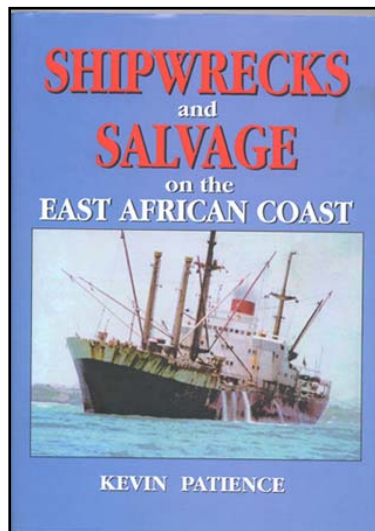


Shipwrecks and Salvage *on the East African Coast, 1499 - 2004*

Kevin Patience

276 pages, H/Back, over 300 illustrations and three maps. £ 21 including P&P to the UK and £ 26 inc. P&P overseas.

Available from Kevin Patience, 257 Sandbanks Road, Poole, Dorset, BH14 8EY. Tel. 01 202 707450 or email: saburi@hotmail.com



The coast of East Africa stretches some 4,000 miles from Cape Guardafui in Somalia to the Mozambique Channel. It is rugged and inhospitable, with few safe anchorages, miles of treacherous coral reefs and a strong northerly current. Over the years it has become a ship's graveyard, to the unlucky ones, and dire warnings to those that ran aground and were subsequently refloated. The earliest recorded casualty is the Portuguese galleon San Raphael that grounded and burnt at Mtongoni, south of Tanga in 1499.

Since the earliest recorded history, seafarers have traded along this coast and until the late 19th century, Zanzibar was the centre of a large prosperous empire. After the signing of the Treaty of Berlin in July 1890, the vast tract of East Africa ruled by the Sultan of Zanzibar became British and German East Africa, now Kenya and Tanzania. The opening up of the two colonies, aided by the completion of the railway from Mombasa to Lake Victoria and the two lines from Tanga to Moshi, and Dar es Salaam to Lake Tanganyika, dramatically increased the volume of shipping along the coast, and in consequence the casualties. Ranging from the 15th century to the present day, they convey some idea of the ever present hazards faced by mariners sailing in this part of Africa. Many were due to human error and mechanical failure with others from under estimating the forces of nature.

Using records in Australia, Germany, Kenya, Tanzania, Zanzibar and the U.K. as well as the library's of Lloyds Register of Shipping, the Guildhall and the National Archives in London together with the Hydrographic Office records at Taunton, the author has discovered the stories of over 200 merchant and naval ships that came to grief. The publication covers most of the known casualties that were wrecked or salvaged along the coast from the Kenya / Somali border to the Tanzania / Mozambique border, a distance of 1,400 miles. The inland lakes including Tanganyika and Victoria also had their fair share of casualties and these are included as are all the tugs from 1896 to date since many played a part in the salvage operations.

The author spent over twenty-five years in the diving and salvage business in the Middle East and East Africa, and was involved in some of the operations described in the book. He dived on and identified many of the other wrecks mentioned, and is deeply indebted to people from all

walks of life, who kindly opened their diaries and photo albums to find references and illustrations to some of the more obscure ship's tales and all are acknowledged.