

AN

AUTO-BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

OF

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LATE

CIVIL COMMISSIONER OF CAPE DIVISION AND RESIDENT MAGIS-
TRATE FOR CAPE TOWN AND DISTRICT THEREOF, AND
CAPE DISTRICT.

BEING

A PLAIN NARRATIVE OF OCCURRENCES
FROM EARLY LIFE TO ADVANCED AGE,

CHIEFLY INTENDED FOR HIS CHILDREN AND DESCENDANTS,
COUNTRYMEN AND FRIENDS.

CAPE TOWN :

A. S. ROBERTSON, ADDERLEY-STREET.

1861.

I need not give any description of an animal now so well known. Suffice it to say, our Hottentots, after securing the skin, regaled themselves upon the meat, a portion of which was cut into thin thongs and dried. We also found wild onions, which were very acceptable.

At Krugersfontein is to be seen the grave of a man named Kruger, who had been trampled to death and destroyed by an elephant which he had wounded. His body was found and buried by the Coranahs.

At Biezenfontein, we perceived, at a distance, a party of eight Bushmen and beckoned them to come to us; but by their signs we made out that they wished us to approach, which we did, and found them fully armed with bows and arrows and prepared to defend themselves in case of being attacked. We attempted to remove their fear, and they exhibited a jackal's tail fastened to a stick, which they held up in the air and waved repeatedly, this being their signal of peace. Having reached our camp, we gave them leather caps mounted with copper plates, copper medals, tobacco, &c., and a sheep, which were immediately divided amongst them; but their astonishment seemed unbounded at the sight of a looking-glass and the light it reflected from the sun. This party left apparently well contented; three more approached, but only one could be persuaded to come to us. He received for himself and companions some tobacco, and left after being with us but a few minutes. Here we saw the first springbucks. At Jonkersfontein, the track of a rhinoceros was seen about five hundred yards from our camp; our search for the animal itself was unsuccessful.

Jacob Kruger, who were now to be attached to our expedition, and reached, on the 7th, the residence of a Kora or Koranna chief and his horde at Modderfontein. This people resembled the Hottentots, to whom they belong; were dressed in skins, and spoke with a clicking of the tongue. Assisted by an interpreter I took down the following vocabulary of some of the words of their language. The *t* denotes the click :

man	kgaukweep	tiger	goassaauw
woman	kalakwees	wolf	t'kohaan
child	t'kgau t'koop	quacha	t'kogle
boy	t'kaan kodaap	hartebeest (deer)	t'kam kam
girl	lato t'kodaas	gnu	ghow
house	kgoma	buffalo	t'kou
dog	alima	seacow	t'koes
cat	t'goaap	eland (elk antelope)	t'ganna
fire	t'geys	springbuck	t'koos
water	t'kamma	koedoe	geip
sun	solus	ostrich	t'kammiep
moon	t'geram	one	t'kure
star	t'kamaro	two	t'kam
earth	t'koop	three	t'nona
tree	heyiep	four	fraka
sheep	debigoe	five	kodoe
ox	goomaap	six	t'nam
cow	goomans	seven	hingoe
calf	kien t'koap	eight	t'keive
black rhinoceros	t'kabaas	nine	goccsie
white	„	mogoe koep	giese
small	„	t'kouwbahas	t'koelie kamma
cameleon	t'keep	sea	
lion	gamma	hill	t'koema

At this place, a Bushman captain, called Caricoup, brought us a large piece of rock-salt, and to him and a Kora chief named Ilapaim presents were made of two leather caps mounted with copper-plates, medallions, tobacco, &c.

or Witwaterfontein, where we were detained repairing the axle-tree of one of the wagons, and by a report that some of our oxen were taken by the Bushmen, which turned out to be incorrect.

On the 14th, we reached the Kabeetzie Galie, or Buffelfontein, where we saw some beautiful mimosa trees and a large number of cranes. From this place, Dr. Somerville and Mr. Daniel, Frans Krieger (a farmer), and a Hottentot, Hendrik Booy, proceeded before the rest of the expedition for the next station, with the object of examining the country and meeting wild animals previous to our arrival with the wagons: however, when we arrived about nine at night at a fountain called T'Joekatgoenie or Dwaalfontein, they had not made their appearance, to our great uneasiness; firearms were discharged without effect, and the night was spent under apprehensions for their safety. The next day a Hottentot brought intelligence that they had encamped under the open air during the night, an hour's march beyond us, and had suffered from want of provisions. We then proceeded to Welkomstfontein where we had the pleasure of meeting our friends. We were here visited by some Bushmen who appeared in a state of starvation, and gave them an ample supply of tobacco and meat, with which they departed making signs of having been rendered happy.

In our further progress we passed the T'Goaypa, or Blinkklips River, and arrived at Eende (*Duck*) fontein, so named on account of the number of wild ducks found at that place.

Hearing that at about one and a half hour's distance from our camp, a natural grotto was to be found, Dr. Somerville, one of the interpreters, and myself proceeded

to examine it, and found a cave abounding in red earth mixed with mica and iron ore. The natives dig this out and besprinkle themselves with the powder, after besmearing themselves with grease, which gives their bodies a reddish, shining colour. Above the cave was a small conical hill. The interior of the cave in itself was sufficiently deep to observe objects at its fullest extremity. Wood-pigeons inhabited its crevices, and there were several nests with eggs. The remnants of a fire indicated recent occupation. Having admired the situation of this grotto and gathered some of the ore, which was very heavy and glittered in the sun, we returned to our camp well pleased with our little excursion. We also visited a deserted kraal, where we found several horns of the buffalo and rhinoceros,—one of the latter about two feet long. At this place, the first troop of buffaloes was seen near the camp. Several of the herd were wounded but none killed.

Our next camp was at the Naggaga, or Yzerberg (iron mountain) fontein. Here the rocks on the mountains had the appearance of blue polished steel, and were so impregnated with iron that the needle of the compass placed on one of the rocks turned at least three or four times before it was steady.

On proceeding from thence to the Cossey, we saw many ostriches, springbucks, and hartebeestes about this lake, and several of the bastard jackals, differing from those in the Cape colony. “Cossey” means this animal.

The lake was about three or four thousand yards in circumference, girt with thick long reeds and to the south-west with a large wood of mimosa. We were rather surprised to find it nearly surrounded with holes about

near a small stream named t'Kakoon. Soon after our arrival, we saw the commissioners approaching with the chief Molihaban and some of his principal men, all apparently much pleased. The chief was about fifty years of age and had a very intelligent countenance. He appeared to a certain extent civilized, and was even polite in demeanor; he held a long *sjambock*, or whip of rhinoceros hide, as the staff of order, and with it enforced both respect and authority, for although a number of people had encircled us they were by his attitude kept at a respectful distance, and we saved from pressure and inconvenience.

In outward appearance and dress there was hardly any distinction between the chief and his subjects, except some red copper rings of native manufacture which he wore on his arms. The commissioners had been well received by him, according to the custom of the country. The people were amazed at seeing the horses mounted with saddles, but especially at their being so well governed by bridles. On the arrival of the commissioners, the chief having saluted them offered milk, of which they partook, and the natives expressed every sign of contentment while the chief signified his gladness and stated that he had known of our approach several days previously. The presents were then delivered; he examined them and appeared much pleased, particularly with the looking-glass. Thousands then approach our camp, mostly armed with assegais. Their great mass made an imposing appearance.

Being the youngest and smallest in size, the natives (who soon learned to know me under the name of Piti) honoured me with their more special friendly

to escape a greater peril. Had it not been for the kind and judicious restriction of Mr. Truter, I would have joined the party, and probably been another sufferer.

We now crossed from Klaboeligani to Cossefontein in less than seventeen hours. Several giraffes were again seen, and Jacob Kruger killed a black two-horned rhinoceros. The huge animal measured

Length from head to tail	10	feet	7	inches
, of tail	2	,	0	,
, of head	2	,	4	,
Circumference	9	,	0	,
Length of ears	0	,	9	,
Front horn	1	,	4	,
Back horn	0	,	10	,

The animal is too well known to need any further description. We learned that there were two other species, namely, a huge white one, known by the native name of *magveoe*, the other smaller and frequenting hills, named *kemen jana*. Ultimately, Mr. Kruger succeeded in also shooting a female of the white species. Her characteristics were the same as the other, but of a light grey colour; the udder had only two teats, the legs were thinner, and she measured

From ears to tail	.	.	7	feet	10	inches
From ears to nose	.	.	2	,	8	,
First horn on the nose	.	.	1	,	8	,
Second do. do.	.	.	1	,	6	,
Ears	.	.	0	,	10	,
Length of fore leg	.	.	2	,	1	,
Height	.	.	5	,	10	,
Circumference of knee	.	.	1	,	10	,
Do. do. body	.	.	10	,	0	,

Three blue elands were also shot; they were larger than the common or red eland, and of a lead colour.

On the 5th of January we again reached the Aakap or Rietfontein. Bitter were the complaints made to us against a Bastard Hottentot, Klaas Africaander, who had murdered his master, a Mr. Pienaar, assisted by a Pole, Stephanus, a man who had escaped from prison in Cape Town, where he was detained for false coining. Their murders of Koranahs and Kafirs on or near the banks of the Orange River were numerous and cruel, and their robberies of cattle very extensive. The injured parties begged us to obtain them assistance and protection, and to have these banditti punished who kept the country in general terror.

Anxious to render these poor people assistance, the commissioners resolved to visit the Koks' kraal, *l'koubalas*, or *bitter dacha*, a large station of Bastard Hottentots near the retreat of Africaander, with the view of obtaining at that station more cattle in exchange for the merchandise which now only encumbered our wagons.

On the 6th, we bartered from the Bastards several head of cattle and sheep, sold some of our goods to the missionaries at cost price, and left Aakap or Rietfontein, having discharged the farmers under our commando, who were glad to return to the Roggeveld. We gave them a wagon and sixteen oxen and the necessary provisions, and forwarded the first intelligence of the failure of our expedition with letters to our friends in Cape Town. We also took leave of our good guide and interpreter Kees, giving him a quantity of goods as presents and in reward for his services.

whenever we showed ourselves; but our frequent visits familiarized them to our appearance in time, and we then had free access to the houses, where we were civilly received.

By the assistance of our interpreter, Ruyter, I collected the following specimens of the Boshuanah language:

sun	let-ja t'jee	knees	lingoosie
moon	moeli	calves	le-kla-lee
stars	dena-leer-ri	shinbone	mo-mo
earth	ummae	feet	loe-nao
fire	mololo	heels	lek-golie
water	meet-zee	toes	mono-ana
air	le-roe		
wind	pie-hoa		ANIMALS.
thunder	leé-roe	elephant	klan
lightning	lo-ga-riema	rhinoceros	t'joe-koe-roe
rain	poela	camelopardales	f'oe-kla
head	kla-goo	buffalo	narie
hair	moreire	qnacha	piet-zee
forehead	paat-kla	gnu	poe-loe
eyelashes	leentjee	gnu, black	coo-ko
eyes	maklo	eland (elk)	poe-hoe
ears	letzee wee	hartebeest	kamma
nose	nient-ja	t'koedoe	tolo
cheeks	ma-roa-ma	ox	komo
mouth	molomo	cow	komena-magali
chin	se-lee-lo	bull	poo-ho
beard	li-tee-lo	calf	pa-manie
tongue	lo-lee-mie	goat	poeli
teeth	meno	sheep	unkoe
neck	kili-kili	springbuck	tsee-pie
throat	moko-kwam	duyker	poeti
shoulders	le-roe-rie	steenbuck	po-loelo
arms	let-joog	wildhog	ka-loopie
fingers	me-noo-ana	hare	moe-klo
breast	schoe-ba	dog	untja
stomach	magolo	lion	tave
side	lo-kla-korie	tiger	unquay
thighs	seroepi	wolf	piri