KHEDIVE ISMAIL'S ARMY

John P. Dunn

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

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This book examines military failure in the age of Imperialism. On paper, the mid-nineteenth-century Egyptian army seems a formidable regional power. It had a tradition of success, modern weapons, and mercenary officers with experience in major wars. Egypt's ruler, Khedive Ismail, hoped to combine the imported technology and brains with native manpower, and establish an Egyptian-dominated Horn of Africa. His soldiers did conquer parts of the Sudan, but they suffered disastrous defeats during the Egyptian–Abyssinian War of 1875–1876.

Although the book provides the first detailed examination of the Egyptian–Abyssinian War in English, it also looks at the root problems that made Ismail's soldiers ineffective. These include issues of class, racism, internal and external politics, finance, and the rapidly changing world of mid-nineteenth-century military technology.

Khedive Ismail's Army is aimed at military historians, and would also interest those studying the Middle East or North-East Africa.

John P. Dunn, an Assistant Professor of History at Valdosta State University, Georgia, studies military affairs in nineteenth-century Egypt, Poland and China. His work has appeared in *The Journal of Military History*, *War in History*, and *The Journal of Slavic Military Affairs*.

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First published 2005
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
270 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005.

"To purchase your own copy of this or any of Taylor & Francis or Routledge's collection of thousands of eBooks please go to www.eBookstore.tandf.co.uk."

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN 0-203-32690-3 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN 0–714–65704–2 (Print Edition)

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Many of the sketch maps in *Khedive Ismail's Army* are based on originals from Egypt's *Dar al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiya* (DAW) in most cases, prepared by members of Ismail's *État Major*. Others are the work of contemporary explorers and travellers. Whenever possible, the original cartographer is remembered by the words, 'as per', and the book listed in the bibliography.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Generosity casts a long shadow. (Arab proverb)

Such shadows cover the pages in front of you, for many individuals helped in their completion. Though hardly even an *effendi* in the study of history, the writer was assisted by many great pashas. It is very fitting that they should be listed before all else.

First, Dr Jose Alvarez, who convinced the author to attend graduate school. Second, the author greatly appreciates the advice, assistance, and encouragement offered by Dr Peter P. Garretson, Tallahassee, Florida; plus Ms Anne Spengler and the hard-working Interlibrary Loan Staff at Florida State University; Dr Richard Pankhurst, Addis Ababa; Dr Richard Hill, Dr Douglas Johnson, Oxford; Dr Gérard Prunier, Gérard Margolis, Paris; Roy Marcot, San Ramon, California; Dr Terry Walz, New York; *Dajjazmatch* Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, Yonkers, New York; Dr Letitia Ufford, Princeton; Dr David Williams, Dr Melanie Byrd, Colonel Fred N. Dunn, Valdosta, Georgia; Sawsan Abd al-Ghani, Ibrahim Saddek, Admiral Galal Allouba, Dr Sulyman Hussein, Dr William C. Reed, and Mark Easton, Cairo.

Chapters 3, 4, 7 and 13 build on articles already published in *War in History*; *The Journal of Military History*; and *The War Correspondent: The Journal of the Crimean War Research Society*. It goes without saying that financial support allowed the research for such articles and the completion of this book. Generous grants came from the American Research Center in Egypt, the American Society of Arms Collectors, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, and Florida State University. These allowed travel to the Southern Historical Collection in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, the National Archives in Washington, DC, London's Public Record Office, Cairo's *Dar al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiya*, *Institute d'Égypte*, *Mahtaff al-Harbi*, and the rare book collections of several other Egyptian institutions. To all individuals and institutions, thanks for your help!

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IIIA	Georges Douin, *Histoire du règne du khédive Ismail, Tome III: L'Empire Africain, 3e Partie (1874–1876), Fascicule A* (Cairo: L'Institut Français, MCMXLI)
IIIB	Georges Douin, *Histoire du règne du khédive Ismail, Tome III: L'Empire Africain, 3e Partie (1874–1876), Fascicule B* (Cairo: L'Institut Français, MCMXLI)
£E	Egyptian pound
AMAE	*Archives du Ministère des affaires étrangères*, Paris
BN	*Bibliothèque national*, Paris
BSKG	*Bulletin de la société khédival de géographie*
CO	Colonial Office, London
cor. pol.	*correspondance politique*
DAW	*Dar al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiya*, [Egyptian National Archives], Cairo, Egypt
DUSCA	*Dispatches from United States Consuls in Alexandria, Egypt*, National Archives, Washington, DC
DUSCC	*Dispatches from United States Consuls in Cairo, Egypt*, National Archives, Washington, DC
DUSMT	*Despatches from United States Ministers in Turkey*, National Archives, Washington, DC
Fechet mss.	Eugene Oscar Fechet, *Personal Notes of a Journey from Cairo, Egypt to Assouan, Abou Hamed and Berber in Soudan, and return from Berber to Edfour*, Special Collections, Library, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York
FO	Foreign Office, London
IO	India Office, London
Lockett	Samuel Henry Lockett, *Lockett Correspondence*, in Hill Memorial Library, Louisiana State University
MAE	*Ministère des affaires étrangères*, Paris
NA	National Archives, Washington, DC
PI	*Période Ismail*, a collection of *Dar al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiya*, Cairo, Egypt

PMAS	*Période Mohammed Aly à Said*, *Dar al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiya*, Cairo, Egypt
PRO	Public Record Office, London
RE	*Revue d'Égypte*
rept.	Reprint edition
SHAT	*Service historique de l'Armée de la terre*, Château de Vincennes, Paris
SHC	Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Sherman	General William T. Sherman, *Sherman Papers*, National Archives, Washington, DC
SNR	*Sudan Notes and Records*
WO	War Office, London

GEOGRAPHICAL GAZETTEER

Good military history requires a strong connection with geography. Based on originals produced by a host of skilled cartographers, *Khedive Ismail's Army* features sketch maps to bolster this alliance. Most were edited to focus on locations or land forms that figure in the text.

Editing raises issues of place naming. Like the Arabic-to-English debate over *pasha* or *basha* discussed in the Glossary, this can simply be an argument over how best to convert local pronunciation into a different language, for instance, *Qallabat* vs. *Gallabat*. Editing, however, is not just a question of linguistics, but sometimes politics, or nationalism. Take Abyssinia, the traditional name given to a highland Christian polity of north-east Africa. Today, some scholars prefer Ethiopia. Abyssinia, though, is the author's choice, not as an insult to the people of Ethiopia, but rather to assist this book's intended audience.

Most military historians do not read Amharic, Somali, or Arabic, and thus, if interested, will delve further by reading primary sources produced by nineteenth-century American, French, Italian, or other Western writers. With this in mind, Abyssinia seemed a better choice. For the same reason, this book employs Cairo, not al-Qahirah, or Gura rather than Gura'e.

Some readers may wish to view modern maps for places like Bogos or Equatoria. The worldwide web features numerous options, some based on GPS technology. In such cases, a list of alternative spellings seemed a good ideal and may assist readers travelling from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century.

Abbasiyah Abasiyah, today a Cairo suburb
Abyssinia Ethiopia
Acre Akko, Accho, Acco, Aka, or St Jean d'Acre, in modern Israel
Adi Qala Adi Quala, Adi Kuala, Adi Kwala, or Adi Huala, a city in modern Eritrea
Adua Adwa, Aduwa, or Adowa, a town in northern Ethiopia
Aksum Axum, a town in northern Ethiopia
Alexandria al-Iskandariyah, a major Egyptian port on the Mediterranean

Alexinatz Aleksinac, on Morava River, about 17 miles north-north-west of Nis, Serbia
Algenden Alghenden, a town in modern Eritrea
Amideb a town in modern Eritrea
Anfile a coastal village in modern Eritrea
Apokorona a region in western Crete
Arkadi Moni Arkadiou, monastery near Iraklion, Crete
Arkiko Arqiqo, Hargigo, or Hrigigo, a port in modern Eritrea
Aroge the name of battlefield near Magdala, Ethiopia
Assab Asab, Asseb or Aseb, a port in modern Eritrea
Assam a river crossing and site of 1871 battle near Adua, Ethiopia
Aswan Assouan or Assuan, important city in southern Egypt
Awsa Aussa, a region in modern Ethiopia near Djibouti and Eritrea
Bahr al-Ghazal South-western Sudan, a region of rivers and low swampy grounds
Bardera Bardere, Bardhere, or Baardheere, village in southern Somalia on Juba River
Benadir Banadir or Banaadir, name for southern Somali coast
Berber Barbar, on the Nile, in northern Sudan
Berbera Berbeera, Somali port on Gulf of Aden
Blue Nile Bahr Arzaq, which starts in Ethiopia, where it is the Abbay, and ends at Khartoum
Bogos Senhit, district near Red Sea, north of Hamasen, today part of Eritrea
Brava Barawe or Barawa, Somali port
Buganda Baganda, provides name for modern Uganda
Bulaq Buluq, or Bulak, Nile port, now a suburb of north-west Cairo
Bulhar Somali port
Bunyoro now part of northern Uganda
Cairo al-Qahirah, Egypt's capital
Cotaxtla a small town 30 miles south-west of Vera Cruz, Mexico
Dabarki Egyptian fort in eastern Sudan during the 1840s
Damietta Dumyat, a town on Egypt's Mediterranean coast
Dar Fur Darfur, former Sultanate, now divided into several provinces in the western Sudan
Daym Idris Deim Idris, a large merchant encampment in nineteenth-century Equatoria
Daym Zubayr Deim Zubeir, capital of Zubayr's merchant/slaver empire in southern Sudan
Dobar Somali village, water source for nineteenth-century Berbera
Dongola Dunqulah, a province and city in the northern Sudan
Equatoria al-Istiwaiya or Istiwaiyyah, a province in southern Sudan
Eupatoria Yevpatoriya, a small Crimean town, now part of the Ukraine
al-Fasher al-Fasir, Fashir, or Fasher, Sudanese town 500 miles west-south-west of Khartoum

Fazughli Fazogli, Sudanese town near Ethiopian border
Gara a small town in the southern Sudan
Ghinda Ginda, Guinda, or Ghinda'e, a town in modern Eritrea
Gildessa Jildessa, in Ethiopia
Godofelassie Gudufalassie, town in modern Eritrea
Gojjam an important kingdom within the nineteenth-century Abyssinian Empire
Gondar Gonder, in western Ethiopia
Gondokoro a village on White Nile in southern Sudan; 5 miles north of modern Juba
Gundet Gundat or Gudagude, town in modern Eritrea
Gura Gura'e or Gure, a town in modern Eritrea
Hamasen Hamasien, a province in modern Eritrea
Harar Harer, a trade centre and old Muslim principality, today in Ethiopia
Hijaz Hejaz, a region in Arabia containing the holy cities of Mecca and Medina
Homs Hims, a large Syrian town
Iddi Ed, Edd or Idi, a town in modern Eritrea
Iftur Aftouh, pass west-south-west of Harar, in modern Ethiopia
Igu Ego, closer pass west-south-west of Harar, in modern Ethiopia
Iraklion Heraklion, chief city of Crete
Ismailia Isma'iliyah, in Egypt, base of operations for Suez Canal Company
Juba Jubba, a river in Somalia; called Gande when it crosses into Ethiopia
Kaka a small village in south central Sudan
Kassala Kasala, a city in north-eastern Sudan
Keren Karan, Cheren, a strategic town in Bogos, today in modern Eritrea
Khartoum al-Khartum, al-Hartum, capital of the Sudan
Khaya Khor K'eyih Kor, Kaya Khor, a mountain pass close to Gura in modern Eritrea
Kismayu Kismaayo or Chisimaio, Somali port
Konia Konya, Iconium, in Turkey
Kosti Kusti, Sudanese town on White Nile
Lado a village in the southern Sudan
Liche Licce, important town in Shewa, Ethiopia
Magdala Mekdala, Maqdala or Amba Mariam, the temporary capital of Abyssinia in 1867
al-Manawashi a battlefield in Dar Fur, western Sudan
Mareb Guda Giddi, a river in modern Eritrea, which passes close to Gundet and Gura
Mareb Mellash 'This side of the Mareb', a vague Abyssinian description for land claimed in what is today Eritrea. Sometimes also called Bahrmerder (sea land)
Masindi a town in west-central Uganda

Massawa Massaua, Massowa, Massoua, Mesewa, Mits'iwa or Mits'iwa'e, a major port in modern Eritrea
Medellin Medellin de Bravo, a small town 11 miles south of Vera Cruz, Mexico
Mogadishu Mogadisho or Muqdisho, Somali port
Nezib Nisibis, in southern Syria
No a papyrus-filled lake in southern Sudan
al-Obeid al-Ubayyid, town in central Sudan
Obock Obok, Red Sea port in modern Djibouti
Omdurman Umm Durman, a suburb of modern Khartoum
Phokies Phokis, town in Crete
Port Said Bur Said, Egypt, the Mediterranean entrance to Suez Canal
Qallabat Gallabat or Metema, a Sudanese town right next to Ethiopia
Ras Hafun a finger of land jutting into Indian Ocean near Somali city of Handa
Rethimnon Rethymnon, an important coastal city in Crete
Roheyta Raheita, Rehayto, or Rahayta, a town in southern Eritrea
Rosetta al-Rasid or al-Rashid, an Egyptian town on the Mediterranean
Saati a town in modern Eritrea near Massawa
Saganeiti a town in modern Eritrea
Senhit Sanhit, the region about Keren in what is today Eritrea
Sennar Sannar, Sennaar, or Sinnar, Sudanese town on the Blue Nile
Shewa Shoa, or Showa, an important kingdom within the Abyssinian Empire
Silistria Silistra, a city in modern Bulgaria
Sinope Sinop, on Turkey's Black Sea coast
Soledad Soledad de Doblado, a small town south-west of Vera Cruz, Mexico
Sphakia Sfakia, an administrative district of western Crete
Stylos a small town in western Crete
Suakin Sawakin, Suachin, Red Sea port of Sudan
Sudd a collection of rivers, swamps and marshes in southern Sudan
Suez a major Red Sea port and entrance to the canal
Tadjoura Tajoura, Tadjourah, Tajurrah, or Tajura, a port city in Djibouti
Taka a Sudanese town
al-Teb a small town in the Sudan
Tel al-Kebir Tall al-Kabir, a town east of Cairo, Egypt
Tigre an important region in Northern Abyssinia
Toura a suburb of Cairo
Tsazzega a district in Tigre
Tylissos Tilissos, Tylisos, a village in Crete
Um Kulu Umkulu, a town in modern Eritrea
Vafe a small village in Crete
Vryses Vrisses, a town in western Crete

Wad Medani Wad Madani, a Sudanese town on the Blue Nile
Wadi Haifa Sudanese town on Egyptian frontier
Wello Wallo, Wollo, or Welo, important province within the Abyssinian Empire
White Nile Bahr Abyad, which originates in the southern Sudan
Woreilu an important Shewan town, today part of Ethiopia
Zeila Seyla or Audal, Somali port
Zula a small port south of Massawa, in modern Eritrea

1

DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH

> Princes engage foreign soldiers to accomplish results, and not to prove why they could not do so.
>
> (Pierre Crabites)

Alexandria's Hôtel d'Europe included a popular Greek restaurant. Although gunfire was not on the menu, two groups of angry Americans provided this 'special' on 11 July 1872. In what *The Times* of London headlined, 'An American Fracas in Egypt', pistol shots were exchanged between the American Consul General, and his fellow countrymen serving with the Egyptian army.[1]

Ending with a minor injury, this shoot-out could serve as a metaphor for a failed mercenary venture. Between 1863 and 1879, Egypt's ruler, Khedive Ismail, hired several hundred European, American, and Ottoman soldiers of fortune. These mercenaries were supposed to provide his armed forces with leadership, training, and technical expertise. Most were unable, unwilling, or incapable of meeting their contractual obligations. Instead, they produced cliques, division, and, in this extreme case, violence. Ismail's mercenaries also helped launch Egypt into imperial ventures that ruined both the armed forces and the economy.

Using the American contingent as a focal point, this book hopes to open a debate on the role of imported talent and technology in nineteenth-century Egypt. The US mercenaries certainly included brave, skilful, and intelligent men, but others were drunkards, deadbeats, and racists. Collectively, the Americans, and indeed most of Ismail's *condottieri*, were failures.

This was contrary to tradition. Muhammad Ali, Ismail's grandfather, retained numerous western mercenaries. The dynastic founder once told a confidant that he expected 49 out of 50 to be 'false stones', but the last would be a 'genuine diamond'.[2] Maybe he was referring to Joseph Sève, a veteran of Napoleon's army who trained officers, and led Egyptian forces in Greece and Syria. Sève went on to become Sulyman Pasha *al-Faransawi* [the Frenchman], a wealthy and influential member of Egypt's ruling class.[3] His students became the officer corps of *al-Nizam al-Jadid* [the New

Regulation], a western-style army, with European weapons and organization, that won a string of victories in the 1820s and 1830s. Other foreign mercenaries assisted in this process, and were vital for its success. Their record established a tradition of such employment well into the twentieth century.[4]

The man behind this idea, Muhammad Ali, was both innovator and copyist. Ruler of Egypt from 1805 to 1848, he broke with tradition in the mass employment of European Christians, and purchase of modern weapons. On the other hand, in hiring mercenaries, he simply followed a tradition dating back to the Pharaohs.

Mamluks were a recent model, one which provided Egypt with high quality troops for nearly 1,000 years. The term Mamluk implied one who was 'owned' by a master. These soldiers started as young bondsmen, but were educated, trained, and then released to serve as professional fighting men. Egyptian Mamluks transcended national boundaries, and featured Muslim warriors from all over the Middle East. The result was an elite fighting force. Mamluks defeated the previously 'invincible' Mongol army at Ayn Jalut in 1260, and went on to conquer the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. For 250 years after, they represented one of the most powerful armies in the region. Even after their heyday, these soldiers held considerable local power, until Napoleon Bonaparte defeated them at the Battle of the Pyramids (1798).[5]

Although Muhammad Ali spent most of his early years attempting to destroy the leaders of this martial caste, he recognized its significance. Indeed, he and his sons had no hostility for rank-and-file Mamluks, offering positions to all willing to break with their former masters. Considering Muhammad Ali was Albanian, and had started his military career as a freelance, retaining these foreign troops does not seem peculiar at all.

European mercenaries could be viewed as an extension of the old Mamluk tradition. Certainly they did not begin as 'slaves', and very few embraced Islam. On the other hand, they had no ties to the previous regime, and belonged completely to Muhammad Ali. In addition, they carried a bonus value of being pre-trained, and having experience in the major battles of the Napoleonic Wars. In a sense, such men were Neo-Mamluks, both a continuation of the Egyptian tradition of employing foreign soldiers, and this new concept of hiring experienced non-Muslims.

With Neo-Mamluks to advise, and sometimes lead, his soldiers, Muhammad Ali created an empire and established a dynasty. They assisted his importation of modern firearms, artillery, and the know-how to build such. Neo-Mamluks helped construct an Egyptian navy, launching hundred-gun ships-of-the-line, the 1820s' equivalent of twentieth-century battleships. When Muhammad Ali's troops went to war, their victories over Arabs, Sudanese, Greeks, and Turks confirmed the value of these men.

Egypt's new western-style soldiers were not only muscle to secure Muhammad Ali's rule, but also a means of modernization. The concurrent

requirement of support systems, i.e. armament plants, uniform factories, etc., pushed Egypt towards an industrial revolution and a stronger economy. For some Egyptians, the military revolution of Muhammad Ali established a government infrastructure, improved medical facilities, and created greater educational opportunities. Thus the new armed forces played an institutional role far beyond the narrow confines of the battlefield.

Even from a purely economic viewpoint, Muhammad Ali's accomplishments were impressive. He created an Egyptian military-industrial complex. This allowed him to exclusively supply all but the most sophisticated equipment to Egypt's armed forces, and while lower costs figured into the scheme, equally important was the idea that military self-sufficiency freed Egypt from outside influence, and advanced her to the status of a regional power.

More than just an ambitious enterprise, this was a revolutionary scheme that sought to graft a modern arms industry onto a pre-industrial society. Like-minded rulers from Abyssinia, China, and Japan followed similar strategies, in the belief that imported technology could create an adequate defence against European aggression. Except for the Japanese, these ventures failed to take root. In all cases, the main problem was lack of infrastructure. Without it, the imported technology could only be maintained through heavy outlays of money and scarce resources.[6]

Still, the predatory world of the nineteenth century allowed little time for contemplation, and many developing states accepted these limitations. Speed was all important, with resulting levels of waste and failure being preferable to a perception of military impotence. For a few, the process was successful enough to allow for entry into the imperialist club of colonial powers.

Muhammad Ali took this path in 1820, when he launched his forces into the Sudan. During the 1830s and the 1840s, his soldiers conquered a vast empire that included significant portions of modern Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Sudan. Although expansion slowed in the 1850s, new conquests seemed inevitable a decade later.

Ismail, who came to power in 1863, took his country back onto the imperial road. He saw a chance to emulate his grandfather's achievements, and during the 1860s, opted for a significant build-up of Egyptian military power. Ismail envisioned his army as a means of dominating the Horn of Africa, a region deemed to have great economic and strategic value. If Muhammad Ali's *al-Nizam al-Jadid* conquered vast territories, why should Ismail's experience be any different?

In 1875–1876, several Egyptian armies marched into Abyssinia. Despite modern equipment, and the advice of American Neo-Mamluks, all with Civil War experience or a West Point diploma, these invasions were defeated. Failure here marked the end for any dreams of empire, and sowed seeds for the Urabi Revolution, plus the subsequent British occupation of Egypt.

What caused this rather rapid and disastrous reversal of fortune for Khedive Ismail's army? Several answers present themselves. Some point to

the limitations of imported technology and foreign advisors. Others include a failure of leadership, morale, and Egyptian politics.

Military defeats are like the skin of an onion, and peeling off one layer will often reveal another. Battlefield leadership comes to mind first, and Abyssinian generals were simply better than their Egyptian counterparts. They utilized terrain and tactics to negate the Egyptians' superior firepower, and secured notable victories at Gundet (1875) and Gura (1876).

A case of good luck maybe? Hardly, and here we get to a deeper problem, one that involves serious flaws in the organization, training, and morale of Ismail's armed forces. Comprised of mistreated, unenthusiastic, native-born enlisted men, and a foreign multi-ethnic officer corps, this army was poorly prepared for war. In the words of an American mercenary, 'it was too timid to fight, and too stupid to run.'[7]

Technology was not a substitute for poor training and morale. Despite sharp uniforms, Remington rifles, Gatling guns, and Krupp artillery, Egyptian soldiers were poorly prepared for modern war. The most serious weakness, however, was at the top. Together with Turks and Circassians, Egypt obtained numerous officers from England, France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland and the United States. Americans played a key role in the 1870s. Indeed, General Charles Pomeroy Stone was Chief of the *État Major* [General Staff] until 1882. By then, Stone almost certainly would have agreed with another Neo-Mamluk, who wrote, 'It was my fortune, good or bad – it is hard to say which – to have been an officer in the Egyptian Army.'[8]

These men were 'strangers in a strange land' – all white, all Christian, serving an African Muslim state. Despite this peculiar dichotomy, Egyptians expected them to repeat an earlier success story, when Sulyman and his colleagues had trained *al-Nizam al-Jadid*. American mercenaries, however, were quite different. Despite experience and training, far superior to Sulyman and his contemporaries, these Neo-Mamluks failed in their primary mission. Some conducted exciting, and scientifically valuable explorations of the 'Dark Continent'. Others performed well on small, individual tasks. As a group, however, they were fractionalized and insubordinate. Finally, when called to deliver victory in Abyssinia, they failed.

Missing was the vital quality of leadership. Muhammad Ali, his son Ibrahim, and their iron-willed lieutenants, were a far cry from Ismail. The grandson of Muhammad Ali, Ismail led a soft life, and never commanded his soldiers, except for a parade. As historian Richard Hill puts it, 'a military ruling class was becoming a clique of pot-bellied *rentiers*. Egypt civilized them and took their swords away.'[9]

This was far from evident at the start of Ismail's reign. Like Muhammad Ali, the Khedive imported massive quantities of western technology and know-how. On paper, these made the Egyptian armed forces seem a regional power. Missing, however, was a dedicated corps of officers. In addition,

Ismail's army never connected with the ways soldiers were encouraged to risk their lives for a cause. Indeed, there was absolutely no incentive for enlisted ranks to do anything, except maybe to run away.

Ismail's ambitious schemes fell apart on the Abyssinian battlefields. These defeats, combined with a simultaneous financial collapse, partially brought about by massive military spending. Revolution followed in turn, with foreign invasion, and, finally, occupation by England that lasted until 1946.

The overall picture of Ismail's armed forces is one of mismatched ends and means. Investigation will reveal a military with potential, but one so bereft of good leadership, that failure was almost guaranteed. There were also problems in how the soldiers were conscripted, trained, equipped, and compensated. If employed in a defensive stance, the army was probably sufficient to protect Egypt from regional enemies. But if used as a tool of empire, as happened in the 1870s, this force was doomed to failure.

Since Ismail's Neo-Mamluks encouraged imperial ventures, and thus bear some responsibility for the débâcles of the mid-1870s, they deserve special attention. How were they hired? What was their function? What results can be attributed to their training and leadership? How did they interact with their native superiors? What problems resulted from the intermixing of West and East, Christian and Muslim? The mercenary community answered many of these questions in their articles, books, and unpublished papers. Combine these with clues from other eye-witnesses, and one has to concur with Judge Crabites, whose comment starts this chapter.

2

CREATING A MILITARY MACHINE

Muhammad Ali and his Neo-Mamluks

Achievements will inscribe your name in the pages of time.
(Muhammad Ali)

An Albanian nobody, whose intelligence and iron will made him *Wali* [Viceroy] of Egypt, Muhammad Ali established a dynasty. Doing so required tremendous effort plus a good deal of violent force directed against a cast of enemies that included Mamluk *Amirs*, British generals, and Ottoman pashas. In 1815, after ten years of conflict, Muhammad Ali sought to secure his position with a radical change.[1]

This was *Al-Nizam al-Jadid*, a collection of Egyptian soldiers and sailors quite different from their predecessors. With them, Muhammad Ali secured control of Egypt and created, albeit temporarily, one of the largest empires in that nation's long history. What made these troops so unique? Why were they so much more successful than other regional forces?

One answer involves leadership. From top to bottom, the new armed forces had effective commanders. Nowhere was this more evident than at the apex of Egypt's new government. Noted historian Afaf Marsot succinctly defines this in her description of the *Wali* and his son and heir, Ibrahim:

> Muhammad Ali and Ibrahim worked together as a team. Muhammad Ali supplied caution and a brake on rash movements, while Ibrahim supplied strategy, military prowess and the cement that kept the Egyptian army together and made his men fear and love him.[2]

These were central themes throughout their long careers. Both men recognized the importance of leadership in military affairs. Both fought with their men in the field, and thus from experience, were aware of what makes an army and its leaders successful.[3]

Leadership, however, was only part of the story. Muhammad Ali also inaugurated a 'military revolution'. As defined by Geoffrey Parker, this combines four steps:[4]

1 Massive growth in manpower.
2 Profound changes in tactics and strategy.
3 Intensified impact of war on society.
4 Significant alterations in government structure and policy.

While Parker applied this model to explain Europe's dominant position in past centuries, it also works for early nineteenth-century Egypt. By the 1820s, Egyptian armies, much larger than their eighteenth-century counterparts, included vastly greater numbers of trained infantry and artillery. Conscription provided the manpower, and as it focused on peasants, a group previously considered poor material for military service, definitely impacted on society. Also, increased military expenses forced Muhammad Ali to alter his government, significantly enhancing its capabilities for raising revenues.

Al-Nizam al-Jadid was the centrepiece in this Egyptian military revolution. A product of Muhammad Ali's willingness to experiment with imported ideas, it provided him with powerful armed forces. Egypt's tremendous economic and manpower resources helped create this new system, but equally important was the employment of western mercenaries, the *Wali*'s 'Neo-Mamluks'.

The employment of Europeans with Egypt's armed forces dates back to the time of the French invasion. Deserters from Napoleon's forces joined several Egyptian leaders in this period. Most provided artillery or other technical skills, but some served as front-line fighting men. Though small in numbers, the French mercenaries had skills valuable to all sides of a confusing struggle that lasted until Muhammad Ali took over in 1805. Just like his rivals, the new *Wali* hired these men, and by 1807, may have retained up to 400 throughout his army.[5]

Neo-Mamluks were important because they were trained in the European ways of war. Muhammad Ali wanted his troops quickly converted to this model, but conservative attitudes, prejudice, and an antiquated educational system made Egypt less than the perfect laboratory for such a radical experiment. The greatest problem was that starting from scratch, Egyptian officers had but a superficial knowledge of western strategy and tactics. Many were poorly educated. For example, General Pierre Boyer, writing in 1825, claimed that few company leaders could even read or write. The rapid pace for transition offended another critic, Captain Jules Planat, who argued that too many captains, some only 16 years old, were promoted, 'without examination, and without passing through the ranks of ensign and lieutenant'.[6] Four years later, Edmund Cohorn found 'the principal vice of the new army' was its lack of men trained for high command.[7] General Henryk Dembinski echoed this view in 1833, saying that a French-style general staff, or *État Major*, was 'indispensable'.[8]

Muhammad Ali recognized these flaws reduced the value of his new army. How could this be remedied? One solution involved European study

tours for officers. Starting in 1809, selected men visited France, Italy, Austria, and England. They toured armaments plants, and were temporarily attached to military academies. By 1826, the Egyptian Military School was established in Paris. Although successful graduates could proceed to official French military academies, some did not get that far. Cultural displacement was intense. Young Arab or Turkish students found France an alien society, one so strange that much of their instruction was untranslatable; their native tongues simply possessed no words for the finer details of western military science. These language difficulties, along with overly generous allowances, distracted them from their study. As one inspector complained, 'if they carry anything away from Paris, it is its vices and not its virtues'.[9]

Muhammad Ali's ambitions did not allow for the gradual process of education to take place, so a concurrent strategy was to hire foreign mercenaries. Unlike the French deserters, the *Wali* intended his new employees to maintain a far more significant and visible presence in the army. This was a radical experiment by Egyptian standards, as the men in question were not only outsiders, but also non-Muslims. Previous employment of western military experts was very limited. On the other hand, Egypt's Mamluk tradition had proved foreigners could make very effective soldiers. Another argument favouring this programme was the marketplace. Demobilization, along with political changes in post-Napoleonic Europe, put many veteran officers out of a job. Their need for employment fitted in nicely with Muhammad Ali's goal of modernization. One might also note that expanding armies with plans for war sometimes attract men who simply enjoy fighting and adventure.[10]

Thus, via the offers of good pay, or an exotic change in pace, Muhammad Ali attracted French, Italian, Polish, Spanish, German, English, and American soldiers-of-fortune. While obviously difficult to coordinate, this motley collection was a purposeful choice. Future events might produce war with one of the mercenaries' homelands. In such a case, it would be dangerous to have 'all the eggs in one basket'.[11]

Despite this desire for variety, French and Italian officers were most numerous. Captain James MacKenzie, Bengal Light Cavalry, explained why in his report on the Egyptian Army:

> From my experience abroad, I should say that the English do not adapt themselves to the manners and customs of a foreign country and indulge in the humours and prejudices of the people, as readily as the French and Italians – hence the preference shown, in Egypt particularly, to natives of the above countries.[12]

A perfect example of this can be seen in Egypt's most famous western recruit, Joseph-Anthelme Sève (1788–1860), who fought for Napoleon on land and sea. Captured, freed, wounded several times, he was awarded the

Legion of Honour and promoted to captain. After 1815, he was placed on half-pay.[13]

With no future at home, Sève packed his sword and took off for Egypt. Arriving at the start of Muhammad Ali's military expansion, he was quickly employed. A somewhat apocryphal story has the *Wali* inquire if it was possible to create a modern army. Sève supposedly answered, 'Yes, on condition that I get three things: time, money, and your august help.'[14] Whatever the case, Sève was among the first foreign contract officers, and his diligence resulted in a promotion to bey.[15]

As an initial assignment, he trained future company-level officers in French drill and tactics. Early on, his students deliberately fired a volley of musket balls directly at their teacher. Sève responded with curses, and a drawn sabre, offering to fight any or all, on the spot. This display of raw courage cowed the officer cadets, and Sève continued his instruction. He later solved the problem completely by converting to Islam and adopting the name Sulyman. Muhammad Ali rewarded this move with promotion to the status of pasha, command of an infantry regiment, and three wives. From here on Sève/Sulyman obtained one success after another. He became inspector-general of all military schools in 1832, and was chief-of-staff to Ibrahim. The new Pasha's advice helped to formulate successful campaigns in Greece and Syria. Captain Charles Scott, a keen observer of the Egyptian scene, credited Sulyman with 'possession of rare military qualities'.[16] This opinion was obviously shared by Muhammad Ali, for by 1847, the French convert was the sixth highest paid officer in *al-Nizam al-Jadid*; his 167,000 piasters per year salary a far cry from half-pay status back home.[17]

While the rest did not make such large amounts, their pay was good by the standards of the 1820s. Although each contract was different, most received the salary of a captain or major. They also obtained rations, a uniform allowance, and unlike Egyptian officers, were paid in Spanish 'dollars', a much more stable currency than the local piaster.[18] Job descriptions ranged from combat command, like that of Sulyman, or the American adventurer, George English, to *talimji* [instructor]. Most mercenaries worked in the latter positions, and participated in Muhammad Ali's drive to establish a system for military education. By 1831, they were teaching Egyptian officers at infantry, cavalry, and artillery specialist schools outside Cairo. The best instructors went to the *État Major* Academy. Here, course work centred on geometry, arithmetic, map reading, military theory, and French. Of these, the latter was given precedence, as most Europeans could not speak Arabic or Turkish, and many modern technical terms did not exist in these languages. The final product of these studies was a French-style general staff prepared to lead a mass conscript army.[19]

European advisors also played a critical role in the development of Egyptian armaments factories. Muhammad Ali wanted his soldiers equipped like their Western counterparts. A survivor of the Ottoman effort

to recapture Egypt from the French in 1801, he recognized that the enemy had superior tactics and equipment. Almost immediately after his appointment as *Wali*, Muhammad Ali strove to remove this disparity, first by import, next by local production.

Small arms represented his earliest venture. Egyptian gun-makers had a long history, but their individual efforts were not sufficient for the rapid expansion of military power. Initially, Muhammad Ali filled this gap by bartering agricultural products for armaments. During the Napoleonic wars, England maintained significant forces in Sicily and the Iberian Peninsula. Feeding these men from local sources was very difficult, while in Egypt, food was plentiful. Trade of Egyptian grain for British muskets, ammunition, and artillery resulted. After 1815, military downsizing allowed Muhammad Ali to purchase surplus firearms from several nations. His globe-trotting admiral, Ismail Gibraltar, bought 'Tower' muskets for 18 francs each in 1817. Swedish, French, and Italian armaments sold for similar markdowns.[20]

Next, students were sent to study western gun-making techniques. A small ordnance mission went to France in 1825, while individuals studied there, and England, well into the 1830s. Finally, arsenals were established in Cairo and Alexandria, to produce copies of English and French weapons. These represent Africa's first military-industrial complex, and by the 1820s, began churning out a considerable array of armaments.[21]

French, Italian, and British engineers were hired to supervise the construction. Labour came from Egypt's long-suffering *fellahin*. Vast armies of these serf-like agriculturalists were drafted for work in all aspects of the Egyptian economy. Artisans were conscripted just like soldiers, and assigned to work in factories. Military industries were favoured with the pick of these 'recruits', since weapons production was a major thrust in Muhammad Ali's economic strategies.[22]

In Cairo and its suburbs, along with Alexandria and Rosetta, the most important military factories were located. The capital had the largest, which was described by eyewitness Scott, as 'the finest establishment in Egypt'.[23] By 1833, these arsenals had 15,000 employees, spent 1.75 million piasters on raw materials, and produced a wide array of firearms, artillery, ammunition, uniforms, and equipment. Output was significant; an example being the 3,000 muskets finished every month.[24]

Though impressive, what really counted was Egypt's new-found ability to produce large quantities of gunpowder and artillery. Howitzers, cannon, and mortars came from Cairo and Alexandria, while powder factories were strung between both locations. Equally impressive was the *Wali*'s naval programme, which by 1832, produced a fleet that included the first African-launched ship-of-the-line. The ability to produce appreciable amounts of warships, guns, and munitions elevated Egypt to a major regional power. Only the Sultan in Constantinople had such resources, and until the 1840s, they were inferior to those of Muhammad Ali.[25]

Even clothing was considered in this ambitious expansion. Textile mills began to produce white cotton uniforms that soon became the trade-mark of Egyptian soldiers. Tanning factories provided belts, cartridge boxes, shoes, and saddles. Finally, there was the *tarboush* [fez] factory at Fouah, where imported Tunisian managers directed 2,000 employees in the completion of this distinctive red cap.[26]

While Muhammad Ali could proudly claim that his soldiers were armed and equipped, from head to toe, by Egyptian products, there was a certain lack of quality due to the rapid pace of expansion. General Pierre Boyer inspected an 800-man infantry battalion in 1824, and declared 200 of its muskets to be 'useless'.[27] Other French observers used terms like '*misérable état*', and '*mal*', to describe the Cairo arsenal.[28] Of course these same officials were also advising the *Wali* to purchase French-made armaments and supplies. If we disregard this conflict of interest, probably a more reasonable assessment is that Egyptian martial products were functional, albeit of rough design and finish. Indeed, contemporary reports indicate that in general, the new weapons, and the western mercenaries, significantly enhanced Egypt's military power.[29]

Muhammad Ali was also pleased, but wanted a regular military advisory team. France showed some interest, providing an official mission in 1824. Under the direction of General Boyer, its job was to help the *Wali* make his army '*à la française*'. Soon French officers were attached to both schools and field units. Their main purpose was to improve on drill. This may seem of slight use to the modern reader, but one should remember that soldiers of this era still manoeuvred and fought in dense formations. Control was therefore a product of continual practice on the drill grounds. Even firing was 'by the numbers', so continual exercise provided the steady pattern of hits deemed necessary for victory.[30]

By 1826, European advisors were attached to each infantry regiment. Units sent to Greece that year had the largest number, five or six, and successfully participated in combat against the insurgents. Encouraged by this, Muhammad Ali asked Boyer for more artillery officers, while the General himself wanted fifty additional infantry experts. These plans, however, were never completed, for the French mission was about to end.[31]

Despite high hopes, and contracts which initially, in the words of Planat, 'were carried out with munificence', friction resulted from several factors.[32] First, there was the war in Greece, where Muslim Egyptians fought for their suzerain, the Ottoman Sultan, against Christian rebels. As European public opinion was strongly 'Philhellene', service in *al-Nizam al-Jadid* became uncomfortable for Boyer and other 'on-loan' officers. In addition, the French came expecting massive salaries and other rake-offs, but obtained little beyond the agreed terms. Combine this with the poorly managed government pay-roll, typical in nineteenth-century Egypt, and there was great anger when pay was late, as often happened after 1825. Also significant was

the animosity generated between Boyer's mission and other European officers. He considered the Spanish and Italian mercenaries, along with Bonapartists like Sulyman, 'refugees … men without respect for authority, without fidelity, law and honor'.[33] In 1825 and 1826, many western advisors resigned over pay and promotion disputes. In August of the latter year, after twenty months of service, Boyer and nine of his senior aides followed suit. This ended the first of several French missions to help organize an Egyptian Army.[34]

A radically different team was considered in the early 1830s. The failure of another Polish uprising against Russia resulted in large numbers of military émigrés. Ibrahim pressed his father to form a larger *État Major*, and provide more regimental instructors, by hiring 400 of these men. Previously, Egypt had employed a few Poles, like Colonel August Szule ['Jussuf *Agha*'], an engineering expert. This much larger scale, however, could attract significant talent, like General Henryk Dembinski, who arrived in 1833, and made a detailed analysis of the Egyptian military. Despite high hopes on both sides, this mission also failed, mainly due to Russian machinations, and misunderstandings between the Polish and Egyptian leaders.[35]

Although no additional efforts were made to mass-hire foreign military talent, the individual contract system still provided for expansion and modernization. Adventurers saw Egypt as the land of opportunity, and flocked to the banners of Muhammad Ali.[36] Expansion continued until 1839, when the Egyptian Army contained 140,000 regulars. This ended with the London Treaties of 1840 and 1841, which concluded a long conflict between Egypt and the Ottoman Empire. For the remaining eight years of Muhammad Ali's reign, the armed forces shrank in numbers, while his system of military factories withered.

What can be said about *al-Nizam al-Jadid*? How can we assess the efforts of Muhammad Ali and his western advisors? Answers to such questions are most easily found in the impressive string of victories won by Egyptian forces from 1815 to 1839. Fighting in the Sudan, Arabia, Greece, Anatolia, Palestine, and Syria, the army was rarely defeated on the field of battle.[37] Strong leadership permeates the history of these campaigns. Success was rewarded, and failure ruthlessly suppressed. Actions like Homs (1832), Koniya (1833), or Nezib (1839) featured Egyptian strategies and tactics equal to those of distinguished Napoleonic generals. These victories were also the result of well-disciplined soldiers, who fought in a European manner.[38]

Such troops made it possible for the *Wali* to keep Egypt under his control and establish a dynasty that remained in power until 1952. In addition, his use of foreign advisors established a long tradition, ranging from American officers, of the 1870s, to Russian ones in the 1960s. It is unfortunate that subsequent rulers of Egypt were unable to match Muhammad Ali's strategic insight, with this interest in foreign mercenaries, for few of these later combinations have been as fruitful.

3

‘HIDEOUS NEGROES FROM NUBIA’

Egypt and the Crimean War

> At Silistria, the Egyptian contingent displayed qualities which would have done honor to the best troops of Europe.
>
> (William Thayer)

Many shared these sentiments at the end of the Crimean War, where Egypt’s armed forces had played a significant role, and for the first time, had faced large numbers of regulars fielded by a western power.[1] Success was partially the result of a veteran leadership who had learned the art of war during the 1830s, but also from the attention and support of Abbas I, a *Wali* who recognized the army was good insurance against enemies, both foreign and domestic.

Egypt’s Crimean heroes were heirs to the victorious traditions of Muhammad Ali’s *al-Nizam al-Jadid*. These soldiers won numerous battles, reaching a high point in 1833, when they prepared to take Constantinople. Only Russian intervention halted Ibrahim Pasha, whose soldiers were less than 100 miles away.[2]

Ibrahim’s generalship partially explains the success of *al-Nizam al-Jadid*. Another reason was the organization of these troops on European lines during the 1820s and 1830s. Early efforts focused on the infantry, with three guard and eight regular regiments. These had a strength on paper of 4,000 men, but rarely numbered more than 3,000 on campaign. Like European organizations, each regiment had a band, which one observer claimed ‘would not disgrace any … in the British service’.[3] Unlike their western counterparts, units also had a *waiz* [preacher] to assist in the men’s religious needs.[4]

Egyptian infantry were trained to fight three ranks deep and manoeuvre in the traditional columns, lines, and squares. Peace-time observations rated the men as proficient soldiers ready for modern war. Battle reports were equally favourable. Note, for example, the ‘Parthian retreat’, followed by massed musketry, as practised by the 14th and 18th infantry regiments at Konia (1832), that shattered the Ottoman cavalry’s counter-attack. Eight years later, Commodore Charles Napier commented on the Egyptians’ excellent discipline in their retreat from Syria.[5]

On the negative side, Egyptian tactics stressed fighting at close range, for their firearms were of low quality. Soldiers were issued with surplus British 'Brown Bess' muskets, or Egyptian copies of these, and the French M1791. Using highly corrosive black powder charges, proper maintenance was required to produce firepower. General Pierre Boyer, writing in 1824, claimed that Egyptian troops were lax in this department. In contrast, they did practise shooting a little more often than their regional enemies, who were also inflicted with poorly designed weapons.[6]

Cavalry forces had additional problems. Regular troopers were a late addition to *al-Nizam al-Jadid*, only dating from 1828. That year, Ibrahim Pasha ordered the creation of seven 'French-style' regiments, with lancers, dragoons, and cuirassiers. In 1853, there were two guard and six regular regiments. These units ranged from 770 to 1,360 men. While certainly an improvement over irregulars, Egyptian cavalry had poor equipment and required extensive training, as most conscripts had little experience in riding a horse.[7]

Artillery, given the pick of each year's conscripts, represented a fairly well-run force. Here the problems included a variety of slow-moving transport animals, like oxen or camels, and the heterogeneous nature of the cannon park. Turkish, French and British guns of many different calibres made repair and re-supply of ammunition difficult. These, however, did not stop Egyptian gunners from playing key roles in victories over the Ottomans at Homs and Konia.[8]

On the other hand, engineer or sapper units were almost non-existent. Boyer listed five of the latter in 1825, and said they were commanded mainly by 'European renegades'.[9] The lack of such troops was noticeable at the long-drawn-out siege of Acre (1831–1832), but despite this, there were very few true sappers even twenty years later.[10]

Despite these flaws, Egyptian soldiers seemed unbeatable. Their reputation was again tested in the Second Syrian War (1839–1840), which started off as a repeat of the earlier campaign. Indeed, one might say *al-Nizam al-Jadid* was too successful, for its victory at Nezib (1839) ruptured the Ottoman high command. As a result, the entire Turkish fleet defected to Alexandria, and the Egyptians were poised for a second march on Constantinople. Only the active intervention of England and Austria reversed this situation, blocking Egyptian expansion, and temporarily answering the 'Eastern Question'.[11]

Peace, followed by an imperial *Firman*, allowed Egypt to become the hereditary property of Muhammad Ali's family. It also restricted the size of the armed forces, but required the cooperation of such troops, if the Sultan went to war. Following the deaths of Muhammad Ali and Ibrahim, Abbas became the next member of that family to rule Egypt. His controversial reign lasted from 1849 to 1853, and featured dramatic alterations of previous policy. For the armed forces, Abbas opposed imperial ventures, and instead, made internal security and defence his primary goals.[12]

The *Wali* had good reasons to be cautious. First, Ottoman strength increased during the 1840s, while that of Egypt declined. Although the *Firmin* of 1841 granted hereditary rights to Egypt, weak rulers might still be deposed on orders of the Sultan. Also, the nation needed time to recover from the fiscal excesses of the 1830s. Abbas simply did not have the financial capability to maintain armed forces like those of his father or Ibrahim.[13]

In addition, Abbas shared few of his older brother's martial talents, and none of his father's charisma. These failings, combined with a poor service record from the Syrian wars, and a disinterest in learning, produced a weak ruler. For Abbas, simply maintaining the status quo was a full-time job.[14]

His initial reshuffling of top-level office holders represented a start in this direction. Well aware that he compared poorly with Ibrahim, Abbas dismissed 600 officers who were too closely tied to the old general's memory. Many European advisors also lost their jobs, not so much out of disloyalty, but rather because they were expensive, and no longer vital to the Egyptian military. Sulyman Pasha survived this cut, and became the *de facto* leader of the army.[15] The navy remained under the command of Said Pasha, another of Muhammad Ali's many sons.[16]

Both services were radically altered during Abbas' four-year reign. After 1840, difficult economic times, treaty restrictions, and the passive nature of Egyptian foreign policy, altered the size of the army. In 1841, with many regiments mere cadres, its total manpower was about 50,000. Now, as the government attempted to reduce spending, service time was drastically cut, and as a result, training and discipline suffered. Although a few crack regiments were maintained, a significant portion of the armed forces became ineffectual.[17]

These, however, were only temporary measures intended both to save money, and to deceive Ottoman inspectors. By shifting regiments between Upper and Lower Egypt, obscuring numbers of the Sudan garrison, and judicious bribery, a gradual build-up increased military strength. Prince Umar Tusun suggests that these measures caused Turkish authorities to underestimate the Egyptian army by almost 50 per cent.[18] Some of this began under Ibrahim's direction, but Abbas completed the programme. Thus, Turkish officials were unaware Egypt could field over 100,000 soldiers in 1853.[19]

Though fewer men were called up than during the 1830s, and Egypt's defensive posture kept most draftees near home, Abbas had no better luck than his predecessors with regards to conscription. The vast majority of the population feared and detested the draft. Self-mutilation was practised to avoid service, and *Bashi Bazouks* still played a vital role in rounding up recalcitrant new soldiers.[20]

Abbas made civil officials responsible for the army's intake of recruits. This required the village *shayk* to furnish yearly quotas fixed by the Minister of War. Technically, a *Firmin* of 1843 called for Egypt to follow the

Ottoman system of five years on active duty, then seven in the *redif* [reserves].[21]

Service, however, could be much longer, and, despite inflation, pay rates remained unchanged from the 1830s. Other disincentives were the combination of harsh discipline, and the use of military units in public works programmes. Employing soldiers as a reservoir of cheap labour hurt both training and morale, but few Egyptian rulers could resist the temptation. Abbas did attempt to improve food quality, and authorized the possibility of marriage for other ranks with good records. Still, these benefits were not sufficient to overcome a national aversion to military service.[22]

This continued opposition to an army career reinforced another Abbasian policy. Unlike his predecessors, the *Wali* placed great value on Albanian mercenaries. Thousands entered Egyptian service at this time, forming police, security, and bodyguard units. Organized as *Bashi Bazouks*, they also obtained state-of-the-art weaponry in the form of American revolvers. By the start of the Crimean War, 4,500 Albanians were part of the army, while almost 2,000 others served in various para-military functions. Although maintaining their traditional role as skirmishers, mountain warfare experts, and muscle for conscription authorities, they were also seen as an insurance policy against the regulars. Abbas favoured these men throughout his reign, and only ended their recruitment in 1853, when Ottoman needs dried up the source of new mercenaries.[23]

Another innovation was the creation of a camel corps. Envisioned mainly for internal security, its function was to increase the army's mobility along Egypt's desert frontiers. Indeed, despite contemporary claims that Abbas was a reactionary, completely uninterested in western products, he continued previous efforts to build a fleet of steam-powered river craft for the Nile, and allowed British interests to construct Egypt's first railways. Although such ventures contained a commercial side, they also dramatically enhanced the *Wali*'s capability to dispatch troops and supplies.[24]

Less helpful were the continual changes affecting military training and education. These began in the 1840s, when many schools closed their doors to new students. Abbas accelerated this trend in 1849, eliminating the infantry, cavalry, artillery, medical, and naval academies. In their place, he established the *Madrasat al-Mafruzah* [School of the Chosen], which Baron de Malortie compared to a 'nursery', as it was to start young boys on the road to becoming efficient and, above all, loyal officers.[25]

The first class totalled 1,700 men and boys, and featured a wide array of subjects, both primary and advanced. Graduation, however, was no guarantee of employment, for the *Wali* maintained tight control over promotion, even down to the company level. In this regard, Abbas tended to favour his personal Mamluks and recent Albanian immigrants.[26]

Better students still pursued higher training in Europe, but in much smaller numbers than before. The Egyptian Military School in Paris closed

in 1849, and of its forty-three pupils, only five continued their martial studies. Medicine became the major thrust of overseas education, and even here, funding was vastly reduced from the days of Muhammad Ali. Still, by 1853, 4,000 officers were available for army service.[27]

As for the foreign mercenaries, they continued to be employed, albeit in limited numbers. Sulyman Pasha used his position as Army Commander to influence Abbas in the employment of artillery and ordnance experts from France. Unlike previous hires, these were contracted through the French government, and only for specific projects. The pay was good, but it was no longer a career opportunity.[28]

Even greater cuts hit the navy. Downsizing began in 1841, when Muhammad Ali disarmed five ships-of-the-line and released 3,000 sailors. Many smaller vessels were demilitarized, and converted for use as Nile transports. A year later, much of the fleet was moth-balled and the budget reduced by 35 per cent. Henri Gisquet, who viewed Alexandria's warships in 1844, described them as 'sad giants, condemned to rot away in silence'.[29] Guns, sails and cordage were missing, most of the ships being little better than relics.[30]

Five years later, Abbas, who considered the navy 'superfluous', attempted to sell most of it to Austria. Although unsuccessful, he continued the policy of moth-balling large units, and demobilizing his sailors. In 1849, he sent 1,500 men and two ships-of-the-line as 'gifts' to the Sultan. The *Sharif* of Mecca also gained a ship when Abbas presented him with a frigate, the largest vessel in Egypt's Red Sea flotilla.[31]

This naval nadir continued until 1850, when ships obtained some repair work, and the *Wali* ordered a new steam yacht. A year later, fleet units helped quash a mutiny of Ottoman soldiers. The event, which possibly had more sinister implications, occurred at Alexandria, and involved 1,200 Turkish *Bashi Bazouks* on their way to Hijaz. Standard procedure called for all non-Egyptian forces to march unarmed when in transit from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. These soldiers refused, and threatened to storm ashore fully armed. This ended when two Egyptian ships-of-the-line sailed up and presented their broadsides to the troop transports.[32]

Despite a lack of hard evidence, Abbas considered this a Turkish plot, and ordered more work on Egypt's coastal defences. Back in 1848, the French engineer, Galice Bey, had started an overhaul of Alexandria's fortifications. A year later his project extended, now including all points eastward to Damietta. Many of the moth-balled navy vessels surrendered artillery for this venture, while thousands of soldiers provided manpower.[33]

The next plot was internal, and featured an attempted *coup d'état* by disgruntled naval officers. In May 1852, a small column of marine infantry and artillery attempted to leave Alexandria for Cairo. Uncovered by higher authority, the unit was halted and forced to return. After an investigation, five navy officers were arrested and sentenced to fifteen years of hard labour in the Sudan.[34]

Such events could not help but justify the *Wali*'s paranoia. In the latter case, his brother Said was implicated. As Commander of the Navy, and heir to the throne, he was in an excellent position to profit from a successful coup. Abbas responded to this threat, whether real or otherwise, by reducing his brother's authority and ordering additional transfers of naval personnel to the merchant marine.[35]

Two years later, other parts of the fleet were lost in a far more spectacular fashion. By then, tensions between Russia and the Ottoman Empire had produced the Crimean War. Sultan Abdul Mejid, who had nearly lost his throne to an Egyptian army in 1839, now called for one to defend him.

By treaty stipulation, Egypt was required to provide 10,000 soldiers for imperial service. After a little negotiation, which concluded that the cost of additional manpower was deductible from Egypt's annual tribute, Abbas authorized the dispatch of 15,000 men and a naval contingent. Ibrahim Pasha Alfi, the Governor of Alexandria, then organized a transport fleet, and within fifteen days, six regiments were on their way to Constantinople.[36]

Arriving at the end of July 1853, Egyptian forces were conspicuous in their white summer uniforms. An enthusiastic welcome may have surprised their commanders, but it seems the Turks, while remembering their disastrous defeat at Nezib, were simply relieved to obtain powerful allies for the expected struggle with Russia. Ironically, many of these soldiers occupied the same barracks used by Tsarist troops whose presence had halted Ibrahim's march on Constantinople in 1833. They were a picturesque lot, ranging from Italian medical mercenaries, to 'hideous Negroes from Nubia'. These should have included a regiment of Copts, but as they were considered unreliable, this unit never left Alexandria.[37]

In addition, three ships-of-the-line, three frigates, and four corvettes joined the Ottoman fleet in early August. The combination of an infantry division, plus naval muscle, strengthened Turkey's war party, and helped convince the Sultan to declare war on Russia. After this, Egyptian ground forces, under their commander Selim Pasha Fathi, were dispatched to the Danubian front, while warships went on patrol in the Black Sea.[38]

It was the latter who became the first Egyptians to engage the enemy. On 18 November 1853, *Pervaz-i Bahri*, a small steamer, was forced to strike her colours after a running battle with the Russian frigate *Vladimir*. Another disaster followed twelve days later when Turkish Admiral Osman Pasha unwisely anchored his squadron at Sinope. Not only did his ships mask the shore batteries, but poor reconnaissance allowed Vice Admiral Pavel Nakimoff to launch a surprise attack in the early morning mist and rain of 30 November. The Russians, equipped with Paixhan shell guns, quickly destroyed eleven ships, including the Egyptian frigate *Damietta*. A catastrophe similar to Navarino, Sinope sent Ottoman fleet morale to the bottom, and it was not restored until the arrival of British and French warships in January 1854.[39]

Although Egypt's navy had no further combat role, the ground forces gained a notable victory on the Danubian front. Forming part of the defence at Silistria was the first brigade under Ismail Pasha Haqqi.[40] From 11 May until 22 June 1854, these soldiers fought off continual attacks by hordes of Russian infantry. On the night of 28 May, fighting from the 'Arab Redoubt', Egyptian troops threw back three columns that penetrated their position, and inflicted almost 2,000 enemy casualties. Such intense fighting demonstrated that Egypt's soldiers still maintained a qualitative edge.[41]

As Russian forces withdrew from this theatre, fighting shifted to the Crimean peninsula. Abbas, very pleased with his soldiers' performance, now agreed to send a second infantry division. Commanded by Ahmad Pasha Manliki, it left Egypt in early October 1854.[42] By now, Egyptian regiments were considered among the best trained and disciplined units of the Ottoman army, and were expected to significantly impact on the fighting in the Crimea.[43]

They did so at Eupatoria [Yevpatoriya], a Turkish-occupied port with the potential to become a nest of bees along Russia's single supply line. Situated in a shallow bay, and guarded by earthworks, a lake, and 'mud up to your ankles', the town was defended by a mixed Turko-Egyptian force of 23,000 men. Egyptian regulars comprised half of the twenty-four infantry battalions, forming a division under Sulyman Pasha.[44]

Despite advice to the contrary, Tsar Nicholas I ordered his generals to recapture Eupatoria, and remove this threat to his army's communications. On 16–17 February 1855, General Khrulev attacked with 19,000 men supported by 108 guns. Arguing that these were sufficient to defeat 'some Turks and Africans', Khrulev threw his men into a massive assault down the centre. Despite heavy fire from guns and off-shore steamers, Russian infantrymen reached the earthworks several times. Halted at this line, they were then thrown back by an Egyptian brigade commander, Selim, who lost his life during the final counter-attacks.[45]

Despite the loss of their leader, and 400 men, Egyptian troops again proved dangerous opponents in defensive warfare. Russian losses were nearly twice as many, and as they feared, Eupatoria-based troops were now able to harass their supply lines. More Egyptian infantry, along with Turks and French cavalry, arrived in the spring and summer. In a series of small engagements during September, these newcomers combined to raid Russian positions outside the town. Twelve battalions of Egyptian infantry supported these attacks, which ended in success and mark the last major engagements for Egyptian troops in the Crimean War.[46]

Repatriation began in the winter of 1855–1856; by January only 2,500 convalescents remained in Constantinople. Returning home, these veterans displayed an air which impressed the new *Wali*, Said, and his overlord, the Sultan. So much so that in June 1856, the latter authorized Said to increase his army by 30,000 men.[47]

While the Crimean War was not an Egyptian production like the Morea, Syrian Wars, or conquest of the Sudan, it demonstrated that soldiers of the Nile still represented hardy opponents. England and France provided the critical force necessary to defeat Russia, but Egypt's army could proudly claim to have fought the soldiers of a great power, and won nearly every major engagement. Not too bad for 'some Turks and Africans'!

4

‘THE ARMY WAS HIS HOBBY’

Said and the Mexican adventure

> In the Opinion of the President, Negroes, natives of Africa, cannot rightfully be employed as soldiers in any way to subvert established political institutions, or disturb society in the American continent.
>
> (Henry Seward)

Between 1853 and 1867, Egypt deployed soldiers in the Sudan, southern Russia, and even Mexico. These men earned reputations equalling those of Muhammad Ali’s *al-Nizam al-Jadid*. Martial glory, however, was only reflected from select units, and disguised army-wide problems that became serious during the 1870s and the 1880s.

These start during the reign of Said (1855–1863), who, despite a strong interest in things military, wreaked havoc on the armed forces. Significant reductions in size and efficiency were by-products of his inept leadership. Combined with financial bungling, which quickly put the nation in debt to predatory foreign lenders, the decline of the army diminished Egypt’s status as a regional power.[1]

Such negative assessments were far removed from the opinions of 1855. Egyptian troops returned home from the Crimean War that year, welcomed back as heroes. Led by a cadre of well-trained officers and senior enlisted ranks, these men had the potential to continue the traditions of Ibrahim Pasha and Sulyman *al-Faransawi*. Abbas may have reduced numbers, but he tried to maintain an effective military. Said was very different. As Baron de Malortie wrote, ‘the army was his hobby’.[2] Indeed, constant irrational changes, excessive favouritism, and an expensive fascination with fancy weapons and ornate uniforms give the impression of someone playing with toy soldiers, rather than directing a real army.

Born in 1822, the *Wali* had obtained a naval education which stressed navigation, mathematics, and language skills. By 1840 he commanded the fleet, and continued to do so during the reign of Abbas. Despite these achievements, Said always remained a little boy; one who was lazy, overweight, and above all else, a spendthrift.[3]

This last trait altered Egypt's financial status. Previous conservative policies disappeared as Said initiated the sale of government bonds, along with loans from European banking syndicates. These significantly increased Said's cash flow, but had a flip side, as nearly every step was controlled by outsiders. David Landes, a noted authority, states that hidden charges, discounts, and commissions were 'enormous'; these, combined with high interest rates, drew the greedy attentions of Western capitalists.[4]

Other European parasites drawn to Egypt's borrowed wealth were middle men, small merchants, business agents and just about anyone who hoped to stake a claim in ventures nearly as lucrative as the California Gold Rush. Many hoped to sell overpriced and often shoddy goods to the gullible *Wali*; some looked for fat salaries as a 'foreign expert', while some were charlatans hoping to cash in on fraud. These men, and their families, poured into Egypt during Said's reign.

Alexandria became the centre for their activities, and due to the extra-territorial status enjoyed by foreigners, many parts of the city were soon effectively alienated from Egypt. Landes notes that 'every seaport has its dubious elements and scum, but we will find nothing in Europe comparable to the crawling white-trash colonies of the emporia of the East'.[5] Backed to the hilt by unscrupulous consuls, these 'colonies' became, first a nuisance, and by the 1880s a threat to national security.[6]

These trends impacted on Egypt's armed forces. At first, flush with the borrowed cash, Said ordered extravagant uniforms, complete with solid silver epaulettes and buttons. Visually, he wanted his troops to be *à la française*, and then some. French tailors and makers of military insignia sold vast quantities of material to the *Wali*, this despite the fact that some could be made locally, or, as in the case of heavy wool tunics and bearskin grenadier helmets, were not ideally suited for use in a warm climate.[7]

Egypt's new *chasseurs à pied* battalions epitomized this trend. Although useful troops, whose training allowed them to be deployed as skirmishers or line infantry, the desire to make them visual copies of their French counterparts entailed considerable expense. Said authorized the purchase of 7,000 complete uniforms from Paris, despite a native uniform industry that dated back to the 1820s.[8]

Although Said combined a collector-like interest in militaria with profligate spending, sometimes he picked good products. For instance, he hired the French inventor and ballistics expert, Colonel Claude-Étienne Minié, who established a Cairo factory for his rifled muskets. This may well mark the only major success of Said's military procurement policies.[9]

These rifles represented a much-needed addition to Egypt's armed forces. Before the Crimean War, they were the tools of specialists, and little used by Egyptian troops. Russian doctrine maintained a similar stance, and as a result, the Tsar's army suffered heavy casualties to the faster, more accurate, and, most important, longer-ranged fire of British and French soldiers.[10]

As a former officer of *Bashi Bazouks*, Muhammad Ali was familiar with rifles, but when ruler of Egypt, he showed little interest in using them. Only once did he stray from this course, in 1836, and then in a rather radical way, by approving the purchase of some seven-shot repeaters. Although these novel weapons tested well, they were considered too sophisticated for the average Egyptian soldier, and were not seen again.[11]

In contrast, Said was very interested in weapons. He purchased rifles from Belgium, and then supported Minié's Cairo-based factory. As a result, Egypt possessed 80,000 rifled muskets in 1860. Most of these were copies of the French standard issue, and came with a sword bayonet. In keeping with Said's desire for variety, a small number, for use by elite guards, featured a barrel ten centimetres longer, and a socket bayonet.[12] Even more exotic were the thousand *voltigeurs corses* purchased in 1863. A double-barrelled rifle designed by Colonel Gustav Delvigne, these were also issued to picked troops.[13]

Training was necessary to fully utilize the new weapons. Selected officers obtained training in France with the *Tirailleurs de Vincennes*, allowing Egyptian commanders to become more familiar with ballistics, and the vastly increased range of their Minié rifles. Since individual marksmanship was not stressed, officer education was a vital ingredient in the successful employment of this system. Individual soldiers could be indifferent shots, but successful firepower was still possible if they were directed by competent officers, or senior sergeants. In such a case, soldiers needed leaders who could determine the proper range, order their men to fix sights for such, and then direct concentrated fire into that area. If on the other hand, as happened in the 1870s, both marksmanship and officer training were neglected, then rate of fire and long-range capabilities of their firearms deteriorated.[14]

Regular soldiers quickly obtained Minié's rifle, a state-of-the-art weapon for the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, by 1861, arsenals were jammed with the new muskets, and Said's erratic financial policies caused yet another twist in the production of Egyptian firearms. In need of ready cash, he decided to enter the international arms market.

On 19 November 1861, William Seward, Secretary of State for the United States, received eleven Egyptian .58 calibre Minié rifles with sabre bayonets. These were samples of 47,000 muskets offered to Federal authorities at eleven dollars each. Here was truly a bold step, for Said was attempting, not only the home production of armaments, but also to become a player in the international weapons trade. Sadly for Egypt, this was not to be, for European suppliers took up all the Union's ready cash. Seward informed US Consul Thayer that while the samples were of top quality, America could not purchase the lot. On the other hand, he ordered Thayer to spare no effort in discouraging Said from selling these to the Confederacy. In the end, Thayer's diplomacy, along with a lack of Southern shipping, kept the Egyptian rifles at home.[15]

Artillery was another expensive feature of Said's military policies. Important technological changes from the 1840s and 1850s made traditional muzzle-loading smooth-bore cannon obsolescent. New designs featured rifled barrels, lighter weight, steel construction, and breech-loaded ammunition. All these combined to make new guns more accurate, plus faster to move and fire. Responding to this, Said hired Colonel Karl Blumel and Captain Ladislas Lukaszy to pick new guns for the Egyptian army.[16]

These were big ticket items for the nineteenth-century arms trade. Blumel, a Prussian, helped Krupp make its first major international sale, when Said purchased several hundred breech-loaders. Lukaszy, an Austrian army officer, designed an improved Congreve rocket, and supervised construction at the Citadel. Egyptian artillery also obtained a stop-gap conversion process known as the 'La Hitte System'. This French-designed process allowed Said to alter many of his old smooth-bores to rifles.[17]

Much of the new artillery went into Said's fortress complex, the *Qala al-Saidiyyah*. A massive defence work located in the Nile delta, it commanded the water approaches to Cairo. When foreign purchases were deemed insufficient, guns from Alexandria and other coastal defences were removed. By 1861, the fortress contained over 1,500 cannon ranging from antique 32-pounders to modern 10-inch Krupps. Garrisoned by the *Wali*'s favourite Sudanese companies, the *Qala al-Saidiyyah* was his bolt-hole, a place of refuge from all enemies, foreign and domestic.[18]

Improved communications was another priority for the Egyptian military. A Bedouin camel corps, telegraph lines, railways, iron bridges, steam ships, and canals all featured in Said's desire to increase his troops' mobility. He even purchased specially designed wagons for the creation of a battalion-sized flying column.[19]

Paying for such toys proved difficult, especially as Said also had to come up with the interest due on previous loans. One solution allowed soldiers' salaries to fall into arrears, sometimes for up to sixteen months. By 1862, even this was not enough, and excluding the Sudan garrisons, manpower rapidly decreased from 24,000 to 6,000, and then to 2,500 active duty personnel. In addition, he sold arms, equipment and transport animals at cut-rate prices. Although some cash accrued from these measures, their combined result hurt morale and deprived the army of its professional cadres.[20]

For those who survived these cuts, the armed forces changed drastically. In the late 1850s, Said tried improving morale via a reduction of military service to 18 months. In addition, he ordered another try at recruiting Copts, and also placed the previously exempt sons of village *shayks* into the conscription pool.[21]

With Said in command, these changes were neither popular, nor productive. Egyptian Christians complained that young men taken from home were subjected to harassment and forced conversion to Islam. Local *shayks* saw

no advantage in a military career, and made every effort to keep their children out of the armed forces. Escape, however, was only possible via flight, or the *badaliyya*, another of Said's innovations – a cash payment which removed individuals from the draft.[22]

Said also enacted legislation to punish draft dodgers and those who maimed themselves to stay out of the army. When apprehended, such men were sentenced to forced labour. As the *Wali* told William Nassau Senior, 'Young *shayks* prefer perfect idleness to the service, but they prefer the service to work!'[23]

North-East Africa remained the final source of 'recruits', for despite protests to the contrary, slave-soldiers were still employed by the Egyptian military. Many of these men were 'freed' during sporadic anti-slavery patrols, and then drafted into the ten infantry battalions of the Sudan garrison. Others were obtained as taxes, or through outright purchase. As in the past, these troops were entrusted with critical missions, such as guarding the *Wali*, his palace, and the Citadel. In 1860, Said wanted black cavalrymen and grenadiers for his guards, and ordered an entire battalion via a prominent Cairene slaver! By spring of 1861, the men could be seen training in Khartoum.[24]

Directing this exotic array was an officer corps beset with change. There were 1,000 of these men in 1860; some were veterans from the school of Ibrahim, mainly from the Turko-Circassian mafia that dominated the military. Said literally started a revolution when he allowed Egyptian Copts and *fellahin* to join this heretofore exclusive club. The *Wali* showed more favour to native Egyptians than any previous member of his family had done. Indeed, Ahmad Urabi's rise to fame was a result of this policy.[25]

Although they obtained a slight pay rise, officers, especially at the lower levels, suffered under Said. First, he eliminated many pensions, substituting poor quality land for previously guaranteed cash incomes. He also abolished their free rations, and in an effort to curry favour with rankers, reduced their authority. The result was decreased morale and poor discipline.[26]

Compounding these problems, Said almost destroyed Egypt's system of military schools. Many were abolished outright, while others opened and closed in tune with Egypt's fluctuating finances. Despite the leadership of noted individuals like Sulyman Pasha and Rifaah al-Tahtawi Bey, military education was in a shambles by 1863. Favouritism pushed aside merit, and created a cabal of incompetents who protected each other and disdained learning. General Charles P. Stone, the man who attempted to fix this mess in the 1870s, claimed that poorly trained officers from Said's time were a major stumbling block preventing army reform.[27]

One might think that the navy fared better thanks to its long association with Said. Steamers were sent up the Nile, and consideration was given to the purchase of ocean-going cruisers, but otherwise, as with the land forces, confusion and a near complete lack of policy reduced Egypt's naval

muscle. The *Wali* even went as far as to transfer most of his sailors into government steamship lines. Besides a small Sudan flotilla of four steamers, the fleet was but a pale reflection of the once powerful squadrons of Muhammad Ali.[28]

More promising, but in the end ephemeral, was the army's role in a little-known campaign, about as far away from Egypt as geographically possible. An entire infantry battalion served with French interventionist forces in Mexico from 1863 to 1867. The only time a regular unit of African troops served in the New World; this was a result of the elite reputation of Egypt's armed forces, and contemporary medical theories that viewed Africans as highly resistant to tropical disease.[29]

Said's strong Francophile policies allowed for a positive reception of a request for military assistance from Napoleon III. Embroiled in a risky adventure, aimed at the establishment of a Mexican puppet state, the French Emperor needed specialists to assist in the destruction of Benito Juarez and his republican forces. Their powerful resistance indicated the potential for a lengthy campaign, victory in such required a well-supplied army.[30]

Success centred on the control of Vera Cruz, Mexico's major port on the Caribbean, and the key to its capital. Although vital to French efforts, the city had a reputation for sickness. Nearby swamps, lagoons, and tropical forests created a belt of malaria, yellow fever, and other deadly tropical diseases. Spread by swarming mosquitoes, and unstoppable by the medical science of this era, these caused a high mortality rate for troops stationed there. Indeed, the local cemetery was sardonically referred to as the 'garden of acclimatization'.[31]

Some troops obviously survived, and veterans of previous encounters were reasonably immune to repeat attacks. Thus, the latter were viewed as especially valuable for deployment around Vera Cruz. While troops of this nature were not available in France, Egypt had significant numbers in her army. Equatoria, the homeland of many Sudanese soldiers, had conditions similar to Vera Cruz. In addition, Egyptian soldiers maintained a reputation, just recently reconfirmed in the Crimea, as first-rate fighting men. Thus it is not surprising that a request was made to Said, that he 'loan' a battalion from the Sudan, to serve with French forces in Mexico. Eager to please his friends, and secure in the knowledge that all expenses would be covered, the *Wali* agreed in late 1862, and then quickly decided to take a Nile cruise. He did so to avoid the attentions of American, British, and Ottoman representatives, all of whom were opposed to this venture.[32]

Said may not have been familiar with the Monroe Doctrine, but he desired the least amount of friction possible. Thus, the mobilization of 450 men from the 19th Infantry Regiment, and their transport to Alexandria's *Dar al-Maks* customs' house, was made as secret as possible. Late in the evening of 8 January 1863, under the command of *Bimbashi* [Major] Jabrat Allah-Muhammad, these troops boarded a French transport, and started on

a wild adventure that took them into a difficult and very irregular military campaign.[33]

Some were seasoned veterans of Egypt's African border wars, others new recruits; all were fairly young. Despite the tensions, and fatigue, of a long sea voyage, their martial prowess, excellent discipline, and smart uniforms gained immediate recognition when they landed at Vera Cruz. William M. Anderson, an American eyewitness, described the Sudanese as:

> tall and tapering, like their own palm trees, and if violent contrasts are agreeable, then they are soldiers '*comme il faut*' for their skins are as black as tar and their clothes as white as snow. Scrupulously neat in person and dress, they are always ready for dress parade.[34]

The army supporting puppet Emperor Maximilian comprised Belgian, Austrian, Polish, Hungarian, French and Mexican troops. The Egyptian contingent needed to learn how to mesh with this multinational force, and initially faced a regime of training and drill. Two problems came to light during this period. First, there were only three officers, far too few for a battalion. In May, this was compounded with the death of Jabrat Allah-Muhammad. How were these critical positions to be filled? Second, who was going to instruct the Arabic-speaking Sudanese?[35]

Both challenges were overcome. Senior sergeants were promoted to lieutenants, the two original lieutenants became captains, and *Yuzbashi* [Captain] Muhammad Almas was made commander. As for teachers, a French Zouave colonel, along with Algerian *Tirailleur*[36] non-coms, provided lessons, in Arabic. Within four months, class was over, and the Egyptians were ready for deployment.[37]

Overall strategy called for splitting the battalion into four companies. Two were given specific patrol and guard duties around Tejeria and Soledad, while the other two remained in Vera Cruz as reserves. All operated in anti-partisan warfare with detachments of the French Foreign Legion, Mexican Imperialists, and irregular '*contre-guérillas*'.[38]

Spring and summer of 1863 saw the Egyptians guard rail lines, trains and way stations. In a typical action, which featured an attack by 300 partisans, 17 soldiers fought these to a standstill, and then chased them off! On 2 March 1865, Egyptian troops again proved their mettle under dire circumstances. Ambushed in rough terrain by 800 guerrillas, their French commander dead, and pinned down by heavy sniping, the Egyptians counter-attacked. Forming two assault columns, they skilfully coordinated with friendly artillery fire, and rushed the Mexican position. The result was yet another victory for the soldiers of the Nile. By July, French dispatches began to carry some distinctly un-Gallic names, like Koukou Adam, Farag-Izzin and Hussein Ahmed. Most observers agreed that the Egyptians fought

'*avec sang-froid le plus rare*', and had to change their initial view that the Egyptians were 'for use simply as mincemeat'.[39]

By 1865, 'these brave children of the African desert' were a significant factor in the defence of Vera Cruz and its supply line to Mexico City.[40] In August, a massed column of 300 men, their largest ever concentration, cleared out partisan strongholds near Cotaxtla, Medellin and Soledad. Next, fifty of them greatly increased mobility by converting to dragoons. They fought in the many skirmishes and mini-battles of this region, and also performed as mounted escorts and couriers. Victorious in nearly every encounter, the dazzling white-uniformed Egyptians were the bane of local resistance forces.[41]

Success breeds good morale, and so does an efficient commissariat. Egyptians serving in Mexico were well supplied with food, and issued French gear when their own equipment began to fail. Efforts were also made to provide for their unique needs, an example of which can be seen in the Imperial wine ration. As its consumption violates a key tenet of Islam, coffee and extra sugar were issued instead. In addition, meat came fresh on the hoof, so the animal could be butchered in the proper Islamic fashion. Another morale boost came when enlisted men discovered their pay was twice the normal level, and unlike back home, obtained on a regular basis. All of these measures helped make the Egyptians an elite force, one of the finest in the French contingent.[42]

Despite their exalted status, the Clausewitzian rule of 'friction' soon caught up with these men. In early 1864, the Egyptians supposedly petitioned, *en masse*, to be repatriated. As the vast majority of the rank and file was illiterate, and the battalion maintained an outstanding record, this was more likely the work of a disgruntled few. Still, casualties, fatigue, and illness had reduced battalion strength, and reinforcements were needed.[43]

Meanwhile, Said died and was replaced by Ismail. The new Viceroy, though not nearly as pro-French as his predecessor, still desired favourable relations with Napoleon III, and offered to send replacements. This was strongly opposed by the United States, now through with a civil war, and able to back up its Monroe Doctrine with muscle. Henry Seward, the American Secretary of State, sent the following to express President Andrew Johnson's views: 'In the Opinion of the President, Negroes, natives of Africa, cannot rightfully be employed as soldiers in any way to subvert established political institutions, or disturb society in the American continent.'[44]

In a meeting between Ismail and Charles Hale, the American consul general, Egypt's ruler boasted that only one of his 'Negroes' had died from yellow fever, and that their natural constitution was 'proof against such maladies'.[45] Hale countered:

> The United States has lately had under arms more than 100,000 of the same race. These men would be, in like manner, particularly fit

> for service in Egypt, if the vicious principle of interference … should be retaliated by us … What the Pasha has done in Mexico at the request of another power, the United States *might* do in Egypt at the request of some friendly power.[46]

Backtracking, Ismail then belittled French chances for victory, and explained that he had to keep the battalion at full strength because of previous agreements made by Said, but would send no additional units. Sharif Pasha, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, added that Egyptian troops in Mexico suffered more from 'nostalgia, than the climate or the fire of the enemy', and that as these men were from the 1863 draft, their time was up.[47]

Such claims were only partially true, for Sudanese soldiers tended to serve for life. Doing so, they often accumulated families and developed ties with their garrison town. Since none of the original contingent had returned, calls for reinforcements were poorly received. Indeed, some of the enlisted ranks saw service in Mexico as a death sentence. Thus in July 1865, when the already disaffected Fourth Regiment was picked to send replacements, the result was open mutiny and a major battle in the city of Kassala.[48]

The mutineers included disgruntled veterans who had recently been forced to leave their families behind at far-away El Obeid, and new recruits recently obtained as 'tribute', or 'liberated' from slavers. Combined with bad discipline, soldiers' morale was further reduced by salaries six months in arrears. Fighting erupted on 3 July, when over 1,000 Sudanese attempted to storm Kassala's citadel. Hasan Bey, the loyal commander, could call on less than 300 defenders, a motley collection of *Bashi Bazouks*, Egyptian artillerymen, and European travellers. Without cannon, the rebels had little chance to capture headquarters; but without numbers, Hasan was unable to throw them out. This stalemate ended in late August when government reinforcements allowed for an Egyptian counter-attack. After several days of fighting, and heavy casualties on both sides, the rebels surrendered.[49]

Although crushed, the rebellion halted mobilization plans, and the reinforcements did not reach Alexandria until November. Even then insufficient numbers made local Nubians and Sudanese possible substitutes. During this time, Hale claimed that: 'No black *boab* could be persuaded to open the door at night for fear of being crimped … and many black servants ran off to hide in the desert while the embarkation to Mexico was going on.'[50]

By December 1865 Ismail had changed his mind, and decided to keep his men at home. By then, the Egyptians still in Mexico were deployed against escalating partisan activity. *Juarista* forces had obtained diplomatic support and military supplies from the Johnson Administration. The war was turning against France. Napoleon III, unwilling, or unable, to face the mounting odds, decided to cut his losses; the idea of a Mexican Empire was abandoned.

Egyptian soldiers fought in forty-eight major engagements during the war, and covered the final withdrawal of French forces in early 1867. Among

the last to leave, they continued to impress friend and foe alike, becoming one of the most decorated imperial units. In four years of combat, the Egyptians had gained fifty-six *médailles militaires*, along with eleven awards of the *Légion d'Honneur*. Equally telling was Field Marshal Elie Forey's promotion of a full quarter of the privates to *premiers soldats*, a special rank whose insignia and higher pay signified a first-class fighting man.[51]

A final honour remained, for on its return home, the *bataillon nègre égyptien* was requested to spend nine days in Paris as guests of Napoleon III. There they participated in a parade and review for the Emperor and their *Sirdar*, Shahine Pasha Genj. It was here that the entire battalion obtained the Mexican campaign medal with its very distinctive ribbon, an award noted by many writers who visited the Sudan in the 1870s and 1880s.[52]

Although the Egyptian army was briefly considered for a role with the multinational force sent to Lebanon in 1860, Mexican service represented Said's only overseas venture. Despite spectacular accomplishments in the New World, the military's degeneration into the rabble defeated by British invaders in 1882 can be traced to this reign. Frivolous spending, combined with inadequate training, and poor leadership, produced terrible discipline and morale problems. Sir James Colquhoun, England's Consul General, witnessed a sharp example of these in 1861, when Said prepared to disband one of his better regiments. All members were offered employment at double pay in the guards, but only 'two men stepped forward. The rest, in less than half an hour, had piled their arms, thrown off their gaiters and shoes … and started off for the railway station.'[53]

So much for Crimean or Mexican glory infecting the heirs of Muhammad Ali's *Nizam al-Jadid*. Disaster was not an immediate result, but the seeds for calamitous defeat were planted, and only needed a major war to burst into full bloom.

5

CONSCRIPTS, STAGE VILLAINS, AND SLAVE-SOLDIERS

Rank and file in Khedive Ismail's army

> Mehemet Ali cast a giant shadow over the fortunes of his successors. His image loomed larger than life.
>
> (Ehud Toledano)

For none was this more true than the ill-fated Khedive Ismail.[1] During the first ten years of his reign, he strove to recreate his grandfather's *al-Nizam al-Jadid*. While he recruited nearly as many soldiers, when faced with serious opposition, the armies of Ismail were but a pale reflection of their predecessors.

How did this happen? What converted the conquerors of Syria into second-raters, capable at best of gendarmerie functions? Morale and leadership problems were one reason. Another was Ismail's failure as a strategist. While one could argue that the Khedive displayed some geo-political sense, he was never able to grasp the realities of generalship. He also seemed oblivious to why underfed, poorly paid, and ill-treated Egyptian conscripts would not lay down their lives for Turkish overlords who despised them. Finally, Egyptian military power was grossly over-extended during this reign.

What were the limits of Ismail's power? A partial answer can be obtained by investigating the army's 'nuts and bolts' – how the troops were organized, trained, and equipped. What were the conditions of service, and how did this affect morale? Combined with a similar examination of the officer corps, the answers to these questions will allow for a greater understanding of Egyptian battlefield failures.

These, however, were far removed from the early years of Ismail's reign, when he proudly greeted Sudanese veterans returning from Mexico. Two years later, addressing the *Majlis* [Chamber of Delegates], he boasted that the puny forces he inherited from Said, about 8,000 men, were greatly improved. As Ismail put it: 'our army and fleet are now at a regular and respectable standing'.[2]

By 1870, ground forces totalled 28 regiments, comprising infantry, cavalry and artillery, many armed and equipped in the latest fashion. Egyptian steamers patrolled the Red Sea and Nile, and maps depicted a Khedival standard over major portions of North-East Africa. Many foreign observers complimented the 'admirable soldiers of the Nile' and agreed with Henri Couvidou, who argued, 'Apart from the *tarbouch*, all is like that of Europe.'[3]

Egypt's population of over five million supported this military increase with their taxes and manpower. Also, Ottoman *Firmins* of 1866 and 1873 removed all limitations on the armed forces, except for a restriction against the purchase of ironclad warships.[4] Bolstered by the Sultan's approval; Ismail significantly increased the size of his army. It grew to 20,000 men in 1865; 61,000 in 1870; 87,000 in 1873; 90,000 in 1875, and afterwards, bounced back and forth between these figures. As short-term armies with significant reserves were now in the vogue, total mobilization could produce even larger numbers, maybe an additional 40,000. Reservists, however, obtained little training, and would need significant time to re-learn old skills.[5]

Such large forces absorbed significant sums of money. The army budget for 1870 amounted to £E700,000, while the Navy received £E200,060.[6] During the early 1870s, total military disbursements often approached £E800,000 per year. In 1876, these expenditures amounted to 10 per cent of the national budget. Combat increased costs. Experts cite the 1875–1876 fighting in Abyssinia for an additional expense of £E1,000,000. One might also include the fortifications, ports, lighthouses, roads, telegraph lines, and other imperial investments, whose purpose was to assist the army in its conquest of North-East Africa.[7]

Infantry was the largest segment of this military muscle. Dressed in sharp white uniforms, and answering to a complicated system of French bugle calls, these men presented an impressive sight. Units were divided into line and guard regiments, whose organization altered during the early years of Ismail's reign. Formerly, each had contained four battalions but the Khedive reduced them to three, using the veterans to create cadres for new regiments.[8] Battalions themselves subdivided into eight companies, and each of these with a paper strength of 85 to 115 men.[9] Two of these units comprised specialists, *chasseurs* and grenadiers. The former supposedly obtained advanced training for service as skirmishers, while the latter were simply the tallest men in a battalion. Each battalion also contained a Muslim preacher, who helped maintain the soldiers' morale. Although a regiment was supposed to total 2,900 men, few ever attained this figure. Closest were those units based near Cairo, or Alexandria, which maintained battalions of 500 to 600 men each. On the Red Sea Coast, or the Sudan, battalions could sometimes muster only 300 to 450 men. Every fourth regiment took an additional battalion made up entirely of *chasseurs*.[10]

Instruction for regular infantry was more related to outdated linear tactics. First at the company level, and then at an annual 'school of the soldier', which sometimes featured up to 20,000 men. Here soldiers learned to fire in unison, and form columns, lines, or squares. Evolutions like these were effective in the 1830s, but were now obsolete.[11]

A very different infantry force existed in the Sudan, where Ismail's policy was to mix the very best with the very worst. Following the Kassala mutiny, he ordered many Sudanese units to Upper Egypt. In their place, the Khedive sent Egyptian regiments, and increased the number of irregular forces stationed in the Sudan. The Egyptians considered this a most unpleasant change, and were returned home by 1867. Afterwards, replacements often came from felons, captured deserters, and the very unlucky.

'Criminals', 'a bad set', and 'petty thieves' are just a few descriptions of the material sent to fill enlisted ranks for Egyptian regular units in the Sudan. Kassala, and later Equatoria, were considered prime dumping grounds for the most heinous offenders. Many considered transfer to the latter a death sentence, 'as few ever return from the White Nile'.[12] Even Khartoum duties were no prize, and most Egyptians did their best to avoid service there.[13]

In stark contrast, the native elements of the Sudan garrison were among the best soldiers in the army. In 1863, they totalled 7,000 regulars and 5,000 irregulars. Their numbers increased during Ismail's reign, partially because of unusual methods employed in 'recruiting' these men.

Many were ex-slaves, mostly Dinkas or Shilluks. Between the 1820s and the 1850s, they were kidnapped just like in any other slaving operation. Ismail correctly saw this practice as an impediment in his public relations campaign with western Europe. How could Egypt pose as a modern part of the civilized world when her army was one of the most efficient slavers in North-East Africa?[14]

He ended large-scale government-sponsored raids, and instead ordered selective intervention against the slave trade. As a result, some private traders were apprehended, and their human chattel 'rescued'. *The Times* records a typical emancipation as follows: '591 slaves were taken, 137 adult males were enrolled in the Egyptian army, 94 children were placed in the Khedive's schools, and 331 women were given in marriage to the soldiers.'[15] Thus, with great economy, the Egyptian government deprived slavers of their contraband, and increased the forces employed to halt this trade!

Captured slaves thus gained the dubious distinction of joining Sudan's *jihadiyya*, the generic term for black Sudanese conscripts. When sufficient numbers were not available, dealers were paid to provide new soldiers, as in 1876, when 1,500 slaves were obtained for 800–1,000 piasters each. Others 'joined' to pay off back taxes, and a few entered the military to help maintain their family's influence in local government.[16] Although most became career privates, one's former status was no barrier to advancement. Richard

Hill provides an example in his detailed description of the career of Muhammad Bey Almos (d. 1880). A Dinka slave, who was 'enlisted' in 1844, he rose to become Governor of Dongola Province, and, among his many decorations, was a *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur*.[17]

Readers more familiar with slavery in the American South might consider the idea of slave-soldiers an oxymoron. Islamic history, however, has a long tradition of these troops. Even the vaunted Mamluk technically started off his career 'owned' by a superior. The idea was to create a special bond between soldier and regime, one not associated with local interests. Douglas Johnson, an expert on Sudanese military slavery, argues a 'military slave identity persisted even after obtaining legal or real freedom'.[18] Soldiers for life, with few options outside a long military career, many developed a loyalty to their 'father', the Khedive, who provided them with status and sustenance.

Despite these unorthodox recruitment policies, Sudanese soldiers comprised an elite element in Ismail's army. Johnson points out they 'were the main force in Egyptian imperial expansion in the Sudan and East Africa'.[19] An important corps since the 1820s, they had just reaffirmed their status during the 'Mexican adventure'. Those returning were sprinkled throughout the region, in the hope that their polish and expertise would rub off onto others.[20]

Some certainly did, for observers often praised the Sudanese as 'the best fighters', or 'the only troops that are worth anything', and 'warriors by instinct'.[21] This reputation is confirmed by the many officers, both European and Ottoman, who often formed bodyguards, or special assault teams from these men. Most found the Sudanese well trained and far better marksmen than Egyptian recruits.[22]

In 1870, Sudanese regulars formed three regiments of the Egyptian line. These seldom maintained unit integrity. Instead, battalions and companies were stationed to protect important towns and trade routes. These men fulfilled a dual role, acting both as soldiers in wars of conquest, and as a para-military police force to maintain law and order, collect taxes, and assist in public works projects. These were vital tasks, and as a result, many Sudanese units were not available for deployment elsewhere. Historian Gérard Prunier provides an 1865 example, noting that of 10,644 soldiers, only 2,600 were mobile.[23] Another feature of Sudanese garrison life was the significant collection of non-combatants attached to each unit. Women and children not only provided a sense of family, but also performed a variety of support roles, ranging from cleaning, to growing and preparing food. Johnson notes the ratio of soldiers to this civilian entourage could be as high as 1–10, and could become a serious logistical issue if the government wanted to transfer a unit to another garrison. It was almost impossible to move the dependants, so one solution was to let soldiers 'inherit' wives and children left behind. It is not too hard to imagine the morale issues involved in such decisions.[24]

At the start of Ismail's reign, key garrisons were Khartoum, Kassala, Sennar, Wad Medani, and Fazughli. By the mid-1870s, some units shifted towards the southern and eastern frontiers, in order to support Egyptian imperial goals along the Red Sea and in Equatoria. A separate establishment soon evolved in the latter province. The Egyptian equivalent of Siberia, it was possibly the least popular duty station for the regular army. Thus, its garrison included local conscripts, and irregulars often referred to as *Bazinqir*. Many of the latter began their careers as guards for Khartoum-based traders and slave dealers. Equipped with old muskets, or double-barrelled shotguns, they 'never traveled without a pot of beer, a rosary for prayer, and one or two concubines'.[25] Emin Bey, Equatoria's last governor, claimed these men were only kept in line 'with a rod of iron'.[26]

Here is the Sudan army's weak link – discipline. In battalions with local commanders, this was not always a problem. Under other leadership, since a transfer south was often a punishment for incompetence, it could be very lax. This was an insoluble quandary, for most Ottomans or Egyptians had no desire to serve there, and yet the government wished to maintain a high percentage of officer slots for these 'more trustworthy' groups. Sudanese could become officers, but only in limited numbers, and then mainly in junior grades. Historian Georges Douin presents Khartoum's first infantry regiment as an example. He cites locals comprising 85 per cent of the entire unit, but only 31 per cent of its officers.[27]

With a longer service record, but greater disciplinary problems, *Bashi Bazouks* were also part of the Egyptian infantry. Mercenaries, mainly Albanians, Kurds, or Turks, these once valuable mountain warfare experts were more often used as tax collectors, a border patrol, or muscle to help enforce conscription and the *corvée*. What order they maintained came at a considerable price. Gordon's assistant, Colonel Stewart, described them as 'swaggering bullies, who, for every pound that reaches the treasury … rob an equal amount from the people'.[28]

Though their skills were attenuated, Ismail envisioned a role for these troops. First, they were inexpensive. Each *Bashi Bazouk* provided his own weapons and gear; in addition, they were supposed to arrive with some martial training. Next, their existence placed a check against malcontents in the regular army, while on the frontier, they were good raiders, and an early warning system against invasion.[29]

Bashi Bazouks were organized into nine major bodies of 300 to 400 men, plus a large collection of smaller units. Hill describes them as perfect 'stage villains'.[30] Garishly dressed and festooned with weapons, they presented a formidable appearance. Each man carried several blades, pistols, and a long musket; many were given horses to further improve their capabilities. With marksmanship skills far superior to typical Egyptian regulars, they were often employed in battle as mounted skirmishers, or scouts.[31]

A final source of infantry was the Police. Divided into a confusing array of village and city squads, it even included a contingent of Swiss and Italian constables, for dealing with European troublemakers. One branch, the *Mustahfazin*, was para-military in nature. Serving as a gendarmerie, and under the control of the Minister of the Interior, its members obtained the same equipment as the line infantry. During the 1870s, it numbered about 2,800 men, who were mainly stationed in Alexandria, Cairo, Port Said, and Suez. Small detachments served as escorts for government officials, while larger units were employed fighting rural bandits, or in the establishment of medical cordons during Egypt's deadly plague season. Although the *Mustahfazin* was not trained for combat, its members participated in the 1882 defence of Alexandria, and the battle of al-Teb two years later.[32]

All of Ismail's foot soldiers were initially armed with single-shot Minié rifles. Between 1869 and 1875, these muzzle loaders were replaced by ultra-modern Remington Rolling Blocks. The new rifle was more accurate, plus it had a greater range and rate of fire. While Rolling Blocks should have made Egyptian troops more dangerous, poor eyesight, along with serious flaws in training, greatly reduced its impact.

A contemporary guidebook notes that: 'In Egypt, there are about as many blind and one-eyed as there are persons who enjoy the use of both.'[33] Opthamalia was still a major scourge, especially among the *fellahin*, who were the main source of army manpower. Dye claimed that typical Egyptian soldiers could not see 'beyond a few rods'.[34] Sir Richard Burton claimed desert Bedouin 'saw better with the naked organ than the Egyptian officers, natives of a valley plain, with their binocular glasses'.[35] Compare these with a period military manual, which suggests most soldiers should be able to discern individual arm and leg movement at 800 yards.[36]

While opthamalia created a terrible handicap, good training could compensate. In regards to marksmanship, many armies still treated the enlisted ranks as automatons. Soldiers were expected to fire only on command, and after having been told at what range they should fix the sights of their rifles. Officers, who directed the shooting, learned how to estimate range, or, if time permitted, placed stones, or wooden stakes at hundred-yard intervals, which allowed for extreme accuracy. Under this system, even the near blind could provide effective firepower.[37]

Egyptian officers rarely used these tactics. In addition, the rank and file made too rapid a transition from Miniés to rolling blocks. The latter's metallic cartridges and breech-loading system required a different drill for proper employment. Soldiers sent to Abyssinia received little or no instruction in the new weapons. The Remingtons fired a massive .43 calibre bullet, which produced a considerable kick on ignition. Many commentators fault Egyptian soldiers for 'firing up in the air'.[38] This sounds like troops

untrained to compensate for the heavy recoil. Finally, fire discipline was poor, soldiers often fired early, wasting ammunition, or reducing the telling effect of a mass volley delivered at close range.[39]

Ismail and his top-ranking officers may not have considered this a major problem. All had obtained their military education in France during the 1840s and 1850s, when a bayonet attack, supported by artillery fire and delivered with *élan*, was considered quite sufficient for victory. Indeed, French drill and organization were very much part of the Egyptian army during the 1870s. Nothing was less likely to succeed on a modern battlefield, as demonstrated by the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871). Even against less sophisticated opponents, Egyptian tactical deployment presented distinct possibilities for unpleasant surprises.[40]

General Rostislas Fadeieff, who was specially commissioned to report on the army's shortcomings, told Ismail that advances in weaponry demanded more training, and modern infantry tactics. He attacked Egypt's annual 'school of the soldier', a massive training camp that took place at Tel al-Kebir, and featured brigade-sized infantry squares, and other tactics more suited for Muhammad Ali's times. While there were still times when armies required mass, both for fire and manoeuvre, extended order was preferred. Despite Fadeieff, and other commentators, Egyptian troops were just the opposite, with soldiers often bunched so closely together, they interfered with each other's firing. Even more dangerous, compact formations, in the words of American mercenary Henry Lockett, allowed snipers to kill his men 'like birds in a dense flock'.[41]

Despite this, Egyptian tactics in Africa often used the square. This deployment allowed for an all-around defence, and for poorly armed enemies, was difficult to overcome. On the other hand, it was a large target, and moved rather slowly. Hicks Pasha notes that an army marching in this fashion travelled only 7 miles per day, and in combat, was like 'a bear fighting with a log tied to his leg'.[42]

A better ploy, used when possible, was to construct fortifications, and tempt hostile soldiers to attack. For a hasty defence, soldiers carried four 'crow's feet' [*ihramat farighah*], which were similar to the ancient caltrop.[43] An eyewitness described them as 'eight iron spikes in a cluster'.[44] The idea was to toss these in front of a position so they would slow an enemy advance. As the construction guaranteed that one or more spikes would point firmly upward, they guaranteed nasty, even incapacitating wounds to horses, camels or people. Next, every commander strove to produce a *zariba*. It consisted of thorn bush limbs piled together to form a block against enemies desiring close combat. Most of Egypt's African enemies had very short-ranged weapons; depriving them of a chance for hand-to-hand fighting was an important advantage. If more time was available, soldiers constructed revetments, ditches, wire entanglements, and sometimes even explosive mines. With this level of defence, artillery and rifle fire, even if

mediocre, mowed down native forces, whose lack of cannon and supplies made any tactic but direct assault useless.[45]

While Abyssinian and Sudanese opponents were hard-pressed to overcome fortified positions, this did not guarantee an Egyptian success. As with nearly every other aspect of Ismail's army, there were problems. First, sloppy engineering often placed fortifications on bad terrain, where fields of fire were blocked, or outworks were too close to the main site. Positions at both Gura (1876), and Tel al-Kebir (1882), suffered from these flaws. Faulty sanitation and Egypt's incompetent quartermaster department represent additional handicaps that could negate the advantage of field works.[46]

Another branch of the army, with its own unique complaints, was the cavalry. Two small regiments existed in 1863; Ismail planned to increase them to eight, but never fielded more than four. These were divided between lancer and dragoon units. In the former, troopers were armed with a long bamboo lance, pistol, and sabre; in the latter, lances were replaced by carbines. By 1876, older muzzle-loading firearms were replaced with revolvers and Remington rolling block carbines. Regiments contained six squadrons, each with eight officers, 25 NCOs, and 84 troopers.[47]

One squadron maintained a different organization. These were *zirkhagi*, the 'iron men', or cuirassiers. Once two regiments strong, and contributors to Ibrahim's victory at Nezib (1839), they were now part of the Khedival Guard. Armed with sabres and pistols, these men wore chain-mail armour and metal helmets with nose-guards. While neither was proof against firearms, both offered considerable protection from cut and thrust weapons, like those used by the vast majority of Egypt's African enemies. They were an elite formation, and often used both to bolster morale among regulars, and impress locals such as when a section was sent for duty in Harar during the early 1880s.[48]

Even more exotic were the irregular mounted troops of the Egyptian army. Bedouins provided significant contingents of light cavalry right up to 1882. Approximately 7,000 men served the Khedive as scouts, raiders, desert constables, and border guards. Clan leaders provided the manpower, along with horse and equipment; in exchange, the government was supposed to pay each Bedouin a salary of £E1 per month. While not especially effective as soldiers, these men did help in the suppression of banditry, and as frontier 'trip wire'.[49]

Other irregular cavalry units existed in the Sudan. The old equestrian aristocracy of the *Shayqiyya* maintained seventeen small squadrons. Smaller numbers of Beni Amir and Saho formed scout and skirmish units. These troopers functioned in a manner similar to the Bedouin of Egypt proper. Two large dromedary units also existed, mainly to protect the caravan route to the Red Sea. Smaller 50-man contingents patrolled out into the deserts west of the Nile.[50]

Save for guardsmen, most Egyptian cavaliers suffered from poor training, and indifferent mounts. Many horses were imported from Syria, and

although excellent breeds were available, Egyptian buyers too often stressed quantity over quality. Hicks, writing in 1883, complained, 'There are no government horses worth anything.'[51] This problem was compounded when poor supervision caused many animals to be hurt by improper care. An even greater blow to cavalry effectiveness was an epizootic plague brought home in 1876 from the Abyssinian war. Thousands of horses died from this disease, and some units were temporarily dismounted, or given mules and donkeys.[52]

Before the pestilence, foreign observers noted Egyptian horsemen as fast and sharply dressed. Otherwise, most comments were negative. Troopers obtained very little training in combat manoeuvres, and were poor marksmen. As cavalry then played a critical role in scouting, and destroying a defeated enemy, the lack of a good mounted arm represented a serious flaw in Ismail's ground forces.[53]

At the other extreme, Egypt's artillery was efficient and modern. A small branch, with only 1,500 men in 1877, it was well drilled, if somewhat slow, and represented the pick of each year's conscription. As service in this arm required seven years of active duty, its members had longer to perfect their art. Unlike the rest of the army, artillerymen followed Prussian, rather than French, tactical doctrine. Dye adds that since the basic unit was small, incompetent officers or NCOs were quickly weeded out.[54]

For administrative purposes, Egypt maintained five artillery regiments: four field and one fortress. These never fought as units, so the basic manoeuvre element was the battery. Field regiments split into four foot, and two horse batteries. A battery's firepower was fixed at six guns, each with its own caisson, and three extra ammunition wagons. The difference between horse and foot units was that in the former, all gunners were mounted and attached to cavalry formations.[55]

Both organizations were in transition under Ismail. Most notably, Krupp guns replaced older cannon, like the mediocre La Hitte conversions. The new Krupps were breech-loaders of steel construction that provided greater range, and a faster rate of fire. A Captain, four officers, 23 NCOs, 72 gunners, and 48 drivers comprised the fighting element of a mounted battery. Most used 7.5cm Krupps, and were drawn by good quality horses imported from France. Only sixty gunners served the 6cm Krupp guns of the foot batteries, which were pulled by mules, and sometimes, camels. All artillerymen were issued side arms or carbines, and were often superior marksmen compared to the infantry.[56]

Other weapons of the artillery included small, but highly mobile, mountain howitzers. Rifled, and firing shrapnel, these were very effective against Egypt's traditional African enemies. Another advantage was the ability to quickly break down a howitzer for transport. Two camels were sufficient to carry it and some ammunition.[57]

In a similar fashion, rapid-fire guns and rockets also played an important role in colonial warfare. Nordenfeldt and Gatling 'machine guns' were used

in Abyssinia and the Sudan. Properly deployed, these could shower bullets over a wide expanse.[58] While rockets were much less accurate, their firing tubes were easy to move, and the mere noise of their flight often had a negative effect on troops unaccustomed to such. Rocket fire could also illuminate a battlefield at night, exposing enemy forces to Egyptian counter-moves.[59]

Thus, Egyptian artillerymen were formidable opponents, indeed, Hicks called them his army's 'backbone'.[60] Excellent weapons and training, however, were sometimes degraded by poor ammunition. Krupp's percussion shells were very accurate, but often failed to explode on hitting soft sand. A British observer from 1882 noted, 'Our losses would have been serious but for this fact.'[61] Maintenance and storage problems also reduced the supply and effectiveness of ammunition, and could render batteries inoperable. Prunier notes government reports on a 50 per cent failure rate in Gatling gun ammunition in 1865, and fortress walls so poorly maintained, that 'it would fall apart if any guns were fired.'[62]

If artillery was the most efficient branch of the regular army, then engineers were its opposite. Poorly trained and organized, they represented another handicap for Ismail's military. Engineer troops prepared roads, bridges, fortifications, and campsites. As these were vital ingredients for imperial expansion, slow or incompetent construction produced negative results for several campaigns. This was not for lack of raw talent, as continual work on canals and dikes made the typical *fellah* conscript a good sapper. Missing, however, were educated officers and the proper equipment.[63]

On paper, an entire regiment of engineers, almost 2,000 men, was available in 1870. In reality this was an administrative unit, and the army never fielded anything larger than company-size detachments.[64] While some foreign mercenaries were hired to increase efficiency, most came and went with little advantage to the engineers. By 1882 the force was small and ineffective.[65]

An even greater failure was the decrepit or sometimes non-existent quartermaster's department. Ammunition, spare parts, food, and other vital supplies were available in depots, but transporting such to men in the field was always slow and inefficient. In the Delta, and along the Nile, Mediterranean, and Red Sea coasts, this was no problem, as steamers or trains provided for rapid re-supply. In the Sudan and Abyssinia, targets for Ismail's imperial ambitions, these were less available. Ships faced a problem traversing the Nile cataracts, while railway lines were almost non-existent. Some effort was made to extend rail lines past Wadi Halfa, but money for this enterprise ran out by 1877. The same happened to the first class road designed to link Suakin and Berber. Only information moved quickly, for by 1879, Egypt did possess a significant collection of telegraph lines.[66]

Thus, the interior presented significant challenges to the movement and re-supply of Egyptian forces. Heavily loaded like most nineteenth-century soldiers, regulars carried their rifle, 100 rounds of ammunition, bayonet,

heavy overcoat, a knapsack, and one to five days of rations. Extra food and munitions came on a variety of wagons, transport animals, and human bearers. Organization, however, was lacking, with the least competent officers assigned to supervision, and their subordinates mainly civilians – often poorly paid and coerced into service.[67] When operating in areas with limited local sources of food or water, this was a major problem. A Sudanese private, Ali Effendi Gifoon, explains that 'unless a soldier had a share in a donkey, or camel of his own, he was apt to fare badly'.[68]

This was especially true in desert travel. Water was a valuable resource in many parts of Ismail's empire. Soldiers had canteens, and company supplies included flattened zinc barrels, that fitted into pack saddles, and large goat skins [*girbeh*], for extra water. Baked by desert suns, the former could literally boil its contents, while the latter just turned nasty. Eugene Fechet, an American mercenary, provides numerous entries in his diary on the problems of water supply for his command during an 1873 expedition in the Sudan: 'Our small supply of Nile water is about exhausted and it tastes and smells very badly. We must fill up with alkaline water – quite sufficiently nauseous when fresh … unpotable when exposed to heat in these nasty waterskins.'[69] Fellow American Raleigh Colston agreed, noting 'as a general rule the water is bad, except when it is worse'.[70]

One solution was to employ drills, and dig for underground water, but this was a difficult operation, and might require sinking a well almost 200 feet. As a result, soldiers drank the vile dregs from their goatskins, and sometimes lost all discipline on finding a supply of fresh water. Fechet noted this when his men, 'maddened and delirious with thirst', broke ranks and raced for a well. Ten years later, at Shaykan, the maddened and delirious army of William Hicks broke ranks for fresh water, a factor in their destruction by Sudanese rebels.[71]

It was obvious Egyptian troops had special supply needs. Yet here is another weak link for Ismail's army, and neither native, Turkish, nor mercenary officer had a solution. Due to the fractured nature of Egypt's high command, each battalion maintained a separate supply train. Dye told his superior, Charles Stone, that efforts at a larger system 'were the work of Sisyphus'.[72] This lack of unity caused significant confusion, with animals and their keepers out of place, or running off in every direction. Considering that a single infantry battalion needed 300 camels to carry ten days' rations and reserve ammunition, such disorganization considerably slowed larger columns. Dye continued his attack on Egyptian transport capabilities, arguing that poorly directed animal handlers, often in unrealistic ratios of one man to five camels or three mules, were simply incapable of adequate service. He describes this organization, on the road to Gura, as 'a scene of the most indescribable confusion'.[73]

A small mule cart represented the most common wheeled vehicle. Donkeys, oxen, and a few horses also carried supplies with pack saddles.

Even elephants were employed. Specially imported from India, these were designated for service in the southern Sudan, where numerous equine diseases made for an unacceptable loss rate with the other animals. Arriving in the middle of 1875, the elephants first joined in pulling supplies for the troops at Gura. Escaping this catastrophe, they were next sent to Equatoria, where they survived into the late 1870s. This area also saw the Egyptians utilize significant numbers of human carriers. Since porters carried their own food, and supplies for the soldiers, they always outnumbered the military component, and made for difficult supervision in anything but a small column. The Italian mercenary Romolo Gessi pointed out that this system required commanders to disperse their troops, for better control and a chance at picking up local forage. The danger of being attacked while divided into small units was unavoidable; yet it was the only way to advance beyond the banks of the Nile.[74]

Camels were far more common for transporting supplies. Properly loaded, a good Sudanese camel was capable of moving 300 to 400 pounds at 4 miles per hour, for 8 hours without halt. Except for elephants, no other animal in the Egyptian army could carry more than half that weight. Dye claims it was a better choice, even though requiring more fodder than a mule or donkey. On the other hand, excessive reliance on camels could force commanders to find terrain suitable for their employment. This happened to Søren Arendrup, Ismail's chief for the Gundet campaign (1875). Camels were not the best animals for travel in the Abyssinian highlands, and so these slowed his advance and limited the axis of approach.[75]

In addition, good camels were expensive. In the Eastern Sudan, during the 1870s, they cost between 15 and 35 Maria Theresa thalers. Taxes in kind, rental, and outright confiscation allowed the army to obtain some of its needs, but in the long term, such efforts simply closed local markets. In the end, the government had to buy camels, and often sickly runts at that.[76]

Animals received little care in regards grooming, or medical attention, and often insufficient food. Many were burdened with extra heavy loads, and forced to carry these too long and too far. During the Gura Campaign (1876), William Loring, an American mercenary, noted 'a wanton waste' of pack animals. His colleague, Alexander Mason, described the mortality rate as 'enormous', and that loss rates of 50 per cent, in less than three months, were considered normal. One might also note that certain animals were not suited for use in the Egyptian empire. Spanish mules were a superior breed, and very popular in Europe, but in the Sudan they suffered losses 30 per cent higher than local breeds.[77]

Ismail's forces seemed impressive, and certainly one could argue that his troops represented the most powerful Egyptian military machine since the era of Muhammad Ali. There were, however, problems in training, organization, morale, and command. These ailments were not so visible in the fetes centred on the opening of the Suez Canal, or the smart parades witnessed by

military tourists, but they were major factors in a chain of Egyptian catastrophes from the 1870s to 1880s.

Possibly the most significant of these problems was motivation among the enlisted ranks. The poor conditions of military life, which will be touched on later, made the army a bad career choice. Only conscription could fill the ranks. An examination of this system, and efforts made to circumvent it, gives a strong sense of how most Egyptians had no interest in an army career.

For those with money, or influence, the draft was avoidable. Wealthy individuals could take advantage of Said's *badaliyya*, and pay £E100 for removal from the list of potential draftees. In addition, before 1880, all inhabitants of Cairo, Rosetta, Damietta, Port Said, Ismailia, Suez, and Alexandria, over 10 per cent of the population, were exempt by ancient tradition, or because the government feared economic turmoil as a result. Sole supporters of families, students, and religious instructors represented additional protected categories.[78]

The remainder, young men between the ages of 18 and 22, were subject to the draft. Recruitment was supposed to be by *qur'a* [lot], and was supervised by provincial administrators, *umdas*, and their subordinates, the *shayks* [village leaders]. According to Eugene Gellion-Danglar, a French observer, conscription was an orderly affair, save during a crisis, when *Bashi Bazouks* and cavalry were used to surround a village, and carry off all eligible males. Those unable to pay the official *badaliyya* might still escape at this point, as poorly paid local officials could be bribed for a lesser sum. Doctor Warren comments that medical officials were also open to graft, as being judged 'unfit' was yet another avenue for the potential draft dodger.[79] For the poor, self-mutilation remained an option, as did simple desertion.[80] Also, after a year of service, one could pay for an early discharge.[81]

The end result was that *fellahin* comprised the majority of rankers. Uncertain of their future, these men made the most unwilling soldiers. As the legal exemptions, and corruption, removed all but the least well off, one could argue that Egypt's armed forces obtained the poorest possible selection. Dye derided them as a 'decrepit nation of veritable (mental) Casper Hausers'. He went on to describe the fearful journey to boot camp, where a recruit was 'torn from his home, and dragged, often in chains … to the army'.[82] US Consul Edwin de Leon characterized draftees as resembling 'gangs of apparent convicts, chained together, and driven by soldiers'.[83] Indeed, Lucy Duff-Gordon mentions military service as a judicial punishment for assault![84]

Why was conscription so greatly feared, even in times of peace? A significant portion of this aversion stemmed from an often too true national conviction that military service was forever. Depending on their specialty, soldiers supposedly performed five to seven years as regulars, and twelve more in the *redif* [reserves]. Some soldiers returned after the first stint, and often, never participated in any training for the later. Others provided but

twelve to eighteen months of regular duty, and were then released on unlimited furloughs.[85]

But as one village mother complained to archaeologist Charles Wilbour, 'My beloved is gone, I know not if he will ever return, I shall not even know if he is dead or alive!'[86] This was the reality of the Egyptian army, where regulations were often meaningless, and many *fellahin* remained in the ranks until maimed or dead. Raleigh Colston, another American mercenary, mentions a 55-year-old private, who, despite twenty-five years of active duty, was unable to leave. Even soldiers released from duty were liable to instant recall, and veterans received little if any compensation, or even respect. Augustus Wylde, viewing invalids returning home from Abyssinia, sadly noted that some of the men 'had seen forty years' service, and were treated worse than dogs'.[87]

Attractive pay and work conditions might overcome some men's dislike of such lengthy service, but in Ismail's Egypt, incentives were few and far between. From the very start of an army career, new recruits were exposed to a system Dye labelled a combination of reward by caprice, and severe punishment. The latter was more likely, and often involved heavy use of the 4-foot long *kurbaj*, a hippopotamus-hide whip. Colston mentions a soldier punished with sixty lashes for a dirty uniform. His fellow mercenary, Charles Chaillé-Long, comments that at the other end of Egyptian discipline, rewards for valour, like medals or promotion, were rarely granted to enlisted men.[88]

Class, racism, or indifference partially explain such behaviour. Here we find yet another blow against a motivated army, for there was still a great chasm that separated the Ottoman ruling elite from their Egyptian subjects. Many of the mercenaries, and most Turkish, Circassian, or Albanian officers, simply did not care about the other ranks, or, in numerous cases, despised them. Dye argued that a lack of equitable treatment destroyed any chance to build up an *esprit de corps*, indeed, morale was almost nil. Colston went a step further, arguing the whole system was at fault. 'Why,' he asked, 'should the fellah fight for his present master when he could lose nothing by exchanging him for another?'[89]

As if to compound this problem, Egypt's armed forces combined harsh treatment with slight compensation. An American naval officer visiting Abbasiyya barracks described them as 'filthy beyond words … the walls infested with vermin'.[90] Uniforms were poorly made due to corruption in army tailoring shops. Tents were too thin, letting the sun through in daytime, or making for chilly evenings; and many troops did not even have these poor shelters. Whatever the quality, re-supply was always a problem – Werner Munzinger Pasha, in 1872, and Hicks in 1883, complained their Sudanese troops were dressed 'in rags'. Other officers noted badly stored and often defective ammunition.[91]

Food was not much better. While regulations prescribed a daily ration of meat, rice, beans, coffee, bread, and sundries, these existed mainly in the realm of fantasy. Most soldiers obtained rice, plus a small, irregular supply

of beef, and lots of *baqsumat* – the Egyptian equivalent of hardtack.[92] Several authors comment on shipments of fruit and vegetables during the Gura Campaign, while cheese also appears now and then, but the only real constant was *baqsumat*, a poor second to more traditional Egyptian favourites like *ful* or *kushari*. Sudanese troops were issued millet porridge or bread, and *marisa*, a traditional beer.[93]

Along with poor food, soldiers also received next to nothing in medical attention. The accomplishments of Clot Bey, much reduced since the 1840s, were now of dangerously uneven quality. Bad enough anywhere, the near total absence of a medical service played havoc on the frontier. Stations in the Sudan, especially Equatoria, could produce sick rates of over 50 per cent. If untreated, many died, or became permanent convalescents. Recognizing the double dangers of tropical disease, and Egypt's inadequate health service, Hicks asked that a European doctor be attached to his command, to avoid 'the risk of Egyptian medical treatment'.[94]

Pay was the same story – not much and not often. A *nafar* [private] was entitled to 20 piasters a month, an *onbashi* [corporal] obtained 30, while a *bash-shawish* [sergeant-major] would expect 60.[95] Troops serving in elite Guards regiments obtained higher rates.[96] If paid on time, these salaries were, at best, equal to those of Egypt's unskilled or agricultural labourers. Not adjusted for inflation since 1863, army salaries lost even this 'charm' by the mid-1870s. In comparison, a *sepoy* from the 1867 British invasion of Ethiopia obtained three times his Egyptian counterpart. To compound matters, Egyptian pay was often late or incomplete. Sudanese troops may not have been paid at all before the 1870s; the Governor of Khartoum told explorer Emilius de Cosson, 'my men work for food, a few sweet dates and plenty of common tobacco'.[97] Hicks complained that only a third of his salary was paid in June 1883, and notes that some Sudanese garrisons were owed 25 months' worth of back pay![98] This was not unusual, the explorer Wilhelm Junker described the government as a 'permanent debtor' in relation to remote garrisons.[99] These soldiers were often paid in kind, and rarely in specie. Sometimes, to quiet such cases, soldiers were allowed to collect taxes, and keep a percentage of the take. One can only imagine the effects on morale, and the local population, who were 'taxed' by these hungry, ill-clad, sullen troops. Lucy Duff-Gordon complained that soldiers quartered in Upper Egypt constituted 'a new plague worse than all the rest', while Colston argued that 'to live', soldiers had to rob locals when pay went into arrears.[100]

With such to work with, one can understand why Hicks argued, 'The Egyptian is the most hopeless man to make a soldier: he has no patriotism, no loyalty, no courage … or any feeling of honor.'[101] Like many others, Hicks failed to determine the root cause of these 'failings'. As proved by Muhammad Ali, Egyptians made excellent soldiers, if they were provided with good leadership. Unfortunately, this was completely lacking, thus producing yet another handicap for the armed forces.

6

NATIVE-BORN OR MERCENARY?

Selecting officers for the army of Khedive Ismail

> These people are cunning in evasion and cannot be induced to initiate American energy. I shall infuse some energy into my officers or leave them in the Sudan.
>
> (Eugene Fechet)

One of many Neo-Mamluks serving in the 1870s, Fechet's complaint was hardly unique. Many observers cited a lack of initiative, incompetence, and even cowardice, as common among Egyptian officers. Although some opinions resulted from jealousy, racism, or misunderstandings, others were right on the mark. There were serious flaws in the selection, training and promotion of Khedive Ismail's officer corps. Leadership, the key to victory in any army, was a commodity in short supply during this period.[1]

General Rostislas Fadeieff, a Russian freelance hired to appraise Egypt's military effectiveness, issued a long report on this very subject.[2] He dismissed motivation for rankers, arguing that '*une armée machinale*' was quite capable of victory.[3] Using his native Russia for comparison, Fadeieff claimed that, with well-trained and devoted officers, Egypt could remain a formidable power. With great delicacy, Fadeieff also suggested that examples, such as those set by Muhammad Ali and Ibrahim, would serve Egypt's current ruler, Khedive Ismail, both for setting a pace, and in supervising the training and promotion of his officer corps.[4]

One of Ibrahim's many sons, Ismail was gifted with a tremendous vision for Egypt's future, and was partially responsible for its *nahdah*, or 'renaissance'. He played a major role in the construction of the Suez Canal, built the first Middle Eastern opera house, and turned Cairo and Alexandria into modern cities. Still, despite the buildings, art, and literature sponsored by him, these were but pale imitations of his grandfather's vigorous days. Nowhere is this more evident than in the armed forces. Poor attention to detail, an inability to follow through, terrible leadership, and above all, a failure to match means with ends, are all hallmarks of his reign. Moreover, Ismail was soft, and somewhat of a coward; born to power, he never faced challenges like those of Muhammad Ali or Ibrahim. Under different

circumstances, he might have been a famous gambler, or a *chevalier d'industrie*, but as a generalissimo, he was destined to fail.[5]

This is not to say he was completely bereft of talent. The Khedive was charming, fluent in several languages, and boasted an education that included France's Saint Cyr and the *École supérieure de guerre*.[6] Nor was he inexperienced in practical matters. Ibrahim took him along for the Nezib Campaign, while later, during the less-friendly times of Abbas, Ismail profitably managed his personal land holdings. Also, he performed important duties for Said, rising to commander-in-chief by 1862. A year later, Ismail came to power with twin desires, one, for Egypt's admission, on equal standing, into the western world, and the other, creating an African empire.[7]

One result of his imperial ambitions was a marked increase in the size of the army. Following the example of Muhammad Ali, Ismail often hired foreign mercenaries for command and technical advice. Military forces also benefited from the import of advanced weaponry. Even the long decline of naval power was slowed by the infusion of new units, along with the modernization of older ships.

These improvements were soon tested by war. Ismail deployed troops in ten major campaigns. These ranged from supporting his suzerain in Arabia, Crete, and the Balkans, to low-intensity wars in the Sudan, and a final showdown with Abyssinia. Despite some success, in the end, Egyptian forces were disastrously defeated, obliterating their victorious reputation of earlier years.

Indeed, by 1879, many Western observers argued that 'gyppies' were simply not made out to be soldiers.[8] While nothing could be further from the truth, the stereotype of indifferent soldiers led by incompetent officers is partially based on fact. Egyptian armies fell apart and suffered defeat at the hands of poorly equipped, but much better motivated enemies. This happened for a variety of reasons, but at the top of the list was a failure to heed Fadeieff's advice. In many cases, the leadership skills of Egyptian officers were lacking, or completely deficient.

While officer quality began to suffer under Said, it continued after his death because Ismail had neither the skill, nor the character, to halt the decline. Thus officers represent the weakest link in a rather rusty chain. Here the problems were greater than those in the enlisted ranks, and included favouritism, division, racial animosity, and incompetence. As an eyewitness put it, 'there was too much selfishness, scheming, contemptible littleness … so little honest work, and even less appreciation of such'.[9] Ismail tried for a quick fix, via awards, financial incentives, and the importation of western mercenaries. Most of these programmes were short-lived, poorly planned, or, in typical fashion, abandoned for some new scheme that was more flashy, or held the allure of instant results. The Khedive had little luck in these matters, and being used to the good life, never joined the army on campaign, or set any kind of martial standard like his father, the much respected Ibrahim Pasha.

Downsizing and financial mismanagement during the 1860s provide two early clues to the start of these problems. By then, the elite cadre of veteran leaders from earlier days had mainly retired. Also, military education was in a state of flux. Poor cash flow during the last years of Said's administration caused many schools to amalgamate, or close down. Instructors, staff, and libraries dispersed, while numerous students graduated with minimal qualifications.

In 1865, by creating *al-Idarat al-Madaris al-Harbiya* [Military Schools Administration], Ismail tried to reverse this course. Three years later, it comprised staff, infantry, cavalry, artillery, engineering, and veterinary departments. Preparatory schools and a Polytechnic round out the picture of military education during Ismail's reign.[10]

A significant collection on paper, these schools suffered from sub-standard education, poor discipline, and inadequate funding. In addition, as Fadeieff warned, modern weaponry and tactics required even more rigorous officer training than that of Muhammad Ali's day, and among serving officers, there existed a dangerous indifference to this issue.[11]

Here was an additional challenge for Ismail. His grandfather had purchased surplus weapons, better, but not radically different from those already used by Egyptian soldiers. Muhammad Ali also picked from a large pool of European mercenaries, some with years of experience gained on Napoleonic battlefields. Ismail's needs coincided with a smaller pool of mercenary talent, and with the start of significant and rapid changes in military technology. As the next chapter reveals, Ismail tried to meet this latter challenge via imports. He failed, however, in the greater test, that of providing management.

Egypt's best simply did not enter the armed forces. The primary education system tracked students, and often sent indifferent or average graduates to military schools. Between 1864 and 1879, 1,943 men joined officer training programmes in this fashion. Others were promoted from the ranks, while some obtained field commissions, and never saw a classroom.[12]

Centred at Abbasiyah, most cadets spent two years in preparatory work, and then specialized in a specific branch of military science. Foreign critics observed that instruction at both levels was sporadic, discipline lax, and physical exercise almost non-existent. Still, as Samuel Lockett Bey wrote, 'in spite of all this, they seem to learn something.'[13] By the early 1870s, when military spending peaked, graduating classes held up to 400 members.[14]

The new lieutenants joined a rapidly expanding army, one that grew from a few hundred to nearly 3,000 officers, in only ten years. Promising, or, in some cases, merely well-connected officers, travelled to Europe for advanced training. France, England, and Germany all accepted small contingents. Also, the Egyptian Military School in Paris reopened, but grew slowly due to the Franco-Prussian War. Superior graduates went on to study for a year at the *État Major*, a staff college that received considerable support from

General Charles Stone, Ismail's chief mercenary. Here junior officers learned how to assist generals on complex issues of strategy and tactics.[15]

Located in the Citadel, the *État Major* featured a mixed staff of American, French, and Egyptian instructors. Most were veterans with significant martial experience, whose work centred on teaching specialized courses in cartography, fortification, intelligence, ordnance, coastal defence, and quartermaster duties. Stone also supported an arms museum, a library, two Arabic-language military journals, and a map collection. Backed by Ismail's approval, graduating from the *État Major* should have been the fast track to command.[16]

Quite to the contrary, such officers were often ostracized or assigned mundane clerical and cartographic duties more fit for the most junior grades. Also, in terms of seniority and pay, their additional education placed them one year behind line officers. Some individuals overcame these handicaps, like Muhammad Pasha Fahmy, who became the army's engineering expert, or Hassan Pasha Aflatun, who rose to the rank of *farik* [general] and was in charge of the Ordnance Department. Most, however, were sidetracked by the additional education, for as Dye put it, 'The Line and staff seemed to be kept apart as it they were two ferocious beasts eyeing each other.'[17]

Why was such talent wasted? More than anything else, an explanation lies in the 'Pasha system', which entered from the start of Muhammad Ali's *al-Nizam al-Jadid*. This centred on high-ranking officers, who became an entrenched power bloc. These men saw their commands, usually at the regimental level, as personal property. The idea that a military unit 'belonged' to its commander, who decided on even the most mundane issues, made innovation difficult, and could limit the effective combination of individual units into brigades or divisions. Stone considered this a major flaw, for as he told Ismail, 'Egypt's fine regiments could be defeated by well organized and directed enemies of half their number.'[18] Also, attention to minutiae diverted generals from more important strategic questions, for as Dye explained, 'No one can command an army and be corporal of the guard at the same time.'[19] Stone provides an example, when he complained that issuing twenty extra rounds of ammunition to an individual soldier required 'a mountain of paper work', plus an order signed by the Minister of War![20] Under men like Muhammad Ali, or Ibrahim, these faults were compensated by their determined attention, and ruthless discipline. Ismail, who never led his armies in the field, and often directed them via palace subordinates, lost touch with the military, thus allowing the Pasha system to flourish. This covetous attitude made it very difficult to integrate the new staff officers being created by Stone. A typical example was the reaction of the *Sirdar* [Commander-in-Chief], Ratib Pasha, who told Charles Chaillé-Long Bey, his newly appointed chief-of-staff, 'I have no headquarters or staff … I will write when I need you.'[21] Ratib neither appreciated the need for assistance, nor did he desire an 'outsider' at the top levels of his command.[22]

Fairly typical of Egypt's senior officers, Ratib was more in tune with memories from the glory days of Ibrahim, rather than the mediocre reality of Ismail. While no Saladin, the *Sirdar* was not the incompetent coward described by several disgruntled American mercenaries. On the contrary, he was brave and diligent, albeit lacking initiative. A product of the *al-Madrasat al-Mafruzah*, Ratib was one of Said's Mamluks who attended the *Chasseur* school in France. The French commandant noted Ratib was sharp-witted, spoke well, and predicted he would become an excellent officer. After a falling out with Said, and a stint in the Ottoman Army, Ratib returned to serve Ismail. Made *Liwa* [Brigadier General] in 1867, he rose to *Sirdar* one year later, and played an important role in several arms buying missions that secured quality weapons at decent rates.[23]

Amir [Prince] Hassan, Ismail's third son, is a different story. The only member of the royal family to take a serious interest in things military, his education included Oxford, the Artillery School at Woolwich, and service with the Prussian Guard Infantry. The latter exposed him to German-style staff training, and the use of war games for military instruction. Fluent in English and German, Hassan was an ardent proponent for the armed forces, and had great potential that was cut short by his youth and illness.[24]

Yet with no iron-willed leader to direct otherwise, Ratib, Hassan, and many other military leaders became lazy, complacent, or ineffectual. Under Ismail, there was too little supervision of juniors by their superiors, and too few efforts to ferret out mediocrity. A Minister of War existed, who supervised an administrative office, the *al-Nazir al-Jihadiyya*, which was supposedly charged with rating officer performance. Neither, however, exercised significant authority. Capricious reward or punishment was the order of the day. Nowhere was this more evident than in the office of the Minister of War itself. Alternating between Ismail's sons, veteran officers, and palace favourites, few men lasted long in this position, yet another reason for poor supervision. Officer quality suffered as a result, and, in the words of a British diplomat, 'was sadly deficient'.[25]

Numerous observers agreed. Egyptian officers were terrible. Many set bad examples for discipline, and often failed in the simplest aspects of leadership. One typical example, repeated over and over again, was the inability of Ismail's armies to maintain pickets or *vedettes*. Such outposts were vital to security, providing an early warning system that, if properly set up, could prevent surprise attack. An officer's duty, especially at night, was to tour such outposts, making sure that sentries were alert and properly deployed. Almost invariably, Egyptian soldiers assigned this work either slept, or failed to observe enemy forces. Ignorant, or racist, Western critics often cited this as proof that 'gyppies' were not fit for combat. They failed to remember that whether American, British, or Arab, most low-ranking conscripts have neither the discipline, nor initiative, to maintain independent actions. Instead, this is a job for junior officers, and if, like in Egypt, these men

refused to regularly inspect positions, most soldiers would take advantage of the situation, to get some sleep.[26]

Even during the day, Egyptian leaders often gave little attention to detail, and opted for the quick and easy solution. One sees examples of this even at high levels of command, as in 1876, when Ismail Pasha Kamil marched his entire brigade into Abyssinia, and made no effort to establish flank, advance, or rear guards. Other leaders misplaced units, forgot to requisition supplies, or, as in the case of the initial success against British invaders at Kassassin (9 September 1882), failed to follow up a promising attack. Such officers might be able to lead a parade, but all too often, any problem, or strenuous effort, was met with the response of '*bukra*', or '*inshaallah*'.[27]

Initiative, even in less strenuous circumstances, was too often a rare commodity. Eugene Fechet, an American mercenary, complained that he got little work out of his lieutenants, 'who seemed to lack common sense', except when their steamer seemed ready to sink, in which case his officers were first to abandon ship.[28] Of course, these issues could also result from language barriers, which were not exclusively a western problem. Many officers were handicapped by a weak or non-existent grasp of Arabic. The Turko-Circassian-Albanian mafia that dominated Egypt seldom bothered to learn the language of their subjects.[29] Their stranglehold on top military positions ensured that even though Arabic was the language of the majority, the army maintained Turkish drill commands until 1920. Of course many native Egyptians learned these only by rote, so the inability to communicate was mutual. Adding to the confusion, many of Ismail's foreign mercenaries learned neither tongue, and employed varying degrees of French for their *lingua franca*. One of them described the perfect commander for Egypt's 1876 invasion of Abyssinia, as one who spoke Arabic, Turkish, French, English, and Amharic! This linguistic divide impaired efficiency, and encouraged ethnic division.[30]

The latter had always been a problem, but was now more acute due to an influx of Egyptians in the higher ranks. Said began this trend in the 1850s, but later changed his mind. Thus did individuals like Ahmed Urabi spend nineteen years in the same rank, watching juniors advance and overtake him, simply because they were from the ruling class. Ismail, however, could only draw some of his officers from local Turks, Circassians, or Albanians – these groups were simply too small to fill every position, so native Egyptians were allowed to rise to the rank of *qaimmaqam* [lieutenant-colonel]. Some, like Urabi, stayed on, others like Crimean veteran Ali Mubarak, left the military to become Minister of Education. In either case, talent was wasted, while racial animosity flourished.[31]

This discrimination against Arabs was not just an issue of morale or poor management; it also served as a factor in the 1882 nationalist uprising against Khedival authority. This began after 1876, when '*al-Sharakisah*' [Circassian] became a derisive term referring to military débâcles in

Abyssinia. Then, in 1881, when Uthman Pasha Rifqi, the Circassian Minister of War, ordered selective demobilization in order to cut the military budget, Arab officers were targeted, while Turko-Circassians were protected. As Urabi put it, 'The practice in Egypt was to discriminate by race … promotions, decorations and rewards went to Circassians.'[32]

Religion was an additional source of friction. Although very few Copts entered the military, Ismail's foreign mercenaries belonged to various Christian faiths. Some Muslim officers did not get along with their American, French, or English counterparts. Occasionally, such attitudes extended to the point that orders were disobeyed, but more often, these simply prevented effective teamwork.[33]

Another problem was literacy. Until 1870, officers were not required to demonstrate reading or writing skills, and some illiterates became majors and even colonels. Supposedly, they were supported by regimental clerks, mainly Copts, who extended down to the company level. There were too few of these, and many, aware of their value, were corrupt, or followed agendas at variance with official policy. Dye, who was probably exaggerating, claimed that illiteracy made written orders only feasible at the regiment or battery level. Whatever the case, such deficiencies degraded the army's ability to communicate.[34]

Favouritism and nepotism compounded all of the above. Advancement supposedly came from a combination of one's duty station, quality of service, and education. Regulations required officers to be at least twenty years of age, and to wait a minimum of one year between promotions. As the frontier was considered a hardship posting, men sent there needed only six months. Some officers followed this road, others, like the adopted son of influential Werner Munzinger Pasha, became 21-year-old majors. Court favourites reached even higher, as can be seen in the case of Søren Arendrup, a former Danish artillery lieutenant, who commanded the disastrous 1875 invasion of Abyssinia, or Eugene Fechet, who started off as a *bimbashi*, and after one trip to the Sudan, was promoted to *qiammaqam*. One wonders how native-born Egyptians responded to such? Maybe with a '*malesh*', and a shrug of the shoulders, for it was *wasta* [influence], rather than performance, that counted most for advancement.[35]

Pay, awards, and other incentives, provide more explanations for the failure of Ismail's military. A pyramid-like salary tables provided significant wealth for top-ranking officers, indifferent compensation for middle levels, and sub-standard rates for juniors. To present but one example, a *bimbashi* from the Egyptian contingent fighting with the French in Mexico received double his normal wages. When he returned home, and found the new salary table established by Ismail in 1863, he not only took a drastic cut in wages, but soon discovered that no effort was made to adjust for inflation. Further, by 1875, Egypt's cash crunch made salaries an irregular feature in army life.[36]

This was a major blow to morale, and as promises of 'tomorrow' lasted for months, this hit hardest among the lower ranks. At the top, men of influence found ways to obtain their pay, even if most did not, like the flamboyant James Morgan, draw a pistol to eliminate the problem of '*bukra*'. At lower levels, already underpaid junior officers were owed up to thirty months of back pay by 1878. Many had used up their credit and some were evicted from their quarters. Samuel Henry Lockett, an American mercenary, described how creditors seized baggage and clothing owned by destitute Arab officers, while at the same time, the Finance Ministry was building a 300-room office complex. Then, as if to compound the injustice, 2,500 more officers, all with salaries in arrears, were placed on 'half-pay'. Hundreds protested this move, and in a celebrated incident, roughed up the Prime Minister. Impoverished, and with hungry families, these men represented a dangerous and angry body, one that would play an important role in the Urabi Revolution of 1881–1882.[37]

The Khedive either did not care, or was oblivious to the plight of his soldiers. He did reward *qaimmaqam* and above with grants of real estate, but even this ended in the early 1870s. Then, in place of land or pay, Ismail doled out Ottoman decorations, like the *Medjidieh* or *Osmanieh*. British wags referred to the latter as the 'owes money 'ere', because it often came in lieu of back wages. In any case, these low-grade silver and gilt awards provided little solace to a hungry subaltern with no place to live.[38]

Foreign mercenaries' officers were treated much better, at first. Familiar with the positive impact Neo-Mamluks had on *al-Nizam al-Jadid*, Ismail hired numerous soldiers-of-fortune, for both training and direct commands. While he employed nearly as many mercenaries as Muhammad Ali, and placed them in higher ranks, his programme was a failure. As one disgruntled *condottiere* put it, 'I don't think I am doing any good for myself or Egypt, and I don't think any foreigner ever will.'[39]

The Khedive's first hires were all Europeans, mainly from France and Italy. The French were again part of an official mission, and numbered seven men under the direction of Colonel Jean Mircher. Several others, like Claude Minié Bey, were already serving under individual contracts. Their initial duties were based on arms procurement and the creation of advanced artillery and cavalry schools. They unofficially pushed Egypt towards the purchase of French weapons, and secretly reported to Paris on local military affairs.[40]

Espionage, however, was only a minor problem for '*la mission française*'. More serious was Emperor Napoleon III's arbitration settlement between the Suez Canal Company and the Egyptian Government. Rather one-sided, it cost Ismail £E3,000,000, and chilled relations between the two rulers. Matters of discipline and control further alienated mercenary from paymaster, the Khedive complaining that they were not his officers, but, 'virtually under the orders of the French Minister of War'.[41] As a result, by 1869, all but three of the French team had returned home.[42]

Mercenary officers from the Dual Monarchy avoided the problems of their French counterparts. Austria-Hungary never sent an official advisory team, but was represented by numerous adventurers who could boast active duty, not only at home, but also in Hapsburg efforts to support Maximilian in Mexico. Most joined as aides, or confidants. Counts della Sala and Koszielski are good examples, both members of Ismail's entourage in the late 1860s. Others sought regular army slots, like Baron von Mockeln and Max von Thurneyssen, participants in the Gura Campaign (1876). A year earlier, Baron Wilmos von Zichy made the terrible mistake of quitting his hunting party to volunteer for service in the Gundet Campaign. Other Austro-Hungarian mercenaries lasted into the 1890s, but had little impact on the Egyptian military.[43]

Italian soldiers of fortune were a very different lot, and often took active commands on the fringe of Ismail's empire. Some, like Gaetamo Casati, Romolo Gessi, or Giacomo Messedaglia, were veterans of the *Risorgimento*, and served long tours of duty in the Sudan. Captain Andreani Somani volunteered for the Gura Campaign, and later joined Ratib Pasha's entourage. Probably the most successful Italian mercenary was Maria Federigo Pasha, who joined as an instructor, and went on to serve as an Admiral in the Egyptian navy until 1893.[44]

Gessi was especially notable. A decorated *Alpini*, who spoke six languages, he secured notable victories in Equatoria. Despite these, he was snubbed by Gordon, then Governor General of the Sudan, who accused his Italian lieutenant of financial wrongdoings. Whether true or not, here was a man, indeed one of the few Neo-Mamluks, who delivered victory, yet was denied reward on dubious grounds. Probably the lack of a senior Italian mercenary to look after his interests was Gessi's real problem. This was a continual theme for the interrelationships of western Neo-Mamluks, each nationality looked after their own, and seldom played fair with rivals.[45]

Ismail also turned to Switzerland, where a long tradition of organized mercenary units nearly provided him with a 'Foreign Legion'. Already employed as special constables for the municipal police of Alexandria and Cairo, Swiss were considered for a 1,000-man military force in 1869. This effort coincides with the high point of friction between Egypt and the Ottoman Empire. Thus when it receded in the same year, so too did plans for this expensive formation.[46]

More serious consideration went to the possibility of Swiss officers replacing the departed Frenchmen. Long-time Cairo resident Jean Ninet carried on some of these negotiations, while General S. de Castella of the Swiss Federal Army worked to establish a niche for himself in the *État Major*. As Stone and his Americans were already in place, it is difficult to determine what degree of genuine interest, or possible double-dealing, was involved with this plan.[47]

While no large-scale hires resulted, several Swiss mercenary officers obtained individual appointments. One, Jacob Durholtz, had the misfortune

to be captured by the Abyssinians, and was later killed while fighting a duel over the issue. Werner Munzinger Pasha also died in service, but only after a spectacular series of promotions that saw this gifted linguist and explorer rise to become a provincial governor.[48]

England provided several notable mercenaries. Samuel Baker Pasha, and Charles 'Chinese' Gordon Pasha, are notable examples. Both gained important Sudanese commands, and while the former made a fortune serving Ismail, the latter died a hero while leading the last independent Egyptian army at Khartoum in 1885. Other British mercenaries served with Baker and Gordon, but a group often overlooked are the engineers who helped maintain the boilers on most of Ismail's warships. The rapid transition from sail to steam, along with an increase in fleet units, required a significant number of these men, who worked until Egyptians were trained as replacements. Their names pop up well into the late 1870s.[49]

British mercenaries also provide examples of divided loyalty. While their French and American counterparts tried to make extra money at Ismail's expense, the English sometimes caused political or diplomatic problems. Baker Pasha often turned to the Foreign Office when he could not have his way in the Sudan. This despite the fact that he had accepted employment as an Egyptian officer. In a different case, when Ismail joined forces with the Ottomans to fight Russia in 1877, the Royal Navy ordered several mercenaries to resign, or lose their reserve status. Finally, there is the case of Baron de Kussel, Alexandria's Controller of Customs, who used his power to hide weapons that could have played an important role in the defence of that city against the British invasion of 1882.[50]

Far more numerous and influential were Ismail's Americans. A mixture of both Federal and Confederate veterans from the Civil War, they were a decidedly mixed lot. No group more succinctly proved that nations do not send their best into the mercenary trade. One could argue that a few gave good value for their salaries, but as a whole, the Americans proved a poor investment.[51]

Most did not mesh well with their hosts. From 1869 to 1882, forty-eight Americans served in the army, fleet, and *État Major*. Though offered generous pay and allowances, many resigned before the end of their five-year contracts. As non-Muslim outsiders, they faced a serious cultural challenge that most could not overcome. Some were insensitive to Egyptian ways; others were deadbeats, drunks, or cranks.

This connection began in the late 1860s, when Ismail sacked his French mercenaries, and looked for suitable replacements. Several factors weighted heavily in favour of American replacements. First, the recent Civil War provided many veterans with experience handling large forces, and practical exposure to the most recent military technologies. Second, demobilization, or affiliation with the former Confederate Army, created a large pool of unemployed officers. Finally, there was a near complete absence of American

interest in Egypt. In all, these were powerful arguments that pushed Egypt towards the hire of American, rather than European, mercenaries.[52]

A key figure in this movement was Thaddeus Phelps Mott, a Union army veteran, whose fluent Turkish, and connections with the Ottoman diplomatic corps, provided an introduction to Ismail.[53] Mott, who exaggerated his influence back home, convinced the Khedive that he could obtain first-rate talent for service in the Egyptian armed forces. In 1868, he was granted the ranks of *Farik* and Pasha, along with a commission to recruit American mercenaries.[54]

Thus began a confused process that involved Mott, his brother Henry, General Fitz John Porter, and S. L. Merchant & Co., who, before 1869, were mainly involved in the cement trade.[55] This combination, like many Ismailian enterprises, was poorly organized, and based on its collective experience, hardly qualified to pick the 'best and the brightest'. Still, the Khedive had his mercenaries, and in 1870, thanked the United States 'for permitting so many distinguished officers to leave their country for the service of Egypt'.[56]

What attracted such men for service in a distant and rather alien land? Money was arguably the strongest pull. Their salaries, in the words of US Consul General Richard Butler, 'were exceedingly liberal'.[57] Most obtained a five-year contract, a minimum rank of *bimbashi*, and were promised a monthly salary payable in gold. Hardship pay, uniform, travel, and housing allowances, along with compensation for wounds or death, all sweetened the package.[58]

Other factors drawing Americans into the Egyptian army were political and career oriented. Former Confederate officers were barred from service in the post-1865 American armed forces. Out of work, in debt, and unable to make ends meet, many were like Samuel H. Lockett, an engineer who could not even afford the 10 cent charge for a ride to see the then marvellous Brooklyn Bridge. As he told a friend, 'It is awful to be poor.'[59] Some of his fellow mercenaries agreed, and like Charles Graves, compared themselves to 'Abraham and Lot, who sojourned in Egypt when the famine was grievous in their own country'.[60] For such men, service with the Khedive represented a chance to make a living, and continue their military careers.[61]

Other ex-Confederates combined these feelings with a bitter resentment of their defeat. Some, like Henry Derrick, wanted to escape 'the cursed tyranny' of the United States.[62] There were also characters, like Morgan, who saw service in exotic Egypt as a modern-day version of *The Arabian Nights*. With him we come closest to the mercenary ideal, that of a man who seeks foreign employment for pure adventure.[63]

Quality widely varied in this group. At one extreme was Lockett, who graduated second in West Point's Class of 1858. During the Civil War, he was a colonel of engineers, and designed the fortifications at Vicksburg and Port Hudson. In between were men like Thomas G. Rhett, an ordnance

expert, or Morgan who had a naval background. Then there was Henry H. Sibley, inventor and former general, but also an alcoholic, who accomplished little beyond sampling the local rotgut. Finally, in a class all of his own, 'Old Blizzards', William Wing Loring. Indian fighter and Mexican War hero, Loring had a less than brilliant career during the War Between the States. Although he reached division- and corps-level commands, his impulsive nature, along with a decided inattention to detail, often led to disaster. Loring was a good example of the officer who could successfully lead a regiment, but was unable to comprehend the needs for leadership at higher levels.[64]

The other half of the American contingent were former officers from the North. While not barred from a military career, many found the rapidly shrinking post-Civil War army unattractive. In addition, promotion was slow, and for officers with indifferent wartime records, or no connections in Washington, almost non-existent. Like their Confederate counterparts, money, career goals, and adventure drew such men to Egypt.[65]

Infantry expert William M. Dye was typical of this lot. Another West Pointer, number 32 in the Class of 1853, he had been a frontier scout, Indian fighter, and brevet brigadier general during the war. In 1866, Dye reverted to his permanent rank of major. Dissatisfied with army life, he resigned in 1870, and sailed for Egypt.[66]

Just a year earlier, the most controversial of Ismail's Northern officers had obtained the rank of *Liwa*. Charles Pomeroy Stone had wide experience in combat, technical, and administrative commands. General Ulysses S. Grant once told Ismail that he 'knew of no one better informed in every department relating to military affairs'.[67] Stone, also a West Point graduate, was number seven in the Class of 1845. An ordnance and engineering expert, he always had several irons in the fire, and as Lockett put it:

> Stone is a kind gentleman, but one whom Egypt has made slippery … you cannot always rely on him … He generally starts a new nest of eggs before the last one is hatched, and the second sitting causes the complete neglect of the first.[68]

He was also a man with a past. Modern authorities consider him a scapegoat, but many contemporaries held him responsible for the Federal defeat at Ball's Bluff (1861). Some, like Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, even accused him of treason, and Stone became the only Northern officer held in prison without formal charges. Although released and promoted to brevet brigadier general, a cloud seemed to dog the rest of his Civil War service.[69]

Stone came to Egypt with a burning desire to prove his qualifications as a military leader. His treatment after Ball's Bluff, where the actions of a subordinate were the real cause for defeat, turned Stone into a demanding taskmaster, and one who demanded absolute loyalty from all subordinates.

He also stressed the need for expansion, as conquests would enhance the glory of the Egyptian army, and thus reflect positively on the image of Charles Pomeroy Stone.[70]

The first batch of American mercenaries arrived between 1869 and 1870. Despite a warm welcome, there were problems from the start. Many of the new soldiers of fortune were promised ranks and pay-rates at least one grade higher than authorized by Ismail. The error was Mott's, although he tried to pass it off as the political machinations of his former friend and now Minister of War, Shahine Pasha. Several mercenaries also claim that they joined the Egyptian military under the notion that it would provide combat commands in a war for independence against the Ottoman Empire. Upon learning of their reduced status, and the fact that they were to serve mainly as instructors, several resigned on the spot and returned to the United States.[71]

The remaining 'soldiers of misfortune' coalesced into rival cliques. Consul Butler blamed this on 'the machinations and intrigues of various ex-Confederate West Pointers … who objected to serving under an officer of the Union Army who is not a graduate of the Academy'.[72] Stone led this faction, many of whom blamed Mott for their reduced rank and pay. The two groups fought over promotions, military decorations, and possible commissions for steering Ismail towards American arms manufacturers. In 1872, Mott quit Egypt, and was soon followed by Butler, but only after an almost comical gunfight with Loring and several other Southerners! After this, North–South disputes came to an end, in the realization, as Raleigh Colston Bey put it, 'that we are all Americans'.[73]

Morgan notes that Stone handled the opposition 'as though they were so many naughty children'.[74] Next he took over leadership of the Americans, became chief of the *État Major*, and remained Egypt's senior western military advisor until 1883. With Stone at the helm, a better system evolved for recruiting future mercenaries. With Ismail's approval, he turned to his old friend, and now commander of the United States Army, General William Sherman. The latter agreed to recommend future candidates, and even managed to provide leaves of absence for ten regular officers so they could serve with the Egyptian military.[75]

The new Chief of Staff stressed Egypt's need for men 'devoted to a task under a thousand difficulties and vexations … and above all, who possess patience, for without that quality, they can never succeed'.[76] He also wanted West Point graduates, and non-drinkers as any use of alcohol demeaned the status of an officer serving in Egypt's predominately Muslim armed forces. As before, pay and allowances were generous, equal to, or better than, the compensation for similar service in America.[77]

Although factions and divisiveness continued, Stone's ascendancy did bring some order to what he called the 'American Mission'. Working directly with Ismail, the two formulated plans for improving the army's staff,

ordnance and logistical capabilities. After a serious study of Egypt's military potential, Stone reported that 'The body has a head, arms, hands, legs, but there are no nerves.'[78] He stressed the need for improving command and control features, so that Egyptian troops could function as a modern force.[79]

Such were the initial duties for Ismail's mercenaries. His Americans designed or improved fortifications, performed topographical studies, and assisted in the purchase and inspection of new weapons. The more adventurous led exploration and reconnaissance teams into the Sudan. Others commanded naval vessels, or worked to improve coastal defences. Lodged in Cairo's Citadel, the revamped *État Major* seemed poised to transform Egypt's army, and raise it to heights equalling the new headquarters.[80]

This did not happen. Instead, American efforts diffused into public works programmes, exploration, supervision of railway construction, providing news summaries and press reports – a host of decidedly civil ventures. Although far off course in regards to Stone's plan for providing the Egyptian army with a new set of 'nerves', some of these projects were important, and success provided prestige. So much so, that in 1873, Ismail transferred the Department of Public Works to military control, making it the Seventh Section of the *État Major*.[81]

One reason for diverting talent from military to civil affairs was that many of Ismail's Americans were bad hires, and unable to work as a team. William Loring, Stone's second-in-command, misplaced talent, putting engineers in quartermaster duties, quartermasters into artillery slots. A fellow mercenary charitably explained that 'the results of his actions fell far short of his good intentions.'[82] Charles Chaillé-Long was a different problem, 'who sympathized with no one except himself, whom he regards as the greatest living man'.[83] Although somewhat successful as an explorer, Chaillé-Long could neither cooperate with fellow officers, nor work for superiors. Others like Captain David Essex Porter, who passed himself off as a Colonel, were drunkards and frauds.[84] Lockett summed up the overall picture in 1875, when he wrote:

> General Stone and Egypt have been cursed with some of the worst Americans that could be found … so much drunkenness and inefficiency … It is a wonder to me that H.[is] H.[ighness] lets another American in as an employee of the government.[85]

Language difficulties were another problem. A capable mercenary needed some proficiency in Turkish, or Arabic, and a strong command of French, the *lingua franca* of Ismail's polyglot officer corps. Other than Mott, Morgan, and Chaillé-Long, no American learned more than a few commands in the two native tongues. As for French, some were fluent, while others shared Lockett's opinion, when he stated, 'I have no idea of learning to speak this slippery gibberish until I am compelled to by direct necessity.'[86]

An attitude far from uncommon, this was the source of endless problems, as very few Egyptian or Turkish officers spoke English. Dr Gérard Prunier, who has extensively studied the Foreign Language collection at Cairo's *Dar al-Wathaiq*, describes 'the often atrocious French of the Americans, and the courteous grammatical answers of the Egyptians as thinly veiled abysses of misunderstanding'.[87]

Then there was the fighting. The 1872 gun battle between Loring and Consul Butler, plus their associated allies, was only one aspect of this problem. Dr Edward Warren recounts an affair in which the servant of an American mercenary beat an Egyptian soldier, and when ordered to stop by Ratib Pasha, threatened to beat the *Sirdar* next! Morgan, who took offence at an order given to him by Ali Bey, 'in a rather peremptory tone of voice', snatched a cane from Loring and proceeded to beat the man in front of Ismail.[88]

Nor was squabbling kept in the family, for the Americans had poor relations with Egyptian, Turkish and other foreign officers. Many of the latter resented or feared that the 'Yankees' were going to put them out of work. There was some truth in these contentions. Stone, according to Lockett, wanted to dismiss all French instructors, 'who put on airs, talk magnificently, and do nothing for a year or so … We will get rid of these French ideas and substitute American ones.'[89] Several foreign mercenaries were just as interested in getting rid of the Americans. Max von Thurneyssen Pasha, an Austrian, intrigued with Ratib Pasha in order to blame Stone's *État Major* for the disastrous Gura Campaign of 1876. Eduard Dulier Bey, a Belgian, was so uncooperative, that the entire American contingent signed a proclamation asking for his dismissal.[90]

The Americans had even worse relations with Egyptian officers. Here competition and infighting were compounded by racial and religious differences. According to Lockett, these combined, so that 'the foreign element in the Egyptian army was a weakness rather than a strength'.[91] Most Americans dismissed Islam as bunk, and showed little respect for Muslim sensibilities. Converts, like the famous Emin Bey, received maximum derision. Raleigh Colston described him as 'one of the most contemptible specimens of humanity I ever met … an ugly little monkey'.[92] Others complained of 'these off-color beys', or, on returning home, exclaimed, '[W]e are very happy at being back again among white folks … where there are no nasty Arabs, and fleas, and flies, and lice, and bed bugs, and dust, and dirt.'[93] These feelings could impact on discipline, as in the case of Dye Bey, who after striking Ibrahim Lufti, a junior officer, refused to submit to a court of inquiry, even after Ismail promised him a board with equal numbers of American, European and native officers.[94]

Egyptian civility also bothered the Americans, who argued that enlisted men were too familiar with junior officers. Many argued that when Egyptian soldiers exchanged effusive greetings, hugs, shared a pipe, or a cup of coffee,

they eroded military discipline. Actions like these were what Lucie Duff-Gordon claimed 'makes Arab society unintelligible and impossible to most Europeans'.[95] The vast majority of Ismail's Neo-Mamluks were unable to accommodate themselves to local custom. This impacted on their performance, and degraded their value. Colonel Charles Graves, who got along better than most of his compatriots, summed up the problem. 'The longer you know them,' he said of Egyptians, 'the less you understand them.'[96]

It was also difficult to accommodate western mercenaries to the realities of daily life, even in cosmopolitan Alexandria, or Cairo. Both cities were expensive, if one wanted to maintain a European-style home, or consume familiar foods. Several Americans, despite advice to the contrary, took their families along, exacerbating the problem. In the latter 1870s, when government payrolls were several months in arrears, the combination of no pay and expensive rents became a worrisome blow to morale.[97]

The harsh conditions of service in the field enhanced such feelings. A travel guide of the era warned that:

> Traveling in the East – if not confined to places on the coast – requires a strong constitution, endurance in combating with difficulties and privations, and a mind which for a time, can abstract itself from the enjoyments and comforts of civilized life.[98]

Some mercenaries could not 'abstract' themselves from the negative aspects of duty on the Red Sea Coast or the Sudan. Service in those locales quickly instructed the Americans on why native officers considered them equivalent to time in prison. Heat is a continual theme in their letter and diaries, also vermin. Eugene Fechet, describing an expedition through the Sudan, spent some time describing 'crawlingly unpleasant things'. As he put it: 'we were infested with flies, gnats, scorpions, and centipedes. I should say that Egypt's chief product is flies; how they swarm.'[99] Combining Egypt's mediocre supply services with tremendous heat, vermin, and tropical disease, caused many to lament the day they joined Ismail's army.[100]

Such feelings were mutual. By 1875, the Khedive seemed interested in finding a new source of mercenaries. General Fadeieff's report urged Egypt to obtain a 'battle-tested commander', and, as a source, suggested Germany. Ismail, who had already ordered the translation of Prussian infantry regulations, was interested. Using his third son, Hassan, then serving as an officer-trainee with the new German army, the Khedive discreetly inquired as to the possibility of hiring a general, and some field-grade officers who were infantry and artillery specialists. In a letter to the Prince, Ismail explained that he had just requested Stone to prepare a list of all Americans who had commanded armies of over 100,000 men. Although some looked promising, the Khedive told Hassan, that he preferred a German 'as they command regulars while the Americans only commanded militia troops'.[101]

Despite inquiries, nothing came of this, maybe because Egypt's tottering economy, along with disastrous defeats in Abyssinia, scared away potential Teutonic adventurers.[102]

It is also possible that Ismail did not want a functional *État Major*, but preferred to balance off factions in his military. Many of his Americans claimed they had little in the way of genuine work, and complained of being ornaments for the court. Ismail's thoughts are not available, but as he continued to hire mercenaries even when desperately short of cash, there must be more to the role of these men. As will be seen in the next chapters, Egypt's divisive officer corps was woefully unprepared for large-scale offensive actions, but neither did it ever threaten the Khedive. Ismail was the final arbiter between racial, linguistic, or religious differences, and maybe he liked it that way?[103]

Whatever the case, all of these problems, from *nafar* to *sirdar*, were millstones about the neck of the Egyptian army. In times of peace, or as a gendarmerie in small skirmishes with disorganized Sudanese warriors, it could function adequately. A major war, however, against a large army with skilful leaders, was an invitation to disastrous defeat.

7

WEAPONS PROCUREMENT POLICIES AND THE EGYPTIAN ECONOMY

> A sword and a strong arm are no longer sufficient for victory … only the most modern rifles will do.
>
> (Khedive Ismail)

Khedive Ismail launched a dynamic military programme early in his reign. It envisioned a large military armed with modern weapons. Like Muhammad Ali, he put forth an integrated strategy of industrial, military, and imperial expansion. Unlike his grandfather, or even Said, however, Ismail failed to create an arms industry. To use the model developed by Keith Krause, during Ismail's reign, Egypt fell below the bottom tier for the diffusion of military technology. Despite an attempt in the 1870s, the Khedive was unable to concentrate skilled workers, or provide sufficient capital. As a result, modern weapons were only available via import, and in exchange for hard cash.[1]

Funding seemed an easy proposition in the 1860s. Agriculture produced lucrative profits during America's 'War Between the States'. Egyptian cotton fields, in the words of the American mercenary officer Samuel Lockett, 'produced a harvest of gold richer and vaster than ever came from Ophir or California'.[2] Without American competition, demand caused the price of Egyptian cotton to increase by 1,200 per cent. While many profited, Ismail's ruthless tax-collectors assured the government a major share from this windfall.[3]

Cotton remains a major cash crop to this day, but its post-1864 price plummeted with the end of the American Civil War. Ismail, living in the shadow of Muhammad Ali, had big plans requiring large sums of cash. To make up for short-falls, he plunged the nation into debt.

Said's financial adventures saddled the nation with a significant, but still manageable, debt of about four million Egyptian pounds. Ismail's ventures quickly converted this sum to small change. Numerous loans negotiated with European banking firms, along with the sale of highly speculative government bonds, all with serious discounts and excessive interest rates, were hallmarks of Ismail's reign. An eyewitness, Edward Dicey, noted that

Ismail was 'indifferent to such, so long as the advance was made'.[4] By 1876, Egypt faced a staggering debt burden of £68,000,000, and a collection of loan sharks who could call on London, Paris, or Berlin for help.[5]

Another problem was Ismail himself, who, in the words of Alexander Scholch, 'distributed tens of thousands of pounds on all sides as if he were giving autographs'.[6] Expensive presents, fabulous parties, and the Cairo Opera house, are just a few examples of 'Ismail the Spender'.[7] These prodigal outlays attracted more parasites, like those who first attached themselves to Egypt during Said's regime. This deluge of European and Levantine adventurers, all enjoying considerable support from consular officials, looted millions via the sale of shoddy goods, lawsuits, and outright fraud. As Stone Pasha noted, 'many Shylocks were made rich by the Khedive's generosity, but few if any were Egyptian.'[8]

Also, despite his earlier career as a shrewd agro-businessman, Ismail made many poor financial decisions. His rapacious needs for quick cash, which resulted in higher taxes, drove many *fellahin* to sell their land. As buyers tended to be Turks or foreigners, groups exempt from taxation, the result was a shrinking tax base, and shortfalls in government revenue. Then there was his famous sale of Egypt's share in the Suez Canal, which netted less than a fifth of the nation's original investment.[9]

Even his new title, Khedive, cost a small fortune. This succession via primogeniture, Red Sea real estate, and a greater degree of military autonomy, cost bribes, and a significant increase in Egypt's annual tribute to the Sultan. The five *Firmins* granting these rights added an extra £E720,000 per year to the Sultan.[10]

Loans continued, but only with massive discounts and fees, which sometimes consumed up to 40 per cent of the gross. By the mid-1870s, Ismail faced an economic crisis. His solutions – higher taxes, salary arrears, defaulted contracts, and a brief flirtation with converting Alexandria into a Monaco-like gambling concession – were insufficient. As a result, the European powers stepped in, and forced the Khedive to accept outside control via *La Caisse de la dette publique*. Created in November 1876, it marked the beginning of the end for an independent Egypt.[11]

All of these represented a slow cancer, one not noticed in the heady 1860s. The cotton boom, bond sales, and loans provided a steady cash flow. This in turn allowed increased spending, much of which went into public works, and imported military technology. Small arms are a good example of the latter, mostly obtained from America.

Several factors explain why. First, the US Civil War marked a decisive transformation in the economic and industrial history of firearms. Heavy demands for both quality and quantity spurred the development of factories in both the North and South. These needs ended in 1865, leaving armaments companies with superior products, the capability of mass production, significant capital investment – and vastly diminished sales. Survival called for the

capture of new markets overseas. One company superbly positioned to succeed was E. Remington & Sons of Ilion, New York. Samuel Remington, President and chief company salesman, clearly recognized the post-1865 challenge facing US weapons makers. His leadership, plus innovative products, allowed the company to dominate a significant percentage of the international arms market.[12]

What was he selling? The rolling breech block system designed by Joseph Rider and Leonard Geiger which became the mainstay of Remington sales well into the 1880s. Indeed, author George Layman claims that the design 'saved the Remington Company from bankruptcy'.[13] Immensely strong, accurate, easy to operate and maintain, Remington's rolling block weapons were the most logical choice for the unsophisticated soldiery often found in conscript armies. No mere sales pitch, Remington's claims were backed up by prestigious authority. General George Armstrong Custer wrote to the company to praise the rolling block's high degree of accuracy. General William T. Sherman thought highly of it, while US Government field testing graded this rifle as an 'excellent infantry weapon'.[14]

For a variety of reasons, foreign competition was nil. First, European gun-makers could match neither the output, nor the efficiency of Remington. Second, most available breech-loading systems were inferior in design. It should also be noted that the best of these weapons were entering military service for the first time, and as such, only small numbers were available for the export market. Finally, at the local level, Egyptian officials were less than pleased with the quality, and cost factors, from their past dealings with French and British companies.[15]

Ismail realized the need to replace his army's rifled muskets. New breech-loading weapons, with their metallic cartridges, promised higher, more accurate, and safer levels of firepower. Conversion of the muzzle-loading Minié into a breech-loader presented one solution. England's Snider system was suggested, and although some 'Snider-Miniés' resulted, the programme was soon abandoned as a needless half-measure. The remaining unconverted muskets were issued to irregular forces, or kept as reserve weapons in Cairo's Citadel.[16]

A different course began in 1866, when Egyptian troops campaigned against Greek rebels on the island of Crete. Their commander, Shahine Pasha, made the acquaintance of an American diplomat, William Stillman. After a discussion of the US industrial capabilities, the general requested, and received, a collection of breech-loading small arms. While these were passed on to Cairo, E. Remington & Sons won a silver medal at the Paris International Exposition of 1867. As this was the highest award for firearms, rolling blocks now had an international reputation. It was here that dreams of an African empire meshed with those of lucrative contracts.[17]

Travelling to the Exposition, Shahine, now Minister of War, headed a party of fourteen experts from every branch of the armed forces. Their job

was to investigate weapons that might be useful to Egypt. As a new infantry rifle was top on the list, an important sub-group formed about Claude Minié Bey, Hassan Aflatun Bey, an ordnance expert, Muhammad Pasha Ratib, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, and Prince Hassan, the Khedive's third son. Working with the *Commission permanente du tir des armes portatives*, the Egyptians tested Martini, Remington, and Henry rifles, using their own Minié as a base for comparison. Graded for speed and accuracy out to 1,000 metres, their unanimous choice was the rolling block rifle – 'A good practical military weapon'.[18] Next, Ismail invited Samuel Remington to visit Cairo for a last round of testing.[19]

These trials took place in 1869 at the Toura Artillery School, where Remington displayed his flair both as a marksman and a salesman. Telling Ismail that US troops were equipped with rolling blocks helped clinch the deal, even if it was far from the truth. The end result was a 30 June 1869 contract signed in London. It called on Remington to produce 60,000 rifles chambered for what soon came to be called '.43 calibre Egyptian'. Production in Ilion was supervised by a team of US Army inspectors led by Minié Bey.[20]

As a bonus to an already lucrative agreement, Samuel Remington obtained a choice plot of Cairo real estate – a personal gift from Ismail. Here he built a mansion which became his regional sales headquarters. The Khedive wanted Remington & Sons to become his agent for the purchase of more than just rifles. Artillery, machine guns, munitions and armament factories all featured in his plans. As future deals loomed on a bright horizon, Remington's home became part of the winter social scene for Egypt's American mercenaries.[21]

Some of these men viewed arms sales as a chance to supplement their income. Egypt, in the words of Consul General George Butler, 'was a fine field for American arms sales'.[22] Butler and other diplomats pushed for increased trade between the two nations. When one considers that Egypt's imports for 1872 were $29.5 million, and that the US share was only $358,000, Remington's contract was not only considerable, but viewed as a wedge to open the door for additional sales.[23]

Generals Thaddeus Mott and Charles P. Stone, Ismail's senior foreign mercenaries, now joined Remington and Butler in lobbying for the purchase of American weapons. Mott pushed for a contract with the Winchester Repeating Arms Company, and was supported by Butler, whose uncle, Congressman Benjamin Butler, was to sell the ammunition for these weapons via his U.S. Cartridge Company. Stone backed Remington, arguing that Egyptian soldiers needed reliable firearms; in his opinion, the novel Winchester design, and its smaller ammunition, did not meet the criteria.[24] Ismail sided with Stone, and thus Remington became Egypt's major supplier of military goods for the next decade.[25]

Sales of Rodman artillery, Gatling machine guns, a cartridge factory and more small arms followed. As can be imagined, such rapid success caused

suspicion and jealousy among the competition. Austrian, French, and British authorities were piqued at the influx of American advisors into the Egyptian armed forces, and by the unprecedented weapons sales. The Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871) temporarily ended some of this attention, and also affected the Remington–Egypt connection.[26]

Ismail wanted to order an additional 100,000 rifles, but was told by Butler that 'with France in possession of the market, such was now impossible'.[27] French ordnance needs were desperate, absorbing Remington's entire manufacturing capability. Ismail, always the consummate politician, saw this as a chance to gain influence with Paris. To do so, he delayed his own order, and agreed to 'default' on the remaining weapons already owed him, allowing France to purchase the lot.[28]

This policy also benefited Egypt in her relations with the Ottoman Empire. In the late 1860s, questions of status led to significant tensions between the Khedive and his nominal overlord, the Sultan. Ismail's hire of foreign mercenaries, and the purchase of improved armament, were viewed with great displeasure by Constantinople. Because of this, Egyptian officials made every effort to disguise their dealings with Remington.[29]

An official policy of disinformation started at the top, where Ismail ordered Nubar to 'leak' several different stories about Egypt's purchase of modern rifles. By April 1870, confused diplomats reported that Russia was providing the weapons! Next, the Khedive moved in, telling England's Consul General Stanton that the contract was cancelled, and there were no new orders for the future.[30]

At lower levels, information was withheld, account books closed, and every effort made to disguise the shipment of Remington firearms to Egypt. Liverpool was the transport nexus, the Americans being required to send their weapons to this port, and then turn them over to Egyptian steamers. During these transactions, British observers noted Ismail's agents accepting large numbers of crates marked 'Hardware', or 'To Aden'.[31]

While the English were not fooled, less adroit Turkish observers failed to report these shipments, so Ismail's charade continued into the winter of 1870. Then, he was almost undone by a blackmail scheme that involved stolen telegrams, in cipher, from him to Aflatun Bey. The Khedive lost these through the desertion of an aide during negotiations with the Sultan. Unable to crack the code in Turkey, it was sent to London, where a certain R. Hassoun broke the cipher, and determined that these detailed the purchase of weapons in America and Great Britain. Decoding, however, took so long, that Ismail was able to avoid payment of blackmail, as the crisis with his Ottoman suzerain was over.[32]

While deliveries to Egypt resumed after 1871, it was not until 1875 that the majority of Egyptian soldiers obtained rolling blocks. Some retained their Minié rifles while a select few on the frontier were issued with Snider-Minié rifles and carbines. The latter proved invaluable during Sir Samuel

Baker's campaign to conquer the southern Sudan. Another of Ismail's many mercenaries, Baker credited victory at Masindi (8 June 1872) to his men's use of breech loaders. Indeed, it seemed 'nothing could withstand Baker's impetuous daring backed by his Snider rifles'.[33]

News of such triumphs only spurred the desire of most Egyptian commanders to obtain modern firearms. The years 1873 to 1875 were full of official requests for the new rifles. A Sudanese administrator, Emin Bey, noted Remington rifles provided such a significant firepower advantage, that in many cases, small bodies of troops could travel through the Sudan's most dangerous regions with tremendous confidence.[34]

Diplomat James McCoan, writing in 1877, estimated a total of 200,000 rolling block weapons were stored in Egyptian arsenals. Adding another 20,000 for first-line active duty troops, and considering attrition, one might guess that Remington sent slightly under 250,000 rifles and carbines to Egypt in the period 1869 to 1880.[35]

Remington was also involved in helping Ismail recreate his grandfather's military industries. Trained technicians from Minié's factory were still around, and, in 1865, the Egyptian government purchased ex-Confederate small-arms machinery left over in England. Four years later, the acquisition of rolling block rifles removed the need for such efforts.[36]

Producing the new weapons required a high level of workmanship and a completely different set of machines. Also, tools were needed to make and reload the brass cartridges used by this breech-loader. Remington offered milling machines for the construction of its rolling blocks and ammunition factories. The new workshops would provide spare parts, repairs, and most important, Egyptian-made ammunition.[37]

This was a significant improvement. Previously, locally made gunpowder was, in the words of *Murray's Handbook*, 'scarce, bad and dear'. In addition, Minié's paper cartridges could get wet and misfire, or easily explode if placed close to a fire. Imported ammunition, from England and Germany, shared these handicaps, and was expensive. Remington's cartridge machinery reduced these problems, as the powder was improved and the cases were metallic.[38]

Cartridge factories were built in Alexandria, Cairo, Suez and Khartoum. The capital had the largest and most efficient of these plants. During the 1882 British invasion, it employed 2,000 people, on 24-hour shifts, and produced up to 60,000 rounds per day. Remington officials also helped in the establishment of a gunpowder factory near Toura, which at peak production could deliver 1,600 pounds per day. Work in these plants could be dangerous, as witnessed by a gun-cotton explosion of 1870 that killed over 200 people in Alexandria. Also, just like earlier efforts, the finished product was not always of the highest quality. Still, Ismail was very proud of these ventures, so much so, that a locally designed Remington bullet mould was part of the Egyptian exhibit at the Vienna International Exposition in 1873.[39]

Uniforms and individual gear were also of local manufacture, with the old tarboosh factory pumping out 50,000 caps per year. Artillery was another matter. Cairo's Citadel produced a 4-pounder mountain howitzer, complete with carriage and caisson. An excellent design, it saw service throughout the Egyptian empire. While a light-weight gun capable of lobbing shrapnel up hillsides, or into a fortified village, was perfect for most colonial campaigns, neither the 4-pounder, nor larger La Hitte conversions, were adequate for counter-battery work. For this, modern steel guns presented the only possible answer. Such sophisticated weaponry, however, was beyond local capabilities, so larger weapons were imported.[40]

The main sources of supply were England and Germany. Consul Butler helped sell a few American-made Rodman guns, which were placed alongside the 200 British Armstrongs guarding Egypt's coastline.[41] Ismail saw the Rodmans as another chance to distance himself from European suppliers, but as US makers could not compete on price, Germany ended up with a lion's share of the market. This came after an 1873 inspection of major European designs by Søren Arendrup, a former artillery officer, and Ismail's only Danish mercenary. Krupp guns, mainly in 6, 7.5 cm and 8.7 cm, soon became the most numerous artillery found in Egyptian service.[42] Almost 500 were available in 1882, of these, 120 had field carriages; while the remaining tubes guarded coastal forts. England's Armstrong works provided larger coastal defence artillery, mainly 8- and 9-inch models.[43]

American firms, however, notably Colt's Fire Arms Company of Hartford, Connecticut, dominated the field in regards the sale of machine-guns. Shahine Pasha lobbied for the purchase of this novel weapon after witnessing Gatling gun trials at Shoeburyness, England, in 1866. He convinced Ismail to order 120 of Colt's M.1865 six-barrel Gatling battery guns. The most effective of early rapid-fire weapons, Gatling guns were employed on both land and sea forces. They were considered especially effective in 'savage warfare', where dense bodies of local warriors provided targets that could maximize the gun's effectiveness.[44] In 1872, a few 'Camel Gatling guns' joined the Egyptian army. These were smaller, more easily transportable models that substituted a tripod for the M.1865's wheeled carriage.[45]

While artillery production was beyond Ismail's capabilities, the manufacture of native-made firearms was possible. Egyptian Minié rifles were proof that local talent had the technical skills needed for such a venture. A second contract with Remington & Sons called for the establishment of a factory to produce completed rolling block weapons. The cost, £E33,000 plus shipping, became a problem when the final third went past due in January 1877. This, plus £E8,000 due for other material, presented an insoluble problem. Remington refused to ship any machinery. Prince Hassan, the Minister of War, and his brother, Prince Hussein, the Minister of Finance, were 'greatly agitated'. They managed to raise £E10,000, but as this did not meet all debts, the plant was never established.[46]

Many individuals were 'greatly agitated' because of the Egyptian financial problems. James Shaw, a British contractor, complained that all he received in response to debts owed his firm was 'the constant promise of *Bookrah! Bookrah!*'.[47] Samuel Remington wrote a personal letter to Ismail stating that Egypt's failure to pay her debts 'was creating a very present and dangerous situation for my company'.[48]

The Khedive received files full of such correspondence in the mid-1870s. His debts, piled on top of disastrous defeats in a war with Abyssinia, caused Egyptian stocks and bonds to plummet in value. Loans dried up, and Ismail began to default on contracted sales. In 1875, these affected military procurement, when Ismail ordered the payment of a £E35,000 penalty fee, in lieu of accepting a new shipment of Remington rifles. Weapons piled up in the customs' houses of Liverpool and Alexandria. By 1877, Remington refused to deliver 46,000 rifles prepared for Egypt, and claimed her debt now amounted to one million dollars.[49]

Military budgets next took a hit, being reduced by almost 20 per cent in 1876. Although exact figures are not always reliable for the period 1877–1882, cash was short in all departments, and often made up by late, or non-payment, of salaries and other commitments. Foreigners turned to their consuls for help. Without such, creditors could exchange a quit claim for about 26 per cent of its full value.[50]

Remington requested aid from Secretary of State Hamilton Fish, who in turn ordered US Consul General Elbert Farman to use 'his unofficial good offices' to obtain redress.[51] Samuel Remington then sailed to Egypt, hoping his presence would hasten the process. Tired, hot and distraught, he only exacerbated the situation, going as far as to draw a sword in the office of Hasan Pasha Aflatun. At this point, Stone suggested Remington return home, 'or there might be serious results'.[52]

Despite the fact that bond holders obtained priority treatment, Farman convinced Ismail to pay off some of his debts to Remington. The diplomat noted that more was done for this one case 'than for all the other Americans in Egypt combined'.[53] His actions produced results. Remington was paid £E71,000 by 1877, and a final settlement of £E65,000 in 1880.[54]

Remington, having sold the Egyptians over three million dollars worth of war material, never returned to the valley of the Nile. As for Ismail's military-industrial complex, it lasted only a little longer than its creator. Deposed in 1879, the Khedive went into exile. His cartridge factories, Remington rifles, and Krupp guns began to disappear after the British conquest of Egypt in 1882.[55]

Ismail's military-industrial system disappeared, not from a lack of need, like the weapons factories of Muhammad Ali after 1840, but rather one of means. He had begun his venture when weapons technology entered a period of change.[56] Between 1860 and 1890, this transition pushed the battlefield from one familiar to Napoleon, to one recognizable by the

veteran of World War II. Unfortunately for Egypt, the rapid pace required significant investments in tools and trained personnel. In addition, the 1870s produced a challenge greater than that faced by Ismail's grandfather. Fifty years earlier, it was possible for a local craftsman to reproduce the Brown Bess musket, or 9-pounder cannon. The same was not true for Ismail's time. By then, copying breech-loading rifles, Gatling guns, or ironclad warships required skills that included engineering, science and literacy. Such highly trained artisans were not available in the quantities needed for Ismail's many enterprises. While the basic idea of Egyptian-made rifles represented a sound investment for national defence, it, like many of the Khedive's projects, faced haphazard implementation and under-capitalization. Never able to command the financial scene like Muhammad Ali, Ismail's efforts floundered and became little more than a footnote in the history of the arms trade.[57]

8

THE KHEDIVE AND THE SULTAN

> The Sultan sits like the Old Man of the Sea on the shoulders of the Egyptian Sinbad.
>
> (Edwin de Leon)

Nineteenth-century Egypt maintained an ambiguous relationship with the Ottoman Empire. From 1840, it was an autonomous province dominated by the Muhammad Ali dynasty. Between 1866 and 1873, the picture blurred further as Ismail extended Egypt's independence via a series of negotiations with Sultan Abdul Aziz. Resulting *Firmans* promoted him to Khedive, or 'Lord', increased the size of the Egyptian army, changed the rules of succession, provided greater financial power, and transferred territory to Egyptian administration.[1]

At first glance the relationship between Cairo and Constantinople seems one-sided. Often this was true, thanks to adroit diplomacy, bribes, and a network of confidential agents who sent valuable intelligence back to Ismail. Yet Ottoman concessions came with a price tag that included significant increases for Egypt's annual tribute payment, and re-affirmation that Egyptian troops would fight the Sultan's enemies. Between 1863 and 1878, the Porte employed Ismail's armed forces in Arabia, Crete, and the Balkans. Commitments ranged from battalion-sized expeditions to a corps of 30,000 men. Ismail's devotion to these campaigns depended on how they served his primary goal of maximum autonomy. Sometimes he was loyal vassal, and other times a traitor, or at least the 'artful dodger'.[2]

The first deployment went to Arabia, in November 1863, where the Assir threatened Ottoman control of the Holy Cities. Egyptian troops could counter this uprising as they held Red Sea coastal towns, and forts situated along the Hajj route. Theoretically these garrisons were illegal, as the 1840 Treaty of London required Muhammad Ali to abandon his claims to Arabia and Syria. The need to protect Hajj pilgrims, however, combined with Ottoman indifference, allowed Egypt to maintain small commands ranging from 20 to 100 men per town.[3]

These troops provided insurance against raids by small Bedouin clans, whom Richard Burton dismissed as 'half peasants, half nomads, whose only

objects in life are to plunder, maim, and murder one another'.[4] Active policing by Egyptian garrisons, plus threats of reprisal, kept most brigandage within acceptable limits. The Assir were a different matter, having been tenacious opponents to previous Egyptian commands dating back to the 1820s. Ismail dispatched an infantry battalion, supported by a battery of mountain guns. Although these troops obtained double pay for a campaign in the Hijaz, little fighting took place. Instead, Ismail used the expedition to make contacts with Assir leaders, setting up the possibility of closer relations, which might allow Egypt to dominate the Northern Red Sea coast.[5]

Ismail was also involved with, or at least very aware of, dissident movements in Syria. Trouble-makers, like Joseph Karam, or the Irish filibuster 'Hassan Bey' (Colonel Eugene O'Reilly), maintained contacts with Egypt. Such operatives might stir up trouble to distract the Sultan's attention, or even create the possibility for a return of Egyptian influence.[6]

Crete also figured in Ottoman–Egyptian relations (Figure 8.1). With its Greek Christian majority, and their tradition of insurrection, the island simmered under any Muslim suzerain. Higher taxes, new internal import duties, and arrogant Turkish officials exacerbated tensions. These boiled over in May 1866, as Christian and Muslim communities began a series of massacres. Soon Muslims congregated in castles and towns, while Greeks filtered off to the mountains. By July, a rebel army had formed, and on 2 September it called for union with Greece.[7]

Conflict between Greeks and Turks had long and bitter traditions. Crete was no exception, which eyewitness J.E. Skinner described as 'war with no quarter given'.[8] Rebel forces numbered between 10,000 and 12,000. They were organized around local leaders, who directed bands of full-time fighters, augmented by village militias. Feeding large groups was difficult, and Cretan rebels seldom fielded units of more than 2,000.[9]

Other logistical problems included a severe lack of horses, which limited mounted units to a single troop of cavalry. Worse, rebel infantry were poorly armed. Skinner, who fought with them, described the typical firearm as 'antiquated flintlocks of Turkish makes, long-barrelled brass-bound pieces, handed down as heirlooms from the revolutionary wars'.[10] A few had muzzle-loading Enfields, or modern hunting rifles, and all favoured Turkish flintlock pistols, which Skinner warned were 'cumbersome and more dangerous to friend than foe'![11]

Skinner and other Philhellenes brought modern weapons. Numbering close to 500, they included English, French, Hungarians, Italians, Serbs, and mainland Greeks. Their leader, Colonel Panos Koronaios, was sent by the Greek government, along with several staff officers, in the hope of creating a force of regular troops. This never happened. Internal divisions, communication problems, and lack of a secure base, prevented significant training. Cretan rebels simply fought in swarms, hiding out in the mountains, and trying to hit Ottoman units when dispersed, or in marching columns.[12]

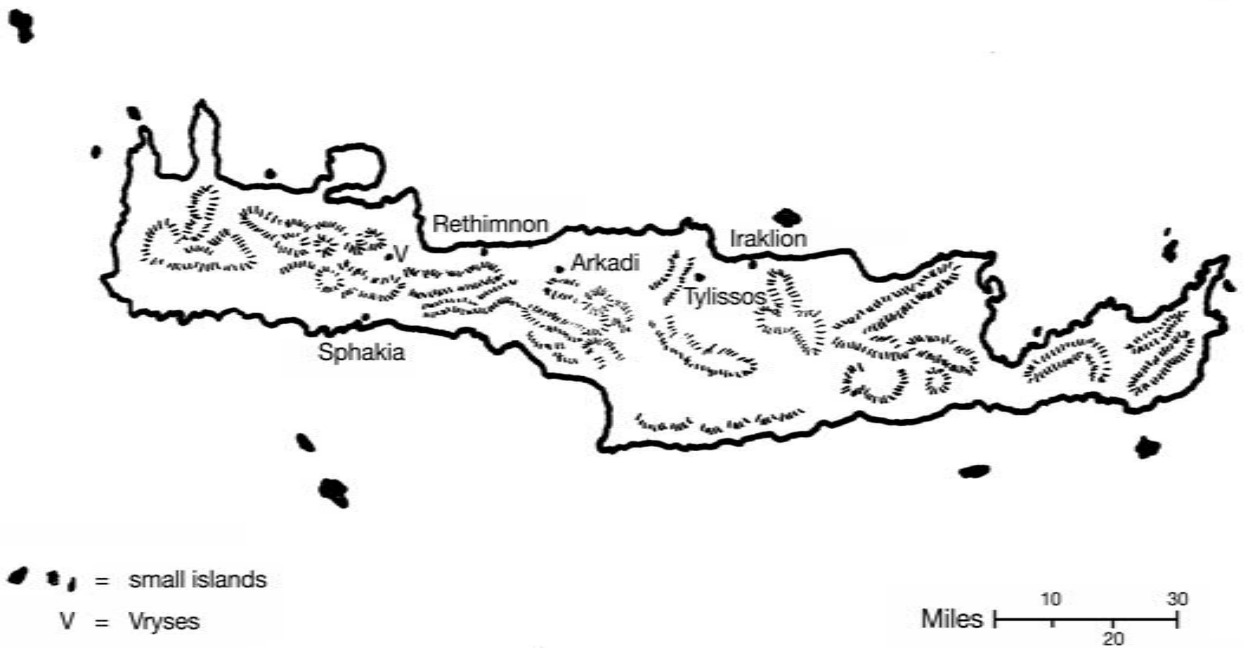

Figure 8.1 Crete in 1866
Source: As per Skinner

Crete's landscape favoured such tactics. Three mountain ranges form a spine that splits the island into distinct regions. Crossing was not easy. Stillman, an American diplomat, described most roads as 'mere bridle paths scratched in the slopes of a huge landslide'.[13] Some were so rough, cavalry and artillery could not enter. Ravines were everywhere, while stony ground, rocks, and bramble covered most hills. Upland plateaus featured space to manoeuvre, but in many cases, geography limited access, and prudent commanders took control of high ground before moving into these areas.[14]

Human geography mainly centred around small villages, often perched high in the hills, and since most had springs, these were good defensive positions. Coastal towns usually numbered less than 10,000, and all remained under Ottoman control. Iraklion, the largest of these, featured significant defences which were probably sufficient to hold off the entire insurrectionary army.[15]

Based in such locations, Ottoman troops controlled the coast. Distributed in small garrisons about the island, they included regular infantry and artillery, plus foot and mounted units of *Bashi Bazouks*. These were supplemented by local volunteers, who knew the countryside, wore the same clothes, and spoke Greek. Although very valuable as scouts, their atrocities created more rebels, and bad press in Europe. In total, the Porte maintained 20,000 regulars, and 5,000 irregulars. As these were hardly enough for an offensive, the Sultan ordered Egypt to provide an expeditionary force.[16]

In 1867, Egypt deployed seven infantry and one artillery battalions, nearly 18,000 men, while eleven steamers carried supplies and supported the blockade. Coming only four years after the nadir of Said's military mismanagement, it was difficult to raise such a force. Ismail had to recall Crimean War veterans to fill some of these units.[17]

Shahine Pasha Genj, the Minister of War, arrived as their commander. His inclusion marked the importance of this expedition. Ismail understood Egypt would play a significant role in the fighting, and this would bring attention from the European media. Leaving no doubt that his army was to court victory, Ismail cautioned his commander to 'be as humane and liberal as possible … as the times command prudence'.[18] Shahine was not to follow in the footsteps of Ismail's father, and become the 'Scourge of Crete'.[19]

Egyptian troops served with three different Ottoman commanders: Mustafa Pasha Naili, Umar Pasha, and the Grand Vizier, Ali Pasha. Fighting began in the summer of 1866, and continued into the winter of 1869. It combined ambush, siege warfare, and a few set piece battles, but by 1867, was mainly an anti-partisan campaign, with Ottoman patrols chasing rebel bands towards fortified kill-zones.[20]

At first, the rebels seemed poised for victory. Their initial success freed much of central and western Crete from Turkish control, thus creating Muslim refugees, who needed escort to safe havens. Serious fighting

restarted in September 1866, when a series of Ottoman attacks failed to capture Sphakia, the rebel heartland.

Next, the Egyptians suffered defeat at Vryses. Located in the Apokorona district, Vryses guarded roads leading to Sphakia. Strategically important to both sides, it was a linchpin for north–south travel. As 4,000 Egyptians under Ismail Pasha pushed into Vryses, Ottoman forces fell behind, opening a gap between them. Next, counter-attacks by rebel troops cut off the Egyptian supply lines, and then captured the only local water source. Between 2 and 5 September, Ismail directed battalion-level assaults against rebels dug into the hillsides. Out of water, and with many of his troops ill, Ismail now turned to negotiations. In exchange for abandoning Vryses, he was allowed to march out under arms. Vryses had two major impacts on Egyptian operations. First, Shahine never again relied on Ottoman troops to guard his lines of communication, and detached two battalions for such ventures. Second, it convinced Cairo that significant reinforcements were needed to win this war.[21]

A month later, Shahine's force, reinforced by 6,000 men, helped restore the initiative by launching an offensive on Sphakia. On 24 October, *Bashi Bazouks* turned both enemy flanks, allowing an Egyptian bayonet assault which smashed a contingent of foreign volunteers at Vafe. Several hundred surrendered, causing a significant blow to Cretan morale.[22]

After Vafe, Colonel Koronaios established a new strong point at the Arkadi Monastery. An ancient, but sturdy collection of stone buildings, it covered an acre of courtyard, complete with drinking wells. Koronaios stocked Arkadi with food and munitions, hoping this could serve as a base for operations against Rethimnon or Iraklion. Arkadi's population included 300 fighters and 643 civilians.[23]

Koronaios left Arkadi in late October, leaving Captain George Demakopulos in command. At this point, vastly superior Ottoman forces attacked the monastery. First directed by Ismail, of Vryses fame, and then the island's overall commander, Mustapha Pasha, this was a mixed force of Turkish and Egyptian regulars, plus artillery, *Bashi Bazouks*, and local volunteers. Mindful of his previous defeat, Ismail detached seven companies, supported by irregulars, to guard the lines of communication. Next, siege lines were dug, and a furious bombardment started on 20 November. For the next two days, Ottoman probes were tossed back by a stalwart defence. On 22 November, either due to artillery fire, or by purpose, the powder magazine exploded. Killing all but 33 of the defenders, the battle ended with Egypt's Seventh Infantry Regiment planting its standard over the ruins. Arkadi cost the Turks 200 casualties, while Egyptian losses were under 40. Coming on the heels of Vafe, it was yet another blow to rebel morale.[24]

Winter 1866–1867 slowed operations, and increased the sick list for all combatants. This was especially true for the Egyptians, who were not prepared for cold weather. Stillman claims they 'perished in the hundreds'.[25]

Inadequate shelter and shoddy winter uniforms partially explain this problem, although Turkish troops had similar complaints but fewer losses. The issue never obtained a solution, and cold weather losses would again dog Ismail's army during the 1870s, in the Abyssinian highlands and the Balkans.

Spring saw the arrival of yet another commander-in-chief, this time the Ottoman Grand Vizier, Ali Pasha. After an initial setback at Phokies, he renewed the offensive against Sphakia. An advanced guard of Egyptians bounced off strong Cretan positions at Stylos, in the process, losing heavy casualties that included Ismail. Flanking attacks drove the rebels away, only to meet them again at Tylissos on 19 April. Here Turkish troops retreated into the plain, covered by an Egyptian counter-attack. The rest of April and May saw numerous Ottoman columns sweeping the island in the hopes of catching rebel bands.[26]

Although Cretan partisans could still deliver stings, their energies faded in summer 1867. Khedive Ismail cited this to excuse his unilateral withdrawal from the conflict. He also complained that the Napier Expedition, sent by England to chastise Emperor Tewodros, could stir up trouble along the Sudan frontier. He needed these men to 'protect' the borderlands.[27]

Fighting in Crete cost 1,333 Egyptian casualties, while the treasury expended £E886,062. Ismail complained bitterly about the financial outlay, even though this, like the cost of the Hijaz Expedition, was deducted from his annual tribute to the Porte. On 3 October, the last Egyptian troops sailed home. Here one sees more evidence of the logistical problems that hurt military effectiveness. An American diplomat described the returning soldiers as men who 'had some hard service and scant fare'.[28]

Did Ismail pull out because the war was nearly over? On the surface, it would seem so. The Grand Vizier declared a general amnesty in October, and later agreed to modify local government by giving more political power to Christians. This allowed the rebellion to peter out during the winter of 1867–1868.[29]

Yet one is suspicious that Egypt's significant contribution was not simply an act of loyalty. Indeed, it is easy to imagine this force as a multi-purpose diplomatic tool. While Ismail negotiated to extend his autonomy, Shahine's reports made clear the Egyptians were invaluable to any offensive. Nor was that the only possibility. Throughout 1866–1867, Greek and Russian agents negotiated with Ismail over the status of Crete. Rumours suggested the island might be transferred to Egypt, and some of Shahine's actions suggest he tried to play a 'neutral' role in 1866. Henry Maciver, one of Ismail's American mercenaries, claimed rebel forces also talked with Shahine. Most likely, all these actions helped secure the 8 June 1867 *Firmin*. Now Ismail could increase the size of his army, separate the stronger Egyptian currency from its Ottoman counterpart, obtain permanent title to the Red Sea coast, and change the line of succession, from the traditional brother–brother, to father–eldest son.[30]

Baron Malortie claimed that Ali Pasha never forgave Ismail for the premature withdrawal from Crete. Tensions between Khedive and Grand Vizier continued into the late 1860s, as Ismail pushed for even greater autonomy. Indeed, the Khedive's purchase of modern weaponry, including iron-clad warships, along with the hire of foreign mercenaries, and construction of new coastal fortifications at Port Said, Ismailia, and Suez, led some observers to predict that Egypt was poised for a war of independence. Ali's dispatch of 10,000 reinforcements to the Yemen, ostensibly to deal with yet another local uprising, was viewed as a counter-move. Although Ismail blinked first in this war of gestures, he managed to keep everything, save for the iron-clads. When Ali died in 1871, Ottoman politics entered a period of internal discord, with fifteen different grand viziers jumping in and out of office until 1880. Add some adept bribery, and Ottoman–Egyptian relations were back in good form until the final crisis of 1879.[31]

Ismail next served the Porte in an affair involving the Suez Canal Company, and its imperious director, Ferdinand de Lesseps. When the latter decided to unilaterally increase usage fees, both Sultan and Khedive said no. De Lesseps then threatened to close down the canal. With Constantinople and Cairo in accord, plus support from England, Ismail directed a quick response. Commanded by Charles Stone, two frigates and three infantry battalions moved into the canal zone. This 23 April 1873 operation was bloodless, and resulted in the capitulation of de Lesseps two days later.[32]

Far larger, but much less successful, another struggle ended over 400 years of joint Egyptian–Turkish military operations. It started with an 1875 war between the Porte and a combination of Serbia plus Montenegro. With his confidential agent writing that Turkish troops 'feared the rebels like demons', Ismail sent a corvette and four batteries of mountain artillery.[33] Commanded by Muhammad Pasha Fahmy, Egyptian ground forces joined with the army of Sulyman Pasha, and shared in his victory at Alexinatz.[34]

Next Ottoman irregulars, described by an American observer as 'uncivilized vultures', smashed Christian uprisings with savage cruelty.[35] The resulting 'Bulgarian Horrors' produced revulsion throughout Europe, isolating the Porte from traditional allies, and allowing Russia to join the fighting in 1877. Unprepared for war with a great power, Constantinople demanded a maximum effort from Egypt – as many troops and supplies as possible.[36]

Ismail faced several difficult decisions. First, he was already waging war against Abyssinia, which will be covered in Chapters 12–15. Indeed, Greek emissaries encouraged Abyssinians, fellow Orthodox Christians, to launch new offensives and tie down Egyptian troops.[37]

Second, Egypt was nearly bankrupt. In 1876, European creditors forced the Khedive to create the *Caisse de la dette publique*. Dominated by British and French bankers, the *Caisse* consolidated Egypt's many loans. Its sole purpose was to repay these debts, a goal which soon absorbed half of all

government income. Only new taxes allowed Ismail to find the £E500,000 needed for a campaign in the Balkans. The money was there, but obtaining it crushed the *fellahin*, or, as one diplomat put it, 'destroying the bees that made the honey'.[38]

Even then, army salaries were months in arrears. Henry C. Derrick, an American mercenary, complained that from the military payroll office, 'the cry is still *mafeesh falouss* [no money].'[39] Here is part of another problem facing Egypt's Balkan contingent – poor morale. Foreign observers noted a marked lack of enthusiasm as enlisted ranks boarded steamers in Alexandria. Hassan, one of Ismail's sons, nominally led the Egyptian Corps, but his chief 'advisor', Yusuf Pasha Shuhdi, was the real commander. Just returned from Abyssinia, the young Prince also brought a pair of Austrian mercenaries as his aides-de-camp, a clear sign that the botched Gura Campaign still dogged their American rivals. In addition, his soldiers, 'with rusty old muskets or no arms at all', had yet to recover from the Abyssinian débâcle.[40]

Ever the schemer, Ismail used issues of money, morale, and Russia's navy as reasons to delay departure. The latter did represent a challenge, as unarmoured Egyptian steam frigates presented little threat to Russian ironclads. The outside possibility of bombardment, or assault by naval landing parties, also threatened the Suez Canal, which Ismail closed to all Tsarist traffic on 10 May. Simultaneously, he sent McKillop Pasha with four light surface craft to patrol off Port Said, and directed an increase in cavalry units to monitor landing zones. Finally, in late May, two Ottoman iron-clads rendezvoused with an Egyptian flotilla off Crete. The resulting convoy took a shipment of arms, forty assorted cannon, Gatling guns, and 7,000 men to Constantinople.[41]

Ismail suggested his troops could guard the Ottoman capital, or be sent to Yemen, thus relieving Turkish units for combat duty. Ottoman reaction was vehement, decrying this as a 'fiendish Egyptian plot', and ordering Hassan to Bulgaria, with directions to improve the defences of Varna.[42] On arrival, a sarcastic French correspondent described

> nice little soldiers with chocolate faces and uniforms of dark blue cloth; they were so pretty, so prim, so well dressed, that one began to hope it would not rain for fear they should melt away. One could have sworn that they had all come out of boxes of toys from the Black Forest.[43]

In early July, 12,000 Egyptian soldiers participated in a Turkish offensive designed to relieve the besieged garrison at Plevna. Hassan's force was hampered both by a lack of artillery horses, and, according to several observers, a strong desire to avoid battle.[44]

Ismail claimed his troops were deliberately kept from the front due to politics, and friction between Hassan and his Ottoman superior, Mehmet Ali

Pasha. English observer Edmund Ollier thought otherwise. He noted infantry poorly equipped for a cold Balkan winter, while the cavalry and artillery were 'exceedingly defective'. Ollier concluded that 'in these days of highly scientific warfare, Egypt's place on any European battle-field is never likely to be distinguished.'[45]

Picking up on this critique, Ottoman officials suggested Egyptian forces be disarmed – the men to be sent home, and their weapons to remain in Turkish arsenals. Ismail refused, complaining to foreign diplomats that his troops were 'boxed up in Varna like prisoners'.[46] With more pressing issues distracting Constantinople, the Turks backed down and Egyptian soldiers began returning home in April 1878. With the fighting ended, Egypt's total contribution to the Ottoman war effort had been 30,000 men. These included sailors, cavalry, infantry, artillery and engineer units, both regulars and guards, plus two ambulance companies from the newly formed Red Crescent Society – an Islamic version of the Red Cross.[47]

The largest Egyptian force dispatched out of Africa since the 1830s, what caused its lacklustre military performance in 1877? Watching these men return to Cairo, Derrick mockingly wrote:

> The conquering hero, Hassan Pasha, has returned from Turkey with the remnants of his gallant army, and he brought back safely all his staff covered with glory and decorations and medals, but without any defiling blood upon their spotless uniforms.[48]

Like most of the American contingent, Derrick suffered from a case of sour grapes dating back to previous rivalries among the mercenary community, and the failed Gura Campaign of 1876. Still he leads us towards an answer, for it was previous battles in Africa that had sapped the morale of the Egyptian Army, making it impossible to do well in the Balkans.

9

THE IMPERIAL ROAD

Egyptian expansion in the Sudan, 1869–1879

> There is a grand program made out for Egyptian progress. The Khedive believes he must do for Africa what the United States has done for America. He thinks it is a manifest destiny for him and his dynasty.
>
> (Samuel Lockett Bey)

Although Khedive and Sultan could have gone to war in 1869, once the Ottoman–Egyptian crisis had passed, Ismail had no significant enemies. So why did he support a sustained effort to expand Egypt's military potential from 1870 to 1875? Internal security and prestige only partially answer the question – imperial expansion completes it.[1]

As Lockett points out, Ismail saw Africa as the scene for empire.[2] The Khedive nursed dreams of an expanded realm that included Crete, Syria, Arabia, and the Horn of Africa. While most of his Levantine ventures ended in the 1860s, a strong desire to acquire African lands propelled Egyptian imperialism well into the 1870s. Indeed, the last independent military actions of Khedival Egypt, in 1883–1885, were aimed at defending these gains.

While the results of Ismail's efforts were failure and yet more financial burdens on his people, the plan for an Egyptian Horn, albeit grandiose, was not without merit. From a practical point of view, the final product would be compact. In addition, such lands would place Egypt in a strong geopolitical stance, and complete the long cherished desire for 'unity of the Nile'.

Ismail had clear views on the economic, political, and military changes caused by the Suez Canal. He realized the Red Sea would quickly alter, from a backwater to an international nexus, hence the strong desire to plant his flag on its African coast. That French, English, Italian, Ottoman, and Ethiopian interests coincided only increased the Khedive's speed.[3]

He was also encouraged by his principal foreign mercenaries, men who saw imperialism as a road to personal wealth and glory. Charles Bell, a contemporary observer of Ismail's Egypt, claimed such men could easily influence the Khedive, as 'his knowledge of both men and things was

superficial and rather the result of rapidly informed impressions than of study'.[4] Ismail neither studied, nor visited the Sudan, Somali Coast, or Abyssinia, yet he was drawn to the Horn of Africa by a variety of advisors.

Some, like Charles Pomeroy Stone, argued that empires create stability and benefit both conqueror and conquered. His views towards the peoples of the Sudan and Abyssinia were shaped by experiences on the American frontier. 'It is melancholy', he wrote, 'to behold the conquest of civilization by savages.'[5] Stone believed that whether Apache or Somali, less advanced peoples fell into a category of barbarian, and must be forced to end their primitive lifestyles for the common good. He also argued 'that the designs of England and other European powers, in Central Africa and Somalia, require immediate and effective action'.[6] This American Pasha argued that Egypt must conquer these regions, or the Europeans would do so themselves. He pushed for expansion in every way possible, defending each move with a host of explanations that always placed Egyptian motives in the most positive light.[7]

Charles 'Chinese' Gordon advanced similar arguments, especially in support of Ismail's anti-slavery policy. He specifically favoured Egyptian control of both Red Sea and Indian Ocean ports. Gordon saw these as valuable acquisitions that would hurt slavers and benefit the Sudanese economy. Other African explorers, like Samuel Baker and Henry Stanley, added their voices to the chorus promoting Egypt's ventures in the Sudan, Abyssinia, and modern-day Uganda.[8]

Werner Munzinger was another famous adventurer who joined the Egyptian army. He argued, 'The Sudan ought to be one large cotton field. It is the key to inner Africa.'[9] As the Red Sea coast, modern Eritrea, had useful ports, Munzinger advised Ismail to grab this area, despite knowledge that such action would probably start a conflict with Abyssinia. Like Gordon, he backed these plans with arguments that Egyptian control would undermine the slave trade. To Munzinger, the noble cause of Egyptian expansion justified '*mésures radicales*', even if these led to war.[10]

Men like Munzinger, Gordon, Baker, and Stone played important roles, not only as advisors, explorers, or military officers, but also as propagandists. All stressed Ismail's efforts to suppress the slave trade. As they were international celebrities, their presence in the Egyptian military assisted good relations with the West. The Khedive wanted European states to accept his nation as an equal partner, and a strong anti-slavery stance assisted this agenda. If Egyptian domination could spell an end to the trade in human beings, this was a powerful argument in the battle for Victorian public opinion.[11]

Indeed, having famous European spokesmen, plus an anti-slavery smokescreen, were vital for a minor power, like Egypt, whose 'secondary empire' might compete with the desires of greater states. By Ismail's time, European consuls were ever ready to intervene, and could thwart Egyptian goals. To

avoid such complications, subterfuge and secrecy became hallmarks of Egypt's foreign policy.[12]

Financial considerations also fuelled Ismail's drive for new land. Although the economic potential of Abyssinia, the Somali Coast, and the Sudan were greatly exaggerated, their resources and people could be exploited to alleviate part of Egypt's massive debts. By 1876, with ready sources of cash dried up, this became imperative. The Khedive faced a 'do or die' situation, and launched his second invasion of Abyssinia, not simply to avenge defeat in the first, but in addition, with hopes that victory might uncover additional revenues for his tottering economy.[13]

Here is where his plans fell apart. Egypt tried to accomplish too much, with too little. The military was ill-prepared to conquer, or administer new territories. In addition, Egyptian aggression unleashed forces beyond Ismail's control. The first of these is what historian Haggai Erlich describes as Abyssinia's 'Ahmad Gragn Syndrome'.[14]

Ahmad ibn Ibrahim ['Gragn'] led a Muslim invasion of Abyssinia in the 1500s. Although defeated, the devastation and near success of this venture created a lasting impression on Christian Abyssinians. In the future, defence against Islamic aggression took on the nature of a holy war, one that could unify the normally fractured Abyssinian polity. Ismail's army learned about the 'Ahmad Gragn Syndrome' in a most definite way during the Gura Campaign of 1876.[15]

The Khedive also underestimated the cost of policing an empire. His initial holdings were peaceful, and required only small garrisons. Indeed, Ismail boasted to an American diplomat that he controlled a larger territory, with far fewer troops, than the French in Algeria. The Khedive miscalculated, however, when he assumed that new holdings would provide easy pickings.[16]

He was misled by ambitious advisors. Stone, Baker, and Munzinger favoured expansion. All agreed with 'men on the spot', like Arakil Bey, the Governor of Massawa, who submitted numerous reports indicating that a conquest of Abyssinia would be easy. Indeed, Arakil stressed that without this addition, Egypt could never effectively administer the Eastern Sudan. Similar arguments pushed Egyptian forces into Dar Fur, and kept garrisons in worthless hell-holes like Equatoria or the Red Sea Coast.[17]

A series of military actions from 1873 to 1876 mark the apex of these ventures. Most were failures; Egypt could bite off large chunks of Africa, but she could not digest them. Law and order, the prerequisites for systematic exploitation, were not attainable. Instead, continual border raids, restive subjects, plus a poorly organized military government, degraded efforts at taxation or development.

Finally, the bad strategic decisions of the 1870s came home to roost a decade later. Disaffected army officers, smarting over mismanagement and defeat, began questioning the need for Ismail, or his heirs. Many of these

men joined the anti-dynastic Urabi Revolution (1881–1882). Even worse, the Khedive failed to realize that just as he saw Abyssinia and the Sudan as areas ripe for exploitation, attracting attention to the Horn produced similar views on the part of Europeans towards Egypt.

Of course none of these problems loomed on the horizon in 1866. That year, the Horn of Africa witnessed a major step towards Egyptian hegemony when Ismail negotiated for the Ottoman *Pashaliks* of Suakin and Massawa. In exchange for increasing Egypt's annual tribute by £E12,500, the Sultan issued a *Firmin* that transferred these territories to the Khedive.[18] Doing so placed Egyptian forces on the Red Sea coast, centred in what today is Eritrea. This marks the start of efforts to connect the Sudan to the Red Sea. In 1875, for £E15,000, similar arrangements transferred sections of modern-day Somalia. Both were costly purchases, and barely made sense if Egypt expected to generate a significant increase in taxable exports.[19]

This seemed only possible with control of the hinterland. Ismail shared a common belief that Abyssinia held vast quantities of exploitable raw materials, and that Egypt could re-direct trade patterns to benefit port towns on the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. Significant profits from the sale of ivory seemed to confirm this view, and helped direct Egyptian forces into the southern Sudan.[20]

Previous efforts to conquer that region had been sporadic and limited. Selim *Qapudan*, a naval officer, had reconnoitred the White Nile to Gondokoro in 1839–1841. During the 1850s, Said ordered the establishment of several small posts along the river. More significant, however, was the penetration by Khartoum-based merchants, both Arab and European, seeking ivory, gum, or slaves. All established base-camps in the form of a *zariba*, a thorn-bush enclosure, often backed by earthen walls. Garrisoned year round by a kind of 'depot company', these mini-forts allowed merchants to safely store their profits from trade with locals. These fell off, however, when the market for beads and trinkets was glutted by rapacious European and Arab traders. Cattle, a long-established trade currency, was another option, but expensive and hard to transport. Many merchants simply used their armed retainers to steal herds from one location, and then trade the loot for ivory in another. This strategy paid a dividend in the form of human captives, who were used to carry the ivory, and then sold as slaves or turned into soldiers. The latter, called *bazinqir*, quickly evolved into musket-armed company-sized units complete with standard bearers. By 1868, there were about 80 *zaraib* [plural form of *zariba*] in private hands, supporting 10,000–16,000 soldiers.[21]

This combination created a patchwork of fortified posts and trader armies that spread violence and distrust throughout the southern Sudan. Robert Collins, a specialist on the region, points out that 'to divide and rule the disunited people of the southern Sudan required neither imagination nor skill.'[22] Merchant forces regularly intervened in local disputes, and offered

incentives for large ethnic groups like the Azande or Dinka to prey on less powerful neighbours.

Egyptian officials became more active in the south during the late 1860s, when Kassala, Dongola, and Khartoum, the centres of Egypt's military power, began dispatching expeditions beyond the frontier. One of the largest ventures involved Sir Samuel Baker, famous African explorer, and now a mercenary general for Ismail. Given '*carte blanche*' to prepare his command, Baker established a miniature fleet of modern steamers, plus traditional *dahabiehs* and smaller craft. On board were 1,645 Egyptian and Sudanese infantry, 200 irregular cavalry, plus 6 rocket tubes, 14 mountain howitzers, and crews. His orders were to prepare maps, suppress the slave trade, support efforts to improve the local economy, and establish a cordon of military posts from Gondokoro to the basin of the White Nile.[23]

Egyptian control rested on command of the river through these fortified positions. Called 'stations', these were little different from the forts run by merchant companies, indeed, some were former *zaraib* taken over complete with their garrison of *bazinqir*. These ranged in size from small posts with less than fifty men, to major sites like Lado, with several hundred buildings, a hospital and mosque. Between 1869 and 1881, the government operated sixty of these, while Khartoum-based merchants opened even more. Though some were built in unhealthy and fire-prone locations, they were a vital element for Ismail's plans to conquer the Southern Sudan. First, the more numerous locals did not possess the military hardware needed to overcome rifle-armed troops firing from behind a *zariba* or earth walls. This allowed small Egyptian detachments to wait for reinforcements, which came by river, and then attack with overwhelming force. Second, as local supplies of wood were sparse, or non-existent, Ismail's steamers needed secure depots for refuelling.[24]

Baker used his fleet to begin this system. By Nilotic standards, he controlled an armada – 42 vessels, including 11 steamers, each armed with up to 3 mountain howitzers. In addition, he towed numerous barges filled with large quantities of supplies and wood. It was an impressive start, and well fitted to the grandiose views of 'Ismail the Magnificent'.[25]

Closer examination, however, reveals a few problems. Promised supplies were missing, defective, or delivered late, while some of the troops were Cairo jail-birds, 'armed with rotten old guns that will not go off'.[26] Baker compensated via reorganization, putting less reliable soldiers into garrison duty, and creating an assault troop, 'The Forty Thieves', from among his best. The latter were further enhanced by replacing their muskets with new Sniders. This unit played an important role in several battles, since it could produce tremendous firepower.[27]

Steamers, artillery, small arms, and training all placed the Egyptians far ahead of any regional force. Despite this, opposition quickly developed as the invaders began to seize cattle, and conscript locals for transport duties.

Baker may have been a great explorer, but his military effort looked more like those of Cortez or Pizaro, than Ismail's so-called 'civilizing mission'. In no time, it was dangerous for Egyptians to be more than 100 yards from a station, unless in large groups. Taking more of the Sudan would not be easy.[28]

As these conquistadors plunged into Bahr al-Ghazal and Equatoria, they discovered that climate, local geography, and sickness were hazards sometimes more dangerous than human enemies. The entire area is basically a wide shallow basin draining into the Nile (Figure 9.1). Its most common features are innumerable rivers and streams, alluvial plains, swamps, and the *Sudd*. The latter term, derived from the Arabic for 'barrier', refers to massive clumps of reeds and papyrus, which could block, or at least hinder, river navigation. About 600 miles south of Khartoum, and stretching for several hundred miles, Charles Chaillé-Long Bey describes the *Sudd* as 'a dreary waste of pestiferous marsh … a gloomy River Styx'.[29]

'In the Southern Sudan,' Robert Collins notes, 'communications were, and remain today, the prerequisite for control.'[30] *Sudd*-cutting expeditions were vital for functional lines of communication. These were tedious and often involved hundreds of workers. Army and Navy personnel directed such ventures, which were dangerous and costly.[31]

Otherwise, *Sudd* growth disguised main channels, blocked intake valves, jammed paddles or propellers, and could alter the current by up to 3 miles per hour. Dead plants caused additional problems, sometimes forming into floating islands of vegetable matter that could be 3 or 4 miles long. All together, these impediments reduced the value of river steamers. Despite efforts to clear paths through the *Sudd*, boats were sometimes trapped. This happened to Gessi Pasha in 1878, when for three months, his command was halted at Lake No.[32]

Gessi's men suffered 400 fatalities during this ordeal. This was another aspect of service in the Southern Sudan. Tropical diseases were common, and as a result, sickness figured as a significant reason for Egyptian casualties. Neither Arab nor European was immune, and in the 1870s, medical science had few answers for this dilemma. Writing on this subject, Gessi notes his steamer often 'changed into a hospital'.[33] Baker provides a more concrete example. His Cairo-based artillery battery suffered a 100 per cent sickness rate after entering Equatoria.[34]

Although not yet identified as vectors in the spread of such diseases, insect life was another scourge of the region. Baker was just one among many travellers to complain of the 'Horrible treeless swamps swarming with mosquitoes'.[35] Charles 'Chinese' Gordon shared that opinion, and said an officer stationed in Equatoria would find a mosquito net 'more valuable than a revolver'.[36] Between July and October, the 'bug season', these pests were joined by termites and safari ants, scorpions, puff-adders, cobras, and African 'killer bees'. The explorer Schweinfurth describes an attack by the

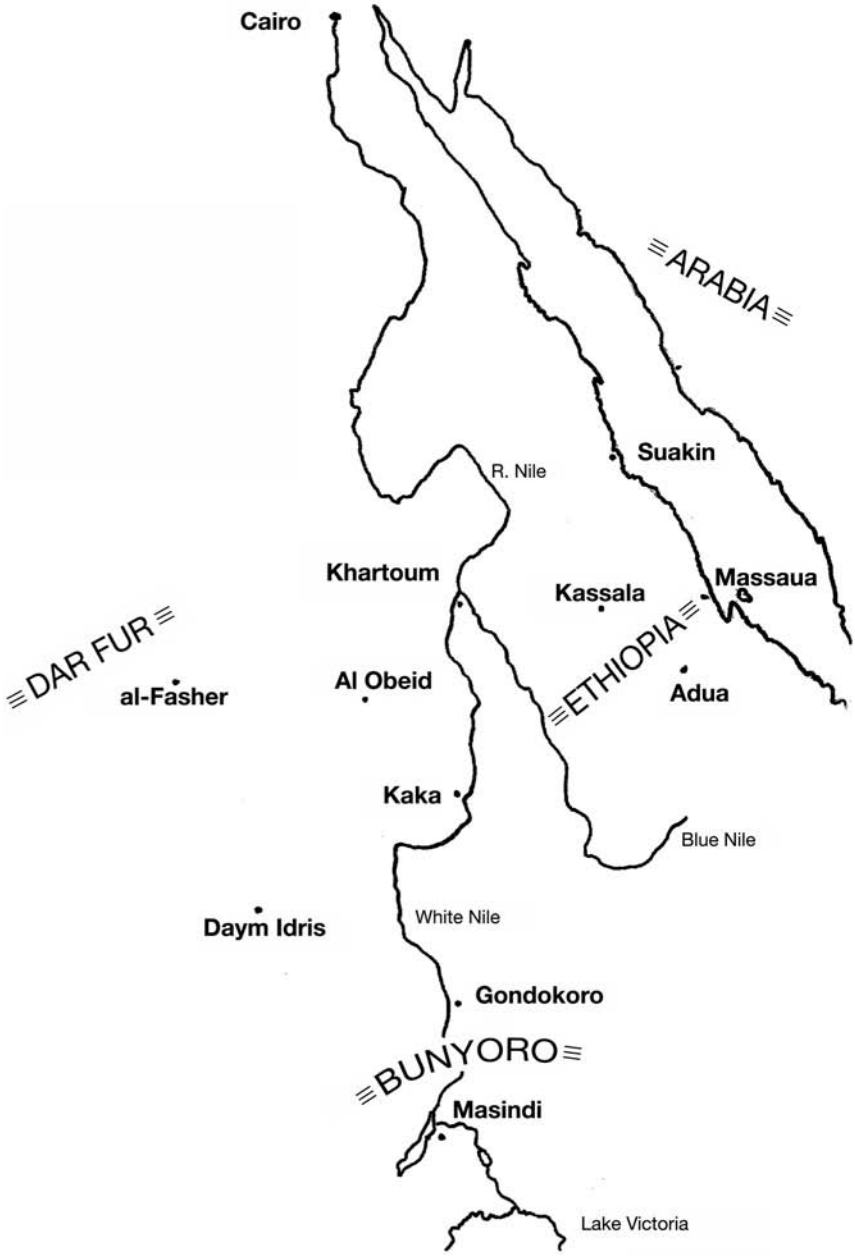

Figure 9.1 Egypt's Nilotic Empire. Scale 1 : 17,000,000
Source: As per Gessi Pasha (Sudan (Sub-collection, DAW))

latter that emptied his steamer, causing the then masterless boat to run aground. Eugene Fechet, an American mercenary, complained that 'White ants are more annoying than all else. They are as numerous as grains of sand, they bite badly, and are very destructive … our tents look as if riddled by fine shot.'[37]

Weather also played a role in the misery of a soldier's life. Riverain forces were hit by giant hail storms, or winds powerful enough to halt a steamship. Everywhere, heat and humidity were high, while rain was heavy between May and September. Waterlogged supplies were difficult to dry in this moist climate. Much sent on the long voyage from Cairo to Equatoria was almost unusable on arrival. This was especially true of rockets and artillery ammunition, which were packed in paper or cloth containers.[38]

On the other hand, metallic cartridges for the new Remington rifles were proof against all but total immersion. This was fortunate, as several groups strongly contested the Egyptian invasion. Although rarely able to overcome a large station, in the marshes and tangled swamps, they could sometimes defeat Ismail's best troops. Who were these men? They ranged from local inhabitants, to merchant adventurers and slave dealers from as far away as Khartoum.

The Shilluk Kingdom had opposed Egypt since the 1830s. Raleigh Colston Bey notes they owned artillery in 1875, and 'fire at all steamers passing through their land'.[39] Although mainly armed with daggers, spears, and bows, some employed flintlock or percussion muskets, and in large groups were dangerous opponents. Gessi claimed that technology was the only reason for the eventual defeat of the Shilluk, for on a more even playing field, 'one (of them) is worth at least three Egyptian or even European soldiers.'[40]

Azande, Dinka, Nuer, and other ethnic groups also resisted, but none were as powerful as the rival kingdoms of Bunyoro and Buganda. Both fielded small armies, plus a *levée en masse* of all adult males. Spears and shields were the weapons of most warriors, with percussion muskets obtained whenever possible. Under the leadership of *Kabaka* [King] Mukabya Mutesa (1856–1884), Buganda later produced uniformed troops, artillery, and military roads. Henry Stanley, who probably exaggerated, claims Mutesa could field 125,000 men.[41]

Even more dangerous were private armies operated by slavers like Zubayr Rahma Mansur. Egypt's Muhammad Bey al-Hilali found this out during a series of 1872 engagements which ended in his death. Important slave traders maintained their own posts, plus large numbers of northern Sudanese mercenaries and *bazinqir*. The latter were slave-soldiers, who began their career as young boys carrying weapons or supplies, and graduated to fighting status when a teenager. The *bazinqir*, being allowed to keep his own slaves, quickly renewed the cycle, and the end result was a significant force. Although never completely united under one leader, some commands fielded

more than 12,000 men. Most fought on foot with smooth-bore muskets, but elephant guns, rifles, artillery, and cavalry were also employed. Organized into *bulaks* [companies], and sometimes instructed by Egyptian deserters, these soldiers were nearly as effective as Ismail's best.[42]

No one group was more powerful than Egypt, but Zubayr reminds us that resistance to authority was 'as numberless as the flies that assemble on a dead bullock'.[43] Baker discovered this Sudanese version of Clausewitzian friction during his efforts to conquer Bunyoro. By 1872, garrison duty, sickness, and desertion had reduced his effectives to 500 men. Reaching Masindi, the capital, with his Forty Thieves, plus 160 regulars, Baker attempted to construct a fort.

Bunyoro's leader, Kabarega, unable to halt the work, launched a surprise attack on 8 June 1872. The first phase included a 'present' of some potent banana wine, which rendered fifty Egyptians 'nearly unconscious'.[44] Morning followed with an assault by several thousand warriors. Baker rallied his troops, and directed them to pour rocket and Snider fire into the enemy columns. Disrupted, the Bunyoro attack faltered, allowing the Egyptians to first peel off both flanks, and then strike a decisive blow in the centre. Kabarega was defeated, Masindi put to the torch, and the Egyptians suffered only five casualties. Still, Baker found his new holdings 'very exposed', and ordered a retreat. The battle of Masindi serves as a leitmotif for Egypt's conquest of the southern Sudan. Breech-loading rifles could bowl over the opposition, when they fought in the open, but with so few troops, it was never possible to effectively occupy this region.[45]

One result was closer relations between Egypt and prominent slave-traders like Zubayr. Turning to these men, Baker was able to confirm his control of the Acholi lands north of Bunyoro. Still, Baker was now on the way out. His £E10,000 salary was a drain on the treasury, and way too much for a man, who, as Ismail puts it, 'had failed to confine his expedition to the letter and spirit of his instructions'.[46] Baker's *razzia* placed a Khedival standard close to the equator, but at considerable expense, and with little return. In 1873, with his contract expired, Baker turned over his command to Muhammad Bey Rauf, and Egypt searched for a new pro-consul.[47]

Still looking for a European, Ismail replaced one Briton with another, Charles 'Chinese' Gordon. Appointed *ferik* and given the same directions as Baker, Gordon entered his new position with considerable energy. He probably expected too much from the limited forces under his control, but unlike his predecessor, had definite plans for the south's pacification and gradual absorption into the Egyptian imperium.[48]

A more immediate goal was to augment the capabilities of his soldiers. Working through Zubayr, Gordon purchased *bazinqir* to reinforce existing battalions, 'so when at full strength, we will be able to attack any controlled place … to get men without having to pay.'[49] He also fought to gain a share of the new Remington breech-loaders, and soon had an entire battalion

equipped with these rifles. The remaining troops had to settle for left-over Sniders, Miniés, and even some flintlocks from Muhammad Ali's era.[50]

Gordon also expanded the number of stations, splitting his garrisons into smaller forts along the river. He argued the South needed policemen, more than soldiers, and therefore the establishment of 'law and order' was a top priority. During the relocation, efforts were made to find better sites, for both defence and health reasons. Gondokoro, 'a cemetery for Arabs and Europeans', was abandoned, and Lado became the new headquarters for Egypt's Equatorial Command. In 1874, it included 1,885 regular and irregular troops, eleven major stations, and a small fleet.[51]

Gordon's overly ambitious plans called for pacification, of existing territory, and expansion. This was in keeping with plans drawn up by Stone, who convinced Ismail to support:

1 Pacification of Equatoria.
2 Conquest of Buganda.
3 Occupation of all major lake shores.
4 Establishment of a naval flotilla to dominate the lakes.
5 Improved communications to Cairo and Khartoum.
6 Occupation of the mountains between Lake Victoria and the Indian Ocean.

Gordon directed thrusts towards the Indian Ocean, and around Lake Victoria. The first plan was based on an erroneous assumption of easy going between Equatoria and the sea. On paper, it seems like a much quicker journey than the 3,500 miles north to Cairo. In reality, the terrain for this shorter route is very rough, a combination of jungles, swamps, desert and rock. Without a railway, which would be excessively expensive to create, the longer road was the more efficient. None of this was considered in 1875, and one result was the Egyptian landings in Somalia, which are discussed in the next chapter.[52]

The second advance put Egypt in contact with Buganda, one of the most powerful states in Central Africa. Gordon saw economic potential here, for if Egypt could dominate Buganda, significant portions of the ivory trade could be diverted from Zanzibar to Khartoum. Mutesa, the Bugandan ruler, had no more interest in an Egyptian suzerain than Kabarega, but unlike the latter, was far more powerful. The result was limited contact, but no lasting extension of Ismail's empire. At such a distant location, Egypt simply could not send the supplies or manpower needed for conquest.[53]

In 1875, Gordon suffered several setbacks that underline the tenuous nature of his power. On 25 August, the Bari, angry with Egyptians since Baker's time, fell on a column led by Ernest Linant de Bellfonds, and destroyed it. In October, several thousand Shilluks besieged the station at Kaka. Yussef Bey and 150 soldiers were sent via steamer as reinforcements.

In a bungled relief operation, Yussef and all but nine of his men were killed. As a result, the station was abandoned, and morale dropped throughout the Equatorian command. Gordon departed shortly afterwards, soon to become the Governor-General of all Sudan. His replacements in the south, a collection of American, Egyptian, British and German officials, all suffered under the same handicaps; and none were able to completely pacify Equatoria. Eduard Schnitzer, better known later as Emin Pasha, was probably the most effective of these post-Gordon pro-consuls. Coming to an arrangement with Kabarega, he was able to extend Egyptian authority into parts of Bunyoro.[54]

Turning to the west, the picture was, at first, more attractive. Ismail's attention drifted here in the late 1860s, as reports filtered back to Cairo about the value of ivory, gum, and ostrich feathers, exported from the Sultanate of Dar Fur. Heavily armed reconnaissance missions, led by several of his American Neo-Mamluks, provided maps and other military intelligence. Following these was a proposition very much in keeping with Egypt's mercenary tradition.[55]

Zubayr, whose mercantile empire now dominated the south, offered to conquer Dar Fur in exchange for support, and forgiveness of past transgressions. Expanding his *bazinqirs* into an army provided the manpower to fulfil this plan. As the cost to Egypt would be minimal, Ismail was very interested, his empire would expand, and a third party would perform most of the work. By September 1874, Zubayr's troops numbered over 7,000, many with firearms. Ismail Pasha Yakub provided support with a separate Egyptian command of 2,000 infantry, 1,000 irregular cavalry, and three guns.[56]

The two columns launched separate invasions in early fall 1874. Unlike Equatoria, Dar Fur's topography allowed for more rapid movement of such forces. Vast plains, wadis, cluster of hills, and low scrub were common to the area. A more formidable barrier was the Dar Fur military. It numbered 3,000 regular troops in 1862, and was bolstered by the traditional *levée en masse*. Divisions included infantry armed with spear and shield, along with Fur heavy cavalry.[57] The latter were armed with lances, swords, maces and some firearms. The riders had chain-mail, and their horses wore quilted cloth armour. On the open plains, these men were dangerous adversaries.[58]

An over-confident Zubayr discovered this the hard way at invasion's start. His initial advance was countered by a massive force many times larger. Directed by Ahmed Shettah, the Chief Minister to Sultan Ibrahim, it scored an initial success, but then faltered. Zubayr's men fell back to a *zariba*, and using their superior firearms, killed Ahmed and defeated the counter-attack.[59]

Now it was the slavers' turn for an offensive, and their target was the capital of al-Fashar. By 25 October 1874, many of the best Dar Fur units were decimated, yet the remainder put up a hard fight at al-Manawashi. Ibrahim commanded his army to attack Zubayr's flanks, and when repulsed,

led his cavalry in a climactic charge down the centre. The result was a catastrophe, with the Sultan and many of his soldiers mowed down by enemy firepower.[60]

The Khedive, although pleased with this acquisition, faced a quandary. To the west, he presented this venture as an effort 'on behalf of law and order and for the purpose of suppressing the slave trade'.[61] Yet the victory was mainly the work of Zubayr, one of the Sudan's most notorious slavers. While there is some contention whether Ismail really opposed slavery, there is no doubt that the stance was an important feature of his relations with Europe. Even if only a facade, Egypt's role as an abolitionist power was vital to the Khedive's desired image, and for continued western loans and arms sales.[62]

In addition, Zubayr was stronger than ever. Did he represent a threat, not only to public relations, but also to Egypt's fragile control of the south? Dar Fur remained unstable for the entire period of Egyptian administration (1875–1883). The Khedive owned the towns, but much of the countryside was rebellious. Several times insurrections reached a stage where local Egyptian commanders had to request reinforcements from Khartoum. As Zubayr was somewhat of a wild card, his continued presence was not in Ismail's best interest.[63]

The solution was to invite Zubayr to Cairo. Promised rewards and a possible increase in his authority, the victorious filibuster travelled north. Given medals, a home, and cash, he also became a prisoner, never allowed to return home. As expected, a power vacuum followed Zubayr's detention, but by 1878, his son, Sulyman, was plotting revolution. In November he seized *Daym* Idris, a government station with considerable stocks of weapons and ammunition.[64] This allowed an expansion of rebel forces, so that, including allies, Sulyman directed upwards of 15,000 men. Of these, 1,700 owned Remingtons, 400 more employed large elephant guns, while numerous others used muzzle-loading carbines, rifles, or double-barrelled shotguns. Although ammunition was sometimes in short supply, Sulyman's army was motivated, and fairly well trained. It represented the most dangerous opposition to an Egyptian Sudan until the Mahdi.[65]

Responding to this threat was Romolo Gessi, Gordon's most trusted lieutenant.[66] Assigned five infantry companies, artillery which included a Gatling gun, and 700 irregulars, he was instructed to crush Sulyman at all costs. Opting for a war of manoeuvre, Gessi finessed his rival out of *Daym* Idris, and then occupied this key position. Immediate efforts at strengthening the fort paid off on 28 December, when Sulyman launched a counter-attack. Canister rounds and 'a real shower of bullets' drove it off with heavy casualties. The more than 1,000 fatalities, compared to less than a hundred Egyptian losses, were a tremendous blow to rebel morale.[67]

Still attacks continued when Sulyman managed to bring up his own artillery. A bombardment commenced on 3 January 1879, followed by a

major assault ten days later. Forewarned by deserters, Gessi deployed his best troops in ambush positions. The resulting carnage cut great swathes into the now disorganized rebel columns. Next, rocket fire caused considerable casualties and set a fire that destroyed Sulyman's camp. This catastrophe, from the middle of March, destroyed what remained of enemy morale, and the battle of *Daym* Idris was over.[68]

Although Sulyman escaped and attempted to rebuild his army, Gessi never allowed it time to recover. Fast-moving columns hit rebel troops repeatedly, and in 1879, surrounded the main force at Gara. Although Sulyman outnumbered Gessi's command, there was no resistance instead, he surrendered. Along with nine other leaders, he was executed on 17 July. In the words of Gordon, 'Thus does God make gaps in His enemies.'[69]

Gessi's defence of *Daym* Idris is a text-book example of how imperialist troops could defeat more numerous locals. The Italian mercenary employed terrain features, manoeuvre, and technology, to negate enemy numbers. He also played on the regional animosity for slavers, and encouraged a *jacquerie* against Sulyman and his allies. Despite such genius, Egypt had no greater control of the southern Sudan in 1880, than she did a decade earlier. The resources needed for complete subjugation were beyond the capabilities of Ismail's debt-ridden state. In addition, revenues generated here were not sufficient to justify the expense. As Collins puts it, 'Gessi found himself master of a devastated land in which the traditional pattern of violence between African and Arab culminated in anarchy and chaos.'[70]

Looking over Egyptian military actions in the Sudan provides a mixed bag of 'lessons'. Certainly the army obtained victories on the battlefield. One notes, however, that despite many successful actions, the Egyptians employed large numbers of irregular and local forces. Only small select units of the regular army were tested in the Sudan. Also, most of these campaigns deployed small forces. This was especially true in units led by Neo-Mamluks, who only directed company- or battalion-sized commands. Finally, Egyptian troops never fought against a large national army. Thus 'victory' in the Sudan concealed problems in the regular army, indeed, it encouraged Cairo to view the rest of the Horn as 'easy pickings'.

10

IMPERIAL APOGEE

The coming of the Egyptian–Abyssinian War

> Abyssinia is completely surrounded by Egyptian possessions, and Anaconda like, the Khedive is tightening his folds every year.
>
> (Samuel Lockett)

Abyssinia was responsible for the first major defeat of an Egyptian army since the fall of Acre in 1840. Like many Egyptian colonial ventures, the 1875–1884 war with Abyssinia was not the result of careful planning, but instead was due to a chain reaction resulting from arrogance, plus a series of miscalculations. Diplomatic, political, and economic issues played a part and, combined with defeat on the battlefield, started a rapid decline for Egypt's imperial dreams.[1]

Up to 1875, Ismail's empire was an expanding regional power in North-East Africa. Then Khedival plans ran aground in a storm of his making. Unprofitable and poorly defined borderlands required digestion; Ismail chose instead to gorge himself on more territory. Doing so put Egypt on a collision path with another dynamic leader, Abyssinian Emperor Yohannis IV. A clash was inevitable when Egyptian imperialism threatened Tigre, the core of Yohannis's ancestral holdings.

Trade revenues formed an incentive for conflict. Ports like Massawa, Zeila, and Berbera were a nexus for caravans. Abyssinian exports – ivory, gold, musk, or slaves – left here for overseas markets. As volume increased during the 1840s, Egypt saw greater value in domination of Red Sea and Benadir coastal cities. Even interior districts were potentially valuable. During the 1850s, for example, Hamasen provided Tewodros with 32,000 Maria Theresa thalers per year in tax revenues.[2]

Although Ottoman flags flew over most Red Sea ports before 1866, this was a tenuous suzerainty at best. On the African side of the Red Sea, small companies of irregulars, seldom more than 100 strong, were the sole representatives of Turkish power. According to French observer Henri Lambert, the closest Ottoman garrison, across the sea in Yemen, had but 1,200 soldiers in 1855, '*fort mal disciplinés*', and they were deserting at an alarming

rate. With such limited military potential, Abyssinia had little to fear from the Sultan.[3]

Egypt was a different story. Muhammad Ali's invasion of the Sudan provided a vigorous and dangerous neighbour. He also sent forces down the Red Sea coast, a policy continued by Ismail. When the Khedive's forces arrived in places like Suakin or Massawa (Figure 10.1), they established regular garrisons, lighthouses, quays, and potential jump-off points for aggression directed into the Abyssinian highlands.[4]

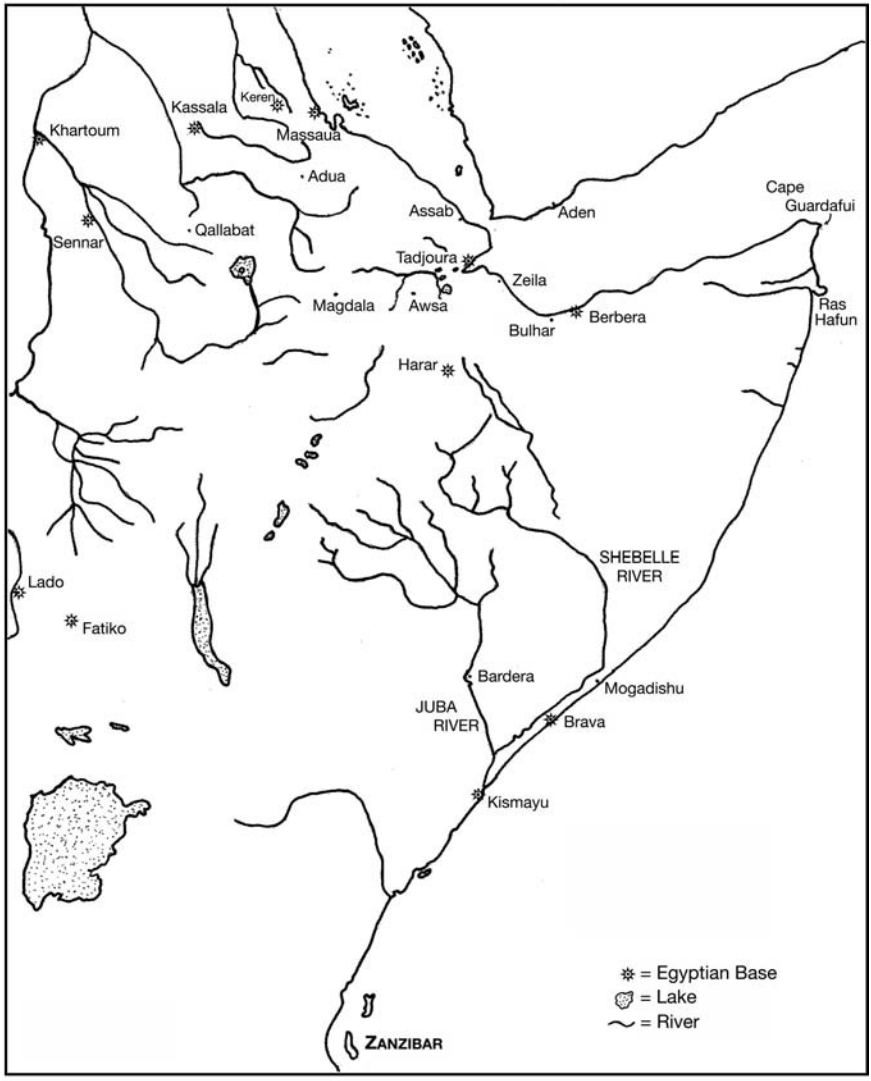

Figure 10.1 East Africa in 1875. 1 inch = 185 miles

Due to radically different ideas of national borders, Egypt and Abyssinia had a history of disputes that stretched back to the 1840s. The former advanced a western-style frontier, with precisely delineated divisions, all mapped out and rigid. Abyssinian rulers maintained a more flexible idea of tribute areas, which could be subject to more than one authority, plus buffer zones owned by none, and subject to periodic raids. Historian Haggai Erlich stresses this theme, and argues it was bound to create a clash between Yohannis and Ismail.[5]

Both claimed districts in the Sudan and modern Eritrea – the latter's Bogos and Hamasen districts being most contentious. Abyssinians backed their arguments with tradition, noting the ancient Aksumite Empire, and the grandeur of more recent medieval rulers. Egyptians countered with *Firmins* from Constantinople, and the fact that the majority of inhabitants were Muslims.

As a result, frontier skirmishes were common. Looting expeditions fuelled these disputes. Although border raiding was a traditional practice, attacks intensified in the 1840s–1850s when Abyssinia entered the conclusion of its *Zamana Masafent* (Era of the Princes). Bringing an end to this near century of anarchy was a primary goal for Emperor Tewodros (Theodore). His efforts split Amhara nobility into numerous factions, many willing to practise the time-honoured Abyssinian tradition of *shiftnnet*, a legitimized defiance of law and order.[6] While most *shifta* directed their energies against Tewodros, some also gained prestige and supplies by cross-border attacks. These could quickly turn into miniature invasions, with a thousand or more brigands involved in deep penetrations of Egyptian territory.[7]

Such banditry was a two-way street. Egypt's officials condoned slave raiding and the collection of 'tribute' from Abyssinian territory. Leaders in Kassala found their neighbours invaluable for maintaining a strong economy. Eugene Fechet, writing in 1873, noted a border ruler paying 15,000 Maria Theresa thalers in 'tribute'. Otherwise, very regular expeditions moved into disputed borderlands, grabbing animals and slaves. Often *Bashi Bazouks* and local irregulars did the dirty work, but government officials always obtained a share of the profits. James Hamilton, writing in the 1850s, describes how half of the booty given up by raiders was used to pay the salaries of soldiers and civil servants.[8]

In these circumstances, it is not difficult to understand Tewodros's support for Umar Wad Nimr, a *shifta* of the first order. The son of *Mek* ['King'] Nimr, whose opposition to Muhammad Ali caused his family's expulsion from the Sudan, Baker Pasha described Umar as 'a most unpleasant neighbour to the Egyptian government'.[9] Hit and run attacks escalated to the point that Egypt's response involved an army of 14,000 men. Musa Pasha Hamdi, the Governor General of the Sudan, led this force in a gigantic razzia against Qallabat and parts of north-west Abyssinia. In

the best of imperial traditions, this raid disrupted Egypt's frontier enemies, and created a temporary shatter-belt of allies and clients.[10]

Kassala was the first headquarters for Egyptian operations against Abyssinia. It could blunt an offensive against the Sudan, or serve as a base for an assault on Gondar, a vital political and religious centre. Since the 1850s, this powerful fortress had held up to four battalions of regular infantry, several hundred *Bashi Bazouks*, and numerous irregular cavalry. The latter, Beni Amir, provided vital scouting and patrol services. Combined with the garrison's artillery, these troops presented a dangerous threat to Tewodros and his successors.[11]

Events of 1867 increased Kassala's strategic value. That was the year an Anglo-Indian army marched all the way to Magdala, and defeated its Abyssinian defenders, which caused Tewodros to commit suicide. Ismail, already interested in extending a defensive zone for his soon to be completed Suez Canal, saw the resulting power vacuum as a good omen for expansion. Four additional Sudanese battalions joined the frontier command, while 10,000 soldiers, many veterans from the war in Crete, landed in Massawa. Led by Abd al-Kadr Pasha, their official mission was to cooperate with the British, but unofficially, the Egyptians were looking to add disputed real estate to their dominion. Although some of these men were soon withdrawn, for fears their presence might unite Christian Abyssinia against the British and a perceived Muslim 'ally', the end result was several small districts placed under Ismail's rule.[12]

The stormy years following Tewodros's demise feature Abyssinian politics in rare form. They also mark the rise of two individuals very involved in this picture: *Dedjazmatch* Kassa Mircha, and Werner Munzinger. The former, also known by his 'horse name' of '*Aba Baz Bez*', was a contender for the now vacant throne of Abyssinia. His power base was Tigre, which bordered on Egyptian holdings on the Red Sea and the Sudan.[13] The latter, a noted linguist and explorer who had extensive experience in the region, was at various times a merchant and diplomat, who involved himself with Abyssinian affairs.[14]

Long plagued by instability, Tigre's northern districts were the scene of intense struggles in the 1860s. Kassa was able to subdue most of his rivals, but peripheral regions were still unsettled. A good example of this was the region of Hamasen, now part of Eritrea, where two rival families battled for control. The opposing leaders, *Dajjazmatch* Hailu Habel and *Dajjazmatch* Wolde Mikail, conducted a blood feud that extended to requesting foreign assistance.[15] In 1867, Hailu Habel sent envoys to the Khedive asking for soldiers to fight his enemy, and therefore, by extension, Wolde Mikail's nominal suzerain, Kassa.[16]

Adding to the confusion, Lazarist Missionaries were active in Hamasen and the nearby district of Bogos. With over 30,000 Catholic converts, they were disliked by most Orthodox Abyssinians. Kassa himself said that he

preferred a Turkish invasion to one by French missionaries! When he discovered their support for Tekle Giorgis, Kassa's major rival, a punitive raid chased many of the converts towards Egyptian territory. This in turn caused the Lazarists to ask fellow-Catholic Munzinger for protection and help. As a consul of France, he was powerful enough to temporarily halt Kassa's revenge.[17]

All the fighting and multiple factions turned Hamasen into a wilderness 'infested with highwaymen, cattle thieves and kidnappers'.[18] A breeding ground for new *shifta*, this highland chaos soon impacted on the caravan trade, and even threatened walled coastal towns. Munzinger viewed Hamasen's disorder as an opportunity for Egyptian expansion, making this point very clear to Khedival officials. He argued the time was now for Egypt to take action, for 'Abyssinia with a disciplined administration and army, and a friend of the European powers, is a danger to Egypt. Egypt must either take over Abyssinia and Islamize it, or retain it in anarchy and misery.'[19]

Ye-seytan meliktenna, 'the angel of Satan', as Kassa often described Munzinger, was a central figure in events leading up to the war between Egypt and Abyssinia. A good friend of Tekle Giorgis, he intrigued against Kassa, and worked to subvert Wolde Mikail, now governor of Hamasen. For Munzinger and Kassa, there was no middle ground. Their mutual animosity only increased when the latter triumphed over Tekle Giorgis, and became emperor, taking the regal name Yohannis IV.[20]

Munzinger carried this hatred into a new job when Ismail appointed him governor of Massawa. Diplomat, noted explorer, linguist *par excellence*, and author of several learned tomes on the Horn of Africa, he seemed an excellent catch for Egypt.[21] Was this not the perfect Neo-Mamluk? Certainly he was a man of influence. As a contemporary explained, 'His private person and name, here count as much, yes, more than the names of England and France, whose representatives he has been.'[22]

The new governor directed Egyptian energies into Hamasen and Bogos. Abyssinians claimed it was part of the *Mareb Melash*, a province whose ambiguous boundaries, as the Amharic implies, stretched 'Beyond the Mareb'. Of course Munzinger held a contrary view. He described the lands about Massawa as very disorganized and controlled by neither Abyssinia nor Egypt. In his opinion, Hamasen, which he described as 'the key to Abyssinia', was a prime target for Egyptian imperialism. From the start, Munzinger entered into negotiations with Wolde Mikail, and played on complaints the *Dajjazmatch* held against Yohannis. The new governor also publicized charges by Muslims and Catholics, who suffered from raids by Orthodox subordinates of Yohannis. The former were a significant population, some of whom favoured rule by co-religionists and could provide intelligence, or auxiliary forces, for the Egyptian army. The less numerous Catholics not only maintained close relations with Munzinger, but by protecting them, Egypt gained credit with France, the semi-official sponsor

of the Lazarist Mission. Along with Munzinger's personal vendetta against Yohannis, his Catholic connection cannot be over-stressed. Samuel Lockett claims that protecting these people, after their bungled efforts to support Tekle Giorgis, was Munzinger's primary goal, one that used Egypt as 'the cat's paw to pull all these hot chestnuts out of the fire'.[23]

Whatever the case, Munzinger pushed for an aggressive policy, and in this regard, sent numerous reports to Cairo. He was backed by Stone Pasha, who provided both economic and strategic reasons in favour of Egyptian imperialism. Ismail paid significant attention to the Red Sea coast and its hinterland, and was unable to disguise his efforts to expand there at the expense of Abyssinia. As *The Times* put it, 'the common talk of the Sudan was the conquest of Abyssinia'.[24]

An invasion of Abyssinia presented greater diplomatic obstacles than Khedival activities in the Southern Sudan. England and France had opposed Egyptian expansion into this region since the time of Muhammad Ali. The 1870s, however, provided many opportunities for an adroit manipulator like Ismail. First, French influence was greatly reduced by the disastrous Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871). Second, Ismail could play the anti-slavery card in his efforts to sway British governments. Munzinger's books stressed the large numbers of slaves shipped out of Red Sea ports. Egypt, a nation supposedly committed to the suppression of this trade, could halt the traffic only if in firm control. In addition, Egyptian diplomacy suggested that Yohannis was a major benefactor of the slave trade, and so it would be most inappropriate for Abyssinians to dominate any lands close to the Red Sea. Also, Egyptians, in the words of historian Ghada Talhami, were England's 'surrogate Europeans'.[25] Acceptable to public opinion, Egypt's rule also prevented a rival power, like France, from dominating the Horn. Finally, Ismail's grand strategy of a 'civilizing mission' played well with some. An American diplomat expressed the feelings of many when he wrote, 'the entire subjugation [of Abyssinia] to the Khedive's rule would be a blessing.'[26]

Ismail might also benefit from conquest. His plans to connect the Sudan with the Red Sea included construction of telegraph and railway lines via Hamasen. Its control would secure vital supplies of fresh water for Suakin and Massawa, while, at the same time, allow rotation of troops and officials into the cooler, more healthy highlands.[27] An occupation of key peripheral towns meant Egypt could dominate major Abyssinian trade routes. Three of the more important, Adua, Qallabat, and Harar, were all targets of Egyptian aggression in the early to mid-1870s. Munzinger later included the Awsa region, as its plains were the main source of Abyssinia's salt. Stone backed this effort, arguing, 'The acquisition of this principality is of the highest importance.'[28]

Stone's brief was both economic and strategic. He warned that other powers were active in the region, so Egypt had to move first, or lose the race

to dominate the Horn of Africa. Britain controlled Aden, and exercised a degree of influence over parts of Somalia. Nearby, France had obtained special rights to Obock, although little effort was made to develop her holdings. Equally bothersome was an Italian venture at Assab. Founded in 1869 by the *Compagnia di Navigazione Rubattino*, this was mainly a commercial enterprise, but one that flew Italy's flag, and had connections to the military.[29]

Stone called the Rubattino establishment 'very dangerous to the interests of Egypt'.[30] Since Egyptian warships had already charted and laid claim to Assab, international law suggested the Italian presence was illegal, so in June 1870, Ismail ordered their removal. The steamer *Khartoum*, under the command of Gamali Bey, landed troops in July, and after a brief scuffle with Rubattino's local support, they lowered the Italian flag. This incident marks the start of aggressive patrols by Egyptian warships, and 'showed the flag' to the Muslim populations of coastal cities. Lighthouses, telegraph stations, and forts were planned for as far south as Ras Muhammad. In addition, ground forces were transferred to the region, providing a battalion-sized defence force in case the Italians returned.[31]

With European interlopers stymied, Egypt's attentions shifted back to Abyssinia. Instability and political intrigue had not ended with the coronation of Yohannis. Although a more powerful ruler than Tewodros, rivals still lurked in the dark shadows of conspiracy. Munzinger hoped some opponents of the new emperor could be twisted to his advantage.[32]

Several individuals and groups loomed as potential traitors. The rulers of Wello, Gojjam, and Shewa all paid lip-service to the supremacy of Yohannis, but secretly harboured desires for his removal. Of these leaders, Menelik, the *Negus* [king] of Shewa, was the most powerful, and therefore most attractive from an Egyptian viewpoint. Like Yohannis, Menelik benefited greatly from the fall of Tewodros, and saw himself as the next emperor of Abyssinia. After Tekle Giorgis was defeated by Yohannis at the 1871 Battle of Adua, Menelik entered into negotiations with Ismail. Two years later, *Aleqa* Birru Wolda Gyorgis, one of the emperor's senior diplomats, deserted his service, and escaped to Shewa.[33] This defector had valuable experience in dealing with Egypt, and was soon on the road to Cairo, with messages from his new master.[34]

Birru was in Cairo from 1874 to 1875, pressing for 'scientific and technical assistance', along with increased trade between Egypt and Shewa. According to Austrian Consul General Count Suzzara, he also negotiated an alliance. Both Munzinger and Ismail placed considerable value on Menelik's ability to distract Yohannis. Indeed, the emperor now faced a dilemma, whether to concentrate his armies in the North against Egypt, or southward to chastise the Shewans. If Menelik forced Yohannis to fight a two-front war, Egypt's chances for success were much higher.[35]

On a smaller scale, Munzinger also subverted officials and leaders in Hamasen. Hailu Wolde Giorgis and Wolde Mikail were both on his payroll,

and the latter, despite an ambiguous start, proved a valuable ally in the battles of 1876–1884. Money and weapons were also employed to re-direct *Shifta* leaders into territory ruled by Yohannis. A dangerous policy to be sure, but one that paid immediate dividends in the period of 1872–1875.[36]

Other forces that could be turned to Egypt's advantage were 'all the sons of Islam who are oppressed by Menelik and Yohannis'.[37] Munzinger's agents provided money and some arms to Oromo groups in Wello. Although the insurrection that followed was crushed by loyal Abyssinian forces, sufficient distraction resulted, so that Yohannis did not have the strength to counter a simultaneous land grab by Munzinger.[38]

This began with Ismail's announcement that previous Abyssinian raids against Lazarist converts took place in territory 'protected' by Egypt since the days of Muhammad Ali. He ordered an invasion of Hamasen, both 'to restore order' and as retaliation for Abyssinian atrocities. Munzinger directed the almost bloodless campaign. His target was the strategic county of Bogos, which one expert has described as 'a good base for any attack on northern Abyssinia'.[39] On 25 June 1872, 1,200 Egyptian regulars, backed by artillery and Gatling guns, occupied Keren, a town well placed to dominate Bogos. Embroiled with the Oromo uprising far to the south, Yohannis was unable to respond to what became a *fait accompli*. Although initially successful, noted historian Sven Rubenson marks this campaign as the point where 'Egyptian arrogance and fatal underestimation of Ethiopia really begin'.[40]

Munzinger informed Ismail that local Muslims welcomed the move, and Islamic leaders from farther away requested similar action. Also, he began the construction of a fortifications that would cement Egyptian control of Bogos. These were centred on Keren, which featured a high mountain top for the emplacement of a powerful citadel. Satellite works at Um Kulu, Amideb, and Algeden completed the system, and also covered a military road back to Massawa.[41]

Ismail's pleasure with his ultra-efficient Neo-Mamluk was evident in 1872. Munzinger obtained the title Pasha, and was appointed Governor-General of the newly created province of the Eastern Sudan. His territories included Qallabat, Kassala, and the Red Sea littoral. Replacing him as Governor of Massawa was the equally ambitious Arakil Bey. The two quickly became rivals, and as both favoured expansion, there was no way to patch up relations with Abyssinia; instead, Cairo was barraged with proposals for new adventures.[42]

Fuelling these plans was another enforced absence on the part of Yohannis. Despite his anger over the loss of Bogos, the emperor took his army further south to settle problems with Gojjam and Shewa. His British advisor, Kirkham, travelled to Europe to protest against Egyptian aggression, but Otto von Bismarck's response was somewhat typical – 'an unfriendly attitude to the Khedive might lead to damaging German

commercial relations with Egypt.'[43] Even Great Britain decided to 'keep absolutely clear' of the conflict. Abyssinia had no friends.[44]

Munzinger obtained reinforcements in 1872/1873, and continued his efforts to fortify Keren, while preparing to grab more of Hamasen. In 1873, Egyptian forces refurbished and reinforced the old citadel at Qallabat, giving them an additional dagger, this one pointed at Gondar. The explorer A. E. de Cosson, visiting in late 1873, described 'a regiment of infantry in neat cotton uniforms, bronze mountain guns … well supplied with food and ammunition … very clean and in first rate order. It was evident that every preparation had been made for war with Abyssinia.'[45]

Munzinger's new command was divided into four military districts centred on key positions at Keren, Suakin, Kassala, and Roheyta (near Awsa). Each had the equivalent of at least one infantry battalion and supporting artillery. More important locations, like Massawa, even obtained large Armstrong guns for a coastal defence battery. Keren, though, was the nerve centre. With sixteen companies of Sudanese infantry, 200 irregular cavalry, and a field artillery battery that included machine guns, Munzinger called it 'our real military'.[46]

These men played a key role in blunting enemy raids and launching their own offensives. The period of 1873–1875 saw an escalation in such activity, some involving units of over 1,000 men. Arakil suggested further expansion, and the creation of buffer zones to halt Abyssinian counter-attacks. By 1874, he and Munzinger agreed that all of Hamasen should be occupied. The idea of first acquiring Bogos to cover Kassala or Massawa, and then Hamasen to protect Bogos, leads one to suspect that Egypt either had no coherent strategy or was attempting to hit Abyssinia with a geographical version of the ancient Chinese 'death by a thousand slices'. Where was the 'end strategy'? No one in Cairo picked up on this, and as previous missions were all successful, Ismail, always the gambler, was ready for another toss of the dice.[47]

In 1873–1875, skirmishes continued as Egypt initiated steps to cut off Abyssinia's access to ammunition and firearms. Simultaneously, spies were sent in country, to gather political, military, and economic intelligence. Explorers, travellers, and scientific experts, like Heuglin, J. Martin Flad, and Bishop Gobat, were recruited for additional information. Although it is hard to determine if all the raw data was digested before the Gundet Campaign of 1875, efforts to halt the arms sales had immediate diplomatic repercussions.[48]

In 1873, the French Government attempted to send five crates of 'presents' through Massawa to Yohannis. As gifts to Abyssinian rulers often included weapons, Munzinger ordered an inspection. His suspicions confirmed, he proceeded to confiscate a small arsenal of rifles and ammunition. France lodged a formal complaint over this treatment of a 'diplomatic gesture', and in 1874, Ismail allowed the shipment to continue. Munzinger was embarrassed in this affray, as it included an old enemy from the French

diplomatic corps, Charles de Sarzec. Also, having involved the Khedive in this humiliation weakened Munzinger's stock with Cairo. Now was time for another spectacular coup, one that would restore him to good grace.[49]

That same year saw the end of a confused campaign in Gojjam, and in January 1875, a negotiation between Yohannis and Menelik. In both cases, the emperor triumphed. This released significant troops for transfer to the Hamasen front. Raids increased as a result, and both sides stepped up military preparations. Munzinger still favoured expansion, and reported that he was ready to acquire Awsa for Egypt. This would give Ismail direct contact with Menelik, who might then be convinced to reconsider his recent promises.[50]

Arakil presented grander visions, arguing that whatever the Egyptians wanted in Abyssinia, 'a land of perpetual anarchy', it was available. He reported that Yohannis had trouble with his army, and it continued to exist, 'only at a terrible expense to the general population'.[51] Arakil did not believe this force could effectively block Egypt's advance. Munzinger was in complete agreement, insisting that Egypt needed a major confrontation, to teach Yohannis a lesson. In prophetic words to an acquaintance, he said that otherwise, 'peace between King John [Yohannis] and Egypt would be over my dead body.'[52]

11

DESCENT INTO THE MAELSTROM

Egypt invades the Somali Coast, Harar, and Awsa

In this country every stranger is an enemy worth killing.
(Werner Munzinger)

Ismail's imperial dreams ended in the 1870s, when his military reached out to conquer distant lands, but fell back bloodied by defeat. European money markets then closed their doors, and unless willing to sacrifice financial independence, new infusions of capital were unobtainable. For 'Ismail the Magnificent', the glory days ended in 1876.[1]

These problems began in Spring 1875, with Munzinger and Arakil bombarding Cairo with telegrams and letters suggesting it was time for a showdown with Ethiopia. 'Good maps, some intelligent officers, and three to four thousand well-armed men', Arakil wrote, 'were all that one needed for victory.'[2] The Armenian conquistador also claimed victory might secure more favourable terms on the next international loan.[3]

Reports also stressed Abyssinian troop build-ups near Hamasen. Allah al-Din Bey, Munzinger's deputy, described 'an invasion by thousands' in early August. The Khedive responded by reinforcing Massawa with two additional battalions. Yohannis did likewise, massing considerable forces about his home province of Tigre. One of Ismail's experts, J. M. Flad, suggested a passive response would encourage Yohannis, but if strong Egyptian forces invaded Tigre, all would be over, for 'the chiefs will fall into your hands'.[4]

Having invested so much in his army, surrounded by ambitious advisors who promised victory, and facing a looming debt crisis, it is not surprising Ismail opted for a military solution. Stone, Gordon, and Munzinger provided him with a coordinated strategy that placed Egypt in an offensive stance not seen since the days of his illustrious grandfather. Their plan, if successful, would punish Yohannis, and surround his country with a belt of Egyptian territory.

This plan envisioned separate columns heading for the Somali coast, Awsa, Harar, and Adua. Four commands resulted; under the direction of

Henry F. McKillop Pasha, Munzinger, Søren Arendrup Bey, and Muhammad Pasha Rauf. Excepting the latter, this was very much a Neo-Mamluk show. Ismail's western mercenaries could now demonstrate their value as battle commanders.[5]

McKillop, an ex-Royal Navy captain, now Admiral in the Egyptian navy, was entrusted with the most far-reaching goal. He was to secure the Somali coast down to the port city of Kismayu. The latter, which dominates the mouth of the Juba River, was a potential gateway to Equatoria, in addition, the south Somali, or Benadir coast, was an important nexus for caravans from the interior, with their valuable cargoes of ivory, horn, gum, and aromatic woods. As slaves crossed over to Arabia via this same route, Ismail could claim he was fighting that evil by cutting off an important highway to one of its last major markets.[6]

The Somali coast was not a passing fancy. Munzinger was familiar with the area, and considered it an easy conquest. He argued that the long rugged coastline made its few existing ports valuable prizes. The Navy supported this notion, making numerous visits to these cities between 1867 and 1874, showing the flag, intervening in local disputes, or hinting to residents that their ports would soon be controlled by outsiders, but would they prefer overlords who were fellow Muslims, or Christians? In 1870, Muhammad Bey Gamal sailed into Bulhar and Berbera, raising the Egyptian flag. Two years later, Stone argued in favour of a military occupation. Berbera must be fortified and strongly held, he wrote, to counter 'English intrigue from Aden'.[7]

Ports like Berbera or Bulhar were valuable bases for the Egyptian fleet, and their occupation denied such to other powers. With the Italians chased out of Assab, the 'power' most likely to contend with Egypt was the Sultanate of Zanzibar. Formed in 1828, when the Arabian state of Muscat split apart, Zanzibar played a significant role in the economic and political life of nineteenth-century East Africa. Sultan Seyyid Barghash (1870–1888) dominated the island, and was *de jure* ruler of almost 1,000 miles of coast-line from Mogadishu to Cape Delgado. Barghash had his own imperial schemes, and though weakly represented by small garrisons, intended to fight for control of the Benadir. Nature seemed to rule otherwise in 1872, when a typhoon destroyed the entire Zanzibari navy. After this, official contact with the Somali ports was intermittent.[8]

Despite his minuscule army, and no fleet, Barghash still had an important asset in the form of his unofficial Prime Minister, John Kirk, who doubled as political agent and Consul General for Great Britain.[9] Supporting the Sultan, he provided the small African nation with favourable press, in both dispatches to his superiors, and letters for public consumption. In 1873, Barghash outlawed slavery, and although the practice continued, like in Egypt, it was an excellent strategy for improving relations with London.[10]

Two years later, Egypt's slow expansion into the Indian Ocean picked up speed. England's acquiescence to an Egyptian-dominated Somali coast

opposite Aden was interpreted by Ismail to include Benadir. This, combined with new *Firmins* of ownership from the Ottoman Sultan, plus Gordon's idea of a land route to Equatoria, resulted in McKillop's Expedition.[11]

The Khedive issued several sets of orders in mid-September. Gordon was to consolidate his control of the equatorial lakes, and move troops towards the coast. McKillop, and his second-in-command, Charles Chaillé-Long Bey, were first to occupy Mogadishu and Kismayu. Next, establish a military colony capable of feeding itself and producing a surplus for expeditions to the interior. Finally, Chaillé-Long would take a column up the Juba River for a rendezvous with Gordon. Although Ismail required 'the greatest discretion and reserve' in dealings with Zanzibar officials, he told Nubar Pasha, 'I will not put up with any attempt on my rights.'[12]

Backing up this royal threat were 1,300 troops, including a troop of guard lancers, the steam frigate *Muhammad Ali*, a steam corvette, the *Latif*, and three transports. On 6 October, McKillop took his flotilla past Ras Hafun, the limit of Egypt's current influence, and quickly occupied several ports to the south. Ten days later, he faced down the 600 man garrison at Kismayu, the strongest Zanzibari position in Benadir. Under the combined threat of naval artillery and fixed bayonets, the garrison commander hauled down his flag and surrendered the town to Egypt. A final landing put Egyptian soldiers in Lamu, only 300 miles north of Mombasa. Ismail now controlled the Somali coast.[13]

While it is possible Douin exaggerates when he claims the inhabitants of Kismayu '*manifestèrent leur joie*' over this change of masters, there certainly was no opposition.[14] McKillop also established Egyptian garrisons in Brava and Mogadishu. Smaller units guarded coastal positions, like Chaillé-Long's fort on a bluff overlooking the mouth of the Juba. Limited efforts to travel up river ended near Bardera, where rapids blocked further navigation. Even if these could be crossed, Chaillé-Long's mission to link up with Gordon was hardly feasible. Faulty maps had created a mistaken belief that Equatoria was but several hundred miles from the sea. In reality, the closest Egyptian soldiers faced a 1,500-mile trek through some very harsh terrain. The linking of Equatoria to the Indian Ocean was hardly possible without a railroad.[15]

Next, Egypt's miserable quartermaster service struck a new blow. McKillop's fleet was low on fuel, and with none in nearby Red Sea ports, he sent a steamer to Zanzibar! Although Barghash agreed to sell 400 tons of coal, he tersely directed the Egyptians to take their purchase and leave Benadir. By now Ismail announced that the purpose of his invasion was motivated by a desire 'to bring order to a slave-dealing and savage place destitute of any fixed rule, and quite devoid of security of life or property'.[16] Kirk provided a very different spin, countering with a long dispatch that described 'a filibustering expedition, organized by the Khedive and commanded by British adventurers, worthy of the palmy days of the buccaneers'.[17]

Firing off his angry dispatch, Kirk next commandeered *HMS Thetis*, and steamed to Brava. Denied a landing, he bullied his way ashore with a threat of bombardment, and told the Egyptians to leave. Next, he informed London, requesting support for Zanzibar. At this point, the Foreign Office telegraphed Cairo that Ismail's financial credit 'will be seriously impaired by useless and distant wars'.[18] With cash flow a vital concern, and his fleet again short of coal, the Khedive caved in, and on 25 December, McKillop was instructed to 'Withdraw your command at once and return to Egypt'.[19]

A far more successful conquistador, Muhammad Rauf, was organizing his domain while McKillop led the fleet back home. An officer with considerable experience, Rauf had served with Baker, and commanded the garrison at Gondokoro. Promoted to *Liwa*, and given new responsibilities in July 1875. His target was Harar, a city with strategic, economic, and cultural value to Egypt. First, it bordered on Shewa, and could provide for stronger links with Menelik's regime. In addition, a garrison here could cover the fresh-water sources for Red Sea ports like Berbera and Zeila. Second, Harar exported coffee, food, gums, ostrich feathers, slaves, and ivory, all valuable commodities in either regional or international markets. Banditry, plus the feeble state of local harbours, reduced the trade's potential, but Egyptian-imposed law and order, along with development plans, were expected to significantly increase volume. Finally, the city's long Islamic history made it an important centre for local Muslims. Since these people were viewed as potential allies, Egypt might play on the theme of co-religionists against Christian Ethiopia.[20]

Ismail secured the port of Zeila on 18 July 1875, and it became the headquarters for his invasion force. Located 180 miles from the coast, Harar was an army affair. Rauf's force included five infantry companies, 236 *Bashi Bazouks*, two mountain howitzers, and two rocket tubes. As usual, the logistical support was haphazard, so Rauf extemporized by purchasing 250 camels on the spot.[21]

On 9 August the Egyptians headed into the Somali wilderness. Marching through rock-strewn gullies and dry river beds, the Egyptians were in the *Guban*, an arid zone that produced normal temperatures of 105 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit from May to September. Very little vegetation remained after such scorching summers, and water was also in short supply. They also had to pass through the lands of the Issa Somalis, a truculent people easy to insult and quick to fight. With only a limited number of matchlocks, or 'Tower'-type percussion muskets, most local soldiers were armed with several javelins, a spear, sword, and shield. Some employed clubs, bows, hatchets, or, rarely, a pistol. Despite the antiquated arsenal, Issa clans were not easy opponents, and passing without incident was certainly a good omen.[22]

By 3 October, acacias and other thorn bushes appeared as Rauf and his men marched into the highlands. Harar was located in this upwards-tilting

plateau, where climate, fodder, and water supplies all improved. Getting there required a difficult march where the complete lack of roads sometimes slowed travel to less than 2 miles per day.[23]

Now Rauf was in lands dominated by the Oromo. These people, not the citizens of Harar, were the real obstacle to an invader. Oromos had significant numbers of cavalry, and, although armed mainly with cut and thrust weapons, were deadly opponents. *Bimbashi* Muhammad Muktar described them as 'dangerous warriors, capable of rapid movement'.[24] He goes on to report on their excellent choice of battlefields, 'the Oromo might be savages,' wrote Muktar, 'but they knew how to make good use of terrain.'[25]

Rauf expected the most resistance from Oromo groups about Harar. Their loose confederation, *Afran-Qallu* ['Four Sons of Qallu'], mustered several thousand troops, most of whom took up blocking positions in the hills near Iftur and Igu.[26] Close to Harar, these featured ravines, gullies, and other cover that allowed Oromos to quickly close with their rifle-armed enemies. For two hours on 25 September, *Afran-Qallu* soldiers hurled themselves at Egyptian squares, but were driven back to the second position. At Igu, the resistance increased as Orfo Jilo Biko, the Oromo commander, directed attacks on both flanks. Muhammad Rauf's skilful use of howitzer and rocket fire ended the offensive, and allowed for an Egyptian victory.[27]

On 30 September, Harari notables met with Rauf. Among them was Ali Abu Bakr, who offered to betray his cousin, the Emir of Harar, and submit to Egyptian authority. By 10 October, Rauf placed his artillery on Mount Hakim, which dominates the city, and demanded its surrender. Resistance collapsed and the Khedival standard flew over Harar.[28]

Rauf, now governor of Harar, Zeila, and Berbera, immediately instituted a crash course on development. His troops were involved in construction work on barracks, supply depots, roads, and a mosque. Mapping expeditions charted routes, and a caravan station was constructed at Gildessa, the oasis stop for trade between Shewa, Harar and Zeila. Rauf also directed improvements for his coastal cities, recognizing that success required an integrated plan for the entire region. Harar blossomed into a statistical anomaly, for unlike most of Ismail's conquests, it showed a net gain in revenue over expenditure.[29]

Far less successful was a campaign directed against the Oromo. Despite the victory at Igu, Oromo bands were still at large, and most travellers agreed that the area around Harar was 'always very dangerous'.[30] Rauf's men greatly strengthened the city defences in the winter of 1875–1876. A fort was built atop Mount Hakim, along with a smaller one to guard the north-west. Both maintained a battery of howitzers and Krupp guns, more than sufficient to break up a concentration of enemy soldiers. Outside their range, however, Oromo cavalry were a match for the mainly infantry force available to Rauf. Starting in January, he arranged for a temporary truce, and used it to bring in significant reinforcements and supplies. By February,

the Egyptians maintained a brigade of infantry, 600 *Bashi Bazouks*, 200 cavalry, two batteries of mountain howitzers, and 16 rocket tubes. Supporting this garrison was a battalion with machine-guns and artillery at Berbera, 400 more infantry at the port's water source, Dobar, and a smaller force at Zeila. Although not fast enough to chase down their mobile enemy, the Egyptians were firmly in control of the urban centres.[31]

Oromo attacks on the city came to an end by March, then Rauf initiated a counter-offensive. The result was a series of low-intensity campaigns, featuring an elusive enemy, and few significant battles. Gildessa was secured at this time, and a juncture was now possible with Menelik. Although the Oromo remained in the field until Egypt pulled out of the city in 1885, Rauf obtained all of his objectives, and did so with minimal losses.[32]

It is instructive to note that these accomplishments were made without the help of foreign mercenaries. The conquest of Harar was an Egyptian production, even down to the enlisted ranks, of which only 25 per cent were Sudanese. Despite this, Rauf was relieved of his command in 1878 when Gordon, then Governor-General of the Sudan, accused his subordinate of mismanagement, oppression, and slave trading. Rauf was shipped back home, and replaced by Radouan Pasha, a naval officer. No details are available for Rauf's dismissal, but jealousy, political intrigue, or a personality clash makes far more sense than Gordon's official explanation.[33]

Muhammad Pasha Nadi took over the governorship in 1880. With him came reinforcements, including a squadron of dragoons and cuirassiers, the latter being sent as a morale booster and to impress the locals. Muhammad re-instituted the aggressive policies of Rauf, sending his command on regular forays against hostile forces. He also strengthened the fortifications, and recruited a police force capable of para-military functions. Energetic almost to a fault, Muhammad brought his troops up to high degrees of discipline and morale.[34]

These were no small accomplishments in 1881–1882, when money and supplies were almost non-existent throughout the Egyptian Empire. Harar being the most isolated province, its garrison was greatly affected by these problems. Muhammad's response was traditional, he sent his men on raiding expeditions, ordering them to steal food from the Oromo. He also used captured livestock for back pay and current salaries.[35] These efforts alleviated the food shortage, but also stirred up previously neutral Oromo groups. Although hostilities increased as a result, Egyptian forces maintained control until problems in the Sudan required the government to abandon Harar. The austere financial programme of post-1882 Egypt did not allow for a large army, and there simply were not enough troops to hold both locations. Radouan Pasha returned to direct the evacuation, one that required a five-battalion offensive to clear away Oromo troops. In April 1885, the last Egyptian soldier left Harar; thus did Ismail's only successful venture come to a conclusion.[36]

Another expedition ended much quicker, and in bloody disaster. Directed by Munzinger, this was the culmination of Arakil's plan for an occupation of the Awsa salt plains. Though Munzinger dismissed the region as worthless, he agreed to conquer the area near Anfile and Awsa.[37] Stone supported this move, insisting that the land grab include all adjoining coastal zones. By doing so, the French enclave at Obok lost its hinterland, and would be impossible to develop.[38]

Control of Awsa also placed Egypt close to Liche and Woreilu, centres of Shewan power. With this in mind, Ismail instructed Munzinger to employ 'great prudence' in his conquest so as to avoid any friction with Menelik. Indeed, a key element in this mission was for the Egyptians to convoy important gifts to the Negus. These included 500 Minié rifles, a cannon, and ammunition for both. Considering that Menelik's army had only 3,000 rifles in 1867, this was a significant present. Travelling with these firearms was *Aleqa* Birru Wolda Giyorgis, the turncoat from Yohannis's court who now served as Menelik's ambassador to Egypt. He brought with him a promise that Ismail could send a Coptic bishop. No small offer, this would provide tremendous prestige to Shewa, while simultaneously eliminating the monopoly Tigre held in this regard.[39]

Birru had a price on his head, and 500 muskets plus ammunition were valuable, almost beyond price, to most Abyssinian leaders. Despite the obvious need for convoy duties, Munzinger took only two Egyptian and one Sudanese infantry companies, some *Bashi Bazouks*, 47 gunners, a pair of mountain howitzers and a pair of rocket tubes. The force, which totalled about 400 men, seems woefully inadequate for completion of even one aspect of this mission. Admittedly, in previous adventures, the explorer bluffed his way through several dangerous situations, and possibly he expected to do the same in 1875. As Munzinger was the world's leading expert on this region, who could argue otherwise?[40]

Egyptian steamers landed the party at Tadjoura on 5 October 1875. Although the 'incredibly lazy' locals and 'magnificent' climate impressed the Italian naval mercenary, Privileggio Bey, the port was hardly the best jump-off point. The English discounted its use in 1867, due to a lack of fresh water and the harsh local terrains. Ismail and Stone, however, neither of whom ever came close to the site, saw Tadjoura as a significant strategic position. Samuel Lockett Bey recalled his very first duties on joining the Egyptian military, as designing barracks and fortifications for the town.[41]

Once on shore, Munzinger's troops faced a gruelling march through 'volcanic rock, hot sands, and the most sultry climate in the world'.[42] In addition, there was little vegetation, lava sheets broken by tall volcanic cones, and occasional ponds of sticky salt brine. In the plains near Lake Assal, the lowest point on the continent of Africa, salt beds were up to 100 feet deep, the temperature could reach 147 degrees F, and humidity 95 per

cent. Fresh water was obtainable, but often it required digging deep into the hard ground for a large supply.[43]

Although not unexpected, a lack of guides compounded this problem. During an earlier mission, Munzinger claimed locals wanted nobody aware of their geography; as 'this is the only safeguard to their independence'.[44] Saying this discounted courage and cold steel – a big mistake. He was moving against the Afar, a bellicose people shaped by their harsh environment. Awsa's Sultan Muhammad Hanfare, sometimes called Illalta, was unfamiliar with Munzinger's reputation, but noted for a willingness to fight any and all invaders.[45]

More mundane matters occupied the expedition's leader. First, very few camels were available, so supplies were cut to a bare minimum. Then the fifty-four *Bashi Bazouks*, valuable skirmishers, refused to go on unless offered more pay. Munzinger refused, sending them back to Suakin. Finally, leaving an Egyptian company to guard Tadjoura, he departed on 27 October. Too late, a telegram arrived from Nubar Pasha calling off the operation.[46]

Munzinger proceeded along a dry river bed towards Awsa. Heat plus hard going limited his advance to a 4-hour march in the morning, then a long break, followed by a 2-hour march in the afternoon. By 7 November, the Egyptians had run out of food, and were eating their camels. Capturing local animals helped feed hungry bellies, but also stirred up Afar warriors. Two days later, a difference of opinion caused most of Munzinger's guides to quit, and that night, some of the camel drivers deserted. It turned out that several of the guides were agents of Muhammad Hanfare, and had purposely misled the Egyptians. Skirmishes with Awsa forces began on 9 November, and grew to a serious level six days later. Still Munzinger pushed on, and by 13 November was camped near Lake Assal.[47]

Here he dug in on a crest, placing artillery, stores, and a company of infantry. The rest of his command built a *zariba* in a stream bed, but exhausted, failed to establish sentries. On 14 November, taking advantage of the sleeping Egyptians, Awsa troops launched a surprise night assault. Key elements overran the artillery, and another team made for Munzinger's tent. In the mass confusion, he was able to shoot three attackers, before falling mortally wounded. Many Egyptians were killed in the first rush, and Izzet Bey, the second-in-command, ordered the survivors to fall back into the streambed. Here they formed square, and fired volleys into the now disorganized Afars, who themselves were more interested in looting the camp. Two counter-attacks followed, the second regaining the crest, and allowing for a barrage of rocket fire. This blasted the enemy troops, causing a hasty retreat.[48]

About half the command survived this attack. Spiking guns, and abandoning most of their equipment, Izzet returned to Tadjoura on 21 November. The losses were so high, Privileggio Bey landed sailors and guns

to help defend the port from Awsa attacks. Munzinger, Birru, and 172 soldiers were dead, all the gifts for Menelik lost, and Egyptian prestige was greatly reduced. Although naval units reinforced Tadjoura, Munzinger's defeat was a disaster that ruined part of Ismail's overall strategy. Shewa never became an Egyptian ally, but as the next chapter will demonstrate, this was just the start of a long string of disappointments for the Khedive.[49]

12

A RIDGE TOO FAR

The Gundet Campaign

> And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great terror shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her wealth, and her foundations shall be uprooted.
>
> (Ezekiel 30: 4)

Ismail's grandiose plan for an African empire was put to the test in late 1875. The most important of his many expeditions, the invasion of Tigre, was designed to force a peace with Yohannis. While the Khedive did not envision a complete conquest of Abyssinia, at least for the time being, this command was expected to secure the emperor's recognition that disputed territories like Hamasen, were now part of Egypt.[1]

Abyssinian resistance was expected, but most contemporary observers shared the view of Samuel Lockett Bey, who told a friend, 'I think Abyssinia will be a part of Egypt before many months.'[2] His opinion was backed up by a well-drilled military machine armed with Remington rifles, Gatling machine-guns, and Krupp artillery – the epitome of a modern colonial army. The Abyssinian military, albeit more numerous, were supposed to be mainly armed 'with bad muskets, spears or only knives'.[3] Most official reports discounted Yohannis as a general, and his men as targets to be bowled over by Egypt's superior technology. All agreed that Cairo's resources were 'quite sufficient' for victory.[4]

Few credited any significant advantage for the Abyssinians defending their home ground, or that geography might put natural roadblocks in the way of a quick victory. However, Egypt's *État Major* possessed very few maps of Tigre, and had but a general idea of the overall terrain its troops would encounter.[5] Vague notions of landscape were matched by an equally poor intelligence of Abyssinia's military potential. Its troop strengths and capabilities were underestimated by Stone's *État Major*, and by men on the scene, like Arakil. In their defence, it should be noted that recent history had produced strong arguments in favour of such views. Only eight years before, during the Magdala Campaign, an Anglo-Indian army marched 400 miles,

brushed aside all resistance, and with minimal losses, destroyed the forces of Emperor Tewodros. Not only were these events well covered in print, but in 1870, two of Ismail's American mercenaries, Charles Chaillé-Long and Beverly Kennon, exchanged information with Sir Robert Napier, the commander of this foray.[6]

The collected data was sufficient to encourage Ismail's authorization of what he described as 'a defence of the Egyptian frontier'.[7] The man chosen to direct this defence was Søren Adolph Arendrup Bey, Egypt's only Danish mercenary. Why Arendrup? This is a question yet unanswered by Egyptian, American, or European sources, but the appointment began what historian Richard Hill described as 'a tragi-comedy of military mismanagement'.[8]

Arendrup was a multi-lingual former captain of foot artillery, and had experience as a ballistics expert and ordnance inspector. His Danish military career lasted from 1857 to 1863, and there are no records of his participation in Denmark's war with Austria and Prussia in 1864. Health problems required his move to a warm climate, so Arendrup travelled to Egypt. Once there, his charm and expertise, along with fluent command of English and French, made employment possible with Stone's *État Major*. In 1872, Arendrup was made *qaimmaqan* and appointed first-secretary to the Chief of the *État Major*. Later, he provided valuable advice and reports on Scandinavian artillery works.[9]

These were the technical services that Egypt needed from her mercenaries. As for command, native officers were available, and even if there was a shortage, other foreigners were far better qualified. The words of another Neo-Mamluk, Charles Graves, seem to sum up the consensus of Western opinion: 'He was a very rash and impetuous man, and had no experience whatever.'[10] It is thus very hard to determine why Stone supported Arendrup's candidacy, or why Ismail picked him. One could speculate that Stone's bitter experience, after the Ball's Bluff fiasco, led him to distrust all but the closest and most loyal lieutenants. He also desired to increase the prestige and power of the *État Major*, therefore Arendrup, his personal secretary, was the man for the job. As for the Khedive, why not trust this senior mercenary, especially since Ismail always had too many irons in the fire to ever keep track of just one?[11]

Although poorly prepared himself, Arendrup did obtain a competent staff. His second-in-command, Rustum Bey Naji, was a veteran of Egypt's recent victories in Crete, while *Bimbashi* Jacob Durholz was a Swiss mercenary with a long record of service in the Neapolitan and Papal armies. James A. Dennison, another *bimbashi*, was a West-Pointer with experience from the American Civil War. Added later were the interesting pair of Arakil Bey, and *Graf* Wilmos von Zichy. The latter was a Hungarian aristocrat and former cavalry officer, who decided to interrupt his safari, and serve as a scout for Arendrup.[12]

Arendrup and his staff were entrusted with several missions. First, they were expected to produce maps and collect intelligence on Abyssinian forces

in Tigre. Next, protect Egyptian subjects from abuse, and restore Cairo's prestige among these people. Finally, Ismail ordered Arendrup to 'take the offensive, if possible', and march on Adua. The Khedive reasoned that capturing this, Tigre's most important economic and political centre, would force Yohannis to give up Hamasen in exchange for its return, 'and demonstrate the values of living in peace with Egypt'.[13]

Arendrup prepared to advance in November; excellent timing as regards the local climate. The Abyssinian highlands featured two rainy seasons, *balg*, the 'little rains' of March to May, and *keramt*, the 'big rains' of June to September. The resulting water filled numerous rocky channels, creating torrents which sometimes lasted up to 100 days. Red clay, the region's most common soil, was converted into a clinging mud by these rains, which made travel difficult for foot traffic, and nearly impossible for wheeled transport. A fall/winter campaign avoided these.[14]

Radical changes of temperature were common, the explorer Hamilton noting a gigantic hail storm so severe, that the stones stung his feet through thick leather boots. The Earl of Mayo recorded frost one morning; on the next, he could not bear to wear a coat. As such freak atmospheric conditions were unavoidable, Egyptian invaders had to be prepared for cold evenings and hot days, with temperature variations of ninety degrees being far from uncommon. They also faced shorter days, sunshine lasting for only ten to eleven hours in the fall and winter.[15]

Growing seasons and harvest times also figured in this invasion. Abyssinian farmers planted wheat, tef and other crops in July through August, and harvested them in November. Some barley and vetch was planted afterwards, but most farming ended in late fall when fields were burned to kill off vermin. Hitting Abyssinia in November was an intelligent choice, for some soldiers were still occupied with farming. In addition, Egyptian forces might be able to confiscate these new food supplies, living off the land, and depriving their enemies of sustenance.[16]

Very much a secret operation, Arendrup's command was gathered with such stealth, that even members of the *État Major* were unaware of his departure. Cairo provided him with two *chasseur* battalions, sixteen companies of Egypt's best light infantry. He was also given six companies of Sudanese regulars from Keren, twelve mountain howitzers, six rocket tubes, and artillerymen for crews. Significant in its absence was a mounted complement – the 'eyes and ears' of a nineteenth-century army. Arrendrup was later able to recruit 100 Beni Amir cavalry, plus a dozen *Bashi Bazouks*, and gave the lot over to von Zichy, with orders to create a scout force. In total, maybe 3,500 men, and since this was a large unit by the standards of colonial warfare, few expected any serious trouble.[17]

McKillop Pasha dropped the expedition off in early September, at Massawa, a place that always lived up to its reputation as a hell-hole. Located in the hot arid belt that surrounds the Abyssinian highlands, it was

dirty, unhealthy, and one of the Egyptian Army's more unpopular postings. Mainly an island, with a causeway connecting it to land, Massawa was also the best port on the African side of the Red Sea. In addition, it featured the closest debarkation point for large parties wanting quick access to the Abyssinian highlands. A pack mule took only 60 hours to travel from here to Adua.[18]

Unfortunately, buying that pack mule was difficult. These animals, along with horses, were the best means for moving men and supplies into the hills, but in Massawa, their life expectancy was so low, that few were available for Arendrup's supply train. Camels, on the other hand, were inexpensive and plentiful; however, they were not well suited for travel in the mountains. Not prepared to send equine transport from other locations, the Egyptians were forced to buy camels. This restricted their options during the advance on Adua, some routes being simply impossible for camels.[19]

Weeks went by while supplies and pack camels were organized. Lockett Bey, continuing his cartographic work on the spot, complained to a friend, 'I have spent a most dreadful summer here in the hottest place in the world … You may bless the stars that so ordained it that you should never come to Egypt.'[20] He, and many other visitors, complained of the horrible smells, and the 'dead, heavy, damp, suffocating *closeness*' that passed for a climate at Massawa.[21]

In this unhealthy miasma, it was not uncommon for over one-quarter of the garrison to be seriously ill. Fall and winter were less dangerous seasons, but still Arendrup strove to organize his men, and on 2 October, the vanguard moved towards the highlands. Three days later, Arendrup ran into the Ghinda district, and its ruler, 'General' Kirkham – Yohannis's agent and ex-drill master. He was expected to use his British citizenship to halt, or at least delay, the Egyptian invasion. Instead, Arendrup ordered Kirkham's arrest, hauled down the Union Jack, and sent a high-handed letter to the Emperor, demanding settlement of all border questions.[22]

Not waiting for an answer, the Dane advanced quickly towards Adua. Advised by Arakil Bey and a French Catholic missionary, *Abbé* Duflot, he directed the march towards Khaya Khor and Godofelassie. At the same time, Arendrup declined to maintain significant reserves along his lines of communication with Massawa. Practically, this allowed him to maintain greater power in his strike force. Of course, with no supports to fall back on, it would also magnify the results of a defeat. Historian Teferi Teklehaimanot suggests that this thrust was designed to surprise the Abyssinians, who were not yet completely mobilized.[23] If so, such was lost when Arendrup allowed a French diplomat to pass through his lines, *with a shipment of rifles* that were gifts for Yohannis! A day later, a pair of English journalists passed by.[24]

With the occupation of Ghinda, the Egyptians were in *qolla* country, a hot lowland region, which although not a real desert, featured little vegetation

and very rough terrain (Figure 12.1). Mainly, it consisted of sandy hills, dry river beds, called *khors*, and day-long dust storms that could reduce visibility to a few yards. Most travellers tried to get through this region as fast as possible, for Arendrup such speed was mandatory, as his camels could not survive on the available fodder.[25]

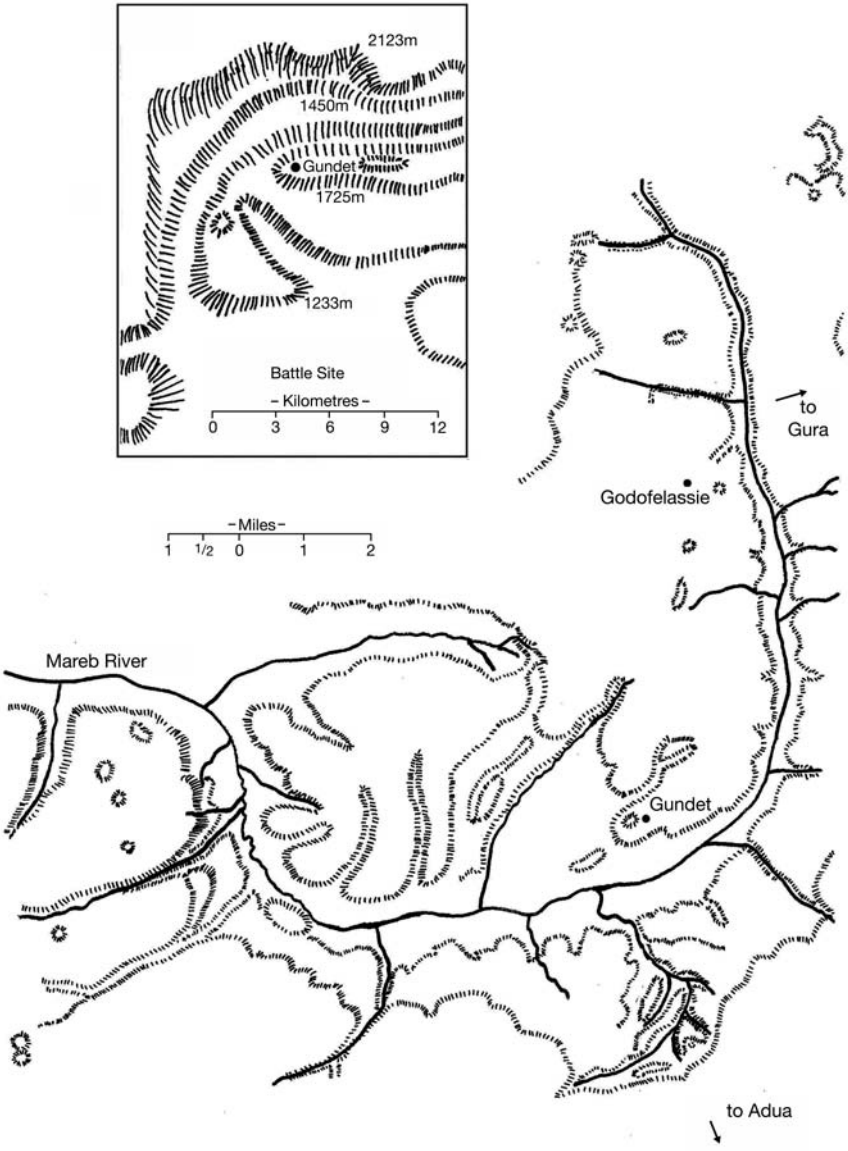

Figure 12.1 Gundet Campaign (November 1875)
Area map as per Heuglin, Munzinger and D'Abbadie; Battle Site as per Simon.

Entering the highlands presented new challenges from radically different terrain. Lockett describes its main features as 'deep narrow defiles and steep zigzag passes'.[26] Some ravines were up to a half mile deep, and climbing up and down the sharp escarpment that begins the highlands was a tedious and difficult task. Arendrup found that without roads, wheeled vehicles were not functional here; luckily his artillery were rocket tubes or mountain howitzers, two items which disassembled for transport on camel back.[27]

Another distinguishing feature of the highlands was significant quantities of plant life. Augustus Wylde described the mountain sides 'as one dense mass of trees with thick undergrowth'.[28] Many were giant acacias, or mimosas, with nasty thorns, and, unless cut down, could block passage to man or beast. These forests were thick enough that rifle fire was sometimes deflected by the many trunks, and vast quantities of guinea fowl could warn of advancing troops by their noisy flight.[29]

Building roads through these tangles was an important part of Arendrup's mission. In some cases, blasting was necessary to create even mediocre improvements. The explorer Paul Traub described some of the finished products as 'near vertical'.[30] Still, work progressed, and by January, field artillery could, with difficulty, be taken from the seacoast to the interior.[31]

The highland's larger population also impacted on terrain features. The local peoples were a mix of Christian and Muslim farmers, who extensively cultivated the plateau region. Many villages dotted the area, and their stone huts and compounds could enhance a defensive stance by either side. Some were constructed on flat-topped mountains called *amba*, which often had but one narrow entrance, with sheer escarpments covering every other approach.[32]

Geography played an important role in both campaigns of the Egyptian–Abyssinian War. First, its rugged nature channelled the invaders into limited choices for their advance. Arendrup's reliance on camels for his supply train further reduced these options. Also, the many hills, ravines, and heavy foliage tended to negate Egypt's advantage in firepower, and allowed Abyssinians many opportunities for ambush.

Arendrup sought to avoid such problems by splitting his command. On 2 October, while advancing on Godofelassie, he detached Durholz with four infantry companies, and a small section of engineers. Their mission was to improve the road network. Arendrup then created two columns for his march on Adua. These supported each other, and rendezvoused with a Sudanese battalion on 1 November. The latter met Arendrup's main body at Godofelassie, and continued with it into Hamasen. A master strategist might use divisions like these to hit an enemy simultaneously from several directions. Arendrup, however, was no Napoleon, so the net effect was to reduce his firepower. William Loring Pasha, who knew the area well, said of these moves:[33]

> It is sad to read of the studied dispositions of the small force scattered in still smaller divisions over a mountainous country, about which little is known, in the face of a powerful and wily enemy of whom less is known.

The weather was another source of worry. The cold highland evenings were hard on the Egyptians.[34] Their thin uniforms were insufficient for nighttime guard duties, and even those trying to sleep under tents suffered from a shortage of blankets. Arendrup tried to remedy this with orders for flannel shirts and greatcoats, but as always, Egypt's rotten quartermaster service failed to provide even a fraction of his requests. Fatigue was the immediate result, followed by a drop in morale, ominous beginnings for an already dicey campaign.[35]

Next the small cavalry force was hit by a virulent equine disease. According to one account, 'The cavalry under Colonel Arendrup were completely unhorsed.'[36] While not entirely true, as some horses survived to infect other animals back in Egypt, many died, reducing already weak reconnaissance capabilities. The scout commander, Count von Zichy, attempted to remedy this by confiscating local mules, and showing his cavalry background, pushed for a more rapid advance.[37]

In late October, Arendrup made contact with his Abyssinian enemies, and began to skirmish with the forces of *Dajjazmatch* Marru. The latter retreated, but on 28 October, spies reported Marru, who anticipated reinforcements in the next few days, was still shadowing the invaders. None of this bothered Arendrup, who reported 'the health and morale of the army are excellent'.[38]

Although disappointed that few of Egypt's local allies, and none of the area's Catholics joined his forces, Arendrup picked up some valuable reinforcements at Adi Qala. Here he met his Sudanese battalion, and its commander, the decorated Mexican veteran, *Qaimmaqam* Faraj Muhammad al-Zayni. By now some of the Egyptians were fatigued from road duties, long marches and the cold. Arendrup decided to create a supply depot here, and leave behind two of the weakest companies, and a pair of guns. In addition he detached Durholz, with two companies and three guns, to guard Catholic mission properties near Saganeti. This reduced the main body to about 2,700 men, but Arendrup was still confident that it was sufficient for victory.[39]

Another important decision reached here was to shift the axis of approach into Tigre. The Egyptians found the original route from Massawa, to Ghinda, to Adi Qala very hard going, and almost impossible for their camel supply train. An alternative was to travel from Massawa to the pass of Khaya Khor, then on to Gundet, and from there, Adua. This second choice was about the same distance, but promised easier travelling. Arendrup figured this new route would reduce his need for depot garrisons, and allow three infantry companies and four guns to rejoin the main force.[40]

Von Zichy strongly endorsed this plan, telling Arendrup it would place the Egyptians within ten hours of the main Abyssinian army. A series of skirmish actions confirmed this, and as the enemy retreated in every case, Arendrup was encouraged to continue. 'I am convinced', he wrote, 'that a continual daytime advance will result in a continual retreat on the part of the enemy.'[41] Faraj and his Sudanese formed a vanguard for these actions, and managed to ambush some Abyssinian cavalrymen on 4 November. Returning from their successful foray, the Sudanese overran a local caravan, carrying off its valuables. Arendrup was incensed, brought Faraj up on charges, and ordered his return to Keren. Richard Hill, a noted historian of the Sudan, argues politics rather than robbery was the real issue, and that Egyptian officers used Arendrup to eliminate a rival. Whatever the case, an officer with extensive combat experience and significant local knowledge was removed from Arendrup's staff. Von Zichy, the zealous, but rash former cavalryman, became the new leader of the vanguard. Taking two companies, he continued Faraj's work, hitting several small Abyssinian detachments as he advanced on the Mareb River.[42]

Friction developed as the rapid advance took the Egyptians deeper into Hamusen. Arendrup's letters complain of fatigue and supply problems. While a rest might reduce the former, the lack of bread and ammunition was serious. Some *baqsumat* and *ful* arrived on 3 November, but not enough. Even worse, his mountain howitzers had only twenty-four rounds per gun, not even enough for a 1-hour heavy bombardment. Although the ammunition shortage was never solved, Arendrup obtained more food by following the time-honoured practice of 'living off the land'. In the words of one observer, the offensive continued because 'the Egyptian army ate its way like locusts through the country'.[43]

By mid-November, several leaders were having second thoughts about Arendrup's pell-mell advance towards Adua. Ismail warned, 'Yohannis' tactics are drawing you deep into Abyssinia … go no further than Adua.'[44] The Khedive went on to confirm that a dragoon squadron, an artillery battery, and four infantry battalions would soon arrive as reinforcements, and to be cautious until then. Even the boastful Arakil had second thoughts, writing to Ismail's confidential secretary, 'does it not seem imprudent to penetrate the interior of Abyssinia with a force of such few men?'[45]

With a very different mind-set, von Zichy drove a force of 3,000 Abyssinians back across the Mareb on 6 November. This drew the Egyptians to the nearby village of Gundet, and began the final chapter of this campaign. Arendrup split his troops into several components by 15 November. The vanguard, with six infantry companies and two guns, was continuing its pursuit, von Zichy sending messages back to Arendrup that all was well. Khaya Khor had five infantry companies and two howitzers under Ali Bey. Durholz and his troops, now separated by a two days' march, were still involved with road work and guard duties. Arendrup controlled the main

body, eleven companies and eight guns, but fractured it again by entrusting half companies to *Bimbashis* James Dennison and Umar Rushdi, ordering them to guard both flanks of the Gundet plateau. It is difficult to determine why Arendrup split up his small army. In an undated fragment of his last despatch, he comments on Yohannis having more troops than anticipated, and the need for reinforcements, or maybe even a withdrawal. Thus it made little sense to divide his command, and seems to reinforce the basic argument that Arendrup had neither the training, nor the experience for such a difficult mission.[46]

Although noted for some spectacular pinnacle rocks, Gundet valley was fairly typical of the area. A sharp drop of 800 to 1,000 feet put one there from the Adi Qala road. Three sides were almost perpendicular, and required zig-zag trails for access, the fourth, closest to Adua, was less steep due to erosion from the Mareb. Thorny acacia trees were numerous, while basalt rocks and boulders covered the plain (Figure 12.2). Such terrain made firing in line, or defensive squares, a difficult manoeuvre. Seeking combat here reduced Egypt's technological edge in advanced weaponry, as fighting here was a close-range affair. In addition, failure to remove brush and rocks

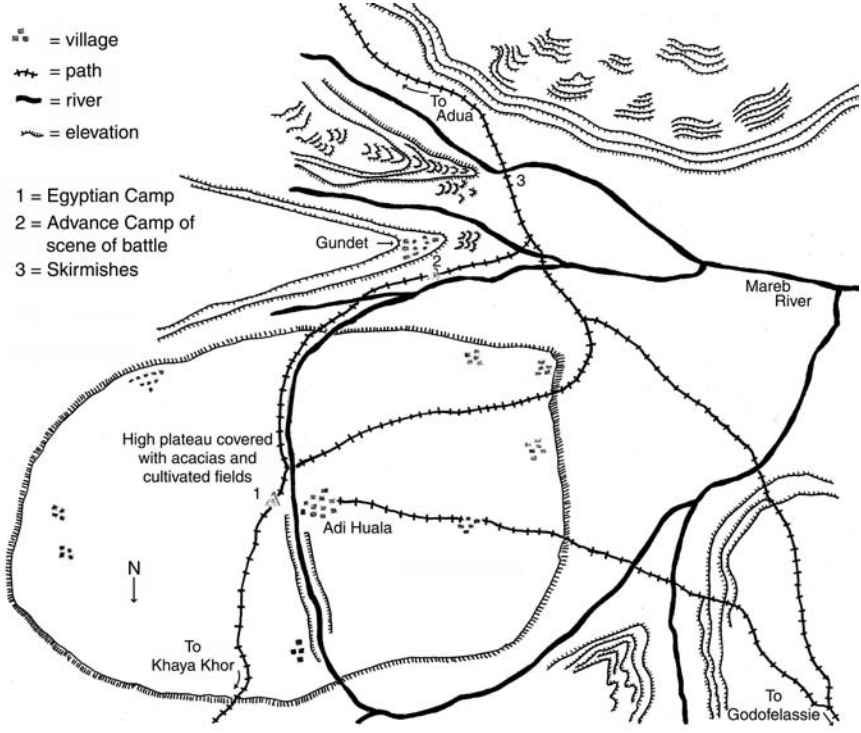

Figure 12.2 Battle of Gundet (16 November 1875)
Source: As per Major Dennison

near his camp was yet another tactical error. Cover like this gave Abyssinians a chance to advance and engage in hand-to-hand combat, where superior numbers played a critical role.[47]

Despite a letter of 11 November, stating his position to be '*très bonne*', Arendrup was in serious trouble.[48] Dennison, who provided one of the few surviving Egyptian accounts of Gundet, described a night when 'the whole valley filled with fires'.[49] Yohannis was fully mobilized, and well aware of the Egyptian dispositions. Estimates of his total numbers vary from 15,000 to 70,000 warriors. Even at the low end, Abyssinia would enjoy a vast numerical advantage over the invaders. Also, the Abyssinians were primed for combat. In the words of historian Sven Rubenson: 'To the vast majority of the Ethiopians this was a religious war, a battle against the descendants of Hagar, the Ismailites, Moabites, and Edomites, who had come from across the sea to destroy God's people.'[50] The Egyptians were unprepared for such numbers. On 13 November, the horde split into attack columns under the direction of *Ras* Araya, plus *Dajjazmatchs* Hagos, Wolde Mikail, and Tessema.[51]

Another Abyssinian commander, albeit only a *Shalaqa*, or 'commander of 1,000', played an important role at Gundet. Alula Engeda ('Abba Guba') directed the 'Parthian Retreat' which had so successfully drawn the Egyptians into the brush and rocks of Gundet valley. Now he prepared a counter-attack against von Zichy. *Dajjazmatch* Wolde Mikail, temporarily the loyal vassal, held a significant cavalry force that was poised to hit the Egyptians if they retreated.[52]

On 16 November, von Zichy, unaware of the numbers against him, continued his advance into a narrow pass. At 09.00 he ran into an ambush. Complete surprise, and masterful leadership, made it impossible for the Egyptians to recover. Alula pounded them with a combination of sniper fire from behind cover, and mass charges for hand-to-hand combat. Heavy casualties in the first few minutes, plus failure to deploy his artillery, led to the quick destruction of von Zichy's command.[53]

Arendrup was over 2 miles away when this action began. Aware his men were involved in a major battle, he directed Dennison and Rushdi to fall back on Adi Qala, while Rustum Bey was to establish a camp guard, and then move towards the Mareb in support of his commander. Arendrup himself took two companies and rushed forward to reinforce von Zichy. Even if the vanguard still survived, this was a critical error. Digging in along the plateau ridge line, with rifles and artillery deployed, was the only viable option for the Egyptians. Instead, Arendrup led his men into a second Abyssinian ambush. Wolde Mikail smashed into the relief force, with an intensity a French observer compared to a 'living hurricane'. The fighting here lasted about 25 minutes, ending with Arendrup shot through the head, and the survivors, in the words of Loring, 'rolled in a bloody mass down the steep incline in a death grapple with their merciless foe'.[54]

Tornado-like blows continued against the next domino, the main camp at Gundet. From 15.00 to 17.00 the Egyptians put up a spirited defence around a core of 300 veterans from Crete. The problem here was too few troops to man the perimeter. Rustum was shot three times while leading bayonet charges to clear out infiltrators. Finally cut down, Arakil took his place, only to be mortally wounded a few minutes later. Still the Egyptians fought, but despite a brave stand, most of this force was destroyed before day's end. Survivors were few, for as Dye put it 'They escaped the bullet only to feel the scimitar, or resisted the club only to be lanced.'[55]

Thus ended the battle of Gundet. Abyssinian casualties were between 250 and 900 men, killed or wounded. Egyptian losses were horrific, nearly 2,000 killed or taken prisoner. In addition, Yohannis obtained 6 howitzers, 2,500 Remington rifles, ammunition for both, and 70,000 Maria Theresa thalers. It was a momentous victory, for as a chronicler notes, 'the land was washed by the Muslims' blood.' Yohannis ordered the dead to remain unburied, a mute warning to future invaders.[56]

For Dennison and Rushdi, now at Adi Qala, the magnitude of Arendrup's catastrophe was not clear until Yohannis appeared with his victorious troops. Their survival resulted from a stratagem involving surrender negotiations and a very rapid night march. All guns were spiked, and most supplies abandoned. Douin claims that rout was avoided only by Dennison and Rushdi threatening to shoot any man out of ranks. On 18 November, linking up with the garrison at Khaya Khor, there was some talk of marching to the aid of Durholz. This idea quickly was dropped in favour of 'every man for himself'. Unknown to the survivors of Gundet, Durholz was already in retreat, and reached Massawa before the rest.[57]

News of the defeat caused panic in Egypt's Red Sea coastal cities. Fortress commanders refused to send out patrols, and many civilians demanded ship passage elsewhere. Calm returned with the arrival of four new infantry battalions. Meanwhile, in Cairo, Ismail told Nubar Pasha that Egypt's 'honour' must be restored. Despite Yohannis's request for peace, and the warning that 'you are not greater than your forefathers, nor we less than ours', the Khedive began plans for a major invasion of Abyssinia in 1876.[58]

With three-quarters of his 1875 ventures ending in failure, one might question his wisdom and leadership. Certainly the incident with Zanzibar was no major defeat, but the destruction of Munzinger and Arendrup altered the regional balance of power. First, captured weaponry significantly enhanced Abyssinian military power. Even more important, the prestige of Yohannis was such that Menelik and other 'fence sitters' were now willing to assist the Emperor militarily. Also, Egyptian morale was low; many in the army believed that victory over Abyssinia was impossible.[59]

This was due partially to a western-style military force being badly defeated by 'natives'. One could put Munzinger's débâcle down to a small unit hit by bad luck. Gundet was different. By African standards, the

Egyptian troops sent to Tigre were powerful, yet on 16 November, 1,000 of these men were slain in less than 30 minutes. Combine this with rather low Abyssinian casualties, and one can understand the reluctance of Egyptian soldiers for a return match.[60]

The Times called the battle of Gundet a 'Medieval epic', while British anti-slavery spokesman Edmund Sturge went a step further, and compared it to the Swiss victory at Morgarten in 1315. Whatever the case, the Egyptian defeat is a good example of the most significant flaw in Ismail's military – poor quality leadership. Most authors agree that Gundet was the result of Arendrup's poor tactics, which were magnified by the excellent generalship of Yohannis. The latter made good use of cover, and never allowed Egyptian forces a chance to employ their vastly superior firepower. Lockett credits the Abyssinians with 'a superior strategy' that 'inveigled' the Egyptians into a giant trap.[61] The writer agrees, but feels obliged to let the victor, Yohannis IV, have the final word: 'By the intercession of the saints and by God, my soldiers and I are safe and unhurt. By the grace of God I have defeated my enemies. Many Egyptians invaded my land, they are dead.'[62]

13

THE ABYSSINIAN ARMY

> What can you do against people who come boldly up to the muzzles of your guns and stab at the men who are serving them?

An Egyptian artillery officer posed this question to explorer A. E. de Cosson in 1876.[1] The point of their discussion was the recent Abyssinian victory at Gundet, one of the few cases where African troops had smashed an imperialist invasion. While Zulus, Sudanese or other African people also had their victories, these were pyrrhic and transitory. Superior technology, backed by powerful economies, and often good generalship, quickly overturned these setbacks.

Abyssinia was the exception. Why did it remain independent when all the other African states had been destroyed and converted into colonies? Contemporary imperialists excused their one failure as the result of 'sheer accident', 'luck', or 'religious fanaticism'. These elements, however, can hardly explain Abyssinian armies fighting countless skirmishes, and fifteen major battles, in the period 1867 to 1896, emerging victorious from the vast majority.[2] This ancient land's geography is advanced as another excuse, but noted historian Sven Rubenson discounts such. 'Geography', he argues, 'played almost no role at all in the preservation of Abyssinia's independence.'[3] While it is impossible to discount the role of terrain in warfare, far more significant was Abyssinia's capability to defend herself. To do so required a military using modern tactics and weapons. Egyptian invaders were completely unprepared for such during the battles of 1875–1876, and the result was calamitous defeat.

Abyssinia produced this unique accomplishment due to the leadership of two remarkable men: the Emperors Tewodros II and Yohannis IV. Each possessed significant martial talents along with an intuitive grasp of the realities of modern warfare. With broad strokes, one might identify Tewodros as innovator, and Yohannis as master tactician. Under their direction, the nation's military evolved into a first-rate army; a force more than able to hold its own against invaders.

First, Abyssinian armies were large, or, as Charles Gordon put it, 'everyone is a brigand or a soldier in Abyssinia.'[4] Manpower is not by itself a guarantee of victory, but without replacements and reserves, military policy is difficult to execute. Abyssinia's internal politics placed Tewodros II in a serious handicap at Aroge, where General Robert Napier's Anglo-Indian force marched 400 miles, yet still outnumbered the Emperor 13,000 to 7,000 men. As imperialist troops often had both a logistical and technological edge, such odds almost always guaranteed defeat.[5]

Following Tewodros as *Negus Negast*, Yohannis IV overcame this handicap. His rise to power was the product of intricate diplomacy, political savvy and good generalship. Very much aware that the fall of Tewodros resulted, not just from a better armed foreign invader, but also because of political disunity at home, Yohannis strove to solidify his power base, while, at the same time, building up Abyssinia's military machine.[6]

Success in his first endeavour was obvious from the increased size of Abyssinian armies. Tewodros could rarely amass more than 15,000 troops. Yohannis mustered 32,000 men in 1873; three years later, he threw 64,000 soldiers against the Egyptians. By 1880, he could muster an army with 40,000 riflemen and 100,000 more with swords and spears. In addition, unlike Tewodros, Yohannis did not have to face Abyssinians working with the invaders. To be sure, *Negus* Menelik of Shewa and *Ras* [Grand Duke] Adal of Gojjam, the two major fence-sitters of 1875, refused to send any of their powerful armies to aid the Emperor in his war with Egypt, still there were few 'quislings' to directly assist the enemy.[7]

How did an Emperor recruit such numbers? Feudal inducements and a sense of patriotism are part of the answer. In the war with Egypt (1875–1884), these were enhanced by the Coptic Church, whose leader, or *Abun*, exhorted his flock to defend the nation against Muslim invaders. Religion had always played an important role in Abyssinia's military machine; an example of this can be seen in 1876 when the Emperor addressed his soldiers before Gura, saying that 'dying for the faith is life in Heaven'.[8] *Ras* Alula took a different track by warning slackers that if they ran away, he would 'throw their bodies to wild animals and their souls to Hell'![9]

Churchmen backed up such claims, with promises of excommunication for cowards, spiritual rewards for the faithful, and by personal example. Nowhere was this more clearly evident than at Gura (1876), where *Abuna* Atenatewos fought in the front ranks and was mortally wounded. Soldiers could also be encouraged by an army's possession of a *tabot*, an important religious relic, like the image of a saint, or the Ark of the Covenant. Both Yohannis and Menilik used the Tabot of the Virgin Mary to stir the religious and martial ardour of their troops. During peace time, religious festivals were often used to recruit new troops.[10]

While there is little doubt that religion aided the state in building support for a military effort, one suspects that the bellicose nature of Abyssinia's

warrior caste needed little encouragement to join battle with a traditional foe. Augustus Wylde, a keen observer of the region, notes 'they are truculent, and know how to fight and defend their property, which makes Abyssinians such a hard nut to crack for the Muslims.'[11] The American mercenary Samuel Lockett called them 'warlike, lovers of liberty and possessed of great courage', while the editor of Britain's official history of the war against Tewodros noted that even outnumbered and outgunned, 'they returned again and again to attack, whenever the ground favoured them.' Combine these attributes with competent leadership, and it is easy to visualize the high state of morale in Abyssinia's military.[12]

While many Abyssinians served out of loyalty to *geta* [master], *hagar* [country] and *haymanot* [religion], others sought glory, loot, or a chance to gain some imperial real estate. The last was a powerful inducement. The emperor could award land to his faithful veterans as *maderiya*, on a temporary basis, or *riste-gult*, which was permanent and inheritable. Families maintained the latter by providing the Emperor with soldiers.[13] *Gebar* [serfs] also came with such grants, and could range from 10 to a common soldier, or 1,000 for general officers such as a *Ras* or *Dajjazmatch*.[14] Lesser, but much sought after, awards consisted of gilt and silver ornaments, lions' manes, and the *kufta*, the highest of these, a brimless cap of purple velvet embellished with rich gold and silver embroidery.[15]

The overall effects of nationalism, religion, and reward allowed Abyssinia's leaders to raise large armies. These troops were a far cry from the orderly ranks and neat white uniforms of Egyptian armies. While there was structure, it was feudal in nature with commanders given ranks like those of: *fitawarari* [advance guard], *dajjazmatch* [reserves], *kegnazmatch* [right flank] and *grazmatch* [left flank].[16] Junior officers ranged from *shaleka* [commander of 1,000] to *asiraleka* [commander of 10]. As demonstrated by men like *Ras* Alula Engeda, officer slots were not restricted to the nobility, and talent could rise from humble origins.[17]

The *Negus Negast* appointed such, and directed grand strategy. Senior officers helped raise armies, advised the emperor, and participated in tactical combat. In battle they encouraged the rank and file with their bravery while simultaneously searching for weak points in an enemy line. Each directed columns ranging from 2,000 to 10,000 *ashkar* (retainers), and the best knew exactly when to transform such from a cloud of skirmishers into a tight mass for hand-to-hand combat.[18]

Battle plans were laid out and even practised beforehand. Once combat began, some control was possible via mounted messengers or the sounds of flutes, trumpets and drums. Of these, the *negarit*, which resembles a kettledrum, was most often employed. The largest and most ornate of such not only provided somewhat noisy instruction, but also served to indicate the position of the Emperor's battlefield headquarters. More numerous were the *sallay*, singers who specialized in war-chants which urged soldiers to charge. It must

be noted, however, that once a charge began, Abyssinian martial music provided but a morale stimulus, for control was now over until battle's end. Tactical direction ended here, and was only regained after soldiers obtained loot and prisoners. This was probably the most significant flaw in Abyssinia's military machine. It made complete destruction of a defeated enemy difficult.[19]

Traditionally, Abyssinian armies maintained an all-round defence with elite troops occupying the *gadam*, or 'central place'. Such picked forces, called *elfign ashkar*, had the best weapons and training. The remaining soldiers were a notch above what might be considered standard African levies. Trained from youth, when they played martial games like *waffo wigia* or *gugs*, the *ashkar* were first-rate soldiers. Most fought on foot, supported by small bodies of elite Oromo cavalry.[20]

In previous battles, the Abyssinians were often brave to the point of foolhardiness. However, by the 1870s, most were familiar with the killing zone created by modern firearms. Battlefield strategy stressed encirclement of the enemy via a turning movement from the wings. The centre, with its picked troops, was held back for a telling blow. Feigned retreats were also possible, to allow greater chances to hit the opponents' flank or rear. Every effort was made to divide men into units of either spearmen or riflemen, so as to get the most out of each weapon type. Tactics stressed rapid contact, skirmishing, advancing under cover, and maximum utilization of their own firepower. Wylde's description of advancing Abyssinian riflemen sounds very much like the tactics of contemporary European skirmishers: 'They generally go in threes, fives, or sevens, with respectively either one, two, or three of the rifles always loaded, so as to cover the men who are loading.'[21] On the way, they made every possible use of ravines, brush, boulders and primitive camouflage to negate enemy fire, while pouring on an incessant hail of their own. Then, at the very last moment, charged as a crushing phalanx of warriors eager for hand-to-hand combat. Wylde finishes off his description of Abyssinian tactics with the warning, 'In fighting against these hill-men one never knows what they are going to do, and where they will be from one day to another, and they are just as likely to have cut the communications when one expects them in front waiting for battle.'[22] Taken all together, the Abyssinian army was formidable by any standard. Its tough fighting men were masters of both skirmish, or ambush warfare, and shock action. A rare combination by African standards, and one that often caused an unpleasant surprise for Abyssinia's enemies.[23]

Traditional weapons included spears, or javelins, which had a maximum range of 30 feet. For close-up work, they employed small round shields plus a variety of razor sharp daggers, straight swords, and the double-edged sickle-shaped *gurade* [scimitar]. Constant practice made Abyssinians very dangerous opponents in hand-to-hand combat.[24]

Many soldiers added some kind of firearm to this array. James Baum, writing in the 1920s, notes that 'all Abyssinians are more interested in guns

than in anything else in the world.'[25] His comment was just as appropriate for the sixteenth century, when gunpowder weapons were introduced to Abyssinia by Ahmad ibn-Ibrahim's Somali invasion. While these were primitive matchlocks, their value, in the words of Dr Richard Pankhurst, was of 'decisive historical importance'.[26] The devastation caused by Ahmad's troops was in good part due to this technological advantage, and Abyssinians quickly sought a balance. This in turn made matchlocks a major import item well into the nineteenth century.[27]

Despite its severe handicaps, such as an accuracy limited to, at best, 100 feet, and ignition failures from rain or wind, matchlocks were employed in large numbers well into the 1870s. Although more efficient, flintlock ignition systems never caught on, probably due to their more sophisticated inner works, and the lack of Abyssinian gunsmiths.[28] Instead, percussion weapons, especially double-barrelled shotguns, began to supplant the matchlock by 1860. While extremely deadly at close range, beyond 100 yards the smooth-bore nature of the shotgun barrel made them highly inaccurate. Still, they were a significant improvement over the matchlock, and together with an artillery park, made Abyssinian armies of the mid-nineteenth century much more effective.[29]

Emperor Tewodros deserves much of the credit for this improvement. Learning from an experience at Dabarki (1848), where Egyptian defenders used their musket fire to rout his attack, he stepped up the import of modern armament, and began a long search for technicians to help produce and maintain such. 'The Egyptians', he explained, 'are no braver than us, but they have the discipline of the West.'[30]

His failure to dislodge Egyptian garrisons from forts like Dabarki also pointed to the need for artillery. Their production, plus firing together in battery, mark significant innovations by this so-called 'mad' ruler. In addition, he introduced rudimentary drill for the matchlock-armed troops, thus improving their rate of fire, and greatly enhanced the army's mobility by cutting down on baggage trains and using the 'forced march'.[31]

Despite these improvements, Aroge (10 April 1868) was a surprise, and an eye-opener, to Abyssinia's military. It clearly demonstrated the difference between 'better and best'. Although the Emperor's cannon commenced battle with a brisk fire, his gunners were poorly trained, and most of their shots missed. The rest of the army, outnumbered nearly 2–1, witnessed the devastating impact of breech-loading rifles and well-handled artillery, as an Anglo-Indian army smashed Tewodros's dreams of a dynasty. Nowhere was this more evident than in a contest between soldiers armed with the new shotguns and India's 23rd Punjab Pioneers. The latter, not being a front line unit, still had muzzle-loading Model 1853 Enfields. Although it had a much slower rate of fire than the new Snider-Enfield breech-loader, the Model 1853 was 'rifled'. As such, the Punjabis were able to decimate Abyssinia's best equipped troops at a range far beyond their ability to return fire.[32]

Range, combined with rate-of-fire, are critical factors in warfare. Significant differences might allow smaller forces to overcome their enemies. Aroge featured Anglo-Indian troops able to produce rapid and effective fire from their rifles at 300 yards. Abyssinians with matchlocks and shotguns may as well have returned fire towards the War Office in London – the chances for hitting an enemy were nearly the same. Martial technology soon provided even better weapons, thus increasing the firepower difference between old and new. Examples can be seen from various battles in the Sudan during the 1880s. There, under perfect conditions, a company of 100 men, all armed with Martini-Henry, or Remington 'rolling block' rifles, could begin volley fire at 1,500 yards. Against a charging mass of native warriors, this fire would pick up until the company produced 10 shots/yard/minute across its 100-yard front. The result was a near perfect shatter zone, where enemy troops were either killed, wounded, or pinned to the ground, by thousands of screaming bullets. Combined with machine guns and artillery, these allowed for tremendous victories like that of Omdurman, where 31,000 Sudanese casualties were exchanged for only 430 Anglo-Egyptian troops.[33]

An observant eye-witness to the earlier British victory at Aroge was *Dajjazmatch* Kassa Mircha of Tigre. Having allied with the Anglo-Indians against Tewodros, he reaped great benefit at the battle's end when General Napier provided him with 850 muskets, 12 small cannon, plus a sizeable amount of ammunition. In addition, Kassa was able to retain the service of Sergeant John C. Kirkham, the first of several foreign drill-masters. Near Adua, in 1871, despite being outnumbered 5 to 1, Tigrean forces were able to effectively make use of the new weapons for a crushing defeat of Emperor Tekle Giorgis.[34]

Victory made Kassa the new Emperor, whereupon he took the regnal name of Yohannis IV. His military policy called for an increase in manpower and the acceleration of arms imports. Proof of this activity can be seen in the statement of Dr Paulitschke, who notes that the price of a rifle dropped from 50 to 20 Maria Theresa thalers in the period 1868 to 1880. The influx of these modern, or at least semi-modern, rifles, marks the rise of a new class of Abyssinian warrior, the *neftegna* ['he who has a rifle'].[35] These men owned all types of Italian, French, Belgian, German and British muskets, both smooth-bore and rifled. A lucky few had Snider-Enfields or Remingtons. The latter became the rifle of choice by the end of the 1880s.[36] With a high rate of fire, robust design and easy maintenance, it was well suited for Abyssinian needs. Equipping his picked troops with these new purchases, Yohannis quickly produced a fighting machine both larger and more powerful than that of Tewodros.[37]

He also continued his predecessor's drive to build up an artillery arm. Using the mountain howitzers given him by Napier, Yohannis established the first reliable artillery park in Abyssinian history. Although of small

calibre, these guns were easy to transport over rough terrain, and did not require sophisticated handling. For many of the same reasons, Yohannis also employed various rocket tubes. He even hired a Swiss adventurer named Louis, who was to form and train a rocket battery however, both Louis and the rockets turned out to be duds. Better results came from Abyssinia's victories over Egypt in 1875/76. The battlefields of Gura and Gundet yielded thirty cannon. Captured Egyptian gunners were pressed into service, and by 1880 had trained a crop of Abyssinian recruits.[38]

While enhancing Abyssinia's military potential, the new firearms and artillery created logistical problems. First, except for a few years of interregnum, Massawa, the most efficient port for distribution into Abyssinia, was dominated by unfriendly Egyptian officials. Smuggling was a direct response, but of course drove up the unit cost of each weapon. Also, while local industry produced sufficient gunpowder for the matchlocks and shotguns, modern rifles required a finer grade of powder. In addition, the new breech-loading systems were charged with a metallic or cardboard cartridge. Production of either was beyond Abyssinian capabilities, although reloading of spent cartridges was possible. Even lead was difficult to obtain, very little was available locally, and once again, hostile neighbours made every effort to halt its import. This resulted in the substitution of poorly formed iron and stone bullets, which reduced both accuracy and barrel life. Another problem was the vast array of weaponry employed, which made ammunition resupply a tremendous problem. Despite these handicaps, picked troops, from the time of Yohannis onward, went through considerable target practice. British diplomat Gerald H. Portal wrote 'they were not particularly good marksmen', but this was in comparison to British soldiers.[39] Compared to Egyptians with their mediocre shooting skills, the Abyssinians were quite good.[40]

Exceptional mobility was another Abyssinian asset. Invading forces could seldom match the Emperor's cavalry arm. Its organization, however, was lacking well into the 1870s. Up to that point, Abyssinian mounted troops fought inter-mixed with the infantry. This reduced the firepower of both, and negated the horsemen's superior mobility. Change began during the war with Egypt. At Gura, Egyptian contract officer Max von Thurneyssen noted the superiority of Yohannis's Oromo cavalry over their Egyptian counterparts. Wylde, writing in the late 1880s, described these horsemen as 'smart' and armed with a variety of spears, swords and rifles.[41]

Indeed, one could describe Abyssinian cavalrymen as elite. The nation's aristocratic culture granted great prestige to horse ownership, insuring that only the best troopers would be mounted. An example of this can be seen in the use of 'horse names', a sort of *nom de guerre* that was applied to both animal and owner if the latter was a man of significance.[42]

Except for its modern armament, an Abyssinian army on the march seemed but slightly removed from that of ancient Aksum. With a mixed bag

of cavalry, infantry, servants and camp followers, it probably made less than 10 miles per day when going over rough terrain. Of course the flying column, as demonstrated by Tewodros, might get up to 25 miles per day. On the other hand, as ex-French army officer Gabriel Simon pointed out, 'the Abyssinian marches indefatigably and is an excellent foot soldier.'[43] Such marching was frequent due to the complete lack of a commissariat. Soldiers on campaign lived off the land, taking provisions by force. A missionary noted the Abyssinian 'army's pay chest is the peasant's hut, butter, sheep, and cow'.[44] After eating up local supplies, travel rations consisted of sun-dried beef and grain. In addition to themselves, soldiers were accompanied by three to four times their number in camp followers, who served as a primitive support service. These formed the flanks and van of an army; by default serving as a massive screen against surprise attack. Hard to distinguish from warriors, their numbers sometimes confused enemy scouts into overestimating Abyssinian strength. Indeed, the continual comings and goings of an Abyssinian army caused French explorer Achille Raffray to describe its perpetual motion as 'like a gigantic kaleidoscope'.[45] Movement only came to an end with the placement of the Emperor's red tent, which was done in advance to designate the centre of a camp site.[46]

Inadequate food supplies placed a major handicap on Abyssinian strategy. First, military actions were tied to the farming season; a campaign before harvest was almost impossible. In practice, most soldiers were disbanded in the month of June and called back to the colours in September. Well-informed enemies could determine that September through January was the most likely time for an Abyssinian offensive and prepare a counter-strike. Second, while individual warriors required little more than water, some food, and rocks to sharpen their swords, in large numbers, they could decimate local supplies. As the nation rarely enjoyed large agricultural surpluses, armies had to march by separate columns, making them vulnerable to defeat in detail, and even when unified, they could rarely stay in one location for long. Thus siege warfare was nearly impossible, and retreat through the same regions dangerous, as the now enraged locals were ready to fight to keep what little survived the first round of pillaging. Finally, large numbers, poor sanitation, and a non-existent medical service made encampments rather unhealthy. Swiss adventurer, Alfred Ilg, estimated these factors cost Abyssinian armies a 15 per cent loss rate.[47]

Yohannis recognized this 'Achilles' heel', and sought to remedy it via the establishment of flour mills and supply depots. Most of the construction took place in Tigre Province, and this work was continued by Menelik. Although far from satisfying the logistical needs of Abyssinia's military, the extra food allowed Yohannis more flexibility than his predecessors.[48]

How does history judge these efforts to upgrade Abyssinia's military capabilities? Yohannis provided an answer with his 1871 victory over Emperor Tekle Giorgis. Using picked troops armed with Napier's muskets,

he covered the only ford across the Assam River, and then enticed his enemy to attack. The result was defeat for Tekle Giorgis, despite a manpower advantage of 500 per cent.[49]

The next challenge issued from Egypt. Border skirmishes dated back to the reign of Muhammad Ali, but provided such a mixed bag of success and failure, that few contemporary observers saw any significant problems facing an eventual Egyptian victory. Thus, the battles of 1875–1876 provided many surprises.

14

THE GURA CAMPAIGN (JANUARY–MARCH 1876)

> Tell Martin he will never forgive himself for missing the Abyssinian Fandango of March Seventh.
>
> (David Essex Porter)

Gundet came as a nasty surprise, causing 'profound distress' for Ismail, Nubar, and other members of the court. The Khedive saw only one possible response for this humiliation – massive retaliation.[1] Yohannis had to be taught a lesson, otherwise, Ismail argued, 'the frontier would never be safe, and the spirit of rapine, which is the base of Abyssinia's social order, will flourish at our expense.'[2] New plans, and another army were to be prepared, all these despite Egypt's shaky economy, about which the *New York Tribune* commented, 'In the present state of finances, an Abyssinian war is sheer madness.'[3]

This message was also conveyed by Ismail's many confidential agents, who warned him of European mood swings, and how the negative impact of another defeat would harm the already weak Egyptian bond market. His diplomats cautioned that England was showing signs of displeasure with the affair, and that a quick settlement was important. Such information registered, but did not sink in. The Khedive was fixed on one goal, the restoration of Egyptian prestige. In December 1875, he ordered preparations for a second invasion of Abyssinia.[4]

Stone and Prince Hussein, the Minister of War, drew up plans for what became the Gura Campaign. These created a significant debate among Ismail's advisors. One faction, led by Stone and Nubar, pushed for all out war, with twin goals to destroy Yohannis and his army. Another, centred on Sharif Pasha, the Interior Minister, favoured a punitive expedition with limited objectives.[5] The Turko-Circassian mafia in charge of the military tended to favour this latter course, and also lobbied Ismail to pick one of them for command of the new army. With the failed efforts of Arendrup, Munzinger, and McKillop fresh in everyone's memory, this was a powerful argument against another western leader. The Khedive, influenced by these failures, but unwilling to abandon his desire for revenge, attempted a

compromise. The *Sirdar*, Muhammad Pasha Ratib, was made commander-in-chief, while William Wing Loring, a *Liwa*, became second-in-command.[6]

The appointments of Muhammad and Loring were the first of many bad decisions made during the Gura Campaign. Loring maintained that he was not a subordinate, but rather a co-commander. Nowhere is this evident in any official correspondence, but it was accepted as fact by most of the *État Major*, which contributed nineteen members to assist Muhammad with staff work. Language difficulties, plus the fact that many of these men arrived in Egypt only a few months earlier, might explain the confusion, but Loring's reputation must also be considered.[7]

Who was this man, who fellow Americans insisted 'is the real commander of the expedition'?[8] Loring began his military career at 14 years of age, fighting Indians in Florida. He lost an arm, and was brevetted for his courage during the Mexican–American War (1846–1848). In the War Between the States, Loring became a Confederate major general, and although holding active command until war's end, was a controversial and often ineffective leader. In the words of a contemporary, Loring 'was easily excited, or thrown off balance, then becoming violent and hasty, with unpronounceable insults flying off his lips towards subordinates'.[9] His 'hot southern blood and an ungovernable temper' often led to the employment of a cane in attempts to sort out problems with Egyptians.[10] Spoken French, his only foreign language, was minimal, and Loring's selection as Muhammad's second-in-command came partially from his exaggerated claims of expertise in 'mountain warfare with savage tribes'.[11] While he did help to open the Oregon Trail, and chased a few Comanches in New Mexico, this impulsive and egotistical man was ill suited for a war in Abyssinia.[12]

Muhammad Ratib was, in almost every way, a completely different person. A Circassian, born in 1831, he entered the Egyptian military in the traditional Mamluk fashion, and was deemed a promising student. Sent to France for advanced training, he was already an important man during the reign of Said. By 1864 he became a *liwa*, and three years later, Ismail appointed him *Sirdar*. Muhammad is often the scapegoat for both American and Egyptian writers seeking to avoid responsibility for Gura. Urabi's friend, Jean Ninet, called him a 'nonentity', while Americans like Loring and Dye accused the *Sirdar* of cowardice, and extreme incompetence.[13] A more reasonable assessment was made by Lockett, who described Muhammad as 'Grantish', a man of perseverance and determination, who was willing to slug it out with his enemies, but only on his own terms, and after everything was set in place.[14]

He gained some combat experience in Crete, but was unfamiliar with the management of large commands. Still, although lacking in some martial skills, and not particularly a 'spit and polish' officer, Muhammad was attentive of his duties and the troops' welfare. He was courteous and friendly to

his officers, both Egyptian and foreign, and strove to complete his mission, within the parameters established by Ismail's conservative directions.[15]

Muhammad faced an additional check on his actions, in the form of *Amir* [Prince] Hassan. One of the Khedive's many sons, he was being groomed to become the Minister of War. Hassan was an Oxford graduate who served as an officer-cadet with the Prussian Guard Infantry. Fluent in French, English, German, Turkish, and Arabic, he was likeable, 22 years old, and the 'third wheel' for this campaign. With his own staff of fifty servants and aides, he was a potential ally for either Muhammad, or Loring. All three recognized this, and each complained of being used by the others. At first, a common bond of English, along with Hassan's fascination for battlefield experiences from the American Civil War, led to his siding with Loring and the *État Major*.[16] The *Sirdar*, vexed but unwilling to assert his rights against a member of the royal family, complained that Loring and Hassan 'were opposing his every decision', and reducing the army's effectiveness.[17]

In this regard, he was right on the mark. Bickering started early in the campaign, and placed the American *État Major* in conflict with Muhammad, their superior. When not arguing with each other, Loring and his principal lieutenant, William Dye, both pressed for a rapid advance. Thinking in terms of sweeping movements from the Civil War, they wanted several columns moving forward on a wide front. Muhammad, steeped in the history of Ibrahim, close-order assault, and supply lines, was cold to such notions. Indeed, the Egyptian soldier was neither trained nor suited for American tactics. Historian Richard Hill aptly presents the difficulties of this situation, describing Loring and Dye as 'good but baffled men floundering in a strange new world which neither understood'.[18]

Misunderstanding, argument, and tensions were all products of the division between Loring and Muhammad, who had been enjoined by Ismail to 'act as brothers'. Lockett comments that this division spread like an infection to the respective subordinates of these men, generating animosity 'actually greater' than that for the enemy. Dye started the ball rolling when, in a fit of anger, he struck *Bimbashi* Ibrahim Lufti. The latter, both popular, and Loring's English-speaking aide, pressed charges for an action that was unacceptable in any civilized army. The *Sirdar* told him to wait until the campaign ended, while Dye simply records this as part of a plot against the foreign officers. About the same time, Loring had trouble with his servants, and was angrily chasing away dogs that mysteriously popped up to eat his supper. By February 1876, these incidents, and others, reached, in the words of Lockett, the level of 'serious antagonism'.[19]

This was most unfortunate as the initial plans saw a role for every member of the team. Muhammad, along with his two brigade commanders, Rashid Pasha Rajab and Uthman Pasha Rifqi, were in need of the technical, logistical, and engineering expertise of the *État Major*. For the Americans, it

was foolish to consider Loring, a brigadier general who just barely got by in French, as the combat commander of an Egyptian army. Indeed, some sources indicate the Americans were not even providing adequate staff work. Possibly these represent fallout from the intense rivalries of the foreign mercenaries. Still, it is hard not to listen to such words, especially when comparing Gura to Muhammad Rauf's successful conquest of Harar, an event that included not a single one of Ismail's Neo-Mamluks.[20]

Of course, the Gura expedition was on a much larger scale. Its goals, although limited, allowed for several options. First, the Khedive's orders stressed the need to punish Yohannis, but required Muhammad Ratib to strike only under favourable circumstances. The Egyptians were to seek a set-piece battle, where their superior military hardware could devastate the Abyssinians. In case Yohannis could not be drawn into such a contest, Muhammad was to occupy Adua, using this valuable city as a prize to draw the Abyssinians into a fight. If neither of these plans were feasible before the rainy season, then Ismail demanded extensive looting and the collection of 'tribute', followed by a withdrawal and preparations for another go round.[21]

Muhammad was to construct roads and fortifications in Hamasen, and Ismail specifically ordered him 'to secure your rear and the supply line to Massawa'. The Khedive continued, 'take the route you find most convenient, and do not hesitate to ask for reinforcements.'[22] Furthermore, the *Sirdar*, although instructed to avoid desecration of Christian churches, must, above all, impress the locals on the omnipotence of Egypt.[23]

Muhammad and his staff interpreted these orders to require a careful approach into enemy territory. Advancing along the same route as Arendrup, the Egyptians marched towards the large village of Godofalassie, and from there towards Khaya Khor. Its occupation, along with that of the large Gura plains, would place them near the Mareb River. All the while, forts and depots were to be established along lines of communication, while garrisons like Karen would provide flank support. Once emplaced, the *Sirdar* wanted to build up his resources, while poised for an attack on Adua. He hoped that before then, Yohannis, with his almost non-existent supply train, would be forced to attack the Egyptians under unfavourable conditions.[24]

Intelligence was vital to the success of this campaign. A few maps, the only positive outcome of Arendrup's débâcle, were combined with information provided by explorers and spies. The final product created fairly good cartographic views of Hamasen and Tigre. Travellers and other experts were debriefed for military information, and for the first time, a more accurate view of Abyssinian capabilities emerged. In addition, efforts to recruit minorities and other disaffected groups were stepped up. Although Menilik was now uninterested in siding with Egypt, Wolde Mikail was another story. Although a participant on the Abyssinian side of Gundet, this Hamasen warlord never got on well with Yohannis. In 1876, seduced by promises of

autonomy, and a gift of several hundred Remington rifles, Wolde Mikail became an ally of Egypt. Wolde Mikail arrived with 4,000 men, whom Wylde describes as 'all the bad characters of Tigre and Amhara'.[25] He would join 'picked men of the Egyptian army', whose rifles, artillery, and numbers were deemed quite sufficient to secure victory. As Neo-Mamluk Charles Graves put it, 'the whole matter will be settled by March or April', because 'the Abyssinians can not stand before the Egyptian troops … if war came, it would be like a body of regulars firing into a street mob.'[26]

Graves had good reasons for such confidence. The Gura Campaign featured the largest Egyptian army since the days of Muhammad Ali. Two infantry brigades, the largest tactical units of Ismail's army, provided 9,600 men. Further enhancing this force, the first battalion of each brigade was selected from the Guard. A sizeable artillery park added significant punch. It included two Krupp batteries, plus batteries of La Hitte and Armstrong guns. These long-range, albeit cumbersome, weapons were matched with twelve rocket tubes and sixteen mountain howitzers. A cavalry regiment gave Muhammad Ratib his 'eyes and ears', while a sapper company made difficult construction projects more feasible. The entire force numbered about 12,000 soldiers.[27]

It was a major undertaking, and stretched Egyptian military capabilities to the limit. Even garrisons from the sensitive Hajj Road to Mecca were required to surrender soldiers for this second invasion of Abyssinia. Impressed by its very size, Ismail's Neo-Mamluks did not catch on to its many problems. Morale was at the top of the list. Survivors from Gundet spread stories of their ordeal and the ferocious nature of Abyssinian warriors. Kirkham, now under arrest and dying in Massawa, told all who would listen, 'The Abyssinians will eat you up.'[28] Then there were the 'horribly mutilated' prisoners, just returned by Yohannis, whose stories infected the rank and file with a dread of combat in the highlands. Even officers were complaining that the expedition's Sudanese contingent was too small.[29]

Logistical problems were also serious. Tel al-Kebir was the base for these operations, and thanks to railroads and steamers, the situation was tolerable until Massawa. Reinforcements and material could be shipped on this route in less than five days. At the port, thanks to the hard work of Sulyman Pasha, the army's chief financial officer, and Charles Graves, an American *qaimqam*, a smooth flow continued. From here, however, supplies had to be transported by human or animal carriers to the front.[30]

As usual, Cairo grossly underestimated transport needs. Even though the Gura Campaign featured exotic novelties like elephants, the army was woefully short in this department. No more than 1,800 men and 4,000 animals were available for moving supplies into the highlands. In comparison, the British, with the same number of troops, employed almost 50,000 animals in the 1867 campaign against Tewodros. As with Arendrup, camels

were the main source of motive power, and since they were already too few, a tendency to overload killed off many, and injured even more.[31]

Bridges, roads, and supply depots offered solutions to Egypt's logistical nightmare. Moving supplies at a more rapid pace, and doing so in stages, would reduce fatigue for both animal and human carriers. Protected depots also discouraged Abyssinian raiders, another source of friction. Supervised by Uthman Bey Ghalib and *Qaimqam* von Mockeln, construction began on a system of connecting roads and telegraph lines. Some of Arendrup's work was joined to this system, and by February, it was possible to take the field artillery and other wheeled vehicles all the way to Gura.[32]

The end result of these efforts was significant material delivered to the front. Ammunition was prevalent, although forage had to be purchased on the local market, and food supplies only grew at a slow pace. Muhammad Ratib wanted a reserve of sixty days before he launched a major offensive. This was accomplished by March, but only at the cost of detachments guarding the depots, and artillery and cavalry horses being conscripted for transport duties. Such improvisation solved the transport dilemma, but it also reduced combat strength.[33]

Initially this was not a significant concern. The *Sirdar* and his staff left Cairo on 5 December 1875, and arrived in Massawa six days later. About the same time, Uthman Pasha Rifqi took his brigade, along with two mountain howitzer batteries, and formed an advance guard for the army's primary target – Gura plain. A highland valley with a good water supply, Gura was closer to Massawa than Gundet, but still within striking distance of Adua. Muhammad wanted his soldiers to concentrate here, prepare fortifications, and draw the Abyssinians into a fight.[34]

The main force followed Uthman, leaving significant detachments behind at each depot. Loring and others noted that, despite an entire cavalry regiment, scouting and reconnaissance were minimal during the advance, even though there was a general sense of unease, and rumours that hordes of Abyssinians were waiting in ambush. As Loring puts it, travel was 'in a haphazard way, relying upon Allah'.[35] Maybe there was no time for scouts, because, as *Amir* Hassan reported, Loring and Muhammad were in constant debate over the course and speed of the campaign.[36]

On arrival at Gura, the Egyptians looked for a camp site. Defensible terrain and access to water were priorities for Muhammad and his chief engineer, Samuel Lockett Bey. Next, it was vital to block the road leading through Khaya Khor pass, the way back to their depots and Massawa. Lack of sufficient wells made this otherwise perfect defensive position untenable for the entire army. As a compromise, Uthman's brigade dug in along the crest, producing an almost impregnable position. Five miles to the south, the main force constructed a fortified camp called Fort Gura (Figure 14.1). Within two days they shifted work to a superior location. In the confusion, no orders were given to destroy the first site, and its works now blocked the

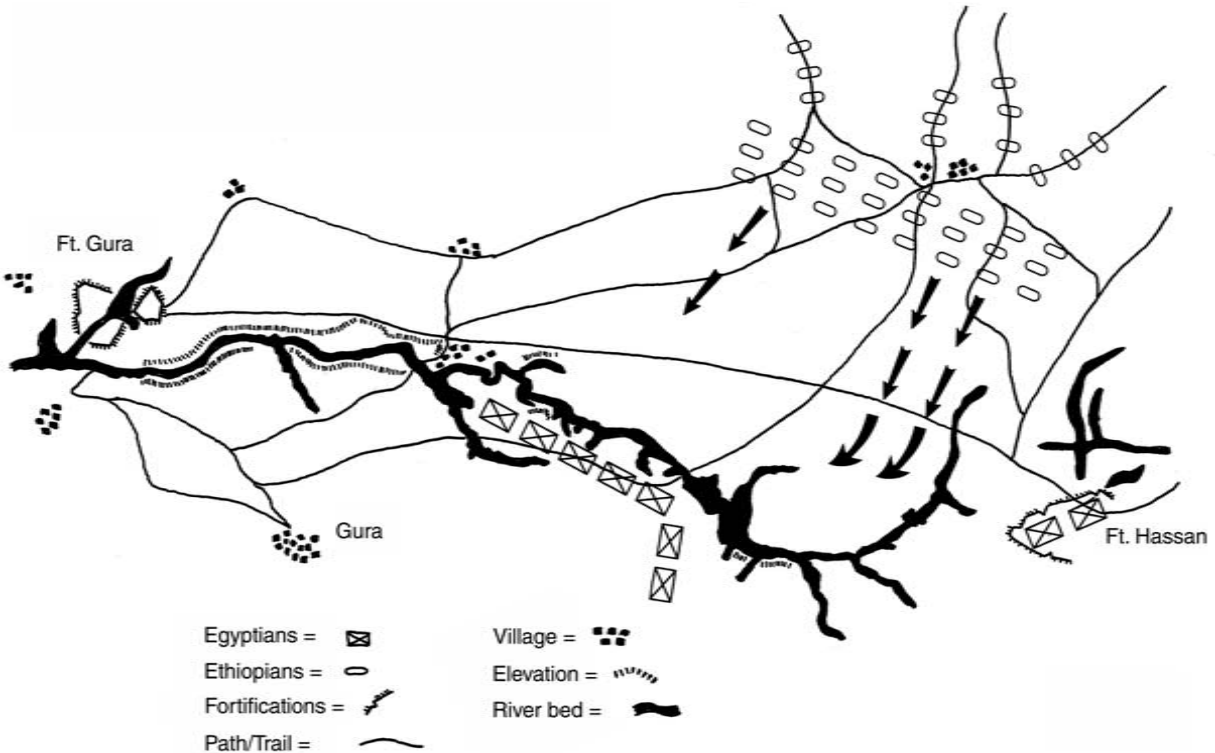

Figure 14.2 Battle of Gura (7–9 March 1876)
Source: As per Dulier Bey and Dye Bey

new camp's fields of fire. In addition, numerous gullies and boulders created additional cover a clever enemy could use to mask his approach on Fort Gura. The Egyptians would live to regret these oversights, but just barely.[37]

Although some might criticize Muhammad's decision to split his troops, these deployments had merit. First, water supplies limited his options. Also, the two camps were hard targets, and if the Abyssinians attacked one, they might provide the other with an opportunity to counter-attack from the flank or rear. Finally, the Egyptian rank and file saw these fortifications as a significant improvement in their chances to defeat the enemy, thus morale improved during, as Lockett put it, 'a very tranquil stage' of the campaign.[38]

For the Abyssinians, tranquillity was not part of their programme. Yohannis, his subordinates, and church officials had again raised the cry of 'holy war'. A dramatic scene marks their initial efforts, when a landslide caused the Emperor to fall from his horse. Jumping up, he yelled to his startled troops, 'God has sent this in his mercy as a sign that the power of the Muslims shall fall before me, just as the mountain has rolled to my feet.'[39] Thus turning a bad omen into a portent of victory, Yohannis marched his forces northward.

Taking advantage of Muhammad's minimal efforts at scouting, the Abyssinians came on quickly, and secured a strategic vantage point. Positioned near Tsazzega on the Godolfelassie road, Yohannis could strike Khaya Khor, Fort Gura, or Keren. This manoeuvre played a vital role in subsequent events. Up to this point, Egyptian strategy called for drawing the Abyssinians into frontal assaults on prepared positions. Now, Muhammad faced the choices of retreat, defeat in detail, or taking his main force and engaging Yohannis in the open. A difficult decision, for no matter which option he chose, the *Sirdar* gave up some of his advantages in doing so.[40]

Muhammad was particularly worried that Abyssinians would attack his rear area. Once there, Yohannis could destroy the small supply depots, and force an end to the entire campaign. On 3 March, now improved reconnaissance patrols informed the *Sirdar* that his enemy was only five hours away. This marks the start of the disastrous Battle of Gura. Four days later, scouts again reported Abyssinian movements. As this coincided with the arrival of a vital supply train, some feared Yohannis was going to destroy it.[41]

Now begins what an American observer sardonically called 'the Abyssinian Fandango'.[42] Early on 7 March, Egyptian buglers called the troops to arms. They then milled about for three hours while the *Sirdar*, and just about every member of his staff, hotly presented alternative strategies. Muhammad wanted to stay put, because past experience had shown dug-in Egyptian forces were unbeatable by enemies, like the Abyssinians, who did not possess artillery. As for the supply column, it could rest at Khaya Khor until Yohannis was defeated, or forced to withdraw.[43]

Loring wanted the garrisons of Kaya Khor and Fort Gura to attack the enemy flanks. His friend, Henry Derrick, commanded the incoming supply

train's escort detachment. Loring feared Derrick was in grave danger under Muhammad's plan, and argued strongly for an offensive move. Several officers, both American and Egyptian, agreed that some demonstration was needed; otherwise, either fort, or the supply column, could be attacked alone. As usual, Loring got angry, and according to Dye, became confused and obstinate. Writing after the fact, Lockett neatly sums up the staff meeting of early 7 March and its subsequent strategy: 'The accounts of this move are so conflicting that it is difficult to get and give a perfectly satisfactory idea of it.'[44] In his diary, *Qaimqam* Ragib Saddek comments that several arguments reached the level of insubordination. Finally, Muhammad gave in to the constant hammering of Loring and Dye, the two combat veterans whose experience was supposedly why Ismail hired them in the first place. At 10.00 hours, the *Sirdar* led his main force out of Fort Gura, and the Egyptians marched to their horrible destiny.[45]

Muhammad's command included seven infantry battalions, two and a half squadrons of cavalry, fifteen mountain howitzers, and seven rocket tubes. Initial plans to include the Krupps, and other long-range guns, were cancelled when the *Sirdar* realized these were too slow. Instead, they he ordered their deployment inside Fort Gura, to beef up the 1,500 men remaining there on guard duty. Thus, the total Egyptian field force was almost 6,000 effectives.[46]

The final plan involved positioning these troops at a point half-way between Fort Gura and Khaya Khor. From there, Muhammad could support either position, and expected his extreme flanks would be covered by artillery fire from both. Even at this late stage, arguments continued between the *Sirdar* and members of the *État Major*. Small bodies of enemy troops fuelled the debate, and as some seemed to be in retreat, the advance was continued. About one and three-quarters of a mile from Fort Gura, the army again deployed, this time on top of a ravine. Dissatisfied, Loring raised arguments and appealed to *Amir* Hassan, who gave his support, so Muhammad next directed the army to a range of hills. Dye compared these moves to 'a grand funeral procession, sad, but resigned, the enemy sounding the dirge in fitful notes from Snyder [*sic*] and Remington rifles'.[47] By now, vast clouds of dust were announcing the imminent arrival of a large Abyssinian contingent. Simultaneously, a jittery Durholz, with vivid memories of Gundet, nearly directed artillery fire on Beni Amir scouts, whom he mistook for Abyssinians. A state of nervous confusion spread throughout the Egyptian lines. This increased at 12.00, when howitzers and rocket tubes started blasting away at the enemy's front ranks.[48]

Yohannis sent his men forward with customary speed. As a result the Egyptian infantry, although facing 'a pretty clear open space of several hundred yards', were unable to place ranging sticks to their front, and would fire high throughout the engagement.[49] The Gura battlefield was wet from recent rains, and much of it was covered with brush, granite boulders, and

gullies. Other parts featured groves of sycamore trees, some so large, Wylde claimed they could offer shade to 500 men. Several ravines cut close to the Egyptian lines, and a deep gully was only 500 paces from their front. These were most dangerous as Abyssinians were masters at the art of approach under cover, and would certainly use them to negate the enemy's superior firepower.[50]

Indeed, Yohannis was very familiar with these features. He had defeated *Dejazmatch* Yainshet here in 1867. Advancing towards Muhammad nine years later, he divided his army into five main columns. One would cover the approach to Khaya Khor, while the other four concentrated on defeating the Egyptians (Figure 14.2). Abyssinian oral tradition holds that the future *Ras* Alula played an important role in the early stages of this strategy. By manoeuvring small bodies in front of the Egyptians, he lured them into the hills and gullies, thus increasing the chances for his men to engage the enemy under favourable conditions. As for numbers, many accounts exaggerate the Abyssinian total, with figures of 50,000 to 70,000 soldiers being common. Even considering the possibility of counting women or *gebar* as combatants, there was no way for Yohannis to deploy that many people. Lockett provides a more sober estimate of 30,000 men, and states only half of these fought in the battle of 7 March. Thus, although certainly outnumbered, the far better armed Egyptians, if properly employed, could still destroy their enemies.[51]

Of course it is one thing for the armchair strategist to compose such assurances, and quite another for the Egyptian *nafar* watching 'Abyssinians advancing in dark masses with murderous intent'.[52] Muhammad, who could not view the entire battlefield from his position in the centre, received conflicting information from scouts and orderlies. Advice to withdraw back to Gura Fort came at the same time, and although too late, it added to the confusion. An important result, in the words of Loring, was that 'only a portion of our force' engaged the enemy.[53] The *Sirdar* lost control early in the battle, and about 13.30, the army devolved into three separate commands: the centre, right, and left flanks.[54]

By now Abyssinians 'were swarming in the valley', while many disappeared into acacia groves and ravines.[55] At first, Egyptian small arms fire scattered the opposition. Heavy slugs from their Remingtons knocked over any man hit. Combined with rocket and howitzer fire, the volume pinned several Abyssinian columns, or funnelled their charges towards the right flank. An Abyssinian chronicle describes how the shooting impacted on common soldiers:

> There was no place to hide, for the bullets showered to the ground like hail from the sky … there took place a heavy killing, the kind of which never took place since the creation of the world, for the boom of the cannons and rifles was like the thunder of the rainy

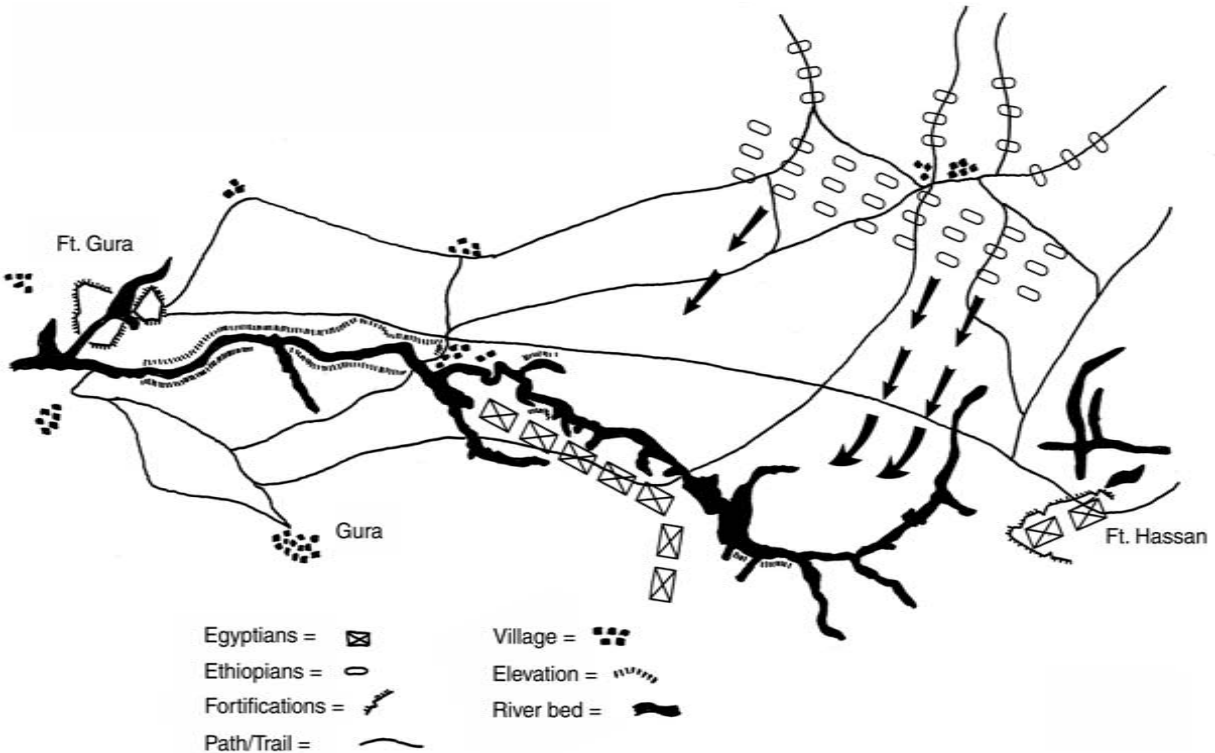

Figure 14.2 Battle of Gura (7–9 March 1876)
Source: As per Dulier Bey and Dye Bey

> season. There were people who thought the sky had collapsed over them and destroyed the foundation of the Earth.[56]

Respite from this 'rain of death' was available. Having failed to place their aiming sticks, Egyptian troops fired high, some not even bothering to bring their rifles to the shoulder. Abyssinian casualties did continue, but only in the rear ranks. Troops who made it through this zone encountered very little accurate small-arms fire at closer ranges.[57]

Here also were the gullies and ravines, cover that not only protected them from fire, but allowed for a stealthy approach right up to the Egyptian line. The right wing, under Rashid Pasha, took a heavy beating as Abyssinians poured out of these positions in a phalanx of flashing steel. Faulty deployments enhanced the shock value of this attack, as a battalion-wide gap appeared in the Egyptian line. These troops had been sent to protect the hard-working artillery, but nobody thought to fill the empty space. So Abyssinians poured through the hole, and Egyptian gunners were forced to defend themselves with carbines and revolvers. Howitzer and rocket fire drastically decreased, and as this was the only effective shooting along the right flank, thousands of Abyssinians surged forward.[58]

This was the turning point at Gura, for now the Abyssinians were in their element: hand-to-hand combat. *Bimbashi* David Porter, an eye-witness to this assault, writes:

> [W]e piled them up with our artillery by scores, but for every man shot down, ten seemed to take his place, until the whole plain seemed alive with these black demons. Imagine 5,000 men who did not know how to shoot, fighting over 50,000 savages who are at war all the time, and who are brave, determined, and not easily conquered.[59]

An entire battalion stood up to this onslaught, and was demolished in less than five minutes. Guns were overrun, and the rapidly deteriorating position became worse as officers were struck with a kind of mental palsy, unable to respond to this threat. Compounding the matter, Muhammad ordered the Egyptian cavalry to escort Hassan back to Fort Gura. Poorly executed, this manoeuvre looked more like a retreat, and caused panic in the ammunition column, which 'stampeded over everybody and everything in its path'.[60]

Disrupting both the centre and what was left of the right flank, pack mules and horsemen fled in extreme disorder. Many Egyptian infantry followed suit, and falling into ravines, or slowed by the thorny acacias, they were slaughtered in the hundreds. A few brave souls tried to stem the rout and form their men into a new line. Among them was Rashid, the right-flank commander, who went down sword in hand, after a vain attempt to

rally his troops. By then, as Porter tells us, 'only Providence, a good horse, and bad shooting on the part of the enemy' could save one from death.[61]

Throughout the intense three hours that mark the high point of the Battle of Gura, a significant Egyptian command made no effort to intervene. Uthman Rifqi, and his 2,500-man garrison, viewed the entire engagement from Khaya Khor. The American mercenaries complained bitterly over his refusal to allow even long-range artillery fire. Uthman argued his force was only powerful dug into the pass, and a sortie to the valley would have simply increased Egyptian losses, and maybe opened up the road to the vital supply depots and Massawa. Lockett, again the odd man out, notes that Uthman explained his actions in the same way Loring defended his rather timid efforts at Baker's Creek, or Champion Hills, during the American Civil War.[62]

In the final analysis, Egypt suffered a disastrous defeat on Gura plain. Yohannis lost about 900 men, while over 4,500 Egyptians were killed, wounded, or captured. In addition, an even greater number of Remington rifles, plus ammunition, became Abyssinian property, and all but two of the howitzers were lost. Lockett exaggerates when he claims 'not one hundred got back to Fort Gura', but the survivors were few, and very demoralized.[63]

Nor was their ordeal finished. The men who escaped to Fort Gura were now besieged, and as an American officer puts it, 'Only the fort saved the Egyptians from a defeat as complete as that of Isandwala.'[64] Loot also played a role in their deliverance, for many Abyssinians were busy gathering up the thousands of weapons and other treasures abandoned on the battlefield. This temporary respite allowed wounded Egyptians a chance to escape. Still, Yohannis marshalled thousands of his best troops, and within a day, they were sniping from hills and other cover, dropping 'a very annoying fire' into the fort.[65]

Loring, still not satisfied with Muhammad's tactics, demanded an immediate cavalry sortie. By now, the *Sirdar* was rather cool towards the American he held responsible for the débâcle of 7 March, and paid little attention to his second-in-command. Instead, his interest was focused on a major problem facing the defence. The original fortifications from the initial camp had never been torn down (Figure 14.3). Some of these works were very close to the current site, and were now being used by Yohannis to funnel his men towards the walls. Heavy cover like this severely reduced the effectiveness of both rifle and artillery fire. Using this route, Abyssinian snipers were able to position themselves within 60 yards of the fort. Pouring fire onto one section, they picked off many Egyptians, especially gun crews whose functions often exposed them as easy targets. On 9 March, several assaults hit Fort Gura, and only determined counter-attacks by Sudanese companies prevented the Abyssinians from gaining a lodgement. Still, it was a very close call. Lockett explains, 'The Abyssinians displayed great courage in this attack, and if they had any skill in carrying fortified places, they

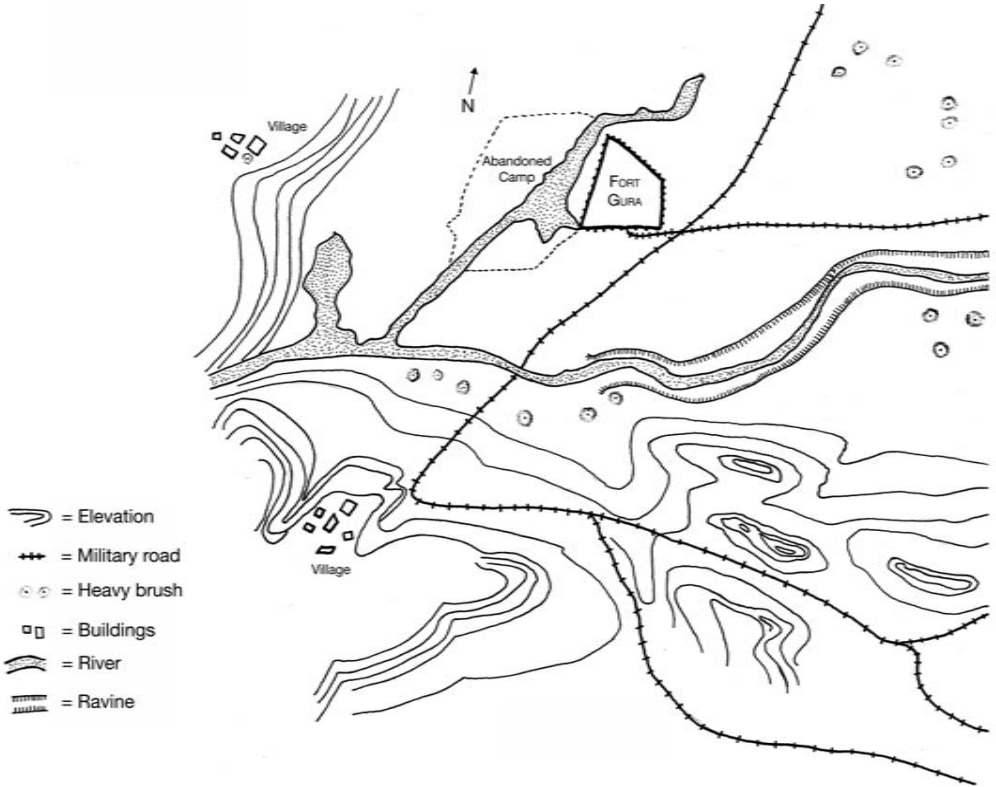

Figure 14.3 Fort Gura in 1876
Source: As per Dulier Bey in Douin, III, p.944

could have easily captured the fort.'[66] Instead, heavy casualties were the price of failure, so much so, that Abyssinian losses were now roughly equal to those of Egypt.[67]

Yohannis next made an effort to gather up all the captured artillery, and looked for gunners among his prisoners. He hoped to bribe or coerce some of these men, so they would train guns on the fort, and destroy it. Loring notes one cannon which 'did us considerable harm', but most shot wide, or were silenced by Egyptian counter-battery fire. Several authorities comment on this, and credit Egypt's artillery as the main ingredient in the successful defence of Fort Gura.[68]

This created an impasse, with neither side capable of defeating the other. Even though 'the whole plain seemed alive with those black and naked demons', lack of effective artillery made it impossible for the Abyssinians to storm the enemy camp.[69] Loot distracted many warriors also, and large numbers were deserting to take their treasures home. For the Egyptians, some of whom had to be chased into line 'with blows from sticks and the kourbash', morale was shot, and no offensive action possible.[70] Logistics determined the final outcome, and despite Egypt's abysmal record in this department, Yohannis had no supply train whatsoever. Porter describes the Abyssinians 'eating up everything in the country', and then being forced to fall back on Adua. It was just as well, he continued, for 'We have some camel meat, and are to have some cow-hoofs tomorrow. I was never so hungry in my life.'[71]

The Abyssinian withdrawal gave Muhammad a chance to leave Fort Gura, and unite with Uthman Rifqi at Khaya Khor. There he obtained news that three new infantry battalions had arrived at Massawa. These, combined with detachments heading towards Gura during the battle, gave the Egyptians another army of 12,000 men. Morale, on the other hand, could not be so easily rebuilt. After two decisive defeats by a people described as primitive savages, most Egyptian soldiers did not wish to re-enter the highlands. Instead, scrapping together regulars, *Bashi Bazouks*, Bedouins, Beni Amir, and Wolda Mikail's troops, Muhammad created a cordon of fortified posts, blocking all the main passes. Dug-in, and with significant artillery assets, these were nearly impossible to breach, so Massawa and its vulnerable water supply were safe (Figure 14.4).[72]

This was the limit of Egyptian martial capabilities. Indeed, some foreign observers were not even certain of Massawa's safety. Lockett notes the highlands were 'swarming with Abyssinians', who, emboldened by repeated victories, were seeking new chances to hit their Muslim enemies.[73] Also, Turko-Serbian hostilities drew the Sultan's attentions to Egypt, and he ordered Ismail to end his battle with Yohannis, so an Egyptian contingent could be sent to the Balkans.[74]

As this new expedition was prepared, no effort was spared to hide the extent of Egypt's second defeat in Abyssinia. All mail from Abyssinia was

censored, and Ismail's officers were instructed to keep quiet. This only encouraged the spread of rumours, so a second ploy evolved, one that claimed Gura was an Egyptian victory. Decorations and promotions to key individuals helped support this line and articles appeared in local papers stressing the fact that Yohannis had abandoned Gura before his enemies.[75]

Certainly the King of Kings did not see Gura in that light. It was a great victory, for as an Abyssinian chronicle speaks of his enemies, 'Some died from the sword and some from the point of the lance, and some by bullets. The corpses of the Muslims fell, and in one day 102,500 perished.'[76] While the numbers are a gross exaggeration, few Abyssinians saw the battles on Gura plain as anything less than a total defeat for Egypt. A large army invaded, was smashed in battle, and the remnants forced back to the coast.

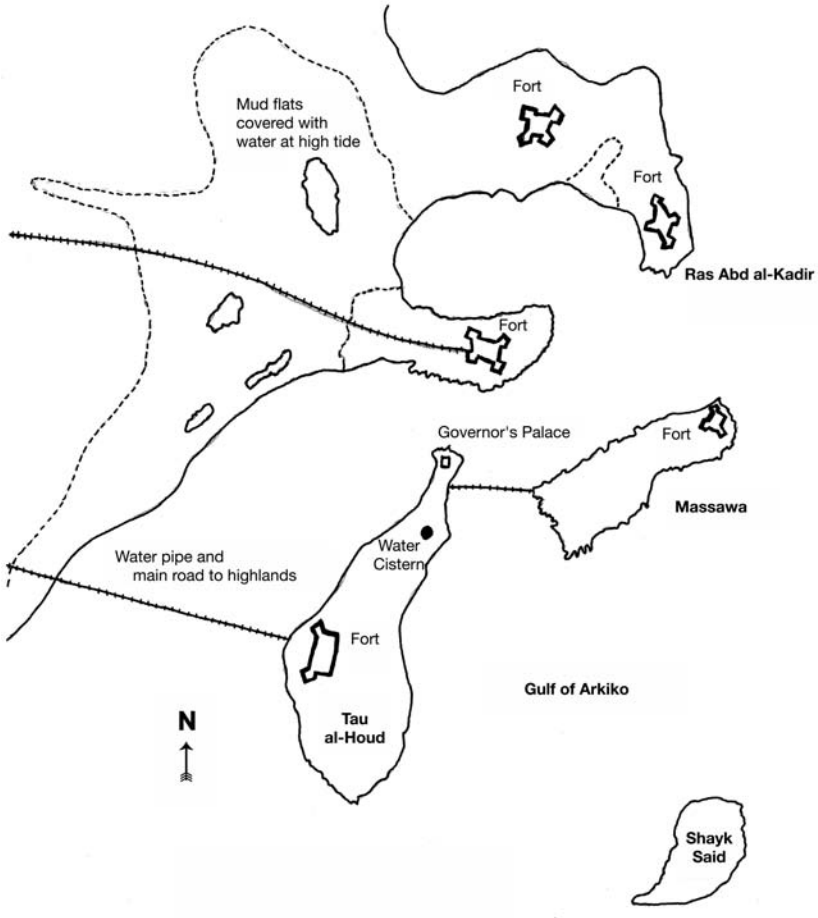

Figure 14.4 Massawa and fortifications (1876)
Source: As per Lockett Bey (S.H.C.); Scale = 1 inch =1880 yds.

Unlike Gundet, this victory came with a high price. Combining all the engagements of 7 to 12 March, Yohannis suffered nearly as many casualties as Muhammad. Among the fatalities were some very important men, like *Abuna* Antanewus, the leader of the Coptic Church, and the *Terkwe Basa*, a senior military officer. In addition, troops returning to Adua carried typhus, which spread through the civilian population, killing another 5,000 people. On the other hand, vast quantities of military supplies were now part of the Abyssinian arsenal. Almost 5,000 Remington rifles plus vast quantities of ammunition made Yohannis one of the best armed leaders in Africa. Significant quantities of artillery further enhanced this position, not to mention boxes of Maria Theresa thalers, gold, and other valuables. For Abyssinia, the heavy casualties suffered at Gura were sustainable, and balanced by the tremendous significance of the captured military hardware.[77]

For the Egyptians, whose bones still littered the fields many years later, there was also little doubt who won at Gura. The Austrian mercenary von Thurneyssen estimated losses in 1875–1876, from all causes, at 14,000 men, and 10,000–12,000 animals. Among these numbers were talented men like Rashid Pasha, the right flank commander, and Dr Muhammad Ali Pasha al-Bakli, Egypt's leading medical authority, who died in the retreat back to the fort. Just as significant, survivors spread terrible tales of Abyssinian warriors, 'who were not men, but devils'.[78] Egyptians might be willing to answer the Sultan's call for a war in the Balkans, but after Gura, they never again invaded Abyssinia.[79]

15

END GAME

> Ismail Pasha wronged me, and attacked my country, and through the instrumentality of one of his servants named Munzinger, took a portion of my territory. In fact, all these present troubles are due to Munzinger. Now that this Moslem kingdom has perished, and is in Christian hands, I request that you will arrange that my lands be restored to me.
>
> (Yohannis to Queen Victoria, 1883)

Gura ended any chance of an Egyptian-dominated Horn of Africa. The débâcles of 1875 and 1876 cost Ismail nearly 14,000 men. These were irreplaceable, for the Porte needed troops to help fight Russia, and Egypt's economy could not support war on several fronts. Indeed, the Red Sea coast was so weak, Yohannis seemed capable of sweeping his enemies from their coastal forts.

For Egypt, this was but the start in a long string of problems. First, there was no easy way out of the war, mainly because Ismail was unwilling to negotiate, save for a return to *status quo ante-bellum*. This was unacceptable to Yohannis, who saw the return of Bogos and Hamasen, plus free access to the sea, as Abyssinia's minimum requirements.[1]

So fighting continued, but in a very different format. Uthman Pasha Rifki, Egypt's new Red Sea commander, undertook a dangerous strategy. In early summer 1876, he provided Wolde Mikail with several thousand Remington rifles, and a significant quantity of ammunition. Uthman then directed the Hamasen warlord to 'sweep the land with fire and sword'.[2]

Wolde Mikail, whom Augustus Wylde describes as 'an Abyssinian monster in every sense of the word', certainly lived up to these orders.[3] In July 1876, he defeated an army under *Dajjazmatch* Hailu Habal, killing the commander and over 500 soldiers. Two years later, Hamasen's greatest *Shifta* smashed another imperial command. He followed this up with raid after raid, so that 'Hamasen was turned into a howling wilderness of ruined houses with a few half-starved peasants.'[4]

Although a competent general, Wolde Mikail's success was also the result of Abyssinian politics. Gura provided Yohannis with prestige, valuable new

weapons, and a chance to quash Menelik. Turning south, the Emperor marched towards Shewa. Fighting ended with the Leche Agreement of 20 March 1878, where Menelik recognized Yohannis as Emperor.[5]

With Yohannis focused on Shewa, Egypt used her new allies to continue a proxy war against Abyssinia in 1877–1878. These attacks disrupted Abyssinian defences, but otherwise brought few lasting benefits. Indeed, as success drew more warriors to Wolde Mikail's banner, Uthman lost control of his ally. By 1877, it was almost as if three separate powers struggled to dominate Hamasen: Yohannis, Uthman, and Wolde Mikail. By then, the latter could field an army of 7,000, over half armed with Remington rifles. He was so powerful, the Egyptians paid him £E1,000 per month *not* to attack Abyssinia during Gordon's efforts to secure a peace settlement![6]

Unable to offer concessions sufficient to even start negotiations, Gordon withdrew in failure. Abyssinia's response was two-fold. First, newly promoted *Ras* Alula was sent to counter Wolde Mikail. Though unable to capture Egyptian forts, he caused just as much devastation in pro-Egyptian villages. With 20,000 men, Alula cornered Wolde Mikail, forcing him to surrender in late 1878.[7]

Remingtons, ammunition and cash continued to flow from Egyptian forts to other *shifta* leaders. Controlling these men was difficult. Some lived up to their bandit traditions by attacking pro-Egyptian villages and caravans. This led to the last clash between Egyptian and Abyssinian forces, near the water holes at Saati in 1883, when Alula chased away *Bashi Bazouks* attempting to construct a fort. By then Egypt was controlled by Great Britain, which joined in a push to end the war. Negotiations dragged on until the Adua or Hewett Treaty, of 3 June 1884. It returned Bogos to Abyssinian control, allowed tax-free movement of Abyssinian imports via Massawa, and required Abyssinia to help Egypt with a different imperial problem, and much closer to home.[8]

By 1884, an uprising in the Sudan was nearly out of control, and Egyptian forces were trapped between Sudanese rebels, and troops loyal to Yohannis. Ironically, the Adua Treaty not only ended the war with Abyssinia, but required Yohannis to rescue the beleaguered garrisons. This done, the Egyptian military completely abandoned the Red Sea coast, surrendering most of their forts to Italy. Like Egypt, the new imperialists quickly came to blows with Abyssinia, and in a similar fashion, were badly defeated at Adua (1896), not too far from Gura, or Gundet.[9]

Maybe the Italians should have studied the Egyptian–Abyssinian War in greater detail. One important result was the greatly increased prestige of Yohannis, and a significant enhancement, through captured weapons, of his military machine. Both factors helped prepare the nation for Adua.

The war's impact was equally significant for Egypt. As one Neo-Mamluk put it, defeat was like 'a large shell fired at the Palace … it fell upon the ship of state, and exploding with fearful effect, literally swept the decks.'[10] When

the 'smoke' cleared, Egypt had a new Khedive, a revolution, another war, and a foreign occupation.

First, there were financial problems, already serious in 1875, but greatly increased by the additional £E1,000,000 cost of Gundet and Gura. How was Ismail to pay for the costs of the war, and his previous debts? Certainly not from Bogos or Hamasen, where fire and sword tactics made revenue collection pointless. Nor was it possible to obtain new loans, for as his advisors warned, defeat had pushed Egyptian bond prices to all-time lows, as jittery speculators dumped them on a weak market. Unable to secure more cash, the Khedive was forced to accept financial supervision from his European creditors. Their creation of the *Caisse de la dette publique* in 1876, although not a direct result of the Abyssinian War, was caused, in part, by massive outlays for Ismail's imperial dreams. Under this new regime, 'assigned' revenues went to pay off Egypt's debts, and what remained served all other purposes. Ismail's responses were more taxes plus the discharge of government employees, including soldiers, often without pay. The result was great bitterness, and anger directed by the masses towards the government.[11]

As Egypt teetered on the edge of complete breakdown, a confluence of European and Ottoman interests forced Ismail to abdicate in 1879. This only fuelled discontent as Egyptians saw his replacement as a tool of foreign bankers. Most also shared a view that their Turko-Circassian leadership was responsible for the military débâcles and financial hard times. These combined to produce the Urabi Revolution, followed by the British invasion of 1882, which reduced the Khedives to London's puppets, and completely reorganized the army.

As for the use of foreign military talent, it continued with British officers well into the twentieth century. Although they produced a much better army, comparison with Neo-Mamluks is not appropriate, as neither American, French, nor any previous group, had their nationals in charge of the Egyptian government. How then does one judge the army of Khedive Ismail? Even with the passage of 135 years, it still seems formidable on paper. The nifty uniforms, state-of-the-art weaponry, plus all those foreign 'experts' were certainly the right mix to impress visitors, journalists, or even military historians.

Yet after the war in Crete, most campaigns ended in failure. Egyptian soldiers could fight and die in large numbers, but they could not win. What happened? What separated Ismail's troops from those of Muhammad Ali?

First, foreign mercenaries never commanded armies in *al-nizam al-jadid*. Joseph Sève could lead his regiment into battle, and even become chief-of-staff, but always under the direction of Ibrahim. With Ismail, Neo-Mamluks had far more authority, and far less supervision. Men like Stone, or Gordon, often had agendas that fitted their personal needs for glory or justice, and then formed these into strategies that supposedly served Egypt.

Under Muhammad Ali, successful military officers obtained significant rewards and became part of the national elite. With his grandson, military

affairs were still important, but only one of many Khedival agendas. Meagre salaries, which later converted to payless furloughs, reduced the status of army officers and demonstrated Ismail's inability to support a top-notch military machine. This was unfortunate, as the weapons systems and the tactics of the 1870s required more sophisticated leaders, from *Sirdar*, all the way down to *onbashi*. These men, with their ethnic, religious, class, and factional differences, were unwilling, or unable, to train Egyptian soldiers in the 'art of war'.

These problems take us to the top, as leadership began with the Khedive. His father and grandfather provided overpowering role models. Like them, Ismail wanted a large army and an empire. He certainly was charismatic, a good diplomat, and an adroit politician. Unlike Ibrahim and Muhammad Ali, both fighters and graduates of the 'school of hard knocks', Ismail was a bad general, who hired men to fight his wars, without giving much attention to their plans, or problems. Whether American, Circassian, or Armenian, these Neo-Mamluks often provided bad advice that took Egyptian forces far from home, into imperial ventures that, even if crowned with victory, would hardly have returned any profits.

Ismail's connection with his army was via parades, war games, and ceremony. He never fired a shot in anger, or experienced the horrors of war to which he so easily exposed his troops. Even when threatened with dethronement, Ismail simply packed his bags, boarded the Khedival yacht, and quietly left for a comfortable exile. How different from his adversary Yohannis IV, who personally took soldiers into battle, and died leading his men at Qallabat (1889).

Egypt suffered under Ismail's leadership, just as France paid for the grandiose puffing of Napoleon III, or Mexico with Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. Counterfactual history could certainly produce a Khedival army that was quite capable, maybe even of dominating North-East Africa. With Ismail, this was not to be. Rather, Egypt's military learned, in a very hard way, some basic principles of strategy, i.e. the importance of matching ends to means. Also that martial quality came from sound leadership and good morale, not foreign mercenaries and imported technology.

GLOSSARY

How do Arabic words convert into English? Take باشا – is it *pasha*, *basha*, or *paça*? Experts could use any of the three. They might also request translations appear with a variety of dots, commas, or accent marks. For example, *ʻUthmān*, rather than just *Uthman*. While these allow scholars to be precise, they often confuse the uninitiated.

Targeting an audience of military historians, *Khedive Ismail's Army* avoids Arabic diacritical marks; in addition, no 'sun' or 'moon' letters. Amharic presents a different challenge, and, like Arabic, can have more than one way for conversion to English. In both cases, simple consistency is the goal, along with a glossary to assist the curious.

The *Encyclopedia of Islam* provides more details on many of these words. For the obscure military terms, try Lieutenant A. M. Mantell, *Military Technical Terms:* Part I, *English–Arabic*; Part II, *Arabic–English* (Cairo: National Printing Office, 1886).

Abun Bishop, highest official of the Abyssinian Orthodox Church until 1959. When placed with a name, it is rendered *Abuna*.

Afar Nomadic herders and warriors united by language but divided into several clans. They live in modern Djibouti, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. Sometimes called Adali, Adal, Odeli, or Danakil, but the latter is considered pejorative by modern Afar.

Agha Old-style Egyptian officer, by 1860s it was used for illiterate officers below the rank of major, or senior non-commissioned officers.

Amhara Dominant ethnic group in nineteenth-century Abyssinia.

Amir Arabic title translated as 'prince'. Often associated with top Mamluk leaders and sons of nineteenth-century Egyptian rulers.

Badaliyyah Money paid to avoid conscription, usually £E20–100.

Baqsumaat 'Travel bread', with individual slices hardened by re-baking. This was a standard ration in the nineteenth-century Egyptian military.

Bashi Bazouk Irregular light infantry, also called *arnauts* before the 1830s. Often Turks, Albanians or Kurds, but could include many others.

Heavily armed, sometimes mounted, and notorious for lax discipline. Alternative translation *bashi bazuq*.

Beni Amir One of the Beja clans living along the Red Sea coast in today's Eritrea and the Sudan. Often provided irregular cavalry to support Egyptian military efforts.

Bey Aristocratic title granted by the Sultan and important Ottoman officials, like the *wali* of Egypt. In the military, one often obtained this when promoted to *qaimmaqam*. Sometimes translated as *bek* or *beg*, to sound like the Turkish original.

Bimbashi A major in the Egyptian army, 'commander of 1,000'. Also spelled *binbashi*.

Bulak A small infantry unit. Also rendered *bulaq*.

Dajjazmatch Abyssinian aristocratic title just below *ras*.

Effendi Arabic title of respect for a literate person. Often given to junior officers in the Egyptian military.

Farik A full general in the Egyptian army, alternative transliteration is *ferik*.

Feddan Egyptian unit of land measurement, about an English acre.

Fellahin Arabic for peasant farmers. Singular is *fellah*.

Firmin A decree issued by the Ottoman sultan. Also spelled *firman*.

Ful A bean dish, Egypt's national staple.

Jundiyya Military service in the Sudan.

Khedive Title purchased by Ismail in 1867 from the Ottoman Sultan. From the Persian *khidev*, and often translated as 'lord' or 'master'.

Liwa A brigadier general in the Egyptian army. Short for *amir-liwa*.

Mamluk Sometimes translated as 'slave-soldier', these military bondsmen were an Islamic tradition dating back to the Middle Ages. Most often connected with Egypt.

Nafar A private in the Egyptian army.

Negus King. Several nineteenth-century Abyssinian leaders held this title.

Negus nagast 'King of Kings', or Emperor of Abyssinia.

Al-Nizam al-Jadid 'The new regulation', used to designate Muhammad Ali's European-drilled forces.

Onbashi Corporal in the Egyptian army.

Oromo Large minority group in nineteenth-century Abyssinia. Often provided first-rate cavalry for Abyssinian armies. Once called *Galla*, but this is now considered a pejorative term.

Para Small Egyptian coin of base metal, 1/40 of a *piaster*.

Pasha A high title, with three ranks, granted by the Sultan, or one of his chief officials, like the *wali* of Egypt.

Piaster Small Egyptian silver coin. Supposedly 100 of these made a gold pound (£E), but 1860s–1870s exchange rates were often much higher.

Qaimmaqam Lieutenant colonel in the Egyptian army.

Ras The highest Abyssinian aristocratic title, right below *negus*.

Redif Reserve forces of the Egyptian army.

Saho A Cushitic people found north of Bogos, who once provided scouts, spies, and auxiliary troops for Egypt. Also *Soho*.

Shaykh Arabic title of respect for a village or religious leader.

Shifta An Abyssinian bandit or rebel. Also *shefta*.

Sirdar 'Field Marshal', the highest-ranking Egyptian army officer.

Sudd Barriers formed from aquatic plants along the river systems of the southern Sudan.

Talimgi Instructor, a title granted to European mercenary officers in the 1820s.

Wali Ottoman Governor-General, or viceroy of Egypt. Sometimes rendered as *vali*.

Yuzbashi Captain in the Egyptian army.

Zariba Thick thorn bush enclosure used to defend a camp. Sometimes a ditch and parapet were added to increase its defensive value. Plural is *zaraib*.

Zirkhagi 'Iron man', a cuirassier in the Egyptian army. In the 1850s–1880s his breast plate was exchanged for a coat of chain-mail.

NOTES

1 DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH

1 *The Times* (London), 15 July 1872: 7.
2 Cited in Jacques Tagher, 'Mohammed Ali jugé par lui-même', *Cahiers d'histoire égyptienne*, numéro spécial (1949): 33.
3 His descendants married into the royal family, and still maintain a gracious home across from the American Embassy in Cairo.
4 Egypt employed European and American mercenaries in the 1870s, English in the 1880s, Germans in the late 1940s, and 15,000 Russians in the 1960s and 1970s. None of them worked as well as men employed by Muhammad Ali. Reflections of this tradition can even be seen today in the hire of expensive coaching talent for Egyptian soccer teams. Andrew Hammond, 'Football's Foreigner Experiment Ends in Tears', *Middle East Times*, Vol. XIII, No. 4 (January 1995): 16. For a good overview of the Egyptian military since 1800, see May Chartouni Dubarry (ed.), *Armée et nation en Égypte: pouvoir civil, pouvoir militaire* (Paris, 2001).
5 For more on Mamluks, see David Ayalon, *The Mamluk Military Society* (London, 1979); and David Nicolle, *The Mamluks, 1250–1517* (London, 1993). For the tail end of their regime, see Daniel Crecelius, *A Study of the Regimes of Ali Bey al-Kebir and Muhammad Bey Abu al-Dhahab, 1760–1775* (Minneapolis, MN, 1981); and John W. Livingston, *Ali Bey al Kabir and the Mamluk Resurgence in Ottoman Egypt* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1970).
6 To examine this western technology, and how it was created, consult William H. McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power* (Chicago, 1982); and Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West* (Cambridge, 1996). For a comparative look at such efforts in Egypt, China, Japan, and the Ottoman Empire, see David Ralston, *Importing the European Army* (Chicago, 1990).
7 Samuel Henry Lockett, 'Notes on the Abyssinian Campaign of the Egyptian Army, 1875–1876 mss.', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.
8 Lockett, 'Recent Military Events in Egyptian History mss.', ibid.
9 Richard Hill, *Egypt in the Sudan, 1820–1881* (London, 1959), p. 166.

2 CREATING A MILITARY MACHINE

1 For an excellent biography, see Afaf Lufti al-Sayyid Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali* (Cambridge, 1984). On his army, see Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali Pasha, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge, 1997); Général M. Weygand, *Histoire militaire de Muhammed Aly et*

de ses fils, 2 Vols (Paris, 1936); David Farhi, 'Nizam-i-Cedid – Military Reform under Mehemed Ali', *Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (1972): 151–184; and David Nicolle, 'Nizam – Egypt's Army in the 19th Century', *Army Quarterly and Defense Journal*, Vol. 108 (Jan. 1978): 69–78. An interesting Arabic source with wonderful colour plates is Al-Amir Umar Pasha Tusun, *Al-Jaysh al-Misri al-barri wa al-bahri* [Egypt's Armed Forces on Land and Sea] (Cairo, 1940). Naval affairs are covered in Vice-Admiral G. Durand-Viel, *Les Campagnes navales de Mohammed Aly et d'Ibrahim* (Paris, 1937); Angelo Sammarco, *La Marina Egizianna sotto Mohammed Ali: Il Contributo Italiano* (Cairo, MCMXXXI); and Admiral Ismail Pasha Sarhank, *Haqaiq al-Akhbar an Duwal al-Bihar* [A Precise History of Maritime Powers], Vol. 2 (Bulaq, 1314 a.h.).

2 Marsot, op. cit., p. 97.

3 Ibrahim died in 1848, probably of complications resulting from sleeping on one too many cold Anatolian fields. Egyptian rulers after him may have died from overeating, but none from sharing the rigours of campaigning with their troops.

4 Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 3.

5 Ali Bey el Abbassi, *Travels of Ali Bey* (London, 1816), Vol. II, pp. 27–28; Gabriel Guemard, 'Pèlerins singuliers et soldats de fortune', *Bulletin de la société royale d'archéologie d'Alexandrie*, Vol. VIII, No. 27 (1932): 27–52; Weygand, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 17.

6 Jules Planat, *Histoire de la régénération de l'Égypte* (Paris, 1830), p. 104.

7 Georges Douin (ed.), *L'Égypte de 1828 à 1830: Correspondance des consuls de France en Égypte* (Rome, 1935), p. 67.

8 Adam Georges Benis (ed.), *Une Mission militaire polonaise en Égypte* (Cairo, 1938), Vol. I, p. 345. For Boyer comment, see Georges Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire française auprès de Mohamed Aly* (Cairo, 1927), p. 189.

9 Cited in Darrell J. Dykstra, 'Joseph Hekekyan and the Egyptian School in Paris', *Armenian Review*, Vol. 35 (1982): 174. For more on the school, see Alain Silvera, 'The First Egyptian Student Mission to France under Muhammad Ali', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 16 (May 1980): 1–22. Paddy Griffith, *Military Thought in the French Army, 1815–1851* (Manchester, 1989), provides a concise appraisal of official military schools in France.

10 For a look at life in the post-1815 French army, see Griffith op. cit.

11 Lists of foreign officers in *al-Nizam al-Jadid* of the 1820s can be found in Douin (ed.), *La Mission du Baron de Boislecomte, L'Égypte et la Syrie en 1833* (Cairo, 1927), pp. 108–109; *Une Mission militaire*, p. 4, n.; and Eduard Driault (ed.), *L'Expédition de Crète et de Morée (1823–1828)* (Cairo, 1930), p. 93.

12 'Report to Alexander Johnson', in FO 78/3185, PRO.

13 Griffith, p. 8, notes that French pay rates were among Europe's lowest. Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, pp. x–xi, provides details on Sève's Napoleonic career. One could also consult Aime Vingtrinier's ponderous two-volume work. *Soliman Pacha, Colonel Sève, Généralissime des armées Égyptiennes ou histoire des guerres de l'Égypte de 1820 à 1860*, (Paris, 1886). Sève, whose name is sometimes entered as 'Seves', cries out for a modern biography.

14 Benis, op. cit., Vol. I, p. xxxiii.

15 Bey was a title granted by the Ottoman Sultan, or one of his top officials, like Muhammad Ali. Often it was granted to military men ranked as *miralai* (colonel), or *qaimmaqan* (lieutenant-colonel). The next step up was a pasha, which had three grades. For more on these, see Richard Hill, *Biographical Dictionary of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (London, 1951), pp. xi, xiii–xvi. On Sève's early employment, see Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, p. xii; Planat, op. cit., p. 14.

16 C. Rochfort Scott, *Rambles in Egypt and Candia with Details of the Military Power and Resources of These Countries* (London, 1837), Vol. II, p. 229.

17 The equivalent in French currency was 41,000 francs. C. D., *Deux années à Constantinople et en Morée (1825–1826)* (Paris, 1828), pp. 207, 209. For more on religious problems facing western officers, see Pierre Giffard, *Les Français en Égypte* (1883), p. 79; Planat, op. cit., pp. 40–41. Harvard man and ex-USMC officer George Bethune English was another of the *Wali*'s officers who converted to Islam. See his *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennar* (Boston, 1823). On 1847 pay, see Helen Anne B. Rivlin, *The Agricultural Policy of Muhammad 'Ali in Egypt* (Cambridge, 1961), p. 326, n.11.

18 In 1833, the Spanish 'dollar', or eight *real* coin, was a major trade currency for the Middle East, and exchanged for 20 Egyptian piasters. In 1843, it produced 22 piasters, and at the same time, was worth four shillings and two pence in British money. Sir Gardner Wilkinson, *Modern Egypt and Thebes* (1843 rept., Wiesbaden, 1981), Vol. I, pp. 28, 102. Planat, op. cit., p. 41, lists an instructor's salary in 1826 as: 2,000 French francs a year, a horse and fodder, two uniforms, and a food allowance of 60 francs per month. Ed. de Cadalvene and J. de Breuvery, *L'Égypte et la Turquie de 1829 à 1836* (Paris, 1836), Vol. I, p. 112, put the figures for 1836 at 2–4,000 francs salary, plus another 250 francs for uniform purchase and care. Not all Europeans obtained officer positions, some technical branches, like the artillery and sappers, hired Spanish and Italian non-commissioned officers.

19 Planat, one of the original foreign instructors at Canca, provides a detailed list of courses offered and instructors (who were mainly French), pp. 92–93, 363–364. See also 'Armée Égyptienne en 1836', *Magasin pittoresque* (1836): 347–348; Cadalvene and de Breuvery, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 124; Douin (ed.), *L'Égypte de 1828*, p. 195; 'Égypte', *Le Spectateur militaire* (August–September 1828): 629; Marsot, op. cit., p. 168; and Prince Pucklar-Muskau, *Egypt under Mehemet Ali* (London, 1845), Vol. I, p. 304.

20 L. Auriant, 'Ismail Gibraltar, amiral Égyptien (1810–1826)', *Revue politique et litteraire: Revue bleu*, Vol. 64 (1926): 627; Robert E. Brooker Jr., *British Military Pistols, 1603–1888* (Dallas, 1978), p. 128; 'Cook to Bathurst, 1 January 1813, Cadiz', WO 1/266; Edgar Garston, *Greece Revisited and Sketches in Lower Egypt* (London, 1842), Vol. II, p. 276n; Gabriel Guemard, *Les Reformes en Égypte d'Ali Bey el Kebir à Muhammad Ali, 1760–1848* (Cairo, 1936), p. 142; David Nicolle, 'Nizam – Egypt's Army': 70; Weygand, op. cit., *Histoire militaire*, Vol. I, p. 190.

21 J. Heywood-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Modern Education in Egypt* (London, 1938), pp. 172–174; Weygand, Vol. I, p. 195.

22 John Bowring, 'Report on Egypt and Candia', House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1840, Vol. XXI: *Reports from Commissioners*, Vol. VI (London, 1840), p.15; A. B. Clot Bey, *Aperçu General*, Vol. II, p. 475; [Barthelemy Prosper Enfantin], *Œuvres de Saint-Simon-d'Enfantin* (1865–1878 rept., Aalen, 1964), pp. 192–193; R. R. Madden, *Egypt and Mohammed Ali* (London, 1841), p. 39; Rivlin, op. cit., pp. 117, 241–245; Victor M. Schoelcher, *L'Égypte en 1845* (1846), p. 55; James A. St John, *Egypt and Mohammed Ali* (London, 1834), Vol. II, pp. 436–437.

23 Scott, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 164.

24 British 'Tower' and French M1777 muskets were the main patterns copied by Egyptian arsenals. Models for pistols and edged weapons were mainly of French design. See also Bowring, pp. 24, 28, 43; Clot-Bey, Vol. II, pp. 210–211; Garston, op. cit., pp. 341–342; George Jones, *Excursions to Cairo, Jerusalem, Damascus and Balbek from the United States Ship Delaware during her Recent Cruise* (New York, 1836), pp. 65–66; Marsot, op. cit., pp. 161, 181; Felix Mengin *Histoire*

sommaire de l'Égypte de Mohammed Aly (Paris, 1839), pp. 132–133; Planat, op. cit., p. 350; Weygand, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 218–219; W. R. Wilde, *Narrative of a Voyage to Madeira, Teneriffe and the Shores of the Mediterranean* (Dublin, 1840), Vol. I, p. 297.

25 Bowring, op. cit., pp. 28–29, 56; 'État comparatif des forces de terre et de mer de la Turquie et de l'Égypte', in *La Spectateur militaire*, Vol. XXI (avril 1835): 85; Moustafa Fahmy, *La Révolution de l'industrie en Égypte et ses conséquences sociales au 19e siècle* (Leiden, 1954), p. 39; Garston, op. cit., pp. 341–342; Marsot, op. cit., p. 165; Weygand, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 218–219. Durand-Viel, Sammarco, and Sarhank provide details on Egyptian naval construction.

26 Edward B. B. Barker, *Syria and Egypt under the Last Five Sultans of Turkey* (1876 rept., New York, 1973), Vol. II, p. 157; Fahmy, p. 46.

27 Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, p. 21.

28 Douin (ed.), *L'Égypte de 1828 à 1830* (1935), p. 194.

29 'Extremely well equipped and well drilled', in Parker, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 54. Consul Mimaut, 1829, 'with great precision', in Douin (ed.), *L'Égypte de 1828*, p. 132; General Boyer, 1824, 'the troops are like our own', in Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, pp. 9, 37; Consul Muliveire, 1825, 'They conduct all the drills with extraordinary precision', in Driault (ed.), *L'Expédition de Crète*, p. 83. Prince Pucklar-Muskau, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 221, points out that Muhammad Ali was often cheated by such 'experts', and had concluded that for all its problems, native industry was a better alternative to European imports. See also John Gadsby, *My Wanderings: Being Travels in the East in 1846–47, 1850–51, 1852–53* (London, 1862), p. 233; Planat, pp. 87–89, 350; Eliot Warburton, *Travels in Egypt and the Holy Land* (Philadelphia, 1859), Vol. II, p. 234; Weygand, Vol. I, p. 190; Wilkinson, Vol. I, p. 89.

30 Baron Pierre François Xavier Boyer (1772–1851) served in Egypt, Santo Domingo, Spain, Germany and France during the Napoleonic wars. An infantry expert, he later commanded a French division in Algeria and was inspector-general of the *Gendarmerie* in the 1840s. Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, pp. xvii–xix. See also Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, pp. xv, xxi; Driault (ed.), *L'Expédition de Crète*, p. 45.

31 C. D., p. 198; Driault (ed.), *L'Expédition de Crète*, p. 46; Planat, pp. 98, 127.

32 Planat, op. cit., p. 68.

33 Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, p. 22.

34 Driault (ed.), *L'Expédition de Crète*, p. 83. On problems of the Boyer Mission, see Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, pp. xvi–xvii, 53, 108; Driault (ed.), *L'Expédition de Crète*, pp. 105, 129–130, 137, 189, 214; Planat, op. cit., pp. 129–131, 133.

35 Benis (ed.), op. cit., Vol. I, pp. xxxiv, xxxviii–xxxix; Edmund Bojerski, 'The Poles in Africa 1517–1939, Part II', *Explorer's Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (1957): 27–29; Henryk Dembinski, 'Manuscrit prophétique rédigé par moi en 1833, en 1834, et que les événements qui la passant aujourd'hui en Europe justiunt d'une manière la plus évidente. 4 Sept. 1855', Carton 42, Dossier '5588 (Divers)', *PMAS*; A. Kosciakiewicz, *Souvenirs de l'émigration polonaise* (Paris, 1858), p. 139; Scott, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 183–184.

36 Captain Scott, who visited in 1836, described the majority of Europeans he saw in Cairo as 'the outcasts of all the nations of Europe … the most rascally looking set I ever beheld', op. cit., Vol. I, p. 158.

37 Some might point out that Egypt failed to retain Greece in 1828, and Syria in 1840. Certainly, both campaigns did end in defeat, but only after the Egyptian armed forces had confronted coalitions of three or four major European powers. Since *al-Nizam al-Jadid* was never envisioned as a tool for world conquest, these

results hardly detract from the military accomplishments of Muhammad Ali and Ibrahim.

38 Nicolle, Umar Tussun, and Weygand provide detailed coverage of the many wars of Muhammad Ali. The author hopes to follow in their footsteps with his next book on the nineteenth-century Egyptian armed forces.

3 'HIDEOUS NEGROES FROM NUBIA'

1 'Thayer to Seward, Alexandria, 19 November 1861', *DUSCA*.

2 David Nicolle, 'Nizam – Egypt's Army in the 19th Century', Parts I and II, *Army Quarterly and Defense Journal*, Vol. 108, No. 1 (January 1978): 69–78, Vol. 108, No. 2 (April 1978): 177–187; and Le Général Weygand, *Histoire militaire de Muhammad Aly et de ses fils*, 2 vols (Paris, 1936).

3 Edward Barker, *Syria and Egypt under the Last Five Sultans of Turkey* (1873 rept., New York, 1973), II, p. 54.

4 C[harles] D[eval], *Deux Années à Constantinople et en Morée (1825–1826)* (Paris, 1828), p. 197; Georges Douin (ed.), *L'Égypte de 1828 à 1830* (Cairo, 1935), pp. 189, 190; Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire française auprès de Mohamed Aly* (Cairo, 1930), pp. xv, 51, 63, 67; Edouard Driault (ed.), *La Formation de l'Empire de Mohamed Aly de l'Arabie au Soudan (1814–1823)* (Cairo, 1927), p. 285; Jules Planat, *Histoire de la régénération de l'Égypte* (Paris, 1830), pp. 59, 352–353; Al-Amir Umar Pasha Tusun, *Al-Jaysh al-Misri fil Harb al-Rusiya al-Marufa bi Harb al-Krim, 1853–1855m* [*The Egyptian Army in the Crimean War, 1853–1855*] (1936 rept., Cairo, 1992), pp. 49–50.

5 Commodore Sir Charles Napier, *The War in Syria* (London, 1842), I, p. xxiv. See also Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, p. 37, Nicolle, op. cit., p. 183.

6 Planat, op. cit., p. 254, says the Egyptians fired off too much ammunition. See also Henry Dodwell, *The Founder of Modern Egypt* (1931 rept., Cambridge, 1967), p. 226; Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, p. 21; Nicolle, op. cit., p. 70.

7 Ed. de Cadalvene and E. Barrault, *Histoire de la Guerre de Mehemed-Ali contre la Porte Ottoman en Syrie et en Asia-Mineure, 1831–1833* (Paris, 1837), pp. 115, 126; Douin (ed.), *L'Égypte de 1828*, pp. 91, 132, 193; Tusun, op. cit., pp. 51–52.

8 Cadalvene and Barrault, Vol. I, pp. 116, 126; Douin (ed.), *L'Égypte de 1828*, p.194; Douin, *Une Mission militaire*, pp. 42, 78; Nicolle, op. cit., pp. 181–184.

9 Douin (ed.), *Une Mission militaire*, p. 77.

10 Planat, op. cit., pp. 348–352; Asad J. Rustum, *Notes on Akka and Its Defences under Ibrahim Pasha* (Beirut, 1926), p. 29 n.

11 Nicolle and Weygand cover Nezib, while W. P. Hunter, *Narrative of the Late Expedition to Syria*, 2 vols (London, 1842), covers British naval operations, and amphibious landings in Lebanon and Palestine.

12 Contemporary European accounts of Abbas I (1813–1854), often negative, sometimes stem from Egyptian efforts to replace western advisers, or cut back on purchases of foreign technology. Examples of such are found in 'Macauley to Buchannan, Alexandria, 22 March 1849', *DUSCA*; J. C. McCoan, *Egypt under Ismail* (London, 1889), pp. 9–10. For a well-written history of Abbas and his government, see Ehud R. Toledano, *State and Society in Mid-Nineteenth Century Egypt* (Cambridge, 1990).

13 For more on Ottoman–Egyptian relations, see Ahmed Abdel-Rahmin Mustafa, 'Some Aspects of Egypt's Foreign Relations under Abbas I', *Annals of the Faculty of the Arts, Ain Shams University*, Vol. VIII (1963): 63–82; and Helen

Anne B. Rivlin, 'The Railway Question in the Ottoman–Egyptian Crisis of 1850–1852', *Middle Eastern Affairs*, Vol. 15 (Autumn 1961): 365–377.

14 Marsot describes Abbas as 'not only slothful but a dunce'. Afaf Lufti al-Sayyid Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 87–89.

15 For more on this remarkable man, see Aime Vingtrinier, *Soliman-Pacha, Colonel Sève: Généralissime des Armées Égyptiennes ou Histoire des Guerres de l'Égypte de 1820 à 1860* (Paris, 1886).

16 John Marlowe, *Spoiling the Egyptians* (New York, 1975), p. 46; 'Macauley to Buchannan', ibid.; Mustafa, op. cit., p. 66; Toledano, op. cit., p. 44.

17 Egypt, Laws, Statutes, etc., *Répertoire Général Annoté de la Législation et de l'Administration Égyptiennes, 1840–1908* (Alexandria, 1906), p. 474; 'Extract of Reports from Egypt, Constantinople, 4 June 1841', FO 406/6; Victor M. Schoelcher, *L'Égypte en 1845* (Paris, 1846), pp. 69–70; Vingtrinier, op. cit., p. 525.

18 Tusun, op. cit., p. 48.

19 Fearing Ottoman intervention upon the death of his father, Ibrahim stepped up training in 1847–1848. He raised almost 80,000 troops, and cut back on soldiers used in agricultural and roadwork. Edwin de Leon, *The Khedive's Egypt* (London, 1877), p. 374; Baron de Malortie, *Egypt: Native Rulers and Foreign Interference* (London, 1882), p. 68; 'Murray to F.O., Cairo, 9, 20 April 1848', FO 142/16; Rivlin, op. cit., p. 366; Ismail Pasha Sarhank, *Haqaiq al-Akhbar an Duwal al-Bihar* [A Precise History of Maritime Powers] (Bulaq, 1314), Vol. II, p. 261; Toledano, op. cit., p. 70; Tusun, op. cit., p. 48.

20 Bayle St John, *Village Life in Egypt* (1852 rept., New York, 1973), Vol. II, pp. 83–85; Joseph P. Thompson, *Photographic Views of Egypt, Past and Present* (Boston, 1854), pp. 258–259; Toledano, op. cit., p. 185.

21 Gabriel Baer, *Studies in the Social History of Modern Egypt* (Chicago, 1969), p. 40; Haim Nohoun (ed.), *Recueil de firmins impériaux Ottomans adressés aux Valis et aux Khédives d'Égypte* (Cairo, 1934), pp. 235, 239; 'State of Egypt', *The Times* (16 March 1853): 5; Thompson, op. cit.; Terry Walz, 'Asyut in the 1260s (1844–1853)', *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 15 (1978): 114.

22 Sarhank, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 263; Nassau William Senior, *Conversations and Journals in Egypt and Malta* (London, 1882), Vol. II, p. 27; Toledano, op. cit., pp. 92, 99, 182, 290, n.22; Thompson, op. cit.

23 Samuel Becker Grant, Jr., *Modern Egypt and the New (Turco-Egyptian) Aristocracy*, University of Michigan, PhD dissertation, 1968, p. 21; Paul Merruau, *L'Égypte Contemporaine de Mehemet Ali à Said Pacha* (Paris, 1864), pp. 24, 330; Sarhank, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 261.

24 'Projet d'Organisation d'un Régiment de Dromadaires Réguliers', *Bulletin de l'Institut Égyptien*, No. 3 (1860): 57–58; Sarhank, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 261.

25 [Artin Bey], 'Extrait d'une Lettre de M. Artin Bey à M. Jomard', *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (April 1842): 275–277; J. Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London, 1938), pp. 294–301; Malortie, op. cit., p. 68; Sarhank, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 263; Toledano, op. cit., p. 58.

26 Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., p. 294; Toledano, op. cit., pp. 70, 86.

27 'Devatserre to Khosrev Bey, Paris, 7 Février 1850', Carton, Dossier, *PMAS*; Darrell J. Dykstra, 'Joseph Hekekyan and the Egyptian School in Paris', *Armenian Review*, Vol. 35 (1982): 175; Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., pp. 304–307, 326–329, 394.

28 Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., p. 293; 'Khosrew Bey to Moyne, Caire, 11 Mars 1850', in Carton, Dossier, *PMAS*; Vingtrinier, op. cit., pp. 556–558.

29 Henri Joseph Gisquet, *L'Égypte: Les Turcs et les Arabes* (Paris, 1848), Vol. I, p. 49.
30 Vice-Admiral G. Durand-Viel, *Les Campagnes Navales de Mohammed Aly et d'Ibrahim* (Paris, 1937), Vol. II, p. 260; Gisquet, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 47–49; Helen Anne B. Rivlin, *The Agricultural Policy of Muhammad Ali in Egypt* (Cambridge, MA, 1961), p. 210.
31 Durand-Viel, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 271–272; Mustafa, op. cit., pp. 66, 77; Rivlin, 'The Railway Question': 366; Toledano, op. cit., p. 91.
32 William Bromfield, *Letters from Egypt and Syria* (London, MDCCCLVI), p. 15; 'Macauley to Webster, Alexandria, 18 August 1851', *DUSCA*.
33 Durand-Viel, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 260; 'Macauley to Webster', *DUSCA*; Mustafa, op. cit., pp. 69–70; Toledano, op. cit., p. 190.
34 Toledano, op. cit., p. 45.
35 Ibid., p. 76.
36 'Untitled mss.', Carton 194, Dossier '1869', *PI*; Tusun, op. cit., pp. 76, 92.
37 'Green to F.O., Alexandria, 20 August 1853', FO 78/965; 'Green to F.O., Cairo, November 7, 1853', FO 78/965; Anouar Louca (ed.), *L'Égypte au XIXe siècle d'après la correspondance consulaire du Portugal: Etude et documents* (Evora, 1983), p. 46; Ersilio Michel, *Esuli Italiani in Egitto, 1815–1861* (Pisa, 1958), p. 202; Mustafa, op. cit., p. 81; Russell, op. cit., p. 125; J. Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea* (1936 rept., Hamden, CT, 1964), pp. 345–347, 501; Tusun, op. cit., p. 93; Vingtrinier, op. cit., p. 572.
38 'Green to F.O.', op. cit.; Bernd Langensiepen and Ahmet Guleryuz, *The Ottoman Steam Navy, 1828–1923*, trans. James Cooper (Annapolis, MD, 1995), p. 4; Temperley, op. cit.; Vingtrinier, op. cit., p. 564.
39 Although the Ottoman fleet still contained seven ships-of-the-line, including three Egyptian 100s, none had the devastating shell-guns. Evelyn Wood, *From Midshipman to Field Marshal* (London, 1912), p. 32; John Shelton Curtiss, *Russia's Crimean War* (Durham, NC, 1979), p. 207; Langensiepen and Guleryuz, op. cit., p. 4.
40 The Ninth Infantry Regiment maintained a Sudanese depot from the 1830s, thus W. H. Russell's comment of seeing 'Negroes of a savage aspect' among the Egyptian contingent. David Cliff, Honourable Secretary of the Crimean War Research Society, letter to author, Ripponden, West York, 22 September 1994.
41 'Thayer to Seward', ibid.; Vingtrinier, op. cit., p. 567.
42 Ahmad Pasha Manliki (1795–1862) was a veteran of the Syrian Wars. Because of his harsh rule while governor of the Sudan, locals there called him *al-jazzar* [the butcher]. Richard Hill, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Sudan* (London, 1967), p. 35.
43 'De Leon to Marcy, Alexandria, 18 September 1854', *DUSCA*; Toledano, pp. 85–86, 88; Vingtrinier, pp. 572–574.
44 Curtiss, op. cit., pp. 365–366; Evelyn Wood, op. cit., pp. 80, 130–132; General Sir Edward Hamley, *The War in the Crimea* (Westport, CT, 1971), p. 205; *Memoria sobre el viaje militar a la Crimea presentado por los oficiales del cuerpo di injenieros nombrados en 1855 para seguir u estudiar los operaciones de la Guerra entre Rusia y la potencias occidentales Francia e Inglaterra, auxiliado a la Turquia*, Vol. III (Madrid, 1861), p. 21.
45 Hamley, op. cit., pp. 205–206; Vingtrinier, op. cit., pp. 568–572.
46 Calthorpe, Vol. II, pp. 148–149, 167–168, 190; 'The Cavalry Affair near Eupatoria', *The Times* (17 October 1855): 7; Curtiss, op. cit., p. 459; 'France', *The Times* (21 April 1855): 10; John Sweetman, 'Turkish Troops and the Siege of Sevastopol', *Army Quarterly and Defense Journal*, Vol. 105 (October 1975): 488; Vingtrinier, op. cit., pp. 572, 574.
47 Merruau, op. cit., p. 33; Senior, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 38.

4 'THE ARMY WAS HIS HOBBY'

1 No single work provides a good overview of Said's reign. Paul Merruau, *L'Égypte contemporaine de Mehemet-Ali à Said Pacha* (Paris, 1864) is useful, but Nassau William Senior, *Conversations and Journals in Egypt and Malta* (London, 1882) is more balanced. David S. Landes, *Bankers and Pashas* (Cambridge, MA, 1979), presents a masterful look at Egyptian finances.

2 Baron de Malortie, *Egypt: Native Rulers and Foreign Interference* (London, 1882), p. 69.

3 Afaf Lufti al-Sayyid Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 90–91; Merruau, op. cit., p. 326; A. A. Patton, *A History of the Egyptian Revolution* (London, 1870), Vol. II, p. 241; J. V. Smith, *A Pilgrimage to Egypt* (Boston, 1852), p. 379; Emin Foat Tugay, *Three Centuries: Family Chronicles of Turkey and Egypt* (London, 1963), p. 101.

4 Landes, op. cit., pp. 99–101, 106–107, 117, 117n. See also Roger Owen, *Cotton and the Egyptian Economy, 1820–1914: A Study in Trade and Development* (Oxford, 1969), p. 126.

5 Landes, op. cit., p. 89.

6 For more on this, see Juan Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East: Social and Cultural Origins of Egypt's Urabi Movement* (Princeton, NJ, 1993).

7 Hundreds of letters and receipts attest to Said's fascination with French-style uniforms, many with the note: '*Expédier dans la plus bref délai*'. See 'Dusautoy to Koenig Bey, Paris, 22 décembre 1862', and dossiers marked '1860', '1861', and '1862' in Carton 22, *PMAS*; and John Marlowe, *Spoiling the Egyptians* (New York, 1975), p. 91.

8 'Dusautoy to Koenig Bey, Paris, 30 juin 1862', Carton 22, Dossier '1862' in *PMAS*; Merruau, op. cit., pp. 38–39.

9 Ian V. Hogg, *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Artillery* (Secaucus, NJ, 1988), p. 184; Merruau, op. cit., p. 38; Amedée Sacre and Louis Outueborn, *L'Égypte et Ismail Pacha* (Paris, 1865), p. 172.

10 Near Sevastopol, on 25 October 1854, an extreme example of this pitted 30 British skirmishers armed with muzzle-loading rifles against a Russian column of 5,000 men with smooth-bores. Firing at long range, the English soldiers 'reduced the head of the column to bloody ruin, and at times, brought the unwieldy mass to a bewildered halt'. Russian return fire was ineffectual. For a good look at the evolution of small arms, see Major F. Myatt, *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of 19th Century Firearms* (Avenel, NJ, 1994), p. 44.

11 An American rifle according to 'Journal de Mr. Piozin, vice consul de s. m. Britannique au Caire', 19 November 1836, [p. 32], Carton 42, *PMAS*.

12 Said specifically ordered these weapons, and probably desired the extra length so that his guards would have longer rifles than Napoleon III's *Cent Gardes*.

13 Egyptian Minié rifles cost 60 French francs each. The longer version cost two more francs, and both were manufactured at the rate of one hundred per month. 'Efflatoun Bey to Hassan Bey, 13 September 1862, Paris', Carton 38, Dossier 'armes', *PMAS*. Due to rapid changes in arms technology, similar rifles were offered in 1870 for 15 francs each. 'Frenkel to Ismail, 9 février 1870, Zurich', Dossier 50/7, Carton 179, *PI*. On double-barrelled guns and Belgian sales, see 'Colquhoun to Russell, 27 August 1860, Alexandria', FO 142/25; and 'Lemercier to Cherif Pacha, 28 septembre 1864, Paris', Carton 179, Dossier 50/7, *PI*.

14 From 1838 through the 1850s, France's *Tirailleurs de Vincennes* represented an elite training battalion. Under the direction of officers like Minié, Delvigne and Thouvenin, this school played a significant role in the advance of tactics, ballistic theory, and weapon design. Egyptian officers had been seconded here since the late 1840s. For more on the school, see Myatt, op. cit., pp. 41–42.

15 'Seward to Thayer, Washington, D.C., 8 April 1862', in United States, Department of State, *Instructions to Barbary Powers*; and 'Thayer to Seward, Alexandria, 19, 26 November 1861, and 12 January 1862', *DUSCA*.
16 'L'Armée de khédive', unpublished mss., Carton 25, Dossier 50/1, *PI*; 'Colquhoun to Russell, Alexandria, 27 August 1860', FO 142/25; 'Lukaszy to Said, Vienna, 30 août 1861', Carton 43, Doss. '1861', *PMAS*; David Nicolle, 'Nizam: Egypt's Army in the Nineteenth Century', *Army Quarterly and Defense Journal*, Vol. 108, No. 1 (January 1978): 72–73; Sacre and Outueborn, op. cit., p. 172.
17 The first Krupp guns purchased were 12- and 24-pounder cast-steel muzzle-loaders. Krupp Works, *Krupp: A Century's History of the Krupp Works* (Essen, 1912). 'Lukaszy to Said, Vienna, 30 août 1861', Carton 43, Doss. '1861', *PMAS*.
18 'Colquhoun to Russell, Alexandria, 23 May 1861', FO 142/25; Marlowe, pp. 102–103, n.; Charles D. Warner, *My Winter on the Nile* (Boston, 1881), p. 67.
19 'Colquhoun to Bulwer, Alexandria, 29 August 1860', FO 142/25; J. C. McCoan, *Egypt under Ismail* (London, 1889), pp. 14–15; Merruau, op. cit., pp. 333–334; Nicolle, op. cit., pp. 72–73.
20 'Colquhoun to Russell, Alexandria, 26 November 1860', FO 142/25; Landes, p. 109; Edwin de Leon, *The Khedive's Egypt* (London, 1877), p. 374; Merruau, op. cit., p. 334; Ismail Sarhank Pasha, *Haqaiq al-Akhbar an Duwal al-Bihar* (1314 a.h.), Vol. II, p. 270; Marlowe, op. cit., p. 97.
21 J. Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London, 1938), p. 338; Merruau, op. cit., p. 26; Mohammad Rifaat Bey, *The Awakening of Modern Egypt* (London, 1947), p. 96; Senior, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 261, Vol. II, pp. 75–77; Muhammad Mahmud al-Suruji, *Al-Jaysh al-Misri fil Qarn al-Tasi Ashar* [The Nineteenth-Century Egyptian Army] (Cairo, 1967), pp. 63–65; Toledano, op. cit., p. 186.
22 H. Bowen, 'Badal', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edn (Leiden, 1960), Vol. I, p. 855; Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., p.338; Senior, op. cit., Vol. I, p.261; al-Suruji, op. cit., pp. 69–70.
23 Senior, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 84–85.
24 Felix Bovet, *Egypt, Palestine and Phoenicia: A Visit to Sacred Lands* (London, 1832), p. 56; 'Colquhoun to Russell, Cairo, 29 April 1860', FO 84/1120; 'Colquhoun to Russell, Alexandria, 29 July 1860', FO 142/25; 'Natterer to Schreiner, Khartoum, 15 August 1860', in 'Schreiner to Rechberg-Rothenlowen, Cairo, 21 März 1861', *Administrativ Registratur 27/9*, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Vienna.
25 Urabi led the 1882 army revolt. Eliezer Be'eri, *Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society* (New York, 1970), p. 308; Wilfred S. Blunt, *Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt* (1895 rept., New York, 1967), p. 367; Toledano, op. cit., p. 70.
26 Be'eri, op. cit., p. 309; Malartie, op. cit., p. 178, n.; 'Stone to Mordecai, Alexandria, 7 September 1882', *Alfred Mordecai Papers*, Vol. IV, 1866–1887, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
27 Jack Crabbs Jr., *The Writing of History in Nineteenth Century Egypt* (Cairo, 1984), pp. 72, 92; Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., pp. 315–319; Merruau, op. cit., pp. 220, 350; Senior, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 93, 95, 215; Charles P. Stone, 'Military Affairs in Egypt', *Journal of the Military Service Institution*, Vol. 5: 168.
28 'John Laird & Co. to Said Pasha, Birkenhead, 14 June 1862', and 'P&O Steam Navigation Co. to Koenig Bey, Alexandria, 1 November 1862', Carton 35, Dossier 'Marine', *PMAS*; Sacrée, p. 174; Lt. Col. E. W. C. Sandes, *The Royal Engineers in Egypt and the Sudan* (Chatham, 1937), p. 99; Sarhank, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 273.

29 Richard Hill and Ian Hogg provide a masterful history of Egypt's Mexican adventure, *A Black Corps d'Elite: An Egyptian-Sudanese Conscript Battalion with the French Army in Mexico, 1863–1867* (East Lansing, MI, 1994). For an Egyptian view, see Al-Amir Umar Tusun Pasha, *Butulat al-awrta al-Sudaniyya al-Misriyya fi Harb al-Maksik* [Adventures of the Egyptian-Sudanese Battalion in the Mexican War] (Alexandria, 1933). Good articles on this topic include: Daniel and Anahid Crecelius, 'An Egyptian Battalion in Mexico', *Der Islam*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (Fall 1976): 70–86; R. Kirk, 'The Sudanese in Mexico', *Sudan Notes and Records*, Vol. XXIV (1941): 113–130; Raveret and Dellard, 'Historique du bataillon nègre égyptien au Mexique (1863–1867)', Parts I, II, III, IV, in *Revue d'Égypte* (June 1894): 43–53 (July 1894): 104–123 (September 1894): 230–245 (October 1894): 272–286.

French archival sources are, by far, the most comprehensive. Château Vincennes's *Service historique de l'Armée de la terre*, [hence – SHAT], has numerous cartons relating to Mexico, and much on their Egyptian allies. Hill uncovered even more in Carton 53 of the 'Expédition du Mexique' files at Val de-Grace's *Archives historiques du service de santé*. American, French, and British diplomatic sources are also helpful. The writer found only a few scattered notes and newspaper clippings at Cairo's Dar al-Wathaiq.

30 Many good works exist on the French intervention in Mexico. One might start with: Jack Autrey Dabbs, *The French Army in Mexico, 1861–1867: A Study in Military Government* (The Hague, 1963); Luis Garcias, *La Intervencion Francesca en Mexico* (Mexico City, 1980); Comte Emile de Keratry, *The Rise and Fall of the Emperor Maximilian*, trans. G. H. Venables (London, 1868); Prince zu Salm-Salm, *My Diary in Mexico in 1867*, 2 vols (London, 1868).

31 Hundreds of French soldiers died from yellow fever every month during summer 1865. 'Rapports sur la situation de Vera Cruz' (mai-juillet 1865), G.7, No. 124, SHAT.

Having experienced tremendous losses to yellow fever during their failed efforts to conquer Haiti in 1791–1803, French authorities were very aware of the dangers posed by similar conditions near Vera Cruz. For more on these topics see Thomas O. Ott, *The Haitian Revolution, 1789–1804* (Knoxville, TN, 1973); and David Zimmerman, 'The Mosquitoes Are Coming – and They Are Among Man's Most Lethal Foes', *Smithsonian*, Vol. 14 (June 1983): 29–37.

32 Britain, having participated in the initial occupation of Vera Cruz in December 1861, found it difficult to take a strong stand. The Sultan viewed the unilateral despatch of Egyptian forces overseas as a challenge to his suzerainty, but was unwilling to offend France and Austria. America, embroiled in a Civil War, had the will, but not the means to oppose Egyptian intervention. For an overview of US–Egyptian relations from this period, see L. C. Wright, *United States Policy Towards Egypt, 1820–1914* (New York, 1969).

33 Hill, op. cit., p. 21; 'Saunders to FO, Alexandria, 10, 11, 16 January 1863', FO 142/26; 'Thayer to Seward, Alexandria, 9, 18 January 1863', *DUSCA*; Tusun, pp. 7, 43.

34 William M. Anderson, *An American in Maximilian's Mexico, 1865–1866*, ed. Ramon Eduardo Ruiz (San Marino, CA, 1959), p. 40. See also Raveret, op. cit., Pt. I, p. 46.

For different views on uniforms, see Jozef Hefter, 'Egyptian Battalion in Mexico', *Military Collector and Historian*, Vol. XVII, No. 3 (Fall 1965): 84–85; and Douglas Johnson, 'What Did the 19th Sudanese Really Wear in Mexico?', *Savage and Soldier*, Vol. XVI, No. 2 (Apr.–Jun. 1984): 9–11.

35 French sources note the troops arrived in Vera Cruz somewhat bedraggled; however, a long sea voyage, in a nineteenth-century troop transport, would do

this to almost anyone. 'Inspection générale de 1863', [comments], G.7, No. 224, SHAT; Tusun, op. cit., p. 77, note.

A unique oral history provides insight on the type of soldiers who served in this battalion, along with a look at their Mexican experience. See Ali Effendi Giffoon, 'Memoirs of a Sudanese Soldier', *Cornhill Magazine*, Vol. 11 (July 1896): 30–40, Vol. 12 (August 1896): 175–187, Vol. 13 (September 1896): 326–338, Vol. 14 (October 1896): 484–492.

For more on the multinational make-up of the Imperial army, see Witold Langvod, 'A Tragic Mexican Postscript to the Polish Insurrection of 1863', *Polish Review*, Vol. XIX, No. 3 (1974): 77–82; and Jozef Ulicsny, *Geschicte des Österreichisch-Belgischen Freikorps* (Wien, 1868).

36 Light infantry specialists.

37 Ali Effendi Gifoon, Vol. 12 (August 1896): 185; 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 8 June 1867', *DUSCA*; 'Inspection générale de 1863', (24 février, 10 mai, 15 juin 1863), G.7*, No. 224, SHAT; Raveret, op. cit., Pt. I: 47; Tusun, op. cit., p. 43.

38 Gifoon, ibid.; 'Hale to Seward', ibid.; Kirk, op. cit., 120–121; Raveret, op. cit., I: 48.

39 Carol Khevenhuller, *Mit Kaiser Max in Mexico: Aus dem Tagebuch des Fürsten Carol Khevenhuller, 1864–1867*, Ed. B. Mammer (Vienna, 1983), pp. 132–133. For an official report on such actions, consult Sacre and Outueborn, op. cit., pp. 292–297. See also Ravert, op. cit., Pt. I: 49. Both Hill, *passim*, and Crecelius, op. cit., 77–80, 82–84, provide excellent coverage of the battalion's major engagements.

40 Cte. Emile de Keratry, 'La Contre-guerilla Française au Mexique', *Revue des deux mondes*, Vol. LIX (1865): 720; and 'Nouvelles locales', *L'Égypte*, No. 41 (25 October 1865): 1.

41 'Égypte: Notice sur le bataillon Égyptien envoyé au Mexique', *L'Égypte*, No. 122 (6 June 1867): 1; Hill, op. cit., p. 74; 'Rapports sur la situation de Vera Cruz' (15 September 1865), G.7*, No. 124, SHAT; Raveret, op. cit., Pt. III: 231–232.

42 'Égypte: Notice', ibid.; 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 8 June 1867', *DUSCA*. For pay rates in Said's army, see de Malortie, p. 178. When Ismail obtained a run-down on these costs, he called the bill 'enormous'. 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 26 August 1865', *DUSCA*.

43 'Affairs militaires', Vol. 8 (23, 26 avril 1864), in G.7*, No. 124, SHAT. See also 'Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Charles Hale, Cairo, 16 November 1865', in *DUSCA*.

44 'Seward to Hale, Washington, 14 December 1865', in United States Department of State, *Diplomatic Instructions of the United States, 1801–1906: The Barbary Powers*, National Archives, Washington, DC. Secretary Seward informed the Sultan, Ismail's nominal overlord, that America was no longer distracted by a civil war, and that both Congress and the Presidency were 'united in a concern for the safety of free republican institutions on this continent'. 'Seward to Morris, Washington, D.C., 21 September 1865', in United States Department of State, *Diplomatic Instructions of the Department of State, 1801–1906, Turkey*, National Archives, Washington, DC.

45 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 26 August 1865', *DUSCA*. This agrees with French statistics, see 'Rapport du commandant supérieur de Vera Cruz au Ministre de la guerre' (21 décembre 1863), G.7*, No. 124, SHAT.

46 'Hale to Seward', ibid.

47 'Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Charles Hale', ibid.

48 D. C. Cumming, 'The History of Kassala and the Province of Taka', in *SNR*, Vol. XXIII (1940): 42–48, 51. See also 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 13 November 1865', *DUSCA*.

49 Hill, *Black Corps*, pp. 83–84, says 1,600+ mutineers died, or were executed afterwards, while government forces suffered 400 casualties. See also Cummings, op. cit., 42–51.
50 *Boab* is Arabic for 'doorman'. 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 13 November 1865', *DUSCA*.
51 Most sources note Egyptian fatalities from all causes as 120–150 men. Crecelius: 86; 'Égypte. Notice': 2; Kirk, op. cit., 121, 126, 128–130; Raveret, op. cit., Pt. I: 52, Pt. III: 232, Pt. IV: 286; Tusun, op. cit., p. 42.
52 For more on the post-Mexico career of these men, consult Hill. See also Georges Douin, *Histoire du règne du khédive Ismail, Tome 1er: Les Premières années du règne, 1863–1867* (1933), p. 347; 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 8 June 1867', *DUSCA*; Gifoon, op. cit., Vol. 13 (September 1896): 330.
53 'Colquhoun to Russell, Alexandria, 2 August 1861', FO 142/25.

5 CONSCRIPTS, STAGE VILLAINS, AND SLAVE-SOLDIERS

1 Ehud Toledano, *State and Society in Mid-Nineteenth Century Egypt* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 6. For a friendly biography of Ismail, see Pierre Crabites, *Ismail the Maligned Khedive* (London, 1933). For a superb look at the inner workings of his government, consult, F. Robert Hunter, *Egypt under the Khedives, 1805–1879: From Household Government to Modern Bureaucracy* (Cairo, 1999).
2 Cited in Angelo Sammarco, *Histoire de l'Égypte moderne, Tome III: Le Règne du khédive Ismail de 1863–1875* (Cairo, 1937), p. 421. The *Majlis* was an advisory group formed in 1866 as part of Ismail's efforts to make Egypt appear western.
3 Dr H. Couvidou, *Étude sur l'Égypte contemporaine* (Cairo, 1873), p. 309. For a similar view of the 'marvelous discipline and esprit de corps of the army', see 'Princeteau to Ministre de la guerre, Caire, 25 décembre 1863', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*. The writer was a General in the French army.

   See also W. Y. Carman, *The Military History of Egypt* (Cairo, 1945), p. 25; Couvidou, op. cit., pp. 309–310; 'Graves to Hany, Cairo, 12 August 1875', *Graves Papers*, SHC; David Nicolle, 'Nizam – Egypt's Army in the Nineteenth Century, Part I', *Army Quarterly and Defense Journal*, Vol. 108, No. 1 (January 1978): 74; Charles P. Stone, 'Military Affairs in Egypt', *Journal of the Military Service Institution*, Vol. 5: 172–173; 'Stone to Ministre du guerre, Caire, 15 décembre 1870', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*; 'Thayer to Seward, Alexandria, 18 June 1863', *DUSCA*.
4 The 1866 *Firmin*, which also granted Ismail's family the right of primogeniture, added £E350,000 to Egypt's annual Ottoman tribute.
5 A significant number of these totals derive from troops on permanent station in the Sudan, police, gendarme, and village militia type soldiers; men who could not be safely transferred in any great numbers. In 1865, out of 20,000 men, possibly no more than 8,000 were ready for active deployment elsewhere.

   In the archives of the French Foreign Ministry, there are detailed lists of Egyptian military strength. See *cor. pol.*, Égypte 55, fols. 231–232, *AMAE*. See also, Great Britain. Foreign Office, *British Documents on Foreign Affairs – Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Printings. Part I. From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the First World War. Series B, the Near and Middle East, 1856–1914*, ed. David Gillard (Frederick, MD, 1984), Vol. 9, pp. 138, 247 [Hence: British Documents]; Carman, p. 25; G. Guindi and J. Tagher (eds) *Ismail d'après les documents officiels* (Cairo: n.p., 1945), p. 173; 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 26 August 1865', *DUSCA*; Blanchard Jerrold, *Egypt under Ismail*

Pacha (London, 1879), p. 74; Edwin de Leon, *The Khedive's Egypt* (London, 1877), p. 369; J. C. McCoan, *Egypt under Ismail* (London, 1889), pp. 96–97, 305, 314–315; E. de Regny, 'Statistica dell'Egitto', *BSGI*, Vol. VIII (Ottobre 1872): 84–85; Alexander Scholch, *Egypt for the Egyptians* (London, 1981), p. 12; Ismail Pasha Sarhank, *Haqaiq al-Akhbar an Duwal al-Bihar* [A Precise History of Maritime Powers] (Bulaq, 1314 a.h.), Vol. II, p. 311; 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 24 November 1870', FO 78/2140; Stone, 'Military Affairs': 175.

6 In 1870, one obtained five pounds, two shillings, six and three-quarter pence in British money for five Egyptian pounds. 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 14 May 1870', Enclosure in No. 45, FO 78/2139.

7 To give but one example, these improvements for Berbera, in Somalia, cost £E99,300. At the same time, the port generated revenue of 'about £E200'. 'Notes sur Berberah, Zeyla et Harar mss.', Dossier 71/1, Carton, *PI*.

Arab Republic of Egypt. Ministry of Information. State Information Service. *The Orabi Revolution* (Cairo, 1988), p. 6; *British Documents*, Vol. 8, p. 216, Vol. 9, p. 139; McCoan, op. cit., pp. 96–97; 'Revenue mss., 1 November 1876', *DUSCC*; Sven Rubenson, *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence* (London, 1976), p. 326, n.165.

8 The regimental staff consisted of a colonel, lieutenant-colonel, three majors, three adjutant-majors, three doctors, six medics, three scribes, and a 34-piece band. 'L'Armée du khédive mss.', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*.

9 In peacetime, a company maintained 68 enlisted men; during war, this increased to 100. Its permanent staff consisted of a captain, 2 lieutenants, 1 sergeant-major, 12 other NCOs, and 7 non-combatants. 'L'Armée du khédive mss'.

10 In the 1870s, the 4th, 8th, 12th and 16th line regiments contained *chasseur* battalions. 'L'Armée du khédive mss'. Guard troops were often used by American mercenaries during their scouting trips into the Sudan.

See British Documents, Vol. 9, p. 239; J. de Coursac, *Le Règne de Yohannes* (Romans, 1926), p. 224; G. Douin, *Histoire du règne du khédive Ismail, Tome III: L'Empire Africain, 1re Partie (1863–1869)* (Cairo, MCMXXXVI), p. 200; Romolo Gessi-Pasha, *Seven Years in the Sudan*, ed. Felix Gessi (London, 1892), p. 187; Guindi et Tagher, op. cit., p. 170; 'Hale to Seward'; Clovis Lamarre and Charles Fliniaux, *L'Égypte, La Tunisie, Le Maroc et l'exposition de 1878* (Paris, 1878), p. 18; Henry Lockett, 'Sketches in Abyssinia and the Confines Thereof mss.' *Lockett Papers*, SHC; McCoan, op. cit., pp. 97–98; Carlos Stone, pp. 30–31; 'Stone to Colston, War Office [Cairo], 11 September 1873', *Colston Papers*, SHC.

11 British Documents, B/Vol. 9, p. 247; Field, p. 397; Guindi and Tagher, op. cit., pp. 109–110; Loring, op. cit., pp. 352–353; Carlos Stone, op. cit., 29–31; Stone, op. cit., 'Military': 172.

12 J. Seymour Keay, *Spoiling the Egyptians: A Tale of Shame Told from the Blue Books* (Cairo, 1981), p. 9.

13 Charles Chaillé-Long, *Three Prophets: Charles Gordon, Mohammed Ahmed (El Mahdi), Arabi Pasha* (New York, 1884), pp. 52–53; D. C. Cumming, 'The History of Kassala and the Province of Taka, Part II', *SNR*, Vol. XXIII (1940): 244–245; Douin, op. cit., pp. 202, 297–298; Dye, op. cit., pp. 162–163; Hill, *Egypt in the Sudan, 1820–1881* (London, 1959), p. 113; Keay, op. cit., p. 9.

14 For more on this, see Ralph Austen, 'The Nineteenth Century Slave Trade from East Africa', *Slavery and Abolition*, Vol. 9 (1988); Gabriel Baer, 'Slavery in Nineteenth Century Egypt', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 8 (1967); and Gerard Prunier, 'Military Slavery in the Sudan During the Turkiyya (1820–1885)', in Elizabeth Savage (ed.), *The Human Commodity: Perspectives in the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade* (London, 1992).

15 'Egypt', *The Times* (16 September 1874): 9.

16 Males fit for military service provided the 'donor' with a £E600 tax credit. 'Peterick to Colquhoun, 17 March 1865, Khartoum', FO 141/57.

17 G. R. F. Bredin, 'The Life Story of Yuzbashi 'Abdullah Adlan', *SNR*, Vol. XLII (1961): 37–39; E. A. de Cosson, *The Cradle of the Blue Nile* (London, 1877), Vol. II, p. 302; Cumming, 'The History, Part I', *SNR*, Vol. XX (1937): 40; Ali Effendi Gifoon, 'Memoirs of a Sudanese Soldier, Part I', *Cornhill Magazine*, Vol. 11 (July 1896): 30, 40; Richard Hill, *Black Corps d'Elite: An Egyptian-Sudanese Conscript Battalion with the French Army in Mexico, 1863–1867* (East Lansing, MI, 1995), pp. 154–155; Prunier, op. cit., pp. 135–136; Dr Georg Schweinfurth, *The Heart of Africa* (New York, 1874), Vol. I, p. 168; Haim Shaked (ed.), *The Life of the Sudanese Mahdi* (Brunswick, NJ, 1978), p. 132, n.53; F. R. Wingate, *Mahdism and the Egyptian Sudan* (1891 rept., London, 1968), p. 10.

18 Douglas Johnson, 'The Structure of a Legacy. Military Slavery in Northeast Africa', in *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (1989): 76.

19 Douglas Johnson, 'Sudanese Military Slaves from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Centuries', in Léonie J. Archer (ed.), *Slavery and Other Forms of Unfree Labor* (London, 1998), p. 143.

20 *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 255; Col. R. E. Colston, 'Modern Egypt and its People', *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol. 20 (1876): 146; Dye, op. cit., pp. 59–61; 'Outrey to MAE, Alexandrie, 1 juin 1867', *cor. pol.*, Alexandrie 39, fols. 217–219, AMAE; Stanley Lane-Poole, *Watson Pasha* (London, 1919), p. 59; H. B. Thomas, 'Notes on the Sudanese Corps in Mexico', *Uganda Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (September 1940): 30–31; 129–130.

21 William Hicks, Charles Gordon, and Henry Lockett, made these comments. *British Documents*, pp. 251, 255; Daley (ed.), p. 10; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 8 October 1876', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.

22 A Sudanese soldiers' song from the period goes: 'It's a fine day, we are fit and strong, let's go out and kill someone.' Major D. Hay Thornburn, 'Sudanese Soldiers' Songs', *Journal of the African Society* (1924–1925), [Kraus Reprint, 1963]: 315.

See also *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 247; Major Gaetano Casati, *Ten Years in Equatoria and the Return With Emin Pasha* (1891 rept., New York, 1962), Vol. I, pp. 61–63; R. E. Colston, 'In the Khedive's Army', *New York World* (22 January 1879): 1; Douin, op. cit., p. 902, n.4; Dye, op. cit., pp. 382–384; F. Sidney Ensor, *Incidents on a Journey Through Nubia and Darfour* (London, 1881), p. 23; Charles Hamilton, *Oriental Zigzag* (London, 1875), pp. 156, 189, 193.

23 Prunier, op. cit., pp. 132–133.

24 Douin, op. cit., pp. 112–113, 203; Gifoon, op. cit., Part II, *Cornhill Magazine*, Vol. 12 (August 1896): 175; Johnson, 'Sudanese Military', p. 152; J. McCoan, *Egypt As It Is* (New York, 1877), pp. 97–98; Thomas: 30–31.

25 Emin Pasha, *Emin Pasha in Central Africa. Being a Collection of His Letters and Journals* (London, 1888), p. 434.

26 Emin, ibid., p. 430. See also, pp. 259n., 409, 475; Guindi and Tagher, op. cit., pp. 210–211; Enclosure, Henriot to Hansal, 6 August, 1880, in Malet to FO, Cairo, 21 February 1881, FO 84/1597; 'Notes of Georges Douin', No.14, Carton V, Sudan subcollection, *PI*; T. Stevens, *Scouting for Stanley in East Africa* (London, 1890), p. 280; Stone, op. cit., 'Military Affairs': 173.

27 Casati, op. cit., I, pp. 314–315; Douin, op. cit., p. 181; Gifoon, op. cit.,; Schweinfurth, op. cit., pp. 230, 251–252; Ian R. Smith, *The Emin Pasha Relief Expedition, 1886–1890* (Oxford, 1972), p. 231.

28 Cited in Henry Russell, *The Ruin of the Soudan* (London, 1892), pp. 6–7, 12–13. See also, *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 251; Colonel J. Colborne, *With Hicks Pasha in the Soudan* (London, 1884), p. 93; Daley (ed.), op. cit., pp. 22, 25; Denis

de Rivoyre, *Mer Rouge et Abyssinie* (Paris, 1880), p. 53; Ernestine Sartorious, *Three Months in the Soudan* (London, 1885), p. 129.

29 Ismail considered implementing a Sudanese version of Austria's military frontier, which guarded the Croatian–Bosnian border. In this, *Bashi-Bazouks* were to play the role of Austrian *Grenzers*. *PI*, Carton 137, Dossier 24/5, holds a 51-pp. document prepared for his study, entitled 'Organisation der bestandenen K.K. Österreichischen Militär-Grenze vor ihrer im Jahre 1871 begonnenen Auflösung (Agram, 1875)'. For more on this topic, see Gunther Rothenberg, *The Austrian Military Border in Croatia, 1522–1747* (Urbana, IL, 1960).

See also, Earl of Mayo, *Sport in Abyssinia; Or the Mareb and the Tackazzee* (London, 1876), p. 33; A. B. Wylde, *'83 to '87 in the Soudan* (1888 rept., New York, 1969), p. 83.

30 Hill, *Egypt in the Sudan …*, p. 26.

31 Wylde, *'83 to '87*, pp. 109, 114, claimed, that with several weeks of training, the worst of his *Bashi Bazouks* could place their shots in a man-sized target at 250 yards. Although the last effort to recruit them *en masse* ended in 1884, Egypt's royal family maintained a small group of Albanian bodyguards until the fall of the monarchy in 1952.

See, Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 72; Douin, op. cit., pp. 418–419; M. Charles Edmond, *L'Égypte à L'exposition universelle de 1867* (Paris, 1867), p. 328; Gifoon, op. cit., p. 176; Henri Labrouse, 'Rivalité entre l'Égypte et l'Éthiopie dans la Mer Rouge à la fin du XIXe siècle', *Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference of Ethiopian Studies* (1984): 292; 'Malet to Granville, Cairo, 4 November 1882', FO 407/25; Rivoyre, op. cit., p. 53; Nassau William Senior, *Conversations and Journals in Egypt and Malta* (London, 1882), Vol. II, p. 45; Carlos Stone, p. 35; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 24 February 1877', FO 78/2631; Wylde, p. 99.

32 *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 241; 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 1 July 1871', *DUSCA*; R. P. Dimotheos, *Deux ans de séjour en Abyssinie* (Jerusalem, 1871), pp. 14–15; Douin, p. 729; Guindi et Tagher, p. 103; W. Melville Pimblett, *Story of the Soudan War* (London, 1885), pp. 60–61; Charles Royle, *The Egyptian Campaigns, 1882–1885* (London, 1886), Vol. II, pp. 72–73; Sartorious, p. 80.

33 Dr Moritz Busch, *Handbook for Travellers in Egypt* (Trieste, 1864), p. 28.

34 *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 250.

35 Richard F. Burton, *The Gold Mines of Midian* (1878 rept., New York, 1995), p. 152.

36 Major General Emory Upton, *Infantry Tactics. Double and Single Ranks* (1874 rept., New York, 1968), p. 71. See also Sir Samuel W. Baker, *Ismailia* (London, 1907), pp. 144–145.

37 Colborne, op. cit., pp. 140–141, mentions using piles of stones set out to 1,000 yards.

38 Col. Stewart, speaking in 1883, noted one-third of inspected troops were 'ignorant of the use of the rifle, and they would be more formidable adversaries were they simply armed with sticks'. Cited, p. 27, Russell.

39 Baker, op. cit., pp. 144–145, 149–150; *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 252; Colborne, op. cit., p. 79; Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 87; Dye, op. cit., p. 397; James Morris Morgan, *Recollections of a Rebel Reefer* (Boston, 1917), p. 306.

40 'L'Armée du khédive mss.'; Colston, op. cit., pp. 144–145; Dye, op. cit., p. 56; McCoan, *Egypt*, p. 99; Morgan, op. cit., pp. 287–288; Nicolle, op. cit., p. 74.

41 'Lockett to Stone, Camp Baaraza, 9 March 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 81, *PI*. See also Colston, op. cit., pp. 144–145; Couvidou, op. cit., p. 310; 'Fadeieff to Stone, Caire, 22 avril and 9 mai, 1875', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*; Morgan, op. cit., pp. 287–288; Upton, op. cit., pp. viii, 73, 153–154.

42 Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 44. Although William Hicks joined the Egyptian Army four years after Ismail's abdication, and commanded very poor troops, his comments are not out of place for many soldiers of the 1870s. See also Colborne, op. cit., p. 130; 'Hicks to Baker, Khartoum, 16 July 1883', Telegram, Enclosure 2 in No. 61, FO 407/28; Morgan, pp. 287–288.
43 R. Salmon, 'The Story of Sheikh Abdullahi Ahmed Gelaha: A Sudanese Vicar of Bray', *SNR*, Vol. XXI, Pt. 1 (1938): 90, gives *um dereisa* as another Arabic name for 'crows' feet'.
44 Frank Power, *Letters from Khartoum* (London, 1885), p. 24.
45 *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 356; Daley (ed.), p. 85; Gifoon, op. cit., '…, Part III', *Cornhill Magazine*, Vol. 13 (September 1896): 335–336; Charles G. Gordon, *The Journals of C. G. Gordon, C.B., at Khartoum* (London, 1885), p. 345; H. C. Jackson, *Black Ivory* (1913 rept., New York, 1970), p. 75; Pimblett, op. cit., p. 29; Power, pp. 69–70, 106; Lt. Col. E. W. C. Sandes, *The Royal Engineers in Egypt and the Sudan* (Chatham, 1937), pp. 130–131.
46 Colborne, op. cit., pp. 82, 112, 210, 214; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 8 October 1876', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; Col. J. F. Maurice, *Military History of the Campaign of 1882 in Egypt* (London, 1887), p. 93.
47 Six officers, 2 doctors, 6 medics and a 23-piece band comprised the regimental staff. *British Documents*, Vol. 9, pp. 237, 239, 241, suggests a slightly smaller establishment for 1881. See 'L'Armée du khédive mss.'; Carman, op. cit., p. 25; Colston, op. cit., p. 143; Guindi and Tagher, op. cit., pp. 170–171; Lamarre, op. cit., p. 18; de Leon, op. cit., p. 376; McCoan, *Egypt*, p. 97; Carlos Stone, op. cit., pp. 31–31; Heinrich Stephan, *Das Heutige Aegypten* (Leipzig, 1872), pp. 177–178.
48 Alfred Bardey, Notes sur le Harar', *Bulletin de la géographie historique et descriptive* (1897): 156; Carman, op. cit., p. 25; Colborne, op. cit., p. 93; Dye, op. cit., p. 9; 'Egypt', *The Times* (18 January 1876): 10; W. W. Loring, *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt* (New York, 1884), p. 59; Nicolle, op. cit.,p. 74; Wingate, p. 77.
49 A. Boinet, 'Population Nomade', *BSKG*, II Série, No. 7 (June 1885): 385–395; *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 247; Dr Wilhelm Junker, *Travels in Africa during the Years 1875–1878* (London, 1890), p. 30; Alfred von Kremer, *Aegypten* (Leipzig, 1863), Vol. I, pp. 122, 133; Scholch, 'The Egyptian Bedouins and the Urabiyun (1882)', *Der Welt des Islams*, Vol. XVII, No. 1–4 (1977): 46, 50; Lt. Col. Hermann Vogt, *The Egyptian War of 1882* (London, 1883), pp. 28, 50.
50 'L'Armée du khédive mss.'; 'Budget du Soudan mss.', Dossier 3/2, Carton V, Sudan Sub-collection, *PI*; Douin, op. cit., pp. 203, 418–419; Guindi and Tagher, op. cit., p. 171.
51 Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 14.
52 One estimate gave a Cairo mortality rate of 75 per cent, and claimed that the Egyptian contingent sent to fight with the Ottomans against Russia spread this contagion to the Balkans. 'Egypt', and 'The Horse Plague in Egypt', *The Times* (1 November 1876): 6. See also *British Documents*, Vol. 9, pp. 160–161; 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 20 October 1870', *DUSCA*; Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 19; Douin, op. cit., pp. 1042–1043; 'Egypt', *The Times* (18 January 1876): 10; 'Fish to Farman, Washington, 6 March 1877', in United States. Department of State, *Diplomatic Instructions, Egypt*; Guindi and Tagher, op. cit., p. 170.
53 *British Documents*, Vol. 9/B, p. 277; Daley (ed.), op. cit., pp. 27, 53; Guindi and Tagher, op. cit., pp. 175–176; Senior, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 38; 'Stone to Minister of War, Cairo, 15 December 1870', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*.
54 'L'Armée du khédive mss.'; Dye, op. cit., p. 59; Guindi and Tagher, op. cit., p. 175; Lamarre, op. cit., p. 18; 'Stone to Minister of War, Cairo, 15 December 1870', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*; Evelyn Wood, *From Midshipman to Field Marshal* (London, 1912), p. 348.

55 'L'Armée du khédive mss.'; McCoan, *Egypt*, p. 97; Carlos Stone, op. cit., pp. 30–31.
56 'L'Armée du khédive mss.'; *British Documents*, Vol. 9, pp. 240–241; Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 63; Carlos Stone, ibid.; Muhammad Mahmud al-Suruji, *Al-Jaysh al-Misri fil Qarn al-Tasi Asher* [The Nineteenth Century Egyptian Army] (Cairo, 1967), p. 409; 'Turkey and Egypt', *The Times* (16 June 1874): 14.
57 Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 34; Douin, op. cit., p. 317; Edmund, op. cit., p. 345; Gordon, op. cit., p. 74; Samuel H. Lockett, 'Recent Military Events in Egyptian History mss.', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.
58 During the siege of Khartoum, an Egyptian Gatling gun, aided by a telescope, was able to destroy Sudanese artillery crews at 2,000 yards. Charles C. Trench, *The Road to Khartoum* (New York, 1989), p. 278.
59 Troops did not always obtain enough training with machine guns. 'Unpublished Letters of Charles Gordon', *SNR*, Vol. X (1927): 30. See also Daley (ed.), op. cit., pp. 12, 14, 17; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (8 October 1872): 9; Gordon, *The Journals …*, pp. 252, 263; Lockett, 'Recent … mss.'; 'Munzinger Pasha and Abyssinia', *The Times* (1 January 1876): 11; Pimblett, p. 29.
60 Daley (ed.), ibid., p. 36.
61 Maurice, op. cit., p. 47.
62 Prunier, op. cit., pp. 134, 138, n. 31; Thomas Archer, *The War in Egypt and the Sudan* (London, 1886), Vol. II, pp. 75–76; Daley (ed.), op. cit., pp. 33, 44, 48; Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 112; Trench, op. cit., p. 89.
63 'Derrick to Lockett, Adi-Rasso, 27 April 1876', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; Senior, Vol. I, pp. 93, 95, 282; Vogt, op. cit., pp. 46–47.
64 Theoretically, an engineer regiment consisted of a seven-man staff, and three battalions. The battalions contained a six-man staff, and four companies. Companies fielded four officers, 21 NCOs, and 130 soldiers. In practice, these were often split up into even smaller units. 'Organization des troupes du génie mss', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*, DAW.
65 *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 241.
66 Thirty soldiers could fit into an Egyptian railway car of those times. 'Marriott to Hussein, Caire, 17 mars 1877', Dossier 20/6, Carton 23, *PI*. See also A. E. Crouchley, *The Economic Development of Modern Egypt* (London, 1938), p. 45; Lt. Col. Count Gleichen (ed.), *The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (London, 1905), pp. 213, 240; Junker, Vol. I, p. 104, Vol. II, p.16; Lamarre, p. 107; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 29 August 1875', Hill Memorial Library, LSU.
67 Although no documentation exists, one must consider how easy it would be to slip in a spy among this large crowd of non-military personnel.
68 'Arrendrup to Tzadezaga, 23 octobre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*, DAW; Douin, *IIIB*, pp. 867, 875; Gifoon: 179. See also, 'Borg to Vivian, Cairo, 3 March 1879, No. 2', FO 141/128; 'Stone to Minister of War, Cairo, 15 December 1870', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*.
69 On 25 April, Fechet noted his canteen water measured 112 degrees Fahrenheit. '4 April 1873', *Fechet mss.*
70 Col. R. E. Colston, 'Life in the Egyptian Deserts', *Journal of the New York Geographical Society*, Vol. XI (1879): 307–308.
71 *Fechet mss.*, '20 June 1873'. See also Colston, ibid.
72 Dye, op. cit., p. 257.
73 Adding to this problem, were the bloated needs of high officials, like Prince Hassan, whose personal supply train consisted of 225 mules, and as these gave out, his retainers grabbed army transport, tossing aside rations, munitions, and tools, so as to continue to carry his elaborate tent, cooking gear, and luxury rations. Dye, op. cit., pp. 216, 229–230. See also Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 59; Dye,

op. cit., pp. 173, 201; Loring, op. cit., pp. 366–367. Fechet noted a ratio of three camels per driver, and that seemed to work during his expedition into the Sudan, '29 March 1873', *Fechet mss.*

74 Gessi, op. cit., p. 219, comments that elephants carried a load equal to that of 375 human carriers. As an example of the numbers needed if using the latter, a column of 140 soldiers employed 300 porters. 'Long to Beardsley, Khartoum, 7 November 1874', *DUSCC*. Dye, op. cit., p. 228; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Shipping and Commercial Gazette* (14 December 1875): 8; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (13 December 1875): 7; Gessi, p. 274; 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 20 March 1875', FO 78/2404, and 'Telegram, Calcutta to Alexandria, 22 December 1875', FO 141/93.

75 Colston notes experts could ride a camel for short spurts of up to 25 mph. Colston, 'Life in …': 312. See also Army Veterinary Department, *Animal Management* (London, 1908), pp. 197, 299; 'Arrendrup to Barrot, Tzadezaga, 23 octobre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*, DAW; Dye, op. cit., pp. 234–235, 253; Gleichen (ed.), op. cit., p. 218; F. L. James, *The Unknown Horn of Africa* (London, 1888), p. 34; Major Arthur C. Leonard, *The Camel* (London, 1894), pp. 187–206; William B. Tegetmeir, *Horses, Asses, Mules and Mule Breeding* (Washington, DC, 1897), p. 129.

76 *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 162; Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 74; Douin, *IIIB*, pp. 860–861; Lady Lucie Duff-Gordon, *Letters from Egypt (1862–1869)* (New York, 1969), p. 261; James, op. cit., p. 16; 'Expedition Ratib Pacha', *RE*, Vol. II (avril 1896): 642.

77 Douin, ibid., p. 885; Dye, op. cit., pp. 247, 267; Major Trevenen J. Holland and Captain Henry M. Hozier, *Record of the Expedition to Abyssinia* (London, 1870), Vol. II, p. 209; Loring, op. cit., p. 382; Mason Bey, 'The Soudan Campaign on the Nile', *Royal Engineers Journal*, Vol. 22 (1892): 32–33; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 210.

78 *British Documents*, Vol. 9, pp. 236–237; Covidou, op. cit., p. 310; Hamilton, op. cit., p. 277; de Leon, op. cit., pp. 370–371; Toledano, op. cit., pp. 182–183; Vogt, p. 50.

79 Warren, an American medical mercenary, claims even officers tried to purchase discharges to avoid service in the Sudan. Edward Warren, *A Doctor's Experiences in Three Continents* (Baltimore, 1885), pp. 458–459; *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 129.

80 A fine of £E150 was levied against the families of deserters, and if not available, then a male relative replaced the original. For the culprit, if apprehended, he faced a severe beating, and six months hard labour, with no pay, and his original military contract still in place. *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 129; Hamilton, op. cit., pp. 167, 277; Toledano, op. cit.

81 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 30 December 1870', *DUSCA*; Dye, op. cit., p. 56; Lamarre, op. cit., p. 3; de Leon, op. cit., pp. 370–373, Charles Chaillé-Long, *My Life in Four Continents* (London, 1902), p. 60; Eugene Gellion-Danglar, *Lettres sur l'Égypte contemporaine (1865–1875)* (Paris, 1876), p. 38; Scholch, *Egypt for the Egyptians*, pp. 34–35; Toledano, ibid.

82 Dye, op. cit., pp. 44–46.

83 De Leon, op. cit., pp. 372–373.

84 Lucie Duff-Gordon, op. cit., p. 331; Charles Warner, *My Winter on the Nile* (Boston, 1881), p. 227.

85 McCoan, *Egypt*, pp. 96–97.

86 Charles E. Wilbour, *Travels in Egypt* (New York, 1936), p. 205.

87 *British Documents*, Vol. 9, pp. 236–237, 247; Colston, op. cit., 143; Lucie Duff-Gordon, op. cit., p. 305; McCoan, *Egypt*, p. 97; Stephen, op. cit., pp. 177–178; Wallace, op. cit., pp. 440–441; Wylde, *'83 to'87*, p. 45.

88 Colston, 'Modern …': 144–145; Dye, op. cit., pp. 42–43; Charles Chaillé-Long, 'Address on Egypt, Africa and Africans mss.', *Chaillé-Long Papers*, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, p. 32.

89 Colston, 'Modern …': 144–145, 147; Watson Pasha, an officer in the British-controlled post-1882 army, notes that POWs captured at Tel el-Kebir were easily convertible into camel drivers to help yesterday's enemy 'for a small rate of pay and their rations'. Lanne-Poole, op. cit., p. 111. See also Dye, op. cit., pp. 42–43; *British Documents*, Vol. 9, p. 247, which quotes Dye; Charles Chaillé-Long, 'Address on Egypt, Africa and Africans mss.', *Chaillé-Long Papers*, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, p. 32.

90 Lt. Cmdr. Caspar F. Goodrich, *Report of the British Naval and Military Operations in Egypt, 1882* (Washington, 1885), p. 336.

91 Daly (ed.), op. cit., pp. 36, 79; Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 48; 'Munzinger to Ismail, Massaua, 2 Feb. 1872', Dossier 73/5, Carton 159, *PI*; Scholch, *Egypt for the Egyptians*, p. 145.

92 Captain Richard Lawrence claimed it was 'so hard it needed something like an axe to cut it'. Cited in Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 129. There are tales, probably apocryphal, that *baqsumat* was used to make bunkers during the siege of Fort Gura (1876)!

93 Contemporary US army rations were just sufficient to sustain a healthy man in hard working conditions. These consisted of 20 oz. of beef or mutton, 12 oz. of pork or bacon, 18 oz. of bread, or 16 oz. of hardtack, plus a small amount of vegetables, coffee, or tea. E[mil] A. Bode, *A Dose of Frontier Soldiering*, ed. Thomas T. Smith (New York, 1994), p. 193, n.3, n.4. In Equatoria, where taxes substituted cattle for cash, soldiers obtained a beef ration two or three days per week. Junker, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 498. Another Sudanese report shows maize, salt, beef and soap issued semi-regularly. 'Memorandum marked "Abdine, Piece 16, Doss 1, Carton 3"', in Douin, *Notes*, Sudan sub-collection, Carton V, *PI*.

See also Douin, *… 3e, … B*, p. 835; Gifoon, op. cit., p. 179; Hamilton, op. cit., pp. 164–166, 189; Hill, *Black Corps*, p. 30; 'Saunders to FO, Alexandria, 10, 11, 16 January 1863', FO 142/26; [Suzzara], 'Expedition des Égyptiens contre l'Abyssinie (1875–1876). I – Mémoire de M. Suzzara', *RE*, Vol. II, No. 10 (mars 1896): 631; Ghada B. Talhami, *Suakin and Massawa under Egyptian Rule, 1865–1885* (Washington, 1975), p. 178; 'Thayer to Seward, Alexandria, 9, 18 January 1863', *DUSCA*; Wylde, ibid.

94 Daly (ed.), op. cit., p. 13. With typical recruits drawn from regions most exposed to one of Egypt's major medical problems, ophthalmia, this lack of medical attention makes even less sense. Almost every observer reports on the poor eyesight of Egyptian soldiers, and their atrocious marksmanship. For more on the illness, see Laverne Kuhnke, 'Early Nineteenth Century Ophthalmological Clinics in Egypt', *Clio Medica*, Vol. 7 (1972): 209–214. See also, Holland, p. xix, n.1; Major H. G. Prout, *General Report on the Province of Kordofan* (Cairo, 1877), p. 83; 'Unpublished Letters': 16.

95 During the 1870s, 20 piasters was approximately worth one US dollar. For comparison, a private serving in Mexico obtained 66 piasters per month, while the British-controlled army of post-1882 paid him 48. 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 8 June 1867', *DUSCA*; Wingate, p. 216. On money and enlisted pay, see Baron de Malortie, *Egypt: Native Rulers and Foreign Interference* (London, 1882), p. 178; McCoan, *Ismail*, pp. 369–371; and Stephen, op. cit., p. 178. Malortie and *British Documents*, Vol. 9, pp. 244–245, show rates after the increases of 1880. For more on these topics, see Bredin, op. cit., p. 38; Colston: 145; 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 22 February 1879', *DUSCC*; G. A. Hoskins, *A Winter in Upper and Lower Egypt* (London, 1863), p. 344.

96 During Said's regime, a guard's private obtained five times the pay of his counterpart in the regular army. Senior, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 282.
97 De Cosson, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 233.
98 At least Hicks could complain to the British Consul! Daly (ed.), op. cit., pp. 65, 79.
99 He goes on to explain that officers, especially Europeans, maintained agents in Khartoum, to insure the payment of salaries! Junker, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 497.
100 'Diary, 21 November 1875', *Colston Papers*, SHC; de Cosson, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 315; Lucie Duff-Gordon, op. cit., pp. 226, 263; Holland, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 117; McCoan, *Egypt*, p. 363. Food prices were lower in Khartoum than in Cairo. Colborne, op. cit., p. 216. On issues of pay and 'taxing', see Bredin, op. cit., pp. 38–39; Gifoon, Vol. 12 (August 1896): 175; and Wallace, op. cit., pp. 440–441. Hicks comments on a scam that cut soldiers pay by 75 per cent, when they were issued cloth instead of coin. Officials and merchants got together to set values at both ends, and profit on the difference, Daly (ed.), op. cit., p. 68.
101 Daly (ed.), op. cit., p. 22.

6 NATIVE-BORN OR MERCENARY?

1 '27 March 1873', *Fechet mss.* For more on Egyptian officers, see Abd al-Rahman Zaki, *A'lam al-Jaysh wal-Bahriyyah fi Masr* [Famous Leaders of Egypt's Army and Navy] (Cairo, 1947), and Muhammad Mahmud al-Suruji, *Al-Jaysh al-Masri fil Qarn al-Tasi Ashar* [The Nineteenth Century Egyptian Army] (Cairo, 1967). Despatches from American, French, and British consuls sometimes contain detailed examinations. Even more significant is Cairo's *Dar al-Wathaiq*, which has numerous files. Finally, the unpublished papers of mercenaries like Charles Graves or Samuel Lockett were most revealing. Charles Pomeroy Stone, the ultimate Neo-Mamluk, took 'steamer trunks' full of documents back to America in 1883. Unfortunately, these have yet to be found.
2 For more on Ismail's Russian connections, see Frederick J. Cox, 'Khedive Ismail and Panslavism', *The Slavic and East European Review*, Vol. 32 (1953–1954): 151–167.
3 'Fadeieff to Stone, Caire, 22 avril and 9 mai 1875', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*.
4 'Colston Diary, 29 May 1876', *Colston Papers*, SHC.
5 James McCoan thought Ismail could have made a fortune as a lawyer, or stockbroker. J. C. McCoan, *Egypt under Ismail* (London, 1889), p. 54n.
6 Ismail was well informed on European political and financial matters. *Dar al-Wathaiq* contains a vast accumulation of reports from his confidential agents in London, Paris, Vienna, and Constantinople.
7 'Egypt', *The Times* (1 November 1876): 6; Georges Guindi and Jacques Tagher (eds), *Ismail d'après les documents officiels* (Cairo, 1945), p. 8; Carlos [Charles] P. Stone, *Asuntos Militares en Egipto* (Havana, 1884), p. 22; Emine Foat Tugay, *Three Centuries: Family Chronicles of Turkey and Egypt* (London, 1963), p. 129.
8 This theme is popular with many authors, who offer opinions like, 'even lambs fight among themselves, although their success over each other does not make a host of them equal to one wolf.' Col. William M. Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia* (1880 rept., New York, 1969), p. 54. The army 'could mutiny, but it could not, or would not fight'. Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt* (New York, 1908), Vol. II, p. 466. Then there is William Hicks Pasha, who must have burned up a Thesaurus trying to describe his men with terms like: 'unpromising', 'cowardly skunks', 'dolts and fools', 'not worth their salt'. M. W. Daly (ed.), *The Road to Shaykan* (Durham, NC, 1983), pp. 13, 22, 37, *passim*.
9 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 28 June 1877', *Lockett*.

10 Eugene Gellion-Dangler, *Lettres sur l'Égypte contemporaine (1865–1875)* (Paris, 1876), pp. 15, 17; Georges Guindi and Jacques Tagher, (eds), *Ismail d'après les documents officiels*, Cairo: n.p., 1945. pp. 171–173; J. Heyworth-Dunne, An *Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London, 1938), pp. 350–351, 358, 376; W. W. Loring, *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt* (New York, 1884), p. 351; J. C. McCoan, *Egypt* (London, MDCCCXCVIII), p. 99; David Nicolle, 'Nizam – Egypt's Army in the 19th Century', *Army Quarterly and Defense Journal*, Vol. 108, No. 1 (January 1978): 74; M. Sabry, *La Genèse de l'esprit nationale Égyptien* (1863–1882) (Paris, 1924), p. 91; W. S. Wood, *An Eastern Afterglow* (Cambridge, 1880), p. 15.

11 'L'Armée de khédive mss.', and 'Fadeieff to Stone, Caire, 22 avril, 9 mai 1875', Carton 25, Dossier 50/1, *PI*; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 29 August 1875, *Lockett*.

12 Most graduates entering the armed forces went to the army. Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., pp. 381–382; Baron de Malortie, *Egypt: Native Rulers and Foreign Interference* (London, 1882), p. 100; McCoan, op. cit., pp. 205–208; Ministère de l'instruction publique, 'Rapport au conseil des ministres, 4 mai 1880', Dossier 165/19, Carton 16, *PI*.

13 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 29 September 1875', *Lockett*.

14 '1er Section mss.', Dossier 23/4, Carton 161, *PI*; Dye, op. cit., pp. 64–65; Gellion-Dangler, op. cit., pp. 15, 17; 'Lockett to Boyd', ibid.; Mission en Égypte, 'Rapport sur l'état des sciences des lettres et de l'instruction publique en Égypte (1868) mss.', Dossier 165/19, Carton 16; and 'Projet pour l'école militaire mss.', Dossier 50/5, Carton 25, *PI*.

15 Stone wanted to hire more instructors from the United States Military Academy at West Point. 'Ismail Pasha to Khedive, Caire, 17 octobre 1871', Dossier 50/4, Carton 24, *PI*. See also Guindi and Tagher, op. cit., p. 173; 'Ismail to Mircher, Caire, 21 juin 1869', and 'Zeki Bey to de la Grangerie, Paris, 21 juillet 1869', Dossier 11/12 [?], Carton 194, *PI*; 'Lockett to Boyd, Knoxville, 30 December 1877', *Lockett*; Anouar Louca, *Voyageurs et écrivains Égyptiens en France au XIX siècle* (Paris, 1970), pp. 101–103; Sabry, op. cit., p. 90; Ismail Sarhank Pasha, *Haqaiq al-Akhbar an Duwal al-Bihar* (Bulaq, 1312 a.h.), Vol. II, p. 311; 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 28 July 1870', FO 78/2140; 'Stone to Abdul Gelil, Caire, 26 décembre 1871', and 'Stone to Ismail, Caire, 16 juillet 1871', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*; Ehud Toledano, *State and Society in Mid-Nineteenth Century Egypt* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 70.

16 Heyworth Dunne, op. cit., pp. 327, 352; Dye, p. 69; Carlos [Charles] P. Stone, op. cit., pp. 27–28, 34; Charles P. Stone, 'Military Affairs in Egypt', *Journal of the Military Service Institution*, Vol. 5, p. 170.

17 Dye, op. cit., p. 73. Another important graduate was Muhammad Bey Sadek, who, thanks to his training in the *État Major*, became the first Arab photographer. Exhibit notes, *al-Mahtaff al-Harbi* [War Museum], Cairo, 1995. See his 'Voyage à la Mecque', *BSKG*, Vol. I, no. 12.

18 'Stone to Ministre de guerre, Caire, 15 décembre 1870', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*.

19 Dye, op. cit., p. 170.

20 'Stone to Ministre de guerre'.

21 Colonel Charles Chaillé-Long, *The Three Prophets: Chinese Gordon, Mohammed Amed (El Mahdi), Arabi Pasha* (New York, 1884), pp. 85–86. See also Dye, op. cit., p. 71.

22 By 1878, almost all Egyptian graduates of the *État Major* were concentrated in the Third Infantry Division, a paper unit. Ministre de la guerre, État Major Général, 'Ordre Général No.1, Caire, 2 mai 1878', *Colston Papers*, SHC. See also Great Britain, Foreign Office, *British Documents on Foreign Affairs – Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print. Part I. From the Mid-Nineteenth*

Century to the First World War. Series B, the Near and Middle East, 1856–1914, Ed. David Gillard (Frederick, MD, 1984), Vol. 9, p. 254; Charles Chaillé-Long, *My Life in Four Continents* (London, 1902), p. 53; Dye, op. cit., pp. 70–72; Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., p. 255; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 29 September, and 25 December 1875' *Lockett*; McCoan, op. cit., p. 99.

23 'État nominatif des Chasseurs Égyptiens, 20 octobre 1855 mss.', Carton 37, Dossier '1855', *PMAS*; Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., p. 327; Loring, p. 411. For more biographies, see Zaki op. cit.

24 The prince wrote to his father in English, French and Turkish. 'Hassan to Ismail, 25 March 1875, and 20 mai 1874, Berlin'; 'Larking to Zeki Pasha, Lee Kent, 8 December 1870', Dossier 2/3, Carton 123; and 'Loring to Barrot, Massawa, 6 janvier 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; McCoan, p. 96.

25 'Stanton to FO, 27 May 1870, Alexandria', FO 78/2139. See also his 17 February 1870 despatch, and 'L'Armée de khédive mss.'; Chaillé-Long, *Three*, p. 82; Col. R. E. Colston, 'Modern Egypt and its People', *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol. XIII (1881): 145; Daly (ed.), op. cit., p. 98; Dye, op. cit., pp. 67, 68, 214n, 219n, 220; Samuel Lockett, 'Notes on Engineering in the Egyptian Army', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.

26 'Egyptian sentries asleep at their post' was a constant theme in the 1870s–1880s. When asked why he did not send out pickets, Hussein Pasha told a British observer, 'why the men might get killed'. Colonel J. Colborne, *With Hicks Pasha in the Soudan* (London, 1884), p. 121. See also Colston, op. cit., p. 147; Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 98; Ali Effendi Gifoon, 'Memoirs of a Sudanese Soldier', *Cornhill Magazine*, Vol. 13 (September 1896): 336; Lt. Cmdr. Caspar F. Goodrich, *Report of the British Naval and Military Operations in Egypt, 1882* (Washington, DC, 1885), p. 113; [Charles Gordon] 'Unpublished Letters of Charles Gordon', *SNR*, Vol. X (1927): 25; Graves, 'An Address on Egypt and the Egyptians mss.', *Graves Papers*, SHC; Paul Traub, 'Voyage au pays des Bogos', *Bulletin de la société Neuchateloise de géographie*, Vol. 4 (1888): 131.

27 'Tomorrow', or 'God-Willing', two words often used to put off a decision, did not seem to impair Muhammad Ali's soldiers. See also Thomas Archer, *The War in Egypt and the Sudan* (London, 1886), Vol. II, p. 73; A. E. de Cosson, *The Cradle of the Blue Nile* (London, 1877), Vol. I, pp. 8–9; Daley (ed.), op. cit., p. 15; Dye, op. cit., pp. 178–179; 'Lockett to Stone, Massawah, 7 September 1876', and 'Notes', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; 'Stone to Ministre de la guerre, Caire, 17 octobre 1871', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*; A. B. Wylde, *'83 to '87 in the Soudan* (1888 rept., New York, 1969), p. 111.

28 *Fechet mss.*, pp. 05, 22.

29 Often just called Circassians.

30 Gabriel Baer, *Studies in the Social History of Modern Egypt* (Chicago, 1969), pp. 222–223; Dye, op. cit., p. 176; Gellion-Dangler, op. cit., p. 70; 'Gordon to Watson, Gondokoro, 15 December 1874', *Marrow Bequest*, Add. Mss. 41340, British Library, London; P. M. Holt, *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt* (London, 1968), p. 250; 'Stone to Ministre de la guerre, Caire, 17 avril 1872', Dossier 39/12, Carton 69, *PI*; 'Stone to Sherman, Cairo, 20 September 1875', *Lockett*; Charles C. Trench, *The Road to Khartoum* (New York, 1989), p. 86; Wood, p. 69.

31 Scholch estimates Egypt's total Turko-Circassian population at 20,000 during the 1870s. Scholch, op. cit., p. 40. See also Colborne, op. cit., p. 108; 'Colquhoun to Russell, Alexandria, 2 August 1861', FO 142/25; Dye, op. cit., p. 61; Alexander Scholch, *Egypt for the Egyptians* (London, 1981), pp. 22–23; Ahmad Urabi, *The Defense Statement of Ahmad Urabi the Egyptian*, trans. and ed. Trevor Le Gassick (Cairo, 1982), p. 18.

32 Trevor Le Gassick (ed. and trans.), *The Defense Statement*, p. 28. Scholch provides an excellent study of this affair in his book, *Egypt for the Egyptians*. See also Samuel B. Grant Jr., 'Modern Egypt and the New (Turco-Egyptian) Aristocracy', University of Michigan PhD, 1968, p. 27.

33 For some, distrust was very high. Urabi believed that American mercenaries betrayed Muslim Egypt to Christian Abyssinia during the Gura Campaign (1876). Ghada H. Talhami, *Suakin and Massawa under Egyptian Rule, 1865–1885* (Washington, 1975), p. 178.

See also 'Lockett to Boyd, Knoxville, 4 November 1877', and 'Sherman to Boyd, St Louis, Mo., 8 November 1875', *Lockett*; 'Loring to Ismail, Alexandrie, 17 juin 1871', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, and 'Stone to Ismail, Caire, n.d.', Dossier 50/7, Carton 179, *PI*; 'News from Egypt – The American Army Officers in the East – Who They Are and What They Are Doing', *New York Times* (27 July 1871): 3. Cf. Colston, 'Modern': 147. For a look at how little this situation has changed, see Alan Hoskins, *A Contract Officer in Oman* (Tunbridge Wells, 1988).

34 Dye, op. cit., pp. 168, 175; Loring, op. cit., pp. 67, 357; Stone, op. cit., 'Military': 170–171.

35 *British Documents*, Vol. 9, pp. 244–245; '24 July 1873', *Fechet mss.*; Charles Hamilton, *Oriental Zigzag* (London, 1875), p. 182; Carlos Stone, op. cit., pp. 24–25; Charles Stone, 'Military': 170–171.

36 'Babbit to Fish, Alexandria, 10 July 1873', and 'Bulter to Fish, Alexandria, 4 June 1870', *DUSCA*; Egypt. Laws, Statutes, etc, *Répertoire général annote de la legislation et de l'administration Égyptiennes, 1840–1908. Ier Partie (1840–1904)* (Alexandria, 1906), pp. 703–705; 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 22 February 1879', *DUSCC*; 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 8 June 1867, *DUSCA*; Malortie, op. cit., p. 178; 'Stone to Alexander, Cairo, 7 February 1871', *Edward P. Alexander Papers*, SHC; Toledano, p. 105.

37 After witnessing the shabby treatment offered to Arab officers, Lockett claimed that he then really understood the Bible passage: 'Woe unto those who go down to Egypt for help.' 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 16 November 1876', *Lockett*. See also Daley (ed.), p. 65; Chaillé-Long, *Three*, pp. 76–77; Aida Greiss, 'La Crise de 1882 et le mouvement Orabi', *Cahiers d'histoire Égyptienne*, Vol. V (Mars 1953): 59–60; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 8 October 1876, and 24 March 1877', plus 'Lockett to Boyd, Massawah, 10 September 1876', *Lockett*; Loring, p. 175; James Morgan, *Recollections of a Rebel Reefer* (Boston, 1917), p. 297; Scholch, op. cit., pp. 65–66; 'Stone to Colston, Cairo, 16 September 1876', *Colston Papers*, SHC; Urabi, p. 8.

38 Baer, *A History of Land Ownership in Modern Egypt, 1800–1950* (London, 1962), p. 46; 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 20 October 1870', *DUSCA*; *Egypt*, pp. 21–22; Fahmi Pacha Gallini, *Souvenirs du khédive Ismail au khédive Abbas II* (Cairo, 1932), p. 1; Loring, op. cit., pp. 448–449; Scholch, p. 26; Frank Scudmore, *A Sheaf of Memories* (New York, n.d.), p. 43.

39 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 24 March 1877', *Lockett*.

40 Pierre Giffard, *Les Français en Égypte* (Paris, 1883), p. 80; Guindi and Tagher, pp. 169–172; Heyworth-Dunne, pp. 223, 349; 'Mircher to Niel, Alexandrie, 18 octobre 1868', fol. 103–104, XLIV, Alexandrie, *cor. pol.*, *AMAE*; Carlos Stone, op. cit., p. 22; Muhammad Mahmud al-Suruji, pp. 99, 153.

41 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 4 February 1870', FO 78/2139.

42 One of the survivors, Larmée Pasha, served Egypt until 1893, thus holding the record for longevity among Ismail's Neo-Mamluks. Involved with several different educational posts, he was also a member of the Urabi court-martial. See Chaillé-Long, *Three*, pp. 81, 83; Giffard, p. 82; 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 4 February 1877', *Graves*, SHC; Heyworth-Dunne, pp. 393, 429, 438; David S.

Landes, *Bankers and Pashas* (1979), pp. 225–226; Paul Ravaisse, *Ismail Pacha, khédive d'Égypte (1830–1895)* (Cairo, 1896), pp. 5–6; Mohammad Rifaat Bey, *The Awakening of Modern Egypt* (London, 1947), pp. 130–131; Stone, 'Military': 167.

43 Alfred J. Butler, *Court Life in Egypt* (London, 1888), p. 65; Dye, op. cit., p. 165; A. B. de Guerville, *New Egypt* (New York, 1906), pp. 96–97.

44 For more on these men, consult: Gaetano Casati, *Ten Years in Equatoria and the Return of Emin Pasha* (1891 rept., New York, 1962); Romolo Gessi, *Seven Years in the Sudan* (London, 1892); L. G. Messedaglia, *Uomini d'Africa* (Bologna, 1935). See also Dye, p. 82; 'Graves to Wife, Gulf of Suez, 23 December 1875', and 'Journal mss.', p. 67, *Graves*; al-Suruji, pp. 129–130.

45 *Alpini*: Italian infantry trained for mountain warfare. For an interesting Gessi book see Massimo Zaccaria, *Il Flagella degli schiavisti. Romolo Gessi in Sudan (1874–1881). Con trentatre lettere edispacci inediti*. (Ravenna, 1999).

46 The unit recruited less than fifty men before being disbanded. 'Bonar to FO, Berne, 30 August, 10 September, 10 October 1869', FO 100/173; 'Ottenfels to Beust, Berne, 16 Sept. 1869', Dossier 14, Carton 53, *PI*.

47 Ninet claimed Count Edward Lavison, one of Ismail's advisors, was behind this scheme. 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 17 March 1875', *DUSCC*; 'de Castella to Ismail, Bulle, Switzerland, 18 septembre, 9 décembre 1871', Dossier 39/12, Carton 79, *PI*; Beat de Fischer, *Contributions à la conaissance de relations Suisses-Égyptiennes (d'environ 100 à 1945). Suives d'une esquisse des relations Suisses-Éthiopiennes (jusqu'en 1952)* (Lisbon, 1956), p. 179.

48 'Diary mss.', 11 May 1874, *Colston Papers*, SHC; 'Werner Munzinger Pascha', *Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen*, Vol. 22 (1876): 107–109.

49 Stanley Lane-Poole, *Watson Pasha* (London, 1919), p. 41; al-Suruji, op. cit., pp. 129–130.

50 'Egypt', *The Times* (21 July 1877): 5; Gen. Sir Charles Gordon, *Equatoria under Egyptian Rule: The Unpublished Correspondence of Col. (afterwards Major-Gen.) C. G. Gordon with Ismail Khedive of Egypt and the Sudan during the Years 1874–1876. With Introduction and Notes* (Cairo, 1953), p. 31; Hamilton, op. cit., p. 156; Baron de Kusel Bey, *An Englishman's Recollections of Egypt 1863 to 1887* (London, 1915), p. 182; 'Loring to Coleman, Alexandria, 19 May 1872', *John J. Crittenden Papers*, William R. Perkins Library, Duke University; A. Merger, *A Son altesse Ismail pacha khédive d'Égypte* (Paris, 1871).

51 Pierre Crabites, *Americans in the Egyptian Army* (London, 1938); along with William B. Hesseltine and Hazel B. Wolf, *The Blue and Grey on the Nile* (Chicago, 1961), provide detailed coverage of the 'American Mission'. The many articles by Frederick Cox represent the best scholarly work to date. For an Egyptian view, see al-Suruji, op. cit., pp. 112–128.

52 Chaillé-Long, 'The Forgotten American Mission to Egypt mss.' *Charles Chaillé Long Papers*, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; Sabry, p. 385; Carlos Stone: 23; [Suzzara], 'Expédition des Égyptiens contre l'Abyssinie (1875–1876). I – Memoire de M. Suzzara', trans. Walberg Bey Dzierzanowski, *RE*, Vol. II, No. 10 (mars 1896): 641; 'Thayer to Seward, Alexandria, 27 January 1863', *DUSCA*; L. C. Wright, *United States Policy Towards Egypt, 1820–1914* (New York, 1969), p. 73.

53 Mott (1831–1894) was a revolutionary volunteer during Italy's *Risorgimento*, a ship's officer during the 1850s, and a battery commander during the American Civil War. His father, Valentine, was the personal physician to Sultan Mahmud II, and his sister married Blacque Bey, the Ottoman minister to Washington, DC. Hesseltine, pp. 18–19.

54 Hesseltine, ibid.; 'Mott to Cherif Pacha, Paris, 13 octobre 1874', Dossier 39/12, Carton 79, *PI*; 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 27 May 1870', FO 78/2139.

55 Fitz-John Porter was ordered before a court-martial and convicted for gross incompetence at Second Bull Run (1862). In 1886, he was exonerated when Confederate officers provided testimony in his defence. See Otto Eisenschiml, *The Celebrated Case of Fitz-John Porter* (Indianapolis, 1950).
56 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 28 May 1870', *DUSCA*; Chaillé-Long, 'The Forgotten mss.', pg. 4; Hesseltine, p. 20; 'Mott to Ismail, Caire, 23 mars 1871', Carton 116, *PI*.
57 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 4 June 1870', *DUSCA*.
58 Charles Graves, the most frugal of the lot, claimed he made US $3,350 a year, after expenses. Part of this was due to the favourable exchange between gold coin and American 'greenbacks' [paper currency]. In comparison, a British Consul at Khartoum, equal in grade to an army colonel, obtained £600 per year, and a *bimbashi* in the post-1882 Egyptian army received £E540 per year. Frederick J. Cox, 'The American Naval Mission to Egypt', *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. XXVI, No. 2 (June 1954): 175; Dye, p. 2; 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 15 July 1878', *DUSCC*; 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 10 February 1877', and 'Graves to Wife, S.S. Dark-a-bee-ah, 25 December 1875', *Graves*, SHC; 'Lockett to Boyd, Montgomery, Ala., 29 May 1875', and 'Mrs. Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 3 June 1876', *Lockett*; Sir Walter Mieville, *Under Queen and Khedive* (London, 1899), p. 71; Lt. Col. E. W. C. Sandes, *The Royal Engineers in Egypt and the Sudan* (Chatham, 1937), p. 148n.; 'Stone to Ministre de la guerre, Caire, 2 février 1873', Dossier 39/12, Carton 79, *PI*.
59 'Lockett to Boyd, Jersey City, 7 July 1875', *Lockett*.
60 Graves, 'An Address on Egypt and the Egyptians mss.', *Graves*.
61 Even when work was available, jobs in the 'New South' often paid significantly less than service with the Egyptian army. Lockett mentions salaries for professors of engineering at between $1,800 and $2,000 per year. 'Lockett to Boyd, Knoxville, TN, 9 August 1878', *Lockett*. For an interesting look at Southerners willing to leave America in search of employment, see Daniel E. Sutherland, *The Confederate Carpetbaggers* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1988).
62 'Derrick to Lockett, Cairo, 7 July 1878', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.
63 Morgan obtained letters of reference from both Jefferson Davis and Robert E. Lee. 'Morgan to Coffinberry, 28 April 1900, and 21 August 1900', *Morgan Papers*, Ohio.
64 Major General George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the US Military Academy* (Boston, 1891), Vol. II, p. 213; Betty Patchin Greene, 'The Bey from Virginia', *Aramco World*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Mar.–Apr. 1974): 24–25; Hesseltine, op. cit., pp. 4–18; David Icenogle, 'The Geographical and Cartographic Work of the American Military Mission to Egypt, 1870–1878', *The Map Collector* (March 1989): 27, 29; 'Lockett to Boyd, Montgomery, Ala., 28 March 1875', and 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 25 December 1875', *Lockett*; George S. Pappas, 'West Point's Foreign Legion', *Assembly*, Vol. XLVIX, No. 6 (July 1991): 23–25.
65 The post-1865 US Army is covered in detail by Robert Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The US Army and the Indians, 1866–1891* (New York, 1974).
66 After Egypt, Dye went on to become Superintendent of Police for Washington, DC, and then in 1888, returned to the mercenary trade, joining the Korean Army! Cullum, pp. 548–550.
67 Cited in Farman, *Grant*, p. 32.
68 'Lockett to Boyd, Knoxville, TN, 4 November 1877', *Lockett*.
69 Two interesting accounts of Ball's Bluff are: Kim B. Holien, *Battle at Ball's Bluff* (Alexandria, VA, 1985); and Joseph Dorst Patch, *The Battle of Ball's Bluff* (Leesburg, VA, n.d.). See also R. B. Irwin, 'Ball's Bluff and the Arrest of General

Stone', in Clarence C. Buel and Robert U. Johnson (eds), *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (1888 rept., Secaucus, NJ, 1982), Vol. II, pp. 123–134. Stone led a fascinating life, and if his papers ever surface, would make the subject of an excellent biography. For more on him, see Abbate-Pacha, 'Le Général Charles Pomeroy Stone', *BSKG*, Supplément au No. 12, II Série (1888): 665–677; Cullum, pp. 214–219; Gerald Weland, 'The Lady and the General Who Put Her on a Pedestal', *Army* (April 1986): 43–44.

70 Patch, op. cit., p. 21.

71 'Babbit to Fish, Alexandria, 30 June 1873', and 'Hale to Fish, Alexandria, 14 April 1869', and 'Mott to Beardsley, Paris, ? September 1874', *DUSCA*; 'Kennon to Bob', Alexandria, 13 August 1870', Mss. 1m6663a255, *Kennon Papers*, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA; Morgan, *Reefer*, p. 266; 'Personal', *The Morning Star* [Wilmington, NC] (1 March 1873): 1; 'Sherman to Colston, Washington, 27 January 1873', *Colston Papers*, SHC.

72 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 7 July 1870', *DUSCA*. Butler was a friend of Mott, and the nephew of the controversial Benjamin Franklin Butler.

73 Colston, 'Modern': 150. See also 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 5 November 1870', *DUSCA*; Elbert E. Farman, *Along the Nile with General Grant* (New York, 1904), pp. 25–26, 66n; John W. McDonald, *A Soldier of Fortune* (New York, 1888), pp. 212–214; 'Stone to Boyd, Cairo, 20 March 1872', *Lockett*; 'Stone to Sherman, Cairo, 9 May and 30 July 1872', Vol. 30, Reel 16, *Sherman*.

74 Morgan, *Reefer*, p. 300.

75 Dye, p. 4; Chaillé-Long, 'Forgotten mss.', pp. 8–9; 'Lockett to Boyd, Montgomery, 17 January 1875', and 'Sherman to Boyd, Washington, DC, 4 April 1873', *David F. Boyd Papers*; 'Poe to Lockett, Washington, DC, 11 September 1874, and 11 January 1875', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; 'Stone to Sherman, Cairo, 31 August 1872, and 12 December 1875', Vol. 33, 34, Reel 18, *Sherman*; 'Edward Warren to Colston, Baltimore, 4 January 1873', *Colston Papers*, SHC; Wright, p. 77.

76 'Stone to Sherman, Cairo, 29 May 1872', *Sherman*.

77 'Stone to Sherman, Cairo, 31 August 1872', *Sherman*.

78 'Stone to Ministre de la Guerre, Caire, 15 décembre 1870', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*.

79 Edwin de Leon, 'The New Egypt of Khedive Ismail', *Appleton's Journal*, Vol. XIV (August 1875): 207–208; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 25 December 1875', *Lockett*; Stone, 'Military Affairs': 171.

80 Crabites and Hesseltine provide great detail on the role of American mercenaries as explorers. See also Cox, 'The American Naval': 173–178; 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 26 August 1875', *Graves*, SHC; 'Lockett to Boyd, Knoxville, 4 November 1877', *Lockett*; Charles Dudley Warner, *My Winter on the Nile* (Boston, 1881), p. 73.

81 Some sign of these trends are seen as early as 1872, when Stone is writing for advice on how to improve Egyptian cotton production. 'Stone to Alexander, Cairo, 8 July 1872', *Edward P. Alexander Papers*, SHC. See also 'Biographies Égyptiennes – Gastinel Pacha', *RE*, Vol. III (Nov.–Dec. 1896): 375–417; 'Catalogue de l'Exposition de l'Égypte', *BSKG*, Vol. II, no. 1 (novembre 1881): 11–21; 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 21 September 1875', *Graves Papers*, SHC; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 8 October 1876, and Knoxville, 4 November 1877', *Lockett*; 'Stone to Colston, War Office, 11 September 1873', *Colston Papers*, SHC; Stone, 'Military': 174; 'Stone to Sherman, Cairo, 12 December 1872', *Sherman*.

Native officers were also transferred in this fashion. Witness Shahine Pasha Genj, a competent *Sirdar*, who was made Inspector of Sudanese railways, and replaced by the less experienced Ratib Pasha.

82 'Colston to Louise Colston, Cairo, 13 June 1874', *Colston Papers*, SHC; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 8 October 1876, and Knoxville, 4 November 1877', *Lockett*; Lockett, 'Notes mss.', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; Loring, p. 351.
83 'Owen Denny to Mitchell, Seoul, Korea, 1888', cited in Robert R. Swartout Jr., *An American Advisor in Late Yi Korea. The Letters of Owen Nickerson Denny* (Birmingham, 1984), p. 46.
84 Porter's letters provide historians with caustic accounts of Ismail's Egypt, but his contemporaries simply saw him as a bad apple, 'who frequented the very lowest company in Cairo, the very scum of a very corrupt city'. 'Graves to Wife, Camp near Village of El Shobak, 8 July 1877', *Graves*, SHC. See also Crabites, pp. 52, 57; and Hesseltine, pp. 111–114; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 27 June 1877', *Lockett*.
85 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 25 December 1875, *Lockett*.
86 'Lockett to Boyd, Hammer Hall, 11 June 1875', *Lockett*.
87 'Gérard Prunier to Dunn, Paris, 23 July 1992', Author's files. See also Hesseltine, pp. 64, 72, 84; 'Stone to Boyd, Cairo, 7 July 1876', *Lockett*; Edward Warren, *A Doctor's Experience in Three Continents* (Baltimore, 1881), p. 408.
88 Ismail supposedly found the affair 'very amusing', and promoted Morgan to be his personal Aide-de-Camp! 'Morgan to Cousin, n.p., 21 August 1900', Warren, pp. 402–403.
89 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 29 August, and 29 September 1875', *Lockett*.
90 Dulier resigned in 1879, but returned to help guide General Drury-Lane's cavalry into Cairo during the British invasion of 1882. 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 7 July 1870', *DUSCA*; 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 16 February 1877, *Graves*; 'Lockett to Boyd, Knoxville, 4 November 1877', and 'Sherman to Boyd, St Louis, Mo., 18 February, 26 July 1875', *Lockett*; Lockett, 'The Recent War in Egypt mss.', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; Loring, op. cit., pp. 441–442, 449; 'Une Partie des officiers supérieurs à Ismail, Caire, 1 janvier 1879', Dossier 39/12, Carton 79, *PI*; 'Stone to Lockett, Caire, 25 July 1876', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.
91 Lockett, 'Notes …'
92 'Colston to Hurlbut, Richmond, 6 April 1887', *Hurlbut Papers*, American Geographical Society, New York.
93 'Lockett to Boyd, Knoxville, 4 November 1877', *Lockett*.
94 Dye, op. cit., p. 177; Hesseltine, op. cit., p. 109; 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 4 February 1877', *Graves*; 'Lockett to Sherman, Baton Rouge, LA, 12 December 1872, Vol. 34, Reel 18, *Sherman*; Loring, pp. 372–373; Wylde, op. cit., p. 78.
95 Lady Lucie Duff-Gordon, *Letters from Egypt (1862–1869)*, ed. Gordon Waterfield (New York, 1969), p. 265. See also Hesseltine, p. 60.
96 Charles I. Graves, 'An Address on Egypt and the Egyptians mss.', *Graves*; and Lockett, 'Notes', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.
97 'Lockett to Boyd, Jersey City, NJ, 16 July 1875', 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 22 August 1875', and 'Morgan to Boyd, Charleston, SC, 14 June 1873', *Lockett*; M. L. Whately, *Ragged Life in Egypt* (London, MDCCCLXIII), p. 11.
98 Dr Moritz Busch, *Hand-Book for Travelers in Egypt* (Trieste, 1864), p. vii.
99 '28 March 1873', *Fechet mss.*
100 No American died in battle while serving Ismail, but several passed away as a result of sickness. Lockett's correspondence, during the hellish summer of 1876, is full of bitter complaints over his living conditions. See also 'Colston to Lockett, Alexandria, 6 July 1877', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.
101 'Ismail to Hassan, n.p., n.d. [1875?]', Dossier 39/12, Carton 79, *PI*. See also 'Hassan to Ismail, Berlin, 10 juin 1875', Dossier 39/12, Carton 79, *PI*.
102 Cox, 'Khedive Ismail and Pan-Slavism: 161'; 'Hassan to Ismail, Berlin, 25 mars 1875', and 'Ismail to Hassan, Caire, 19 April 1875', Dossier 2/3, Carton 123, *PI*; Heyworth-Dunne, p. 352.

103 See Crabites, op. cit., pp. 52, 57; 'Colston to Louise Colston, Cairo, 13 June 1874', *Colston Papers*, SHC; Dye, pp. 2, 4, 177; 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 26 February 1877', *Graves*; Hesseltine, op. cit., pp. 111–114; 'Lockett to Boyd, Knoxville, 4 November 1877', *Lockett*.

7 WEAPONS PROCUREMENT POLICIES AND THE EGYPTIAN ECONOMY

1 Keith Krause, *Arms and the State: Patterns of Military Production and Trade* (Cambridge, 1992).

2 'Recent Military Events in Egyptian History', in *Samuel Henry Lockett Papers*, SHC.

3 Ismail was notorious for squeezing every last *para* out of Egypt's citizens. Lucie Duff-Gordon claims he even obtained a percent from the earnings of 'dancing girls', thus earning the sobriquet of '*Mawas Pasha*' [Pimp Pasha]! Lady Lucie Duff-Gordon, *Letters from Egypt* (New York, 1969) p. 293.

On Egyptian cotton prices and production during the period 1860–1865, see 'Thayer to Seward, Alexandria, 21 July, 26 August, and 30 September 1861', in *DUSCA*; David S. Landes, *Bankers and Pashas* (Cambridge, MA, 1979), pp. 69, 329–340; Anouar Louca (ed.), *Lettres d'Égypte, 1879–1882* (Paris, 1979), p. 12; John Marlowe, *Spoiling the Egyptians* (New York, 1975), p. 120; L. C. Wright, *United States Policy Towards Egypt, 1820–1914* (New York, 1969), pp. 67–68, 7.

4 Edward Dicey, *The Story of the Khedivate* (London, 1902), p. 94.

5 Egyptian bond issues began in the 1860s. Never completely sold out, they were only completed through the sale of excess shares to brokers, hence the discount. Also, to attract creditors, bonds, and loans, paid high interest rates. For more on these topics, see 'Thayer to Seward, Alexandria, 17 January 1863', *DUSCA*; Hoskins, p. 13; Landes, op. cit., p. 57, *passim*.

6 Alexander Scholch, *Egypt for the Egyptians* (London, 1981), p. 20.

7 Departing from Ismail's lavish Suez Canal party of 1869, a French journalist boasted, '*J'ai mangé le patrimoine de trois fellahs!*' One Who Knows Them Well [Charles Bell], *Khedives and Pashas: Sketches of Contemporary Egyptian Rulers and Statesmen* (London, 1884), pp. 12–13.

8 'Stone to Colston, Cairo, 3 March 1876', *Colston Papers*, SHC. Ismail once sent General William Sherman a diamond necklace valued at $150,000. See 'The United States', *The Times* (11 February 1875): 10. For samples of his considerable outlays on European entertainment groups, see 'Budget de l'opéra pour la saison de 1870 et 1871 mss.', Dossier 80/3, Carton 120, *PI*. See also Dicey, pp. 74–75; 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 4 May 1878', *DUSCC*; Landes, p. 130; J. C. McCoan, *Egypt under Ismail* (London, 1889), pp. 107, 118, 120.

9 The history of the Suez Canal is covered in D. A. Farnie, *East and West of Suez: The Suez Canal in History, 1854–1956* (Oxford, 1969). See also Cole, op. cit., p. 59; 'Great Britain and Egypt': 6; Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Egypt. 1876, no. 1. Correspondence Respecting the Purchase by Her Majesty's Government of the Suez Canal Shares Belonging to the Egyptian Government* (London, 1876); and McCoan, *Ismail*, p. 29.

10 'Boker to Fish, Constantinople, 2 July 1873', *DUSMT*.

11 Crouchley, op. cit., p. 276; Mohamed Hussein Haekal, *La Dette publique égyptienne* (Paris, 1912), pp. 79–87; Baron des Michels, *Souvenirs de carrière (1855–1886)* (Paris, 1901), pp. 152–155; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 29 March 1877', FO 78/2631.

12 For more details on post Civil War problems in the US arms industry, see Felicia Johnson Deyrup, *Arms Making in the Connecticut Valley* (New York, 1970), pp. 202–204.

13 George T. Layman, *The Military Remington Rolling Block – 50 Years of Faithful Service* (Prescott, AZ, 1992), p. XV.

14 David F. Butler, *United States Firearms: The First Century, 1776–1875* (New York, 1971), p. 153; 'E. Remington & Sons to General Sherman, Ilion, 29 November 1869', *Sherman Papers*, Vol. 27, Microfilm Roll 15, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; Alden Hatch, *Remington Arms in American History* (New York, 1956), pp. 135–136; Layman, p. 19; Charles B. Norton, *American Breech-Loading Small Arms* (New York, 1872), pp. 25–26, 36; Harold L. Peterson, *The Remington Historical Treasury of American Guns* (Edinburgh, 1966), p. 71; Konrad F. Schreir, *Remington Rolling Block Firearms* (n.p., 1977), pp. 4, 17.

15 Military 'experts' considered multi-shot tubular feed weapons, like the M.1866 Winchester, too complicated for the average soldier. For an interesting examination of martial firearms of the period, see Leon Mares, *Les Armes de guerre à l'exposition universelle* (Paris, 1867). See also Donald Featherstone, *Weapons and Equipment of the Victorian Soldier* (Poole, 1978), p. 25.

Remington provided the Egyptian government with numerous testimonials from Italian, Danish, and Spanish officers who favoured his system. For example, see 'Rapport du armée d'Outre-mer à Cuba, 23 mars 1869', and 'Rapport du Capitaine Poggio, Turin, 17 mars 1869', Dossier 50/8, Carton 179, *PI*. See also Ronald Pearsall, 'The Military Breechloaders of 1871', *Army Quarterly and Defense Journal*, Vol. 104, No. 1 (October 1973): 90–93; 'Reports to Commanding Officer by W. G. Chamberlain, 8 May 1871', 'Report of Observations at Remington's Armory, Ilion, NY', *Springfield Armory Records*, National Archives, Washington, DC. For more on dissatisfaction with European salesmen, see McCoan, op. cit., p. 130n; and Landes, op. cit., pp. 225–226.

16 Ismail gave over 42,000 of these Egyptian-made Minié rifles to the Sultan during the Russo-Turkish War. 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 30 May 1877', *DUSCC*; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 23 June 1877', FO 78/2633, PRO.

On conversion plans see 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 17 October 1866', *DUSCA*. On Snider conversions, see 'Fedrigo Bey to Riaz Pacha, Alexandria, 11 October 1866', Dossier 50/7, Carton 179; and 'Minié Pacha to Ismail, Caire, 15 février 1871', Dossier 50/8, Carton 179, *PI*; 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 3 June 1870', FO 78/2139.

Charles J. Purdan, *The Snider-Enfield Rifle* (West Hill, Ontario, 1990), p. 23, claims that Colt sold 12,000 M1861 Springfield muskets to Egypt after the Civil War. These were intended for conversion to breech-loaders via the Snider system. The relevant archival records for this sale, if it happened, are hidden in the poorly organized Colt files of the Connecticut State Archives.

17 Shahine even considered a visit to America, mainly to inspect arms factories and meet top-ranking US military men. 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 28 January 1867', *DUSCA*; Layman, pp. 3–4; Norton, pp. 44–45; 'Seward to Morris, Washington, 18 October 1866', *Diplomatic Instructions of the United States, Turkey*.

18 'Commission permanente de tir des armes portatives to Ratib Pacha, Vincennes, 18 mars 1869', Dossier 50/8, Carton 179, *PI*.

19 Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., p. 349; Norton, pp. 42–43; 'Commission permanente du tir des armes portatives to Ratib Pacha, Vincennes, 16 avril 1869', 'Newley to Patib Pacha, Paris, 12 avril 1869', and 'Procès-verbal des résultats des différents tirs excédant à Vincennes les 15 et 16 mars 1869', Dossier 50/8, Carton 179, *PI*.

20 One of Ismail's American mercenaries, Frank Reynolds, later replaced Minié as the Egyptian inspector at Ilion. His death in 1875 saw Cairo's request for the appointment of a US Army inspector. 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 20 October 1875', *DUSCC*.

The original contract can be found in Cairo's Dar al-Wathaiq, 'Contrat, London, 30 juin 1869', Dossier 50/7, Carton 179, *PI*. Due to the destruction of their Archives by fire in 1939, it is difficult to determine the exact prices charged by Remington. In the 1871 so-called 'Persian Contract', which was probably a subterfuge to get weapons into France, 50,000 Egyptian rolling blocks were listed as having cost $13.76 each. [Untitled Ledger], 1874, in *Shepard and Richardson Papers*, Herkimer Historical Society, Herkimer, NY. In 1877', 35,000 rifles were contracted for $500,000. 'Farman to Fish, Cairo, 3 April 1877, *DUSCC*. The Remington 1877 catalogue featured them at $17.00, or $20.50 with bayonet, while the carbine version sold for $16.00. See also 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 30 December 1870', *DUSCA*; 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 4 May 1878', *DUSCC*; Layman, pp. 11, 98; Samuel Norris, 'Facts About Small Arms', *New York Times* (31 July 1898), pp. 4–6; 'E. Remington & Sons to Col. J. G. Benton, Ilion, N.Y., 19 July 1869', *Springfield Armory Records*.

21 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 4 May 1878', *DUSCC*; 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 6 November 1875 and 4 January 1877', *Charles I. Graves Papers*, SHC; K. D. Kirkland, *America's Premier Gunmaker: Remington* (New York, 1988), p. 36; *A New Chapter in an Old Story* (New York, MCMXII), p. 21.

22 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 30 December 1870', *DUSCA*.

23 Other than weapons, the only significant American export to Egypt was petroleum. 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 30 April 1873', *DUSCC*. On consular activities in support of Remington, see 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 20 October 1875', and 'Farman to Fish, Cairo, 25 November 1876', *DUSCC*.

24 Firing at 30 yards, rolling blocks tested in England punched through 15 half-inch water-soaked elm boards, each placed an additional half-inch apart. Such hitting power was considered vital in 'savage warfare'. Most imperialists agreed with Colonel Vincent Fosberry, VC, who explained: 'A savage opponent will make his rush, having fully made up his mind to kill you, or be killed by you, and one of these two things he will get done without an *arrière-pensée* of any kind … when he makes his attack on you a personal one, you must be prepared to stop him or die.' Cited in John E. Parsons, *The Peacemaker and Its Rivals. An Account of the Single Action Colt* (New York, 1953), p. 82.

25 Along with plenty of ammunition, Mott's deal involved the purchase of 9,566 Colt revolvers for $14.50 each, 10,278 Winchester carbines at $28 each, 10,278 Winchester rifles with bayonet, for $27.50 each, and the machinery for making 30,000 cartridges per day at $8,250. In all a total of $717,386, 'plus shipping and handling'. 'Contract Between Winchester Repeating Arms Company and Henry Mott'; and 'Mott to Ismail, n.p., n.d.', Dossier 50/7, Carton 179, *PI*.

Mott and Butler's failure probably cut them out of a very substantial commission. It was not unknown for large sales to involve '*baksheesh*' of over £10,000. 'Boker to Fish, Constantinople, 15 August 1872', *DUSMT*. There is little doubt that this clash marks the beginning of the end for Mott, and sets the pace for Butler's celebrated gun fight with several of Stone's fellow mercenaries.

26 'Butler to Fish, 30 December 1870' and '29 April 1871, Alexandria', *DUSCA*; photocopy of *New York Tribune* article of 5 May 1871, Ilion Free Public Library, Historical Room.

27 'Butler to Fish, 30 December 1870, Alexandria', *DUSCA*.

28 Warren E. Schulz, *Ilion: The Town Remington Made* (Hucksville, NY, 1977), p. 16, lists 154,120 rifles plus 19,777 carbines delivered by Remington to France.

Nubar Pasha claimed that 20,000 rolling block rifles were delivered to Egypt by May 1870, the rest of the original 60,000 probably became French. 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 12 May 1870', FO 78/2139.

See also 'Butler to Fish', ibid.; Alfred J. Butler, *Court Life in Egypt* (London, 1888), p. 168; Layman, pp. 12, 35–36; 'Esquiros [to French Consul, Alexandria], Marseille, 19 septembre 1870', Dossier 63/10, Carton 97, *PI*; 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 30 September 1870', FO 78/2140; 'Telegrams, Tours to New York City, 20 August 1870' and '21 September 1870', *Shepard and Richardson Papers*.

29 For more on this, see Afaf Lufti al-Sayyid Marsot, 'The Porte and Ismail Pasha's Quest for Autonomy', *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 12 (1975): 89–96.

30 'Ismail to Nubar Pacha, n.p., n.d.', Dossier 50/7, Carton 179, *PI*; 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 28 April 1870', '14 June 1870', and '24 June 1870', FO 78/2139.

31 'L'Armée du khédive mss.', Dossier 50/1, Carton 25, *PI*, notes that by winter 1870, Egypt's possession of Remington rifles was common knowledge in European military circles.

See also 'Eumench to Barrot Bey, Alexandrie, 26 septembre 1873', Dossier 63/24, Carton 97, *PI*; 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 21 June 1870', FO 78/2139, and '9 July 1870', and '14 July 1870', FO 78/2140.

32 Hassoun demanded 20,000 francs to keep quiet, and threatened to publish copies of the telegrams in English and Arabic if refused. 'Hassoun to Fedrigo Pasha, Wandsworth, United Kingdom, 18 March 1873', Dossier 50/8, Carton 179, *PI*.

33 On Masindi, see 'Baker to Ismail, Khartoum, 5 juillet 1873', Dossier 72/1, Carton 59, *PI*. For more on this, see Sir Samuel W. Baker, *Ismailia* (1907). Col. Charles Chaillé-Long, noted for his tall tales, claimed to defeat 400 local warriors with a Reilly No. 8 elephant gun, and two privates armed with Sniders! Charles Chaillé-Long, 'Letter to the Editor', *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol. XXXIX (1904): 349. For more on Egyptian Sniders, see 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 3 September 1873', *DUSCC*; Jerry Janzen, *Bayonets from Janzen's Notebook* (Tulsa, OK, 1987), p. 39.

34 F. L. James, *The Wild Tribes of the Sudan* (London, 1884), p. 56, notes that some Egyptian forces still used percussion muskets in 1881. Douin, *IIIB*, pp. 1154–1155, 1202; 'Registre 31, Arrivé Maia Sanieh, No. 17', p. 31, [Dossier 71/23?], Carton 20, Sudan sub-collection, *PI*; G. Schweinfurth *et al*. (eds), *Emin Pasha in Central Africa* (London, 1888), p. 253.

35 J. C. McCoan, *Egypt* (New York, MDCCCXCVIII), p. 97. See also Remington articles from *Herkimer Democrat* (7 July 1869) and *Utica Press* (21 July 1882), held by Ilion Free Public Library, Historical Room.

36 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 14 June 1865', *DUSCA*.

37 Remington offered a small 'starter' factory to make rolling block rifles for $37,000. 'Minié Pacha to Ismail, Caire, 1 février 1871', Dossier 50/9, Carton 179, *PI*. See also Charles Fitch, 'Report on the Manufacture of Interchangeable Mechanisms', in United States Congress, *Miscellaneous Documents of the House of Representatives* (Washington, 1882), Vol. 13, pt. 2, pp. 613–614; McCoan, *Egypt*, pp. 98, 292.

38 Dr Moritz Busch, *Hand-Book for Travellers in Egypt*, trans. W. C. Wrankmore (Trieste, 1864), p. 19; 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 2 September 1870', in FO 78/2140; Paul Traub, 'Voyage au pays des Bogos', *Bulletin de la société neuchateloise de géographie*, Vol. 4 (1888): 129; Sir Gardner Wilkinson, *A Handbook for Travellers in Egypt* (London, 1867), p. 29.

39 Efforts to establish a Khartoum- based percussion cap factory failed in the 1860s. Douin, *IIIA,* p. 100, n.1. See also 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 22 October 1870', *DUSCA*; *Égypte. Commission à l'expostion universelle de Vienne*, 1873,

Catalogue raisonné de l'exposition Égyptienne (Vienna, 1873), p. 173; Georges Guindi and Jacques Tagher (eds), *Ismail d'après les documents officiels* (Cairo, 1945), pp. 141–142; Great Britain. Foreign Office, *British Documents on Foreign Affairs*, David Gillard (ed.) (Frederick, MD, 1984), B/Vol. 9, pp. 151, 241–242; Douglas Johnson, 'The Myth of Ansar Firepower', *Savage and Soldier*: *Sudan Issue*, p. 22; Louca, p. 195; 'Mott to Riaz Pasha, Caire, 7 mai 1871', Dossier 50/9, Carton 179, *PI*; Norton, p. 285; 'Stone to Ministre de Guerre, Caire, 7 mai 1873', Dossier 50/9, Carton 179 *PI*; Carlos [Charles P.] Stone, *Assuntos Militares en Egipto* (Havana, 1884), p. 31; Charles P. Stone, 'Military Affairs in Egypt', *Journal of the Military Service Institution*, Vol. 5, p. 173.

40 Jacquier Bey, director of the arsenal, probably designed the mountain howitzer in 1865. Edmund, p. 345; 'L'Armée de khédive mss.'.

41 Although the Rodman was a smooth-bore, and the Armstrong rifled, placing such guns together was not unusual for the times. The former had great smashing power, while the latter fired at longer ranges. This combination was considered useful for engaging ironclad warships.

42 One of the 7.5cm guns is the famous *Haqa Fatma*, the Ramadan gun, which still booms loudly from its position near the Police Museum at Cairo's Citadel. There was also a single 11-inch Krupp gun, which supposedly became part of Alexandria's defences. This may have been a purchase from Said's era. 'L'Armée du khédive mss.'; 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 3 June 1870', FO 78/2139.

43 Like small arms, artillery weapons of this period slowly converted to breech-loaders. These designs were difficult to produce, and thus more expensive than the muzzle-loaders of Napoleonic and American Civil War fame. Some idea of the changes involved can be seen in Warren Ripley, *Artillery and Ammunition of the Civil War* (New York, 1970).

A few samples of prices offered Egypt include 28.5-centimetre Finspong (Swedish) guns at £1,400, 10-inch Parrot rifles at £1,439, 15-inch Rodmans at £3,290, or a 20-inch monster for £6,185. 'Arrendrup Memorandum, Caire, 19 avril 1871'; and 'Stone to Ministre du Guerre, Caire, 8 avril 1871', Dossier 50/7, Carton 179, *PI*.

Dossier 50/8, Carton 179 from the *Dar al-Wathaiq's Période Ismail* collection, contains numerous reports and advertisements for all kinds of artillery from the 1865–1880 era, both standard and experimental. See also British Documents, B/Vol. 9, pp. 151, 240–241; 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 29 April 1871', *DUSCA*; McCoan, *Egypt*, p. 98; 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 18, 21, 24 June, and 15 October 1870', FO 78/2139, PRO; 'Steward to Comanos, Washington, 2 October, 1878', in United States, Department of State, *Diplomatic Instructions, Egypt*; 'Stone to Ministre du Guerre, Caire, 7 mai 1873', Dossier 50/10, Carton 179, *PI*; al-Suraji, p. 51; 'Turkey and Egypt', *The Times* (16 June 1874): 14.

44 A machine gun playing 'a little Gatling music' was both harmful to enemy morale, and the equivalent of about one hundred infantrymen with breech loaders. Paul Wahl and Donald R. Toppel, *The Gatling Gun* (New York, 1965), pp. 37–41, 65–68. See also, Charles W. D. Beresford, 'Machine Guns in the Field', *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute*, Vol. 28 (1884): 949.

45 Gatling guns were expensive weapons. Those sold in 1870 cost $1,750 (£350) for a .58 calibre, and $2,350 (£470) for a 1 inch version. With 168,000 rounds of ammunition, limbers, and tack, the total cost was £40,192. 'Mott to Charif Pasha, Caire, 1 novembre 1870', Dossier 50/7, Carton 179, *PI*.

See also 'Mott to Ismail, New York, 3 septembre 1872', and 'Mott to Riaz Pacha, Caire, 7 mai 1871', Dossier 50/7, Carton 179, *PI*; Charles B. Norton and W. S. Valentine, *Report to the Government of the United States on the Munitions*

of War Exhibited at the Paris Universal Exhibition, 1867 (New York, 1868); 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 19 May 1870', '27 May 1870', and '3 June 1870', FO 78/2139; Wahl and Toppel, pp. 39, 41.

46 British Documents, B/Vol. 9, p. 151; 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 4 May 1878', *DUSCC*.

47 Although literally 'tomorrow', *Bukra* can be very flexible, like the Spanish *mañana*. 'James Shaw to Barrot Bey, London, 15 September 1876', Dossier 50/13, Carton 179, *PI*.

48 'Remington to Ismail, Caire, 2 juin 1876', Dossier 50/7, Carton 179, *PI*. Egypt's financial instability sometimes factored into prices charged by western vendors. To account for the risk, an 80–100% surcharge was not uncommon. 'Egyptian Finance mss.', in Dossier 'Trauvaux publique', Carton 6, *PI*. See also 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 4 May 1878', *DUSCC*.

49 On the Remington contract, see 'Evarts to Farman, Washington, DC, 28 March 1878', *Diplomatic Instructions …*; 'Farman to Fish, Cairo, 25 November 1876', 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 3 April 1877, 15 June 1877, 26 July 1877, 4 and 10 May 1878', *DUSCC*. On budgets, see British Documents, B/Vol. 9, p. 216; 'Report on Revenue, 1 November 1876', *DUSCC*; McCoan, p. 96.

50 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 16 March 1877', FO 78/2631.

51 'Fish to Farman, Washington, DC, 2 August 1876', in United States. Department of State, *Diplomatic Instructions, Egypt*, National Archives, Washington, DC.

52 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 10 May 1878', *DUSCC*.

53 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 4 May 1878', *DUSCC*.

54 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 4, 10 May 1878', *DUSCC*; 'Farman to Fish, Cairo, 3 April 1877', *DUSCC*; 'Hay to Farman, Washington, DC, 6, 15 July 1880', *Diplomatic Instructions, Egypt*.

55 'Evarts to Farman, Washington, DC, 28 March 1878', *Diplomatic Instructions, Egypt*. For details on the post-1882 disposal of Egypt's Remington rifles, see John Dunn, 'Remington Rolling Blocks in the Horn of Africa', *Bulletin of the American Society of Arms Collectors*, No. 71 (1994): 25–32.

56 This theme is covered by Ian Hogg, *The Weapons That Changed the World* (New York, 1986).

57 For more on the problems of technological transfer, see Nathan Rosenberg, 'Factors Affecting the Diffusion of Technology', *Explorations in Economic History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Fall 1972): 3–33.

8 THE KHEDIVE AND THE SULTAN

1 For more on this, consult Afaf Lufti al-Sayyid Marsot, 'The Porte and Ismail Pasha's Quest for Autonomy', *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 12 (1975): 89–96. See also 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 30 July 1870', *DUSCA*; Georges Douin, *Histoire du règne du khédive Ismail, Tome 1er: Les Premières années du règne, 1863–1867* (1933), pp. 205–232; 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 2 June 1866', *DUSCA*; 'Ismail to Nubar, Caire, 30 Avril 1867', Doss 34/1, *PI*; J. C. McCoan, *Egypt under Ismail* (London, 1889), pp. 59–61.

2 Abraham Bey, Ismail's confidential agent in Constantinople and brother-in-law to Nubar Pasha, would make an interesting study. The *PI* contains nine boxes of his correspondence.

3 Richard Burton describes several of these posts during an 1877 journey through NW Hijaz see his *The Gold-Mines of Midian* (1877 rept., New York, 1995).

4 Burton, ibid., p. 391.

5 Egyptian military escorts for Hajj pilgrims only concluded in 1925. Martin Kramer, 'Shaykh al-Maraghi's Mission to the Hijaz, 1925', *Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 16 (1982): 124–125; McCoan, p. 35.

6 Hassan later joined an entourage of anti-Ismail émigrés, bringing with him a nefarious band of desperadoes. After Ismail's diplomacy altered the line-of-succession, he created enemies among his brothers. One, Muhammad Abd al-Halim (1831–1894), plotted against Ismail and his son Tewfik, employed Hassan, and probably supported the Urabi Coup. For more on these Syrian affairs, see McCoan, pp. 79, 114; L. Schatkowski-Schilcher, 'The Hauran Conflicts of the 1860's: A Modern Chapter in the Rural History of Modern Syria', *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 13 (1981): 159–179. Foreign Office records (FO 195/806) mention O'Reilly, Karam, and others.

7 Major revolts took place in 1821, 1827, 1833, and 1840–1841. In 1866, the island contained about 300,000 people, and no more than 30 per cent were Muslim. For a contemporary view, see Le Duc de Valmy, *La Turquie et l'Europe en 1867* (Paris, 1867). See also, Douglas Dakin, *The Unification of Greece, 1770–1923*. (London, 1972), p. 107; Emmanuel E. Marcoglou, *The American Interest in the Cretan Revolution, 1866–69*. (Athens, 1971), pp. 40, 49; William Miller, *The Ottoman Empire and Its Successors 1801–1927* (Cambridge, 1934), pp. 308–310; Athanase G. Politis, *Un projet d'alliance entre l'Égypte et la Grèce en 1867* (Cairo, 1931), pp. 3–4; Stanford and Ezel Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Vol. II (Cambridge, 1978), p. 151; William J Stillman, *American Consul in a Cretan War. With Introduction and Notes by George Georgiades Arnakis* (Athens, 1966), pp. 14, 15n.

8 J. E. Hilary Skinner, *Roughing it in Crete* (London, 1868), p. xxxi.

9 For information on the poor treatment of Egyptian prisoners, see 'Photiades à Ismail, Athènes, 8 janvier 1867', Dossier 39/12, Carton 69, *PI*. See also: Marcoglou, p. 60; Skinner, pp. xviii–xix, xxv; Wagner, p. 12.

10 Skinner, op. cit., p. 17.

11 Skinner, op. cit., p. 17; Stillman, op. cit., p. 69n.

12 Two useful primary sources on the Cretan side of this war are: E. Anninos, *I Ptossis ton Arkadiou* [The Fall of Arkadi] (Kefalliniu, 1869); and P. Perides, *Apomnimaneermata peri tis Kritikis Epanastaseos tou 1866* [Memoirs of the Cretan Revolution of 1866] (Athens, 1867). Thanks to John Chalapis, who maintains an interest in Crete's history, and suggested these titles. See also Ballot, pp. 5, 159–160; Dakin, pp. 109–110; Marcoglou, p. 51; Politis, p. 5.

13 Stillman, op. cit., pp. 128–129. For more on Stillman, see his *The Autobiography of a Journalist* (Boston, 1901).

14 Skinner, op. cit., pp. 79, 97; Stillman, ibid.

15 Georges Perrot, *L'Ile de Crète* (Paris, 1867), pp. 84, 108–109; Skinner, op. cit., p. 59.

16 'Chahine à Nubar, Caire, ? Octobre 1867', Dossier 9/12, Carton 194, *PI*; Dakin, pp. 109–110; Marcoglou, p. 60; V. Raulin, *Description physique de l'île de Crète* (Paris, 1869), I, pp. 64–65, 292; Skinner, pp. xxvi–xxvii; Stillman, p. 53.

17 Douin, *Ismail*, I, pp. 351, 353; Lady Lucie Duff-Gordon, *Letters from Egypt (1862–1869)*, ed. Gordon Waterfield (New York, 1969), p. 305; Politis, op. cit., p. 70; Raulin, op. cit., I, p. 292; Stillman, op. cit., p. 40.

18 Politis, op. cit., p. 22; Angelo Sammarco, *Histoire de l'Égypte Moderne, Tome III: Le Règne du Khédive Ismail de 1863–1875* (Cairo, 1937), pp. 152–153.

19 Ibrahim's harsh suppression of Greek rebels in the 1820s earned him the title 'Scourge of the Morea'. Politis, pp. 20–25; F. Charles-Roux, *L'Égypte de 1801 à 1882* (Paris, 1936), pp. 302–303; Sammarco, ibid.; Stillman (1874), p. 63.

20 Stillman, op. cit., pp. 18–19.

21 Douin, *Ismail*, pp. 361–362; Raulin, op. cit., I, p. 292; Sammarco, op. cit., pp. 153–154; Stillman, op. cit., pp. 49, 51, 55, 63–66.
22 Raulin, op. cit., I, p. 292; Skinner, op. cit., p. 82; Stillman, op. cit., pp. 64, 70–71.
23 Skinner, op. cit., p. 75; Stillman, op. cit., pp. 65–66, 86.
24 Local tradition holds that the magazine was purposely exploded by the defenders, so as to kill more Turks. Douin, op. cit., I, pp. 377–379; Skinner, op. cit., p. 77; Smith, op. cit., p. 96; Stillman, op. cit., pp. 67, 86.
25 Stillman, op. cit., p. 71.
26 Ballot, op. cit., pp. 217, 250–251; 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 9 July 1867', *DUSCA*; Skinner, pp. 105–113; Stillman, op. cit., pp. 60–61.
27 Ghada H. Talhami, *Suakin and Massawa under Egyptian Rule 1865–1885* (Washington, 1975), p. 137.
28 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 7 October 1867', *DUSCA*. See also Stillman, p. 109; Emine Foat Tugay, *Three Centuries: Family Chronicles of Turkey and Egypt* (London, 1963), p. 139.
29 For details on the Cretan settlement, see Sir Edward Hertslet, *The Map of Europe by Treaty* (1891), Vol. IV, pp. 2810–2815.
30 It is interesting to note that Ismail provided 100,000 francs to Queen Olga of Greece, for the aid of Cretan refugees. M. Sabry, *La Genèse de l'espirit national égyptien (1863–1882)* (Paris, 1924), p. 20. See also 'Chahine à Nubar', ibid.; John W. McDonald, *A Soldier of Fortune* (New York, 1888), p. 212; Politis, pp. 64, 70; , Paul Ravaisse, *Ismail Pacha Khédive d'Égypte (1830–1895)* (Cairo, 1896), p. 9; Roux, op. cit., pp. 302–303; Alexander Scholch, *Egypt for the Egyptians* (London, 1981), p. 12; Stillman, pp. 17–18, 40–42, 48, 64–65.
31 US diplomat Butler claimed Ismail sent ship loads of antique weapons to Constantinople, claiming these were his most recent purchases. 'Butler to Fish, Alexandria, 17 and 27 May 1871', *DUSCA*; Cox, 'Pan-Slavism': 158; Douin, *Ismail*, p. xxviii; Baron de Malortie, *Egypt: Native Rulers and Foreign Interference* (London, 1882), p. 76, n.352; John Marlowe, *Spoiling the Egyptians* (New York, 1975), pp. 156, 159–160; McCoan, p. 114.
32 Military units also protected the canal from disgruntled workers, marauding Bedouin, and bandits. 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 29 April 1874', *DUSCC*; 'Borg to Vivian, Cairo, 29 December 1877', FO 141/112; Cox, 'Suez', 201; D. A. Farnie, *East and West of Suez* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 81, 220; Marlowe, op. cit., p. 161.
33 'Notes de Stamboul, 7 Decembre 1875', Dossier 83/6, Carton 161, *PI*.
34 Muhmud Pasha Fahmi (1839–1894) played a prominent role in the Urabi Revolution, serving as Chief of Staff for the rebel army in 1882. *IIIB*, p. 1051; John Ninet, *Arabi Pacha, Égypte (1880–1883)* (Paris, 1884), p. 245; 'Quarrasimo à Effendi Bey, Constantinople, 6 jul 1876', Dossier 83/6, Carton 161, *PI*.
35 'Chambers to Evarts, Constantinople, 23 October 1877', *DUSMT*.
36 Douin, op. cit., p. 22; 'Fife to FO, Gallipoli, 26 January 1878, FO 78/2777; 'The Khedive and the Sclavs', *The Times* (11 December 1876): 6; 'Lenner to FO, Constantinople, 5 June 1877', FO 78/2573; 'Quarrasimo to Effendi Bey, Constantinople, 6 July 1876', Dossier 83/8, Carton 161, *PI*; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 21 April 1877', FO 78/2632. For Egypt's diplomatic role, consult Hamdu Allah Mustafa Hasan, *Misr wa al-Harb al-Rusiyah al-Turkiyah, 1877–1878* [Egypt and the Russo-Turkish War] (Cairo, 1989).

For the war itself, see Ian Drury, *The Russo-Turkish War 1877* (London, 1994); Francis Greene, *The Russian Army and Its Campaigns in Turkey, 1877–78* (New York, 1879); B. W. Menning, *Bayonets Before Bullets: The Imperial Russian Army, 1861–1878* (Indianapolis, 1992); Maureen P. O'Connor, 'The Vision of Soldiers. Britain, France, Germany and the United States Observe the Russo-Turkish War', *War in History*, Vol. 4 (1997) No. 3: 264–295.

37 Alexandria's Greek community provided volunteers for the Russian army in 1877! 'Egypt', *The Times* (31 August 1877): 6. For more on Greek–Ethiopian relations, see Theodore Natsoulas, 'Yohannes' Greek Advisors', *North East African Studies*, No. 3 (1985): 21–40.
38 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 30 March 1878', FO 78/2854. Some angry *fellahin* formed bands of desperadoes who attempted raids on the Suez Canal. 'Borg to Vivian, Cairo, 29 December 1877', FO 141/112. See also 'Egypt and the War', *The Times* (2, 21 January 1878): 10; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 12 May 1877', FO 78/2632; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 30 March 1877', FO 78/2631.
39 'Derrick to Lockett, Cairo, 22 July 1876', *Lockett-B*.
40 William M. Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia* (1880 rept. New York, 1969), pp. 484, 487; Richard Hill, *Biographical Dictionary of the Sudan* (London, 1959), p. 387; W. W. Loring, *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt* (New York, 1884), p. 355; 'Stanton to FO, Alexandria, 13 May 1876', FO 78/2503; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 3 April 1877, and 5 May 1877', FO 78/2632.
41 Rather than sending all breach-loading Remingtons, Ismail palmed off 42,000 old muskets and ten million cartridges. 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 30 March 1877', *DUSCC*; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 15 February 1877', FO 78/2631. See also, 'Depeche au Gouverner de Candie, Canea, 29 mai 1877', and 'Depeche de Son Altesse à Talat Pacha, 6 Mai 1877', Dossier 83/8, Carton 126, *PI*; 'Egyptian Defenses', *The Times* (1 June 1877): 4; 'Farman to Evarts, Cairo, 30 May and 12 June 1877', *DUSCC*; Farnie, pp. 259–261, 278–279.
42 Selim Deringil, 'The Ottoman Response to the Egyptian Crisis of 1881–1882', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 24 (Jan. 1988): 9.
43 Cited in Drury, op. cit., p. 47.
44 The Egyptian 'division' contained three infantry regiments and an artillery battalion, but totalled only 8,864 effectives. Lt. Gen. Valentine Baker Pacha, *The War in Bulgaria* (London, 1879), Vol. I, pp. 3, 164–165, 201, 259; Alfred J. Butler, *Court Life in Egypt* (London, 1888), pp. 208–209; A[ntonio] Gallenga, *Two Years of the Eastern Question* (London, 1877), Vol. II, pp. 298–299; McCoan, op. cit., pp. 213–214; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 27 February 1877', FO 78/2631.
45 Edmund Ollier, *Cassel's Illustrated History of the Russo-Turkish War* (London, 1878), p 140; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 28 March 1878', FO 78/2854.
46 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 29 March 1878', FO 78/2854.
47 'Arrif [to Khedive], Pera, 22 September 1877', Dossier 83/8, Carton 126, *PI*; L. A. Balboni, *Gl'Italiani nella Civilta Egiziana del Secolo XIX* (1906), Vol. II, p. 222; 'Militaires malades arrivés de Constantinople et reçus à l'hôpital général, 6 août 1877', Dossier 83/9, Carton 126, *PI*; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 4, 6, 10 April 1878', FO 78/2854.
48 'Derrick to Lockett, Cairo, 28 April 1878', *Lockett-B*.

9 THE IMPERIAL ROAD

1 For more on Ismail's African empire, see Georges Douin, *Histoire du règne du khédive Ismail, Tome III: L'Empire Africain, 1re Partie (1863–1869)*, followed by *Tome IIIA*, and *Tome IIIB*. Keeping in mind Douin's close ties to the Muhammad Ali dynasty, his work deserves respect. Other useful sources are the memoirs and papers of American, British, and Italian Neo-Mamluks who served in the conquest of the Sudan, and several very good secondary sources. Examples include: Richard Gray, *A History of the Southern Sudan* (London, 1961); George B. Hill (ed.), *Colonel Gordon in Central Africa, 1874–1879* (London, 1881); M. F. Shukry, *Equatoria under Egyptian Rule* (Cairo, 1953);

Umar Tusun, *Tarikh Mudiriyyat Khatt al-Istiwa al-Misriyya* [A History of Egypt's Equatorial Province], 3 vols (Alexandria, 1937).

The Sudan sub-collection of *Période Ismail* in Cairo's *Dar al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiya* has much interesting material, but was only available for the last week of my stay in Egypt.

2 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 19 November 1875', *Lockett*.

3 Thomas E. Marston, *Britain's Imperial Role in the Red Sea Area 1800–1878* (Hamden, CT, 1961), p. 486; Mesfin Wolde-Mariam, *An Introductory Geography of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa, 1972), p 4.

4 One Who Knows Them Well [Charles Bell], *Khedives and Pashas: Sketches of Contemporary Egyptian Rulers and Statesmen* (London, 1884), p. 6.

5 Charles P. Stone, *Notes on the State of Sonora* (Washington, 1861), p. 22.

6 Stone identified English missionaries, Italy, Belgium, and Zanzibar as rivals in the race to dominate Central Africa. 'Stone to Ismail, Caire, 21 octobre 1876', Dossier 1/1 [?], Carton 21, *PI*.

7 For an example, see Charles P. Stone, 'The Political Geography of Egypt', *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol. XV (1883).

8 Elbert E. Farman, *Along the Nile With President Grant* (New York, 1904), p. 7; Lt. Col. Count Gleichen (ed.), *The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (London, 1905), Vol. I, p. 237.

9 Cited in Frederick J. Cox, 'Munzinger's Observations on the Sudan', *SNR*, Vol. 5 (1953): 193.

10 'Munzinger to Ismail, Caire, 10 février 1873', Dossier 73/5, Carton 159, *PI*. See also Cox: 189; 'Wylde to FO, Jeddah, 23 April 1877', FO 78/2632.

11 Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, *Yohannes IV of Ethiopia* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 51–52; Marston, pp. 435–436, 487; Shukry, p. 21.

12 Men like Baker gave Egypt access to high society and influence that ranged from London to Constantinople. 'Elliot to FO, Constantinople, 10 June 1869', FO 78/2075; and 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 2 April 1869', FO 78/2092.

Diplomats were a continual thorn in the side of Egyptian expansion. Ismail claimed his greatest enemy was the 'Ten Headed Nilotic Hydra – A Consul, a go-between, a scoundrel, a journalist, a count, a baron, a financier, a money forger, a Greek, and an Armenian'. Jean Ninet, *Arabi Pasha* (St Quentin, 1884), p. 280. The tremendous power of Egypt's foreign community and their consuls is aptly recorded in Juan R. I. Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East. Social and Cultural Origins of Egypt's Urabi Movement* (Princeton, NJ, 1993).

13 By the late 1870s, Sudanese budgets were continually in the red. Lt. Col. Count Gleichen (ed.), *The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (London, 1905), I, pp. 6–9, notes that under the more efficient Anglo-Egyptian administration, the Sudan did not generate more than half the government's expenses. See also William McEntyre Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia* (1880 rept., New York, 1969), p. 101; 'Unpublished Letters of Charles Gordon', *SNR*, Vol. X (1927): 58. For views on Ethiopian revenues, see Gabre-Sellassie, op. cit., pp. 8, 10, 54.

14 Haggai Erlich, 'Ethiopia and the Middle East. Rethinking History', in Bahru Zewde, Richard Pankhurst, and Taddese Beyene (eds), *Proceedings of the 11th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies* (1994), Vol. I, p. 636.

15 Ahmad's death at the battle of Zantara (1543) did not completely end the fighting, which continued off and on at varying levels of intensity. See Carlo Conti Rossini, 'La Guerra Turco-Abbisina del 1578', *Oriente Moderno*, Vol. I (1922)/Vol.II (1922): 634–636, 684–691/ 48–57.

16 Munzinger held that 8,000 men could control all of the Sudan. 'Munzinger to MAE, Massawa, 15 octobre 1865', cited in Douin, Vol. III, p. 204. See also Sir

Samuel W. Baker, *Exploration of the Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia* (London, 1868), p. 52; 'Hale to Seward, Alexandria, 26 August 1865', *DUSCA*.

17 Arakil was the nephew of Nubar Pasha Bogos, an important member of Ismail's cabinet. 'Arakil to Barrot Bey, Messaouah, 29 mai 1875', and 'Arakil to Khairy Bey, Messaouah, 3 octobre 1875', in Dossier 73/3, Carton 159, *PI*.

18 The same *Firmin* also allowed an expansion of the army to 30,000 men, and granted the right of succession to Ismail's oldest surviving son.

19 Marston argues the Sultan profited greatly from these exchanges, as the increase in Egypt's tribute more than compensated for lost revenues. He also suspects that diverting Ismail into African adventures distracted him from similar efforts in the Middle East, thus avoiding a repeat of the 1830s. Marston, pp. 456, 478.

The gist of these treaties are presented in Egypt. Administration des Biens Privés et des Palais Royaux, *Recueil des firmins imperiaux Ottomans adressés aux valies et aux khédives d'Égypte* (Cairo, 1934), pp. 483–484, 489–490; see also Ghada H. Talhami, *Suakin and Massawa under Egyptian Rule* (Washington, 1975), pp. 31–33.

20 R. Beachy, 'The East African Ivory Trade in the 19th Century', *Journal of African History*, Vol. VIII, No. 2 (1967); Henri Deherain, *Le Soudan Égyptien sous Mehemet Ali* (Paris, 1898), p. 303.

21 For more on the connections between Khartoum-based merchants and slave-soldiers, see Douglas Johnson, 'Recruitment and Entrapment in Private Slave Armies: The Structure of the Zarā'ib in the Southern Sudan', in Elizabeth Savage (ed.), *The Human Commodity: Perspectives in the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade* (London, 1992); and 'The Structure of a Legacy: Military Slavery in North East Africa', *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 36 (Winter 1989): 72–88. For a first-hand account by a former slave-soldier, see Salim Wilson, *I Was a Slave* (London, 1939).

See also Baker, *Nile Tributaries*, p. 576; Robert O. Collins, *Land beyond the Rivers: The Southern Sudan, 1898–1918* (New Haven, CT, 1971), p. 66, and 'The Nilotic Slave Trade: Past and Present', in Savage (ed.), *The Human …*, pp. 145, 147; Damazo Dut Majak Kocjok, *The Northern Bahr-al-Ghazal: People, Alien Encroachment and Rule, 1856–1956* (University of California PhD, 1990), pp. 104–105; Lubos Kropacek, 'The Confrontation of Darfur with the Turco-Egyptians under the Viceroyship of Muhammad Ali, Abbas I, and Muhammad Said', *Asian and African Studies*, Vol. VI (1970): 84; 'Petherick to Green, Khartoum, 21 December 1855', FO 141/19; Selim *Qapudan*, 'Voyage aux sources du Nil Blanc', ed. E. F. Jomard, *Bulletin de la société de géographie de Paris*, Vol. 18 (1842).

22 Collins, 'The Nilotic …': 147.

23 Ismail provided 13 veteran officers from the Mexican Adventure to serve with Baker. The allocation of such valuable cadres is a sign of the importance assigned this mission. Richard Hill, *A Black Corps d'Elite* (East Lansing, MI, 1994), p. 125. Including Baker's salary of £E10,000 per year, the expedition cost approximately £E500,000. Baker, *Ismailia*, p. 8; 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 26 August 1874', *DUSCC*; 'Contract fait et accepté entre son altesse Ismail Pacha … et chevalier Sir Samuel W. Baker', Dossier 72/1, Carton 59, *PI*; 'A son altesse le viceroi d'Égypte', Dossier 1/1 [?], Carton 21, *PI*; 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 2 April 1869', FO 78/2092.

24 Romolo Gessi Pasha, *Seven Years in the Sudan* (London, 1892), p. 69; Johnson, 'Recruitment and Entrapment …': 163.

25 'Baker to Ismail, Sobat, 28 December 1870', and 'Baker to Ismail, undated memorandum', Dossier 72/1, Carton 59, *PI*.

26 'Sir Samuel Baker', *London Mail* (15 August 1873): 8.

27 'Beardsley to Fish', ibid.; Baker, *Ismailia*, pp. 15, 143–144, 146.
28 'Baker to Ismail, Masindi, 18 May 1872', Dossier 72/1, Box 59, *PI*; Gleichen (ed.), pp. 81, 233; Shukry, pp. 27, 39.
29 Charles Chaillé-Long, 'Uganda and the White Nile', *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol. VIII (1876): 286; Gleichen, pp. 153–154; Ian R. Smith, *The Emin Pasha Relief Expedition, 1886–1890* (Oxford, 1972), p. 4.
30 Collins, *Land beyond the Rivers*, p. 24.
31 Collins provides extensive coverage of the plant types, how Sudd is created, and man's efforts to destroy it. Gordon describes a spectacular Egyptian cutting expedition in 1873, G. B. Hill (ed.), p. 41.
32 Major Gaetano Casati, *Ten Years in Equatoria and the Return with Emin Pasha* (1891 rept., New York, 1962), I, pp. 135–137; Gessi, op. cit., pp. 43, 69, 103, 132; Ian Smith, op. cit., pp. 11–12; C. T. Wilson and R. W. Felkin, *Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan* (London, 1882), II, pp. 112–115.
33 Gessi, op. cit., p. 69.
34 Baker, *Ismailia*, pp. 29, 43; Chaillé-Long, op. cit., p. 300; Wilson and Felkin, op. cit., p. 115.
35 Baker, *Ismailia*, p. 19.
36 Cited in Charles C. Trench, *The Road to Khartoum* (New York, 1989), p. 85.
37 Casati, Vol. I, pp. 135–137; '23 April 1873', *Fechet mss.*; Gessi, p. 86; Gleichen (ed.), pp. 67–68; Dr Georg Schweinfurth, *The Heart of Africa* (New York, 1874), Vol. I, pp. 73–75, 81; Trench, pp. 84–85.
38 'Baker to Ismail, Khartoum, 9 October 1870', Dossier 72/1, Carton 59, *PI*; Casati, ibid.; Gessi, pp. 17, 19, 86.
39 Colston Diary, 19 November 1875, *Colston Papers*, SHC.
40 In close confines, or ambush, a spear, or bow and arrow could be equal to a Remington. As Gordon put it, 'People laugh at bow and arrows, but at night they are very disagreeable.' Cited in Trench, p. 104. See also Casati, Vol. I, p. 129; and Gessi, p. 30.
41 Chaillé-Long, op. cit., pp. 288–289; Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 54; Ian Smith, op. cit., p. 42n; Henry Stanley, *Through the Dark Continent* (1899 rept., New York, 1988), Vol. I, pp. 240, 239–241, 304, 307, 313; Wilson and Felkin, Vol. II, pp. 2–3, 19. For more details on the Bugandan army, see Richard Reid, *Political Power in Pre-Colonial Buganda* (Oxford, 2002).
42 Baker, *Ismailia*, Vol. I, pp. 2–3; Casati, Vol. I, p. 58; Collins, *Land …*, p. 71; Gessi, pp. 50–57; 'Gordon to Khairi Pacha, 16 août 1874', Dossier 71/3, Carton 167, *PI*; H. C. Jackson (ed. and trans.), *Black Ivory* (1913 rept., New York, 1970), p. 51; Johnson, 'Recruitment and Entrapment …': 169; Schweinfurth, Vol. I, pp. 71, 93, Vol. II, pp. 421, 427.
43 Jackson, op. cit., p. 7.
44 'Baker to Ismail, Khartoum, 5 juillet 1873', Dossier 72/1, Carton 59, *PI*.
45 'Baker to Ismail, Masindi, 18 May 1872', and 'Baker to Ismail, Khartoum, 5 Juillet 1873', in Dossier 72/1, Carton 59, *PI*; Baker, *Ismailia*, pp. 363–356; Ian Smith, p. 14.
46 'Bearsdley to Fish, Cairo, 11 December 1872', *DUSCA*.
47 Douin, *IIIA*, pp. 2–3; 'Sir Samuel Baker', *London Mail* (15 August 1873): 8.
48 If used with caution, a good look at Gordon's early efforts are covered by his egotistical lieutenant, Charles Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa* (London, 1876). See also Trench, pp. 71–72; 'Unpublished Letters of Charles Gordon', *SNR*, Vol. X (1927): 40.
49 Cited in Gerard Prunier, 'Military Slavery in the Sudan during the Turkiyya (1830–1885)', in Savage (ed.), *The Human Commodity …*, p. 136.
50 Douin, *IIIA*, p. 26, *IIIB*, pp. 1154–1155, 1202; Trench, p. 79.

51 Chaillé-Long, 'Uganda': 286–287; Gleichen (ed.), op. cit., p. 234; Shukry, pp. 40, 237, 239; Ian Smith, op. cit., p. 9; Trench, op. cit., pp. 78, 81, 92, 117.

52 The Emin Pasha Relief Expedition gives a good idea of the difficulty in approaching Equatoria from the east coast of Africa. Ian Smith, p. 159. 'Stone to Ismail, Caire, 21 octobre 1876', Dossier 1/1 [?], Carton 21, *PI*.

53 Henry M. Stanley visited Buganda about the same time as Gordon's lieutenant, Ernest Linant de Bellfonds. Chaillé-Long, an Anglophobe, claims Ismail was very worried that explorers like Stanley, or Dr Livingstone, were British agents working to deprive Egypt of her African Empire. *My Life on Four Continents* (London, 1912), Vol. I, pp. 67–68. For an interesting look at the role of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and its role in countering Egyptian influence in Buganda, see Nicholas Harman, *Bwana Stokesi and his African Conquests* (London, 1986).

Ernest Linant de Bellfonds, 'Itinéraire et notes: Voyage de service fait entre le poste militaire de Fasiko et la capitale de Mtesa roi d'Uganda, février–juin 1875', *Bulletin trimestriel de la société khédiviale de géographie du Caire*, Vol. I (1875–1876): 1–104; John M. Grey, 'Ernest Linant de Bellfonds', *Uganda Journal*, Vol. 28 (1964): 31–54; G. B. Hill (ed.), p. 65; Shukry, p. 114; Trench, p. 93.

54 The above-mentioned battles are just a few of the many engagements between Egyptian and local forces in the 1860s–1870s. Most were at the company level, and on such a small scale, many seem similar, and few were decisive affairs in themselves. Rather, the total impact of continual skirmishes, even victorious ones, begins to wear down the small Egyptian garrisons of the southern Sudan. One can find ample coverage of these in G. Schweitzer (ed.), *The Life and Work of Emin Pasha* (London, 1898). See also Gessi, pp. 96–98; Grey, p. 85; Smith, p. 12; Trench, pp. 103–104.

55 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 20 January 1875', *DUSCC*; Gleichen (ed.), p. 177; Georges Guindi and Jacques Tagher (eds), *Ismail d'après les documents officiels* (Cairo, 1945), pp. 230–232; Major H. G. Prout, *General Report on the Province of Kordofan* (Cairo, 1877), p. vi; 'Stone to Barrot Bey, Caire, 3 decembre 1874', Dossier 10/12 [?], Carton 194, *PI*; 'Unpublished': 11.

56 Douin, *IIIA*, p. 447; Gessi, op. cit., p. 54; Jackson, op. cit., p. 61; Gustav Nachtigal, *Sahara and Sudan* (Berkeley, CA, 1971), Vol. IV, pp. 322–323; 'Purdy to Ismail, Kebkebieh, 7 septembre 1875', Dossier 10/12 [?], Carton 194, *PI*; Schweinfurth, Vol. II, pp. 354–355, 361–362.

57 Dar Fur means 'home of the Fur'.

58 For geographic details, consult Gleichen (ed.), pp. 173–174. On Fur warriors, see Theodore von Heuglin, 'Berichte und Arbeiten über Ägyptischer Sudan und die Lander westlich und sudlich von Chartum', *Petermanns Mittheilungen* (1863): 97–114; Nachtigal, Vol. IV, pp. 341–344, 352–353; Ferdinand Werne, *African Wanderings* (London, 1852), pp. 37, 173.

59 Richard Hill, *Egypt in the Sudan, 1821–1881* (London, 1959), p. 137; Jackson, pp. 66–67; Nachtigal, Vol. IV, p. 321.

60 Douin, *IIIA*, p. 390; R. S. O'Fahey, *State and Society in Dar Fur* (New York, 1980), p. 100; Hill, ibid.; Jackson, op. cit., pp. 67–68.

61 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 1 January 1875', *DUSCC*.

62 Henry Derrick, a former Confederate officer, claimed instant abolition of slavery would ruin the local economy, and cause unrest. He decried the west's 'bogus philanthropy', which 'one enjoys so much when another pays the cost'. 'Derrick to Lockett, Cairo, 29 April 1878', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.

63 Kocjok, pp. 113–114; Nachtigal, Vol. IV, pp. 396–397; Schweinfurth, Vol. II, pp. 410–417.

64 *Daym*, sometimes transcribed *Deim*, describe the combination of village and garrison that evolved about an original *zariba*. Some of these, like *Daym* Zubair or *Daym* Idris, were fair-sized towns. Johnson, 'Recruitment and Entrapment …': 171.
65 Zubayr served with Egyptian forces sent to fight in the Russo-Turkish War (1877), and remained in Cairo under house arrest until 1903. Gessi, pp. 304–305. See also, Gessi, pp. 182, 184, 186, 302–304, 343–344; Gleichen (ed.), op. cit., pp. 240–241; Trench, op. cit., p. 144.
66 For an excellent source on Gessi, which reprints many of his original letters, see, Massimo Zaccaria, *Il Flagella degli Schiavisti: Romolo Gessi in Sudan (1874–1881)* (Ravenna, 1999).
67 Gessi, op. cit., pp. 187, 194, 206, 232–234, 237–238, 245; Gleichen (ed.), op. cit., pp. 241–242; Kocjok, op. cit., pp. 135–137.
68 Gessi, op. cit., pp. 252–254, 264.
69 Not all of the rebels were captured. An important lieutenant, Rabih ibn Fadlallah, escaped and continued to operate as far west as Chad, where he bedeviled French imperialists until his death in 1899. See Commandant Emile Reibell, 'La Campagne contre Rabah', *Bulletin de la comité Afrique Française* (1901): 15–23. See also Gessi, op. cit., pp. 284–287, 321–322; Gleichen (ed.), op. cit., p. 242; Wingate, op. cit., p. 11.
70 Collins, 'The Nilotic Slave …': 150; Gessi, op. cit., pp. 266–279; Dr Wilhelm Junker, *Travels in Africa during the Years 1879–1883* (London, 1890), pp. 63–64.

10 IMPERIAL APOGEE

1 Several excellent sources track the road to war. The best is Ghada H. Talhami, *Suakin and Massawa under Egyptian Rule, 1865–1885* (Washington, 1975). This sympathetic view of Egyptian rule is balanced by Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, *Yohannes IV of Ethiopia: A Political Biography* (Oxford, 1975); and Sven Rubenson, *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence* (London, 1976).
2 Out of 200,000 total, Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855–1974* (Athens, OH, 1991), pp. 21–22, 32.
3 *Journal de voyages de Monsieur Henri Lambert (1855–1859)*, cited by Admiral Henri Labrousse, 'Chapitre VII, Rivalité entre L'Égypte et l'Éthiopie dans la Mer Rouge à la fin du XIXe Siècle', *Récits de la Mer Rouge et de l'Océan Indien*, http://www. stratisc.org/pub/pub_LabrousseMROC_7.html
4 Denis de Rivoire, *Au pays du Soudan* (Paris, 1885), p. 2.
5 Haggai Erlich, *Ethiopia and the Challenge of Independence* (Boulder, CO, 1986), p. 47; M. Sabry, *Le Empire Égyptien sous Ismail et l'ingerence Anglo-Française (1863–1879)* (Paris, 1933), pp. 66–67; Charles P. Stone, 'Military Affairs in Egypt', *Journal of the Military Service Institute*, Vol. 5, pp. 174–175, comments that he found only three maps when taking over the *État Major* in 1870, but one of these depicted Abyssinia.
6 Also translated as *shetennet*, it derives from the verb *shaffata*, 'to rebel'. One involved in such actions was a *shifta*, a term including an array of men ranging from bandits to disgruntled politicians.
7 For a description of a typical large raid, see 'Munzinger to Ismail, Suez, 28 janvier 1873', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*. See also Sir Samuel W. Baker, *Exploration of the Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia* (London, 1868), pp. 343–344; 'Bruce to Clarendon, Alexandria, 31 May 1854', FO 78/1035; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, pp. 14–15. For more details on the 'Era of the Princes', consult Bahru Zewde.

8 '3 June 1873', *Fechet mss.*; James Hamilton, *Sinai, the Hedjaz and Soudan* (1857 rept., Reading, 1993), pp. 245–246, notes one raid netting 1,800 cattle and 340 people.
9 Baker, op. cit., p. 300.
10 Baker, pp. 159, 161, 298–299; 'Cameron to Russell, Alexandria, 15 August 1863', FO 401/2; Douin, *III, … 1re Partie*, pp. 59–67; Rubenson, pp. 212, 221; Talhami, p. 131; 'Translation from the Turkish of 3 June 1863 orders to Musa Pasha, Reg. 526, 2nd part, N. 27', in *Sammarco Papers*, Carton '6', DAW.
11 Hamilton, pp. 245–246; Rubenson, p. 107. Beni Amir were one of several branches of the Beja people, many lived in the soon to be disputed district of Bogos. For more on them, see A. Paul, *A History of the Beja Tribes of the Sudan* (London, 1971).
12 J. de Coursac, *La règne de Yohannes* (1926), pp. 78–79; Douin, *III, … 1re Partie*, pp. 356–357; William McEntyre Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia* (1880 rept., New York, 1969), p. 122; Major T. J. Holland and Capt. H. M. Hozier, *Records of the Expedition to Abyssinia* (London, 1870), Vol. I, pp. 44–48; Talhami, op. cit., p. 17.
13 Also written as '*Abba Bez Bez*', or 'Master of the Sacker'. For more on Abyssinian horse names, see Chapter 13.
14 Talhami, op. cit., p. 135.
15 *Dajjazmatch* was an Abyssinian aristocratic title, see Chapter 13 for details.
16 For a well-documented article that explains this conflict and gets to the essence of *shiftnnet*, see Richard Caulk, 'Bad Men of the Borders: Shum and Shefta in Northern Ethiopia in the 19th Century', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (1984): 201–227. See also Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, op. cit., pp. 25–27; Talhami, op. cit., pp. 144–145.
17 Dye, op. cit., p. 124; Gabre-Sellassie, op. cit., pp. 36–41; Rubenson, op. cit., p. 293; Talhami, op. cit., pp. 139–141.
18 Caulk, op. cit., p. 216.
19 Cited in Rubenson, op. cit., p. 200.
20 Writing to Queen Victoria much later, Kassa, now Emperor Yohannis IV, claimed that 'all these present troubles are due to Munzinger'. 'King John of Abyssinia to Queen Victoria (Received December 10, 1883)', [Translation], No. 5, *Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Abyssinia* (London). See also Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, pp. 39, 41; 'Wylde to FO, Jeddah, 23 April 1877', FO 78/ 2632.
21 Some of Munzinger's more interesting works include: 'Narrative of a Journey through the Afar Country', in *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. 39 (1869): 188–232; *Ostafrikanische Studien* (Schaffhausen, 1864); and 'Voyage à travers le grand désert salé de Hanflia jusqu'au pied des alpes Abyssines', in *Le Globe*, Vol. 8 (1869): 151–153.
22 Cited in Rubenson, p. 17. On hearing that Munzinger took employment with Ismail, Yohannis derisively referred to 'the man who has one heart but serves three masters'. 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (25 October 1875): 10. Talhami. op. cit., p.139, notes that previous to this appointment, Munzinger already had a reputation as a slippery character. Bairu Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany. Cultural, Political and Economic Relations, 1871–1936* (Wiesbaden, 1981), p. 35, continues on this line. On the other hand, his services to General Napier, during the Abyssinian Campaign, were of sufficient quality to make Munzinger a Companion of the Order of Bath. This was no small achievement. Thomas E. Marston, *Britain's Imperial Role in the Red Sea Area, 1800–1878* (Hamden, CT, 1961), p. 383.
23 For more details on Hamasen and the Mareb-Melash, see R. Perini (ed.), *Di qua dal Marèb* [*Marèb-Mellàse*] (Florence, 1905). See also Lockett, 'Notes', *Lockett*

Papers, SHC. See also D. C. Cumming, 'The History of Kassala and the Province of Taka, Part I', *SNR*, Vol. XX (1937): 19; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, p. 42; Wilhelm Junker, *Travels in Africa During 1875–1878* (London, 1890), p. 106; Stephen A. Longrigg, *A Short History of Eritrea* (1945 rept., Westport, CT, 1974), p. 102; Werner Munzinger, *Ostafrikanische …*, pp. 137–138; and *Ueber die Sitten und das Recht der Bogos* (1859), pp. 12–14; Rubeson, op. cit., p. 278; Talhami, op. cit., pp. 51, 145; J. Spencer Trimingham, *Islam in Ethiopia* (London, 1952), p. 116.

24 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (8 October 1872): 9. Dossier 73/1, Carton 148, *PI*, contains numerous reports from Munzinger and Stone pushing for the acquisition of lands in the Horn of Africa. See also 'Beardsley to Hale, Cairo, 6 October 1872', *DUSCC*.

25 Talhami, op. cit., p. 203.

26 'Beardsley to Hale, Cairo, 6 October 1872', *DUSCC*. See also 'Ismail to Munzinger, Caire, ? mai 1873', Dossier 72/1, Carton 59; and 'Munzinger to Ismail, Caire, 10 février 1873', Dossier 73/5, Carton 159, *PI*; Munzinger, *Ostafrikanische …*, p. 127; Talhami, op. cit., pp. 141–142.

27 Suakin and Massawa both obtained fresh water via reservoirs located miles from the coast. An enemy in control of these spots could make life unbearable for the inhabitants. Even with the water, neither was an attractive place. Living in far more comfortable times, Commander Ellsberg, USN, wrote, 'The next stop beyond Massaua was Hades.' Edward Ellsberg, *Under the Red Sea Sun* (New York, 1946), p. 112.

28 'Stone to Ministre de la guerre, Caire, 30 novembre 1872', Dossier 5/7[?], Carton 194, *PI*. In *Ostafrikanische …*, Munzinger provided significant economic details for the Red Sea coast in the late 1850s. In Dossier 73/3 and 73/5, Carton 159, *PI*, one can view numerous reports by Munzinger, and Arakil Bey, on the financial benefits of pushing into Abyssinia. The Swiss mercenary expended considerable efforts to beef up Massawa's revenues during the early 1870s. Enclosure of 'Prideaux to Tremenheer [sic], Aden, 28 June 1872, in Tremenheire to India Office, London, 7 July 1872', FO 1/28.

See also 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 12 December 1872', *DUSCA*; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, pp. 9, 18, 46–47; Longrigg, p. 106; [Heinrich von Maltzan], 'Ein Besuch bei Munzinger in Mokullu (Ostafrika)', *Das Ausland*, Vol. 44 (1871): 113–117; 'Munzinger to Ismail, Au nord de Tor, 31 octobre 1872', Dossier 73/1, Carton 148, *PI*; Talhami, pp. 86–87, 132.

29 I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia* (Boulder, CO, 1988), p. 41; Charles P. Stone, 'Memorandum Obbok-Assab, decembre 1879 mss.', Dossier 23/4, Box 171, *PI*; Talhami, pp. 197–198; Kebreab Tesfai, 'The Causes and Effects of the Dogali Encounter', in Taddesse Beyne *et al.* (eds), *The Centenary of Dogali* (Addis Ababa, 1988), p. 91.

30 Stone, 'Memorandum …': ibid.

31 English support played a part in this aggressive stance, and even encouraged Ismail to suggest they transfer their Somali holdings to him, and get France to surrender Obock. 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 22 September 1873, FO 78/3187. See FO 78/3188–3189 for more on this. Also, 'Egypt', *The Times* (11 July 1870): 9; Marston, pp. 388–389, 431; 'Munzinger to Ismail, Tor, 31 octobre 1872', Dossier 73/5, Carton 159, *PI*; M. Sabry, *L'Empire Égyptien sous Ismail et l'ingerence Anglo-Française (1863–1879)* (Paris, 1933), p. 391; 'Stone to Ismail, Caire, 7 février 1871', Dossier 10/12 [?], Carton 194; and 'Stone to Ministre de la guerre', ibid., *PI*; Talhami, op. cit., p. 199.

32 In 1872, William Wing Loring compiled a list of possible turncoats whose military assets might benefit Egypt in a war with Abyssinia. W. W. Loring, 'Memorandum mss., 30 Novembre 1872', Dossier 73/1, Carton 120, *PI*.

33 Also translated as *Alaqa*, this Amharic title is given to a learned priest. Birru is sometimes given the title of *Ras*. Most authorities consider this a spurious award. See Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, op. cit., p.57.

34 Negussay Ayele, 'Ras Alula and Ethiopia's Struggles Against Expansionism and Colonialism: 1872–1897', in Taddesse Beyne *et al*. (eds), *The Centenary of Dogali* (Addis Ababa, 1988), p. 171; de Coursac, p. 226; Gabre-Sellassie, pp. 55, 57, 84, 224–225; Harold G. Marcus, 'Imperialism and Expansion in Ethiopia from 1865 to 1900', in C. H. Gann and Peter Duigan (eds), *Colonialism in Africa 1870–1960* (Cambridge, 1969), p. 421; Pellegrino Matteucci, *In Abissinia* (Milan, 1880), pp. 185–186.

35 For more on the strategic problems facing Yohannis, consult M. L. Louis-Lande, 'Un Voyageur Français dans l'Éthiopie meridonale, Pt. I', *Revue des deux mondes*, Vol. XXX (1878): 891–896. See also 'Menelik to Ismail, Liche, 15 Mai 1868 [e.e.]', Dossier 3/1–3/7?, Carton 'V', Sudan sub-collection, *PI*; [Suzzara], 'Expédition des Égyptiens contre l'Abyssinie (1875–1876), I: Mémoire de M. Suzzara', *RE*, Vol. II, No. 10 (March 1896): 631.

36 In Egyptian service, Wolde Mikail raised an army of 7,000 men. A. E. de Cosson, *The Cradle of the Blue Nile* (London, 1877), Vol. I, pp. 83–84; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, p. 49; 'Wylde to FO, Jeddah, 23 April 1877', FO 78/2632; Wylde, *'83 to '87 in the Soudan* (1888 rept., New York, 1960), Vol. I, pp. 324–326.

37 Stone, 'Memorandum'.

38 Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, pp. 48; 'Kennedy to Salisbury, London, 19 June 1887', FO 403/89; Henri Labrousse, 'Rivalité entre Égypte et Éthiopie dans la Mer Rouge à la fin du XIX siècle', *Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference of Ethiopian Studies* (Berlings, 1984), p. 289; 'de Sarzec to MAE, Paris, 17 juin 1873', *cor. pol.*, Egypte 51, AMAE; Bairu Tafla (ed.), *A Chronicle of Yohannes IV (1872–1889)* (Wiesbaden, 1977), p. 143; 'Telegraph, Massouah, 1 August 1872', in 'Beardsley to Fish, Alexandria, 31 August 1872', *DUSCA*.

39 A. B. Wylde, *Modern Abyssinia* (London, 1901), p. 23.

40 Rubenson, p. 294. Bogos, sometimes called Bilin, was the scene of Egyptian–Abyssinian raids and counter-raids since the 1850s. For more on these earlier events, consult: Junker, *Travels … 1875–1878*, p. 106; and Munzinger, *Ueber die Sitten … Bogos*, pp. 12–14. See also Ayele, op. cit., p. 170; 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 16 October and 12 December 1872', and 'Comanos to Fish, Alexandria, 21 August 1872', *DUSCA*; Caulk: 207; de Coursac, p. 102; Erlich, p. 10; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, p. 46; Johann Maria Hildebrandt, 'Ausflug in die Nord-Abessinischen Grenzländer in Sommer 1872', *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, Vol. 8 (1873): 451–471; 'Ismail to Munzinger, Caire, 21 mai 1872', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*; Labrousse, op. cit., p. 289; M. F. Shukry, *The Khedive Ismail and Slavery in the Sudan (1863–1879)* (Cairo, 1938), pp. 249–250, 261.

41 Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, op. cit., pp. 47–48; Charles Hamilton, *Oriental Zigzag* (London, 1875), p. 190; Longrigg, op. cit., p. 106; 'Munzinger to Ismail, Massaoua, 26 avril 1872', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*; 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 30 November 1872 and 27 January 1873', FO 78/2229; Talhami, op. cit., p. 143; Wylde, *Modern Abyssinia*, p. 23.

42 G[eorges] Douin, 'Arakel Bey', *Bulletin de l'institut d'Égypte*, Vol. 22, fasc. 2 (1940): 252; Gerhard Rohlfs, *Meine Mission nach Abessinien* (Leipzig, 1883), pp. 51–53; Talhami, op. cit., pp. 145–146.

43 Cited in Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, op. cit., p. 50.

44 De Cosson, Vol. II, pp. 42–43; 'Minutes (Tenterden to Derby), London, 27 June 1874', FO 78/2342; 'Munzinger to Ismail, Massaua, 15 septembre 1872, Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*.

45 De Cosson, Vol. II, pp. 165–167. See also Rohlfs, p. 53.
46 Some of the troops left on the coast were older men, or those with discipline problems. de Coursac, ibid.; 'Munzinger to Ismail, Massaua, 15 septembre 1872', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71; 'Munzinger to Stone, Keren, 3 juin 1873', Dossier 72/1, Carton 59; 'Stone to Ministre de guerre, Caire, 9 février 1873', Dossier 73/1, Carton 148, *PI*.
47 De Cosson, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 50–51; Douin, *IIIB*, pp. 699–700; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, op. cit., pp. 43–44; 'Munzinger to Stone', ibid.; Shukry, op. cit., p. 262; Talhami, op. cit., pp. 146–147.
48 De Cosson, Vol. II, p. 119; 'Heuglin to Barrot, Caire, 9 février 1876', and 'Flad to Barrot, Caire, 30 octobre 1875', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71; 'Bunchetti to Kairy, Caire, 5, 8, 30 septembre, and 5 décembre 1874'; and 'Kairy to Ismail, Caire, 18 mai 1873', Dossier 59/2, Carton 121, *PI*; 'Vivian to FO, Alexandria, 19 July 1873', FO 78/ 2283.
49 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 17 November 1873', *DUSCC*; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (25 October 1876): 10; Achille Raffray, *Afrique orientale* (Paris, 1876), p. 3.
50 'Arakil to Barrot, Messaouah, 12 février 1875', Dossier 73/3, Carton 159, *PI*; J. Martin Flad, 'Reise von Massaua zu Metemmah', *Das Ausland*, Vol. 48 (1875): 99–100; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, p. 45.
51 'Arakil to Barrot', ibid.
52 Lockett, *Notes …*, SHC. See also Douin, 'Arakil': 254; Douin, *IIIA*, pp. 358, 793; Gabre-Sellassie, p. 63; J. W. Keller-Zschokke, *Werner Munzinger-Pascha. Sein Leben und Wirken* (Aarau, 1891), pp. 61–63; Général Max von Thurneyssen, 'L'Expédition de l'Égypte contre l'Abyssine', *Bulletin de l'institut Égyptien*, Vol. 5 (1911): 98–99.

A keen observer of this area, Wylde considered the 1875–1876 hostilities between Egypt and Abyssinia to be the direct responsibility of Munzinger and Arakil. 'Wylde to FO, Jeddah, 23 April 1877', FO 78/2632.

11 DESCENT INTO THE MAELSTROM

1 Douin, Gabre-Sellassie, Rubenson, and Talhami are important sources, in addition, Gen. Sir Charles Gordon, *Equatoria under Egyptian Rule: The Unpublished Correspondence of Col. (afterwards Maj.-Gen.) C. G. Gordon with Ismail Khedive of Egypt and the Sudan During the Years 1874–1876, with Instructions and Notes*, ed. Muhammad Fuad Shukry (Cairo, 1953), and Dr Philipp Paulitschke, 'Le Harar sous l'administration Égyptien', *BSKG*, No. 10, Série II (March 1887): 575–591.
2 'Arakil to Barrot, Messouah, 12 février, 2 and 4 septembre 1875', Dossier 73/3, Carton 120, *PI*. See also Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, *Yohannes IV of Ethiopia* (Oxford, 1975), p. 58.
3 Ismail obtained a £E32 million loan in 1873, but after all discounts, commissions, etc., the net gain was only £E11 million. Alexander Scholch, *Egypt for the Egyptians* (London, 1981), p. 47. See also *IIIB*, pp. 740–741.
4 'Flad to Khairy, Caire, 30 octobre 1875', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71; and 'Arakil to Khairy, Messouah, 2 septembre 1875', Dossier 73/3, Carton 120, *PI*; Gabre-Sellassie, p. 57; *Moniteur Égyptien* (11 August 1875): 1; Ghada Talhami, *Suakin and Massawa under Egyptian Rule, 1865–1885* (Washington, 1975), p. 150.
5 J. de Coursac, *Le Règne de Yohannes* (Romans, 1926), p. 303; Sven Rubenson, *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence* (London, 1976), p. 317; M. F. Shukry, *The Khedive Ismail and Slavery in the Sudan (1863–1879)* (Cairo, 1938), pp. 296–302.

6 Mordechai Abir, 'Caravan Trade and History in the Northern Parts of East Africa', *Paideuma, Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde*, Vol. XIV (1968): 113–114; Lee Vincent Cassenelli, *The Benadir Past: Essays in the Southern Somali History* (University of Wisconsin PhD, 1973), p.71; Chaillé-Long, 'Lettres', *Bulletin de la institut d'Égypte*, Vol. 1, No. 14 (1886): 69; G. Finazzo, *L'Italia nel Benadir* (Roma, 1966), pp. 141–142.

7 'Egypt and Arabia', *The Times* (23 October 1873): 3; I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia* (Boulder, CO, 1988), p. 42; Thomas E. Marston, *Britain's Imperial Role in the Red Sea Area 1800–1878* (Hamden, CT, 1961), pp. 388, 430–431; 'Munzinger to Stone, Kassala, 26 avril 1873'; and 'Stone to Ministre de la guerre, Caire, 9 février 1873', Dossier 73/1, Carton 147, *PI*; Shukry, pp. 248–249; Talhami, pp. 199–202.

8 Cassenelli, p. 110; Douin, *IIIB*, p. 637; L. W. Hollingsworth, *Zanzibar under the Foreign Office* (1953 rept., New York, 1975), pp. 12–13; Lewis, op. cit., pp. 37–38; Col. E. A. Stanton (ed.), 'Secret Letters from Khedive Ismail in Connection with an Occupation of the East African Coast', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, Vol. XXXIV (1935): 272.

9 A medical doctor and former lieutenant of the famous explorer David Livingstone, Sir John Kirk was British agent and Consul to Zanzibar from 1873 to 1886.

10 Cassenelli, op. cit., p. 125; Hollingsworth, op. cit., pp. 12–13.

11 Foreign Minister Lord Salisbury, argued that an Egyptian occupation of *northern* Somalia 'was our only security against other powers [read France] obtaining a footing opposite Aden'. Cited in Lewis, p. 42. The India Office did not agree, arguing ports like Zeila or Berbera posed a threat to Aden. 'IO to FO, London, 17 January 1874', FO 78/3187. See also *IIIB*, p. 634; Lewis, pp. 36, 40–41; Shukry, pp. 71–72.

12 Cited in Stanton, op. cit., p. 273. The expedition was covered in secrecy and misinformation, but this was blown by *The Times* on 19 October. McKillop gave a long report on the affair, which includes copies of official orders to himself, Gordon, and the Italian mercenary Fedrigo Pasha. These can be found in 'McKillop to Stanton, Cairo, 11 April 1876', FO 78/2501. See also 'Beardsley to Fish, Cairo, 29 September 1875', *DUSCC*; Colonel Charles Chaillé-Long, 'Colonel Chaillé-Long on the Juba', *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol. XIX (1887): 194; Douin, *IIIB*, pp. 640–644; William McEntyre Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia* (1880 rept., New York, 1969), pp. 82–83; 'Ismail to Chaillé-Long, Caire, 17 septembre 1875', *Long Papers*, Library of Congress; 'Ismail to Gordon, Caire, 17 septembre 1875', Dossier 72/1, Carton 64, *PI*; Stanton: 271, 273, 280–281. Many official documents relating to this expedition are reprinted in Gordon, *Equatoria under Egyptian …*

13 Charles Chaillé-Long, *My Life on Four Continents* (London, 1912), Vol. I, pp. 175–179; Douin, *IIIB*, pp. 656–664; 'McKillop to Stanton', ibid.; 'The Suez Canal and the Soudan Railway', *The Times* (4 January 1876): 1.

14 *IIIB*, p. 651.

15 Chaillé-Long, op. cit., pp. 196–198; R. Coupland, *The Exploitation of East Africa* (London, 1939), pp. 113, 270–290; Douin, *IIIB*, p. 663; Lewis, op. cit., pp. 3, 30; E. Turton, 'Kirk and the Egyptian Invasion of East Africa in 1875: A Reassessment', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1970): 356, 369.

16 'Egypt and Abyssinia. From an Occasional Correspondent', *The Times* (20 December 1875): 6.

17 Cited in Reginald Coupland, *East Africa and Its Invaders* (Oxford, 1938), p. 283. See also *IIIB*, pp. 653, 687.

18 'Derby to Stanton, London, 3 December 1875', FO 141/91.
19 Chaillé-Long, 'Colonel Long': 196; 'Stanton to FO, 11, 14 November 1875', FO 78/3188; Turton: 362–364.
20 R. A. Caulk, 'The Occupation of Harar: January 1887', *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 9 (1971): 2; Gabriel Ferrand, 'Notes sur la situation politique, commerciale, et religieuse du pashalik de Harar et de ses dépendences', *Bulletin de la société de géographie de l'est*, Vol. IX (1886): 4–6; Gabre-Sellassie, op. cit., p. 289; Sabry, *L'Empire Égyptien sous Ismail et l'ingerence Anglo-Française (1863–1879)* (Paris, 1933), pp. 413, 418; Sidney R. Waldron, 'Social Organization and Social Control in the Walled City of Harar, Ethiopia' (Columbia University PhD, 1974), pp. iii, v.
21 *IIIA*, p. 695n.; 'Nubar to Stanton, Cairo, 8 November 1875', FO 881/3058; Paulitschke, op. cit., pp. 575, 576n.; and *Harar: Forschungreise nach dem Somal- und Galla-ländern Ost Afrikas* (Leipzig, 1888), pp. 229–230; Sabry, op. cit., pp. 418–419.
22 Bardey, op. cit., p. 150; Richard F. Burton, *First Footsteps in East Africa* (1894 rept., New York, 1987), pp. 31–33; Cassenelli, op. cit., p. 112, n. 92; James, op. cit., pp. 47, 118, 166, 324–325; J. R. Wellsted, *Travels in Arabia* (1838 rept., Graz, 1978), Vol. II, pp. 363.
23 Alfred Bardey, 'Notes sur le Harar', *Bulletin de géographie historique et descriptive* (1897): 130–131; Ferrand: 6; F. L. James, *The Unknown Horn of Africa* (London, 1888), p. 50; 'Mokthar et Fouzi to Ismail, Harar, 16 octobre 1875', Dossier 72/1, Carton 59, *PI*.
24 Caulk notes local Oromo considered Harar's army of 200 matchlock men and 100 cavalry 'too unworthy an enemy to be counted'. R. A. Caulk, 'Harar Town and its Neighbors in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of African Affairs*, Vol. XVIII (1977): 371, 375. Mohamed Moukhtar, 'Notes sur le pays de Harar', *BSKG*, Série I, No. 4: 387–388.
25 'Mokthar et Fouzi'.
26 West-south-west of Harar, these two passes are sometimes spelled Aftouh and Ego on French-language maps.
27 Cassenelli, op. cit., pp. 118–119; Caulk, 'Harar Town …': 371, 383–384; Lewis, op. cit., p. 43; 'Mokthar et Fouzi'; Paulitschke, 'Le Harrar …': 576; Sabry, op. cit., p. 419; Shukry, op. cit., p. 255.
28 James, p. 333, claims Rauf used a stratagem to confuse local resistance. According to him, the Egyptian claimed to be in route for Abyssinia, and only in need of 'a rest'. Bardey, op. cit., p. 155; Caulk, 'Harar Town …': 381; Sylvia Pankhurst, 'Harar under Egyptian Rule', *Ethiopian Observer*, Vol. 2 (1958): 56.
29 Bardey, op. cit., p. 157; Ferrand, op. cit., p. 4; James, op. cit., pp. 22–23; 'Notes sur Berberah, Zeyla, et Harar mss.', Dossier 71/1, Carton 167, *PI*; Paulitschke, 'Le Harar …': 579, 586–589; and *Harar: Forschungreise …*, p. 231; Sabry, op. cit., pp. 414, 421.
30 Bardey, op. cit., p. 156.
31 Bardey, op. cit., p. 147; 'IO to FO, London, 11 April 1876, with enclosures'; 'News Report from Aden, 7 to 12, 13 to 19 January, and 14 February to 1 March 1876', FO 78/3189; Henri Labrousse, 'Rivalité entre l'Égypte et l'Éthiopie dans la Mer Rouge à la fin du XIXe siècle', *Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference of Ethiopian Studies* (Berlings, 1984), pp. 286, 291; Paulitschke, 'Le Harrar …': 577; Sabray, op. cit., p. 415.
32 Bardey, op. cit., p. 156; Taurin de Cahaque, 'In der Umgegend von Harar', *Mitteilungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft (für Thuringen zu Jena)*, Vol. I (1882): 79–86; Caulk, 'Harar Town': 382, 384; Marston, op. cit., p. 490;

'Munzinger Pasha and Abyssinia', *The Times* (1 January 1876): 11; Paulitschke, 'Le Harar …': 578; *Harar: …*, p. 230.

33 Labrousse, op. cit., p. 291; Paulitschke, 'Le Harrar …': 579; Sabry, op. cit., pp. 423–424.

34 Bardey, op. cit., p. 156; Paulitschke, 'Le Harrar …': 580; *Harar: …*, pp. 232–233.

35 Privates were issued lambs and told each was worth five piasters. Paulitschke, 'Le Harrar': 582.

36 Caulk, 'The Occupation …': 2–3; Ferrand, op. cit., pp. 2–3, 8; 'Harar', *Das Ausland*, Vol. 62 (1889): 128–131; Paulitschke, 'Le Harar': 581–582.

37 Werner Munzinger, 'Narrative of a Journey through the Afar Country', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. 39 (1869): 216.

38 Arakil got Cairo excited with a report that promised Egypt a significant profit from this venture. He estimated the salt trade being able to pay for a 500-man occupation force, and still provide Cairo with 50,000 Maria Theresa thalers every year.

The salt, cut into bars about 10 inches by 2 inches by ½ inch, exchanged at fifty to a thaler on site, but farther away, like in Gojjam, the rate was as high as 8–1. 'Arakil to Barrot, Messouah, 27 mai 1873', Dossier 73/3, Carton 159, *PI*; Frederick J. Cox, 'Munzinger's Observations on the Sudan', *SNR*, Vol. XXXIII, Pt. 2 (December 1952): 192; Rubenson, p. 313. For more details on these salt bars, which served as a type of currency in the 19th century, consult Dennis Gill, *The Coinage of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Italian Somalia* (New York, 1991).

39 The Abyssinian Coptic Church, which represented the vast majority of local Christians, always obtained its *Abun*, the chief religious official, from Alexandria. Egyptian Copts made sure their role continued by sending only one bishop at a time. Douin, *IIIB*, pp. 721–726, 735, 752; Gabre-Sellassie, op. cit., pp. 57–58; Guindi and Tagher, op. cit., p. 227; 'Ismail to Munzinger, Caire, 31 juillet and 26 août 1875', Dossier 73/5, Carton 159, *PI*; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Matteucci, pp. 185–188; 'Privileggio to Barrot, Zeyla, 15 decembre 1875', Dossier 'Corr. Comm. Privileggio', Carton 147, *PI*; Rubenson, pp. 368–377; Talhami, pp. 150–151; Pippo Vigoni, *Abissinia: Giornale di un Viaggio* (Milan, 1881), pp. 126–127.

40 'Doss No 3/5. Documents relatif à la rencontre où fait tuer Munzinger Pacha, près d'Ausa mss.', Dossier 3/1 [or 3/7?], Carton 'V', Sudan sub-collection, *PI*; Douin, *IIIB*, p. 793; Munzinger: 225.

41 Lockett, 'Engineering …', SHC; 'Privileggio to Barrot'; Paul Soleillet, *Obock, le Choa – le Kaffa. Recit d'une exploration commerciale en Éthiopie* (Paris, 1886), p. 36; Talhami, p. 133.

42 V. Fedoroff, 'Obock and the Country Bordering on the Gulf of Tajura', *Journal of the Royal United Service Institute*, Vol. XLI, No. 231 (May 1897): 623.

43 For the harsh terrain of this region, one picture is truly worth a thousand words. See Thomas Misslin's web site for such, 'Djibouti', http://thomas.misslin.com/contents/djibouti/djipix3.htm. See also, Jules Borelli, *Éthiopie meridionale. Journal de mon voyage aux pays Amhara, Oromo et Sidama. Septembre 1885 à novembre 1888* (Paris, 1890), pp. 149–150; Major Trevenen J. Holland and Capt. Henry H. Hozier, *Record of the Expedition to Abyssinia* (London, 1870), pp. xvi–xvii; I. M. Lewis, p. 2; L. H. Mitchell, 'Journal officiel de la reconnaissance géologique et minéralogique', *BSKG*, Vol. 3 (1889): 194; Munzinger, op. cit., p. 197; Mesfin Wolde-Mariam, *An Introductory Geography of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa, 1972), p. 49.

44 Munzinger, op. cit., p. 195.

45 Muhammad Hanfare (1861–1887) later allied with Menelik of Shewa. Gabre-Sellassie, p. 63; James, p. 12; Shehim Kassim, 'The Influence of Islam on the 'Afar' (University of Washington PhD, 1982), pp. 99–101.

46 *IIIB*, pp. 794–795, 799, 804–805; Gabre-Sellassie, op. cit., p. 63.
47 'Doss No 3/5. Documents …'; 'Privileggio to Barrot, Tadjoura, 29 novembre 1875'.
48 G. R. F. Bredin, 'The Life Story of Yuzbashi 'Abdullah Adlan', *SNR*, Vol. XLII (1962): 39; Douin, *IIIB*, pp. 806–809; Theodore von Heuglin, [Letter], *Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen*, Vol. 22 (1876): 108–109; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; G. Wild, 'Werner Munzinger Pascher', *Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen*, Vol. 22 (1876): 107–108; Gaston Zananiri, *Le khédive Ismail et l'Égypte (1830–1894)* (Alexandria, 1922), pp. 136–137.
49 No documentary evidence exists to support the belief that Yohannis was behind Munzinger's defeat. Still, 'the wicked man and devil named Munzinger' was certainly at the top on the Emperor's hit list. See *IIIB*, pp. 809, 812; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (21 February 1876): 5; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; 'Privileggio to Barrot, Tadjoura, 29 novembre, 15 décembre 1875, and 12 janvier 1876'; Gabriel Simon, *Voyage en Abyssinie et chez les Gallas-Raias: L'Éthiopie, ses mœurs, ses traditions, le Negouss Iohannes, les églises monolithes de Lalibela* (Paris, 1885), p. 117; Talhami, p. 150; 'Telegram from the Governor of Bombay, 26 November 1875', FO 78/3188.

12 A RIDGE TOO FAR

1 The Battle of Gundet is covered in detail by Douin, *IIIB*. Important documentary sources include French diplomat Charles de Sarzec, who visited Abyssinian Emperor Yohannis one day after the affair. He provides many details in 'de Sarzec to MAE, Massouah, 24 decembre 1875', *Massouah 4*, *cor. pol.*, fol. 41, *AMAE*. The 3 December 1875 issue of *Moniteur Égyptien* contains Ismail's official version. Far more valuable are the orders and despatches of Arendrup, Arakil, and others, which are held in the *Période Ismail* collection of Cairo's *Dar al-Wathaiq*. James Dennison and Jacob Durholz, among the few Egyptian officers to survive this débâcle, both prepared reports. I could not find Durholz, while Dennison's effort now resides in Denmark! Dye, Lockett, and Loring provide useful information gleaned from their conversations with survivors.
2 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 19 November 1875', *Lockett*. For an exhaustive autobiography of Lockett that details actions in 1875–1876, see Annie Louise Etheredge, 'An Alabamian in Abyssinia' (University of Alabama MA thesis, 1957).
3 'Arakil to Khairy, Messuouah, 2 septembre 1875', Dossier 73/3, Carton 159, *PI*.
4 [William Wing Loring?] 'The Egyptian Campaign in Abyssinia', *The Living Age*, Vol. 134 (1877): 279.
5 Lockett Bey notes spending 'ten hours a day for ten days' compiling an elaborate map of Abyssinia. 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 19 November 1875', *Lockett*.
6 Napier was also a guest of Ismail when he visited Cairo in 1868. Charles Chaillé-Long, *My Life on Four Continents* (London, 1902), Vol. I, p. 21; 'Egypt', *The Times* (26 November 1868): 7.
7 'Ismail to Arendrup, Caire, 17 septembre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*.
8 Richard Hill and Peter Hogg, *A Black Corps d'Élite: An Egyptian-Sudanese Conscript Battalion with the French Army in Mexico, 1863–1867, and its Survivors in Subsequent African History* (East Lansing, MI, 1994), p. 129.
9 Arendrup (1834–1875), is given biographical coverage in *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon* (Copenhagen, MCMXXXIII), Vol. I; P. I. Liebe *et al., Faste Artillerioffi cerer af Linen* (Copenhagen, 1978), pp. 19–20; and Axel Moos, 'En Dansker Marcherede ind i Abessinien', *Berlingski Aftenavis* (1935). Both

spellings of his name, Arrendrup and Arendrup are used. I appreciate the hard work of E. Borgstrom of Denmark's *Rigsarkivet* who provided this information, along with a photocopy of Major Dennison's report on Gundet. For Arendrup's Egyptian contract, see 'Stone to Barrot, Caire, 18 janvier 1872', Dossier 39/12, Carton 79, *PI*.

10 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 10 December 1875', *Graves Papers*, SHC.

11 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 17 December 1875', *Lockett*; General Max von Thurneyssen, 'L'Expédition de l'Égypte contre l'Abyssine', *Bulletin de l'institut Égyptien*, Vol. 5 (1911): 20.

12 Von Zichy was in East Africa to escape his creditors, and had a relative, Count Franz von Zichy, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador to the Porte. The Count used this connection to his advantage in 1875. 'Arrendrup to Khairy, Addi Huala, 11 novembre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*; William McEntyre Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia* (1888 rept., New York, 1969), pp. 131–132; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *Daily Telegraph* (19 and 21 February 1876): 5; Beat de Fischer, *Contributions à la connaissance de relations Suisses-Égyptiennes (d'environ 100 à 1945), suivies d'une esquisse des relations Suisses-Éthiopiennes (jusqu'en 1952)* (Lisbon, 1956), p. 179, n. 26; [Suzzara]', 'Expédition des Égyptiens contre l'Abyssinie (1875–1876). I. – Mémoire de M. Suzzara, *RE*, Vol. 2, No. 10 (March 1896): 636; A. B. Wylde, *'83 to '87 in the Soudan* (1888 rept., New York, 1969), Vol. I, p. 327.

13 Arendrup's orders, 'Palais de Gezireh, le 17 septembre 1875. Instructions données au Colonel Arendrup', are found in a variety of sources. Dossier 73/3, Carton 159, in *PI* contains the originals, and nearly complete copies are available in 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 27 September 1875', Enclosure 2, 'Du khédive au Colonel Arendrup', and Enclosure 3, 'Du khédive à Arakel Bey', FO 78/2404; M. F. Shukry, *The Khedive Ismail and Slavery in the Sudan (1863–1879)* (Cairo, 1938), Append. C., pp. 19–21. See also *IIIB*, pp. 747–751, 776; 'Ismail to Arakel Bey, Ghizireh, 17 septembre 1875', Dossier 73/3, Carton 159, *PI*; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; 'Nubar Pasha to FO, Cairo, 5 December 1875', FO 141/93.

14 Major Trevenen J. Holland and Capt. Henry M. Hozier, *Record of the Expedition to Abyssinia* (London, 1870), Vol. I, pp. xiv, n.2, 157; Stephen A. Longrigg, *A Short History of Eritrea* (1945 rept., Westport, CT, 1974), pp. 4–7; Arthur B. R. Myers, *Life with the Hamran Arabs* (London, 1876), p. 50; H. Scaetta, 'Geography, Ethiopia's Ally', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 14 (1935): 66.

15 'Arrendrup Despatch No. 10, 17 octobre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*; Earl of Mayo, *Sport in Abyssinia; Or the Mareb and the Tackazzee* (London, 1876), p. 27; James Hamilton, *Sinai, the Hedjaz, and Soudan* (1857 rept., Reading, 1993), pp. 186, 257; Holland, Vol. I, p. 157; Myers, pp. 239, 351–355.

16 E. A. de Cosson, *The Cradle of the Blue Nile* (London, 1877), Vol. I, p. 109.

17 'Comanos to Fish, Cairo, 18 February 1876', *DUSCC*; Douin, 'Arakel Bey', *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte*, Vol. 22, Fasc. 2 (1940): 258–259; *IIIB*, pp. 753, 767; Dye, pp. 131–132, 135; Lockett, 'Recent …', SHC; W. W. Loring, *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt* (New York, 1884), p. 301.

18 Ismail spent large sums of money building up the port facilities at Massawa. Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. II, pp. 4–45, details the travel time from Massawa with pack mules to many Eritrean locations. For the battlefield of Gundet, it was 47 hours. See also L. Louis-Lande, 'Un Voyageur français dans l'Éthiopie meridionale', *Revue des deux mondes*, Vol. 30 (1878): 878; Paul Traub, 'Voyage au pays des Bogos et dans les provinces septentrionales de l'Abyssinie', *Bulletin de la société Neuchateloise de géographie*, Vol. 4 (1888): 117; Mesfin Wolde-Mariam, *An Introductory Geography of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa, 1972), p. 49.

19 Achille Raffray, *Afrique orientale* (Paris, 1876), p. 7; Traub, op. cit., p. 99.

20 'Lockett to Boyd, Massawah, 10 September 1875', *Lockett*.
21 'Lockett to Stone, Massawah, 7 September 1876', *Lockett Papers*, SHC. Lockett was particularly appalled by the city's water supply, which was partially supplied by open grave sites in the cemetery. The unused holes served as water catchments, but as Lockett puts it, 'You are no wise certain whether you will find therein living waters or a defunct Muslim.' If a steamer was in port, its condenser was used to provide fresh water. In comparison to the local supply, Dye called this 'the nectar of the Gods'. Dye, p. 163; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.

See also 'Graves to Lockett, Massawah, 12 April 1878', and 'Lockett to Wife, Massawah, 12 August 1876', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; Pellegrino Matteucci, *In Abissinia* (1880), p. 38; Gabriel Simon, *Voyage en Abyssinie et chez les Gallas-Raias. L'Éthiopie, ses mœurs, ses traditions, le Negouss Iohannes, les églises monolithes de Lalibela* (Paris, 1885), p. 9.
22 *IIIB*, p. 774; Dye, op. cit., p. 128; 'Graves to Lockett …', ibid.; Ghada H. Talhami, *Suakin and Massawa under Egyptian Rule, 1865–1885* (Washington, 1975), pp. 148, 151.
23 Teferi Teklehaimanot, *The Ethiopian Feudal Army and its Wars* (Kansas State University PhD, 1971), p. 66.
24 'Arrendrup to Khairy, Sabar Kumma, 13 octobre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*; *IIIB*, p. 774; Dye, pp. 128, 132, 134–135; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *Daily Telegraph* (19 February 1876): 5; Talhami, op. cit., pp. 148, 151.
25 Abyssinians recognized the significance of the *qolla*, saying, 'God fenced the Paradise with fire.' Wolde-Mariam, p. 50. See also Gabre-Sellassie, p. 4; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Paul Traub, 'Voyage au pays des Bogos', *Bulletin de la société Neuchateloise de géographie*, Vol. 4 (1888): 101.
26 Lockett, 'Abyssinia …', SHC.
27 'Egypt and Abyssinia': 5; Lockett, ibid.; Longrigg, pp. 4–5; Gerald H. Portal, *My Mission to Abyssinia* (1892 rept., New York, 1969), p. 101; Scaetta, p. 64; Wolde-Mariam, pp. 40–41; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, p. 95.
28 Wylde, ibid.
29 'The Egyptian Campaign in Ethiopia', *The Living Age*, Vol. 134 (1877): 279; Holland, p. xii; Myers, pp. 79, 107, 117–118; Portal, pp. 38–39; Simon, pp. 18, 101; Wylde, ibid.
30 Traub, op. cit., p. 111.
31 'Derrick to Lockett, n.p., n.d. [1876]', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; Simon, p. 111; Traub: ibid.; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p 258, Vol. II, p. 45; Wylde, *Modern Abyssinia* (London, 1901), pp. 23, 112.
32 'Egypt and Abyssinia' (19 February 1876): 5; 'The Egyptian Campaign …': 279; Lande, p. 898; Wolde-Mariam, pp. 40–41; Wylde, *Modern Abyssinia*, p. 118.
33 Loring, op. cit., pp. 302, 303. See also, 'Arrendrup, Despatch No. 4, 6 octobre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*; Dye, pp. 135–137.
34 The average reported by Arendrup was 7 degrees Centigrade. 'Arrendrup Despatch No. 10, 17 octobre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*.
35 'Arrendrup to Khairy, Massawa, 3 octobre 1875', and 'Arrendrup, Massawa, Despatch No. 2, 1 octobre 1875', 'Arrendrup, Despatch No. 5, 7 octobre 1875', and 'Arrendrup, Despatch No. 10, 17 octobre 1875', all in Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*; *IIIB*, pp. 755–764.
36 'Farman to Fish, Cairo, 28 December 1876', *DUSCC*.
37 Von Zichy served as a cavalry officer for the Habsburgs in 1859 and 1866. 'Arrendrup to Khairy, Addi Huala, 11 novembre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*; 'Farman to Fish', ibid.
38 'Arrendrup, Despatch No. 11, 18 octobre 1875', and 'Arrendrup to Khairy, Addi Huala, 11 novembre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*.

39 'Arakil to Barrot, Tsadezaga, 23 octobre 1875', Dossier 73/3, Carton 159; 'Arrendrup to Barrot, Tsadezaga, 23 octobre 1875', 'Arrendrup to Khairy, Addi Huala, 11 novembre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*; Dye, pp. 135–137; Lockett, 'Notes on the Egyptian Army mss.', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; Loring, p. 302.
40 'Arrendrup to Khairy, Adi Huala, 11 novembre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*.
41 'Arrendrup to Khairy', ibid.
42 'Arrendrup, Despatch No. 13, 2 novembre 1875', and 'Arrendrup to Khairy, Adi Huala …', ibid.; Douin, 'Arakel': 259; Hill, pp. 131–132. Cf. *IIIB*, p. 765, which cites a dispatch I did not find in the Arrendrup file, one indicating a different cause for Faraj's punishment.
43 Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, pp. 327–328. 'Arrendrup to Barrot, Tsadezaga, 23 octobre 1875', and 'Arrendrup to Khairy, Addi Huala, 11 novembre 1875', in Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*.
44 'Ismail to Arrendrup, Caire, 18 novembre 1875', Dossier 73/4, Carton 159, *PI*, DAW.
45 'Arakil to Barrot, Addi Huala, 12 novembre 1875', Dossier 73/3, Carton 159, *PI*, DAW.
46 'Arrendrup, Despatch No. 13, 2 novembre 1875', 'Despatch No. 14, 9 novembre 1875', and 'Despatch No. ?, Gundet, n.d.', in Dossier 73/4, Carton 159; 'Commanos to Fish, Cairo, 18 February 1876', *DUSCC*; Dye, pp. 137–138; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; 'Report of Major Dennison. Affair of Gundet', *Søren Adolp Arendrup*, Statens Arkiver, Rigsarkivet, Kobenhaben, Denmark; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 258.
47 de Cosson, Vol. I, pp. 77–78; 'Egypt and Abyssinia' (21 February 1876): 5; Simon, pp. 109–110; Suzzara: 638; Pipo Vigoni, *Abissinia: Giornale di un Viaggio* (Milan, 1881), p. 82; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 253, Vol. II, pp. 251–252; and *Modern Abyssinia*, p. 24.
48 'Arrendrup to Khairy …', ibid.
49 'Report … Dennison'.
50 Rubenson, op. cit., p. 327.
51 Negussay Ayele, 'Ras Alula and Ethiopia's Struggles Against Expansionism and Colonialism, 1872–1897', in Taddesse Beyne *et al.* (eds), *The Centenary of Dogali* (Addis Ababa, 1988), p. 171; Talhami, pp. 153, 159. On numbers, see 'Afrika': *Geographischer Monatsbericht*, No. 4 (March 1877): 158; *IIIB*, p. 775; Dye, p. 395; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *Daily Telegraph* (21 February 1876): 5; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (25 October 1876): 10; 'Report … Dennison'; Rubenson, p. 322; Suzzara: 637; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 328.
52 *IIIB*, p. 775; Haggai Erlich, *Abyssinia and Eritrea during the Scramble for Africa: A Political Biography of Ras Alula, 1875–1897* (East Lansing, MI, 1982), p. 11; Lockett, 'Recent …', SHC; 'Report … Dennison'; Mamo Wudnieh, 'The Life and Works of Alula Aba Nega', in *Centenary …*, p. 236; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 253.
53 *IIIB*, p. 775; Dye, pp. 137–138; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (25 October 1876): 10; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, pp. 302–303; 'Report … Dennison'; Simon, pp. 112–114.
54 Dye, p. 138; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', ibid.; Gabre-Sellassie, pp. 62–63; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, p. 304. See also *IIIB*, pp. 778, 792; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', ibid.; 'Report … Dennison'.
55 Dye, p. 139. See also 'Comanos to Fish, Cairo, 18 February 1876', *DUSCC*; Douin, 'Arakel Bey': 263; Dye, pp. 140–141; 'Report … Dennison'; Simon, p. 114; Wylde, *Modern Abyssinia*, p. 24.

56 Cited by Chaine: 182. Matteucci, p. 78, notes extensive evidence of the battle still existed in 1878. See also *IIIB*, pp. 781–782; Dye, pp. 140–141, 398n; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *Daily Telegraph* (21 February 1876): 5; Raffray, p. 250, n.1; Rubenson, p. 322; Teklehaimanot, p. 67; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 252.
57 *IIIB*, p. 786; Dye, pp. 143–145; Gabre-Sellassie, p. 62; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, p. 305; 'Report … Dennison'.
58 Cited in *IIIB*, pp. 850–851. See also *IIIB*, pp. 814–815; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 17 December 1875', *Lockett*; 'Expédition Ratib Pacha', *RE*, Vol. II (April 1896): 640.
59 *IIIB*, pp. 898, 1047; Gerhard Rohlfs, *Meine Mission nach Abessinien* (Leipzig, 1883), p. 62.
60 For instance, Kambula (1879), where 2,000 British troops defeated 24,000 Zulus, or Bedden (1897), which featured 1,200 Belgian *askaris* defeating an entrenched force of rifle-armed Mahdists. Maybe the most famous example of the tremendous advantages held by western troops was Rorke's Drift (1879). Here several thousand Zulus were defeated by less than 100 British soldiers. For an interesting booklet of the topic, see Howard Whitehouse, *Battle in Africa, 1879–1914* (1987). On Gundet results, see 'De Sarzec to Decazes, Massouah, 24 December 1875', *Massouah 4*, *cor. pol.*, fols. 39–48, AMAE.
61 Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.
62 From the Amharic, translated into French, 'de Sarzec to Decazes'. See also 'Abyssinia and Ethiopia', *The Times* (15 December 1875): 7; and (25 October 1876): 10; *IIIB*, pp. 788–789.

13 THE ABYSSINIAN ARMY

1 A. E. de Cosson, *The Cradle of the Blue Nile* (London, 1877), Vol. II, p. 314.
2 In a thirty-year period, Abyssinian rulers engaged local rivals, along with troops from Great Britain, Egypt, Harar, the Sudan and Italy. Major battles include: Aroge (1867), Adua (1871), Gundet (1875), Gura (1876), Saati, Dogali, Chalanco, Gondar (1887), Wagera (1888), Gallabat (1889), Coatit, Amba Alagi, Senafe (1895), Makale, Adua (1896).
3 Sven Rubenson, *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence* (London, 1978), p. 407.
4 Cited in Richard Caulk, 'Bad Men of the Borders: Shum and Shefta in Northern Ethiopia in the 19th Century', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (1984): 224.
5 For more on this, see Donald Crummey, 'The Violence of Tewodros', in Bethwell A. Ogot (ed.), *War and Society in Africa* (London, 1972). Good overviews of the Emperor are found in: Walda Maryam, *Chronique de Theodoros II, Roi des Rois d'Éthiopie* (Paris, 1905); and Sven Rubenson, *King of Kings: Tewodros of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa, 1966).

Good accounts of the 1867 British invasion include: Darrel Bates, *The Abyssinian Difficulty* (Oxford, 1979); Clements R. Markham, *A History of the Abyssinian Expedition* (London, 1869); Frederick Myatt, *The March to Magdala* (London, 1970); Henry Morton Stanley, *Coomassie and Magdala* (New York, 1874); Henry St Clair Wilkins, *Reconnoitering in Abyssinia* (London, 1868).
6 For the problems of Tewodros, with an emphasis on the military, see Crummey. On Yohannis, see J. de Coursac, *Le Règne de Yohannes* (Romans, 1926), and Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, *Yohannes IV of Ethiopia* (Oxford, 1975). See also Tadesse Beyene, Richard Pankhurst and Shiferaw Bekele (eds), *Kasa and Kasa: Papers on the Life, Times and Images of Tewodros II and Yohannes IV (1855–1889)* (Addis Ababa, 1990).

For a quick look at military actions between 1867 and 1872, see Richard Caulk, 'Firearms and Princely Power in Ethiopia in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of African History*, Vol. XIII, No. 4 (1972): 609–630.

7 Adal, promoted to *Negus*, later changed his named to Takla Haymanot. On numbers, see Antonio Cecchi, *Da Zeila alle Frontiere del Caffa* (Rome, 1886), Vol. I, pp. 430–431, 443; J. de Coursac, pp. 193, 264; William McEntyre Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Ethiopia* (1880 rept., New York, 1969), p. 396; Ian Knight, *Queen Victoria's Enemies (2): Northern Africa* (London, 1989), p. 9; Achille Raffray, 'Voyage en Abyssinie, à Zanzibar et au pays des Ouanika', *Bulletin de la société de géographie*, Vol. X, no. 6 (1875): 300; Gabriel Simon, *Voyage en Abyssinie et chez les Gallas-Raias* (1885), p. 279. On hold-outs in 1875, see Haggai Erlich, *Ethiopia and Eritrea during the Scramble for Africa: A Political Biography of Ras Alula, 1875–1897* (East Lansing, MI, 1982), p. 10; Teferi Teklehaimanot, 'The Ethiopian Feudal Army and its Wars' (Kansas State University PhD, 1971), pp. 64–65.

8 Bairu Tafla (ed. and trans.), *A Chronicle of Yohannis IV (1872–89)* (Wiesbaden, 1977), p. 151.

9 Cited in Mamo Wudineh, 'The Life and Works of Alula Aba Nega', Taddesse Beyne *et al*. (eds), *The Centenary of Dogali* (Addis Ababa, 1988), p. 243.

10 Yohannis supposedly prayed for three weeks before the battle of Gundet in 1875. For more on this consult *Mondon Vidailhet Collection*, BN, Paris, especially Éthiop. 259, fols. 46–47. See also 'Chronicle of Yohannis by Qes-Bebez Tekle-Haymanot MSS.', trans. Tesfa Yohannis, *Private Papers of Peter P. Garretson*, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL; De Coursac, p. 306; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *Daily Telegraph* (21 Feb. 1876): 5; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, p. 60; 'La Guerre en Abyssinie MSS.', Dossier 9/1, Carton 81, *PI*; Richard Pankhurst, *An Introduction to the History of the Ethiopian Army* (Addis Ababa, 1967), p. 48; Pankhurst, *The Traditional …*, p. 4; Rubenson, *Survival*, p. 327; Tafla (ed.), p.91, n. 130; Ghada Talhami, *Suakin and Massawa under Egyptian Rule, 1865–1885* (Washington, 1975), pp. 152, 162; Pippo Vigoni, *Abissinia: Giornale di un Viaggio* (Milan, 1881), p. 83.

11 Augustus B. Wylde, *'83 to '87 in the Soudan* (1888 rept., New York, 1969), Vol. I, p. 312. Wylde, a trader and sometime British diplomat, is a good source, even if somewhat prejudiced towards Yohannis IV.

12 Great Britain. War Office, *Record of the Expedition to Abyssinia* (London, 1871), Vol. II, p. 37; Lockett quote from William B. Hesseltine, *Blue and Grey on the Nile* (Chicago, 1961), p. 181; Achille Raffray, *Afrique Orientale* (Paris, 1876), p. 249.

13 On inducements, see R. A. Caulk, 'Armies as Predators: Soldiers and Peasants in Ethiopia c. 1850–1935', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. XI (1978): 467–468; 'Egypt and Abyssinia' (21 February 1876): 5; Talhami, p. 162.

14 Joanna Mantel-Niecko, *The Role of Land Tenure in the System of Ethiopian Imperial Government in Modern Times* (Warsaw, 1980), pp. 82–85, 90, 98, 111, 113, 184–187, provides a detailed look at real estate as military pay. Also Caulk, 'Armies as Predators …': 477.

15 On Ethiopian 'decorations' of valour, see Cecchi, Vol. I, p. 349; Gerald H. Portal, *My Mission to Abyssinia* (1892 rept., New York, 1969), pp. 154–155; Teklehaimanot, p. 16.

16 These ranks are difficult to translate directly into western equivalents. One might very roughly describe them as follows. The *Ras* or *Dajjazmatch*, with 3,000–10,000 men, were the most important, and would rate as a lieutenant general. A *Fitawarari*, with 3,000–8,000 men, was like the brigadier. With

2,000–5,000 men, both the *Kegnazmatch* and *Grazmatch* are like a colonel with his regiment. The number of troops also depended on the officer's personality and political power. An example of such can be had from *Ras* Alula's personal army, which numbered 1,500 cavalry and 2,000 infantry in 1883. Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 214. See also Cecchi, Vol. I, p. 355; Count Gleichen, *With the Mission to Menelik* (London, 1898), p. 194. Teklehaimanot, pp. 7–10; Tafla (ed.), p. 109.

17 On paper, a *Shalek'a* directed 1,000 men, in reality his command varied from 600 to 1,300 men. See Mantel-Niecko, p. 63; Mansfield Parkyns, *Life in Abyssinia* (London, 1868), pp. 75–76.

18 Samuel Lockett, one of Ismail's Neo-Mamluks, estimated Abyssinian units at Gura ranged from 2,000 to 5,000 infantry, and 100–500 cavalry. Gleichen, p. 194; Knight, p. 8; Samuel H. Lockett, 'Notes on the Abyssinian Campaign of the Egyptian Army, 1875–1876 MSS.', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; 'Questionnaire MSS.', 23 décembre 1875, Dossier 9/1, Carton 81, *PI*; Tsehai Berhane Selassie, *The Political and Military Traditions of the Ethiopian Military [1800–1941]* (Oxford PhD, 1980), p. 313; Teklehaimanot, pp. 7–10.

19 Simon, p. 274, described the Abyssinian battle drill as 'excellent'. On Abyssinian martial music, see Dye, p. 357; Ashenafi Kebede, *The Music of Ethiopia: Its Development and Cultural Setting* (Wesleyan University PhD, 1971), pp. 161–162; Bairu Tafla and Blatten Geta Mahtama Sellasie Walda-Masqal, 'A Study of the Ethiopian Culture of Horse Names', *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (1969), p. 197; Raffray, p. 57; Tafla (ed.), p.131, n.230; Max von Thurneyssen, 'L'Expédition de l'Égypte contre l'Abyssinie', *Bulletin de l'institut Égyptien*, Vol. V (1911): 24; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. II, p. 9.

20 Darkwah, op. cit., p. 182, notes the picked troops of Menelik numbered 12,000 out of 200,000 in 1889. See also Knight, p. 6; Pankhurst, *Traditional …*, p. 8; Selassie, *The Political …*, p. 313; von Thurneyssen: 28; Wudineh, p. 233. See also A. E. de Cosson, Vol. II, pp. 60–61; F. L. James, *The Unknown Horn of Africa* (London, 1888), pp. 67–68; Earl of Mayo, *Sport in Abyssinia; or the Mareb and the Tackazzee* (London, 1876), pp. 76–77. Portal, op. cit., pp. 86–89, describes the cavalry game of *gugs*, while Teklehaimanot, op. cit., pp. 13–14, 27 speaks of *waffo wigia*. Both involve evasion and target hitting.

21 Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 109.

22 Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 97.

23 On the division of soldiers by weapon types, see Cecchi, Vol. I, pp. 348, 356. For the use of speed, flanking moves, cover and camouflage, see Caulk, 'Armies …': 474; Metteucci, op. cit., p. 195; Portal, op. cit., pp. 9, 58–59; 'Questionnaire MSS.'; 'de Sarzec to Decazes, Massouah, 24 décembre 1875', *Massouah 2*, fols 41–48, AMAE; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, pp. 137–138. On shock tactics, Vigoni, p. 84.

24 Consult Philipp Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: Die Materielle Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Somal* (Berlin, 1895), pp. 109–112 for description of these weapons. Mayo, p. 92, claims Tewodros could hurl a spear to 30 yards. For an excellent overview of all nineteenth-century Abyssinian weaponry, consult Pankhurst, *Introduction … Army*. See also Knight, p. 9; W. W. Loring, *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt* (New York, 1884), p. 323; Mayo, pp. 117, 120; H. Lebens Mitchell, *Report on the Seizure by the Abyssinians* (Cairo, 1878), pp. 19, 23; Simon, pp. 86–87; Raffray, pp. 57–59.

25 James Baum, *Savage Abyssinia* (New York, 1927), p. 254.

26 Pankhurst, *The Penetration and Implications of Fire-Arms in Ethiopia Prior to the Nineteenth Century* (Addis Ababa, 1968), p. 8.

27 Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, p. 19, estimates a maximum of 37,000 matchlock-armed troops by 1850, the vast majority in Tigre Province. See also M. Abir, 'The

Origins of the Ethiopian-Egyptian Border Problem in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of African History*, Vol. VIII (1967): 448; Great Britain. War Office, p. 7; 'Lage von Abyssinien', *Das Ausland*, Vol. VII (1834): 1139–1140; Pankhurst, *History of the Ethiopian Army*, p. 62.

28 Cecchi, Vol. I, p. 355, notes Menelik's Shewan army of the late 1870s as having 4,000 'modern' rifles, 15,000 matchlocks, but only 3,000 flintlocks.

29 Pankhurst, *History … Ethiopian Army*, pp. 68–69, notes the cost of a good matchlock in 1843 at 20–30 Maria Theresa thalers, at the same time, the much more modern flintlock could command only 4–5.

Teklehaimanot, op. cit., p. 24, points out that, before 1867, Abyssinians were not aware of the tactical role of firearms. See Parkyns, Vol. II, p. 24, for a description of the many problems facing the operation of matchlocks. De Cosson, Vol. I, pp. 197–198, mentions a large elephant gun which he compares to the Chinese 'gingal'. At close range, it would have been like a small cannon.

All firearms up to the 1880s used a charge of 'black' gunpowder. Firing turned this into a highly corrosive sludge that clogged barrels, and if not properly cleaned, greatly reduced accuracy. African armies often suffered from poor weapons' maintenance. On the subject of weapons see R. H. Kofi Darkwah, p. 198; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, p. 19; Ali Effendi Gifoon, 'Memoirs of a Sudanese Soldier', *Cornhill Magazine* (October 1896): 335; Gleichen, p. 196; Knight, p. 9; Loring, pp. 323, 368; L. H. Mitchell, p. 19; Pankhurst, *Introduction … Army*, p. 69.

30 Cited in Douin, *Histoire du règne du Khédive Ismail, Tome III: L'Empire Africain, 1re Partie (1863–1869)* (Cairo, MCMXXXVI), p. 53.

31 Great Britain. Parliamentary Papers. *Correspondence Respecting Abyssinia, 1846–1868* (London, 1868), pp. 97ff, 179f, 189f; Knight, p. 8; Rubenson, *Tewodros*, pp. 39–40.

For an overview of Tewodros see Donald Crummy, 'Tewodros as Reformer and Modernizer', *Journal of African History*, Vol. X, No. 3 (1969): 457–469.

32 Great Britain. War Office, Vol. II, p. 36 covers the action of the 23rd Punjab Pioneers. See Donald Featherstone, *Weapons and Equipment of the Victorian Soldier* (Poole, 1978), p. 24, for impact of breech loaders on Aroge. For the views of Tewodros' artillery at Aroge, see Theophil Waldmeier, *Erlebnisse in Abessinien in Jahren 1858 bis 1868* (Basel, 1869), pp. 95–96.

33 Howard Whitehouse, *Battle in Africa, 1879–1914* (Fieldhead, 1987), p.35, provides an excellent description of imperialist firepower vs. traditional 'native' warriors. See also Lawrence James, *The Savage Wars: British Campaigns in Africa, 1870–1920* (New York, 1985); and Featherstone, pp. 24, 29, 31.

34 Great Britain. War Office, Vol. II, pp. 96–97, lists the armament given to Kassa. See also Markham, pp. 263, 382; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 315. On Kirkham, an ex-P&O steward who claimed service with 'Chinese Gordon's' Ever Victorious Army, and William Walker's Filibusters, see Caulk, 'Princely Power …': 614–615; Mayo, p. 37n; Pankhurst, *Introduction … Army*, p. 22; Simon, p. 279. Kirkham describes the 1871 battle of Adua in a letter to the 27 July issue of *The Times*, and in 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 15 September 1871', FO 1/29. Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 264, claims that a half-German, half-Abyssinian named Schimper [Engeda Esat Schimper?] served in the Franco-Prussian War and came back to advise Yohannis.

35 *Neftegnoch* is the plural, and both stem from *neft*, or rifle. Caulk, 'Armies …': 469.

36 According to Wylde, some veterans preferred the Snider with its ponderous round, as 'a hit meant certain death.' *Modern Abyssinia*, p. 460.

37 Egyptian intelligence guessed that Yohannis could equip 15,000 men with rifle muskets. 'La Guerre en Abyssinie MSS.' See also A. E. de Cosson, Vol. II, pp. 19,

65; Dye, p. 183; Pankhurst, *Introduction … Army*, p. 66; Paulitschke, pp. 112–113; Portal, p. 258; 'Stone to Abdul Gelil Bey, Caire, 10 décembre 1872', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; Talhami, pp. 152, 163; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, pp. 294–295.

38 Egyptian sources noted the Abyssinian production of canister rounds which used Italian sardine tins as the casing! 'Arakil to Barrot, Massaua, 12 février 1875', Dossier 73/3, Carton 159, *PI*. See also Caulk, 'Firearms and Princely Power': 615; A. E. de Cosson, Vol. II, p. 64; Pankhurst, *Introduction … Army*, p. 22; 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 13 January 1871', FO 1/28.

39 Portal, op. cit., p. 254.

40 Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 295 and Cecchi, Vol. I, p. 349, mention that 'a most welcome present', to Abyssinians, was a gift of English-made gunpowder. A. E. de Cosson, Vol. II, p. 58, on the other hand, warns that using such powder in local-made guns could be dangerous to the user.

See also A. D'Abbadie, *Douze ans de séjour dans la haute Éthiopie* (Paris, 1868), p. 249; 'Bunchetti to Kairy Pasha, Caire, 5 décembre 1874', Dossier 59/2, Carton 121, *PI*; de Cosson, Vol. I, p. 218, Vol. II, p. 57–58; 'Essex to Mother, Fort Gura, 20 March 1876', and 'Leorik to Nubar Pasha, Suez, 17 March 1874', Dossier 9/1, Carton 81, *PI*; 'Memo of A. B. Wylde' (16 September 1879), FO 407/11; Raffray, p. 67; Vigoni, p. 110; 'Vivian to FO, Alexandria, 19 July 1873', FO 78/2283; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, pp. 74, 296–297.

41 Simon provides numerous opinions, see pp. 90–93, 272, 333–334. See also 'Questionnaire MSS.', ibid.; Thurneyssen: 28; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. II, pp. 8–9.

42 *Abba Nada* [Lord of the Sudden Attack], *Abba Dagat* [Invincible Lord] and *Abba Mabraq* [Lord of Lightning] are examples of 'horse names'. See the introduction in Tafla, and Blatten: 196–198, for more on this.

43 Simon, op. cit., p. 268.

44 Cited in Caulk, 'Bad Men …': 223.

45 Raffray, op. cit., p. 250.

46 Major W. C. Harris, *The Highlands of Aethiopia* (London, 1844), Vol. III, p. 372; Mantel-Niecko, pp. 124–125; Pankhurst, *History of Ethiopian Tents* (Addis Ababa, 1982), p. 13; Parkyns, op. cit., p. 75. On food and supply issues, see Caulk, 'Armies as Predators', pp. 463, 468–469; Cecchi, Vol. I, p. 345; Harris, Vol. II, pp. 163–165, 171; Knight, p. 6; Pankhurst letter to author; 'Questionnaire MSS.'; Simon, op. cit., p. 276; Teklehaimanot, op. cit., pp. 17–18. On movement and camp followers, see A. E. de Cosson, Vol. II, pp. 62–63; Portal, op. cit., p. 147; Whitehouse, op. cit., p. 14.

47 For supply problems see Caulk, 'Armies as Predators …': 473–474; Darkwah, p. 181; Nathaniel Pearce, *The Life and Adventures of Nathaniel Pearce* (London, 1831), Vol. I, pp. 207–208; Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 405–406; Wylde, *Modern Abyssinia*, p. 36. On health issues, see Conrad Keller, *Alfred Ilg: Sein Leben und sein Wirken als Schweizerischen Kulterbote in Abessinien* (Frauenfield, 1918), pp. 42–43; Caulk, 'Armies …': 475.

48 Caulk, 'Armies …': 467–468; R. P. Dimotheos, *Deux ans séjour en Abyssinie* (Jerusalem, 1871), pp. 36–37; Alfred Ilg, 'Die Athiopische Heeresorganisation', *Schweizerische Monatschrift für Offiziere aller Waffen*, Vol. VIII, pp. 44–45; Rubinson, *Survival*, pp. 279, 405–406.

49 Harold G. Marcus, 'Imperialism and Expansionism in Ethiopia from 1865 to 1900' in C. H. Gann and Peter Duigan (eds), *Colonialism in Africa, 1870–1960* (Cambridge, 1970), Vol. I, p. 421; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, p. 33; 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 15 September 1871', FO 1/29; Tafla (ed.), pp. 109, 113; Wylde, *'83 to '87*, Vol. I, p. 315.

14 THE GURA CAMPAIGN

1 Georges Douin, who helped establish Egypt's modern archives, comments that almost every primary source on the Egyptian side of this campaign is contradictory. The major published works are by Suzzara, Thurneyssen, Loring and Dye. Unpublished material at *Dar al-Wathaiq*, and the Southern Historical Collection, includes letters, reports, diaries, and maps by Muhammad Ratib, Samuel Lockett, Eduard Dulier and Ragheb Saddek.

As for Abyssinian sources, the author begs your indulgence, and hopes that someone like Dr Haggai Erlich will one day provide us with a counter-point to this very Egyptian version of the Gura Campaign.

2 'Instructions données à s. exc. Ratib Pacha Serder des troupes Égyptiennes au moment de son depart pour l'Abyssinie, Caire, 5 décembre 1875', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*.

3 'Americans in Egypt. The Abyssinian Expedition', *New York Tribune* (26 February 1876): 3.

4 Observers feared a major Egyptian effort would be very expensive. It cost England £8,989,000 for her Abyssinian Expedition of 1867. 'The Abyssinian Expedition', *The Times* (12 August 1875): 6; 'Gibbs to Ismail, London, 3 April 1876', Dossier 29/9, Carton 61, *PI*; Lockett, 'Notes on the Abyssinian Campaign of the Egyptian Army', and 'Recent Military Events in Egyptian History', *Samuel Lockett Papers*, SHC; W. W. Loring, *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt* (New York, 1884), pp. 330–331; 'Nubar to Ismail, Constantinople, 7, 11, 27 January 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*.

5 Sharif (1823–1887) held numerous high posts during Ismail's reign. In 1872, as Minister of the Interior, he investigated the gun fight between US Consul General Richard Butler, and three Neo-Mamluks, one of whom was William Loring. It is interesting to speculate if this brawl coloured Sharif's views on Americans. The author hopes to expand on this strange affair with an upcoming article, 'An American Fracas in Egypt: The Butler Affair of 1872'.

6 *IIIB*, 818–820; William McEntyre Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia* (1878 rept., New York, 1969), pp. 153–154; Lockett, 'Recent …'; Loring, p. 333; 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 27 November 1875', FO 78/2405; Ghada H. Talhami, *Suakin and Massawa under Egyptian Rule, 1863–1885* (Washington, 1975), pp. 156–157; Général Max von Thurneyssen, 'L'Expédition de l'Égypte contre l'Abyssinie', *Bulletin de l'institut Égyptien*, Vol. 5 (1911): 23.

7 During the Gura Campaign, Loring signed correspondence as '*Chef d'État Major*'. Such items were copied in English, French, and Turkish. Examples in Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; and *Graves Papers*, SHC. For more on this fiction, see 'Comanos to Fish, Cairo, 18 February 1876', *DUSCC*; Dye, pp. 165–166; 'The Egyptian Campaign in Abyssinia', *The Living Age*, Vol. 134 (1877): 280; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 17 December 1875', *Lockett*; 'Expédition Ratib Pacha', *RE*, Vol. II, No. 11 (avril 1896): 641, 644.

8 'Lockett to Boyd', ibid.

9 Lockett, 'Notes …'

10 Elbert E. Farman, *Along the Nile with President Grant* (New York, 1904), pp. 96, 194.

11 Loring, op. cit., p. 330.

12 *IIIB*, p. 838; Loring, p. 344; James Morgan, *Recollections of a Rebel Reefer* (Boston, 1917), p. 288.

13 Dye, *passim*; John Ninet, *Arabi Pacha: Égypte (1880–1883)* (Berne, 1884), p. 180; Loring, *passim*.

14 Records of Muhammad Ratib's French education are stored in the *Période Muhammad Aly à Said Pacha* collection of Cairo's *Dar al-Wathaiq*. See also

Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; [Suzzara], 'Expédition des Égyptiens contre l'Abyssinie (1875–1876), I: Mémoire de M. Suzzara', *RE*, Vol. II, No. 10 (March 1896): 640–641.

15 Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; 'Ratib to Nubar, Massoua, 28 décembre 1875', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; [Suzzara]: ibid.

16 In 1872, Prince Hassan visited America to investigate its rail network. 'Boker to Fish, Constantinople, 13 July 1872', *DUSMT*.

17 *Amir* Hassan kept a diary, in English, which detailed many events from this campaign. Sadly it was destroyed after his death. Dye, pp. 188, 229; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; 'Loring to Barrot, Massawa, 6 janvier 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; Loring, p. 340; J. C. McCoan, *Egypt under Ismail* (London, 1889), p. 96; Gerhard Rohlfs, *Meine Mission nach Abessinien* (Leipzig, 1888), p. 60; 'Ratib Pascha': 644; Emine Forat Tuguy, *Three Centuries: Family Chronicles of Turkey and Egypt* (London, 1963), p. 164.

18 Richard Hill and Peter Hogg, *A Black Corps d'Élite: An Egyptian-Sudanese Conscript Battalion with the French in Mexico, 1863–1867, and Their Subsequent Role in African History* (East Lansing, MI, 1994), p. 196. Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC, describes a 'want of concert between the Commander and the staff officers'. See also Dye, pp. 207, 211–212.

19 Dye, op. cit., pp. 152, 242, 245, 303; 'Expédition Ratib …': 682; 'Lockett to Boyd, Knoxville, 4 November 1877', *Lockett*; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; [Suzzara]: 644; Talhami, op. cit., p. 158.

20 Dye, pp. 165–166, lists foreign members of the *État Major* who served in the Gura Campaign. Of these men, five arrived in Egypt only a few weeks before, and three had been in the Egyptian Army for only a few months. For more on the expedition's staff officers, see *IIIB*, p. 827, n. 8; Dye, p. 164; Loring, pp. 330–331; M. Sabry, *L'Empire Égyptien sous Ismail et l'ingerence Anglo-Française (1863–1879)* (Paris, 1933), p. 471; [Suzzara], op. cit., p. 644; Thurneyssen, op. cit., pp. 21–22, 168.

21 *IIIB*, ibid.; Dye, pp. 159, 250–251; 'Instructions données à s. exc. Ratib …', *PI*; 'Stanton to FO, Cairo, 27 November 1875', FO 78/2405, PRO; Talhami, p. 154; Thurneyssen: 23.

22 'Instructions données à s. exc. Ratib …'

23 Ibid.

24 *IIIB*, p. 878; Dye, pp. 203–208, 211–212; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; 'Rapport du Ratib Pacha, Serder de la Armée Égyptienne', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; F. Harrison Smith, *Through Abyssinia: An Envoy's Ride to the King of Zion* (New York, MDCCCCXC), p. 117.

25 A. B. Wylde, *Modern Abyssinia* (London, 1901), p. 26.

26 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 10, 16 December 1875', *Graves Papers*, SHC. See also *IIIB*, pp. 821, 865; Dye, pp. 327–328; 'Egypt and Abyssinia. To the Editor of the Times', *The Times* (14 November 1876): 9; 'The Egyptian Campaign': 279; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, *Yohannes IV of Ethiopia* (Oxford, 1975), p. 66; Lockett, 'Engineering …'; and, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, p. 335; 'La Guerre en Abyssinie mss., 15 février 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71; 'Nubar to Munzinger, Caire, 24 novembre 1875', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71; 'Pesannos to Kairi Pasha, Alexandrie, 5 janvier 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71; 'Stone to Khairi, Caire, 29 décembre 1875', Dossier 72/1, Carton 59, *PI*; Talhami, p. 154; Kebreab Tesfai, 'The Causes and Effects of the Dogali Encounter', in Taddesse Beyne *et al*. (eds), *The Centenary of Dogali* (Addis Ababa, 1988), p. 92.

27 Some authorities provide slight variations on this order of battle, and the writer was unable to confirm one recollection over another at *Dar al-Wathaiq*. 'Comanos to Fish, Cairo, 18 February 1876', *DUSCC*; *IIIB*, pp. 816, 829–832;

Dye, p. 155; 'Egypt', *The Times* (18 January 1876): 10, and (26 January 1876): 6; Loring, op. cit., p. 334; [Suzzara], op. cit., p. 673; Talhami, op. cit., p. 158; Thurneyssen, op. cit., p. 22.

28 Dye, op. cit., p. 155.

29 'Afrika', *Geographischer Monatsbericht*, No. 4 (März, 1877): 158; Wilfred Scawen Blunt, *Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt* (1895 rept., New York, 1967), p. 368; *IIIB*, pp. 852–853; Dye, pp. 160, 183; Loring, pp. 345–347.

30 Urabi claimed that Massawa was a scene of complete idleness. Cited in Talhami, p. 178. Graves claims otherwise. 'Graves to Wife, Cairo, 26 January 1876', *Graves Papers*, SHC; 'Graves Journal', p. 26, *Graves Papers*, SHC; Dr Wilhelm Junker, *Travels in Africa During the Years 1875–1878* (London, 1890), pp. 50, 53; Baron de Kusel Bey, *An Englishman's Recollections of Egypt (1863–1887)* (London, 1915), pp. 151–152; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Talhami, op. cit., p. 134.

31 Dye, pp. 157, 203, 206, 224; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Shipping and Commercial Gazette* (14 December 1875): 8; Junker, ibid.; Loring, pp. 342–343; John Sutton and John Walker, *From Horse to Helicopter* (London, 1990), pp. 54–56; [Suzzara]: 642; Thurneyssen, op. cit., p. 22.

32 *IIIB*, p. 883; J. de Coursac, *La Règne de Yohannes* (Romans, 1926), pp. 223, 230–231, 238, 241; Dye, p. 225; 'Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 8 October 1876', and 'Lockett to Boyd, Knoxville, 4 November 1877', *Lockett*; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; 'Stone to Lockett, Cairo, 17 January 1876', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.

33 The trip from Massawa to Gura was about 75 miles. A fast horse could take one there in two days, but most travel required five. *IIIB*, pp. 1055–1056, 1079; Dye, pp. 211, 256, 258; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.

34 *IIIB*, pp. 816–817; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, p. 343; [Suzzara]: 641; Talhami, p. 159.

35 Loring, op. cit., pp. 392–393.

36 Annie Louise Etheredge, *An Alabamian in Abyssinia* (University of Alabama MA thesis, 1957), pp. 134, 146; 'Hassan to Ismail, Gura, 17 février 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, p. 370.

37 *IIIB*, p. 881; Dye, pp. 261, 301, 329, 352; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; 'Lockett to Loring, Camp at Kaya-Khor, 17 March 1876', Dossier 50/3, Carton 25; 'Lockett to Stone, 21 March 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; Loring, op. cit., pp. 379–381; F. Harrison Smith, p. 117; [Suzzara], op. cit., p. 682; Talhami, op. cit., p. 160.

38 'Lockett to Stone', ibid. See also Dye, op. cit., pp. 272–274, 258–259; Thurneyssen, op. cit., p. 24.

39 Teferi Teklehaimanot, 'The Ethiopian Feudal Army and its Wars' (Kansas State University PhD, 1971), pp. 71–72.

40 *IIIB*, pp. 901–903, 909; Dye, p. 313; Gabre-Sellassie, p. 70; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, op. cit., p. 408.

41 Dye, pp. 316–319; 'Essex to ?, Gura, 15 March 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; Gabre-Sellassie, p. 71; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.

42 'Essex to ?.'

43 The *Sirdar* was also worried about the safety of *Amir* Hassan. Dye, pp. 317, 330–331; 'Essex to ?', ibid.; Loring, pp. 403–404; 'Ragheb Saddek *Effendi* Diary, 6 March 1876', [French translation], Dossier 3/1, Carton XII, Sudan subcollection, *PI*. [In January 1995, I was told this dossier would be placed in the *PI* collection, Carton 71.]

44 Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.

45 Loring is very suspect as the architect of defeat at Gura. His subsequent publications, both private and public, try to paint Muhammad Ratib as the culprit, but the writer sees 'Old Blizzards' back to his old tricks. For more on this controversy,

consult Douin, and 'Loring to Lockett, New York, 28 July, 5 August, and 14 October 1881', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.

See also Dye, pp. 217, 341; 'Essex to ?'; Loring, pp. 397, 403–404, 409; 'Loring to Stone, Fort Gura, 22 March 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; 'Ragib Saddek Diary'.

46 *IIIB*, pp. 886, 900, 921–922; Dye, pp. 280–281, 335–336, 347; 'Essex to ?'; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Thurneyssen: 24.
47 Dye, p. 369.
48 Dye, ibid., pp. 246–248, 297–298, 336, 349; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, pp. 376–377; 'Ragib Saddek Diary, 14 March 1876'; Thurneyssen: 24.
49 Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.
50 De Coursac, op. cit., p. 313; 'Essex to ?'; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, p. 408; Thurneyssen: 23; Wylde, *Modern Abyssinia*, p. 116.
51 Even Menilik provided a few of these soldiers. *IIIB*, pp. 859, 924; Dye, pp. 395–396; Haggai Erlich, *Ethiopia and Eritrea during the Scramble for Africa: A Political Biography of Ras Alula, 1875–1897* (East Lansing, MI, 1982), pp. 58–59; Gabre-Sellassie, pp. 26, 67; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, p. 348; Pellegrino Matteucci, *In Abissinia* (Milan, 1880), p. 186; Rubenson, p. 328; [Suzzara]: 643.
52 Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.
53 'Loring to Stone, Fort Gura, 22 March 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*.
54 Dye, op. cit., pp. 347–349; 'Essex to Friend, Gura, 15 March 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; Loring, op. cit., pp. 403–405.
55 Loring, op. cit., p. 406.
56 Bairu Tafla (ed. and trans.), *A Chronicle of Yohannes IV* (Wiesbaden, 1977), pp. 149, 151.
57 *IIIB*, p. 928n.; Dye, p. 375; 'Farman to Fish, Cairo, 1 June 1876', *DUSCC*; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, op. cit., pp. 406–407; [Suzarra]: 684.
58 *IIIB*, pp. 927–929; Dye, op. cit., pp. 358, 361, 363; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, op. cit., p. 409; 'Ragib Saddek Diary'.
59 'Essex to Mother, Fort Gura, 20 March 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*.
60 Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC. See also Dye, pp. 365–366, 373; 'Essex to Friend'; A. B. de Guerville, *New Egypt* (New York, 1906), p. 100; Loring, p. 418; Thurneyssen: 25.
61 'Essex to Mother'; see also 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (12 October 1876): 5; 'Essex to Friend'; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, p. 413; 'Ragib Saddek Diary'.
62 Dye, op. cit., p. 381; 'The Egyptian Campaign in Abyssinia': 281; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Loring, op. cit., p. 410.
63 *IIIB*, p. 941; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.
64 A reference to the British catastrophe in Zululand three years later. Col. R. E. Colston, 'Modern Egypt and its People', *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol. XIII (1881): 145.
65 *IIIB*, p. 946; Dye, op. cit., p. 382; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.
66 Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.
67 *IIIB*, p. 945; Dye, p. 388; 'The Egyptian Campaign in Abyssinia': 281; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; 'Lockett to Wife, Abyssinia, 16 March 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; Rubenson, p. 329; Thurneyssen: 26.
68 *IIIB*, pp. 926, 947n.; Dye, p. 388; Gabre-Sellassie, p. 73; Loring, pp. 426–427; Mettucci, pp. 197–198; Thurneyssen: 26; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 23 January 1877', FO 78/ 2631.
69 'Essex to Mother'.
70 Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.
71 'Essex to Mother'. *IIIB*, pp. 943–944; Dye, op. cit., pp. 381–382, 398; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC.

72 'Comanos to Fish, Cairo, 21 April 1876', *DUSCC*. See also *IIIB*, pp. 957, 969; 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (31 January 1877): 10; Lockett, 'Notes …', SHC; Paul Traub, 'Voyage au pays de Bogos', *Bulletin de la société neuchâteloise de géographie*, Vol. 4 (1888): 106, 122.
73 'Lockett to Stone, Massawah, 7 September 1876', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.
74 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (31 January 1877): 10; 'Lockett to Stone', ibid.; Thurneyssen: 27.
75 'Cookson to FO, Cairo, 7 August 1876', FO 78/2503; Dye, 'Letter to Editor', *Moniteur Égyptien* (24 June 1876): 1; 'Irgens to Lockett, Province of Behera, 17 May 1877', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; 'de Lesseps to Ismail, n.p., 14 March 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; 'Mrs. Charles Lockett to Boyd, Cairo, 3 March, and 3 June 1876', *Lockett*.
76 Cited in Haggai Erlich, 'A Contemporary Biography of Ras Alula: A Ge'az Manuscript from Manawe, Tamben, Part I', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (1976): 30.
77 Another winner at this battle was *Ras* Alula, henceforth known as the 'Lion of Gura'. He soon evolved into the Emperor's most trusted lieutenant. *IIIB*, pp. 954–955; Ayele: 172; A. Bonacacina, *Due Anni a Massawa* (Fabriano, 1887), p. 43; de Coursac, op. cit., p. 313; Erlich, 'Contemporary': 32; and, *Ethiopia …*, pp. 58–59; Lockett, 'Recent …', SHC; L. H. Mitchell, *Report on the Seizure by the Abyssinians* (Cairo, 1878), p. 71; Tafla (ed.), p. 189.
78 'Egypt and Abyssinia', *The Times* (31 January 1877): 10.
79 *IIIB*, pp. 942, 954–955; Dye, op. cit., p. 394; 'Dye to Stone, Gura, 22 March 1876', Dossier 9/1, Carton 71, *PI*; J. Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London, 1938), pp. 179–180; Loring, pp. 436–437; Gerhard Rohlfs, 'Ergebnisse meiner Reise nach Abessinien; Bemerkungen zur Karte', *Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen*, Vol. 28 (1882): 405; 'Stanton to Derby, Cairo, 13 May 1876', FO 78/2503; Thurneyssen: 27–28; 'Vivian to FO, Cairo, 23 January 1877', FO 78/2631.

15 END GAME

1 Several works provide insight on peace-making efforts after Gura. See Haggai Erlich, *Ethiopia and Eritrea During the Scramble for Africa: A Political Biography of Ras Alula, 1875–1897* (East Lansing, MI, 1983); Gerald H. Portal, *My Mission to Abyssinia* (1892 rept., New York, 1969); Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, *Yohannes IV of Ethiopia: A Political Biography* (Oxford, 1975).
2 'Lockett to Wife, Massawah, 12 August 1876', *Lockett Papers*, SHC; A. B. Wylde, *'83 to '87 in the Soudan* (1888 rept., New York, 1969), Vol. I, p. 333. For a very good account of Wolde Mikhail and the intricate politics behind his rebellions, see Richard Caulk, 'Bad Men of the Borders: Shum and Shefta in Northern Ethiopia in the 19th Century', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (1984): 201–227.
3 Wylde, I, p. 335.
4 A. B. Wylde, *Modern Abyssinia* (1901), p. 28.
5 For more on this see Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855–1974* (1991), pp. 45–48.
6 Caulk: 210; 'Lockett to Wife', ibid.; Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, *Yohannes IV of Ethiopia* (1975), p. 274.
7 Caulk: 210. Wolde Mikhail died in 1906, in his own bed.
8 Caulk: 212. On the significance of Egyptian fortifications, and their role in preventing a complete Abyssinian victory, see Johann Baron von Müller,

'Tagebuch meiner Reise durch das Gebiet des Hababb und Beni-Amer', *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, Vol. 18 (1883): 412–438; and Gabriel Simon, *Voyage en Abyssinie et chez les Gallas-Raias: L'Éthiopie, ses mœurs, ses traditions, le Negouss Iohannes, les églises monolithes de Lalibela* (Paris, 1885), p. 367. See also Lockett, 'Notes on the Abyssinian Campaign of the Egyptian Army, 1875–1876', *Correspondence*, SHC; 'Wylde to FO, Jeddah, 23 April 1877', FO 78/2632.

9 The situation in the Sudan was so bad; Egypt even provided Remingtons and Miniés, along with ammunition, in an abrupt effort to appease *Ras* Alula. 'Chemside to Marcopoli Bey, Suakin, 4 September 1885', FO 78/3803. Sven Rubenson, *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence* (1976), pp. 356–358, provides a complete text of the Adua Treaty of 1884, while Bahru Zewde offers a good interpretation of British intentions, pp. 54–55. An excellent look at the Sudanese uprising is found in Ismat Hasan Zulfo, *Karari: The Sudanese Account of the Battle of Omdurman* (1980).

10 'Derrick to Lockett, Cairo, 7 July 1878', *Lockett Papers*, SHC.

11 Mohamed Hussein Haekal, *La Dette publique égyptienne* (1912), pp. 79–87. Two other excellent sources on Egypt's finances, and their impact on national policy, are Abdel-Maksud Hamza, *The Public Debt of Egypt, 1854–1876* (1944); and David S. Landes, *Bankers and Pashas: International Finance and Economic Imperialism in Egypt* (1958).

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