East Africa Command

Prior to the Second World War, the United Kingdom had several colonies in East Africa. They were:

- Kenya;
- Uganda;
- British Somaliland;
- Nyasaland (now Malawi);
- Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia);
- Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

In the Great War, a campaign was fought in German East Africa, and following the Armistice, that country was incorporated into the British Empire as Tanganyika (now Tanzania).

Between the two world wars, responsibility for the Army in the colonies of East Africa was devolved to the individual colonies themselves. The various Army regiments in the colonies were amalgamated into the King's African Rifles in 1902, which after the Great War was reduced to six Regular battalions. Its main task was as an imperial police force tasked with internal security in East Africa.

An Inspector General of African Colonial Forces was appointed to oversee the units in both East and West Africa. In 1935, Italy annexed Ethiopia, raising tensions in the area. In 1938, Major General George GIFFARD was appointed

Inspector General of Colonial Forces, and commenced a programme to expand African forces and provide up to date equipment and training.

On the 3rd February 1940, East Africa was placed under the command of G.H.Q. Middle East. East Africa Force came into being on the 21st August 1940, with Major General DICKINSON officiating until the arrival on the 1st November 1940 of Lieutenant General Alan CUNNINGHAM, D.S.O., M.C..

E.A. Force had three divisions under command for the campaign in East Africa, the 11th (African), 12th (African) and 1st South African Infantry Divisions. The 1st South African Division was on the left flank of the East Africa Force, and attacked into Abyssinia in January 1941. The 11th (African) Division and 12th (African) Division both attacked into Italian Somaliland in January 1941 and drove along the coast before turning inland and into Abyssinia.

With the end of the main campaign, on the 15th September 1941 East Africa Force was redesignated as East Africa Command, with Lieutenant General PLATT being appointed as the new Commander-in-Chief. The new Command was divided into four Areas:
- Eritrea;
- Ethiopia and British Somaliland (the 12th (African) Division);
- Central Area (Italian Somaliland, Uganda, Kenya, Zanzibar and Tanganyika);
- Southern Area (Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia).

Ethiopia was regained sovereignty on 31st January 1941, which was recognised by an agreement in December 1944. The 12th (African) Division disbanded on the 18th April 1943 as the government regained control of the country. A new Islands Area was formed on the 1st September 1942 to take control of Madagascar, Seychelles and Mauritius. Southern Rhodesia was transferred to the

responsibility of South Africa, and the General Officer Commanding Southern Area transferred to become the General Officer Commanding Islands Area.

The Islands Area was disbanded on the 24th July 1944, with the Headquarters becoming H.Q. Northern Area. The Central Area became the Southern Area on the 1st August 1944 to give two Areas, as existed pre-war.

After the end of the Second World War, East Africa Command continued to operate until October 1946, when it was downgraded to a Major General's command as the East Africa District.

In August 1951, the Mau Mau began coming to notice. They were a militant African nationalist movement, whose intention was to remove British rule from Kenya. The Kenyan Government imposed a curfew in three districts on the outskirts of Nairobi, where gangs of arsonists were setting fire to homes of Africans who refused to take the Mau Mau oath. On the 7th October, the Senior Chief Waruhuo was assassinated after speaking out against the Mau Mau. The British Government agreed to send troops to Kenya on the 19th October, and two days later, the Kenyan Government declared a state of emergency after a spate of over 40 murders in Nairobi. The President of the Kenya Africa Union, Jomo Kenyatta is arrested. The Mau Mau declared open rebellion on the 25th November, with the British responding by arresting over 2,000 suspected Mau Mau terrorists.

On the 26th January 1953, panic spread amongst the Europeans after a white farmer and his family was murdered. Settlers form their own commando units as they are concerned about the lack of response by the authorities. The Kikuyu tribal areas were cordoned off to restrict the movement of Mau Mau terrorists.

The British government responded in a similar manner to that employed in Malaya. A new Commander-in-Chief was appointed and a Major General as Director of Operations.

On the 24th April 1954, 5,000 British and Empire troops and 1,000 policemen carried out a series of coordinated dawn raids. On the 18th January 1955, the Governor General, Sir Evelyn BARING offered an amnesty, but three days later, two English schoolboys were murdered, and in June, the amnesty was cancelled. By October, over 70,000 Kikuyu tribesmen had been arrested, 13,000 people had been killed over the past three years. The rebellion began to die down, and on the 10th November 1959, the state of emergency was ended. Kenya then started to move towards independence.

The British territories began to be granted independence in the 1960's. Tanganyika (now known as Tanzania) achieved independence on the 9th December 1961, Uganda on the 9th October 1962, Kenya on the 12th September 1963, Nyasaland (renamed Malawi) on the 6th July 1964, and Northern Rhodesia (renamed Zambia) on the 24th October 1964.

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief
21st August 1940 – 1st November 1940[1]
Lieutenant General (Acting) Douglas Povah DICKINSON, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C.
1st November 1940 – 28th August 1941
Lieutenant General Alan Gordon CUNNINGHAM, D.S.O., M.C.
28th August 1941 – 5th December 1941 (Officiating)
Lieutenant General (Acting) Henry Edward De Robillard WETHERALL, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C.
5th December 1941 – January 1945
Lieutenant General Sir William PLATT, K.C.B., D.S.O.
January 1945 – October 1946
Lieutenant General Sir Kenneth Arthur Noel ANDERSON, K.C.B., M.C.

General Officer Commanding
October 1946 – 1948
Major General William Alfred DIMOLINE, C.B., C.M.G, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.
9th July 1948 – 6th September 1951
Lieutenant General Sir Arthur Arnhold Bullick DOWLER, K.B.E., C.B.
7th September 1951 – 6th June 1953
Lieutenant General Sir Alexander Maurice CAMERON, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O.

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief
7th June 1953 – 2nd May 1955
General Sir George Watkin Eben James ERSKINE, K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O.
2nd May 1955 – 1957
Lieutenant General (Temporary) General Gerald William LATHBURY, C.B., D.S.O., M.B.E.

Deputy General Officer Commanding-in-Chief
7th June 1943 – 1954
Lieutenant General Sir Alexander Maurice CAMERON, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O.

Director of Operations
January 1953 – 1956
Major General William Robert Norris HINDE, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O.**

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[1] Lt. Gen CUNNINGHAM was appointed on the 19th October 1940, but DICKINSON appears to have remained in post until 1st November 1940 to effect the change over in command.

Brigadier General Staff – (B.G.S.)
26th August 1940 – 23rd April 1942
Brigadier (Acting) John Keith EDWARDS, M.C., *p.s.c.*
24th April 1942 – 2nd May 1943
Brigadier (Temporary) Wilfred Algernon EBSWORTH, *p.s.c.*
25th May 1943 – 13th February 1944
Brigadier (Temporary) Wilfred Algernon EBSWORTH, *p.s.c.*[2]
14th February 1944 – 1946
Brigadier (Temporary) Edward Steven Bruce WILLIAMS, C.B.E., *p.s.c.*

1949 – 1952
Brigadier James Rupert COCHRANE,

General Staff Officer, 1st Grade
6th April 1940 – 26th January 1941
Colonel (Acting) William Alfred DIMOLINE, O.B.E., M.C., R.Signals, *p.s.c.*

Deputy Director of Military Intelligence
15th September 1941 – 7th April 1942
Colonel (Acting) Reginald Antony HUTTON, 2, G.R., *p.s.c.*

Deputy Adjutant and Quartermaster General – (D.A. & Q.M.G.)
15th February 1941 – 14th September 1941
Brigadier (Temporary) Edward Henry Lysaght LYSAGHT-GRIFFITHS, D.S.O., O.B.E., *p.s.c.*

Brigadier i/c Administration
15th September 1941 – 8th October 1941
Brigadier (Temporary) Edward Henry Lysaght LYSAGHT-GRIFFITHS, D.S.O., O.B.E., *p.s.c.*

Deputy Adjutant and Quarter-Master General – (D.A. & Q.M.G.)
9th October 1941 – 23rd March 1943
Brigadier (Acting) Alan Colquhoun DUFF, O.B.E., M.C., R.E., *p.s.c.*

Assistant Adjutant-General
6th November 1941 – 27th June 1942
Colonel (Temporary) Rupert Edward HOBDAY, D.S.O.*, *p.s.c.*

Assistant Quarter-Master General
2nd June 1940 – 8th October 1941
Colonel (Temporary) Alan Colquhoun DUFF, O.B.E., M.C., R.E., *p.s.c.*

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[2] Awarded the C.B.E. on the 8th July 1943.

Brigadier Royal Artillery – (B.R.A.)
1940 – 1940
Brigadier John Yeadon ORMSBY
1940 – 1943
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1943 – 1944
Brigadier Walter Whitney COWAN,

Chief Engineer – (C.Eng.)
29th June 1940 – 22nd May 1941
Brigadier (Acting) Arnold MINNIS. R.E.
1941 – 1945
??

Deputy Director of Survey
1941
Brigadier Martin HOTINE,
1941 – 1943
Brigadier John SPOTTISWOODE,

Chief Signal Officer – (C.S.O.)
18th March 1940 – 24th September 1941
Lieutenant Colonel Cyril Edward SKETCH, R.Signals.
1941 – 1945
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Director of Medical Services – (D.M.S.)
13th June 1941 – 5th October 1941
Brigadier (Acting) Robert Eric BARNSLEY, M.C., M.B.
6th October 1941 – 4th April 1943
Brigadier (Acting) Evelyn Alexander SUTTON, O.B.E., M.C., R.A.M.C.

Deputy Director of Medical Services – (D.D.M.S.)
1946 – 1948
Brigadier John Mandeville Mac FIE,

Consulting Physician
1940 – 1942
Brigadier William Heneage OGLIVIE,

Brigadier Edward Revill CULLINAN,

Deputy Director of Ordnance Services – (D.D.O.S.)
19th August 1940 – 2nd June 1942
Colonel (Acting) John William GAISFORD, R.A.O.C.

Deputy Director of Supplies & Transport – (D.D.S.T.)
9th September 1940 – 15th December 1943
Colonel (Acting) Charles Vore BENNETT, O.B.E., A.M.I.Mech.E, R.A.S.C.[3]

Ethiopia (12th African Division)
15th September 1941 – 18th April 1943
Major General Charles Christopher FOWKES, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.*

General Officer Commanding Central Area
15th September 1941 – 7th December 1941

8th December 1941 – 22nd April 1943
Major General Henry Edward De Robillard WETHERALL, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C.
23rd April 1943 – 31st July 1944
??

Commanding Officer, Northern Area
1st August 1944 – 1945
Major General Gerald Russell SMALLWOOD, D.S.O., M.C.
1945 – 1948
??
1948 – 1951
Brigadier Alexander Cosby Fishburn JACKSON, O.B.E.

Commanding Officer, Southern Area
1st August 1944 - 1945
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1946
Brigadier William CARDEN-ROE,

General Officer Commanding Southern Area
15th September 1941 – 30th August 1942
Major General Gerald Russell SMALLWOOD, D.S.O., M.C.

General Officer Commanding Islands Area
1st September 1942 – 24th July 1944
Major General Gerald Russell SMALLWOOD, D.S.O., M.C.

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[3] Promoted Acting Brigadier in post on the 15th September 1941.

Chief Political Officer
1941 – 1942
Major General Philip Euen MITCHELL, C.B.

Deputy Chief Political Officers
1940 – 1943
Brigadier Maurice Stanley LUSH, M.C.*
Brigadier The Honourable Francis James Rennell RODD.

Head of British Military Mission to Ethiopia
1941- 1943
Major General Stephen Seymour BUTLER, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Reserve of Officers
April 1943 – 1949
Major General Algernon Edward COTTAM, O.B.E., M.C. (1)

Military Administrator of Eritrea
1941 – 1942
Brigadier Brian KENNEDY-COOKE
1942 – 1944
Brigadier Stephen Hemsley LONGRIGG,

Chief Administrator of Eritrea
1945 – 1946
Major General John Meredith BENOY, C.B.E.