

By the same author :
THE WANDERINGS OF AN ELEPHANT HUNTER

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Karamojo Safari

with an Introduction
by
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SUFFOLK
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to see the leg of the far side, the position of the vitals will become clear at once. Always try to visualize the course your bullet will take after entering the body.

THE BRAIN SHOT

While this is not a shot for the tyro's first effort at elephant, it may transpire that it is the only one offered, as for instance in the case of an elephant launching itself straight at one, or, as will be more common, should you wish to finish off an animal wounded in the body and bleeding to death.

Here the ability to follow the course of your bullet after its entry will help. If you can see any indication of the locality of any of the features on the far side, this will help enormously. Very often a piece of the far ear can be seen, and if you identify it with the corresponding piece of the near ear, you can form a judgment of the locality of the brain. Eyes and ear holes are all pointers to the location of the brain. But it is of no use shooting at them; they are only the outward ends of invisible lines radiating from the brain.

Now let us see if common sense will help us here. It is obvious when looking at the enormous bulk of an elephant's head that tremendously strong neck muscles must be required to support the weight. Roughly speaking, the spine or vertebral column will be found in the centre of the muscular column of the neck. Where the vertebræ end in the skull will be found the brain. Now that is a valuable indication. It means you have to shoot for the *centre* of things whether from the side or from the front.

THE FRONTAL BRAIN SHOT

There is nothing serious for your bullet to overcome on its passage to the brain provided it follows the course of the air passages into the skull and then leaves them to break through a quite thin wall of bone into the brain itself. No respectable bullet that had been correctly launched could be diverted sufficiently from its course as to miss the brain. But you will notice that the air passages run up the forward face of the heavy bone carrying the tusks and joining them together. This bone is not ordinary bone. It is of a dense cellular construction full of oil and extremely resistant to bullets and axes. Only saws make any impression on it. A sharp axe flies back from it while a high-velocity bullet is brought to a standstill in an

incredibly short distance. This bone wall must be avoided at all cost.

Luckily for the shooter and unluckily for the elephant this formidable barrier is lowered in the middle so as just to allow a bullet to reach the brain. The eyes are the external markers for this shot. Draw an imaginary line between the eyes and put your shot a little above this line, according to the position in which the head is held.

There is a boss, or raised part, covering the cartilage that shields the hollow giving access to the air passages into the skull. This boss is very conspicuous on the living animal and should be looked for. Then watch that the head is not in any unusual position, that it appears to be facing exactly toward you, and get your shot in. But no flinching or you may be wrecked on that bony barrier.

The best general advice that I can think of is to keep your bullet directed toward the centre of things, neither high nor low.

BUFFALO AND RHINO

Just as in elephant, the heart will be found tucked away in the most inaccessible place low between the forelegs. If there is grass, about ten to one it will hide that vital organ. In this case the old hunter's advice of "a shot behind the shoulder" is quite good although somewhat vague.

But there is a better one. Unlike the elephant, where it is very short and much obscured by the enormous ears, the *neck* of the buffalo and of the rhino is comparatively long. Nearly all of it is vulnerable, and is a large target. All the nerve channels pass through it and they are of necessity closely grouped together. The vertebral column need not be touched to insure a kill, but it is as well to aim for the centre of the neck. It is a clean, deadly, and humane shot. Furthermore, it is often clear of interfering bush. It does not enrage the animal as a shot too far back in the body might. And it does not result in one of those unpleasant follow-ups occasioned by a lightly pierced lung. Moreover, it can be used with success from a variety of angles; it is not essential that it be broadside-on. I don't know why the neck shot has been so neglected. In all the deer and bovine animals the neck presents the largest vulnerable area of the whole body.

It is remarkable how often a clear view of the neck can be got when a similar view of the body vitals is obscured *once you have trained your mind to look for the neck shot.*

Apart from that, a solid of any calibre will soon lay low any of these animals when directed towards the *centre* of the vital body area. Just as in elephant, ignore the outward marks except as indications to the whereabouts of the life spark far in the interior of those capacious barrels.

LION

It is quite impossible to lay down any rules for shooting the big cats. The almost infinite variety of position they may present themselves in makes any precise rules ridiculous in practice. As a general rule, however, the vitals are to be reached by a centrally directed bullet just as in the case of elephant, rhino, and buffalo.

You cannot walk about and select your position when dealing with lion as you often can with elephant. More often you have to take what offers or leave the chance altogether. Fortunately, here again a true-flying bullet of any calibre directed towards the vital area will accomplish wonders even when fired up the stern, should it be a solid. If you must use soft-nosed bullets, you should be more selective and perhaps await a broadside shot.

Whatever you do, try to avoid any of the high-velocity, pointed, soft-nosed type of bullet. Although you may have only one lion to get, you have likewise only one life to lose.

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