

THE ONE-HUMPED CAMEL IN SOMALILAND

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ABSTRACT

Somaliland is a self-proclaimed republic located in the Horn of Africa. The country has adopted the same borders as the former British Somaliland Protectorate but it has had difficulties in gaining international recognition. Its area of 68 000 square miles (176 120 square kilometres) is home to about 4 million people. Sheep and goats each number more than 8 million head, camels 1.7 million and cattle 0.40 million. Livestock are the basis of the livelihoods of the majority of the nation's people. The camel has always been an icon in the culture and customs of the ethnic Somali. The British administration organised a Camel Corps to help in the maintenance of law and order in the then Protectorate but it also distinguished itself against the troops of Italian Somaliland in the World Wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 before it was disbanded in 1946. As well as being important in the cultural fabric of the inhabitants of Somaliland, the camel is the major source of milk in the country, provides meat, performs transport operations and contributes its hides to the economy. Livestock in general are the major source of foreign exchange earnings to which camels contribute a considerable proportion. Feed is generally a problem and some has to be imported from Ethiopia. The presence of many diseases is a major constraint to the higher output which would be of great benefit to the welfare of the nation and of individual households and family units.

Key words: Animal diseases, camel, livestock trade, mad mullah, medicine, milk production, Somaliland ethnoveterinary

The self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland is located in the Horn of Africa. This entity has an area of 68 000 square miles (176 120 square kilometres) and is home to about 4 million people. It claims the same borders as the former British Somaliland but is officially recognised as an independent state by very few other countries or international organisation. Its current status serves only to add to its very checkered history.

Earlier contacts and treaties from 1820 between the British and some Somali clans culminated in formal treaties between the British and the now-designated 'British Somaliland' clans were signed between 1884 and 1886. The new entity was garrisoned from Aden and administered as part of British India until 1898, then by the Foreign Office until 1905 and finally by the Colonial Office. A series of military expeditions between 1900 and 1920 known as the Somaliland Campaign (the Anglo-Somali War or the Dervish War) was conducted against the Dervishes under Mohammed Abdullah Hassan (known to the British as "Mad Mullah") with the help of Ethiopia and Italy. During the First World War (1914-1918), the Mullah was assisted by the Ottoman Empire and the Germans and for a short time from Emperor Iyasu V of Ethiopia. The conflict was eventually concluded by the British using aircraft

to bomb the Dervish capital of Taleh in February 1920. This was the 5th and final expedition of the Somaliland Campaign against the Dervish forces of the Mullah. Although, most fighting took place in January 1920, the British had begun preparations for the assault in November 1919 with British ground forces and detachments of the Royal Air Force and the Somaliland Camel Corps (Jardine, 1951).

Following the Italian conquest of Ethiopia in 1936, the occupation of the greater part of Somalia by Italy, and the outbreak of the 2nd World War (3 September 1939), British Somaliland was in an invidious position. A small regular garrison was unable to defend the Protectorate which was invaded by Italy on 3 August 1940. Despite strong rearguard action by the Somaliland Camel Corps, troops of the King's African Rifles, some Indian troops and the small number of troops of the British regular army the Protectorate was evacuated. Italian troops entered Berbera in the evening of 19 August and Mussolini annexed the Protectorate to Italian East Africa as part of the Italian Empire. On 16 March 1941, the British landed a mainly Indian force and a Somali commando, supported by a naval force based at Aden, at Berbera. Due to earlier propaganda and some "misinformation", the Italians had already withdrawn most of their forces from the former

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British Protectorate. The British claimed victory on 8 April and appointed a Military Governor. British forces then advanced into eastern Ethiopia to clear out the Italians there. The Somaliland Camel Corps was reformed by mid-April and supported British forces over the next few months in flushing out Italian guerrillas still fighting in Ethiopia (Mackenzie, 1951).

The British government granted independence to its then Protectorate of British Somaliland in 1960 in order for it to unite with the Italian-administered Trust Territory of Somaliland (the former Italian Somaliland). The British Somaliland Legislative Council requested independence in April 1960 so it could unite with the Trust Territory of Somaliland that was scheduled to gain independence on 1 July. On 26 June 1960, the former British Somaliland Protectorate became independent as the State of Somaliland. The next day the Somaliland Legislative Assembly approved a bill that would formally allow for its union with the Trust Territory of Somaliland on 1 July 1960. The Italian Trust Territory of Somaliland became independent on 1 July and on that day the State of Somaliland joined with the former Italian Somaliland to become the Somali Republic. During its 5-day period of independence the State of Somaliland was recognised by 35 sovereign states. Following a series of unkept promises from the Mogadishu-dominated government and attacks by it on the northern areas the Republic of Somaliland declared itself independent on 15 May 1991 (Kaplan, 2008).

Pastoralism accounts for around 70 per cent of Somaliland's economy, employs about the same proportion of its population of around 4.5 million and generates 85 per cent of foreign exchange earnings (Muhumed and Abdiqadir, Mohamoud Yonis 2018). Goats and sheep are the primary form of capital and are fundamental to the culture. They are not just a source of milk and meat but of self-sufficiency, pride and the freedom to live a life of choice. Animals can be sold for cash or exchanged for rice, flour, medicine, water, transport or clothes. Millions of animals are shipped each year across the Gulf of Aden. A family with ten camels and a few hundred goats possesses real wealth and has access to the global economy (Hunt, 1951; Mares, 1954a; 1954b; Muhumed and Abdiqadir, 2018).

The Somaliland Camel Corps

Beginnings

The British administration was not slow to realise that a close affinity existed between the people

of Somaliland and their camel charges. Establishment of the "Somali Camel Constabulary" recognised this affinity and the possibility of its use as a military force. The Constabulary, reconstituted in 1912 as the Somaliland Camel Corps, fought the Battle of Dul Madoba on 9 August 1913 against the Mad Mullah where it suffered a severe defeat. Colonel Richard Corfield, commanding the force, was among the 36 personnel of the 110-man unit that were killed: another 21 were wounded during the engagement (Irons, 2013).

As a regular unit the Somaliland Camel Corps needed a uniform and a distinctive badge (Fig 2) and, of course, they were expected to perform parades at important functions (Fig 3). The uniform was basically a standard British Army khaki drill with the addition of a knitted woollen pullover and shoulder drill patches. The lower parts consisted of shorts worn with woollen socks on puttees and 'chaplis' (coloured sandals), boots or bare feet. Officers wore pith helmets whereas other ranks sported a 'kullah' (cone-shaped cap inside a turban) and a 'pugree' (a long strip of cotton or silk wound round the turban and hanging down the back as a tail). Troops were equipped with a rifle, a leather ammunition bandolier and a leather waist belt.

First World War

Hastings Lionel Ismay arrived in Somaliland on 9 August 1914 and despite pleas to be posted to Europe he stayed in the Protectorate until 1920. Ismay belonged to the 21st Prince Albert Victor's Own Cavalry (Frontier Force) (Daly's Horse) of the Indian Army and arrived with a group that was to serve as the Somaliland Indian Contingent with the King's African Rifles (National Archives, 1916)¹. At this stage the strength of the Camel Corps was about 500 although not all fought together in all operations against the enemy. On 17 November 1914, a major assault was launched against the Mullah's fortress at Shimber Berris. In this attack Major Adrian Paul

1. General Hastings Lionel Ismay, 1st Baron Ismay KG, GCB, CH, DSO, PC, DL (21 June 1887-17 December 1965). Ismay was later (1925) an Assistant Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) then, on promotion to Colonel, he was military secretary for Lord Willingdon, the Viceroy of India. He returned to the CID as Deputy Secretary in 1936 before becoming its Secretary on 1 August 1938. When Winston Churchill became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in May 1940 he appointed Ismay as his chief military assistant and staff officer in which capacity he was principal link between Churchill and the Chiefs of Staff Committee. Ismay was the first Secretary General of NATO from 1952 to 1957.

Ghislain Carton de Wiart² was shot twice in the face, losing his eye and also a portion of his ear. Captain Ismay was also present at this engagement and gained, along with de Wiart, the Africa General Service Medal with Clasp for Shimber Berris 1914-1915 (National Archives, 1916). De Wiart was

particularly signalled out for “military reward” and, although Ismay received two Mentions in Despatches (London Gazette, 1916) it was De Wiart who got his reward in the form of a Distinguished Service Order (DSO) (London Gazette, 1915), for which Ismay had to wait several more years:

War Office,

2nd August, 1916.

The Colonial Office has forwarded for publication the following Despatch on military operations in the Somaliland Protectorate: –

From H.M. Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief, Somaliland Protectorate.

To the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Residency, Berbera,

20th February, 1915.

SIR, – I have the honour to transmit a report by the Officer Commanding the Troops, Somaliland Protectorate, on the recent military operations against the dervishes; at Shimber Berris, at the head of the Ain Valley.

I also desire to put forward, for military reward, the names of the following officers, native officers, non-commissioned officers, and men : –

Captain A. Carton de Wiart, 4th Dragoon Guards, for gallantry in charging a fort on the 19th November, though severely wounded.

The following officers, non-commissioned officers and men also distinguished themselves, and are deserving of mention: –

Captain H. L. Ismay, 21st Prince Albert Victor’s Own Cavalry, made the staff arrangements in February prior to and during the operations, and with complete success, this not being an easy task in a waterless country such as Somaliland in the dry season.

The following are also deserving of mention : –

(b) In February.

Captain H. L. Ismay, 21st Prince Albert Victor’s Own Cavalry, made all the staff arrangements prior to and during the operations, an exceedingly difficult task in a waterless country in the dry season, and with the complete success that you witnessed.

War Office,

15th May, 1915.

His Majesty the KING has been graciously pleased to approve of the undermentioned rewards for Distinguished Service in the Field, in connection with the successful operations against Dervish forces at Shimber Berris, Somaliland, during the months of November, 1914, and February, 1915: –

To be a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order –

Captain Adrian Carton de Wiart, (Royal Irish) Dragoon Guards.

Not long after the attack on Shimber Berris the Camel Corps received orders from London “forbidding all offensive operations in Somaliland” due to the misfortunes of the Army elsewhere. As a result of this order,

2. Lieutenant General Sir Adrian Paul Ghislain Carton de Wiart VC, KBE, CB, CMG, DSO (5 May 1880-5 June 1963) was a British Army officer born of Belgian and Irish parents. He was awarded the Victoria Cross in 1916 after leaving Somaliland and fighting in France. Elsewhere in three wars (Second Boer War 1899-1902, sFirst World War 1914-1918, Second World War 1939-1945) he was shot in the face, head, stomach, ankle, leg, hip and ear; survived two plane crashes; tunnelled out of a prisoner-of-war camp; and tore off his own fingers when a doctor refused to amputate them.

British operations were limited for the duration of the First World War and Ismay's unit undertook no further major offensives. Ismay did, however, become Second in Command of the Camel Corps and was promoted to Temporary Lieutenant Colonel (London Gazette, 1919):

*War Office,
15th July, 1919.*
REGULAR FORCES.
MEMORANDA.
Bt. Maj. H. L. Ismay, Ind. Army, to be temp.
Lt.-Col., for service with the Somaliland
Camel Corps. 1st Apr. 1919.

Interwar period

After the end of World War I it was decided that the Mullah must be neutralised permanently. During this period the Camel Corps was very active and took part in or led many actions. Attacks against the Mullah commenced on 21 January 1920 and after several days of bombing by the Royal Air Force, Ismay was ordered to lead an assault by the Camel Corps against Hassan's fortress at Jid Ali (London Gazette 1920a; 1921a). On 7 February the Camel Corps completed a march of 150 miles in 72 hours and "animals and men now needed a rest" (!). For his service in the effort against Hassan, Ismay finally received the Distinguished Service Order (London Gazette, 1920b):³

*War Office,
29th November, 1920.*
His Majesty the KING has been graciously pleased, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Somaliland Protectorate, to approve of the undermentioned rewards in recognition of distinguished services rendered in connection with Military Operations in Somaliland: –
To be dated 1st October, 1920.
Somaliland Camel Corps.
Awarded the Distinguished Service Order.
Capt. & Bt. Maj. (T./Lt.-Col.) Hastings
Lionel Ismay, 21st Cav., Ind. Army, attd.
Somaliland Camel Corps.

3. In London Gazette, 1920a, two officers were promoted Brevet Lieutenant Colonel, two Brevet Major, two other officers received the DSO, one received a Bar to His Military Cross, four officers received the Military Cross and one Corporal was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (the next lower decoration for other ranks after the Victoria Cross).

Ismay gained a second Clasp, Somaliland 1920, to his Africa General Service Medal and in addition to his advanced rank of Brevet Major he was made a Temporary Lieutenant Colonel (National Archives, 1922). On 5 August 1920 Captain (Brevet Major) H L Ismay was promoted to the substantive rank of Major (London Gazette, 1921b):

*India Office,
1st March, 1921.*
The KING has approved the promotion of the following officers of the Ind. Army, Ind. Med. Service, Ind. Army Depts., and Ind. Army Res. of Officers : –
INDIAN ARMY.
Captains to be Majors.
5th Aug. 1920.
H. L. Ismay, (Bt. Maj.)

During the Interwar years, the SCC was re-organised better to defend the protectorate in the event of another war. The Somaliland military garrison was progressively reduced during the 1920s and following the financial crisis of 1931 only the Somaliland Camel Corps remained, comprising 14 British officers, 400 African 'askari' and 150 African Reservists. Colonel Arthur Reginald Chater of the Royal Marines commanded the Somaliland Camel Corps from 1937 to 1940 and was then Military-Governor of British Somaliland from 1941 to 1943. In the late 1930s the Corps was allocated GBP 900 to construct defensive pillboxes and reserve water tanks.

By 1939 the Corps comprised: Headquarters and Headquarters Company, The Somalia Camel Corps based at Laferug between Berbera and Hargeisa along Route 1 Highway; 'A' (Camel) Company at Hargeisa; 'B' (Nyasa Infantry) Company at Tug Argan southwest of Laferug near Hargeisa south of Assa Hills; 'C' Company at Burao; and, 'D' Company at Tug Argan (less 2 Platoons at Sheekh). Thus, at this stage, only 'A' Company retained its camels whereas the other companies were essentially infantry units.

Second World War

A request by the Governor that 50 additional men be enlisted in the Camel Corps was approved in the spring of 1940 and two Camel Corps Companies were mechanised later in 1940 (Wavell, 1946). Following the entry of Italy into the war the



Fig 1. The Republic of Somaliland in the context of the Horn of Africa.



Fig 2. The uniform and badge of the Somaliland Camel Corps.



Fig 3. The Camel Corps on parade in 1913.

Camel Corps made a number of successful raids, usually against numerically superior forces, along the Italian Somalia and Ethiopian (now an Italian colony) borders. The Camel Corps continued to defend Somaliland almost on its own: on 6 July 1940, for example, the only other troops in the country were one battalion (Northern Rhodesia Regiment) of the King's African Rifles (K.A.R) and one Indian battalion (1st Battalion 2nd Punjab Regiment) which had arrived from Aden only a few days earlier.



Fig 4. Somali shillings to the value of USD 100 (Photo of the author and his hoard in Hargeisa in May 2003).



Fig 5. Camels awaiting export from Berbera in June 2003 (Photo by the author, June 2003).



Fig 6. Fodder imported from Ethiopia on its way to Berbera (Photo by the author, June 2003).

The total force amounted to 1475 men. A Kenya Battalion of the K.A.R and an artillery battery were said to be on the way. The situation on 1 August shows the overwhelming importance of the Camel Corps: one Company Somaliland Camel Corps less one Troop in the Dobo area (forced to withdraw on 4 August by a superior Italian force); a Motor Company

of the Somaliland Camel Corps less one Troop (inflicted heavy losses on Italians on 4 August), one Troop Somaliland Camel Corps and one Company Northern Rhodesia Regiment at Hargeisa area; and one Company and one Motor Troop Somaliland Camel Corps at Burao. At Tug Argan, there was B Company Somaliland Camel Corps as well as other forces. During the fighting around Tug Argan from 11-15 August Captain Eric Charles Twelves Wilson then aged 27 kept a Vickers machine gun post in action in spite of being wounded and suffering from malaria.⁴ Some of his guns were blown up by enemy

artillery fire and his spectacles were smashed. He was wounded in the right shoulder and the left eye but then disappeared and was posted as missing in action and presumed killed. He had, however, been captured by the Italians, was kept in a prisoner of war camp in Eritrea and was discovered alive and released when the Italian forces capitulated in 1941. In the meantime he had been awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross. On his return to England he belatedly received his VC in July 1942. The formal citation for Wilson's VC, when he was still presumed dead, reads (London Gazette, 1940):

*The War Office,
11th October, 1940.*

The KING has been pleased to approve of the award of The Victoria Cross to : –
Lieutenant (acting Captain) Eric Charles Twelves Wilson, The East Surrey Regiment (attached Somaliland Camel Corps).

For most conspicuous gallantry on active service in Somaliland. Captain Wilson was in command of machine-gun posts manned by Somali soldiers in the key position of Observation Hill, a defended post in the defensive organisation of the Tug Argan Gap in British Somaliland.

The enemy attacked Observation Hill on August 11th, 1940. Captain Wilson and Somali gunners under his command beat off the attack and opened fire on the enemy troops attacking Mill Hill, another post within his range. He inflicted such heavy casualties that the enemy, determined to put his guns out of action, brought up a pack battery to within seven hundred yards, and scored two direct hits through the loopholes of his defences, which, bursting within the post, wounded Captain Wilson severely in the right shoulder and in the left eye, several of his team being also wounded. His guns were blown off their stands but he repaired and replaced them and, regardless of his wounds, carried on, whilst his Somali sergeant was killed beside him.

On August 12th and 14th the enemy again concentrated field artillery fire on Captain Wilson's guns, but he continued, with his wounds untended, to man them.

On August 15th two of his machine-gun posts were blown to pieces, yet Captain Wilson, now suffering from malaria in addition to wounds, still kept his own post in action.

The enemy finally over-ran the post at 5 p.m. on the 15th August when Captain Wilson, fighting to the last, was killed.

When the British forces evacuated Somaliland on 17/18 August, the local Somalis of the Camel Corps were given the option of evacuation to Aden or disbandment but the great majority preferred to remain in the country and were allowed to retain their arms. (Wavell, 1946). On 16 March 1941 British and Indian forces departed Aden in order to recapture British Somaliland. The Somaliland Camel Corps was re-founded and by

4. The son of a Church of England clergyman, Eric Charles Twelves Wilson (2 October 1912-23 December 2008) was commissioned Second Lieutenant in The East Surrey Regiment on 2 February 1933. Promoted to Lieutenant in 1936 he was seconded to the 2nd (Nyasaland) Battalion The King's African Rifles in 1937 and then to The Somaliland Camel Corps in 1939. He was made Captain in 1941. As a Temporary Major he was Adjutant of the Long Range Desert Group and then Second in Command, 11th (Kenyan) K.A.R which was part of 25th East African Brigade, 11th East African Division in the Burma Campaign. After a spell in hospital with scrub typhus he commanded an infantry training establishment in Uganda. Promoted to Acting Lieutenant Colonel in June 1945 he was seconded to The Northern Rhodesia Regiment in 1946. He retired on retirement pay as a Major in 1949 but was granted the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He served in Tanganyika in the Overseas Civil Service until that country's independence in 1961. In 1962 Wilson became Deputy Warden of London House, a residence for graduates from the Commonwealth of Nations pursuing graduate studies in the UK. Promoted to Warden of London House in 1966 he retired in 1977. He died aged 96 on 23 December 2008 and was buried in the churchyard of St Mary Magdalene, Stowell, Somerset.

18 April the unit was at about 80 per cent of its former strength. Its main operations now were to harass the Italians and to resume operations against local bandits. In 1942, the Somaliland Camel Corps became fully mechanised. On 30 April 1944, members of the Camel Corps captured 53 Germans who had been forces ashore when their submarine was sunk by RAF bombers: the Germans were then interned. There were tentative plans to send the Corps to Burma but it was disbanded later in 1944 after a series of mutinies (Jama, 2000a; 2000b).

Culture and custom

Livestock have a primordial role in Somaliland not only in the household and national economies but also as intimately associated with the history and culture of the people. Livestock production and pastoralism are the bedrock of Somali life. Indeed, livestock played a prominent role in Somaliland's history where there was no centralised political authority and governance was based upon customary law ('xeer'). Among rural communities in Somaliland livestock still serves as the primary exchange market and are traded frequently by barter rather than by cash exchanges. Sheep and goats far outnumber camels which in turn are followed by cattle but in Somaliland, the camel is king. The value of any item is always equated to that of a camel:

'geel waa wixiigooyaan wa geel'

Everything equal in value to a camel can be considered as a camel

Camels have an important role in traditional social relations, such as in payment of a dowry and in compensation ("blood money", 'dia') of injured parties in clan feuds. In the latter case in the 1890s blood money for a man killed was 100 milch camels, sometimes with the addition of 4 horses but half this number was considered enough for a woman. The loss of an eye or permanent disablement of a limb required a payment of 50 camels with the loss of both eyes or disablement of both limbs the full amount as for murder was demanded. Blood loss from the head cost 30 camels and a simple bruise demanded payment of three or four camels (Swayne, 1995). In Somali culture, camel ownership (in terms of herd size) is an indication of social status. In Somali traditional economy, camels are the main reserve stock and therefore act as a store of wealth and security against drought, disease and other natural calamities (Somalilandbiz, 2019).

Somaliland's customary law ('xeer') determines daily life and is used to address a range of conflicts,

including murder. This is where camels play a major role. For example: If a clan member is murdered by someone from a different clan, a council of elders from both sides will meet to hear the case and determine the punishment of the offender. In a case I became familiar with, the offender's clan had to pay the family member of the victim and his clan a total of 120 camels. This is a significant number of animals that represented the loss of meat, milk and status to the offender's clan, but symbolically addressed the loss of life of the victim for his family and clan (Hart, 2011).

Camel numbers and distribution

The country's porous international boundaries and the considerable annual and seasonal internal and cross border movement means that data on numbers (Table 1) should only be considered as estimates (MNPDP, 2011)⁵. Based on these nebulous figures, camels are most important in terms of the biomass of domestic ruminants (41%) followed by goats and sheep combined (35%) and then by cattle (24%), (Wilson *et al*, 2004). Stock routes along the western border of the country move in waves into Ethiopia at the beginning of the main rainy season in April and return to Somaliland at the start of the dry season in

Table 1. Estimated numbers of livestock ('000) in Somaliland, 2005-2009.

Year	Livestock species				Total livestock
	Goat	Sheep	Camel	Cattle	
1998	6072	6909	1444	341	14766
1999	6367	7146	1476	348	15337
2000	6520	7267	1492	352	15632
2001	6676	7391	1508	356	15932
2002	6837	7517	1525	360	16238
2005	7341	7906	1578	373	17198
2006	7517	8041	1596	378	17532
2007	7698	8178	1614	384	17873
2008	7883	8317	1630	389	18219
2009	8072	8458	1646	394	18570
2010	8266	8602	1664	399	18931
2011	8464	8748	1682	404	19298
2012	8667	8897	1701	409	19674
2013	8875	9048	1720	414	20057

Source: MOL, 2006; MNPDP, 2011; Too *et al*, 2015 (based on MNPDP information)

5. In spite of the uncertainty the myth of an annual increase in numbers persists, based on a 1975 Somalia census of livestock population and annual growth rates 2.4 per cent for goats, 1.7 per cent for sheep, 1.7 per cent for camels and 1.2 per cent for cattle.

September. Animals normally stationed along the coast move inland at the start of the rains and head back to the coast again in December. It is nonetheless generally accepted that the Sool (in the southeast), Sanaag (in the northeast with a long coastline on the Gulf of Aden) and Togdheer (in the south centre of the country bordering Ethiopia) regions account for about 75 per cent of all livestock. Cattle are mostly found in the wetter (500 mm annual rainfall!) western part of the country whereas, camels and small stock predominate in the drier areas.

Genetic resources

A traveller at the end of the 19th century wrote that there appeared to be two distinct varieties of camel in Somaliland. The Gel Ad, or white variety, occupied the Berbera side whereas the Ayyun or dark Dankali type was common around Zeila. The Issa people admitted the superiority of the Berbera and were willing to pay a higher price for it. This author stated that Somali camels did not trot, were mainly used as transport animals and anyone wanting a faster camel was advised to buy them in Aden and import them. The Somali people named their animals individually with a good large camel being called 'maródi' (elephant) and one noted for its pace might be flatteringly called 'faras' (horse) (Swayne, 1895).⁶

In greater Somalia camels in the modern era are generally assigned to five breeds. The Somaliland is the main camel of the north. Those in the lowlands have fine sparse hair but highland camels have longer and thicker hair. Camels weigh up to 700 kg live weight. The largest Somaliland camels are owned by the Dolbahanta tribe in the southeast of the breed's range (Ahmed, 2005).

The camel of the mountainous regions is known as the 'ayun' or 'cayun'. This type is slighter than the 'caroog' but is more suited to the rugged terrain of the highlands although, it is a poorer producer of milk and meat than other types. In the northern coastal strip, there is more water than in the mountains but the feed resources are not as good. The leaner camels of this area are nonetheless better milk producers than the mountain type (Rirash, 1988).

6. Harald George Carlos Swayne (1860-1940) was a British soldier who served in the Royal Engineers (eventually promoted to Colonel) and an explorer, naturalist and big game hunter. He roamed widely in the then British Somaliland, making 17 trips in the Protectorate between 1885 and 1893, sometimes with his younger brother Eric John Eagles Swayne, covering ten thousand miles with his riding and transport camels. There are 543 mentions of camels in his book of 390 pages.

Production

Camels are mainly dairy animals in Somalia although, there are no data on production. The importance of camels as milk producers results in the herd structure being 80-87% female and 13-20% male. About 23% of the herd is lactating at any one time. Camels are also used as pack animals when moving camp and to a limited extent in commercial transport. An annual reproductive rate of 0.78 young per camel in 1984 implies an interval between births of 15.4 months. This interval is shorter than most data for other countries and may at least in part be due to the bimodal rainfall pattern over much of Somalia (Wilson, 1984; Wilson *et al*, 2004).

Milk

It is estimated that some 50-60% of Somaliland's total production of milk is from camels with cattle contributing 30-40% and goats and sheep providing up to 10%. Lactation yields are estimated at 900-1100 kg. A recent study estimates lactation yields at 1450 litres and total camel milk production in 2013 of 489.4 million litres (Too *et al*, 2015).

Most milk produced is on individual holdings for family consumption but a commercial enterprise, Waayeel Camel Dairy ("Waayeel"), was established in 2014. This is a dairy production business which sells camel milk and male calves to the local markets in Burao. The company also delivers fresh milk to its customers at a kiosk in Burao and has a growing and loyal customer base for its dairy products (Somalilandbiz, 2019).

Meat

The Meat Inspection and Control Act (MOL, n.d.) regulates the slaughter of animals and the handling of them before slaughter and of their meat after slaughter. The Act has a special section on "Conditions for Halal slaughtering for Camels" although many of its stipulations are not respected where home slaughtering takes place.

The camel is the most important source of red meat and is the preferred meat type by many of the people of Somaliland. In 2013, it provided 52% of national production in Somalia as a whole, worth USD 266.1 million USDs in 2015, equivalent to 3.3% of livestock's contribution to the country's economy (Too *et al*, 2015). Somali camels weigh 500-700 kg and offtake is generally considered to be very low 1.6% (Wilson *et al*, 2004). Somalis ate 21.2 kg of camel meat in 2013 compared to 4.3 kg of goat and sheep meat combined and 4.0 kg of beef (Too *et al*, 2015).

Hides

Hides and skins, both fresh and partly cured, are an important source of export revenue in Somaliland. It is estimated that 49380 camel hides were extracted from camels in 2013 worth USD 207 396 (Too *et al*, 2015). The hide as a whole piece is rarely used when camels are killed by traditional owners but can be put to service tentage, for sandals and for making ropes (the “rawhide” of western cowboy and Indian films).

Transport

In the late 19th century, the usual load was 250 pounds (113 kg) excluding the weight of the mats used instead of pack saddles. Carrying this load, a caravan moved at a speed of 2¼ to 2¾ miles per hour (3.6 to 4.4 km/hour) for stints of 5 (4 a.m. to 9 a.m.) and 4 hours (1 p.m. to 5 p.m.) (Swayne, 1895).

It is very unusual for female camels to be used for any form of transport. In the 21st century, camels are used only to a limited extent for commercial or trade transport. They are, however, vital to the nomadic Somali way of life in transporting the tent, household goods, the elderly and frail family members and children. It takes up to 2 years to train a camel for riding or pack work starting at 4 or 5 years age (Axmed, 1987).

Trade

Before Somaliland became a British Protectorate, livestock were traded throughout the land and in coastal cities mostly by barter for food, clothes and other goods. Trade was boosted during the late 19th century as the British administration increased the demand in order to supply fresh meat to their army in Aden (Samatar *et al*, 1988).

In 1870 a British Army Officer was in Berbera to purchase transport animals for the British expedition in Abyssinia. He bought 1069 bullocks and 15 donkeys and was continuing to purchase animals of these descriptions but reported that the animal resources had been much overrated, that mules and ponies were scarce, and the few he had seen had been of the worst description. Camels, he stated, could be purchased in large numbers, but it appears he had not been authorised to buy this class of stock so none were purchased (Holland and Hozier, 1870).

Domestic animals are Somaliland’s main export product with a large portion of the country’s foreign exchange earnings coming from the sale of livestock (Muhumed and Abdiqadir, 2018). The number of livestock exported since the declaration

of independence has, however, fluctuated wildly as a result of drought, civil unrest, urbanisation, an inadequate financial sector, poor infrastructure, the informal nature of marketing, embargoes and the policies of its main international trading partners (Table 2-4). The problems associated with this are compounded by the fact that the country suffers from extremely high levels of inflation and currency depreciation (Fig 4). This has meant that export earnings are estimated to have fallen due to the depreciation of the Somaliland shilling against the dollar (Somalilandbiz, 2019). After the Saudi Arabian ban on Somaliland’s livestock was lifted in 2009, exports grew rapidly in the following years. For example, between 2009 and 2011, livestock exports more than doubled. In the meantime, livestock exports have fluctuated between 3.0 and 3.5 million animals exported each year mainly through Berbera, the principal port for Somaliland’s livestock exports (Fig 5). Some 84.7% of camel exports are to Saudi Arabia, 10. 7% to Yemen and 4.6% to the UAE (Somalilandbiz, 2019).

Feed and nutrition

Most pastoral stock range freely and consume mainly low quality forage. *Acacia* are common in the mountains whereas, the main feed sources in the coastal areas are *Sueda fruticosa* and *Salvadora persica*.

Table 2. Live animal and hide exports through the ports of Bossasso and Berbera in northern Somalia, 1995-1998.

Port and year	Item exported			
	Camels	Cattle	Small ruminants	Hides (pieces)
Bossasso/a				
1996 (January-July)	15 000	6 000	570 000	363 000
1997	14 599	17 831	494 320	640 750
1998	3 938	29 492	519 020	195 060
Berbera				
1991	102	11 800	482 500	
1992	389	36 600	631 200	
1993	14 800	80 900	1 010 000	
1994	38 000	55 800	1 690 000	
1995	22 000	75 000	2 680 000	61 000
1996 (except December)	30 000	59 000	2 130 000	170 000
1997	50 598	66 939	2 814 495	33 737
1998	11 663	92 213	957 224	50 078

Note: Bossasso is in neighbouring Puntland but most camels are from Somaliland

Source: Academy for Peace and Development (2002)

Table 3. Livestock Exports through Berbera Port (1991-2000).

Year	Livestock species			Total
	Sheep/Goat	Cattle	Camels	
1991	482 508	11 756	102	494 366
1992	631 192	36 662	389	668 243
1993	1 014 921	80 861	14 824	1 110 606
1994	1 685 265	55 729	38 025	1 779 019
1995	2 713 597	75 128	21 993	2 810 718
1996	2 417 656	64 596	42 828	2 525 080
1997	2 814 495	66 939	50 587	2 932 021
1998	957 623	92 213	11 663	1 061 499
1999	2 000 335	88 939	34 840	2 124 114
2000	1 233 851	46 289	10 100	1 290 240

Source: Academy for Peace and Development (2002)

Table 4. Total livestock exports through Berbera Port (2011-2015)

Year	Livestock species			Total
	Sheep/Goat	Cattle	Camels	
2011	3 104 684	150 934	107 281	3 362 899
2012	3 219 584	190 354	102 664	3 512 602
2013	2 888 955	201 876	75 728	3 166 559
2014	3 089 592	252 397	64 578	3 406 567
2015	3 270 386	160 395	61 475	3 392 256

MNPD, 2015

Supplementary feed is rarely provided and herds of camels feed as much as 10 miles from their camp and are watered every 5 days on dry feed. The increasing number of livestock in periurban and urban areas as well as the implementation of quarantine facilities for export animals and feeding systems during shipment the fodder supply value chain is becoming an increasingly important investment. Fodder scarcity is understood to have had a direct impact on livestock production during the recent series of droughts (Somalilandbiz, 2019). One family, for example, lost 30 of 40 camels to drought in 2017 (Muhumed and Abdiqadir, 2018).

Fodder production contributes directly to increased body weight and finishing of livestock, thus creating a value-added final product. Currently, fodder availability is unreliable, which drastically affects the finishing of the livestock. This, in turn, affects the final price of the livestock for export-oriented markets. Fodder for domestic use as well as for export markets is usually sourced from Ethiopia and a vibrant fodder trade has developed over the years to sustain livestock during the long trek from the Ogaden to Hargeisa and Berbera and to allow

them to achieve a better price (Fig 6). Ethiopia circulated a letter prohibiting the movement of any fodder beyond Jigjiga town.

Disease

Disease control

A Somaliland Veterinary Code (Law No 34/2006 and 2008) provides a regulatory framework that meets international standards and especially, those Office International des Epizooties (OIE, World Organisation for Animal Health). Other legal instruments pertinent to health and disease include the National Livestock Policy (in draft, 2015), the Animal Welfare Code (Ministerial Decree, 2015), Disease Contingency Plan (in draft, 2015) and Operating Procedures for Priority Diseases (Ministerial Decree, 2015).

Disease occurrence

In the late 19th century, it was written that “in the Ogádén the ‘balaad’, or small gadfly, is a terrible scourge to [camels], and, to a lesser extent, so is the large gadfly, or ‘dúg’; they are also infested with ticks, which swell to the size of a date-stone, and are seen clinging round the eyelids.⁷ While drinking, the camels often take in small leeches, which fix themselves to the root of the tongue, growing to a great size and filling the mouth with blood” (Swayne, 1895).

Trypanosomosis (‘dhukan’) due to *Trypanosoma evansi* and sarcoptic mange (‘cadho’) resulting from infestation by *Sarcoptes scabiei* are possibly the 2 most important diseases of camels (Omar and Borstein, 1991). The gathering of camel herds in the dry seasons at rivers and standing water with vegetation suitable for biting insect vectors such as tabanids and horse flies plays an important role in the epidemiology of trypanosomosis (Wilson *et al*, 2004). Other external pests and parasites include ringworm (‘cambaar’) and ticks (‘shillin’). Internal parasites (‘goryaan’, ‘caal’) include tapeworms such as *Monezia* and *Stilesia* as well as hydatid cysts and many species of roundworm. As for other dairy animals, mastitis (‘candhobarar’) is a problem not only causing pain to the milking camel but to the owners in reduced milk output and the concomitant reduced quality of life.

Camel pox (‘furuqa geela’) caused by an Orthopox virus is widespread and although it ends to be benign in mature animals it can be very serious in young animals. Camel contagious ecthyma is a

7. ‘Balaad’ is *Glossina morsitans*; ‘dug’ is a species of *Tabanus*.

benign disease that can be confused with camel pox but seems to be uncommon in Somaliland. Warts caused by a papilloma are common in young stock appearing mainly around the lips and nostrils but can be more widespread in older animals. Anthrax ('kud') is feared by the Somali herdsmen who encircle dead animals with a thorn boma to deter other stock: unlike cattle it takes a protracted course in camels with painful swelling of the lymph glands (Mares, 1954a). Other diseases that occasionally affect camels include tuberculosis ('urug', 'feero') and tetanus ('kojiso').

Somali ethnoveterinary medicine

Information on Somali ethnoveterinary practices has been documented since at least 1895 (Swayne, 1895). Camels showing stiffness were "fired, either by raising small blisters with a red-hot ramrod or spear or by striping with hoops of red-hot iron. Open sores had glowing stones strapped over them which was followed by an application of moist camel dung. When off feed, a dose of melted sheep's tail was given. Thorns were removed from the foot with the 'biláwa' or dagger and camel dung was then applied. Sore backs caused by the chafing of a load was often bitten by the camel until it festered and became invaded by maggots, the treatment for which was a strip of calico, steeped in carbolic solution, tied over the wound to protect it from attack by omnivorous birds (Swayne, 1895). Some 30 years later, a Treatise on the Camel provided additional information on ethnoveterinary medicine (Leese, 1927). Later work (Hunt, 1951; Mares, 1951; 1954a; 1954b; Peck, 1939; 1940) included descriptions of plant remedies, traditional vaccination, cautery, use of broths and salt in the form of salt bushes, salty wells and salt-rich soils. Mares (1954a; 1954b) also provided an extensive list of Somali names for livestock diseases and parasites. In the 1990s participatory techniques were used to elicit information on indigenous practices (Catley, 1996; Catley and Ahmed, 1996). More recent accounts of Somali ethnoveterinary practice show considerable agreement with the earlier work and even 40 years after the publication of Mares work, herders in northern Somalia were still using soups, cautery, and medicinal plants (Catley and Mohammed, 1995; 1996). A brief review of the literature indicates common terminology for some livestock diseases throughout Somali-occupied areas. For example, the words 'gendhi', 'dhukaan', 'caal', 'cadho' and 'cambaar' are very widely used by Somali herders from north-west Somalia to northern Kenya.

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