

# THE WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE.

Vol. IX.

JULY, 1902.

No. 52.

## *The Sultan of Johore.*

AN INTERVIEW WITH A ROYAL TIGER-HUNTER.

BY FREDERIC COLEMAN.

The Sultan of Johore is a keen sportsman, and within four years has killed ten tigers and four elephants, to say nothing of many other wild beasts. A feature of his tiger and elephant shooting is the fact that he always hunts on foot, thus increasing the danger considerably. His Highness related to Mr. Coleman a number of his most thrilling encounters, and photographs of some of his tigers are also reproduced.



MOST of us have our hobbies, but not all of us are given opportunities to indulge them. When a Royal personage has a hobby, however, there is much probability that he or she

will give it more than a modicum of exercise.

His Highness Ibrahim, K.C.M.G., Sultan of the State and Territory of Johore, is ruler of one of the richest States in the Malay Peninsula. As is natural, the Sultan has his hobbies. The two principal ones, or at least the two to which he has devoted the most time and attention, are big-game shooting and horse-racing.

The fact that the Sultan, although but little more than four years has elapsed since he first began big-game shooting, has become an experienced huntsman is proven by the ten tigers, four elephants, and many other wild beasts which he has killed within that time.

Personally, the Sultan is a very charming young gentleman of twenty-eight years, whose frank, genial manner wins friends for him wherever he goes. He is tall, lacking but an inch of being 6ft. in height, and of good figure.

His upright carriage and springing step at once bespeak his energetic and athletic temperament, which accounts for the fact that he works as hard while at play as he does while at work.

Johore itself possesses remarkable facilities for the indulgence of its ruler's taste for shooting big game. Its 9,000 square miles of territory are chiefly covered with what is as yet unexplored jungle, and its 300,000 inhabitants are for the most part residents of districts near the coast. In the virgin forests of the interior of Johore there is a sufficiency of game to keep sportsmen busy for many years to come.

But it is not into the unexplored portion of Johore that



HIS HIGHNESS THE SULTAN OF JOHORE IN STATE UNIFORM.  
*From a Photo.*

the Sultan went to shoot his tigers. Indeed, the ten he has killed all met their fate within a radius of seven or eight miles from Johore Bahru, or New Johore, the capital and principal city of the State. Johore Bahru, with

a little while. Within a couple of hours he reappeared, looking as unconcerned as though he had done no more than go out to have a look at a favourite horse. I was not a little surprised to hear from him that he had



THE SULTAN'S FIRST TIGRESS, SHOT ON JANUARY 20, 1898—SHE MEASURED 7 FT. 3 IN.  
*From a Photo.*

its estimated population of 20,000 souls, lies fourteen miles due north-east from the city of Singapore. Yet within the last two years a big tiger came walking down one of the new roads one dark night to a spot not more than one hundred yards from the Johore Hotel, the principal hostelry thereabouts, and then coolly marched back the way he had come, leaving his huge footprints in the soft earth to cause excited gossip among the terror-stricken natives the next morning.

I met a gentleman when I was last in Johore who is an intimate friend of the Sultan. He told me the following characteristic story concerning him: "I was having tiffin with His Highness one day," he said, "when news was brought to us that a tiger had been seen about a mile out of Johore. The Sultan asked me if I would pardon him while he went and changed, and left me to myself for

been out and had shot the tiger! Sure enough, the big striped brute was brought up on the lawn for our inspection not many minutes after. That was, it seemed to me, a most remarkable interruption to our tiffin, but it was looked upon as a most trifling matter by my host."

The Sultan has done a good deal of travelling on the Continent, strictly incognito. He has spent some months in England, and his stud

of ten or twelve horses, which two English grooms are soon to take out to the Straits Settlements, has been admired by many critical eyes.

Knowing that the subject of sport is ever dear to the heart of the average Briton, and that big-game hunters the world over are always eager to hear of countries prolific with big game, His Highness kindly granted me an interview on behalf of THE WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE on the subject of his own experiences in tiger and elephant shooting.



*From a* THE SECOND TIGER, KILLED ON NOVEMBER 16, 1898. *[Photo.*

"I consider tiger-shooting the best sport in the world if done on foot," said the Sultan. "I do all my shooting on foot, whether I am after tiger or elephant. Elephant-shooting is good sport, but it is not up to tiger-shooting in any particular.

"I began shooting in the summer of the year 1897, but it was not until the 20th of January, 1898, that I bagged my first tiger. The event was one which I shall not soon forget. I was out on the Tehran Road, just a little over five miles east of Johore. When first I caught sight of the animal, which was a fine young tigress, she was about a hundred yards distant. I fired at once and wounded her. She came on with great bounds, and I



From a]

THE FOURTH TIGER, MAY, 1899—HE MEASURED 9 FT. 6 IN.

[Photo.

waited till she reached a close range before letting her have the second shot, which found its mark just at the back of her ear, smashing the skull and reaching the brain. The bullet caused instant death, and I was pleased to discover that the tigress measured 7¼ ft. in length.

"In July, 1898, I shot my first elephant at a place not more than ten miles out of Johore. I was accompanied by my tracker and gun-carrier. We followed the track of an elephant for a mile and a half through the jungle, and when we finally reached our quarry he was lying down. In fact, we were upon him before we knew it, for when he rose, disturbed by the noise we made in tracking him, he was not more than twenty yards away.

"A shot from my 12-bore struck him in the forehead, and with a scream of anger he charged down upon us. By the time he reached the spot where he had sighted us, however, we were elsewhere, and had temporarily escaped his fury. A second shot struck the big brute near the eye, and caused him to stand still for a moment. Instantly I let go two charges from my '577 Express, both taking effect near the ear. As these did not seem



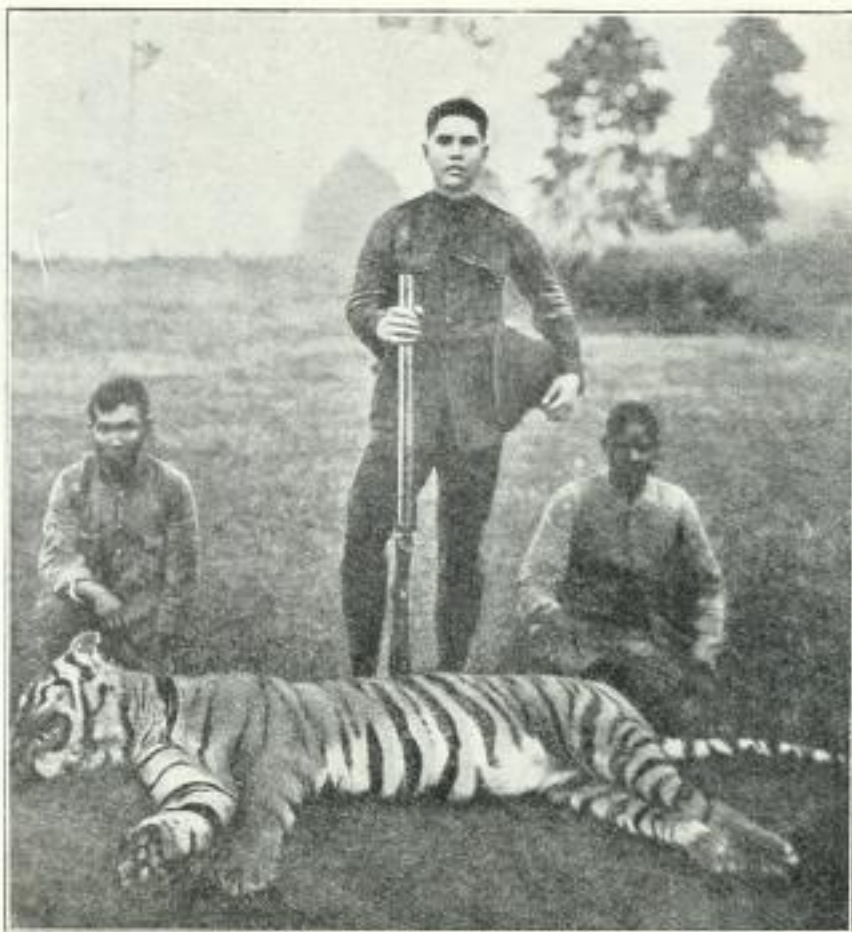
THE THIRD TIGER, KILLED IN MARCH, 1899—IT TOOK THREE SHOTS TO FINISH HIM.

[Photo.

enough to settle him, I treated him to an explosive bullet from a Lee-Metford sporting rifle, making the fifth charge which he had received. Even that was not sufficient, and five more shots had to be fired before the big brute at last came down.

"The elephant was an exceedingly large one. His tusks—which, with his great feet, are in my collection of trophies—are very beautiful ones. We brought back a portion of the trunk about 3ft. long and found that its actual measurement was 2ft. 1in. in circumference near the middle and 1ft. 2½in. at the tip."

I asked the Sultan what other big game could



THE FIFTH TIGER, JULY, 1899—THE SULTAN FOLLOWED THE ANIMAL ALONE INTO THICK JUNGLE. [Photo.]

be found in Johore, and he named so many varieties of wild beasts that I was inclined to wonder how it fared with the few natives of the interior with such unpleasant neighbours about them.

"To begin with," said His Highness, "after the elephants and tigers come the *sladang*, a great wild bull, and the rhinoceros. Then there are black panthers, spotted leopard, bears, and many wild boars. In the rivers there are large numbers of crocodile."

The *sladang* is a great wild bull or bison, which is very dangerous to hunt. The huge beast is very fierce, extremely quick, and possesses a most keen power of scenting his enemy.



[From a]

THE SEVENTH TIGER, KILLED APRIL, 1900.

[Photo.]

Captain Syers, of Selangor, who was a noted sportsman and perhaps the best-known great-game shot of the native States, met his death, after twenty-six years of experience in the jungle, while hunting *sladang* in Pahang, the native State north of Johore. The captain shot at a great *sladang*, which charged him and, striking him, tossed him against the bough of a tree, catching him on its horns as he came down again. He died while *en route* to a point where medical attendance could be procured. When the *sladang* which cost Captain Syers his life was finally killed, he was found to be marked with no fewer than eighteen bullet wounds. An immense *sladang* head which adorns the top



From a]

THE SULTAN'S TENTH TIGER, KILLED IN 1901.

[Photo.

of the staircase of the Singapore Club gives the casual globe-trotter some idea of the enormous size of the beast.

"Yes," continued His Highness, "there is still plenty of big game in Johore, and I am sure big-game hunters will always find a cordial welcome awaiting them here."

"Do the tigers bother the natives much?" I asked.

"Well, they keep pretty well away from the villages except in rare instances," answered the Sultan. "Of course, they get a native now and then who has been unlucky enough to run across a tiger in the jungle, and they trouble the people a great deal by continually carrying off cattle and pigs. I allow my subjects to trap tigers and they frequently catch one in that way, but I have forbidden the use of spring guns on account of the danger to the people."

"What gun do you prefer for shooting big game?" I queried, "and how do you go to work to get at your tiger when you shoot him?"

"All my guns are from Holland and Holland. This firm, I consider, makes some of the best guns in the world for big shooting," His Highness replied. "My preference is a .577 Express for tiger and an 8-bore for elephant. As to beating



From a]

THE EIGHTH TIGER, AUGUST, 1900.

[Photo.

up for a tiger, I invariably use my own men for that work. Outside natives are frequently quite ready to do it, but if I engage them I am responsible for their safe return home, which is by no means probable if they do not know their business thoroughly well. I have had but one fatality thus far among my own beaters, though now and again one of them gets wounded, for it is always most dangerous work. The beaters hammer empty kerosene tins with a stick, let off crackers, and shout—do anything, in short, which will make a tremendous row.

"My dogs? Oh, I use no good dogs for tiger-shooting. A pariah dog is worth just as much as a pure-bred hound for that work. A

"My third tiger," said the Sultan, in answer to a question, "I shot not far from the water-works at Johore. He was driven in such a way that he emerged from the jungle at a point not thirty yards from the spot where I was waiting for him. I fired and struck him in the back, breaking his spine. Firing again, I hit the brute in the head, the bullet entering the skull and rolling him over on the grass. As he was a full-grown animal and a very large one, another shot was necessary to finally finish him.

"About two months after that I got my fourth. I was told that a tiger had been seen in the neighbourhood of Johore, and at once set off for the point to which my trackers had followed him. The beaters soon drove him out



TIGER KILLED BY MRS. GEORGE PAULING, A FAMOUS LADY LION-HUNTER, WHO WAS THE SULTAN'S GUEST IN 1901. *[Photo.]*

good dog only gets killed; and to be too game means sure death for a dog when he is after a tiger.

"Where do I shoot a tiger?" The Sultan laughed heartily at the question. "Why, anywhere so as to get him. As soon as he is wounded he will either wait for you to come to him or else come at you himself. How near have I been to a tiger? Oh, I should say as close as 10ft. One can never tell how close one may have to get to the beasts."

The Sultan, as has been recounted, bagged his first tiger in January, 1898. Before the close of the year he had killed his second, and in March, 1899, he added the skin of a third to his collection of trophies.

of the jungle, and I was able to get a shot at about twenty-five yards. I was lucky with the first shot, which entered the beast's head just over the eye and pierced his brain, killing him at once. He measured 9ft. 6in. in length and was beautifully marked."

In getting his fifth tiger His Highness showed his absolute disregard of the danger he ran by following the big animal alone into the thick jungle. "A tracker fired at my fifth tiger," said the Sultan, "before I arrived on the scene. He did not hit the brute, which instantly returned to the jungle. I went in after the beast and came upon him quite suddenly. I shot him behind the shoulder as he came at me, but he still advanced. My second shot, however, hit

him in the cheek and brought him down in a heap. He was not so large as some I had shot, but was very plucky."

His Highness killed still another tiger in 1899

had stalked. He fired at the bull, and as he did so a cow elephant, thus far unseen, charged the party from the rear. Turning like lightning, His Highness shot the



*From a*

THE SULTAN'S MAGNIFICENT COLLECTION OF TROPHIES.

*Photo.*

and two in 1900. In 1901 he killed two more, which brought the list up to ten. The Sultan kindly furnished me with photographs of nine of the dead tigers and one which was shot by Mrs. George Pauling, an experienced African lion shot, who was a guest of His Highness in 1901.

A feat of the Sultan's while elephant-shooting is frequently told by his friends. Five or six elephants were in a herd which His Highness

charging elephant, now but a few yards distant, with the undischarged barrel of his gun. Both shots proved so serious as to be to all intents and purposes fatal, for both elephants were soon finished off. Thus the Sultan of Johore bears the distinction of having shot one elephant with one barrel of his gun and another with the other—two charges for two elephants being a very good record indeed.