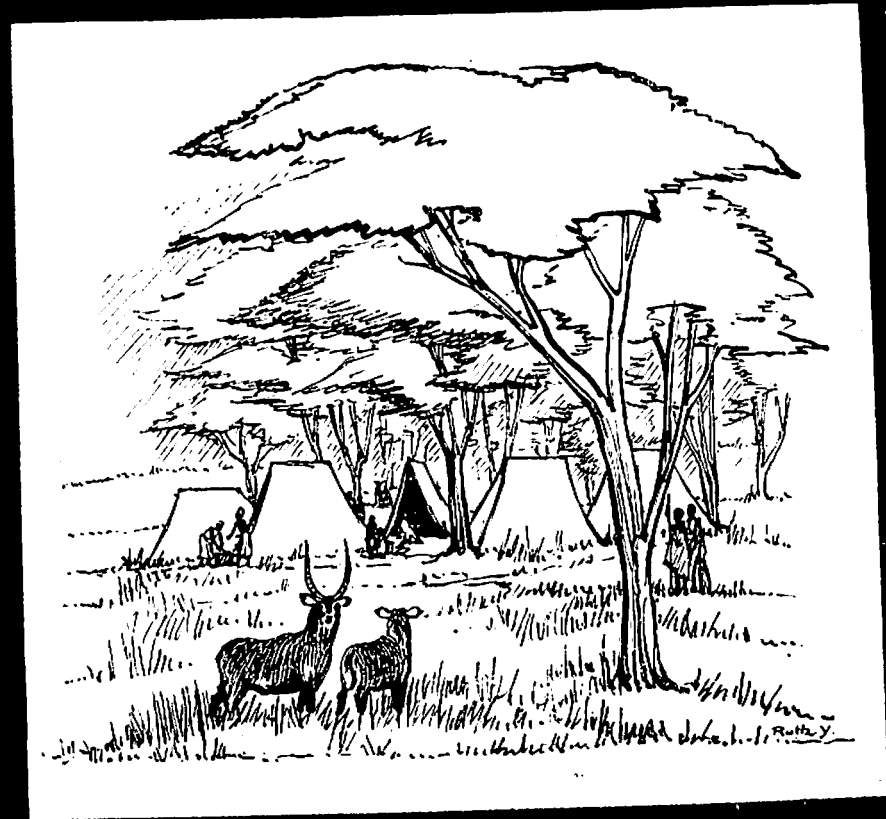


*The Masai shields which are used as signs on the Ngorongoro crater rim today, are Very similar to the ones seen by Dr. Baumann in 1892. But the shape of the Masai spear has changed. The broad-pointed blades above are the ones seen by Baumann. The narrow spears of today are depicted on the front cover which also carries the shield-shaped emblem of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area.*

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# NGORONGORO'S FIRST VISITOR

BEING

AN ANNOTATED AND ILLUSTRATED TRANSLATION

FROM

**DR. O. BAUMANN'S**  
*DURCH MASAILAND ZUR NILQUELLE*  
*THROUGH MASAILAND TO THE SOURCE OF THE NILE*

(Published Berlin 1894)

*translated by*

**MRS. G. E. ORGAN**

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EAST AFRICAN LITERATURE BUREAU



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*Frontispiece and numbers 1, 5 and 6 are reproductions from Dr. O. Baumann's *Durch Masailand zur Nilquelle*. Numbers 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, and 10 are from photographs by H. A. Fosbrooke.*

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## FOREWORD

Many readers of this series will, it is hoped, buy these booklets in the course of their visits to Ngorongoro, but for those who like to read about a place before they go there, or who are interested in the area but unable to visit it, the following general notes should prove of interest.

Ngorongoro is a volcanic crater, or more properly caldera, situated in the Arusha Region of Tanzania, approximately 35° 30' East and 3° 15' South, being 112 miles West of Arusha and 290 miles by road from Nairobi. The average height of the rim is about 7,600 feet and of the floor 5,600 feet, giving a depth of 2,000 feet, with a diameter ranging between 10 and 12 miles, and a floor area of 102 square miles. This makes it one of the biggest caldera in the world, others of similar magnitude being Lago di Bolsera in Italy (10½ miles in diameter) and Mono Lake in California (15 miles in diameter). It is surrounded by most scenic volcanic highlands, with six peaks rising to more than 10,000 feet.

Apart from its scenic and geological interest, Ngorongoro's chief claim to fame lies in the number and variety of wildlife which it contains, which by the open nature of the country can be seen at all times of the year. Most conspicuous of these are the wildebeest whose numbers vary between 10,000 and 14,000 according to the time of the year. There are also large numbers of eland, zebra and gazelle — Grant's and Thompson's — as also hartebeeste, waterbuck, bushbuck, reedbuck and the like. These animals attract the usual predators, lion, leopard, cheetah, wild-dog, hyaena and jackal. One of the conspicuous features of the Crater is the rhinoceros population which varies, according to the time of year, from half-a-dozen to nearly forty. They, like the other game, can be viewed close-up from vehicles, which are permitted to descend into the Crater for a small fee. Elephant, buffalo and hippo are also present, although giraffe are conspicuously absent.

The Crater is the centre, of a 3,200 square mile Conservation Area in which the Tanzania Government is conducting a pioneer experiment in multiple land usage, reconciling the interests of wildlife, of the pastoral Masai who inhabit the Area and of general conservation, particularly in regard to the 350 square miles of forest in the Area, which acts as a source of water for the surrounding farming country.

## INTRODUCTION

Now that Ngorongoro is receiving so many visitors—some 16,000 in the 1965 season — many are asking “who was the first overseas visitor and what did Ngorongoro then look like?” As far as the records reveal, Dr. O. Baumann, the German explorer, was the pioneer who first saw the Crater on the 18th March, 1892, when he records :

*“At noon we suddenly found ourselves on the rim of a sheer cliff and looked down into the oblong bowl of Ngorongoro, the remains of an old crater. Its bottom was grassland, alive with a great number of game; the western part was occupied by a small lake.”*

The translation which follows is taken from the book describing his journey, published in Berlin in 1894. We take up the story from the time when, coming from Mbugwe by the west shore of Lake Manyara, the explorer climbed the Rift Wall, some miles north of the present village of Mto wa Mbu, and obtained, as does the present day traveller, a magnificent view over Lake Manyara, right down to Mount Ufiome, near Babati.

Each day's journey is translated in full (by Mrs. Organ) and thereafter a short commentary (by H. A. Fosbrooke) follows, explaining points in the light of our present knowledge.

Dr. Baumann's route, marked on the accompanying map, is deduced from his own description and confirmed from his own map and the map which accompanied Dr. Obst's *Das Abflusslose Rumpfschollenland in Nordostleichen Deutsch-Ostafrika* (Mitte der Geogr. Ges. in Hamburg. Bd. XXIX Karte i). This latter map is of great interest as it is possible to pick up the routes of many German explorers; those who visited the present Conservation Area are listed below, with an indication of the area they traversed. With so many routes criss-crossing on a single map there are some points of confusion, which could only be cleared by reference to original sources, which are not currently accessible to the writers. It is clear, however, that the Area had been very fully explored before the outbreak of World War I, as witness the very full details on the first British map — copied from the German maps — published by the Military in 1916.

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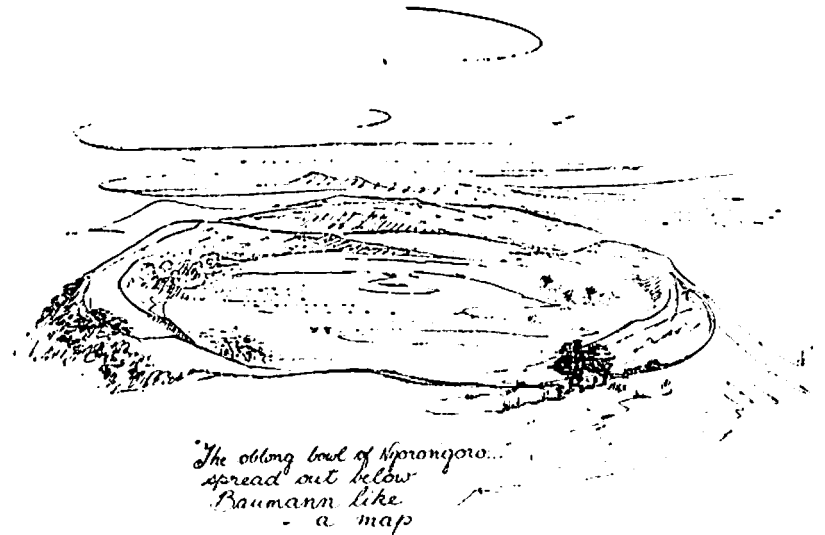


"The presence of two Elmoran who suddenly appeared near the Murera Stream was most opportune." (16th March 1892.) Masai Moran (warriors) as depicted in Baumann's book. Note the difference in shape of spears referred to on page 9.

Cover shows Baumann's Camp in the Lerai Forest on the Crater floor.

There were doubtless many others, but the explorers recorded on Obst's map with their dates and the areas they covered, are :---

Baumann : 1892	—	Rift Wall, Murera, Ngorongoro, Lairobi, Endulen and Serengeti.
Hoesemann : 1891	---	Mangola and Eyasi.
Kohlschutter : 1900	---	Endulen.
Bast : 1904	---	Ngorongoro, Endondol and Embagai,
Abel : 1904	---	
Jaeger : 1907	---	Covered the whole area.
Methner : 1907	---	
Schlobach : 1908	---	Mto wa Mbu to Olodare.
Zache : 1910	---	From Murera across Crater-to Siedentopf's Farm.
Rothert : 1911	---	Malanja, Balbal to the west.



So, having paid tribute to these, and doubtless many other unnamed pioneers, let us take up the story of the first of these in March, 1892.

## BAUMANN'S JOURNAL

Baumann writes of his climb up the Rift Wall :

### 13th March

*"March 13th was taken up by an exhausting climb to the plateau. A narrow Masai cattle track led along a slope which had an outcrop of enormous basalt boulders and up which men could advance quite well, but donkeys and cattle only with difficulty. When, after a strenuous ascent, we arrived at the magnificent plateau, it was almost evening.*

*There, on the top, a wonderful view over the shimmering Lake Manyara compensated us for our efforts. From this point the lake is visible in its whole extent, showing the steep Western banks and the distant Ufimi Mountain to the south. With its discovery one of the main missions of the Masai Expedition was fulfilled.*

*Cool, clean air refreshed us, at this height clear streams rushed between slopes covered with fine grass; a dark forested mountain range appeared to the north."*

The point at which Baumann climbed is considerably to the north of the motor road ascent and the Manyara Hotel, but the description tallies exactly with what the present-day traveller sees from the observation point at the top of the scarp. "The forested mountain range" which Baumann observed is now included in the Northern Highlands Forest Reserve, a part of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

### 14th-15th March

*"Next morning we set out for a short march only and camped at Lmorro stream, where we spent one complete day repacking our loads. The loss of men since Umbugwe had now become noticeable, also our pack donkeys had suffered from the bites of the ndorobo fly. This insect is to be found near streams and is dangerous for donkeys as they bite the animal's anus which causes swelling and leads to the animal's death. We urgently required new herdsmen for our cattle herd and our loads were not substantially reduced.*

*To reduce the number of loads, the weight of some bundles containing clothes was increased and various pieces of clothing were distributed to the porters, as an advance for their services.*



1. "A wonderful view over shimmering Lake Manyara compensated us for our efforts."

## 16th March

Even then, too many loads remained and I came to the conclusion that I would have to dispose of some loads, as by delaying our safari, the whole success of our expedition might be endangered. We, therefore, proceeded to dig a pit and put in it glass beads, brass wire, various musical boxes and other junk which may come in useful when one travels in Africa, but on the other hand one might be just as well without it.

We filled in the pit and lit a fire over it, following Kiburandgop's advice, as he maintained that the ashes would mark the place even after many years.

We had now recovered our former mobility and it only remained to replace the five dead askaris from the ranks of the porters. I had earmarked some people for such a situation long ago. Their extraordinary efficiency had drawn my attention to them. One man, by the name of Bakari Juku, deserves a particular mention. He was a real Digo, who hardly knew any Swahili.

"He was a thickset fellow possessed of extraordinary strength. His large jet black head was set between broad shoulders almost without a neck. The face bore a striking resemblance to that of a hippopotamus. Sharp, enterprising eyes looked from this face which was not improved by small-pox marks, but in spite of this, one immediately took a liking to him. He proved himself later to be an excellent askari. Whenever there was an attack or other dangerous event, Juku went in front of everybody. He was also an untiring worker. Once, when circumstances demanded it, he carried two loads on his head and a sick fellow askari on his back for many hours."

"Lmorro" stream, appearing on Obst's map and the first British map as *Olmoro*, is the northernmost of the streams which, rising in the highland forest, drain into Lake Manyara; Baumann's camp lay well to the north of the present motor road.

Tsetse fly is still present below the Rift, as visitors to the Manyara National Park may have observed. It was through the area now included in the Park between the Lake shore and the Rift that Baumann travelled and where doubtless the donkeys became infected with trypanosomiasis, indeed a disease fatal to donkeys, but not manifesting the symptoms recorded.

"The newly appointed askari were issued with their uniforms and on 16th March the journey was continued over the Plateau.

The absence of a guide was very hampering as everything was completely strange to Ndaikai, and also Kiburandangop could no longer remember the details of the route. As long as the march led over open grassy hilltops, progress was comparatively easy, but as we had to pass through a forest we definitely required a guide.

The presence therefore of two Elmorani, who appeared suddenly near the Murera stream was most opportune. They told us that they had been attracted by the smell of our cattle. I need not mention that we did not release such welcome guests. One of the warriors was the leader (Leigwenan) of the young people of Mutyek. He was a strikingly good-looking fellow having delicate, attractive features and a slim, perfectly proportioned body. He told us that his people were at present engaged in a fight against the Umbugwe and asked whether we had met them. We thought immediately of the incident at Lake Manyara, and declared that we had in fact made a "flying acquaintance" with these gentlemen.

It impressed the Leigwenan enormously that we had beaten the Wambugwe and had taken away a lot of their cattle as the Masai had never managed to accomplish this.

He became thereafter our enthusiastic friend and even proposed to start a partnership of cattle pilfering.

He naturally had never seen a white man before. Even now, he had no idea that I was a representative of another race, but he thought that I was a different type of coastal negro, this being also presumed of Dr. Fischer. (Laschomba Neibor — white coastal negro)."

The word "elmorani", now spelt *il Muran*, indicates warriors of the Masai tribe, whilst the word "Leigwenan" is properly of *Aigwanani*, the leader or spokesman of a group. The same social organisation as Baumann found exists today whereby all Masai youths, on being circumcised in their mid-teens, belong to an age set which is given a name, as might be the name of a regiment. After seven years as junior warriors, a promotion ceremony elevates all



2. "March 13th (1892) was taken up by an exhausting climb to the plateau". The Rift Wall in the vicinity of Baumann's ascent.



3. The Murera Valley, where Baumann camped on the 17th March, as seen from to-day's motor road, with Mbulu farms in foreground and Lolmolasin Mountain (11,969 ft. 3,700 m.) in background.

members of the group to the rank of senior warrior. After another seven years there is a standing-down ceremony by which elderhood is attained. Meanwhile, of course, further youths have been circumcised and promoted to fill the ranks in the warrior group.

The area called "Mutyek", properly *Ngotiek*, is the plateau country bounded by the Rift on the east, the Northern Highlands Forest on the north and the Marang Forest on the south. In the past this was Masai country, as the presence of a warrior spokesman with jurisdiction over the area indicates. After the famine described below and the introduction of German Administration, an endeavour was made to concentrate all Masai south and east of the Great North Road.

When, in early British times the Masai re-entered the *Ngotiek* area, they were driven out by cattle disease, possibly trypanosomiasis carried by the tsetse which meanwhile had invaded the area. In 1929 a Land Commission established by Government allocated the area to the *Iraqw* i.e. the *Mbulu*, a rapidly expanding tribe living to the south. At first reluctant to pioneer into these fertile lands, wheat production during World War II emphasised the value of the area, which has now become one of the best examples of mechanical farming by advanced Africans. The tsetse has been removed by self-help labour turnouts, many thousands of workers being employed annually in the 1940's.

The *Mbugwe* referred to in the above passage are a Bantu tribe living to the south of Lake Manyara, one of the few Bantu tribes to stand up to the Masai. This is by virtue of their prowess as spearmen and the fact that they lived in villages set on open plains where cultivation was prohibited by tribal law. This meant that no enemy could approach under cover of high standing crops, and if they did succeed in rustling any cattle, there was open country over which they could be chased and the cattle recovered.

### 17th March

*"On the morning of 17th March, the warriors marching vigorously ahead, had soon found a red cattle track, which climbed through beautiful grass covered slopes and brought us into thick, tropical forest. Entangled herbaceous vegetation and numerous nettles covered the ground.*

*Thick but not very high trees stood here and there, their branches covered with moss and lichen on the windswept side*



*and entwined by numerous creepers. We camped in the forest near a murmuring stream, over which lovely butterflies fluttered. In the evening thick mist descended and it became quite cold."*

The Murera river by which Baumann camped on the night of the 16th/17th is that crossed at the bottom of a long descent where a P.W.D. camp is seen adjacent to the bridge. From the fact that Baumann soon entered the forest it can be deduced that he camped well up-stream from the present road crossing. The route which he followed is that used today by trade stock being driven from the cattle auctions to the west.

### 18th March

*"On 18th March we pushed on through the mountain woods over a good, even cattle track flanked on either side by thick walls of herbaceous vegetation. Starting at 9 a.m. we passed through open grassland with marshy rills and with charming scattered groves. At noon we suddenly found ourselves on the rim of a sheer cliff and looked down into the oblong bowl of Ngorongoro, the remains of an old crater. Its bottom was grassland, alive with a great number of game; the western part was occupied by a small lake. We went down the steep slope and started to pitch our tents at the foot of the precipice. The tents were not quite erected when the camel-driver Mohamed appeared, apparently most distressed and reported that the camel had collapsed and was dying. At Lake Manyara and in the hot plains north of it the condition of this excellent animal had recently improved. The cold region of the plateau, however, and in addition the damp tropical forest, was too much for the poor ship of the desert. It developed a cough, which brought up blood and it only managed to drag itself along with a tremendous effort.*

*I therefore was not surprised by Mohamed's message and gave him a few people to assist him to save the camel. But several hours later the Arab returned very disturbed and handed to me the halter of the camel. The poor animal had ended its suffering. It was really touching to see how much Mohamed took the loss of the camel to heart, he became very depressed and it was noticeable that he lost weight.*



4. *"At noon (18th March, 1892) we suddenly found ourselves on the rim of a sheer cliff and looked down into the oblong bowl of Ngorongoro" The Crater from Baumann's Point.*



5. *"I took the chance to look at some Masai kraals (20th March) ... the yard was surrounded by low, hide-covered tent-like huts."*

A reproduction from Baumann's book.



6. A hunger stricken Masai as seen by Baumann in 1892.

*At nightfall several Masai warriors were seen prowling around the camp, probably with the intention of stealing cattle. The number of sentries was accordingly doubled and the rest of the night was quiet."*

This day's march proceeded through the Nailangalanga series of glades. It is significant in relation to those who claim to detect evidence of severe forest destruction over recent years that Baumann speaks of open grassland with charming scattered groves, rather than of forest broken by occasional glades.

Then after a steady climb came the great moment, Ngorongoro spread out below Baumann like a map. The spot on the East Rim Road is marked by a board, where the present day visitor can share Baumann's experience, without necessarily agreeing that the Crater wall is a "sheer cliff".

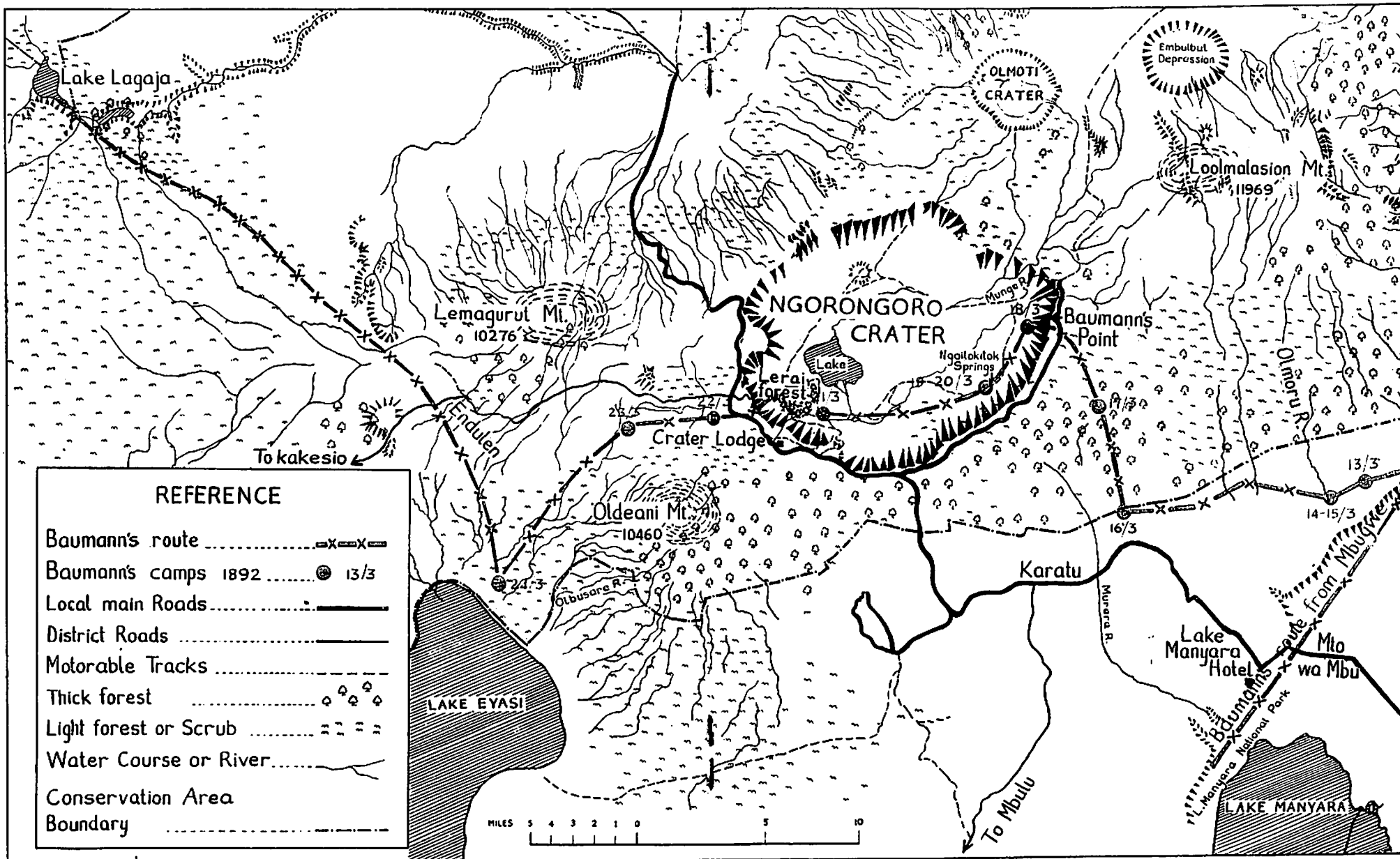
#### 19th March

*"Early at dawn we marched over a gently undulating slope. The soil was black humus covered with good grass and in places with volcanic rubble. We were escorted in the morning mist by a great number of warriors, strong-bodied picturesque fellows with colourful shields and bright broad-pointed spears. The Laibon appeared in a cloak of monkey-skin. All these people were showing no arrogance since the Leigwenan (chief of our local guides) had told them that we were not to be trifled with. They looked fairly well-fed, as they still owned some small livestock and the plains were full of game. The abundance of game was really magnificent. Large herds of antelope roamed around and long-maned gnus, light-footed zebras, and, singly or in pairs, appeared the broad backs of rhinos.*

*Although I am not at all a great Nimrod, during the day I shot one wildebeest and three rhinos; the latter we left to the Masai. From the neighbouring kraals, which appeared like dark circles in the grass, a crowd of thin Masai women arrived, their heads shaved and their iron ornaments rattling; they had come to get meat.*

*We made our camp near a small wood in the shade of a giant tree. The air is always cool and fresh on that mountain range, doubly appreciable at noon when the sunrays were*

# NGORONGORO



Map of the Ngorongoro Crater Area, showing Dr. Oscar Baumann's route, and the places where he camped between 13th and 24th March, 1892.

penetrating the damp morning mist. There was really nothing to remind one of the tropics but swarms of flies which often infect the Masai with a kind of trachoma.

For a hunter our camp would have been paradise. Close to the small wood were numerous guinea-fowl, of which I shot a few for breakfast. Hippopotami snorted in a pool and terrific herds of game were roaming in the wide plains; they were hardly shy at all, although they had been hunted by the Wando-robo and recently also by the Masai. The latter hunted game mainly by using their spears. They follow the wildebeest, which do not run very fast and kill these with their spears. They approach the sleeping or grazing rhino in a snake-like fashion and spear it at close range."

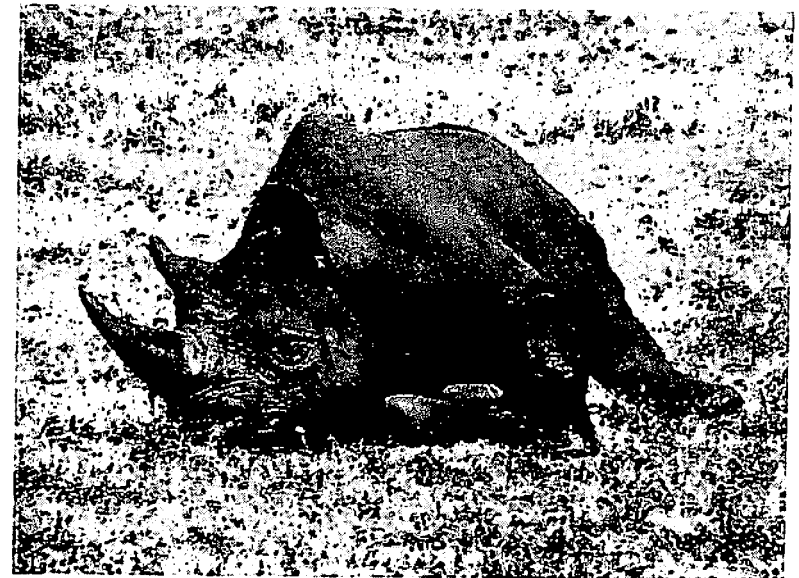
Baumann refers to the "fairly well-fed" condition of the Masai he met, for at the time he was travelling through Masailand the whole area was suffering from the most appalling famine. Rinderpest had swept down from the Horn of Africa, and was not halted till it had decimated the cattle and game throughout East Africa, Rhodesia and finally South Africa. In addition, smallpox was rampant in the land, and, as an additional plague, locusts had descended on the country and ruined the grazing. This explains why the Masai of Ngorongoro were living on game and why Baumann, having disposed of three rhino during his first day in the Crater, left the meat for the Masai.

Only a detailed study of their accounts reveals what havoc the early explorers caused amongst the game, particularly elephant and rhino. Further to the East Count Teleki's Expedition, travelling from Kilimanjaro to Lake Rudolph in 1886, disposed of 99 rhino, whilst a group of Indian Army officers, Capt. Willoughby and two others, hunting around the eastern slopes of Kilimanjaro, killed 66 rhino in four months! Although I know of no early explorer who admits the fact, the reason for killing so many rhino was doubtless for profit. For in those days, as today, rhino horn fetched a good price on the Coast for export to India and the East for medicinal purposes.

The state of the Masai was pathetic at this time, see particularly Baumann's description of the Masai in his diary entry of 20th March—"women reduced to walking skeletons", "children resembling deformed frogs", "warriors who could hardly crawl on all fours". One critic considered that Baumann was exaggerating and pointed to the



7. "The abundance of game was really magnificent. Large herds of antelope roamed around and long-maned gnus, light-footed zebra . . . . We made our camp near a small wood . . . ." Baumann, 19th March, 1892. Wildebeest and zebra, also eland and waterbuck, at edge of Leraï Forest (Baumann's "small wood").



8. "The Rhinoceros is not shy, and if the wind is favourable, one can easily approach to within thirty paces, without disturbing them" Baumann, 21st March, 1892. Protective measures have further reduced this shyness as witness the placid rhino "Horace", photographed in coy mood, October, 1965.

fact that when he first met the Masai in the Crater on the 19th he referred to "*a great number of warriors, strong-bodied fellows. . . . They looked fairly well-fed as they still owned some small livestock. . . .*" (See supra.) How can one reconcile these two pictures, recorded on successive days? The answer is that the well-fed were Ngorongoro residents, whilst the scarecrows were "*refugees from Serengeti where starvation had depopulated whole districts. They had fled to their countrymen of Mutyek (Ngotiek) who had barely enough to eat themselves.*" (See infra.) In other words the more favourable habitat of the Highlands had permitted the inhabitants to weather the storm more successfully than the plainsmen, who fell back on the Highland area as a last resort. This explains the extreme regard which the Masai have, even today, for Ngorongoro. Their resistance to the National Parks authorities was a manifestation of this feeling: when they felt that their security in the area was under attack, they resisted violently. For this reason present policy is not "to kick the Masai out of the Crater", but rather to provide alternative security in the form of pumped water, improved grazing and artificial salt licks so that the need for these three essentials can be met outside the Crater: thus the dependence of the pastoralists on the Crater will in time fall away.

Another interesting point in Baumann's description is the record of Wandorobo in the Crater (see also 21st March where the safari passed "*a Wandorobo camp, the surroundings of which were littered with game refuse. . . .*") The word Wandorobo is the Swahili version of the Masai *ol Toroboni*, pl. *il Torobo*, meaning hunting folk. In this general term are included the click-speaking bushman remnants living in the Lake Eyasi trough, the Nandi-speaking hunters of the Ruvu valley, and the Masai-speaking Dorobo who, with the metal-working smiths, form a lower caste amongst the Masai, and who doubtless migrated with them from the north. It is to the last named category that the "Wandorobo" met by Baumann probably belong. The writer has visited a Masai-speaking Dorobo camp at Engare-Nanyuki in the bush fringe to the north of the Serengeti Plains and Baumann's description of a camp littered with game refuse was as true as it had been 50 years before.

One final point of interest to pick up from Baumann's record of the 19th is the reference to the "*many coloured shields and bright broad-pointed spears*". The "many colours" in fact consisted of red from red ochre, white from ash or lime deposits, and black

from charcoal; it is these colours which are used on the shields, all of indigenous pattern, used as signs on the Crater rim. Little change has taken place in the shields carried today except in the introduction of blue and pink, bought as dyes from the shops. The spears, however, have undergone drastic change; instead of the broad-bladed type (see frontispiece and back cover) the fashion now requires a slender blade, (as shown on the front cover). The change took place in a very short time, around the turn of the century; it may have been due to the importation of iron bars, or even wire, which permitted the smiths to beat out longer blades than they could do from indigenously smelted iron.

## 20th March

*"We rested for a day at Ngorongoro and I took the chance to look at some Masai kraals. I was received in the friendliest fashion.*

*In the yard, which was surrounded by low, hide-covered tent-like huts, the Elmoran (warriors) called their "Sowai" to me. In front of the huts squatted old men, whose features were sharply defined, while the Inditos (girls), decked out with iron ornaments and glass beads, peeped from within the huts with shining black eyes.*

*My constant companion during these walks was Leigwe-nan, whom I had pleased by giving a present of a calf.*

*In the meantime a crowd of tattered scare-crows, now typical of the Masai country, gathered outside the thorn fence of our camp. There were women reduced to walking skeletons, out of whose sunken eyes looked the madness of hunger, children resembling deformed frogs rather than human beings, warriors who could hardly crawl on all fours, and moronic, emaciated greybeards. These people ate everything available; dead donkeys were a delicacy for them; but they also devoured the skins, bones and even horns of cattle. I gave these unfortunate people as much food as I could, and the good-natured porters shared their rations with them but their hunger was unappeasable and they came in ever greater numbers. They were refugees from Serengeti where starvation had depopulated whole districts. They had fled to their countrymen at Mutyek who had barely enough to eat themselves. Swarms of vultures followed them waiting for victims. We were daily confronted*

*by this misery and could do almost nothing to help. Parents offered us their children in exchange for a piece of meat. When we refused to barter they artfully hid the children in our camp and escaped. Soon our caravan was swarming with Masai children and it was touching to see how the porters cared for the little urchins. I employed some of the stronger men and women as cowherds and thus saved quite a number from death by starvation."*

Baumann's friendly reception by the Masai is typical of what the visitor may expect today. These people are satisfied with their own way of life, and in consequence respect others who have different standards and different values. It is those who envy the visitors' higher standards who are, understandably, apt to resent and be jealous of these. The term "*Elmoran*" is properly *il muran*, singular *ol murani*, whilst the greeting "*Sowai*" is perhaps better rendered *soba*. The girls, "*Inditos*", should be spelt *en dito* pl. *ndoiye*.

The famine conditions have been commented on under the record of the 19th. Suffice it to say here that no such calamity has befallen the Masai during the period of the European tutelage, German and British. Though successive droughts have led to a severe diminution in the number of stock, human life has always been safeguarded. A system of cattle markets has enabled the Masai to turn some of his stock into cash (some 6,000 head per year are sold from the Conservation Area) whilst a network of trading settlements has insured that maize meal and other foodstuffs are available for purchase. Only in the severest conditions, as in 1960-61, has the Tanganyika Government been compelled to issue any famine relief in Masailand. But the Crater Highlands are so favourably placed that even in the worst years they have been able to support themselves through the normal marketing and trading system.

## 21st March

*"On March 21st, 1892, we penetrated into the Ngorongoro Crater, passing a Wandorobo camp, the surrounding of which was littered by game refuse, over which ravens, marabous and vultures were fighting. We halted in a pleasant acacia forest near the lake. The plain around us was again populated by numerous rhinoceros, amongst which there were magnificent snow-white specimens, one of which I shot. In the afternoon,*

*Mzimba went hunting for the first time in his life and shot a rhinoceros. Several others in my expedition have also shot these beasts, as hunting them is not nearly so difficult or dangerous as it is claimed to be by professional Nimrods. The rhinoceros is not very shy, and if the wind is favourable, one can easily approach to within thirty paces, without disturbing them. To hit a rhinoceros at thirty paces, you do not have to be a spectacular shot and if the bullet hits the chest or (with a smaller calibre gun) the head, the animal usually collapses without further ado. If wounded anywhere else, it either runs away at such speed that there is little hope of catching it, or it attacks the hunter. This moment is usually the one described with vivid horror by the Nimrods. The companions flee and only the hunter bravely faces the charging colossus. This sounds terribly dangerous but the "charging colossus" is nearly blind and one step aside is sufficient to make it miss and it charges past. When it stops and looks around for its enemy the hunter has plenty of time to kill it with another bullet at close range.*

*In the evening, Wandorobo arrived in our camp and told us in confidence that some warriors of the neighbouring kraal intended to attack us. I doubted very much that someone would dare to attack us, nevertheless, I ordered the thorn fence to be built particularly carefully and increased the sentries during the night.*

*I had hardly retired to my tent when I heard the crack of a rifle. Everyone ran to the fence and I lit a magnesium flare, specially brought for such a purpose. We captured two stark-naked Masai warriors who had tried to get into the cattle enclosure. We feared that we might be attacked, but there were no further incidents of this kind, except that our sentries once fired in the dark on some approaching figures. Next morning we were horrified to see two dead starvelings outside the fence. Beside them stood a thin old man with untidy white hair heaping furious curses on our heads. "You wallow in milk and meat," he cried, "and shoot at us, who are dying of hunger. Curses on you!". I arranged for some meat to be given to the poor old man, which he swallowed raw, only to start cursing us again. Even after the caravan had moved off, the cries of the pitiable fellow followed us for some distance."*

The "pleasant acacia forest near the lake" is doubtless Lerai, which still harbours elephant, waterbuck, baboon and other forest-loving species for the enjoyment of today's visitors.

One is sorry to see that another two rhino were shot on this day's safari. It is perhaps a pity that Baumann passed through the Crater in March, for it has been noted recently that the rhino population seems to reach its peak in that month (37 were observed in the Crater by 20th Century Fox in March, 1962) and then decrease to a meagre half dozen in the dry season.

The "magnificent snow-white rhino" seen by Baumann were not of the white rhino species — which are in any case black. They were doubtless common black rhino fresh from a bath in white alkaline mud, such as can frequently be observed today.

The unfortunate incident of the shot Masai typifies the period during which Baumann travelled. East Africa was opened up by armed caravans, originally Arab and Swahili, and the explorers took over the organisation they found in the country. The Masai had a tremendous reputation for frightfulness amongst the Swahili porters and caravan leaders, so it is quite understandable that they should try to get in the first shot, even though the Masai of Ngorongoro were in such a pitiable condition at this time.

## 22nd March

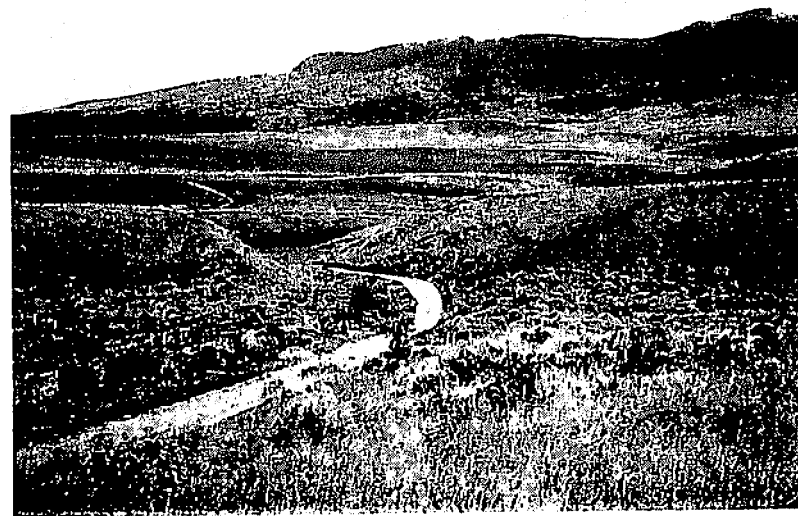
*"We climbed the steep western slope of the Crater bowl along a good cattle track and reached the Nairobi plateau, which is 2,400 metres (approximately 7,500 feet) above sea level. Long streaks of mist stretched over green pastures of lush grass with here and there a solitary gnarled tree covered with lichen."*

*Former Masai kraals could be recognised by lighter coloured grass and thickets of stinging nettles.*

*Their inhabitants appeared to have either completely disappeared or they were wandering about lost and starving. A few of them joined us. The Masai element appeared to be on the increase in the caravan. It was amusing to watch how quickly the proud Elmoran could change into a "Lashomba" (Swahili) with fez and loin cloth. Even a whole family came with us, consisting of a mother, a pretty young daughter, two youths and one baby who hardly ever cried and was fed on cow's milk."*



9. "Green pastures of lush grass with here and there a solitary gnarled tree covered with lichen." The modern visitor sees the same view as did Baumann seventy years ago.



10. "The plateau of Nairobi, which was crossed by deeply worn cattle tracks." One such track is now utilized by the motor road to the Serengeti.

Baumann's route brought him out of the Crater between the Conservation Office and the Endulen Turn-off. This three miles of grassland can be reached by three different cattle tracks, so it is uncertain which one the safari used. The "green pastures of lush grass" may reveal a little poetic licence, as the present pasture is particularly unpalatable, consisting largely of two tough grass species, *Elusine jaegeri* and *Pennistum schimperi*. However much an explorer may be in error in the matter of pasture, he is unlikely to mistake forest for grassland, so when Baumann talks of "here and there a solitary gnarled tree covered by lichen" he is likely to be correct. This is the situation on the Lairabi rim of the Crater today, so those who accuse the Masai of denuding that area of forest have difficulty in sustaining their charge in the face of this evidence. There is, unfortunately, sufficient grounds of believing that the forest is receding (but not at the rate which was at one time feared) and it is the concern of the Conservation Unit to arrest and, if possible, to reverse this process. The solitary giants are obviously remnants of what was once solid forest; they are not renewing themselves by a succession of seedlings, which makes it all the sadder to witness the gradual attrition of these survivors. In the exceptional rains of 1961-62 a couple were so heavily weighed down by their moisture-laden lichen that they crashed without the aid of human agency: others are dying back, and their dried branches eagerly seized on by the local residents for firewood. This situation is being met by the establishment of plantations, but these can never achieve the grandeur of the indigenous forest, which is now safeguarded by fire protection measures.

### 23rd March

*"On the morning of the 23rd March (1892), we were walking gradually uphill, over the cold misty Plateau of Nairobi, always through beautiful pastureland, the rich soil of which was crossed by deeply worn cattle tracks. To our left rose grass covered hill tops. Although the land was beautiful and fertile, the everlasting repetition of low grass slopes became monotonous, especially as nothing indicated a change.*

*Suddenly I noticed a movement at the head of the caravan, the porters put down their loads and pointed to the south. I hastened my steps and could not suppress a cry of surprise as I reached the hilltop. Below us, flanked by steep rocks, was*

*an enormous cleft, a rift valley from the geological point of view. One could almost see how part of the plateau must have slipped down 1,000 metres (3,000 feet approx.).*

*In the bottom of the rift was a blue lake, surrounded by sandy shores, its southern part seemed to disappear into the horizon. Rising to the west of the lake shore were the mountains forming the Serengeti Plateau. At the eastern shore a range of parallel mountain chains continued, which culminated in the Itagu mountains, which stood out like a wall against the horizon. Above these, almost directly to the south, towered a mighty, dark, cone-shaped mountain. It was called the Gurui Mountain as I learned later. I had already seen it from Umbugwe, but I had not recognised it as such, on account of the mountain range in the foreground.*

*We camped at a dominant peak on the brink of a steep drop and I enjoyed looking from my tent, having the most wonderful view of the lake glittering in the sun, which I was the first European to see."*

Nairobi, present usage *Lairabi*, meaning cold, is well applied to the area in question. This high grassland area is called on subsequent German maps "Baumann Hochland". It is of interest that Baumann notes the "deeply worn cattle tracks" so obvious to the visitor today. Indeed the main road passes along one of these as it ascends from the grasslands to the Endulen Road. Further examples are to be found upstream in the same water course, where some observers suggest that a series of prehistoric dams may be seen. As these "dams", which certainly hold water in the rains, in each case correspond to the point at which a cattle track descends into the streambed, it is the writer's view that the "dams" are formed by the wash of silt down the cattle tracks, gradually forming deltas in the streambed, which eventually join in the middle and so form a "dam". This phenomenon can be observed even in the case of footpaths through grassland. It can only take place, of course, when the scour action



down the path deposits material at a greater rate than the main stream can carry it away: this condition in fact pertains on the Lairobi plateau where the heavy growth of bamboo on the watershed followed by the grassland insures against damaging flash floods. This natural dam formation process can be observed where the road passes over two such dams in quick succession at the west end of the Lairobi plateau, where it approaches the Endulen Road turnoff.

The other problem for consideration is, whose cattle wore down these tracks? It is significant that Baumann noted them as a feature 70 years ago. It is known that the Masai first entered this area about 1850. This would mean that, if they were responsible, they made such an indelible mark on the country in a period of 40 years! Since Baumann's visit they have been here a further 70; even assuming that the period till 1920 entailed very light land usage, owing to recovery from famine and the upset of World War I, there has passed a period of 40 years of "typical" Masai usage, without apparently any increase in the severity of erosion along the cattle tracks.

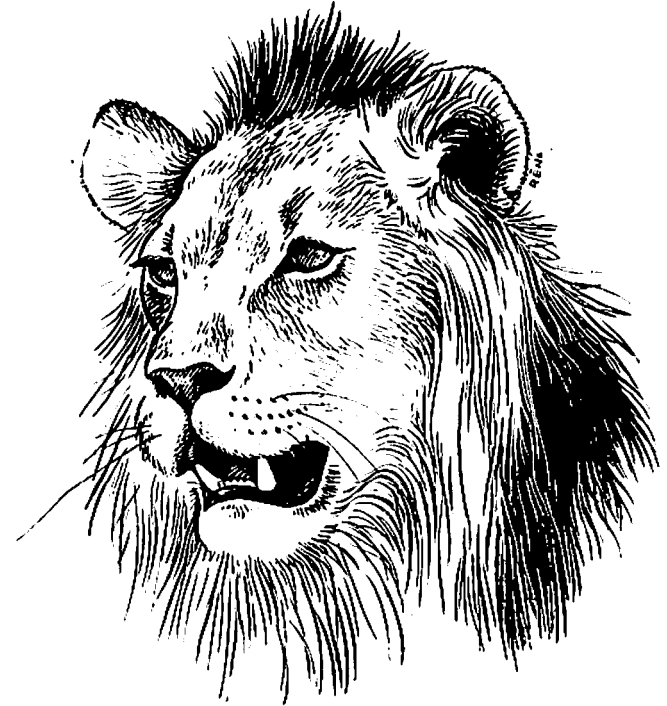
There is further evidence that such tracks were there when the Masai arrived. One of the very conspicuous graded roads down the west rim of the Crater bears the name of the Masai age set which was of the warrior grade around 1850. It is unlikely that the name would be applied to the track if in fact it didn't exist at that time.

Again, all through the Northern Highlands area many similar tracks are known, some with old gnarled forest giants *growing in the bottom of the track*. This indicates that the tracks have been in their present state (more or less) for the life of the trees, possibly up to a century.

Thus the whole picture suggests that a century or more ago the area was subjected to greater erosion than occurs at present. This may be explained in more than one way. Perhaps the climate was different at that time, so that an equal weight of pressure on the land led to more serious effects; a longer dry season followed by heavier rains, would bring this about. Again, the previous inhabitants may have had more cattle than the Masai, thus causing more erosion: or they may have utilised the land in a different manner. If in fact they had been settled agriculturists, with herds of cattle, it would be unlikely that they would move down to the plains during the rains. This would mean that constant trailing to and from their static villages throughout the year, through the rainy season and the dry, would enable equal or even smaller numbers of cattle to cause more damage

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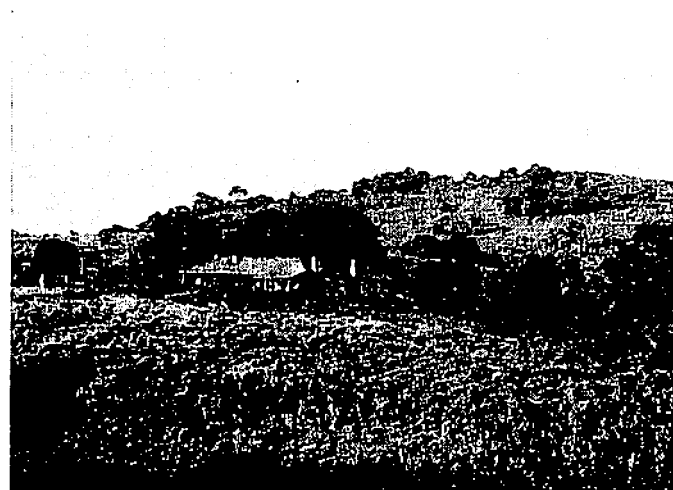
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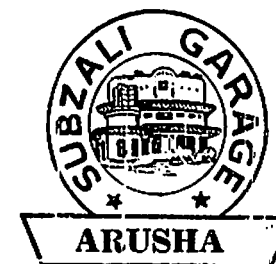
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than the present stocking rate. Further research is required before a definite reply can be given to this problem.

One last comment on the events of 23rd March, 1892; the spectacular view over the Eyasi Rift can be obtained from the Endulen motor road, three miles beyond the road junction but only at those times when the dry season haze or smoke from the burning grass and bush is absent. The distant mountain "Gurui" is the extinct volcano, 12,000 feet high, which rises below the rift in Tatog country, called by the Barabaig, Gurui and by the Mbulu, Hanag.

### 24th March

*"On March 24th I started to descend to the lake, accompanied by a number of askaris and one Masai guide. We clambered through ravines, covered by dense vegetation and crossed streams; there being no sign of a path. Finally we camped near the last steep drop which was densely covered by aloe, euphorbia and thornbush. We fought our way through this thick bush and had to pass an almost vertical sandy wall of volcanic ash. In the afternoon, we arrived near a stream close to the lake, completely exhausted by the burning heat.*

*A violent attack of fever forced me to remain there and I sent a few askaris to the lake shore to collect samples of water and salt. Pestered by mosquitoes, surrounded by the howling of numerous hyaenas, we spent the night by the stream."*

Baumann's route towards Eyasi lay through particularly tough country, even today inaccessible except by foot. The change in the vegetation is noticeable, changing to the dry, low altitude species such as aloe, and euphorbia. Though identification is uncertain, it seems probably that Baumann camped by the Ol Busare stream, which today forms the boundary of the Conservation Area.

### 25th March

*"The following day we climbed up to the top again, using a better road, which led through a beautiful valley in which Phoenix palms grew. During the ascent we met some people from our camp who had come to search for us, as we had been expected to return the previous day. At the camp we received*

*a hearty welcome, as the members of the expedition were seriously concerned about us and earnestly requested us not to undertake an excursion, even the shortest one, without their company in the future."*

Baumann's fever was fortunately insufficient to incapacitate him, as the neighbourhood of Eyasi would have been an unpleasant place to be stranded in. Having camped once more in the Highlands, Baumann led his safari over the Serengeti, passing Lake Lgarja, and thence to the Lake Victoria region.

When one reads the accounts of the early explorers of other areas one is struck by the changes which have taken place in the last hundred years. Rebmann (1848) and Baron von der Decken and Richard Thornton (1862) found the Chagga composed of small isolated groups of forest dwellers, each chiefdom being a small clearing divided from its neighbour by a thick primeval forest; now dense contiguous settlement crowds the mountain slopes from east to west. The lower areas of the Kilimanjaro District, now taken up with Chagga maize *shambas* and large sisal plantations, were uninhabited as late as the 1880's, when Sir Harry Johnston described the area round Lake Jipe as follows:—

*"Here I saw more game at once than I have ever seen in Africa. It was a sportsman's paradise — a delicious dream of happy hunting-grounds hardly to be realised in this life. Hundreds and hundreds of giraffes scudded before us; herds of elands (the bulls a deep dun colour with glossy hides that looked like satin in the noonday sun) sauntered along, now nibbling the sweet grass, now trotting off as we advanced. Myriads of red hartebeeste, sable antelopes, mpalas, and zebra studded the undulating plain, while a small group of ostriches might be observed on our left-hand side, and a rhinoceros stood under the shade of a mimosa to the right of the path, flicking his short tail from side to side, and watching the movements of our caravan with suspicion."*

But it is not only the spread of civilisation and development which reduced the wildlife: the introduction of weapons of precision, used by both the immigrant and indigenous population played havoc with the game. Capt. Sir John Willoughby and two brother officers from the Indian Army disposed of 350 head of game, including 66 rhino,

in a shooting trip around Taveta of four months duration: Count Teleki and his party (the discoverers of Lake Rudolph) shot 99 rhino in the course of their safari, whilst Sir Frederick Jackson gives details of similar slaughter around Machakos. Speaking of the party working on Sclaters Road he says "*. . . their combined bag of game, if a record had been kept, would have been little less than staggering; their slaughter of rhinoceroses alone in the open thornbush country between Sultan Hamud and Machakos Road was only equalled by that of a man named Gardener Muir and his Scots ghillie, who between them killed over eighty round about Machakos in 1893 in less than three months."*

Luckily for the present-day visitor Ngorongoro was distant from the main areas of development, whilst the presence of the Masai pastoralists kept agricultural intrusion at bay. This means that even today our visitors can see Africa through the eyes of the early explorers with the teeming wildlife population of the Crater easy to view from the comfort and safety of a Land-Rover, unperturbed by the intrusion. Further to the west, where the Conservation Area and National Park meet, an equally spectacular display is provided for those lucky enough to visit the plains when the great migration of wildebeest is occurring. In these two features, the miniature world of the Crater and the vastness of the Serengeti Plains, Tanzania's conservation policy has carried the late 19th century into the middle of the 20th and, one hopes, indefinitely into the future.

