

Game in the Zande Country.

1911—1925.

By MAJOR P. N. LARKEN.

All the common species of antelopes were fairly evenly distributed over the districts in the parts suitable to them—waterbuck, Uganda kob, Jackson's hartebeeste, dikdik, duiker (red duiker and the little grey one, so like an Italian greyhound, very common in the thicker forests), and Oribi. Warthog were common and the red bush pig a pest. So were buffalo, which seemed to be of two types, one with a very broad knobbly palm and the other with a smaller palm from which ridges or grooves extended parallel to the axis of the horn. Red and black beasts ran in the same herd. The biggest buffalo I ever saw was a red female in a large mixed herd.

In one or two places one found an abnormal amount of game, notably on the Diabaingbe stream in Ezo's country, and the Maingbara ($28^{\circ}11'E$ $5^{\circ}7'N$) in Ogbo's. And there were those odd patches of forest which held nothing at all, and over which seemed to hang a cloud of gloom that made one glad to get out of them.

It was noticeable that south of the Sue river the Waterbuck far out-numbered the hartebeeste, while north of it the reverse was the case.

I cannot remember seeing roan south of the Sue, even north of it they were scarce. There were a fair number near where the old Tembura-Wau road alongside the Sue crossed the Bo river, but on the whole they were a rarity.

Eland were said to be found in the Vugba forest in Boro's country along the south bank of the Sue, and a junior Departmental official on tour once surprised me by saying that he had shot at one on the Yambio-Tembura road somewhere near the Lingasi river. As this individual was, however, such an unsporting type that he could say to me with a revolting air of complacency "I hit him, anyhow," he may well have made a mistake in identification. Though I only once saw a herd of fourteen in Mbiri Tembura's country, there were plenty of tracks.

I seldom came across a rhinoceros, but used to see a great amount of spoor in the countries of Tembura's sons Mbiri and Maringinda, north of the Sue, and I once nearly fell over one three or four days march north west of Tembura Station.

Giraffe I can only remember seeing on the Mazawa, next stream to the Maingbara, where a herd could usually be found. Since the people consider that eating their meat brings on leprosy, as indeed the mere handling of the blotchy skin could do, they are not likely to be molested by man.

One might expect to come across a lion anywhere, though I think there was a greater concentration of them near the Iba river ferry, and along the old Tembura-Wau road by the Sue than anywhere else. In my opinion they should not be shot as they provide such a lot of meat for the people. I can remember no cases of maneaters. The only complaint I ever heard was an occasion when the people asked me to deal with one which had settled down near a path and was threatening passers by. No action on my part was necessary, however, for on starting out a messenger came saying that it was a lioness, and that she had been seen moving off with her cub in her mouth—which of course explained her aggressive attitude.

And there was the little man who told me that he had killed a lion the previous day with an arrow because they had met on the path "and he put his teeth out at me" "*u kusi lindi ru fe re.*" Still, that is flimsy evidence of his being a maneater.

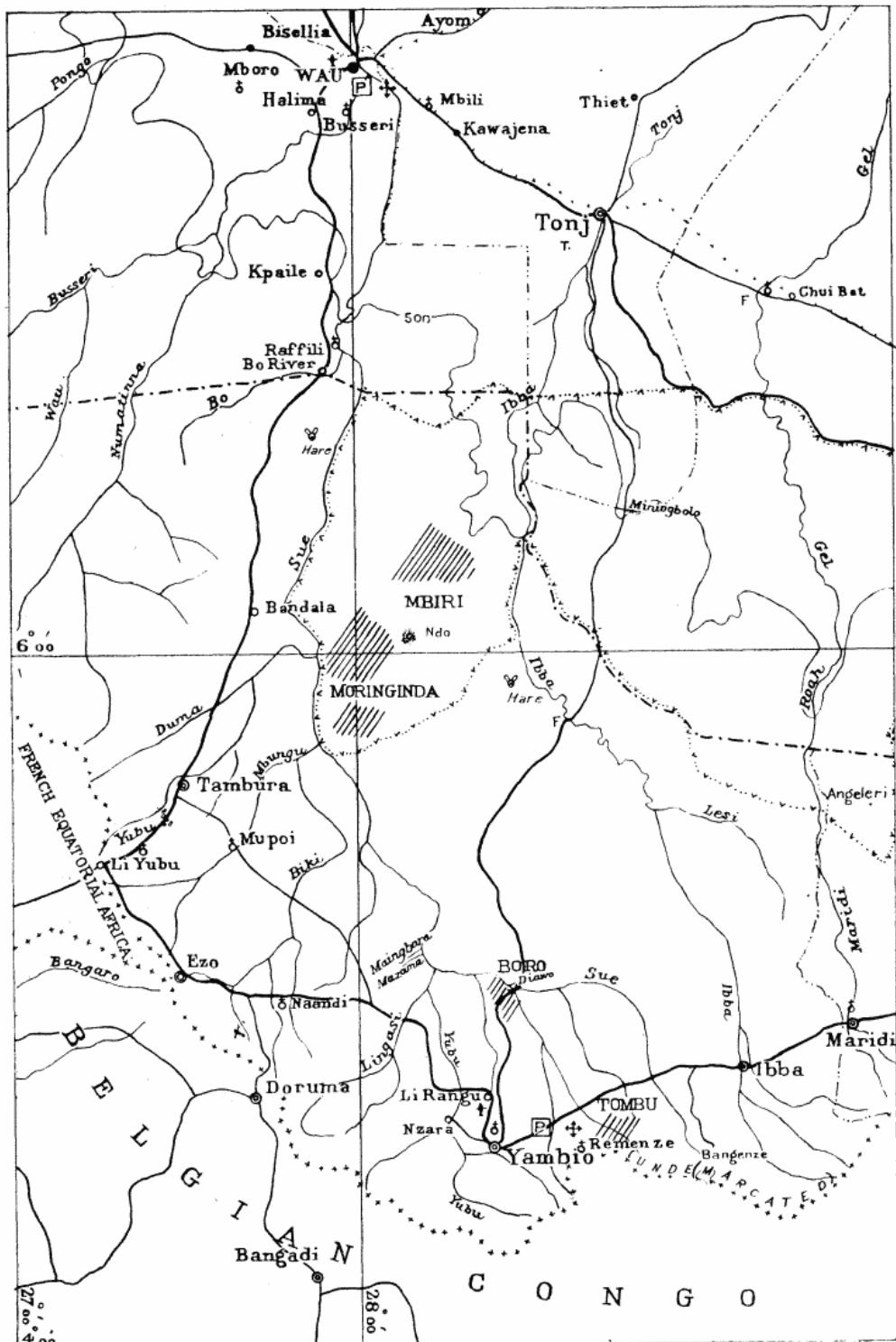
Leopard were anywhere.

Hyaena were fairly common on the Iba river but not elsewhere. In the resthouse near the Iba ferry we had some meat smoking over fires one night. Next morning the servants found that it had all disappeared. An investigation showed that a hyaena had snatched it from the little wooden platforms on which it was drying, and deposited it in small heaps all round the perimeter of the resthouse yard.

Wild dogs hunted over the whole area. They seem to be of the same type as those I have shot or seen at Shambe, at Wau, and near the Bo river. The rapidity with which a pack will clear up a carcase was made clear to me when a female waterbuck crossed my path 50 or 60 yards ahead of me, making at full gallop for the safety of the river nearby on my right, closely followed by a dozen or more dogs. A few yards from the river bank the leaders caught her by stifle and pulled her down. In the short time it took me to shoot three or four dogs (which their companions set on and tore up at once) and to drive the rest off, the buck had been disembowelled and a great quantity of the meat eaten.

Walking, with carriers behind me, down the Diawo stream in the evening, I found a pack hunting hartebeeste and shot two. Shortly afterwards, two very small hartebeeste calves came

SUDAN WILD LIFE AND SPORT



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* Bengtsgård