

W. N. McMILLAN'S EXPEDITIONS

AND

BIG GAME HUNTING

SUDAN, ABYSSINIA, & BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

BY

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*With One Hundred and Twelve Illustrations and One Map.*

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*A RHINOCEROS HUNT, &c.*

Southward the magnificent Athi plains stretch away to the horizon, with here and there a grass-covered hill or mountain protruding to relieve the monotony.

The mountain tribes living in the immediate neighbourhood are composed mostly of Wakikuius and Massai, and some Swahilis in Nairobi. These latter natives make splendid porters, but demand higher pay and better food, etc., than



A CHRISTMAS PARTY ON Mr. McMILLAN'S FARM, 1908.

the other tribes. Any Swahili will carry a load up to a hundred pounds for miles over a rough country. As a rule they are contented and cheerful and willing workers. The Kikuius, on the other hand, are an inferior race, and, although willing to work, they are only worth the half of a Swahili. The Massai are the most powerful race in the neighbourhood, and, although small and slim, are of a warlike nature and very proud. They are a cattle-raising tribe, and consequently are

*THE AFRICAN EXPEDITIONS OF W. N. McMILLAN.*

mostly requisitioned for transport work, and very good they are at it too. They drive their cattle at will all over the plains. Some hundreds of Kikuius, Swahili, Myanwezis and Massai had been employed, both for transport and building work. As the light rains were on in the beginning, we had great trouble in getting the goods out to the farm from Nairobi, a distance of about twenty-two miles. The roads were anything but ideal, and drifts had to be made across all rivers. Oxen only were used as draft animals, as horses or mules were all but unobtainable, or were very dear. However, everything had gone fairly well so far.

As this is not intended to be a description of the country or its people, but only a rough chronicle of some of Mr. McMillan's many ventures, I will omit going into further details.

As before stated, Mrs. McMillan and Mr. Bulpett arrived about the middle of January, and as the whole country teems with lions, it was not very long before a hunting party was organised in order to give Mrs. McMillan a chance to have a shot at one. The party had been away some time, and had been having varying success, when one day three rhinos were encountered in a valley, and chase was made at once. Mrs. McMillan was put up into a tree, much against her own will, from whence she could watch the hunt in safety, and had the pleasure of seeing two of the rhinos killed by Mr. McMillan. It was an exciting hunt, as at one time one of the boys had been chased by one of the animals, and the poor fellow had to run for his life.

A day or two later, while in camp on rough ground beside Donyo Sabuk, Mr. McMillan had the good fortune, so he called it, to come across a lion in the open, which he succeeded in securing without much trouble.

The skin was brought back to camp in triumph by the Somali shikaries, who, as usual in such cases, announced the



*MRS. McMILLAN'S LION HUNT.*

successful termination of the hunt by firing off shots and singing songs of prowess.

Mrs. McMillan expressed a wish to have a look at the scene of conflict, and consequently Mr. and Mrs. McMillan and Mr. Bulpett started off with their skikaries the next morning.

On the road Mrs. McMillan, who is a crack shot by the way, killed a waterbuck.

When the party finally arrived at the spot of the previous day's kill no sign of the lion's body could be found, but it was apparent that some large animal had dragged it away, as the trail made by the body being dragged through the long grass could easily be made out.

The trail led to a bush in a dry mullah close by. The bush was approached with the utmost caution by a shikari, who presently returned and reported that he had heard the sound of crunching bones, and expressed the opinion that there was a lion inside the bush, actually engaged in devouring the remains of his own brother.

The party at once posted themselves around the bush—too near to it for prudence be it said—and told the Somalis to fire the grass; they had not long to wait before out dashed a fine lion, close to Mrs. McMillan, who quite undaunted by the close proximity of the king of animals, gave him two barrels of the Mauser rifle she was carrying.

Though badly wounded the shots failed to bring him down, and he galloped off and disappeared behind the thick vegetation.

The Somalis, who had followed him on mules, succeeded in rounding him up, and drove him into a bush about a quarter of a mile away. Everybody followed, and positions were again taken up around the bush and the grass fired.

Before many minutes had elapsed out jumped two lions, one evidently the same Mrs. McMillan had wounded.

*JUJA FARM.*

had been bought, including Major Ringer's farm, and, consequently, the estate now comprises an area of 20,000 acres of land. As the farm is in possession of its own refrigerating plant, electric light plant, machine and blacksmith shop, water tower, stables, stores, dairy, etc., etc., in connection with which there are stables, stores, and residences in Nairobi, I have no doubt that it is the best and most completely equipped farm in the whole of Africa, if not in the whole world.



Mrs. McMILLAN & YOUNG ZEBRA, JUJA FARM.

On the lands belonging to the farm, innumerable herds of game roam about at will, and as the land is surrounded by perennial rivers, all having a good flow of water, the game is kept from wandering away. The rivers are full of fish, crocodiles and some hippos, so on the whole it will be seen that, besides possessing a farm, Mr. McMillan owns a perfect game preserve. The land itself is flat, treeless and grass covered.

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In the valleys along the rivers, however, some good timber is found in places, and the soil along the banks is excellent for cultivation, and almost any kind of garden produce or grain will grow there. The soil on the plains is also very good, and produces enough grass to support any number of cattle. The game on the plains consists of the same species as before mentioned on Major Ringer's farm. From the farm-



GRASS LAND ON Mr. McMILLAN'S FARM.

houses the roaring of lions and the howling of hyaenas is heard every night, reminding one of what a very wild country it is.

Towards the north, some 125 miles distant, the snow-capped peak of Mount Kenia, about 18,200 feet high, is plainly visible on a clear day. Due west the roofs of the houses in Nairobi are seen glittering in the sun, while to the east the view is hemmed in by Mount Donyo Sabuk.