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COLONY AND PROTECTORATE OF KENYA

**GAME DEPARTMENT  
ANNUAL REPORT  
1930**

**Price 1/-**



ATA RITCHIE

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## NATIVE SCOUTS.

The provision under the estimates for scouts proved very inadequate.

## REVENUE.

## LICENCES.

The sum realised by the sale of game licences during the year was £11,754, comprised as follows:—

Game, £10,566; Game Bird, £556; Trout, £632.

The following comparative table, giving the number of the several game licences over the last eight years, is of interest:—

LICENCES	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930
Visitor's Full ..	35	26	56	35	24	27	36	43
Visitor's Private Land ..	2	33	38	43	25	29	20	11
Serving Officer's ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	5
Resident's Full ..	156	293	367	373	425	301	315	231
Resident's 14-day ..	115	133	102	140	108	139	135	138
Resident's Private Land ..	515	646	744	765	817	647	519	393
Native Employee ..	25	18	22	27	30	14	13	6
Bird ..	..	954	1,268	1,324	1,360	1,050	1,134	1,112
Elephant, 1st ..	58	111	168	173	170	24	37	23
"   2nd ..	..	37	57	57	64	1	4	1
Rhino, 1st ..	52	76	112	117	157	65	63	46
"   2nd ..	..	9	9	11	17	15	17	9
Giraffe ..	5	3	14	8	..	1	6	3
Ostrich ..	2	2	4	4	..	18	17	12
Trophy Dealer's ..	12	54	72	98	137	106	..	..
Game Dealer's ..	..	4	4	7	7	4	..	..
Traveller's ..	190	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Governor's Permit ..	..	..	..	9	4	9	27	78
Total Revenue £	8,284	11,499	17,681	16,490	15,478	11,073	13,285	11,754

The following analysis table of licences issued during the year is also of interest:—

Licences	European	Indian	Goan	Arab and Somali	Native	TOTAL
Visitor's Full ..	43	..	..	..	..	43
Visitor's Private Land ..	11	..	..	..	..	11
Serving Officer's ..	5	..	..	..	..	5
Resident's Full ..	220	7	..	4	..	231
Resident's 14-day ..	138	..	..	..	..	138
Resident's Private Land ..	379	3	3	8	..	393
Native Employee ..	6	..	..	..	..	6
Bird ..	573	159	75	178	127	1,112
Elephant, 1st (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	3	..	..	..	..	3
Elephant, 1st (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	20	..	..	..	..	20
Elephant, 2nd (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Elephant, 2nd (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Rhino, 1st (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	19	..	..	..	..	19
Rhino, 1st (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	27	..	..	..	..	27
Rhino, 2nd (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	2	..	..	..	..	2
Rhino, 2nd (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	7	..	..	..	..	7
Giraffe (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	2	..	..	..	..	2
Giraffe (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Ostrich (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	3	2	..	..	..	5
Ostrich (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	7	..	..	..	..	7
Governor's Permits ..	46	1	..	..	..	47
Governor's Permits for Elephants in Meru District—						
Bull ..	14	..	..	..	..	14
Cow ..	17	..	..	..	..	17
Duplicates of Lost Licences Sh.10	1	..	..	..	..	1
Visitor's Yearly Trout Licences ..	2	..	..	..	..	2
Visitor's Fortnightly Trout Licences ..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Visitor's 24-hourly Trout Licences ..	3	..	..	..	..	3
Resident's Yearly Trout Licences Sh. 25	386	..	2	..	..	388
Resident's Fortnightly Trout Licences .. Sh. 10	144	..	2	..	..	146
Resident's 24-hourly Trout Licences .. Sh. 3	347	1	27	1	..	376
Duplicates of Lost Licences Sh. 2	2	..	..	..	..	2
TOTAL ..	2,430	173	109	191	127	3,030

Cases of shooting without licence may, and doubtless do, occur, especially on private land, but I believe infrequently, for I am convinced that the majority of people recognise and respect their obligations to the community in this respect.

Several instances were reported of shooting taking place on private land without the consent of the owner.

I consider this a mean form of poaching, for there is still in Kenya ample game on Crown land for everyone who cares to take out a licence, and it is unnecessary to blow up someone's herd of semi-tame tommy, impala, or whatever it may be. I should like to take this opportunity of saying that this Department will always give any help it can to aggrieved landowners in such cases.

It is now an offence under the Game Ordinance to shoot game on private land without permission of the owner or his agent, and I hope that before long this provision will be extended so as to include game birds also, thus bringing the Game Bird Ordinance into line with the Game and Trout Ordinances.

#### NATIVE.

I regret to have to report that conditions in several parts of the Colony were very bad; worst perhaps in the Northern Frontier Province.

This latter area presents a difficult problem. A huge area of 92,000-odd square miles (or nearly one-half of the total area of Kenya) of bush is inhabited—if one can use the word in relation to a population of less than one (actually 0.67) per square mile—by a great variety of wholly or almost wholly nomadic peoples. It has five Government stations on points of its periphery: Siolo, Bura, Wajir, Mandera, and Moyale, and one, Marsabit, in its heart. Roads of access to these stations, and such other roads as are administratively essential, have been made. Apart from these nibbles of civilisation, the vast area remains as untroubled and as intractable as the pyramids—Africa at its most primitive and most relentless.

As well expect a native *toto* with a stick to keep a swarm of hungry locusts off a five-thousand-acre maize crop, as hope that an Assistant Game Warden, with a Ford car and a dozen scouts, can control poaching over this area. The "home" provided by international boundaries makes the game of "Tom Tiddler's ground" still more hopelessly one-sided.

It may be of interest to recount details of one or two of the more outstanding cases.

By far the biggest and most important was the capture of a consignment of rhino horn at Malindi.

There were 218 horns, weighing 955 lb.—worth, at that time, some £600.

The conviction of the "owner," a Barawa—he is still paying instalments of his fine, which amounted to £560!—led to the break-up of the gang, of which he was chief, and the conviction of fourteen of his fellows. The headquarters of his organisation was at Mariakani, a village which has long been notorious for the facilities it offers, lying as it does at the junction of three districts—Kilifi, Mombasa and Kwale.

The only unsatisfactory point in an otherwise excellent case lay in the fact, as we learned subsequently, that the horns captured were only the second half of the shipment, the first having got clear away.

Another large haul was staged in Nairobi, 38 horns being captured by the Criminal Investigation Department with all the accompaniments of a modern crook play: a bland stool-pigeon, detectives behind hedges, motor cars being abandoned and the booty transferred to rickshaws, and the rest. The unsatisfactory point in this case was that the real culprit was not brought to book, his guilt being taken by an underling; or so it appeared to me.

A third case, and one in which I took a somewhat unsatisfactory part—unsatisfactory to me, at least—may be recorded in some detail, since it has points of interest.

I got information that there were rhino horns hidden in or about a certain *duka* in the Masai Reserve, a couple of miles from Konza Station. Accompanied by Inspector Sweeney, of the Criminal Investigation Department, I raided the place, which consisted of several buildings and a small *shamba* within a double and very thick thorn fence.

It was clear from the demeanour of the various inhabitants that the stuff was on the premises somewhere, but search as we would—and we made a job of it—we could find nothing but a piece of the nasal bone of a rhino, the bone which supports the front horn. The bone had been picked up by a dog, and carried in—so we were told.

At last, with a couple of crowbars, we prodded the ground in and around the buildings; and searched as thoroughly as possible in a near-by huge heap of cattle manure

brought from neighbouring Massi *manyattas*. I thought I had found the cache when the crowbar touched something hard at the bottom of the heap, but on looking at the end of the bar there was nothing but some particles of stone. At last, dispiritedly indeed, we returned to Nairobi. I had set out at dawn feeling the complete sleuth; I returned after dark feeling a complete fool.

We got our own back, however, two days later, when, as a result of some further information, Sweeney and the Game Department head scout, Saa, went down again—I couldn't spare the time—and found 34 horns in a thicket a couple of hundred yards from the *duka*. From the disorder of the manure heap, and subsequent admissions, it appeared that when the crowbar hit the stone it had been a few inches only from the horn, which was hidden in a hole covered with stone at the base of the manure heap.

Sweeney's capture was only just in time, for the horn was to have gone to the Coast that night.

The sequel to this capture was unsatisfactory, since the owner of the *duka*, an Indian, fled the country before the case came on. I regret that he did not remain to enjoy the period of enforced leisure which would have allowed him to meditate on his misdoings and manure heaps.

#### DAMAGE BY GAME AND VERMIN, AND ATTEMPTS AT CONTROL.

Reports of damage by game and vermin were somewhat less numerous than usual, though as varied and widespread as ever, ranging from elephants at Lamu to porcupines near Kisii.

The two game and vermin control officers were hard at work throughout the year.

Captain Oulton operated in the following areas: Naivasha, Nakuru and the Mau in that vicinity, Kaimosi, Kakamega, and finally Kisii. He worked well and consistently, poisoning hyena, baboon, bush pig, leopard, and porcupine, as well as dealing with a herd of marauding buffalo; for this latter work he found it necessary to invoke the aid of certain Wanderobo, the nature of the country making it impossible to influence them by ordinary methods of hunting.

He reported the Kaimosi-Kakamega area to be infested with vermin to an unbelievable degree, and the following extracts from his monthly report for September from Kakamega give some idea of his work there:—

“During the month, fifty-eight natives have brought to me maize cobs, sweet potatoes and bananas for baiting with arsenite for pigs, baboons and porcupines, and brought meat or fowls for baiting with strychnine for leopards, hyenas, cats and mongooses.

“Considerable numbers of dead hyenas have been found, also a fair number of dead pigs, baboons, cats, mongooses and porcupines. Those actually found are certain to be only a fraction of the total, owing to the excessively luscious growth of high grass and scrub.

“I have made two *safaris* to places off the road where a car could not be used, one visit lasting three days and the other five days. The natives at the villages visited gladly supplied the porters for carrying camp kit, etc., and without payment. Whilst I was at one of these villages a number of hyenas broke into a hut and killed eleven fowls.

“Several cases of leopards and hyenas causing the deaths of cattle and sheep were reported to me, and strychnine was placed in the remnants in each case.

“I spent three days on the Nzoia River in an attempt to deal with the hippo complained of. Only one was in evidence at the time, and this I shot, but its body was not found, doubtless owing to the excessive flood in the river. These hippos apparently move up and down over a long stretch of the river, and it is a matter of luck to locate them. I hope to pay a further visit to the locality before leaving the district.

“The District Commissioner, Kakamega, expressed a wish that I should visit the veterinary station at Sangalo, near Bungoma, where numbers of leopards, hyenas, cats, mongooses, etc., abounded. I found it was a newly opened animal husbandry establishment, where preparations were afoot for the reception of cattle, pure-bred fowls, etc., for demonstrating improved methods of housing, treatment, etc. It was a vital necessity that the considerable numbers of vermin should be dealt with before the establishment was stocked up. Near-by there were extensive rocky kopjes covered with thick undergrowth and timber, and full of caves—just the ideal quarters for vermin. Whilst there, word was brought in of a leopard having killed a heifer

Captain Whittet had an unhappy time. In the first place, he was away from his area, the Northern Frontier Province, for several periods, since he had to come in to take charge at Nairobi when I was away; and even when he was free to try to deal with the widespread poaching, circumstances and lack of resources were against him.

Mr. Dent toured the Colony with his accustomed vigour. His report appears under the appropriate heading.

Mr. MacArthur, who returned from leave free of fever once more, and full of energy, proceeded forthwith to spread panic among the ivory and rhino-horn community; the comparative immunity they had enjoyed during his absence had allowed them to increase their nefarious dealings, and his bag was a heavy one.

His report is as follows:—

" I returned from leave in March, 1930, and, hearing bad reports from Malindi-Mariakani, went on *safari* to that area within a month of my return. Camped on the Voi River some 50 miles east of Voi, and commenced inquiry and investigation of really bad poaching of the year 1929. Several poachers admitted killing three to as many as fifteen rhino in six to twelve months, with an odd elephant or two, the rhino horns being sold at Mariakani and other trading centres. The meat of the animals was left to rot in the bush country. The cases were heard in Mombasa and Malindi, and there were many convictions. I ended the *safari* in Mombasa Hospital, down with malaria, about August of 1930. From September to the end of the year, the Wakamba at Masongaleni, Ziwani and Taveta were visited, and many offenders brought to court.

" *Rhino*.—The Wansanye, Wakamba, and Wagiriana hunted chiefly for rhino, owing to the high value of the horn and an easy market at Mariakani. Several areas suffered badly, but the more impenetrable thorn-bush country happily still contains a very fair number of the great beast.

" *Elephant*, too, were hunted by these tribes, but not nearly so badly as in previous years. His ivory is the hunter's private banking account, as it keeps for years when buried in sand and near water.

" *Lion*.—The Coast is not a lion area. Those on the Serengetti Plains and Tana River appear to have suffered by the leopard-trappers, but are still numerous.

" *Leopard*.—This animal has, in many areas, been practically wiped out by trappers, and in consequence baboons and pigs have increased to incredible numbers. I have met native trappers with as many as fifteen steel traps, and ten a common number, moving over large areas, waterhole to waterhole. The Wasanye and Waboni set poisoned arrow traps on game paths for leopard, and there are several cases where innocent human beings have fired the arrows into their legs and died. The whole country from Voi to Sankuri is a very dangerous area for these bow-and-arrow traps, and presents a most difficult problem to deal with.

" *Buffalo*.—The Coast has many large herds of buffalo, and they are safe from attacks by natives armed with bow and arrow and those armed with a rifle, living as they do in dense bush and sansevieria. These herds seldom, if ever, suffer from rinderpest or such diseases.

" *Topi*.—These antelopes are very numerous on the North Tana and south banks.

" *Water-buck*.—Very numerous on the Tsavo, Sabaki and Tana River.

" *Oryx, Fringe-eared*, are numerous on the Serengetti Plains."

The work of the game and vermin control officers has been related above.

The clerical staff of the Department worked with their accustomed application, and it was seldom that I could lay the blame for any office oversights on their shoulders.

With regard to the work of the scouts, there is little of interest to record. One of them went to gaol for extortion and taking bribes. This offence, although in a way it may form a kind of informal and poetic justice, is yet one for which we are always on the watch. The pay of native scouts is naturally not high, and the temptation to accept hush money often great. I may say in this connexion that scouts are very often accused falsely of taking money by those they have reported: and also natives quite often pass themselves off as scouts in order to extort from their fellows.

The work of the head scout at the Coast must again be commended. Diwan bin Ahmed may, with practical truth, be said to be worth his weight in gold to this Department. He has in the last few years been instrumental in the confiscation of many thousand pounds' worth of ivory and rhino horn. It is not to belittle the astonishing success of Mr.