

Skyways to a JUNGLE LABORATORY

An African Adventure

By GRACE CRILE

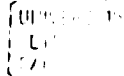


WILLIAM HEINEMANN LTD.

Publishers · London

GIRAFFE on the Athi Plains

TAKEN FROM THE AIR BY LIEUT.-COL. F. T. COLBY



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110 p.

Fuller, with Captain Hewlett, started out on their first morning to scout for game. They had hardly left the camp before they ran into a herd of elephant, and but a few steps further on, while Dr. Quiring was taking a picture, a herd of buffalo rushed past. They secured an impala, and when we arrived Sunday noon, Dr. Quiring was busy with its measurements.

Monday morning they again went scouting, Dr. Quiring to shoot and Mr. Fuller to take photographs. Again they ran into elephants. Mr. Fuller climbed an ant-hill to get a better view, but the elephants caught his wind and slowly retreated into the shadows of the forest. Their retreat disturbed two rhinos and a mtoto that rushed out, so just as Mr. Fuller climbed down he found the elephants departing but the rhinos coming—and he had only a camera with which to shoot!

Tuesday morning, they brought back another impala, a gray monkey, a big eagle, and a strange-looking mudfish—a barbel—at least three feet long. Late in the afternoon, Dr. Quiring, Captain Hewlett and I went out to scout for game, hoping to get a zebra for a possible bait. We rode down to the shore of Lake Manyara, where there were hundreds of birds feeding—storks, herons, egrets, vultures, and small birds of every kind. The sand was crisp with the soda deposit and crackled as we walked on it. As we turned in that

night, through the trees we could see the moon, Orion was overhead, the Southern Cross twinkled low in the horizon; strange barks and calls broke the silence; old Leo roared, and later a hyena took up his song. The nights are cool, the matted beds comfortable, the little hut a delight to snuggle into, and as we slipped into slumber, we hoped that the fire outside was sufficient to keep out inquisitive prowlers.

MAJI MOTO CAMP

DECEMBER 4, 1935

The Rhino

THE arrangement last night was that Captain Hewlett, Mr. Fuller, and Dr. Quiring should go out for rhino at four this morning. Captain Hewlett had scouted about the day before and knew the whereabouts of a good specimen. When secured, the native boys were to come back for the Chief and me and we were to bring out all the paraphernalia for dissection in the field.

At seven we heard the first shot; then in fifteen minutes two more shots; then a fourth.

Just as we finished breakfast, Dr. Quiring and a few native boys returned, saying the rhino was down in a clear space and but half a mile away.

We gathered together our equipment and were off with bowl and plaster, rope and scales, a kit of instruments, hammers, axes, tarpaulin, etc., on the heads of the boys. With our gun carriers leading and rifles loaded, the Chief, Dr. Quiring, Dr. Carr, and I, with the native boys, silently tiptoed our way, penetrating deeper and deeper into thick bush, the native boys stopping like antelopes at every sound, and looking about before venturing further, as this is elephant and buffalo country and spoor was all about.

Soon we ran onto the blood spoor, and in a moment, there in a little open space, lay our rhino, in perfect position for our purpose. Round and round him we walked, impressed with the grotesqueness of the great beast. We wondered what was his age, his story, what were his links with the past. He was so immense, so ugly, it hardly seemed possible such a mass of dynamic energy could be almost instantly stopped by a few small pieces of steel from Mr. Fuller's rifle. He was a young adult bull, measuring 10 feet 11½ inches, including the two-foot tail. In the deep folds of

his skin were massed many ticks; in fact, he carried with him a valuable private collection of insects, ticks, and worms that scuttled for safety as soon as he was killed.

In no time poles were cut, a tarpaulin was stretched over him and our scales were slung over the branch of a tree close by. The native boys cut a three-foot window in the big carcass. That piece of skin weighed 35½ pounds. The skin varied from about a half inch in thickness, under the belly, to over an inch in thickness on the sides and the back, the thickest part being over the neck and the shoulders.

The Chief, Dr. Quiring, and Dr. Carr made the dissection. There seemed to be just five centers of heavy muscles—the four legs and the great head. The men said the cartilage of the back bone was “soft,” but I noticed they cut it with a hatchet!

The rhino birds must have had good picking on this old fellow's back. These little brown birds serve as eyes and ears for the rhino. Not until they leave does the rhino sense or scent danger. Then in alarm, his nose to the ground, he puffs and circles until he picks up the scent when, without further ado, he charges.

The rhino bird and the rhino are fine examples of cooperation. The ticks on the rhino give a good living

to the bird, and the eyes of the bird are more useful to the rhino than are his own eyes. The rhino, in fact, has eyes all over him—eyes that see in every direction—and if one pair of these collaborating eyes is destroyed, a new pair flies to him. The rhino cannot coerce the rhino bird into his service, but the rhino affords not only a living but also a haven for these birds, as many of the enemies of the rhino bird would not venture to attack them on the rhino.

Although birds also accompany the elephant and the buffalo, neither the elephant nor the buffalo depends, as does the rhino, upon birds to apprehend danger for him. But neither the elephant nor the buffalo offers such an easy living as does the rhino. The eyesight of the rhino is said to be poor. Perhaps the fact that he exercises his own sight so little accounts for its poor development. One eye of our rhino, for instance, weighed two grams less than one eye of a Thomson's gazelle; yet the weight of the rhino was 1,663 pounds and that of the gazelle 52 pounds.

At eleven-thirty we were called to luncheon, served under a mimosa tree from an English picnic basket, while Captain Hewlett told us of encounters with rhinos.

He says that the rhino is largely a creature of habit. He grazes early in the morning, retreats into the bush

for his noon siesta, and comes out again at tea time. One can almost tell the time of day by the time he comes out to graze. Each morning when we leave camp we run into rhinos and mtotos. A well regulated rhino family picks out its habitat and stays there, unless disturbed. Next to the elephant there is no animal with so keen a sense of smell as the rhino. Several times Captain Hewlett has pointed out to us great circles in the sand where a rhino has milled about, perhaps trying to rub some of the ticks from his back.

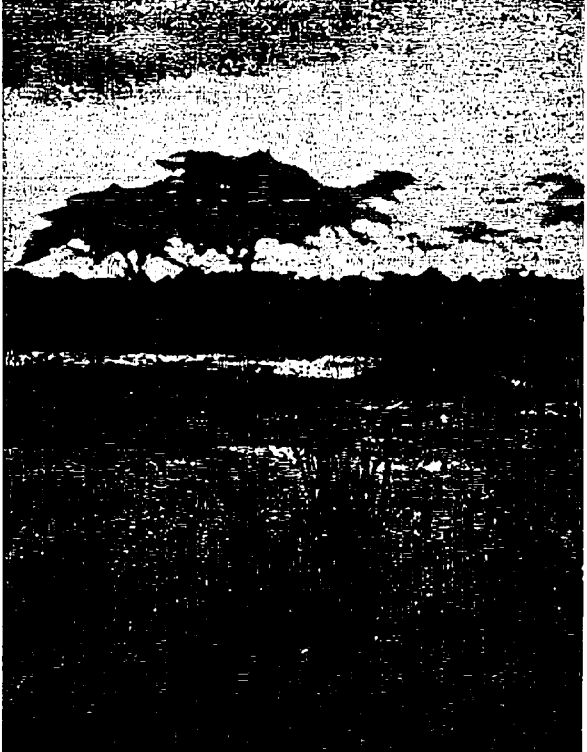
While we were working on the rhino, the native boys built a high machan in a tree close by. Captain Hewlett and Dr. Quiring plan to stay there tonight in the hope of getting a lion or a hyena.

MAJI MOTO CAMP

DECEMBER 5, 1935

In the Machan

ALL night, from six o'clock in the evening to seven this morning, Dr. Quiring and Captain Hewlett sat in the machan, high in a great mimosa tree, snug-



OUR GIRAFFE
"There Was
Something About
This Great Beast
That Seemed to Cast
a Spell Over All
of Us."

Every Day We
Encountered
RHINOS on the Plain
PHOTOGRAPH BY
DR. W. HARRISON CARR

MAJI MOTO CAMP

DECEMBER 8, 1935

The Lions

WE put down two zebra baits late Saturday afternoon, and Dr. Quiring and Captain Hewlett spent the night near by, in a camouflaged position.

All night they waited, but not a lion approached. Bound to get one, at early dawn they started across the plains and soon saw two fine males stalking a herd of zebra. They began to stalk them, and in twenty-five minutes they were back and at our door with the two lions. Captain Hewlett's lion weighed 430 pounds; Dr. Quiring's, 410 pounds. The lengths were 8 feet, 11 inches and 8 feet, 7 inches.

We got up immediately and set to work. The Chief called our attention to the sympathetic complex which, in itself, was as large as the adrenal glands. Eighty or more nerves extended from it to the adrenal glands. The adrenal glands and the sympathetic complex secrete adrenalin and sympathin, the two most