

UGANDA AND WORLD WAR ONE

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This paper will not attempt to give a systematic account of the campaigns in East Africa of the 1914-1918 War. This has already been done with great precision elsewhere.¹ What we shall attempt to define are the white attitudes towards the Uganda Africans as fighters in particular and the Africans as fighters in general. We shall examine why the black man fought for the white man when he was ignorant of the causes of conflict between white and white and lastly we shall discuss conditions of service and what happened to him when he was no longer needed.

The conquest of the African continent was largely undertaken by Africans acting on behalf of various European powers. Sometimes the Africans were fighting, as far as they were concerned, with their traditional enemies, but for most of the time the Africans were fighting purely as mercenaries against distant Africans. General Louis Faidherbes' *Tirailleurs Sénégalais* were turned loose on the muslim states in the Futa-Djallon region in the later part of the nineteenth century; the West African Frontier Force (WAFF) was instrumental in the last Ashanti war of 1900 in turning the tables against Ashanti and the King's African Rifles (KAR) was used extensively in East Africa to bring stubborn societies to their senses. Of all the colonial powers, the Portuguese relied on the Africans least because white conscripts were easily obtainable from poverty stricken Portugal.

In Uganda, the employment of black to fight black by white men began in 1890, when Lugard left Mombasa with seventy Sudanese *askaris*, recruited for the Imperial British East Africa company (IBEAC) by Captain W. H. Williams in Egypt. The following year, Captain Williams joined Captain Lugard in Buganda with another contingent of a hundred Swahilis and seventy-five Sudanese troops. Another contingent of Sudanese troops was added the same year when Lugard convinced Salim Bey and his men to join him. Later, in 1893 another polyglot collection of Sudanese, Egyptians, Pygmies and Ethiopians under Fadl el Maula was attracted to Uganda by Thurston. This collection formed the basis of what became the Uganda Rifles in 1895 when under the Uganda Rifles ordinance, provision was made for a commandant who was to be white, chief officers who were also to be white and African officers, under officers and privates who were to sign on for a period of twelve years.

Lugard had used the Sudanese and Baganda levies, about 25,000 against Banyoro in 1891 and Colonel Colville also used the Sudanese and the Baganda

against Bunyoro between 1873 and 1895. Major Cunningham used the same forces against the Nandi between 1895 and 1897. The Baganda were again used against themselves in 1897. Mwanga was at large in South West Buganda and a detachment of the Uganda Rifles including 14,000 Buganda levies under the Katikkiro and the overall charge of Ternan left Port Alice (Entebbe) to attack the very elusive Mwanga. When the force was recalled in July 1897, Ternan received a message of thanks from Queen Victoria on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee and the contents of the message were passed on to the Baganda chiefs and the Buddu Field Force. The *askaris* were in fact awarded a special gratuity of one month's pay. Between 1900 and 1914, the KAR, as the Uganda Rifles and the East African Rifles had become by 1902, was used extensively in punitive and pacification campaigns in northern Uganda, western Kenya and Somaliland.

Before 1914, the security of East Africa as a whole was thought of as an internal matter. In any case, if the need arose, the Indians and South Africans would be called in to defend British East Africa against external attack. The Africans were not thought capable of undertaking the defence of East Africa against external attack and although in the regulations of the KAR issued in 1905, the training of the KAR was not to be limited to local conditions only, the KAR was ill-equipped for the purposes of external defence. Indeed, certain clauses of the Berlin Act of 1885,² had provided for the neutrality of Africa in case of war elsewhere. These articles were to become operative, however, if the powers concerned so proclaimed the fact and fulfilled the duties, which neutrality requires. And at the outbreak of World War One attempts to invoke these clauses of the Berlin Act proved ineffective. Considering the shortlived resistance of the West African German colonies of Togo and Cameroon against the Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF), those concerned with the defence of British East Africa, thought that the KAR would repeat what the RWAFF had done in West Africa. This as it turned out, was a gross miscalculation and by 1916 the British had begun to recruit masses of 'natives' into the army, giving them three month sandwich courses before letting them loose on the war fronts.

What kind of African did the whites prefer in the armed forces? There was general preference for recruitment among the remote ethnic groups from communities which were detached and even hostile to the 'urban' Africans.³ Until World War II northerners in Nigeria and, in particular, the Hausa provided the bulk of military recruits. In Ghana, the northern illiterate was preferred for recruitment and until 1960, in Ghana, 60% of the recruits came from the north. Sierra-Leone was the same. Illiterates such as the Korankos, Mandingos, Fulas and Limbes were preferred for recruitment. The British and French preferred the illiterates to others because they had very little enthusiasm for the sophisticated Africans who, in the main, had embraced

Christianity and the trappings of western civilization. In other words, the whites hated the uppy nigger of the colonial period.

In the mechanised armies of the twentieth century, basic education was sometimes needed. Where this was the case, whites preferred to educate the illiterates within the ranks rather than recruit the educated schoolboys from the mission schools.

The Hamitic Theory was sometimes brought to bear upon recruitment. The greater the infusions of this exotic 'hamitic' blood the more martial, ethnic groups were considered to be. Indeed Lloyd-Jones observed:

It would appear that the central African races possess military qualities in direct proportion to the amount of influence left by foreign invaders. The Abyssinians and the Somalis, of course, are not of African origin and there is little doubt that the Gallas, Masai and Nandi have traces of non-African strains in their blood. Again the Nilotic Sudanese and the tribes of northern Uganda show signs of the effects of former Asiatic invasions to which they owe their warlike characteristics.⁴

It seems that considerations of how much 'hamitic blood' each ethnic group had weighed least upon the conscience of the recruiters during World War One. In Uganda the Bahima who are, for instance, reputed to have very heavy doses of this exotic blood, did not feature at all in the colonial armed forces.

The Baganda had been used in the 1890's against Kabarega, the Nandi and Mwanga and when war broke out in Europe in August 1914, the Baganda were among the first people to be called upon to shoulder the war burden. On the 8th August, 1914, the Acting Governor H. R. Wallis, speaking on the occasion of Kabaka Chwa's coming of age, concluded his speech by appealing to Daudi Chwa to make a contribution to the war: He said:

It will be your duty as an officer in the KAR and those of your people to push the enemy back in the event of attack.⁵

Indeed, in September 1914, Daudi Chwa in his address to the youths declared:

The wars that the British are involved in these days will also involve us who are under the British flag. It is our duty to defend our country. I know that you are prepared for this.⁶

It was reported in the *Uganda Annual Report* of 1914-1915, that the outbreak of war was followed by widespread expressions of loyalty to the British Government and offers of service and assistance from the *Chiefs* and people of the Protectorate. Valuable help, it was further reported, had been rendered the military authorities by the Baganda, Banyoro and other ethnic groups, under the guidance of *their Chiefs* and that praiseworthy activity was evinced in the mobilization of a force of African levies, the collection of recruits and African carriers and in the Organisation of local food supplies. Considerable bodies of Africans were despatched to East Africa after the

commencement of hostilities to assist in the military transport to that country; large numbers, in addition to regular troops were occupied in combatant and not combatant duties on the southern and western frontiers of the Protectorate.⁷

There was no lack of enthusiasm among the chiefs with regard to the defence of the British empire and its expansion. The chiefs were the major beneficiaries of British imperialism in Uganda and heartily responded to the call to arms. The war represented no immediate threat to the chiefs who rarely participated in the actual campaigns. What they did was to send those under their charge to die for the British in German East Africa. The British had, for instance, brought death, famine and misery to Bunyoro during the 1890s and the Bahyoro could not have easily forgotten what the British had done to them to fight willingly on their behalf. They were simply forced by the chiefs to enlist in the forces and it is the chiefs who got the credit for their people's participation.

One of the strongest supporters of British imperialism in Uganda and chief British war propagandist was Z. K. Kisingiri, one of the regents during Daudi Chwa's minority. Kisingiri, as a matter of fact, offered to lead 500 African warriors to Europe to help the British in the fighting there.

In the *Ebifa* of November 1914, Kisingiri was reported to have said:

George the kind father gave us the honour of K.C.M.G. and we should therefore, pray for the British and assist them.

Kisingiri's letter to the Provincial Commissioner was, indeed, a vivid protestation of loyalty and probably represented the views of most chiefs in the country at the time. At the beginning of the hostilities in 1914, H. H. Daudi Chwa, Sir Apolo Kagawa, W. S. Kahaya (Omugabe of Ankole) and Nuwa Mbaguta were granted honorary commissions of Lieutenants in the KAR. Some chiefs went into active service. Aloni Kiyimba, the Saza chief of Bugangaizi, who was posthumously awarded the Bronze Medal of the Lion, on the recommendation of the commanding officer of the Belgian Congo Eastern Forces, on 3rd September 1916, by the Governor-General of the Belgian Congo for rendering service in the Congo carrier section, died in active service.¹⁰ At any rate, there were not many chiefs who actually went to the battle fronts.

The other important element in the recruitment campaign were the missionaries. They, being teachers and managers of men in general, were in touch with the educated youth needed in the more sophisticated services such as the medical corps. Young men needed for these services could only be obtained from the mission schools.

Indeed, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Willis, Anglican Bishop of Uganda, placed the services of the Rev. W. B. Gill at the disposal of the recruiters to help with recruitment in C.M.S. schools and the Catholic Missions likewise flung the doors of their schools open for recruitment.¹¹ To emphasize the link

between loyalty and royalty, Prince Joseph Musanje was gazetted as second lieutenant in the medical corps, thus becoming the highest ranking African on active service from Uganda.

Chiefs were also used in the all important task of keeping the morale of the participants high. A letter written by Daudi Chwa on 12th April 1918, to his men in the field, clearly indicates this role. The letter was issued in the daily orders.¹²

Apolo Kaggwa who was also a major recruitment agent visited the men in the field on several morale boosting missions.

Not all chiefs, though, echoed Kisingiri's views. Kigezi chiefs stood out against this belated sympathy with the British cause. In 1915, an important chief in Kigezi, probably Katulegi, of Mutongo village, was giving trouble "owing to his German proclivities".¹³ An expedition was sent against him and he retired to an Island in lake Bunyonyi after having removed all the canoes from the shores. His people who attacked the expedition were reported to have been severely punished. In the *Uganda Annual Report* (1916-1917) attempts to undermine European authority in Kigezi were again reported.

We have discussed the role of chiefs in the recruitment drive. Indeed, there were no conscriptees, only volunteers during World War One in Uganda. Some European observers in Uganda at the time, noted, however, that the voluntary system as Europeans understood it was not comprehended and that the raising of the levies could hardly be described as a voluntary effort on the part of the indigenous people.¹⁴ Among the Native Medical Corps few 'volunteers' wished to be re-enlisted. The reason given for the lack of enthusiasm by the Europeans was that training was hard and discipline rigid. The wave of patriotism had passed and the original ardour had been damped by six months of field service.¹⁵ In the case of the Baganda volunteers no lesser a person than the Katikkiro, Apolo Kaggwa had to be sent to the field, both as a British and Buganda Government representative to entice the 'volunteers' into re-engagement.

Apart from what they were told by the chiefs, there is no account of what the ordinary man thought of the war. Many ordinary folk could not even distinguish between the Germans and the English and rendered service to both. In 1911 the 2nd KAR (Yao battalion) was disbanded because the British officials were unable to read the writing on the wall. Many of the disbanded KAR *askaris* joined German service and served the Germans during World War One without deserting to join their former masters. The British naively hoped that the *askaris* would desert their "brutal" masters and serve them. This naive hope never materialised.

During World War Two, however, ordinary Ugandans expressed their opinion of the war. Paulo Wanyama from Bukedi, when asked why he joined the war, replied that he was told by the chiefs to join and that he hoped

that the war would provide plenty of opportunity for 'adventure'.¹⁶ Another more sophisticated Ugandan who attained the rank of Regimental Sergeant Major, the highest rank that an African could reasonably expect, and a former Makerere student of the late 1930's, Robert Kakembo, noted that the majority of Africans did not participate in the war to fight for King George nor to defend the Empire. They joined to help the missionary who were kind to them or the kind D.C.'s wife whose children played with his own. There were those who simply joined to get a job and consequently money.¹⁷ In a forward to Robert Kakembo's book *The African Soldier Speaks*, George Turner, the Principal of Makerere, described Kakembo as a thoughtful and able man and noted that the war was doing what some people feared, namely the putting of ideas into the Africans' head. The book was not allowed to circulate, was given confidential cover by the Government, and was only for official use. Kakembo discussed more fundamental issues such as the likely effect of the war on Africans, which issue alarmed the government but does not concern us in this paper. It is probable that the participant in World War One, like his counterpart in World War Two, was fighting, because he had been told by the chief, because, he loved adventure and most important, probably, because he wanted to earn money and improve his lot. Unlike Kisingiri, the ordinary man was neither fighting for the British Empire nor for his country. Indeed, the Africans according to Dolbey wanted the war to end as quickly as possible because they were tired of forced labour, of food requisition, and the terrorising of the civilian population.¹⁸ King George did not come into the picture at all.

On 5th August, the Acting Governor of Uganda, H. R. Wallis, issued three proclamations, published in the *Uganda Official Gazette*. He declared that war had broken out between Britain and Germany; that the KAR, Uganda Police Force and Uganda Volunteer Reserve will, until further notice, be under conditions of active service and that, under the KAR Reserve Forces Ordinance of 1912, every reservist will be called out on permanent service, within or without the Protectorate. With the exception of the Uganda Volunteers Reserve which was exclusively European and Asian, the majority of the people concerned in the second and third proclamations were Ugandan Africans.

Three days after the issue of the proclamations, on 8th August, 1914, the Acting Governor, while addressing the Lukiiko on the occasion of Daudi Chwa's coming of age, declared that it was the duty of Chwa, as an officer in the forces of His Majesty to defend the country.

The response from Buganda and elsewhere has been described as prompt. There were four categories of participants in the war. There were the Troops, the Soldiers, the Followers and the Porters. The majority of participants from Uganda were either Followers or Porters. Only the Africans specialised work, such as medical work attained the dazzling heights of troops status.

At the outbreak of the war, the 4th Battalion of the KAR at a strength of seven companies was scattered on varied tasks.¹⁹ The immediate task of the 4th KAR and the hastily recruited levies was the defence of the Uganda Railway and from the outset four companies of the 4th KAR and auxiliaries were despatched to Kisii to defend the Uganda Railway against German incursions. Two companies of the 4th KAR were posted to Masaka and Sanje for the defence of the southern border. The southern border was also reinforced by the Uganda Police, which had been hastily turned into a service battalion, and the Baganda Rifles. These later reinforcements were stationed at Masaka and Mbarara respectively. In all, about 3,000 Baganda spearmen were employed in the defence of the southern frontier and another 15,000 assorted Africans were on reserve.

The Belgians who were attacking the Germans from the west and made the crucial strike at Kigali in mid 1916 needed the support of the Ugandans. The Belgians were short of porters because the Batutsi had proved stubborn. They therefore, turned to Uganda for their transportation requirements. A base for operations against the Germans was set up by the Belgians in Uganda, at Bukakata, and the necessary carriers and ox-wagons were provided by Uganda.

At the beginning of the war the Germans had an armed tug at Bukoba but no passenger or cargo steamers. Nevertheless, the British took the greatest precautions in the defence of Lake Victoria. Accordingly, a canoe patrol, based at Port Bell was set up and this African flotilla participated in the naval action which soon rendered Bukoba a useless military base.

The 4th KAR took a lions share of the fighting in the Voi and Kisii areas in 1914. At the beginning of 1917, the original battalion had grown to four battalions, and a fifth was in the formative stage at Bombo when the war came to an end in 1918. All these battalions, almost to a man, were recruited from Uganda, about 7,000 men in all.

In June 1916, after the whole of the Lake region had been cleared of the German enemy, and Lake detachment, the Uganda Police Service Battalion, the Buganda Rifles and the Uganda Transport Corps were disbanded and from then until the end of the war, Uganda's war effort was directed towards the keeping of the KAR supplied with men and to keep going the medical services in the field.

As we noted earlier, most of the African recruits were used in the carrier services. By 1915 about 4,500 Africans on three month reliefs manned the transport corps. By 1916, when a lot of the Followers and the Porters were retired, 38,000 had been registered in the carrier services alone, exclusive of the specialist carriers such as machine-gun carriers. Uganda also had the task of supplying the Belgians with porters. About 8,400 Bakiga and Banyankole were employed in the Belgian Service Corps. In 1917 the policy was to recruit

carriers from the "grain eating tribes" of the Eastern Province for service in the interior of German East Africa.

At the outbreak of the war, the missionary hospitals in Kampala and the government hospitals at Entebbe were turned into military hospitals and forty Africans were withdrawn from the Government Medical Services to constitute a Uganda Stretcher Bearer Company. There was another medical team in Kampala, at the time undergoing medical training for the anti-venereal disease campaign and this team along with the Stretcher Bearer Company formed the nucleus of the Uganda Native Medical Corps (UNMC). The strength of the UNMC was boosted by further recruitment from the mission schools, and the first school recruits came from Mengo High School. The recruitment from the schools run counter to the policy of recruiting illiterates because the nature of the work was too sophisticated for illiterates. A Corporal in the UNMC had to have a knowledge of reading and writing; he had to know enough English to enable him to name the articles used in the dispensaries; he had to have an elementary knowledge of dispensing of simple stock medicans; he had to be capable of keeping simple records such as the admission and discharge records; he had to be able to prepare blood films and, preferably, be able to type.²⁰

As we noted earlier the overwhelming participants were either followers or porters. In the case of the UNMC there arose problem of the status of the ex-schoolboys. They could not accept the status of either followers or porters and the status of troops was secured for them with the utmost difficulty from the General Headquarters in Nairobi.²¹ The UNMC served with the KAR the Lake Force and the Belgian Forces and after the capture of Tabora in June 1916, the members of the UNMC attached to the Belgian and Lake Forces were paid off. Those with the KAR remained in the service until the end of the war in November 1918.

In 1917, there was a reorganisation of the Medical Services and the Uganda and East African Medical Corps were brought together into the new African Native Medical Corps under one director, Major-General G. D. Hunter. Once more, the schools provided a substantial number of UNMC's and in Uganda D. G. Tomblings was in charge of fresh recruitment. Tomblings was chosen for the task because he was well known to the Chiefs (he was an Assistant District Commissioner) and the missionaries. Members of the corps served in distant places. They were distributed throughout the KAR and travelled as far north as Ethiopia and as far south as Durban.

Material contributions to the war effort were also considerable. At the outbreak of the war, a Uganda War Relief Fund was established and later, in the year, the Belgian Red Cross Fund. "It was not possible in the 1914-1915 Financial Year to contribute to the Imperial expenses in connection with the war."²² There were multiple appeals for donations from the National Committee for Relief in Belgium. There were appeals from the Overseas Club, London, for donation towards the financing of an aircraft flotilla and

there were appeals from the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John.

In January 1915, Zakaria Kisingiri, whom we have met before, began a vigorous campaign of fund raising, giving many reasons for his fresh move. In his appeal published in *Ebifa* of January 1915 Kisingiri said that the money was going to 'feed the soldiers,' widows and orphans; to feed the Belgians; to feed prisoners of war; to be used in the buying of arms and ammunition; to buy medicines and to be used in the case of those with injuries. These were very noble tasks for Uganda's donations. What Kisingiri ignored was the fact that in Uganda and in East Africa Africans were suffering as a result of the war and yet donations from Africans were going abroad to relieve the suffering Europeans. Charity seems to have begun outside home and this was unnatural. In the *Uganda Official Gazette* a record of contributions and contributors was faithfully kept throughout the war period. Contributions by Europeans, Asians and prominent African Chiefs were individually acknowledged. In the case of contributions from the mass of the Africans there was the notorious habit of lumping together the contributions from them and recording them in the Gazette as contributions from various "natives".²³ In the case of the really important persons, making donations, even very important officials in the British Government, were informed of such donations.

On 26th August 1915, Bonar Law, the British Colonial Secretary, wrote a letter to Governor Jackson in which he expressed his gratefulness to Apolo Kagwa for his contribution of Rs. 250 to Queen Mary's Relief Fund.²⁴

Considering Uganda's resources at the beginning of the 20th century, the contributions were considerable. On 7th September 1915, 55,770 pounds of coffee were shipped from Mombasa, being a gift on the people of Uganda to Britain, intended for war relief. This gift was divided between the War Office (for the benefit of the British Army) and the National Food Fund for the Relief of Belgian refugees in England. In addition to contributions to various war funds, the problem of food supply within East Africa fell squarely on the Africans. Food was requisitioned for most of the time and soldiers on the march used to forage for food often causing a lot of hardship to the civilian population. Phillip Mitchell, writing on the problems of supply, commented: "The unfortunate villages through which we passed in succession must have been reduced to destitution."²⁵

At the beginning of the war the Europeans had a tongue-in-cheek attitude towards the participation of the Africans and had grave doubts about their ability to stand fire and so on. In the House of Commons this very issue was discussed, and Mr. Bonar Law, the colonial secretary, eventually stated government policy towards the natives in this respect. He stated:

The Government was carefully considering the recruitment and training of native troops in East, Central, and West Africa and also the steps to be taken in order to make the best use of natives of Tropical Africa.²⁶

Despite these doubts the Africans were used and acquitted themselves pretty well. Lloyd Jones stated in this connection:

The 4th KAR established a reputation for gallantry in action which was amply confirmed later in many hard fought actions and which disproved for ever the contemptuous assertions of those contemptuous Europeans who had frequently and publically prophesied that the KAR niggers would not stand fire.²⁷

Phillip Mitchell also paid tribute to the African soldiers thus:

They were intelligent, smart, efficient, and wholly dependable and when on mobilization in 1914, they had to adjust themselves to working with a large number of European Volunteers like myself who were appointed as action leaders, machine gunners and the like, most of us totally untrained and ignorant; they made an admirable job of a difficult situation. No one in those days would say bluntly that these African Warrant Officers were our superiors but that was the fact, and they dealt with us while they taught us our business tactfully and sensibly so that they were respected and obeyed.²⁸

Although a lot of praise was heaped on the Africans during the war years they were discriminated against as usual. There were differentials in pay, different honours were bestowed, and there were differences in the overall treatment of Africans. For instance, the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) was the highest honour to which an African was eligible. On this Lloyd-Jones comments: "For some reason best known to the authorities the African *askari* alone of all King's soldiers is ineligible for the VC (Victoria Cross)".²⁹

In 1903, Sergeant-Major Nderemani had been awarded the DSM in connection with the Gumburi incident in Somalia. The two British officers who participated in the act of great gallantry along with Nderemani were awarded the Victoria Cross. The three men had saved wounded men from deadly enemies.³⁰

Of the honours created during World War One the Military Cross (MC) created on 1st January, 1915, and the Military Medal created on 5th January, 1916, the Africans were entitled to the latter and not the former. One had to be an officer, or a Warrant Officer in Britain or India to be entitled to the MC.³¹

In Uganda, the honour which was generously dished out to the Africans was the African Police Medal for Meritorious Service. It seems, however, that the Belgians were more generous with their honours than the British. In 1917, the Belgians awarded sixteen bronze medals to Ugandans of the Congo carrier section, of the East African Transport Corps. Such generosity was unheard of in the British colonies. In addition, to discrimination in the granting of honours, there was differences in pay as between Asians and Africans of the same ranks. For instance, the African Regimental Sergeant-Major (RSM) (and this was the highest rank an African could reasonably aspire to at the time) was paid Rs. 9 per month while the Subadar Major

(the equivalent of RSM) was paid Rs. 200 per month. While African privates were paid Rr. 4 per month, the Indian sepoy was paid Rs. 40.

The porters got off worst during the war. They were simply regarded as a means of transport in the same manner we regard cars these days and were treated as such. With regard to the treatment of porters Dolbey noted:

Toiling behind the column on marches in the long and ragged line, the native porters, the human cattle that are after all the most reliable form of transport in East Africa porters normally marched a distance of ten miles a day with loads of 40-60 pounds. The porters were fair game since they did not have the means for self-defence and they were liable to destructions such as any other form of transport such as the ox-wagons.³²

There was much loss of life among the porters. It was impossible to provide them with their accustomed food. The eating of grain gave rise to intestinal diseases and repatriated carriers came home with various diseases including tuberculosis and at the end of the war Uganda was besieged by all kinds of epidemics.

Even specialised personnel such as the Medical Corps were subjected to all sorts of humiliation. Keane commenting on the treatment of UNMC said:

Any attempt to display technical knowledge such as the reading of the thermometer or the keeping of temperature charts or any medical skill was unexpected and was looked upon as a species of impertinence.³³

It is not easy to assess the effects of this experience on the Africans because no Africans left memoirs of their war experience. We can only deduce their feelings from the whites who wrote about their experience of African participation in the war at the time. Many whites agreed that success in the East African campaigns, depended upon the discipline and devotion of the indigenous troops. And Dolbey observed that their participation left the future clouded with potential trouble for in the war the black man had seen the white man on both sides run away from him. The black man had been armed and trained in the use of the rifle and the machine gun and his intelligence and capacity had been attested to by the degree of fire control that he mastered.

Other observers saw the whole black experience in a different light. Cameroon, commenting on the effects of the war on the Africans stated:

What will be the attitude of the natives after the disturbing and exciting experience? What will be their future outlook; both in our own protectorates and in the newly acquired territories? Time will show. That they responded nobly to the call to assist in the defence of the British Raj was indisputably made manifest and we can look forward hopefully to a period of increasing happiness and the establishment of good government, and peaceful progress and prosperity among the natives of the Central African dominions of the crown.³⁷

The Second World War has been credited with the great breakthrough in the decolonisation process but World War One has not been credited with anything very significant. The contribution of World War One to political awareness needs urgent attention. Some of the blackman's fear of the European probably evaporated considerably after the war as the Africans had decisively proved to the Europeans that they were also men.

FOOTNOTES

1. H. Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, Gale and Polden, Aldershot, 1956.
2. See Berlin Act, 1885, Chapter 2, articles X-XII.
3. W. F. Gutteridge, in L. H. Gann and Duignan's *Colonialism in Africa*, Vol. II, Cambridge, 1970, chapter 8.
4. W. Lloyd-Jones, *The KAR*, Arrowsmith, 1926, p. 139.
5. *Ebifa* No. 92, September 1914.
6. *Ebifa* No. 93, October, 1914.
7. *Uganda Annual Report*, HMSO, London 1914-1915, p. 20.
8. The other four chiefs willing to participate in the exercise were J. M. Kago, H. M. Magatto, E. Kezimbira and S. Muwanguze. The offer was rejected by the government with a promise to bring "this striking evidence of loyalty to the notice of H. M. the King". (See Appendix A.)
9. Sir Apolo Kagwa was honoured by the British. His was given the KCMG.
10. *Uganda Official Gazette*, 1916-17.
11. At the outbreak of the war recruitment from the schools, into the Medical Corps was as follows: King's School Budo 51 boys; St. Mary's School, Rubaga 37 boys; Mengo High School 7 boys; Mengo Central School 16 boys; Kako Central School 10 boys; Mbale High School 7 boys; Toro High School 30 boys; Kamuli High School 7 boys.
12. Quoted in G. J. Keane's *The African Native Medical Corps*. See Appendix B. Richard Clay and Sons, London, pp. 34-35.
13. *Uganda Volunteers*, p. 76.
14. *Uganda Volunteers*, p. 60.
15. *The ANMC*.
16. S. G. S. Wamala, *Paulo, Wanyama mu Lutalo Olwakaggwa*, Eagle Press, Kampala, 1954.
17. R. S. Kakembo, *An African Soldier Speaks*, Kampala, 1944.
18. R. V. Dolbey, *Sketches of the East African Campaign*, John Murray, London, 1918.
19. The seven companies of the 4th KAR were deployed as follows: 2 companies — Rudolf Province; 3 companies — British East Africa; 1 company — Entebbe; 1 company — Mambo.
20. *ANMC*, pp. 61-62.
21. *ANMC*, p. 14.
22. *Uganda Annual Reports*, 1914-1915, p. 23.
23. *Uganda Official Gazette*, 15-10-1915.
24. From Bonar Law to Jackson, published in *Ebifa*, Sept. 1916.
25. *African Afterthoughts*, p. 40.
26. Speech quoted in *Uganda Volunteers*, p. 55.
27. Lloyd-Jones — *The KAR*, p. 173.
28. *African Afterthoughts*, p. 46.

29. Lloyd-Jones, *KAR*.
30. *Afterthoughts*, p. 47.
31. *Uganda Official Gazette*, 15-7-1916.
32. *ANMC*, p. 5.
33. *Sketches*.
34. *Uganda Volunteers*.

APPENDIX A

P. C. Buganda, 14th October 1914

Sir,

I have the honour to write you this letter *on behalf of myself and four other chiefs*, asking you to be good enough to bring our request before his Excellency the Acting Governor.

We would be very pleased if the Governor would kindly allow us and our five hundred men to proceed to England and join the British army which is now on active service. The reason for our wishing to join this war which has broken out between Great Britain and Germany is that because sometime ago H.H. the Kabaka and several chiefs of Buganda paid a visit to England where they were warmly received and given a cordial reception everywhere and also that (sic) because we are always well treated by the British Government: H.H. the Kabaka and his party told us many interesting things when they returned to Buganda and they well (sic) enjoyed themselves while in England and the English people were very glad to see them in their lovely country. Now if the English showed us such a great kindness during the period of peace, we must also do something to show faithful friendship we have with his most gracious Majesty and the English people to join with them in facing the hostilities which confront the whole British Empire. We are quite ready and anxious to fight for the British Union Jack which we like to see flying all over the great parts of Africa and we never wish to be trampled down by other nations of Europe.

Z. K. Kisingiri,
Omuwanika.

APPENDIX B

Chwa's Letter to the Baganda Who Joined the War in 1917

Now some eight months have passed since you volunteered for active service in German East Africa as dressers and attendants of the sick and the wounded in the forces of H.M. King George V which are now fighting against the Germans to secure the peace and justice which they would seek to destroy. News reaches us from time to time of the excellent work you are doing and that you perform your duties earnestly, willingly and steadfastly, and bear cheerfully all hardships. Moreover we learn with regret that some of your numbers have died in the service. *Let not your sufferings, and the sacrifice of these lives be in vain, rather let them help to spell the good name of your country: I and the Lukiiko of Buganda are proud of you.* I therefore write you this letter to thank you. . . . It is my wish that you should continue faithfully until the end of the war.

Quoted in S. J. Keane's *The African Native Medical Corps*, Richard Clay and Sons, London, p. 34.