

UGANDA PROTECTORATE.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

GAME DEPARTMENT

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1927.

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1928.

It is a matter of congratulation that Mr. G. L. Maitland-Warne came off as lightly as he did, for he was in the water for the best part of twenty minutes, before being rescued, in a locality which is infested with man-eating crocodiles.

Expenditure and Revenue.

6. Figures for 1927 are as follows:—

	£	s.	dts.
Expenditure	6,987	13	67
Revenue	26,664	6	23
Balance of revenue over expenditure	19,676	12	56

7. The revenue was derived as follows:—

	£	s.	dts.
(a) Sale of ivory, rhinoceros horns and hippopotamus teeth	21,445	12	43
(b) Sale of buffalo hides	25	1	50
(c) Game licences	5,193	12	00

8. *Game Licences.*—Revenue from licences is most satisfactory, for although a slight decrease is shown on the figures for 1926, it must be remembered that after 1st October, 1926, the cost of Resident's and Visitor's (Full) Game Licences, Resident's (Fourteen-day) Licences, and Special Elephant Licences were reduced by 33%. Figures for the last five years are:—

	£	s.	dts.
1923	5,341	10	00
1924	3,540	10	00
1925	4,337	4	00
1926	5,772	12	05
1927	5,193	12	00

9. Game licences were issued:—

	No.		No.
Resident's (Full)	244	Resident's or Visitor's Special—One White Rhinoceros	6
Visitor's (Full)	13	Resident's or Visitor's Special—One Gnu	—
Resident's (Fourteen-day)	16	Native's Special—First Elephant	5
Visitor's (Fourteen-day)	8	Native's Special—Second Elephant	2
Resident's or Visitor's Special—First Elephant	130	Native's Special—Two Elephants	1
Resident's or Visitor's Special—Second Elephant	61	Bird	1:8
Resident's or Visitor's Special—Two Elephants	18		

10. *Ivory.*—Two ivory auctions were held at Kampala, one in May and the other in November. At the former 6,462½ lbs.—consisting of small bull and small cow tusks—were withdrawn from the sale owing to the offers received being below the reserve prices. At the latter, buying was brisk and all lots were disposed of on the first day.

Total weights sold and average gross prices realised:—

							Approx. average gross price per lb.
	Lbs.		Shs.	Cts.	£	Shs.	Cts.
May 4th, 1927.							Shs. dts.
Ivory	23,002½	...	266	847 24	(13,342	7	24)
Rhinoceros horns	132	...	3,999	60	(199	19	60)
Hippopotamus teeth	85	...	93	50	(4	13	50)
November 14th, 1927.							
Ivory	17,154	...	1,538	65	10,265	12	00
Rhinoceros horns	61	...	1,225	68	(111	5	68)
Hippopotamus teeth	69	...	17	25	(17	25)	

The prices of ivory generally continue low. Soft, large and medium tusks, have been steady on average, though with a tendency to decline, but showed an improvement towards the end of the year. Bangle ivory which represents the majority of tusks offered at these sales has kept firm with an upward tendency. Billiard ball ivory has gradually, but steadily, risen.

In May the prices realised on the ivory and hippopotamus teeth sold were considerably below those realised at the last sale but compared very favourably with the existing London prices. Although the prevailing market price for rhinoceros horns was high, the price obtained was exceptionally good in view of the fact that the majority of the horns sold had been damaged by insects.

In November, the price realised on ivory was slightly lower than that obtained at the May sales, but compares favourably with those realised at other markets.

The demand for rhinoceros horns continues as keen as before. At the end of 1927 there was in store at Kampala:—

	No.	Weight lbs.
Ivory (cracks)	350	5,421½
Rhinoceros horns	12	79
Hippopotamus teeth	40	223

Ivory Receipts and Sales during the Year.

				RECEIPTS		SALES	
				lbs.	val.	lbs.	val.
January	...	...	...	3995	0	—	—
February	...	...	...	40	8	—	—
March	...	...	...	3371	0	—	—
April	...	...	...	2503	8	—	—
May	...	...	...	1510	10	—	8
	...	...	...	4351	0	2300	8
TOTAL				35372	10	2380	0
Balance at May	...	...	...	3260	1	—	—
June	...	...	...	529	8	—	—
July	...	...	...	193	12	—	—
August	...	...	...	1749	8	—	—
September	...	...	...	3463	14	—	—
October	...	...	...	937	0	—	—
November	...	...	...	1580	12	48	0+
	...	...	...	—	—	18145	8
TOTAL				22141	—	18145	8
Balance November	...	...	...	4102	8	—	—
December	...	...	...	1319	0	—	—
TOTAL				5421	8	—	—
Balance at close of December	...	...	...	—	—	5421	8

* Written off. * Unavailable ivory. * Unavailable ivory. * Unavailable ivory.

Illegal Killing of Game and Breaches of the Game Laws.

12. During 1927 there were practically the same number of convictions for breaches of the Game Ordinance as were obtained in each of the last two years, viz. 23 and 23.

Karamoja	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gulu	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mbarakuti	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Tororo	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Homa	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
East Pord	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Jinja	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Kampala	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Generally speaking, there is little poaching, and in the majority of prosecutions the offences were of a minor nature. It is gratifying to note that there is less inclination on the part of the local inhabitants to kill such inoffensive creatures as giraffes and ostriches.

There was one particularly flagrant breach of the game laws in Gulu when a European, resident in Uganda, was convicted of killing four elephants with underweight tusks, three of them being in excess of the licence he held. A fine of Shs. 500 was imposed.

13. The production, during the year, at district headquarters West Nile of twenty-two white rhinoceros horns, totalling 122 lbs. in weight, merits further investigation, being the equivalent of a total of eleven animals destroyed.

Horns brought in during 1925 of fifteen, and in 1926 of no less than seventeen, animals, represent figures far exceeding the number of deaths that can be attributed to natural causes. Annual mortality at this rate would entail the speedy extermination of the species in the Protectorate.

There is an indication that many of these "found" rhinoceros horns are of considerable age *vide* the remarks in regard to the May ivory auction when the rhinoceros horns were described as of poor quality and damaged by insects.

Of the twenty-two "found" horns, four originated from two animals killed in self-defence or lost wounded by big game hunters. In addition six white rhinoceros were killed under special licence.

It has been decided to prohibit completely the hunting of this fine animal and in future no more permits will be granted. Four "found" rhinoceros horns brought into Gulu are possibly those of the white variety.

The inducements to poach are many if it is realised that the value of rhinoceros horn on the home market has reached the figure of Shs. 46 per lb. with a steady upward tendency. Front horns of 15 and 17 lbs. in weight which are included in those found

therefore become trophies of considerable value. But, as there is no reward paid for bringing in "found" rhinoceros horns, it is evident that any illegal killing which takes place is not done with a view to making profit out of the horns.

14. A paucity of game in Gomba in the eastern extremity of the Entebbe district cannot be attributed to poaching and an explanation of this state of affairs in an area which a few years ago was well-stocked, must be sought elsewhere.

It is probable that the activities of wild (hunting) dogs have been the determining factor in the existing scarcity, for though for some time no reports have been received of the depredations of these pests, they were unusually active in this area in the early part of 1925.

In Buddu, in the Masaka district, the local inhabitants with the aid of spiked foot-traps and other illegal contrivances appear to keep the numbers of topi and smaller antelopes completely in check.

Topi and haartebeest of all wild animals are probably the easiest to snare, and will foolishly return time and again to water-holes, salt-licks or ant-hills baited with salt, where they have previously seen members of their own species fall victims to traps.

The Game Ranger, Mubende, comments on the slow increase of topi and reedbuck and does not suspect poaching as the few animals encountered are not shy.

It is probable that the damage is caused by foot-trapping, which, from numerous observations, I have noticed does not tend to make these species wild.

Frequent visits are apparently made by natives from Toro, with the intention of hunting game, to the Buyaga sleeping sickness (prohibited) area on the Lake Albert littoral. They cross the end of the lake in dug-outs.

Although the poachers are responsible for considerable damage there is little doubt that at present it is the ravages of lions which are keeping down the numbers of game in that locality.

15. From time to time incidents occur in the West Nile district in connection with elephant hunting and ivory transactions which are open to suspicion: it is hoped in future to take vigorous action in that locality to detect offences in this connection.

The Acholi, as of old, periodically make forays into the (prohibited) sleeping sickness areas for the purpose of hunting game. Large numbers of natives annually, at the season when the grass is burnt, enter the Gulu prohibited area and the Bunyoro Game Reserve in search of the tusks of wounded elephants which have withdrawn into those sanctuaries to die.

Game Trophies.

16. Export permits for elephant tusks, buffalo hides, hippopotamus teeth, blue monkey skins, and other trophies of pronounced marketable value, were issued during 1927 as under:—

TUSKS OF ELEPHANTS OBTAINED BY LICENCE-HOLDERS AS REPRESENTED BY
EXPORT PERMITS ISSUED DURING 1927.

District.	over 30 under 40	over 40 etc.	over 50 etc.	over 60 etc.	over 70 etc.	over 80 etc.	over 90 etc.	over 100 etc.	over 110 etc.	over 120 etc.	Total for District.
Mengo	2	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Mubende	8	6	1	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
Masaka	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ankole	1	2	2	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	8
Kigezi	...	...	4	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	6
Toro	10	8	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	22
Bunyoro	22	14	20	8	12	2	2	...	...	...	52
West Nile	17	32	24	11	5	3	...	...	1	1	92
Gulu	6	4	6	10	10	4	...	...	...	...	40
Chua	...	4	4	2	4	...	...	...	...	...	14
Karamoja	3	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Lango	2	3	9	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	18
Bugishu	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Bugweri	4	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Bugoya	...	...	2	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	6
Budama	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
TOTALS	75	78	76	45	37	14	3	...	1	1	330
1926 TOTALS	85	66	63	45	34	28	7	5	...	...	333*

* Includes seven single-tuskers.

17. *N.B.*—(a) Four pairs of underweight tusks—errors of judgment on the part of licence-holders—were returned to sportsmen, thus filling their licences.

(b) The above list represents a total of 165 elephants obtained by licence-holders, to which must be added the four elephants with underweight tusks referred to in (a).

(c) This total (165 and 4) is almost identical with the total of elephants (170 and 5) obtained under licence during 1926.

(d) It is interesting comparing the 1927 figures with those of 1926 for the various weights of tusks. The year 1928 should possibly provide some indication as to whether the bigger tusked bulls are becoming shot out. It is noteworthy that in 1926 twenty-eight tusks of 80 to 90 lbs. in weight were obtained, as opposed to fourteen in 1927; and twelve tusks of 90 lbs. and over as compared with five.

(e) It will be seen that the Northern Province continues to provide the best tusks, as is indicated by the figures from Banyoro, West Nile and Gulu. In this connection it must be remembered that many tusks shown as emanating from Gulu were obtained west of the River Nile in the West Madi area.

18. Hippopotamus teeth	...	816½ lbs. (this does not include sportsmen's trophies)
Rhinoceros horns (Black Rhinoceros)	...	22 (sportsmen's trophies)
Buffalo hides	...	308 (includes 81 hides the property of Government).
Blue monkey skins	...	113
Colobus monkey skins	...	30
Blue Duiker (<i>Ntalaganiya</i>) skins	...	3 karosses, each containing 30—36 skins.

The hippopotamus teeth mostly originated from the River Nile vernia area in the Northern Province, i.e., Gulu 300 lbs. and West Nile 388 lbs. There were also 93 lbs. from Toro and 35½ lbs. from Entebbe.

19. In certain specified areas where buffaloes had proved a nuisance it was deemed advisable, with the recommendation of the local administration, to grant licence-holders permits to kill additional buffaloes as soon as they had obtained the number allowed by their licence.

Government-owned buffalo hides originate from the activities of the game rangers and native guards employed on cultivation protection.

The hides were obtained in the following areas:

(i). *By Licence-holders*.—Toro 47, Mengo 40, Ankole 25, Banyoro 24, Mubende 23, West Nile 20, Busoga 11, Chua 10, Entebbe 9, Gulu (West Madi) 7, Lango 5, Masaka 4, and Kigezi 2. *Total* 227.

(ii). *Cultivation Protection*.—Mubende 30, Banyoro 19, Toro 13, Kigezi 7, Entebbe 5, Masaka 4, Buduma 2, and Bugishu 1. *Total* 91.

20. *Blue Monkey*.—There is a very marked decrease (nearly sixty per cent) in the numbers of skins exported, the majority of which represent the accumulations of past years when this species was not afforded protection.

Colobus Monkey.—With the exception of six, forming a rug, all were obtained under recent licences.

Blue Duiker (Ntalaganiya).—Spasmodic efforts are made by local natives to trade in these skins but with little success. As far as can be ascertained from game registers received and export permits issued, the numbers of the more interesting species obtained under licence during the year are as under:—White Rhinoceros 6 (West Nile), and in addition two killed (a) in self-defence, (b) in error; Black Rhinoceros 12 (Gulu, Karamoja and Lango); Lesser Kudu 2 (Karamoja); Grant's Gazelle (Bright's) 15 (Karamoja); Oryx 9 (Karamoja); Klipspringer 4 (Ankole and Karamoja); Eland 14 (Ankole and Karamoja) including two shot in error in Toro; Impati 8 (Ankole and Masaka); Situtunga 9 (includes some old trophies). These figures can only be accepted as a guide, and are certainly below the actual numbers of animals killed.