped with a plain white cotton turban. He took up the life of the wandering dervish with a begging bowl and staff. There appears to be no record of his wanderings but it is certain that he travelled east to Abyssinia and through Kordofan in the west. Along the way he preached a doctrine that included ejecting the Turks and infidels who were occupying their country. He urged his listeners to cast off their bonds and join him on his path to heaven which he simply called “The Way”.

After a period of time Muhammad Ahmad returned to his family home on Abba Island and dug a hole on the muddy bank in which he lived. He quickly gained a reputation as a holy man and began to attract followers, which are referred to as the Ansar (followers). One of the first individuals to join him was Abdullahi Ibn Sayed Mohammed who in later years would become the Mahdi’s successor known as the Khalifa.

The followers began to donate money to Muhammad Ahmad and a mosque was constructed on Abba. When he was in a strong enough position he issued a jihad against the “Turks” (Egyptian and British occupiers) ordering all Muslims to stop paying taxes and to kill any that they could find since they were infidels. This began the Mahdist movement that would lead to the occupying forces being driven from Sudan, the death of Charles Gordon and nearly fifteen years of fundamentalist Muslim rule that would lead to the devastation of the country through war, cruelty, neglect, famine and disease.

Muhammed Ahmad died on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 1885 at the age of forty from typhus or a similar disease. His legacy lives on in the form of a fanatical brand of Islam called the Mahdist movement.

## Charles “Chinese” Gordon



When Gordon was tasked to deal with the self-appointed Mahdi in Sudan and evacuate the Europeans, he was no stranger to religious fanatics. When he first made a name for himself it was as a young officer in China during the Opium Wars.

In 1862 a Chinese schoolteacher, named Hsiu Chüan, was influenced by an American Baptist missionary to become a Christian. Soon after, he began to have visions that god was telling him directly to convert his countrymen. Other Chinese Christians began gathering around him and he began calling himself the Son of God and asking his followers to call him Heavenly King. The group organized with political overtones rather than religious and he soon started building an army. Gordon led the forces that opposed this uprising and was ruthless enough that when his own troops threatened a mutiny because he would not allow them to loot, he personally grabbed one of them at random and had him shot as an example.

Tales of Gordon's exploits in the Crimean war and, later in China, thrilled people throughout Britain and soon he was one of the best known military men of his age. Gordon had a well known distain for rewards and glory as well as contempt for officers who curried favor with politicians. He had an image as a cigar chomping soldier with sword in hand leading his men through breached Chinese castle walls.

In 1873 the Khedive of Egypt hired Gordon with the objective of having him take control of Sudan and eliminate corruption and slavery. The Khedive was reacting to pressure being placed on Egypt because they had supposedly been in control of Sudan since the 1820's and had taken no steps to end the trade in slavery.

Shortly after Gordon was sent to Khartoum in 1877 he ordered the construction of many forts along the

upper Nile. These outposts became homes to many of the Egyptian forces under Gordon's command. They married local women, learned to brew beer like the locals and even joined the tribal dances during the full moon.

Gordon did not believe in governing from a central location and spent the next year travelling by camel and Nile steamer all over the country. In one situation where there was a danger of an insurrection in Darfur, he rode to their camp with just an interpreter and negotiated a resolution.

In 1878 the Khedive summoned Gordon to Cairo to be part of a commission which was attempting to resolve Egypt's financial problems. The following year the Khedive was removed from his position under pressure from Britain and France. The Khedive was replaced by his son, who led Egypt under the direction of Viceroy Evelyn Baring (who later became Lord Cromer). At this point, Gordon returned to Khartoum and spent the next year suppressing the slave trade and putting down rebellions.

At the end of 1879 Gordon travelled to Abyssinia on a peace mission. The diplomatic attempt failed completely and Gordon ended up in prison. He was eventually released and sent to Massawa in Ethiopia. Gordon elected to return to Britain through the Red Sea and Suez Canal rather than venture overland back to Khartoum.

In 1883 it had become apparent to Britain that Sudan was a lost cause and not worth the expense and loss of life it would require to defeat the Dervish army. With the amount of Egyptian troops, civilian support staff and families present, a plan was needed to safely evacuate everybody back down the Nile to Egypt. The government of Prime Minister William Gladstone asked Gordon if he would return to Khartoum to oversee the evacuation of the country.

After accepting the offer to evacuate Sudan Gordon arrived back in Khartoum in February of 1884. Many people were successfully sent down the Nile to safety in Egypt, but by March the Mahdi was moving his forces to the vicinity of Khartoum to begin a siege. At that time Gordon would have still had the opportunity to travel downriver to Egypt. Seeing that there were more people that had to be evacuated, Gordon chose to stay and direct the fortification of Khartoum.

The Dervish siege of Khartoum started on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 1884 and the British government made a decision to abandon Sudan. For the next several months, public pressure mounted against Gladstone's government to send a rescue mission for Gordon. Many in the military and the government understood that there were still opportunities for Gordon to flee



to Egypt. He could use one of the Nile steamers at Khartoum to escape but had refused to do so while others remained.

It took until August of 1884 for approval to be granted for a rescue attempt to be headed by Field Marshal Garnet Wolseley. By the time that the expedition was organized and the troops and equipment in place, several months had passed. The actual rescue mission began travelling along the Nile towards Khartoum in November and reached Metemma on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 1885 where several gunboats were waiting to convey them to Khartoum.

The Mahdi knew that the rescue mission was getting close and on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 1885, the Dervish forces stormed the walls of Khartoum. The town was taken within hours and there was great loss of life. Gordon was killed in the courtyard of Governor-Generals palace and his head was chopped off to be presented to the Mahdi.

When Khartoum was surrounded by the forces of the Mahdi, there were signs that the stress was beginning to affect Gordon. He would dine alone at the table in his quarters with a mouse as his only companion. Gordon would permit the mouse to eat out of his plate. He had a turkey-cock that he would hold in his arms and rock to sleep at night. Gordon would spend long hours on the roof of his house with a telescope staring at the Mahdi's camp across the Nile in Omdurman and during these months of waiting his hair turned snow white.

### Colonel Reginald Wingate



Wingate's first commission after graduating from military college was to a British artillery unit in 1880. With the opportunities that foreign postings offered to brilliant young officers he accepted a position in

the Egyptian army in 1883. He spent time in Cairo as an aide-de-camp for the Sirdar, Sir Evelyn Wood.

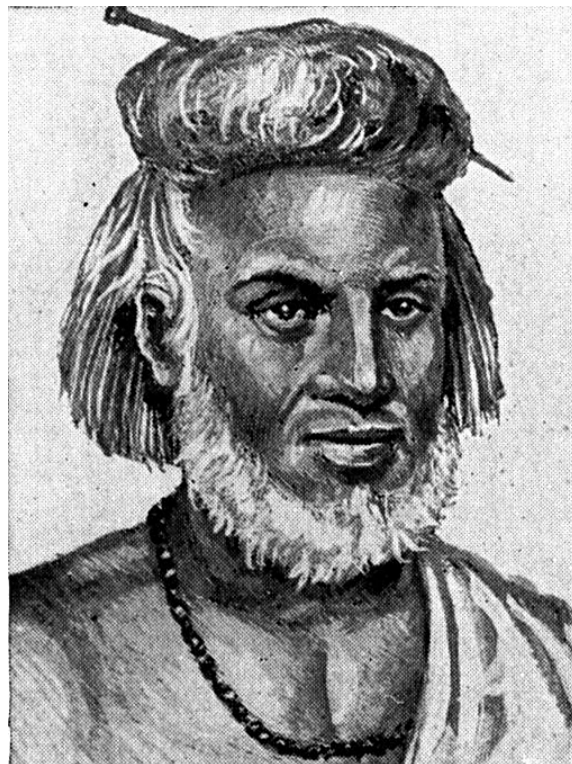
When the Kitchener campaign against the Dervishes was in the planning stages, Wingate was assigned to the Egyptian Military Intelligence branch, which he became director of in 1889.

Colonel Wingate was fluent in Arabic having spent time studying in Aden several years earlier. He quickly developed a network of spies and informants inside of Sudan. His primary task was gathering information about Dervish troop strengths but he also put together plans to help several European captives escape from Omdurman.

During the campaign of Kitchener to eliminate the dervish forces, Wingate took part in several of the battles. After the battle of Omdurman when the Khalifa's forces were defeated and scattered, Wingate personally led the mission to hunt down the Khalifa in Kordofan. That final battle took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 1899. The Khalifa and most of his loyal Emirs were killed and the remainder of the Dervish survivors surrendered.

In December of 1899, Evelyn Baring the British Consul-General in Egypt appointed Colonel Wingate as the Governor-General of Sudan and the Sirdar (Commander in chief) of the Egyptian army. Wingate remained at that post until 1917 when he was assigned as the British High Commissioner of Egypt.

### Osman Digna



Born in the mid-1830's as the son of a Kurdish merchant and a mother from the Hadendoa tribe near Suakin in eastern Sudan. His full name is Uthman Ben Abu Bakr Digna. He would eventually become known as Osman Digna throughout the European and British press.

Osman's family was wealthy and had been living in eastern Sudan for nearly three centuries. With his brothers and cousins he went into business dealing in cotton, ostrich feathers and slaves. His customers were the Arabs across the Red Sea and the business was thriving.

In 1877 the British began to close in on Osman's slavery business by stopping one of his ships and then raiding the homes of all of his family. Out of the slave trade, he worked in various businesses and ended up travelling to Berber looking for a way to make a living.

There does not seem to be any exact information about how Osman became involved with the Mahdi but one of his brothers was reported to be an early convert. In 1883 Osman Digna travelled to meet the Mahdi and his forces at El Obeid. The Mahdi made Osman an Emir and placed him in charge of the eastern provinces. Digna was provided with letters of authorization and proclamations to present to the chiefs. The only order that he had was to organize the coastal tribes to rise up against the Egyptian occupiers.

With the British and Egyptians taking away the livelihood from most of the slave merchants in eastern Sudan, the Hadendoa tribes were ready to rise up and readily followed Osman Digna.

The British nicknamed the Hadendoa warriors *Fuzzy Wuzzy* because of their traditional hair style. They were immortalized in a poem by Rudyard Kipling called *Fuzzy Wuzzy*. This poem makes reference to a battle where the Hadendoa warriors broke through a British infantry square formation. They were the only enemy force that ever managed to accomplish that feat.

Following is a portion of the Kipling poem:

*So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy,  
at your 'ome in the Soudan;  
You're a pore benighted 'eathen  
but a first-class fightin' man;  
An' 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy,  
with your 'ayrick 'ead of 'air-  
You big black boundin' beggar-  
for you broke a British square!*

The Hadendoa warriors that Osman ended up leading were fierce but did not have the modern rifles of the

Egyptian and British forces. In the first battle that Osman led against the small garrison at Sinkat he lost many men and received three wounds himself. This failure delayed the coastal tribes from joining him until he had proved himself. Later in the year Osman redeemed himself by leading successful battles at Sinkat, Tokar and El Teb. By the end of the year he had nearly 11,000 warriors under his command.

For the next several years Osman Digna played a part in many of the conflicts in Sudan as a trusted Emir of the Mahdi and then the Khalifah. He led a force at Omdurman and was one of the few that escaped. In the final battle against the Egyptian and British forces led by Colonel Wingate in November of 1899 Osman once again was one of the few to escape. He was later captured hiding in a cave with a servant and identified by his known scars and missing arm from the battle of Suakin. Osman Digna was then shipped to a prison in Egypt where he remained for eight years. He was not allowed to return to Sudan and died in Egypt in 1926.

#### **Abdallahi ibn Muhammad – the Khalifa**

Abdallahi was born in Darfur in the Baggara tribe in 1845. As a young man he was educated to be a religious scholar and soon became recognized as a holy man. He learned about the Mahdi and joined his followers in 1880. The following year the Mahdi named him as Khalifa and made Abdallahi one of his trusted lieutenants.

The Khalifa's first battle was at El Obeid against the Egyptian and British forces led by Colonel William Hicks. El Obeid was a massacre with over ninety percent of Hicks forces being killed. Abdallahi went on to fight in other actions and was the commander of the forces that laid siege to, and later stormed, the walls of Khartoum beside the Hadendoa warriors, led by Osman Digna.

Upon the death of the Mahdi in 1885 the Khalifa became the leader of the Dervish army. Although he had limited resources to operate with, he realized that after they had driven the Egyptian and British army from their country they had to defend their borders to deter an invasion.

Under his orders, in the north and east of Sudan, a large number of dervish troops were dispersed to patrol the major trade routes. This also reduced the population at Omdurman and made it far easier to manage the logistics required to feed the population.

During the following years the Khalifa did not allow Sudan to grow stagnant. His Dervish army invaded Ethiopia in 1887 and in the 1889 repulsed an Ethiopian invasion of 150,000 troops, killing Emperor John IV in the process. During this period



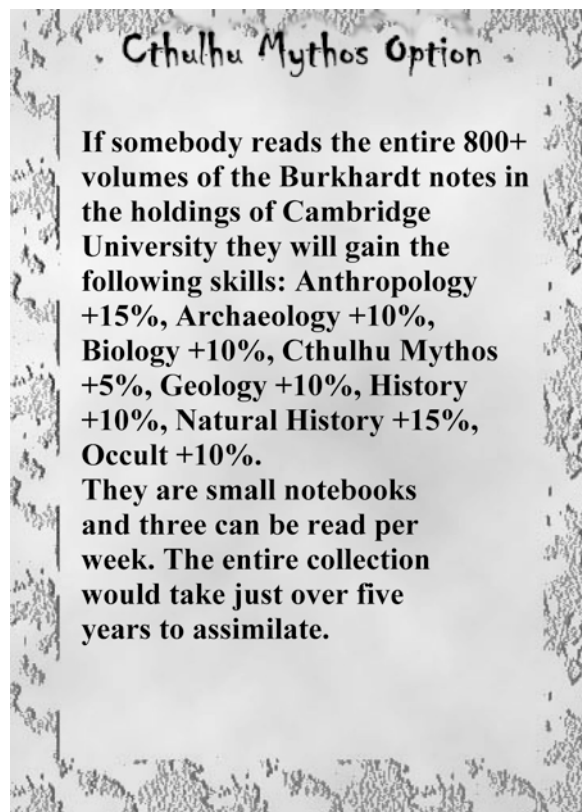
he also spent time locating skilled individuals to make as many of the river boats operational as possible. The Khalifa also freed some of his European captives with the agreement that they would assist him building an arsenal on the banks of the Nile at Omdurman. One of his major goals was to create a production facility to create gunpowder and produce mines to be placed in the Nile in the event of a British invasion.

When Kitchener invaded Sudan in 1896 and the dervish army continued to lose territory, the Khalifa had his forces assemble at Omdurman for a final confrontation with the European and Egyptian invaders. When the battle of Omdurman was fought on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1898, the Khalifa along with his trusted Emirs and bodyguards managed to escape the battlefield and flee to the province of Kordofan.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 1899 a force of Egyptian troops, led by Colonel Reginald Wingate, located the Khalifa and his followers near Umm Diwaikarat in Kordofan. A fierce last stand battle took place at the end of which the Khalifa and most of his bodyguards and Emirs were dead. The reconquest of Sudan by Egypt and Britain was complete.

#### **Johann Ludwig (aka John Lewis) Burckhardt**

This individual travelled throughout the Middle East 1809-1817. He studied Islamic law and Arabic in Syria and became fluent enough in the language to pass as a native. He travelled throughout the Nubian



Desert disguised as a Syrian merchant eventually working his way through the country to the coast of the Red Sea where in 1812 he went on pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina in Arabia. This predated Sir Richard Francis Burton's journey to Mecca by approximately 40 years.

He kept meticulous records of his years spent in the Middle East and, after his death from dysentery in 1817 in Cairo, his will included a donation of nearly eight hundred volumes of notes to Cambridge University.

**Rudolf von Slatin** – He was born in Austria in 1857 and was a poor student who dropped out of school at the age of 16. Realizing that he had no good prospects for a future in Europe, he accepted a position to be a clerk for a book seller in Cairo.

Slatin soon quit his job in Cairo and worked his way up the Nile to Khartoum. Sudan was a fascinating place for the teenager and he decided to travel across the country to visit a Catholic mission in the Nuba Mountains of Kordofan. Returning to Khartoum he applied to Charles Gordon to offer his services. Slatin decided to return to Austria to perform his mandatory military service before he received a reply from Gordon, who at that time was in Equatoria far to the south.

Gordon eventually accepted the offer of the young man and in January 1879 he arrived back at Khartoum. One of the things that he had written to Gordon about was the unfair taxation system that placed undue burdens on the poor so Gordon appointed the twenty-one year old as a Financial Inspector. The first obstacle that Slatin ran into was how to tax the trade between wealthy merchants of young women slaves. He was unable to develop a system to track any of these barter transactions and conceded that the scope of the task was far beyond his training and experience.

After resigning the position, he was reappointed by Gordon as Mudir (Governor) of Dara, which is a district located in the southwest of Darfur. When he arrived at his post in 1879, his main local government official was a nephew of Mohammed Ahmed, the man who would soon rise to power as the Mahdi and head of the Dervish army.

In 1881 the governor (Pasha) of Darfur was relieved of his position and Slatin was appointed to replace him. Suddenly this twenty-three year old man found himself in charge of a Sudan province that covered more than twice the area of England. Unfortunately for Slatin, this was an area where the Mahdi was gaining followers and early in 1883, he found himself cut off, surrounded by numerous uprisings and all of the telegraph lines to Khartoum cut. No supplies

could reach him and any messages he sent out had to be concealed in the messengers boot or sewn into their clothing.

Near the end of October 1883 Slatin and a mixed force of over 8,500 men marched on the Dervishes and had several hard fought conflicts of close combat with sword and spear. By the end of a week of daily battles there were less than 900 men remaining with nearly 200 of those wounded, including Slatin, who had been wounded three times. Slatin had lost a finger to a bullet, had another bullet lodged in one his legs that had flattened out against the bone and the third wound was where a hurled spear had stuck in his knee.

His incredible stamina and endurance was a morale booster for his men, but a few days later Slatin realized that his men would no longer follow him into battle because he was a Christian and considered unlucky. He announced to his men that he was converting to Islam and chose the Islamic name of Abdel Kader. The battles against the Mahdi's followers continued but Slatin learned that the messages that he was trying to smuggle out of Darfur were being intercepted. He began using other methods, such as cutting small slits in the sides of donkeys and placing messages beneath their skin.

At this point in his battles against the dervishes he had just over 500 men left out of the original 8,500 and there were no fellow Europeans within 600 miles. It became apparent to Slatin that there was no way to overcome the growing opposition so he met with many of the local chieftains to discuss the situation. This parlay concluded with Slatin submitting a letter to the Mahdi. It was a request for the Mahdi to send out a replacement governor and, to treat the people of the province well in exchange for Slatin ceasing military operations against the dervishes and handing over all of his authority.

Slatin was summoned to Kordofan to the camp of the Mahdi. He was greeted by the Khalifa whom Slatin soon learned was vain and easily flattered, but also very ruthless. The Mahdi decided to keep Slatin close to him so that he could be watched and, as a result, he spent the next eleven years in captivity, travelling with the Dervishes to Omdurman and witnessing many of the momentous events that took place during the Sudan conflicts.

The eventual escape of Slatin was arranged through the careful planning of Major Reginald Wingate, the head of the Egyptian Military Intelligence branch. After a grueling three week journey across the northern Sudan desert Slatin finally arrived at Aswan in March of 1895.

The Egyptian Khedive promoted Slatin to the position of Pasha and he accepted the position of a staff office for the Kitchener campaign to retake Sudan, at the end of which, he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General in the British Army.

**William Hicks** – By the authority of the Governor General of Sudan (Charles Gordon) William Hicks was appointed as Pasha of Kordofan. Hicks was a veteran of the British army and had served in India retiring with the rank of Colonel. When he accepted the post in Sudan he was promoted to the rank of Lewa which is the equivalent of a Major-General and appointed as a Pasha within Kordofan.

William Hicks has been described as man of medium height and build with a thick moustache and goatee. He was known for being impatient and not very diplomatic. Known to be stubborn and somewhat vain, he was unwilling to listen to suggestions from anybody around him and would make decisions based on his own training and experience.

During his time as Pasha the Egyptian and British forces were trying to suppress the slave trade in Sudan. The province of Kordofan was where the Mahdi began building a following and soon had a large army. At the beginning, the authorities in Egypt did not realize the severity of the problem and asked their representatives in the field to treat it like any other tribal uprising.

Hicks eventually convinced his superiors that he required more forces to deal with the situation and on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 1883, an expedition of 10,000 men set out from Khartoum to deal with the Mahdi.

After dealing with critical shortages of supplies and water, the Hicks expedition finally made contact with the vast army of the Mahdi on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November 1883. According to the eyewitness accounts of the few survivors, the battle was long and fierce and Colonel Hicks was one of the last men to fall having emptied his firearms he then drew his sword and fought to the death. Records indicate that out of the 10,000 troops only 300 escaped.

It was during the period when Hicks was marching on the Mahdi that Rudolf von Slatin was also fighting a large Dervish force in Darfur.



## Tewfik Pasha – Khedive of Egypt from 1879-1892



Born in 1852 as the son of Khedive Ismail but he managed to stay out of the political intrigues of Egypt by running a farm and making friends with his neighbors.

Under his father the Khedive Ismail, the Egyptians were rising up in protest of the occupation of their country by Britain and France. This was in 1878 when the Mahdi was gaining power in Sudan and the Egyptian debts to foreign powers were becoming a crisis. Ismail was forced to resign and his oldest son Tewfik became the Khedive in 1879.

Tewfik did not have any university education and he was faced with a bankrupt country, an army that was preparing to overthrow him, and a bureaucracy that was rife with corruption and incompetency.

As a puppet leader of European investors, Tewfik had very little support from his people or the Egyptian army. Shortly after he was appointed as Khedive, the level of anti-foreign feelings within Egypt became alarming. When one of the strongest anti-European Egyptian generals was named as Minister of War, he sent troops to the port of Alexandria and began constructing fortifications to drive off the British and French warships.

The British fleet assembled in the harbor of Alexandria in July 1882 and began bombarding the Egyptian army emplacements. This led to even more anti-European sentiments. The Egyptian army and people turned on the Khedive and he was forced to flee and ask for protection from Britain. Britain landed troops in force and took control of Egypt from Alexandria to Aswan. Since France did not participate in this reconquest, they effectively

relinquished any remaining influence that they might have had within Egypt.

This entire affair took several years to resolve and was a major distraction from dealing with the growing power of the Mahdi and the Dervish forces in Sudan.

Writings about Khedive Tewfik are quite flattering, indicating that he was a kind man who placed the interest of Egypt before his own. He sought good counsel but was willing to voice his concerns or dissent. Tewfik died in 1892 at a young age of 39. His successor was his eldest son Abbas Hilmi Pasha also known as Abbas II who was 18 years old at the time and attending university in Europe.

## Abbas Pasha – Khedive of Egypt from 1892-1914



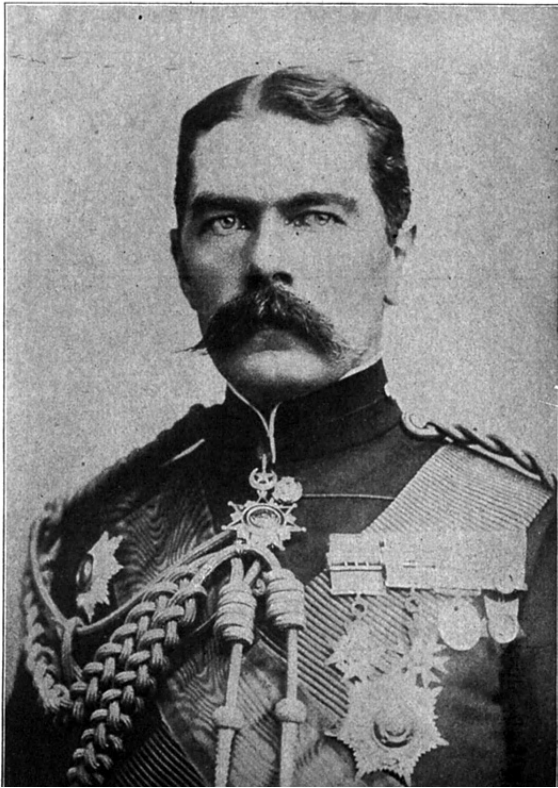
The son of Tewfik Pasha who assumed the position of Khedive after his father died. At the time he was a student at a university in Vienna. Abbas was only eighteen years old when he inherited the position and showed immediate signs that he was not fond of the British influence within Egypt.

There is some evidence that Abbas was secretly backing the nationalist movement that was attempting to politically maneuver to drive the British out of Egypt.

He eventually acknowledged that the British influence in Egypt was actually beneficial. After deferring to the judgment of Sir Evelyn Baring who was the British Consul-General based out of Cairo.

Abbas Pasha remained as the leader of Egypt until the beginning of World War I when Britain deposed him due to his sympathy towards the Ottoman Turks.

**Major-General Horatio Herbert Kitchener –  
Sirdar of the Egyptian Army**



Kitchener is one of the most notable British Generals from the late 1800's and served not only in North Africa, but served as Commander in Chief during the Boer War and as Cabinet Secretary of State for war during the British preparations for World War I. He was noted for his attention to every minute detail with any military undertaking that he was involved in and was reluctant to delegate authority.

In the years preceding his military campaign to retake Sudan from the Dervish forces of the Khalifa, Kitchener served as the Governor of Port Suakin on the Red Sea. In that location he led his forces in several actions against the Mahdi's trusted Emir in that area Osman Digna.

Born in Ireland as the oldest son of a military officer, Kitchener did not attend school until he entered the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. His classmates considered him unremarkable, and throughout his career he was considered as frosty and somewhat dull by those that served with him.

Kitchener spent time in Palestine studying archaeology and learning Arabic, much like Charles Gordon had done when he was still a young man.

In 1882 when Sir Evelyn Wood was recruiting officers to retrain the Egyptian army, Kitchener was attracted by the prospect of receiving an instant

promotion of two grades to Bimbashi (Major) and being placed as second-in-command of the cavalry.

After the news that the Major Hicks expedition was wiped out in Sudan, Kitchener and 1,000 troops was sent to the Egypt-Sudan border area to survey the condition of the roads. He remained in the Aswan area from April to June 1884 and while there organized a small defense force amongst the local tribes.

From July to September 1884 Kitchener worked between Aswan and Dongola in northern Sudan, bribing local tribes for their cooperation and coordinating a group of messengers that travelled to and from Khartoum carrying messages from Gordon.

During his time in northern Sudan Kitchener showed keenness that others had not given him credit for. Kitchener reported that the regular Egyptian military would not be a match for the fanaticism and fierceness of the Dervish army.

In September of 1884 when Lord Wolseley arrived in Egypt to launch the Gordon Relief Expedition up the Nile into Sudan, Kitchener was assigned to his force. Kitchener was appointed to the Intelligence Service and given the additional duty of Quartermaster-General for Dongola.

When it became clear that the Gordon Relief Expedition had failed and that Khartoum had fallen, the effort was abandoned and Kitchener soon found himself back in London studying Ottoman law.

Kitchener secured work on a commission in Zanzibar and shortly thereafter was appointed as the Governor-General of Eastern Sudan and the Red Sea Littoral. Unfortunately by this point in time, most of that area was being held by the forces of Osman Digna and the Hadendoa warriors known to the British as Fuzzy Wuzzy's.

In January of 1888 while on a patrol, Kitchener received a bullet wound to his jaw during a skirmish with Dervish troops. He was shipped home to England to recover from his wound and in 1891 he returned to Cairo and became head of the Egyptian Constabulary.

Sir Francis Grenfell resigned his position of Sirdar of the Egyptian army in April 1892 and Kitchener was recommended as his replacement by Sir Evelyn Baring. Baring realized that Kitchener was not the most popular nominee but he knew that he could stretch out any budget given to him. This thriftiness in a commanding officer did not make Kitchener a favorite of his officers and men. He would not authorize the replacement of anything until it was



badly worn out and that included uniforms and vital equipment.

Under Kitchener's command the Egyptian army was well trained. A number of Sudanese units were formed from the fierce black warriors from the southern equatorial regions that had fled the Dervishes. There were also a number of deserters from the Dervish army that joined the Egyptian forces.

In March of 1896 the Egyptian and British forces crossed into Sudan to begin the campaign to eliminate the Dervish forces, unseat the Khalifa and impose control over Sudan. This would culminate with the last great cavalry battle of the British Empire on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1898 at Omdurman.

Immediately after the battle of Omdurman, Kitchener had a large portion of Khartoum rebuilt as the capital from which he would rule Sudan as Governor-General until December of 1899.

When he left Sudan Kitchener became involved in the Boer War, and then served as the Commander-in-Chief of India, where he remained until 1909. It was Kitchener serving under Lord Curzon who issued the orders for the controversial Younghusband expedition into Tibet in 1904.

Kitchener returned to Egypt in 1911 in the capacity of Proconsul until 1914 when World War I began. He accepted the appointment to the Prime Ministers Cabinet as Secretary of State for War and was also promoted to Field Marshall. His career ended during a mission to Russia while he was aboard the HMS Hampshire when it struck a German mine and sank with all hands on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1916.



*Kitchener's image was used on the above iconic World War I recruiting poster. This poster style has been copied by many other countries for recruiting purposes.*

## **K**itchener's Campaign and the Battle of Omdurman

The first action of the campaign was on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1896 at Firket. It was a British attack on a well defended Dervish town that ended up in brutal house-to-house fighting with bayonet and sword. During the initial attack it was the black Sudanese X<sup>th</sup> under the command of Major Lewis that stormed the town walls and swept away the defenders. The X<sup>th</sup> was part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the Infantry Division under Colonel Hunter.

Kitchener's plan was to slowly work southward along the Nile towards Khartoum. To reduce the expense of moving supplies for the number of troops, he ordered that Dervish prisoners be put to work constructing a supply railway. The Khedive had demanded that before the Sirdar begin this undertaking that he do it with a minimum of expenses.

During the progression of the Egyptian and British forces along the Nile, a flotilla of heavily armed gunboats ranged ahead to destroy any Dervish forts that had been built within sight of the river. The newest of the boats were equipped with recently invented search lights that were used for nighttime illumination to prevent surprise attacks by the Dervish army. The dervishes had never seen artificial illumination and were quite frightened the first time they encountered it. Churchill speculated that the Dervishes might have thought that the searchlight was "the cold, pitiless eye of a demon".

### **Timeline of the Kitchener Campaign**

**12<sup>th</sup> of March 1896** – The Sirdar Kitchener receives a telegram from London with orders to launch a full-scale military operation up the Nile against Sudan.

**14<sup>th</sup> of March 1896** – British forces stationed at Cairo receive orders to strike their camp and prepare to travel south to Wadi Halfa in a few days.

**18<sup>th</sup> of March 1896** – A British logistics detachment is sent by rail to the most southern point of the Egyptian rail line to begin work on supply depots. This mission is under the command of Captain Welch.

**21<sup>st</sup> of March 1896** – Battery of Maxim machine guns with their crews depart by train along with many "Special Service" officers.

**22<sup>nd</sup> of March 1896** – The Sirdar Kitchener, Major Wingate and Slatin Pasha begin their journey to Wadi Halfa by train. They were accompanied by two full trains carrying the North Staffordshire Regiment.

**23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1896** – Kitchener and the North Staffordshire Regiment reaches the end of the rail line after 20 hours of travel. They boarded two of Cook's steamers which were waiting for them while a violent sandstorm raged around them. These ships were the paddle steamer Ramses the Great and the sternwheeler Ambigole. Each ship was towing two nuggars (barges) on which equipment was loaded.

**26<sup>th</sup> of March 1896** – Steamers stop at Luxor to take on provisions and the British troops have time for a quick tour of the ruins.

**29<sup>th</sup> of March 1896** – Kitchener's group reaches Aswan near the 1<sup>st</sup> Cataract and spends several days transferring personnel and equipment above the Cataract. After four hours of travel by camel across the desert they reach Shellal where four flat bottomed sternwheelers were waiting for them. There were three post boats the Tanjore, Kaibar, Akasheh, and the gunboat El Teb.

**2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1896** – The small flotilla arrives at Wadi Halfa in the late morning after having travelled over 800 miles in ten days. Over the next few weeks, more troops and supplies arrive. Kitchener dispatches missions along the river to secure water supplies and small towns. Mounted patrols are also sent out to look for any approaching enemy patrols.

**15<sup>th</sup> of April 1896** – A large body of troops departs Suakin to provide assistance to a force at Tokar that had been cut off and isolated by the forces of Osman Digna. A number of skirmishes were fought over the following twenty-four hours of the march. Late on the 16<sup>th</sup> the Tokar troops under the command of Major Sidney were located at Khor Whintri where they had retreated when Tokar fell. During the night and for the next full day the British column was under attack by Dervish forces. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of April, the column arrived back at Saukin.

**April 1896** – Much work was done in preparation of the coming conflict with the Dervish army. Telegraph lines were laid out by soldiers having one mile long spools of wire carried on camels which they laid across the desert with pole crews following behind. Military hospitals were constructed to deal with the wounded and rail line was laid across the desert towards the south at the rate of 500 yards per day.

**1<sup>st</sup> of May 1896** – A mixed British and Egyptian patrol of 240 men encounter a large Dervish force near Akasheh consisting of 300 Baggara cavalry and 1,000 spearmen. After three hours of close combat and rifle fire each side withdrew.

**1<sup>st</sup> of June 1896** – The vicinity had been cleared of Dervish forces so Sirdar Kitchener advanced his headquarters to Akasheh.



**7<sup>th</sup> of June 1896** – Two columns advance to where nearly 10,000 Dervishes were camped at Ferket and launched a four pronged attack at dawn. Fighting lasted several hours with nearly 1,000 dervishes killed and 500 captured. British and Egyptian losses were 20 killed and 80 wounded out of 2,100 soldiers.

**20<sup>th</sup> of June 1896** – Rail line reaches Akasheh and the telegraph lines are extended as far as Suarda.

**Mid-July to Mid-August 1896** – Cholera sweeps through the Egyptian and British troops killing over nine hundred men.

**4<sup>th</sup> of August 1896** – The rail line from Egypt is extended as far as Kosheh and men and equipment begins moving forward.

**August 1896** – During part of the month a fierce desert wind caused great hardship for the men. There were periods when the daytime temperature would reach 129°. In the last week of the month, uncommon and very heavy rain poured throughout the area where the Egyptian and British forces were camped. The camps were hit by flash-flooding but within days they were struck by fierce sandstorms which caused ten deaths. The flash-flood wiped out miles of rail to Kosheh that had to be rebuilt.

**Mid-August 1896** – Seven stern-wheeler Nile boats gather at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cataract to be guided above them. Four were gunboats, the Tamai, El Teb, Metemmeh, and Abu Klea. The other three were post-boats, the Kaibar, Dal, and Akasheh. The annual Nile flood had raised the level of the river enough that they could pass safely over the granite outcrops.

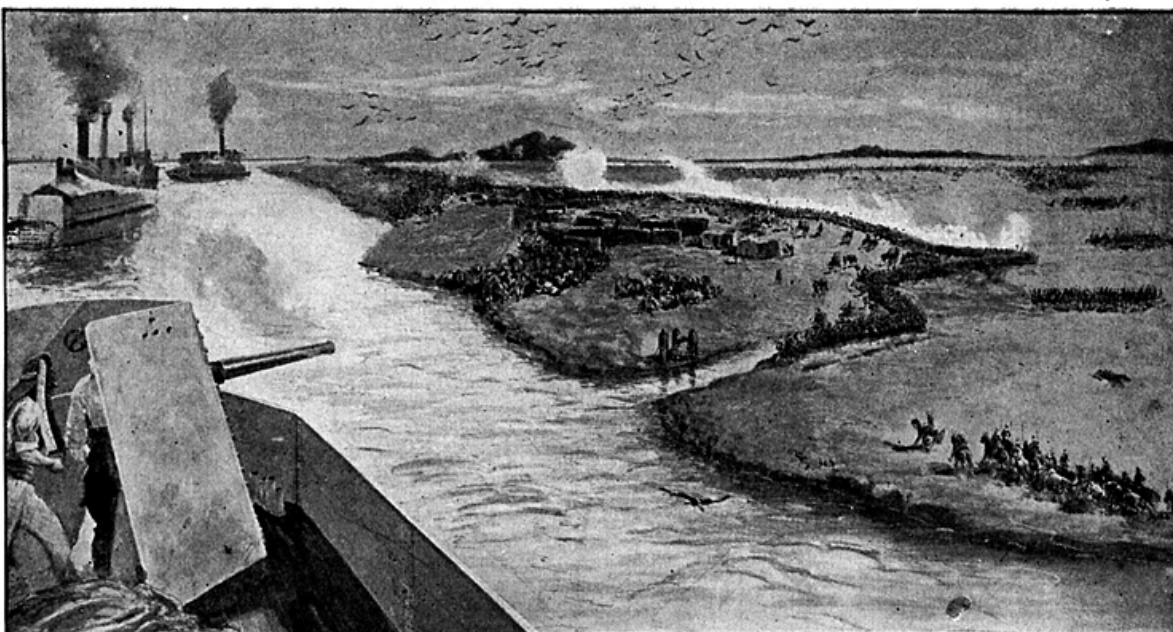
**10<sup>th</sup> of September 1896** – The remainder of the troops at Akasheh move forward by rail to Kosheh. The following day, the brand new gunboat Zafir assembled at Kosheh had its boiler blow up when it fired up the engine for the first time.

**12<sup>th</sup> of September 1896** – The flotilla of boats carrying the soldiers begin moving up the Nile. They travel by day and at night put to shore for the men to camp.

**18<sup>th</sup> of September 1896** – Soldiers who had been travelling on the gun and post boats are put on shore below the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cataract. Scouts had reported that the Dervishes had built forts on either side of the river above the Cataract to defend against the boats. The Soldiers march around the Cataract and on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> 15,000 men close in on Kerna. Before the soldiers reach Kerna, word is passed back that the Dervish force has withdrawn from the area using 27 gyassas to cross the river. The Dervish force massed on the western bank of the Nile and an all day artillery battle raged with the gunboats taking heavy fire and damage. Kitchener's forces won the day with the Dervishes taking heavy losses.

**23<sup>rd</sup> of September 1896** – The Egyptian and British forces continue advancing and in the pre-dawn hours attack Dongola with the gun boats shelling the town from the River. The battle continued for several hours before the Dervishes were routed.

**7<sup>th</sup> of October 1896** – Patrols drove the last of the Dervishes out of Dongola province and the troops from the gun boat Abu Klea raised the Egyptian flag at Meröe which lies just below the 4<sup>th</sup> Cataract.





**Spring of 1897** – The Khalifa issues orders that the fortifications of Omdurman be reinforced and issues orders for surrounding tribes to send more men to Omdurman's defense. The Jaalin tribe refuses, gathers at Metemmeh and prepares to defend it.

**1<sup>st</sup> of July 1897** – A large Dervish force sent by the Khalifa arrives at Metemmeh. After a fierce battle with great losses amongst the Jaalin and the Dervish army, the town falls.

**29<sup>th</sup> of July 1897** – Major-General Hunter sets out from Meröe with four regiments and an artillery unit to attack Abu Hamed. They arrived to attack the enemy position on the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> of August. The battle went on through the whole day in house-to-house fighting with sword and bayonet. While this battle was taking place the boat flotilla was moved above the 4<sup>th</sup> Cataract. During this passage the gun boat El Teb capsized.

**13<sup>th</sup> of September 1897** – After the gun boats drove the Dervish defenders inland with their combined fire, the Egyptian army moved up and captured the town of Berber. This town lies twenty miles south of the 5<sup>th</sup> Cataract and roughly an equal distance north of the Atbara River.

**23<sup>rd</sup> of September 1897** – Osman Digna with over 5,000 men was based at Adarama. When he found out about the advance of the Egyptian army he shipped his forces across the river and began moving towards Omdurman.

**15<sup>th</sup> of October 1897** – Three gun boats Zafir, Fatteh, and Nazir were sent south to reconnoiter the area near Metemmeh. They found that the forces of the Khalifa had constructed seven mud-brick forts along the river. Over the next few days, artillery duels took place and the maxim machine guns raked the shores whenever the Dervishes were spotted. It was estimated that nearly 1,000 Dervishes were killed. The boats had only one killed and several wounded.



*Nile gunboat with riflemen firing towards the shore.*

**29<sup>th</sup> of October 1897** – The Egyptian and British force moves forward and occupies the now deserted town of Adarama.

**1<sup>st</sup> of November 1897** – Kitchener sends another group of boats to Metemmeh. They discover that three more forts had been constructed. Another artillery exchange took place with several of the forts being destroyed and one of the Dervish tent encampments being heavily raked by fire from the Maxims. The boats continued on to inspect the base of the 6<sup>th</sup> Cataract and then returned to Adarama.

**25<sup>th</sup> of December 1897** – The Egyptian army reoccupied the fortress at Kassala. They had landed from the Red Sea at the port of Massowah and marched to Kassala.

**Late 1897** – The archaeologist E.A. Wallis Budge arrives at Meröe to begin excavations of pyramid shafts at nearby Jebel Barkal. He remained in that area until mid-1898.

**19<sup>th</sup> of March 1898** – A force of 18,900 Dervishes began marching towards Hudi on the Atbara River. Their intention was to meet up with Kitcheners force and stop it. They travelled up the Atbara River and constructed a strong defensive zariba at Nakheila.

**8<sup>th</sup> of April 1898** – In the early morning hours of Good Friday, British and Egyptian forces launch their attack on Nakheila where the Dervishes had time to reinforce their zariba with entrenchments. At 6:15 AM the artillery and rockets opened fire and when the fortifications were judged sufficiently weakened the infantry and cavalry was sent forward. Generals Gatacre and Hunter were at the front of the charge with fixed bayonets. Once inside the zariba several hours of hard trench clearing operations took place with point blank rifle fire and bloody bayonet work. The Egyptian and British casualties were 81 killed and 454 wounded. The Dervish forces had nearly 2,000 killed and 1,000 wounded.

**20<sup>th</sup> of April 1898** – Railhead is extended as far as Abadieh and the sections for three new gunboats travel from Egypt to be assembled in early June. These boats are the Sultan, Melik, and Sheikh.

**25<sup>th</sup> of July 1898** – Additional forces begin moving forward from Cairo. Summer quarters were prepared at Fort Atbara while preparations were made for the assault on Omdurman. The last of the reinforcements had departed from Cairo by the 9<sup>th</sup> of August arriving at Atbara on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**25<sup>th</sup> of August 1898** – The troops begin moving south along the Nile to begin the march on Omdurman.

**1<sup>st</sup> of September 1898** – At 1 PM the Egyptian and British forces set up camp one and a half miles south of Kerriri which placed them within six miles of Omdurman. Another force was sent down the east bank of the Nile to clear the Dervish forces as far as the Blue Nile. In the afternoon the gunboats landed howitzers on the riverbank across from Omdurman and the artillery barrage commenced. The Khalifa's forces were spotted within five miles of Kitchener's forces and it was a tense night with each group expecting the other to attack.

**2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1898** – The 25,800 man Egyptian and British army took up a position along the west bank of the Nile and at 6 AM the Dervish forces, which numbered over 52,000, came in sight approximately 3000 yards away. It turned into a long hard day of fighting with massed charges of 10,000 fanatical Dervish troops at a time that overwhelmed some of the Egyptian and British positions. Support from the gunboats in the river broke many of the charges and bought the time required for troops to withdraw and restore their formations. In one action the Khalifa's brother and his men marched toward the British under the black banner of the Khalifa until every last man had been shot. The most famous action of the day was the charge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Lancers with 320 men charging against 2,000 Dervishes. One of the men assigned to the 21<sup>st</sup> was young Winston Churchill. At that time the Dervish warriors had set up a line across the southwest corner of the battlefield to cover the withdrawal of the Khalifa and his surviving Emirs.

By 2:30 in the afternoon, the surviving Dervish army had retreated into the desert heading towards Kordofan. The Sheikhs of Omdurman met the advancing Egyptian and British troops with a flag of truce and offered a complete surrender. As the city of Omdurman was entered, street intersections had Maxim emplacements set up to defend against Baggara warrior stragglers that were still in the area. Kitchener's well planned attack was a complete success with only 77 killed and 529 wounded. Dervish losses were considerable with 10,800 bodies found on the battlefield and 350 within Omdurman. The number of Dervish wounded was estimated at 16,000.

**4<sup>th</sup> of September 1898** – Kitchener and his officers, along with a contingent representing the various military units involved in the Sudan campaign, crossed the Nile to Khartoum to hold a ceremony at the Governor-Generals residence where Charles Gordon was killed. Kitchener ordered the rubble of Khartoum be cleared and for rebuilding to begin immediately.

**7<sup>th</sup> of September 1898** – Sirdar Kitchener receives a telegram that the French army had a small force occupying Fashoda far in the south of Sudan.

**10<sup>th</sup> of September 1898** – Kitchener with a military escort travels south from Khartoum up the White Nile towards Fashoda. They capture any Dervish steam boats that they encounter en route. The group arrived at Fashoda on the 21<sup>st</sup> and, after establishing a base, Kitchener decided that this was a diplomatic issue and returned to Khartoum. The incident nearly developed into a full-scale war between France and England but France finally ordered their men to withdraw from Fashoda on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November. Fashoda was renamed Kodok in an attempt to erase the incident from the historical record.

**September 1898** – Throughout the remainder of the month, constant patrols of gunboats and mounted soldiers confronted small pockets of Dervish warriors. The Egyptian and British forces accepted surrenders and fought those that resisted.

**24<sup>th</sup> of November 1899** – Major Reginald Wingate leads the force that finally catches up with the remnants of the Kahlifah at Umm Diwaykarat. The Dervish force had prepared to make their last stand at this location in the Nuba Mountains with approximately 10,000 warriors. Wingate approached the Dervish camp at night with 8,000 men and launched a two-pronged attack to hit them with a heavy crossfire from the Maxim battery. When the Khalifa realized that they had lost the battle, he called his closest Emir's to sit with him. The Khalifa would not surrender so he, his Emirs and the bodyguards calmly sat there waiting to be shot by the Egyptian and British forces. Wingate's force suffered 3 men killed and 23 wounded. The Dervish forces suffered 1,000 killed and wounded and had 3,000 captured with the remainder fleeing back to their homes. Once again, the elusive Osman Digna escaped the field of battle but was eventually captured on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January 1900.

#### **Omdurman Armory – partial list of contents**

To the British soldiers who entered the armory of the Khalifah's Dervish forces, the contents gave the appearance of a museum. War drums and shields from the southern equatorial regions were stacked next to flintlocks and barrels of gunpowder. Captured bayonets were stored beside transport equipment for hundreds of camels. Searching through the piles of obsolete equipment even revealed at least one crusader helmet.

#### **Devastation of the Dervish War**

*Statistics from an article by E.A. Wallis Budge*

<b>Province</b>	<b>Population Before Dervish Government</b>	<b>Population in 1903 After Dervish Government</b>
Bahr al-Ghazâl	1,500,000	400,000

Berber	800,000	100,000
Dongola	300,000	110,000
Fâ-Shôda	900,000	150,000
Kasala	500,000	80,000
Khartûm	700,000	90,000
Kordôfân	1,800,000	550,000
Red Sea Province	320,000	60,000
Sennaar	1,100,000	150,000
Other Areas	605,000	180,000
TOTALS	8,525,000	1,870,000

*Total deaths due to disease, famine and warfare during the period of Dervish rule = 6,655,000 men, women and children.*

### **Kitchener's Soldiers**

During the campaign to invade Sudan and overthrow the Dervish forces, Kitchener made use of Egyptian, British, Indian and Sudanese units.

The standard rifle that was issued to infantrymen was an American made Remington rifle chambered for a .40 caliber round. (Some units may have still been using the older Martini-Henry rifles in .577 caliber.) Each soldier was also issued the following:

- 90 to 200 rounds of rifle ammunition (This would vary based on the mission)
- 1 bayonet
- 30 revolver rounds for officers for either a Mark I or II .455 caliber Webley revolver
- Officers and mounted troops were issued a cavalry saber
- Water bottle or canteen
- 2 to 6 days supply of rations
- 1 blanket
- Haversack – canvas bag with single shoulder strap to sling over one shoulder
- Field dressing
- 1 Khaki uniform
- 1 Dress red jacket
- 1 Linen ticket to be sewn inside their uniform for identification purposes. It contained the following information

*Description Card for Active Service Army form B2067*

*Number and Name*

*Rank and Regiment*

*Nearest of Kin*

*Residing At*

*Signature of Officer Commanding Company*

### **Standard British Marching Square**

The front facing consists of marching infantry units. The hospital corps, baggage and gun carriages were kept in the centre of the square.

While on the move the camel corps mounted cavalry would form the rear and flank guards. When the

square would come to a halt, the camel corps would fall to the back of the square and assume a rear facing.

## **T** **Travel**

In the 1870's when Charles Gordon was sent to Sudan there were only two communities of any size. These were Khartoum and El Obeid, the latter being the capital of Kordofan province. The country had virtually no roads and no rail lines and the primary means of getting around was boats on waterways, camel caravans and walking.

There are many small islands in the Nile River where there have been small villages for thousands of years. Travelers as late as the 1940's commented on how inbred the people were in these isolated communities. It was also noted that although the people declare that they are Muslim, their actual religious practices involves magic and amulets and many other simple folk beliefs and superstitions.

### **Baksheesh**

The word means gratuity and is used as a system of motivation and to gain preferred treatment from the locals. It can also refer to bribery that is necessary to accomplish things such as gaining access to a building or making an appointment with an official. Europeans and North Americans who dispense cash too freely as baksheesh can expect to be followed and waylaid by robbers.

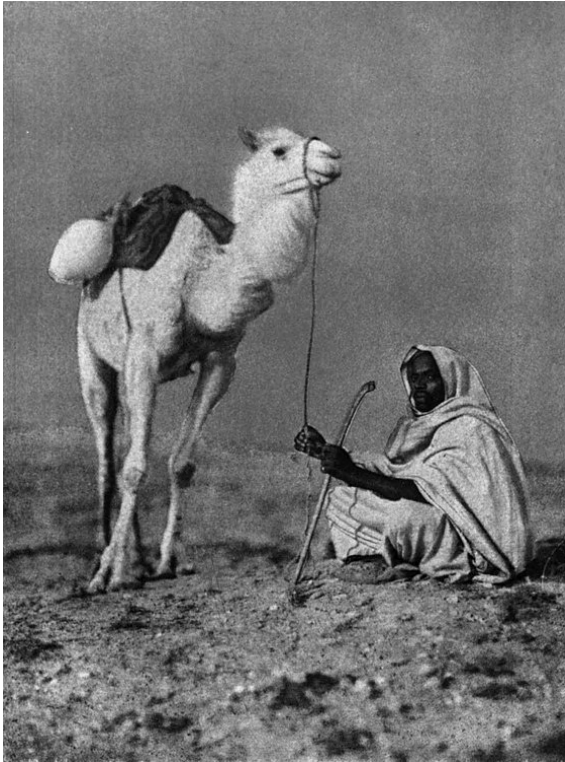
### **Camels**

Some caravans had camels saddled with cacolets which were designed for carrying two riders with padded seats on each side. In the memoirs of many of the British military men who campaigned in Sudan they observed that they could push a camel for seven days without water. At the end of the seven days if the camel was allowed to drink as much as it wanted, they could push it for another seven days. Having done this for two successive seven day periods, there was a very high likelihood that the camel would die.

The African camel is also referred to as a dromedary or Arabian camel and has one hump. This is in contrast to the two humped central Asian bactrian camel.



## Camels



**STR** 4D6+18  
**CON** 2D6+6  
**SIZ** 4D6+21  
**POW** 3D6  
**DEX** 3D6  
**HP:** 24  
**Move:** 10  
**Damage Bonus:** +3D6  
**Weapon:** Bite 25%, damage 1D6  
Kick 10%, damage 1D6+db  
Spit 40%, damage -1D6 APP (temporary loss)  
**Armor:** 3 point hide.  
**Skills:** Go Without Water 85%, Malinger 60%.

## Caravans

The regular trade route from Aswan to Berber across the desert would take three weeks. There was very little water to be had along the way and individuals were responsible for themselves and their animals. At camping spots each traveler would sleep on top of their gear and goods to prevent their fellow travelers from robbing them.

Arranging a caravan rather than joining one usually requires that two-thirds of the contracted price be paid up front with the remainder due at the end of the journey.

Experienced travelers in the region recommended that when a caravan was assembled the individuals hired be from different tribes and religions or sects. This was to minimize the chances of them conspiring

against their employers. This diversity also provided a broader range of language skills for when translation was required. A further recommendation was for 25% of the hired help to be armed guards and the remainder unarmed laborers or fellaheen (Arabic word for farmer or peasant worker).

## Dahabeahs

These are barge style shallow bottomed boats with two or more sails. They have been used for travel and cargo on the Nile for several thousand years. Drawings of them appear on tomb walls with the design virtually the same as the boats used in modern times. The larger versions are capable of carrying up to twelve passengers.



## Drinking Water Hazards

Travelers have discovered that drinking the water directly from the Nile can be hazardous to their health. Some of the afflictions that can be contracted are Bilharzia, Guinea Worm and the danger of blindness.

## Feluccas

Lateen sail Nile boats with one or two masts used to carry passengers or cargo. They typically have a two or three man crew and can carry up to ten passengers.

## Firman

A firman is an official decree from the authorities of a Muslim state. During the time of the Khedives in Egypt, starting with Muhammed Ali Pasha, civilians wishing to travel from Egypt into Sudan had to obtain permission from the Khedive. The process for this involved the spreading of baksheesh among lower level civil servants to eventually reach somebody who was able to process the request.

## Haboob

These are massive sandstorms that move quickly and usually last less than one hour. They can be seen in the distance moving across the countryside like a

wall of brown mountains blocking out the sun. Witnesses to these sandstorms state that when they engulf you it is impossible to even see your hand in front of your face. The swirling sand is choking unless you have a cloth to cover your face.

### Mules

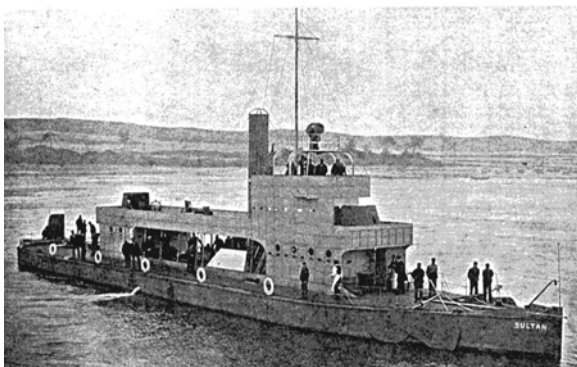
There are mules available in Sudan which are used in some of the non-desert areas as pack animals. A loaded mule can travel 12 miles per day and can carry 120 pounds.

### Nuggars / Gyassas

These are single mast Nile boats that are capable of carrying ten to twenty tons of cargo. They can be sailed with a very small crew of two to three persons and have sufficient room to carry up to six passengers, if they are willing to sleep on deck.



### Nile Gunboats



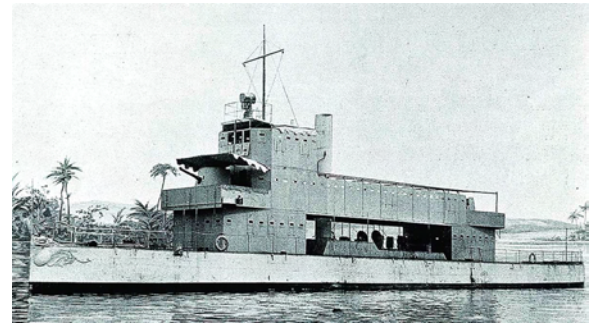
*Nile Gunboat Sultan – courtesy of the Melik Society*

In 1896 the gunboats of the Zaphir type were coming into service. They were flat-bottomed sternwheelers constructed entirely of steel. With three decks, each boat could accommodate up to three hundred men. They were designed at the Nile Engine Works in Cairo. The boats were transported to the Nile in sections and assembled on site. These gunboats were 135 feet in length, 24 feet in beam and had a hull

draft of only 42 inches. The Zaphir type was equipped with the following armament:

- 1 – 12 pounder fast firing gun facing forward
- 2 – 6 pounder fast firing guns
- 1 – howitzer
- 12 – Maxim machine guns – in 1898 the number was reduced to 4

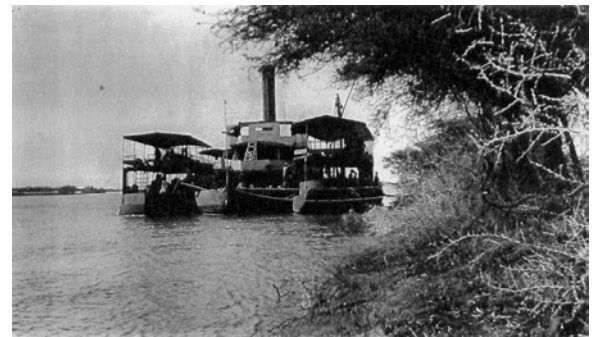
It was soon discovered that when the water level of the Nile was low that the Maxim's were mounted too low to effectively cover the riverbanks. To resolve the issue two platforms were constructed to raise the level of the guns by a total of twelve feet.



*Nile gunboat Melik – courtesy of the Melik Society*

There were a number of older stern-wheeler boats that were primarily used for the transport of troops and materials such as equipment and provisions. They had a greater towing capacity than the gunboats and in many cases travelled with other boats lashed port and starboard to increase their carrying capacity.

The Tamai class of gunboats was of an older design dating back to the Gordon Relief Expedition. They were approximately ninety feet in length and were equipped with one 90 mm Krupp gun, having a bow facing, and two .45 Nordenfelts. These boats were known for their towing capacity and operational reliability. They were designed to be simple to operate and simple to repair.



*Zaphir (center) – courtesy of the Melik Society*

During the Kitchener campaign these boats proved invaluable to suppress the dervish forces from establishing defensive positions along the Nile. With each movement forward the boats would be moved

above any cataract obstructing their path after which they would begin a series of attacks against any dervish river outposts. Their constant harassment and interdiction of the Nile served to diminish any supplies that could reach Omdurman by river.

### Simoom

During the hottest period of the year from mid-July to Mid-August, one of the gravest dangers in the northern desert area of Sudan is the Simoom. It is described as a blasting column of wind that gathers sand and debris like a waterspout and slowly travels across open areas. Travelers caught in one of these sand spouts are soon overcome with its extreme heat. The amount of sand and dust in the air can be choking. Travelers that do not find shelter when a simoom is heading in their direction risk injury, or even death from temperatures that can exceed 130°. A typical simoom lasts for twenty minutes. It is the force of these storms that sculpt much of the landscape of the Saharan and Arabian deserts. The word simoom originates from the Arabic word *samma* meaning poison.



*Illustration of a series of simooms with the appearance of water spouts.*

### Sudd

This is a large marshy wetland area along the Nile that is situated on the White Nile roughly halfway between Khartoum and Sudan's southern border. The area covered by the Sudd varies yearly and in a wet year can grow to a size of over 50,000 square miles. It is an area of the White Nile that is extremely difficult to navigate due to constantly changing channels and lagoons choked with thick reed and papyrus vegetation that grows as high as twelve feet tall. Large portions of this matted vegetation drifts together and can block riverboats from travelling along the river.

When the channels were unobstructed in the Sudd region, a riverboat could make the thousand mile trip from Khartoum to Gondokoro in approximately forty days.

### Hunter's Traps

The clever traps of the hunters in both south and north Sudan can be hazardous to travelers who may not be aware of them. In Darfur and parts of Kordofan, villagers would capture poisonous snakes and bore holes through their tails through which they would pass a cord. The snakes were then hung near water holes to bite animals that came to drink. The animals would die from the bite and the meat would be used to feed the village.

In the southern jungles many tribes use snares, pit traps and spiked deadfalls. Each of these traps is capable of injuring or killing unwary travelers. Some of the pit traps and deadfalls are constructed large enough to capture or kill a rhinoceros.

### Water

For any travelers in Sudan water is a major issue. Water holes, which are scarce to begin with, are frequently fouled by animal droppings or bodies. Dry river beds can be a source of water by digging down from one to six feet below the surface. In forested areas where the baobab or *adansonia* tree grows, natives make use of the large barrel shaped trunk which stores up to 32,000 gallons of water during the rainy season.

### Food

One of the customs of Sudan is to offer a traveler food even if that person is a prisoner or enemy. Indicating that you have a lack of appetite after being offered food is regarded by the host as a sign of fear. Depending on the situation this could be interpreted that you intend wrongdoing and feel that you might be caught, or that you have already done something and deserve to be punished.

As with other Arab countries, showing hospitality to a guest is very important. If the guest is of a high status a sheep will be slaughtered to provide a feast.

In times of famine food was so scarce that there are documented reports of people eating tallow candles or boiling their boot and belt leather to make a thin broth.

Following one terrible famine during the time of the Khalifa, plagues of locusts descended on the country. Many of the people netted as many of the insects as they could to eat. Locusts can be stir-fried, boiled in a soup-like mixture or spitted and roasted over an open fire. They are rich in protein (sixty percent by weight) and can be ground up and added to other dishes to make them more nutritious.



In the south there is a tradition in times of plenty that the men of the tribe do not eat leftovers. That is considered a miserly thing to do and all of the extra food is given to the women and children. This custom is forgotten in times of famine. Cattle is more important to them alive for the milk they provide so, instead of killing them for meat, they will drain some blood from the animals and consume it. This is considered a great shame and somewhat disgusting to many of the tribes.

There are many online resources for Sudanese recipes and the following are a sample of the more traditional ones that investigators might be served.

**Aseeda** – Sudanese dish consisting of grain flour mixed with water and yeast. The mixture is allowed to rise for five hours or more and then spooned into boiling water until the contents of the pot thickens. It is then dropped onto a plate to serve and usually covered with a sauce made of spices and peppers.

**Camel Liver** – Traditionally this delicacy is eaten raw and served with salt and red pepper. It is not a recommended dish for travelers to sample since it has been recognized that the raw meat can provide a vector for plague to spread from camels to humans. If an investigator eats raw camel liver there is a 5% chance that it carries the infection which the investigator will contract with a failed CON x 5 roll.

**Fassikh** – This is a popular traditional dish from the central area of Sudan made from fish cooked in an onion and tomato sauce.

**Kissra (Soudan Biscuit)** – Kissra is a style of dried flatbread used by travelers in the Soudan. It was a favored food of the Dervish cavalry patrols since it was light, nutritious and did not easily spoil. It is made from sorghum flour that is allowed to ferment for two or three days and then poured as a thin mixture into a hot oiled pan.

**Moukhbaza** – A traditional dish from the eastern area of Sudan made out of banana paste.

**Nyaba** – A paste meant to be scooped up and eaten with flatbread. It is made by blending ground peanuts into water, creating a thin paste. Spinach leaves or other greens are then boiled in a bit of chicken stock until the pot boils dry. The peanut paste is then mixed into the boiled greens, salt is added and it is ready to be served.

**Peanuts** – These are grown extensively in the southern areas of Sudan and used in many dishes. The oil is used for cooking and the ground peanuts are used as an addition to other dishes such as onion and tomato curry.

**Tagalia** – Finely chopped meat fried in sesame or peanut oil with onions and garlic. The mixture is then boiled down in water with tomato paste, spices and okra powder to thicken it.

**Waykaab** – A dish made by bringing a pot of milk to a boil, adding salt and baking powder and then stirring in okra powder until it thickens and turns slimy.

**White Nile Perch** – Onion is fried in oil until soft then garlic, salt, and tomato paste is added. The mixture is stirred until the onion is golden brown, then coriander seed, salt and pepper is added. Lemon juice is added to the mixture along with thick slices of perch steak. Green pepper and slices of tomato is placed on top of the fish along with other sliced root vegetables (carrots and potatoes). After cooking for a further five minutes sultanas and dried apricots are added along with coriander leaves. The cooking pot or pan is then covered until the fish is cooked.

## General Reference Material

### Military Ranks in the Egyptian and Sudanese Armies

Rank	British Equivalent
Sirdar	Commander-in-Chief
Ferik (Pasha)	Lieutenant General
Lewa (Pasha)	Major General
Miralai (Bey)	Brigadier General or Colonel
Kaimakam (Bey)	Lieutenant Colonel
Bimbashi	Major
Saghkologasi	Adjutant Major
Yuzbashi	Captain
Mulazim Awal	Lieutenant
Mulazim Tani	Second Lieutenant
Solkologasi	Quartermaster
Bash Shawish	Sergeant Major
Bulk Amin	Quartermaster Sergeant
Shawish	Sergeant
Ombashi	Corporal
Nafar	Private

Pasha = Originally an Ottoman Turkish title for a governor or general. In Egypt and Sudan it was an honorific with the equivalent of a British Lord.

Bey = Originally an Ottoman Turkish title for a chieftan or leader of a tribal group. In Egypt and Sudan it was used for an individual in charge of the administration of a province or other large area.

Lieutenant = Keepers are reminded that the pronunciation of this military title in the British military is *left-tenant*.





## Muslim Prayer Times

Salah is the term for the mandatory daily prayers which are performed five times a day. They are mandatory for everybody beyond the age of puberty with the exception of women who are menstruating.

Missing daily prayer is considered an offence since prayer is considered to be one of the Pillars of Islam. The mass prayer sessions held before the Mahdi and the Khalifa in Sudan was also used as a form of roll call. If people were missing they would be questioned about what they had been doing. This ensured that their chieftains and other followers could not slip away to conspire against them.

The clothing that is worn and the place of prayer must be clean. In Sudan during the time of the Mahdi, the majority of people belonged to the sect of Sunni Islam. Before prayer their ritual ablutions included washing their hands, face, and feet three times in a specific order. If water was not available, the ablutions could be performed with clean sand.

Following are the names of the daily prayers and the times that they are required to be performed.

Fajr – Between dawn and sunrise.

Dhuhr – Between noon and Asr.

Asr – Begins in the afternoon when the sun is close enough to the horizon that an objects shadow lengthens to twice the height of the actual object.

Maghrib – After sunset until dusk.

Isha'a – Sometime between dusk and dawn and for members of the Shia sect between dusk and midnight.

## The Five Pillars of Islam

Hajj – Every Muslim has an obligation to make a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca once in their lifetime if they can afford it.

Salat – A requirement to pray five times a day facing towards the Kaaba in Mecca. The prayers are intended to express thanks and worship to Allah. The prayers should be conducted in Arabic unless the individual cannot speak that language in which case their own native language is acceptable.

Sawm – Periods of ritual fasting either during the holy month of Ramadan or for purposes of repentance.

Shahadah – The creed of submission to Allah stated as *'I testify that there is no god but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah'*.

These are the first words said to a newborn baby and the first words that children are taught when they begin to speak. Converts are required to recite the

creed as a sign of their submission and acceptance of Islam.

Zakat – A requirement for giving to charity based on the individuals wealth. It is the responsibility of the rich to ease the hardships of the poor.

## Calendars for the Sudan Gaslight Period

### Moon Phases

☾ = First Quarter

○ = Full Moon

☾ = Last Quarter

● = New Moon

January 1897						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3●	4	5	6	7	8	9
10☾	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18○	19	20	21	22	23
24	25☾	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 1897						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1●	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9☾	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17○	18	19	20
21	22	23	24☾	25	26	27
28						

March 1897						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3●	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11☾	12	13
14	15	16	17	18○	19	20
21	22	23	24☾	25☾	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 1897						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2●	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10☾
11	12	13	14	15	16	17○
18	19	20	21	22	23☾	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 1897						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1●
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9☾	10	11	12	13	14	15
16○	17	18	19	20	21	22
23☾	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31●					

June 1897						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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## **S**cenarios

*Please note that the keeper has permission to make copies of the player handouts for game purposes.*

## **S**phere of Influence

The starting point of the scenario is set in the month of July 1898. Early on the investigators will be travelling to gather clues with the ultimate goal of arriving at the ruins of the city of Khartoum on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1898. The keeper should adjust travel times and place roadblocks wherever they feel it is necessary. It should not be an issue early on in the scenario, but when they reach the Egypt section, they can be held up for several days or even weeks while waiting for travel authorizations or press credentials. The keeper can speed things up in the Egypt section by providing transportation to the investigators by rail instead of by boat.

This scenario works best with a group of three to five investigators with a variety of backgrounds. There may be periods when combat with native bandits occurs, so some skill in firearms or the use of a sword is desirable.

### **Keeper Information**

In 763 AD Ti-srong-de-tian the leader of Tibet lead the Tibetan army in a full invasion of China. The Tibetans were successful enough to advance as far as the Chinese capital city and sack it.

There was great fear amongst every sect and cult throughout China that the barbarian Tibetans would let loose their Bön sorcerers on the country.

For several thousand years a small secretive and scholarly group called the Order of the Orb had been guarding an artifact. An item that their lore whispered had come from the beginning of time when the Great Old Ones had ruled the world. In appearance it was a grey orb roughly the size of a human head. If the artifact was touched the surface felt as if it was pulsing or writhing. Those that remained in its immediate presence for long periods of time, would gradually fall under its influence and see visions which would eventually drive them mad. As part of the guardian's duties every few years they would move the artifact to another hiding place. Those that were selected to guard the orb were strong willed individuals (high POW) that were allowed to stay near it for no longer than one month at a time.

When the Tibetan army was approaching their city, a decision was made to head north through Mongolia

and take the orb to the western area of China. Five members of the Order of the Orb set out with a group of bodyguards. Nearly six months later, after many difficulties, the group reached a Chinese trade enclave at the harbor of Karachi in Pakistan. During the long trip from China, three of the five members of the Order of the Orb perished through sickness, accident and a bandit attack.

One of the surviving members of the order had some experience when he was younger with trade missions from Karachi to Saukin in Sudan. He convinced his younger associate that the farther they could carry the orb from the Tibetan Bön practitioners the better protected it would be.

Several weeks after they had arrived at the trade enclave, the two scholars, along with a few bodyguards, arranged for passage to Sudan on a merchant ship scheduled to stop at several Red Sea ports including Saukin.

In 764 AD the Chinese merchant ship arrived in the Red Sea port of Saukin with a large portion of their crew dead or insane. It seems that during the long voyage, the younger of the two members of the order decided he would find out more about the orb. He performed a simple invocation dripping some of his own blood onto its surface. He awakened a long-slumbering evil which luckily did not kill him, but instead drove him mad.

For the remainder of the voyage the crew of the ship experienced glimpses of other worlds and dimensions including the Lake of Hali. Some of these visions which were briefly seen drove many of the crew mad.

When the ship arrived at the designated seaport in Sudan the two scholars with their remaining bodyguards travelled inland seeking an isolated hiding spot for the idol where it would not likely to influence many people.

The few spells that the scholars knew were used to awe the tribal groups that they encountered while travelling across the country. When they reached the Nile a decision was made to travel upstream and, upon reaching the location of present day Khartoum, they decided that they would bury the orb at the confluence of the White and the Blue Nile Rivers on Tutti Island. There it lay, forgotten for the next thousand years, radiating its malevolent evil and slowly gathering power.

The elder of the two members of the order, wrote a scroll containing a description of where the orb was buried using an obscure Chinese language cipher.

On their return trip from Saukin to Karachi, the Chinese merchant ship that they booked passage on



was boarded and robbed by pirates from Yemen. The scroll passed from hand-to-hand over the following years finally ending up in the hands of Hunayn ibn Ishaq, who was the director of the House of Wisdom in Baghdad.

Many scholars attempted to decode the cipher on the scroll. There was a consensus that it referred to an object of considerable power. In some cases they interpreted it as referring to the Ark of the Covenant located somewhere in the mountains of Ethiopia.

Shortly before the attack on Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258, the scroll was smuggled to Athens. It remained in the library of the Holy Monastery of Kaisariani for several years until an attempt to translate it was made by a scholar schooled in ancient Chinese. The codes for the location of the orb could not be deciphered however; the text portion at the beginning of the scroll was translated into Greek.

What the Greek scholars did not realize was that another translation of the Chinese scroll had been made into Arabic. The Arabic translation and other notes made it into a private collection in Venice and some notes about the scroll became part of the collection of the Near Eastern Antiquities department of the Louvre.

### Seed of Yog-Sothoth

The Lurker on the Threshold is constantly looking for methods to influence the beings and creatures beyond the gates where it is imprisoned.

Periodically Yog-Sothoth casts forth his seed which floats through the cosmos and sometimes comes to rest on populated worlds.

The ancient orb which lies at the center of this scenario is one of those seeds.

The seed initially appears to be a dead lump of matter but when it senses life forms it begins to reach out and absorb magic points. If it comes to rest in an uninhabited area it will lay dormant for millenia if necessary.

It initially has an influence radius of 250 yards, increasing by a further 250 yards per year to a maximum of 5000 yards.

When life forms come in range, the seed attempts to absorb 1 magic point per week from each one. This requires a POW versus POW resistance roll with the orb having a POW of 5. Those that loose the resistance roll (usually while asleep) will suffer headaches, tiredness and vague nightmares of alien landscapes.

When the seed accumulates 10,000 magic points the following will happen. Every five years it spends 1000 points to send out a wave of power. This wave affects sensitive people (POW of 15+) and gives them nightmarish visions (SAN loss of 0/1D3). Of those that suffer a SAN loss, 1% of them will receive fragmented visions in their dreams about how to find the seed and be imbued with a burning desire to learn more about it.

This is the method that a seed uses to look for sentient beings it can use to open a gateway for Yog-Sothoth to pass through. If the person who receives these visions makes a 1/4 IDEA roll, they receive enough information to begin searching for the orb. Most will fail, but the seed is patient and knows that eventually one will succeed.

As the person gets closer to the aura of influence of the seed, the visions they have while sleeping become stronger and teaches them how to perform a ritual to awaken the seed which in turn summons a Servitor of the Outer Gods who will open a portal for Yog-Sothoth to pass through.

There was another ritual, which has been long forgotten that drew upon the power of the sphere to briefly open random windows into other worlds. This was the spell used by the younger Chinese scholar during the journey from Karachi to Saukin that drove him mad and killed part of the crew.

### Introducing the Investigators

One of the investigators is contacted by an old friend named Evan Chetworth who asks for a meeting. It is in the form of a letter that arrives in the morning post (Player handout #1).

The introduction to the scenario works best if the investigator is associated with the law or is a fellow scholar.

#### *Player Handout #1 – letter from Mr. Chetworth*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I certainly am hesitant to bother you over what may turn out to be a trifling matter, but recent occurrences are troubling me greatly.

It is best that the details be told in person.

Would you please do me the honour of visiting me this evening? This is certainly a matter which may require assistance from your friends so please feel free to invite them also.

Your obedient servant,  
Evan Chetworth





Chetworth has a lovely new home in the upscale Belgravia district of London. When the investigators arrive they will be greeted at the front door by a butler who will show them into the sitting room.

A few moments after being served tea and a tray of assorted snacks, Chetworth will enter and warmly greet the investigators.

He is a very well dressed and somewhat gaunt man in his early seventies. His white hair is closely trimmed and he has a goatee. Investigators may notice that he is fidgety and has a somewhat nervous smile.

Chetworth thanks the butler and dismisses him and then gets down to business where he will convey the following information:

- An associate and long-time acquaintance of his in Paris named Michelle Fournier was murdered a week ago. Chetworth thinks that this might be the result of recent events in which he was involved. Fournier was found dead in his home and his study was ransacked. An examination by some of his co-workers revealed that all of his Chinese, Greek and Arabic books and notes were missing.
- Two weeks earlier a stranger had appeared at his door with a request for information about a document stored in the Arabic documents collection at the British Museum. Chetworth had been the curator of that collection for nearly fifteen years.
- The stranger introduced himself as Robert Smith and claimed that he needed a sponsor to examine the documents at the museum. Smith indicated that he needed to examine some obscure Arabic documents that related to research that he was conducting on biblical archaeology.
- Not knowing the individual and feeling somewhat uncomfortable by his manner, Chetworth sadly informed Smith that since he was retired he could no longer provide letters of introduction to researchers.
- Upon being pressed about a specific document, Chetworth let the information slip that Fournier at the Louvre had a copy in his possession.
- Being somewhat artistic, Chetworth made a sketch of the man that had visited him and discretely approached several people that he knows to see if they might recognize him.
- One of his friends is the local Vicar who indicated that the chap looked somewhat familiar and after thinking about it for a day, went through some old newspaper clippings and found an article with a photo that looked remarkably similar. In the photo the young man was in a group picture identified as members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. The Vicar

gave Chetworth the newspaper clipping which he will hand over to the investigators (Player handout #2).

*Player Handout #2 – Newspaper clipping*



Chetworth will ask the investigators if they could contact the Golden Dawn and try to obtain more information about this mysterious Robert Smith. He is very worried that if the man is the murderer of Fournier, that he may come after him next. He does not wish to involve the police in case he is wrong about the young man who visited him and unjustly besmirches his name.

**Investigators Contact the Golden Dawn**

By 1898 the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn has become a notorious organization towards which many affluent thrill seeking individuals gravitate. There has been a fascination in the press about what actually goes on behind their closed doors, plus a number of recent, and very public, leadership scandals with founding members resigning and leaving MacGregor Mathers in charge.

Mathers lives in London and if the investigators contact him he will agree to meet them at his home. He is one of the most influential occult figures in Britain and is an outspoken vegetarian and non-smoker. As soon as the investigators are shown into his study he will inform them that they cannot smoke in his presence. If any of the investigators are smokers he will make several comments about their odor.

If any of the investigators make disparaging remarks about the Golden Dawn or magic in general, Mathers will ask them to leave and one of the investigators will have to make a successful Persuade skill roll to continue. In the event that everybody fails their skill attempts, Mather will mention that he may continue if they make a financial contribution to the Order of five pounds or more.

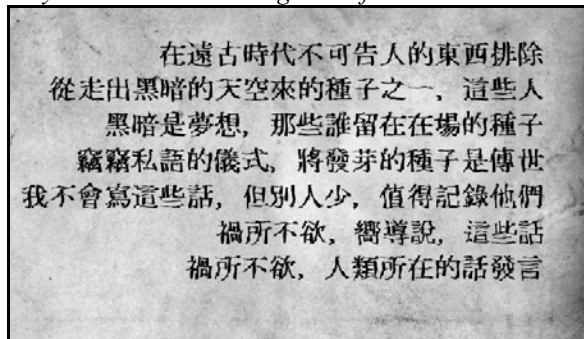
If the investigators hand Mathers the newspaper clipping and point out Robert Smith in the background, he will tell them the following.

- The man's actual name is James Fenwick.
- Fenwick resigned from the Golden Dawn approximately three years ago when he was refused admission into the second order due to his immaturity and obsession with some obscure Chinese legends.
- From what Mathers recalls, Fenwick had some fragments of a Chinese text that hinted about an artifact from an ancient and forgotten god.
- Mathers recently heard that the young man had attempted to raise some funds and borrow money to purchase an Arabic manuscript called the Ma'Hatha Scroll from an estate auction in Venice.
- The Venice auction story about Fenwick was included as a passing remark in correspondence from an acquaintance of Mathers in Rome.
- Mathers tells the investigators that if it is true that a former member of the Golden Dawn is a murderer, it is best that he be brought swiftly to justice to prevent another scandal.

At this point the keeper may suggest to the investigators that it would be proper for them to visit their friend Chetworth again to give him an update.

Since they had last seen him he has visited his old department in the British Museum and made a copy of the document fragment (Player handout #3).

*Player Handout #3 – Fragment of Chinese document*

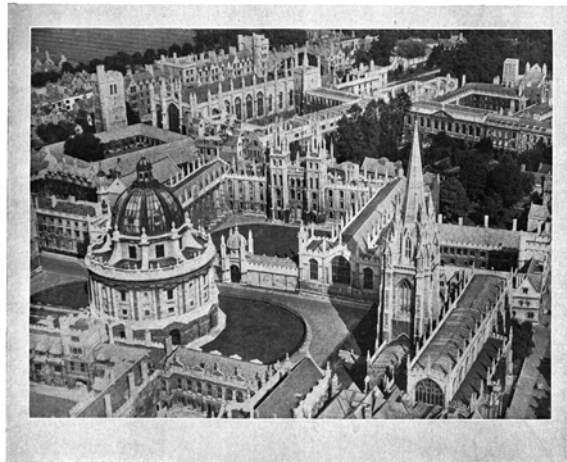


If the investigators do not have any knowledge about Chinese, he will arrange for a meeting with an expert in Chinese languages and dialects at Oxford University in the Oriental Languages department. Chetworth will send a letter to his acquaintance at Oxford and provide a letter of introduction to the investigators.

**Investigators Travel to Oxford**

The keeper should determine the best way for the investigators to reach Oxford. They may hire a carriage and travel the roughly sixty miles over a two day period, or take a train which will get them there on the same day.

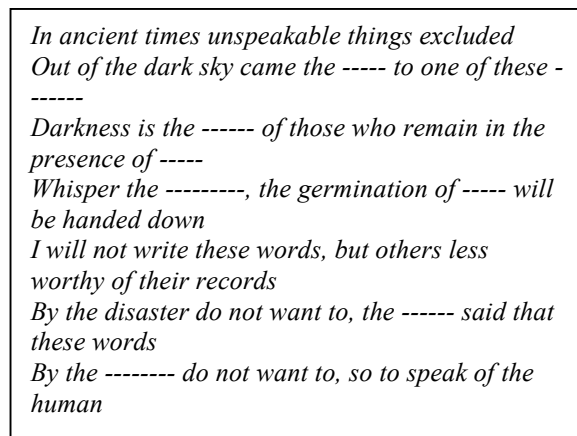
The contact at Oxford University is Dr. Charles Morgan. He will consent to meet with them in a small private room at the Bodleian Library.



*Oxford University – Bodleian Library is the round building on the left side of the photo*

Morgan is a no-nonsense gruff individual who will want to get down to business immediately. The scroll presents a minor challenge to him and he will send for several reference books. Six hours of uninterrupted work will allow him to translate the opening paragraphs of the scroll but there are a number of small gaps (Player handout #4).

*Player Handout #4 – Translation of Chinese document*



He will admit that the remainder of the document is in some sort of code which might take years to crack.

He will reluctantly tell them that a Jesuit scholar in Rome named Father Vittore Bianchi may have some expertise in these matters. If pressed he will simply say that they were friends in the past but had a falling out over an academic disagreement.

Morgan further indicates that if they intend to travel to Rome that they will require a letter of introduction to be able to see Father Bianchi. He will write one out for them but let them know that when Bianchi

sees who it is from that he may become hostile and wishes them good luck. If the investigators press him further about the conflict with the Jesuit, he will simply tell them that it is about a public debate regarding his theological position about a recent translation of Baruch Spinoza's *Ethics*.

### **Investigators Travel to Rome**

The investigators will ultimately choose a method to reach Rome, but the recommended method is:

- Travel by train to the port of Dover.
- Board one of the regular ferries to Calais.
- Travel by train from Calais to Paris.
- Board one of the trains of Compagnie deschemins de fer de Paris à Lyon et à la Méditerranée which travels to Marseille.
- Book passage on a ship travelling to Genoa or Naples.
- Board a train travelling to Rome.

The keeper should adjust the travel times and add encounters with other passengers along the way. You should also take into account the playing style of the investigators to know how much additional material that you may have to research along the way.

In 1898 the ruler of Italy is King Umberto I who ascended the throne in 1878. Foreigners are watched quite closely when they enter the country. There have been several assassination attempts on the king's life. Following the Italian colonial wars in Africa, the rising costs of food drove people to riot in the streets. The most recent incident took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 1898 when the army fired cannon into crowds of demonstrators in Milan killing over 100 people and wounding another 1,000. As a result, the country has become a police state where passes are required to travel between cities and people are stopped randomly to be questioned by authorities. Investigators are unlikely to be permitted entry into the country with weapons in their luggage.

There is a great deal of animosity between the Italian state and the Vatican during this period so if the investigators state that the reason for their visit to Italy is to consult with a Jesuit scholar at the Vatican, they may receive some extra attention from the customs officials.

If none of the investigators have been to the Vatican before, the entrance to the museum and library is located north of St. Peters Square. A uniformed Swiss guard who is fluent in Italian, German and French will greet them. If none of the investigators can communicate with him, he will send for somebody who can speak English.

Once ushered inside, the investigators will be led to the library and asked to wait while their letter of introduction is conveyed to Father Vittore Bianchi.



*Section of the Vatican Library*

After a fifteen minute wait, an elderly priest approaches walking with the assistance of a simple cane. He introduces himself as Father Bianchi, sits down and asks the investigators to tell them why they wished to see him. He seems very alert for his advanced age of 89 and, where necessary, will interrupt investigators to ask questions.

After hearing their story and asking to see the Chinese document, he will tell the investigators the following information.

- In 1890 he was approached by young James Fenwick who wished to inquire about obtaining permission to examine a Greek document which purported to be a translation from Arabic. Fenwick was a visiting student from a British university and had obtained permission to access some of the materials held at the Vatican library.
- After speaking with the young man, Father Bianchi felt that Fenwick was interested in the document because he was dabbling in the occult.
- Upon checking further, he discovered that Fenwick was a member of the Golden Dawn and further access to the Vatican holdings was withdrawn.
- Bianchi has since examined the Greek document and believes that it contains forbidden knowledge that could be put to evil uses. It may even be powerful enough to summon some form of ancient demon.
- In a recent letter that Bianchi received from a friend in Venice, he was informed about a manuscript that Fenwick was attempting to purchase.
- A few weeks after he had received the letter, Fenwick showed up with an old Arabic manuscript and asked if Bianchi could direct him to somebody who may be able to help him decipher the contents. Not wishing to be rude,



Bianchi told him that there were several capable scholars in Cairo including Hassan Al-Moselhi.

- Bianchi now realizes that providing that information might have been a grave mistake and asks the investigators to travel to Cairo to see if they can determine what Fenwick may have learned.
- The elderly Jesuit can do nothing with the cipher portion of the Chinese document, but the portion that they already have translated reminds him of the Greek document that Fenwick was interested in several years earlier. If the investigators are willing to wait for two days, he will have a copy made and an English translation of the first section that is not encoded.

*Player Handout #5 – Greek document fragment*

Στην αρχαιότητα αχαρακτήριστη  
πράγματα απεφάνθη  
Από έξω από το σκοτεινό ουρανό  
ήρθε ο σπόρος ενός από αυτά τα όντα  
Σκούρα είναι τα όνειρα εκείνων που  
διδομένη στην παρουσία των σπόρων  
μύθο των τελετών που θα  
βλαστήσουν οι σπόροι που έχουν  
Δεν θα γράψω αυτά τα λόγια αλλά και  
άλλοι λιγότερο όξια έχουν καταγραφεί  
τους μετά από μια μάλιστατον οδηγό  
που μιλάει αυτές τις λέξεις μετά από  
μια μάλιστατην ανθρωπότητα, όπου οι  
λέξεις έχουν μιλήσει

*Player Handout #6 – Translation of Greek fragment*

In antiquity unspeakable things ruled  
From outside the dark sky came the ---- of one of  
those things  
Darks are the ----- of those who stay in the  
presence of -----  
Whispers of celebrations will germinate -----  
We will not write these words, but others less  
worthy recorded them  
Woe unto the driver who speaks these words  
Woe unto mankind, where the words are spoken

Father Bianchi realizes that travel to Egypt may be expensive and offers to provide them with £100 (British pounds) to help defray their costs.

When the investigators are ready to depart, Bianchi will warn them that if Fenwick has the full Arabic version decoded there is the potential for him to unleash unspeakable evil.

**Investigators Travel to Cairo**

The fastest route for the investigators to reach Cairo is to book passage from Naples to Alexandria. From there they can take a train to Cairo.

At this point in the adventure it should be early August 1898, depending on how fast the keeper has allowed them to collect the previous clues.

Cairo in the late 1890's was a fashionable tourist destination with many fine hotels. It was easy to get around using the electric street trolley system that had been opened for business in 1896.



1890's Cairo

If the investigators are not fluent in Arabic, their hotel may be able to recommend a professional and reliable dragoman that they can hire.

Their first concern should be to track down Hassan Al-Moselhi whom Father Bianchi told them about. Since it was indicated that the man was a scholar of some sort, the investigators will most likely look for a university. The University of Cairo did not open until 1908 and many other colleges was ordered to be closed by Muhammed Said Pasha, the ruler of Egypt in 1854. The only major remaining center of learning is the Al-Azhar University which is connected to the Al-Azhar Mosque.

Al-Moselhi is a scholar in Oriental languages at Al-Azhar and had studied with the famous Yusef Ma Dexin, who was a Chinese scholar of Islam that had studied at that institute in the early 1800's.

The keeper should follow the lead of the investigators as to how they go about locating Al-Moselhi. If they begin looking for a university right away then their search should not take very long otherwise (allowing for time to make the 2<sup>nd</sup> September deadline in Khartoum) feel free to run the investigators all over Egypt.

When they finally arrive at the Al-Azhar, unless any of them are Muslim they will be asked to wait outside until somebody can be summoned from the Oriental

Languages department. Communication with people is not an issue since English is one of the main languages in the country during this period.



*Al-Azhar Mosque and University*

After a wait of approximately thirty minutes, a man in his mid-thirties will arrive and introduce himself as Mustafa Galal an assistant to Professor Hassan Al-Moselhi. Galal will usher the investigators to a shaded area across the square where there are tables and very strong tea and coffee. Once everybody has been seated and their refreshments served he will inquire about the nature of their business.

Have the investigators attempt a Psychology skill roll with a success indicating that Galal is clearly upset about something and barely managing to contain his feelings.

If the investigators are frank with Galal about who directed them to see Al-Moselhi (Father Bianchi) and why there are looking for him, then he will reveal the following.

- One week ago Al-Moselhi was found dead in his home, an apparent victim of an accident. Police say that he fell down a flight of stairs and broke his neck.
- Galal has since visited the home to help his family members go through some of his papers and sort out what should be returned to the Al-Azhar University and what might have value.
- Galal was unable to find the folders containing several years of notes regarding attempts to decipher a copy of an ancient Arabic document. A collector in Venice had permitted him to make a copy of the original many years before. This document was the Ma'Hatha Scroll.
- Almost two weeks ago an Englishman appeared at the University asking to see Al-Moselhi. The man was approximately thirty years old, and had recently acquired the original Ma'Hatha Scroll and was trying to determine how much of the deciphered portion had been decoded.
- Al-Moselhi turned the man away telling him that the passages were demonic in nature and he would not allow anybody to see the translation if he thought there was a chance they might try to use it. The young man offered the Arabic scholar

money and when that did not work started to threaten him. Galal was in the next room and physically removed the Englishman from the premises.

There are a number of ways that the investigators may proceed at this point, but ultimately they must gain the trust of Galal for him to provide additional help.

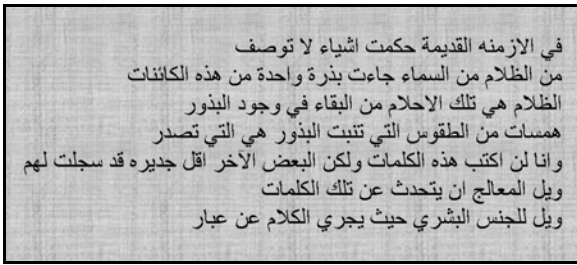
If they show Galal the picture of Fenwick and explain their involvement, he will open up to them. If he has to work hard to pry the information out of them, he will be reluctant to divulge anything else unless the player makes a good argument and succeeds on a Persuade skill roll. The only thing that should prevent the investigators from making headway at this point is if they do not tell the truth or try to use force.

- Professor Al-Moselhi had decoded nearly the entire document. All of that information was in his notes.
- Galal had assisted him with the early portion of the translation, but the work was causing terrible nightmares so he moved on to other duties.
- Galal has a current set of notes in his possession. The professor would use carbon paper to make an extra copy and store them with Galal for safekeeping, warning him not to read them.
- The younger scholar gave in to the temptation of the forbidden several weeks ago and read through some of the material. It appears to be directions on how to conduct a ceremony to open certain barriers between the worlds which will allow unnamed entities to cross over. It involves using some sort of orb that was hidden many years ago by members of a Chinese mystical order.
- The scroll also includes another section with information on how to banish the creatures that may cross over to herald the arrival of the entity.
- There is also a warning that if the ceremony is not performed to its conclusion that the entity that is associated with the seed/egg will become enraged.

If the investigators show Galal any of the original texts and translations, he will ask them to wait at the café while he goes back to his office for a few minutes. When the young scholar returns to the café he presents the group with a document fragment (Player handout #7).

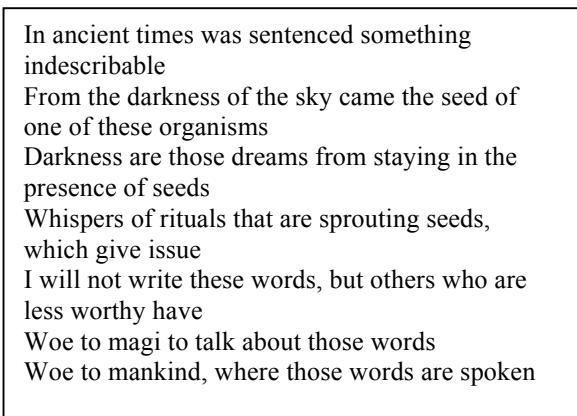


### Player Handout #7 – Arabic document fragment



He will then produce a writing pad and pencil and write out an English translation for the investigators (Player handout #8).

### Player Handout #8 – Translation of Arabic fragment



The next step for the investigators is to talk Galal into going through his copies of Al-Moselhi's notes about the Ma'Hatha Scroll to extract any additional information that might tell them what is going on. If the players do not think to ask this question, perhaps one of the investigators will think of it with a successful Idea roll. Alternatively, the investigators may wish to try to track down Fenwick.

**Ma'Hatha Scroll** Notes that Galal can provide.  
1D4 SAN loss +3% Cthulhu Mythos

- The object that Fenwick is looking for is a sphere approximately the size of a human head.
- There is a story in the scroll about two Chinese guardians of the sphere that brought it to Africa and buried it on an island at the fork of the "Two great rivers that feed into the one which sustains the lands of the great stone temples."
- Part of a ceremony to awaken it involves spilling blood upon it from a living human.
- A gateway of some form will open and "*spheres that hunger*" will come forth. These spheres are three dimensional manifestation of an eleven dimensional creature. The life force (POW) that these spheres absorb is transmitted to the slumbering entity.

- If sufficient life force is gathered there is a chance that the god will be able to enter the world.
- The spheres can be destroyed, but they are difficult to damage by piercing.
- After a sphere has fed sufficiently it will spawn another sphere.
- There is a chance that something called a "Musician of the Gods" (Servitor of the Outer Gods) will come through when the gateway is opened. If it does, it will begin a musical ceremony to call forth an ancient evil from where it slumbers in the spaces between the worlds.
- There is a portion of the document that contains information on how to "Dismiss a Musician of the Gods". More than one person can attempt to learn it at the same time. It will take 7 days to study from the translation that Galal provides. An investigator understands and remembers the spell if they successfully roll INT x 3 or less. A flute is required to perform the spell. They will not know if they have successfully learned it until they attempt to use it.
- There is an additional portion of the dismiss spell that can improve the chance of a successful dismissal. The flute that is used during the casting can be enchanted. This enchantment involves learning the specific spell, taking 7 days with a successful roll of INT x 3 or less. When the Enchant Flute spell is performed the caster sacrifices permanent POW. For every 1 point of POW that is put in the flute there is a 10% greater chance that the dismissal will be successful.

### Searching for Fenwick

The investigators may want to go to the authorities to try to locate Fenwick. If they mention this option in front of Galal, he will promptly tell them that the Egyptian police are corrupt and prone to bribery, so it is likely that if Fenwick has any evil intent that he has already placed bribes in the hands of the officers on the force. He will suggest that they come up with some story and approach the British authorities. Alternatively, they can do some detective work and check the local hotels to see if anybody remembers Fenwick from the photo.

It will take several days of talking to front desk staff, concierges, and doormen but it will eventually pay off. Part of the problem is that Fenwick has reverted to his alternate identity of Robert Smith. Somebody eventually remembers Fenwick and, if the investigators offer up some baksheesh, they can find out that he checked out the same day that he received a package from the office of the Sirdar in Cairo.

A visit to the Sirdar's office and another full day of waiting and paying baksheesh to speed things up will obtain the following information.

- Fenwick (Smith) provided documentation that he was a contributing writer to several small newspapers in London.
- He was issued a press pass for a six month period to be able to move to the front. The authorization allows him to go as far as Fort Atbara.
- He left on a troop train three days earlier but he had to wait nearly a week before there was one with a space for him.

#### **Fenwick's Plan – Keeper Information Only**

- His ultimate goal is to arrive at Khartoum and perform the ceremony that he has devised from his studies plus the notes which he stole from the home of Professor Al-Moselhi. With the final pieces of information unlocked by Al-Moselhi, Fenwick was able to decode the remainder of the document that he had.
- From the notes, Fenwick has deduced that the orb is buried on Tuti Island which lies at the confluence of the White and Blue Nile Rivers.
- Fenwick has worked over the last ten years as a freelance writer for several London newspapers. He will use his credentials to obtain press accreditation and letters of authorization to travel to the front in Sudan with the stated intention of reporting on the war effort.
- When he reaches the front, he plans to slip away from the British army post and try to make contact with the Dervishes. He is confident that with his magic abilities and knowledge of Arabic that he should be able to awe the local tribes. Fenwick plans on hiring some Sudan tribesmen or convincing them to accompany him. He plans on using his Arabic and knowledge of Islam to pose as a convert that wishes to travel to Khartoum to wait for the victory of the Khalifa at which time he will pay his respects at the tomb of the Mahdi.
- He has been closely following the news about the war in Sudan and knows that the final push by Kitchener to attack the Khalifa's army at Omdurman will happen soon. Being in Cairo and seeing the number of troop trains going out along with supply trains has confirmed his guess.

#### **Getting to the Front**

Should the investigators be drastically behind schedule, the keeper should be aware that by July of 1898 that train travel from Cairo to Atbara took ten days.

If the investigators are at a loss on how to proceed, successful Idea rolls indicate the characters think about some of the following methods.

- Obtain photographic equipment to look the part and apply for press credentials. With that documentation they may travel as far as the front.
- See if Mustafa Galal, their contact at the university, can help them. He has done work in the past with E.A. Wallis Budge the noted Egyptologist and knows that he is currently in Cairo planning an expedition to Meröe after Kitchener has defeated the Dervishes. Galal will arrange for a meeting and explain the more exotic features to Budge. Budge can provide some assistance by pulling strings to allow them to travel to Fort Atbara. In addition he will introduce them to a reliable dragoman who is an expert at making arrangements for expeditions including supplies and assistants. Budge will warn them that it is very dangerous travelling in Sudan and that several reporters, and other civilians have already been killed.
- If the investigators take either of the previous routes to obtain travel documentation, they will next find that they may not be able to arrange for train travel to the south of Egypt for several weeks. The fleet of Thomas Cooke river boats has all been hired by the office of the Sirdar to move supplies and men. The keeper should watch the calendar and adjust the travel obstacles accordingly.
- The remaining method of travel that is available is for the investigators to hire a boat to take them to Aswan. From there they can hire camels to get beyond the 1<sup>st</sup> cataract where they can try to hire another boat.

#### **Supplying an Expedition**

Hiring a dragoman and a boat will cost 350 pounds for one month. In addition, they will also have to obtain supplies to last for the duration of the trip. Fortunately, there are a number of suppliers in Cairo operating as specialized outfitters for all types of expeditions. The three main professional provisioners in Cairo are:

- Walker and Company
- Nicola Zigada
- E.J. Fleurent

The following list of items is recommended for a group of three travelers for two months and will cost 150 pounds. Unused supplies can be returned for a 10% restock fee.

It is an extensive list, but where most expeditions travel, the only food available is whatever the



investigators can buy or barter for at villages they approach.

The goods will be carefully packaged in baskets for shipping and easy handling. An examination of the list will reveal to the investigators why expeditions during this era required so many porters.

*(From the 1898 Baedeker's Egypt Guide)*

2 ½ pounds of tea in tins  
15 pounds of coffee  
1 bag of green coffee  
1 tin of cocoa  
1 tin of tapioca  
2 tins of julienne soup  
45 pounds of rice  
1 pot of extract of meat  
1 bottle of ketchup  
2 tins of condensed vegetables  
4 tins of green peas  
6 tins of French beans  
6 tins of white beans  
1 tin of arrowroot  
11 pounds of biscuits  
13 pounds of bacon  
15 pounds of ham  
2 tins of ox-tongue  
3 tins of preserved meat  
1 bottle of Worcester sauce  
1 bottle of pickles  
18 small boxes of sardines  
12 large boxes of sardines  
2 bottles of olives  
7 pounds of dried apricots  
10 pounds of plums in tins  
1 box of figs  
1 ½ pounds of candied lemon peel  
2 ½ pounds of Malaga raisins  
1 pound of Sultana raisins  
2 ½ pounds of currents  
1 bag of maize flour  
2 casks of flour  
48 pounds of salt in tins  
2 bottles of essences  
1 packet of spice  
1 tin of pepper  
2 bottles of vinegar  
3 bottles of salad-oil  
1 bottle of mustard  
1 bottle of French mustard  
2 packets of gelatine  
2 barrels of potatoes  
1 Cheshire cheese  
2 Dutch cheeses  
11 pounds of syrup  
15 pounds of loaf-sugar  
15 pounds of butter in ¼ pound tins  
17 pounds of butter in ½ pound tins  
20 packets of candles  
1 bottle of lamp-oil

1 barrel of paraffin-oil  
1 box of toilet-soap  
4 bars of soap  
1 tin of soda  
1 packet of starch  
Blacking and blacking brushes  
3 packets of paper  
2 packets of matches  
Corkscrew  
2 knives for opening tins  
Baking-powder  
String and rope  
60 bottles of Medoc  
36 bottles of Medoc supérieur  
35 bottles of red Vöslauer  
20 bottles of white Vöslauer  
20 bottles of beer  
1 bottle of brandy  
1 bottle of cognac  
1 bottle of whiskey  
1 bottle of vermouth

### **Travelling by Felucca to Aswan**

The average travel time between Cairo to Aswan by felucca is six to ten days depending on the winds. The keeper should feel free to adjust the time based on how close they are to the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September.

It is recommended that the keeper who wishes to add some authentic detail along the way, obtain a reproduction copy of the 1898 Baedeker Egypt Handbook for Travellers. There was a reproduction copy of this travel guide published by Elibron Classics in 2006 with the ISBN number of 1402197055. It provides over 600 pages of Egyptian Gaslight period information.

Investigators will have their documentation carefully examined before they are permitted to travel anywhere near Kitchener's front lines. The relationship between the press and the military is uneasy at best. On several occasions during the Sudan campaign, Kitchener banned press representatives from travelling anywhere near the front lines to give him total control over what information reached the public.

If the investigators are running out of time, then allow them to board a train at Aswan to take them south as far as Fort Atbara. Should they have arrived several weeks early, force them to make most of the journey by camel caravan. Emphasize the harshness of the land with sandstorms, lack of water, animals dying along the way, decisions about what supplies to leave behind, etc.

## Arriving at Fort Atbara

The keeper should orchestrate the arrival to be near the end of the month of August, preferably during the last week.

Within the camp are tens of thousands of soldiers and civilian support staff along with press representatives from all around the world. Kitchener has spent time and money to construct mud brick barracks, docks for the gunboats, and storage sheds to hold the massive amount of supplies required for his Egyptian and British forces. In addition, there are hundreds of acres of pens to hold the camels and other animals used to carry men and cargo.

Fort Atbara is confusing to the investigators, everybody seems to be in a hurry to perform their tasks and have no time to help reporters. If the investigators manage to speak with any other members of the press who are present at the fort they will be advised to try their best to stay out of the way, and remain unnoticed.

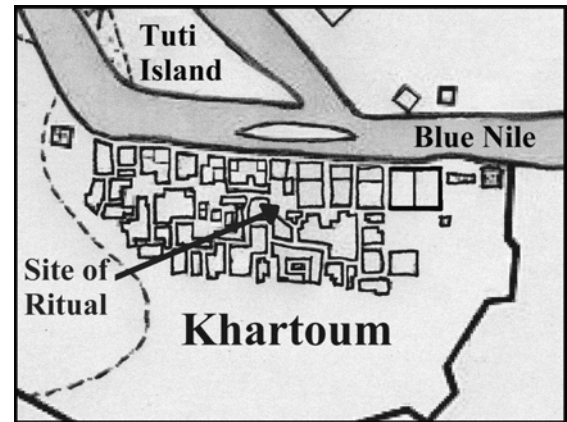
The investigators should manage to obtain camels and a few more supplies through a series of successful Fast Talk and Persuade skill rolls along with giving baksheesh. How they role play that portion should determine their success or failure. They will be able to travel south on the east side of the Nile towards Khartoum and with a successful Navigate skill roll, reach the north bank of the Blue Nile near Khartoum in three to four days. If they manage to hire a native guide they will not have to make a Navigate skill roll. As stated previously, the keeper should determine the difficulty of the task based on how tight the time frame is.

Fenwick at this point will be about one or two days ahead of the investigators. He has been travelling at a slower pace since he had hired a young porter whom he intends to sacrifice. He did not leave Fort Atbara until he had a pretty good idea that Kitchener's attack on Omdurman would take place on roughly the 1<sup>st</sup> of September.

In fact, on the evening of the 1<sup>st</sup> Fenwick was in Khartoum and used his telescope to watch the gunboats patrol the Nile. He could see signs of both the Dervish army and the Egyptian and British troops assembling just north of Omdurman.

During the day on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, Fenwick had made contact with several local natives and hired them to take him by boat across the Nile to Tutti Island. Within two hours of pacing from landmarks and digging, he had uncovered a small stone sarcophagus which contained the ancient orb. He was smart enough to show it to the locals who he had hired so that they would not murder him and throw

his body in the river thinking that he had found gold or jewels. It was less likely for them to act if they saw that he had only discovered an old rock. Fenwick and his guides managed to leave Tutti Island before the British gunboats began to bombard the three small dervish forts located there.



## 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1898 – Day of the summoning

For anybody in the area it was an eerie night knowing that two large armies were camped upon the same plain within 3,000 yards of each other. Powerful searchlights aboard the newer gunboats lit the night as they swept the dervish ranks to see if there was any intention of a night attack.

The investigators should be within a few hours ride from Khartoum at this point. If for some reason, events have occurred to delay them beyond this date, see the section at the back of the scenario detailing consequences of failure. They will be able to find boats on the north side of the Blue Nile to cross over to Khartoum.

At dusk, Fenwick will select a location amongst the ruins of Khartoum and, as his first order of business, will overpower his young porter and truss him up. He intends to use him during the ceremony since one section requires spilling the blood from a living creature over the orb to awaken it.

After a careful examination of the documents in his possession along with the position of the stars, Fenwick has determined that 10:00 PM will be the optimal time to begin the ceremony.

Preparation will begin much earlier than that when he hangs his prisoner over the orb and makes several shallow cuts. This will slowly drip blood onto the orb to begin the awakening process.

Trying to locate Fenwick amongst the ruins of Khartoum will be difficult and possibly time consuming for the investigators. They may have encounters with Dervish deserters who were not willing to face Kitchener's forces. These Dervishes

will each be lightly armed with two spears and a sword. Of course any gunfire from the investigators will alert Fenwick that there may be danger nearby and he will be prepared to defend himself. Several years earlier the Khalifah had ordered the buildings in Khartoum stripped of their wood and metal for use in Omdurman. Most buildings had been pulled down and the streets and alleys are clogged with jagged rubble. Masses of thorn bushes have also blocked some areas. These are the same types of thorns used to build defensive perimeters around dervish encampments and can cause light damage to anybody trying to force their way through them.

The first indication that the investigators will have of the exact whereabouts of Fenwick is when dark clouds begin to gather overhead. A small funnel cloud will descend to a spot in the ruins ahead of them and flashes of strangely colored lightning will spread out above them in strangely silent forks.

If the investigators choose to go towards this phenomenon they will see Fenwick approximately fifty yards ahead of them looking upward, dagger in hand, screaming strange words that cannot be clearly heard over the sound of the wind.

The investigators may immediately shoot him and if they do not kill him, he will stagger forward and slash the throat of his prisoner, completing the ceremony (see Ceremony is completed). If they do manage to kill him before he wields the dagger then they will deal with another outcome (see Ceremony is not completed).

### Ceremony is Completed

When Fenwick completes the chant of his spell, he will viciously slash his captive's throat open to spill the remainder of the young man's blood over the orb.

A shimmering portal will appear in mid-air and through it will slither a hideous ever-changing creature. This is a Servitor of the Outer Gods.

At the same time several (1D3+1) iridescent spheres which are Servants of Yog-Sothoth. They are three feet in diameter and float through the portal and slowly move towards Fenwick.

The spheres will attack Fenwick, or the nearest person, and drain his POW until he is a charred and smoking husk. With this sacrifice of POW the Servitor will begin to play its musical instrument to herald the arrival of Yog-Sothoth.

Investigators will have 1D3+1 rounds to dismiss the Servitor before it finishes announcing Yog-Sothoth. They can choose to perform the ceremony that they had the opportunity to learn while in Egypt, or they

can run for their lives. If they do manage to dismiss the Servitor the Outer God, Yog-Sothoth will not make an appearance.

The investigators can buy more time by attacking the servitor. Unless they have magical weapons there is little that they can do against it but they will draw themselves to its attention. It will use its spell abilities or, if the investigators are close enough, its tentacle attacks.

### Servitor of the Outer Gods

**STR** 16  
**CON** 23  
**SIZ** 18  
**INT** 21  
**POW** 21  
**DEX** 19  
**HP:** 21  
**Move:** 7

**Damage Bonus:** +1D6

**Weapon:** Tentacle 45%, damage db x 2

**Armor:** None, but no physical weapon can harm one; magical weapons do normal damage; regenerates 3 hit points per round until dead.

**Spells:** Alter Weather, Cause Blindness, Circle of Nausea, Create Gate, Dread Curse of Azathoth, Power Drain, Wither Limb, Wrack

**Beings that it can summon:** Yog-Sothoth, Byakhee, Dimensional Shambler

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D10 Sanity points to see a servitor.

### Servant of Yog-Sothoth

*Spheres that Hunger*

*(See end of scenario for pregenerated spheres)*

**STR** 2D6  
**CON** 2D6  
**SIZ** 1D6+6  
**INT** 2D6  
**POW** 3D6  
**DEX** 3D6  
**HP:** 8-9

**Move:** 9 (floating)

**Damage Bonus:** None

**Weapon:** Touch 45%, target is drained of 1D3 POW which is transmitted to Yog-Sothoth. For each 10 points of POW that is transmitted there is a 10% chance that Yog-Sothoth will appear for a duration of 1D3+1 rounds (the stars are not quite right for Yog-Sothoth to permanently appear).

**Special Ability:** When an individual sphere has absorbed the equivalent of its own POW, an identical sphere will come through the portal.

**Armor:** None but impaling weapons (including firearms do only half damage).

**Spells:** None

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D3 Sanity points to see a servant (for the first time).

### Total POW Drain Tracker

Check one box for each point of POW that the spheres drain. For each row filled there is a 10% chance that Yog-Sothoth will appear. Keeper should make a roll for each row completed with an increasing chance each time. If the entire table is filled there is a 100% chance that the Outer God will show up. The keeper may wish to use different colors for each of the original spheres. When one of them has consumed an amount of POW equal to its own, another will come through the portal.

											10%
											20%
											30%
											40%
											50%
											60%
											70%
											80%
											90%
											100%

### Ceremony is NOT completed

This is most likely to occur if the investigators are prepared to shoot and kill Fenwick as soon as they see him. If he never has the opportunity to complete the spell or slash the throat of his prisoner, then use the events in the following paragraph.

A smaller portal will open in 1D3+1 rounds and 1D3+1 spheres (Servants of Yog-Sothoth) will come through. They will attack the nearest living creature and keep going until they are destroyed. As with their attacks in the preceding section, their POW drains accumulate and after every ten points there is an increased percentage chance that Yog-Sothoth will make an appearance.

### Aftermath

Since the stars are not right for the Outer Gods to be permanently released from their ancient slumbers, an appearance by Yog-Sothoth will be, out of necessity, very brief.

Events taking place in Khartoum will not be noticed by anybody not in the immediate area. It occurs after dark and a full scale battle took place a few miles to the north-west on the opposite side of the Nile earlier in the day. The only signs that anything is happening amongst the ruins of Gordon's old capital is a darkening of the sky with low hanging clouds.

If it seems that the investigators have concluded the scenario with too much ease, the keeper should feel free to add a few more Servant's of Yog-Sothoth to

be floating amongst the ruins and chasing them when an opportunity presents itself.

If the Servitor of the Outer Gods had time to summon a dimensional shambler, it will be waiting nearby in the ruins to ambush the investigators. If the investigators manage to inflict over ½ of its hit points it will grab the closest person and attempt to return to its dimension to feast on their flesh. The investigators have until the end of that round to kill the creature otherwise they will lose their friend forever.

### Dimensional Shambler

*The Murderously Malign*

**STR** 19  
**CON** 17  
**SIZ** 19  
**INT** 8  
**POW** 11  
**DEX** 11  
**HP:** 18  
**Move:** 7

**Damage Bonus:** +1D6

**Weapon:** Claw\* 30%, 1D8+db

*\*can attack with both foreclaws at once, at the same DEX rank.*

**Armor:** 3 point thick hide.

**Spells:** None.

**Sanity Loss:** 0/1D10 Sanity points to see a dimensional shambler.

### Rewards

The immediate compensation to the investigators will be a potential SAN reward based on the outcome of their action.

- Fenwick killed before he can complete the ritual and open the gateway +1D8 SAN
- Ceremony completed and Servitor of the Outer Gods shows up, but is dismissed before it calls Yog-Sothoth +1D10 SAN
- Yog-Sothoth appears and somehow the investigator(s) manage to survive +1D4 SAN
- For each Servant of Yog-Sothoth killed by the investigator +1D3
- For each investigator killed -1D4 SAN

### NPC Statistics

**James Fenwick** a.k.a. Robert Smith Age 29

STR 13 CON 14 INT 15 SIZ 13 POW 14  
 DEX 12 APP 14 EDU 18 SAN 30 HP 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: .455 Webley revolver 40%, 1D10+1  
 Sabre 60%, 1D8+1+db

Spells: Awaken Seed of Yog-Sothoth, Cure Blindness, Dominate, Fleshward

Skills: Anthropology 36%, Cthulhu Mythos 20%, History 45%, Library Use 40%, Occult 70%, Other Language-Arabic 46%, Other Language-Greek 46%, Other Language-Latin 51%, Persuade 35%, Psychology 40%, Ride 35%

### James Fenwick

James Fenwick was recognized by his family and teachers at a young age as bright but unable to stay focused on important matters. His family was not well off but the local vicar used some of his contacts to get the young man into the University Of Edinburgh School Of Divinity.

Fenwick soon learned that he was extremely good at learning other languages and became interested in the history and religions of the countries that his professors were introducing him to. This newfound interest made him start to explore the religious practices of other cultures which led him into a study of the occult. After graduation with a degree in religious studies and ancient languages, he moved to London taking up a clerical job to earn a living and in the evenings began seeking out other fans of the occult. This search eventually led him to the periphery of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

After being admitted at the lower levels of the organization he was not allowed to progress. This was due to his noticeable thirst to gain power and knowledge for which his examiners felt that he was not ready.

Fenwick came into a small inheritance when his mother and father were killed in a tragic carriage accident. He used the money to travel throughout Europe using his degree to visit libraries and examine documents that were not usually accessible to the public.

In 1885 when the Orb had absorbed enough magic points from the people of Khartoum and the forces of the Mahdi in Omdurman, it began to send out its waves of powers to attract sensitive people. Fenwick was one of them and soon began to search for it.

After learning about the Arabic Ma'Hatha Scroll which was in a private collection in Venice, he managed to find scraps of notes in other libraries. These notes mentioned that a "Great Power" could be awakened with the proper rites but gave no specifics. He made it his life's goal to get his hands on the Ma'Hatha Scroll and eventually ended up stealing and even killing while slowly succumbing to his lust for power and fame.

### Evan Chetworth Age 67

Retired British Museum historian of Arabic studies

STR 8 CON 8 INT 13 SIZ 13 POW 12  
DEX 8 APP 9 EDU 21 SAN 60 HP 11

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Cricket bat 40%, 1D8+db, Rapier 35%, 1D6+1+db

Skills: Anthropology 26%, Archaeology 56%, Art-Drawing 45%, Credit Rating 25%, History 80%, Library Use 50%, Occult 50%, Other Language-Arabic 76%, Other Language-Aramaic 51%, Other Language-Hebrew 46%, Persuade 40%, Psychology 35%

### Evan Chetworth

Chetworth has recently retired from a position in the Middle East department. His specialty was the study of ancient documents in Arabic, Aramaic and Hebrew.

Travels to foreign countries throughout his career were not very agreeable to his health. Several bouts of dysentery early in his career has left him somewhat feeble and forced him to spend most of career working in the museum offices.

He is a soft-spoken man who can no longer walk without being assisted. While speaking his listeners tend to hang onto his words since he intersperses them with personal anecdotes.

His studies brought him into contact with many other scholars throughout Europe, some of whom had an interest in ancient religions. He had a passing interest in the material but he was more interested in the dissemination of knowledge amongst the different cultures.

He is aware of the Victorian era occult fad but as a devout Church of England member does not have any belief in any of the more outré mystical theories.

Chetworth's main concern about Fenwick (Smith) is that the young man is deluded enough to potentially kill people to obtain the information that he is seeking.

### MacGregor Mathers – Occultist Age 44

Leader of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn

*NOTE: Mathers has been detailed elsewhere by another publisher which has produced materials for Call of Cthulhu. If you have that out-of-print book, feel free to use any Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn details contained therein.*

STR 13 CON 14 INT 15 SIZ 13 POW 17  
DEX 15 APP 13 EDU 20 SAN 55 HP 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Fist/Punch 60%, 1D3+db  
Fencing Foil 40%, 1D6+1+db, Heavy Épée 40%  
1D6+1+db

Spells: *The keeper should decide if Mathers knows any actual spells.*

Skills: Accounting 35%, Anthropology 26%, Astronomy 26%, History 65%, Occult 75%, Other Language-Gaelic 45%, Other Language-Coptic 40%, Other Language-Greek 56%, Other Language-Hebrew 50%, Other Language-Latin 66%, Persuade 45%, Psychology 45%

### MacGregor Mathers

Mathers is one of the most famous occult figures in Victorian Britain. As the leader of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn there is a great deal of information that is readily available about him.

For the purposes of this scenario, he will have a brief and pleasant meeting with the investigators and is able to identify Fenwick from the photograph provided by Chetworth. Some of the biographical information available about Mathers indicates that he could be quite arrogant. The keeper should feel free to play this up and even hint that he knows more than he is willing or able to tell the investigators.

The keeper might wish to spice up the scenario by having Mathers order that the investigators be followed. Anybody assigned this task will not attempt to interfere at any point in time, but give the investigators the chance to make Spot Hidden skill rolls to detect their observer. With enough hints from the keeper that they are being watched, a sense of paranoia can be instilled amongst the investigators.

**Dr. Charles Morgan** – Chinese Linguist  
Professor at Oxford University Age 60

STR 8 CON 6 INT 15 SIZ 11 POW 9  
DEX 16 APP 12 EDU 24 SAN 45 HP 9

Damage Bonus: none  
Weapons: Rapier 40%, 1D6+1+db

Skills: Anthropology 76%, Archaeology 46%, Art-Drawing 50%, Credit Rating 35%, History 80%, Library Use 45%, Medicine 50%, Other Language-Chinese 75%, Other Language-Mongolian 66%, Other Language-Tibetan 31%, Persuade 45%, Psychology 35%

### Dr. Charles Morgan

Dr. Morgan is willing to help out especially since the investigators have been sent to him by an old friend.

These days he is not able to talk long and will be as concise as possible with his answers. He spent much time in China, Mongolia and along the Tibetan border and was seriously injured in a bandit attack that forced his return to Britain.

He should be treated as a minor character.

**Father Vittore Bianchi** – Jesuit Priest  
Greek scholar at the Vatican Library Age 73

STR 9 CON 12 INT 15 SIZ 11 POW 14  
DEX 13 APP 13 EDU 25 SAN 70 HP 12

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: none

Skills: Anthropology 41%, Archaeology 26%, Cthulhu Mythos 5%, First Aid 50%, History 75%, Library Use 60%, Listen 50%, Occult 45%, Other Language-English 66%, Other Language-Greek 91%, Other Language-Latin 86%, Persuade 70%, Ride 35%

### Father Vittore Bianchi

Father Bianchi is a vibrant septuagenarian who has a keen intellect and gets great personal joy by debating others. If any opportunity presents itself to have a friendly argument with any of the investigators he will seize it immediately.

His passion throughout his entire life has been learning and then sharing his knowledge.

He will express regret that he was willing to help out Fenwick without trying to learn more about him because he was young and thirsty for information.

The elderly Jesuit is a firm believer that many of the ancient writings contain whispers about demons that wait to be unleashed. Father Bianchi has inadvertently gained a small amount of Cthulhu Mythos which has made him delve deeper into his old manuscripts. This is the main reason why he will be interested in sending the investigators to Cairo to discover Fenwick's actual motives and goals.

Bianchi will take this opportunity to question the investigators to determine if they are moral people. He will urge them to make sure that they stop Fenwick from performing any rituals and impress upon them that the "Powers of Darkness" are real and make use of people like Fenwick.

**Mustafa Galal** – Arab language scholar  
Assistant to Hassan Al-Moselhi at Al-Azhar  
University in Cairo Age 28

STR 14 CON 9 INT 16 SIZ 15 POW 10

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Martini-Henry Rifle 35%, 1D8+1D6+3,  
Cavalry Sabre 15%, 1D8+1+db

Skills: Archaeology 56%, Astronomy 46 %, Bargain 30%, History 60%, Library Use 55%, Natural History 45%, Other Language-English 46%, Other Language-French 30%, Other Language-Greek 76%, Other Language-Turkish 66%,

### Mustafa Galal

Mustafa Galal grew up on a small farm along the Nile near Aswan. Local teachers recognized his intelligence when he was young and as soon as he was old enough, sent him to Cairo for further education.

He performed a short period of mandatory military service where he learned how to use a sword and rifle. He did not like the army and as soon as it was permitted he returned to his academic studies.

His studies and interests paralleled those of Professor Al-Moselhi who took him on as first a student and then as his valued assistant.

Galal holds many of the ancient Egyptian superstitions and is a firm believer in ancient gods and demons. His translation of the Arabic version of the Ma'Hatha Scroll on behalf of the investigators troubles him since he will see the potential of many ancient prophecies being fulfilled.

Once he translates the portion about dismissing the summoned creature he will try to impress upon the investigators the importance of them learning it.

### What Happens to the Orb?

As a physical item the orb is indestructible. An investigator would need a method to attack it in all of the dimensions that it exists in. This can be done by a nuclear explosion or by placing it at a location and then summoning Azathoth.

It is likely that the investigators will spot the orb and perhaps choose to pick it up. If they do they will discover that its surface is warm and slowly writhing in their hands even though it appears to be a solid object.

If they do not take it with them then it will be discovered and eventually end up in a museum in Europe or North America. The orb will begin its slow and steady progress of absorbing magic points all over again and will have an affect on its surrounding area as described at the beginning of the scenario.

### 10 Servants of Yog-Sothoth

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	7	7	4	7	6	6	8	5	12	8
CON	6	7	3	8	8	7	8	6	9	7
SIZ	7	11	8	10	9	8	10	11	11	9
INT	8	6	12	7	9	4	8	7	8	11
POW	15	12	6	9	7	12	8	12	12	9
DEX	9	11	13	9	14	10	6	8	9	6
HP	7	9	6	9	9	8	9	9	10	8



## Horror in the Sudd

This scenario is set in early 1900 after the Egyptian and British forces have reestablished their presence from Aswan in the north to Gondokoro in the south.

During the years of the Mahdi, and following that the Khalifa, travel on the Nile south of Khartoum came to an almost complete halt. As a consequence the main channel on the White Nile became even more choked by vegetation than usual.

This swampy region is called the Sudd and during the rainy seasons can cover an area of over 50,000 square miles making it one of the largest wetland areas in the world.

Blockages in the river are caused by matted papyrus and reeds. It is these blockages that make the level of the Nile so variable. During years when there are major blockages, the flow can be reduced to the point where water is insufficient for irrigation and causes major famines.

In 1899 Sir William Garstin, the Under-Secretary of State for Public Works in Egypt, surveyed the upper White Nile and authorized the funds to clear a channel so that travel could continue unimpeded.

In December of 1899 a sudd removal task force consisting of five gunboats under the command of Major Malcolm Peake departed from Omdurman. In addition to the crews of the gunboats, the work gangs and guards consisted of:

- 800 dervish prisoners
- 100 Sudanese soldiers
- 5 British officers
- 5 Egyptian officers

Clearing the sudd is difficult and monotonous work for both the dervish prisoners and their overseers. When they started the work they did not realize that they would awaken something that had been slumbering for many centuries, a gigantic fresh-water dark sargassum that is kin to the dark young of Shub-Niggurath. There are other smaller dark sargassum hiding in the White and Blue Nile rivers but this is the oldest, the smartest and most deadly one of all.

### Introducing the Investigators

It will be up to the keeper on the best way to introduce the investigators to this scenario, particularly if you are inserting it into an existing campaign. If you are running it as a one-shot adventure then allow them to set up crew members or officers on one of the five gunboats. It is best to have an already existing group with well established ties to

explain why they might want to risk their lives and sanity to help each other.

Some suggestions to explain the presence of the investigators aboard the gunboats:

- One or more of the investigators have expertise with tasks such as dredging work and are hired on to advise Major Peake.
- One or more of the investigators have expertise with mechanical repair and have been hired in the event that one of the gunboats needs emergency repairs.
- The investigators have a professional level skill (+75%) in something that might be required during the long period of the sudd clearing such as Biology, Medicine, Other Language-Arabic, etc. and have been hired by the expedition along with their assistants.
- The Egyptian or British government are sponsoring the investigators to conduct a survey on the flora and/or fauna during the expedition.
- The investigators are journalists who are along to collect information and report on the dervish prisoners and how they are being rehabilitated by the Anglo-Egyptian condominium.
- One or more of the investigators is a clergyman on his way to the Gondokoro area of southern Sudan and has persuaded the powers-that-be to provide him and his associates free passage with the sudd expedition.
- If the investigators played the previous scenario and met E. A. Wallis Budge, he might hire them to travel with the expedition to see if there are any ruins worth exploring in the south of Sudan.



### Leading Up to the Main Encounter



For at least a week the investigators should be witness to the following events:

- The dervish laborers are spooked by something strange that they find on a block of sudd that they are working on. Officers involved will permit the investigators the opportunity to examine the find firsthand. If they do venture onto the sudd they find several hippopotami carcasses that are simply bags of skin, bones and internal organs with all of the muscle gone.
- From the ship where investigators can see across the vast expanse of the papyrus and reed marsh, a spot hidden reveals an occasional strange fog bank ahead of them in the distance that gradually dissipates. On average it appears to be nearly two miles across.
- After several days the gunboats spot groups of dugout canoes filled with frantically paddling Sudan natives who refuse to stop or talk. A successful Spot Hidden role indicates that they keep looking back towards the sudd as if they expect something to appear or to be chasing them.
- One or more of the dervish laborers will vanish by appearing to be pulled down into the sudd. Eventually one of these lost individuals will come to the surface with their body appearing similar to the carcasses of the hippopotami with all of his muscles tissue gone.

### Sudd Clearing

The gunboats would travel through the open channels until they encountered a sudd blockage consisting of thick matted vegetation with reeds and papyrus growing on top of it.

Sometimes the vegetation growing on the sudd was nearly twenty feet tall and stretched away as far as the eye could see.

The masses of sudd that directly blocked the channels could be as much as twenty feet thick. At these points the volume of water from the White Nile flowed beneath the sudd at a tremendous velocity. When a piece of sudd broke free from the main mass it would float into the main channel and be quickly torn apart by the currents.

**If an investigator falls into the river amongst these currents they must make a swim roll each round to avoid being swept away until they can be rescued.**

To remove the sudd blockages the gunboat would begin by burning off the papyrus and reeds. Witnesses to this work commented that when the papyrus was burned the fire would frequently follow

the bed of the river. The gunboat would then offload a work gang of dervish prisoners onto the sudd. With long saws the laborers would cut a block roughly ten by ten feet. A trench would be cut across the top to place a heavy wire hawser and chain upon which the work gang would stand to hold it in place. The gunboat would run its bow up onto the cut block and the laborers would secure the hawser and chain to the boat. With engines straining the gunboat would back away until the mass of tangled vegetation ripped away. The dervish laborers would then move back to the main sudd mass and start their work all over again while the gunboat deposited the block downstream for the currents to break it apart.

Many of these sudd blockages stretched for miles and took weeks and sometimes months to completely break apart. It was steady work and took three years to completely open the main White Nile channels. The British found that the channels had to be maintained as part of an ongoing project else they would quickly become blocked again.

### Meeting the Monster

At the end of a long day of sudd cutting as the sun goes down the gunboats can see a small village in the distance.

Anybody on deck at night can see an isolated fog bank rising up in the vicinity of the village. Shortly after screams can be heard from that direction which continues on for nearly an hour.

In the morning the gunboats force their way through the narrow channels, having to stop several times to clear thick sudd blockages. By early evening they have made enough progress that a shore party can be sent out to determine what has happened. The investigators are asked to go along with a small group of soldiers and a British officer.

The gunboats will continue clearing sudd as the shore party makes its way towards the village. They make very good time and will arrive near the village while it is being searched.

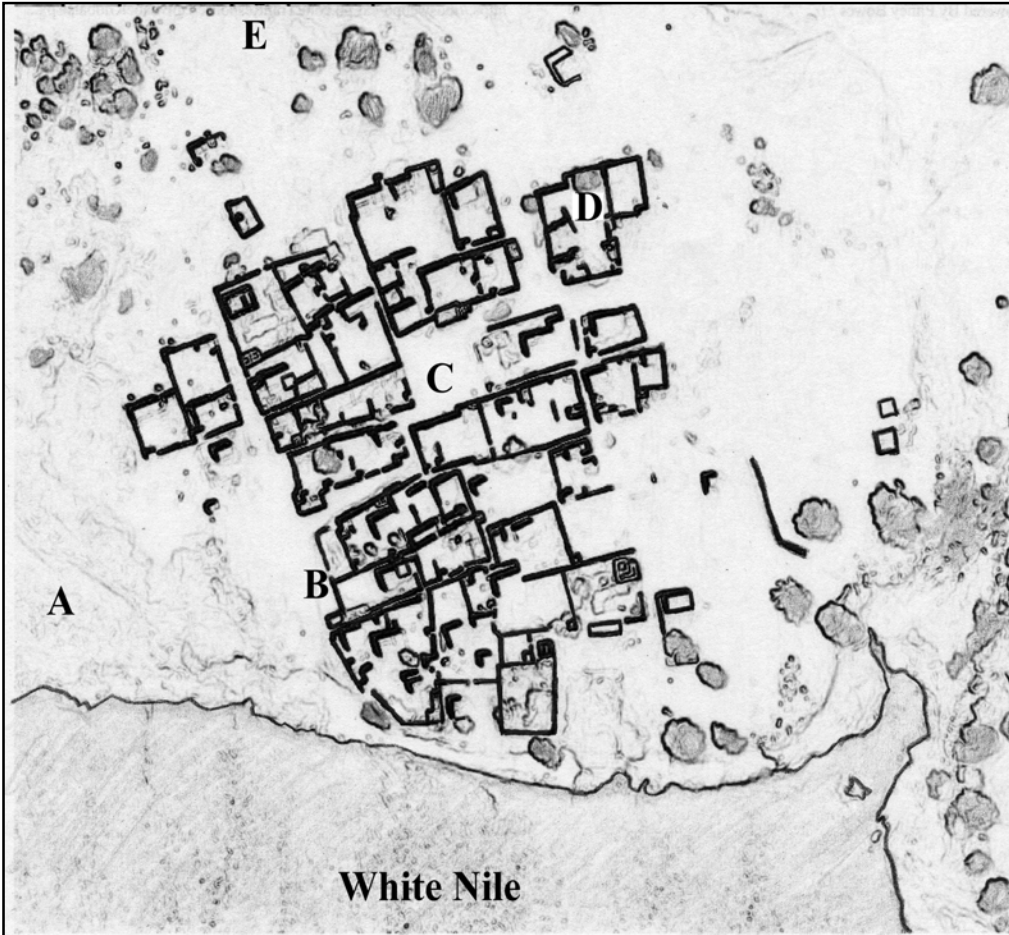
After walking for nearly half a mile along the banks of the Nile they approach the village. There is a foul odor wafting over the area and as they get closer they can see that many of the houses nearest to the river have been flattened, and there is no apparent presence of the inhabitants.

Upon entering the village they will encounter the following and be subject to the accompanying SAN loss.

- In the first hut that they reach a pair of human feet can be seen sticking out from beneath some

debris. If they move the debris to uncover the body they will see that it is an adult male that has had all of the muscles removed from the body similar to the animals and dervish prisoner that they encountered earlier. SAN loss of 1/1D3.

- When they leave that hut and move deeper into the village, they see many more bodies lying in the open areas between the huts. Most of the huts have been flattened and there are broad trails of some foul smelling substance leading up to them. If the investigators examine any of the bodies, they will discover that 1D3 are still alive but cannot move since they only have 1 STR point remaining. SAN loss of 1/1D3 for discovering these nearly-drained villagers.
- At this point the Sudanese soldiers will try to flee and the British officer will draw his revolver in an attempt to stop them. If he fires at any of the soldiers they will gun him down and point their rifles at the investigators nervously to see what they will do. If the investigators take no action the soldiers will head inland as fast as they can.



- Have the investigators attempt a Listen skill roll to hear whimpering from one of the partially collapsed huts deeper in the village. If they investigate they find a woman who has had her legs “sucked dry” of muscle tissue but is still alive. There are three small children huddled behind her in the corner of the hut who appear to

be unharmed. Investigators will immediately notice a look of madness in the eyes of these survivors. The only response which the investigators will be able to get in any attempt at questioning is “It came from the river.”

### Map Legend

- A = Direction that the investigators and party approach the village.
- B = First body found amongst collapsed building.
- C = Open area with many bodies.
- D = House with injured women who is hiding with children.
- E = Tracks of several people lead off in this direction.

While dealing with the woman and children, a successful Listen roll will let the investigators hear the engines of the approaching gunboats. Within minutes they will hear panicked screams and the beginning of sporadic gunfire. If the investigators rush out they see that a thick fog has descended over the area but they can dimly see a gigantic black bulk

wrapping tentacles around the lead gunboat and pulling men off the deck into the water. Investigators who witness this receive a SAN loss of 1D6/1D20 for seeing the dark sargassum.

The creature pulls a total of 2D6 men into the water and then plunges beneath the murky surface. Crew and soldiers in the water are seen splashing around with some trying to swim to shore. One-by-one they are pulled under the surface and do not appear again.

Minor damage to the structure of the gunboat is visible and all five boats begin to reverse their course as quickly as possible. A thick fog begins to fill the river and village and the investigators can hear a large splashing nearby as if something large is coming out of the water. The investigators will immediately

notice the same foul stench as the one that they detected upon arrival at the village.

Their best option at this point is to either barricade themselves inside a building or travel inland as quickly as possible. Should the investigators forget about the woman and children in the hut, they will hear their frantic screams as the dark sargassum drains away their strength and suffer a SAN loss of 1/1D3.

### Finding the Trail

A successful Spot Hidden or Track roll reveals a trail leading away from the village inland away from the river. There appears to be fresh footprints of at least ten persons who were moving quickly. From the sequence of events that the investigators know about, these fleeing villagers have at least an eight hour head start.

At this point the investigators and any remaining Sudanese soldiers may choose to proceed several ways.

- Travel along the Nile in the direction of the gunboats. The keeper can discourage this by having the mist reappear with the sound of the dark sargassum moving towards them.
- Hide in the village and try to come up with a plan to destroy the creature. As with the previous plan, have the mist roll through the village and force the investigators to flee.
- If the investigators choose to travel away from the river they should come across the trail of the surviving villagers that fled inland. After trailing for some time, at sundown they should see a campfire in the distance.

### Ancient Dark Sargassum – Fresh Water Version of a Dark Young of Shub- Niggurath

**STR** 52  
**CON** 52  
**SIZ** 105  
**INT** 20  
**POW** 30  
**DEX** 21  
**HP:** 79  
**Move:** 8

**Damage Bonus:** +9D6

**Weapon:** Tentacle 90%, damage=db or catch (grapple). STR drain attack is automatic when grappled, 1D3 STR drain per round.

Crush Ship 80%, damage=db

**Armor:** Firearm attacks do only 1 point of damage. A firearms impale does 2 points of damage. Shotguns are exceptions and do minimum possible damage, whatever that is. Hand-to-hand weapons do normal damage; attacks dependent on heat, blast, corrosion,

electrical charge, or poisoning have no effect.

**Spells:** Alter Weather, Blight/Bless Crop, Dominate, Dread Curse of Azathoth, Flesh Ward, Mental Suggestion, Mindblast, Power Drain, Wrack.

**Skills:** Camouflage Self 90%

**Sanity Loss:** 1D6/1D20 Sanity points to see a dark sargassum.

### Tactics of the Dark Sargassum

This is a very old and wily creature which knows that hit-and-run tactics are far more effective than a direct frontal attack. It has survived for many millennia and only comes out to satiate its evil hunger when necessary. It has had run-ins with humans in the past and knows that in numbers they are capable of hurting it and perhaps even killing it. Therefore it will use the following methods when it decides to expose itself. The encroachment of the modern riverboats and gunboats are new and although it does not fully appreciate the capabilities of the automatic weapons such as the Maxim machine guns, the creature is cautious enough to be patient and learn from any encounters.

- If there are over 5 people it will spend 10 magic points to create a thick fog in a two mile radius. It will then select a group of targets to attack (tentacle attack of up to 20 persons at once).
- As soon as the dark sargassum takes any damage it will plunge out of sight into the river or beneath the sudd and cast a 10 dice fleshward for protection.
- The dark sargassum will then begin using the Mindblast and Wrack spell to target the individuals that harmed it.
- Whenever it has the opportunity it will use its tentacle attacks to grapple people, drain their strength and if necessary crush them or pull them under water to drown them.

### Travelling Further Inland

It will be easy to follow the trail of the fleeing villagers and, as mentioned above, after travelling for some time (perhaps two or three days) the investigators will spot the campfire in the distance.

During this travel period, if the Egyptian soldiers fled during the encounter with the dark sargassum at the village, the investigators will encounter them along the way. The keeper should determine in what manner this meeting will take place. If the investigators fired on them when they fled, it may not be a friendly reunion.

There are several hazards that might be encountered along the way and their statistics will appear at the end of the scenario.

- Crocodile(s)
- Elephant(s)
- Hippopotamus
- Lion(s)
- Rhinoceros
- Snake(s)

When the investigators group catches up to the fleeing villagers there will be several of them gathered around a cooking fire with the rest off foraging for food. When the other villagers return and see strangers in their encampment they will hide in the surrounding brush and wait to see if the investigators are a threat. The only weapons that the villagers have are spears, knives and knobkerries.

One of the villagers speaks Arabic at 30% and can translate. If none of the investigators speak Arabic then they will have to speak in English to one of the Egyptian soldiers who in turn will speak to the villager who will then convey the message to the village elder at the encampment.

Information that is available from the Village Elder:

- Their tribe has an ancient legend about an ancient creature that lives in the river.
- Many generations ago their tribal god possessed a member of the tribe and banished the river creature.
- The tribesman remained possessed for several years and during that time taught them about many things such as how to plant and harvest the fields.
- The elder knows how to call upon their tribal god and appeal to it for aid to banish the river creature.
- The elder will explain that the investigators must take part in the ceremony. They are involved in the situation and the tribal god is more likely to respond if they participate.

The spell that the village elder knows has been passed down since ancient times and has rarely been used. What the spell does is contact a member of the Great Race of Yith and invites it to inhabit a member taking part in the ritual.

### **Spell Variant** **Contact Great Race of Yith**

The caster of this spell spends 1 point of POW and must be accompanied during the hour long ritual by at least ten other persons who contribute 1D6 Magic Points each.

The contacted Yithian will look into the mind of the caster to determine why they are being contacted. This will allow them to prepare for the time and location where they will be travelling to.

At the end of the ceremony one of the individuals participating will experience a mind transfer with a member of the Great Race of Yith. The Yithian will select an individual who has a low POW and is fit. It will not transfer into an injured or crippled body.

***For the purposes of this ceremony the Yithian will make use of the investigator with the lowest POW.***

During the first few minutes after the transfer the host will be much disoriented, uttering strange sounds and unable to walk without falling. The individual will make wild gesticulations with their arms and their hands will rapidly open and close in a clamping motion.

Gradually the person will calm down and begin to look around, their face emotionless but showing curiosity. If anybody attempts to talk to them it might take a few tries for them to understand. When they begin talking it will sound as if they are just learning to speak, mumbling and lisping.

The Yithian already knows about the dark sargassum from what it learned by reading the mind of the village elder who cast the spell. When it is able to communicate through its new human host (1D4 hours) it will affirm the following:

- Confirm that it is able to deal with the creature.
- Insist that once that has been done, it wishes to inhabit its current host for some additional time.
- Stipulate that if they are not willing to agree to the inhabitation that it will leave and they can deal with the creature by themselves. It knows from past contact with humans that if it can reach an agreement with the investigators that it may be able to use its host to travel in an unobstructed manner. Even if they do not agree, the Yithian still plans to remain.

Note: This Yithian will plan to inhabit its new host for a period of 1D4 years. It is a scientist and wishes to study this era of African colonization by the European powers. It realizes that this era precedes the world wars and development of nuclear weapons and wishes to document whatever information it can.

### **Returning to the Village**

The journey back to the destroyed village is also hazardous but if they investigators manage to talk the villagers into accompanying them, their group should be more than double the size. This number of persons should be able to handle any animal that they encounter along the way with the possible exception of a rhinoceros. These animals can unexpectedly charge out of the bush and will attack the nearest person.



When the village comes in sight the gunboats are nowhere to be seen. The bodies have been removed and a spot hidden reveals a mass grave on the outskirts. After the gunboats retreated they came back a short time later and put some more men ashore who found the bodies. They waited around for two full days and then began patrolling the previously cleared portion of the river for several miles. The commander's rationale was that the investigators would follow the river and flag down the ships when they were spotted.

The Yithian/investigator will inform the group that the banishment spell must be cast in darkness and that it requires a creature to sacrifice, either an animal or a person. The Yithian/investigator might act mildly surprised if there are any objections to sacrificing one of the persons present.

If the investigators go within one hundred feet of the water and remain there for more than three rounds the tentacles of the dark sargassum will erupt from the water and lash out at them. Anybody that is struck or does not succeed in a dodge roll will be held and drained of 1D3 STR per round until either dead or freed. Should this take place while it is still daylight, the dark sargassum will leave the water and try to pursue the humans until it captures and drains at least one of them. If the investigators manage to inflict 8 or more points of damage to the creature (10% of its total) it will flee back towards the river while casting Alter Weather to create an obscuring fog to hide itself.

If it is night time when the creature begins to attack the investigator who has been possessed by the Yithian will begin to cast the dismissal spell that is a variant of the Summon/Bind Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath.

Since the Yithian's are masters of time, when the original contact spell was cast it researched what might be needed before it cast its mind across the gulfs of space and time. It will use a total of 9 magic points when casting the spell to give it a 90% chance of dismissing the dark sargassum.

### **Spell Variant – Dismiss Dark Young of Shub Niggurath / Dark Sargassum**

Dismisses a single dark young/dark sargassum. The magic point cost varies; for each magic point sacrificed, increase the chance for a successful cast by 10 percentiles; a result of 96-00 is always a failure. Each cast of this spell also costs 1D3 Sanity points. A creature of at least SIZ 8 must be sacrificed. The summoner needs a knife to make certain ritual cuts in dispatching the victim. Unlike the summon spell it can be cast any time at night and does not require the dark of the moon to be effective. The dark young or dark sargassum will be banished the round after the

casting is complete.

The banishment will be spectacular and involves the river appearing to boil for nearly a full mile. Foul vapor will fill the air and dead fish will float to the surface. In fact, for nearly twenty miles fish, crocodiles and hippopotamus bodies will be floating in the river. The water will be undrinkable for any villages downstream for nearly a one week period. Fish kill, the noxious odor and the un-drinkability of the water eventually reaches nearly all the way to Omdurman.

Once the creature has been banished the Yithian will expect the humans to live up to their bargain for it to continue using its human host. There is nothing that can be immediately done about the situation but, if the rest of the investigators manage to talk to the village elder, he will be able to tell them that there used to be a well known Sheikh in Omdurman who knows the rituals to cast out demons. The man's name is Sheikh Ahmed Wad Ibrahim and he was a prayer leader of a small Sufi sect.

### **Returning to Omdurman**

The investigators can select a number of options at this point, but the most likely way that they can proceed are:

- Wait in the village until they see a boat going by and try to signal it by firing off a shot or standing on the shore waving and shouting.
- Begin traveling south along the White Nile to see if they can reach the point where the gunboat flotilla is continuing to clear sudd from the river.
- Follow the White Nile northward and foraging for food between villages. It is unknown what reception that they will receive at each village with some of them being hostile to Egyptians and Europeans. There is further danger while traveling northward that they will encounter some former members of the Dervish movement. Some of these individuals still hold a strong resentment against their defeat by Kitchener's forces and may seek vengeance.

The officers and crew of the ship that had been damaged by the dark sargassum did not get a very good look at it in the fog and confusion. During the intervening time they have arrived at the conclusion that the ship snagged on some heavy logs that was home to a nest of giant snakes and any talk of a monster will be dismissed. Even those that have a vague suspicion that what they encountered was some kind of creature will not speak up, realizing the damage it would have on their military career.

### **Arrival at Omdurman**



If the investigators have been careless and not stated that they are taking precautions when discussing the fate of the possessed investigator, that individual will try to escape once they reach Omdurman. The Yithian will attempt to arrange passage on a boat downstream to Cairo and then travel on to Europe.

Should the investigators anticipate this possibility and have the Yithian/investigator restrained he will use the spell *Sekhmenkenhep's Words*, found in the Call of Cthulhu rule book on page 241, with a 50% chance to persuade the listener's. Allow the player to role play this portion and provide them with the instructions that they must convince their fellow investigators that the mission that they are on is vital to the future of humanity and that unless they allow this situation to run its full course their true personality and soul may be trapped forever in an alien place. If the players are convinced, they will allow their friend to depart and may end up trying to track him or her down after the effects of the spell have worn off 1D3 days later.

If the Yithian fails to escape from the investigators they will have no difficulty tracking down the Sheikh that they were told about by the village elder. Sheikh Ahmed Wad Ibrahim is a very devout follower of Islam but will take a matter of possession very seriously. He will demand an offering of £100 (Egyptian) for the poor before he conducts the exorcism. The spell that he casts is actually *Cast Out Devil*, found in the Call of Cthulhu rule book on page 223. It takes a full day to cast and the elderly Sheikh will be assisted by a few chosen assistants to whom he has taught the spell. After it has been declared successful by the Sheikh it should be simple for the investigators to test their friend by asking questions that only they would know the answer to. As mentioned in the spell description in the Call of Cthulhu rule book, the person who has been possessed by a member of the Great Race of Yith might suffer vague nightmares of monstrous creatures and dark cyclopean structures.

**Information for the investigator possessed by the Yithian Mind**

The mind of the Yithian will not immediately know how to operate the body of its new host.

There will be issues with mobility and speech will be difficult. Nonsense words will be the first thing out of your investigators mouth and then some simple questions to confirm that you are in the correct time and place.

The mission of this particular Yithian is:

- Solve the immediate problem of the people who performed the contact. Help them banish the Dark Sargassum.

- Assess the people surrounding your host to see if they will be of any use to you or a hindrance.
- If they are a hindrance try to use them to get back to Egypt, escape from them if they attempt to restrain you, or kill them.
- Gather information about how the British Empire is dealing with Egypt.
- If you manage to lose your associates, travel to Europe and contact a Yithian agent who will support you with documents, money, etc. (keeper should determine this information if they wish to turn this into a separate adventure).
- Travel to South America to visit certain ruins to ensure that certain wards are still in place.
- While in South America travel to Nazca (which will not be discovered by archaeologists until the 1920's). While at Nazca read certain lines which Yithian travelers in the past have left as messages. They will tell you if anything has to be 'corrected' during the time period that you are in. (Once again, the keeper should detail this out if they wish to run this objective as an adventure).

**Rewards**

Surviving investigators should each receive a SAN bonus of +2D6.  
For each investigator death survivors lose -1D3 SAN.  
If they manage to have the Yithian exorcised from their friend award them a SAN bonus of +1D6.

**NPC Statistics**

**Major Malcom Peake** – Commander of the White Nile sudd clearing expedition of 1899 – Age 35

STR 13 CON 12 INT 15 SIZ 15 POW 15  
DEX 14 APP 12 EDU 20 SAN 65 HP 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Remington Rifle 45%, 1D8+1D6+3  
.455 Webley Revolver 80%, 1D10+1  
Cavalry Sabre 45%, 1D8+1+db  
Machine Gun (Maxim) 40%, 2D6+4

Skills: Accounting 50%, Bargain 50%, History 50%,  
Navigate 75%, Persuade 75%, Pilot Boat 35%, Swim 45%

**Major Malcolm Peake**

Born in 1865 in Burrough, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. He received a commission in the Royal Artillery on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 1884. He was employed in the Egyptian Army from July 1895 to July 1905.

Peake served in the Dongola Expedition where he



commanded an artillery battery. He also took part in the battles around Atbara, the battle of Omdurman and the mission to route the Khalifa out of Kordofan led by Sir Reginald Wingate.

Major Peake was selected to lead the sudd clearing expedition due to his wide range of operational experience including directing the artillery pieces aboard the Nile gunboats.

He is a very competent career officer who is destined to become a Brigadier-General during World War I.

#### 5 British Officers

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
STR	13	12	12	13	15
CON	10	18	12	12	14
SIZ	11	16	17	9	16
INT	13	11	13	12	12
POW	11	11	9	11	12
DEX	10	10	11	12	11
APP	12	11	10	10	12
EDU	11	10	13	13	12
SAN	55	55	45	55	60
HP	11	17	15	11	15

Weapons: Remington Rifle 35%, 1D8+1D6+3  
 .455 Webley Revolver 45%, 1D10+1  
 Cavalry Sabre 35%, 1D8+1+db  
 Machine Gun (Maxim) 30%, 2D6+4

#### British Officers

#1 – Second Lieutenant Michael Ravensdale – He is a young but very confident junior officer who faced combat at Omdurman. He feels that he proved himself to be a dedicated professional soldier and is not afraid to enter into combat again.

#2 – Lieutenant George Hill – A grim man in his mid-twenties who is an adequate soldier but has been passed over for promotion. It has been noted that he is mildly xenophobic and tends to become edgy and rude when in the presence of somebody from a different country or race.

#3 – Second Lieutenant Dougal Wright – A giant of a man from Scotland who has thick Glaswegian accent. He is always joking about the heat and the insects but many around him can not understand a word he is saying (1/2 English language skill roll to understand).

#4 – Lieutenant Thomas Leatherby – Although he is not a distinguished officer, he speaks Arabic quite well and frequently acts as a translator for his superior officers. He is popular with the ranks since he also uses his language skill to help them communicate with the locals.

#5 – Captain Francis Davies – He is a large and very

powerful man who has some bullying tendencies. He will not utter threats but he will get in somebody's face when issuing orders. The men serving under him do not like him very much. It is assumed by all that his men and junior officers are unlikely to risk themselves to save him if he finds himself in trouble.

#### 5 Egyptian Officers

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
STR	11	14	11	14	12
CON	14	12	13	11	11
SIZ	12	12	11	12	13
INT	10	17	11	10	9
POW	11	13	15	9	15
DEX	11	11	13	12	15
APP	10	13	9	8	11
EDU	9	11	9	14	11
SAN	55	65	75	45	75
HP	13	12	12	12	12

Weapons: Remington Rifle 30%, 1D8+1D6+3  
 .455 Webley Revolver 30%, 1D10+1  
 Cavalry Sabre 40%, 1D8+1+db  
 Machine Gun (Maxim) 25%, 2D6+4

#### Egyptian Officers

#1 – Mulazim Tani (2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant) – A stoic and very obedient soldier who rarely exhibits any original thought. He comes from a very poor family and enjoys the higher standard of living as a junior army officer.

#2 – Mulazim Tani (2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant) – Quiet but friendly 26 year old who has been passed over for promotions several times. His superiors always think that he allows himself to become distracted with daydreams. In reality he has the potential to be a strategic genius and is constantly running through scenarios in his head along with possible solutions.

#3 – Mulazim Awal (Lieutenant) – Youngest son of a wealthy Cairo merchant. He has a better education than many of his fellow officers and tends to be somewhat smug. He cannot abide superstitious people and berates his fellow Egyptians and the Sudanese troops not to act like ignorant fellaheen.

#4 – Yuzbashi (Captain) – This officer is a hard working, dedicated soldier who has worked his way up through the ranks. He laughs easily and loves music, playing several traditional Egyptian instruments. His appearance is marred by a massive sword scar across his face from the battle of Atbara.

#5 – Mulazim Awal (Lieutenant) – A very religious man who studied under a Sufi master during his teens. He is still somewhat dismayed about how easily the Sudanese began following a self-proclaimed Mahdi.

**10 Sudanese Troops**

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	13	14	12	13	16	14	13	11	12	9
CON	17	9	14	11	10	10	9	13	15	13
SIZ	12	16	13	14	10	9	10	11	11	12
INT	14	12	12	15	9	11	13	9	13	11
POW	13	14	13	12	9	16	12	11	12	12
DEX	9	12	13	10	13	10	15	14	10	12
APP	11	13	12	14	10	13	15	8	11	11
EDU	9	7	11	12	12	8	13	10	9	10
SAN	65	70	65	60	45	80	60	55	60	60
HP	15	13	14	13	10	10	10	12	13	13

Weapons: Remington Rifle 25%, 1D8+1D6+3  
 Cavalry Sabre 30%, 1D8+1+db  
 Spear, Short 35%, 1D6+1+db

Skills: Ride Camel 35%, Hide 35%, Sneak 30%

The Sudanese are very good soldiers who follow orders and do not panic. They are fierce fighters and in many of the battles against the Dervish forces it was the Sudanese troops who did the hard house-to-house fighting. During the time when the troops were relaxed, British observers noted their playfulness and competitive spirit.

**10 Dervish Prisoners**

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	11	10	10	14	11	12	12	12	14	14
CON	12	10	10	11	8	11	14	9	13	10
SIZ	11	14	9	12	11	12	9	9	12	10
INT	13	12	10	10	16	11	7	8	9	14
POW	12	10	11	9	12	10	11	9	11	17
DEX	17	9	8	10	8	15	10	10	15	6
APP	13	13	8	12	6	6	10	14	15	10
EDU	11	9	7	9	10	7	7	8	6	9
SAN	60	50	55	45	60	50	55	45	55	85
HP	12	12	10	12	10	12	12	9	13	10

Skills: Clear Sudd 40%, Climb 50%, Dodge DEX x 2 +10%.

Many of the Dervish prisoners were wounded during the wars with the Egyptian and British forces and have reduced physical attributes. Some are suffering from the after-effects of many of the nasty diseases that can be contracted along the Nile River system.

It is not the intention of their British and Egyptian overseers to work them to death, and if any of the prisoners are too sick to work, they will be permitted to convalesce. There is minimal medical expertise available to tend to the sick and injured so at the first opportunity these individuals will be transported to Khartoum.

**Nile Village Elder and 10 followers (7 – 10 are children)**

	VE	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	6	16	12	9	11	13	12	5	3	5	8
CON	12	11	13	9	13	10	10	14	10	13	9
SIZ	10	13	16	9	12	9	12	7	7	4	6
INT	14	10	9	11	10	9	9	13	13	9	11
POW	20	11	13	11	10	11	12	11	10	12	11
DEX	9	14	12	10	9	14	9	15	13	16	11
APP	14	15	12	10	11	10	11	11	10	13	12
EDU	12	9	7	7	8	11	8	5	6	4	6
SAN	80	55	65	55	50	55	60	55	50	60	55
HP	11	12	15	9	13	10	11	11	9	9	8

Village Elder – Manute (Man-new-tay)

Tribal shaman/witch doctor – 60+ years old

Manute is a shrewd old man who is willing to do whatever it takes to preserve the people of his village. Since the investigators or anybody that accompanies there are either European or Egyptian, their lighter skin will initially make him assume that they are involved in the slave trade. Once they have talked to him, through an interpreter, and his fears are assuaged, he will begin to provide them more information.

Spells: Attract Fish, Augur, Heal, Spell Variant – Contact Great Race of Yith.

**Sheikh Ahmed Wad Ibrahim** – Islamic holy man with knowledge of the Cthulhu mythos – Age 75

STR 8 CON 9 INT 15 SIZ 11 POW 18  
 DEX 11 APP 11 EDU 20 SAN 60 HP 10

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Scimitar 45%, 1D8+1D6+3

Skills: Astronomy 45%, Bargain 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 15%, History 75%, Law-Sharia 75%, Occult-Islam 80%, Persuade 75%, Ride-Camel 35%,

Spells: Bind Enemy, Bless Blade, Bless Crop, Cast Out Devil, Heal, Warding the Eye

**Sheikh Ahmed Wad Ibrahim**

This elderly scholar is well regarded amongst the Islamic community, but he is less of a teacher and more of a researcher. He has been exposed to some Cthulhu mythos writings over his lifetime and realized the threat that was represented within the pages.

At some point he made a decision to read enough to glean whatever information that might be beneficial to the people around him.

Sheikh Ahmed exudes a quiet confidence when addressing others and remains calm no matter what situation he finds himself in. He knows he is approaching the end of his lifetime and has made his

peace with Allah.

### Game Option - Keepers of the Revelation

After the death of Abd al-Azrad in 738 one of his students fled to Sudan bearing fragments of the Al-Azif. The Islamic community in the area of the port of Suakin took him in and over several years learned and interpreted what they could from the fragments.

What was written shook some of them quite badly and they decided that the information should not be widely dispersed. A small group of carefully selected Islamic scholars divided the writings and memorized a few pages each. The books were then carefully buried beneath one of the tombs as Jebel Barkal. During each of their lifetimes they would select one of their students whom they deemed worthy enough to receive the terrible knowledge and passed it on.

Today there are roughly ten Sheikhs who share the knowledge. If there were complete spells within their section they may have studied the material enough to be able to cast it. Some of them have studied binding spells in case some evil sorcerer calls up one of these 'demons' and others, like Sheikh Ahmed, have learned what they think might be useful.

Some of these scholars get together at times to share their knowledge of spells. If they detect a major threat they may call on each other for assistance.

With their Cthulhu mythos knowledge these Sheikhs try not to become too involved in worldly matters. They spend much of their time in prayer and study of the Koran believing that their mythos knowledge places their souls in jeopardy

The combined knowledge of the Al-Azif fragments in their possession gives a Sanity loss of 1D10/2D10 and Cthulhu Mythos knowledge of +15%. Since the information is dispersed amongst multiple people it would take many years of direct study to learn the full content. Sheikh Ahmed is the oldest of the Keepers of the Revelation and during his lifetime has been exposed to and learned the most knowledge of the group. He fears that he has been damned and fears what will happen when he dies.

## Dangerous Animals of Sudan

### African Elephants



**STR** 6D6+34

**CON** 3D6+16

**SIZ** 6D6+42

**POW** 2D6+6

**DEX** 3D6

**HP:** 45

**Move:** 10

**Damage Bonus:** +6D6

**Weapon:** Trunk 50%, damage Grapple

Rear and Plunge 25%, damage 8D6+db

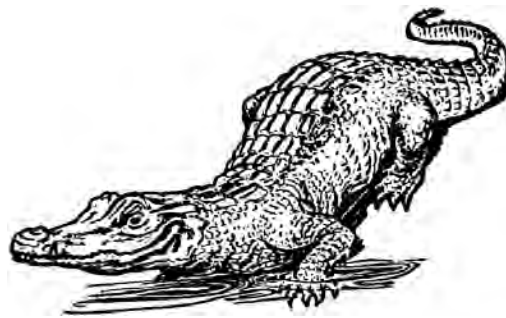
Trample 50%, damage 4D6+db

Tusk Gore 25%, damage 6D6+db

**Armor:** 8 point skin.

**Skills:** Listen 80%, Scent Something Interesting 95%.

### Crocodiles



**STR** 4D6+12

**CON** 3D6+8

**SIZ** 4D6+12

**POW** 3D6

**DEX** 2D6

**HP:** 22-23

**Move:** 6 / 8 swimming

**Damage Bonus:** +2D6

**Weapon:** Bite 50%, damage 1D10+db

**Armor:** 5 point hide.

**Skills:** Glide Stealthily Through Water 75%, Hide 60%, Sneak 50%.

## Hippopotamus



**STR** 6D6+15  
**CON** 6D6+6  
**SIZ** 6D6+15  
**POW** 3D6  
**DEX** 2D6  
**HP:** 28  
**Move:** 7 / 12 swimming  
**Damage Bonus:** +3D6  
**Weapon:** Bite 40%, damage 1D8+4+db  
**Armor:** 3 point thick hide.  
**Skills:** Attack Boats 40%, Hide in Water 85%

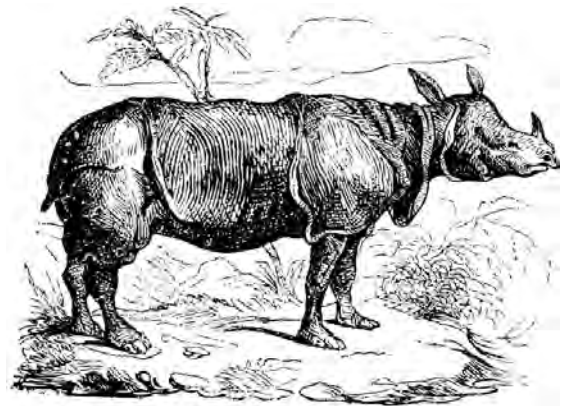
## Lions



**STR** 2D6+12  
**CON** 3D6  
**SIZ** 3D6+6  
**POW** 2D6+6  
**DEX** 2D6+12

**HP:** 20  
**Move:** 12  
**Damage Bonus:** +2D6  
**Weapon:** Bite 5%, damage 1D10  
Claw 60%, damage 1D6+db  
Ripping 80%, damage 2D6+db  
**Armor:** 2 point skin.  
**Skills:** Organized Hunt 25%, Track 25%.

## Rhinoceros



**STR** 6D6+20  
**CON** 4D6+6  
**SIZ** 6D6+20  
**POW** 3D6  
**DEX** 2D6  
**HP:** 31  
**Move:** 15  
**Damage Bonus:** +4D6  
**Weapon:** Bite 25%, damage 1D10  
Charge 50%, damage 1D10+db  
Trample 75%, damage 3D10+db against downed foes  
**Armor:** 10 point hide.  
**Skills:** Be Annoyed 70%, Scent Danger 60%.

## Snakes

There are twenty known species of poisonous snakes in Sudan from adders, whose bite causes pain and swelling, to the Black Mamba, whose bite is nearly always fatal. Other species include a range of vipers and cobras plus the boomslang whose bite causes severe internal bleeding.

If the keeper wishes to inflict snakebite on their investigators, it is recommended that they determine the potency of the venom in advance and set a POT versus CON resistance roll. Please remember that this scenario is set in the Cthulhu by Gaslight period so there are no anti-venom treatments available.



# **G**lossary [see back of Prisoners of the Mahdi for more glossary items]

**Abuk** – She is a member of the Dinka pantheon of gods. Abuk is the mother of Deng.

**Ajok** – This is the name of the tribal god of the Lotuka tribe.

**Angareeb** – Bedsteads used by the dervishes. They consist of a rough wooden frame strung with whatever fiber is available. For Emirs and other important personages, they are carried around for them to sit on when resting. In the presence of the Mahdi or Khalifa they were the only ones permitted to sit on an angareeb.

**Ansar** - The term used for the warrior followers of the Mahdi. It is based on the same word used to describe an elite group of Arab mounted warriors.

**Ashraf** – Descended from the prophet Mohammed. Several of the Arab families in Sudan make this claim.

**Bagarra** – This is a generic term for the cattle-owning tribes of Arabic descent centered in northern Sudan. They are semi-nomadic and travel with their animals to the best grazing areas. Their lifestyle and attitudes are quite different to the settled agricultural tribes along the Nile. In addition to being skilled herdsman these tribes is also the source of many of the slave traders throughout the countries history.

**Baksheesh** - A word of Persian origin that is used throughout the Middle East to refer to tipping and bribery.

**Bashi-Bazouks** - Irregular force of mounted fighters from the Balkan area of the Ottoman Empire who were not regular troops. They lived off what they looted from their enemies and were considered somewhat undisciplined.

**Bedouin** – Desert dwelling Arab nomadic tribes found throughout the Middle East and northern Africa. These tribes took care of their own interests even at the expense of a fellow Bedouin tribe. If there was an outside threat the tribes would band together. Each tribe was lead by a Sheikh with the title referring to the leading tribal elder.

**Blemmyes** - A Nubian tribe describe by the early Romans who came into conflict with them. Also a medieval term for headless monsters with their eyes and mouths in their belly said to live south of Egypt

**British Square** – This was a term used by Rudyard Kipling for an infantry square formation that has been in use since at least Roman times. The theory of this tactic when used with riflemen was to hold off firing until the enemy charge was approximately one hundred feet away. The volley fire would drop horses and men into a low wall surrounding the square that would impede any enemy troops that was following the initial charge. Occasionally several squares would be positioned so that approaching enemy forces would find themselves in a crossfire.

**Cacolet** – This is a type of saddle that fits on the back of a pack animal to carry passengers in chairs or litters.

**Condominium** – Also known as the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. This refers to the agreement between the two countries from 1899 to 1955 for the joint rule and authority over Sudan.

**Dahabeah** - Barge-like Nile boats with one or two sails and a structure similar to a houseboat. They are usually capable of carrying up to twelve passengers or several tons of cargo.

**Deng** – This is the creator god of the Dinka tribe.

**Dervish** - A common term used to identify the followers of the Mahdi in late 19th century Sudan. The Mahdi had been a scholar studying the Sufi traditions of Islamic mysticism.

**Dragoman** – Term used for a combination travel guide and translator in Egypt and other parts of the Middle East. Reputable dragomen can be hired through the recommendations of Embassies, consulates or hotels.

**Emir** - Arabic word that can mean commander or prince and is used as an honorific for somebody in a position of power.

**Execration Texts** - Bowls or small idols used in magical ceremonies by the ancient priests of Kush.

**Fazughli** - A location on the south shore of the Blue Nile that is close to the Ethiopian border. It is a mountainous ridge where ancient gold mines were located.

**Fellata** – Term which has been used for centuries for the pilgrims from western Africa who pass through Sudan on their way to the seaports on the Red Sea. These people are on a pilgrimage to Mecca and since they travel by foot the journey can take several years. This pilgrimage is long and difficult and many of the Fellata die during this passage.

**Felucca** - A Nile sailboat with one or two lateen style sails. They usually have a crew of two to three and can carry up to ten passengers. A felucca can carry several tons of cargo and are sometimes used as fishing boats.

**Firman** - An official decree issued by the head of an Islamic state. They can grant privileges or permission or alternatively be used to pronounce a judgement under Sharia law.

**Fuzzy Wuzzy** - Warriors from the Hadendowa tribe in eastern Sudan who comb butter into their hair to make it stand stiffly upright.

**Gyassas** - A long low boat with multiple lateen sails. When transporting the troops in Kitchener's army between 75 and 120 troops were moved on each gyassa, depending on its size.

**Haboob** - Massive sandstorms generated by the shifting tropical winds in North Africa. Since Sudan is on the eastern edge of the Sahara desert it is prone to frequent storms. At their most massive they can be over 100 miles across and over 2 miles high. They travel at a rate of 20 to 30 miles per hour and usually strike with very little warning. The word haboob is Arabic and means *strong wind*.

**Hadendoa** - A fierce tribe from eastern Sudan located in the lands to the east of the Nile to the Red Sea.

**Jak** - These are independent, and often malicious, spirits of the Dinka tribe.

**Jebel Barkal** - A flat topped mountain rising from a plain near the 4th Nile Cataract. At the foot of the mountain is a royal cemetery of the Kush kingdom.

**Jebel Gedir** - A region of the Nuba Mountains where the Baggara tribes were located.

**Jibba** - The traditional long robe worn by the Mahdi and his followers. They were originally made from plain white cloth with colored patches added to them which denoted the clan affiliation of the wearer and as a sign of asceticism.

**Kababish** - A group of tribes, mainly of Arabic descent, who live in the northern area of Kordofan.

**Khalifa** - In Sudan this was the title used by the successor of the Mahdi. Initially all of the main advisors of the Mahdi had this title and in that usage meant *helper*.

**Khedive** - Title of the ruler of Egypt based on a Persian word meaning 'lord'

**Kobu** - Magicians within the Lotuka tribe in southern Sudan who predict the rainy season and tell the tribe when to plant their crops.

**Kunjur** - Rainmakers from the Korongo tribe in southern Sudan.

**Kwoth** - A spirit worshipped by the Nuer tribes who manifests in all things. Every item venerated as being part of Kwoth is worshipped as a separate spirit, each requiring its own forms of sacrifice. This type of religion is known as pluriform monotheism meaning that the one god has many parts.

**Lado Enclave** - An area of 15,000 square miles in the south of Sudan. It had been claimed by the Ottoman forces of Egypt after the annexations of 1821. It came under control of the British and in 1894 was leased to Belgium during the lifetime of King Leopold II. Lado was the farthest point up the Nile River that boats could travel.

**Mahdi** - Mahdi is the term for the Islamic redeemer who will rid the world of evil and bring all persons into the fold of the Muslim faith. Muhammed Ahmed proclaimed himself as the redeemer and assumed the title during his rule of Sudan.

**Mahdist** - A term used to refer to the followers of Muhammed Ahmed. They were a united force under his rule that drove the occupying forces of the Khedive of Egypt out of Sudan.

**Maphanga Stones** - Stones used by the magicians of the Lotuka tribe to perform weather magic and read seasonal portents.

**Merissa** - Type of beer made from fermented grain, usually sorghum. It has the consistency of pea soup and a low alcohol content.

**Meröe** - An ancient city on the east bank of the Nile approximately 130 miles north of Khartoum. It is the site of a large royal burial site with over two hundred pyramids.

**Molin-guo** - Name that early Chinese traders gave to Sudan

**Nhialic** - Name of the supreme deity of the Dinka.

**Nuggars** - Nile cargo vessel with one or two sails and a shallow draft to be able to maneuver through shallow areas.

**Pasha** - An Ottoman empire title given to governors of an area. It can also be granted as an honorary title as an equivalent to the British title of Lord.

**Peeth** – This is the term that the Dinka use for the evil eye.

**Reth** – Title for the king of the Shilluk/Cholo tribes in Southern Sudan near Fashoda.

**Sharia Law** – Name for the Islamic religious system of law covering both public and private life. It is a consensus based framework of rules that can be interpreted based on the local community standards. From a western viewpoint, in a stricter and more orthodox Islamic country, the punishments tend to be harsher and more medieval in nature.

**Sheikh** – Title for a tribal elder or an Islamic teacher.

**Simoom** – A desert cyclone with very high temperatures and winds that can kill anybody exposed within its blast in minutes. They can last up to twenty minutes and reach temperatures of nearly 140 degrees.

**Sirdar** – Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian military

**Sudd** – This is an Arabic word meaning ‘block’. They are masses of vegetation with reeds and papyrus growing on top that floats in the Bahr-el-Jebel and Bahr-el-Ghazal areas of the White Nile River. The density of them at times prevents travel on the river and turns the south-central area of Sudan into one of the largest marshes in the world.

**Sufi** – This is a tradition of Islamic mysticism based on purification of one's self and turning away from worldly things to become closer to Allah. Another name for these Islamic mystics is Dervish.

**Taqiyah** – A type of headwear that is a simple cap usually made out of white cotton. Sometimes it is decorated with white embroidery. It is also known as a kufi. It has no specific religious meaning but is commonly worn to Friday prayer by all Sudanese Muslims.

**Umm Hagar** – Prison in Omdurman built to house enemies of the Mahdi and Khalifa. The name is translated into English as House of Stone.

**Wadi** – Dry riverbeds formed by the runoff from the seasonal rainstorms.

**Wal** – Dinka term used to describe bad medicine or evil magic that they believe some members of the tribe are capable of casting against others.

**Zariba** – A protective fence either constructed of tangled thorn bushes similar to barbed wire or a more permanent enclosure constructed as a palisade. These fences would be hastily constructed by an army on

the march for defense against surprise attacks or to prevent their animals from wandering away. This was also a common method throughout the Sudan to construct cattle pens to contain the animals and exclude predators.

**Zeer** – An earthenware jar used for drinking water. Unless they are completely dried out twice a week they provide a breeding ground for bacteria.

**Yaum al-Qiyamah** – In Arabic this means *Day of the Resurrection*. It is the Islamic equivalent of the Christian Judgment Day.

**Yieth** – These are the helpful clan spirits of the Dinka that are called upon for assistance in times of trouble.



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