



## Battle Story: Omdurman 1898

*William Wright*

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The battle took place at Kerreri, 11km north of Omdurman in the Sudan. Kitchener commanded a force of 8,000 British regulars and a mixed force of 17,000 Sudanese and Egyptian soldiers. He arrayed his force in an arc around the village of Egeiga close to the bank of the Nile, where a gunboat flotilla waited in support, facing a wide, flat plain with hills rising to the left and right. The British and Egyptian cavalry was placed on either flank. Al-Taashi's followers, known as Ansar and sometimes referred to as Dervishes, numbered around 50,000, including some 3,000 cavalry. In a few hours and at a loss of less than 400 officers and men killed and wounded, the Anglo-Egyptian army defeated the more than 50,000 brave tribesmen who charged their enemy, regardless of the hail of maxim bullets, many of them armed only with spears, swords and ancient chainmail armour. In concise detail, with orders of battle, maps and over fifty photographs, the author shows how Omdurman was a superb example of logistics in warfare. First-hand accounts from both sides help the reader to understand all the horrors and glory of that day including the famous charge of the 21st Lancers, often called the last great cavalry charge of the British Army. This war arguably the height of British Empire military dominance.

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