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British Perspectives on Aulihan Somali Unrest in the East Africa Protectorate, 1915–1918

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By Allah, I will not be a slave to the Government.

—‘Abdurrahman Mursaal, February 1917¹

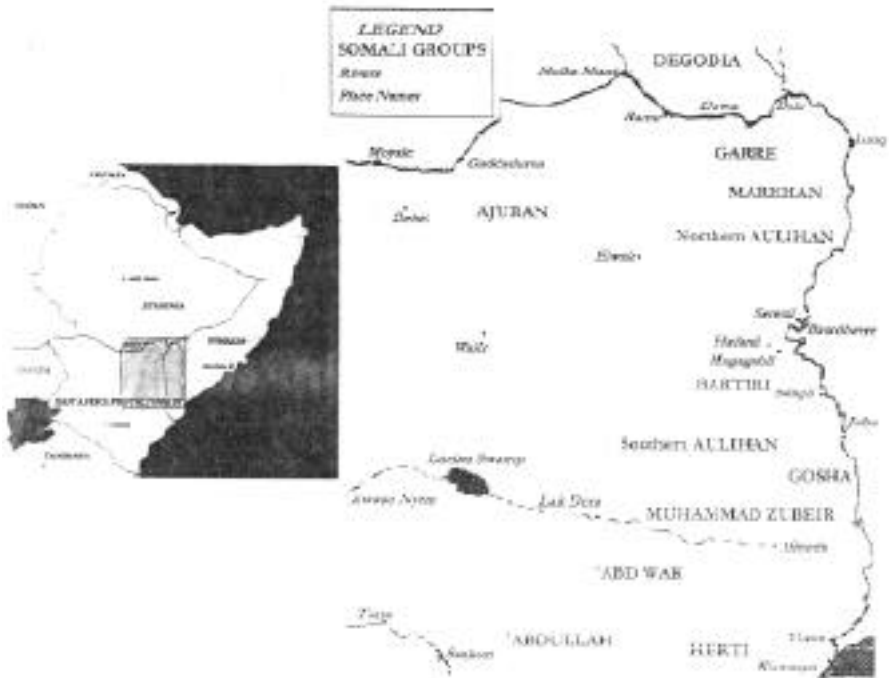
Men run wildly about in pursuit of vengeance,
Supporting the unbelievers, who offer them grain for food.
Foreign soldiers are the ones they choose
In preference to the Prophet, on whom be peace.

—Muhammad ‘Abdille Hasan²

Introduction

This article examines an Aulihan Somali uprising that occurred in the north-eastern frontier of Great Britain’s East Africa Protectorate, or EAP, during World War I.³ The disorder began with a major livestock raid in December 1915 by Aulihan on some Samburu who had ventured with their herds into the region of the Lorian Swamp. Less than two months later, the sack of the British frontier post at Serenli on the Juba River followed. At the time of the disturbances, the colonial authorities were acutely aware of their precarious position on the frontier. Their insecurity was highlighted by clashes with Ethiopian “Tigre,” or bandits, that had resulted in the death of one British officer and the wounding of another in 1913 in the Northern Frontier District (NFD). Furthermore, there had been several earlier armed clashes in Jubaland to the east of the NFD. Since the arrival of the first British agents in the region, colonial policy unsuccessfully

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Distribution of Somali groups in the East Africa Protectorate, c.1916

sought to halt continued westward migration of Darood Somalis across the Juba as well as to stem the flow of firearms into the north. Thus, local affairs increasingly ensnared frontier officials. Despite these considerations, the British were preoccupied with the perceived “Tigre” threat, so when trouble occurred with the Aulihan, it took imperial administrators largely unawares. Added to these problems, budgetary constraints and confused and inconsistent policies had earlier led to the withdrawal of colonial troops from Jubaland, after which only a company of Armed Constabulary (AC) remained at Serenli. Finally, the advent of the First World War had left British officers and men, as one contemporary critic described them: “more or less marooned in the desert,” short on provisions and instructions.⁴ Consequently, an almost complete collapse of colonial authority followed the Aulihan rebellion in the northeastern frontier region and the fundamental weakness of the British rule over Somalis was unmasked. It would take a full two years for the British to reestablish control over the Aulihan.

The Aulihan disturbances have received some attention in unpublished dissertations by Thomas Cashmore and E. Romily Turton and relatively brief treatment in monographs by Moyse-Bartlett and Charles Chenevix Trench.⁵ The wider, colonial historiography of Kenya, lamentably, has neglected the Somali unrest. Those familiar with Kenya's past, thus, know much about the hardships endured by Kenyan peoples such as the Kikuyu and Luo, who served in the Carrier Corps during the First World War, and perhaps also about the Giriama uprising. Fewer are acquainted with what took place in the sparsely populated and vast semi-arid NFD and Jubaland regions.⁶ Yet, an understanding of the Aulihan emolué and its suppression is important not only for filling a missing gap in our knowledge of one particular Somali clan, but also for interpreting the history of British-Somali relations as a whole.

This study analyzes the causes of Aulihan unrest, the "punitive expedition" that finally led to its suppression, and events immediately thereafter. It argues that the colonialists imagined themselves impartial arbitrators who were bringing a more enlightened system of governance to a people so caught up in narrow and parochial disputes that they could not recognize the blessings that were being bestowed upon them. It is, of course, difficult to reconstruct the Somali perspective from British archival records, as this work has been compelled to do. The reader nevertheless will appreciate something of how disruptive the imposition of alien rule was to the indigenous political culture as well as to influential individuals who saw their personal authority increasingly under assault. The ensuing clash would be tragic for both those agents who stood in the vanguard of the so-called *pax Britannica* and for the Aulihan who hoped to rid themselves of their unwanted and unasked-for mentors.

The Samburu Raid

The first major blow to colonial authority in the northeast occurred in December 1915 when Aulihan Somalis residing in the area between the Lorian Swamp and Wajir mounted a huge raid on the Samburu to their west. Since the commencement of colonial rule in the north during the first decade of the twentieth century, the British had left the Samburu almost without administration. The government transferred its official in what then was Southern Samburu District to the NFD in 1915.⁷ Conducted mainly by the Reer Tur Adi section of

the Aulihan but also with Jibrail participation, the attack had devastating results. The Samburu lost 54 persons, including babies speared on their mothers' backs, according to one lurid account.⁸ Besides the Samburu, three Meru also perished, and the Somalis took thousands of cattle, small stock, and donkeys. A British officer joined the party of Samburu *murran*, or warriors, who chased and overtook the assailants. These so-called southern Aulihan turned and routed their pursuers, however, and forced them to quit the field in what another colonial officer described as "rather a bad show."⁹ Meanwhile, the few Europeans living in the north became apprehensive if not panicked concerning their safety.¹⁰ Ethel Rayne, wife of a King's African Rifles, (KAR), lieutenant assigned to the north, later remembered being reassured by a British officer left in charge of the *boma*, or government post, where she was staying. He told her that she could sleep secure in the knowledge that if Somalis attacked the outpost in the night, he would shoot her and the children.¹¹ Things were not much better at Wajir. On 18 December, there was an alarm in the night owing to the garrison being jumpy about the intentions of some Aulihan who were roaming about the *boma*. A couple of days later, a runner arrived with a note from another British official inquiring whether the Aulihan had killed John Llewellyn, the Wajir Assistant District Commissioner (ADC).¹²

Receiving anxious reports from the frontier, officials in Nairobi immediately reacted by dispatching reinforcements to the north including 50 police under Captain J. F. Wolseley-Bourne. Nevertheless, one must seriously question the determination of the colonial administration when one considers the fact that Wolseley-Bourne was originally under orders to return to the south by the end of January. Such would have compelled an immediate move against the southern Aulihan, before adequate preparations could have been made to give it any real chance of success.¹³ One who demanded such "immediate and decisive action" was Lieutenant Harry Rayne, husband of the aforementioned Ethel and a veteran of the Nandi punitive expeditions, who was given charge of organizing a British patrol to bring back the stolen cattle. Rayne hoped to surprise the Aulihan in a dawn raid, kill as many as possible, and afterwards seize hostages to open talks on his terms.¹⁴

At the same time that preparations for military reprisal were underway, the colonial administration sought nevertheless to negotiate with the southern

Aulihan. The British authorities held *shirs*, or public meetings, with the Somalis where they demanded that the Aulihan return the stolen livestock to the Samburu and pay them *dia*, or blood money, at a rate of 20 cattle per victim.¹⁵ Meanwhile, British representatives sought to get more information about the raid and learn the identities of its perpetrators.¹⁶ Because of these meetings, the Reer Jibrail sections of the Aulihan returned most of their portion of the spoils, but not the Reer Tur Adi Aulihan who, according to the EAP's Acting-Governor Charles Bowring, "escaped practically unpunished." By the end of the year, the Aulihan still owed 2,400 cattle, 15,800 sheep and goats, and 350 donkeys by the government's reckoning.¹⁷ Only the Reer Abukr section of the Reer Tur Adi paid the entire fine assessed against them.¹⁸ Finally, in January 1916, the colonial government had had enough with talking. British officials gave the Aulihan less than a week to pay their fine, and when the Somalis did not fully comply and asked for more time, their request was denied. Still, the British failed to take offensive measures against the Aulihan. At Wajir, the only action that the ADC took was to double the guard since he feared a night attack from the many Somalis who had assembled near the *boma*. The British deadline came and went with apparently little effect.¹⁹

By mid February, the Wajir ADC was aware that there had been a dramatic change for the worse in the British position. From out of Jubaland to the east, survivors of a mule safari owned by the white-settler Denys Finch-Hatton, best remembered for his romance with the writer, Karen Blixen, appeared at Wajir. They reported that some of the more northern elements of the Aulihan had attacked their caravan south of Serenli; 13 of their party had been killed, and their stock stolen. Several wounded men were left behind as the survivors trekked through scorched country without water, and a couple of the men who did reach Wajir later succumbed from thirst.²⁰ A few days after their arrival, the Wajir ADC's worst imaginings were confirmed when he received a telegram with the news that these so-called northern Aulihan had overrun the British post at Serenli.²¹

The Sack of Serenli

On 2 February 1916, the disaster that British officials had feared would one day happen in the NFD occurred in neighboring Jubaland. There, a large party

of northern Aulihan led by Hajji 'Abdurrahman Mursaal surprised and killed the Serenli DC, Lieutenant Francis Elliot, and many of the British garrison. It is important to understand the motives that lay behind the sack of Serenli. The incident actually arose from a dispute between Aulihan and Marehan Somalis not long after the outbreak of the First World War and from which a series of raids and reprisals had followed. Following the deaths of nine Marehan at the hands of northern Aulihan and the looting of hundreds of camels, Lieutenant Elliot had publicly given 'Abdurrahman Mursaal an ultimatum to surrender the stolen animals to him within three days. Instead, the government-paid Reer Waffatu headman defiantly delivered a gift of black animals that, by Somali custom, constituted an open challenge to the Serenli DC.²² The undaunted, but injudicious, Elliot apparently was contemptuous of the threat and failed to take precautions. Instead, he continued his incredible practice of locking the garrison's rifles in the guardroom each evening before sunset.²³ Moreover, he allowed a large contingent of Aulihan to camp just 100 yards from the *boma*.

At 7 P.M., while the *askaris*, or African soldiers, were settling down to evening meals, the Aulihan burst upon the British post. The Somalis set the surprised soldiers' huts on fire, and killed many of them as they fled the flames. By one account, 'Abdurrahman Mursaal himself is said to have shot Elliot beneath the ear with a revolver, and by another, to have donned Elliot's sun helmet after the raid. Dozens of Elliot's men were killed in the attack, while the survivors escaped across the Juba River to the nearby Italian post at Baardheere. The Somalis captured the company's maxim gun along with large quantities of arms and ammunition.²⁴ For the next 18 months, 'Abdurrahman Mursaal's northern Aulihan, strengthened by the acquisition of British weapons, held free reign over much of Jubaland and threatened British rule in the NFD as well. Indeed, a British officer with service in the region would later describe the Ogaden, of whom the Aulihan were a part, as "one of the most formidable fighting tribes in Africa" because of their mobility with their ponies, remarkable endurance, and the skill with which they wielded their spears.²⁵

The calamity that befell Elliot was undoubtedly partly his own doing. Nevertheless, the root of the problem stemmed from the unwillingness of higher authorities to bear the costs and accept the responsibilities of frontier

administration. As had been the case with other frontier representatives from the inception of British rule in northern Kenya, officials in Nairobi had placed Elliot in a position of weakness and forced him to improvise in a hostile milieu. Like those other British administrators and contrary to official policy, Elliot found himself thoroughly entangled in local politics. Reading the official records from the period, the historian is struck by the degree to which colonial officers became involved in petty disputes. At times, this involved an attempt to prevent Somali groups, including the Aulihan whom the officer-in-charge of the NFD blamed for “crowding in,” from wresting the Wajir wells from the Boorana and their Ajuran allies.²⁶ In other cases, it entailed intrusion into feuds among the Somalis so that *kaffirs*, or infidels, became judges in conflicts that had heretofore been resolved by traditional means or with reference to *shari’a*, or Islamic law. Believing themselves impartial and just, British administrators presided over Somali *shirs*, mediated *dia* disputes, settled bride-wealth cases, and decided rights to watering sites. Such intervention could become dangerous for frontier representatives since they lacked legitimacy in Somali eyes and were without the means to enforce their decisions. That this was part of the reason for the Aulihan uprising is evidenced by the fact that, after the sack of Serenli, ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal wrote a letter to King George V complaining of Lieutenant Elliot’s partiality to the Marehan.²⁷ Meanwhile, although the taxation of Somalis had not yet been sanctioned, the authorities had long since pressured them to surrender camels for government transport.²⁸ Elliot, who took pride in his knowledge of the Somali language, did not fully appreciate the subtleties of Somali politics.²⁹ Moreover, he counted too much on his own abilities, and consequently paid the ultimate price for his folly.

Understanding something of the character of ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal is also important, not only for appreciating the events which lay behind the Aulihan rebellion, but also for comprehending the critical fact of why other Somali groups failed to join his resistance to colonial rule. ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal was the son of Mursaal bin Omar, an important Ogaden leader in Italian Somaliland.³⁰ The Aulihan chief and “holy man” came to the EAP after working for the Italian Benadir Company and running amiss of the Italian colonial administration.³¹ ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal briefly served the Kismaayo

administration after 1896, when the British sent him and 18 constables to establish a customs post at Serenli.³² He became a leader of an Ogaden rebellion in British territory in 1898, however, and was involved in the death of the Jubaland subcommissioner, A. C. W. Jenner in late 1900.³³ Nevertheless, the Reer Waffatu chief was soon working with the British again. So slight was the influence of the colonial authorities over the Somalis that they took help where they could get it. Some were not so ready to secure his services. John Hope, one of the first British officials to serve in the NFD, condemned 'Abdurrahman Mursaal's proclivities for independent action, and C. S. Reddie, a Jubaland Provincial Commissioner (PC), accused the Aulihan leader of gun-running.³⁴ Nevertheless, Captain R. E. Salkeld, a British officer in Jubaland who subsequently became the PC, was willing to rely on 'Abdurrahman Mursaal.³⁵ In fact, the Aulihan leader had the opportunity to meet with the EAP governor in 1915, and used his interview to promote his personal authority when he returned to Serenli.³⁶ Obviously, the Aulihan leader was a man who took his own counsel, and one who could not be pushed too far. Elliot's inability to grasp this led to tragic consequences for him and his men as well as the Aulihan chief's followers when colonial troops finally suppressed their rebellion.

The Aulihan and Other Somali Clans

Much to the relief of anxious colonial authorities, the leaders of other Somali clans, who likewise experienced the indignities of British rule, refused to join 'Abdurrahman Mursaal.³⁷ Without doubt, part of the reason for their reticence lay in the already existing conflicts among the Somali clans, and had nothing to do with the Aulihan headman per se. To take the case of the Marehan, 'Abdurrahman Mursaal had supported a British attempt to disarm them in 1913 and, not surprisingly, the Marehan still had not forgotten his collaboration.³⁸ Indeed, the Marehan's feud with the Aulihan, not to mention the camel raid led by 'Abdurrahman Mursaal himself, had been the proximate cause for the dispute with Lieutenant Elliot. Why then should they join his rebellion? Much the same can be said for the Muhammad Zubeir whose elders refused to participate in a general uprising even though they were heavily pressed by some of their more restless youth who sympathized with the Aulihan.³⁹

Beyond these reasons lay the fact that some of the chiefs and headmen felt that they had more to gain by siding with the colonial authorities than with their Aulihan cousins. The Muhammad Zubeir chief, Hajji Hasan Yera, was the most prominent figure who remained steadfast in the British camp. Like ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal, he too had once been implicated in Jenner’s death, but now showed himself an invaluable ally to the colonial state.⁴⁰ To wit, Hajji Hasan was left in charge of Wajir when the British withdrew from the post, and was given 2,000 rupees worth of trade goods as provisions by the departing British officer. The Muhammad Zubeir chief responded to his charge by punishing Somalis who had raided the Boorana after the British withdrawal. He even went so far as to beat a member of his own clan who had been caught looting the Wajir *boma*.⁴¹ Finally, Hajji Hasan himself opened the gates of the fortress to British soldiers when they reoccupied Wajir.⁴²

‘Ali ‘Abdi, a Garre Somali, was another chief who sided with the colonial administration. While it is difficult to gauge Hajji Hasan’s motives for standing with the British, the Garre chief well understood the dangers of actively resisting the colonial authorities. He had been released from imprisonment in Nairobi for abetting Ethiopian *shifita*, or bandits, after having been shown the military might of the British in the capital and having been compelled to take a loyalty oath. Apparently William Barrett, the British officer who recommended ‘Ali ‘Abdi’s repatriation to the north, was right when he told Governor Sir Henry Belfield that ‘Ali ‘Abdi recognized that it was “in his interest and that of his tribe to be loyal” for, in 1916, the Garre chief volunteered to cooperate with the British against the Aulihan.⁴³

Another concern that preoccupied the colonial administration was that somehow ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal might combine with their nemesis in British Somaliland, Sheikh Muhammad ‘Abdille Hasan. While this Ogaden Somali, anti-colonial leader styled himself “the Poor Man of God,” he was known by the more pejorative sobriquet “the Mad Mullah” by the British whom he had defeated on several occasions.⁴⁴ Throughout the Aulihan uprising, the colonial administration closely monitored any information linking the two resistance leaders. Fortunately, from the British point of view, whatever contacts might have existed between the two groups never amounted to anything.⁴⁵ Another Somali whom the British were watching because of his suspected political ambitions

was Sheikh 'Ali Nairobi. The *sheikh* had come to Jubaland in 1896 as the first representative of the puritanical Salihyya sufi *tariqa*, an Islamic brotherhood. In August 1916, the British received intelligence that he was erecting a mosque in Italian territory near the Dawa River, collecting large tithes from the Marehan, and "attempting to emulate the Mullah."⁴⁶ Although similarly wary Italians removed 'Ali Nairobi to Muqdisho, the British had information that he was later in contact with Muhammad 'Abdille Hasan, himself a devotee of Salihyya Sufism. 'Ali Nairobi's brother had reportedly joined 'Abdurrahman Mursaal, and there were also rumors that 'Ali Nairobi himself was considering a move across the Juba to join the Aulihan rebels. According to Major E. G. M. Porcelli, the British officer commanding troops in Jubaland, 'Ali Nairobi worked "hand in glove" with 'Abdurrahman Mursaal.⁴⁷ Finally, a third Somali leader from outside the protectorate is worthy of mention. He was Sheikh Muhammad Yusuf, a Somali from Jibuti. From his headquarters 60 miles north of the Dolo, in mid 1917 Muhammad Yusuf proclaimed the imminent advent of the Mahdi, and began calling for *jihad* against the colonialists. Luckily for the British, this time the Ethiopians intervened and quelled any potential rebellion by driving the *sheikh* from territory claimed by Addis Ababa.⁴⁸

Thus, relations among Somali groups defy simple explanation although they often were characterized by tension, if not outright enmity, at the time when Serenli was plundered. In the absence of Somali primary sources it is difficult to reconstruct the exact circumstances that lay behind each particular alliance or feud. Nevertheless, pausing to reflect on the ecological and historical milieu may enhance our understanding of the dynamic that fueled frontier conflicts among the Somalis. The semi-arid climate resulted in limited water resources and scarce grazing for the pastoralists who inhabited the Juba region. Hunger and thirst were ubiquitous realities to people who herded camels along with sheep and goats for their sustenance in this harsh environment. Added to these "perennial twin scourges" was the threat that animal disease might suddenly make one destitute.⁴⁹ It is not surprising then that Somalis, like the other peoples of the region, engaged in the time-honored tradition of livestock raiding as a survival strategy. Moreover, the late-nineteenth century had witnessed a puritanical Islamist awakening among the Somalis, and the concomitant rise of *wadaads*, or men of religion, as a challenge to the traditional authority of the

warrenlehs, or secular men.⁵⁰ Indeed, one of the centers of this revivalist movement was at Baardheere, which lay just across the river from Serenli in Italian-controlled territory. The unasked for and unwelcomed imposition of British, Italian, and Ethiopian rule in Muslim lands surrounding the Juba contributed further to regional instability.

It is informative also to note that the British role among the Somalis was complex. Indeed, the standard description of their imperial policy as being one of “divide and rule” needs some qualification. First, the Somalis were not then and never had been really united. Reviewing volumes of reports concerning the activities of the Somalis, one finds interminable accounts of feuds among the various clans, disputes that had nothing to do with the British. Secondly, British representatives often intervened in Somali politics as peacemakers, and they did so when it was not necessarily in their own immediate interest. This fits well into John Lonsdale’s comments concerning segmented lineage societies in western Kenya where “political advantage accrued to the conqueror more often by arranging external peace between segments rather than by manipulating divisions within them.”⁵¹ That being said, it was more commonly the case that Nairobi’s policy was to stay out of internal Somali feuds. This was because frontier officials generally lacked the means to enforce their decisions. Bluff could have fatal consequences not only to British prestige, but also more concretely to highly exposed frontier officers. In the specific case of the Somalis, Igor Kopytoff’s general conclusion that what colonial authorities in Africa tried to do was to control rather than abolish frontier conflicts proves accurate.⁵²

Yet, the fact that the colonialists sought to create divisions among the peoples they ruled to maintain imperial authority is certainly also an important component to understanding events surrounding the Aulihan rebellion. The British use of chiefs like Hajji Hasan and ‘Ali ‘Abdi has already been mentioned. Beyond this, most of their intelligence came from Somali spies, friendly traders, or other Somalis who were doubtless interested more in their own concerns than in imperial prerogatives. Moreover, some of these Somali agents did more than gather information—some spread disinformation among fellow Somalis while the authorities employed others to ensure that no combination could be accomplished by poisoning any negotiations with the Aulihan.⁵³ Indeed, when the punitive expedition actually got underway, many of the

British *askaris* were Isaak Somalis from British Somaliland, and a number of local Marehan joined the colonial troops in suppressing the Aulihan.

Thus it was that ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal was able to cultivate few allies in what might have been fertile soil. While sections of the northern Aulihan soon joined the Reer Waffatu chief, the only other Somali clan to join his rebellion was the Bartiri, a wealthy but small group living just to the south of the northern Aulihan and already under their neighbor’s influence. Save for a section of Herti Somalis, no one else would stand with ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal against the colonialists. In fact, the Aulihan themselves never fully united against the British. Although the colonial authorities blamed ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal for having instigated the Samburu raid, they had no evidence for their assertion.⁵⁴ Nor was there any information that directly linked the attack on the British post at Serenli with the happenings on the Ewaso Nyiro. That the two events occurred independently is also supported by the fact that the Aulihan did not present a united front against the British. Already within a few months of the fall of Serenli, British intelligence reported that at least two sections of the southern Aulihan, the Reer Gharsin and Reer ‘Ali, had renounced their connections with the northern Aulihan and “demonstrated their loyalty” to the government by paying most of the fine they owed to the Samburu for the December 1915 raid.⁵⁵

Early British Responses

Returning to the days immediately following the sack of Serenli, one finds that the British generally appreciated their weakness in the northeast. Immediately they sent reinforcements to the affected areas and removed their officers from harm’s way. A British cruiser steamed in the waters of the Indian Ocean off Kismaayo, and the arrival of the Arab Rifles at that port helped to keep the crisis from getting out of hand.⁵⁶ Fearing an attack led by ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal with possible Muhammad Zubeir support, the authorities ordered the evacuation of the NFD post at Wajir. Before leaving Wajir, Llewellyn held numerous *shirs* and swore Muhammad Zubeir on the Qur’an to defend the *boma*. Then, in mid March the Wajir ADC reluctantly fell back to Bulesa.⁵⁷ The following month, Vincent Glenday, then Gurreh ADC, withdrew from the Dawa region to safety at Moyale. His departure left the Garre to their

own devices as they faced encroachments from other Somali clans not to mention deprivations from Ethiopian *shifita*. Significantly, Glenday feared not the Aulihan, but attack from either Ethiopian Degodia Somalis or from the Marehan.⁵⁸

Meanwhile in Nairobi, the Executive Council of the EAP met with representatives of the military and police on 8 and 12 February. At the same time, British soldiers were launching an offensive across the border into German East Africa towards Taveta. They met with disaster at Saliata hill on the morning of the twelfth when 1,300 entrenched German troops routed Brigadier General Wilfred Malleson's 6,000-man force.⁵⁹ Not surprisingly, authorities in Nairobi resolved that any punitive expedition against the Aulihan was out of the question for the time being, and that offensive operations would have to be delayed until sufficient forces were available to put down the rebellion. Henceforth, the British took a cautious approach towards the Somalis and considered defensive contingencies. Accordingly, these officials were concerned that 50 constables under Samuel Deck and Wolseley-Bourne who had advanced from the NFD provincial headquarters at Archer's Post to Marti—over 100 miles southwest of Wajir—should be prepared to fall back or even retreat to Meru just northeast of Mount Kenya if it became necessary.⁶⁰ Deputy-Governor Bowring informed London that it was “quite impossible” to launch a punitive expedition against the Somalis while the military's hands were tied with operations against the Germans. Officials at the Colonial Office (CO) saw no alternative but to leave the problem in the hands of the local authorities.⁶¹

Thus, the British held their collective breath and anxiously watched to see what would happen next. Yet, the northern Aulihan remained relatively quiet. Soon after overrunning the British post, the Tur Adi Aulihan raided some Gosha villages, but little happened to threaten the imperial position.⁶² ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal, as has been pointed out above, was busy trying to recruit other Somali groups to join his rebellion. Besides trying to enlist the Marehan and Muhammad Zubeir, elements of the northern Aulihan also traveled to the Tana River region where they made a failed bid for ‘Abd Wak and ‘Abdulla Somali support. Unable to garner Somali allies, ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal was even reported to be trying to establish contacts with *Fitawrari* Waldi, the local Ethiopian frontier governor. Although the British did not know

the whereabouts of 'Abdurrahman Mursaal, they heard rumors that he had crossed into Ethiopia. More significantly for British policy in the NFD, without the colonial state to check their progress, other Somali groups were moving west from Wajir into Boorana domains near Arbajahan.⁶³

As might be expected, some among the British urged action. The ardent Harry Rayne was one who, already by the end of April, was calling for the reoccupation of Serenli. Rayne blamed the weakness of the civilian authorities with encouraging 'Abdurrahman Mursaal's actions in the first place, and considered the northern Aulihan the only threat among the Somalis.⁶⁴ From Addis Ababa, the British minister to Ethiopia, Wilfred Thesiger, likewise advocated stronger measures. Thesiger urged a move against the Aulihan because he feared that otherwise the Africans would "lose respect" for the British. Though not so plucky as Rayne, Thesiger suggested the British should reestablish themselves at Wajir and in Garre country.⁶⁵ Governor Belfield and his military advisors remained more reticent. At a 1 May conference, they upheld their Fabian policy in the northeast. Troops were needed elsewhere as General Jan Smuts was then trying to coordinate a complex pincer movement against General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck's *Schutztruppe*, or colonial forces, that was directed towards the Central Railway in German East Africa.⁶⁶ The military would not risk a disaster by undertaking actions against the Somalis with inadequate troops. Instead, they were patiently working to reorganize and augment their frontier forces.⁶⁷ Officials accordingly created a new 5th Battalion of the KAR in Jubaland, and John Llewellyn assembled a 36-man mounted infantry force for duties in the northeastern frontier.⁶⁸

At Bulesa, where colonial forces had assembled, the "men on the spot" were arguing among themselves over what to do. Harold Kittermaster, the officer-in-charge of the NFD, was prepared to reoccupy Wajir and, in preparation for that move, gave permission for John Llewellyn to take 40 men on patrol. Nevertheless, Major P. Rigby, the military commander, vetoed this as "within his province."⁶⁹ Thus far, Rigby's idea of a display of force had amounted to nothing more than showing off his maxim gun to impress what he considered credulous Boorana and Somali government-appointed headmen, and then secretly packing the gun away so that he might use it elsewhere.⁷⁰ Kittermaster refused

to let the matter drop. He suggested that the idea of abandoning the plan to retake Wajir was based on “silly reports” that claimed the Muhammad Zubeir had joined or been beaten by the Aulihan. Kittermaster turned to Nairobi for backing, and the governor and Executive Council gave him their support by granting him permission to act at his own discretion.⁷¹ Finally in June, two detachments of British forces moved east towards the castellated fortress.

Before reoccupying the government post, Kittermaster instructed Llewellyn to reconnoiter the area to obtain information concerning the whereabouts of the Aulihan. By the beginning of July, Llewellyn received information that the rebels were four days from the *boma*, so he continued to advance toward it cautiously. Kittermaster was not reckless either and specifically ordered Llewellyn “not to engage the Aulihan.”⁷² Even so, another minor flap occurred when the timorous Rigby upbraided Llewellyn for displaying the flag while the ADC was looking for water.⁷³ One almost gets the sense that the British major would have preferred that his men retake Wajir only by stealth in the night. In any event, when he and Llewellyn eventually entered the British post on the 15th, Hajji Hasan and some friendly Muhammad Zubeir were already there to greet them. Before pursuing the Aulihan, Rigby apprehensively awaited reinforcements. In the interim, he had his men strengthen the defenses at Wajir *boma*, which was already protected by two-feet thick limestone walls.⁷⁴

All the while, the frontier remained relatively quiet. By June, British authorities had concluded that there was no chance of a combination between the Marehan and Aulihan.⁷⁵ Llewellyn’s patrol had, as Kittermaster had explicitly intended it, served the colonial goal of strengthening the hands of its ally, Hajji Hasan. In addition, tensions heightened between the Muhammad Zubeir and the Aulihan when the former killed two Aulihan not far from Wajir in July.⁷⁶ Elsewhere, there were conflicting reports about whether the Garre had given ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal permission to transit their lands, although apparently no agreement had been achieved.⁷⁷ Beyond that, the Aulihan raided a half-dozen Habr Sulieman villages and killed 14 people while looting camels. Though Rigby and Llewellyn gave chase, the Aulihan successfully eluded them.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the salient point is that ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal was doing more to alienate his neighbors than to recruit them to his cause as time went on.

With colonial forces back in control of Wajir, and little likelihood of a general uprising, London in late July gave its approval in principle to Serenli's reoccupation. Although Charles Lane, the Jubaland PC, now added his voice to those of hawks like Rayne and Thesiger by advocating an immediate move on the post, the Secretariat in Nairobi and the military remained more circumspect.⁷⁹ In early September, Kittermaster and William Barrett, now a lieutenant colonel, met with Governor Belfield. They decided to increase forces at Moyale and Wajir so that there would be 350 men, including ACs, in the NFD. They also dispatched a patrol into Garre country to check Degodia raids. On the other hand, Rigby was ordered to disband his police units and return to Nairobi. Moreover, nothing was resolved concerning Serenli.⁸⁰ That decision came later in the month when Nairobi officials acceded to authorities at the War Office who were still absorbed with the effort in German East Africa and did not want to spare the troops. Another factor that influenced Nairobi's opting not to launch a punitive expedition at that time was the fact that the Juba River was then too shallow to be used to bring gunships upriver. Besides that, the British needed to consult with Italy before commencing operations so that their troops might be permitted to cross Italian territory east of the Juba.⁸¹

Beyond such considerations, the authorities in Nairobi hoped first to prepare the logistics for military operations. They called for strengthening of the communications and transportation infrastructure in the region by establishing wireless stations in the NFD and Jubaland and constructing a road from Kismaayo to Serenli.⁸² A fanciful scheme also arose when Kittermaster put forward the idea of using airplanes or naval airships for operations against the Aulihan.⁸³ As usual, London was loath to accept the expenses that accompanied imperial responsibilities, even though officials there knew that such were unavoidable. In any event, there was no time for such measures, and the punitive expedition was launched without doing much to lay the logistical groundwork for the operation.⁸⁴ Months of inaction had followed London's initial approval of the reoccupation of Serenli as conflicting proposals were shuffled between East Africa and England and from department to department. Another element to this exchange would be consequential later. The majority of the military concerns discussed in connection with the Aulihan uprising remained unresolved even after the suppression of the Somalis, and they would

become the justification for improvements in roads and communications in the north throughout the rest of the colonial era.⁸⁵

While all this was going on, developments on the frontier generally continued to favor the British. In August, one of the most vociferous opponents of colonialism among the Marehan, Shirre Jama, was murdered by members of another section of that clan.⁸⁶ Meanwhile, the Aulihan position continued to deteriorate as they became embroiled in disputes with their neighbors. In September, they had a minor skirmish with the Habr Suleiman near Salagli on the Juba River. There were also rumors of a larger clash with the Muhammad Zubeir that supposedly had left forty Aulihan dead. Likewise, there were a series of encounters in the wake of successful Marehan stock raids on the Aulihan.⁸⁷ The Aulihan elsewhere killed almost all of 30 Marehan and Dolbahanta Somali traders whom they attacked, while their Bartiri allies struck a mail party near Salagli and took the lives of an *askari*, and two porters.⁸⁸ The following month, a large party of Aulihan raided the settled Gosha for chickens and maize.⁸⁹ Meanwhile, the Aulihan sought to obtain more arms and ammunition for their impending showdown with the British. These they hoped to get from Ethiopia or from friendly Garre. The scuttlebutt was that the Aulihan bartered stolen Marehan camels for forty cartridges per head.⁹⁰ At the same time, the most that the British had done was to launch a patrol that penetrated 30 miles from Yonte on the lower Juba.⁹¹ Intelligence reports predicted that ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal would escape across the Dawa or Juba before the end of the year.⁹²

Such internecine fighting among the Somalis gave the colonial authorities the breathing space they so desperately needed. Early in the crisis, Colonel George Thesiger, the KAR Inspector General, had expressed the crux of British policy succinctly. He wrote that playing the Marehan and Muhammad Zubeir off against the Aulihan was “the essential need of our frontier policy for the duration of the war.”⁹³ While the fighting between the Muhammad Zubeir and Aulihan continued, by late 1916, the conflict with the Marehan overshadowed it. Indeed, Ahmed Hajji, a son of ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal, was killed in October by Marehan, and unconfirmed reports attested that the rebel leader had been wounded in the leg.⁹⁴ The Marehan decided to take even more effective action against their rivals. They suspended their internal feuds so that they could deal

with the Aulihan and, according to Sa'id Ahmed bin Sheikh, a British intelligence agent at Baardheere, organized a force of 700 men to oppose Aulihan egress through their domains into Italian Somaliland.⁹⁵ Paradoxically, when the Marehan asked for British assistance, the Jubaland PC voiced the opinion that the Somalis were simply "agitating in order to obtain arms and ammunition from the Government."⁹⁶ Imperial authorities now were taking allies on their own terms, and remained wary of armed Marehan.

As 1917 began, 'Abdurrahman Mursaal was at Serenli, and the dispute with the Marehan continued. At the end of January, the Aulihan staged a surprise night attack on Marehan in Jubaland and dozens were killed before the raiders made off with 500 camels and some rifles. In reprisal, Marehan killed 60–70 Aulihan in early March. At the same time, Aulihan raids on the Gosha continued, only now with Bartiri connivance.⁹⁷

"Butcher and Bolt"⁹⁸

Thus, with 'Abdurrahman Mursaal preoccupied with the Marehan, the British finally decided to act. Instead of striking the northern Aulihan, however, they initially chose to punish the southern Aulihan who had yet to pay their fines for the Samburu raid. Kittermaster placed William Barrett, now commandant of the newly created 5th Battalion, in command of the operation.⁹⁹ In February 1917, Barrett moved into the Lorian region with a patrol to expropriate Aulihan livestock. Accompanied by 30 men from the Camel Corps and 30 mounted-infantry, he then proceeded towards Marehan country from Wajir to Elwak. Altogether, Barrett claimed some 1,800 head of stock as forfeit for the December 1915 raid.¹⁰⁰

Not until May did Acting-Governor Bowring give his approval in principle for the long-in-coming punitive expedition against the northern Aulihan.¹⁰¹ Lieutenant Colonel Barrett trekked to the Juba at Luuq from where his men constituted the northern part of a pincer movement directed at Serenli.¹⁰² Moving south, his forces intended to block 'Abdurrahman Mursaal's escape across the Ethiopian frontier. Under Barrett's plan, a detachment of 250 men would constitute the second element to the pincers. They would move by steamer up the flooded Juba and rendezvous with him, Serenli being reoccupied in the process.¹⁰³ That the Juba was inundated was important, not only because

it made the river navigable, but also because it blocked flight into Italian Somaliland. Aware of Marehan hostilities with the Aulihan, Barrett still thought the Marehan unreliable allies, and proposed that the British go it alone against the rebels.¹⁰⁴ It is significant to recognize that Barrett later changed his mind, and decided to take help where he could get it. In October, the colonel secretly ordered the Reer Farah Ogas section of the clan to send men to free his *askaris* from tending captured stock during operations against the Aulihan.¹⁰⁵ Thus, 800 Marehan would accompany the punitive expedition that defeated the northern Aulihan.¹⁰⁶

Yet, back in May, not everyone had been persuaded that the time was propitious to reoccupy Serenli. Most importantly, Lieutenant General Arthur Reginald Hoskins, who had replaced Smuts as Commander-in-Chief of East African Forces in January, had demurred. Lettow's *Schutztruppe* by then had been pushed far south below the Rufiji River so that Hoskins's reasons for hesitation had mainly to do with the situation in the northeastern frontier. He wondered if Barrett had all the information he needed, and expressed concern about the reliability of the colonel's sources. When Hoskins further considered the number of troops that would be necessary to retake and hold Serenli, he decided to oppose the proposed action. Fortunately, it was at that very time that Field Marshal Sir William Robertson, pressured by Smuts and apparently hoping to appease South African political interests, relieved Hoskins of his command in East Africa and replaced him with an Afrikaner, Lieutenant General Louis Jacobus van Deventer.¹⁰⁷ Charles Bowring believed he saw an opportunity to reestablish British prestige in the north and moved to assert himself on the issue with his chief opponent out of the way. He turned to London and asked that the matter be put before the War Office and be treated as urgent.¹⁰⁸ Referring the question to the military command for its views, the CO took Bowring's side in the matter, reasoning that, "An adequate show of force [was] the only thing that [would] keep the frontier tribes in order."¹⁰⁹

While the British tarried, 'Abdurrahman Mursaal made one final attempt to sway the Muhammad Zubeir to his side. The indecisiveness of the colonial authorities had not done much to bolster their supporters or to convince possible straddlers of the seriousness of their intentions. 'Abdurrahman Mursaal promised immediate settlement of the numerous outstanding claims for *dia*

which had arisen with the Muhammad Zubeir, while at the same time he appealed to anti-colonial sentiments. British intelligence placed him forty miles inside of Muhammad Zubeir country and apparently intent on an attack on Wajir.

Yet, before any such attempt at union could be made, another minor dispute arose between the Somali clans. This involved an Aulihan killing a Herti Somali who was living in a Muhammad Zubeir village and was apparently a *sheegad*, or adoptee, of the Muhammad Zubeir.¹¹⁰ Uncertain of a Muhammad Zubeir move against his rear, and perhaps because he dared not attack such a well-defended fortress, 'Abdurrahman Mursaal did not set upon Wajir, but instead withdrew towards the Juba. Whatever the case with the Aulihan, the Muhammad Zubeir had proved that they could not be taken for granted by the British. Indeed, they had already demonstrated their contempt for the administration by refusing to comply with government orders that they bring in meat and baggage camels.¹¹¹

To local officials such a recalcitrant attitude underscored the urgency of launching a punitive expedition against the Aulihan and reoccupying Serenli. Act now, they argued, to save British prestige, and thereby forestall future problems with other Somali groups. Having assured themselves that the Muhammad Zubeir would not join the rebels, the only reason to delay was to get the troops who would steam up the Juba into position. At the last moment, however, Bowring began to have cold feet. The Acting-Governor expressed his trepidation about the campaign, and feared that the Muhammad Zubeir and the rest of the Somalis might join 'Abdurrahman Mursaal's estimated 600 and 1000 northern Aulihan. A general uprising would result in a costly campaign in Jubaland. Consequently, Bowring summoned Harold Kittermaster from Archer's Post to the capital for last minute consultations.¹¹² In the meantime, nevertheless, he allowed the plan to continue apace.

Before discussing the details of the punitive expedition, one observation may be instructive. In several respects, the British had planned their expedition well, taking into account not only political and military factors, but also using ecological conditions to their advantage. Jubaland was then in the midst of a severe drought which would constrict 'Abdurrahman Mursaal's movement options and hinder his water supply.¹¹³ Ironically, at the same time the Dawa and Juba

Rivers, fed by rains to the north in the Ethiopian highlands, were in flood. As has been mentioned, this not only allowed the northward movement of troops by river craft, but also obstructed the Aulihan's escape routes. Everything was set for what the colonialists hoped would be 'Abdurrahman Mursaal's last stand.

On 28 August 1917, imperial troops left Kismaayo bound for Serenli and a planned rendezvous with Barrett around the middle of the following month. Officials in the EAP still feared a widespread Somali rebellion, and expressed anxiety that delay might cause such a dreaded consequence. Bowring met with his Executive Council in Nairobi where they decided to give Barrett a free hand in the north. A few days later, on 5 September, Kittermaster arrived at the capital and added his voice to those who called for immediate action.¹¹⁴ When the CO was informed, London supported its "men on the spot."¹¹⁵

At the time that Barrett's column reached Baardheere on 10 September 1917, it was unlikely that there were any Aulihan within 50 miles of the Italian post.¹¹⁶ He heard encouraging news that the Muhammad Zubeir were still at loggerheads with the Aulihan and had looted 200 of the latter's cattle. Across the border to the north, the Ethiopians had driven Muhammad Yusuf from their country. There was also a rumor that the Bartiri had clashed with their erstwhile Aulihan confederates.¹¹⁷ More cheering still was the intelligence that the Italian resident at Baardheere shared with Barrett—there were no Aulihan on the Juba.¹¹⁸ To Barrett the only disappointing revelation was that, contrary to earlier rumors, 'Abdurrahman Mursaal was still alive.¹¹⁹

Having joined with troops from the south, Barrett reoccupied badly damaged Serenli on 26 September 1917, nearly 20 months after its sack. There soon proved to be large numbers of Aulihan along the river, however, despite what the Italians had told Barrett. Indeed, Major E. G. M. Porcelli, leader of the advancing southern British column, was slightly wounded along with a few of his *askaris* when a group of 100 Aulihan attacked them on the Juba at the end of September. Towing an Italian vessel, the English steamer repelled two more assaults leaving at least two dozen slain Somalis by British estimates.¹²⁰

While Porcelli repulsed these charges, Barrett learned that the Aulihan had massed near Salagli 43 miles south of Serenli on the Juba River. The lieutenant colonel immediately set after the kill. An advance party under the Canadian,

Captain Owen Martin, moved by land near the river while Barrett and a second group went down the Juba by steamer hoping to mount a surprise attack. On 11 October 1917, part of Barrett's force engaged the Aulihan at Salagli, killing only a handful of them, but capturing 750 cattle. In the days that followed, colonial troops continued to bring in large numbers of stock and kill or capture the Aulihan who engaged them. More devastating than British bullets were the drought conditions that prevailed in the interior. The British reported large numbers of Aulihan were dying of thirst when they could find no water after being driven into the bush. Since an expected counterattack by 'Abdurrahman Mursaal never materialized, Barrett finally retired again to Serenli. His troops had suffered no casualties, and the only losses on his side were the death of one of the Marehan who had cooperated with him and another seriously wounded. An Italian official told Barrett that the Aulihan were planning to escape to Ethiopia.¹²¹ When a relieved Bowring received word of these actions, he sent word to London and commended Barrett's operations as "well conceived and capably carried out."¹²²

The British did not deliver the coup de grâce against the northern Aulihan until over a month later, at the end of December 1917.¹²³ On the 23d, a column of the 5th KAR attacked some Aulihan watering their herds at Hafanli and Baso, and killed 50 and wounded numerous others. Again, many of those who escaped died of thirst. Subsequently, British reinforcements killed several more Aulihan at Karao and confiscated 2,000 camels. Only a small number of these were taken to Serenli, however, as the Marehan levies with whom they were entrusted bolted with the confiscated animals. On Christmas Day, the main British column moving down the Juba surprised a group of Aulihan at Illa Armo, and killed or wounded a handful of them. That night, a large party of Aulihan riflemen surprised Captain Martin as his unit marched on the main body of Aulihan at Hagagabli. The four-hour running battle culminated when Martin's forces captured Hagagabli with a bayonet charge. Still the Aulihan fought on for another four hours before they were finally routed. The retreating Somalis left 15 dead and many more wounded in their wake. Three colonial soldiers were seriously wounded, and there were ten casualties among the Marehan accompanying the patrol. British Lewis guns, one of which was specially mounted and fitted on a mule saddle, were an important determinate in deciding the outcome of the battle.¹²⁴

Finally, on 28 December, Martin led his outfit on an 11-hour night march to ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal’s village. Here a son and brother of the rebel leader were killed when the British attempted to surprise the Aulihan in the moonlight.¹²⁵ The British captured 1,200 camels (which they managed to retain this time), some rifles and ammunition, and 600 water pots with which ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal planned to escape to Ethiopia. Francis Elliot’s effects were also returned to Serenli. As the new year began, British forces surprised the rebels at Hafanli, and captured hundreds of camels and killed several more Aulihan. Yet ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal eluded them.

By now, the northern Aulihan were “completely demoralized . . . and eager for peace.”¹²⁶ This the obdurate Barrett refused until the defeated Somalis brought in ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal—even though he had intelligence that the rebel leader had escaped to the north. Further intelligence confirmed, however, that the Aulihan chief and 15 of his followers were in Italian territory near Luuq. There he had been joined by Muhammad Yusuf with a few loyal devotees. It was therefore impossible for the Aulihan to hand him over. Consequently, the British commander presented his terms to the Aulihan. He directed them to surrender their ringleaders for trial by courts martial. The Aulihan were also charged to return all weapons and government property they had stolen from Serenli as well as looted stock. In addition, Barrett ordered the Aulihan to pay a fine of 2,000 more animals. By 15 January, the Aulihan had capitulated and the British were disarming them. Up to this point, the authorities had captured 5,200 Aulihan, although a few fought to the end. The British estimated Martin’s column had killed 250 rebels, but it is impossible from official records to estimate how many others, including women and children, perished from thirst in the bush.¹²⁷

Meanwhile, London was pleased with the entire operation. Walter Hume Long, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, sent Bowring the following wire: “Great credit is reflected on all concerned.”¹²⁸ W. C. Bottomley, head of the East African Department of the CO, concluded that ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal was “not likely to be popular with the Aulihan in future.” The heavy penalty imposed on the Aulihan did not seem excessive to Bottomley, and the execution of the Somali leaders fit well with the “*public* example” he deemed necessary.¹²⁹

Nevertheless, the bloodletting was not over yet.¹³⁰ The southern Aulihan had not yet demonstrated sufficient prostration. By the end of 1917, the Reer Afgab, Reer Songat, and Reer Hawash had met the colonial government's terms, but other sections had not. With the northern Aulihan well in hand, colonial authorities demanded that the southern sections comply or else. Although many of them appeared, they failed to surrender all the stock Kittermaster had insisted on and left him suspicious of their intentions. Thus, on 28 February 1918, the NFD officer-in-charge decided to send an expedition against the Somalis as retribution for the Samburu raid. Captain Wolseley-Bourne led the British forces that divided 170 *askaris* into 2 columns, each with a machine gun. Opposed to them were a roughly equal number of Aulihan warriors. The two colonial detachments marched southeast of the Lorian Swamp, unknown country to the British, on either side of Lak Dera moving to the east. Wolseley-Bourne worked quickly not only so that he could catch the Somalis by surprise, but also so that he could beat the *guu*, or major rains, which were due at any time.

During this final operation, the British burned 17 villages and killed, by their count, at least 100 people, three-quarters of whom were women. Many others, including children, certainly died of thirst or lost their animals when they fled towards the Tana River—the only water available 80 miles away. Others were wounded or captured when they tried sneaking back to water their herds. Some of the Aulihan survived by receiving assistance from Maghabul Somalis in the area. Only two KAR soldiers were killed in action, although two others were wounded and a couple of Boorana levies lost their lives to “friendly fire.” By the time operations ceased on 16 March, the patrol had captured 300 cattle and 3,500 sheep and goats as well as a handful of camels and donkeys. The British also had taken 30 rifles.¹³¹ The British held women and children as hostages until the last resisters came in with their firearms, and 20 men were impressed into *corvée* labor to do bridge work. Officials in Nairobi, later relented their original demand for the surrender of 5,000 cattle when they allowed that such a heavy penalty was “excessive.”¹³² In addition, the Maghabul also were fined for abetting their Ogaden cousins. At last, Harold Kittermaster told the Aulihan that this put an end to the Samburu matter. Because of this devastating operation, the NFD officer-in-charge said he was gratified to see the change in the Somalis' attitude, and reported that “no further trouble need be feared from the Aulihan for

some time to come.”¹³³ Acting-Governor Charles Bowring agreed, adding that the punitive expedition would without doubt prove a beneficial lesson to the other inhabitants of the north.¹³⁴

For their “salutary” efforts, the British commanders were mentioned in the London Gazette for distinguished service in the field, and the troops received the African General Service Medal.¹³⁵ Soon thereafter, William Barrett was invalidated home owing to “intense mental depression.”¹³⁶ The Foreign Office expressed the government’s appreciation for Italian help during the Aulihan operations to Rome through the British Ambassador.¹³⁷ It should be added that besides providing intelligence and transit rights to the British, as mentioned above, the Italians also set up pickets on the left bank of the Juba. The Italians also permitted the British to use their wireless at Luuq to report Somali movements and prevent the Aulihan from escaping.¹³⁸

Nevertheless, the imperial lion had failed to seize its African prey. British intelligence reported that ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal was trying to join the Ethiopian Ogaden, and had released all his wives but one. He allegedly told the women to wait for him for ten months when he would wage a big war against the colonialists.¹³⁹ No such campaign ever materialized, and ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal soon faded from the consciousness of the colonialists.¹⁴⁰ A military court later tried 17 Aulihan leaders at Afmadu in Jubaland. Eight of these men were hanged, and the rest were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, although they were subsequently deported.¹⁴¹ While the authorities collected the fines from the Aulihan, they did not compensate private traders or property holders for the losses they sustained during the upheavals.¹⁴² Finally, in London, an official gave the CO’s assessment of the Aulihan campaign: “Another remarkable account of fine deeds well done of wh[ich] nothing is known by the British Public.”¹⁴³

Conclusion

This article has focused on the conflict between the Aulihan Somalis and the British colonial administration. The troubles with the Aulihan began when over 50 Samburu were killed and thousands of their stock looted as the result of an Aulihan raid in late 1915. British authorities could do nothing about the Aulihan attack except to demand that the Somalis make restitution for their

actions. Yet, the raid on the Samburu was only the preliminary to a more serious challenge to colonial rule as sections of the Aulihan subsequently sacked the Serenli *boma* and killed Lieutenant Elliot along with many ACs. As has been seen, much of the blame can be attributed to the foolhardy actions of the DC, but the rebellion was also the consequence of colonial intrusion into local disputes about which the alien rulers had little understanding.

In the wake of the disaster, colonial authorities recognized their extreme weakness and could only respond to the uprising by reinforcing Kismaayo as well as temporarily removing their forces from Garre country and Wajir. Consequently, the northeast was abandoned to rebellious Somalis for nearly two years. Luckily for the British, however, no real planning had gone into the rebellion besides the immediate destruction of the Serenli garrison. The Somalis proved so divided among themselves that the colonialists' fear of a united Somali front was never realized. The leader of the uprising, 'Abdurrahman Mursaal, had enlisted no allies before embarking on his reckless course. In fact, it was over a dispute with rival Marehan that he had come to blows with Elliot in the first place. Because of this, colonial representatives were able to find important allies among the Somalis so that 'Abdurrahman Mursaal was never able to organize a broad, Somali anti-colonial resistance. When the Aulihan *sheikh* did at last seek to build an anti-colonial coalition, his last hope came undone when the Somalis chose to feud among themselves rather than unite against the British.

Nevertheless, British authorities responded cautiously and deliberately to the Somali unrest. The colonial government delayed a punitive expedition because they overestimated the ability of the Somalis to mount a united resistance. Officials responded with trepidation to every rumor that the rebellion was spreading. Finally, only after prolonged bureaucratic infighting and when victory was certain in the war in German East Africa, did the British move to reestablish themselves in the northeast. The authorities first directed retribution against the southern Aulihan for their raid on the Samburu in 1915, and imposed heavy fines of livestock on the Somalis. Then, after yet another round of official wrangling and further hesitations, the British moved to suppress the northern Aulihan and reassert themselves over the Somalis. In the event, however, the British military expedition proved a well-coordinated affair with deadly

consequences. After routing the Aulihan just south of Serenli, the British once again turned to those southern sections of the clan that had escaped them earlier. Their subjugation was complete with hundreds of Somali men, women, and children killed, nearly a score of villages razed, and thousands of head of livestock seized. The British declared victory and awarded themselves medals for bravery.

The Aulihan, indeed, had paid a heavy price at the hands of the British punitive expedition. Not only did they lose many of their animals—and thus their means of subsistence—but also they had to surrender many of their leaders who were then either hanged or deported. Nonetheless, the campaign had not been a total success for the British. ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal had eluded colonial troops and eventually escaped into Ethiopia with a small number of followers. Meanwhile, Marehan levies conscripted to help the British with the seized Aulihan stock had scrambled off with many captured animals to the embarrassment of colonial officials. More importantly, this inability to control the Marehan illustrated just how little control the colonial state exercised on the northeast frontier. This example of Somali resistance certainly would make the British think twice about imposing their dictates in the northeast for some years to come. Indeed, the presence of so-called recalcitrant Somalis there had much to do with the nature of the cession of Jubaland to Italy in 1925. Potential Somali opposition to the imposition of taxation likewise delayed effective collection until the early-1930s.

Notes

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1. Quoted in Charles Chenevix Trench, *Men Who Ruled Kenya: The Kenya Administration, 1892–1963* (London: The Radcliffe Press, 1993), 64.
2. Maxamed Cabdille Xasan, “Perhaps the Trumpet has Sounded” 11–14, trans. B.W. Andrzejewski with Sheila Andrzejewski, in *An Anthology of Somali Poetry* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 42.
3. The EAP became Kenya Colony in 1920. The area under discussion also included territory situated east of the Juba River that the British transferred to Italian Somaliland in 1925.

4. The commentator was William Lloyd-Jones, the British officer who was wounded near Lake Turkana in 1913 by "Tigre." See Lloyd-Jones, *K.A.R.: Being an Unofficial Account of the Origin and Activities of the King's African Rifles* (London: Arrowsmith, 1926), 119. For the historical background to this article, see George L. Simpson, Jr., "Frontier Banditry and the Colonial Decision-Making Process," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* (1996).
5. Thomas H.R. Cashmore, "Studies in District Administration in the East African Protectorate," (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 1966); Edmond Romilly Turton, "The Pastoral Tribes of Northern Kenya 1800–1916," (Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1970); H. Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden Ltd., 1956); and Chenevix Trench, *Men Who Ruled Kenya*.
6. Geoffrey Hodges, *The Carrier Corps: Military Labor in the East African Campaign, 1914–1918* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986); and Cynthia Brantley, *The Giriama and Colonia Resistance in Kenya, 1800–1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).
7. Northern Frontier District Annual Report (NFDAR), 1915–16, H.B. Kittermaster, Kenya National Archives (KNA): PC/NFD1/1/2. Apparently, such neglect is what J. Gerald Hopkins, the Bulesa ADC, had in mind when he wrote that "The Somali Unrest is Largely of Our Own Making." Bulesa District Annual Report (AR), 1917–18, J.G. Hopkins, KNA: PC/NFD1/4/1.
8. Bowring to Long, 18 February 1918, Public Record Office (PRO)/Colonial Office (CO) 533/193/17538; and Ethel K. Rayne to Charles Chenevix Trench, 11 and 25 July 1963, in Charles P. Chenevix Trench, Papers on the Northern Frontier District, Kenya, 1894–1916, Rhodes House, Oxford, Mss. Afr. s. 583. The author wishes to express his gratitude to Mr. Chenevix Trench for his kind permission to use these manuscripts for this article.
9. Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 14 December 1915.
10. Cashmore, "Studies in District Administration," 362.
11. Ethel K. Rayne to Charles Chenevix Trench, 11 and 25 July 1963, in Chenevix Trench, Papers on the Northern Frontier District.
12. Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 18 and 20 December 1915.
13. Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 10 and 11 January 1916. In any event, Wolseley-Bourne was destined to stay on long after what the military authorities originally had planned.
14. Rayne was very critical of what he termed the weakness of the civilian authorities, who acted too slowly and would not give him the latitude he desired. In Rayne's view, their policies encouraged 'Abdurrahman Mursaal to embark on his reckless actions. Ethel K. Rayne to Charles Chenevix Trench, 25 July 1963, in Chenevix-Trench, Papers on the Northern Frontier District. For a brief biographical sketch of Rayne, see W. Robert Foran, *The Kenya Police, 1887–1960* (London: Hale, 1962), 18–19.
15. Bowring to Long, 18 February 1918.
16. Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 15–16; and 19–21 December 1915.

17. Bowring to Long, 18 February 1918. Bowring served in this capacity from Belfield's departure in April 1917 to the end of January 1919.
18. Kittermaster to Chief Secretary, Nairobi, 3 April 1918, enclosure in Bowring to Long, 11 May 1918.
19. Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 19–24 January and 2 February 1916.
20. Ibid., 10–16 February 1916.
21. Ibid., 17 February 1916.
22. Lloyd-Jones, K.A.R., 215; and Chenevix Trench, *Men Who Ruled Kenya*, 63. According to H. Moyse-Bartlett, 'Abdurrahman Mursaal had gone to Nairobi where he failed to get the administration's support for his claim to all the country between Wajir and Serenli. Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, 434.
23. It is hard to fathom why he locked the arms away from his men unless he feared them or felt that the *askaris* might get into trouble with the weapons. It might be noted that another source blamed Elliot's death on a Somali woman who, after talking him into locking away the garrison's rifles, betrayed the British officer to 'Abdurrahman Mursaal, while Moyse-Bartlett claims that the foolish act was done at the suggestion of 'Abdurrahman Mursaal himself. Ethel K. Rayne to Charles Chenevix Trench, 11 and 25 July 1963, in Chenevix Trench, *Papers on the Northern Frontier District*; and Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*.
24. Official accounts of the raid can be found in Bowring to Law, telegram, 19 February 1916, PRO/CO 533/167/8413; Bowring to Long, confidential, 10 August 1917. (These are also in KNA: PC/NFD4/7/1.) One colorful account states that the retreating troops heard the screams of their abandoned comrades as they were "stabbed and mutilated by the dervishes." It should be borne in mind that the same source, written many years later for a popular audience, attributes the unrest to the "Mad Mullah." J. A. Hunter and Daniel P. Mannix, *Tales of the African Frontier*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), 278. For additional sources see Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 24 February 1916; Chenevix Trench, *Papers on the Northern Frontier District*; and Cashmore, "Studies in District Administration," 361–62.
25. Samuel Frederick Deck, *The Ogaden*, 1931, Rhodes House, Oxford, Mss. Afr. s. 424.
26. Kittermaster to Bowring, 12 March 1916, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 18 April 1916, PRO/CO 533/168/23980. Some British officials tended to side with the Somalis so that two factions emerged within the administration. Lloyd-Jones colorfully describes these schools as those who were pro-Somali or supporters of a "Glaxo policy" and Somaphobes, or supporters of a "Hell-Fire policy." Lloyd-Jones, K.A.R., note 122–123. See also Vincent B. Thompson, "The phenomenon of shifting frontiers: the Kenya-Somalia case in the Horn of Africa, 1880s-1970s," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 30(1995): 12.

Compare the following characterizations of Somalis by two KAR officers.

All Somals loathe and detest Europeans. Europeans generally reciprocate. All East African tribes without exception detest Somals, but fear them. The Somal pride of race is stronger than that of other tribes. He (the Somal) is arrogant,

overbearing and 'showy,' and is undoubtedly in some ways very brave, but hysterical and unbalanced.

The majority of the people dislike them [Somali askaris]. Personally, I don't want to serve with any other brand of troops. The Somalis are not natives in any sense of the word. They are endowed with as good a brain as any European. They are inclined to be rather rogues, [and] want watching, but as soldiers they are superior to anything else out here.

Notes on Somal tribes, Lt. H. Rayne, enclosure in Rayne to Director of Intelligence Division, Admiralty War Staff, 1 November 1916, PRO/CO533/177/53130; and private letter, Martin Mahony to his father, 1 Feb. 1922, Meru, Rhodes House, Oxford, Mss. Afr. s. 487.

27. Précis for week ending Saturday June 3rd, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 10 June 1916.
28. Reddie to Hollis, 10 July 1911, KNA: PC/NFD4/1/3.
29. Ethel K. Rayne to Charles Chenevix Trench, 9 May 1963, in Chenevix Trench, Papers on the Northern Frontier District.
30. Turton, "The Pastoral Tribes of Northern Kenya," 259.
31. Cashmore, "Studies in District Administration," 359.
32. Turton, "The Pastoral Tribes of Northern Kenya," 201, 229.
33. Charles Chenevix Trench, *Men Who Ruled Kenya*, 50. After the sack of Serenli, the British reported that 'Abdurrahman Mursaal openly boasted that his intrigue had resulted in Jenner's death. Third Somali rebellion—known as Mr. Jenner's Expedition, u.d., KNA: PC/NFD6/6/1. Romilly Turton also states that 'Abdurrahman Mursaal was indirectly implicated in the PC's death. Chenevix Trench, based on what the Muhammad Zubeir chief, Hajji Hasan, told John Llewellyn, believes that Mursaal Omar instigated Jenner's murder. Turton, "The Pastoral Tribes of Northern Kenya," 232; Llewellyn's replies to an undated interview with Chenevix Trench, in Chenevix Trench, Papers on the Northern Frontier District; and verbal information provided to Chenevix Trench, in *ibid*.
34. Hope to [Chief Secretary, Nairobi, June 1910]; and Reddie to Hollis, 10 July 1911, KNA: PC/NFD4/1/3.
35. John Llewellyn later described 'Abdurrahman Mursaal as "Salkeld's blue eyed boy." Llewellyn's replies to an undated interview, in Chenevix Trench, Papers on the Northern Frontier District.
36. Cashmore writes that 'Abdurrahman Mursaal "claimed that the Governor had given him all the territory between Serenli and Wajir for the Aulihan." Cashmore, "Studies in district administration, 360.
37. Bowring to Long, confidential, 10 August 1917. The author could find no evidence to verify Moyse-Bartlett's contention that 'Abdurrahman Mursaal sought "overlordship" over all of Jubaland. Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, 435.
38. Bowring to Long, confidential, 10 August 1917. See also, Chenevix Trench, *Men Who Ruled Kenya*, 57.

39. T. S. Thomas, Précis for weeks ending Saturday April 15th, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 26 April 1916, PRO/CO 533/168/27359; and Saturday June 3rd, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 10 June 1916.
40. Précis for week ending Saturday, 19 August, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 25 August 1916.
41. NFDAR, 1915–16; and Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 22 October 1914.
42. NFDAR, 1916–17, H.B. Kittermaster, KNA: PC/NFD1/1/2.
43. Belfield to Harcourt, 13 May 1915, PRO/CO 533/154/28470; and précis for week ending Saturday, 26 August, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 30 August 1916, PRO/CO 533/169/46838 (or KNA: PC/NFD4/7/1).
44. The “Holy Man” as the Somalis called Muhammad ‘Abdille Hasan was anything but mad and very much had his wits about him. Charles Chenevix Trench, personal letter, 14 September 1999. Recent scholarship on the Somali leader can be found in Said S. Samatar, *Oral Poetry and Somali Nationalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982) and ‘Abdi Sheik‘Abdi, *Divine Madness: Mohammed ‘Abdulle Hassan* (Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Zed Books, 1993).
45. As might be expected, information in the British records about the extent and nature of ‘Abdurrahman Mursaal’s overtures to Muhammad ‘Abdille Hasan is limited. See précis for weeks ending Saturday, May 20th by T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 31 May 1916; and Saturday, 30th September, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 4 October 1916.
46. Précis for week ending Saturday 5 August, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 11 August 1916, PRO/CO 533/169/44764 (or KNA: PC/NFD4/7/1.)
47. Précis for week ending Saturday, 30 September, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 4 October 1916.
48. Bowring to Long, telegram, 8 June 1917, PRO/CO 533/182/29260; Bowring to Long, confidential, 10 August 1917; and précis for period 4 August 1917 to Saturday 8 September 1917, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Monson to Long, 12 September 1917, PRO/CO 533/184/54746.
49. Samatar, *Oral Poetry*, 101. For the role of ecological considerations in the recent Somali troubles, see Lee Cassanelli, “Explaining the Somali Crisis,” in *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War behind the War*, ed. Cynthia Besteman and Cassanelli (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 13–26.
50. To underscore this, Said Samatar refers to the period between 1880 and 1920 as “the era of the sheikhs in Somali history.” See *Oral Poetry*, 96–97.
51. John M. Lonsdale, “The Politics of Conquest: the British in Western Kenya, 1894–1908,” *Historical Journal*, 20 (1977): 844.
52. Igor Kopytoff, “The Internal African Frontier: The Making of African Political Culture,” in *The African Frontier: The Reproduction of Traditional African Societies*, ed. Igor Kopytoff (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), 21.
53. Despatch on operations against the Aulihan on the Juba River, Barrett to Staff Officer, KAR, Nairobi, 30 October 1918, enclosure in War Office to Under-

- Secretary of State for the Colonies (USSC), 11 September 1918; and Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 8 July 1916.
54. Bowring to Long, confidential, 10 August 1917.
 55. Précis for weeks ending Saturday, 6 May, T. S. Thomas, confidential, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 10 May 1916; and Saturday, 17 June, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 23 June 1916.
 56. Bowring to Long, confidential, 10 August 1917.
 57. Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 24 February through 18 March 1916.
 58. T. S. Thomas, Précis for week ending Saturday 15 April, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 26 April 1916.
 59. One might also note that the British forces in East Africa were awaiting the arrival of their new commander, Jan Smuts, who would arrive at Mombasa on 19 February. Byron Farwell, *The Great War in Africa, 1914–1918* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1986), 250–68; and Geoffrey Hodges, *The Carrier Corps: Military Labor in the East African Campaign, 1914–1918* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 47.
 60. T. S. Thomas, The Somali unrest in the northern territories, 14 February 1916, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 16 February 1916, PRO/CO 533/167/13328. NFD headquarters was transferred from Moyale to Archer's Post at the beginning of April 1916. NFDAR, 1916–17.
 61. Bowring to Law, 16 February 1916; and minute by Machtig, 21 February 1916, on Bowring to Law, telegram, 19 February 1916.
 62. Bowring to Long, confidential, 10 August 1917. The Gosha were Communities of Bantu-Speaking, Former Slaves who Inhabited the Juba River Valley. See Lee Cassanelli, "Social Construction on the Somali Frontier: Bantu Former Slave Communities in the Nineteenth Century," in *The African Frontier*.
 63. T. S. Thomas, The Somali unrest in the northern territories, 14 February 1916, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 16 February 1916; précis for weeks ending Saturday, 22 April 1916, confidential, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 26 April 1916; and Saturday, May 6, T. S. Thomas, confidential, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 10 May. Following the sack of Serenli, the Ethiopians refused to assist the Aulihan. The British attributed this to the fact that they also were Christians. Précis for week ending Saturday, 20 May by T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 31 May 1916.
 64. Ethel K. Rayne to Charles Chenevix Trench, 25 July 1963, in Chenevix-Trench, Papers on the Northern Frontier District; précis for week ending Saturday, 22 April 1916, confidential, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 26 April 1916.
 65. Précis for week ending Saturday, 20 May by T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 31 May 1916.
 66. Having conquered the Kilimanjaro region, this was the second phase of Smut's offensive into German territory. Unfortunately, for the British, heavy rains and widespread disease among the troops and porters caused serious delays in their advance. See Farwell, *The Great War*, 268–283; and Hodges, *The Carrier Corps*, 48.

67. Précis for week ending Saturday, May 6, T. S. Thomas, confidential, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 10 May 1916.
68. Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, *Text of Speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-Chief on the Presentation of the Colours to the 3rd and 5th Battalions, Kings' African Rifles at the Parade at Nairobi, Kenya Colony, Saturday, 26th January, 1924* (Nairobi: Government Printer, 1924), 3. East Africa Pamphlets; and précis for week ending Saturday, 17 June, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 23 June 1916.
69. Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 16 May 1916.
70. The maxim was concealed by taking it apart and packing pieces in sacks of flour to get it away. Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 20 March 1916. To give some idea of how impressed the Somalis were with some of the British weaponry, they referred to the old, breach-loading Martini-Henry rifle which still used black powder and with which some of the ACs were equipped as "big fart." Verbal information provided to Charles P. Chenevix Trench, in Chenevix Trench, *Papers on the Northern Frontier District*.
71. Précis for week ending Saturday 27 May by T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 31 May 1916. Officials at the CO did not understand that Wajir would be reoccupied, but only that a mounted patrol was to be sent into the area "with a view to steadying the neighbouring tribes." Minute by Machtig, 27 June 1916, *ibid*.
72. Précis for week ending Saturday, 3 June, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 10 June 1916.
73. It should be noted that part of the reason why Kittermaster dispatched the patrol in the first place, was to make a show of force and thereby cause some of the more restive Muhammad Zubeir to think twice about joining the Aulihan. *Ibid*. For an account of the incident between Rigby and Llewellyn, see Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 6 July 1916.
74. Bowring to Long, confidential, 10 August 1917.
75. Précis for week ending Saturday, 3 June, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 10 June 1916.
76. Précis for week ending Saturday, 22 July, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 27 July 1916, PRO/CO 533/169/42046 (or KNA: PC/NFD4/7/1).
77. Précis for weeks ending Saturday, 27 May 27 by T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 31 May 1916; Saturday, 17 June, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 23 June 1916; Saturday, 24 June, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 28 June 1916, PRO/CO 533/168/38639; Saturday, 1 July, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 5 July 1916, PRO/CO 533/169/38650; and Saturday, 19 August, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 25 August 1916. All are also in KNA: PC/NFD4/7/1.
78. Précis for week ending Saturday, 2 September, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 7 September 1916, PRO/CO 533/170/61849 (or KNA: PC/NFD4/7/1); and Llewellyn, Kenya administration diary, 27 July 1916.

79. Précis for week ending Saturday, 19th August, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 25 August 1916.
80. Précis for week ending Saturday, 9 September, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 15 September 1916, PRO/CO 533/170/61856 (or KNA: PC/NFD4/7/1).
81. Bowring to Long, confidential, 10 August 1917; and précis for week ending Saturday, 23 September, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 29 September 1916, PRO/CO 533/170/61869. The Italians gave such permission so that the British might reoccupy Serenli. Précis for week ending Saturday, 16 September, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 23 September 1916, PRO/CO 533/170/61856.
82. For information related to erecting telegraph stations see Read to Secretary, Ministry of Munitions of War, 2 August 1916, PRO/CO 533/172/34261; Law to Belfield, telegram, 6 December 1916, PRO/CO 533/172/57870; enclosures in Crown Agents to USSC, 11 January 1917, PRO/CO 533/187/2284; Contract for radio telegraph stations in Jubaland and Northern Frontier District, 22 June 1917, enclosure in Crown Agents to USSC, 30 June 1917, PRO/CO 533/187/33300; and Long to Bowring, telegram, 23 July 1917, PRO/CO 533/189/36447. Read to Secretary, War Office, 11 November 1916, PRO/CO. 533/171/53765 contains a proposal for road construction.
83. Harold Kittermaster wanted to send a couple of aircraft to Lorian in advance to get used to operating them in desert conditions. While Lieutenant General A. R. Hoskins, the Commander-in-Chief, East African Forces, saw merit in the idea, he vetoed the experiment as unfeasible. Kittermaster to Commandant, KAR, Nairobi, 26 November 1916; Hoskins to Belfield, 12 February 1917; and T. S. Thomas to D[eputy]A[djutant] & Q[uartermaster]G[eneral], 19 December 1916, enclosures in Belfield to Long, 5 March 1917, PRO/CO 533/179/23158. It might be noted that this was the means by which the British at last defeated Muhammad 'Abdille Hasan in British Somaliland after the First World War.
84. For more on the subject of the use of aircraft in colonial Africa see David Omissi, *Air Power and Colonial Control* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1990) and David Killingray, "A Swift Agent of Government: Air Power in British Colonial Africa, 1916–1939," *Journal of African History* (1984).
85. Yet, some of these were long in coming. To take the case of wireless telegraphy in the NFD, it was not until 1929, that the government erected 500-watt transmitters at Wajir, Moyale, and Marsabit. NFDAR, 1929, R.W. Hemsted, KNA: PC/NFD1/1/3.
86. Précis for week ending Saturday, 19 August, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 25 August 1916.
87. Précis for weeks ending Saturday, 9 September, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 15 September 1916; Saturday, 16 September, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 23 September 1916, PRO/CO 533/170/61856; and Saturday, 30 September, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 4 October 1916.
88. Précis for fortnight ending Saturday, 14 October, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 20 October 1916, PRO/CO 533/170/57640.

89. Précis for week ending Saturday, 28 October 1916, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 3 November 1916, PRO/CO 533/171/61897.
90. Ibid.
91. Précis for week ending Saturday, 30 September, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 4 October 1916.
92. Ibid; and précis for three weeks ending Saturday, 25 November, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 2 December 1916, PRO/CO 533/172/1735.
93. Précis for week ending Saturday, 20 May by T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 31 May 1916.
94. Précis for week ending Saturday, 28 October 1916, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 3 November 1916.
95. Précis for week ending Saturday, 4 November, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Belfield to Law, 10 November 1916, PRO/CO 533/171/61910.
96. Précis for three weeks ending Saturday, 25 November, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Law, 2 December 1916.
97. Précis for period 13 January to 14 March, 1917, T. S. Thomas, 16 April 1917, enclosure in Bowring to Long, 23 April 1917, PRO/CO 533/180/30873; and the fortnight ending Saturday, 28 April, T. S. Thomas, 2 May 1917, enclosure in Bowring to Long, 8 May 1917, PRO/CO 533/181/34463.
98. The nickname in the British army for punitive expeditions was “butcher and bolt.” James Morris, *Pax Britannica: The Climax of Empire* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1968), 117.
99. Minute by Machtig, 2 January 1917, on Belfield to Law, 10 November 1916.
100. Précis for period 13 January to 14 March, 1917, T. S. Thomas, 16 April 1917, enclosure in Bowring to Long, 23 April 1917.
101. Bowring to Long, 9 May 1917, PRO/CO 533/181/34467.
102. Moyse-Bartlett writes that Barrett left Gobwen, near the mouth of the Juba, in late August. While this author has not had access to the relevant KAR documents, this would seem impossible. See Moyse-Bartlett, *The King’s African Rifles*, 435.
103. The Juba was normally navigable to a few miles north of Serenli four to five months of the year. Capt. C.N. French, “A Journey from the River Juba by Dolo, Moyale, and Mount Marsabit to the Uaso Nyiro,” *Geographical Journal* 42 (1913): 432.
104. Bowring to Long, telegram, 8 June 1917.
105. Despatch on operations against the Aulihan on the Juba River, Barrett to Staff Officer, KAR, Nairobi, 30 October 1918, enclosure in War Office to USSC, 11 September 1918.
106. Moyse-Bartlett, *The King’s African Rifles*, 437–38.
107. Hoskins was sent to command a division in Mesopotamia. Hodges, *The Carrier Corps*, 51; 62; 65–66 (see footnote 19); and Farwell, *The Great War*, 321–22.
108. Bowring to Long, telegram, 8 June 1917.
109. Read to War Office, confidential and pressing, 12 June 1917, PRO/CO 533/182/29260; and minute by Butler, 7 September 1917, on Bowring to Long, 14 June 1917, PRO/CO 533/182/39820.

110. Lee V. Cassanelli describes *sheegad* as a Somali “mode of adaptation for survival” whereby a treaty is reached where one party becomes a client to another in exchange for support and services for necessities as in a time of drought. Other means included in his analysis include range management, movement to pasture and/or water, the exchange of livestock for necessities, and subsistence outside of pastoralism as in cultivation, fishing, or incense gathering. Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600–1900* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 51.
111. Bowring to Long, confidential, 10 August 1917.
112. Ibid.
113. The *dair*, or light rains of September and October, having failed. Précis for period 13 October to 23 December, 1917, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Monson to Long, 4 February 1918, PRO/CO 533/193/17521.
114. Monson to Long, telegram, 10 September 1917, PRO/CO 533/184/45147.
115. Read to War Office, urgent and secret, 13 September 1917, PRO/CO 533/184/45147.
116. Monson to Long, telegram, 14 September 1917, PRO/CO 533/184/45688.
117. Précis for period 4 August 1917 to Saturday, 8 September 1917, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Monson to Long, 12 September 1917.
118. Barrett to Staff Officer, KAR, Nairobi, 7 October 1917, enclosure in Bowring to Long, confidential, 13 November 1917, PRO/CO 533/185/12640; and précis for period September 8th to Saturday, 13 October 1917, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Long, 22 October 1917, PRO/CO 533/185/59286.
119. Précis for period August 4 1917 to Saturday, 8 September 1917, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Monson to Long, 12 September 1917.
120. Bowring to Long, telegram, 2 October 1917, PRO/CO 533/185/48910; Barrett to Staff Officer, KAR, Nairobi, 7 October 1917, enclosure in Bowring to Long, confidential, 13 November 1917; and précis for period 8 September to Saturday, 13 October 1917, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Bowring to Long, 22 October 1917.
121. Barrett to Staff Officer, KAR, Nairobi, 30 October 1917, PRO/CO 533/185/12640; and précis for period 13 October to 23 December, 1917, T. S. Thomas, enclosure in Monson to Long, 4 February 1918.
122. Bowring to Long, confidential, 13 November 1917.
123. Details for this phase of the campaign are sometimes conflicting. See Fortnightly summary of events in Jubaland to 15 January 1918, enclosure in Monson to Long, 4 February 1918; and Bowring to Long, telegram, 14 January 1918, PRO/CO 533/193/2644.
124. Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, 436.
125. Ibid.
126. Bowring to Long, telegram, 14 January 1918.
127. Bowring to Long, telegram, 4 February 1918, PRO/CO 533/193/6431; and Fortnightly summary of events in Jubaland to 14 February 1918, secret, enclosure in Monson to Long, confidential, 24 July 1918, PRO/CO 533/196/44224.
128. Long to Bowring, telegram, 16 January 1918, PRO/CO 533/193/2644.

129. Emphasis in original. Minute by Bottomley, 5 February 1918, on Bowring to Long, telegram, 4 February 1918.
130. The following account of the southern Aulihan expedition is based on Kittermaster to Chief Secretary, Nairobi, 3 and 10 April 1918; and Wolseley-Bourne to Phillips [Assistant Commandant, KAR], 27 April 1918, enclosures in Bowring to Long, 11 May 1918.
131. Again, the exact numbers disagree from one document to the next, and those contained in the text are not necessarily authoritative. Cashmore gives a total of 28,000 camels, 400 rifles, and 18,000 rounds of ammunition captured from the Aulihan by the British for the entire punitive expedition. Cashmore, "Studies in district administration," 364.
132. Bowring to Long, 11 May 1918.
133. Kittermaster to Chief Secretary, 10 April 1918, enclosure in Bowring to Long, 11 May 1918.
134. Bowring to Long, 11 May 1918.
135. White to USSC, 10 April 1918; and Read to War Office, 17 April 1918, PRO/CO 533/202/17676; van Deventer to War Office, 24 June 1918, enclosure in War Office to USSC, 11 September 1918; and Read to War Office, 21 December 1918, PRO/CO 533/199/60889.
136. For the peculiar circumstances surrounding Barrett's return to Britain see Barrett to Milner, 26 June 1919; and minute by CO official [Bottomley?], 2 July 1919, PRO/CO 533/225/38739; verbal information provided to Charles P. Chenevix Trench, In Chenevix Trench, Papers on the Northern Frontier District; and Chenevix Trench, *Men Who Ruled Kenya*, 56.
137. Foreign Office to Rodd, 29 October 1918, enclosure in Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to USSC, 1 November 1918, PRO/CO 533/201/52716.
138. Bowring to Long, telegram, 7 March 1918, PRO/CO 533/194/11837; and Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, 435.
139. Fortnightly summaries of events in Jubaland to 14 February 1918, secret; and of events in Jubaland and Northern Frontier from 1st to 15 March 1918, secret, enclosures in Monson to Long, confidential, 24 July 1918.
140. The last mention this author found of the rebel leader placed him at the Webbe Shebelle in 1923. Kenya Colony and Protectorate, *Native Affairs Department Annual Report 1926* (New York: Andronicus Publishing Company, Inc.).
141. Fortnightly summaries of events in Jubaland to 28 February 1918, Maj. C.G. Foster, secret; Fortnightly summary of events in Jubaland and Northern Frontier from 16 to 31 March 1918, secret, enclosures in Monson to Long, confidential, 24 July 1918; and Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, 436.
142. Letter from Power, 7 March and Power to Chief Secretary, Nairobi 16 March 1916, KNA: PC/JUB1/10/1; and Bowring to Long, 5 December 1918, PRO/CO 533/199/6985.
143. Minute by W.A.S. Hewins [then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies], 10 October 1918, PRO/CO 533/195/38656.