



## Ten Years in Captivity in the Madhi's camp

*Father Joseph Ohrwalder*

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Father Joseph Ohrwalder was born on March 6, 1856 at Lana in the South Tyrol was a Roman Catholic priest, who was taken captive by the Mahdists in Sudan while working as a missionary there. He spent ten years in captivity but eventually escaped. He died on August 8th, 1913 at Omdurman in the Sudan. The German manuscript of his travails was rendered into English by Francis Reginald Wingate. General Sir Francis Reginald Wingate, 1st Baronet GCB GCVO GBE KCMG DSO TD was born at Port Glasgow, Renfrewshire on June 25th 1861. Wingate entered the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery on 27 July 1880. He served in India and Aden from March 1881 to 1883. He then joined the 4th Battalion of the Egyptian Army with the brevet rank of Major. In the Gordon Relief Expedition of 1884–1885 he was ADC and military secretary to Sir Evelyn Wood. In 1883 he received the Order of Osmanieh 4th Class from the Khedive and in June 1885 he was Mentioned in Despatches for service in operations in the Suakin and Upper Nile regions. After holding an appointment in England for a brief period as ADC to Wood, who was now General Officer Commanding Eastern District, he rejoined the Egyptian Army in 1886 as assistant military secretary to Sir Francis Grenfell. In 1887 he received the Order of the Medjidieh 4th Class and took part in the operations on the Sudan frontier in 1889, including the engagement at Toski — for which he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) — and in the further operations in 1891, being present at the capture of Tokar. His principal work was in the intelligence branch, of which he became assistant adjutant-general in 1888 and director in 1892. A master of Arabic, his knowledge of the country, the examination of prisoners, refugees and others from the Sudan, and the study of documents captured from the Dervishes enabled him to publish in 1891 *Mahdiism and the Egyptian Sudan*, an authoritative account of the rise of the Muhammad Ahmad and of subsequent events in the Sudan up to that date. In 1891 he was promoted to the 3rd Class of the Order of the Medjidieh. By 1894 he was governor of Suakin and appointed Companion of the Order of the Bath in the 1895 Queen's Birthday Honours. Wingate was promoted to Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel on 18 November 1896 and after the Battle of Atbara in 1898 he interrogated the defeated dervish commander Emir Mahmoud. Largely through his assistance, Father Ohrwalder and two nuns escaped from Omdurman in 1891. Wingate also made the arrangements which led to the escape of Slatin Pasha in 1895. He translated into English Father Ohrwalder's narrative (*Ten Years in the Mahdi's Camp*, 1892) and Slatin's book (*Fire and Sword in the Sudan*, 1896).

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