

THE WANDER YEARS

HUNTING AND TRAVEL
IN FOUR CONTINENTS

BY

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CHAPTER THREE

INTO UNKNOWN AFRICA, 1894-5

With Donaldson Smith's Expedition

RETURNED from my world trip, there was evidently a general impression among my relatives that now I should turn my mind to serious matters. A stool in my father's bank beckoned uninvitingly, and shades of the prison-house gathered round me. Then a miracle happened. My uncle, E. Lort Phillips, had been with the famous expedition led by Frank James, the first to penetrate the then unknown country between Berbera and the Webi in Somaliland. Hence it was in the nature of things that when the American traveller, Dr. Donaldson Smith, who had been on a sporting trip in Somaliland, decided to fit out an expedition across the unexplored country between the Shebeli river and Lake Rudolph, and was in London for that purpose, he and my uncle should meet. What was more natural and kindly than that my uncle, knowing how keen I was on everything associated with travel, should invite me to be present at a meeting of Dr. Donaldson Smith and his friends. There was heady talk that night for a predestined banker with a taste for the wild. I sat and listened while they talked of what had been done and what remained to be done; of camels and loads and camps; of the armed force of Somali servants, which accompanied all travellers; of rivers and mountains that no white man had seen; of great hunting: elephant,

rhinoceros and lion, gazelle and antelope and zebra; and I came away filled with the desire to join the expedition. My uncle at first pooh-poohed the idea; my father was opposed to it. But my longing increased, and having learnt that Donaldson Smith was willing to take me as hunting companion, provided I brought my own men and camels—twelve men and twenty camels—my uncle urged my father to let me go, and at last he consented.

Had ever a young traveller as inexperienced as I so great a chance! For this was the real thing. Geographical travel into an unknown country, reported to be dangerous and hostile, with Lake Rudolph, which, since its discovery by Count Teleki in 1887-8, so many travellers had vainly endeavoured to reach, as the ultimate objective. Dr. Donaldson Smith's main purpose was geographical, but he was taking with him Mr. Dodson as collector, and natural history and hunting had their place in the programme.

It was on Friday, June 1st, that we started from Tilbury. The whole of my family came to see me off. My father I was never to see again, for he died while I was away, and the news reached me when I was far in the interior of the Galla country. Representatives of the British Museum, Mr. Fagan and Dr. Gregory, were there to bid the expedition God-speed, and Mr. Gwyn, Mr. Stamford and Mr. Mahew also came to say farewell.

My diary entries were perfunctory until we reached Aden, where serious business began. It was pleasant to find how well my uncle was remembered by the Somalis. At the mention of "Wilwal," the name by which he was known to them, their eyes brightened, and "He nice man, he make plenty fun," was the gist of their praise of him. The first thing that Donald, as I called the doctor, had to do was to interview the man who we hoped was to be our head-man, Hadji Dualla Idriss. So we sent for him,

and after lunch the great man appeared. He listened while we described the trip and its object, and then said: "White mans can go all over Africa if they nice, but when they have big temper, no." There was bargaining, and presently Dualla left to think Donald's offer over.

MacConkey the banker, who had met me on arrival, came in and gave us the news. Lord Delamere had been bitten by a lion, which sprang at him and seized his foot; a Somali rushed up, put his hands in the lion's mouth, and tore it off; the lion then seized the Somali's arm, when another rushed up and by a lucky shot through the spine killed the lion instantly. Greenfield had also been badly mauled by a lion. Prince Rospoli some time ago had been killed by an elephant.

Next day we called on Colonel Sealy, who took quite the opposite view to Dualla, saying that he didn't think we should get into the Galla country, and putting things in as black a light as possible. We talked to him for quite a time and he was very nice; he said the risk was very considerable, but that was our look-out—if we succeeded it would be a grand thing.

On returning to the hotel we found Dualla, who agreed to take 300 rupees a month, and 1,000 rupees if we got to Lake Rudolph. He wanted 2,000 rupees in advance, but to this, of course, Donald would not agree, finally deciding to give him 1,200 rupees in advance, and at the expiration of four months another 800. With this he was satisfied. He was to have the choosing of all the men; in fact we only reserved to ourselves the right of selecting our body-servants. His appointment as head-man settled, and the news spread abroad, Dualla was followed about, wherever he went, by a crowd of Somalis hoping to join the expedition. This seemed to please our head-man

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immensely, and on Sunday, June 24th, he brought to us after breakfast forty-five men that he had engaged. We sat at a table, whilst they stood round and filled the room. It was a curious sight; most carried sticks, and nearly all looked like what one imagines Jacob's sons to have been—they had quite the look of shepherds. Donald harangued them, making things out in as black a light as possible; but there was very little grumbling, though a few men wanted a portion of their month's wages paid to their families whilst they were away.

We left Aden on June 28th, and just before we left, Straker and Greenfield arrived. The latter had been knocked over by a lion, and to save his chest and vital parts he thrust his arm into the lion's mouth; the first time the lion tore a piece of flesh clean out, and then broke the arm in three places, so that it was feared he must have his arm off.

On Sunday, July 1st, we arrived at Berbera, where we landed our things on the pier, and for the next ten days were busy collecting our camels, arranging the loads, etc.

On July 10th the expedition really got under way. We let the caravan precede us by three hours, and at 7 p.m. Donald, Dualla and I galloped along side by side over the stony ground. The air was cool, and as I noted in my diary, the feeling that we were really off made things very bright. The stars shone clear, and we rode straight in the direction of the Southern Cross. After travelling about twelve miles, we came on the encampment, for the men had unloaded our camels and were lying all over the place. We got out our beds and tried to sleep, but for some time the noise of the men kept me awake. At last I slept. It seemed to me I had only been asleep for a second when I heard, "Fred, get up." It was 2.30 a.m., and we were to begin our

second march, which we were told would this time bring us to water. It was pitch dark, and after a cup of tea we mounted our horses again. It was 9.30 before we got to the water-hole, called Daragoadly, having marched six and a half hours. We had now come twenty-three miles. The wind was blowing great guns, the sun was beginning to get hot, the camels dropped in firstly in strings, then one by one, and on the last of all came our tents. Such a disturbance as then ensued I never saw. Everything went wrong, the wind being the great trouble; but at last the tents were up and things began to straighten themselves. Through it all Dualla was to the fore, superintending everything at once in a marvellous fashion, and then, as if things had been comfortable for weeks, he came into the tent and explained to us the meaning of Daragoadly, which he gave thus: Dara (pear), Goadly (hole), i.e. pear tree with a water-hole close to it.

Although my diaries of the journey through Somaliland are full, and though, at the time, every step of the way was packed with interest to the young traveller, there would be monotony in the recital of our day by day adventures. Here a man shammed sick, and there a camel died; one march was through an arid waste, the next through patches of green trees in which birds of gorgeous plumage flew; then sand again with nothing but very dead-looking bushes. The temperature varied with the altitude; sometimes no hotter than a pleasant summer's day in England, at other times great heat, windy and dusty, windy and raining, and on the whole but little game to be seen, and that wild and rarely accessible, though I got two dik-dik. The native peoples were a constant source of interest.

At Hargeisa we stayed a while to give the camels a rest and to rate the chronometers. Here we found

Brook camped; he had started a little before us and had already got a lion and a leopard. Here I decided to go off into the Haud and try for game. So we weighed out some rice and dates, filled two barrels with water, hired three camels at one rupee a day each, and nine of us, i.e. Ahamed, Abdullah (the under-cook), Abdi, Adan, Yusuf (my syce) and three camelmen started off at 5 p.m. We marched till 8 p.m., one of the camels, a wretched beast, lying down every few yards. I bought a goat just before leaving for eight rupees as a leopard bait, and with my milk-goat and a sheep had quite a farm-yard.

It did not seem strange marching off alone into the wilds of Africa with eight armed warriors, because although they spoke very little English they were all so friendly. I had many friends in camp, and if we could not speak to one another we could stand and grin, which did just as well. Yet it really was strange enough. There was I sitting in my tent writing, and through the open door I could see a fire, round which were squatting four black men, in the centre of them my supper cooking; and beyond, the three camels and two goats and one sheep, and the other four men busy building up a zareba, the first we had made.

During this little hunting episode, I got two oryx, and saw more, but found the country, though good for tracking, difficult for stalking.

We left Hargeisa on Sunday, July 22nd, starting for Milmil across the Haud, a waterless tract that took five days to cross.

From now on game became more plentiful, but still very difficult of approach; but as I have given a full list of the game I killed during my travels, I need not recite the kills here, unless the circumstances seem interesting enough to justify especial mention. Often, of course, we killed for food, and I see that I wrote of one particular meal with gusto: "An excellent supper

of soup, kidneys, brains, hearts stuffed with marrow, tinned peaches, jam, tea and biscuits. Imagine such a feast." I can, of course, and my mouth waters for it, eaten in a tent far from the madding crowd.

On July 27th we reached Milmil, where there were water-holes but no fixed village. While we rested there we saw many natives, some local, some on their march to Berbera with skins, gum and butter (*ghee*) for sale. A Midgan (outcast Somali tribe) tried to sell me the head of the Greater Koodoo. These people kill game with poisoned arrows.

The oryx they hunt in the following manner: taking a donkey they tie horns on its head and paint stripes down its sides, then taking it to where the oryx are, they lie hid; the oryx, seeing as they think another of their own species, come running up, when the Midgan lets fly. The skin of the shoulder he uses for shields, and the rest of it for rope, with which he ties his household goods on his camels.

When a native caravan arrived at a camping-place, the women immediately began to set up the beehive huts, made of curved sticks stuck in the ground and covered with camel blankets. They stand a little over four feet high and have one opening, in front of which, as a rule, a fire burns. As the temporary village rises, the men remain at their devotions. As our Somali told us, women do not pray, but men pray and are very good. Occasionally we found the prayers of our caravan interfered seriously with work. Hunting was intermittent, as our expedition had a geographical purpose and a definite objective. We kept on the march. One great drawback to hunting of this kind is the difficulty—often the impossibility—of following up wounded game, with the consequence that one often declines a long shot that under ordinary hunting conditions would have been taken.

I sometimes spent the night in a lion zareba, with

a donkey left out for decoy, but although I was promised lions, no lion appeared, though often the country seemed alive with them.

At Lafkei we had up the guide who was taking us towards the Webi, but extracting information from him was difficult. We heard that the country was infested with the fly (not the tsetse, but, as we discovered, unpleasant enough); that near the Webi there were some very *bad hills*, few people and quantities of game. While in the country known as Dacheto, we had a surprise, as one morning at breakfast-time in walked Captain Percival, Royal Artillery, who had started ten days later than we did. He was now after elephants; a little later we heard that he had got one.

As we marched on, elephant and rhino tracks were seen and soon became more numerous. On August 15th I got my first rhino. I had spent the night with Donald in a zareba with two men over a water-hole. Early in the evening we heard two zebras, but did not see them, then a hyena. At ten o'clock there was a great rattling of stones, and out walked a rhino. We were waiting for elephants, and so had settled not to shoot anything else till after 3 a.m. The rhino soon went off, and was followed by another with a good horn; then came a family party of male, female and young rhino, the two old ones having very good horns. Several more came and stamped about in the stones, but no elephants. At last 3 a.m. came, but it was quite dark, for the moon had set. We heard a rhino come up within about 25 yards. I stood up with the eight bore, and directing it as near as I could guess at his shoulder, fired. He rushed off at full speed, and we heard him galloping, then his footsteps ceased, and soon we heard a thud and a long sigh, and we knew he was ours.

Just before daybreak another rhino came, but we



THE HEAD OF MY RHINO

did not see it, and going out we followed my rhino's tracks. Soon we found blood, and then there lay the great beast dead; the bullet had gone straight in at the shoulder. It is wonderful how quickly the vultures clean all the meat off a carcass. The following day there was scarcely anything left on the rhinos we killed. So numerous were these birds that outside our zareba there was quite an army of them, fighting each other for fun and for the scraps—there must have been at least five different kinds.

The next night, Donald having gone north-west exploring towards the Webi Shebeli, I spent at the zareba over the water-hole with two men. If we saw one we saw fifteen rhinos. They were snorting about all night, and very interesting it was watching them in the brilliant moonlight. The young ones are most comical; they follow their mothers with their noses to her tail, and whenever she stops they stop, and whenever she moves they move; they never leave her tail or her side.

The male usually leads the way, and does most of the snorting and smelling around, whilst the females (sometimes two accompany him) stand and watch him, doing very little themselves. I fired at the best two I saw; the first one I hit in the shoulder, and after going off at a mad gallop, it fell stone dead; the other I must have hit too far back and low. It also went off with a rush, and then we heard it stop, and it remained in the same place for more than two hours, when it went off, but on looking for tracks in the morning there were so many we could not pick it out, nor could we find any blood, so we had to give it up. During the day we could find no rhino, so they must travel long distances to water.

On August 19th I got my first lion. I had not been sitting up, as I had done so many nights, and I was annoyed at being wakened early. My annoyance,

however, soon vanished when I heard that a camel had been killed and that lion tracks had been found close to it. I at once dispatched two men to look after the body whilst I had breakfast, and followed. Before very long Abdi with my .577, and I with the eight bore were after them, and soon came up to them some 60 yards from the kill. Leaving them where they were, Abdi and I went up to the camel and hunted on the ground for the story. The lion, having killed the camel, had dragged it some 15 or 20 yards to a thick bush, where it had made a very small repast. Abdi then took a step to one side, and I half cocked the rifle, and looked round to see where it was best to build a zareba. Happening to look up I saw Abdi beckoning me, and thinking he wanted to show me a very clear track, as he often did, I strolled over to him. As I did so I heard a growl in the bushes by me. I stepped back and cocked my rifle, but only in time to hear the lion make off through the bushes.

I then sent back the two men to fetch other men to help; and when they came up I with four of them made a small circle to see where the lion had gone off. Going round we could find no track of the lion, which meant he had not left the bushes, so I sent the men to beat towards me, while I took up a position which commanded three openings of grass in amongst the bushes. Then taking my .577 instead of my eight bore I waited, all excitement. Before very long we heard a slight movement to our left, and I turned, holding the rifle ready. Then we heard the men forcing their way through the bushes, followed by a shout, and out rushed the lion 33 yards off. For a second he stood still as he saw us. I raised my rifle, fired, and he sank where he stood.

For one instant all was still, then Salan set up a shout which was echoed by frantic yells from the

beaters. Scream after scream rent the air; the men leaped up and brandished their rifles, coming through the bushes with a bound. The bullet had broken the lion's neck. The men now became quite crazy; they jumped on the lion, danced and yelled around me. In fact this became almost the most exciting part of a most exciting hunt.

The lion was a fine male with a good mane, measuring as it lay 83 inches from the head to the tip of the tail; 41 inches at the shoulder; length of head 16 inches; girth round body 53 inches; length of upper tooth 2 inches; length of lower tooth $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Talking to Abdi afterwards I said, "I am thankful I did not wound the lion, or he would have had one of the men for certain." "Oh, that is nothing," said Abdi. "What does it matter if one man die if you kill a lion. That very good."

Donald returned on August 20th, having found the way he had attempted impossible for camels. He had got a rhino, which had charged him, and was within one yard of him when he dropped it with his eight bore; it rose, and with the other barrel he felled it again, but it rose again and made for one of the men before he managed to kill it.

During the afternoon of the following day I came upon three Grevy Zebra. The bushes were very thick, and as I kept catching glimpses of them, I kept firing, thinking I was firing at the same one, and eventually, much to my disgust, I found I had killed the three. I always hated to kill uselessly. Luckily, however, a lot of half-starved Ogadayn appeared from goodness knows where, and I do not expect much was left to rot.

During our next march elephant tracks were countless, but tracks were all we saw. On reaching a big river called Bouraga, Abdi told me there was

an elephant in a large reeded pool. It proved, however, to be a rhino, which tried to charge out to us after receiving two bullets in the shoulder. He fell dead, however, and proved to have fine horns, 22 inches the front one, and 10 the second one.

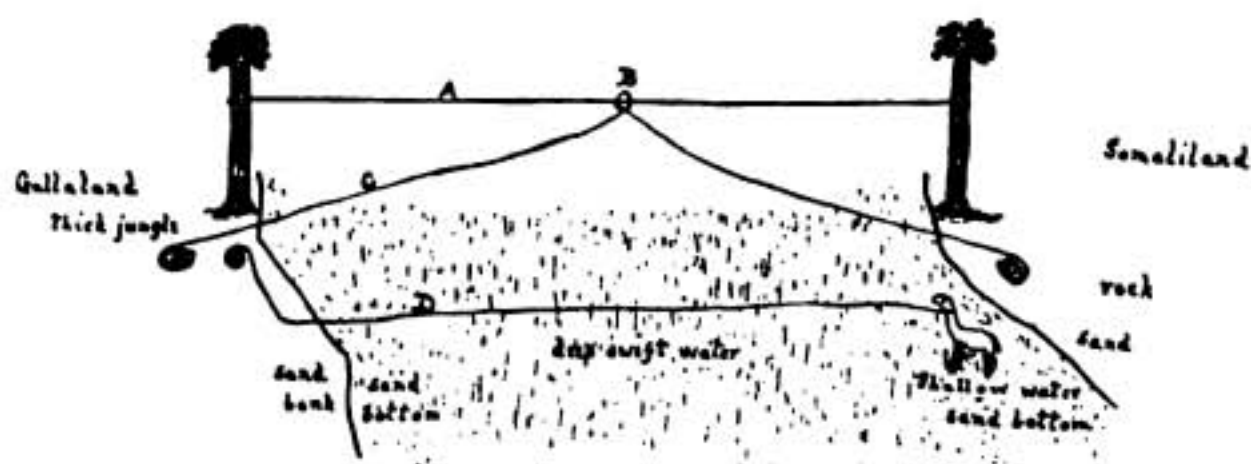
Next morning we sent eight men ahead, who returned with the news that they had got to the Webi, that it was full of water, and that on the other side were high hills. During the march I saw bands of zebra, oryx, and female koodoo. We saw a leopard dive into the bushes, and sending men round they reported that the place was full of lions. However, after much beating and shouting, a leopard came out. I fired at him with my .577 as he dashed away, and must have hit him as he was doubled up, because the bullet grazed one leg, went through his chest, and broke his other leg. Yet in spite of this fearful wound he managed to get up a very steep piece of ground 50 yards high, where he died. It was a fine male, although of no great size.

On the morning of August 24th we saw the rushing water of the Webi Shebeli, like a Scottish spate, of a muddy colour and very swift, and about 100 yards across. Longitude $42^{\circ} 5' 45''$, Latitude $7^{\circ} 15' 38''$. During the march we came on several palms, with clusters of hard fruit about the size of apples growing at the top. I tasted one of them, and it resembled very dry ginger-bread as near as anything; it ought to be called a bread-fruit, but is called a Dhoum Palm. The natives are said to live on it.

We camped a little way from the river on hard dry ground, and in the afternoon I went for a hunt, and not far from camp a waterbuck galloped past us some way off. I ran to a hill to cut it off, it saw me, and stopped long enough for me to give it a shot from the .577 which went through its lungs and out at its shoulder. It ran some way up the hill, and then

pitched over on its head, cracking the skull and cutting gashes in its face on the sharp stones. Its horns measured 13 by $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the height at its shoulders 36 inches. This was the first one we had got and therefore a joy.

For five days we were busily engaged in testing the crossing, but everywhere the river seemed deep and swift, and the approach to the bank difficult. Finally, on August 30th, we found a point down the river that promised better. After some food the men fixed the ropes across the river, which at this point is some 40 yards across. They put up the ropes in the way shown in the accompanying sketch.



Rope A was a thin one, attached to a tree on either bank, and well out of the water. B a rope ring, attached to the centre of rope C and made to run on A. C also was a thin rope with a plentiful supply on either shore. Rope D was fastened to the Galla shore, the loose end being fastened to B; it was then drawn over to the Somali shore by C, where it was tied to a camel. Then the men on the Galla shore began to pull. The current carried the camel down as they dragged him to the shore. The rope D was then carried over again by rope C.

The camel was allowed the use of his legs, but a barrel was tied under his neck; he usually kept his

head out of the water, till the current took him below the men who were pulling, when, as he had to be dragged against the current, he usually spent part of the time under water.

The men got over eleven camels, the last six taking one hour. The first camel was a great excitement, as we did not know what would happen. They tied his legs and lifted him bodily into the water; the men began to pull, the camel fell over on his side, and went the whole journey under water. We all thought, of course, he was done for, but no, he was all right, but very obstinate about getting up. After this their legs were left untied so that they could swim.

All the time Abdi was plying the berthon boat backwards and forwards, taking over provisions and other stores, and bringing back the water barrels; so that we had got over the whole of one camp, including the men and rifles. The Webi had never before been crossed in this way, Ime, Senmoretta, Karunle, and Shebeli having natives and rafts and a regular ferry.

By Saturday, using the boat and the raft the men had constructed, the crossing was practically complete, and for the first time we camped in the Galla country. Having captured a couple of Gallas, who were very scared until they discovered they would not be ill-treated, we persuaded one of our Ogadayn guides to go to the coast with letters. So far from the much dreaded Gallas proving dangerous, we found that they had been completely crushed by the Abyssinians, and when they knew we were friendly inclined rather to welcome than to attack us.

The Abyssinians march into the country, and if the people resist, they lay waste their villages, killing women and children; if they submit they take all they have, leave one of their own men in the village to look after all the sheep, cattle, and camels, allowing

the original owners the milk, but on no account the right to kill and eat them. Then taking a good supply of food, they march on to subjugate the tribes beyond, followed by hosts of starving people, whom they feed with scraps, and compel to work like slaves. They take all the ivory and things of value, bribing the natives to inform against those secreting anything. Our two Gallas told us that a large body of Abyssinians had been in this country, killed many of the people, and, taking what they wanted, had marched south, where they had remained fighting and looting for five months. The Gallas said they had sheep, but could not sell them to us as they belonged to the Abyssinians.

Everywhere we found the Gallas, chiefs and people, men and women, anxious to please and willing to trade. They were quite happy when being photographed, but had no interest in the resulting pictures. We bought from them spears and shields. On one occasion two chiefs brought us a present of camels. They said they had had to come at night as someone might have seen them bringing the camels, and if the Abyssinians heard of it they would be punished; they then added they would have liked to have given us a larger present, but they were so poor they could not.

After this they launched out into a most pitiable and pathetic tale. Four years ago a party of Abyssinians came from Harar and conquered them; after that came an Abyssinian chief named Wulda Gubra, who put a tax on the country, the tax consisting of a monthly payment of cows and sheep to any number the Abyssinians chose to take. This soon cleared out all but the rich men, the poor creatures dying of hunger; the rich men were little better off, they had to bring to the chiefs their sheep and cattle every month, the chiefs being compelled to remain in certain spots to collect them, and hand them over to

sud de l'Ethiopie. Seulement l'époque que vous avez choisi pour ce voyage coincide avec celle a la quelle je vais moi-même partir en expédition et cela se trouve que vous voulez traverser le pays même que je veux roumettre. Je crains qu'en passant par cette contrée vous ne vous trouviez entre les Gallas et les hommes de mon armée. Dans le cas ou il vous arriverait un malheur, cela me ferait beaucoup de peine. Je serais très content si vous traversiez ces pays lorsqu'ils seront roumis. Je vous dit cela parceque lorsqu'un voyageur a une idée il vaut mieux qu'elle reussisse, s'il tombe dans un precipice c'est un malheur pour lui et pour le roi du Pays. Je ne vous dis pas de ne pas mettre votre projet a exécution, mais j'espère que vous ayez la patience d'attendre 2 ou 3 ans lorsque ces pays seront tout a fait roumis.

ADDIS ABABA.

*29 Octobre 1887 (style Abyssin).
7 Novemb 1894 (style Français).''*

The letter clearly did not say we were not to proceed, so talking it over we decided that Dualla should go to Wulda Gubra again and explain, and that then we should make straight for Lake Rudolph.

A six days' march, however, was all we accomplished before the Abyssinians turned up again, with Wulda Gubra in person, apologetic but decided. It was evident that he had had instructions from Menelik that we were not to travel through his country. So, again under escort, we marched back in a north-easterly direction. On December 12th we reached the Webi. During the march we had passed through an interesting country, birds and insects plentiful, and our men were continually bringing Dodson the latter, hoping that among them might be a new one and worth the rupee which was the prize for a find. We had some hunting, of course, but got little of consequence. One oryx I shot had curious horns, there being 4

inches difference in them in length, measuring $29\frac{1}{4}$ and $25\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and being only $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches in circumference, which is small for a male.

Here we camped for a while, and dispatched three carriers to Berbera and Aden with letters. The men were to deliver these, and execute certain commissions, and then with the camels and goods we had ordered to return to Shebeli, where they would meet us. On December 17th we crossed the river by wading, the men beating the water with sticks to keep off crocodiles. In the country round we saw many tracks of game—elephant, lions, etc.—and here I got two ouls (Soemmerring's Gazelle) in time to have them for our Christmas dinner, at which we had Prince Boris for our guest. The Prince was shooting in the neighbourhood and had called at our camp on the morning of December 24th. We also heard that Count Hoius was somewhere about, and that Seton Kerr and Sir Henry Tichborne had come in together. In the afternoon we went over to see Prince Boris, who had pitched his camp one mile from us, and there we found the greater part of our men gathering news.

Prince Boris came out to greet us, a man of about thirty-five, dark and slim, with a pointed beard. He spoke English very well with a slightly foreign accent. His tent was a joy; silk-lined, large, and fitted up with table-cloth, dressing things, and his rifles standing in a rack. Cane chairs were given us, champagne called for, and dainty Russian cigarettes handed round. The Prince proved a great talker, and extremely amusing. Silver mugs were produced and he drank success to us. He then said he had heard when in Europe that we had crossed the Webi; had asked about us at once at Aden, where Captain Abud, who had taken Colonel Sealy's place while he was away on sick leave, said we had been turned back by the Gallas. He said that Von Hoemel was getting over his accident with the rhino, but that Lord

Delamere, it was feared, would never be the same again.

Then in a very graphic way he told us lion stories, and talked much of his former expeditions, and showed us a male oryx he shot, $37\frac{1}{4}$ inches by 8, a record head and out and away the best I have seen. He also showed me a Lee Metford rifle .303, a perfect gem and as light as a feather. After a two hours visit we left, he promising to come over the next day to eat Christmas dinner with us, and saying we must feed with him the following night.

We spent the afternoon of Christmas Day decorating our tents, and fixing up a dinner for our guest in the evening. We hung bunches of green on the top and sides of the tents, put two tables together, covered them with tobe, placed a wash-basin full of flowers in the centre, and saucers with chutney, biscuits, etc., round it. Got out champagne from our medicine supply, and our last four bottles of soda water. At 5 p.m. punctually he arrived, and we showed him photographs and our rifles. The latter he looked down on, and showed me the principle of his bullets. The .303 had a special nickel bullet, the .450 and .577 hardened lead bullets with a short hole. This was for soft-skinned animals, and a bullet with a steel core for rhino and elephants.

We had a pleasant dinner, the cooks quite out-doing themselves in excellent little breads; in fact he remarked several times, "Well, you don't do badly after six months." He had killed two oryx in the morning with his .303, and had wounded two others with his .450. He told us that this was his fourth trip into Somaliland; that he had been into the Masai country and had made several expeditions from Mombasa; had shot in India, the Pamirs, Russia, Siberia, Sweden, Java, and the Malay Peninsula. He said he should come every winter to Somaliland. He left at 9.30. We sat up, and at 10.15, which

would be 7.30 in London, drank to the old folks at home, and I thought that they were probably drinking our healths at the same time.

On Boxing Day we went over to dinner with Prince Boris about 5.15, and a splendid feed he gave us. To eat potatoes was a real luxury, and I must say I never enjoyed a dinner so much before.

On the 27th we were again on the march, and on the 28th I killed two mongoose, which proved to be new to science and have been called *Crosarchus somalicus*. An account of this mongoose will be found in the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, Series 6, Vol. XV, June 1895, under the title "On a New Banded Mongoose from Somaliland," by Oldfield Thomas.

Our march to Shebeli was often through cultivated and populated country, and we continually had news of how the Abyssinians had been harrying the country, killing and looting and mutilating. The Somali villages I found considerably cleaner than the Galla. The hunting on the whole was poor, though tracks were often numerous. No doubt, had we been able to camp when and where we pleased, we should have done well, but we had our destination in mind, and could only hunt within reasonable distance of our line of route. I got a large crocodile, with a lucky shot in the brain. I had peeped over the bank and come face to face with the monster. At one village, "Mercoufee," an old man, came and squatted before my tent. "Salaam," said I. "Wilwal?" he said, his face beaming. "No," I replied, "Wilwal's nephew." Then he proceeded to tell me he had seen Wilwal at Bari, and to hold forth a long discourse about him, only a few words of which I could understand.

On January 11th, the men of a caravan from which we were buying tobés, told Dualla that three months ago he met some traders just crossing the

Webi. They had a letter with them from the Resident at Berbera for some Europeans who had crossed the Webi; the Resident had told them that if they got news of Europeans they were to leave their caravan and follow them, that the letter was most important, and that the Europeans would give them a very good reward. They thought the letter had something to do with a death. News that filled me with foreboding.

On the 13th we passed a large village (Bari) where James, and afterwards Colonel Paget, had camped; and when the natives heard I was Wilwal's nephew I realized there was a great deal in a name. "Wilwal" rang on every side; men pushed each other to see his relation; those who had seen him repeated over and over again stories of his doings, and the excitement became intense. Over and over again I was asked if I was really his nephew, and expected every minute to be stuck on a throne with a sceptre in my hand, as king of the village.

We camped at last near Gelaydee out in an open plain without a tree, over a mile from the river, a spot chosen against fever and mosquitoes, where we stayed till the now dreaded letters came. Here we hunted, and I practised spear-throwing with the men, which I had often done during the retreat from Ginnierh. I had now become adept and was able to hold my own. Going over the birds I had secured I found I had eighty-one, of which sixty-four were different species.

On January 16th a native came in to report Greater Koodoo, and offered to take me over the river and show me. First we made for the village of Gelaydee. This village was a grand affair compared with the Galla ones I had seen, having regular roads in it, narrow certainly, between the huts, each of which was enclosed in its own stockade; there were also lounging places where the scandal of the

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place was discussed. The roads formed a regular maze, and it took some little time to get down to the water, where a rough raft was waiting. A crowd of men, women and children followed to discuss me, and I was compared to Wilwal, and appeared in a very unfavourable light to that great man. "He never missed anything." "He could do this, do that." "He gave enormous presents of tobe." In fact, to have reached his standard, I should have been ruined, and have had to surpass mankind. But for all my guide's promises there were no Greater Koodoo.

I was beginning to be very anxious about the letters. For one day Ahamed began talking to me about them, and gave the following account: The caravan man had met a trader, who told him he bore a very important letter for one of the officers who had crossed the Webi with Dualla Idriss, that he had been told it contained the news of the death of his father, and he said the letter was black edged. He had been told to try and find the party, and as soon as he heard of them to leave his caravan and go to them straight, and he would be well rewarded. But there was nothing to do but wait patiently for Salan's coming. On January 22nd the bad news came. Salan had been held up by looting natives, and had sent for help to get the camels and tobés through safely, but the man he sent confirmed the worst news for me. My dear father was dead.

Dualla went himself for the letters and returned on the 24th with them. Tearing mine open I found the sad news to be too true. But I was able to learn little, except from the solicitor's letters, as all those concerning my dear father had been sent by the caravan. Those which arrived from my mother and sisters never mentioned him, and all I could learn was that he had died suddenly after a short illness of two days. It was necessary for me to return at once,

but I found it impossible to get off till the next morning. I got up at daybreak to fix things up. Settled everything about the camels, etc., through Dualla, and by throwing away all I could, got my bunderbuss down very small indeed, so as to be able to travel quickly. I made Abdi Segar my head-man, and he at once set to work to buy me sheep.

Friday, January 25th, was a busy day. Chits had to be written and accounts settled, and good-byes to be said, so that up to mid-day I was hard at work. Many of the men said they were sorry to lose me, and I for my part was most sorry to part with them; for they were certainly good fellows, and most interesting to study if you cared enough to take an interest in them. At noon the camels were called and loaded, it taking eight to carry my things, the other two being driven, which was about all they were fit for. A great many of the men who had been rather favourites of mine, turned in with a will to speed the parting guest, and we were ready by 1 p.m. I had nine men: Abdi Segar, Yusuf Baigsi (my syce), Ahamed (my tent boy), Duda (gun-bearer), Mahomed Omer (camelman who had looked after my skins), Mera (cook), and three camelmen that Dualla wished to get rid of.

We had been unable to get a guide, as every man was afraid of returning after leaving the protection of our rifles, of which we had only five, counting my sporting rifles, but as Mera had gone the road with Colonel Paget two years before we were not quite at a loss, and he remembered the road after a fashion.

I soon found Mera had fever, and when we camped one of the camel-men lay down with the same complaint, so that of all the men with me, I had one almost dead, and four down with fever, whilst the remaining six had fifteen camels, a flock of sheep and goats, and a dying man to look after, for attached to my party, so long as they could keep up with us, were five

camels, four carrying Donald's collection, one carrying Ahamed at death's door, and two men to look after him and the camels. It was curious, but on this unhappy rush to the coast I had my first real chance with waterbuck, killing a fine male. Indeed we saw enormous quantities of waterbuck and other game. We had no guide till Abdi, by strategy, secured two men whom he held as prisoners, promising them, however, good rewards if they brought us through.

One of these men was very rich and complained bitterly of the treatment, so through Ahamed I gave him a little parable. I asked him if he had been without food for five days and found a chatty of milk belonging to the Sultan in the road, would he drink it? "Of course," he answered. "Well, you are like the chatty of milk," I said. "We don't know the road, we are short of men, and I am in a hurry, and were you the Sultan himself we would take you along. Now you have the choice of three things: to run away, in which case I shall shoot you; to come to Berbera bound as my prisoner, there to be handed over to Mr. Cox and put in prison; or to become my soldier and receive wages, and if you take me to Milmil in seven days, baksheesh." He chose the third, and we tramped on in the dark.

As he was a great hunter I tried to learn how he killed his game. He told me that where I killed the rhino at Turfa he had killed a zebra. After the arrow had entered it the creature only went about one hundred yards and then fell dead. He killed three elephants near there, and one or two rhinos. Leaving all his clothes behind, and having only his bow and arrows, he crawls up to within about ten yards of the elephant, shoots at its stomach, as the skin on the back is too thick, and then bolts for dear life. Sometimes the elephant pursues, sometimes makes off. Some poison works soon and the beast falls down

before going far. Other poison is slower, and the animal goes perhaps two miles, but one arrow is usually enough. The poison is obtained from the wood of a tree.

We pressed on as fast as we could go. On January 28th Ahamed, one of the head-men, died. We buried him, and I took a photograph of his grave. We had a long discussion which road to take, either via Gooratee or Milmil. All the men were for Milmil and talked about all sorts of thirsty horrors by the former. Abdi, however, said it saved three days, so I voted in its favour and took it. This caused much grumbling: "The water barrels leaked," "The men were all sick," "We should have to carry water for six days," and "There were no people"—in fact the Milmil road was Paradise, Gooratee, hell. But I stuck to hell.

The memory of that march to the coast is still a nightmare. My men fever-stricken, water often scarce, and once Abdi, who had been my standby throughout, thinking of me more than of himself, as witness his advice to go the quicker, harder way, was down with fever himself, so that I alone remained untouched. On February 9th we were well out of the waterless country. To say that a decent wash was a joy does not even faintly describe my feelings as I dipped into a pailful of water. And the sublime content exhibited by the camels was only beaten by that shown by the men, who lifted the pail to their mouths and drank, till I wondered where the stuff went to. On the evening of that day I see I wrote in my diary, "I am nearly dead, having had so little sleep, so must stop." Abdi had said to me: "You march like the Debbil and don't care for men or camels." "Or myself," I added. I was nearly all in when I reached Berbera on Monday, February 11th, at 8.30 in the morning. We had done the journey from the Webi to Berbera, four hundred miles, in seventeen and a