

Newdigate Owen Burne was born in London on the 9th.April 1898 . On the 1891 Census his grandparents were living at Hare Dene House,Albury Heath.In 1911 his widowed grandmother was living at Lea Cottage,Albury.His father,Brigadier General Rainold Burne had been born in Albury;as his father was in the army the family lived in various places.His great grandfather was Viscount Sidmouth of Cookes Place,the minister at the Catholic Apostolic Church.

Newdigate was gazetted a Lieutenant on the 18th.April 1916 attached to the Indian Army and the following year he was posted to the 40th.Pathans.The Pathans or Pashtuns mainly come from northern Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In 1917 the 40th Pathans were in what is now called Tanzania where Portugal and its allies Belgium and the British Empire were fighting the Germans.On the 19th.July Newdigate was mortally wounded at the Battle of Narungombe.The Pathans found themselves in a large hollow that was commanded by a German machine gun.Newdigate was taken to Kilwas hospital where he died on the 27th.October 1917 aged 19.The 40th Pathans lost three officers killed,two wounded,12 men killed and 25 sepoy's wounded.Newdigate Burne is buried in Dar es Salaam War Cemetery.

The 40th Pathans Great War Memorial is at Attock in Pakistan.The memorial is in the shape of a 303 bullet.

1. Memorial

2. 1891 Census

3. 1901 Census

4. 1911 Census

5. The 40th Pathans in Action in East Africa - January 1916 to February 1918

6. The Battle of Narungombe

In Memory of

Lieutenant

Newdigate Owen Burne

40th Pathans who died on 27 October 1917 Age 19

Son of Brig. Gen. R. O. Burne, C.B.E., and Mrs. S. M. Burne, of 77, Biddulph Mansions, Elgin Avenue, Maida Hill, London, England. Educated at Rottingdean School and Uppingham (classical scholar).

Remembered with Honour

Dar Es Salaam War Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

On landing in East Africa the regiment included individuals and drafts from 12 other regiments. As the regiment arrived at Mombasa a local British unit, the Arab Rifles, was ambushed with heavy casualties down the coastline near the border with German East Africa. No. 1 Company under Major H.A. Carter VC, 101st Grenadiers attached to 40th Pathans, immediately marched to Mwele Mdogo, a defensive position near the border. No. 3 Double Company, commanded by Captain G.S. Douglas, 18th Infantry attached to 40th Pathans, followed. Sadly at Mwele Mdogo early on the morning of 13th January 1916 Major Herbert Augustine Carter VC was found dead outside his tent with a bullet wound in the headⁱⁱ. Regimental headquarters and No. 2 Double Company also moved to Mwele Mdogo where extensive patrolling took place. Detachments from the regiment occupied posts on Kasigao mountain and Samburu station on the Uganda Railway, and these deployments were effective until the end of March.

During this initial period in British East Africa drafts from other regiments except linked battalions were withdrawn and the 40th Pathans was re-constituted with drafts from the Depot at Fategarh. Double Companies were changed into a single company establishment that read:

- No. 1 Company – Pathans and Punjabis of the 40th.
- No. 2 Company – Punjabis of the 40th.
- No. 3 Company – Dogras of the 40th.
- No. 4 Company – Punjabis of the 33rd and 46th Punjabis (the two linked battalions).

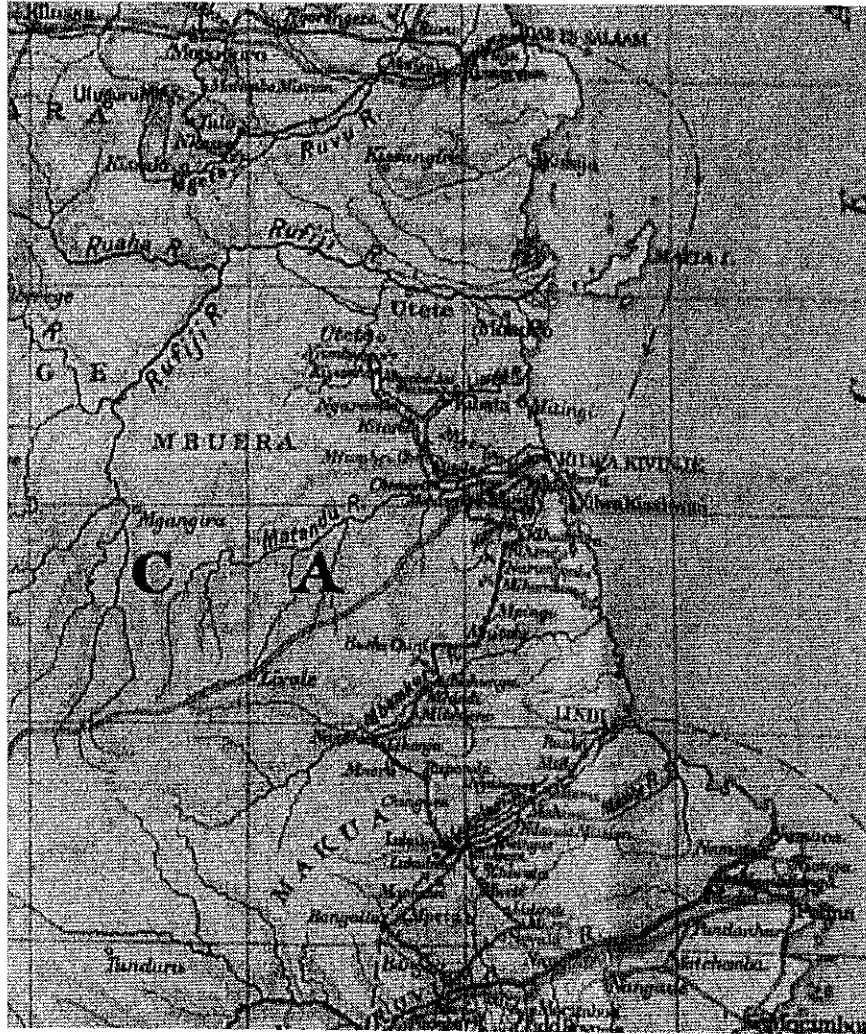
The advance into German East Africa

During March 1916 British forces in British East Africa advanced into German East Africa under the command of the South African General Jan Smuts. The 40th Pathans moved across the border at Taveta on 9th April and then camped near Moshi on the lower slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro until the seasonal rains ended a month later. During this period a large draft arrived partly from the Depot in India and partly from Mesopotamia. The men from the Depot were absorbed into the existing companies but the men from Mesopotamia were trans-frontier Pathans from the 20th and 26th Punjabis and they were formed into No. 5 Company. Also during this month the African climate with its accompanying diseases started to take a toll with many men going sick with fevers such as malaria. Jigger fleas were encountered that wormed their way under toe-nails unless the feet had been rubbed with kerosene oil; bad cases of jigger fleas needed the amputation of toes.

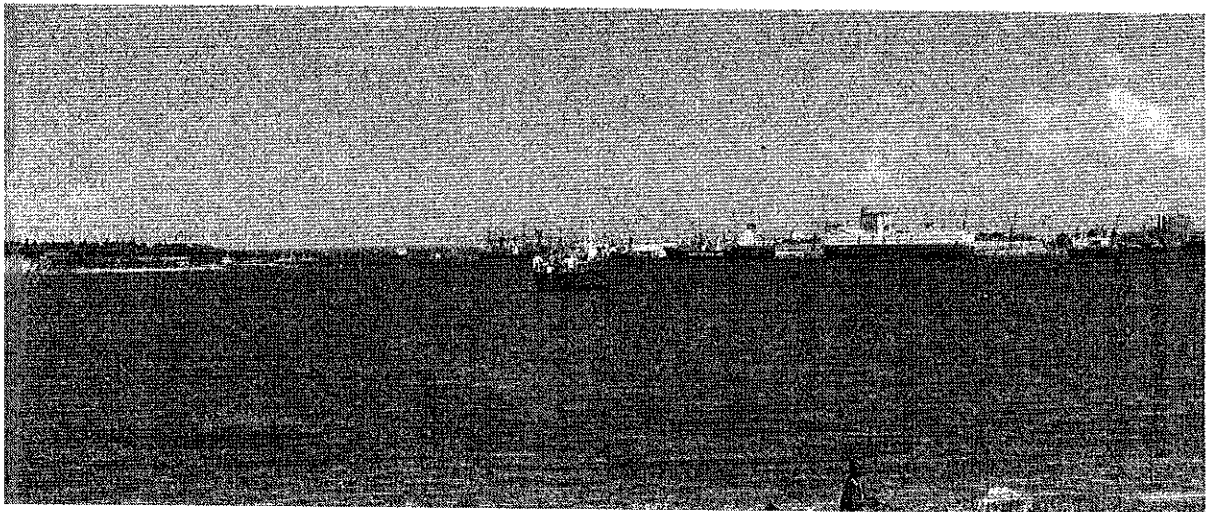
The regiment had brought four machine guns from France and two more were issued in BEA. They were distributed one to each company with one in reserve; the carriers were cheerful African Kavirondo tribesmen from the region near Lake Victoria whose bravery in carrying the guns and ammunition into and out of battle was to result in many Kavirondo casualties.

As part of the 2nd East African Brigade the 40th Pathans marched down the line of the German Usambara Railway, first coming into contact with the enemy at Mombo on 9th June 1916. However the German Schutztruppe, as the local army was named, had no intention of standing and fighting and it sprang ambushes before withdrawing, leaving behind demolished bridges and ripped-up railway track. Although by the end of June the regiment had only suffered a handful of battle casualties from enemy machine gun and artillery fire, it had lost 475 men to sickness and disease during the brief advance; the regimental strength was now 250 sepoys. The sick men that were not invalided to India slowly trickled back to the regiment from hospital, but many of them quickly relapsed and needed evacuating again. Men were not the only casualties of disease and when following the routes of the South African mounted formations the tracks were littered with the decomposing carcasses of horses and mules that had succumbed to the bites of tsetse flies.

The 40th Pathans was employed on Lines of Communication security duties south and east of Handeni until late August when it marched into Bagamoyo, north of Dar Es Salaam, which had been captured by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines. Just over 1,000 men were by now on the strength of the regiment in East Africa but over half of those were sick in hospital. Captain E.H.V. Hodge, Indian Medical Service, was hospitalised himself and Captain H.S. Golam-Hossain, Indian Medical Service, was posted in as the replacement Regimental Medical Officer. Prior to Captain Haji arriving No. 914 2nd Class Sub Assistant Surgeon Arjan Dass Gossain, Indian Subordinate Medical Department, had been acting as Regimental Medical Officer; Arjan Dass Gossain was to be rewarded for his efforts by the award of an **Indian Order of Merit, 2nd Class**, in 1917. Colonel Mitchell was evacuated with prolonged dysentery and Major H.S. Tyndall, 40th Pathans, temporarily assumed command of the regiment.



Map of German East Africa southern coast

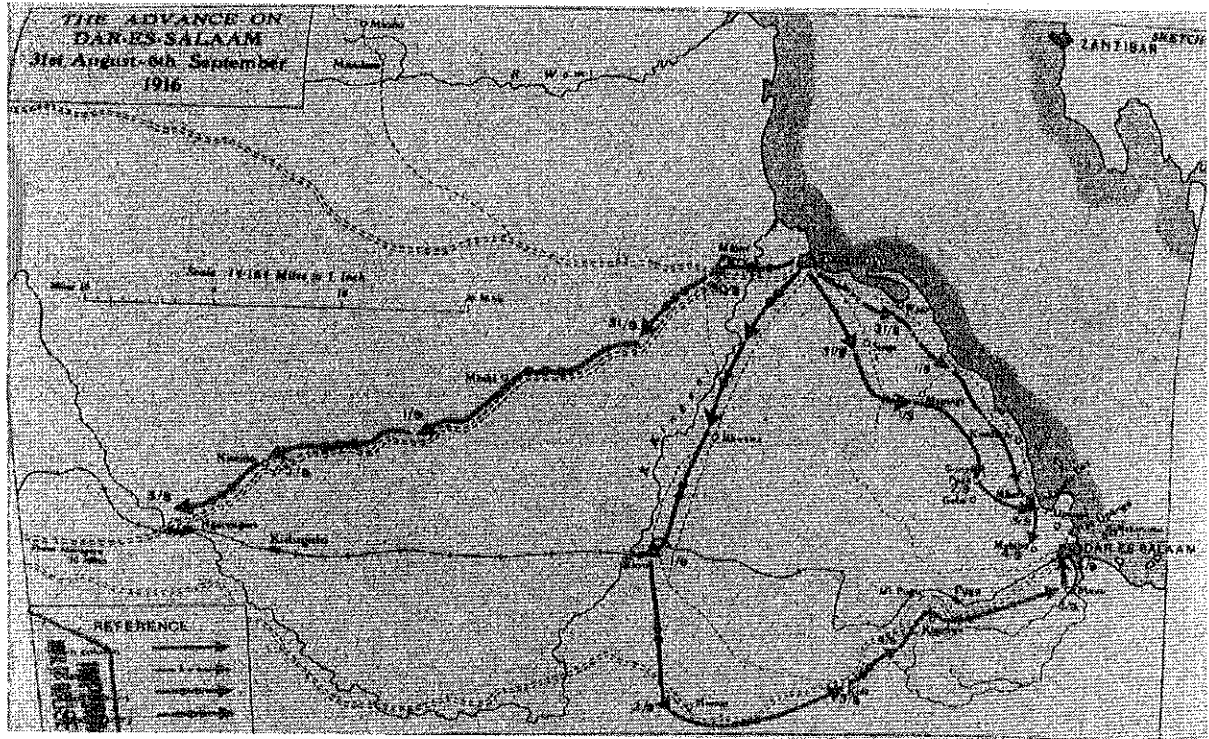


Dar-es-Salaam Harbour

The advance on Dar Es Salaam

On 31st August the 40th Pathans marched out of Bagamoyo on an independent mission connected with the capture of Dar Es Salaam; three

other British columns also marched out with differing tasks. The Pathans were to march south-west through Mbawa to Ruwu station on the German Central Railway. If the adjacent bridge over the Kingani River was intact then the regiment was to guard it, but if the bridge was blown the Pathans were to loop eastwards and occupy Pugu Hill west of Dar Es Salaam. Accompanying the Pathans column were two British intelligence officers with African Scouts, and the Bishop of Zanzibar with a Labour Corps of Zanzibaris who carried the column's supplies.



The Pathans had a small contact at Mbawa during which Subedar Najibullah, 46th Punjabis attached to 40th Pathans, and one sepoy were wounded. At Ruwu on 1st September the railway bridge was seen to be completely destroyed. Quickly moving south to Msenga two Germans and a few askari from the 3rd Schutzen Company were captured. Major H.R. Lawrence, Indian Political Department attached to 40th Pathans, was sent with the Dogra company and two machine guns to attack Kola, which was taken after a sharp fight, Jemadar Mainu being slightly wounded. Twelve Germans were captured and one killed. With the remainder of the regiment Major Tyndall captured nine Germans, a few Askari and about 2,000 porter loads of rations, clothing and supplies in a large depot at Kasinga. Major Lawrence made a night march through the bush to join the regiment at Kasinga. On 5th September the 40th Pathans marched into Dar Es Salaam, the town having been surrendered by the Germans the previous day.

Awards made for Tyndall's very successful operations west of Dar Es Salaam were the **Distinguished Service Order** to Major Henry Stewart Tyndall, and the **Military Cross** to the acting regimental adjutant, Temporary 2nd Lieutenant Reginald Trelawny Thornton, Indian Army Reserve of Officers attached to 40th Pathans. Reginald Thornton's citation read: *For conspicuous gallantry in action. He displayed great coolness and initiative when heavy machine-gun fire was opened on his regiment which was acting as advance guard. He rendered valuable service during the coast operations.* No. 4079 Sepoy Chamel Singh was awarded an **Indian Distinguished Service Medal** for saving Major Lawrence's life during the Kola Fighting. Chamel Singh was also Mentioned in Despatches and he received the Russian Medal of Saint George, 3rd Class. Another recipient of the **Indian Distinguished Service Medal** at this time was No. 2718 Sepoy Mohammed Gafar Khan.



4079 Sepoy Chamel Singh's IDSM and Russian Medal of St George

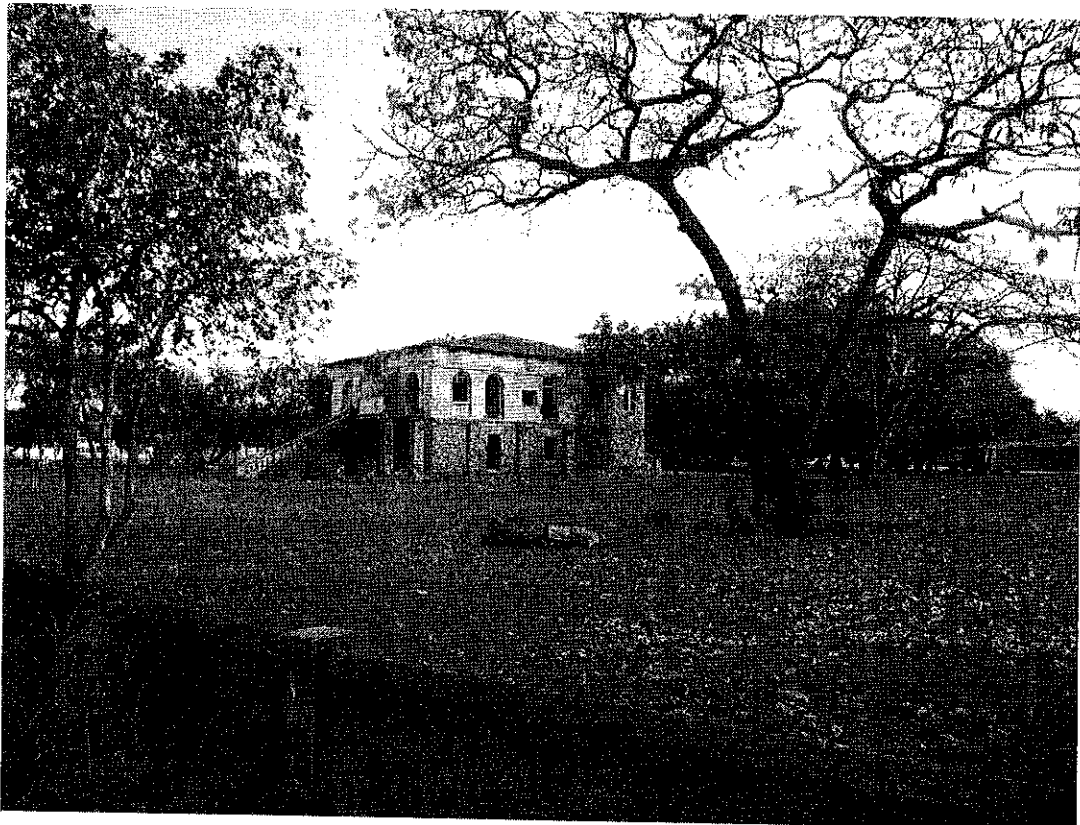
Operations on the southern German East Africa coast

The operational tempo now increased for the 40th Pathans. After seizing, Dar Es Salaam the British decided to occupy all other ports south of that city up to the border with Portuguese East Africa, now Mozambique. Since the start of the war two disguised German blockade-running ships had arrived in German East Africa with weapons including howitzers, ammunition, military supplies and artillerymen; now points of access along the southern coastline were to be denied to German shipping.

On 11th September a force of around 1,100 men embarked at Dar Es Salaam; the commander for land operations was Major Henry Tyndall and his force comprised:

- The 40th Pathans.
- a composite battalion (detachments of 129th Baluchis & 5th Light Infantry).
- 200 Zanzibar and Mafia Rifles.
- 200 Royal Marines with 2 Hotchkiss guns.
- 60 sailors.
- A total of 12 machine guns, a pack-radio and teams of local porters.

On 13th September the force made an unopposed landing at Mikindani, leaving 3 officers and 117 men of the Baluchis, plus 3 naval machine guns, there as a garrison. The remainder of the force marched up the coast to Sudi Bay, where the most recent blockade runner had landed its cargo. Sudi was also occupied without opposition on 15th September. Two of the Baluch companies were left there whilst the remainder of the force re-embarked by boats, transferred to trawlers, and was then taken to the transports that had to lie some way off the shallow shore. Sailing north the 40th Pathans was landed at Lindi on 17th September. A detachment of 5th Light Infantry was landed further north at Kiswere the next dayⁱⁱⁱ.



Lindi German Boma

At Lindi 40 mines were discovered on the beaches and safely dealt with whilst the navy dredged 3 modern sea mines out of the harbour. In Lindi with Henry Tyndall and his Pathans were marines and their Hotchkiss guns, two naval machine guns with their crews and two Intelligence Officers. A defensive perimeter was constructed around Lindi town. But there were Germans in the area. They had not contested the landings because of the firepower superiority provided by the Royal Navy, but nevertheless they intended to keep the British garrisons close to the coastline.

Colonel Mitchell had been released from hospital and it was decided to maintain the Pathans' Battalion HQ at Dar Es Salaam, so transfers of administrative staff were made back there, leaving Henry Tyndall with 7 British officers, 4 Indian officers and 234 rank and file as detachment commander at Lindi. He quickly decided on offensive action and obtained naval gunfire barrages against reported enemy positions to the west. On 27th September Tyndall took 100 rifles and 4 machine guns, supported by porters carrying water, and marched 25 kilometres west to the reported enemy location. His advance came across enemy observation points with telephone lines and then he came near the German hand-powered trolley line that ran from Lindi port to service agricultural plantations inland.



Lindi Harbour

At noon he was opposed by a strong Schutztruppe detachment in concealed trenches that fired at 300 yards range when the Pathans crossed an open sandy clearing. The porters fled discarding their loads of water in the bush. Fortunately the shooting of the enemy Askari was very poor. The German ambush had caught the Pathans in a poor position but they maintained their firing line for three hours. Later Subadar Jan Gul, 26th Punjabis attached 40th Pathans, was awarded an **Indian Order of Merit, 2nd Class**: *For conspicuous gallantry and courageous example in leading his men across the open up to 300 yards from the enemy's position and maintaining them there for three hours under very heavy fire.*

4799 Naik Punna Khan also received an **Indian Order of Merit, 2nd Class**: *For conspicuous gallantry in action on 27th September 1916. He maintained his machine gun for three hours under very heavy frontal machine gun and rifle fire 300 yards from the enemy's position. During this time the enemy brought up another machine gun on his right flank in order to enfilade our line, but Naik Punna Khan silenced this machine gun every time it opened fire, until he was wounded.*

The Germans sent reinforcements up the trolley line and Tyndall had to withdraw. At this point an enemy counter-attack of 20 Askari led by a German sergeant captured a machine gun, killing or wounding and capturing most of the crew. Things started to go badly wrong for the Pathans but 2nd Lieutenant Dennis George Whigham-Teasdale, Indian Army Reserve of Officers attached to 40th Pathans, saved the day and earned a **Military Cross**: *For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He handled a machine gun with great skill, and thereby enabled the rearguard to withdraw at a critical time from a difficult situation.* No. 4699 Sepoy Aijal, 40th Pathans, rushed an enemy Askari who emptied his magazine at him, but Aijal was unwounded and he captured the Askari, earning an **Indian Meritorious Service Medal** for this deed.

Tyndall withdrew his force and marched back to Lindi, having lost 4212 Sepoy Sher Ali killed, and having been himself wounded along with 11 other men. One sepoy with a broken leg, Naik Sanam Gul, was brought in under a flag of truce by the Germans^{iv}. It was believed that the German casualties were 10 Askari and 4 Europeans killed, including the Sergeant who captured the machine gun.

Operations near Kilwa

On 30th September 1916 the 40th Pathans concentrated on the coast at Kilwa. Here an issue of clothing was made and eagerly received as many sepoys had been without boots for several weeks and others were

wearing captured German uniforms; logistics was never a subject that General Smuts devoted time towards and neither was the administration of African and Indian troops. An intense patrolling programme was initiated, Subadar Mehrab Din capturing a German and an Askari and shooting a prowling lioness. Captain Eric Conway Irwin, 20th Punjabis attached to 40th Pathans, raided an enemy post at Samanga and was awarded a **Military Cross**: *For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when in command of a patrol. He carried out a successful raid on a strong hostile position and accounted for twelve of the enemy.*

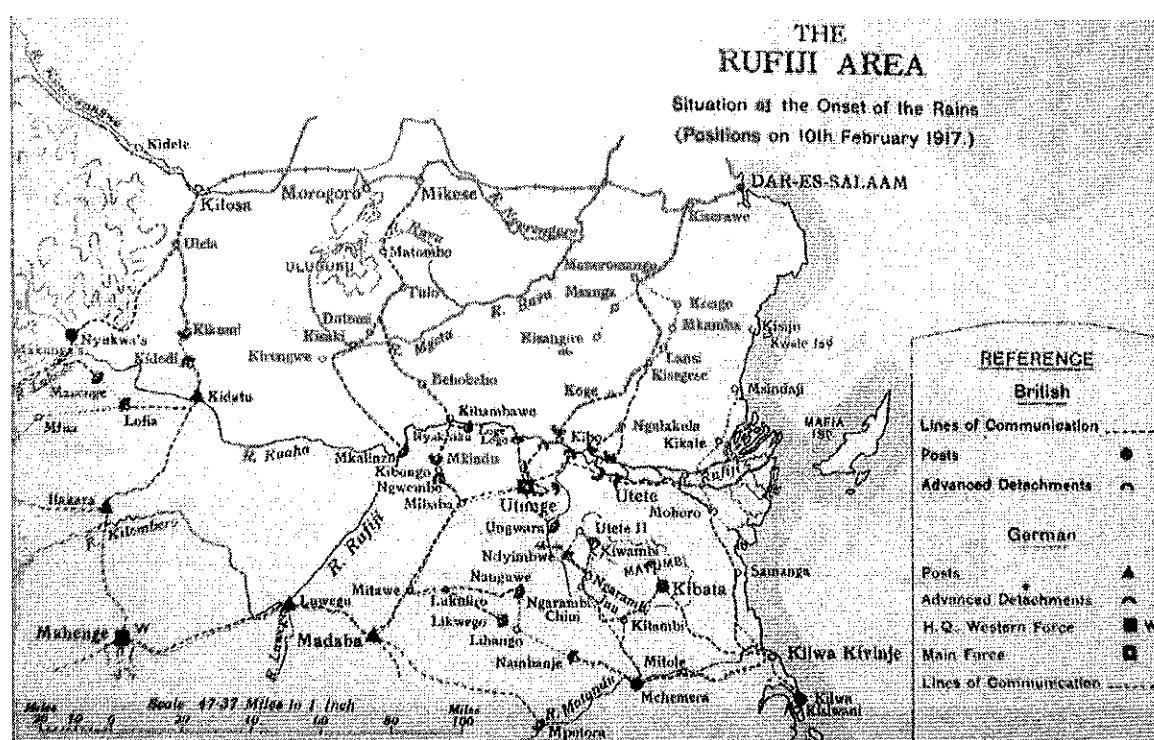
In early December a British outpost at Kibata was besieged and attacked by a strong German force that included heavy artillery^v. The 40th Pathans and the Gold Coast Regiment marched up to Kitambe to threaten the enemy's right flank. The Gold Coasters advanced and soon were involved in serious fighting, losing two British officers killed with seven others wounded and 30 soldiers killed and 86 wounded. The Pathans were in support, occupying picquets on vital ground until the Gold Coast Regiment withdrew; the Pathans then occupied Gold Coast Hill as it had been named, and defended it until 22nd December when a withdrawal was ordered. Whilst on this operation the 40th Pathans had two machine gun porters killed and two others wounded, and 15 sepoy and Subedar Najibullah, 46th Punjabis attached to 40th Pathans, also wounded; however an average of 10 men per day had been evacuated with malaria. On 29th December 1916 Colonel Mitchell was posted to command a battalion of his own regiment and Major Tyndall was appointed to command the 40th Pathans.

The Pathans remained in the vicinity of Kitambe for a couple of months, working closely with the Calcutta Volunteer Battery of 12-pounder guns and the 22nd Derajat Mountain Battery. However the supply system failed leaving the sepoy on half-rations during this time; regimental game-hunting parties scoured the area but without much success, although Subedars Gul Zaman and Mehrab Din did sometimes bring meat home.

In late February the regiment was ordered to concentrate at Kitambe and as Captain Irwin's company left its post at Kiyombo the enemy made a surprise attack. The porters disappeared into the bush and shed their loads and the sepoy jumped back into their trenches to fight off four attacks. Jemadar Sher Ahmad, 26th Punjabis attached to 40th Pathans, was awarded an **Indian Order of Merit, 2nd Class**: *For gallantry and devotion to duty in the field.* Havildar Mir Dast, 26th Punjabis attached to 40th Pathans, was shot through the liver but crawled off into the bush. The enemy took him prisoner but he escaped and continued crawling through the bush for several days until he made contact with the

regiment. For this extraordinary feat he was awarded an **Indian Distinguished Service Medal**.

At Kitambe full rations were issued and the men could rest. A draft of two Indian officers and 170 sepoy was sent from the 46th Punjabis in India, however before the draft reached the Pathans 50 sepoy had been hospitalised with fever. This draft had not been issued with rifle oil since landing in East Africa, and on arrival at Kitambe many of the rifle barrels were corroded because of the heavy rain and consequent mud. On 28th March 1917 2nd Lieutenant John Francis Gardener, 40th Pathans, died at Kibata hospital of enteric fever after a long illness. At that time the 40th Pathans was down to only three fit British officers.



The fight at Rumbo

By April 1917 German detachments were threatening Kilwa from the south-west and a British entrenched camp was established at Rumbo with a forward post on the Ngaura River; the 40th Pathans garrisoned Rumbo. Henry Tyndall was ordered to take out a force to attack and halt a German move towards Kilwa. His available troops were:

- the 40th Pathans with 3 machine guns, less 100 men left to hold Rumbo camp.
- 2 mountain guns of the Gold Coast Regiment Artillery Battery, with an escort of 30 men from 'A' Company Gold Coast Regiment.

- 140 Askari of Nos 1 and 3 Companies of 2/2nd King's African Rifles with 2 machine guns.
- A Royal Navy Lewis Gun detachment.
- The 22nd (Derajat) Mountain Battery, Indian Army, which remained at Rumbo camp.

The Royal Navy detachment had previously manned a 12-pounder gun during the Kibata fighting, but the gun produced so much smoke after firing that German gunners had been able to easily identify its location and return fire. The gun was withdrawn to the coast but the detachment was issued with Lewis Guns and tasked with supporting infantry operations.

Tyndall only had two other British officers in the 40th Pathans at that time, and he appointed one of them, 2nd Lieutenant J.T.G. Humphreys, to be his staff officer in a Column Headquarters that he decided to form. Humphreys had recently joined the regiment and had not yet learned to speak to the sepoys in an Indian dialect. Unfortunately but perhaps understandably Tyndall did not appoint an officer to command his porters who carried reserve ammunition and supplies for the column. Facing the British were over 300 German Askari and 4 machine guns of the 11th and 17th Field Companies under Captain von Lieberman and Lieutenant Bueschel. The Germans occupied high ground that rose away from the southern bank of the Ngaura River.

Tyndall's force left Rumbo at 0700 hours on 18th April and waded across the Ngaura which at that time was knee-deep. However rain began to fall and the river began to rise. The single-file track being followed passed through high elephant grass for over a kilometre and a half and the ground on either side was covered in dense bush. No 3 Company of Dogras was the Pathan advance guard and at 0945 hours it drove back an enemy piquet on the track, and from then on the Germans laid increasingly heavy fire down on the British troops. The Gold Coast Regiment 2.95-inch guns came into action. The Pathans advanced Nos 2 and 4 companies on either side of No 3 Company but forward movement became impossible as enemy machine guns dominated the ground ahead.

The 2/2nd King's African Rifles detachment under Major W.T. Gregg was detailed to outflank the 17th Field Company position on a spur on the left of the track whilst the 40th Pathans confronted the enemy on and near the track. However von Lieberman held his ground against the King's African Rifles whilst Bueschel mounted fierce flank attacks against the Pathans'

advance. The Pathan veterans remaining in the unit held their positions but lost two machine guns, both of the weapons having their crews shot down. The Havildars commanding the gun teams, 3214 Bachitru (Dogras) and 3570 Haider Ali (Pathans) were both killed. The advance guard commander, Subedar Mainu, was also killed and confusion reigned amongst the sepoy due to lack of sufficient leaders in the platoons and companies. The forward companies were severely shaken. Tyndall and Humphreys issued and despatched orders to companies but they were not heeded. Tyndall himself moved around the battlefield but found that the sepoy did not know what to do because of the absence of known leaders giving them orders that they could obey.

One order sent to the King's African Rifles detachment was to re-capture the two lost Pathan machine guns. Gregg crossed the track to try to find out what was going on and saw that Major Robert Naismyth MacPherson, 40th Pathans, the only British officer with the Pathan rifle companies, had been shot dead with a bullet through his heart. He had been killed whilst trying to rally his men. Gregg was unable to recapture the lost machine guns as his Askari were heavily involved with fighting the 17th Field Company.

Meanwhile the Gold Coast Regiment gunners were firing at likely enemy locations ahead of the advance, but their shells were bursting short of the intended targets as they impacted on tree branches that were in the way. The Battery Commander, Captain J.G. Foley, believed that only the Pathans were to his front. Then his Battery Trumpeter approached to inform him that the men seen ahead in the bush were in fact German Askari who had infiltrated forward. Foley did not believe this until the trumpeter fired at one of the men and the bush came alive with enemy returning fire. Foley quickly issued orders to take the guns out of action and transport them back across the river whilst two teams of Gold Coast riflemen alternately charged the enemy, now only 20 metres away, and then leap-frogged back to the river. This tactic kept the enemy from over-running the guns. The withdrawal of the guns was supported by 50 King's African Rifles Askari and by 70 sepoy under Subedar Sher Ahmad IOM (26th Punjabis attached to 40th Pathans).

Tyndall rallied the men that he could locate in the dense bush and fought a defensive action to protect the withdrawal of the guns. Fortunately most of the German Askari were firing high due to the higher ground that they were occupying. When the guns were across the river the Punjabi company of the 40th Pathans was ordered to be rearguard. The company commander, Subedar Ghulam Ali, fought a hectic but sound withdrawal action for which he later received a **Military Cross** with the citation: *For*

conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He conducted the withdrawal of a rearguard with exceptional gallantry and skill. He set a magnificent example to his men.

Fortunately for the Pathans a tree had fallen across the river and by clinging on to it a hazardous crossing could be made, but the remaining Pathan machine gun was lost in the turbulent water. Many loads of ammunition and stores were also lost in the river as panic set in amongst the porters. Casualty evacuation across the river became extremely difficult and hazardous. As the retreating British troops neared Rumbo Camp they heard the 2.75-inch guns of the 22nd (Derajat) Mountain Battery firing over their heads to deter the German pursuit. The mountain gunners had established an Observation Post in a tall tree, but the observers up aloft had to endure the ferocious stings of a colony of red ants that had been disturbed.

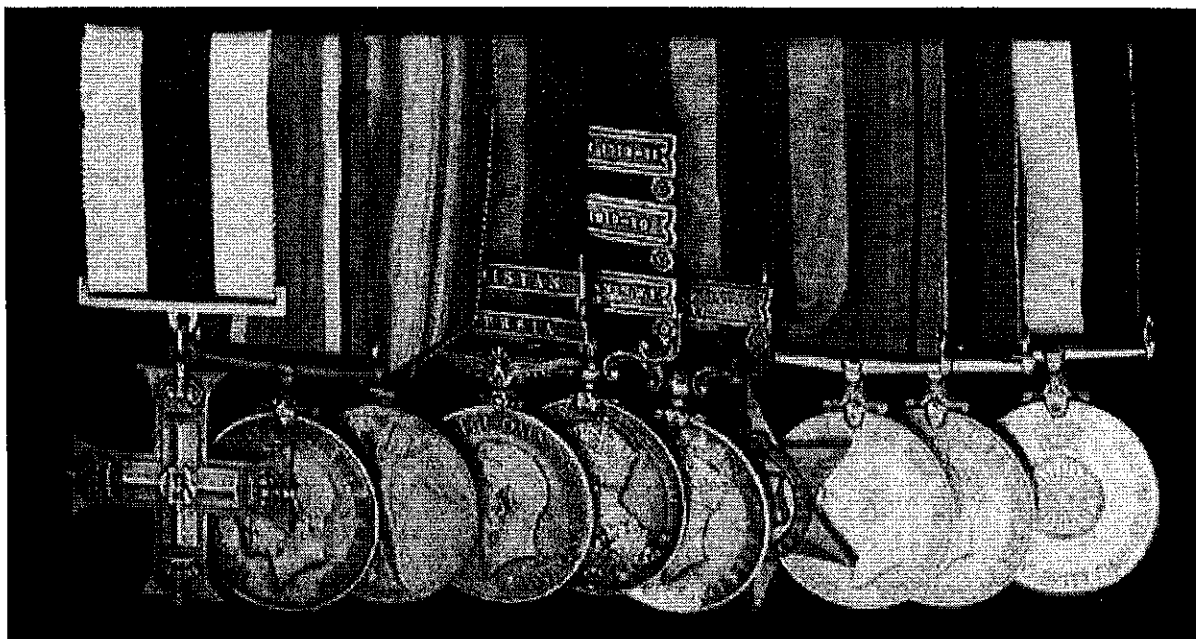
In the Rumbo battle the 40th Pathans lost 1 British officer, 1 Indian officer and 25 sepoy killed; 1 Indian officer and 34 sepoy wounded, and 35 sepoy missing. Most of the missing men were wounded and captured, and were later recovered by British forces from enemy bush hospitals as the Germans withdrew southwards. Three Kavirondo machine gun porters were killed and 6 wounded. The other units lost totals of 10 killed, 30 wounded and nine men missing.

During the following afternoon the Germans handed over several badly wounded British prisoners under a flag of truce. The Germans intimated that they had taken around 30 casualties during the previous day's fighting. Henry Stewart Tyndall received a **French Croix de Guerre**, as did Major W.T. Gregg of the King's African Rifles. Two recipients of the **Indian Distinguished Service Medal** around this time were Lance Naiks No. 1016 Alam Khan and No. 1570 Gul Haider, both 20th Duke of Cambridge's Own Infantry (Brownlow's Punjabis) attached to 40th Pathans.

Lines of Communication duties and the Narungombe battle

In May 1917 the medical services declared that the 40th Pathans was 60% unfit and the unit was placed on Lines of Communication security duties. However because of active enemy patrols around Kilwa many sepoy were sent out on patrol even when unfit. Just after morning 'stand to' had been stood down on 25th May around 90 enemy troops crawled up under cover of ground mist and attacked a Pathans post at Mitole. The sepoy fought back but Jemadar Shiraz IDSM^{vi} and three sepoy were

killed and three others were wounded. The Germans left 10 dead on the position and were observed carrying away 15 other men. Captain Roland Richardson, 55th Coke's Rifles (Frontier Force) attached to 40th Pathans, was awarded a **Military Cross** for his gallant defence of the post, and No. 3952 Naik Sahib Shah was awarded an **Indian Distinguished Service Medal**.



The Military Cross group of Captain Roland Richardson

In July 1917 the 40th Pathans under Major E.C. Irwin MC was placed in No. 3 Column that was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel A.J. Taylor DSO, 8th South African Infantry. Colonel Tyndall was on leave in South Africa. The column also contained the 3/3rd King's African Rifles, two companies of the 8th South African Infantry, and a section of a Stokes Mortar battery. Two other British columns were in the field and the objective was to capture the important water holes at Narungombe.

On 19th July the three British columns attacked strong German defences at Narungombe. The 40th Pathans had recently received many new and only partially trained recruits from India and it was placed in reserve in No. 3 Column which was on the left flank of the British attack. However the Germans chose to vigorously counter-attack on this flank. During the fighting a gap developed between the King's African Rifles and one of the South African companies, and Colonel Taylor ordered Major Irwin to fill the gap. The Pathans found themselves in a large hollow that was commanded by an enemy machine gun. The situation was not helped by the hasty withdrawal without notice of the South African company, and the enemy quickly sited another machine gun on the opposite side of the hollow. The German units opposing the 40th Pathans were Nos. 10, 11 and 17 Field Companies.

Major Irwin and 2nd Lieutenant Humphreys were soon killed and Lieutenant N.O. Burne, 40th Pathans, was mortally wounded. Captains Richardson and Gulam-Hossain were wounded. Haji Suleiman Gulam-Hossain, Indian Medical Service, continued to treat the wounded whilst he was himself wounded and under enemy fire, and for this gallant action he was awarded the **Military Cross**. With all the British officers killed or wounded Subadar Gul Zaman, 40th Pathans, rallied the young sepoy and led them out of the hollow and onto a location ordered by Colonel Taylor where the Pathans dug themselves in. Gul Zaman received an **Indian Order of Merit, 2nd Class**: *For conspicuous gallantry, great coolness and energy under fire on the 19th July 1917. When all the British officers had become casualties, he rallied his men and took them out of action. He is an excellent hard-working officer and has done hard work throughout the war.* Apart from those casualties already mentioned Jemadar Darjodhan and 11 men were killed and 25 sepoy were wounded at Narungombe. The Germans withdrew from their trenches during the night.

The final months in East Africa

Colonel Tyndall returned from leave to resume command and the 40th Pathans was deployed to man ten posts on the Lines of Communication with the Regimental Headquarters being located at Ssingino. Regular patrolling continued and on 4th September a patrol consisting of one non-commissioned officer and nine men was badly ambushed; three men were killed and the remaining seven were missing. Batches of the new recruits were sent back to Ssingino for training in bush warfare.

The Pathans came into contact with the Nigerian soldiers of the West African Frontier Force and Askari from the Belgian Congo, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, who had moved into southern German East Africa as the last of the Schutztruppe moved south towards Portuguese territory. By the end of 1917 the German theatre commander, General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, had moved a drastically slimmed-down force of his best men into Portuguese East Africa where he continued to operate.

The decision had been taken in 1917 to repatriate both British Army and Indian Army fighting units from East Africa because of the wastage of those units due to tropical diseases. New battalions of the King's African Rifles took their place and moved into Portuguese East Africa after the Schutztruppe. Colonel Tyndal was admitted to hospital and invalided to England on 11th November. Lieutenant Colonel A.I.R. Glasford CMG DSO, 46th Punjabis, was appointed to command the 40th Pathans on 12th November.

The regiment embarked at Dar Es Salaam on the Bibby Line S.S. *Warwickshire* on 7th February 1918, disembarking at Karachi and reaching Fatehgarh on 24th February. The 40th Pathans had fought a tough war; apart from those who were killed in action or who died in hospital, 1,167 all ranks had been invalided from East Africa.

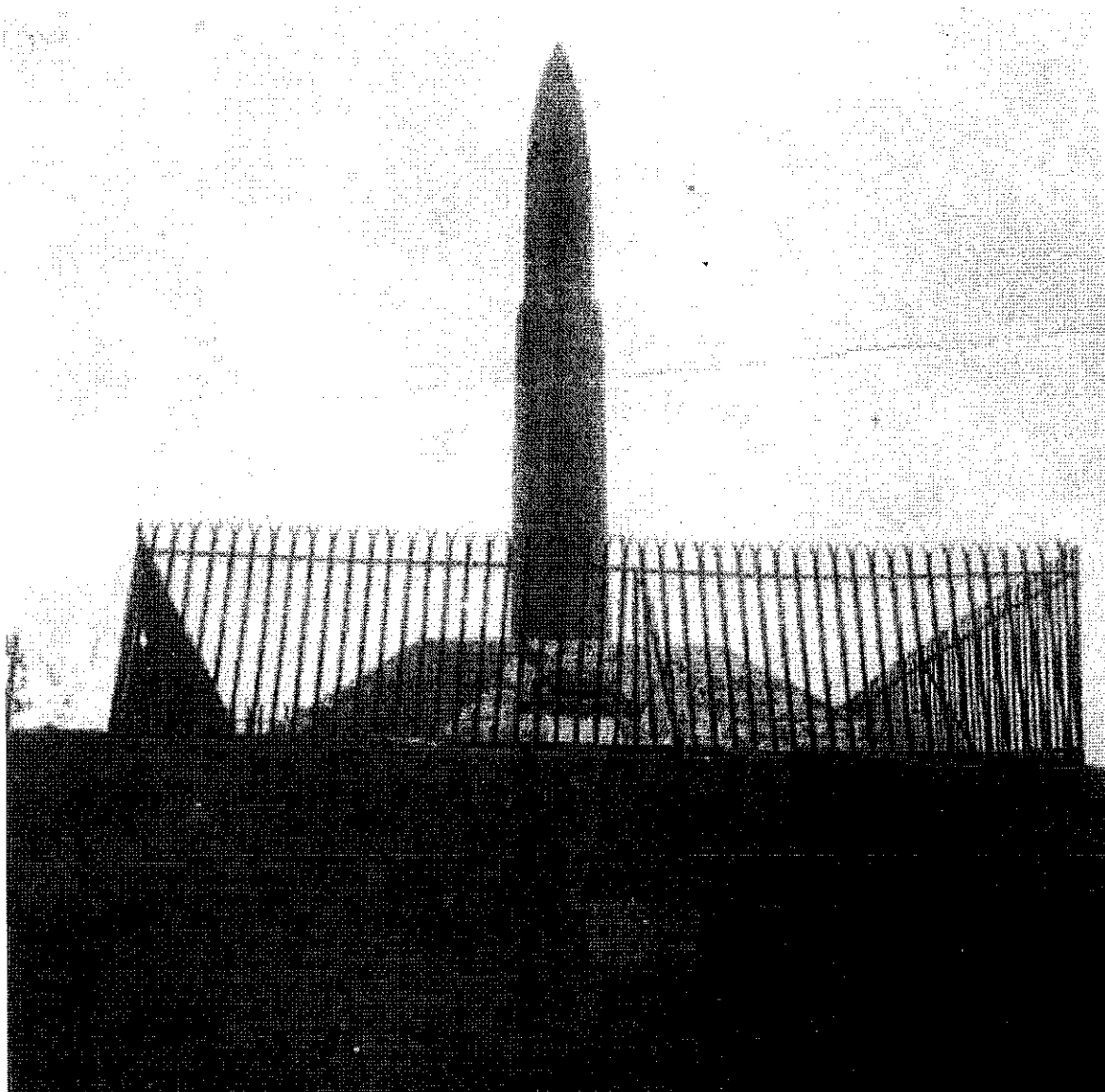
Awards of the Indian Meritorious Service Medal

The following 18 men of the 40th Pathans received the Indian Meritorious Service Medal for service in East Africa:

Jemadar Gandki; 3484 Havildar Kambar Ali; 3242 Havildar Basant Singh; 4908 Sepoy Chur Singh; 3409 Havildar Piru; 4715 Sepoy Mira Khan; 4713 Lance Naik totti; 2962 Havildar Sultan Khan; 3328 Havildar Ansu; 4495 Naik Latif; 4156 Havildar Tek Chand; 4180 Lance Naik Nathu; 4689 Sepoy Ambu; 4699 Sepoy Aijal; 4897 Sepoy Maibullah; Jemadar Hazarat Nur; 3897 Lance Naik Sundar; 4779 Sepoy Lakhia.

The following 8 men received the medal for service whilst attached to the 40th Pathans in East Africa:

1980 Lance Naik Faqir Muhammad, 2683 Sepoy Fazal Khan, 2625 Sepoy Maula Dad, 2118 Naik Nawab Khan, 2371 Sepoy Fazal Din, all of the 46th Punjabis. 630 Sepoy Nurdad Khan and 710 Havildar Said Akbar of the 20th Duke of Cambridge's Own Infantry (Brownlow's Punjabis). 2557 Havildar Sohna Singh of the 124th Duchess of Connaught's Own Baluchistan Infantry.



The 40th Pathans Great War Memorial at Attock, erected in 1919

ⁱ It is probable that a decision was made not to send this predominantly Muslim regiment to fight the Turks in Mesopotamia. Seven Orakzai Pathans and three Punjabis had deserted to the enemy in France on 4th October 1915.

ⁱⁱ For more information on this incident refer to: <http://www.kaiserscross.com/188001/465701.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ The most important port south of Dar Es Salaam, Kilwa Kisiwani, had been occupied by the 2nd West India Regiment on 7th September. This had a deep-water anchorage

^{iv} The Germans often returned wounded prisoners to the British, thereby passing over the logistical burden and the casualty evacuation problems.

^v For further details of the Kibata action see: <http://www.kaiserscross.com/188001/447622.html>

^{vi} Jemadar Shiraz had received his Indian Distinguished Service Medal in France in 1915 when he was No. 3372 Colour Havildar Shiraz.

SOURCES:

- *Draft Chapter XVII of the unpublished Part II of the Official History, Military Operations East Africa (CAB 44/9).*
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- *My Reminiscences of East Africa* by General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck.
- *The Gold Coast Regiment* by Sir Hugh Clifford KCMG.
- *The History of the Indian Mountain Artillery* by Brigadier-General C.A.L. Graham DSO OBE DL psc.
- *Unit War Diary 2nd Bn 2nd Regiment King's African Rifles. (WO 95/5322).*
- *Letters from Lieutenant Colonels H.S Tyndall DSO (40 Pathans), W.T.H. Gregg DSO (2/2 KAR), F.M.G. Griffin MC (129th Baluchis), and Major J.H.M. Stevenson MC (22nd Mountain Battery) (CAB 45/66).*
- *Tip & Run. The Untold Tragedy of the Great War in Africa* by Edward Paice.
- *Reward of Valor. The Indian Order of Merit* by Peter Duckers.
- *The Award of the Military Medal to African Soldiers of the West African Frontier Force & The King's African Rifles from 1916 to 1919* by John Arnold with William Spencer MA and Keith Steward FRGS.
- *Commonwealth War Graves Commission records.*

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Name: Esher, Christ Church, Lt N O Burne

Address: Esher Christ Church,
Church St,
Esher,
Elmbridge,
Surrey,
KT10 8QS

OS grid: TQ 13824 64688

Summary: Metal plaque with dedicatory inscription. At top left hand corner, the regimental emblem of the RASC. Plaque set on a wooden backing.

Wars Commemorated:

First World War

Full Inscription: "In loving memory of Newdigate Owen Burne Lieutenant 40th Pathans. Only son of Brigadier General & Mrs R.O. Burne. Born 9th April 1898 died 27th October 1917 at Kilwa East Africa. Dulce et decorem est pro patria mori. This tablet is placed here by the Officers MT Reception & Training Area RASC as an expression of their sympathy with his father & mother."

IWM Link: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/64418>
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Battle of Narungombe

The **Battle of Narungombe** was fought between the German Empire and Portugal during the East African Campaign of World War I.

The battle honour "Narungombe" has been granted to the Ghana Regiment, King's African Rifles and the South African 7th and 8th Infantry Regiment.

References

- Chisholm, Hugh (1922). *The Encyclopædia Britannica, The Twelfth Edition, Volume 2*. New York: The Encyclopædia Britannica Company, LTD.

Battle of Narungombe	
Part of East African Campaign	
Location	Portuguese East Africa
Belligerents	
 Germany	 British Empire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> German East Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Africa India British East Africa Uganda Protectorate Northern Rhodesia Southern Rhodesia Nyasaland Belgium Belgian Congo Portugal Portuguese East Africa

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