

IN WILDEST AFRICA

The Record of a hunting and exploration trip through Uganda, Victoria Nyanza, the Kikuyu and Kenia Regions and British East Africa, with an account of an ascent of the snow-capped Mount Kilim, in East Central Africa, and a description of the various native tribes.

By

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Illustrated by thirty-five plates from original photographs, taken chiefly by the Author's travelling camera

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The Uganda Railway 101

of tropic forest, dense jungle, open prairie. And on this ride we observe the native, undeveloped human beings, from the suave and almost civilized Swahilis of Mombasa and the coast, through the El Moran or Spartan-like soldiers of the Masai, to the docile Kikuyu, the shepherd Nandi, and the stark-naked, but modest Wakavirondo at Port Florence.

It was into this country and across these Equatorial prairies that Ex-President Roosevelt went to attack the last stronghold of big and dangerous game. Even on the railway and in your comfortable car, you are not in the "sheltered home" of Europe and America. Why, the very train I rode upon in the summer of 1908 was stopped by two inquisitive giraffes, who poked their noses across our engine and broke off one of the lanterns serving for our headlight. When the engineer got off to see what was the matter, he found a huge giraffe, with broken legs, dying on the track. A rhinoceros tried conclusions with one of the earlier trains, and the train demolished him.

But it was "Simba," the lion, that gave the Uganda Railway its most thrilling stories. In fact, one of the stations in the region of wild game, between Tsavo and the Athi Plains, is called Simba Station.

Hunters disagree as to the bravery of the lion,

Kiu, two hundred and sixty-seven miles, to Fort Ternan, five hundred and thirty-six miles, thus being a territory two hundred and sixty-nine miles wide. The elevation seldom falls below that of Fort Ternan, four thousand nine hundred and eighty feet above the sea, reaching at Mau summit eight thousand three hundred and fifty feet, and at Nairobi, the capital of British East Africa, five thousand four hundred and fifty feet. Kiu, Machakos Road, Kapiti Plains, and Athi River are in the centre of the game reserve.

No one who travels on this road will be disappointed in the marvellous collection of game seen every few hundred yards. Ostriches waddled across the open prairies, the unwieldy rhinoceros blinked at us from the grass, and the giraffe ogled our engine.

At Nairobi, the tin-roofed town, less than ten years old, are the headquarters of the railway as well as of the government of the colony. There was a sense of bustle and of city life as we entered the station. At this place already are a thousand white residents and fourteen thousand natives, Goanese and Indians; good hotels; and hustling markets. Of the three thousand white men in British East Africa, fifteen hundred are located within fifty miles of Nairobi.

Between Nairobi and Fort Ternan lies the best farming land of East Africa, a territory over two

infested, full of game and leopards. At the end of the route lies Lake Djipe, on the borders of German East Africa, swarming with hippopotami. The Parri Mountains, in German East Africa, have colobus monkeys in addition to other wild animals. All along that Taveta road, which has a regular service of donkeys and camels, the hyenas come around the camp every night, and lions roar within two hundred feet. At every turn in the road one starts coveys of partridges, guinea fowl, and wild pigeons. As for ostriches, gazelles, and kongoni, they are everywhere.

The game license in British East Africa is two hundred and fifty dollars, and if the hunter enters Uganda it is two hundred and fifty dollars more, and in the Sudan two hundred dollars in addition, or seven hundred dollars through these three territories. Now in German East Africa the game license is only three dollars and thirty cents. The Germans, however, charge thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents for each elephant shot, ten dollars for each rhinoceros, six dollars and fifty cents for each buffalo or gnu, and one dollar for each of the smaller game.

Between Kilimanjaro (19,800 feet) and Mount Meru (12,000 feet) there is a thick forest for ninety miles, abounding in elephants. When I was there nine of these animals were shot in one week. The

In the Country of Big Game 123

Boer, Van Roy, and the brothers Trichard, also Boers, got three elephants between them in as many days. Monchardi, a young Italian, shot two lions one morning before breakfast at a settlement called Marangu. Fleischer, a famous Hungarian hunter, bagged a couple of elephants in an afternoon near Moschi. Several fine young rhinoceros cubs were caught by Max Klein and sent to Bostock's in Hamburg.

But in British East Africa there are to be found the biggest herds of game in the world. The British government has three game reserves in East Africa, aggregating nearly fifty thousand square miles. The whole East Africa Protectorate is only 240,000 square miles, so that the white settlers complain that there are too many game reserves. Lord Delamere and Mr. Bailey, two of the Governor's council at Nairobi, were expelled in 1908 by Governor Sadler for insisting on the reduction of the game reserves and also of the reserves set aside by the British government for the natives. Nevertheless, outside of the reserves there are sufficient game herds to draw the most famous hunters of the world, and this year the licenses will yield the government more than fifty thousand dollars. On one license the hunter may kill two elephants, two rhinoceri, two hippopotami, two zebras, six rare antelopes and gazelles; also two of the rare colobus monkeys and

two smaller ones, two male ostriches, two marabouts, two aigrets, common antelopes and gazelles to the number of ten, ten wildcats, ten jackals, ten wild pigs, two wolves, and two cheetahs. As to lions, leopards, and crocodiles, one may, without payment, shoot as many of them as one can get.

A young American woman, Mrs. Ismay (née Schieffelin, of New York), killed one of the biggest man-eating lions ever bagged.

At Simba, on the Uganda Railway, there are lions within two miles of the station. On the Kapiti and Athi plains one sees herds of game as far as the eye can reach across the open country.

In the African fauna the big mammals hold the most conspicuous position. The mind at once recalls the giraffe, elephant, lion, hippopotamus, rhinoceros, zebra, as well as the numerous species of antelope; and few scenes leave a deeper impression on the mind of the traveller than the numerous herds of game, gambolling and feeding on the vast plains of the interior.

The relative importance of the great mammals is increased by the scarcity of the small ones. This reminds us at once of Darwin's famous comparison of the mammalian fauna of Africa and that of South America. He pointed out that the barren steppes of the former are inhabited by vast herds of enormous animals, whereas the luxurious vegetation of

In the Country of Big Game 125

the latter supports only a few small forms. Darwin's statement of the facts is undoubtedly correct, and his conclusions just and instructive, but he gave no explanation of the anomaly. Professor Gregory suggests that Africa may be described as the land of migratory mammals, instead of the habitat of large mammals. The rains fall at two special periods of the year, which differ in different parts of the country, and at other times the steppes are burnt and foodless. In the dry season the soil is baked so intensely hard that small mammals cannot burrow into it. The result is that the only animals that can live are those that have sufficiently rapid power of locomotion to follow the rains, or are sufficiently strong to hold their own in the fight for water around the pools or to survive long periods without drinking.

Unless animals are followed one cannot realize how far they will wander. They walk slowly, feeding as they go, but often journeying twenty or thirty miles from one night's resting place to the next. Only animals of considerable size can travel such distances, and, since these journeys are necessary in Africa, the continent has gained the name of the "home of the large mammals."

The buffalo is very dangerous, being far more formidable than the American bison. He hunts instead of being hunted, and is said to have ten

times the vitality of the lion. In fact the lion is not only cowardly, but he dies easily. Mr. McMillan, the American millionaire, who has a farm of twenty thousand acres thirty-four miles from Nairobi, has animals of all kinds upon his farm. Mr. McMillan is one of the most kindly men in the colony.

Thirteen miles from Nairobi is the farm of Mr. Heatley. Heatley had just shot a magnificent specimen of buffalo the day I met him at McMillan's house. He said there was a herd of forty near his place. He has the best model farm in East Africa.

There are one thousand white men in a circle of twenty-two miles from the centre of Nairobi, and farms and farm-houses in the regular English style are springing up all around. Nairobi is in the very heart of the game lands. The game oftentimes comes right into the town. Fifty miles away all sorts of big game can be found, and Mr. McMillan said he would procure for Col. Roosevelt, buffaloes, lions, leopards, and rhinoceri, all in the vicinity of his house. This he seems to have done.

To the northward of Nairobi and the Mount Kenia region lies the Sucota game reserve in Nainasha Province; and near this is the Eldama Ravine. Some of the level land at this point rises to between eight and nine thousand feet. Many herds of wild game fatten on these great meadows. The

In the Country of Big Game 127

Uasi Ngishu plateau, near Mount Elgon, is perhaps the garden spot of all this upper hinterland. Wooded and well-watered valleys and good native roads and new highways, constructed by the English government, lead the hunter to Mount Elgon. All the way from Nairobi to Mount Elgon, fourteen thousand feet high, game of every kind abounds on every hand.

The most picturesque and thrilling journey from British East Africa into the Uganda Protectorate is to turn away from the beaten track, walk across the Uasi Ngishu plateau to the Mount Elgon region, take in the almost untouched hunting grounds in the neighbourhood of this great mountain, and by a six days' journey reach Jinja, at the head waters of the Nile, near the famous Ripon Falls. From the railway station at Londiani to the Eldama Ravine is twenty-two miles. Thence to Mumias, forty miles, the highlands offer charming scenery; and kudus, tetals, nellats, antelopes, giraffes, hartebeestes, as well as rhinoceri and elephants are thick. From Mumias to the Nile a good road passes through the Elgon district, where we found some tribes of cave men.

Mbale, on the western slopes of Mount Elgon, is eighty-six miles from Jinja. The two kingdoms or principalities of Bukedi and Usoga lie on this route. Perhaps the two men who understand this

country best are Bishop Hanlon, of the Catholic mission, who has a diocese of eighty-six thousand Christian natives; and Archdeacon Buckley of the Church of England missions. These good men will often ride alone for hundreds of miles through the lion infested forests of the Uganda Protectorate.

A trip around Lake Victoria is a rare treat to the man who loves an outdoor life. This body of water is said by the most recent surveys to be larger than Lake Superior. Hippopotami and rhinoceri are seen among the papyrus reeds; lions and leopards are in the woods; and the red colobus monkey (the rarest in the world) is found in the trees. At Bukoba there is a German commander and several German officers, and at Mwanza, the most southerly port, there is a fine set of German officers. "Good hunting" is always the watchword in this part of Africa. There is a herd of elephants on the island of Ukerewe, — "Ukerewe" was the original name of Victoria Nyanza.

Returning to Entebbe, one can proceed by 'rickshaw to Lake Albert Nyanza, about two hundred miles distant. All the way through this Uganda country one falls in with chimpanzees, colobus monkeys, zebras, buffaloes, and every kind of African antelope. There are wild asses in Uganda, and the three-horned and five-horned giraffes. Sir Harry Johnston claims that there are okapi in the West of


sausage — not an unusual mistake, and one that has been made before and since.

When we started from Burra we had to cross the Taru desert, which extends for fifty miles to the Lumi River. Although a desert with no springs or streams, the wild Taru was blossoming like fairyland when we crossed it after the rains.

On the slopes of the far distant Parri Mountains the land looked desolate and burned, but in the meadows toward the Serengeti Plain the grass waved luxuriantly, together with pink and white lilies that starred the prairie lands in all directions. The acacia trees, growing like huge umbrellas, looked like an orchard, so straight and regular did they grow in rows.

In the open plains, where there were few if any trees, wild animals were thickly clustered. The giraffe scudded away, as did herds of elands whose glossy hides gleamed like silk in the sunlight; red hartebeeste, sable antelope, mpalas, the tiny paa, and herds of zebra studded the undulating plains. Small groups of well behaved, genteel ostriches walked daintily in the long grass; and once or twice we came upon a rhinoceros under an acacia tree flicking his tail and leering at us with suspicious eyes.

One morning I was bringing up the rear of the caravan, the rest of the party having gone a mile



Across the Serengeti Plain 165

and a half ahead, when I observed a huge rhinoceros not more than fifty or sixty feet from me. For the second time I was taken aback in the presence of wild game. Being alone and having a light rifle, I did not care to tackle the "rhino" in that lonely corner of the fields. Accordingly I crept away to the windward of him and let my scent drift down toward him. As soon as the animal felt the scent he started after me with a lunging lope about as fast as a horse would trot. Meanwhile I started back to get behind him, about as fast as a motor car would go at sixty miles an hour. The "rhino" galloped on and was finally bowled over by the other hunters who had heavy rifles.

In crossing this desert we had to carry water in big tin cans upon the donkey wagon. Before starting I gave one of my Swahili boys particular directions to fill the tin cans from a spring beside the river. He filled six five-gallon tin cans and we started in good heart.

The first afternoon out on the desert I noticed that the water was full of bubbles and very bad to the taste. I called the boy who had filled the cans and said to him: "Boy, what is wrong with this water?" He said: "Safi maji, bwana" — "clean water, master." When I inquired still further from the boy about the water he said he was quite sure

They dress in riding boots, wear big helmet hats and dash about on ponies, reminding one of what might have been seen in Virginia and Carolina in the pioneering days.

There are not many European women in Nairobi. Some of the Government officials have their wives with them, and now and then comes a titled lady with her friends, to hunt. There were three women in Nairobi last year who had, themselves, shot lions. There are English doctors, dentists and lawyers, two photographic firms, several real estate offices and a number of men who advertise themselves as Safari outfitters. These men supply the hunters with tents, provisions and all things necessary for a shooting trip. They will hire porters to carry the tents and chop boxes (boxes containing sixty pounds of tinned meat). They (the porters) will chase the lions out of the jungles, assist in setting the camp, make a corral for the animals, if any animals are taken, and they are useful in a dozen different ways.

One of the functions of the porters is to scare up rhinoceroses and, when the hunters wish to catch a young "rhino," they cautiously approach where the mother and the young one are feeding. One of the cleverest of the porters will then be hired for a special duty, and given twenty or thirty rupees extra to perform it. The hunters approach

very cautiously the mother "rhino," where she is feeding with her young. They have a wagon and huge bags made of burlap. The porter selected to startle the mother "rhino" goes and stands to the windward of her, about two hundred yards away. She is sure to charge upon him, and the boy then runs perhaps a hundred yards — waits until the "rhino" approaches, and, when the enraged beast makes a lunge for him, he cleverly sidesteps, after the manner of a toreador in the bull ring. Meanwhile the hunters, with a big burlap sack, rush upon the young one, thrust the sack over its head, hustle it on to the wagon and drive away as fast as they can. A young "rhino" is worth seven thousand dollars in Bostock's menagerie.

Among the interesting men I met in Nairobi one well known through the American press is Mr. William N. McMillan of Missouri. In one of the wildest parts of the Dark Continent Mr. McMillan has his farm, where antelopes and zebras, gnus, lions and leopards are as thick as domestic cattle in our Western prairies. It is one of the great game preserves of the world.

Mr. McMillan is about thirty-five years old, tall, dark, fine-looking, a man of culture as well as a man of enterprise and great wealth. It is said he spends sixty thousand dollars a year on his farm in improvements. The name of the farm is Juja, and