



THROUGH
JUBALAND
TO THE
LORIAN SWAMP

AN ADVENTUROUS JOURNEY OF EXPLORATION & SPORT
IN THE UNKNOWN AFRICAN FORESTS & DESERTS OF
JUBALAND TO THE UNEXPLORED LORIAN SWAMP

✓
BY

I. N. DRACOPOLI

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

WITH 44 ILLUSTRATIONS & 2 MAPS

PHILADELPHIA

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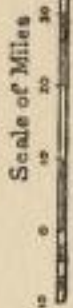
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1914

SKETCH MAP

JUBALAND

showing
DISTRIBUTION OF GAME
by
I. N. DRACOPOLI



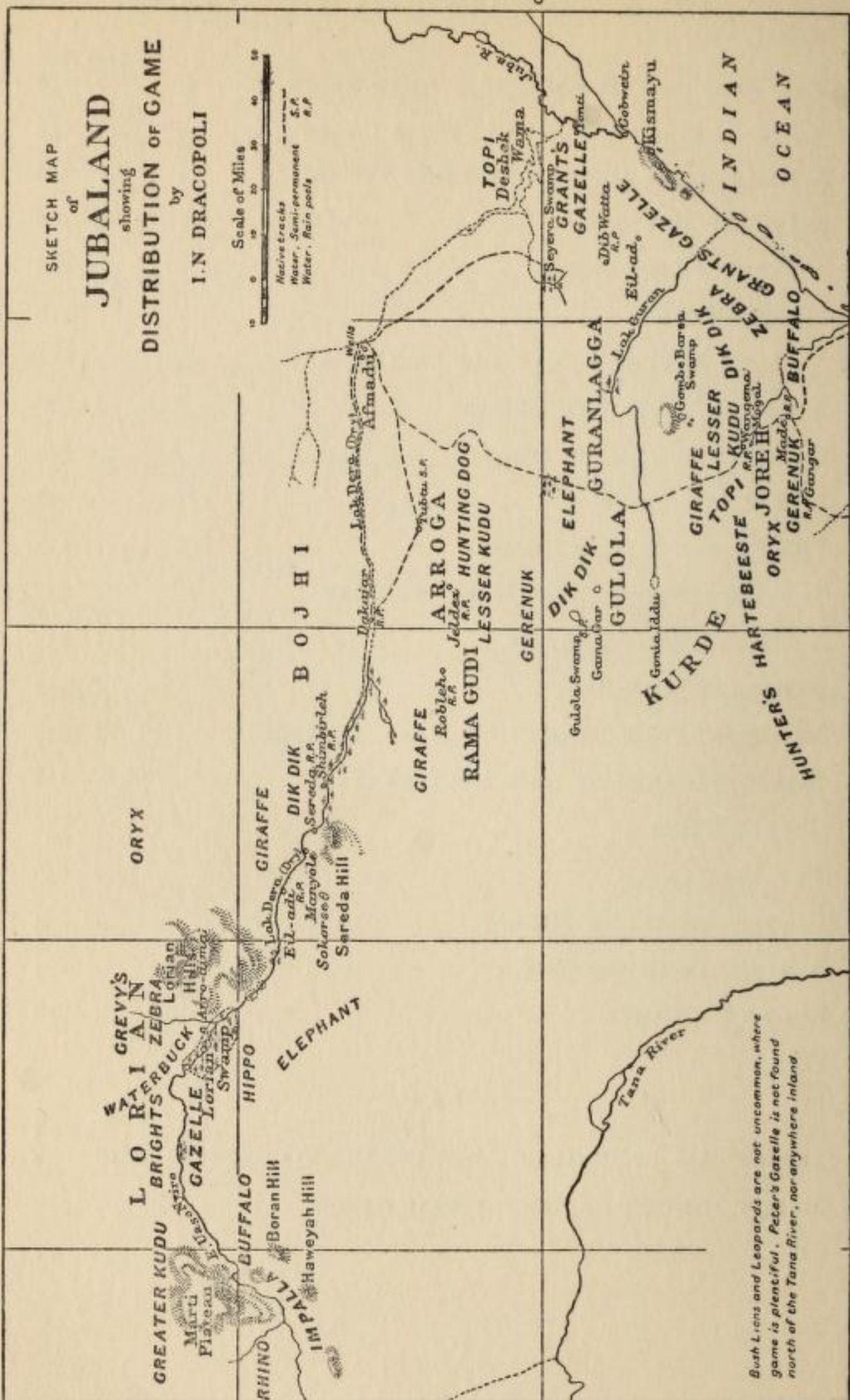
Massive tracks
Water, Semi-permanent S.P.
Water, Rain pools R.P.

39

40

41

42



Bush Lions and Leopards are not uncommon, where game is plentiful. Peter's Gazelle is not found north of the Tana River, nor anywhere inland

39

40

41

42

LEATHER—SPEARS

that has not yet been solved. The iron required is obtained from the coast through Arab traders, and payment is made for it with cattle, hides or ghee.

The Midgan men themselves tan the leather that is required for the manufacture of shields, sandals, belts and water-bottles. The skins most prized in Jubaland are those of the giraffe (*Giraffa reticulata*), the rhinoceros, which is very rare, and the oryx beisa. In the bulls of the latter species the skin over the withers and lower part of the neck is extraordinarily thick and tough. This peculiarity in the oryx beisa may have been developed as a protection against their sharp spear-like horns when they are fighting one another.

The spears carried by the warriors, of which there are a considerable variety, are usually fitted with thin strong shafts made from a variety of wood. Some are quite ornamental, cut from trees especially selected for their fine even grain, and highly polished by rubbing in ghee, which imparts a rich dark yellow gloss to the surface; others are fashioned from a kind of wood that resembles hickory; others, again, are made of ebony, which is also treated with ghee. The latter kind are only carried by those warriors who have killed an enemy; this distinction, which confers upon a man the privilege of wearing the "Bal," or feathered head-dress, is eagerly sought after, and the young men are always on the look-out for the opportunity of gaining it. Among certain tribes I have been told that a man cannot marry until he has thus proved his metal.

The wooden sleeping-pillows are of a variety of shapes, ranging from the pattern with the single leg, as carried by the poor man, to that cut out of a solid piece of wood, 15 inches in diameter, with six legs, which are very rare and only used by men of import-

CHAPTER XXII

THE GAME ANIMALS OF JUBALAND

BEFORE leaving Jubaland and the Lorian, and entering on the narrative of the closing stages of my journey, it would seem appropriate to give some account of the game animals to be found between the coast and Marti plateau, to examine briefly any differences or peculiarities that may distinguish them from those found in other parts of the Protectorate, to notice how far they are influenced by climate and physical conditions, and incidentally to glance at their distribution throughout that large area.

If the dense character of the bush that covers the greater part of southern Jubaland and the lack of water are remembered, it will readily be seen that only those bush-loving animals which are more or less independent of a plentiful supply of water, will be found inhabiting the regions where such conditions prevail. In addition, on the open stretches near the coast, and on the alluvial plains near the Lorian Swamps, zebra, Grant's gazelle and a few other of the more characteristic plain-dwellers will be seen.

Of the larger game, buffalo, rhinoceros and lion are very scarce, but there is a small herd of buffalo in the tsetse-infested jungle in the south-east of the Biskayia district, which is known to the natives under the name of Wama Iddu (sandy swamp), and from time to time I came across the pug marks of a lion in Joreh, where game is more or less plentiful. Leopards

CHAPTER XXIII

THE UASO NYIRO

HAD circumstances permitted, I should like to have spent a much longer time in exploring Marti and the surrounding country, but it was essential that I should proceed without delay, for, should game be scarce, starvation both for my men and myself would stare me in the face. Meru, the nearest food supply, was nearly 150 miles away, and I had no provisions left except the sheep I had bought from the Borana, a little tea, sugar and a few pounds of flour full of weevils. It was therefore imperative that I should waste no time, and so I turned my back on Marti, not without regret, and marched westwards, following the southern bank of the Uaso Nyiro. Although my men were aware of the shortage of our food supply, they showed no anxiety, and would have been perfectly willing to remain near Marti for a week or more, so implicit is the trust shown by natives in the foresight and wisdom of their white masters.

On the banks of the Uaso Nyiro dom palms and a few mimosas form a narrow but picturesque belt of tropical vegetation. Within a mile of the river they disappear, giving place to a dense and almost impenetrable tangle of bush and tall grass, which in turn gradually changes into more open country as the Uaso Nyiro is left behind. It was across the latter that I sent my camels, having arranged to meet near some

A FIGHT—RHINOCEROS

small hills known to both guides, while I entered the jungle on foot in search of buffalo or rhinoceros. I had not gone very far when I saw two gazelle fighting; they would run and butt each other, and then with horns interlocked would push their hardest in strenuous endeavour to overthrow their adversary. So pre-occupied were they that they allowed me to approach within 30 yards, when, having apparently heard me, they broke apart, turned round and stared fixedly in my direction. As I needed meat, I seized the opportunity and fired, killing the larger of the two. All the meat was sent back to the camels, which were not far off, while I went northwards into the bush, which had now become extremely dense.

In all directions it was crossed by buffalo and rhinoceros paths, but there was little fresh spoor of the latter and none of the former. The guide led the way with his bow and arrow in readiness, while I followed, holding my .450 Express rifle. The grass met high over our heads, forming, as it were, a tunnel, and down this we crept along the game trail which twisted and turned as it approached the river. At length the grass gave place to dense bush and acacia trees, and at the bottom of a bank we came upon a small and shallow pool where some rhinoceros had just been wallowing. For on the trees that surrounded it fresh mud was still clinging where they had rubbed themselves after their bath. On the plains or in open, park-like country, rhinoceros are neither very dangerous nor difficult to bag, but in the bush he becomes a truly formidable antagonist, for it is almost impossible to detect him when he is lying down. Then circumstances are much more in his favour, for, owing to his acute senses of hearing and of smell, he has every

A NEED FOR CAUTION

chance of locating his adversary long before he himself has been seen. Being subject to fits of unreasoning rage, he will often charge the hunter blindly when disturbed, either from fear, pure viciousness, or in a wild attempt to escape. On such occasions there is only time for a single shot, and unless this is well placed, the rhinoceros is more likely to bag the hunter than to be bagged himself.

Before setting out on the spoor, the guide, in order to encourage us, said that he and his companion had tried to enter that patch of bush some two months previously, but having been charged twice by rhinoceros and three times by buffalo they had had to retire! With redoubled caution I went on, but the wind was very fickle, and I was afraid it would betray our presence before I could get a shot. Nor was I mistaken, for very soon there was a tremendous commotion in the bush ahead, and out dashed two rhinoceros, followed by a small calf. They stood for a moment peering, first this way and then that, and I was able to get a good view of them. None carried long horns, so I decided not to shoot unless they charged. Suddenly they dashed off, emitting loud snorts, and carrying their tails high in the air, looking like nothing so much as huge pigs. At the same moment, just as they were disappearing in the bush, a gun went off close to my head; turning round, I saw that my interpreter, Hassan, had pulled the trigger of his gun by mistake in the excitement of the moment. I was naturally much annoyed, and threatened to take his rifle from him, as it was quite enough to keep a look-out in front without having to think of being shot from behind!

Nothing further was seen for a long time. We

A RHINO BATHING-PLACE

marched for hours through the bush, and then beneath the dom palms, until I suddenly came upon another rhino bathing-place, but the appearance of the tracks proved clearly that the pool had not been visited for several days. My guide pointed out, near by, a tiny little hiding-place he had built, and he told me that his companion and himself had shot a rhinoceros there not very long before on its way down to drink ; in order to prove his words, he took me some 500 yards down the game trail, and there, sure enough, I saw its remains, the white bones cleaned and bleached, showing up in striking contrast to the gloom of the palm-grove. Amid the quiet and lovely surroundings in which they lay, they were a harsh reminder of the tragedy, for ever lurking in the shadow of the bush, that threatens the lives of all wild animals—tragedies so quickly consummated and as quickly forgotten.

The camp, whither the camels were going, was still a long way on, so I did not rest here, but marched on again through the dense undergrowth. It was now oppressively hot ; no breath of air stirred below, although above I could see the tops of the palm trees swaying in the wind. We were all wet to the waist from the tall grass ; hidden holes in the ground and concealed dead branches made walking a slow and trying business. A tremendous crashing, and the sound of flying hoofs came with startling suddenness to break the silence, as a herd of waterbuck rose at our very feet, and galloped off through the bush ; I saw no more rhino, and no buffalo, nor any fresh tracks of either, but as I emerged again into more open country I caught a glimpse of a small herd of impalla, already in full flight, bounding over the bushes with astonishing grace and facility. These

IMPALLA—A TIRING MARCH

beautiful antelopes are always a joy to watch, with their foxy red coat, white throat, and long lyrate horns, and they form a very desirable trophy. Along the Uaso Nyiro, especially along its upper reaches and between it and Ngabotok, the horns of the impalla attain a much greater length than they do elsewhere. I saw two magnificent specimens in Nairobi, both well over 30 inches, that had been shot by an officer in the K.A.R. near Ngabotok, but near the Tana River they are much smaller, and I have never seen any in that locality that could compare with those found near the Uaso Nyiro, although, as far as I know, there is no reason for this increase of size.

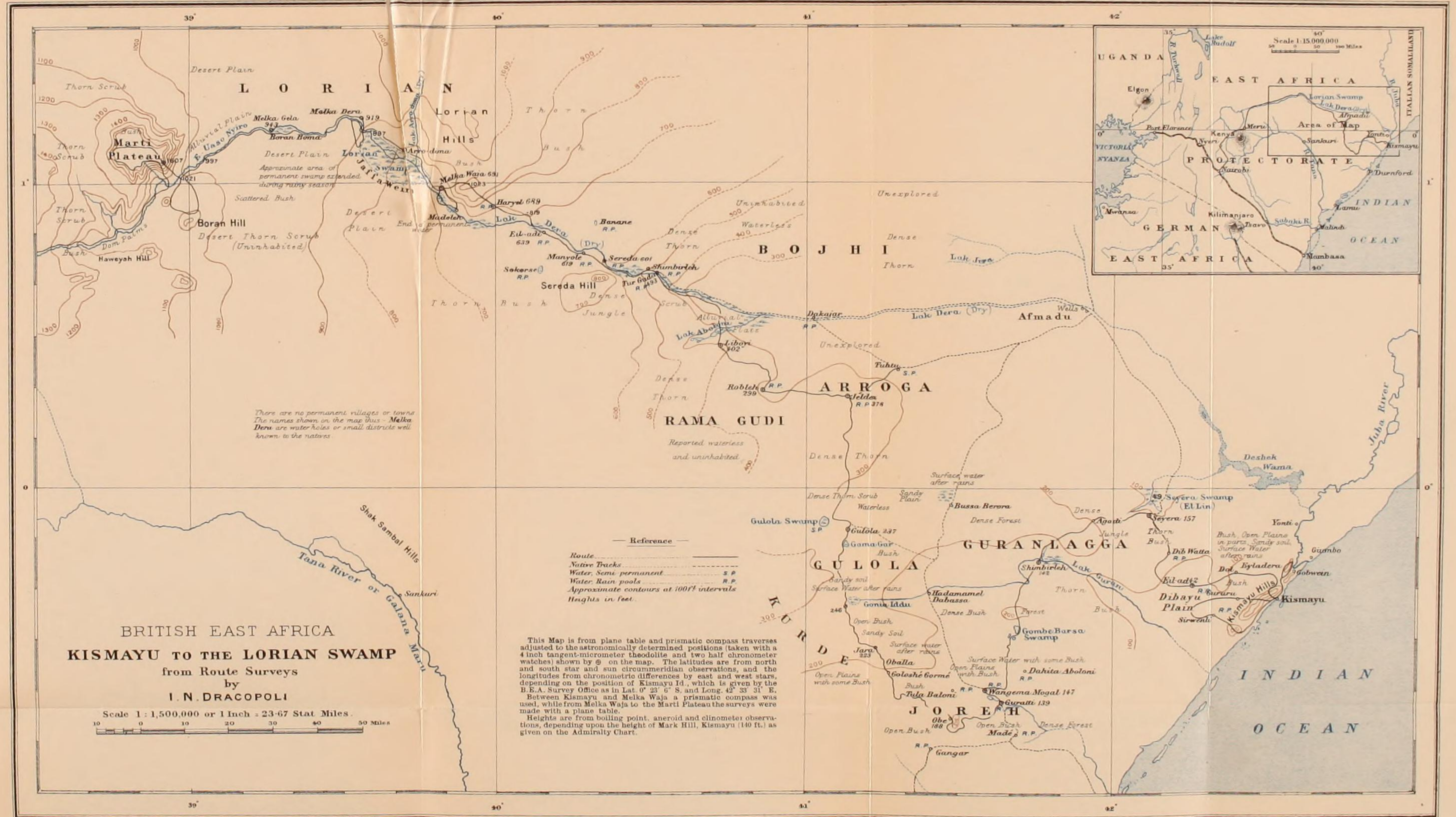
At one o'clock the guide, in answer to my question, said that "Camp was not too far"—a characteristically vague expression; but it was not until after three o'clock that I caught sight of the camels feeding, and soon my tent appeared under a large tree. It had been a tiring march of some ten hours, so some food was very welcome, and the Grant's gazelle I had killed in the morning provided some excellent meat. On the following day I had decided, on the advice of my guides, to cross the river and join the trail that leads along the northern bank. In order to minimise the risk of the camels being bitten by tsetse fly, I determined to start well after sunrise, as the camp was but three miles from the ford.

The sun had already dispersed the morning mist as the caravan started out, and it was eight o'clock by the time we had crossed the thick belt of bush and palm, and had reached the low shelving bank which marked the ford. The river was very broad, but quite shallow, and the scenery particularly lovely and

APPENDIX D
NAMES OF ANIMALS

English.	Somali.	Swahili.
1. Buffalo	Gisi	Mbogo.
2. Bushbuck	—	Pongo.
3. Crocodile	—	Mamba.
4. Dik-dik	Sakaro	Paa.
5. Elephant	Marodi	Tembo.
6. Nearly all gazelles	Aoul	Swala.
7. Gerenuk	Gerenuk	Gerenuk.
8. Giraffe	Gir'ri	Twiga.
9. Hippo	Jir	Kiboko.
10. Hunter's hartebeeste	Arrola	Arrola.
11. Hyæna	Didar (striped) Woroba (spotted)	Fisi.
12. Impalla	Arrola	Swala, or Palla.
13. Kudu (greater) „ (lesser)	Godir Dir-dir	Marua. Kungu.
14. Leopard	Shebeil	Chui.
15. Lion	Lib'bah	Simba.
16. Oryx	Biid (plural, Biida)	Cheroa.
17. Rhino	Wiil	Faru.

THROUGH JUBALAND TO THE LORIAN SWAMP



LIST OF POSITIONS.

Name of Station.	Latitude.	Longitude.
Eil-ad	0 18 45 S.	42 16 26 E.
Seyera	0 4 12 "	42 06 01 "
Shimbirleh	0 14 43 "	41 45 28 "
Wangema Mogal	0 39 55 "	41 35 20 "
Guratti	0 42 03 "	41 38 15 "
Jara	0 32 17 "	41 13 10 "
Gonia Iddu Camp near..	0 24 00 "	41 09 03 "
Gulola	0 8 13 "	41 08 11 "
Jeldez	0 17 31 N.	41 09 12 "
Robleh	0 19 21 "	40 51 30 "
Liboyi	0 27 17 "	40 43 00 "
Tur Guda	0 42 11 "	40 30 41 "
Sereda	0 44 20 "	40 20 27 "
Eil-ad	0 51 18 "	40 07 40 "
Haryel	0 53 41 "	39 59 38 "
Melka Waja	0 58 03 "	39 49 16 "
Dera	1 12 58 "	39 34 37 "
Boran Boma	1 09 59 "	39 15 47 "
Marti Plateau (Observation Point)	1 03 57 "	38 54 19 "

There are no permanent villages or towns. The names shown on the map thus - Melka Dera are water holes or small districts well known to the natives.

— Reference —
 Route
 Native Tracks
 Water: Semi permanent S.P.
 Water: Rain pools R.P.
 Approximate contours at 100ft intervals
 Heights in feet.

This Map is from plane table and prismatic compass traverses adjusted to the astronomically determined positions (taken with a 4 inch tangent-micrometer theodolite and two half chronometer watches) shown by S on the map. The latitudes are from north and south star and sun circummeridian observations, and the longitudes from chronometric differences by east and west stars, depending on the position of Kismayu Id., which is given by the B.E.A. Survey Office as in Lat 0° 23' 6" S, and Long 42° 33' 31" E. Between Kismayu and Melka Waja a prismatic compass was used, while from Melka Waja to the Marti Plateau the surveys were made with a plane table.
 Heights are from boiling point, aneroid and clinometer observations, depending upon the height of Mark Hill, Kismayu (140 ft.) as given on the Admiralty Chart.