

Shooting trip in Nyasaland. Xmas 1911.

Having received permission to get away at Xmas for 10 days I decided to make for the Shire River N of Lilonde, unfortunately several other people also decided to go to the same District. I did not know this.

22nd Dec Started my boys off yesterday morning to make for NAMALOMBA, a small village on the W. bank of the Shire about 12 miles N of LILONDE., about 11.4 miles from ZOMBA.

Left ZOMBA at 6.30 am. on my bicycle, with Lt Collins who was going to CHINYAMA Village, after a two hours ride we stopped and had some bread & sardines, we then parted company. At LILONDE I caught up my boys, who had got along very badly on account of so much rain. One of the Police boys at LILONDE had the previous night shot a fine lion, with a splendid mane, it was walking round his hut. Got my boys across the river, and started off. I arrived at NAMALOMBA about 1.30 pm, the boys arriving about 3pm. Except the boy with my camp bed. Heavy rain commenced about 11 pm, but left off in about an hour, so decided to go out and get some nyama (meat) for the boys.

and myself. Practically everywhere up to ones knees in water, commenced to rain again but as I was already wet through, ^{it did not matter} kept on until nearly dark (6.30 pm), without getting a shot, arrived in camp about 7.30 pm. very tired.

The boy with my camp bed not having turned up, except ^{in the rain}, he has missed the path leading to the village, luckily I was able to borrow a new chapoy. (Native bed)

The river (SHIRE) is from 100' to 150' wide, but only a narrow channel free from sudd, reeds, etc. During dinner I don't think there was a square inch of my table free from insects, moths, flying bugs, mosquitos etc. Looking across the river one could easily imagine there was a large town on the other side, as there were thousands of fire-flies. Had to write my notes under my mosquito net, as the mosquitos began to find out the soft spots during dinner.

My table boy during dinner kept smacking his legs etc., so evidently they could penetrate his skin.

"Prevention of malarial fever."

"Don't get bitten by the malaria mosquito, but live in a mosquito proof house. (Never leave it, but die of something else, and live miserable)"

Rained nearly all night, this is the wet season.

23rd Dec. Went out at 6 a.m., shot at a Waterbuck (Nakodzywe)^{standing}, that I could just see his head, looking towards me, about 100' away, hit him in the side of the head, followed him for about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour, when my boy pointed out an Impale (Kewala) about 150' away, hit him a bit too far back, followed him on for about an hour, saw him twice, very groggy, but could not get a shot. Came on to rain which washed out his spoor. Returned to camp ^{about 12 noon}, wet through, very tired, and disgusted at my shooting. Lunch & a sleep.

About 11.30 p.m. everybody looked so miserable, that I decided to go out again, although it was still raining, and shoot something for the boys, head or no head, male or female. Walked for about an hour, everywhere under water, saw nothing so decided to return.

Just before reaching camp heard an Kewala, which quite bucked us up, after 5 min. very careful stalking my boy pointed out the Kewala, about 100' away, hit him exactly where I aimed. Boys pleased on our return. Tomorrow I intend to move to higher ground, the game having moved up higher on account of the wet.

MVERA is a fine place for Hippo, in fact they keep one awake at night.

* Country thick forest, but trees not very large.

② Butcher of the one that was shooting at near.
NAMA LOMBA

My boys also ⁴ tell me that there is a Barana Ross camped about 6 miles lower down the river.

21st Struck camp at 6 a.m., crossed the river, and walked to MVERA* S. end of Lake Samalombe, very bad going, path? nearly always under water. I arrived at MVERA without a halt at 11.30 a.m., only about 15 miles.

Saw a tent on arrival and found out that two African Lakes Co. officials, ^(Messrs Turner & Ross) were camped there for shooting, and were then up the river after Hippo. They returned about 1 p.m., and invited me to lunch, my boys not having arrived.

They had fired away nearly all their ammunition at Hippo, but not certain if they had killed any. Gave them a few rounds.

We all went out in the evening, taking different directions. I heard several shots fired. Saw 5 Reedbuck (mbogye) ^{on a bank (plain)}, got to an ant hill about 200' from them, fired 12 shots, killed three, heads no good, all four shots were hits, one buck taking two bullets to kill him. Returned to camp and found my boys had arrived, and camp pitched. Turner & Ross returned but had killed nothing, so gave them some buck.

As Ross & Turner are staying here, I shall

move again tomorrow. Flying ants, bugs
mosquitoes & worse than ever.

25th Xmas Day. marched due E., saw nothing
except Kewala & Kwapi (English. Impala & Duiker)
Saw about a dozen Hyenas, shot one, skin
no good. Saw shoer ofeland, Zebra & Hartbeest.
Arrived at a village called CHIKALUMA about
9.30 am. Went out at 2 p.m., very hot. Shot
a Reed buck (mboya), and two Hartbeest
(Ngondo) 3 rounds, 3 buck. Returned to camp
at 6 p.m. very tired & very thirsty. Heavy
thunderstorm, rained nearly all night.

Had a tinned Xmas pudding for dinner

26th Went out at 7 am. very misty, very wet
^{under foot,}
water nearly everywhere over ones shoes, returned
to camp at 11 am. having only seen Kwapi
Ngondo & Kewala, none of them with long
horns. Went out again at 3 p.m. shot
two Ngondo (Hartbeest), and wounded another,
should have got it but it was heading
away from camp & I was tired.

Shall move again tomorrow.

27th Started at 6 am., after going for about
an hour found we were going wrong,
we were on the right path if it had
been the dry season, but impassable
in the wet season, as it crosses a large
Dambo (plain) which is under water during
the rains.

b

We got a guide, who, after going about 6 miles showed us a good path, which I was able to cycle on, was very glad, as walking in wet boots is not a pleasure.

Arrived at MISOLA village about 10 am.

Same old yarn plenty of game.

Misola the chief made me a present of a chicken some eggs & flour made from meal. My boys arrived about noon.

Started out at 2 pm and after going for about an hour, saw fresh spoor of bland (Nchifu), followed it up until we caught up to a herd of between 30 & 40, after a bit of stalking, got within about 100 yards of them but could not see a single bull, we (my boy and I) laid very still, some of the cows came within 50' of us. After about an hour crawling got a view of a fine bull, but could not get a shot at him, as he had either trees, or cows between us. The herd were moving slowly, grazing as they went along. Eventually I got a fair view of the bull, fired, and wounded him, the herd made off, we followed them up, until just before dark, we got a splendid view of the herd, they went by us in Indian file about 150 yds away, the bull was not there, except he had been left to die. My boy saw him once, and said he was very sick, shall probably get him tomorrow.

28th Went out at 6 am. saw the same herd of bland, after getting a couple of

looked at them, found there was no bull. Shortly afterwards saw some fresh Sable spoor, followed it up and got within about 250' of a herd, with two bulls, one bull fairly plain, but only had short horns, another bull was about 70' nearer but I could not see him, my boy had seen him and said he had got good horns, so I decided to wait and get a shot at him. Suddenly something startled them, and they went off at racing speed, followed up ~~it~~ spoor until 11 am, when the sable saw us first, and made off. Whilst returning to camp dropped across fresh lion's spoor followed it up, until we lost it on rocky ground.

Out again at 2 pm, saw some fresh Buffalo spoor followed it up, until a heavy thunderstorm came on, which washed out the spoor, so returned to camp wet through.

29th Dec. Out at 6 am came across spoor of a bull & land followed him up until about 10 am, when he joined in a herd, which made it much easier to follow the spoor. Came up to the herd, ^{with the lions seen yesterday} and got a splendid view of them, and to my great disappointment, they had ~~indirectly~~ driven away the bull. Saw a small leopard just as we came up to the herd, could have easily shot him, but I wanted a bull & land.

Tried to find spoor of where the cows

had driven off the bull, but could not. Returned to camp, heavy thunderstorm, flooded out. made the chief a few presents, including one of my hunting knives.

Moved camp about 2.30 p.m., arrived at MBERA at 6 p.m., very hilly, but I was able to ride my bicycle the last 4 miles.

On the march one boy carries my gun & another my bicycle, so if I strike a path fit to ride, I do so, handing over the bicycle again when the path gets to bad.

Of course the usual way of travelling is by machila, but I had such little notice of being able to get away, ~~at~~^{and} it being Xmas time, every machilaman had been engaged.

Chief MBERA (all villages are called after the name of the chief or headman) gave me a chicken, eggs & mealie flour.

Heavy thunderstorm just after I arrived at the village, my kit got wet, as my boys did not reach the village until after 7 p.m.

30th Sent my boys off at 5.30 a.m., with instructions to get as near CHIKALA as possible, my bicycle boy to go on until he gets to a path that I can ride my bicycle, the village people tell him where that is. He has also got a bottle of cold tea, tin of sardines, and some bread, also a pair of boots & socks, so that I can change when I catch him up.

My gun boy & I, with guides from the village, go back part of the way I came yesterday & then strike off into the hills.

About 7.30 am saw a Sable amongst some trees, very difficult shot, ^{as only is apt to hit one of the trees} let drive, he went for about 100 yds & stopped, let drive again, the villagers said I had missed, but my boy said not, followed up the spoor for about 1/2 mile, when the spoor showed he had started to walk, and also to take very short paces, shortly afterwards we came to where he had stopped, & there was a lot of blood. My boy of course jeered the others "what do you know about my master's shooting, he never misses" & T. Shortly afterwards we saw the Sable moving off to our right. Telling the boys to still follow the spoor I went off to the right, after a bit, I saw the Sable coming towards me, keeping himself hidden from the natives following his spoor, he stopped amongst some trees about 200' away, I let drive, he ran round & fell down dead. My first or second shot was a miss as except the shot that killed him, there was only one other wound, which was just too high for his heart & just too low for his spine. A fair head, horns about 36" but not certain to an inch or so, as I had not got a measure. Left instructions for its head & skin to be brought into Zomba, meat to be divided amongst the villagers & the chief. Struck across country to the place where my bicycle was waiting for me, saw nothing worth shooting on the way, about 9.30 am. came up to my bicycle, had my change, wash, & the sardines & T., started off again at 10 am. Went on until 1.30 pm.

walking and riding, my boys, one with my rifle, the other with my wet boots & keeping up, carrying my bicycle ^{half} across streams, and when the path was too bad for me to ride carrying my bicycle.

Caught up my boys, had some lunch.

Started again at 2.30 pm, arrived at MUTAIRI at 4.30 pm, boys arrived between 5.30 and 6.30 pm. everyone very tired.

3rd Started off at 5.30 am. to cycle into ZOMBA about 50 miles, nearly all up hill. Arrived at my house at about 12 noon done in, very hot the last part of the journey.

Not a successful shoot, but splendid training, the rains spoilt shooting, and having the bad luck to strike places other people were at. I could have shot a lot more, but most things I saw were not good enough horns.

The last two days of my journey (not the last day) ^{ending in 42 miles} was through a lion country, my camp boys say they saw lion's spoor.

The natives have built several ⁸ rest houses between villages, so that if natives happen to get stranded at night, they can go into them.

Jack.

* The rest house is built like a stockade, with small trees from 10' to 15' in height, built in the center, a small grass roof.