Quest for the Jade Sea

Colonial Competition Around an East African Lake

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December 5, 1892, with eighty men.[34] Chanler became ill with fever, probably malaria, but would not consider stopping. Eventually, they came to the Nyambeni Mountains that today fringe Meru National Park, where they encountered the Embu, an eastern extension of the Kikuyu. It was here that they picked up a guide named Motio, who took them to the Guaso Nyiro River and Lake Lorian, which they soon discovered was not a lake but a swamp into which the river emptied.[35]

Chanler had to be carried in a hammock for the first four days of this trek because he was delirious and semiconscious. It was the rainy season, and malaria transmission was at its peak (although this was unknown at the time since the parasite and the vector had yet to be linked).

On December 26, 1892, they came upon a waterfall on the Guaso Nyiro that rose some sixty feet high; they called it Chanler Falls, a name that is still used today.[36] Marching ever eastward through the dry scrub, they reached the Merti Plateau by December 30. On January 12, 1893, they realized that Lake Lorian was really a swamp, swarming with mosquitoes. The members of the caravan were both dejected and angry, for instead of a fresh-water lake where they could rest and recuperate, there was nothing but "an abode of pestilence and death," as Chanler recorded.[37] It took them a month to hobble back to Hameye. Short on rations and sick with malaria, they were attacked by the Wamsara (Meru), and three porters were killed and twelve wounded in the skirmishes that followed. They finally reached Embu country and on February 10, 1893, sighted Hameye, where the Stars and Stripes were proudly waving over the camp. The news that Galvin gave them was not good: The oxen had died, as well as some of the cattle, camels, and donkeys.[38]

While resting at Hameye, Chanler wrote to his sisters Margaret and Alida, telling them what had transpired over the previous months and outlining his future plans:

> I cannot write a long letter because I am not very well. I discovered a most beautiful waterfall which I have called Chanler Falls. So the family will be handed down to history after all. In a day or two and with the whole caravan, I go to Mount Kenya, and then to the unknown north. I hope to be gone eighteen months as there is a great deal of exploring to be done, and should my expedition be the first to do it, I should be famous. Höhnel is a charming fellow, and George is as nice as ever. This letter must go the rounds of the family as I cannot write any more. Love to all.[39]

Tenacious and determined, Chanler set out for the north on March 8, 1893, heading for the Mathews Range, which had never been fully

explored. En route to the Nyambeni Mountains, some twenty men deserted. Chanler sent his headman, Hamidi, down to the coast for replacements. This proved to be a serious mistake because the man was not trustworthy, as von Höhnel had suspected all along. Chanler, however, pushed ahead, exploring the southern Mathews Range and Lolokwi Mountain. He then met with the Rendille people, a group of pastoral nomads who had had no previous contact with Europeans. He unwisely communicated these facts in a September 22, 1893, letter to George Mackenzie, the director of the IBEA. His claim of first contact had disquieting political implications. For all the company directors knew, Chanler could have signed a treaty of protection with them on behalf of the United States and handed them some flags, as the British and Germans had been doing all along elsewhere in Africa.

The expedition's fortunes were dealt a serious blow on August 24, 1893, when von Höhnel was seriously gored in the groin and lower abdomen by a charging rhinoceros. Chanler treated the wounds as best he could with permanganate, but he had little in the way of painkillers or other medications. He knew that he had to get von Höhnel back to their base camp at Daitcho, some 280 miles to the southeast, where there was a good store of medicines. On September 1, they started for Daitcho, but their progress was hindered by numerous rhinoceros charges. Von Höhnel later wrote:

> The rhinoceros mating season was apparently at its height, and part of the Guaso Nyiro River that we were following was a favorite trysting place for all the amorous pairs of the entire district, who of course were highly displeased with seeing us disturb their idyll. In the next few days, we had a hundred narrow escapes with these animals, and twenty-five times the caravan was seriously charged and scattered. Many a time the frightened men put my stretcher roughly down on the ground, and the rifle shots of the vanguard led by Chanler, the shots of the guard that surrounded me, the close and distant snorting of the monsters and the constant alarms of the fleeing men created a pandemonium that kept me at a high pitch of excitement the whole time. Under my very eyes, one of our men was thrown high into the air and fell head-first on a hard rock; he was buried twenty-four hours later. To all this must be added my own unbearable pain.[40]

Von Höhnel and Chanler arrived at Daitcho on September 18. Von Höhnel was finally given morphine in regular doses and was able to get some much-needed rest. However, because he had not eaten in almost three weeks, he was in an extremely weakened state.

A passing ivory-trading caravan brought the good news that there was an English physician, Dr. William Charters, at the Kibwezi Mis-

sion Station, 380 miles away. As soon as von Höhnel was able to travel again in a stretcher, Chanler sent him to Kibwezi with Galvin and twenty-five men, as well as eighteen unfit porters. The group arrived at Kibwezi fifty-four days later. Charters debrided von Höhnel's wounds under general anesthesia, and after three weeks, von Höhnel left for the coast and home. Meanwhile, Chanler planned his trip to Lake Rudolf and beyond. On October 19, 1893, he wrote to von Höhnel:

> George's letter with the welcome intelligence that you had bought 50 donkeys reached me here a few days ago. You, despite your illness, and the natural desire to hurry on to medical aid, stopped till you had added another good turn to the many I owe you.
>
> Now we are able to go forward with ease and speed you are forced to turn your face to the coast. I cannot tell you the full extent of my feelings at your departure because I do not yet realize all that you were to me, both personally and as one of the leaders of this expedition. From the moment when you lay breathless & bleeding under the tree in the Subugo forest I realized that you could no longer hope to continue your journey; but what your absence would mean to me I had not the energy to conjecture. My whole mind and body were filled & tingling with the desire to get you safely to Daitcho.
>
> We may not see one another in this world so that I can speak my mind freely to you. Your companionship during the past months has been one of the pleasantest incidents in my life. Your influence has been all for the good and I must tell you that I feel to be a better man since I have known you. I fear many & many times I have caused you pain & now I ask your pardon. I have a bad—really bad—temper & on looking back I wonder at the kindliness with which you often met my roughness. If we should be permitted to meet again I hope there will occur some opportunity for me to prove my affection for you.[41]

Chanler wrote von Höhnel several more letters, updating him about his plans for the expedition. He realized that without von Höhnel, the expedition no longer had any real scientific capability. Yet he was tenacious and determined to go on.

On October 7, 1893, Hamidi, the headman, returned to Daitcho from the coast with eighty unfit porters, whom Chanler tried to train for the next two months until Galvin returned. Galvin finally arrived at Daitcho on December 15 with supplies, pack animals, and the news that von Höhnel was making a satisfactory recovery. Chanler wrote von Höhnel a letter the following day: "I am delighted your wound is healed and that there will be no ill after effects—you had a terrible time of it; and deserve good days and many of them to make up for what you have suffered."[42]

On December 17, 1893, the day after Galvin returned with supplies for the trip north, Hamidi and most of the porters suddenly deserted. The next day, the Sudanese guards also left but then returned. This mass desertion effectively caused the collapse of Chanler's expedition. But why had it occurred? Chanler was absolutely dumbfounded at first because it had come as a total surprise to him. Hamidi returned two days later and said that the men felt that their enlistment time had expired and that they had no desire to go farther into unknown country filled with savage people like the Rendille. Chanler was correct when he later said, "I was firmly convinced that he was at the bottom of it."[43] Hamidi confessed that nothing Chanler had done should have caused the mass desertion and that he himself had no complaints to make. Yet on his return to camp, he made every effort to get the Sudanese to desert. "He told them that they should come to him at the river and follow him to the coast as General Mathews of Zanzibar had told him that if he succeeded in inducing the men to desert, he would see that they all received their pay upon reaching the coast."[44]

Chanler went on: "Taking all things into consideration, it looked as if Hamidi had been acting under orders received during his visit to the coast; but what possible reason the authorities at Zanzibar could have for breaking up my expedition could not appear clear to my mind. The ways of diplomacy are devious."[45]

General Mathews, then the custodian of British interests on the mainland, had every reason at this time to see that Chanler was stopped. With seemingly endless personal financial means, Chanler was capable of roaming all over the unexplored British sphere with the American flag in tow, and in so doing, he posed a potential political problem. The easiest way of stopping him was to cause a mass desertion of his men. Speaking of Hamidi's role in this, Chanler cogently made the following observation: "Instead of twenty well-armed men and some donkeys, I had been furnished with a disorderly rabble of eighty unarmed and insubordinate men—that he— [Hamidi] must have received something stronger than a hint that it was the pleasure of the people in power at the coast."[46]

Von Höhnel did not think much of Hamidi, observing that "in Count Teleki's Rudolf Lake Expedition he was a simple porter who after one year had been made an askari."[47] And with von Höhnel, the famous and well-respected explorer, out of the picture, it would have been easier for Mathews to cause the expedition's collapse.

Chanler and Galvin had no choice but to return to Mombasa, which they reached on February 10, 1894. There, Chanler found a letter from Mathews, advising him not to proceed to Zanzibar but rather to leave

Smith and Dodson headed across the desert to the west of the mountain. It took them five days to get to the base of Marsabit, traveling, as Smith said, over a path worn smooth by countless animals: "On the second day, we commenced to ascend the mountain, but we did not reach the top until after three marches. I was attacked by fever on these marches, and twice had to be carried; but the cool bracing air at the top of Mt. Marsabit quickly cured me."[33]

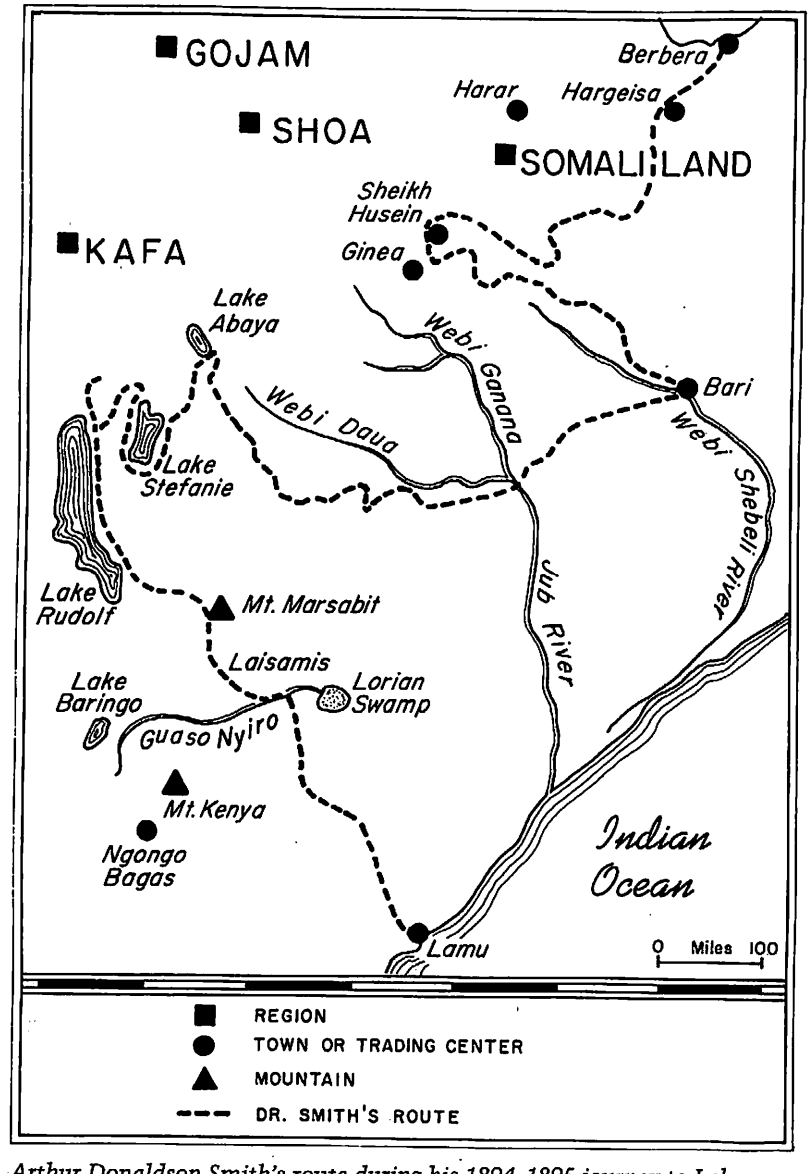
It was not so much the air that cured Smith as the heavy doses of quinine he took. In spite of being very ill, he was most impressed with Marsabit: "According to European ideas, nothing could be more charming than this Marsabit. Surrounded by a large forest and lying at the top of the mountain, is a lake a mile square, clear, and deep. The jagged walls of a crater form a semi-circle about it, while from another side, a broad road leads out from the forest to the open meadow beyond."[34]

Smith left Marsabit on September 13, 1895, after spending only four days on the mountain. Before leaving, he was almost killed by an elephant, after which he wrote the following understatement: "By this time I had begun to look forward to getting home safely."[35] Heading south through 140 miles of uncharted country, the caravan reached the Guaso Nyiro River on September 22, where Smith suffered a severe relapse of malaria. He camped on the northern bank at Melka Koja, a point reached by Chanler and von Höhnel in 1893 on their way to the Lorian Swamp.

On October 1, Smith felt well enough to head south across an unexplored stretch of country between the Guaso Nyiro and Tana Rivers, reaching the latter six days later. Suffering more from the effects of quinine than from malaria, he looked down from the banks of the Tana and thought he was hallucinating:

> Imagine our astonishment when a canoe hove in sight just around a bend in the river—and in that canoe sat a man holding a pink umbrella! Yes, true enough, a pink umbrella, and underneath a man in a white suit! I fired two shots from my Winchester, and the next instant the salute was answered from the canoe. With all the Somalis drawn up in a line behind us, presenting arms, Dodson and I awaited the landing of the white man. As the Rev. Robert Omerod stepped on the sandy beach, he grasped our hands heartily.[36]

Omerod was a member of the Methodist Reformed Mission who was on his way downstream after an exploratory trip for the purpose of setting up a new mission. He helped Smith obtain a half dozen canoes from the Pokomo people he knew along that stretch of the river. This greatly facilitated the expedition's return to Lamu on the coast:



Arthur Donaldson Smith's route during his 1894–1895 journey to Lake Rudolf (drawn by Saturnino B. Villapez).

When Lugard moved on to Uganda, he effectively packed Neumann off to the coast by saying that his orders contained no provisions for him. Mackenzie quickly overlooked Lugard's candid evaluation because he was hard pressed to find Europeans of even modest abilities. Thus, instead of dismissing Neumann, he promptly assigned him to work with a survey party that was to identify possible routes for a railway from Mombasa to Lake Victoria. Led by Captain Eric Smith, the group also included James Martin, who had traveled with the explorer Joseph Thomson in 1883–1884. In December 1890, the survey party left Mombasa and headed for the lake and Uganda, which they reached after an uneventful trek of a few months. Once the work was completed, Neumann returned to the coast. En route, his camp at Loita was attacked by the Maasai, who killed thirty-eight of his ninety-two men. He and the remaining survivors managed to escape under the cover of darkness but not before he was speared through the forearm.[5]

When Neumann arrived in Mombasa, he found a letter from South Africa offering him the position of magistrate among the Zulu. He decided to accept it because he knew it would quickly provide him with the additional funds he needed to finance an elephant hunt in East Africa. His year with the IBEA had not made him a rich man, but it had given him the opportunity to become familiar with the country and to discover where elephants could be found in great numbers.

One of the consequences of Teleki's sale of ivory in Zanzibar in 1889 was that it drew attention to the elephant herds in the Lake Rudolf region. This was an area not previously hunted by Europeans or frequently visited by coastal traders. However, some of the latter soon began to travel up toward the lake in search of ivory gathered by the Wanderobo, who were expert elephant hunters.

In December 1893, Neumann was back in East Africa at the head of a caravan of fifty men armed with Snider rifles. In Mombasa, by a stroke of good luck, he met von Höhnel, who was on his way home to Austria-Hungary after having been wounded by a rhinoceros. Von Höhnel recorded the meeting:

> A Mr. Neumann was just equipping a caravan with his modest means in order to visit the Rudolf lake district. He wanted to undertake the shooting of elephants on a business basis. He was about 40, fair, of slight build, and did not look very enterprising. . . . He was said to be a crack shot. I was able to give him good information about the districts which he intended visiting, and he consulted me on many points.[6]

In late January 1894, Neumann met William Astor Chanler, who was returning to the coast following the desertion of his men. They spent a pleasant night talking and smoking Neumann's Havana cigars.

Chanler gave Neumann much useful information about the districts to the west and on parting gave him his little terrier, "Frolic."[7] Neumann essentially headed for areas recently visited by Chanler and von Höhnel, and in February 1894, he killed his first elephants. He then headed for the Guaso Nyiro River, where he was so successful at shooting elephants that he was able to send his first shipment of ivory back to Mombasa by July.

With the help of Wanderobo trackers, Neumann continued hunting until early 1895, when he decided to return to the coast. He had amassed a large hoard of ivory, had become intimately familiar with the dry bush country of what is now northern Kenya, and had made friends with expert Wanderobo hunters, who greatly facilitated his success.

Using some of the ivory sale proceeds from this first trip, he then outfitted a second but smaller caravan of thirty-five men, which left Mombasa on May 16, 1895. Neumann headed for Lake Rudolf, whose large elephant populations had only been hunted by the Wanderobo and Count Samuel Teleki. The scale of his elephant killing in the area north of the Guaso Nyiro River earned for him the Swahili language sobriquet *Nyama Yangu* (My Meat).

Killing as many elephants as he could, Neumann finally got a glimpse of Lake Rudolf's southern shore on December 4, 1895. Von Höhnel and Smith had recorded their first views of this body with poetic descriptions and philosophical reflections; Neumann, by contrast, dispatched his with a terse comment: "A fine sight it was, looking blue like the sea."[8] More important to him, he soon found many old bull elephants carrying large tusks, three of which he killed in one day.

There was hardly an elephant along the eastern shore of the lake that escaped the sights of his rifles. By late December, he had reached the northern end of the lake, from where he moved into the forests along the banks of the Omo River. It was here that the first serious tragedy of the expedition occurred. On January 1, 1896, Neumann's servant, Shebane, was washing in the shallow waters of the riverbank when suddenly an enormous crocodile seized him. Neumann described what happened next:

> I was still looking down when I heard a cry of alarm, and, raising my head, got a glimpse of the most ghastly sight I ever witnessed. There was the head of a huge crocodile out of the water, just swinging over towards the deep with my poor Swahili boy in its awful jaws, held across the middle of the body like a fish in the beak of a heron. He had ceased to cry out, and with one horrible wiggle, a swirl and a splash, all disappeared. One could do nothing. It was over; Shebane was gone.[9]

Cavendish split his expedition at this point, sending the main body of men down the eastern shore of the lake with Andrew while he himself marched along the western shore. Andrew spent most of his time shooting elephants and amassing more ivory, while Cavendish claimed that he was constantly attacked by the Turkana, with whom he tried to establish friendly relations. Finally, on May 3, he captured a woman and, using her as an interpreter, established contact with the Turkana. Writing of this, he said: "After much palaver and a few presents, we satisfied them that we only wished to pass through the country and had no intention of stealing anything, nor was fighting a pleasure to us."[28]

This account was eventually disputed by a later traveler, Herbert Henry Austin, who noted in his diary that Cavendish had disgracefully looted and plundered the Turkana.[29] Thus, based on the testimony of two eminent British travelers, it appears that Cavendish's behavior toward some local peoples was abusive and exploitative in the extreme.

Cavendish and Andrew finally met on the eastern shore of the lake and proceeded south toward Baringo. En route, they came upon a small soda lake in the Suguta Valley, known today as Lake Logipi.

On July 6, 1897, they arrived at Lake Baringo, where Andrew was charged and seriously injured by a rhinoceros. He required several weeks of convalescence, after which they marched south toward Fort Smith in the newly established Uganda Protectorate. There, they met Frederick Jackson, the deputy commissioner, who was keenly interested in hearing about their journey. He was very impressed by the size of their ivory hoard but somewhat disconcerted by their boasting of the huge profits they would realize when it was sold in Zanzibar. After resting at Fort Smith for a brief time, they marched southeast toward Kibwezi, where von Höhnel had been treated for his wounds in 1893. From there, they moved on to the railhead of the Uganda Railway, then under construction. The entire caravan was placed aboard a special train and carried over the newly laid tracks to Mombasa.[30]

Cavendish spoke before the Royal Geographical Society on January 31, 1898. As Turton has observed, the scientific results of his expedition were negligible, and his account of local populations was "confusing and not very informative."[31] Yet he and Andrew were the first to carry the Union Jack around the lake, and in so doing, they made an important statement on behalf of British colonial interests. This was not lost on Frederick Lugard, for whom Neumann had worked and who was in the audience:

> He is the first Englishman who has traversed that country—his predecessors, one of whom we welcomed here, were Dr. Donaldson Smith and Signor Bottego, the Italian explorer. They have done excellent work, but they are not of our own nationality. . . . The more British explorers that go into that country, the better, provided they work in the way Mr. Cavendish worked.[32]

Lugard was blinded by his own jingoism and a dedication to promoting Britain's colonial empire. As Turton has succinctly noted, Cavendish's geographic accomplishments were "clearly negligible."[33] True, he had been the first European to completely travel down the western shore of Lake Rudolf. But as Karl W. Butzer found, his map of the Omo delta was by and large adapted from Smith's.[34] Many were receptive to Lugard's comments because they needed to attach more importance to Cavendish's accomplishments than they deserved for the sake of facilitating Britain's claim to the area.

Not everyone at the meeting heaped praise on Cavendish. Dr. R. Bowdler-Sharpe of the British Museum was obviously irritated by the poor quality of the expedition's natural history collection and Cavendish's neglect of it. In polite and diplomatic language, he expressed strong regrets that the British government had left the collecting of natural history specimens to people like Cavendish, whom he regarded as an "incompetent amateur." Bowdler-Sharpe's stinging comments surely must have embarrassed Cavendish:

> Since his return, he has been so busy that he has not been able to give us the time necessary to help in getting his collection in order . . . and only Mr. Cavendish himself can sort out this enormous mass of skulls and skins, and bones and limbs. . . . It is a national disgrace to England that all our great natural history expeditions depend upon private enterprise, and that our Government does absolutely nothing in the matter.[35]

In February 1898, soon after Cavendish's presentation before the Royal Geographical Society, Lugard tried to persuade him to lead another expedition in East Africa. Instead, Cavendish traveled to Patagonia; then, from 1899 to 1902, he served as a captain in the South African Light Horse during the Boer War. He served in the army again in World War I, and in 1932, he became the sixth Baron Waterpark. Four of his five marriages ended in divorce, and none produced a male heir. Thus, when he died on November 26, 1948, the title passed to his nephew.[36]

Only a few months after Cavendish had left Berbera, another British aristocrat set out from the same port for Lake Rudolf. Hugh Cholmondeley, the third Baron Delamere, was born on April 28, 1870, and grew up on his parents' estate, Vale Royal. An indifferent student at Eton, he inherited the title when his father died in 1887.[37] High-strung, slight of build, and endowed with fiery red hair and a temper to

match, he quickly abandoned his parents' plans for a university education and began fulfilling his passion for hunting.

On reaching his majority in 1891, Delamere set off on what was to be the first of five hunting trips to Somaliland. Though not physically robust, he possessed remarkable stamina and determination, which enabled him to overcome enormous hardships, injuries, and illness. During his third trip in 1894, he contracted typhoid fever in Aden. After recovering, he crossed over to Zeila on the Somali coast and proceeded into the interior, where he spent three months shooting lions and sticking wart hogs. While there, he was charged by a lion; his ankle was so badly mauled that he was left with a permanent limp.[38]

Delamere arrived back in England in 1894, not only with a limp and peritonitis but also in financial distress. But neither debts nor illness and injury could keep him from his passion for hunting, and thus, within a few months, he was back in Somaliland for the fourth time. On this trip, he hunted lions by using dogs.

On learning that Arthur Donaldson Smith had successfully returned from a trip to Lake Rudolf, Delamere resolved to do the same. In 1895, he began making serious preparations for this journey to the lake. His mother, who had reasons to be concerned for his health and safety, insisted that he take a physician along as a companion. She left the selection to the Rowland Ward Company, the taxidermists and travel book publishers, who eventually chose twenty-six-year-old Dr. A. Eustace Atkinson, just out of medical school. Atkinson was a charming and powerfully built man who got on extremely well with Delamere.

The Lake Rudolf trip was delayed because Delamere first went on a tiger hunt in India and then to Norway to shoot elk. While in Norway with Atkinson, he was thrown from a horse and suffered spinal injuries. Back at Vale Royal, his mother had good reason to dissuade him from yet another hunting expedition to Somaliland. However, stubborn and determined to reach Lake Rudolf, he left with Atkinson for Aden in the summer of 1896.[39]

Delamere was an experienced traveler and quickly able to organize his caravan. It consisted of himself, Atkinson, a taxidermist, a photographer, and an army of porters. In December, they marched out of Berbera with 200 camels loaded with 100 rifles, a Maxim gun, instruments, ammunition, food, provisions, and bales of beads and cloth. They headed southwest, more intent on hunting than on geographic discovery. In March, they arrived at the Italian post of Lugh on the Juba River, where Captain Ugo Ferrandi welcomed them, as he had Cavendish and Andrew four months earlier. Since he was running low on trade goods, Delamere sent Atkinson to Zanzibar aboard an Italian gunboat, with a £1,000 credit to replenish his stock. It was while in Zanzibar that Atkinson realized the huge profits to be made in ivory. He rejoined Delamere with a determination to kill as many elephants as he could.[40]

In May 1897, Delamere and Atkinson met as planned at the waterholes of El Madow (now Muddo Erri). They then passed along the line of wells that fringe the Mega escarpment, basically following Smith's original route. Then departing from this line of march, they headed south toward Marsabit Mountain, where they arrived in August. The mountain was home to large herds of elephants that had not been extensively hunted before. Delamere prolonged his stay in the Marsabit forest to enable Atkinson to accumulate ivory. He shot twenty-one elephants in as many days.[41]

Thus far, Delamere had avoided Ethiopian raiding parties because the rains had failed and the wells along the raiding routes were dry. Also, the Ethiopians were preoccupied with military defenses elsewhere. Yet Delamere found ample evidence of the destruction caused by Menelik's armies in their attempts to extend his imperial frontiers.

Delamere finally left Marsabit for Laisamis to the south and from there went northwest to Lake Rudolf, which he reached in September 1897. He led his caravan around the southern shore and then a third of the way up the western shore before moving on to Lake Baringo. Atkinson, who had shot his first elephant at Marsabit, continued shooting the animals just as Delamere did. At the end of the expedition, Atkinson's ivory brought in £1,000; Delamere's totaled £14,000, most of it obtained in the Baringo District.

Eventually, they arrived at Ravine, where James Martin, who had traveled with Joseph Thomson, was serving as the collector of the Baringo District for the Uganda Protectorate. Martin had also set up an elaborate, illegal ivory-collecting scheme, through which he eventually pocketed between £12,000 and £15,000. Because of his illicit trafficking in ivory, he was later removed from Baringo and sent to the remote Sese Islands in Lake Victoria.[42]

Delamere was captivated by the cool, lush highlands of East Africa, with their forests and well-watered meadows. They were a dramatic contrast to the hot, dry scrub of Somaliland. He decided to explore them further with a smaller expedition. He sent half his men back toward the coast with Atkinson, while he traveled through the Laikipia Plateau. It was probably during this trip that he first thought of settling in this fertile land. Leaving the plateau, he trekked toward Marsabit, where he camped near a spring that was later known as Delamere's Njoro (Delamere's Water). Atkinson joined him there to shoot more elephants, and eventually, they headed south toward the Guaso Nyiro River. While at this river, they met Dr. Johann Georg

Kolb, the German naturalist who was a good friend of Arthur Neumann. The two caravans had barely parted company when Kolb was charged by a rhinoceros and killed.[43]

Delamere continued his sinuous wanderings to the Mount Kenya region and then headed for Mombasa and the coast. He arrived in England in 1898 after a two-year absence and with so thick a beard that his mother did not at first recognize him.

Neither Delamere nor Atkinson kept a diary of their unusual trip, nor did either of them ever publish an account of it. It was not until some thirty years later that the full story of this expedition was finally recorded by the late Elspeth Huxley, who interviewed Atkinson in Kenya after Delamere had died.[44] The natural history and geographic accomplishments of this expedition were negligible and added little to what was already known about the region.[45]

Delamere married Lady Florence Cole, the daughter of the earl of Enniskillen, in July 1899. That same year, he returned to East Africa with his bride, where he eventually became the leader of the white settlers. As such, he played an important role in the early political life of Kenya Colony. He died of coronary artery disease on November 13, 1931, and was buried on his estate, Soysambu, on a knoll overlooking Lake Elementita.[46]

Atkinson also settled in Kenya, where he at first hunted for ivory. In fact, he not only hunted for ivory himself but also hired both white hunters and Africans to do it for him.[47] In 1902, his relentless pursuit of ivory led to a terrible tragedy and a criminal trial in Nairobi. He and two accomplices, Smith and Vincent, had been hunting elephants in northern Kenya near Mount Kulal. In addition to hunting, they regularly purchased ivory from the Rendille people, whom they supplied with guns and ammunition. On July 30, 1902, word reached Sir Charles Eliot, the governor of the British East Africa Protectorate, that Atkinson and his partners had killed some Rendille in order to obtain their store of ivory.[48] Eliot promptly dispatched H.R. Tate, the district officer at Fort Hall, into the area south of Lake Rudolf to verify this story, which had been brought to light by disgruntled porters.[49]

Tate discovered that Atkinson, Smith, and Vincent had haggled for several days with a Rendille chief over the price of a load of ivory he had accumulated. Exasperated, Atkinson invited the Rendille hunters to congregate around a keg that he said contained their payment in Maria Theresa dollars. The keg was actually filled with gunpowder, but because Atkinson had been sitting on it, the Rendille did not doubt his claim that it contained the silver coins. Pretending he had to relieve himself in the bush, he surreptitiously lit the fuse and walked away. Most of those near the keg were either killed instantly or seriously wounded when it exploded. Atkinson and his accomplices then quickly gathered up the Rendille ivory, which their 200 porters carried down to Nairobi.

When Tate submitted his report in October 1902, it contained sufficient evidence to hang all three men. However, the Africans who had witnessed the killing were fearful of retaliation if they gave testimony in court. Consequently, the prosecution was only able to call three witnesses, one of whom was Arthur Neumann, who was not present when the incident occurred. Much to Eliot's dismay, the all-European jury promptly acquitted Atkinson and recommended that Smith and Vincent be deported.[50] After the trial, Atkinson returned to his farm at Karura, where he gave up both medicine and ivory hunting for farming, sawmilling, and the manufacturing of roof shingles.[51]

With the conclusion of Delamere's trip, travel to Lake Rudolf by sportsmen and ivory hunters temporarily came to an end for several years. Important political interests involving the Upper Nile, the Mahdist state in the Sudan, Ethiopian expansionism, and colonial rivalries forced the British to prevent any but officially sponsored expeditions from reaching the lake. Scientific exploration and sport had dominated European interest in the lake over the previous decade, but such pursuits were now supplanted by the political goals of competing colonial powers.