

SERVICE & SPORT IN THE SUDAN

A RECORD OF ADMINISTRATION
IN THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN
SUDAN. WITH SOME INTERVALS
OF SPORT AND TRAVEL ❁ ❁ ❁

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(LATE OF THE BLACK WATCH)

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narrow, sunken, ascetic face, full of cunning and ferocity. In height 5 feet 7 inches, he had the cringing manners of the mulazimen of the Khalifa. His eldest son was a fine-looking young fellow, who, however, got into trouble. The various members of the Dardug family were superior to the natives around. His territory used to cover 4400 (110 by 40) square miles, which held close on 2000 inhabitants. It used to be divided into two by that of Saïd Baldas.

No police came to greet us from the town. As I entered it, however, the Anglo-Egyptian flags were hoisted on two poles outside the ex-Sultan's "palace," and his brother, followed by a lot of people carrying food for my party, hurried out, apologising for the small show of hospitality, and assuring us that, till I rode into his village, he was unaware (*sic*) of my presence in the district. His rest-house was scrupulously clean, the ground of the village square well swept.

When crossing the spurs of J. Giyawa I was struck by the huge peninsula of hills that stretches eastwards to Tearan, and forms the Bahr el Arab-Boru watershed. The highest hills were in the Nile-Congo watershed, west of my route. From them descended a number of the Bahr el Arab tributaries. The Reikei, the largest we crossed on our way north, was about 10 yards broad, with banks 12 feet high.

We reached Kafiakingi, Sultan Murad Ibrahim's capital, after a few long marches. Four miles south of it lies Duku, where his principal sheikhs used to live. When passing through it, on this occasion, the sheikhs

who came to meet me seemed so hurt, not so much at my not stopping there, but at my not drinking "a cup of water," that, to please them, I had to break through my rule of not drinking on the march, and have some.

The country had changed greatly in the last few miles. We were no longer in the hills, and the ground was much more sandy, "Kordofan-like," than otherwise.

Just before reaching the very excellent huts that the Sultan was running up for me I met the latter, who had only then been apprised of my approach.

We had had to capture a guide, as he had refused to show us the way, and the long march and the 10 A.M. sun combined, with this contretemps, in making me rather wroth. But when I saw one man hoisting the Sultan into his scarlet robe of honour, for which he had sent, another trying to make his new tarbush stay on his head, another to lasso him with the tinsel slings of his scimitar, and then turned to my party—myself the worse for wear, two rank tatterdemalions carrying on top of their all, on their heads, a big piece of raw meat from the last-killed antelope, and proudly bearing aloft the two flags, a yard or so square each, and behind them my orderly driving a donkey, and with one puttee on and the other round the neck of a wretched naked native, it was all I could do, without laughing, to repeat the endless "taïb aiwa taïb el Hamdililah"'s of salutation, rendered necessary by politeness.

Murad Ibrahim, of the Kreish Hofraui—which latter

term means "miners," having reference to the copper mines about fifty miles away, which they worked—was a weird little man. He was supposed to be a sort of Macbeth, which perhaps accounted for his jumpy manner. He was about thirty-five years of age at the time, 5 feet 3 inches in height, with a wizened, frightened face. He was later deposed in 1908. I left Kafiakingi the same afternoon, leaving behind me the escort I had had till then, and taking a few men who had been sent there by Fell to form a post. My destination was Hofrat el Nahas ("the holes of copper"), reputed to be one of Solomon's mines.

Just after starting I noticed that one of the younger soldiers, who had accompanied me from Dem Zubeir, had attached himself to my party. He was a fine, big Niam-Niam, his teeth filed in true cannibal style. He explained his presence by saying that where his officer went he followed.

Nine men and two carriers formed my party. As there was no road most of the way, I decided that we should keep together (a quite unnecessary precaution). Our night halt was at a bend of the Barada River, one of the sources of the Bahr el Arab.

There has been some discussion as to the name of the river. My successor maintained that it was Bahr (river), 'Aada (custom). Apart from the fact that having heard, previous to reaching it, discussions on the subject, I personally made very searching inquiries on the spot, and without trying to explain the difference of pronunciation, it is merely necessary to point out that Bahr 'Aada is not Arabic. It should be Bahr

EL 'Aada if anything. The river was bordered by dried-up swamp on both banks. Where we crossed it we had to go through long grass for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles—the river flowing in the centre. The river was almost dry, 30 yards across, with banks 15 feet high, and sandy bed. From here to the Umbelacha, the main stream of the Bahr el Arab, is, from January to May, a rather waterless march. Going, there was just enough for my small party, but coming back, twenty-four hours later, the water-holes had practically dried up.

We saw a lot of roan antelope, and, on my return march, an elephant which I was unable to attack—shortage of water and inability to carry back the trophies being the reasons.

To give an idea of the quantity of game about, I might insert here a list of what I remember seeing on one morning's march, and find recorded in a letter: Buffalo, leopard, roan antelope, Vaughan's cob, dikdik, hartebeest (Jackson's), waterbuck, bush-buck, besides which I passed the fresh tracks of lion, elephant, rhinoceros, and giraffe.

From J. Siomo, called by Sparkes Pasha (the first white man to visit the mines) J. Telata from the fact of its consisting of three little peaks, I got a fine view. Near it I put up a rhinoceros in a bamboo brake.

When about ten miles from the mines I left my party, and with three men went on to them. The remainder were to collect water by squeezing it out of the mud through a rag, as we had had to do already.

When we reached the mines we were not much impressed. There were a lot of shallow pits about

thirty yards across and ten to twenty feet deep. I should say they covered an area of about half a mile square. A little geological knowledge would have made my visit a useful one. I bought a huge ingot of horseshoe shape, seven inches across by two thick, but later, when my belongings were sent to me from Dem Zubeir, this interesting relic was mislaid.

From the copper bed to the river Umbelacha was only a few steps. The river was a fine one about seventy yards or more across, with banks of twelve to fifteen feet high. The bed was sandy, with huge, flat bars of rock running across it here and there. The country to the north and west appeared much less hilly than to the south. In the vicinity on both sides of the river were the tangled scrub over the areas formerly under cultivation, and the ruins of huts. The Sultan asked to be allowed to—and subsequently did—remove his capital to this place, its old site.

We rejoined our party after a short halt, and found a little water; even following the tracks of monkeys failed to reveal a pool. When eventually we reached the Barada, having drunk at one inadequate pool on the way, two men had dropped out (they rejoined us during the night). Though it was night when we reached the river, we were well lighted by the grass, which was now on fire. It took us some zigzagging about to reach the river. When we crossed, the right bank not being alight, our guide chose, as a cheerful subject of conversation, the probability of putting up a lion as we pushed through the high grass. I breathed more freely when we reached the open forest.

of large chimpanzees (?) and other apes. The country, however, between the Pongo and the Wau or Busseiri Rivers was alive with elephant. I was, as well may be imagined, much disappointed at not retrieving my former elephants, so when, close to the Pongo, I came on a herd, I threw to the winds the warning of those who said, "Never interfere with a herd in which there are young." The herd I selected was grazing, the bull in rear. From a few yards I gave him the shoulder shot. He ran a hundred yards, and the herd stopped and looked at him. I had to make a long stalk to get near him again. He was swinging his near foreleg when I did so. I fired, but retired as the herd gathered round him and moved off with him to where I had had my first shot. I followed, and my next shot, from a distance of about fifty yards—I could get no nearer—brought the herd forward at a run towards the sound. My quarry scarcely moved. I returned to my old stand. In the meantime I had noticed that some men of the party had turned up, and those who had not already done so took off their boots. I fired again. The herd gave one united scream and charged with uplifted trunks. I ran as I never ran before and hope never to have to run again. Everything on me—watch, compass, knife, &c.—seemed to rattle like sleigh-bells. I forgot to say that my rifle, a .303, had jammed each time I fired, the breech being badly pitted. The last time I had fired I had had to stamp the breech open, so I could not reload. I had just determined to throw it away, when a khor, 12 feet deep and 4 yards wide, crossed my path.

I jumped into and ran along it, impeded at every step by low-lying branches. Seeing a large pool, I jumped into it, rifle and all, and tried to sink. Alas! when my head was under water I was conscious that my feet were above it, and *vice versa*. On the bank above I could hear the elephants tramping and screaming, and some distance away some shouting. Presently, at my very feet the whole herd thundered across the khor. At the time I would have given a good deal if the incident had taken only as long in happening as it takes telling. Did I run three hundred yards, or thirty? Was I five minutes in the water, or only as many seconds? I will never know.

The incident taught me a few useful facts. It is useless to attack elephant with a small-bore rifle unless one is a crack shot. The heart is so big that, unless one severs the great arteries at the top, the wounded animal may go miles before succumbing. It is generally fatal to get into a watercourse. If the elephant get one's wind, he has one like a rat in a trap. The great elephant hunters, the Mandalla, tell me that they will never tackle even a sorely wounded elephant in a khor. From them I also heard that when chased one should shout loudly. The intelligence of the pursuer leads him to look for the companion to whom one shouts. Hence he probably overruns one's trail. Shouts like monkeys' "hough!" are also useful, as elephants are terrified of them. Monkeys give them a bad time, especially when they are young, chase and pinch them, jump on their backs and pull out their hair.

I looked like Neptune when I rejoined my party, which had now come up. All around elephants were trumpeting like mad. It was dusk, so I halted where I was, in order to send next morning a couple of men to cut out the trophies I was certain needed but the knife to secure. I was an idiot not to stay myself, but I did not feel justified in wasting the time. I retrieved nothing. For the next five days we passed, in different herds, quite a hundred elephants a day. When marching in the dark it was not pleasant, not to say dangerous, to hear the echoes of the forest awakened by a herd breaking away quite close to us, the fear being that the inquisitive calves would come to investigate and be followed by their mammas to protect them.

The trees were not so large as further north. It was, however, picturesque. The rocky, undulating country formed valleys, in one of which my men declared they saw the tracks of eland. I could not make them out myself.

One morning we halted near a string of pools through which the water perceptibly trickled. There was a great quantity of rubber vines about. At the edge of the pool was the track of rhinoceros, accentuated by the scar he rips along the path as he walks. Natives are convinced that he does this with his horn, which, being of the nature of matted hair and not joined to the bone of the head, they maintain hangs over his nose like a bushy bag when he is unsuspecting. Ridiculous, of course.

Of course, we being much further west than the

route followed by Junker, the Busseiri took some time to reach. I halted in a shady glen, out of which we had turned a herd of hartebeest and some gazelle. I was too tired to follow them, but as we were short of meat I allowed a couple of men to go out on their own account. My plan on such occasions, *i.e.* when bad luck had followed my stalks, was to give a man two rounds. If he got anything, well and good, I paid; if he did not, he paid for the ammunition. Though his weapon was an old Remington, I never remember one of them paying. Remember, of course, that the locally enlisted Jehadia were accustomed, from boyhood up, to stalk game to spear it, so got fairly close.

These men came back with the welcome news that the Busseiri, as this branch of the Wau River is called, was only a few miles south of us. I followed the glen, which soon merged into a dried-up swamp on which were a number of marabout stalks. This brought me to the river in the middle of another, which, when overflowed, would be $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles broad. On the opposite side, at the edge of the trees, was a large herd of waterbuck. As the men had killed, I stalked for view, crossing the sandy river-bed 22 yards broad. The perpendicular banks, between which a faint trickle of water flowed from pool to pool (this was the height of the hot weather), were about 20 feet high. From its size one would say that the source of the river must be quite 40 miles further west. This, if so, would mean that when the frontier is demarcated we will find ourselves the possessors of

another 30,000 square miles of country south of the Bahr el Arab.

I could now turn back. South of me was the territory of the Sultan Tambara (Niam-Niam). The wakils of Saïd Baldas, who had come with me, declared themselves highly satisfied with the country. I had also carried a traverse near the sources of all the western sources of the Nile, from the northernmost one to those of the southern rivers. The swamp I mentioned stopped two miles down-stream, when the river on both sides ran between small containing hills. The branches of trees on either bank might perhaps scratch a steamer's paint, but I feel sure one could penetrate much further west than this.

We halted for the night, prepared to receive the Niam-Niams if they came, but in this almost virgin wilderness we were undisturbed save by the yowling of leopards, whose tracks we saw next morning. We marched along the right bank till daybreak, and then crossed. That day we found water with the aid of a wart-hog! The time to halt was past, but there was no sign of water. I saw a wart-hog, the flesh of which is almost the only tasty one in the forest, and shot it. His stomach showed us that he had just drunk. A few casts round brought to light a pool hidden under the overhanging roots of a big tree.

Our way lay over long undulations. Often the now tangled dry grass had been spared by forest fires and made the way difficult. At one place, Babai Khair-mulla, so called after the famous slave-raider, we found what may have been, as suggested, a French settle-

cubic feet that flow down the grand rivers of that province only to disappear, one can well believe that statement.

I followed the (already mapped) road towards Chak-chak. There was practically no game along the road. Its absence accounted for the attenuated bodies of the tsetse flies, and the violence the few we met displayed in attacking us.

The country was peculiar, the trees further apart and smaller than elsewhere. Occasionally there were inexplicable breaks and hummocks in the ground, and here and there huge slabs of rock, and groups of boulders, ten feet high. Further on we came again on large trees. Near a rest-house were the standards—like a towel-horse—on which a hunting party had dried the meat of some animal they had killed.

As we walked along we frequently came upon “notices” on the trees. One would be blazed a foot square, another would carry a number of small cuts. Like North American Indians, the children of Nature in these parts are not slow in devising means of communicating with friends who may follow them.

I need not go into endless repetitions of the scenery, which the newly sprouting grass, answering to the fairy wand of the rain-god, rendered particularly alluring. Vista after vista passes before my eyes as I follow the blurred lines in my field-book ; but, being no master of words, I feel any attempt on my part to do them justice is worse than useless.

Some miles from Sh. Ramadan’s village I shot a hartebeest, and a second shot brought a female down

by mistake. She was in milk, and I drank some of it. It was such as any other.

I do not think I have mentioned how we used to indicate to our party that an animal had been shot. If the trophy was worth keeping, the head would be cut off. If not, a joint, or even an ear, would be laid on the path, or hung on the fork of a tree, and a line of leaves show the direction of the kill. Only once was a large joint taken by a beast of prey before my carriers came up to it.

To get to Sh. Ramadan's we had to go down a sharp ledge of rock. When there I told him that he might send his people to fetch some of the meat I had killed for himself. In true Dinka fashion he did not seem a bit obliged. I begged him not to make a favour of accepting the present, as lions and hyenas would make short work of what my people left. He then sent for it.

From this place we struck across country for Beit Itman—the village at which I had halted when marching from Kossinga to Chakchak.

Our path led us at first across a bit of country that very much resembled the dried-up bed of a river. The "banks" steep, 20 feet high and 100 yards apart, were, like the putative bed of the stream, covered by trees.

The Kuru, where we crossed it, was still a series of pools. The right bank was high and wooded, the left a broad plain. The latter was full of game of every sort. It looked like the pictures of a "Sportsman's Paradise," which one sees in old books of

travel. To the left a small herd of buffalo were standing swinging tails and heads; from the edge of the forest came a herd of waterbuck on their way to water. Jackson hartebeest were in scores on my right, and a few single roan stood boldly out. Numbers of cob were scattered everywhere in herds and singly. My men pointed out rhinoceros and lion, but I could not distinguish either.

Before dark I shot a cob for the pot and camped. We heard lions in the distance during the night, but our three great fires were not wanted. I think I was the only person in the district nervous of lion. A man, quite close to Dem Zubeir, despatched a fine one single-handed with his spear. A native officer, unconsciously I must admit, pursued one from thicket to thicket in mistake for a Jackson hartebeest.

On going on, the tracks of rhinoceros and giraffe were everywhere. Again and again we passed the scar the former makes on his path.

The watershed between the Chell and Sopo appears to be very flat, the trees on it of moderate size, with here and there small tangled clumps of bushes. Several places are undoubtedly swamps in wet weather. Above one of these we came upon a long series of parallel comb-like ridges of rock, with some white quartz about. A prospector would have been in his element.

As we marched I was always on the look-out for the Chakchak-Kossinga track. Tracks of elephant and other game would have deceived me, but to



EL KAIMAKAN SWENY BEY AND BIMBASHI HUTCHINSON, D.S.O.
(RIVER JUR WITH MY HOUSE AND SERVANT IN BACKGROUND)



OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS AT THE "EED" RECEPTION AT WAU.
(MABRUK EFFENDI FIRI SEATED ON RIGHT)

Morgan they were as different as a home-made blouse is to a creation of Paquin's to a woman.

It was daylight when we marched into Beit Itman this time, so I saw that it was quite a large settlement.

We left it by direct route to J. Telgona. There was a path for a few miles of the way to the new clearing, made by a man called Ali, who had settled there with his family. He was the father of one of the boldest women I have seen among blacks—more of a man than a woman.

Before reaching Beit (the house of) Ali I came upon a rhinoceros. We saw him at the end of a long glade, from the place where I had just shot a water-buck. There was a strict order against killing rhinoceros unless they charged. I do not think that I quite kept the spirit of the regulation, for I walked in my original direction, though it brought me within thirty yards of him. A tempter at my elbow, in the person of my servant, kept whispering as he touched his side, "Hit him here, sir!" A troop of wart-hogs, 100 yards the far side of the rhinoceros, took fright, and tails erect, bolted. At last he turned round, ran a couple of steps towards me, and then turned about and bolted. As that could not be called a charge, I lost my chance. He had quite good horns, and was of the white or grass-eating, square-lipped species, which is the sort in this part of the country. They are pretty numerous.