

DITDC ARMIES

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DEATH IN THE DARK CONTINENT

Here are a few additional army lists for *Death in The Dark Continent*, inspired by what I have been reading lately. The first two reflect new insights derived from Mike Snook's *Go Strong Into The Desert*, and partially replace the Mahdist and Beja lists (numbers 15 & 19) for the period up to the Mahdi's death in 1885, though that list should still be used for later Mahdist armies. The others are a selection of odd and obscure subjects which may be based rather more on guesswork than most of those in the rule book, but they are nevertheless as historical as I can make them.



91. RED SEA COAST TRIBES (1870-1882).

This list covers the non-Arabic speaking tribes of the Red Sea littoral of Sudan until they joined the Mahdist uprising. List number 19 in the rulebook should still be used from 1883 onwards, but it does not fully cater for those groups which previously had no access to firearms. We assume that not all the Warriors were as motivated as they became under Mahdist influence, but that skirmishing tribesmen were somewhat more aggressive in the days when they had to rely on spears.

- Ag 0, Tribal.

• Warriors (6 points)	4-9
• Skirmishers with spears (4 points)	0-4

Notes

1. A Chief may be a Light Horseman with spear (7 points).
2. Up to half the Warrior and Skirmisher bases fielded may be upgraded to Elite (+2 points if Warriors, +4 points if Skirmishers).
3. Any or all bases may be mounted on camels (+2 points).
4. Home terrain is Mountain.
5. Stratagems: Surprise.

92. KORDOFAN AND NILE ARABS (1870-1885).

Kordofan is a large region of savannah west of the Upper Nile which was inhabited by a mixture of sedentary farmers and nomadic stock breeders. Nominally under Egyptian control from the 1820s, it revolted spectacularly in 1881 under Muhammad Ahmad ibn Abdallah, who claimed to be a “Mahdi” or Islamic Messiah. Other Arabic speaking tribes living along the White Nile later joined them and fought in a similar style, although they were probably slower to adopt the distinctive Mahdist costume or jibbeh. This was the army that stormed Khartoum and killed General Gordon.

- Ag 0, Tribal before 1881, Ag 2, Organised thereafter.

• Baggara Arabs: Light Horse with spears (7 points)	0-3
• Warriors (6 points)	4-8
• Skirmishers with spears (4 points)	0-4
• Former slavers, bazingers etc: Untrained Soldiers with muskets (7 points)	0-1
• Jihadiyya: Soldiers with breechloaders (20 points) (after 1883 only)	0-1
• Captured artillery: Untrained light rifled field guns (20 points) (after 1883 only)	0-2

Notes

1. A Chief representing the Mahdi Muhammad Ahmad ibn Abdallah (1881 – 1885) may be Outstanding (+25 points).
2. After 1880 any or all Warriors may be upgraded to Elite (+2 points) as Mahdist Ansar.
3. After 1882 up to half the Warrior bases fielded may be equipped with breechloaders captured from the Egyptians (+4 points). Up to half the Skirmisher bases may also be upgrade to Untrained with breechloaders (8 points).
4. Home terrain is Savannah.
5. Allies: Nuer or similar tribes (List 35), Shilluk (List 83), (both after 1881 only).
6. Stratagems: Terror (after 1880 only), Surprise





93. TRIBAL ETHIOPIAN (1870-1897).

Under this heading are all the peoples of the Ethiopian highlands who were not subject to the Emperors Yohannes IV and his successor Menelik II. These included Wollo in the north, and Gojjam and Welega in the west, all of which came under central control in the 1880s, and a cluster of kingdoms in the south and west which were conquered by the Emperor Menelik II after his accession in 1889 in a series of campaigns known as the “Agar Maqnat”, or “Colonisation and Christianisation”. The ruler of the southern region of Wolaita in the south west relied heavily on fortifications in his unsuccessful resistance to Menelik’s armies in 1896. Neighbouring Kaffa was conquered in the following year despite resorting to guerrilla warfare and scorched earth tactics. This list may also represent some of the less well equipped rebel forces in the frequent Ethiopian civil wars. All of these groups shared much of the Amhara culture of the Ethiopian kingdom, but were less likely to have access to firearms than the royal armies.

- Ag 1, Organised.

• Heavy Cavalry with close combat weapons only (8 points) or muskets (11 points)	0-1
• Highland or Galla cavalry: Light Horse with spears (7 points)	0-3
• Traditionally armed highlanders: Warriors (6 points)	3-8
• Untrained Skirmishers with muskets (5 points)	0-2
• Tribal allies: Skirmishers with spears, slings or bows (4 points)	0-4

Notes

1. Except in a Kaffa army, up to quarter of the Warrior bases fielded may be equipped with muskets (+2 points).
2. Up to 1 Warrior unit may be upgraded to Elite (+2 points) as a Chief’s bodyguard, but only if the Chief is also a Warrior.
3. If defending, any musket armed troops in a Wolaita army may be deployed in trenches, even though this rule normally applies only to Soldiers (see page 53 of the rules),
4. In a Kaffa army, up to half the spear armed Skirmishers fielded may be upgraded to Elite as Omo or southern Sudanese tribes.
5. Home terrain may be Forest or Mountain if Kaffa, otherwise Mountain.
6. Defences: Town walls, Tembes, Bomas (all). Trenches, Pitfall traps (Wolaita only).

94. MOORISH.

The “Moors” of what is now Mauretania were mainly nomadic Berber tribes of the Sahara. Their homeland was largely outside our area, but they did raid into Senegal well into the Colonial period, and including them will allow people to use their Beau Geste Arabs with these rules. Their society was divided into Bidhan or “white Moors”, including the Hassaniya Arabs who considered themselves an elite, and Haratin or “black Moors”, who were mostly the descendants of slaves and were more likely to engage in farming than herding. The latter would not necessarily be taken on long distance raids and so are not compulsory, despite comprising a majority of the population.

- Ag 2, Tribal.

• Bidhan: Light Horse with spears (7 points)	4–9
• Haratin: Skirmishers with spears or bows (4 points)	0–4

Notes

1. Up to half of the Light Horse bases fielded may replace their spears with muskets (+2 points). After 1890 up to half of the gun armed bases may upgrade these to breechloaders (an additional +9 points).
2. Any Light Horse figures may be depicted as mounted on camels instead of horses, but this does not change their classification.
3. Up to a quarter of the Skirmisher bases may be upgraded to Untrained with muskets (+1 point).
4. Home terrain is Steppe.
5. Stratagems: Scouting.



95. GOGO.

The Gogo of Tanganyika were previously classed as ordinary Villagers (List 1), but in view of how large they loom in explorers’ accounts they might be worth a second look. They were actually more interested in extorting tribute from caravans than in conquest, and although they defeated several Arab forces, most Europeans were intimidated into paying up. The Gogo fought in typical skirmishing style, though the allied Humba were said to be descended from the Masai and may have retained their eagerness for close combat. The traditional tactics of the Gogo were so successful that they never bothered much with guns, and their main strengths remained their numbers and the speed with which they could muster for battle. For this reason they have the option of being classed as Disciplined, so that they can benefit from extra movement chances and get flank marches on quickly. H M Stanley also regarded the Gogo as exceptionally well schooled in various dirty tricks and “foxy-craft”.

- Ag 0, Organised or Disciplined.

• Gogo: Skirmishers with spears or bows (4 points)	4–9
• Untrained Skirmishers with muskets (5 points)	0–1
• Humba: Warriors (6 points)	0–4

Notes

1. Up to 3 spear-armed Skirmisher units may be upgraded to Elite (+4 points).
2. The musket armed unit may not be more than 4 bases strong.
3. Home terrain is Savannah.
4. Defences: Tembes.
5. Stratagems: Surprise, Scouting, Terror, Witchcraft.

96. PULLEINES LAMBS (1878-1879).

Pulleine's Rangers, better known as "Pulleine's Lambs", was a militia unit created in South Africa in 1878 under the auspices of Lieutenant Colonel Pulleine of the 24th Foot, who was later killed at Isandhwana. It was staffed by unemployed English navvies taken off cancelled road building projects and offenders transferred from regular units as a punishment, and was notoriously undisciplined. We learn about it mainly from the unreliable memoirs of George Hamilton-Browne, who claimed to have commanded it, and tells many colourful tales of the men's propensity for drinking and brawling. He says that they never saw serious action, but that they would surely have made an impression if they had. There was a leavening of men with proper military training, but Warriors seems the most suitable classification for the rest because of their eagerness for hand to hand combat and reluctance to practice their musketry.

- Ag 2, Organised.

● Regular officers: Muzungu with breechloaders (28 points)	1-2
● Trained men: Soldiers with breechloaders (20 points)	1-2
● Navvies and similar: Elite Warriors with breechloaders (12 points)	2-6

Notes

1. The Chief must be a Muzungu.
2. If defending, any or all units may be deployed in trenches. Although this rule normally applies only to Soldiers (see page 53 of the rules), digging was obviously what the navvies were trained for. Whether they would have been happy to stay on the defensive in their trenches was another matter.
3. Home terrain is Steppe.
4. Defences: Tembe, Wagon Laager.
5. Allies: British in South Africa (List 68).

