

A
NARRATIVE OF FOUR JOURNEYS
INTO THE COUNTRY OF
THE HOTTENTOTS,
AND
C A F F R A R I A,

IN THE YEARS 1777, 1778, 1779.

ILLUSTRATED WITH A MAP, AND NINETEEN COPPER-PLATES.

BY *LIEUTENANT WILLIAM PATERSON.*

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MDCCLXXC.

SECOND JOURNEY.

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At night we arrived at a place called Olive Bush, where we rested. The man, to whom this place belonged, was the only one, of a whole family, who escaped from a party of the Boshmen Hottentots. Those savages had attacked them a few years before, and put to death the mother, brother, and sister of this person.

1778.
August.

On the thirtieth, we proceeded to the northward; and, in the evening, came to a farm called Rhinoceros Bosch, from its having been much frequented by these animals some years ago; though very few are now found in this part of the country. During the night we had much wind and rain; and in the morning the thermometer had fallen to forty degrees.

Pursuing our journey, north by west, we had the Rogge Veld Berg on our right hand. On our way we met one of the inhabitants of the mountain, who promised to assist us with a team of fresh oxen to carry us to the summit, which was very difficult of ascent. In the evening, we rested by the side of the Rhinoceros River; but as we had no shelter from the incessant hail and rain, and were unable to keep our fire lighted, our situation was extremely uncomfortable. In this condition we remained during the whole of the following day.

On the second of August, the promised assistance arrived in order to conduct us up the mountain; but it was with the utmost difficulty we could reach the summit, the path was so very steep and rugged. At eight, in the morning, I found the thermometer at thirty degrees; and the top of the mountain

was not at home; but as we could not advance any farther, for want of water, we remained there during the night. The only thing we could procure at this place was milk, for which we gave the Hottentots some tobacco. Early next morning, we travelled through a dry barren country which lies between the Rogge Veld and Hantum. At noon we crossed the Rhinoceros River, where we saw several large herds of Quachas; and, in the evening, came to a very decent house, where we were well received. This house is situated on the very borders of the Boshmens' Land; and is frequently attacked by that tribe of Hottentots. As we had undergone many inconveniences for some time before, from the severity of the weather, and the want of shelter in many places through which we had passed, I determined to rest here a few days, and to visit the Hantum and other countries adjoining. There is a very good house under, or rather near the foot of Hantum Berg, belonging to the father of my companion. The next morning I therefore proceeded thither, and left my oxen to rest, while I made some short excursions. In this part of the country there are many things worthy of observation. The horses in this district are yearly attacked by a disorder, for which it is very difficult, if not impossible, to account. Certain it is, that the utmost care, the feeding of them with corn, and keeping of them in stables, as much from the air as possible, does not operate as a preservative from this disease; so that those who have other farms near, remove their cattle till this season is passed. Horned cattle are exposed to equal danger from the *Amaryllis Difticha*, or Poison Bulb, with which the country is covered; they are extremely fond of its leaves,

1778.
August.

half an hour, we gained the opposite shore, where we wounded an Hippopotamus. At noon I made an excursion along the mountains, which were so naked that scarcely a plant was to be seen. Some of these mountains consist of a species of quartz, others of iron, and several strata of copper ore. Along the banks of the river I found many pebbles of hard agate. In the evening we returned to the waggon, much fatigued. The wind being easterly, had driven us above a thousand yards down the river. I stayed here several days, searching the whole country for plants, and shot many beautiful birds, with which I was before unacquainted.

1778.
September.

On the fifteenth, whilst we were in this situation, my companion, Mr. Van Renan, very narrowly escaped with his life. In crossing the river, accompanied by four Hottentots, the whole party was attacked and pursued by two Hippopotami. They had, however, the good fortune to get upon a rock in the middle of the river, and their guns being loaded they killed one of these animals; the other swam to the opposite side. Mr. Van Renan's intention was to go to the northward, being informed that the Camelopardales were in that part of the country, while I made excursions to the eastward through a large plain in search of plants. Here I found many new species of Gramina, particularly that which the Dutch call Boshman's Grass, from the use made of it by that people, who eat the seed of it. At different seasons of the year a species of locusts come down to this plain in such numbers as to destroy most of the plants. The Boshmen esteem these insects excellent food. The locusts are dried and kept for use

1778.
September.

when they have no other provision. This part of the country abounds with poisonous reptiles. The quadrupeds which are found, are Elephants, Rhinoceroses, Camelopardales, Zebras, Elks, Koedoes, Lions, Tigers, Hyenas, and Jackals.

Mr. Van Renan returned the nineteenth. He had shot a Camelopardalis, towards the evening, at a great distance from the water, to which they immediately directed their course, intending to send a Hottentot next day to skin the animal. On their return, to their great surprize, a Lion sprung up about fifty yards from the place where the Camelopardalis lay; and, on their arrival, they found he had disfigured it so much, that nothing could be preserved except part of the skin of the neck, with the horns, and part of the hind quarters. After seeing this, I resolved to cross the river with some of the Hottentots, and procure the skeleton which they left in the fields. But by this time the river began to swell, and the Hottentots refused to accompany me, as they would be in danger of being detained for several months on the opposite side; this being the rainy season to the eastward of our present situation, in which quarter we discovered many thunder clouds. The climate differs much from that of the small Nimiqua Land. During our stay here, the thermometer rose from ninety-five to one hundred and ten in the shade.

The twenty-third, we spent the whole day in shooting at the Hippopotami, one of which we killed. We saw also the method made use of by the natives to catch these animals; which is as follows: they dig large holes in the ground, along

fail to attract the attention of travellers. This lake is a plain much above the level of the sea, and between three and four miles in circumference. At some seasons of the year it is formed into an entire mass of fine white salt, which has a very striking appearance. The heavy rains had dissolved the middle part of it, a short time before my arrival; but round the sides was a hard crust of salt exactly resembling ice.

1779.
January.

The adjacent country is covered with a variety of frutescent and succulent plants, many of which were quite new, in particular some of the Euphorbia. Here we were visited by two Caffres, the first we had seen; for they very seldom venture so far out of their own country. At night we arrived at a place, called by the Hottentots Kow Cha, which is much frequented by Lions, Rhinoceroses, and Buffaloes. The soil is of a sandy loam, and produces excellent pasture for cattle, but no corn; there is, however, no proof that the land is not fitted to produce grain; for no pains is taken, at this distance from the Cape, to cultivate the ground.

We proceeded, on the twenty-ninth, to the eastward, towards the Sondags Rivier, or Sundays River. The face of the country, at this place, has a very barren appearance; but it produces a variety of arboreous plants, though very few of any considerable height or size, which demonstrates the poverty of the soil. On our way we saw great numbers of wild Dogs, which travel in herds, and are very destructive when they get where there are flocks of sheep. Wild Dogs are also found very near the Cape. They are much larger than the Jackal, with large ir-

1779.
January.

regular blotches or spots on their skin. After a very disagreeable day's march, through a dry stony country, we arrived at night at the Sundays River, which is distant from the Cape Town about nine hundred miles. This river was the extent of Mr. Mason's journey to the eastward. There are still some of the Hippopotami found here, but they are very shy.

The following day I visited one of the Dutch boors, who had resided in that part of the country for many years. This man was possessed of numerous herds of cattle; but had no corn, and scarcely a house to live in, though the place was favourable for both. But the generality of those people are of so indolent a disposition, that they seldom trouble themselves either to build houses or to cultivate the ground. Those of them who chuse to be industrious, and to make the most of their advantages, are enabled to live in a very comfortable manner.

One of our companions, Mr. Tunies, left us on the thirty-first, and we were joined by Jacob Kock, an old German, whom I mentioned at Swart Kops Rivier. Mr. Van Renan and I went on towards the Great Fish River. At noon we overtook our waggon at a place which, in the Hottentot language, is called Curnow. We were informed by our servants, that they had been disturbed in the night by some Elephants, which came very near the waggon.

In the afternoon we continued our journey to a plantation, called the Sand Fleet, belonging to our fellow traveller, Jacob

Kock. The country here is extremely beautiful and picturesque, very hilly, and the hills are shaded with impenetrable woods; the vallies well watered and covered with grafs, which affords excellent pasture for cattle. Great numbers of quadrupeds inhabit this neighbourhood, such as Lions, Panthers, Elephants, Rhinoceroses, Buffaloes, Spring Bocks, &c. At a little distance to the eastward are some Kraals belonging to the tribe of Hottentots, called Chonacquas. These people are much darker in their complexion, and better shaped than any of the other tribes I had before seen. Whether this difference arises from their mixing with the Caffres, several of whom dwell in this part of the country, or from any other cause, I could not ascertain. It is not very uncommon for the Caffres and Chonacquas to quarrel, which generally ends in an engagement. In these encounters several hundreds of the Caffres sometimes unite to oppose their enemies, who very seldom bring a proportionable force into the field. But the dexterity with which the Hottentots use their bows and arrows, and the practice of poisoning the latter, render them very dangerous enemies to those who only use the Haffagai. The disputes between these people generally originate about cattle, of which both nations are extremely avaricious.

1779.
January.

We directed our course eastward, to the Boshman's River, and at noon I visited a Kraal belonging to a Hottentot captain, called De Royter. This man has upwards of two hundred Hottentots and Caffres in his service, and a few hours before our arrival, had fought against a number of Caffres,

1779.
February.

tacked the buffaloes; they were about an hundred in number; five of them we shot; the others fled into a wood, which was about a mile to the eastward of us. Mr. Kock had the animals skinned; their hides making such excellent thongs for oxen that they are preferred to every other material for this purpose. At night we arrived at the Fish River, where we stayed two days. During the night we had heavy showers of rain, with loud claps of thunder. Here the river assumes a southern direction, and empties itself into the great Indian Ocean, at about twenty miles distance. The deepest parts of the river are inhabited by the Hippopotamus, and the adjacent woods by Elephants, Rhinoceroses, and Buffaloes. We shot several of the buffaloes, which were much heavier than an European bullock.

Seeing no possibility of proceeding farther with our waggon through the impenetrable woods, we agreed that Mr. Van Renan should continue with it, while Mr. Kock and I proceeded easterly towards the Caffres, being informed that we could reach their country in two or three days. Most of the arboreous plants in these parts were unknown to me, except the *Euphorbia Antiquorum*, *Erythrina Corallodendron*, and the *Gardenia Stellata*. We took with us a Hottentot who was perfectly acquainted with the language of the Caffres. In passing through the thickets, on the banks of the Fish River, we encountered considerable difficulties, till we fortunately got into an Elephant's path, in which we continued till noon. We then crossed the river and entered a spacious plain, which afforded us great variety of the most beautiful evergreens I

duced to believe that it is greatly superior to any other known part of Africa.

1779.
February.

The woods produce variety of arboreous plants, and some of a great size : they are inhabited by Elephants, Buffaloes, &c. There were also variety of beautiful Birds and Butterflies ; but they were so shy, that I was able only to preserve two Birds of that country.

When we returned to our waggon, on the ninth, we were accompanied by the chief and about six hundred of his servants or soldiers, who followed us till noon, when we took leave of them. We then directed our course towards the Great Fish River, where we stayed all night.

The next morning we left our Hottentot, with a gun, as he was so much fatigued that he could not keep pace with us. Two days afterwards he overtook us, and on his way had shot two Rhinoceroses, and brought part of the flesh with him, which proved good eating, being very young and tender.

On the twelfth we proceeded on our return by the route we had before taken ; and I collected many seeds, and fruits of evergreens, in the woods.

We arrived at the Now Tio towards the evening. Mr. Van Renan left the waggon, accompanied by some Hottentots, with an intention of shooting at a herd of Buffaloes, which they observed at about the distance of a mile. Before they returned

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belong to Colonel Gordon. Soon after I received a letter from him, and we proceeded to the Rhinoceros' Fountain. The river was frequented by a variety of Water-fowl, which afforded us excellent sport; among these we found great numbers of Flamingoes, of two species, one much smaller than the other. We stayed here two days, and made excursions along the shore, where we saw strata of the most beautiful rocks I ever beheld, some of them as white as snow, and others veined with red and other colours; this we took for a species of quartz. Here we saw several huts made of the ribs of Whales, and others of Elephants bones; but we perceived that they had not been inhabited for many years.

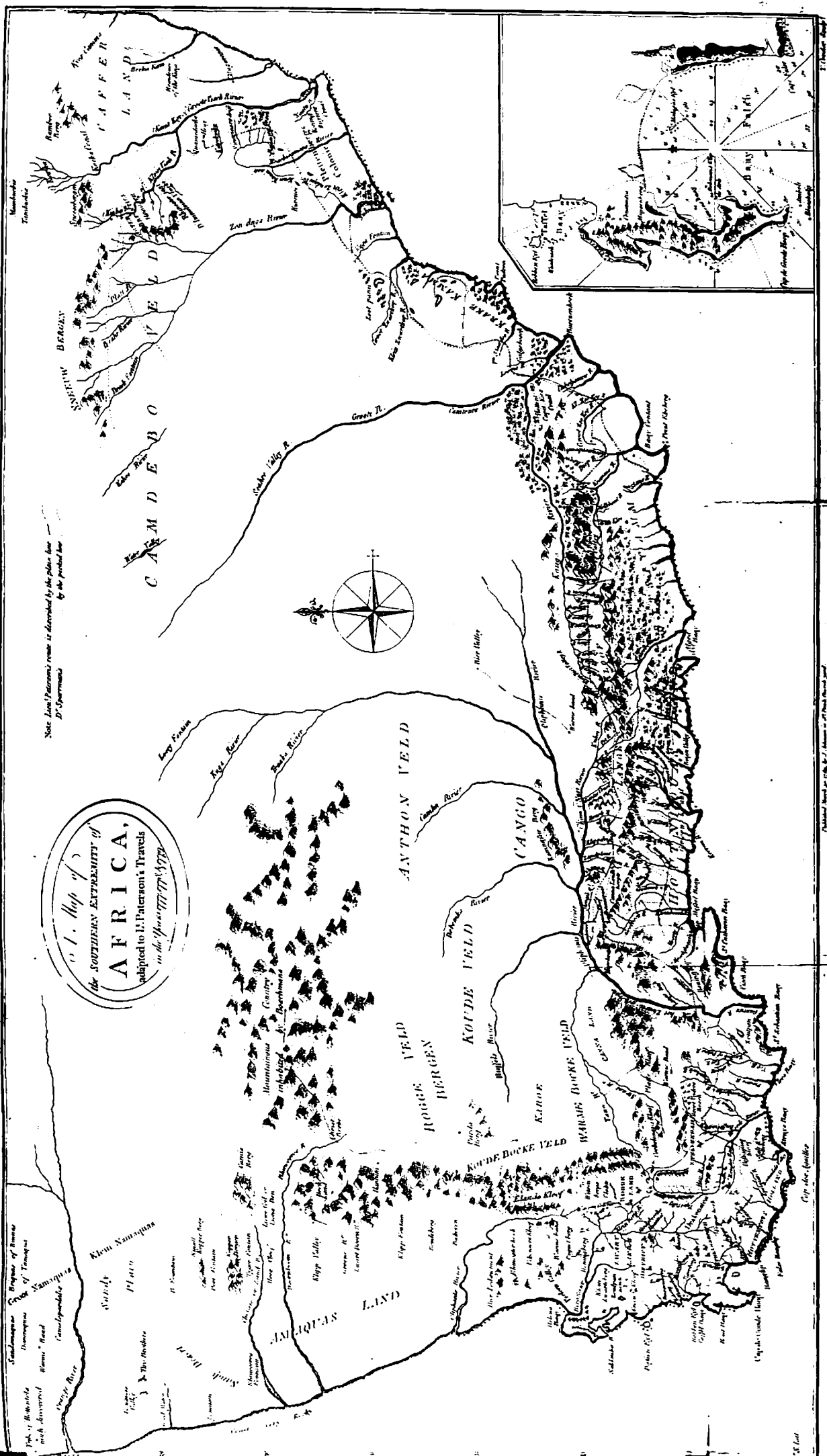
1779.
August.

Colonel Gordon's companion, and the two Van Renans, being informed of a herd of Elephants which were seen to the northward, left us on the seventh, while we directed our course to the mouth of the river, where was a large lake of water which communicated with the sea. Here we expected to catch some fish, but we found none that were larger than a sprat. In the afternoon we shot some wild Ducks, and returned to the waggon. In the evening our companions returned, finding the Elephants were gone.

From this place we directed our course north, through a sandy country. We travelled the whole day, and at night were informed by our guide, that we were not half way to the first water; and that, as it was extremely dark, he would not venture to conduct or direct us through the sandy downs which lay along the shore, and extended many miles to the eastward.

A. S. Map of
 the SOUTHERN EXTREMITY of
AFRICA,
 adapted to L. Paterson's Travels
 in the Years 1777, 1778, 1779

Note: L. Paterson's route is described by the plain line
 D'Après's route by the dotted line



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