







A CEYLON  
SPORTSMAN'S DIARY







CEYLON RECORD SPOTED BUCK.

**A CEYLON  
SPORTSMAN'S DIARY**

**AN ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S SHOOTING  
EXPERIENCES FROM 1909 TO 1920 INCLUSIVE**

**WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS**

**HARRY STOREY**



**ASIAN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES  
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BY HARRY STOREY.

(Author of "Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon.")

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EXPERIENCES FROM 1909 TO 1920 INCLUSIVE.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS  
— FROM PHOTOGRAPHS.—

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TO  
MY WIFE



## PREFACE.

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THIS book is written, primarily, in the interests of sportsmen resident in Ceylon which will account for the considerable amount of detail in the way of routes and place names, but I hope it may also appeal to sportsmen in other parts of the world, especially those who have visited, or otherwise know, the Island.

I have retained the well-known Ceylon misnomers such as "elk" for the Indian *sambhur* (*cervus unicolor*); "spotted deer" for *cervus axis*; "red deer" for *cervulus muntjac*, but I have avoided the substitution of "cheetah" for "leopard"—there I draw the line.

In Ceylon *shikaris* are always spoken of as "trackers" and this expression I have retained.

These misnomers have been in use since the earliest days of the British occupation of Ceylon so I see no reason for altering them.

My thanks are due to Messrs. R. A. G. Festing and G. S. Wodeman, E. L. Walker, W. L. Murphy, Chas. Northway, G. M. Crabbe, G. Harbord, and others who did not wish their names to appear, for contributions and photographs.

HARRY STOREY.

Warakamure Estate,  
Matale, Ceylon.  
June, 1921.



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## Chapter I.

### THE CEYLON GAME PROTECTION SOCIETY.

**T**HIS Society has undoubtedly earned the gratitude of all sportsmen in Ceylon.

It is almost entirely due to its persistence that the various laws for the better protection of game, especially deer, have been won from successive Governors, and to these laws in their present form we owe the yearly improving position of Ceylon as a big-game country.

In spite of strenuous effort very little had been accomplished up to the year 1906 when the writer's book "Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon" was published, but since then there has been such marked progress that a brief history of the Society is worth placing on record.

The Society owes its origin to the late Admiral Sir William Kennedy, K.C.B., who, when Commander-in-Chief in the East, managed to enjoy a great deal of shooting whenever his Flagship happened to call at Trincomalee.

In the course of his shooting trips he saw such strong evidence of unlimited destruction of

game that he talked the matter over with various Ceylon sportsmen, resulting in a meeting being called at the Bristol Hotel, Colombo, on 25th May, 1894, and the "Ceylon Game Protection Society" was duly formed with the late Lieut.-Col. (then Capt.) Gordon Reeves as honorary secretary.

From that meeting a resolution was forwarded to Government recommending that the export of horns and hides be prohibited for one year, but this resulted only in the prohibition of the export of hides for a period of some years. The records of minutes of proceedings between 1894 and 1898 seem to be missing; but, during that time, the late Mr. Thos. Farr, who ran a pack of elk hounds in the hill country, had succeeded Col. Reeves as honorary secretary, and, in his turn, been succeeded by the late Mr. North C. Davidson. The three gentlemen mentioned were well-known planters and keen sportsmen.

In 1898, owing to strong representations from the owners of hunting packs, the shooting of elk in the hills, above 4,000 ft. elevation, was prohibited in the country hunted by the packs.

During this year, also, the idea of a sanctuary had been mooted; Government was approached and the result was the fixing and proclaiming of the "Yala" sanctuary in the Southern Province.

Many other schemes for game protection, practicable and otherwise, concerning increase of gun and game licenses, etc., were, from time to time, suggested but nothing eventuated.

In 1898, also, Mr. A. M. Hurst moved a resolution that the export of horns, hides and dried meat

be put a stop to, and this was approved by the Society, but, having been submitted to one or two Government officials, it was shelved because they expressed the opinion that it would necessitate "too much legislation." In May, 1899, with Mr. North Davidson still honorary secretary, the writer made a strenuous effort on behalf of low-country game by reviving Mr. Hurst's former resolution and showing the Society that the trade in dried meat was really the root of the whole evil—that it was insufficient, and practically useless, merely to prohibit the export of horns and hides whilst the trade in meat remained unchecked. Convincing facts and figures from personal observation were laid before the Society, and, in spite of considerable opposition from Government officials, who deprecated any attempt at interference with the meat trade, a resolution was passed and forwarded to Government, recommending the total prohibition of all trade in game produce. Though strongly backed up by innumerable letters to the Papers from prominent sportsmen nothing was done by Government except to proclaim the prohibition of export of cut horns and hides for a term of years. In this year also a deputation of sportsmen visited the Customs to inspect a big lot of supposed shed horns awaiting shipment, the result of their examination showing that not less than 25 per cent. of the shipment were cut horns. Nothing, however, was done by Government in this matter.

In this year watchers were first appointed, and paid, by the Society, for the better protection of the forests hunted by the packs of elk hounds.

Mr. North Davidson resigned the honorary secretaryship in 1901 and the late Mr. Thos. Farr took up the work for the second time. In this year, owing to strong representations from the Society, the "Residents Reserve," a tract of country in the Southern Province adjoining the sanctuary, was proclaimed as closed to non-residents for shooting purposes. The possible importation of black buck from India was proposed, but, on consideration, the cost was found to be prohibitive. Beyond the foregoing matters, and a vast amount of correspondence with Government on various subjects, nothing at all was done for game protection in the low-country during the years 1902-3-4-5.

In 1906 the late Mr. Farr resigned the honorary secretaryship and the writer accepted the post, seeing a chance to put up another fight for the low-country. By this time, mainly owing to the fact that nothing had been accomplished for the better protection of game except in the hill country, the membership, originally well over 200, had dwindled down to 64, so that it was obviously necessary, for the sake of the future existence of the Society, that something should be accomplished in the near future.

In this year, for the first time, watchers were appointed to the low-country, at least so far as regards the residents reserve in the Southern Province. At a general meeting in September of this year (1906) the writer, as honorary secretary, laid before the meeting a voluminous report dealing with the wanton destruction of game from every possible point of view, and giving most convincing

facts and figures in support of the case. This report, which was adopted at this very influential meeting, resulted in the resolution to request Government to prohibit all trade in game produce once more going forward, and the report of the proceedings, together with publication of the report on game destruction, in the press, brought forward a vast amount of correspondence in support.

A consequence of this resolution was that the Governor (the late Sir Henry Blake) received a deputation of sportsmen on the subject in December of that year, and the matter was very fully argued, but it was found impossible to induce His Excellency to put a decisive stop to the trade in game produce. Nevertheless that meeting, and possibly pressure in the shape of much strong correspondence, resulted in the "Dried Meat Ordinance" (19 of 1908) being drafted before Sir Henry Blake resigned office, though it did not become law until the late Sir Henry McCallum assumed the reins of Government. As soon as possible after the advent of the late Sir Henry McCallum the writer, as honorary secretary of the Society, sent him the detailed report on destruction of game drawn up in 1906-7 with the result that His Excellency, early in 1908, appointed a Commission to report on all the Game Ordinances and the question of the protection of game.

The Commission consisted of the Hon. Mr. J. P. Lewis, C.M.G. (then Government Agent of the Central Province), Chairman, the late Hon. Mr. J. Ferguson, M.L.C., Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranayaka, Maha Mudaliyar, Mudaliyar Solomon Seneviratne, the



late Col. Reeves, the late Mr. Thos. Farr and the writer (Honorary Secretary, C. G. P. S.). Meetings were held in Kandy and in Nuwara Eliya, and the whole of the Game Ordinances were revised, made more drastic and embodied under one Ordinance (No. 1 of 1909). In the matter of destruction of game the writer was able to give the Commission convincing facts and figures, and the eventual result was the proclamation of the Dried Meat Ordinance and present satisfactory condition of the game laws.

From this time may be said to date the commencement of real protection of game in the low-country. The result of the "Dried Meat" Ordinance was marked and immediate. Traders who had "squatted" in the low-country to deal in produce of the chase, finding their occupation gone, departed bag and baggage, and a few early prosecutions under the Ordinance soon stopped any attempt at trade.

This does not mean that illicit killing has ceased, but it is very certain that, as dried meat cannot be exported to towns as before in bulk, the slaughter has vastly decreased, as local consumption is not a fraction of the former demands of trade.

Protection being now fully established, the Society flourished exceedingly, becoming stronger in membership and also financially.

More watchers were posted in the low-country and also, on the Society's recommendation to Government, another "Resident's Reserve" was proclaimed embodying that very fine block of shooting country in the North-Central Province,

Tamankaduwa District, known as the Vettikachi country.

The Southern Province reserve was vastly extended and now encircles the sanctuary on its three "land" sides. Though the Society has no exclusive rights as regards these reserves nevertheless Government stipulated that the Society should appoint and pay the watchers and this has been done ever since.

A few years ago, under the energetic secretaryship of Mr. G. M. Crabbe, the Society imported some black buck from India, but the experiment proved a failure—the animals, two bucks and five does, never recovered from the journey sufficiently to be turned out and gradually died. There is no reason, however, why the experiment should not be tried again later.

The result of the prohibition of trade in game produce has been the steady and most noticeable increase of game in all the sporting districts, especially as regards spotted deer. The increase in numbers is marked and the improvement in heads is also most noticeable. Elk have increased considerably in some districts, but not so noticeably in other parts where a considerable amount of water-hole slaughter still goes on. The fact remains, however, that Ceylon has fully regained its former rank amongst sporting countries.

During Sir Henry McCallum's time a limit of three head per license was imposed, as regards deer, but no limit was placed on the number of licenses issuable to any one person per season. It became, more or less, an established custom

that, if required, any person applying might be permitted to take out three licenses at a time for any one Province. This held good for some years until the then Government Agent of Uva interpreted the limitation order to mean that only one license could be issued to any one person, for any one Province, per season. This caused a great upset and a vast amount of correspondence with Government ensued. The Society eventually carried the matter to the Governor of that period, by way of the Colonial Secretary, but in vain, as the Government Agent's reading of the order, referred to above, was sustained.

However, soon after the advent of Sir William Manning as Governor, the writer, as Chairman of the Game Protection Society, together with Mr. V. A. Julius (good sportsman and veteran member of the Society) were granted an interview with His Excellency and the matter was fully enquired into, with the result that His Excellency—a keen sportsman of Central African experience—after satisfying himself that such excessive restriction was totally unnecessary, at once restored the *status quo ante*.

For some years past the writer, after six years' service as honorary secretary, has had the honour of being permanent Chairman of the Society, whilst the secretaryship has been in the capable and energetic hands of Mr. G. M. Crabbe and, later, Mr. J. P. Ireson, both keen and experienced sportsmen.

Membership, except for a slight check during the dreadful war period, has steadily increased,

reaching the high-water mark of 259 members in 1919, with corresponding increase in financial status by means of subscriptions and liberal donations. Members who go in for big-game shooting pay a higher subscription than other members, and these enhanced subscriptions make it possible to employ a fair staff of watchers. Generally speaking the Government Agents and Assistant Government Agents have been sympathetic, and helpful, in most matters, when appealed to by the Society. Long may it flourish.

## Chapter II.

### WATER-HOLE SHOOTING IN THE NORTH-CENTRAL PROVINCE DURING 1909.

THE shooting districts and *fauna* of Ceylon were fairly fully described in my book "Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon" so that there is no necessity to go over that ground again.

I therein narrated many of my experiences from the year 1890 to the year 1907, and the incidents I am now about to relate are edited from my diaries since the latter date.

In July, 1909, I made arrangements to visit the Egodapattu Division of Tamankaduwa District, in the North-Central Province, for bear shooting at water-holes. The wilder more remote parts of this *pattu* are inhabited only by a few scattered parties of Veddas, some of whom I proposed to make use of as carriers and trackers. I packed up all *impedimenta* and sent it off, six days ahead, by cart in charge of my faithful old camp-man Meiyān, with two other coolies to help him. They were to proceed right through to the Tamil village of Manampitiya, on the east side of the Mahaweliganga, going via Habarane, Minneriya and Topāwewa (the ancient Polonnaruwa). I left by car, on 25th July, accompanied by my friend H. S. Cameron, a non-shooter but deeply interested observer, taking





with us our clothes boxes and my guns (12-bore "Paradox" and .303 "Savage"). Reached Topáwewa (Polonnaruwa), 74 miles, at 10 a.m., put up the car at the resthouse, lunched, got some carriers for our boxes, and pushed on to Manampitiya village, a walk of 10 miles including crossing the Mahaweliganga by ferry. Travelling in this part of the country in the wet season is very difficult owing to the amount of water lying about at that time, but is all right in the dry season. We reached Manampitiya village at 5-30 and put up in the Gansabhawa bungalow, a wattle-and-daub thatched shelter for the use of officials and travellers, situated on the edge of the fine *wila*, or lagoon, which lies between the river and the mountain known as Gunner's Quoin, or, more correctly, Dimbulágala-kanda.

We got up at 5 a.m. next day, loaded up all our baggage on a buffalo cart hired from the village and set off by 6-15. We walked ahead of the cart accompanied by a cooly and a Vedda who had come in to meet us.

Our track took us past the north end of Gunner's Quoin through open plains interspersed with small blocks of jungle, trees, and rocks, the massive rugged cliff of the mountain dominating the surrounding country from its sheer 1,700 ft.

Called in at Kosgahulpota—a spring under the mountain cliff—for more Veddas and then pushed on to Dambáneulpota, site of a deserted village and a small breached tank, the total distance walked being about 10 miles.

The cart did not arrive until 11-30 and it



was 2 p.m. before we got the tents up and had breakfast. Immediately after breakfast we got our blankets, water bottles, and some food, ready for a night watch and set off for a rock-hole near the south-west end of the mountain about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from camp.

We started at 3-40 but did not reach the rock until 5-15. Found the water-hole in good order—a perpendicular-sided hollow about 5-6 feet deep in a flat part of a huge outcrop of rock. An elephant, some years ago, got into this hole, and perished miserably because it could not get out again, the hole being known as Aliyawetichagala, or “the rock where the elephant fell.” There was a very convenient tree, at the side of the rock, fully commanding the hole and right for the wind. In this tree our attendant Veddas built a stage but did not get it completed until 6 p.m. We had heard a bear making a noise on the hill before it was finished, and, just as we took our places on the stage, another bear passed along the foot of the rock to seaward of us, out of our sight, but got our wind and went off with a grunt.

The rock is a big undulating mass stretching away to our right, whilst we and the water-hole are at the extreme left end of the outcrop which is situated at the south end of a rocky jungle-covered ridge, but separated from it by a miniature pass, up which bears usually approach the water-hole.

Around, on three sides, is jungly park country, and Gunner's Quoin frowns down on us from its abrupt precipices a mile away, our ridge lying parallel to, but separate from it. The stage

was so close to the rock surface that we could easily step on to it from the rock, and the water-hole was immediately in front of us about 15 yards away. There being only a half-moon, the light was not good, so we watched very carefully, and at 7-30 I perceived a black form against the dark shadow of the jungle just beyond the hole. It disappeared for a moment, but, immediately after, it appeared again close to the water-hole and stood looking straight at us.

I fired at it instantly, the shot being followed by dead silence and Cameron asked me what I had fired at. I told him "a bear"; stood up to see better, saw a black mass on the rock so gave it another shot to make sure. We descended to the rock to examine it and found my first shot had caught it fairly in the white half-collar covering the chest, killing it in its tracks.

It was a good specimen of a male bear.

The Veddas, four of them, who were occupying a higher portion of the rock on our left, came down and dragged the body away to their side, out of the "wind." A wait of one-and-a-half hours now ensued, and then, at 9 o'clock, another bear suddenly, and absolutely silently, appeared at the edge of the hole, offering me a good broadside shot which I took advantage of. It grunted and groaned as it scrambled away towards the rocky ridge, but died in a few minutes. We retrieved it and placed it by its mate on the rock—this second one being a female.

Nothing further happened until 11-30, at which time I was lying down on the stage for a snooze.

but, being roused by a signal from one of the Veddas, I sat up and saw a shadowy black mass at the edge of the hole, at which I fired rather too hurriedly. It went away quite slowly and quietly, but I hoped I had got it all right. No other animals came, except the usual porcupines wandering over the rock, and at daybreak we went in search of the third bear, but found no track or blood trace so were forced to conclude I had missed it or not seriously injured it.

We then photographed the "bag," and the water-hole, had the bears skinned and returned to camp by 10 a.m. rather tired.

After a good feed and a sleep we felt better—ready for another night out if need be, but scouts brought word that the water-hole we had hoped to go to this night had been shot over by some Veddas a few nights ago. We therefore stayed in camp and had a comfortable night's rest. The next day we packed up food-stuff enough for three days and set off, with five Vedda carriers, taking my man Meiyān and one cooly with us, walking about 7 or 8 miles to Weeragoda, a rock outcrop containing some remains of ancient Sinhalese and Tamil temples, a favourite camp of the Veddas. The available water here is a curious natural phenomenon consisting of a shallow circular pool, about 6 feet diameter, a little way inside a block of jungle, containing good clear water which only exists during the dry season! The pool is dry during the wet season—this I can vouch for as I have seen it at various times of the year. It is not a good hole to watch as there the wind veers



VEDDAS AND DEAD BEARS



SHOOTING STAGE IN A TREE.

about too much, so we did not make use of it, but, after settling camp, went on to look at another spring in the bed of an abandoned tank known as Ulpotawewa, about a mile away through the forest. Found plenty of tracks at the water, which was in a small patch of grass surrounded by forest, so had a stage built in a rather high tree commanding the hole, and then returned to camp for breakfast at 2 p.m. We went to our stage at 4 p.m. sending the men who accompanied us back to camp as there was only room on the stage for Cameron and myself.

From the stage we watched a 6 ft. yellowish snake glide about in the grass near the water-hole for some time, and many birds, doves and pigeons came to drink. At 6 p.m. we heard wanderoo monkeys in the jungle making a big noise, so concluded a leopard was on the move, which behoved us to watch carefully, keeping an eye on a small animal path leading out of the jungle on our left. Sure enough, at 6-10, out of this path strolled a female leopard, a thing of wicked beauty, and a sight to make one tingle with the lust of slaughter.

She paused on the edge of the open, looked to the right, then to the left, but the next moment fell dead to a shot from my .303 "Savage." I got down to look at her, very pleased with myself, but left her there as she was out of the wind and not likely to disturb other animals coming. Nothing more came until 9 p.m. when three jackals turned up and drank noisily, taking no notice of my flashing a light on them from an electric torch. Another long wait until 11 o'clock, when some animals, which we were sure were pigs, rummaged about

under our tree, on the jungle edge out of sight, but, when one of them walked out to the water, I saw it was a bear. I fired at it, but made a bad miss, failing also with the second barrel as it bolted off. Nothing more came to water that night.

After daybreak, as soon as the men came, we skinned the leopard, having first photographed it and the tree with the stage, and returned to camp, where they told us bears had careered about all over the rock near camp, for a long time, to the great alarm of the men.

We packed up and marched to Mápotahá, a rock outcrop about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles further on, but found the water-hole in the rock, at which I had watched last year, all but dry. However, as there were plenty of tracks around we went off to a "camp" about a mile away, where we got water by digging, had a feed and a rest and returned to the water-hole at 4 p.m. accompanied by three Veddas.

We took our station behind some boulders commanding the water-hole, and, at 6 p.m., heard a bear roar in the jungle near by.

At 6-30 a female bear with a cub came on to the rock from the jungle in front of us, and walked up the slope to the water-hole, where I shot her. On receipt of the shot she rolled down the slope, roaring and yelling, whereupon the cub, also joining in the hullabuloo, flew at its mother and bit her in a most unfilial fashion! I ran out, but the bear just then gave utterance to its final long-drawn howl and died. The poor cub yelled and screamed, running at us full of fight, so I had to shoot it or it would have kept up the noise half the night.

LEOPARD SHOT FROM STAGE IN A TREE







We dragged them out of the way and nothing more occurred until 8 p.m. when another bear came up the slope on our left, after snuffing about at the base of the rock for some time. It appeared quite suddenly between two boulders, about 15 feet away on my left, only its head and shoulders being visible, so I fired at it quickly and it went away without a sound. After this a pig came at 1 a.m. at which I fired but missed, and that was our last visitor for the night. At daybreak we went to look for tracks of the second bear and found lots of blood and even pieces of bone, but after half-a-mile all tracks gave out on the hard dry ground, so we returned to the rock and photographed the dead bear. The skin was too poor to be worth taking. We then returned to the night camp and from there back to Dambánculpota. On the way I and one Vedda visited Kada Ela, the water-hole in a sandy river bed that we had intended to watch at after our first night's shoot, and found tracks of bears drinking, so I decided to watch there this night, Cameron electing to remain in camp. Had a good feed and a rest, after which, at 4 p.m., I set off for my vigil, the stage being in a tree commanding the sandy river-bed. The wind here was rather inclined to veer round, for, at 8 p.m., I heard first one and then another bear arrive at the edge of the opposite jungle, where they remained a full half-hour with an occasional rustle, or hard breathing. At 8-45 we heard considerable rustling in the jungle on our side of the river, and, very soon, along the white sand came a female bear with a cub. I shot at the bear when close to the water-hole,

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but off she rushed, though I felt sure I had got her as she stopped, roaring, some little distance off, out of sight, and we heard the cub rush off without her, wandering about moaning and crying for some time, to which the bear made no reply. The other two bears did not bolt away, but, when all was over, we heard them give a grunt and walk off as much as to say "Ah! I thought so!" Nothing more came that night. A very careful search the next morning failed to find the supposed dead bear, so we returned to camp, where I found Cameron had got everything packed up ready for return. Paid off the Veddass, loaded up the buffalo cart and walked back to Manampitiya, where we rested for that day, returning to Polonnaruwa the next day and home by car.

Travelling in the part of the country we had been shooting in was terribly trying. There was not much forest to give us shade and the open plains had all been burnt, so the heat was terrific. Water there was none beyond the puddles the animals drank at, so that even water for cooking purposes was "precarious." One has to be very keen to be able to stand this style of shooting, but there is a strong fascination about it and an ever-present sense of mystery and imagination.

## Chapter III.

### DEER SHOOTING IN THE NORTH-CENTRAL PROVINCE DURING 1910.

THE season for deer opens on 1st November and, on that date, in 1910, M. L. Wilkins and I visited the Batugasdamana country (commonly known as Vettikachi) which is situated in the north east part of Tamankaduwa District, North-Central Province. This stretch of fine shooting country, site of innumerable small tanks and villages some centuries ago, was, on the representations of the Game Protection Society, proclaimed by Government as closed to non-resident sportsmen, in 1914, the Society to provide and pay the necessary watchers, but, apart from that, the Society has no exclusive sporting rights. The "Dried Meat" Ordinance had, in 1910, been in existence for two years and the increase in the number of deer was distinctly noticeable even then, but we were greatly struck by the disproportionately large number of poor heads—so much so that we intentionally shot some of the very poor ones met with, merely to get rid of them, on the principle that "every little helps."

I sent off a cart with our camp equipment the usual 5-6 days ahead, with orders to go to Alut Oya Resthouse (now a P.W.D. circuit bungalow) at which place I had arranged for 20 Sinhalese

carriers to meet us—men from Diwulánkadawela and Rotáwewa villages 8-10 miles away.

My intention was to enter the shooting country by a little-used jungle path from the ancient abandoned tank, Puliankulam, on the Alut Oya-Kauduluwewa path, four miles from the resthouse. I met Wilkins at Matale station and loaded him, box, guns, etc., on the car, starting off immediately on our journey.

We ran into heavy rain near Alut Oya which continued all night. The carriers had arrived but, in the morning, were unwilling to carry *via* the track mentioned above as it was very over-grown and little used. However, I persuaded them to try it, easing matters a little by carting the baggage as far as Puliankulam. There is to me always a fascination about a jungle path, and always will be, no matter how well I know it or how often I have tramped along it, and I have traversed this particular path a good many times. Our starting point, the small tank known as Puliankulam, or sometimes Puliankadawela, is historically interesting for, in the 1820's, there was a fortified station here on the Matale-Trincomalee post track, and for some years, the Government Agent of Tamankaduwa District dwelt here.

The fortifications are still in good order if one knows where to look for them—as a matter of fact the Alut Oya-Kauduluwewa road passes through the very middle of the fort—but the rampart each side has been thrown down into the outer ditch in the making of the road. The other parts of the ramparts and ditch are, however,

plainly to be seen if the visitor enters the jungle each side of the road. The fort was star-shaped and is situated on slightly rising ground close to the west end of the tank bund. The buildings must have been merely wattle-and-daub and thatched, for they have utterly disappeared.

Our track lay across the tank over dried mud ploughed into lumps and hollows by elephants, buffaloes and pig, making walking very uncomfortable, but the path was all right once we got into the jungle at the other side. We then had nearly three miles of jungle to traverse, which would have been very pleasant but for the necessity of dodging twigs, branches and fallen trees which had to be more or less cleared for our carriers. At the end of the three miles we enter a small block of very scrubby open, known as Relapanáwa, the site of an ancient village and some small breached tanks. This place is usually very "gamey," and I have had good sport in it at times, but this day we did not see anything to shoot at as we passed through.

The track out of this bit of open is impossible to find, if you do not already know it, without guides, as it goes out by a very tricky hidden route, entering the forest once more where you may chance to meet a bear or an elephant any time if you travel quietly. After about two miles of forest the path crosses a picturesque rock outcrop, with the usual water-hole in it, and, about the middle of it, on a built-up platform, are the remains of a small temple. Beyond this rock there is some scrubby open land for a short distance in which,

again, the track becomes very difficult to follow but eventually leads into jungle once more. We have still to traverse three or four miles of forest, with one or two small open spaces—beds of breached tanks—before we finally emerge into the *damanas* (grassy plains), which form the shooting country, after our very interesting walk. We stopped at the rock outcrop, afore mentioned, for breakfast and the men's rice, and then pushed on to our final camp at another rock outcrop known as Godepotagala, where I paid off the carriers and they left at once for their village by a different track than that by which we came.

As it was dull and threatening we at once put up the tents, set our residence in order and got out our rifles, W. having a .401 "Winchester" and I my faithful .303 "Savage," but did not go out as it was too late.

Rained all night and was still drizzling in the morning, but we went out at about 6-30 and saw three nice bucks before we separated, though we did not get a shot. I and my trackers wandered on through park and forest, small glades and larger open spaces, with the ever-green jungle on all sides, until we spied a fine herd of deer in one of the glades. I got to within about 170 yards, but could get no nearer. Saw five bucks, one a very good one, but he fed away out of sight and they began to get restless. Finally I got the chance of a broadside shot at the second-best head, but could only see part of the upper half of his body. However, he fell to the shot but got up again as I ran up, moving on a few

CAMP AT GODEPOTAGALA.







paces dragging a hindleg and hobbling into the jungle close by, when I was still 40-50 yards away.

I had foolishly refrained from firing again as I thought he was disabled, but I soon found he had joined the herd and gone away strong.

Examining the place, where he had been standing when I shot at him, I found my bullet had cut through a leaf stem of a wild date palm and had, no doubt, been deflected, probably only "creasing" a muscle. Heavy rain set in after this, soon soaking us to the skin, so we moved on seeing more deer but getting no shot for some time. Finally, in Borawewa,\* I stalked a herd very carefully, spotted a buck which looked fairly good, sat down on the sopping ground and fired at him. At the shot he "hunched" himself, ran a little way and stopped, but, just as I was going to fire again, the herd stampeded, he with them, round a corner of jungle. I walked up, rounded the corner and saw the buck standing, about 40 yards away, looking very sick so I fired at once and dropped him. The antlers, which had appeared quite good from a distance, turned out to be only about 22 inches. In a herd containing a number of poor heads the best head of the lot always looks deceptively good if there is no really good head in the herd for comparison. I think that is one reason for poorish heads being so often shot.

We cut up the buck and then returned to camp where I was able to get into dry clothes. It is

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\*Names such as "Borawewa," and the like, in connection with the shooting country, in this and succeeding chapters, are names of localities only, such as abandoned tanks and former village sites.

a very comfortable thing to get back to a good weatherproof tent, and dry clothing, after tramping the whole morning through pouring rain, lank grass, and dripping jungle. This particular camp is on an undulating slab-rock outcrop with good water-holes in it, and good jungle in and around it, the tent being pitched under a fine shady tree. This latter is a very necessary precaution in Ceylon, otherwise, if pitched out in the open, even a double-fly tent becomes unbearably hot in the middle of the day with the sun blazing down on it. Another great advantage at this camp is the fact that half-an-hour's sun will dry the rock and then an hour will suffice to dry the wettest clothing spread thereon.

W. came in shortly after I returned, having seen few deer and none worth a shot.

We fed sumptuously on large quantities of fresh deer-meat stewed to a turn and very tender, after which we turned in for a snooze until 3 p.m.; cup of tea and out again 5 p.m., the rain having ceased about breakfast time but no sun. I strolled off via Kudáwewa and its surrounding "parks," but saw nothing to shoot at until I got into the swampy lower end of Mediwewa, where I stalked a small herd which I found to contain only a very poor "head," the buck owning it being engaged in playfully butting his pet doe. Left them and went on, coming, shortly after, in sight of another herd in a jungle "bay." I could not get nearer than 170 yards, so stood watching them until I made out what looked like a fair buck, offering a broadside shot, at which I fired, the twilight being



ROCK-HOLE AT CODEPOTAGALA.



very dim by this time. I heard the shot strike with a thud, but the buck turned and tore away to the jungle, followed, after an interval, by the rest of the herd. By this time the light was too far gone to attempt a search in the jungle, so we returned to camp. I find I note in my diary that I saw this day 17 bucks and about 50 does. W. again had no luck, having seen only some 30 does, so had not fired a shot. The evening was pleasantly fine, but it poured with rain all night, to which we were quite indifferent, the tents being water-tight, chairs and beds comfortable, and food good ; our condition, therefore, being one of blissful contentment.

The next morning W. went off for a round in good country, whilst I went to look for last night's buck, first going a short round eastward during which I saw nothing shootable.

Coming into Mediweva at the lower end again and making my way towards the "bay" where I had shot at the buck, I saw a nice-sized boar wandering about in the swampy bit of open grass land. Him I forthwith dropped in his tracks by a good shot at 100 yards. Left him there, going on with the trackers to where I had shot at the buck, and, I am glad to be able to say, we found it, in about a quarter of an hour, not more than 50 yards inside the jungle. The head was a poor one to my dismay, but I could not help being proud of the shot—dim twilight and the distance turned out to be 160 paces. Not a bad performance for a .303 with only a 22-inch barrel! Left a man to cut up the buck, and returned to camp taking the boar's head as it had fair tusks.

I had heard W. fire three rapid shots so hoped he had scored. He had seen two pigs close to camp but did not get a shot. Saw nothing further until he got into Maradankadawela, where he came on a herd, but it stampeded when he tried a stalk—two bucks in it but no chance of a shot. Further on missed a running buck, but, coming on a herd on the run shortly after he dropped a buck by a 60-yard shot. He saw many more deer but got no further chance of a shot. Of course the retailing of each one's experience occupied us contentedly for a considerable time at and after breakfast—one of the pleasures of camp and congenial companionship.

Going out about 3 p.m., I stalked a good herd of spotted deer up a long glade about a mile from camp in which I saw what looked like a buck with a curiously malformed head which I determined to try for. I could not get near enough, however, thanks to a confoundedly wide-awake doe which happened to be in my way, so, when I did try a shot through a "thin" bush I made a clean miss. Saw another fine herd about a mile further on, but the stalk failed as they spotted me and bolted off. After this I returned to camp and found that W. had accounted for two bucks; one he had dropped at 30 yards as it bolted past him, the other he had stalked and shot at as it walked along, part of a big herd. It was a long shot and his first shot missed it, of which it took no notice—the next shot dropped it.

This one had a nice head of 27 inches, which is quite good for this part of the country.

The next morning we went to Halmillewa, the southern portion of the main block of open country, getting there by an abominable elephant path consisting of 2 miles of mud and water, struggling in and out of 18-inch deep "wells," for such are elephant tracks in soft mud.

We saw nothing shootable, however, though we saw lots of deer—mainly does of course. Returned to camp and I had another fruitless round in the afternoon seeing any amount of deer but none worth a shot. W. was more fortunate, for he dropped a buck by a good running shot at 60 yards—poor head.

The next day I saw innumerable deer but never a good head so, eventually, I shot a poor-headed buck for meat as our trackers were drying it all for use at their village. W. had seen some big herds, and, in stalking one good lot, they winded him, bolted and streamed past him at 60 yards upon which he dropped the first buck at full speed by a good snap-shot. He also shot a fine peacock by an 86-yard shot with the rifle.

Curiously enough we saw nothing during this camp but spotted deer and a few pig. Usually, in this stretch of country, especially during wet weather, one would see almost every species of game in Ceylon—elephants, buffaloes, leopards, bears and the different varieties of deer, but this time most of these animals were conspicuous by their absence. W. certainly heard two leopards quarrelling one day in a bit of jungle he was passing through, but though he approached very carefully, he got no sight of them.



Nothing of any note occurred until the day came for our return. I arranged that W. and the carriers should make for the main road, distant about 10 miles by way of Nikkewewa and the Kanthalay track; whilst I, with one man, would go back to Alut Oya, distant about 12 or 13 miles, by the track we used when coming into the country. This we did, and on my way in a small patch of open country I stalked and shot a buck by a 122-yard shot, solely for the purpose of being able to take home a fresh haunch of meat which my man cut off and carried a hot 7 miles (from where I had shot the buck) to the Alut Oya resthouse. There all the food I could get was half a soup-square and two eggs, after which I changed, got into the car and drove towards Kanthalay for about 7 miles, picking up Wilkins near Kituluttu. I found he had bagged another peacock on the way. We paid off our carriers and loaded up the cart, which I had sent on from Alut Oya, took our guns, clothes boxes and trophies in the car and did a fair run back to my bungalow, 70 miles, after a very pleasant trip but with poor results as regards trophies.

### WITH THE CROWN PRINCE OF GERMANY

DECEMBER, 1910.

AMONGST other entertainments provided for the Crown Prince of Germany, when he visited Ceylon, in 1910, during his Eastern tour, was a shooting trip in the low-country. The late Mr. J. O'K.

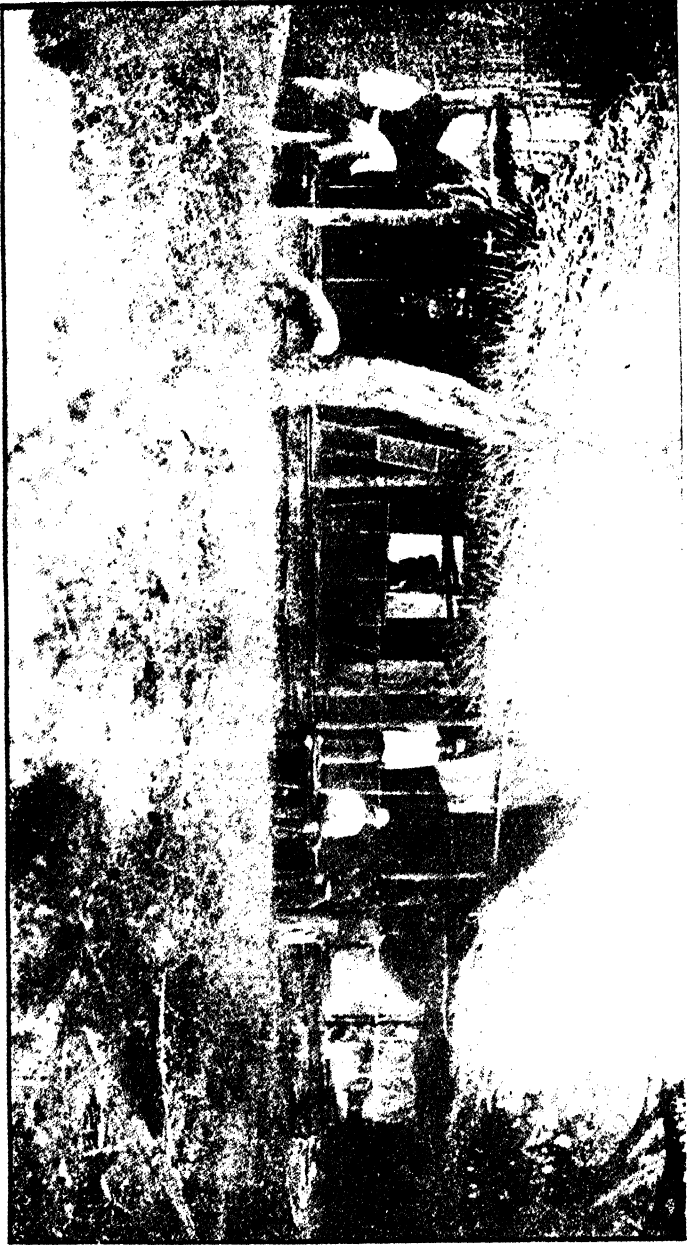
Murty, then Government Agent of the Eastern Province, was placed in charge of the arrangements and I was asked by the Governor to accompany the party. I was not consulted as to locality but found it had already been decided that the party should proceed to the "Vettikachi" shooting country south of Kanthalay tank. I stipulated that all the hunting arrangements should be in my charge and requested that 6 men, known to me, should be sent to the camp from the jungle villages on the south-east border of the hunting country.

All arrangements for the camp had been made officially, but I sent off my own tent and equipment by cart on 25th November in charge of my old camp-man, Meiyar. The Prince and party were to arrive on 4th, so, having wired to Murty, I left by car on 2nd, and, knowing the Kanthalay resthouse would be fully taken up by the Prince's party, I left my car at the Kituluttu P.W.D. bungalow (since pulled down) some 5 or 6 miles from Kanthalay. I was met at Kituluttu by one of my own coolies, and one of my jungle villagers, to carry my box, gun-case, etc. I left there at about 1-30 p.m., after a change of clothing and some light refreshment, and walked two miles along the road to the turn-off at the 84th mile where the track to the Vettikachi country commences.

There is a small block of open grass land about a quarter-of-a-mile down the track, and, although it was only 2-30 p.m., and fairly hot sunshine, I saw a fine buck vanishing into the jungle on my left. A little further on I saw another buck, up a narrow glade, standing broadside on, looking at

me. As I knew fresh meat would be very acceptable at the camp I at once fired at the buck and he fell dead after a short run. My men took the two hind quarters, the rest of the meat being hung up on a tree near the track for the benefit of anyone following us. I then pushed on to camp, distant about 7 miles, finding that the track had been well cleared but was still very muddy near the Kaluganga where, however, some P.W.D. coolies were turning the track into a "corduroy" road. I found a regular "town" in course of construction. My own tent was nicely placed next to Murty's, and near the wooden 3-roomed bungalow being run up for the Prince. The latter building had a kajan roof and was fitted with mosquito-proof wire-netting. There were several other tents near mine and a roomy open-sided thatched mess-room or dining hall. I append a sketch-plan of the camp. I found a letter from Murty asking me to take charge of everything pending his arrival. I also found my 6 jungle villagers duly arrived, looking very askance at all the many strangers, and, no doubt, feeling rather out of place. They located themselves near my tent and would only take orders from me.

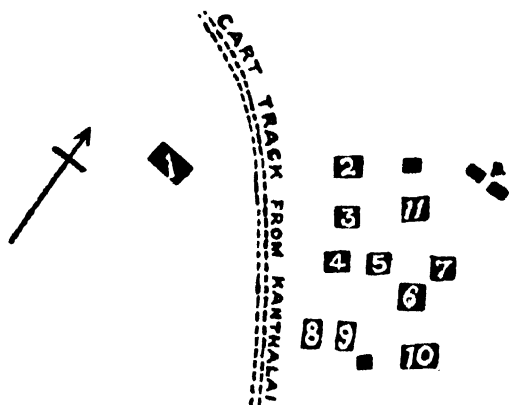
The catering was in the hands of "Soult" Perera of Colombo—a well-known professional shikari—and, on the whole, was very well done. The camp swarmed with coolies, Kachcheri Mudaliyars, forest rangers, servants, etc., etc., including a police sergeant and two constables.



BUNGALOW BUILT FOR GERMAN CROWN PRINCE'S CAMP.



## PLAN OF THE CAMP.



1. The Prince's Bungalow.
2. J. O'K. Murty, G.A., Eastern Province.
3. H. Storey.
4. Count zu Sollms Wildenfels, A.D.C.
5. Lieut. von Wedel, A.D.C.
6. Dr. Widenmann.
7. Count Finck von Finckenstein, A.D.C.
8. Mess Room.
9. The Caterer's Quarters.
10. Servants, Kitchens, etc.
11. The Prince's Servants.

The morning after my arrival I went off with my trackers to prospect the country around, but I did not get a shot at anything as I saw no bucks worth shooting. On my return to camp I found a letter from Murty instructing me to locate elephants and buffaloes, but this part of the country is most essentially deer country, very little visited by elephants and containing very few buffaloes. The late Mr. McBride, of the P.W.D., District Engineer at Trincomalee, arrived in the afternoon,

Being in charge of the road improvements on the jungle track. I helped him to put up his tent near Murty's and found he had brought a basket full of the finest tomatoes I have ever seen, grown in his own garden at Trinco. At about 4 p.m. I went out to shoot some meat for the camp and killed a buck about a mile away, which was cut up, brought in and distributed. McBride and I dined together off deer liver, steak and tomatoes, exceedingly good. I went out early next morning looking for elephants, also sending my trackers in various directions for that purpose, but, though we found a few tracks, they were all of under-sized animals not worth shooting. I also saw a herd of buffalo, but they were obviously village buffaloes gone wild, though not branded. I saw great numbers of deer, and, when returning towards camp, I shot a buck by a good shot at 100 yards, the meat of which was all brought to camp. After breakfast I supervised the fitting up of the Prince's bungalow as the party were expected in the afternoon.

The Prince arrived at 4-30 p.m. accompanied by Mr. Murty and Count Finckenstein. The Prince was very pleasant, like a boy out for a holiday, and speaks very good English. The Count was a big heavy very dark man and could speak little English. Later arrived the other A. D. C.'s Count zu Sollms Wildenfels, Lieut. von Wedel and Dr. Widenmann.

We all dined together, without any ceremony, in the mess-room, and had a good dinner. The Prince was very abstemious and so were the staff, though there was very conceivable species of liquor available.







COUNT FINCKENSTEIN.

THE GERMAN CROWN PRINCE.

MR. J. O'K. MURTY. G.A., E.P.

I happened to sit opposite to the Prince and remarked on his abstemiousness. He replied that he drank very little wine or spirits, and the Emperor none at all except on state occasions, when he might drink a glass of champagne.

I was up at daybreak the next morning and sent my scouts out to look for elephants or buffaloes. The Prince told me he had informed the officials in Colombo that he only wanted to shoot elephants and buffaloes, so I had to tell him that this was not a good part of the country for such game, and that, if I had been consulted, I could have advised going to more favourable country. However, at 6 o'clock off we set, a regular party, to shoot buffaloes.

The Prince, Count Finckenstein (both on horseback) Murty, myself, "Soul" Perera, 4 trackers, and half-a-dozen coolies with drinks and refreshments! Ye gods! We saw several lots of deer, on the way, and two lots of pigs. The Prince tried a running shot at a buck but missed. Failed to find any buffalo in their usual haunts, so went on to Mee-gollewa (a small tank) where, leaving the party at lunch, I went off to the tank to look for buffaloes. I located some in the water away in one corner so sent for the Prince to come along. We then tried to approach the buffalo in the water, which was about thigh deep, but the Prince and Murty made such a noise over it that the animals took alarm and bolted, so we returned to camp.

The Prince did not go out again that day except for a short stroll in the evening, when he potted a spotted doe for meat—using a small-bore rifle with a telescopic sight.

I rose at 4-30 the next morning and was off before daybreak in the hope of locating buffaloes, having sent scouts out also looking for elephants. It was arranged that the Prince should ride along later to the halting place of yesterday, where I would meet them. I scoured the country for miles in vain—not a sign of a buffalo to be found—so I eventually joined the party at the arranged spot. I wanted then to push on to the Wadigéwa jungles, where I knew we could find elephants, but, just then, one of my trackers arrived and reported an elephant quite near camp.

We returned at once, and, just as we reached camp, the Crown Princess arrived accompanied by Mr. F. Bartlett, Assistant Government Agent, Trincomalee, and attended by the Countess Grote, Lieuts. von Behr and Sobeltitz, and Mr. W. Freudenberg, the son of the German Consul at Colombo.

We all sat down to lunch at once, and the moment the Prince had finished he asked me if we should start, so I said "the sooner the better" and off we went—the Prince, Murty, myself and trackers.

The elephant had entered the jungle from the open park about a quarter-of-a-mile from the point where the cart track emerges from the jungle. I went in ahead with one tracker, and, almost at once, found a place where it had been lying down, so that it was very evident it had just lately risen and moved on. I took up the track again and went forward very cautiously but before we had gone 50 yards I heard a stick break just ahead, so I stopped and beckoned the Prince to

come forward. As soon as he reached me I was able to point out the elephant, which was standing facing us about 20 yards away. The Prince wanted to kneel for the shot, but I advised not and took him a little to one side where he could get a clear shot for the "bump." I rather guessed what would happen so prepared for events. The Prince fired, much too high, and the elephant stood motionless for a couple of seconds, until, the next moment, Murty blazed off both barrels of a fearsome 4-bore duck-gun that he used for elephants, which, being loaded with black powder, enveloped us in a dense cloud of smoke! The elephant then, snorting and trumpeting, rushed off through the jungle which was just what I had expected and was waiting for. I rushed after it, at once, as hard as I could leg it, and, ranging up alongside, I put in shot after shot, as I ran, from my little "Savage" .303, until, at the fourth shot, I brought it down on its knees. I then yelled to the Prince and he managed to reach me before the elephant got up again, killing it with a shot in the ear. Word was at once sent to camp and then there *was* a "tamasha!"

The Princess came along, accompanied by the whole of the inhabitants of the camp, so far as I could see; everybody talked at once full of excitement; the Prince posed by the elephant and on the elephant, whilst cameras clicked in all directions and great were the rejoicings! Finally we all returned to camp and the Princess and suite were packed off again for Kanthalay. From the time we left the luncheon table to the killing of the elephant did not occupy more than about 20 minutes!

I may say it was not a big elephant, not more than about 8 feet at the shoulder. We did not go out again that day. The next morning I went off to inspect the jungle around Perumalmadu, a large abandoned tank, some 2 or 3 miles north-west of the camp. Arrived there, the only tracks we could find were those of the elephant killed yesterday, which had evidently made the neighbourhood of the old tank a sort of headquarters.

The morning had been very dull, and heavy rain then commenced to fall in torrents, so I sheltered under some trees for about an hour until it abated somewhat, after which I further inspected the jungle around but with no result. Rain again coming down heavily, I returned to camp.

After lunch the Prince and Count Finckenstein on horseback and, Murty and I walking, went about 5 miles up the Kanthalay track to inspect a spoor reported from that side but found it too old to be worth following, so, as very heavy rain still continued, we decided to make for the Kanthalay resthouse. Arrived at the main road Murty sat down to await the arrival of a car from Kanthalay, but I, being too wet to care about sitting down, pushed on afoot, whilst the Prince and Count Finckenstein cantered ahead to send a car back for Murty. I reached the resthouse at dusk, wet to the skin of course, and found the place packed with the Princess's suite. The Prince and Finckenstein were able to borrow clothes from some of their people, and Murty was all right as he had a box in reserve at the resthouse. He lent me a shirt and trousers, but, as he was a big man, the waist band went

one-and-a-half times round me, so the effect was distinctly amusing. Freudenberg lent me a coat and the others were variously garmented, but we all sat down to dinner very hilarious. How they talked! All together at the top of their voices as hard as they could! After dinner I had to inspect the head of a buffalo shot by Behr, a semi-wild one which had attached itself to a herd of tame ones near Kanthalay. It was a very good head and the Princess's suite seemed highly pleased that they had shot a buffalo whilst the Prince had not. The latter was distinctly annoyed, which seemed to add to the joy of the Princess's party.

Murty and I then left in one of the Government cars for Trinco, as we could not put up at the rest-house packed to the roof almost as it was. The rain was torrential—so heavy that at times our driver was unable to see the road at all, and had to halt once or twice awaiting slight abatement. Eventually we reached Trinco (24 miles) at 12-10 a.m. knocked up the resthouse people and got to bed. We returned to Kanthalay by 8-30 next morning, rain still pouring down, rivers all bank high and two trees were down across the road. The down-pour abated slightly by the time we reached Kanthalay, and we found that the Princess and suite had left for Kandy. I sent out trackers at once and got news of an elephant at about 10 a.m. so off we set by car to the far end of the bund, and on to the jungle a little beyond the P.W.D. lines a quarter-of-a-mile further down the road.

By this time the rain had ceased and cleared up. We entered the jungle, finding it flooded with

water, but, as it was fine open forest, we could get along all right. I suggested to Murty that neither he nor I should fire at the elephant unless necessity compelled as I thought it would be best if the Prince and Finckenstein did all the shooting, kill or no kill, as the case might be. I had an idea that we would find the elephant asleep so late in the morning, and, sure enough, we did. This was a very sizable elephant with a foot print well over 50 inches in circumference and must have stood fully 9 feet in height. We got up to it in about half-an-hour and found it lying down in a nice open part of the forest. The Prince got into position for the front shot and I placed Finckenstein to one side strongly advising him to fire into the elephant's shoulder if the Prince failed to kill it, as the Prince was using a small-bore rifle but Finckenstein had a d.b. Holland and Holland .400 h.v. rifle. The Prince fired, failed to kill and the elephant, with a scream, began to get up, whereupon Finckenstein also fired but at its head and not at the shoulder as I had advised.

Murty then blazed off his 4-bore, and we were at once smothered in a dense cloud of smoke, so that the elephant might have run over the top of us for anything we could see! Luckily, however, it turned and rushed off, trumpeting loudly and I did not attempt to follow in that flooded jungle. The next thing I saw was the Prince stamping about holding his head with both hands and shouting "Good Lord! You have burst my ear"! This was the result of Murty's 4-bore being fired past his head at close quarters!

The whole thing was too ludicrous for words and I roared with laughter, whilst even the saturnine Finckenstein grinned broadly. Murty, in fearful agitation, apologised most profusely and eventually the Prince calmed down. By my advice we then followed the elephant as I guessed it would stop after a short run, as a wounded elephant often does so, especially if hit in the head.

We came up with it again in about a quarter-of-an-hour, and, against my advice, both the Prince and Finckenstein fired at its head when I wished them to go for its shoulder. My reason for this was, that, novice-like, they were both aiming far too high for the brain (though I had explained its position clearly), whilst they might easily have disabled it by a couple of shots into the shoulder. On receipt of the shots it rushed off, screaming, but stopped a short distance away and smashed the jungle around, before moving on again.

The Prince and Finckenstein exclaimed "He has it this time!" but I could not agree, and, though we followed until they did not care to walk any more, we never saw it again. We then returned to the resthouse, by way of the paddy-fields, getting there at about 3 p.m., the Prince being rather "done" as, no doubt, he was not in the habit of doing much walking. After "breakfast" I set off for camp, but turned back on meeting a messenger who reported being unable to cross the rivers, which were flooded to bank-top.

The Prince left for Kandy at 4-30 p.m. that day and Murty and I spent a quiet evening at the resthouse. I arose at 4-30 next morning—fine, no rain—got in a car and set off again for camp, picking up



“Soult,” on the way, who had come up from camp and had managed to get through the rivers during the night. Walked down to camp by 8 a.m. very wet and muddy as I had had to do a lot of wading, and mud-plugging, all the “corduroy” and temporary bridges having been washed away. I found the camp all “struck” and ready for departure, so off they went whilst I had something to eat, packed my own things, settled with the trackers (preferring to do that myself rather than trust it to a headman) and followed the others.

Arrived at the main road, we found three cars waiting, but, as the luggage would about fill them, I offered to take the Doctor and the other two A.D.C.'s, and the Prince's valet, back in my car, getting one of the waiting cars to run us down to Kituluttu for that purpose. Arrived there, I changed and we then had a good run to Dambulla, where we lunched. On our way to Matale my fan-belt broke, so, as I got dirty doing the repair, I ran round by my bungalow for a clean-up and my wife gave us all tea. We got to Kandy before 6 p.m., going straight to the Pavilion, where the Prince, coatless, came out to greet us and gave me an autograph photo of himself on horseback in his Guard's uniform. I then “took my leave” with much bowing and hand-shaking—they were great at that—and all the party had shaken hands most cordially with “Soult” Perera on leaving camp, somewhat to my amusement.

I forgot to mention that after the second day the “staff” were allowed to go out shooting and I told off trackers to accompany them. Wedel shot four bucks, Dr. Widenmann got two bucks

and a python 15 feet long which he had found wound round one of the bucks that he had wounded and followed up !

The Prince was pleasant—always had a smile on his face—and, as I said before, behaved like a boy out for a holiday and intending to have a good time. He did not strike me as being brainy. The experience was interesting, but was “sufficient unto the day.”

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## Chapter IV.

### DEER, BEAR AND LEOPARD SHOOTING IN THE NORTH-CENTRAL PROVINCE DURING 1912.

I WENT Home for about a short holiday in 1911, during which I enjoyed some very pleasant grouse, pheasant and rabbit shooting, but I do not rank as an expert with the shot-gun—I feel much more at home with my rifle in our Ceylon jungles. Returning to Ceylon in December, 1911, I was unable, owing to stress of work, to get away for a shooting-trip until early in February, which is still a good month for sport if the north-east monsoon rains do not cease too early in the year, as there is plenty of water about and the early mornings are positively cold.

On this occasion I again visited the Vettikachi country and was accompanied by an old friend, W. R. W., who had lately returned to Ceylon after six years in Papua opening up rubber land.

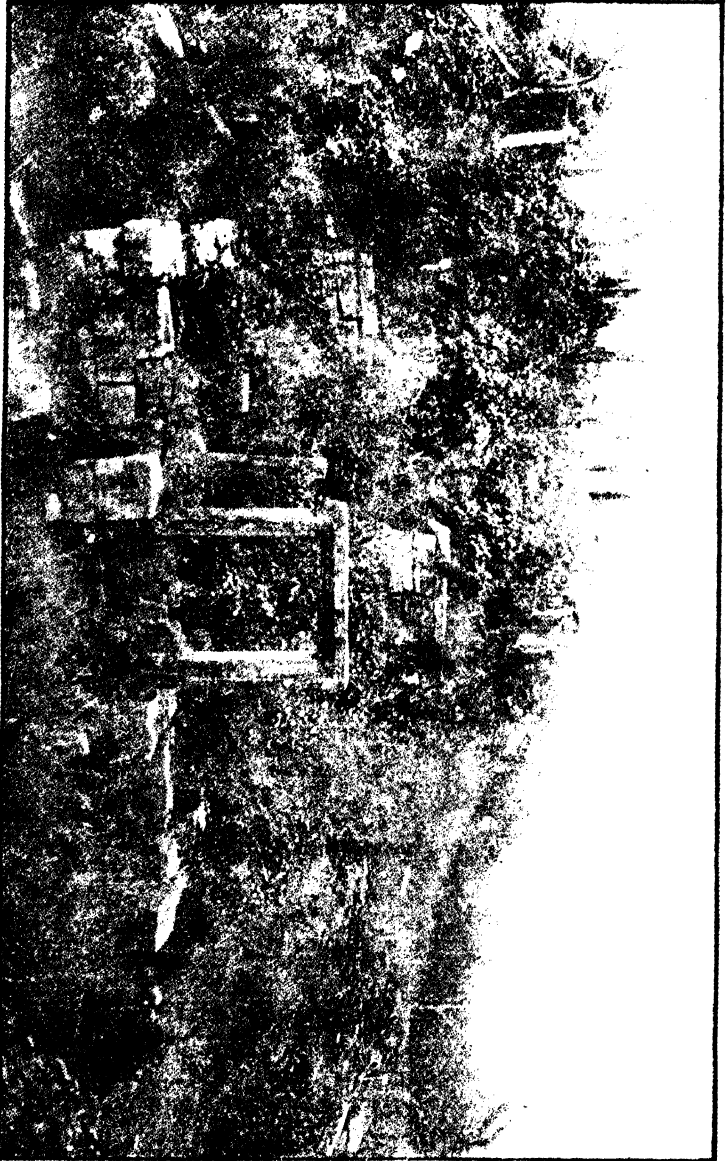
We sent our cart of baggage off ahead, with orders to go to Diwulánkadawela village via the Minneriya road (turn-off at the 13th mile), we following later by car but going via Alut Oya and walking from there. Five men from the aforementioned village met us at the Alut Oya rest-house, to carry our clothes-boxes and gun-cases, and we set off for our 10-mile tramp via

Puliankulam and Kauduluwewa. We passed a large camp of Telugu Gipsies near Alut Oya. They showed us the skins of two fishing-cats, commonly called tiger-cats, which they had killed by means of their dogs. Near Puliankulam we met two young Germans in camp and I was annoyed to find that they had shot an old wild buffalo that I had known by sight for years, but never interfered with, a frequenter of Kabalaheruwewa and Puliankulam. Pushing on we found the Alut Oya, which we had to cross three times, very full of water, but nowhere too deep to ford. There was a lot of water also in the great Kaudulu tank, over the bund of which our path to the village turns off, and we reached our destination at 6 p.m. We got up at daybreak the next morning, and, with about 20 carriers, left at 7 o'clock via the Talákolawewa path for two miles and then striking off north-east by a faint jungle track leading to the Gal Oya. This river we crossed, with some difficulty, owing to the volume of water and slippery boulders, just at the site of a former fine stone anicut which, at this point, turned water down a *Yodi Ela* ("Channel built by giants") into the very middle of what is now a reserved shooting country. The whole of it has been washed away, however, except the overflow, part of which still exists, a massive piece of stonework, on the east bank of the river. From the river we travelled along the *Yodi Ela* for a couple of miles in fine forest, and thence by jungle track some three miles further to the great rock containing the interesting Medirigiri ruins. On the journey I

called up and shot three jungle cocks in the space of about half an hour's walking.

I had visited these ruins several times before, but they always fascinate me with their beautiful pillars, walls, doorways and images standing up here and there on the rock or in the jungle bordering the rock. It seems hard to believe that, in their heyday, they formed a large monastery of great sanctity situated in what was then populated and cultivated country, judging by the number of abandoned tanks in the neighbourhood, and the *Yodi Ela*, before alluded to, which passes close by.

As a matter of fact very few Europeans have visited or seen these ruins, lying as they do in remote jungle country far off any beaten track. An incident of ancient history in connection with these ruins has always interested, and still interests me. In the 12th century, when the famous Parakrama Bahu the Great was "bringing the kingdom under one canopy" by rounding up his cousins, who held various parts of Ceylon as sub-kings, the King Gaja Bahu, who had held the "King's country" (practically the northern half of Ceylon) with his capital at Polonnaruwa, getting tired of constant warfare, departed to Kanthalay and thence to Mandalagiri. The latter is the ancient name by which the above monastery is referred to in the *Mahāvansa* (ancient history of Ceylon). The King Gaja Bahu "went to the vihara Mandalagiri and made a solemn declaration there saying 'I have given the king's country to King Parakkama,' and when he had caused this to be inscribed on a table of stone he returned to Gangátatáka (Kanthalay) and died there."



MEDDIGERU BITINS.



Now, though at least two inscriptions have been discovered at these ruins, the one mentioned above has not yet been met with, but, given a systematic search, I have no doubt it could be found, as the *Mahāvansa* is very trustworthy in these matters. I have looked around, and questioned the local natives, in vain, but I certainly got news of an inscribed pillar one of them had seen in the jungle some little distance away but could not be sure of finding again. I will find it some day if possible.

We rested awhile at the ruins whilst I prospected the small extent of open country for the chance of a shot but saw only some does.

Pushed on and finally camped near the rock Tun-ima-gala by a fine pool of water in the forest beyond the rock. Paid off the carriers, retaining five men as trackers. Our tent was pitched on a level bed of clean sand under fine shady forest trees, a dry and comfortable situation.

We breakfasted off curried jungle cock which was fearfully and wonderfully tough, but somehow we ate it in large quantities.

At 4 p.m. I went out for a look round, W. R. W. lying up as something had gone wrong with his eyes—a legacy from Papua. We wanted some fresh meat, as we were nine in number, all told, at camp, so I made up my mind to shoot something. Our camp lay within the jungle proper, but about a quarter of a mile north lay a biggish block of “parks,” of all sizes, known as Kumbukkatàwela-patana, being ancient paddy-fields formerly served by a large abandoned tank on a small river known



as the Ambagaha Oya, which borders the plains on the south side just on the edge of our "camp" jungle.

I saw a herd of spotted deer as soon as I entered the open, but no good buck in it; further on I saw a doe elk and a solitary spotted buck with a poor head. After further wandering, time getting towards dusk, I came on two bucks fighting, both with poor heads, but, as we wanted meat, and this was a last chance for this evening, I promptly shot one of them and we carried it back to camp, seeing several more deer on the way and hearing a bear in the forest when approaching our camp. It was 7 p.m. before I got in, feeling that I had had about enough as I had walked at least 18 miles that day. However, a good dinner of deer meat and a comfortable bed soon made up for everything, and W. and I yarned for a long time, as we had not seen much of each other for many years.

The next morning I was much concerned to find that W.'s eyes were no better, so he remained in camp whilst I went off for a round. Not far from where I had shot the buck of yesterday evening I saw a fine boar in a bit of swampy reedy ground standing facing me about 40 yards away with only his head and part of his chest visible. I fired quickly, off-hand, and knew I had hit him though he went off at great speed, leaving, however, a copious blood track leading into jungle 100 yards away where we soon found him lying dead about 50 yards in. He was a fine big boar, measurements by steel tape showing approximately 29 inches height at the shoulder, 4 feet 7 inches from snout to stern in a

straight line and the tusks projected  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches. As camp was not far off I sent one tracker to call two men to cut it up, and went on again. I tramped a long round seeing a great many jungle cocks, one big pig, some deer in forest, and a peacock, but did not get another shot at anything, eventually reaching camp at 10 o'clock. Found W. no better. Had a good breakfast, followed by a snooze, until 3 p.m., at which time I set out again to explore the ancient tank I mentioned previously as having irrigated this part of the country.

Accompanied by three men I tramped a good two miles up the bed of the Ambagaha Oya seeing no game but innumerable tracks of deer and pig, occasional tracks of bear, leopard and elephant. Arrived at the tank, I found it possessed a good high bund but had evidently been breached for many centuries as the open space in the bed of the tank was not more than 50 yards in diameter, all else being dense forest. This was probably the biggest tank in this part of the country as the bund is higher than any of the others I have seen. We left by an old timber track, going north, coming out into open country again after about a mile of walking and making our way towards camp, which we reached at 6-40 without incident except that the men caught and killed an iguana which they prize very highly for its meat. The next morning, as W.'s eyes were getting worse, I sent off for carriers, intending to break camp and return home, especially as chance of sport seemed to be poor. I then went for a round going towards another abandoned tank known as Ambagaswewa,

which lies about two miles further down the same stream east of camp. In a small grassy glade, fairly closely studded with trees and bushes, I saw a poor-antlered buck which fled, and, almost immediately afterwards, saw still another, similar one, which spotted us also, and went trotting off joined by a buck with what looked like a fairly good head. Hurrying forward, to a point behind some trees, on the chance of seeing them again, I caught sight of them entering the jungle some distance away, the big buck stopping for a final look round. I sat down, elbows on knees, for the shot and, to my delight, the buck dropped in his tracks. I paced the distance and found it to be 110 yards and the antlers measured  $27\frac{3}{4}$  inches—quite a good head for hereabouts.

The shot had caught him just where neck and shoulder join—a very fatal spot. The antlers were interesting as there were two small extra points on the inside curve of the right brow-tine and one on the left brow-tine, thus forming a head of seven points instead of the usual four points.

Left the body whilst we went on somewhat further, but I did not get another shot so returned to camp, leaving two men to cut up and carry in the meat. The carriers had not arrived, so I went out again in the evening, but it had been a blazing hot day and the sun was evidently “out” to blaze well up to 6 p.m., so there was little chance of seeing anything.

Returning towards camp, however, at dusk, we came on a big pig amongst some trees, about 40 yards distant, grubbing up some roots.

Eventually, by dodging about a bit, I managed

to get a satisfactory sight and fired, hitting him all right, upon which he rushed across my front about 35 yards away and I bowled him over like a rabbit with another shot.

I found my first shot had caught him fair in the body, and would probably have eventually killed him, but if he had had the sense to run into the near-by jungle instead of into the open, as he did, I would never have got him as he could have travelled far.

My second shot caught him in the neck just at the base of the skull. I saw at once that he had very fine tusks, so cut the head off to take back to camp. When the head had been boiled clean we got the tusks out and found they measured  $9\frac{3}{4}$  inches on the curve—a measurement that, so far as I know, has never been beaten in Ceylon.

I believe the late Mr. Thos. Farr is credited with having killed a boar with  $9\frac{3}{4}$  inch tusks, in the hills, over dogs, some years ago, and I have seen longer single tusks which have grown to an abnormal length consequent on the loss, or breakage, of the upper "rubbing" tusk, but I do not think any perfect pair in Ceylon has ever exceeded the above measurements.

My unfortunate friend was very interested in the two last trophies—the abnormal-pointed antlers and these tusks—but we arranged to leave the next morning as his eyes were very bad. I got all ready for leaving during that evening, and, by 6-30 the next morning we were ready to start, in light marching order, with four men to carry our boxes, guns and trophies. The carriers had not

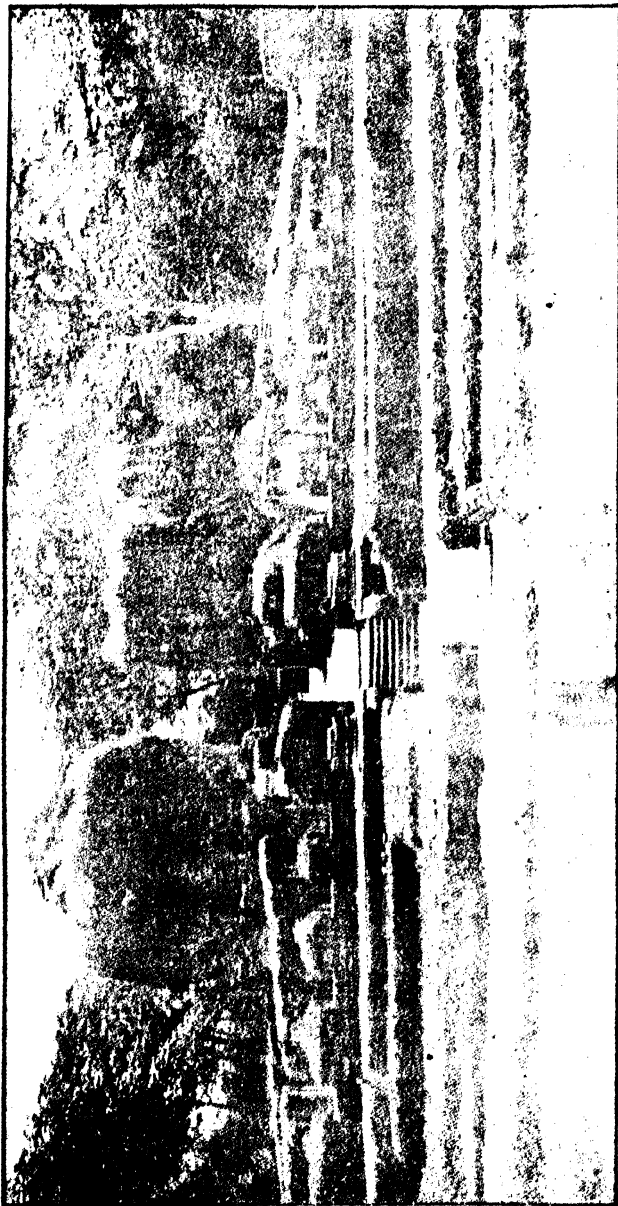
come, but I left money enough to pay them with my faithful Meiyān, together with full directions as to returning, and we then set off. My intention was to go right across country by the old track to Puliānkulam, and on to Alut Oya, where my car was stabled, distance not less than 15 or 16 miles. We walked quickly, not stopping for any shooting though I saw a herd of pig in one park, a biggish herd of spotted deer, and another pig further on.

W. could hardly see to walk and was in considerable pain, so we had to stop for a rest now and then, but we eventually reached Puliānkulam at 11-45 and Alut Oya resthouse at 1 p.m. After a feed, and a change, we paid off our men, got in the car at 2-40, and I "let her rip" as fast as possible to get W. to a doctor. We reached Matale at 5-25, which was very good going for a 60-mile run and W. told me, some time afterwards, that the doctor told him he would possibly have lost his sight but for our prompt action.

Beyond a little snipe and teal shooting I got no more sport this year until July, in which month, I once more visited the Vedda country of Egoda-pattuwa. As rinderpest was, at this time, rife up north I decided, as I was going alone, to reduce everything to a minimum and pack all my belongings, coolies included, on my car instead of using the usual bullock cart.

This I did, but, with Meiyān and Sinna Peiyāl aboard as well as myself and motor boy, the load was heavy, so I travelled very gingerly to Polonnaruwa as the roads were in bad order and very bumpy. Stayed the night at the resthouse,





RUINS OF KING'S PALACE AT ANCIENT POLONNARUWA.

visiting some of the newly-excavated and intensely interesting ruins of the King's Palace in the near neighbourhood during the evening—the work of the then Government Archaeological Commissioner, Mr. H. C. P. Bell.

Procured a cart the next morning to take my things to the Mahaweliganga and from there I got Gallella villagers to carry on to Manampitiya, reaching that village at 11-15 a.m., putting up in the *Gansabhawa* house as usual, and breakfasting off one of two jungle hens I had shot on the way.

The country around was exceptionally dry and burnt up—the *wila* (lagoon) even had been nearly dry until a few days before, when up-country rain brought the river down in flood and filled it again.

“Kapurala Arachchi” got a cart for me the next morning to take our things as far as Kosgahulpota, a spring under Gunner's Quoin, but the Veddas whom I required as carriers and trackers were no longer there, having moved on to a *chena* (clearing) about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles away. Some of them arrived, however, shortly after, but I found several of my best “hunters” were away, whilst two of them were in prison for exporting and selling dried meat which I believe was not even deer meat but pig and iguana. Bravo! The “Dried Meat” Ordinance makes no exception in the case of any “dried meat.”

I secured four men for my purposes, however, and fixed camp at the *ulpota* (spring) for the time.

That evening I watched, from a stage in a tree,



at a rock-hole under the cliff of a jutting-out spur of the mountain, the name of the "hole" being Parellapotaha. At 6-30 to my surprise porcupines arrived, and, as they are usually very late arrivals, I rather feared that nothing else would come, but at 7-30 I heard a bear coming from the mountain. In spite of moonlight the darkness was intense under the trees and cliff, so I switched on my electric lamp and saw the bear coming along the foot of the cliff on my right. The moment I got a clear sight of it I fired and it rolled down the slope of the rock with terrific yells, which were at once replied to by another bear close by, showing that a couple had come along, probably a mother and nearly full-grown cub, as the one I had shot at was rather small. The second bear fled yelling and the wounded one went off with many lamentations in the dense darkness of the jungle. Nothing more came that night and a careful search next morning failed to find the wounded bear, though the men in camp, only about 300 yards away, said it passed very close to them, but blood tracks soon gave out and the iron-hard dry ground thereafter failed to yield up a readable track. After breakfast I packed up food enough for four days and set off for Kada Ela, but, on the way, passing a "likely" rock-hole by the side of an upstanding outcrop of rock in an open plain, decided to watch at it as there was a handy solitary tree in correct position for commanding the hole. In this tree the men built a small stage just big enough for myself and one man. The rest of the men occupied a high slab-rock about a quarter-of-a-mile away. I got on to the

DEAD BEAR AND WATER-HOLE PHOTOGRAPHED FROM THE SHOOTING STAGE.





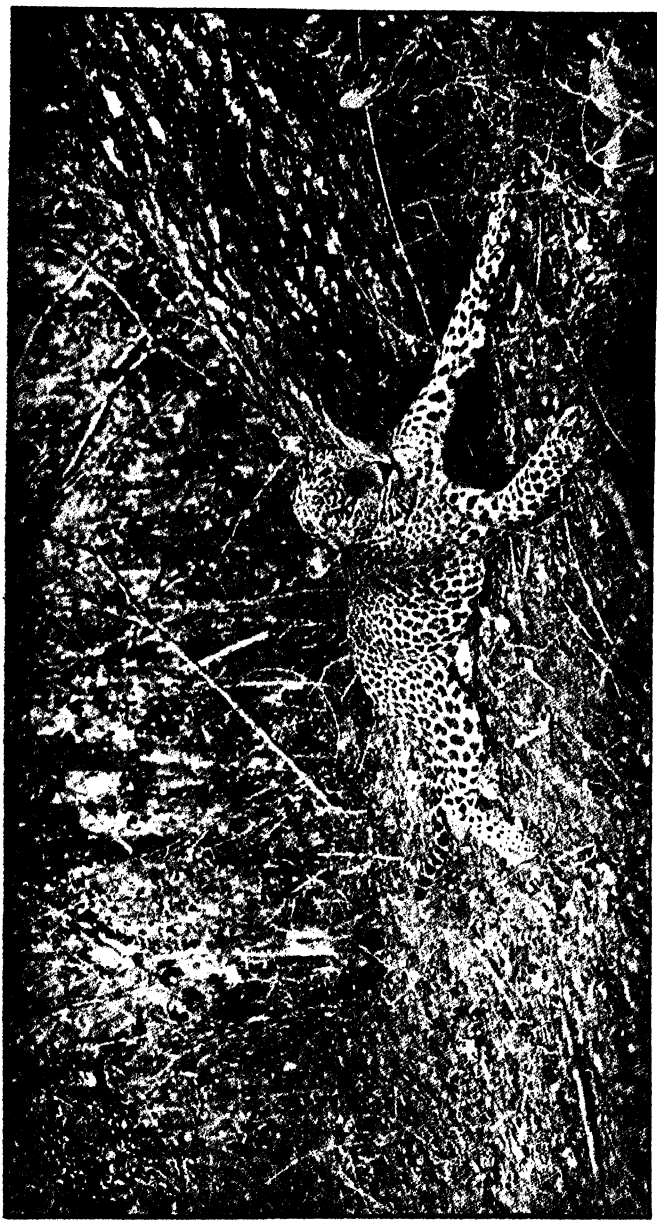
SHOOTING STAGE AND DEAD BEAR AT A ROCK-HOIF.

stage at 5 p.m. and was much interested, shortly after, in watching three lanky jackals come to the water. Whether they sensed that something was wrong or not I cannot say, but the nervousness of their approach was extraordinary—the quick glancing here and there, sudden little startled runs followed by stoppages for intense listening with pricked ears, and the final approach to the hole, which was about three feet deep, into which they dropped and drank, like mad things, of the muddy green puddle in the bottom. They snapped and snarled at each other and fairly “champed” the water, instead of tongue lapping in decent “dog” style, varied by occasional startled stoppages for intense listening. They were very thin, but not to starvation point, and were a light grey in colour with fairly bushy tails. They drank their fill and went away as sneakily and nervously as they came, though, so far as I know, the only thing they need fear is the leopard. Of other visitors before dark we had bulbuls, mynas, bronze-wing doves, and some black-headed yellow birds. At 8 p.m. I saw a dark object coming over the summit of the main “whale-back” rock in front of me which soon showed itself to be a bear coming straight for the water-hole. He stopped on a convenient light-coloured patch on the rock by the edge of the hole and I dropped him in his tracks by a shot between neck and shoulder. I got down and hauled him away into a hollow, a little distance off, but he had bled pints onto the rock. At 11 p.m. I saw a bear in the open park behind me, but it evidently got our wind and sheered off. Nothing else came

during the rest of the night, and I managed to put in a little sleep. In the morning we all went on to Kada Ela, a water-hole in a sandy stream-bed in jungle about two miles or less beyond the hole of last night, and there we found lots of tracks, so decided to watch. We dug a water-hole for our own use in the sand, from which we got cooking water for the men's rice and my breakfast, after which the men built two stages, one for me and one for themselves in trees commanding the stream bed. I got on to my stage at 3 p.m. and was arranging my blankets and other appurtenances, when, happening to look around, I saw two bears at the edge of the jungle on the other side of the water-course—a female with a three-quarter grown cub. The mother was full of suspicion and insistently called the cub, which was hankering after the water, but the obstinate "child" would not obey.

I grabbed my gun as quickly as possible and fired at the mother, but, not having reloaded since I got onto the stage, the result was merely a click and the bears departed hurriedly. The wind was very tricky, veering about all over the place, so I was doubtful if any bears would come to the water. However, at about 4 p.m., a big bear made its appearance opposite, but gave me no chance of a shot before it cleared off. The mother and cub again turned up, but I only got a shadowy glimpse of them in the jungle, with no chance of a certain shot. Before dusk the big bear, mentioned above, came again and I got a fair shot into his shoulder at which he rolled over, yelled lustily, scrambled up and bolted. After dark several other





*Photo by G. M. Crabbe, Esq.*

LEOPARD.

bears came near, but would not come to the water so I only heard but did not see them. I managed to get a little sleep during the night, and in the morning we endeavoured to find the bear shot at, but not a track of any sort could be picked up. I was using a 20-bore "Paradox" at this time and found very good reason to believe, in later years, that it had nothing like the killing power of my former 12-bore "Paradox"—far too many wounded bears got away.

After "early tea" we set off to inspect another series of water-holes, but did not find tracks enough to warrant a night's watch at the three we inspected, so we returned to our camp at the *ulpota*. Some of my former good trackers had now returned and fixed up a stage in a tree, for me, at a *linda* (literally "well" but, in this case, is applied to a hole in any hollow, or watercourse, dug out by animals) in Gónandamana, to which I went in the evening. This was a pleasant stage, for I was up in a leafy tree on the edge of a spur of jungle, jutting out into a fine park, giving me an extensive outlook. The *linda* was just below me dug in the course of a "jungle drain." Just at the "betwixt and between" period, at dusk, I was studying the shadows to learn them, for future reference, when I saw a shadowy something pass the edge of the sandy slope of the water-hole and stop exactly opposite me. I fired down on the animal at once, and was properly pleased to find I had killed a leopard which my attendant men pulled to one side out of the way of anything else coming. At 7-30 four pigs came along, but scented the



leopard and bolted. They munched fruit under a tree about 100 yards away for a long time and then approached the water-hole again led by a fifth pig, bigger and bolder than the others, with loud braggart grunts, but at the last moment his heart failed him and away they went. I did not attempt to fire at them.

At 10-30 a bear came along from behind us, but got our wind and clear d off, being our last visitant for that night. In the morning we skinned the leopard and returned to camp for a much-needed rest and a decent meal, as I usually night-watch on nothing but biscuits and a bit of cake. At 3 p.m. set off again for another *linda*, this time in open tree-studded park, but also consisting of a hollow dug out by animals in a dry "jungle drain" water-course similar to the one of last night. A stage had been made in a convenient tree commanding the hole on which I, and two men, took our places at 5-30. At 9-30 a solitary pig came along at which I fired; thought I had hit, but it bolted away to my left where, it seemed to me, I heard it fall in some thin bush about 100 yards away. At 10-30 a bear arrived and got down into the hole, out of my sight, where it drank long and noisily.

Emerging at our side of the hole, I got a shot at it which caused it to roar loudly, and it rushed away out of sight to my right, but we thought it had fallen about 100 yards away near a clump of bush. At 12 midnight another pig arrived which I successfully plugged and he also bolted away to our left, but I was fairly sure I had got him.

The idea of having two pigs to eat hugely

delighted the Veddas, who had been without meat for some time. At 12-30, to our considerable surprise, our dead bear, as we thought, began to roar and moan, the noise going on for a considerable time until, suddenly, I saw it coming towards our tree from the right, slowly and, apparently, painfully, uttering low moans. It stopped under our tree, and I could only see its stern half, but I was taking no chances, so fired down on to it at once, whereupon the apparently sick bear was galvanized into amazingly vigorous life for it roared, yelled, turned about six somersaults and bolted like the wind!

We at once decided that it was a second bear that had come across our first dead bear, and mourned over it, which was later proved to be correct. Nothing more turned up for the rest of the night, so, at daybreak, we got down and went to look for the first bear, which we found dead, as conjectured, near a clump of bush 100 yards away, whilst the tracks of the second bear, walking round and round it, were plainly visible. We came across the blood track of the second bear, but, before following it up, we went to look for the two pigs, finding the first one dead just where we thought, and the second one about 200 yards away, on our left front, having run round in a curve after leaving the hole.

We then set to work to track the second bear, as these Veddas were first-class trackers, but, after the blood stopped for some time we could not find his track, on the brick-hard ground. After a long search one of the men picked up a strip of gut

wrapped round a stick, half-a-mile on in the open park, and, shortly afterwards, another man found a blood track, which we held on to carefully, leading eventually into a block of jungle. A quarter-of-a-mile inside the jungle we found our bear dead, spread-eagled against a sloping rock, which gave me much satisfacton as I had thus accounted for all my night visitants.

We then returned to camp, where I packed up for return home, doing an 18-mile walk to Polonnaruwa, and back to the estate by car that evening.

I find I still have another shooting trip to narrate for 1912, this time in November the open season for deer, and once again, in the Vettikachi country. I was accompanied by a young friend named G. B. Vernon, who had lately come out from home, and was on a rubber estate in the northern part of Matale District.

Alas! Like so many more good men he "went West" during the great war.

All our baggage was loaded up on my car, and a "trailer," the combination conveying our whole equipment quite comfortably though both vehicles had to carry a big load. Nevertheless we reached Alut Oya resthouse safely, and stayed there for the night as our carriers had not arrived.

To my surprise, however, they all turned up at 2-30 a.m. so we were able to get away at 6 o'clock in the morning *en route* for the Godepotagala camp via Puliankulam.

On the way I shot a jungle cock with my rifle and a soft-nosed bullet—result, the miserable

bird was blown to bits being merely a bag of skin and feathers !

We got to our camp in good time and put up the tents, V. going out after tea for a stroll round but did not bag anything. He was using a .256 Männlicher rifle in which there was a certain amount of sighting error which he had to remember to allow for when shooting.

I paid off the carriers the next morning retaining four men as trackers. I went for a round but shot nothing, though I had a close view of an elephant in one of the parks—I saw lots of deer, of course, but none worth a shot.

Back to camp I found V. had come in, having secured his first buck and was very pleased with himself though the head was only 22 inches.

In the afternoon I set off with three men to Ambagaswewa, whence I sent two of the men, by way of the Ambagaha Oya, to make their way to Meegaswewa village, 8 miles away, in order to procure trackers who knew the country better than our Diwulankadawela men. I saw nothing to shoot at either going or when returning to camp, nor had V. succeeded in bagging anything, during the afternoon, having missed a shot at a pig. There was considerable thunder during the night, but no rain fell unfortunately, as rain means more deer out and until later hours. In the morning I sent V. out via Mediwewa, and the eastern plains, whilst I went westward to Borawewa, and the far western *damanas*, but I saw nothing except five wild buffaloes with poor heads. When I got back to camp I found Meegaswewa trackers had arrived

and they told me that most of the deer would be found in the Maradankadawela and Nikkewewa *damanas* as they had all been burnt off and the young grass had sprouted.

V. got back to camp, also empty-handed, just in time for breakfast (11 o'clock) after which heavy rain set in for an hour. It cleared up at about 12 o'clock, so out we went, V. going to Maradankadawela whilst I went to Bendiwewa. My round was quite fruitless, however, for I saw nothing worth shooting of any sort, and I could not recollect ever having seen this country so apparently void of game, which I put down to the non-arrival of rain, the grass being mostly too old and gone to seed; also another shooting party had been here only a week ago. Vernon came in at 5-30, bursting with pride, having secured a beautiful head of 31½ inches which he came across just inside the Maradankadawela country and bagged by a 60-yard shot. There was a good deal of rain during the night, but it cleared up at daybreak. I sent V. off to the Nikkewewa country whilst I went eastward again. About a mile beyond Bendiwewa I came on a small herd of deer, in a somewhat scrubby park, and spotted three bucks amongst them, but, by the time I had made my approach, they had all fed away behind some leafless bushes, making their way towards the jungle. I could only see one buck, and him I shot at through the network of dry bush twigs. At the shot he leapt about 5 feet into the air and darted towards the jungle, but we found him dead about 50 yards beyond the point where he had been shot. To my disgust I found

the head in velvet not fully developed, but even then measuring 24 inches, so it would have probably developed into at least a 28-inch head.

Went on for a further round in lovely park country, but saw nothing shootable so returned to the dead deer, cut it up and back to camp.

Found V. had returned after a blank morning.

It poured with rain all the afternoon, so we did not go out again. Rain also continued most of the night, but stopped at 6-30 a.m., so out we went, V. going eastward and I going to the far south plains, which necessitated the mud-plugging walk along an elephant path alluded to in chapter III. I saw nothing shootable, however, though in one park I saw a herd of fully forty deer, but the only two bucks in it had very poor heads. Returning to camp, I found V. had got back, having secured a neat little head of  $24\frac{1}{2}$  inches, which he shot out of a small herd which had come running out of a clump of bushes, the buck foolishly stopping for a fatal look round. There were two tremendous down-pours of rain between 12 noon and 3 p.m., but it then cleared up and out we went. Vernon went westward, whilst I tried the Maradankadawela country. There was a vast amount of water out in every hollow and jurgle drain, and I saw a great many deer, but failed to stalk any of them. Eventually I saw a fine herd, at the far side of the park, towards which I made my way as carefully as possible, finally reaching the cover of a small ant-hill beyond which all was clear open country with the deer still 200 yards away. I lay on the ant-hill for a full half-hour before I was able to pick out the

best buck, and then, as it was nearing dusk, getting a clear sight on him, I fired and dropped him in his tracks. I paced the distance very carefully and found it to be 185 yards—the longest shot I have ever made with my short "Savage."

The head, a very nice one measuring 28½ inches, was cut off and carried back to camp, which we reached well after dark.

V. had not fired a shot, though he had seen a lot of deer and some wild buffaloes.

Heavy rain again during the night, but it was fine at daybreak when we set out once more, V. going east towards Dambagolla, I going again to Maradankadawela. I did a fair round, but saw nothing until we had started on our return, when, passing along the edge of some jungle, I heard a grunt or two from within it, which one of the trackers said was a pig. I was not sure about that, however, and was making my way quietly towards the place when I heard more grunts, and a well-known deep indraw of breath, which diagnosed "bear" at once. I approached very cautiously, entered the jungle, and almost at once saw the bear hard at work grubbing an ant-hill, so busy that I got to within 20 feet of him before I fired. At the shot he fell, roaring and struggling, so I plugged him again upon which he got up and staggered along for about 10 yards, but a third shot finished him. His coat was a good one, so I took off the skin and returned to camp, in pouring rain, but very well pleased. I found that V. had had no luck—had not even fired a shot. Usual rain between one o'clock and three, after which it cleared

up and we went out, but I saw nothing worth a shot, and V. when he got in told me he had watched a good buck for an hour and then clean missed it when he got his chance. Ra'n as usual, for part of the night, whilst the morning was very dull when we set off for our rounds. I got nothing, as seems to be the usual thing this trip, seeing only a few does and one solitary boar which I did not get a shot at. V. returned with the head of a very fine boar which he came on at close range and promptly shot.

From 11 a.m. it rained steadily, but we went out at 3-30 in spite of it, V. going to Kudáwewa whilst I went to Mediwewa.

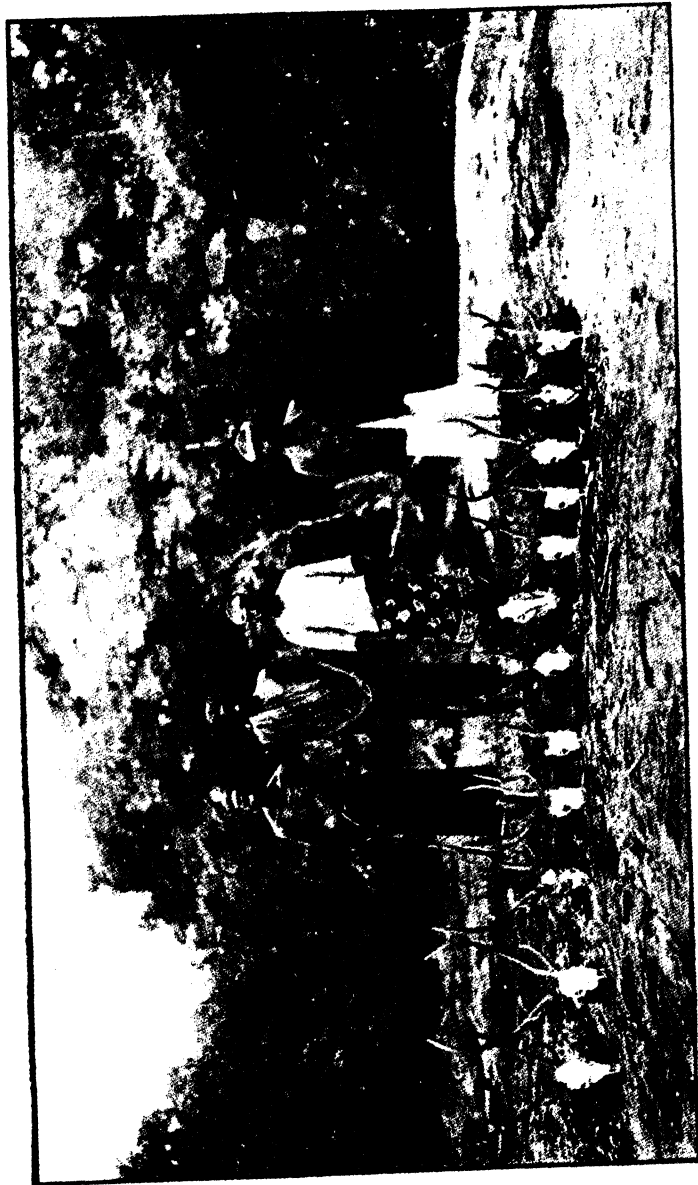
A slice of surprising luck met me here, for, having arrived at the open park I decided, against the advice of the tracker, to turn to the west towards Ulpotawewa to look for a big herd I knew frequented that part. Sure enough I spotted them before I had gone 100 yards, but they were fully 200 yards away, on the far jungle edge, so I went out for a careful stalk. I had barely started when, to my surprise, they all stampeded, with shrill alarm calls, which I knew was not on my account as they had neither seen nor winded me. As I was looking about for the cause I heard my two trackers, whom I had left a little behind when I started the stalk, "clucking" to attract my attention and on looking round they said "leopard," pointing to my left. I looked and there, cantering across the park, straight towards me, was a leopard! When it got to about 40 yards distant I "barked," to attract its attention, which caused it to stop



at once, whereupon I instantly fired and it dropped in a doubled-up struggling heap. It got up again, however, and cantered away very groggily towards a clump of jungle, my second shot missing it, by a narrow margin, just as it reached cover. I followed up with extreme caution and found it dead, in the channel of a *Yodi Ela* which crosses the country at this point, my shot having caught it fair in the chest. Returned to camp at once, the trackers carrying in the body, having been absent only 40 minutes—pouring rain the whole time. V. returned at dusk, having seen a python, a buffalo, some does, and fired at a buck but missed. We measured my leopard, a female, and found it to be 6 feet 2 inches nose to tip of tail.

The next day was to be our last and I had sent off for carriers to Meegaswewa. It was a drizzly morning but V. went out at 6-15 whilst I did not go out until 7 o'clock. I came on two good bucks and some does down wind, so fired hurriedly at one of the bucks but missed it clean. Of course this being our last day I found deer in every park, but I did not get another shot for some time until I came on a very fine solitary buck which got my wind at once. I could only see head and neck so "drew a bead" on his neck, and fired, dropping him in his tracks. I then looked round for my men, and, when I turned to my buck once more, he was up and away and that was the last I saw of him! Inexcusable carelessness! Went on again, and, finally, close by Maradankadawela tank I saw a herd of does, feeding and sleeping, about 200 yards away. I got a little closer, and





TROPHIES, CAMP MEN AND TRACKERS,

looked carefully, but could not see any buck for some time, but, eventually, I made out what looked like a pair of antlers behind an ant-hill, so down I sat to wait half the day if necessary. I sat there for an hour before the bucks (there were two) moved, and then they fed away out of my sight. However, I waited on and they fed back again, but I could not get a clear sight for a shot until, finally, the big buck got partly upon an ant-hill, to browse on some fancied leaves, giving me at last a fair chance, which I took instant advantage of, and dropped him. I paced the distance and made it 160 yards and the antlers, a fine pair, measured  $30\frac{1}{2}$  inches. I then returned to camp and Vernon reported having shot a buck in velvet, and had also seen a leopard, but got no shot at it. At 12 o'clock a large gang of carriers arrived, including old Kapurala, who had been with me some years ago, when we were both mauled by a leopard in this shooting country, an adventure related in my former book.

We packed our stuff during the afternoon ready for an early departure in the morning. V. was to go out via the Kanthalay track with the carriers, whilst I was to go back to Alut Oya via Relapanawa and Puliankulam to bring the car along to meet him. We got away by 6-30 in the morning, I being accompanied by one man, and my journey was very unpleasant along the much overgrown old track in soaking wet jungle. On the way I shot a buck for the sake of a haunch of fresh meat to take home, but that tramp through the jungle was principally "water, water everywhere!" Got to Alut Oya about 11 a.m. changed, ate some

biscuits, got into the car and away to the 84th mile, where I met Vernon and the carriers, who had arrived there an hour previously, their walk being shorter than mine. Packed our baggage, paid the men off, had some refreshment and got away at 1 p.m., arriving home 6 p.m., travelling in torrents of rain from Dambulla to Matale. I did no more shooting, except an occasional shot at snipe, during 1912.

## Chapter V.

DEER SHOOTING IN THE SOUTHERN PROVINCE :  
BEAR, LEOPARD AND DEER SHOOTING IN  
THE NORTH-CENTRAL PROVINCE  
DURING 1913.

IN February, 1913, I got the chance of a trip to the Southern Province, which I had not hitherto visited for a regular shooting trip, though I had done some snipe shooting near the coast, and had once shot a rogue elephant near Ambalantota some years ago. An old friend, J. P. Ireson, superintending estates in the far-away Moneragala district, in Uva, invited me to accompany him to the Tissa-Kataragama country, an invitation which I accepted with pleasure, as he knows those shooting districts well. Ireson supplied all the camp equipment, except my bed and bedding, which I packed up and sent off to him by rail well ahead of my own time of departure.

I travelled by car via Kandy, Kegalla, Bulat-kohupitiya, Avisawela and Ratnapura, to Balangoda, where I stayed the night at the resthouse. Pushed on the next morning up, and ever up, to Haldumulla and Koslande, thence down into the low-country at Welawáya, where I turned into a minor road leading to Muppáne, a resthouse just at the foot of the great mountain which forms the Monera-

gala District, which I reached at 12 noon and was met by Ireson. The total distance, by the route travelled, from Matale to here was 193 miles.

We lunched at the resthouse, and walked from there up to Ireson's bungalow, a climb of 1,500 feet in a distance of 3 miles, where I found a comparatively cool climate with a pleasant breeze always blowing.

Ireson's trophies filled me with envy, for he had a fine series of heads from 30 inches up to 33½ inches—such as I had rarely seen in my North-Central Province country, though common enough in the Southern Province. The next day we left Muppane, in my car, at 12-40 p.m. and motored to Tissamaharama reaching the resthouse at 4 p.m., and staying the night there after our run of 60 miles. Heavy rain and thunder during the night. We left next morning at 6-30, with four carriers for our boxes and gun-cases, travelling 13 miles, by a very weedy overgrown track, inclusive of a great deal of mud-plugging and water, to Katagamuwa hamlet, where we found our camp and carts. After breakfast, and a rest, we went out, at 3 p.m., with two of the Game Protection Society's watchers, who are stationed here, as this is all "Residents' Reserve" country. I went north-west along the local tank bund and through a small patch of open country as sappy as a paddy-field, in which I saw a few deer but got no shot. Returning towards camp, however, I came on some deer in an abandoned paddy-field under the tank and carried out a careful stalk, knee deep in weeds and water, successfully. I spotted a decent-looking

buck, which I dropped in his tracks by an off-hand shot at 60 yards, and he fell with a splash in the water. The antlers measured only 26 inches, to my great disappointment. We cut up the meat and my men carried it all to camp, where I found Ireson had already arrived, having failed to bag anything.

Heavy rain set in at daybreak which continued, with intervals, all the morning. Ireson stayed in camp to supervise the packing, whilst I went on ahead with a tracker. The path lay through a series of narrow glades and open park in which I saw a fair number of deer but got no shot for some time. Finally I came on a nice herd in a very weed-grown park, and got an off-hand shot at what looked like a good buck at 60 yards, which I hit, but it ran off with the herd. I followed, and, coming suddenly on a buck, in the undergrowth not more than 30 yards away, which I at once concluded was the one I had hit, I shot and killed it, finding to my disgust, that it was not the one I had hit but another one with a poor head.

Left the body by the track and pushed on, after a fruitless search for the other buck, seeing some fine wild buffaloes and lots of peafowl on the way, the latter being very common here. I also saw a buck elk and a doe, but the buck had cast his horns ; and many of the spotted bucks seen were still in velvet. I reached the final camp site, known as Talgasmankada, on the bank of the Menikganga (in flood) after about 6 miles' walking. The game sanctuary commences on the other side of the river, which forms one of the boundaries for about 10 miles. Ireson turned up shortly afterwards, and



we had something to eat, but the carts failed to arrive, so I went out again about 3 p.m. I saw nothing worth a shot and got back to camp at 6-30, in pouring rain, wet through, but a change and dinner soon put me right.

It rained off-and-on all night—a most unusual thing at this time of the year, as fine weather should have set in at this period. The whole countryside, however, was a morass of standing water, whilst the river was in heavy flood most of the time.

I noted with considerable interest and some surprise, that, in camp, under forest trees on the bank of the river, we had no mosquitoes, but, 100 yards away, in the open park they swarmed.

Ordinarily I would have expected exactly the reverse. The morning was fine, so out we went, at 6-30, in different directions. I went along our back-track for some distance and soon came on a herd which included a buck with good-looking antlers, so I carried out a careful stalk. Arrived at a good vantage point, I perceived that the herd was walking along towards me, so kept well out of sight. A "poor head" buck passed me, so very close I was sure he would spot me, but he did not, so I bided my time until the best buck got within easy range, when I dropped him at 40 yards. I was somewhat disappointed to find my "good" head only measured  $26\frac{1}{2}$  inches, its rather unusual spread having been deceptive. So far I had seen none of the famous south-country good heads, specimens of which I had expected to see in almost every herd!

Left the buck until our return, and went on

seeing lots of deer, but none shootable until I came upon a fine herd in the corner of a very "bushy" park, to which I got fairly close by a good stalk. I made out one buck, but careful inspection showed it to have a poor head, whilst just then some does spotted me and came along to inspect. They seemed to come in an endless stream, from all directions, until quite a crowd was between me and the buck. However, just then a better buck walked out from some bushes, so I fired at him, causing a terrific stampede of does and more bucks, but the one shot dropped after about 50 yards' run. The head again was comparatively poor, only measuring 25 inches. Got back to camp, with loads of meat, at 10-45, finding Ireson returned, having failed to bag anything. We went out again at 4 p.m. I going towards Yala. Saw a few does, and also some peafowl, which I tried unsuccessfully to stalk. The tracks were all mud and water and every park a quagmire. Any deer we shot usually fell with a splash in water! I bagged nothing this round, but Ireson came in with a smallish head.

There was no rain during the night and the morning was fine, whilst the river had sunk a good 2 feet, so out we went bright and early.

I saw nothing worth a shot, but took note how very weed-grown the parks were—so unlike our pleasant grassy glades and *damanas* in the North-Central Province. The weed growth made stalking very easy, nothing like the difficulty there is in more open country.

On my way back to camp I came on a big *tic polonga* (a venomous snake) lying quietly with

a fluttering quail held in his mouth. I killed the snake but too late to save the quail, which died almost at once. Ireson also failed to bag anything on his round, and we neither of us bagged anything in the afternoon. Out at daybreak next morning, I went along past the rock known as Moderagala, through a pleasant series of glades nearly to a great isolated rock, with a dagoba on the summit, known as Akásachaittayagala ("the rock of the dagoba in the skies"). On the way I came suddenly on a fine peacock, and promptly shot it, gaining thereby a magnificent tail 5 feet long, but that was my sole bag for the morning. Ireson returned with an ordinary-sized head, but had missed a shot at a leopard and seen another one. In the afternoon I again failed to score, but Ireson brought in a fairly good head. The weather continued fine and I had better luck the next morning coming on a nice buck, with a herd, in one of the very weedy parks. I could not, however, get nearer than 100 yards and, to my great consternation, my first shot was a clean miss, but, as he took no notice of it, I extra-steadied myself and dropped him with the next. The head was a satisfactory one of 29 inches.

Ireson also brought in a fair head, but not so good as mine. We neither of us scored in the afternoon, however, as we were getting fastidious and wanted better heads.

The next morning I visited a wonderful hill of jungle-covered boulders, with ruins of dagobas on various points, and a large brick-and-plaster-built recumbent figure of Buddha, very much

damaged, under a rock shelter, whilst there were innumerable cave inscriptions over the many shelters under boulders, showing that this hill was at one time a big and populous monastery. Its modern name is Sitalpauwiharegala and it is referred to in the *Mahāvansa*, as existing some time B.C., during the reign of King Duttagāmini under the name of "Cittalapabbata." The now tiny hamlet of Katagamuwa is also identifiable in the same history as "Kammantagāma," near the above "Citta" mountain, and was the birth-place of one of Duttagāmini's heroes named Nandimitta commemorated by a ruined dagoba close by the village known to this day as "Nandimittachaittaya." After spending the morning at the ruins I returned to camp.

Ireson came in empty-handed, having been all the way to Yala. We crossed the river next day, waist deep only, and travelled up stream, inside the sanctuary, within which no shooting is allowed, until we crossed its outer boundary into Uva, but I saw nothing worth a shot during the morning, so returned to camp.

Ireson did not get back until late in the afternoon, but he brought with him the best head of the trip, a very nice one of 30 inches.

This finished our trip, and we packed up that evening ready for a start the next morning. We got away at 6 a.m. and walked hard, reaching Tissa by 1 p.m., with a short stop on the way. We had some food at the resthouse, changed, got into my car, and away, getting to Muppene at 6 p.m. Slept at Muppene and I left next morning, going

via Koslande, and Haputale, to Nuwara Eliya (100 miles), where my wife and family were staying for the hot weather. Stayed there one night and home the next day, the total motoring distance of the whole trip being 475 miles.

On the whole I considered the southern country could not give any points to the North-Central Province country, at least as regards variety, for red deer, pig and bears—common enough in the North-Central Province—seem wanting in the Tal-gasmankada country. Since my visit, however, the “Residents’ Reserve” country, then only a small strip south-west of the sanctuary, has been extended until it consists of a belt of country, of considerable width, encircling the sanctuary on its three land sides. The original block was in the Southern Province, but the new additions are partly in Uva and partly in the Eastern Province.

I find nothing more in my diary until August of this year (1913), in which month I went again to my favourite Vedda country (Egodapattuwa). I find I noted that, having arrived at Polonnaruwa, I went out for the night to a water-hole, but had no luck, as nothing came but porcupines and some elk. On the way back to the resthouse next morning I had an 80-yard running shot at a fine leopard, but missed. Secured a cart and travelled to the Mahaweliganga, 7 miles, and from there sent to Manampitiya, 3 miles away, for another cart to take my things on, finally reaching that village at 4-30 p.m. Two of my Vedda friends, having heard that I was coming, turned up to greet me. Got away early the next morning, taking the baggage by cart





*Photo by G. M. Crabbe, Esq.*

LEOPARD.

all the way to the Vedda temporary settlement, about half-a-mile beyond the Kosgahaulpota, the spring under the mountain Gunner's Quoin.

I watched at the *linda* in Gónandamana (referred to in the last chapter), that night, but nothing came to water, though leopards roared in the neighbourhood and I saw one bear, down-wind, which, however, cleared off. On our way back to camp I had a look at Alakannagodelinda, where, last year, I had shot two bears and two pigs, recorded in last chapter, but this time only pigs appeared to be drinking, so I did not watch it. Arrived at camp, I sent men off to build a stage at the rock-hole Aliyawetichagala, where I had slain two bears when Cameron was with me. Set off to walk there at 4-30, a very picturesque and impressive walk as our track skirted the mountain the whole way, its stupendous masses of jungle-covered rocks and cliffs towering above us in magnificent array. In this part of the country it is impossible to get away from the mountain—at any point you can see it standing up out of the plain in solitary grandeur, reaching as it does a height of 1,700 feet above sea-level. We reached our destination before 6 p.m. and at 6-30 monkeys began their harsh grunts and barks, not very far away, showing that a leopard was on the move. I very soon heard it walking along, amongst the dead leaves of the jungle below us, until it seemed to be almost under our tree, but from there it apparently went away and I heard nothing more for nearly an hour. I then, however, to my surprise, heard it, unmistakably, jump down from a tree, or rock,



not far away, and also heard a cat-like mewing which made me think there were cubs about. Presently I heard the "pad-pad" sound of footsteps, and deep breathing, as the leopard approached the rock, and, in a few moments, it appeared, from the shadow of trees bordering the rock on my right, leisurely proceeding towards the water-hole. The moonlight was sufficiently bright for me to see that it was a fair-sized thick-set male, and, tense with excitement, I watched the sinuous form approach the hole. As soon as he got near enough to offer me a clear shot I fired at him, with my 20-bore "Paradox," using a "destructor" bullet and he collapsed at once, but, in a few moments, got up again, and, with hollow groans, came lurching towards me probably with the intention of descending the rock at our side. I waited until he came within about 10 or 12 feet and then fired down on him between the shoulders, which finished him and he slithered over the edge of the rock, dropping into a dry pot-hole at the base where we left him. Nothing more happened until 11-30, moon down and dark, when a bear came along the rock, from the right, struck the leopard scent and came sniffing along the track to the edge where the leopard had slid over. The chance of a shot was ideal so I fired down on him, as I had on the leopard, using a "destructor" bullet likewise, but at the shot the bear merely uttered a loud roar of surprise and bolted at speed—to my intense disgust. It was our final visitor if we except the usual porcupines. At daybreak we hauled out the leopard and started skinning it. Found it

to be a male, measuring 6 feet 8 inches from nose to tip of tail, and we came to the conclusion that a female with cubs had been with him at the time we heard the mewling, but we could find no trace of them.

As we were at work on the leopard we heard a bear wailing loudly on the mountain a mile away, in all probability the wounded bear, so we at once made for the spot as hard as we could go. The sounds ceased as we got near the foot of the rocks, but we spent an hour searching in vain, as it was hopeless trying to locate anything amongst the acres of chaotic masses of rock and boulder. We then returned to our leopard, completed the skinning job and walked back to camp, meeting some Veddas, on the way, who, uneasy at our late return, had come to look for us.

I forgot to mention, that, on our way to look for the bear, we passed the Kudá-ulpota, or "little spring," which rises at the foot of a wonderful green valley running up into the vast cliffs of the mountain.

Some 20 years ago there was a tiny hamlet here of two or three houses, people who had settled there to work some paddy-fields from the spring, and I visited the place, at that time, on my way to shoot an elephant which had, a few weeks before, killed one of the men then living there. Now all had gone to jungle again and not a sign was to be seen of the houses or cultivation of 20 years ago. In the evening we went to another *linda* in Gónan-damana, where four bears and two leopards had drunk, but the wind blew the wrong way all night so

that not a thing came to water, though we heard bears and leopards, at intervals, all around. The next day there was a heavy thunderstorm, with torrents of rain for an hour, which effectually finished all chance of further water-holing, so I packed up and left for Polonnaruwa, and home the next day.

Finding the next month, September, still dry I managed to find time for another shot at bears, going once again to the Vedda country of which the principal drawback is the distance one has to walk to get there, added to the terrible scarcity of potable water which makes camping rather trying. I did my usual walk, from Polonnaruwa to Manampitiya on the other side of the *ganga*, but, as I reached the latter place in good time, I merely breakfasted there and pushed on past Gunner's Quoin, to the Veddas' "chena," a total distance of about 16 miles. As soon as I arrived there I got my things ready for a night watch, and set off at 4-30 for Gónandamana, accompanied only by "Arachchi," a typical little Vedda who had been badly mauled by a bear some years ago, resulting in a twisted, almost useless, left hand. I may mention that "Arachchi" is a sort of nickname for a bear amongst the Veddas.

It has occurred to me that I have not, in any of my previous chapters, recorded any notes about these jungle dwellers. Of pure Vedda blood there are certainly none left amongst these nomads of Tamankaduwa, unless I may except one oldish man I have met occasionally who strikes me as a real aborigine, who usually resides near Bendia Wila, a large swampy lagoon some miles south-





VEDDAH HUT.

west of Gunner's Quoin. The reason of the mixture of blood is that these particular people usually go to Batticaloa side for their wives, where the Veddas show a strong admixture of Tamil blood: also an occasional "alien" Sinhalese man drifts in from somewhere and settles down amongst them, adopting all their habits and customs. They retain their inherited nomadic habits and do not settle in any village, but they clear a "chena," in any fancied locality, plant dry grain, chillies and a few vegetables, build flimsy, ramshackle, shelters out of jungle sticks, mana grass, and slabs of bark, and remain there for a year, occasionally for two years, after which they move on to some other spot. They do a fair amount of hunting—in fact, previous to the passing of the "Dried Meat" Ordinance, traders were in the habit of supplying them with guns, powder and bullets to be paid for in kind in the shape of dried meat, horns and hides. The result of this is that the magnificent park country they inhabit is, or was, almost devoid of deer, though it is now slowly recovering from the excessive slaughter but will not be a good hunting country for some years yet.

Nowadays they confine their hunting mainly to iguanas, squirrels, rats, honey, and any other jungle produce. When I first began visiting their country there were some first-class hunters and trackers amongst them, but they are now (in 1920) mostly dead and gone, those remaining being in no way so good. As a matter of fact they are taking to more regular work and do a great deal of cattle-tending for owners in Tamil villages bordering

the river, who like to send their cattle to the drier "park" country at certain times of the year. Amongst themselves those of most Vedda blood could talk a dialect that I was unable to understand, although I have a fair knowledge of the "jungle" language. Otherwise they all speak ordinary Sinhalese, and most of them also talk Tamil fluently.

They are an extraordinarily truthful people I have always found, and not very talkative but fairly cheerful and easily amused.

To return now to my Gónandamana water-hole, after getting settled on the shooting stage, up in a tree, which I have previously described, I watched for some hours, but, as nothing came, I lay down to sleep leaving Arachchi on the watch. About midnight he woke me saying a bear was coming, so I sat up at once and saw a bear coming panting along from the left in the open park. I fired at it as soon as I got a good sight, whereupon it gave a terrific yell and turned to bolt, but I knocked it over with my second barrel. Nevertheless it got up again and ran into the jungle behind us, but, in about five minutes, we heard moans followed by the well-known three long-drawn howls that this type of bear utters, under certain circumstances, when dying. It was our only visitor that night.

We descended from our tree at daybreak, to look for the bear, and found him about 150 yards away in the jungle. We took the skin as it was an extra good one, but the coarse hair cannot rank as fur compared with the coats carried by the colder climate bears. I found my first shot had hit







VEDDAS AND DEAD BEAR.

it in the fleshy part of the neck, but the second one was fair in the body.

Returned to camp, and that evening went to watch at a *potaha*, the usual name of a rock-hole, about three miles distant. I sat on one of the large collection of boulders to be found at this hole, but nothing came until 11-30, when a bear approached by a deep rocky gully below and to leeward of us so that it got our wind and departed. After this I went to sleep, but was roused by a Vedda at 2-30 and sat up very "muzzy."

I saw a black shadow at the water-hole, in the now very dim moonlight, and fired at it knocking it over, but it got up again to receive my second barrel which caused more violent contortions, loud yells and quick departure. I was by this time losing faith in my 20-bore "Paradox" very considerably. We set off, at daybreak, to look for the bear, finding a copious blood track which persisted for nearly a mile in the open park, but it eventually gave out and we utterly failed to pick up any trail on the baked ground—to my great regret, for nothing can be worse than to wound and lose. Having returned to camp I packed up food, etc., for three or four days and we set out for Kada Ela, a sandy water-course mentioned in a previous chapter. We camped well away from the water-course, but had to dig a hole there for water for our own use. My old "messa" (stage) was rebuilt and I got on it at 3 p.m., but not a thing came until 9 p.m., at which time a small leopard came walking up-stream. Just as it was getting near enough for a shot it must have got a whiff of our wind for it sprang

off to one side under the dense shadow of the jungle, came out and back again twice, but would not stay out to be decently shot. It then lay up just inside the jungle edge for some time and we heard a bear come along in its close vicinity, causing a considerable amount of mutual growling and snorting, but they evidently compared notes, for they cleared off "one time" shortly afterwards. Nothing came to water that night.

After a meal at my temporary camp we set off for Kemmatgala, a high double peak of rock about 6 miles further on, in jungle. This rock has had a small dagoba on one of its summits several centuries ago, and there are some rude cave shelters, a little distance below the summit, with a fairly large stone altar slab in front of them.

There are several water-holes on it, but the best one cannot be successfully watched owing to a tendency on the part of the wind to vary at that point, and the want of a conveniently placed tree for a stage. I, eventually, had a stage built in a tree commanding a curiously-situated hole, in the side of a perpendicular part of the rock near the summit, approached by a long slope in the valley between the two peaks of the rock. Whilst the men were cutting sticks and creepers, for the stage, in the jungle bordering the "best" hole above mentioned, a bear rushed at a tree in which one of the men happened to be at the time collecting creepers, but it was frightened off by his, and his mates', yells. We blocked all the other water-holes with the idea of forcing bears to come to our hole, and I watched most of the afternoon, but nothing

came. Still I enjoyed a most glorious view visible from my high situation, on this rock, well above the tops of the forest trees. I could see for miles over the forest. Gunner's Quoin stood up, solitary, about 10 miles away and I could see the range of the Matale East mountains far away due west of our rock, whilst various other similar outcrops were visible standing up here and there above the vast "sea" of forest. The expression "sea" was applied to the forest by one of the Veddas as we sat on the summit when we first arrived. He looked round and remarked that it was "like being on a rock in a great sea with a wall of mountains round"—referring to the vast range of the Matale-Kelebokka-Medamahanuwara mountains visible some 30 or 40 miles away in the west. One would hardly expect to find such a poetic description emanating from a jungle Vedda! To return to my stage—at 5-30 a grand buck elk came walking up the sloping valley, from the lower jungle. He had a fine head (for Ceylon) of, I should think, fully 30 inches, causing me to long for possession, but I refrained and shoo'd him away. At 6-20 a bear came walking up the slope in a very businesslike way and I shot him just as he approached the water-hole. It turned out to be the aggressive gentleman who had "gone for" Menika, recognizable by an old wound in the back of its neck, probably a bite. Its skin was a shabby one, so I did not take it, but nothing else came that night. I had a much-needed, and thoroughly appreciated bathe and general clean-up at this water-hole before we struck camp next morning. A thorough

bathe is seldom possible when doing a round of water-holes in my rough-and-ready style, I must admit. We did not leave this rock until about noon, journeying to Mapotaha, about 5 miles away, reaching there at 2 p.m.

I left my "camp" there and went on, with two men, to inspect Weeragoda and Ulpotawewa, the first being the Vedda camping place mentioned in chapter II, and the second the spot where I killed the leopard as narrated in the same chapter.

I found no trace of bears or leopards drinking, however, at either place, so returned to Mapotaha where I took up my station behind my usual boulder commanding the water-hole. At 5 p.m. I saw a fine leopard walking along the jungle edge, on the north side of the rock, about 100 yards away, but did not attempt a shot as I was sure he would come to the water-hole. However, he failed to do so, for he turned into the jungle and departed, to my sorrow. At about 7 o'clock a bear came up the rock, from the jungle in front about 100 yards away, but evidently thought there was something wrong for it turned and ran back about 50 yards, and stood stock-still for about half-an-hour. After that it came up to the edge of the water-hole and I fired at it very deliberately but, at the shot, it merely turned sideways, with its head cocked, listening. I fired again and it then walked quietly away! I found the next morning that I had missed both shots, for some reason or other, and I am of opinion that the bear was *stone deaf*, hence its peculiar behaviour. I have met with one other similar case since then. At 1 a.m., as I was sleep-

VEDDA CAMPING PLACE AT WERRAGODA.





ing, my Vedda sentinel, on top of a huge boulder above and behind me woke me with the news that a bear was coming from the steep hollow on our left. I watched the edge of the slope for a long time and then, suddenly, the head and shoulders of a bear appeared, looking straight at me, about 20 feet away. I fired at it instantly and it rolled, gurgling and scrambling, down the steep slope where we heard it struggling for a long time in the dead leaves under dense jungle shade, but it eventually dragged itself away. At 3 a.m. I got a momentary sight of a bear on my left, but it departed at once. At 3-30 another bear suddenly appeared at the water-hole which I fired at but missed clean as it was now very dark. At daybreak a fine antlered buck elk came out on the rock which I watched for some time, but, of course, did not shoot at.

I then got something to eat, after which we set off to look for the wounded bear. We found, as soon as we got down into the hollow, indisputable evidence that the bear's hind quarters were paralysed as the track plainly showed, though how that could have happened, when I only saw head and shoulders, I could not imagine. We followed the broad "dragg-ing" track for nearly a mile, eventually coming out on to a flat slab-rock whereupon the Veddas at once said "it is in the potaha," informing me that there was a cave under the far side of the rock containing water sometimes. I walked across the rock, finding that it ended in an abrupt drop of about 5 feet on the edge of the jungle, and, leaning over, I saw there was a low cave, in the vertical face, forming a long opening in the rock. I got down and peeped in,



with my gun ready, instantly perceiving the bear just within, who saluted me with a ferocious roar, but a shot drove him into the interior of the cave. The opening was only about 2 feet high, so I squatted there, for some time, looking in and listening. Then, as nothing happened, I crawled into the cave some little distance, and lay there until my eyes got accustomed to the darkness. Eventually I was able to make out the bear, which had retreated as far as the cave allowed, a distance of about 30 feet, to where the roof of the cave sloped down to nothing, and was lying with his head pushed under the dwindling slope. I fired into his stern but with no apparent effect beyond a loud roar, and then, as I had not many cartridges left, I came out and instructed the men to get a long jungle stick, with a crook at the end, with which I crawled in again and tried to pull him out by hooking it over his back legs, but in vain.

The men then got two jungle-creeper ropes, made nooses at the ends, and I, and another man, crawled in, looped the ropes over its hind paws, came out, the others tailed on and we hauled him out, roaring and snapping at us, still full of life and very wroth. Not caring to waste a cartridge I promptly knifed him but he was so muddy and dirty that a *post-mortem* was not desirable. I am inclined to think that my first shot caught him in the side of the neck, passed through the upper part of the chest, clear of lungs and bone, and finally struck the spine somewhere behind the shoulders. We returned to the other rock and made a perfunctory search for the deaf bear but with no result,

so we set off and returned to our main camp getting there at 1 p.m.,—an intensely hot morning.

I went to another rock-hole at night, known as Nelumbuhitanagala, which I had not previously visited, but nothing came to water though, at intervals, we heard animals, in the adjoining jungle, including an elephant. There was a total eclipse of the moon just at its rise at 6 p.m., full moon, of which I had a magnificent view. This occurred on 15th September, 1913.

The next morning I visited some interesting ruins on another rock close by—ruined temple, other buildings, and a small rough stone foot-bridge over a dry water-course; after which we returned to the main camp. I then packed up, returned to Manampitiya with Vedda carriers, but had to wait until 3 p.m. before I could get Manampitiya men, after which I pushed on to Polonnaruwa, getting there 6-10 p.m. after 20 miles of pretty tough walking in blazing hot weather. Motored home the next morning.

I find I managed to have still another shooting trip in 1913, this time during the open season for deer, in November, and once more in the Vettikachi country. Two friends, booked to accompany me, were unable to come, so I went alone, sending my baggage ahead by cart to Diwulánkadawela village. I followed, by car to Alut Oya, a week later, where I was met by three men from the above village and we set off to walk there at about 11 a.m. Heavy rain in October had filled the tanks and left water about everywhere in the jungle, but the Alut Oya had no running water in it as yet.

The track runs alongside the river, practically, for 4 miles, diverging a little in the fourth mile where the road lies along the great *Yodi Ela* which crossed, and dammed, the river some centuries ago but is now breached. This *ela* commenced at Ela-hera on the Ambanganga, 18 or 20 miles north-east of Matale, absorbed the whole river into the canal, by means of a gigantic stone dam, now in ruins, fed the great tank of Minneriya, overflowed from thence, by a continuation of the canal, to the former great, but now badly breached, Kaudulu tank, and, thence, past the place on the road just mentioned, for many more miles to the huge Kanthalay tank, a total distance of about 54 miles—a marvellous piece of work. The track we were following is all through very gamey country with various patches of open (old abandoned paddy-fields of bygone centuries), here and there, in which deer, pig, buffalo, etc., may be met. After the fourth mile the river is crossed three times in the ensuing three miles before reaching Kauduluwewa. Just before I, with one man, reached the *wewa* there was a big elephant in the jungle adjoining the track and he came out, after we had passed, nearly frightening my man Meiyana and the two carriers out of their senses. The open part of the tank, when we got there, was full of water, overflowing into the Alut Oya at our third crossing place. We eventually reached our destination, Diwulankadawela village, at 3 p.m. where I found my camp duly pitched for the night. Rained at intervals all night, but, though dull, was not raining in the morning, so we got away at 7 o'clock. I had about 18 men, nearly





MEDIRIGIRI RUINS, ANCHORITE'S CAVE.

all the male inhabitants of the little village, to carry my baggage, and the going was very heavy as there was a terrible amount of water everywhere. We were entering the country by the Gal Oya-Medirigiri track, and, when we reached the oya, we found it a raging muddy torrent, running like a mill-race, and, as the river bed is very rocky, we had a difficulty in getting across. However, by cutting a lot of good stout sticks as supports, the men strung themselves out across the 40 yards of river—which was really not much more than waist deep, but the force of the current was very strong—and passed the baggage from one to another very skilfully, but it took all of an hour to complete the crossing. Had to do a good deal of wading, also, between here and Medirigiri, and, when we reached the rock, we found a party of 12 Kiniai Moormen there on their way to Topáwewa (Polonnaruwa) to noose elephants. The ruins had been cleared of jungle by the Archaeological Commissioner's men since I was last here, so I had a very interesting look round, being able to see and appreciate them much better than before when all was bush and jungle. In past centuries the buildings must have been very imposing and of considerable importance. The ancient builders knew how to select picturesque and striking positions with a good eye for beautiful surroundings, and knew how to model their buildings accordingly.

The principal temple here was a fine circular building, of an uncommon type, and the tall slender stone pillars connected with it carry beautifully carved capitals well worth seeing. There

are quite a number of statues of Buddha lying about the various ruins, carved out of white limestone which must have been brought from a distance. Those in the circular temple are sedent figures, and there are standing figures lying prone amidst the ruins of other buildings.

Remains of a massive stone wall surround the temple precincts and include a good-sized *pokuna* (water tank lined with cut stonework), whilst there is another large pool of water in a hollow between two parts of the main rock. After a rest here we pushed on to Tun-ima-gala where we pitched our tents, this time in the open on account of the wet weather now on us—otherwise, if under trees, everything remains wet and final packing when breaking camp is unpleasant. The adjacent rock admitted of rapid drying of wet things on the least sign of any sunshine. I paid off my carriers on arrival, retaining five men as trackers.

There was a considerable amount of rain during the afternoon, but it stopped at 4 p.m., so I went out. There is about one-third of a mile of jungle between camp and the commencement of the park country, and, just as we reached the open, we came on a small herd of spotted deer which I stalked, but found to contain only one "poor" buck, so left them and went on. Shortly afterwards I saw six does and another "poor" buck, and, a little distance further on, I saw a doe stepping about here and there in a curious sort of manner and looking at something on the ground near her. A tracker suggested it might be a snake, but it occurred to me that it might be a case of her fawn

killed by a snake, so we walked quietly up to investigate.

The doe did not notice us until we were not more than 30 yards away and then she saw us and went off. A nearer approach showed that my conjecture was correct for there lay a poor little fawn, with a fair-sized python lying over it having evidently completed its constriction and being not quite ready to do the swallowing. The snake was about 10 feet long and of hefty thickness, but I did not interfere with it. Returned to camp shortly after. There was no rain during the night so I got away at the earliest gleam of daylight next morning, meaning to shoot some meat whatever happened, there being 8 of us to feed in camp. I came on a small herd of deer almost as soon as I reached the open, and saw what in the dim light looked quite a good buck amongst them.

I had a shot at him at about 80 yards and hit him, but he bolted with the does, so I gave him another shot as he passed and down he went. I found my first shot had got him in the lungs and my second fairly in the shoulder. The head, to my disappointment, only measured 20 inches—looked much bigger in the half-light as is often the case. Left two men to skin and cut up whilst I went on to Hammillewa parks, seeing two lots of does, three pigs, and a doe elk, on the way, and, later, I saw a fine herd of deer with one good buck in velvet. Pushed on to Ambagaswewa along a very wet muddy track, and all in vain for I saw nothing shootable, so returned to camp, and did not go out in the after-



noon—too wet. I was up by 4-30 next morning, and out by daybreak, as I intended to be away all day visiting some of the country further north. This entailed travelling out of our bit of open country by way of the muddy elephant track alluded to in former chapters. After negotiating the muddy part I approached Mediawewa, the next open, by a dry bit of path, with caution, as I have generally found that deer are to be met with on first approaching a park in the early morning. Sure enough there was a nice herd in the open a little to my right, so I got to a tree by an ant-hill for a look round. The herd was full of bucks, but they began moving away towards the jungle, so that I was unable to pick out a good one. Eventually I shot one that passed me at about 40 yards, but his head only measured  $21\frac{1}{2}$  inches though I had thought it much bigger when I first saw it. Left it for our return, had something to eat and pushed on again via Borawewa and the *damanas* beyond. Saw a small herd of deer and watched them a long time, but only perceived three poor bucks, so moved on. Saw six pigs further on, and heard an elephant in some jungle as we passed. Saw more deer near Godepotagala camp-site but nothing shootable, so returned to camp by 3-30, cutting up the dead buck on our way.

There was no rain during the night, and the next morning was fine and cloudless, which presaged a hot day with a poor chance of seeing much game about. However, out I went at earliest daybreak, and, in traversing the track in the jungle between camp and the open country, we found that

an elephant and a leopard had meandered along during the night. I had also heard a bear calling near camp at about 4 a.m. We came on the usual herd of deer just in the open—consisting of about 20 does and one poor buck, but I now look upon them as old acquaintances and “pass by on the other side.”

I spent the morning strolling through the pleasant parks, and their intervening belts, or blocks, of jungle, but saw nothing worth a shot though I came across lots of deer.

The morning was very hot, so we eventually turned towards camp, and, by the time we got there, clouds were banking up. Rain came on about noon for a short time, and, at 2-15, as it was dull and cloudy, I went out intending to visit the small open patches around Medirigiri. We reached that neighbourhood, after a two-mile walk, and cautiously skirted the open, soon coming on a small herd of deer which I carefully stalked, but the wind being tricky they began to run about. I saw one poor buck, but, almost immediately, a much better one came out of the bush and stood looking towards me, so I fired as soon as I was able to get my sight on him. He bolted with the herd, but, following quickly, we found him lying dead, about 150 yards away, shot just where I intended between neck and shoulder. The head was well shaped but measured  $24\frac{1}{4}$  inches only.

Looked round the ruins again whilst two men were cutting up the deer, and came back by a short round eastward but saw nothing though we heard elephants close by, in two places, on our way.

Got back to camp by 5-30, and it rained at intervals during the night. Roused the camp at 4 a.m. as today I intended visiting a stretch of country known as Marakiakelé, extending southward from a point about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles east of camp. The morning was dull but no rain and I reached the first open at 5-35—just light enough to see. During our walk eastward we saw a surprising number of deer—four different herds in all, aggregating about 60 head, but either the wind was tricky, or they are much too wide-awake at this early hour, for we could not get anywhere near them. Arrived at the end of our main park, eastward, we entered a jungle track which led us, in about half-a-mile, to another small patch of rather bushy open, very soppy after all the rain. This we crossed and again entered jungle by an elephant track at the other side, which led after about one mile to a slab-rock containing a water-hole, with a ruined dagoba at one end—a place where I had shot bears in previous years. Beyond this another half-mile brought us to a narrow stretch of grassy glades, which extend, with intervening blocks of jungle, southward for about 3 miles, but we only explored about two miles of it as we saw merely a few does and some wild buffaloes. Moreover, going southward all the time, with a north-east wind behind us, there was a poor chance of getting within shot of anything.

After a short rest, and a snack of something to eat, we set off back again, and just at the end of our jungle track as I was about to enter the main "home" park, I saw some does in the open,

so remained under cover. I made out one ordinary buck, but as the herd was a real big one I waited and was rewarded, a few minutes later, by seeing a fine buck walk into view butting the does out of his lordly way. I fired at him, rather unsteady with excitement, and thought I had missed, for, with the startled herd, he merely ran a few yards and stopped behind some does. As often happens, when deer cannot see the shooter, the herd though startled did not bolt but merely ran about here and there. I could only see the upper half of my buck's body, but fired at him again instantly as I knew they would all be off in a moment. At the shot he leapt high in the air and bolted with the herd, turning into the jungle on our left. We ran out and took up the track, soon hearing the stricken buck groaning, but he sprang up and ran on when we approached so I finished him with another shot. My first shot had caught him in the neck low down and done no harm, but the second had smashed a shoulder all to bits. The head was a very shapely one measuring  $29\frac{1}{2}$  inches, so I returned to camp well satisfied, getting there at 1-30 p.m. and did not go out again.

The next morning was fine as I got away, early as usual, to go round the eastern *damanas* again, but rain came on soon after I started and continued, most unpleasantly, all the morning. I walked miles through sappy parks, and dripping jungles, seeing many herds both large and small, but none containing a buck worth a shot, so eventually returned disconsolate to camp, at 11 o'clock wet to the skin.

I heard several shots from the direction of the northern part of the country which I guessed to be another Matale planter, Robert Wilson, who I knew was expected to arrive about this time. He, by the way, had an extraordinary piece of luck on this trip, for he secured the Ceylon record spotted buck's head. He wrote me, soon after our return home, to say he had bagged a 35-inch head so I went off hot-foot to see and measure it. It was a real beauty of a head, and, as he said, it measured exactly 35 inches. I felt green with envy! A very few heads of over 34 inches have been secured in the south, but this head holds the record, which is very remarkable, as any head over 30 inches is most unusual in the North-Central Province. There was no rain during the night, but the morning was very dull as I set out for Hammillewa parks in the hope of meeting a very nice herd that I had seen there yesterday. On the way I shot a rather poor buck for meat, as I expected my carriers to arrive this evening and they would expect a good whack of meat to eat and to take back with them. A long search failed to find the wished-for herd, so I pushed on, by way of the muddy elephant track, to Mediweva. As usual I approached the open cautiously stepping along the jungle track towards its open end very carefully. I peeped out and at once saw some does close in, so I lay low until they fed away out of sight, after which I again had a look round. I saw more does, not more than 40 yards away, luckily behind some bushes, so I crouched down out of sight and prayed that the wind might hold good, and not veer about as it often does.

I spotted two poor bucks, but later made out two more in the bush under some low-hanging trees, busily engaged in banging their horns against the branches to clean off the stripping velvet. One was a poor head, and I could not make out the other, but some instinct made me watch for him intently.

In the meantime the does and other poorish bucks, formerly on my left, had all fed away to my right and out of my sight, but presently they began grazing towards my front, some of them very close to my cover. The "poor" buck that had been cleaning his horns now left the bush and joined the herd, but I kept my attention fixed on the other, which was still busily occupied banging his antlers about on the branches, for none of the others I had so far seen were worth a shot.

After some time the hidden one stalked proudly out exhibiting to my enraptured gaze the best head I had seen so far this trip.

I covered him instantly and fired, upon which, as they could not see me, the herd, startled, crowded up round the stricken buck which for a moment did not move. After a few seconds' pause they all dashed away towards my left and I gave the buck another shot as he rushed past.

There was a great commotion in the jungle, but I soon heard my buck gasping and struggling close by, and he died just as I reached him well stricken by both shots. The head was a beauty of  $31\frac{1}{4}$  inches. Leaving two men to cut it up, I went for a further round, but saw nothing, so returned to them. Mediwewa is only a small abandoned

tank with an open of about 100 acres, but it is an extraordinarily gamey place. In it I have shot, at different times, at least eight bucks, two big boars and a leopard, and, have seen in it also wild buffaloes, elephants, bear, and peafowl at various times. Returned to camp, but did not go out again as it rained heavily all the afternoon.

My carriers arrived at about 2-30 and I did not like the sound of rain during the night, but, though dull at 6 a.m., it was not raining, so we packed leisurely to give the tents time to dry as much as possible and got away at 7-30. I went ahead on the chance of a shot, but though I saw deer at Medirigiri none were worth shooting, so I pushed on to the river which, to my surprise, considering the rain, was much lower than it was when we first came. I had a good look at the ruins of the ancient dam, of which all that remains is part of the overflow on the left bank of the river, a fine piece of stone work but not of any great height. On to Diwulánkadawela, reaching there at 11 o'clock and pitched camp for the night, going out for a fruitless round in Hinguruwatdamana during the afternoon. Our "camp" village is most unpleasantly situated for wet weather, as the approach to it from every side is through wet low-lying ground. Up at 4 o'clock next morning, packed, paid off everybody, gave away all my medicines to the various fever patients, cases of itch, psoriasis, and ulcers, etc., etc., sent off the cart and started off by way of Kauduluwewa for Alut Oya and my car. I had three carriers and my man Meiyān with me carrying my box, gun-cases, heads, and



REMAINS OF ANCIENT DAM ON THE GAIROYA.





some lily bulbs from the jungle for my wife's garden as some of the jungle lilies bear very beautiful flowers. I looked out for deer, intending to take a couple of haunches home with me if possible, and soon had the luck to shoot a buck in Kauduluwewa, of which I took what I wanted and left the rest for the carriers to pick up on their return.

Further on, in Potánwela, I shot a fine boar, but he had poor tusks which I did not take. The carriers would also attend to him. I reached Alut Oya at 11 a.m. and got away for home at noon, running into heavy rain between Nalande and Matale. Reached my "next door" estate, Ukuwela, at 2-50 p.m. left a haunch there for my neighbours the Garricks, and on to my bungalow by 3-10.

This ended my sport for 1913.

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## Chapter VI.

### DEER, LEOPARD, ELEPHANT AND BEAR SHOOTING IN THE NORTH-CENTRAL PROVINCE DURING 1915.

I WENT Home in 1914, but spent most of my holiday under doctor's care owing to a ruptured biceps muscle in my right shoulder, caused by a slip in paddy-field mud when snipe shooting, and this gave me considerable trouble and anxiety for more than a year. I returned to Ceylon, however, in December of that year, but was much too busy for the next two months to be able to get away for any shooting, also my shoulder was still very dicky. I managed eventually to get away early in March for another visit to the Vettikachi country. This time I motored to Minneriya with all my baggage aboard, left my car at the Irrigation Bungalow stables, hired a cart and travelled by a minor road (mere track cut through the jungle) to the village of Diwulankadawela. March is, as a rule, a poor month for a shoot because the dry hot weather has then set well in; grass has seeded and become coarse, consequently, as few animals are met with an hour after daybreak or before dusk, I did not expect much sport.

From the village I set off the next morning, with carriers, by the Medirigiri track, which had been

so little used that it was much over-grown, making bad going for the men. At the ruins I saw a fine boar in one of the pokunas, but did not shoot him as I hoped to find deer in the adjoining open. Of course I saw none! Pushed on to the same camping ground I had occupied with W. R. W. in 1912, and paid off the carriers after they had had a feed of rice. I went for a stroll round in the late afternoon, but it was blazing hot right up to sunset, so I saw nothing but a few does and one "poor" buck. I went a long round the next morning to Ambagaswewapitiya and Ambagaswewa, returning by the Hammillewa parks, seeing a few deer but none worth a shot. At one point, however, when peering into a block of jungle a mouse deer jumped up almost at my feet, ran off about 10 yards and stood looking at me. As their meat is excellent I carefully shot it in the head, otherwise my soft-nosed bullet would have knocked it into an uneatable pulp.

A fair shower of rain fell at about 11 o'clock and the afternoon was dull and cloudy so I went out at 3 p.m. straight through to Mediwewa. There I stalked a fine herd in some bush at the east side, but missed a shot at a nice buck—to my great annoyance as we wanted meat for camp. Did not get back to camp until 7 p.m.

The next morning I went to Medirigiri, taking a camera in order to photograph the ruins, and, on the way, I shot a buck with a poor head, sending the meat at once to camp. Took several photos, and, when returning, my men found a good lot of wild honey, which they cut out of a tree and

carried the combs back to camp, arriving there at 10-30. Dull afternoon, so I went out about 3 p.m., going, by way of the Hammillewa parks, further westward to visit a small abandoned tank known as Siyambalagahawewa. After leaving the Hammillewa parks the track in many places was a fearful mud puddle of elephant tracks, and the two or three patches of open were very much overgrown with bush and very thorny. Just as we got into the last bit of open my tracker suddenly pointed to the left and I saw the head of a nice buck appearing over some low bushes, but I could not see any other part of him except his neck. As he was down-wind, not more than 40 yards away, I fired at him as quickly as I could, aiming for his neck, and dropped him in his tracks, to my great satisfaction. The head was a very nice one of 28 $\frac{7}{8}$  inches. We cut him up and the men with me carried the skin and meat to camp.

At 7 p.m. an elephant came very near the pool of water close to camp, and stayed about for some time, doing a lot of grunting. I tried the Mediweva country again the next morning, but it was a blazing hot day, so we saw nothing. Spent some time exploring and travelling along the *Yodi Ela* (which starts from the Gal Oya and runs past Medirigiri through the midst of this block of shooting country which it originally irrigated) from Mediweva southward, where it is in very good order in parts, but peters out, all washed away, in many other places.

Exceedingly hot afternoon, but I went out at 3-30 to re-visit Ambagaswewa, near which I was

surprised to see a pelican get up out of a pool of water in a small patch of open. I had never before seen them except in open water on big tanks. I saw nothing in the shape of game, however, until just at dusk, when, in a glade in the "home" park, a leopard suddenly got up in longish grass about 50 yards away and bounded off into the jungle before I had time to do anything. To my great surprise, however, another, but smaller, leopard popped up in the same place, and stood gazing at me. I could only see his head and neck, but, judging the whereabouts of his body, I fired instantly and, though he dropped at the shot, he got up again and bounded away, somewhat groggily, into the jungle. I heard grunts and groans, but, waiting until they ceased, I then cautiously approached the jungle edge and found him lying dead about 30 yards inside, shot fairly behind the right shoulder, the bullet having gone out through the abdomen at the other side. It turned out to be a three-quarter grown cub, so the first one must have been its mother who basely deserted it. As it was now dusk we tied the body on a pole and the men carried it to camp, where I had it carefully skinned.

Though I did another big round I shot nothing else during this trip, so left for home the day after, staying one night at Diwulánkadawela on the way.

In April this year W. wrote me that he wanted a few days' "rest," so proposed that I should accompany him on a visit to Tamankaduwa for the purpose of having a shot at some of a number of "proclaimed" elephants in that district. As I had not done any elephant shooting for some

years I jumped at the chance and proceeded to make all the necessary arrangements. Knowing we could find some sort of shelter in a village all the time I did not take any tents, and was able to pack all the required equipment on a trailer attached to my car. W. joined me on 17th and we motored to Polonnaruwa the next day, reaching there at 11 a.m. Breakfasted at the rest house, after which the Revenue Officer of the district, the late Mr. Godwin de Livera, called and gave us all required information about the elephants. We secured a cart and started off at 1 p.m. for Diwuláni, a village of Moors on the edge of the great Diwuláni *wila*, a good centre for our operations. We did not get there until 5-30, although the distance is only about 7 miles, owing to the muddy condition of the track in many places, the final half-mile being through a paddy-field. We found shelter in the mud-and-thatched village school-shed, but did not get our dinner until 8-30. The night was oppressively hot and muggy, as April is a very hot month. For battery W. had a powerful .404 rifle, but I had no weapon suitable for elephant shooting so had only brought my 20-bore "Paradox," with some solid bullets, and my .303 "Savage" with nickel-coated solids. We sent scouts out the next morning who duly returned reporting a solitary elephant in forest at the other side of the *wila*, so we had breakfast at 10 o'clock and set out. We crossed the swamp, a mile of open water, in a very "dicky" dug-out canoe, crowded with ourselves and four lusty Moormen, and having only about three inches of free-board above the water, but we got safely across.



SCHOOL SHED AT DIWLIANI VILLAGE.





Landing in a sea of swamp grass we tramped a considerable distance through it, and, after crossing several river branches, eventually reached good forest, where we soon got on to the elephant's track which we followed here, there and everywhere, for a long way before we came upon him. The meeting, when it did happen, was unexpected, for, without hearing a sound, we suddenly saw him standing facing us about 25 yards away.

W. was to have first shot, so I whispered to him to fire at its knee joint, but he did not hear me and tried the front shot which failed, for the elephant bolted off, saluted by two shots from me and one more from W. I may say I do not like the front shot when the elephant is actually full face towards the shooter as the centre spot to be hit, clear of bone, is not more than a hands-breadth in width, or height. The space is much greater if the elephant is standing at a slight angle, enabling one to aim a little to one side of the centre. We heard the elephant crashing about at some distance, so sat down for a rest. I then went on its track, taking one man with me, and, to my surprise, came on it in some very thick scrub, after walking not more than a quarter of-a-mile.

I should, of course, have sent back for W., but thought I would have a smack at it "on my own." It stood about three-quarter face to me, but I could only make out part of its head, and a bit of the top of its back, so I tried a shot at its head with no effect except that it turned slightly away. I then put one into its shoulder and down it fell flop on its stomach, but immediately began

to make desperate efforts to rise. It managed to get up in a few seconds, and promptly came straight at me, crashing through the bushes like a tornado. I waited until I saw its head clear about 15 yards away, and then fired for the frontal shot, but the result was a "click" as my magazine was empty! I "stood not upon the order of my going," but promptly executed a "strategic movement" to my rear, ran about 50 yards, nipped round some bushes, and took my stand behind a tree to await events, whilst I reloaded my magazine. Not hearing anything I returned towards the elephant and found he had only followed me for about 20 yards after which he had turned off into the jungle, going strong. I then returned towards W., for my man had vanished into thin air early on, and, accompanied by the Moormen, we took up the track, as we felt sure the animal could not go far without a stop. To our surprise, however, we found that, after the first rush, he had steadied down and gone away at a firm steady walk. We followed until we nearly dropped, only giving up towards evening as we were forced to conclude that he was not at all seriously injured. On our way back, by way of Puthur village route, we came on some pig, in a swampy bit, of which W. accounted for three before they got away, much to the satisfaction and amusement of the Moormen, for they do a lot of damage to gardens and paddy-fields. By the time we got back to our camp we had been hard at it for 5½ hours in the afternoon of an intensely hot day—and W. had only lately recovered from a bout of malaria! The night was oppressively hot and muggy,





THE AUTHOR AND DEAD ELEPHANT.

so much so that we could hardly sleep, though we had our camp-beds out in the open, but even there not a breath of air was stirring.

We were up at 6 the next morning, and at 7 o'clock, news came of elephants having raided the Puthur paddy-fields during the night so off we went. We had a perfectly awful tramp through the muddy paddy-fields, adjacent swamps, and back-waters, finally striking a track of two or three elephants leading out of the paddy-fields into the forest. This we followed into excellent open forest, almost free of under-growth, and after about a mile of this, we heard the elephants doing a comfortable snore enjoying their morning sleep. We soon sighted two, lying down about 50 yards apart, so, as it was my first shot, I walked up close to the biggest one with the idea of trying an experimental shot at a knee-joint from my "Paradox," having notified W. of my intention so that he could be ready if I failed. I did fail, for, at the shot, the elephant scrambled up with a scream, and rushed off at full speed only to fall dead the next moment to a shot from W.'s rifle. It unfortunately fell with the leg I had fired at doubled up under it, so we were unable to examine the effect of my shot. The fore-foot measured 50 inches in circumference which would make the elephant about 8 feet 6 inches high at the shoulder, a fair height for most Ceylon elephants. We cut off one fore-foot, cut out the toe-nails of the other, and, of course, took the tail, getting back to camp at 2 p.m. after a gruelling tramp since 7 a.m.

We did not turn out again that afternoon.

The next morning we set off to walk round the south end of the great swamp, by way of Mánikampattiya to Gallella, and the forest beyond that village on the east side of the swamp. There, on the edge of the wila, we soon struck the track of a good-sized solitary which we followed until we came up with him in nice open forest.

He was standing half asleep so W. and I got easily to within 20 yards of him but found the wind fitful and tricky. W., however, got into good position for the ear shot, but just as he was going to fire, the elephant slewed itself round until it was stern on to both of us. W. "stage-whispered" to me that he was going for the leg shot, and promptly fired at the back of the knee of its left fore leg, but, rather to our surprise, off it went with a rush. I got a shot into his stern (from my .303) at which he stopped for a moment, enabling me to try two more obliquely into the back of his head but only with the effect of causing him to turn on us. A facer, however, from W.'s heavier rifle turned him again and off he went. We then sat down for half-an-hour before following up, after which we took up the track again. We were surprised to find that he had kept going, though, after about a quarter-of-a-mile, the track showed that he was going a bit lame in the injured leg. He led us through more or less open swampy grass land at first, with an occasional bit of forest and then into awful rattan swamps, where we had to make continual detours, picking up the track at various points, as the rattan swamp was almost impassable. Beyond this he entered the swamp proper, where there

were only scattered trees and high swamp grass very full of young rattans and in this we sighted him very soon, standing dejectedly under a small clump of trees, nearly broadside on, facing towards our right, about 100 yards away.

As the space between us and him was perfectly open we did not attempt to get nearer, so W. sat down and tried a careful shot at the temple but failed to drop him.

At the shot he wheeled round, making for the open swamp at speed, being joined immediately, to our great surprise, by another elephant about the same size which had evidently been standing behind the clump of trees out of our sight. Away the two went, side by side, full speed into the swamp and we tore after them trying a flying shot, every time we got a sight, at the wounded one. The going was awful—wet, muddy and the elephant track, our only possible “road,” went through masses of rattans which scratched and tore us painfully. The grass was four to eight feet in height, so that we could only see the heaving backs of the elephants, but got a fuller sight at times when we struck a growth of low grass. The wounded one was going very lame so we swore to hang on to him to the bitter end. Presently we got such a clear sight of them that I tried a shot into the second elephant, which caused him, at once, to leave the other and go off on a track of his own towards our left out of sight. We then concentrated on the first one which, by now, was going along very groggily about 100 yards away, and I jumped on to a fallen tree whence I could see well over the grass.



W. joined me on the log so I got down again, to give him a clear shot and ran forward, as hard as I could, on the track again to try for another position. I had not run more than 30 yards when, glancing to my left, I saw the second elephant not more than 30 yards away, going very slowly towards my left and slightly turned away from me. I at once tried a shot past his shoulder to get him at the back of the neck, but caught him, as I found later, at the very point of the shoulder and down he went as though struck by lightning. I then looked round for the first elephant just as W. fired at it. The shot caused it to throw up head and trunk, but, at the next shot, down it went—the two fallen monsters being about 120 yards apart. I then turned my attention again to my elephant, and found him struggling to rise but my shot had apparently disabled his left shoulder so that he could not use that leg having fallen on his right side. I tried a couple of shots for the brain but he was throwing his head about too much so I yelled for W. to come, telling him what had happened. He arrived, considerably surprised, and tried a shot or two but could not “touch the spot,” so I squeezed past the elephant, in the thick rattan grass, until I could get a broadside shot into his ear, at about 10 feet, which at once finished him.

I then set off to find the other one, which had sunk out of sight in the grass, but had an awful job to get to him in the dreadful thicket of grass, thorny bushes and young rattans. Eventually I found him dead on his knees, so then, after due inspection, as our village was almost opposite across



W AND HIS ELEPHANT.



THE GREAT DIWULANI LAGOON, W. IN THE CANOK. *Page 110.*



ELEPHANT SHOT BY THE AUTHOR.



DEAD ELEPHANT.

the water, our men "coo-eed" until a canoe came across for us and we went back to get something to eat. We returned at 3 p.m., photographed them both, which necessitated a considerable amount of cutting and clearing of grass, bush and rattan, and then had the feet, &c., cut off. My animal was at once recognized as a well-known rogue as he had only a bare knob of a tail, easily identifiable, and had been for long a much-feared resident of the swamp.

W.'s elephant had one short thick tusk at the right side, but nothing at the other, and the forefoot measured  $52\frac{1}{2}$  inches in circumference. Mine had no tusks, but his foot measured 54 inches.

The whole village, men, women, and children, paddled over in detachments to view the dead animals, much edified.

This swamp is an absolute maze of elephant tracks and is one of their great strongholds in this district. These swamps along the Mahaweliganga produce easily the biggest elephants in Ceylon, and some real monsters have been killed in them.

We were about tired out by the time we turned into bed that night.

The next morning we went off early to Puthur again, as we got news of elephants having walked close past the village during the night.

We took up their track, soon after crossing a river branch, following it through nasty swamp, and rattan jungle, into good forest in which they like to lie up in the day-time. Here we soon found one of them lying fast asleep, and, as first shot was mine, being still full of theory and wishing for

practice, I again essayed a shot at a knee joint with my 20-bore. The moment I fired, however, W. blazed at its head with his .404, and killed it as dead as a door-nail before it had time to move, whereupon I cursed him heartily for spoiling my experiment, but he chortled hugely. This elephant was at once recognized as a well-known old gentleman of very bad temper, being in the habit of chasing anybody it met.

It was a small old beast with feet only  $46\frac{1}{2}$  inches. This ended our shooting, as W. had to get back to work, so we packed our baggage, and sent it off by cart, whilst we were taken by canoe to the south end of the lagoon to the village of Mánikampattiya, whence we walked to Polonnaruwa, where we stayed the night, and home next day.

I find I managed to put in two bear shooting trips during July and August of this year, during each of which I had a rather unusual experience. In July I packed my bag and baggage into my car, and, accompanied by my faithful Meiyān, motored to Habarane, thence travelled 13 miles down the Minneriya road and took my car, by the jungle track which turns off at that point, all the way to Diwulánkadawela village. Needless to say I will not try it again as I had to do most of the journey on first and second speeds owing to stones, rocks, holes, and tree stumps, in the road which is not a road at all, in the strict sense of the word, but only a cleared track in jungle. However, we arrived safely and "parked" the car under some huge kumbuk trees in the bed of the tank—dry but for

a few puddles at this time—got my baggage carried to the village close by and pitched camp.

I went off, with two men, at 3-30 p.m. to watch a rock-hole known as Milatagala about 3 miles away. This is a fine turtle-back rock in open country, with some rather scrubby jungle on the east side of it, and I was watching a water-hole, at one side, from a stage in a tree.

It was very hazy that night, with a strong wind blowing all the time, added to which not a single animal of any sort came to the water-hole. At 5-30 the next morning, still only half-light, the men had descended from the stage and I had handed down to them, everything but my .303 "Savage" rifle when, happening to glance around, I saw a small bear coming along the rock. Seeing me at once, as I was standing up on the stage in full view, it stopped, but came on again, and I then saw it was accompanied by a cub. Fearing it would see the men I snatched up my rifle, and fired a snap-shot at it as I could not define the sights, but made a clean miss, at which they bolted with fearsome yells. Returned to camp, had some "early tea," packed up food enough for a week's absence if necessary, and set off with eight men from the village. We went by way of Kauduluwewa (which I was surprised to find still held a lot of water) to Puliankulam, 7 miles, where we all had a feed, using the only available water, a muddy puddle, in the bed of the tank.

From there we walked another three miles, leisurely, to Relapanáwa, where I expected to find water at which to watch for the night, but found

on arrival all the water in the breach of the bund completely dried up. This was a bit of a facer, so we decided to push on two more miles to Millagala, where we were confident we should find water in the rock-hole, but when we arrived there water was conspicuous by its absence. It was now too late to go further, so, as we had brought some water with us, we promptly camped below the rock on the leeward side. It occurred to me, however, that bears might easily wander to the rock in vain search for water. so I had a stage built on a convenient tree nicely commanding the water-hole, and took my place on it at 5 p.m. This rock is a whale-back about 150 yards long by perhaps 20 yards wide, entirely surrounded by jungle.

At 5-30 a bear walked out of the jungle down into the water-hole, and disconsolately out at the other end on to the slope of the rock, where I promptly plugged him fairly in the chest, knocking him over into the water-hole. He scrambled out, but a second shot sent him rolling down the rock into the jungle, where he soon died. The men came running up, hauled him over to leeward and retired to camp again. At 6-15, still broad daylight, another bear came out at the same place and walked along the rock at the edge of the water-hole, where I had a shot at him with my 20-bore "Paradox," hitting him behind the shoulder and knocking him over. He got up again, however, but fell to my second barrel, and then, to my surprise, got up once more and walked off into the jungle! I called the men, and we took up the track, which showed plenty of blood, but saw no sign of the

bear until Appua spotted him high up in a big tree. I shot him again, and he fell fully 50 feet with a whack that should have broken every bone in his body, but, to my utter amazement, he got up and walked off, needing another shot to finish him. My shots were placed with care, but I must have failed to reach the vitals each time. Hauled him to the rock and the men returned to their camp. Nothing more came, so I slept very comfortably on the stage, as a fine cool breeze blew the whole night. Left the rock at 7 a.m. and walked to Godepotagala, where we camped. I had a stage built at the water-hole on a rock about a quarter-of-a-mile south of our camp, where I had seen bear and leopard tracks. Near by we also found the remains of an elk fawn, killed and partly eaten by a leopard, which we dragged on to the rock nearer to the water-hole and my stage, which was about 50 feet distant.

I took my place on the stage at 1-30 p.m. as I thought some daylight visitors of interest might arrive. Very shortly afterwards a lovely spotted buck came on to the rock, where he stayed some time but eventually strolled away. He carried a head of fully 30 inches. At 2-45 he returned to the rock accompanied by another, but inferior, buck and two does. They wandered about on the rock departing, however, without drinking at 3 p.m. At 3-10 they returned and, this time, the big buck came to water for a good drink, I was very sorry I had no camera with me as I could have secured a lovely photo. The big buck then departed, but the others, which did



not drink, wandered about until 3-20 before finally leaving. At 3-40 I saw a fine peacock on my far right at one end of the rock strutting proudly about for some time. At 4-15 a family of jungle hens scratched about in the undergrowth below my stage. At 4-45 the peacock returned from my left side, came towards the water, but took alarm and bolted. At 5-35 a bronze-wing dove perched on a branch of my tree within five feet of me for a few minutes. At 5-55 a fine jungle cock strutted under my stage, saw me, and flew off with a tremendous clatter. This was my last visitor until 8-15, when a porcupine arrived and had a drink. After this a monotonous wait sent me to sleep until I was wakened at 2 a.m. by one of the men in time to hear a bear in the jungle behind us utter a yell and bolt, having winded us. So ended the night's events. Back to camp, breakfasted and left for Hammillewa, where there is a fine rock-hole but where the wind is usually rather variable owing to its position. Camped in jungle under the lee of the rock away from the water-hole. At this hole we watch on the rock itself hidden behind a low semi-circular wall of stone on the slope above the water. To pass the time I went off with two men to inspect the water at Ambagaswewa, two miles away, but found too much water in the Oya (stream) there, so returned after firing the grass in the tank bed, as it was too long and coarse.

There were a few slight showers during the afternoon, but I started my night watch at 5 p.m. in the "kotuwa" (the Sinhalese name for this type of hiding place for night watching). At 7-20





ROCK-HOLE AT HAMMILEWA.

a grand buck elk stalked out of the jungle about 40 feet away, got a whiff of our scent, "barked" loudly, stamped his feet and departed. At 8-15 a female bear with a half-grown cub came along the rock from our right, going straight to the water, where I shot the mother, knocking her into the hole.

The cub bolted into the jungle, got up a tree and made the "welkin" ring with its cries, so, after we had hauled the dead bear out of the water, I took my electric hand-lamp, went into the jungle, located master bear, and shot him for peace's sake. Nothing else came, so I retired to the camp at 11-30 for a sleep, but ran out to the kotuwa just before daybreak on chance, but nothing turned up. Watched at another fine rock-hole, known as Timberiatáwelagala, about three miles away, the next night, but there was too much water, so nothing came. We then broke camp and returned to Diwulánkadawela, whence I motored home the next day.

I got away for my second trip on 17th August, packing everything on to my car as usual, and motored to Polonnaruwa for the night.

I noticed that everything looked very fresh and green, with plenty of water about owing to some recent rain, so I had only faint hope of finding a dry spot fit for shooting purposes. However, the next morning, having recruited ten carriers, I set off *via* Dástota for Yakkúre, distant about eight or ten miles, the journey involving wading waist-deep across the Ambanganga at its junction with the Mahaweliganga, and crossing the latter river by canoe at Dastota. At Yakkúre I paid

off my carriers and lodged in a jungle-stick shelter that had been put up for the Government Agent's visit some time previously. This village is, or was originally, a Vedda settlement, and a fair number of the inhabitants are of Vedda descent, but there is now a considerable admixture of aliens from other parts of the country. I sent out scouts next morning to examine water-holes, but all reported too much water, so I set off with guides to examine the place on the Mahaweliganga about three miles away, where in ancient days a dam had been built to turn water down irrigation channels (known as "Yodi Elas") on each side of the river, of which ample traces still remain. Clever use had been made of an up-ended outcrop of rock extending right across the river, on which to build a stone dam, though of this latter there is practically nothing remaining but a medley of cut blocks scattered for a long way down river. On the east side to get the irrigation channel away from the river had necessitated a stupendous amount of earth cutting for some distance. This channel, plainly visible for many miles, runs by a most tortuous trace past Handapánwila and Bendiyawila to the western side of Gunner's Quoin, eventually petering out on the plains.

The channel taking off at the west bank fed the country near Dástota, whilst another continuation of it must have been taken off the Ambanganga, as a fine channel from there crosses the road between Polonnaruwa and the *ganga*, about five miles from the former place, and leads into the plains west and north-west of Diwuláni *wila*.

Getting back to the village at 10 o'clock, I packed all up, got carriers, and set off for Kosgahulpota, under the north-east end of Gunner's Quoin, distant about twelve miles. Stopped on the shore of Bendiawila for breakfast, at a camp where a real aboriginal-looking old Vedda was tending some cattle for the Tamils of Horawila village; left there 1-30 and got to Ulpota at 4 p.m. Here I found the country dry, and there were a few of my Vedda friends camped in the near neighbourhood, so I pitched camp for some days' stay. I may say that for this trip I had brought only my .303 "Savage" to see how it would serve as a water-hole weapon, as I had become mistrustful of the 20-bore "Paradox."

The next morning I visited Alakannagode linda, where I found traces of bears drinking occasionally only, and also went to have a look at the Gónandamana linda, but found no tracks there.

Returned to Alakanna, built a stage in the tree I have used on previous occasions, and went on to camp for the necessary outfit. Got back to the linda at 5-30. At 7-30 a bear came along from the east side but winded us when 50 yards away and bolted.

Nothing more coming, I went to sleep, but was hurriedly wakened at 2-30 a.m. with news of a bear—probably the 7-30 gentleman.

I sat up, seized my rifle, and saw a bear walking past our tree at which I fired a hasty shot. The bear fled silently and I do not know whether I hit it or not—probably not. In the morning I sent out scouts to examine other water-holes,

but found that the dry zone only extended for about three or four miles north and east of the Quoin—there being far too much water at all the holes beyond that radius. Eventually I decided to watch at the Alakannagode potaha, a rock-hole, in a long outcrop, about a mile east of the linda afore-mentioned, and it was well I did, so for I had a most remarkable experience there.

This rock-hole is situated in a long ridge of rock, running for about a mile across the plains from north-west to south-east, facing the open plain on the west but backed by jungle on the east side. At the point where the water-hole is situated the ridge is cleft by a gorge full of jumbled boulders and trees, and there is a collection of boulders, on one of which I took my station, at the back of the water-hole which is a deep hollow on the gentle slope of the main rock below the boulders. I got to the rock at 5 p.m., and, just as I had comfortably settled myself on my folded blanket, with my other appurtenances handy, a bear ran across the open plain on our front about 100 yards away, but I did not try a shot at it. At 5-10 I saw something moving behind a bush, on my left front, where the main rock dies away into the open plain, and out on to the rock came a fine leopard. It stopped and stood sniffing at the rock, about three-quarter face towards me, offering a fine chance of a shot so I promptly plugged it between neck and shoulder.

The shock of the impact knocked it back about six feet, rolling it over, but it got up again and, with a hoarse grunt, rushed straight up the slope

of the rock on our left, past the water-hole, bounded from boulder to boulder, finally crashing down into the jungle at the back and away. I fired at it again as it passed in full flight, but did not know then whether I had hit or not.

We listened intently and heard a groan and a sigh some distance off so were fairly sure it was dead. I began to think then what might have happened to us if it had chosen our line of boulders in its frenzied flight! At 6-40 an elephant came along the foot of the ridge on our right front, and stopped behind some trees to throw sand over itself, just where our part of the rock ran out into the plain. I did not want it at the water-hole, so shouted but it took no notice—probably deaf. It eventually came on to the rock towards the water-hole, so I fired a shot at the top part of its head, upon which it quietly turned round and walked away. I was annoyed at this occurrence as, just when it turned up, two bears were having a scrap, and making a fearful row, some little distance away, in the jungle on my left further along the ridge. At 7-30 a fine buck elk came to the rock, and I had a good look at it by means of my electric hand-lamp, which it did not seem to mind, but, after drinking, departed leisurely. At 9-30 heard a leopard drinking noisily, at another water-hole, in the rock at the other side of the gully, which we had “stopped” in the usual way by putting fresh-cut branches over it. A few moments later, whilst the drinking still went on, a half-grown leopard suddenly appeared on the main rock about 45 feet away right in front, having sprung up out of the gully and walked



rapidly towards the water-hole. I foolishly fired at it at once and made a clean miss, at which words failed me! The other one drinking was probably the mother. At 10-10 a bear walked on to the rock from our right front where the elephant had appeared before, and walked towards the water. This time I waited to let it get to the water, but it walked right past the hollow and was out of sight in a moment. Being too hasty in one case, and too deliberate in another, lost me a possible leopard and a bear. After this I slept until 2-30 a.m. when Appuhamy awakened me to say that two bears had been quarrelling in the open and might come to water, so I sat up ready. By this time the moon was well down, but shining right in my face, making a very bad light for shooting.

However, a few minutes later the bear appeared, walking up the slope of the rock from directly in front, and went straight to the water-hole. As soon as he started drinking I stood up to see him better, fired and knocked him into the water where I could not see him as a boulder partly obscured the hole. He failed to get out at that end, but eventually managed to emerge at our end which necessitated his coming through a cleft, between two of the boulders, into a small space below my rock. As soon as he appeared, looking very groggy, I handed my electric lamp to one of the Veddas which he shone on to the bear enabling me to finish him off with another shot. This ended one of the most eventful and interesting nights I have ever spent at a water-hole. The "bag" might have been an outstanding one if I had used a little more judgment.

At daylight down I got to search for the leopard and we found him dead in an open space surrounded by thorny jungle about 150 yards from our rock. My first shot had raked him through the lungs into his stomach, whilst the second shot had gone through the fleshy part of the left fore-leg. Took the skin and returned to camp. This leopard measured seven feet from nose to tip of tail. In the evening I went to watch at Pahatelalinda, a scraped hole in a dry water-course, my stage being in a big tree to one side of it. Nothing came, however, in spite of many tracks, until 3-40 a.m., when a fine boar appeared which I forthwith shot. I secured a pair of eight-inch tusks from him, which is a good size for a Ceylon boar.

This ended my water-hole shooting and I returned home the next day.

After August there was no more shooting possible until the deer season opened in November, for which date I had invited my friend J. P. Ireson down from far Moneragala, to give him a shoot in our North-Central Province country in return for my trip with him in February, 1913. Ireson arrived by car on 31st October at my bungalow, and we left with his car, my car and trailer, fully loaded, at 3 a.m. on 1st November, arriving at Alut Oya P.W.D. bungalow (former resthouse) at 6-45 a.m.

There we were met by thirty carriers, men of Diwulánkadawela and Rotáwewa villages, who had been sent by the Revenue Officer, the late Mr. Godwin de Livera, with his usual courtesy and kindness. As they had had their morning feed we

arranged the loads and started right away—there being five surplus men whom I solaced with coin of the realm and sent back to their village.

We travelled by the Puliankulam-Relapanawa track, but, though Ireson and I went ahead keeping a sharp look-out, we saw nothing until we reached Mediwewa, where we saw a small herd of does. We found the country rather dry and short of rain, as the north-east monsoon had not properly set in, and this was likely to affect our sport.

We reached the Godepotagala camp at 12-45 p.m., got the tents all up by 1 p.m. and then had our "breakfast." The men killed a 12-foot python, in the big water-hole the skin of which I eventually had tanned and used for making shoes and slippers. At 4 p.m. it turned dull and drizzling, so we went out, Ireson going north-east whilst I went to Mediwewa and the east parks but saw nothing. Heavy rain coming on, I returned by way of Mediwewa, and, whilst traversing the open plain, old Loku, my principal tracker, spotted a bear at the far west side. I ran across the plain as hard as I could and got to within about 80 yards, nearer than which I could not approach as there was no cover. The bear was then near an ant-hill, with two or three trees growing on it, not far from the jungle edge, so I steadied my rifle against a small tree trunk and fired. At the shot the bear merely walked quietly to the top of the ant-hill, and, as he then turned facing me, I plugged him in the chest at which he gave a yelp and bolted to the jungle. We ran up to the ant-hill where we found a copious pool of blood due to the first shot, and a good blood-



THE BIG WATER-HOLE AT GODEPOTAGALA.



track to the jungle which we followed for some distance, but the heavy rain and drip from the trees soon obliterated all tracks, so we had to give up as it was now dusk. Ireson arrived just as I reached camp. He had had a laborious stalk after a big buck but missed a long shot at him. After that he came on, and stalked a herd out of which he shot a buck with a 25-inch head which came in handy to feed our big camp as the carriers were staying overnight. Rain ceased about dinner time and the night was pleasantly cool. I paid off the carriers next morning and sent Ireson off to Maradankadawela side whilst I went to Hammillewa, ahead of the carriers who were returning by that route through Medirigiri. The early mornings at the beginning of the north-east monsoon are very pleasant. After the rain of the previous evening the air is delightfully cool; everything is fresh and green, birds are singing everywhere, jungle cocks calling, monkeys chattering and there is always the chance of seeing animals of some sort in the glades and open parks.

The grass and undergrowth are dripping so that you are wet almost to the waist in ten minutes — but what of that! You are alive and out for exciting sport so nothing else matters.

I and my trackers reached Hammillewa well ahead of the carriers who were following behind us, and, just as we reached the open, beyond the camping place by the rock, I saw a pig about 40 yards away, standing facing me, which I promptly shot and left for the carriers to cut up and take with them. We then went on to the Kumbukkatáwela patana

plains but, somewhat to my surprise, I saw no game. Returning towards camp we put in a long search for my bear of the previous evening, but rain had obliterated every trace so we had to give up. Ireson had returned after a blank morning, and heavy rain set in continuing, off-and-on, all the afternoon. Sareef, the Game Protection Society's watcher for this block of country, arrived at 1-30 p.m. in pouring rain. We went out at 4-30, as it had then ceased off a little, Ireson going eastward with Sareef, whilst I went to Mediwewa and round by Ulpotawewa. In Ulpotawewa I came rather suddenly on a buck elk, with what looked like a short but massive head. I only had time for a brief glance, and, as he was stern on to me, I fired at him instantly breaking one hind leg high up in the haunch. He rushed off towards the jungle on my right but I dropped him with a second shot, and, on going up to him, was annoyed to find that my "massive" head was in velvet. Left the body until the next day. It was getting late and again raining heavily. About a mile further on, light being now very dim, I saw what I thought was a buffalo but stalked it to make sure. When I got near enough I saw that it was a fine buck elk with several does, all busily grazing. His head was short but fairly thick so I shot him at about 70 yards distance, and we then had to hurry to camp as darkness was setting in. Ireson reported a blank afternoon, having seen nothing worth shooting.

We were up at 5 o'clock next morning, and, at daybreak Ireson went off by way of Mediwewa







GAME WATCHER SAREEF (centre) AND TWO TRACKERS.

to work round by Borawewa and connecting parks to my second elk of which his men would bring in head, skin and meat, whilst I sent other men to cut up the one at Ulpota. In the meantime I went to Maradankadawela with Sareef as tracker.

On our round we saw some lots of does, one big herd with six "poor" bucks in it, more does, two herds of wild buffalo, twelve in one lot, eight in the other, and finally came on another good herd of spotted deer, with what looked like some warrantable bucks in it, which I proceeded to stalk carefully. Dressed, as I always am, in dark green on these occasions, I don't go in for much creeping and crawling, preferring to walk towards the deer, watching them intently, stopping instantly when any of them look up, and taking advantage of every possible tree and bush to efface myself. I think this a better system than a crawl which necessitates the raising of one's head at intervals for a look, a movement that may be easily seen by a wide-awake deer on the look-out. I have to do a crawl occasionally when occasion demands, but most of my stalking is successfully accomplished in the above-mentioned fashion. I got to within 80 yards of the herd, in very good position, when a slight shift of the wind gave me away and off went a number of them, including the best buck which had been on the far side of the herd. Oblivious to the alarm, however, there remained behind two bucks, fighting furiously whilst a few does stood looking on. I did my best to get my sights on to one of the bucks, but, for a long time, their gyrations utterly prevented it. Finally

I did manage to get in my shot, at which they all bolted away. Following quietly we soon found the one I had shot lying at the point of death, not more than 30 yards beyond their fighting place, hit fairly behind the shoulder. The antlers measured  $28\frac{1}{4}$  inches—about the usual average good head for this part of the country. Left a man to cut it up and went on further, seeing a good many more deer but none shootable for some little time, until we came on another good herd with several bucks in it. I got a shot at one very nice buck, but, as a doe was in the way, I had aimed rather high and think my shot only grazed his spine for he literally sat down for a moment before bolting away with the herd apparently none the worse.

Whilst stalking this herd a drove of eleven pigs, including two very big boars, wandered to within ten yards of me before becoming aware of my presence. Back to camp and found Ireson had had no luck, but had brought in my elk head, skin, etc.

Rained heavily after 2 p.m., but, as it eased off a little by 4-30, we went out, Ireson going to Maradankadawela and I to Kudáwewa. I saw nothing shootable on my round, but Ireson secured a nice buck with a  $27\frac{3}{4}$  inch head very shortly after leaving camp. Rained, off-and-on, until 9 p.m. Ireson went to the Batugasdamana parks with Sareef in the morning, whilst I again visited the Hammillewa country, doing a big round by Siyambalagahawewa, Ambagaswewa and on to Medirigiri. I saw only two or three lots of deer with nothing shootable amongst them, and I also saw four wild

buffaloes with calves in one of the parks. I did not get back to camp until 3 p.m.

Ireson had come in with one head of 29 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches, and one of 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ , of which the former had cost him two hours' tracking owing to his first shot at it having only broken a leg. He had seen several other good bucks and had missed a shot at one. I did not go out in the afternoon, but Ireson went for a round failing, however, to bag anything although, as usual, he saw lots of deer. The next day Ireson went a round through Mediweva, and Borawewa, but saw nothing shootable, though he disturbed some leopards at work on the remains of my second elk which they had dragged into the near-by jungle. I went, with Sareef, a long round through Maradankadawela, Batugasdamana and Nikkewewa, but got no chance of a shot for some time. Eventually, in one big park we were traversing, we saw a herd of deer go into a small patch of jungle, and, as they did not come out again, Sareef went round the far side to drive them out to me if possible.

This he successfully did, for out streaked a "poor" buck, then some does with another "poor" buck, after which came a better one which I promptly plugged, and off he went, in that peculiar headlong manner denoting a fatal wound. Found it dying about 100 yards away, and was disappointed to find the head a poor one of only 23 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Left a man to skin and cut up whilst I and Sareef went on further. We did a long tramp right round by the Nikkewewa camping place, but saw nothing for some time until, eventually, we sighted a big

herd near the edge of a bit of jungle we had just walked through. The wind was wrong and they were rather restless, but I could not see any warrantable bucks, though Sareef was continually urging me to fire at each and any of them—he has a crude idea of the size of antlers. Finally I saw what looked like a good one and fired at it, but, though I was fairly sure I had hit him, it must have been a miss as we saw no more of him and found no blood track. Saw nothing more until we were nearing the place where I had killed the first buck, and we then came suddenly in view of a solitary buck in the open over 100 yards away. His head looked good, as heads always do if there are no others near for comparison, so I lay down, in the short grass, for a steady shot and dropped him in his tracks. The distance measured 123 paces. The head turned out to be only a very moderate one of 24½ inches. Called Mudalihamy, who was not far away busy with the first buck, cut off the head, took the skin and returned to camp.

The day had been fine, with a strong south-west wind, which was unusual as the north-east monsoon had set in, so we did not go out again until after 4 p.m. Ireson went off with Sareef, whilst I went round by the park in which, a good many years ago, I had been mauled by a leopard, but saw nothing, so pushed on to Dambagolla park in order to return by way of Bendiwewa. This is a round of fine shooting country, but I saw only two small lots of does and some pigs. In traversing these parks, divided as they are by large or small belts of jungle, I usually take the lead as soon as

we enter the forest, as there is always a possibility of meeting something in the narrow track. On this occasion, leaving the Bendiwewa "open" by a track through a small block of forest, and walking fast as evening light was waning, I did not take the lead, but allowed the guide, a Meegaswewa man, to continue in front, merely taking the precaution of folding down my aperture sight as I usually do in forest. The track, a mere animal path, was very narrow, necessitating brushing through the undergrowth, so that I could not see past the leader, who, a few minutes after we had entered the jungle, suddenly stopped, uttered two fearful yells and waved his arms violently. I was surprised, but had no time to speak, or conjecture, for, with another yell, he rushed back and got behind me. I then heard terrific roars and saw two bears coming at me, as hard as they could leg it—a mother with a three-quarter grown cub—distant, when first I caught sight of them, about fifteen yards, in a wider portion of the path with less undergrowth. "Action front with rapid fire" was obviously called for and I luckily dropped the mother bear, with my first shot, at a distance of about six feet. The cub incontinently bolted off, to my left, but I laid him out with my next shot, giving him another to settle him, and then gave mother another one as she was still alive. All this happened in much less time than it has taken to write the account—about three seconds of vivid action! I was accompanied by two men on this occasion, the delinquent Meegaswewa man, a young fellow who had been out with me before, and Appua of Diwulán-

kadawela, an old tracker of mine. The Meegaswewa man was the guide as Appua did not know this part of the ground. When it was over Appua and I looked at each other, but we really had to laugh over the memory of the other man's antics. We then went for him and told him in very plain language what we thought of him, so that he was a very worm by the time we had finished. The bears had been grubbing at an ant-hill when he caught sight of them, and, if he had stopped and silently notified me in the usual jungle fashion, I could have shot them both comfortably without any bother. So far as I was concerned that youth's career as a tracker was finished—I had no more use for him. Left the bears and hurried back to camp as dark was setting in. Heard another bear calling near camp as it travelled along—evidently on the look-out for a mate.

Ireson had not shot anything, but just missed seeing two leopards in a jungle path between Mediwewa and Borawewa—saw their tracks on the path and heard them in the undergrowth.

The next morning Ireson and I travelled in company as far as Nikkewewa before we separated; he going south-east with some Meegaswewa men whilst I went north-west with Sareef and another man. This was to be, probably, the last day of our shoot, and, be it noted, it was a Friday which succeeded in living up to its reputation, for we both had exceeding bad luck. I traversed every glade and park for miles, seeing lots of deer but missed the only two rather difficult chances I got at decent bucks. I got back to camp at 11-30, but Ireson

did not turn up until 1-30 p.m. with also a tale of woe, for he had shot a good buck in a big herd, after a most laborious stalk, only to find its head in velvet and still soft. It will, of course, be said "how stupid to shoot a buck in velvet," but, at anything other than a very short range, it is exceedingly difficult, in the excitement of a stalk, to perceive that the head you are after *is* in velvet—it merely shows up as an extra fine head. Given a stalking glass, or binocular, the velvet would at once be apparent, but no one burdens himself with a glass in our tropical low-country for our short range shooting. There is one way of identifying "velvet" horns if the shooter remembers it in the excitement of the moment, and that is the fact that "velvet" horns do not exhibit the white tips to be seen on all clean mature antlers, but, knowing that well, I have myself on several occasions inadvertently shot bucks with their antlers in velvet.

On his round Ireson came past the place of my bear adventure of the previous evening, so he had them skinned and brought the skins with him. At about 3 p.m. 26 carriers turned up from Meegaswewa and Wadigéwa villages for to-morrow's carry to the main road. We went out in the evening, but I failed to bag, though Ireson brought in a buck which the carriers fell upon at once, cooked what they wanted and smoked the rest. The night was fine, so we were up by 4 a.m., got all ready for departure, and, after paying off trackers and surplus men, we set off bag and baggage at 6-15. We went back by the Relapanáwa-Pulian-



kulam track, and, as the carriers asked us to shoot another deer for them, I downed a "poor" buck as we passed through the last of the Borawewa bits of open before entering on the long stretch of jungle track, leaving it for the men to cut up on their return.

In the forest stretch Ireson and I, walking well ahead, came quite suddenly on two elephants standing somewhat close by the track. We watched them for some time and they were utterly unconscious of our presence though not more than ten yards distant. We finally shoo'd them away and pushed on, as we were making no stop until we reached Alut Oya, a tramp of about fourteen or fifteen miles. Reaching the Kauduluwewa-Alut Oya track at Puliankulam, we saw in the road an elephant track of the previous night, and it persisted the whole four miles to the main road only turning off into the jungle close by the P.W.D. road-cooly lines.

A somewhat curious point about this trip was, that, though Ireson and I traversed each other's beats several times, he did not meet with any other animals but spotted deer, whereas I had met species of almost every game animal in Ceylon. We reached Alut Oya at 11 a.m. and paid off the carriers, who started off back shortly after for their twenty-mile walk home. We left about 1 p.m. and reached my bungalow by 4-30 after a very pleasant week of jungle life.



CAMP AND TROPHIES.



## Chapter VII.

### VISIT TO PADAWIYA TANK IN NORTH-CENTRAL PROVINCE. DEER SHOOTING IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCE IN 1916.

DURING March this year, as there was "nothing doing" on the estate owing to a very severe drought, I went on a long-contemplated visit to the great breached tank known as Padawiya, situated in the extreme north-east corner of the North-Central Province.

I had been to the tank once before on a shooting trip in 1895, and was bear-shooting in the near neighbourhood in 1905, but this time I meant to explore the bund of the tank and also the ruins below the tank, and, if possible, I intended to travel down the outlet river, the Ma Oya, about ten miles, to inspect the remains of an ancient anicut\* in the river known as Vanáddipálam. I travelled light, as I carried everything on the car, taking only a couple of sheet-tents and necessary provisions, rice, etc., being accompanied only by my old camp-man Meiyán. Left my bungalow at 7-45 a.m., and travelled at a steady moderate pace by way of Anuradhapura and Madawachi, to Vavoniya, where I turned down the Vavoniya-Horówapotana minor road, fifteen miles, to Keppiti-

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\* Tamil aneikattu, a dam.

golléwa, my starting point for the tank. Total distance motored, 116 miles. Put up for the night at the circuit bungalow, where I met the late Chase Wiggin, Superintendent of Minor Roads in the North-Central Province, whom I had not seen for some years, so we had a great yarn. He was a very keen sportsman, being able on his circuits in this "gamey" province to put in a great deal of shooting.

He had accounted for practically all "rogue" elephants proclaimed in the district for many years past, as he, being an official and residing at Anuradhapura the seat of the administration, was able to get first news of any proclamation and act accordingly. I think at this time he had accounted for 29 elephants, using only a .303 rifle so far as I know, but in 1918, as I relate further on, he was caught and killed by a rogue elephant he had shot at near Dástota. At the time I met him his total of bears killed was a little short of my own total, but he had slain very many more leopards than I had been able to account for. I left with a cart the next morning by a "jungle track" road for Padawiya, getting as far as Rámbekepiéwa for breakfast, beyond which the cart could not go, so I paid the carter off and engaged carriers. On the way to this village in the Mahanetiéwa paddy-fields I bagged six-and-a-half couple of snipe, and also on the jungle track I shot two jungle cocks.

I found at Rámbekepiéwa there were not men enough available to carry my baggage, so a very keen youngster, who had followed me from Mahanetiéwa, tore back to that village, one-and-

a-half miles, and returned with five more men required.

Left here about noon, dull and drizzly, and pushed on to Singhayaulpotapitiya by about 3 p.m., where, as it looked like rain, we pitched the two sheet tents at once, after a journey of about fifteen miles. Rain came down in torrents shortly after we got the tents up, but previous to this there had been a drought of several months. From here to the tank bund is a distance of about two-and-a-half miles.

Our camp was in a tiny glade under fine jungle trees below a small tank, a delightful situation. There was a small hamlet here, when I first visited this part in 1895, but it has now all disappeared. My men are a very willing nice lot of villagers, genuine "Wanni minissu,"\* as they proudly informed me, compared with the "foreigners" (Sinhalese from other parts of Ceylon) in other and younger villages. White men are comparatively rare visitors in this part of the country, and, in such remote places, the villagers are not spoilt by too much civilization. Rained fairly heavily at intervals during the night, and was rather muggy, but I slept like a top and did not hurry about getting away in the morning. Three cold roast snipe for early tea went down exceedingly well, "to my great content." I left camp at 7-30, leaving the men to follow when the wet tents had dried off before packing them, and got to the open bed of the tank, which is mainly a plain of tall *rámbe* grass, at 9 o'clock without having seen any game. As a matter of fact this is very poor game country —

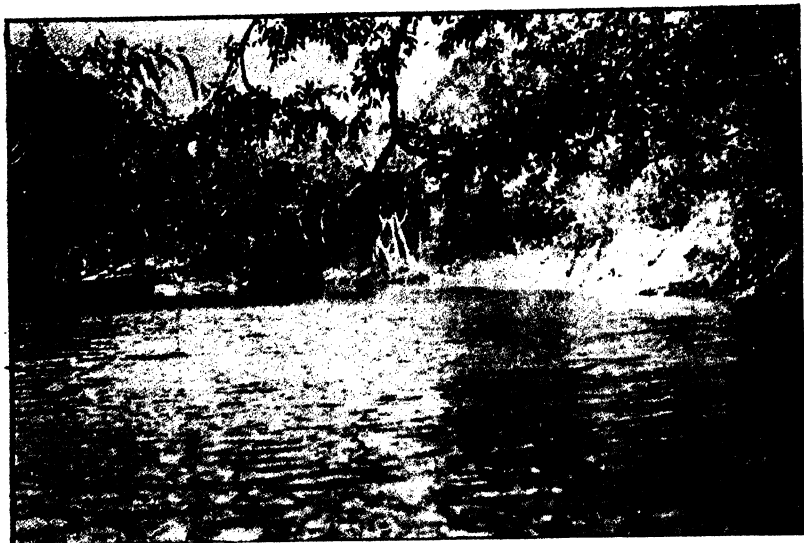
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\* "Men of the Wanni" district.

too much jungle, and too much shot over by villagers who bring their buffaloes from a distance to graze in the tank bed.

When the men arrived we pushed on to a slab rock, near the north end of the bund, beyond the hill known as Deyiannekande, which forms part of the great bund. On the way we put up a young buck elk, in the long grass, which I promptly shot for the men. We reached our camp site at 10 a.m., and, whilst they were pitching the tents, I went on with my guide, the "father" of the carriers' village, to view the great breach where the enormous bund, here 40 or 50 feet high, has been completely washed away where it crossed and dammed the river (Ma Oya), leaving a fine clear pool of water full of fish and swarming with crocodiles.

The bund is clothed in jungle from end to end, with rocky high ground rising here and there, in its line, from the summits of which there are grand views. The bed of the tank is practically all tall rámbe grass, but is divided into many "bays" by belts of jungle trees, and each bay is known by a name. Mr. H. C. P. Bell, when Archaeological Commissioner, wrote a full and very interesting report on this great tank, which he visited and examined on one of his many exploration circuits. Between the rámbe grass and the jungle edge, or edge of the jungle belts, there is usually a strip of short grass about 20 yards wide and the only chance of seeing deer is in these strips, as the rámbe grass is anything from three to six feet high. The next morning I went a long round, through fine forest and occasional bits of open, some of which



THE POOL IN THE GREAT BREACH AT PADAWIYA.

*Page 138.*





had obviously been ancient paddy-fields under the tank, but saw no game and few tracks of any. On every bit of slab rock were old meat-drying stages by water-holes, showing that illicit slaughter was still going on in this part of the country. In forest, and everywhere, I came across deposits of broken pottery, relics of the inhabitants of these parts in past centuries, showing that this had been a very populous district in ancient times.

After our round, guided by old Ukkurala, we eventually reached the *godahorówwa*, or high-level sluice, in the great bund, the only one remaining, as the main sluices were probably in the part of the bund now breached. It is in good preservation, and, at the outlet end where it discharges into a long rocky cutting, which eventually dies out in the flat forest land, a stone slab had been set up with the figure of a 7-headed cobra cut on it. Just above the outlet end of the culverts some treasure-hunting vandal, inspired no doubt by the sight of the cobra carving, had dug a regular pit right down on to the covering stones. At the intake end the *bisokotuwa*, or valve chamber, was fairly intact, and, I was told, had been inhabited by a family of bears about a month ago, but the lodging was "to let" at this time.

Our camp was only a quarter-of-a-mile distant from this sluice and I got back there at 11-30 after a long and tiring morning. I found Kadiruwela of Bogawa village had arrived, being my intended guide for the down-river tramp. He was a quiet, very intelligent, man and showed me a glowing testimonial given him by Lieut. Scovell of the

Seaforth Highlanders in 1904. In the afternoon I set off to examine the ruins of the "town" known as Moragoda, situated some little distance below the bund of the tank. On the way I shot and killed a crocodile in the river pool not far from the great breach. The ruins are situated in big forest at the present day, and consist of remains of an ancient Tamil town enclosed within a circle of brick walling. Of the buildings nothing but heaps of bricks remain, except here and there where a foundation is visible showing the size and shape of a former building. In and about the town are nine brick-lined wells mostly almost full of earth. The cleaning out of these wells might result in finds of interest as wells, in old days, were great repositories of treasure or household goods in time of war or invasion.

Outside the town are remains of a Sinhalese dagoba and "pokuna" (tank) which may be older or younger than the town—who can tell? There are various carved stones about and a rather fine recumbent carved figure of a bull.\* There are also three slabs with Tamil inscriptions on them.

Outside the walls there are also the remains of a stone-built *lingam* temple with the lingam still *in situ*. I felt I would well like to spend a week or more examining this place and getting some excavation done.

After a couple of hours pleasantly spent, I went on round a considerable part of the east side of the tank, where there were enormous stretches of rambe-grass-covered plains along the edges of which we travelled, seeing one "poor" buck,

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\* This bull has been broken by some treasure-seeking lunatic.

some does, a hare and two peacocks, but did not get a shot at anything. As shooting country this is not worth consideration, being merely a buffalo feeding ground, and, as I said before, shot out by the herders.

I have not seen even a pig, nor have I seen any elephant tracks, which I certainly expected to find in such a place as this, surrounded as it is by exceptionally fine forest. The tank is fed by two streams, the Mora Oya and Makunu Oya, which join not far from the breach, near which the joint river forms a pool, on the up-stream side, about half a mile long, and fully 100 yards wide in places, swarming with crocodiles of all sizes. Below the tank the river is known as the Ma Oya and discharges into the Kokkilay Lagoon, about 20 miles north-east of the tank. The next morning I went out again with Kadiruwela to shoot something for the camp, but saw nothing except a few does for a long time, until, returning towards camp, I came on a "poor" buck which I shot, spotted deer meat being, to me at least, infinitely better than tough tasteless elk meat.

The natives give me glowing accounts of bears at water-holes, but I am very sceptical, as I have seen no such thing as a bear track, always plentiful in real "bear" country, and I remember my bear-shooting trip in this neighbourhood in 1905 was a complete failure as I only saw and bagged one bear.

All the few bucks I have seen carried very poor heads, shed horns seen were poor, heads of two bucks killed by leopard were also very poor,

so good heads are evidently wanting around this tank. Went out in the afternoon to try for a shot at an exceptionally big crocodile I had seen in the pool, but, though I saw him, I did not get a shot. Saw swarms of smaller ones. There are vast weird-shaped kumbuk trees growing in and about the pool, which is very rocky in places. We were up and away for down-river very early the next morning.

Our track for the first three or four miles led through fine open forest and over various rocks, but after this the jungle became much poorer, until, after about six miles, we struck off due east for the river bank again, where we stopped for some food, and I shot a jungle cock called up by the "wing-flapping" dodge.

From this point we had no path, having come thus far by a hunting track, so had to make our way as best we could through the unexpectedly poor jungle bordering the high river bank, needing a good deal of cutting of undergrowth to make a track for the carriers. The river was not flowing at this time but lay in long deep pools in a very rocky river bed, with high steep banks, and not more than 20 to 30 yards wide in most places.

I shot another jungle cock before we started off again. I calculated that when we stopped we were not more than about four miles from the anicut, but it took us three-and-a-half hours to get there owing to the aforementioned difficulty of travel. After about one-and-a-half miles we crossed the river to the southern bank, by means of some rocks and a couple of cut-down small trees laid

across, as further down it would be very difficult to get over. We finally reached our objective at 3-30 p.m., and at once put up the tents and spread out some of the things to dry as it had rained a little during part of the journey. My men are a very willing cheery lot and are immensely interested in everything I do and say. A camera was an unknown object of great curiosity to them, whilst my topographical map sheets interested them very much as several of them had been "line cutters" for Government Surveyors on the topo. survey some years ago. The "father" of the village, old Ukkurala, was intensely interested about the great war and took in very intelligently all I could tell him about it. I have often had to tell the jungle folk about the war and they were always most anxious to know if "we" were winning! On the first part of our way I saw tracks of one elephant, one leopard and a few deer and pig, but found no tracks anywhere near the river. The next morning I examined the ancient dam, which is built across the river at a place where the bed consists of an outcrop of rock, and is, at this point, about 500 feet wide. The dam is built of big blocks of roughly hewn and split stone, many as much as six feet by two feet by two feet, and is some six or seven feet high by about thirty feet wide with a top slope towards down-stream side. It is breached in two places, one in the middle and the other near the north bank. There is the usual fault of the ancient builders here, and that is the utter want of proper extension of the stone-work into the solid river bank at both sides. I have seen several such dams

or rather their remains, and in each case they were simply built up against either bank without being carried well into it, result having been the water making its way round the ends and gradually carrying the stone-work away block by block.

The only channel from this dam takes off through the north bank about a quarter of a mile up-stream, and is merely a small *ela* leading to some swampy ground about three miles away. The country around is all dense poor jungle with no villages anywhere near. I went for a walk of some miles that morning, but saw no game, though I bagged four jungle cocks, by "calling."

Not wanting to return by way of Padawiya I sent some men out to find their way and cut a track to a small abandoned tank known as Olumadu which my map showed me to lie about three miles east-south-east from here. They returned in the evening, having found their way to the tank by regular jungle instinct as the whole country was absolutely trackless jungle. Kadiruwela knew of the tank from another direction, but had never been there from this side so that his pilotage was a clever bit of work. We set off at 7 a.m. next day and I found the track they had cut, with its many "kinks" extended to quite four miles by the time we reached Olumadu, which I found to be a fair-sized "village" tank many centuries abandoned, breached and almost wholly grown up in jungle. There is a fine pool of water in the main breach, and we had our 11 o'clock meal near by. We left again at 12-30, making for a tank known as Iratteikulam ("double" tank), about

three-and-a-half miles away, by a fairly clear but very twisty jungle track in course of which I saw a few spotted deer. We reached the twin tanks at about 2-30 and camped there for the night. At the west end of the tank bund is a high mound of rock on which I found a "cave" shelter, very slight over-hung, only, for shelter, in which, on the floor, five sleeping places were cut side by side slightly sunk and divided from each other by tiny stone ridges, each space measuring five feet six inches by one foot six inches. As the shelter faced due east and was only about the bare five feet six inches deep it must have been intensely hot in the dry season and exposed to wet in the north-east monsoon, so the users must have been genuine devotees !

To save rain dribbling into the shelter, however, there were two *katari*, or drip ledges, cut on the brow of the rock, and at one time the interior had been all plastered, as there were patches of plaster remaining here and there, but I failed to find any inscription. There is a fine view from the rock over a sea of jungle, with other rocks showing up here and there, but it is not high enough to show the sea at the east coast, or even the lagoon, though not more than ten or twelve miles away as the crow flies. The boundary of the Eastern Province and North-Central Province crosses the tank bund close by and the demarcation line of the survey could be just discerned. I was out in the evening, but saw no game near here, though elephants made themselves heard fairly near at 3 a.m. We got away at 6-30 next morning finding



our way by a faint jungle track to Diyatittawewa, abandoned, fully overgrown with jungle, and on by Kurichankulam to the main Keppitigolléwa-Pulmóddai track by which, along a good path, we reached Alutgama, where we stayed for food.

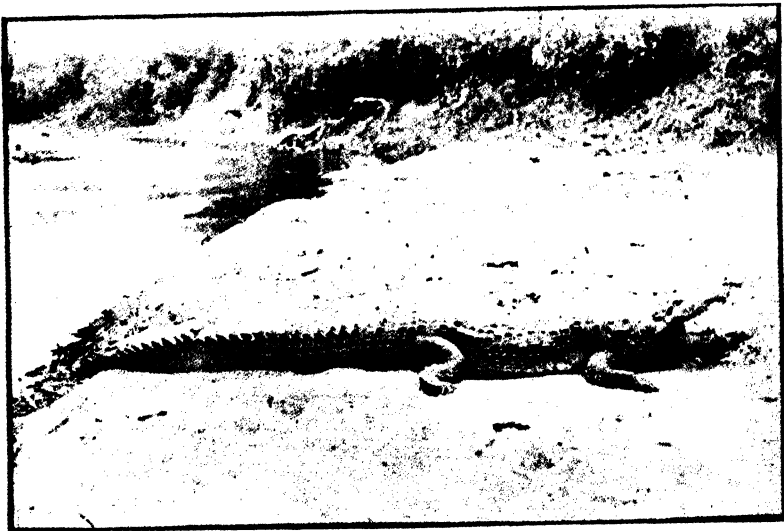
There is the ruin of an old temple near here containing a battered life-size stone figure of Buddha. Paid off Kadiruwela here, as his village is near by, and pushed on to Hérathammilléwa village, reaching there at 4 p.m. after a good seventeen miles of jungle tramping. I had intended to stay the night here, but my most excellent carriers expressed their wish to reach home, five miles further on! Whilst resting in the road track a deputation of villagers came and asked me to shoot a vicious crocodile in their tank, so off I went, accompanied by most of the inhabitants, to the tank bund. From there I saw at least four small-sized crocodiles, fired at and missed one, but plugged and killed another by a neat shot at sixty yards which blew the top of its head off.

Yells of delight from the onlookers and a party of young fellows rushed round the pool to the other side and dragged it out, a stout loathsome beast but only about seven feet long. By now it was five p.m., so off we set again, full swing, and got to Rámbekepiéwa by 6-30 after twenty-two miles of about as stiff a walk as I have ever done.

Slept in the village *maduwa* (sort of communal shed), arose at 5-30 a.m., gave away my remaining tinned cakes, biscuits and sugar to the village children, left at 6-15 and got to Keppitigolléwa at 8. Changed, paid off my carriers, with Rs. 5 each,



RUINS AT ALUTGAMA.



*Photo by G. M. Crabbe, Esq.*

A CROCODILE.



which greatly pleased them, and got away by car at 8-45, going direct to Madawachi by a cross-country minor road. A few miles beyond Madawachi a leopard crossed the road not more than thirty-five yards ahead of the car, at 10 o'clock of a hot sunny morning! Reached Anuradhapura 10-30, where I stayed for tiffin, leaving there 2 p.m. and home by 5 p.m., after a trip of very great interest to me, though a failure from a shooting point of view.

Towards the end of April, work being still slack on the estate, I decided to run up to the Northern Province for a short visit to Tunukkay, a part of the country I had never previously visited. I was able to travel light as there is a *madam* at that village for use of officials but which visitors can occupy by permission of the Government Agent. I motored *via* Anuradhapura and Vavuniya to Mankulam, a distance of 136 miles, where I put up at the resthouse and arranged for a cart to take on my baggage the next day. I got away early in the morning, walking well ahead of my cart, along a horribly straight jungle road, running due east and west so that the sun beats down on the unfortunate traveller all day long. The distance to Tunukkay is thirteen miles, but it "walked" like thirty.

I saw no game other than jungle fowl and finally reached the village at about 11 a.m.

The country here is all inhabited by Tamils, clean, well-built men as a rule of good caste who will not do a hand's-turn to help a visitor if they can possibly avoid it. Tunukkay is a small village

of about six or seven houses only, situated in a grassy plain very much studded with thorny scrubby jungle, as there is no good forest in this class of flat sandy country near the coast.

A great number of cattle from Jaffna are sent here and put in charge of these villagers as it is good grazing country. In wet weather these cattle tramp every track in and out of the village into black tenacious mud, which is horrible stuff to walk through.

I put up in the madam, which is a kajan-roofed open trellis-work building, forming quite a good lodging. I went out in the afternoon with an elderly Tamil as tracker, and found the country to consist of grass land very much overgrown with horribly thorny scrub, unpleasant to walk through and not, as a rule, permitting of much more than fifty yards clear sight in any direction, though here and there I found some fair-sized open plains. The country was very dry, and the grass out of condition, so I did not see many deer, but I saw some very good bucks which usually spotted me before I saw them through the sparse-foliaged bush. I failed to get a shot at anything though we were out until 7 p.m. I went a long round the next morning and saw three good bucks but did not get a shot, my bag for the morning being one pig only. The afternoon was also a blank as I saw nothing but a few does. The next morning we went a longish round, going south-west, but for fully two miles we never saw a living thing, until, in some rather thick scrubby jungle, we heard a considerable rustling of dead leaves going on

under a biggish banian tree, which was in full fruit. I thought it might be pigs, but the tracker got excited so we crawled under the bush towards the tree as quietly as we could and soon found that the animals were spotted deer. One of them saw me almost at once, and commenced to utter the shrill alarm call, so I sat down, rifle at shoulder, to see what would happen. In a few seconds a big body crossed the dark opening I was gazing into, and I saw a head of fine antlers lowered to feed so fired at the buck, instantly, upon which there ensued a terrific commotion of deer, and pigs as well, rushing about in all directions. In the midst of it we detected one frenzied rush ending in a crash and struggle so knew the buck was accounted for all right. Made our way to the spot and found a fine buck lying dead, whose antlers measured  $31\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The tracker with my help skinned and cut it up, hanging all the meat he could not carry on the tree branches. We then returned to camp with the head, skin and some meat, and the shikari returned for the balance of the meat as the villagers were too busy minding their own business. These Tamil villagers will not do anything to oblige a visitor.

In the afternoon we went a long round by way of the local tank bund, and thence southward, but only saw a few vanishing deer. Returning towards the village at dusk, I saw a herd of pig crossing the road ahead of me on their way to the paddy-fields, so opened fire on them, killing one and scattering the herd.

In the morning I heard elephants doing a lot

of trumpeting westward of the village, so went out that way to some big plains some three miles away, where I saw good herds of deer but never a chance of a shot as they always spotted us and departed at speed. Went to the tank on my return and slew two nine-foot crocodiles in one of the muddy pools.

Went out again at 4-45 p.m., but it was a very hot sunny evening and I got no chance of a shot. At one time a herd of pigs came along, so we squatted down quietly and one of them, all unconscious, walked to within twenty feet before he saw us. He then uttered funny little grunts, looked angry, and wagged his tail furiously, so I waved my hand at him which sent him off grunting loudly. There were twelve or thirteen lean hideous beasts in the herd.

I had another round the next morning, but, though I saw lots of deer, pig and some peafowl, I got no shot at anything. I packed up and left at about 12-30 for Mánkulam, a very hot tiring walk. Stayed the night there and home next day, but intending to try Tunukkay again during the north-east monsoon.

This I proceeded to do at the beginning of November, having arranged for another visit this time accompanied by my old friend W.

I motored up with all the necessary baggage, whilst W. travelled by train to Mánkulam station, arriving there at about 3-15 a.m.

Having secured a cart overnight, we loaded it up and sent it off at 4 a.m., we following at 5 a.m. after early tea. We overtook our cart a few miles



*Photo by G. Harberd, Esq.*

DYING CROCODILE.

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out as the road was very rough, having been cut up by timber carts, transporting logs and railway firewood. We saw no game on the road and eventually arrived at our destination about 9 o'clock, but, as our cart did not arrive before noon, it was 1 p.m. before we got our breakfast. After a good rest we went out at 5 p.m. with our shot guns to the paddy-fields to see what we could pick up.

There were no snipe, but plenty of golden plover, which were amazingly tame, not taking alarm for quite a long time after we began shooting. The shooting was quite brisk before they took to flying high, and by dusk we had accounted for seven couple. Heard elephants trumpeting in the south during the evening.

We went for a round together the next morning through bush and glade, glade and bush, seeing a good many deer but no bucks worth a shot. I missed a running shot at a fine boar in one nice open glade. We got back to camp for breakfast without having bagged anything.

We went out in different directions at 4 p.m. I going towards the western plains, whilst W. went southward, not intending to go very far round. It was a blazing hot afternoon with a strong south-west wind blowing which was unusual for this time of the year as the north-east monsoon was fully due. Under the circumstances I had little hope of seeing any game, but, just as I emerged from a bush track into the open plain, I saw a fine herd of spotted deer scattered about amongst the stunted bushes which dotted the plain. The nearest were perhaps fifty yards away and the more distant

ones about 150 yards, so I crawled out to the shade of a stumpy tree where I sat down for a thorough look round.

I saw several poor antlered bucks, but soon spotted a fairly good one, about 100 yards away on my right, at which I promptly fired and down he dropped. The herd scattered in all directions as I walked up to the stricken buck which, I noted, was nicely plugged behind the shoulder. As it was not dead I laid down my rifle, drew my hunting knife and approached to stick it, but, the moment I got near, up it jumped and galloped off like the wind. I snatched up the rifle and gave him another shot before he had gone more than fifty yards which finished him all right, but he would eventually have died from the original wound—though he might have run some distance. The antlers were a nice, even, thick-set pair of  $28\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Cut off the head, and, as I had only one man with me, we left the body in the bush, to be brought in later.

Coming back through open bush, I saw another fine herd, including two exceptionally good bucks, but failed to get a shot. Shortly after this I heard four shots in rapid succession from W. and wondered what it meant, as he is a very deadly shot usually.

Just as I got out of the bush into the open grassy western track some deer began to stream across, from the left side, a regular procession of does and bucks of all sizes, going at speed. One buck looked fairly good, so I snap-shot at him as he passed and thought I had hit all right, but he went on with the herd without a falter. Followed

into the bush and found him dead about thirty yards in, well smitten in the shoulder. Antlers measured 27 inches only, but were a nice even pair, so we cut off the head, dragged the body to the open track and went on to camp. W. arrived shortly afterwards with his two men proudly bearing the body of a leopard slung on a pole!

As they were walking through a rather bushy bit of open W. had seen what, at first glance, he thought was a doe wandering through the weeds and scrub towards a clump of trees with clear open glade on both sides. He could only see its back but, as the motion was very undulating, he watched carefully and suddenly became aware that it was a leopard! It disappeared behind the clump of trees so W. ran forward until he could command two sides of the clump, and then, to his great surprise, he saw a second leopard squatting on its haunches on the edge of the bush about three-quarters facing away from him. This one he shot instantly and then had three rapid running shots at the first one, as it went bounding away, missing it each time by a very small margin. His men then got a pole, tied up the leopard and they returned to camp.

It was a smallish thick-set male measuring six feet seven and a half inches, nose to tip of tail along the curves. Heard leopards roaring twice, and elephants trumpeting once during the night. We were out by 5-30 the next morning and I went westward again, seeing several lots of does early on but no bucks. I then heard elephants making a tremendous noise, trumpeting and squealing,

not far away, so went to have a look at them as I knew it would be youngsters that were making the noise. I soon found there were a good many scattered about in the bush near by, and I walked very close up to one in the open, but he did not seem to mind in the least. There were also a number of deer close by, quite oblivious to the squealing and trumpeting going on which emanated from some young ones ragging each other. Did not disturb the family party, so pushed on, seeing two fine peacocks shortly after but never a chance of a shot at them. Arrived at the open plains again, I made my way carefully round the outskirts, but saw nothing shootable so returned, intending to cut up the first buck shot yesterday which had remained untouched during the night. Going back over ground we had already walked over, I suddenly saw a buck gazing at me intently, head and neck only showing above the bush about ninety yards away. At first glance the head looked a poor one, but just then he gave his head a shake, took a step forward and craned his neck for a better look at us which enabled me to see that the head was a good one. The mark offered was very small as he was facing me, and I had to fire off-hand as there was no handy tree for a rest, so I aimed low enough for his chest and fired. Heard the thud of impact, but he bolted off at speed, so we followed and found him dead less than fifty yards beyond the place where he was shot. The head was a very nice one of 30 inches. We skinned and cleaned the body and the two men then carried it, slung from a pole, to camp, a very fair load as I

know from trying one end of the pole myself for a short distance.

W. had no luck. He had seen and stalked a good buck in a herd in the bush, lost sight of the buck, saw it again, as he thought, walking along, so dropped it by a fine 120-yard shot, finding, to his disgust, that he had bagged a buck with a rotten little head and not the one he originally saw.

In the evening my stroll round by way of the Mánkulam road and a south-east circuit was a blank. W. came in at dusk with a 24-inch buck. He had come on a herd with some poor heads in it, and had finally seen the one he shot, which, by comparison with the others, looked good even when scrutinized through a stalking glass. This shows how very difficult it is correctly to estimate the size of a head! We were out by 5-45 a.m. next day, W. going south-west towards Murungan tank some distance beyond the place where he had shot his leopard, whilst I went a couple of miles along the Tenniyankulam road for a north-west round.

After leaving the grassy road track I struck through some very sparse open bush, seeing nothing for some time until I sighted open plain ahead, and almost at once caught sight of a herd of spotted deer walking along on my left front, about 100 yards away. I sat down and watched a seemingly endless procession of deer file past, but saw no good bucks in the herd. As I watched I suddenly sighted another herd on my right front, coming towards the bush across the open plain, so doubled quietly back for about a quarter-of-a-mile and then ran

round towards the left to cut them off. I timed the movement nicely, getting into good position just as they streamed into the open bush, and soon picked out a nice-looking buck in the procession, about 150 yards away, so sat down for a shot. In the meantime another buck not more than 80 yards away, had spotted me and stopped for a good look, most of the herd, including my desirable buck, also halting though they had not seen me. When my animal stopped his body was in full view, but his head was hidden behind a tree so I drew a bead on the line behind the shoulder and fired. I heard the welcome thud of the bullet, but he managed to gallop off with the herd (which must have numbered fully 100 head) for about fifty yards before he fell. His fall caused the herd to check, turn, and stream past me again, and, in the score or more bucks in the herd, I saw at least one better than my "bag" but he gave no chance of a shot. On reaching my buck we found him dead, so cut off the head, which measured  $29\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and put the body, well covered with branches, under a tree to be brought in later. I then pushed on with my two guides into the open plain for about a quarter-of-a-mile, after which, at the guides' suggestion, we turned into some thickish jungle where they said, if we walked quietly, we might come upon an elk lying up. The jungle undergrowth was very thick, so we struck into the dry bed of a sandy "jungle drain" along which we were able to walk silently. We had not proceeded more than fifty yards when, hearing a crackle of twigs and a snort on the right bank, we looked up

to see two large elephants and a baby distant about fifteen feet gazing at us! My men vanished like shadows, but, as the elephants merely moved back into the bush a little, and walked on upstream, I followed quietly in the sand, until, turning a corner, I came upon about a dozen more elephants of all sizes, including one very big one, about thirty yards away. I watched them, but they got very uneasy, and presently the mothers having "rumbled" to collect the babies, the herd moved off uttering little snorts and trumpeting.

The sight was well worth a morning's walk as herd elephants are not met with any, or every, day. I then turned back, rejoining the men, who grinned rather sheepishly, and we proceeded down stream as it was no use following on the elephants' track. We had not proceeded more than 100 yards, I being in front, when one of the men "clicked" to attract my attention, so I stopped dead, turned my head very cautiously and saw him pointing to the jungle on my left. The stream bed was only some six or eight feet wide, bordered by almost impenetrable bush, so I walked very quietly back to the man, scrutinizing the bush as I went. Almost at once I caught a shadowy sight of the head and antlers of a buck elk, which was lying down in the bush, and had evidently raised his head in alarm after I had passed. The moment I spotted him he leapt up, with a crash of branches, and I instantly fired through the bush as I could not see his body but could only judge its position.

He went off at speed, crashing through the bush, so we crawled in to investigate and soon



came on a blood track, which we followed along a very twisty animal track, the blood rapidly increasing in quantity. After about 200 yards of tracking we had the satisfaction of finding him dead in a thorny thicket—a fine old buck, big of body but the head, though fairly massive, only measured 26½ inches. We cut off the head and returned to camp after one of the most eventful mornings I have ever experienced. W. turned up at 10 o'clock. He had been to Murungan, and the abandoned paddy-fields beyond, but saw nothing to shoot at until he came on a peahen about 45 yards away. He told his tracker he would shoot it in the head, and actually did so, thus saving damage to the body! Shortly after that he killed a fine boar by a running shot at about forty yards, but of deer he saw none worth a shot. We went out in the evening after 4 p.m. I going westward, whilst W. went Tenniyankulam way. I failed to stalk one fine herd in bush, but sighted another good lot a short distance further on which, however, saw me as soon as I saw them and went streaming past at full speed.

Seeing what looked like a good head amongst them, I swung my rifle on him as he passed and heard the bullet strike with a loud smack, but he disappeared the next moment behind some trees. On walking up to the trees I found him lying on his back, with his antlers flat on the ground under his stretched-out head so that he was absolutely anchored and unable to move!

As he was not dead I knifed him, and, on turning him over, I found I had hit him high up in the

shoulder. The head measured 28½ inches, so cut it off and returned to camp. I have omitted mention of the fact that when the villagers discovered that we killed our game they always went out on our return to camp, and brought in the meat of which we allowed them to keep all that we did not require.

W. arrived at 6 p.m. with a beautiful head of 30¾ inches. He had come on a big herd in fairly open bush in which he had spotted the big buck lying down. He had to stoop down for the shot, firing between two branches, but managed to plant his bullet exactly on the point of the shoulder which laid out the buck then and there.

This was the best head of the trip.

Out as usual shortly after daybreak, W. going by way of Tenniyankulam, whilst I went to an abandoned tank and village site known as Kalvilankulam, taking with me some men to cut up the buck I had killed the previous evening. Found the body untouched so left the men with it and went on with two trackers. Very shortly after, in a bush track, we passed within thirty feet of an elephant standing stern on in the bush just off the path, but did not disturb him.

I found the Kalvilankulam country to be very sandy and much overgrown with horrible thorny scrub, the only "game" seen being great numbers of semi-wild buffaloes. Returned to camp by way of Murungan tank, but saw nothing except a peacock and hen scuttling away down a grassy glade in the bush.

I found W. in camp, he also had had a blank

morning. We went out together at 4 p.m. up the Tenniyankulam road, W. turning into the bush westward after a mile, intending to work round south-west, whilst I turned in west at two miles, working round to the north-west.

I went through some fine grassy open bush, seeing nothing until we reached a big open plain containing some pools of water near which I found evidence of former habitation in the shape of many fragments of old pottery scattered about in all directions. At one place was a small boulder having a twelve inches deep by nine inches wide cylindrical hollow cut in it inside a roughly cut counter-sunk circle, which had evidently been the village paddy-pounding mortar, as the sides of the cylinder were considerably worn with use. I pushed on for a further round, but saw nothing except tame buffaloes and some peafowl, so returned to camp. W. came in at 5-45 with a fine 29½ inch head.

He had come on a hornless buck, and saw another deer standing near but its head was hidden behind a bush. The moment the hidden head became visible he saw it was a buck with good antlers and promptly downed it by a seventy yards shot. Apart from that he had not seen anything else shootable.

The next morning W. went down the Mankulam road for two miles and then round by Puthukaddankulam, whilst I again went up the Tenniyankulam road.

About a mile from camp three elephants crossed the track, about seventy yards ahead, looking fine in the early dawn.

After about three miles we struck in westward and eventually reached the north end of the extensive western plains.

The plain is bordered by bush interspersed with glades, so we crossed to the far west side and walked quietly and cautiously along through a succession of these glades, keeping a sharp look-out for deer or any other game. After some time I saw a herd of deer walking across the open about eighty yards away, so sat down ready for a shot if a good buck offered himself. After about twenty does had filed past a warrantable buck came walking along which I promptly shot, and found the head to be a nice even one of  $28\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Pushed on towards Kalvilankulam, near which, in a sandy patch, we came on a small crocodile lying asleep or torpid. I wanged a big clod of hard earth at him which woke him up and he swelled, hissed and clapped his jaws together with a loud crack. Teased him for a while and then went on to Kalvilankulam, skirting the tank on the look-out for pig or deer but saw none. Back to camp by 9-30 after a good ten-mile tramp, and found W. already returned after a blank morning. This finished our outing, so we packed up and returned to Mankulam in the afternoon and home the next day, after a very successful and pleasant trip, in which we had good sport and, luckily, fine weather.

## Chapter VIII.

### NOTE ON SNIPE AND TEAL SHOOTING.

### DEER SHOOTING IN THE NORTH-CENTRAL PROVINCE IN 1917.

#### AN ADVENTURE WITH AN ELEPHANT.

I HAVE said nothing about snipe or other minor game shooting in this book for the reason that I dealt with the subject fairly completely in my first book "Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon."

The advent of the motor car has, however, made snipe-shooting trips an easy matter for anybody, and very fair shooting can be enjoyed in tanks or paddy-fields in the immediate neighbourhood of most low-country resthouses. I was reminded of this when reading my shooting diary for 1917, previous to editing it, for I found, in January of that year, a note of a two days' motor-ing and shooting tour up the north road in company with J. C. T., an old friend and planting neighbour. My diary states that we found most of the tanks nearly empty and the greater part of the paddy-fields dry—a very unusual thing at this time of the year, for, given a normal north-east monsoon, all tanks should have been full to overflowing, and most of the paddy-fields should have been in growing paddy. The monsoon had very evidently been a serious failure in the north, with a corresponding shortage of paddy crops.

I find nevertheless that by diligently searching for wet patches in paddy-fields, and prospecting several tanks, big and little, we succeeded in two days' travel in bagging  $27\frac{1}{2}$  couple of snipe,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  couple golden plover,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  couple whistling teal and one couple of goose teal—a grand total of 79 head picked, not counting a fair number of teal lost in deep water. This is not much of a bag for that class of shooting, but under the circumstances it was good enough, and these little tours are very enjoyable.

In March of this year, having taken my family to an up-country bungalow for the hot weather, I decided to visit the Vettikachi country once more as I had not been there for over a year. Since my last visit this country had been proclaimed as a shooting reserve for Ceylon residents only, but Government stipulated that the Game Protection Society should appoint and pay the necessary watchers, which was, of course, agreed to, and this arrangement still holds.

Being alone for this trip I was able to pack all my baggage on my car and left Matale for Kanthalay at 2-30 p.m. late in March.

Two or three miles beyond Habarane I saw a fine black cart-bullock lying in the road drain, killed, and partly eaten, by a leopard. At the  $70\frac{1}{2}$  mile post I saw two animals on the road ahead, which a nearer approach showed to be two leopards!

The largest of the two was sitting like a cat, in the middle of the road, looking in my direction, whilst the other, a smaller one, was standing on the edge of the grass bordering the road. I slowed

down, but when I got to within about sixty yards the big one got up and walked into the grass at the side of the road where, for a moment, it stood sideways looking at me. I stopped the car, but made the serious mistake of not stopping the engine with the result that, when I got my rifle to my shoulder, the vibration was so great I could not steady my sight. However, there was no time to deliberate as the leopard moved on again, so I chanced it, and fired, but I saw the splinters fly off a small tree on a line about an inch above the leopard's back. Had I stopped car and engine I would have had an easy pot shot, which I could scarcely have missed! Pushed on, a sadder and wiser man as regards shooting from a motor car, and, at mile 78, saw a fine buck elk standing by the side of the road, 100 yards away, but he left hurriedly without giving me a chance of a shot. Heavy rain came on shortly after this, so had to put the hood up, but I saw, further on, a spotted buck, and, later, some pigs—a fair show of game on a main road in a distance of less than twenty miles! Reached Kanthalay resthouse 6-30 p.m. and stayed there for the night.

I was annoyed to find my week-old letter to Sareef, the watcher, lying at the resthouse undelivered, so had to send for him the next morning with the result that we did not get our baggage cart away until 11-30. I motored, taking Sareef with me, to the turn-off at the 85th mile and sent the car back by my driver to the resthouse. I then walked on down the track very leisurely, to put in time, as the cart would be far behind us. We

saw two lots of deer in the small open close to the main road, but none worth a shot, and between there and the Kaluganga I called up and shot three jungle cocks. Arrived at the first river crossing on that track (there are three streams or stream beds to cross), we rested until 3-30 and then strolled on to the first part of the open park country about a mile away for a look round. We saw two lots of deer, and a solitary boar, but nothing worth a shot, so, seeing that it was clouding up very black with thunder growling in the north, we turned back to meet the cart at about 5 p.m.

On the way I stalked a herd of deer and spotted a fairly good buck amongst them, but, just as I got into nice position at about fifty yards, he lay down behind an ant-hill out of my sight. Just then the rain commenced to fall, coming down, a few moments later, in a regular torrent, the darkness being so intense that I could barely define my aperture sight. Something startled the buck for he got up and ran towards my left, stopping for a moment about sixty yards away which enabled me to get in a shot.

He ran off, but I knew he was hit, so, as we could barely see anything, taking note of the place, we hurried to the jungle track, near which this had happened, to find out what had become of our cart. The open park was, by this time, a sheet of water and the jungle track a knee-deep stream of water and mud!

We crossed the first river—knee-deep when coming, now waist-deep—and we agreed that if the cart had not got across the middle, and



biggest, river, neither it nor we could cross ! However, less than half-a-mile further on we met the cart, floundering axle-deep in the water, so turned back with it and pushed on to the river we had just crossed, but found it now impassable !

We looked around, and finding a few square feet of ground not actually under water, we decided to camp—in fact we could do nothing else but camp.

got a sheet-tent up for myself in a patch of mud, erected my bed, and two tables on which I put my box, guns and gun-cases ; undressed as best I could and got into bed where I was at least dry ! In the interval the rain ceased and the men managed to put their tent up. What they did for food I do not know, but I dined royally off some plain “ Plasmon ” biscuits and a drink of water !

The night was fine but turned very cold. Such are the pleasant little incidents that the sportsman occasionally hits up against, but it is all in the day's work. This rain was a most unusual occurrence for this time of the year—I had expected to find the country dry and water somewhat scarce !

The morning broke fine and clear, the flood had all subsided and life was worth living once more. We remained in “ camp ” until 8 o'clock to permit of the men having a much-needed meal, and also to allow of the tents and other appurtenances to get dry. This done I set off with Sareef for a good round whilst the cart proceeded to the Nikkewewa camping place.

In about a three-mile round I saw seven lots of deer but mostly does, and also met an elephant quietly feeding in an open park, as late as 9 o'clock.





Saw a fine solitary boar, but failed to get near enough for a shot, and by 10-30 we had got back to the place where I had shot at the buck the previous evening. We soon found it not more than fifty yards from the shooting point, and the head was a good average one of 28 inches, so we then pushed on to camp, which was not more than a quarter-of-a-mile away, sending some men back for the skin and meat.

The Nikkewewa camp, being on the bund of a small abandoned, breached, tank, was on dry ground so we soon had all our wet things out in the sun which quickly dried them—one advantage of a tropical sun.

Sareef, the watcher, told me of a very exciting adventure he had experienced lately which might have turned out very seriously for him.

He was doing *shikari* for a gentleman at Kanthalay and had gone out, armed with a d.b. 12-bore gun, to shoot a couple of jungle cock for him. He had a shot cartridge in one barrel and ball in the other luckily, for, about two miles from the resthouse, he was suddenly attacked by a bear which he managed to kill before it reached him.

Almost at once, however, a female bear, with a cub, whose existence he had not been aware of, also rushed out and attacked him, and again luck was with him for he killed them both! Some adventure!

At this time of the year most of the bucks have dropped their horns, or are in velvet, and the grass is so long that at 100 yards distance only head, neck and top of the back of a deer will be visible

which makes shooting rather difficult and walking very unpleasant. At 3 p.m. heavy rain came on until 3-40, when it ceased and I went out, but it was a case of "water, water everywhere," more like mid-December than March! I saw several lots of deer but nothing worth shooting until 5 p.m., when we sighted a fine herd with at least three good bucks in it. We could not get nearer than 200 yards, however, and then, a shift of wind giving us away, they cleared off. We followed up, as they had gone amongst some clumps of jungle, sighted them again, and I did a very careful stalk which enabled me to get a shot at one buck which appeared in an opening between bushes about ninety yards away. I heard the bullet strike with a loud thud, but off he went with a leap so we followed and found him lying down not far away. He got up, however, as we approached and slipped into a patch of jungle before I could shoot, so as it was getting late we left him for to-morrow and returned to camp.

I was out by 5-45 next morning for another good round. We saw a fine buck in velvet close to camp, but beyond some parties of does saw nothing shootable until we were in the Dambagolla parks, where we came on a small herd with two bucks, one of which was a good one, but got no chance of a shot. Shortly after that we heard deer a little distance off, uttering a very frightened series of alarm calls, so ran to see what was the cause, and almost at once saw a leopard crossing the park towards the far side jungle fully 200 yards away. I ran as hard as I could, but he disappeared

into the jungle before I got near enough for a shot, and I then wished I had sat down, at the first, for a long-shot chance. We then worked our way round towards the place where I shot the buck last evening, and, arrived at the jungle it had gone into, we spread out for a careful search as I had three men with me. In a short time I and one of the men simultaneously sighted the buck, which was lying dead about 100 yards inside the jungle, to my great satisfaction. The head was  $28\frac{1}{2}$  inches—usual good average for this part of the country, but it was not the “big” head of the herd that I had seen that evening. Butchered it and back to camp by 11-30. I went out at 3-45 that afternoon, but, as the rain had kept off, it was rather hot and muggy and we saw no game until we came to an animal path about half-a-mile long, through jungle, leading from one block of open to another.

As we got near the far end of the path we heard *wanderoo* monkeys making a big clamour, so, conjecturing that this meant a leopard, I walked along very quietly keeping a good look-out. I could not see any leopard track in the path itself, but, as we got close to where it enters the open, I saw the “old man” of the monkey family cursing away vigorously, and looking towards the open from a tall tree.

I sneaked along without a sound, but the “old man” spotted me and at once began to move about, which no doubt attracted the leopard’s attention, because, just as I came in sight of the open end of the path, I saw the leopard’s face framed in the entrance gazing at me for one brief

second before it vanished. I rushed forward but it had departed into the jungle, so that I had had the unusual experience of seeing two leopards in one day without being able to get a shot at either !

Returned to camp seeing nothing else but a "sunder" of about a dozen pigs which passed us within twenty yards. The next morning I determined to shoot the first buck I saw, whatever its head, as meat for Sareef and another Mohammedan, seeing that they had not been able to "cut" either of the two deer previously killed. This I accomplished in Mediweva by a good "walking" shot at 145 yards, and, leaving two men to cut it up, went on by way of Borawewa and Ulpotawewa. In a very thorny glade I came suddenly on a big boar, grubbing on a knoll, not more than ten yards away, and him I promptly shot but was disappointed to find a very ordinary pair of tusks. Went on round to the Godepotagala camp-site for a rest, as, having brought some food with us, we were not intending to return to camp for breakfast. Thunder and a smart shower of rain came on at 1 p.m., but we did not get wet under good tree shelter. We sent two men back to camp from here, with the meat, and, later on, I and Sareef went a round by way of Maradankadawela but saw nothing shootable. I find my diary records that walking in the long grass is "beastly and very tiring," and also notes that few deer were met with in the early mornings but a fair number in the evenings between 4 o'clock and 6.

Going round by Bendiwewa the next morning, I missed a ninety-yard shot at a fair buck, which

was the only chance I got as I saw nothing else worth a shot. As the afternoon was blazing hot I did not go out until well after 4. Turning into the parks, just east of camp, I came on a number of deer almost at once at a jungle corner, some being in the open, others in the jungle. The wind being good I crouched down, not more than thirty yards away, for careful inspection, and saw, one by one, three immature "velvet" head bucks come out, feed around and eventually lie down in the shade. Shortly after this, however, out came a beautiful buck, and as he wandered in my direction I shot him at once, finding on examination that I had secured a fine head of 31 inches, which pleased me exceedingly. As we were close to camp I left a man to do the necessary and pushed on for a further round, but saw nothing else worth a shot so returned to camp at 6-45. Just after dinner a buck elk in the bush at the other side of the little tank pool not more than fifty yards away went crashing away uttering terrific trumpeting calls, which I thought at the time was caused by his coming suddenly within sight of our camp. I found, however, next morning, that he had very narrowly escaped being pounced on by a leopard whose track was plainly visible close by where the elk had been standing.

Altogether this trip I have seen about a dozen doe elk, but only one buck, which I came on very suddenly wallowing in a puddle of water in the jungle out of which he leapt and fled with a terrific "trumpet." Another interesting sight I saw yesterday was a peacock "dancing" to his lady-love,



uttering fearful squawks, and shrill calls, of all of which she seemed to take not the slightest notice. During my round the next morning I saw in one herd containing some "poor" bucks one of the latter in the act of shedding his antlers, for one horn was hanging down over his eye ready to drop off! About a mile or so beyond this we came on a solitary buck whose head looked good (nothing to compare it with be it noted) so I dropped him by a neat shot at ninety yards. The head, however, though shapely, was only a miserable  $21\frac{3}{8}$  inches, but we cut him up and the men carried the meat to camp, which we reached at 9 o'clock. During the afternoon round, as late as 6-15, I came on a herd strung out across a flat bit of park, amongst which I saw what looked like a decent buck. It was very dark by now, and the distance was fully 200 yards, so I determined to get to a tree about fifty yards nearer, which I proceeded to do by stooping, crawling and getting along somehow until within ten yards of the tree when a wretched doe saw me.

I stood up at once and walked rapidly to the tree hoping she would not give the alarm before I reached it, but she began to run and so did the buck. The latter, however, not knowing what the alarm was, stopped after running about twenty yards, so I fired at him instantly and down he dropped. I paced the distance to be 150 yards, and his head measured 27 inches, but I felt I deserved a better trophy after such a good shot. Had to leave him for next day and we did not get back to camp until close on 7 o'clock. We got

in the meat and skin the next day and I went for a long final round, as I was leaving the morning after, but had no luck.

Up at 4 o'clock the next morning, packed up, away by daybreak and got home by 5-30 p.m. after, for the time of year an unexpectedly successful trip.

Towards the end of June I began to think of water-hole shooting, but there had been a rather unusual amount of rain in the northern low-country. However, a letter to my friend Mr. Godwin de Livera, the Revenue Officer of Tamankaduwa District, elicited a reply to the effect that Egodapattuwa was dry, so I journeyed to Polonnaruwa by car on 27th June. Sent my baggage off in a cart as soon as possible same day, and after breakfasting with the Revenue Officer I followed at about 2-30 p.m. catching up the cart at the ferry (Magamtota) over the Mahaweliganga. Took the baggage over in the ferry canoe, and, after taking off the wheels, the cart was cleverly balanced athwart the canoe, and safely brought across to save the trouble of having to send for carriers from Manampitiya.

As it was now too late to go any further I put up for the night in a temporary jungle-stick shelter, which had been erected on the river bank for the use of some official.

A fine breeze made the night very pleasantly cool and I had a long chat with old Kanavathie, the ferry-man, whom I have known for about 25 years. He lives in a native hut at the ferry, the only other building being a small Tamil temple

attended by a *Pusári* (priest). Old K. told me of a very interesting occurrence that he had seen last year.

During one night a herd of elephants came into an abandoned tobacco clearing adjoining the ferry and made such a tremendous noise that he and his family, the only people there at the time, were terrified so he got his gun and fired off the one and only charge he possessed, but this merely seemed to redouble the commotion. At daybreak he ventured as far as the ferry—about 100 yards from his hut—and looked into the tobacco clearing, which was close by, from the shelter of one of the big *kumbuk* trees on the river bank.

The elephants were still there—he said 40, may have been anything up to a dozen—bunched round one individual and all in a state of wild excitement.

The movements of the others enabled him to see that the centre animal, the cause of all the excitement, was a female in the very act of bringing forth a calf!

He saw the whole process, which was accompanied by wild stamping and trumpeting and rushing about on the part of the other elephants. When all was over he, most inconsiderately, shouted and yelled until they all scattered to the jungle close by, the mother, supported by two others, moving along with baby between her forelegs.

What a chance of a lifetime! I would have given much to have been able to see, and accurately note, the whole occurrence.

I left the river about 6 o'clock the next morning

and walked on to Manampitiya, reaching there at 7-30. Secured carriers at once, paid off the cart and left for Kosgahaulpota, the principal spring under the mountain, Gunner's Quoin. Arrived there, I found the Veddas were in a *chena* (clearing) half-a-mile further east, so pushed on to there and camped in a convenient spot under some fine trees after paying off the carriers. Questioning the Veddas, they could give me no news of water-holes, but the general opinion was "too much water about" as I had half expected. However, after getting camp comfortably established and assembling the requisites for the night, I set off with some men at 3-30 for Alakannagodepotaha. I found, however, on the way so much water in patches around Alakannagodelinda that I had very faint hope of any sport but pushed on to the *potaha* and established myself on the rock. Watched until 9 p.m., but, as nothing came, I then went to sleep as also did the men. At 10-15 some inner consciousness awoke me, and I sat up at once to find a bear at the water-hole! I did not wait to don my shooting specs (without which I cannot see much) but grabbed my rifle and fired at the bear, which yelled loudly and bolted so I was uncertain whether I had hit it or otherwise.

Nothing else came though we heard other bears in the distance later on.

At daybreak I found I had made a miss—too low, judging by the bullet-mark on the rock. Back to camp, breakfasted at 9 o'clock and then set out with some men on a tour of inspection but found too much water everywhere and not a chance of any

shooting. Found the track of an elephant close to camp, which had been troubling the Veddas for some weeks, so sent two of the men to follow, but they returned after some hours to report that the animal had gone away beyond Kudáulpota. Leopards had also been harassing the Veddas and had taken all their dogs and chickens lately !

I returned to Manampitiya the next day after distributing salt, rice, and currysuffs amongst the few Vedda families, their necessaries of life being "precarious."

I remembered I had held a license for some time to shoot two rogue elephants near here, but had made no use of it and one of the animals had been shot by somebody else. However, after spending the night in the gansabhawa house, I sent an old village Vedda out to prospect and he returned at 8 o'clock reporting an elephant in the nasty scrubby jungle between the wila and Gunner's Quoin, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the village. I had only my .303 "Savage"—no sort of a weapon for "real" elephant shooting, but off I went accompanied by the old Vedda and two Tamils from the village, both good men. The latter told me they did not like the jungle where the elephant lived as it was too thick and thorny, all undergrowth and few big trees.

I found the jungle to be all they had said as soon as I got into it, but by 9 o'clock we got within sound of the elephant, which we approached along a convenient dry sandy water-course.

By stooping right down, and peering along the ground, I eventually sighted bits of him about

twenty yards away, but could not pick out any part for a shot before he moved quietly on still feeding.

The ground was a cover of dry crackling leaves and dead sticks which made silent movement almost impossible even for the bare-footed natives, and, in addition to this, the regular south-west wind had dropped, leaving fitful zephyrs blowing all over the place. With due care we got near the elephant again, but he once more moved on, so we sat down for more than an hour to give him a chance to settle down. We set out again at 11-30, but came in sound of him in less than a quarter-of-a-mile, and located him under a biggish tree in a beastly thicket of small undergrowth—a most unpleasant place for an approach.

I spent an hour trying to get at him, but failed until a few favourable puffs of wind enabled me to get round to one side, whence I was able to see a part of him as he stood facing me, but completely behind the trunk of the one and only big tree. I got to within about fifteen yards, and watched my chance as he swayed about from side to side in the restless fashion peculiar to elephants, finally trying for the frontal shot during an extra wide “sway.” Failed to drop him, but got in a body shot as he turned with a terrific snort and bolted.

He did a fair amount of smashing branches, but stopped within sound and began throwing sand over himself though we could not see him. This stopping on his part alarmed the men, who said this was a “wicked” elephant, and I must say it surprised me, being an unusual proceeding

on the part of a wounded elephant other than a really wicked rogue. I was rather sceptical about the "wicked," as a real "bad'un" would have started hunting us right away, whereas this animal seemed uncertain what to do and undoubtedly had not winded us. I began to think that it was a case of that not very uncommon occurrence in Ceylon—a deaf elephant, and later events convinced me that I was right. After a brief stop the animal moved quietly on again and we followed with extreme care into some still worse scrubby jungle, not getting within sound of him again for about a quarter-of-a-mile. I crawled around in the abominable bush until I finally managed to sight a part of one back leg into which I promptly put a bullet. He gave a violent kick and moved on again with a snort, doing some more jungle smashing, but did not go far, as he was possibly suffering from the effect of my first body shot—or still wondering what was happening! We followed up again, finding that he had gone into an absolutely impenetrable thicket of bush, and I was prowling round this, looking for a way in, when he for the first time winded me—I had felt a breath of wind at my back the moment before and knew something would happen! And happen it did, with a suddenness that left me no time to think, for, with a tremendous snort, he came straight at me crashing through the bush like a tornado. I had not the faintest chance of stopping him with my .303 (though I was loaded with solid nickel-coated bullets) unless I killed him, but a lightning glance round showed me a smallish tree, a few feet

to my left, that offered a chance to slip behind it if I failed with my shot.

The next instant his great head, with ears spread, came crashing through the bush not more than twenty feet away and my attempt to hit the "bump" had no more effect on him than if I had been shooting with a peashooter! I leapt nimbly to one side—that is to say I fully intended to, but my foot caught in a creeper, or a root, and down I fell across his track! This was one of those moments when instinctive action works quicker than thought, for, with a tremendous wrench, I slewed my body round parallel to the track, and, the next instant, the elephant rushed past me, missing me by inches, his feet scattering earth and sticks all over me. I looked up at his great bulk as he passed and thought "will he stop and look for me," but, as he did not stop, I got up, jerked another cartridge into the magazine and put in a fine back-raker, before he had gone thirty yards, which caused his back legs to give way for a moment. He rushed on, however, veering round to my right in a half circle, and I put in two more body shots before he got away. I then began to wonder what had become of the men, but just then, saw one of the Tamils close by and we smiled at each other, being "still alive." He had been fairly close behind me when the charge occurred and had just time to flatten himself against a small tree when the elephant rushed past. The other Tamil turned up a few minutes later, but the Vedda did not arrive for some time. He had been holding my topee, together with a small cartridge bag,



with some skinning knives and oddments in it, when the elephant charged, and swore that, whichever way he ran, the elephant followed him! It so happened he had run round to my right at the same time as the elephant turned in its sweep round in same direction—hence the elephant appeared to be chasing him! He had dropped my topee and bag and it was some time before we found them. I wanted to follow the elephant at once, but the men flatly refused—they had had enough—so, as it was now 2-30 p.m. we returned to camp as I had had nothing to eat since 6-30 a.m. Though heavy rain came on during the night I went out to look for the elephant again first thing the next morning but, though we picked up the track where the “bust-up” occurred, we soon lost it where it crossed open park as all tracks had been completely washed out. I returned to Polonnaruwa that afternoon and home next day. I heard afterwards that the elephant returned to the edge of the *wila* a few days later and died there by the water, being very lame from the leg shot, and no doubt fatally injured by the body shots. I make no apology for this performance with a .303—it was entirely unpremeditated and merely undertaken out of pique at having failed to get any bear shooting.

I don't recommend a .303 for serious elephant shooting, though, of course, given opportunity for a certain shot at the vitals, a .303 will kill an elephant as surely as any bigger rifle, but it will not stop, or turn, him if not killed.

Three months crawl by before any more shooting can be enjoyed, but, by the beginning of October,

I am usually getting restless and planning my November outing. This year was no exception to the rule, but, for various reasons, I did not get away until the fourth week of November, visiting, once more, the Vettikachi reserve in Tamankaduwa. I knew other parties had been in there since 1st of November, but I hoped to be able to find something left in out-of-the-way corners.

Arrived at Kanthalay in the evening with all my baggage on my car as usual, I found that Sareef, head watcher, was in the reserve with two gentlemen, but old Perumal, the assistant watcher, was awaiting me. I was up by 4 o'clock next morning, got my cart, with the baggage, away by 4-40, and, after early tea, I started in the car with Perumal, but, instead of following the cart, we, after leaving the car, turned down a jungle track leading to the shooting country through Perumalmadu (large, breached, long-abandoned, tank), a longer way round than the cart track, but I hoped to get a shot on the way. I saw five lots of deer in various small open patches before we got to Perumalmadu, and at least two fine bucks, but did not get a shot; moreover the finest of the two good bucks seen was in velvet. In the very swampy bit of open in Perumalmadu we came on a nice herd of about thirty deer, including six bucks, and a careful stalk brought me to within about fifty yards of a fairly good buck half hidden in the thick soggy grass and bush so I had to take the shot off-hand. I heard the thud of the bullet, but the buck never even moved, so, concluding he was done for, I watched the fleeing herd to see if I could pick out another good buck

but failed to get a chance. I then turned my attention to the stricken buck just as he sank to the ground, but, when I approached, he got up and ran so I had to plug him again, which dropped him finally after going about fifty yards. Cut off his head, which measured  $28\frac{5}{8}$  inches, took some of the meat and pushed on by a very much overgrown track, through soaking wet undergrowth, to the Nikkewewa camp. Found the other shooting party there, and, as they were just leaving, I took over Sareef, but decided to push on to Godepotagala camp beyond which the country had, possibly, not been so much disturbed as around Nikkewewa. I got to Godepotagala by 1-30 p.m. and at once pitched camp as it looked like rain. Saw three lots of deer on the way from camp to camp, but no good heads. I went out to Mediwewa at 4 p.m. where I saw, and stalked, a fine herd of deer out in the clear open. I got to within 100 yards and spent about twenty minutes inspecting them, counting ten bucks, but none with a head over about 27 inches, so did not shoot. Including the bucks I counted sixty head in that herd, and in thirteen herds of deer seen by me today the grand total aggregated quite 200 head. Returned to camp without further incident. I calculated that I had walked not less than twenty miles this day and was wet through practically all the time.

I was up and out as early as usual the next morning, but, though I went for a good round in very gamey country, I did not see very many deer and not a head worth a shot, so returned to camp by 8-45. There was a fairly heavy down-pour of



CAMP KITCHEN, COOK AND COOLY.



rain during the afternoon until about 3-30, when it cleared up and I went out. Going by way of Mediweva, I again saw the herd of sixty head, and, further on, in parks beyond their ground, I saw several other herds, but did not get a shot, or saw nothing good enough.

I left camp at 6 o'clock next morning to visit the Hammillewa country, and found part of the track, as usual, trodden into muddy "wells" by elephants. In sandy parts of the track I saw an amazing variety of spoor—elk, spotted deer, pigs, leopard, two bear tracks, buffaloes, porcupines and jackals, showing that this path is fairly well perambulated during the night time. When we got into the open country I found the grass was hopelessly long and I saw very few deer, but, in one park I saw, about 75 yards away, a magnificent elephant strolling about as though the whole place belonged to him—as indeed it did! Back to camp at 11-30. Rain came down very heavily from mid-day until 3 p.m. so I did not go out until 3-30, but again I had no luck, though I saw a good many deer and some fairish bucks, at none of which was I able to get a shot. I found the deer all very alert, no doubt due to the considerable amount of shooting that had been done prior to my coming. Another thing—I had on this trip, for some reason or other, brought only khaki clothes, for shooting purposes, instead of my usual green clothes and the khaki seemed to catch the eyes of the deer at the slightest movement or even when I was standing still.

For stalking purposes, therefore, there is no

comparison—darkish clothing is necessary and, from my own experience, preferably a green colour. Without doing any shooting I moved camp back to Nikkewewa the next day, to try my luck at that side of the country, as it had now been “at rest” for some days.

Out by 5-30 the next morning, I saw a fine herd streaking across the *daman*, including a number of good bucks, but they gave me no chance. Further on I saw a herd of twelve wild buffalo, but did not disturb them as I had no license for shooting them. On my way back towards camp I stalked a good herd of deer, standing or lying about near the edge of a block of jungle, and got into excellent position behind a fallen tree, from which I spotted a fine buck lying down, so hidden by grass and small bush that I could not get a shot. I sat there waiting for him to get up, trying by a variety of small noises, whistling and so on, to rouse him but in vain. The wind was perfect and the deer were absolutely undisturbed but, suddenly, something inside the near-by jungle so startled them, that, simultaneously, they all sprang up and fled like the wind! I think it must have been a leopard, approaching down wind, as I had heard one roaring a short time before in the jungle some distance beyond them. As by this time we had no fresh meat I shot a doe shortly after the above incident fairly near camp and had all the meat carried in—doe meat is better than old buck or indeed any buck for eating purposes.

I had better luck the next day, however, for I secured a nice buck not long after I had gone out.

I stalked a small herd feeding under big trees near the jungle edge, but had a very troublesome job to get near them, taking quite an hour to get within range, as the does were very suspicious and "on the bark" the whole time. Eventually they saw me and ran, but the buck remained for a look round which was fatal, for I dropped him in his tracks by a 92-yard shot. The head was quite a good one of 29 inches. Leaving old Perumal and a Moorman to cut it up, Sareef and I went on further, and in less than a quarter-of-a-mile we came on an elephant within thirty yards of us under some trees, scraping up earth with his fore-feet, but we did not disturb him. A little later we sighted a herd of deer under some big trees bordering some rather scrubby jungle, and with them I had a very curious experience. The approach was not easy, but, by taking every precaution, I eventually got on to the slope of an ant-hill about eighty yards from the deer and lay there watching for a chance. I soon made out a nice buck, and fixed my attention on him, but after remaining behind an ant-hill for some time he wandered about amongst the tree trunks without offering a chance. Eventually he stopped, broad-side on, in such a position that I could only see his hind quarters, so I promptly fired at the pelvis but he was, of course, still able to run off with the other deer into the jungle, dragging a useless hind leg. I walked quietly towards the jungle which was bordered, be it noted, by a strip of longish grass and small bush about twenty yards wide, and soon picked up a blood track. When I came to the edge of this strip the deer, which had apparently



stopped just within the jungle edge, began running about, as I thought at the sight of me but, suddenly, to my considerable surprise, my buck came running through the strip of grass and bush, haltingly, but at a fair speed, straight towards me. I put up my rifle at once, and, with my eye glued to the sight, followed him until he swerved to pass me at about fifteen yards when I plugged him again, but he went on about thirty yards before he dropped. Just as he fell some slight sound made me look round, and there, just where the deer had been when I fired my shot, was a magnificent leopard standing looking at me!

The moment he caught my eye he turned and fled to the jungle, my snap-shot at him being a clean miss! What had obviously happened was this:—the commotion inside the jungle, as I approached it, was caused by the deer running into the leopard, so to speak, which at once singled out, and went for, the wounded buck as leopards in shooting country very soon learn what the sound of a shot means!

As the buck came straight towards me, half hidden in the bushy long grass, the leopard must have been exactly behind him hidden by the grass, and absolutely invisible to me once I got my eye to my rifle sights seeing nothing but the object buck! Had I seen the leopard I would most certainly have withheld my fire until he had downed the buck as he certainly would have done in a few more seconds.

What a chance missed! I could have seen the leopard effect his kill and could then have bagged him and the buck as well! The only

faint consolation I had was that the buck carried a head of 30½ inches. It *should* have occurred to me, from the commotion in the jungle, that something was after the deer, and I suppose the sight of the buck running blindly towards me should have made me aware that something was chasing him but the whole thing occurred in the space of seconds only.

Sareef swore that he knew it was a leopard in the jungle (which I took *cum grano*) but he, being to one side, had seen the leopard and could not understand how I had failed to see it until I explained matters.

This experience ended my stay and we packed up for home the next day.

Sending the cart back by the usual track I went by way of Perumalmadu again, with Sareef and Perumal, but failed to bag anything. My car met us at the main road, whence I went on to Kantalay resthouse for a change and clean up, and home in the afternoon.

## Chapter IX.

### BEAR SHOOTING IN THE NORTH-CENTRAL PROVINCE IN 1918.

#### DEER SHOOTING IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCE.

IN AUGUST this year I paid another visit to my favourite Vedda country, the Egodapattuwa of Tamankaduwa. On this occasion, as will be seen, I made the great mistake of taking only my .303 rifle with me, for I made an awful hash of the finest chances at a water-hole any man in Ceylon has ever had! I motored, with all my baggage on my car as usual, to Polonnaruwa; sent the things off in a cart by 12-30 p.m., lunched at the resthouse and followed at 1-30, catching up with my cart at Gallella village.

Arrived at the river I found the water so low that I waded across, the depth being nowhere more than six inches above my knees—a thing I had never experienced before. I have seen natives wade across often enough, but the water usually reached to about their chests in depth, so on those occasions I used the ferry canoe.

Arrived at the other side I stopped for a yarn with old Kanavathie, the ferry-man, as he knows every single thing that happens in the district. In particular I asked him about the death of Mr. Chase Wiggin (the late Superintendent of Minor

Roads of this Province) which I alluded to in chapter VIII. His version of the occurrence, which is probably correct as he would get it from actual witnesses, is as follows:—An elephant had killed a boy at Dástota, so Wiggin, being at Polonnaruwa at the time, went after it at once and got news of it near Yakkúre. He took some men of that village with him and they soon located the elephant in rather scrubby jungle not far from the village. W. made his approach and downed the animal with his first shot, but it got up and rushed off, he following and pumping shots into it with his repeater. The elephant, after eight shots had been fired at it according to Kanavathie, finally turned on him, mad with pain and rage, and W., when he failed to stop it with another shot, ran behind a small tree, the only one available. The elephant rushed up to the tree, seized it, and Wiggin, together, with its trunk, shook, and kicked at him and the tree, finally leaving him and rushing off into the jungle. The unfortunate man when first seized called to the men to bring him his other rifle but they had all bolted to safety. When the elephant left him he fell inert at the foot of the tree so the villagers at once made a sort of stretcher of jungle sticks, and carried him to Polonnaruwa, about ten miles distant, but he died before he got there. Thus died a gallant sportsman and one whose services had been exceedingly useful in many ways to the Government Agent of the Province. He was buried at Polonnaruwa just in the angle at the point where the Hatámune path joins the Polonnaruwa main road near the 26th mile. His sad

death exemplifies the considerable risk run by tackling an elephant with a light rifle, for I believe I am right in saying that most of his shooting was done with a .303 rifle only. The elephant was found dead some weeks later. After a little more yarning with old Kanavathie I pushed on to Manampitiya, arriving there about 5-30 p.m. and putting up in the gansabhawa bungalow as usual.

After a pleasantly cool night I left Manampitiya at about 7-15 a.m., after paying off my cart, and pushed on with seven carriers for Kosgahulpota. On the way I turned off the path to visit a linda at which I had once shot a bear, and, just as we got in sight of the place I saw a pig standing near it looking at us. The distance was about forty yards, so I fired at him quickly off-hand and hit him, but he bolted off. There was a good blood track, however, so a brief search soon brought us to the pig, which was lying dead, after a run of about fifty yards, shot in the chest. It turned out to be a fair-sized boar with good tusks, so we pulled him out of the bush to the open by the linda and left him "to be called for." Went on to Ulpota, but found nobody near the spring, so pushed on to the chena (clearing) where the Veddas happened to be at the time. There had been a considerable fall of rain immediately around here, four days before my arrival, which sounded bad for my chance of water-hole shooting.

I went that afternoon to Alakannagodepotaha, but found the pool very full of water and there was a lot of water about on the way there.

However, I stayed there all night, but not a

thing came near the water, and I heard no sound of any animals other than spotted deer calling in the open parks.

Saw a nice herd of spotted deer on our way back to camp, including two good bucks.

Found the old Udaiyar of Horewila at the chena, having called to pay his respects to me, as I have known him for many years.

I sent off some men to examine various water-holes, but they reported too much water and nothing drinking, so by the advice of the Udaiyar I set off to visit Bellonwala, a temporary Vedda settlement about five miles north. Some three miles on the way, however, I met my little Vedda friend, Arachchi, hobbling along by the help of a stick, accompanied by his wife, on his way to see me. He reported no chance of a shoot, and, in answer to my enquiry, said that, when felling some jungle, a tree had fallen on his foot and crushed his big toe. Returned to camp, where I examined his foot, washed it in strong "pot-permang." covered it with carbolic ointment, bandaged it neatly and sent him off, with a letter, to the dispenser at Manampitiya, with strict orders to remain there until my return to that village. That night I tried a watch at the linda, where I had shot the pig the day I arrived, but nothing came, so my trip seemed likely to be a "wash-out." However, on my way back to camp, we suddenly saw a bear meandering through some scrub on its belated way to its fastnesses in the mountain (Gunner's Quoin) which towered above us. I ran forward and plugged it the moment I got a fair sight, getting a good broad-

side shot which killed it at once. It turned out to be a female and deserved its fate for being out too long after daylight! I went a long round this morning in search of a "dry enough" water-hole, visiting Gónandamana, Nelumbuhitanagala and Dambáneulpota, but found no "sign" anywhere, so returned to camp about 1 p.m. very hot and tired, having been on the tramp since daybreak. I did not go out again that day, but the next morning, accompanied by a party of Vedda guides I set off to visit the wonderful Márawidiya caves high up in the face of one of the great cliffs of Gunner's Quoin. After a pleasant walk of some miles through plain and jungle, the mountain towering above us all the way, we began to ascend a long slope of rock full of trees and scattered boulders. As we got higher the jungle became thicker and the boulders more huge and numerous, some of them having drip-ledges cut on them—evidence of former occupation by Buddhist monks. The track in places seemed polished by centuries of use in bygone days, and, in some of the steeper parts, stones had been roughly placed as steps. As we got higher we left ordinary jungle behind and entered a thick growth of a species of bamboo which was not very easy to get through and the steep slope was covered with fallen leaves dangerously slippery to walk on—so much so that we usually "scuffled" our feet about, until we found the bare earth, for each step. Above the bamboo thicket we reached the last steep slope and made our way along a very narrow ledge under a high cliff to the first cave, which is a huge hollow under a vast over-hang of the cliff.

A drip-ledge is cut on the brow of the overhang to prevent water trickling down into the cave, and in the cave itself are the remains of the first temple, which is merely an oblong room with front and side walls built of brick, with the rock itself forming the back wall. The walls are all plastered, and, at one time, have been painted throughout. Considerable traces of the frescoes still remain, but the walls are now very dilapidated.

Imagine the carrying of the bricks, lime, and other building material up the fearfully steep mountain side a thousand or more years ago! Religious devotion, forced labour, or high pay—which?

The view from the platform of the cave was superb—a vast sea of forest and plain, studded here and there with smaller rocky hills, the plains extending, miles and miles, to the great mountain ranges of Matale East, the Knuckles, and Medamahanuwara on the west, and south-west, and to the sea at Batticaloa in the east, the north being closed to our sight by the mountain itself.

The cliff side dropped down sheer below us, for many feet, into the dense jungle growth of the lower slopes, and towered in awe-inspiring overhang far above us.

The outer platform had obviously had a verandah roof over it at one time as the sockets for the rafters are there, cut in the rock face, whilst the ground is littered with broken ancient roofing tiles. There is an inscription in large-sized cave characters cut high up in the rock under the drip ledge.



At the far end of the platform is a deep internal cleft containing water at the bottom of it, and you pass this by means of a built-up brick platform on your way to the next cave. Having crossed the brick platform you make your way very cautiously along a razor back ledge under the cliff for some distance, and then pass through a remarkable tunnel which leads you out on to the platform of the second cave—an overhang similar to the first one containing a more dilapidated building, in the same style, with the remains of two small quartz sedent figures in it. High up in the overhanging rock-roof a fine inscription is cut on a squared slab, which, according to Mr. H. C. P. Bell, c.c.s., late Government Archaeologist, is a script of the 11th century and relates that Queen Sundara Maha Devi improved the path, or track, to these caves by pavements and chains for the most dangerous parts, and gifted a certain village to the 500 priests of the mountain.

There is also a beautifully cut cave-character inscription high up in the rocky roof. These cave-characters, according to Mr. Bell, date back to some centuries B.C., so that these caves were occupied, and perhaps even then not originally, well over 2,000 years ago! From this platform we pass through another tunnel in the rock, along another risky ledge into another great overhang containing a deep, beautifully clear, pool of water which obviously never dries up as the sun never reaches it. I and the Veddas all had a good drink of the clear cool water. Beyond this pool was still another overhanging rock with an uneven hollow under it





full of remains of bricks but no visible building. The tunnels puzzled me—I could not determine whether they were natural or artificial, but, in any case, the whole place is amazing and one fails to conceive how it was ever found originally! Apart from Mr. H. C. P. Bell, and one or two Government Officials, very few Europeans have ever visited these caves, and I do not recommend anybody with a weak head for heights attempting to visit them. After admiring the wonderful view in detail, and getting the names of various localities from the Veddas, we made our way down again.

Curiously enough, when passing one of the great boulder caves on the way down, we noticed that between our going up and returning a piece of rock inside the cave had fallen from the roof—would have been an unpleasant surprise for any hermit occupant! Mr. H. C. P. Bell published extracts from his notes and reports about all the caves and ruins in and about Gunner's Quoin (Dimbulágalakande) in the "Ceylon Antiquary," Volume 3, in 1917.\*

In the afternoon about 4-30 I set off, with some men to watch at a rock-hole we had passed on our yesterday morning's tramp, and at which we had noted good bear tracks. Our "hide," at the top of a steep slope of rock above the water-hole, was ideal if anything had come, but not a living thing came near the place.

After 1 a.m., as mosquitoes were rather bad close to the hole, I and the men moved up to the top of the rock, some distance away, where we slept peacefully and comfortably until daybreak.

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On our way back to camp we came on three pigs in an abandoned chena, one of which I shot. Arrived at camp, I found some of the Veddas had gone off to inspect Mádamana, but I had little hope of any good news.

However, they returned in the evening and reported water everywhere except at Mápotaha which, they said, was outside the lately-fallen rain zone and innumerable bears were drinking! I did not quite believe all they said (though I have usually found them exceedingly truthful) but decided to go there the next day as it is a likely hole if conditions are right.

I wandered around the northern base of the mountain at daybreak, in the hope of meeting another "late night" bear, but in vain, so returned to camp for breakfast before starting for Mápotaha. Left camp with six men at 1-10 p.m., blazing sun and intensely hot. We struck the dry zone about six miles from camp just before we reached Nametaga, under which rock we managed to get a little water by digging in the sand. We covered the hole by rolling a hollow log on to it and I was greatly interested, on my return journey next day to note that the hollow log had been pulled away from the water-hole by a leopard! We reached Mápotaha at about 4-30 p.m., finding the country around scorchingly dry, and only a small puddle of muddy water left in the potaha on the slope of the rock.

This rock is a curious outcrop, as, unlike the general run of slab-rocks which are usually undulating slab and nothing else, it is a mass of loose boulders all over its summit and upper slopes,

the lower slopes only being bare rock. It is surrounded by jungle on all sides, but is close to open park on the east side. Those of the men who are not immediately wanted camp among the boulders to leeward of the water-hole, whilst I take my stand behind a boulder commanding the hole, and having other boulders on each side of, and behind, me. The boulders back of my station are the highest on the rock, so I place a Vedda on the top of the highest one as a sentry as I cannot see every part of the approach slopes from where I stand. The night was full moon, and, as soon as the sun went down, the moonlight in a cloudless sky was wonderfully brilliant.

Romantic, I suppose would describe the situation, for there was I, not within fifty miles of any other European, on a rock in practically trackless jungle, accompanied by six more or less unsophisticated jungle-dwelling Veddas, waiting to kill whatever might come along in the shape of bear or leopard—though I don't think romance can apply to anything but the time and place! It was intensely hot until the sun went down, and nothing came before that time, which made me rather sceptical about future arrivals as the first bears, or bear, coming to such a remote place as this, usually arrive just before dusk. However, at 7-30 two bears came wandering up the rock from the west-side and halted, almost side by side, just at the edge of the rock overhanging the water-hole. My first shot dropped one of them in its tracks and the other being, as I said, on the very edge of the water-hole, fell into the hollow but scrambled out roaring.

I fired twice at it as it rushed about, and think I hit it once, but it got clean away, though it remained in the jungle, near by, roaring and moaning for some time. The reason of this was, I think, because this bear was a nearly full-grown cub and the one I had shot was its mother.

The first one shot was absolutely disabled, but as it took a long time dying, moaning and groaning, I walked over and slipped my hunting knife into it which effectually silenced it for ever. Nothing more happened until 8-50, when another bear came up from the north side and I fired at it just as it reached the edge of the water-hole.

Without a sound it dashed full-speed through the water-hole hollow, and rushed across the rock slope in front of me, but my second shot laid it out, as though struck by lightning, dead as a door-nail.

By this time I was very "cock-a-hoop," but I was to get several rude awakenings and shocks to my faith in a .303 as a water-hole gun! At 10-45 another bear came up from the north side which I downed with my first shot; plugged him again and he tied himself into knots, roaring his loudest, hit him again and—he got up and bolted forthwith!

At 2 a.m. a bear came up the slope out of the hollow on my left (south) side without a sound, and stopped at the sight of the dead bear (the second one killed) lying on the rock. I fired, hit it, and it fell, but got up at once and disappeared down the slope. At 2-25 another bear came up the slope on my right (north) side and I knocked it over with my first shot, hit it again with a

second, but missed a third shot as it, too, bolted away. By this time I was the sickest water-hole shooter in Ceylon, full of disgust at myself, and full of distrust of my beloved little "Savage" .303 as a night weapon! At 3-25 a bear came out on the rock on my left rear some distance off, so I climbed on to the topmost boulder and had a shot at it which hit, I think, judging from its indignant roars, but off it went! At 4-15 I shot an enormous porcupine by mistake, as it had got rather hazy by now. At 4-40 a bear, possibly the original nearly full-grown cub of the one first killed, came wandering around the lower slope of the rock so I walked out, until I could see it fairly plainly, and had a shot but think I missed it. At 6 a.m. broad daylight, sun shining, a bear came cautiously out of the jungle on my right front and walked up to the edge of the water-hole where it stopped, in perfect position for a shot, about three-quarters face to me. I aimed carefully for the point where neck and shoulder meet and knocked him head over heels, but he got up roaring, bolted down the rock, and, though I caught him fair in the stern with a second shot, rolling him head over heels, he got clean away! The Veddas and I then took up, and followed, three fine blood tracks, one after the other, but they soon ceased and tracking on the brick-hard dry ground became an impossibility. Those three bears, at least, would probably die, but I had not the satisfaction of being able to find them and I thus failed to take advantage of the most wonderful night at a water-hole I have ever had, or am ever likely to have again!



This lesson teaches me that I must, in future, have a gun of not less than 12-bore once more for water-hole shooting—a light rifle is very evidently of little use for such work. After a couple of hours vain searching we set off back to camp eight miles away, had a hurried breakfast there, packed up my chattels, paid off my hunters, took on others as carriers and got away by 11 a.m. on my return journey. Reached Manampitiya 12-30 p.m., interviewed the dispenser *re* Arachchi, who was there and doing well, and then, finding the Manampitiya men were all away, but my good little Veddas agreeing, to my surprise, to carry through to Polonnaruwa, I pushed on again at 1 p.m. Arrived at the Mahaweliganga I found a fair flood coming down—rain up-country evidently—so old Kanavathie ferried me over, and at the other side I lay down, just as I was in shirt and trousers in the river as a refresher. This cooled me down for the horribly hot seven miles to Polonnaruwa, which place I reached at 4-30 p.m.

The carriers arrived 5 p.m. and the resthouse keeper, a new man, low-country Sinhalese, stared at them in amazement when I told him they were Veddas—for I must admit they looked a curiously savage lot out of the jungle environment. I paid them liberally and sent them off quite happy after their fifteen-mile carry. My total tramp had been not less than 23 miles.

I found a note at the resthouse from my old friend W. who had been there with his brother for two nights before, and had each shot a leopard in the pokunas amongst the ruins of the ancient

city. I loaded up my car, and got away at 5-10, but went straight into a terrific thunderstorm, and torrents of rain, which lasted all the 27 miles to Habarane. Close to the latter place, at dusk, and within 100 yards of the main road, I nearly barged into a large herd of spotted deer standing in the road, causing a fine commotion as I ran the car up to them. It rained at intervals nearly all the way to Matale, and, owing to occasional trouble with my lamps, I did not get home until 9-30 p.m. after two days and a night of, more or less, strenuous travel and occupation. There was, of course, no particular need for such a forced journey, but I knew rain was coming, and, the shooting being over, I wanted to get home as quickly as possible.

If the very heavy downpour of rain had caught me napping, say at Manampitiya, I would have had a very wet and muddy tramp to Polonnaruwa the next day.

I find I have only one more shooting trip to record for the year, and this was another visit to Tunukkay, Northern Province, in the first week of November. I only possessed one game license, as this visit occurred at the time referred to in chapter I, when the issue of more than one license per applicant had been stopped, so I took my shotgun with me, intending to do a little shooting at anything in the shape of game birds, hares, and such-like. I motored up the north road, with all my baggage on board, and stopped on the way, after about ninety miles' journey, to dispose of a packet of sandwiches—preferable to wasting a couple

of hours at a resthouse— and also there was a tempting little tank close by which might contain something shootable.

Having fed I got out my shot-gun and cartridges, called up a few village boys and strolled into the bed of the tank. Snipe there were none, but I found a lot of golden plover about which gave me excellent sport, for I bagged eight of them in about a quarter-of-an-hour, and also secured one whistling teal—thus ensuring a nice dinner when I got to Mánkulam resthouse.

I am reminded of a small incident that occurred when I was passing through Matale which rather amused me. I called at the store of the Tamil chetty who supplies rice to the estate to take on a small bag of rice for my trip, and when putting the bag in the car the chetty said something to my old camp-man, Meiyán, which made the latter smile. I asked the chetty what he wanted and he told me he had asked Meiyán to bring him back the leg of a peacock, if possible, as it was “ a splendid medicine for the bad sickness ” (influenza !). I arrived at Mánkulam about 3 p.m., after passing through a heavy shower on the way, finding not much rain but everything fresh and green. Arranged about a cart for which, with driver, I was charged Rs. 3 per day or Re. 1 more than I usually pay elsewhere.

Got up at 4-30 the next morning and away at 5-30. The cart bulls were as lean as skeletons but travelled well, the cart and load being light, so I decided to go right through to Tunukkay, thirteen miles, without a stop, as the weather

looked like rain, and I did not want to get stuck on that flat mud road, which would certainly happen in the case of heavy rain. I enjoyed a little shotgun shooting on the way—I saw two red deer, called up and shot five jungle cock, bagged one snipe, missed a long shot at a hare, and missed another jungle cock—pleasant interludes on this interminably straight shadeless road.

I reached Tunukkay at 11-30, but found the bungalow keeper ill—after-effects of fever and influenza from which the whole village seemed to have suffered but, luckily, lightly.

I doled out medicines to the coughing villagers, dosed the bungalow keeper heavily with quinine and arsenic, put him on a milk diet as there are hundreds of cattle in the village, and had the satisfaction of seeing him greatly recovered before I left. These little attentions are not usually forgotten by the recipients. I did not go out in the afternoon, and the night was hot and close with much thunder and lightning in the distance.

I was out by daybreak the next morning, going round by the Tenniyankulam road and the big plains, but saw nothing—neither the great herds of deer, nor the elephants, were there, this time, probably because of the long spell of dry weather just ended, and also this part of the country was still very dry.

As a little rain had fallen the black soil was in its usual sticky condition, clogging one's feet and making walking extremely tiring. After breakfast at 11 o'clock eye-flies and every other possible species of fly drove me into bed under the mosquito net until 3 p.m., when I went out again.

Going towards Murungan tank we came on a very big herd of deer in one of the nastiest of the many nasty thorny scrub patches, but I managed to get to within easy shot by a careful approach and sat down behind a tree for due inspection. They were so bunched up together, and moving about, that, though I saw several really good heads, I could not define their bodies. After a while, however, I thought I had accurately spotted the body of a good buck and fired at it, but made a clean miss. There was a tremendous scurry as the herd fled in all directions, and, on walking up to the place, I found, that, though I had missed my buck, my shot had killed a small yearling buck which had evidently been some distance beyond the one I had fired at. Further on, in the old Murungan paddy-fields, I saw a grand boar, but did not get a shot at him. Saw some elephant tracks, and also met with such a number of hares, as I walked along, that I began to keep count of them, but gave up after I had seen twelve, though I fancy I saw not less than twenty! On our way back the men with me cut up and carried in as much as possible of the deer meat. I got up at 4-30 as usual, and was out before daylight, the next morning, going to Murungan again. Saw nothing on the way until we were going along the jungle path, between the tank and the old paddy-fields, when we passed within twenty yards of a small family of elephants that had just entered the thick thorny scrub on our right. One of my trackers promptly bolted back along the path, but I and the other man walked quietly past, nothing happening.

About a quarter of a mile further on, in the old paddy-fields, we saw eight other elephants out in the open feeding, about eighty yards away. They were of the small, fat, tubby type I have usually seen about here, 7 to 8 feet in height, probably, at the shoulder, and I watched them until they got a whiff of wind, which sent them shuffling off into the scrub with much snorting and rumbling.

A little further on we saw a female elephant with a small calf, about forty yards away, quietly feeding, so did not disturb them. After that I spent a long time trying to get within shot of a good herd of deer, but they would keep to the bush, so I failed to get near them. I also saw many fine peacocks, but they are far too wide-awake to permit of a chance of a shot, even with a rifle, unless one can be caught unawares, which does not often happen, however. Back to camp after a blank, but very interesting, morning.

I went out again about 3 p.m., going back along the Mánkulam road for about one and a half miles and then turning northward by a buffalo track in the scrubby jungle.

About a quarter-of-a-mile in we passed very close to a big elephant just inside the scrub on our left—so close that the men were rather frightened but I told them to walk quietly and nothing happened. The track showed this to be a much bigger elephant than is usually met with around here, and I would not be very keen on trying to shoot one in the horrible thorny scrub jungle.

Further on we crossed some dry paddy-fields under a tank, made for the bund, crawled quietly

up and peeped over the top to see if there were any deer in the dry tank bed. There was a small herd, but, as wind was blowing towards them, we hurried further along under the bund, to get out of it, and I then peeped over again.

A whiff of our wind had evidently reached them, from our first position, for they were restless, and began walking towards us, eventually breaking into a run and coming right up to within twenty feet of where I lay on the bank before they found out what was wrong and bolted! The buck was a poor one so I did not fire at him. Their alarm did not disturb another lot of deer at the far side of the tank, though I failed to approach near enough to find out if there was a warrantable buck amongst them, as they remained under a very open clump of jungle trees allowing of no cover for a stalk. Heavy rain came on shortly after this so we made for the village by way of their paddy-fields and once more I saw a great number of hares—I have never seen so many anywhere before. Jungle cock abound everywhere, and I usually see a few snipe on my rounds in any wet patch I happen to pass. Out at daybreak the next morning, I went about three-quarters of a mile along the Mánkulam road, then, turning south, went about east-south-east through a few abandoned tanks and their surroundings, tramping through mud and water most of the way, seeing a few deer, but nothing worth a shot. Saw a lot of hares, as usual, and any amount of cranes in wet patches, but nothing shootable, and got back to camp by 8-30.

I went out again at 2-30, as heavy rain was

working up from the north-east, going towards Murungan as the most likely place, just now, to find good herds. At about 3 p.m. we sighted a herd scattered about in the open scrub, and here be it noted that in this type of country the moment you sight deer they probably spot you at the same time, so that it is generally fatal to manoeuvre for position. Best plan is to sit down at once where you are, or crawl to an adjacent scrub tree, if possible, and "wait and see," as the deer, if not disturbed, will feed about so that, in time, you may be able to locate a good buck.

In the present case I managed to get to a convenient little tree, whose trunk afforded my favourite support for a shot, and soon spotted some good bucks, at one of which I fired, dropping him in his tracks. The herd scattered, some running close up to me, and I saw another good buck stop, for one fatal moment, so plugged him, hearing the bullet go home with a good thud, but he ran off. However, I was sure of him so paced the distances of the shots finding the first to be 92 yards, and the second 136 yards, which was a good distance for what had been a shot taken with lightning quickness. We found the second one 40 yards further on and the heads turned out to be  $28\frac{1}{2}$  inches and  $28\frac{3}{4}$  inches respectively—good average Ceylon heads. Heavy rain came on just then so we took the heads, and one haunch and returned to camp wet to the skin.

I went for a round the next morning but failed to get a shot at anything, and, as I intended leaving for home the next day, I did not go after deer during



the evening, but merely potted around with my shot-gun, bagging two hares out of a few shot at rather long distances. I left the village, walking ahead of my cart, at 5-15 the next morning, finding that although it had not rained during the night, the flat, earthy, sandy, road was very soft and difficult to even walk on, and therefore much more difficult for my cart. About two miles on we passed within twenty yards of an elephant just inside the scrub bordering the road, and the big elephant which I had passed close by in the scrub a few days ago had walked for fully three miles along the road during the night. I shot three jungle cock on the way, and, in one case, the cart being quite close, I called Meiyān to come in and pick up the cock I had shot. I had actually fired three shots at this bird, so there had been plenty of noise not to mention my shouting to Meiyān; yet when he came into the jungle, and walked past me to pick up the bird, a fine leopard sprang out of a bush, just in front of him, and bounded away! The rain of the previous day had been very heavy, so the going was exceedingly bad, the bulls having great difficulty in getting the light cart along. At one place a tree had fallen across the road and it took us a full hour to cut a track round it as we only had my camp hatchet for the job. However, we eventually got to Mánkulam at 1 p.m., having been eight hours in doing the thirteen miles, and by 1-30 I had changed, paid off the cart, packed the car and away for home. Found any amount of water out all along the road and struck torrential rain near Anuradhapura, but I got home safely by 7-40 p.m.

after a run of 132 miles. The trip, all round, was enjoyable if not very successful but no more of Tunukkay for me in the rainy season !

## Chapter X

### DEER SHOOTING IN THE NORTH-CENTRAL PROVINCE DURING 1920.

I WENT Home in June, 1919, and was far too busy to do any shooting in the months previous to my departure. Returning to the island in June, 1920, I managed to get away for a shot at bears in July, visiting, once more, my favourite "Vedda" country in Tamankaduwa. Nothing, however, of any particular interest occurred during the trip, so I do not propose to give an account of it. The conditions were not very good, as my "best" water-holes drew blank, but, at one particular place in a dry water-course bed not usually productive, I managed to kill three bears in two nights, watching, with an interval of two nights between the visits.

On this trip I found, to my regret, that several of my former best Vedda trackers were dead and gone, those remaining not being particularly good hunters, and the little communities containing more aliens than before.

My old friend H. S. Cameron (who had been absent from Ceylon for some years on war service) being with me on this occasion, we seized the opportunity to visit the wonderful Mārāwidiya caves, in the cliffs of Gunner's Quoin (see chapter IX for account of my former visit).

To my sorrow a railway is now being traced and constructed from the northern line of railway near Kurunegala across country to Batticaloa and also to Trincomalee, which will cross the Mahaweli-ganga near the old ferry, and pass a few miles north of Dimbulágalakande (Gunner's Quoin). This line will probably mean such an influx of coolies and all sorts during construction that the country around will be ruined utterly so far as sport is concerned and will completely lose its present remoteness—the pity of it, from *my* point of view! However, I cannot start criticising the railway so will proceed with my more legitimate work of recording shooting experiences.

As I had not done any deer shooting in the Vettikachi reserve since November, 1917, and, as I wanted to settle some matters concerned with the watchers, I made arrangements to visit that part of the country for the first week in November, 1920.

I motored to Kanthalay and pitched a camp near the overflow, at about the 85½ mile, where Sareef (the Game Protection Society's head watcher) and his assistant, together with a cart and three coolies, met me. This plan saved a full hour's travel for the next morning, as it is close to the turn-off to the jungle, and if I had put up at the resthouse, I would have had 2½ miles extra walk.

I took my car to the resthouse, however, after unloading my baggage, and walked back to the camp. Roused everybody at 4 a.m. next day, and, after packing my things, leaving the cart to follow by the usual track, I set off at 4-30, with Sareef and

assistant, to enter the country by a track through Perumalmadu, a considerably longer walk than the ordinary track and harder going. In, probably, nine years out of ten heavy thunderstorms in October will have usually filled all water-holes, started the streams, and partly filled the tanks, but on this occasion there had been no such rain and I found the country very dry with no water about anywhere.

On the way I caught sight of a lean leopard crossing a burnt open patch, but it was too far off for a shot. We did not see any deer until we got into the small patch of open in the bed of the Perumalmadu tank, and there we sighted a nice herd, most of them lying down under some scattered trees.

Spotted a buck which Sareef swore was a thirty-incher, but which I thought might be less though it looked magnificent compared with three other poorer heads we saw in the herd. It was lying down over 100 yards away, and between it and us lay the other three bucks and several does so that the approach was anything but easy.

I crept along very carefully, as there was not the faintest chance of a "walking" approach, until I got to within about eighty yards, beyond which I could not move, so I sat up under the shade of a small tree, and watched for a full hour — from 8 to 9 o'clock and a blazing hot morning. Every buck and doe in sight except the one I wanted got up at intervals, stretched themselves, moved on a little and lay down again, two of them in so doing completely covering my buck! Eventually

a slight shift of wind startled them and they all jumped up, standing to attention, but my buck was still covered by the others. I sat tight and they soon relaxed their attention, so much so that two bucks between me and my hoped-for quarry, began a playful pushing match, upon which the latter stalked up in a most lordly way and separated them. He then stood offering me a lovely chance, but, as I had been sitting at the "ready, present" for full five minutes, and was shaky with the strain of it, I made a clean miss! The herd ran about a little here and there, not very alarmed, but my buck never moved so I reloaded, took a grip of myself, drew a deep breath and got him all right with the next shot. The head was a nice shapely one, but only taped 28 inches—much to Sareef's surprise, and I admit I thought it might be more. We cut off the head, also as much meat as the assistant could carry, and pushed on for camp, seeing a great many deer on the way after getting into the main open country. I tried a couple of very long shots at two good bucks, but missed them. Arrived at camp rather tired after being on the go for eight and a half hours, I found the cart had only just arrived (12-30 p.m.) so helped to erect the tents and appurtenances. We camped at Godepotagala, where I had confidently expected to find good water in the rock pools, but the only liquid available was a very dirty puddle in the bottom of the largest pool! We had to use it, however, and it was 2-30 p.m. before I got my breakfast, but I had sustained myself with half-a-dozen Plasmon biscuits on the journey.

As it was a very hot day, and I had had all the walking I wanted, I did not go out in the evening. There was thunder in the distance, but the wind, which at this time should be north-east, was still strong south-west, and we had a shower of rain from the south-west at 8 p.m.

I was out by daybreak the next morning, going by way of the Mediweva parks, where I saw two herds of deer but no head good enough for a shot. Returned by way of Borawewa and Ulpotawewa, seeing nothing good and getting back to camp at 10 o'clock.

There was a south-west squall with a little rain at 1 p.m., so, as the afternoon remained dull and cloudy, I went out at 3-15, going north-east, but we saw nothing until about 4-30, when we sighted a big herd of deer and about twelve pigs scattered about all over a tree-studded park on the feed. It took us some time to locate the bucks, and we had to make two détours through the adjacent jungle before we finally found them. A very careful approach across an open patch then enabled me to get behind a tree within 100 yards of half-a-dozen fair bucks. Whilst I sat there a fine peacock walked past about forty yards away, but spotted me instantly and ran to cover.

This did not disturb the deer, so, selecting my buck, I let him have it and he fell after a run of about fifty yards shot through the lungs. The head was a fair one of  $28\frac{7}{8}$  inches—as usual it looked much bigger!

We opened the body, covered it with branches to keep until to-morrow, took the head and went

on. Very shortly after we sighted a really fine herd, walking along in single file, near the edge of the jungle bordering the park we were in. I counted over twenty bucks, none very good but eventually saw a fine one near the rear of the herd. The distance was nearly 200 yards, but when he stopped for a moment I fired at him from a rest against a tree trunk and hit him.

He trotted on rather slowly after the herd, stopped a moment, and then turned into the jungle into which most of the herd had already disappeared. We found a slight blood track, but left it until next morning as it was now getting late and we were some distance from camp. That herd must have contained sixty or seventy head of deer, if not more.

We were out at daybreak as usual the next day and heard bears in some jungle, quite close, shortly after starting out, but could not locate them as they ceased calling. We did a long round, and saw some nice herds, but got no chance of a shot, so went on to the buck shot last evening and left two men to cut it up whilst I and Sareef set off to look for the wounded buck. We searched for a long time, but in vain, so concluded that it was not much hurt—in which, as events will show, we were wrong. Back to camp after a blank morning. There was another south-west squall with a little rain at 2 p.m. which again caused a dull afternoon, so out we went at 3 o'clock going eastward, south and south-west, until we entered Mediwewa from the lower end, having seen nothing shootable on the way. I may say here that the deer were mainly



out on the feed from about 10-30 a.m. until 12-30 p.m. —an unusual proceeding probably induced by the dry weather, the general feeding time being very early morning and late evening.

The heat, however, between 10-30 and 12-30 is far too great to make going out for a long tramp worth while.

In Mediwewa we saw a fine herd of deer in the distance, so commenced to stalk them, but a very heavy thunderstorm and rain came on suddenly from the north-east, during which we stood under trees to get what shelter we could, which was of little use as we got wet to the skin. When it was over we walked on to look for the deer again, but had not gone far when we spotted a bear grubbing away at an ant-hill which had been somewhat softened by the rain.

The wind was right and he was so occupied that I walked up to within twenty yards for the shot, on receipt of which he rolled over, roaring, with a broken shoulder, but got up and ran off needing another two shots to finish him—a fine young male. This was an unexpected piece of luck which pleased me very much, though it is just at times like this, heavy rain after dry weather, that they come out in the evening to grub about in the softened earth for ant larvae and anything else of that sort. As it was now getting dusk we hastened to camp, seeing a fresh elephant track in a patch of jungle on the way.

As I was confident we would find a lot of deer about after yesterday's heavy downpour I was out at daybreak, intent on a long round, going

eastward to Bendiwewa and beyond; but we did not see more than a dozen deer, in all, nor a buck worth a shot. In one park I saw about a dozen pigs grubbing about and one solitary individual in another part walked to within fifteen yards of us, quite unconscious of our presence, but scuttling away in a fearful panic when we "shoo'd" at him. We returned to camp by 9 o'clock on a very hot sunny morning. The afternoon was cloudy, so I started out at 2-30, going direct to the Maradan-kadawela country, where, just as we entered the open from the belt of jungle under the old tank, we sighted a herd of deer strolling out of the jungle for their evening feed. The approach was difficult, but I got down into a slight hollow, whence I was able to crawl up to the trunk of a biggish tree well out in the open in which they were feeding. The deer were scattered, but by degrees began to walk past my tree, at a distance of about 150 yards, on their way to some other part of the park. I saw one or two bucks go by, but held my fire for a better one which I thought I had seen in the distance. He was a long time making his appearance, as he had stopped to feed behind an ant-hill, but came walking along, eventually, at the tail of the herd, and stopped for a moment in good position, which enabled me to get in my shot.

The distance was fairly long so I had steadied my rifle against the tree trunk, and, at the shot, the buck rushed staggering away, but fell dead after about forty yards. The distance of the shot I paced to be about 120 yards and the head, which had looked so good, only taped  $26\frac{5}{8}$  inches. Leaving

a man to cut it up we went on for a further long round but saw nothing except two or three wild buffaloes.

On our way back, when we got to the jungle under Maradankadawela tank, I went in front as usual, and, when passing along at the foot of the jungle-covered bund, we suddenly heard the hard breathing of a bear from the other side of it. A moment later I saw its black mass, amidst the bushes at the top of the bank, so fired at it as soon as I got a moderately clear view. There was a fearful roar and it ran forward a few paces along the top of the bund, so I fired again and the next instant, it and another bear which I had not seen came charging down the bank on top of us! I broke the shoulder of the first one fired at, just as it reached the track I was on, with a third shot which turned it into the jungle, and then I fired two over-hasty shots at the other one rushing down-bank on my left, but do not think I hit it in the thick bush. This emptied my magazine, and, by the time I refilled it, they had rushed away out of sound, so, as it was now getting dusk, we went on to camp after about five seconds of as lurid a bit of excitement as I have ever enjoyed!

The next morning we went right away towards the Nikkewewa side of the country, but only saw a few deer and some pigs on the way. Seeing a strange cart-track in the open we went on to the camp site at the small abandoned tank, and found a camp pitched there for two sportsmen who were expected that evening. I left a note for them to say I was clearing out next morning so that they could have Sareef's services if required.

Though it was 9 o'clock by now, and very hot, I went into the parks east of the camp in the hope of picking up a buck or so, and sure enough we sighted a fine herd on the feed in a very extensive tree-studded park. This type of plain has no undergrowth or bush in it—only trees with clean trunks, and stalking is very difficult as the deer seem to spot any movement at once. However, they were a long way off, so I set out cautiously, walking quietly from tree to tree, standing still as a statue if any deer looked up, until, after the best part of an hour, I got to within about 150 yards of a bunch containing what looked like a decent buck. A further wait enabled me to get in a shot, on receipt of which the stag "buck-jumped," ran a few paces and stood still, so, taking no chances, I fired again, but he never moved, falling, however, to a third shot. Pacing the distance to be 155 yards I found all three shots had hit the buck, and any one would have been fatal. The head was disappointing, however, being only about 27 inches. We took some of the meat back to the visitors' camp and then went on towards Maradankadawela to look for the wounded bear. By this time it was 11-30, and blazing hot, but we saw immense numbers of deer—big herds in every park—all on the feed but very wide-awake, not permitting any chance of an approach. Arrived at the block of jungle Sareef and his assistant went in on the bear's track, but I, having had about enough, went on alone to camp which I reached at 12-30 p.m. An hour afterwards Sareef returned reporting that they had tracked the bear a long way, but, as the

ground was very dry, they had eventually lost the track in some scrubby jungle. The unfortunate animal would almost surely die, but wounded bears run on and on until they drop, and it may have gone miles.

Their search, however, resulted in a very pleasing bit of luck, for this jungle was the same block into which the big buck, shot at three evenings ago, had gone, and they came upon its dead body, partly eaten by leopards, far inside the jungle! The head was a beauty and measured 30½ inches to my very great satisfaction. I went for a last round that evening and saw lots of bucks, but none that I considered worth a shot.

There was a tremendous downpour of rain at 8 p.m. mainly from the west.

I roused camp at 4 a.m. next day, packed my things, and, leaving the cart to follow, pushed on with Sareef to the Nikkewewa camp, where I had a chat with my friend C. F. S. B., whom I found busy drying things soaked by the heavy rain of last night, and rigging up a shelter for their coolies.

Leaving Sareef there I pushed on without a stop, going right through to Kanthalay resthouse, which I reached at 11 a.m., got out my car, returned to the turn-off, where my cart had just arrived, packed my car and away for home, getting to the estate by 3-30 p.m.

This completes the editing of my diaries up to date. It will be noticed that whilst in 1910 there were plenty of deer, the heads were almost uniformly poor, but, as years went on, the deer increased in number (thanks to protection) and

developed better antlers, so much so that heads of 27 to 29 inches are now fairly plentiful. Heads of over 29 inches are still rather scarce outside of the sanctuaries, so that 27 to 29 inches may be taken as representing Ceylon's average good heads.

Compared with India Ceylon trophies of all sorts are notoriously poor, but, in the case of spotted deer, the Indian animal is considerably larger judging by dimensions given in various works on natural history. For India the height at the shoulder of a spotted buck is given as from 34 to 36 inches. I have measured many bucks in Ceylon, but never found one to exceed 31 inches, so that three to five inches added would make a considerable difference in bulk all round, and, that being so, our bucks can scarcely be expected to carry such large antlers as the Indian deer. Record figures give the Indian maximum as 39 inches for antlers, whilst Ceylon's record stands at 35 inches. (See Rowland Ward's *Records of Big Game*; 6th Edition, 1914).

## Chapter XI.

### ADVENTURE.

HAVING very fully related my own experiences, I am able, thanks to the kindness of other resident sportsmen, to compile this chapter of exciting incident and adventure, well worth placing on record as showing how unexpectedly risks may occur when traversing the jungles of Ceylon.

The following account, furnished by Mr. G. S. Wodeman (Ceylon Civil Service), of a very unpleasant adventure which occurred to him when Assistant Government Agent at Trincomalee, and to Mr. R. A. G. Festing when Government Agent of the Eastern Province, merits the palm for utter unexpectedness and serious results.

Mr. Wodeman writes: "While Mr. Festing, at that time Government Agent of the Eastern Province, was on circuit in the Trincomalee District in August, 1918, he accompanied me through the villages of Kaddukulam Pattu West, the only Sinhalese district of Trincomalee (other inhabitants are mainly Tamils--Ed.) lying to the north of the Anuradhapura-Trincomalee road. On Sunday, August 18th, we started out in the early morning from the village of Madawachi to walk by way of a jungle path to Pettéwe, where we had to inspect a tank.

Mr. Festing walked ahead, carrying a double-

barrelled shot-gun loaded with No. 8 shot on chance of bagging a jungle cock for breakfast; I was just behind him, armed with a walking stick only, and following me were the Korála of the district and two other headmen. At about 8 a.m., when we were within two miles of our destination, just as Mr. Festing, who was about five yards ahead, turned a corner in the jungle path I saw him hurriedly bring his gun down from his shoulder and, at the same time, I heard fearsome grunts and roars from a point ahead. Instantly there was a great commotion behind me as the headmen promptly vanished into the jungle.

Probably the incidents that followed only occupied a minute or two, but so crowded was that space of time with lurid incident that it is difficult to describe the sequence of events. As the headmen flashed past me on one side into the jungle I saw two bears, side by side, charging down on Festing as hard as they could leg it from a distance of about ten yards, roaring as they came. He told me afterwards, that, when he came in sight of them, they were standing on their hind legs, sniffing to get our wind, and happened to be facing him as he rounded the corner—had they been facing the other way the chances are they might have bolted forthwith. I heard Festing fire both barrels in quick succession, and saw one of the bears run into the jungle while the other, on Festing's side of the path, ran straight at him and knocked him down. Seeing Festing and the bear struggling together, F. swearing like a trooper and the bear growling and snarling, I ran up, and, seizing the



gun which was lying on the ground, as I could not get at the cartridges in Festing's pocket, I belaboured the bear over the head as hard as I could until the gun stock broke. The shot had taken effect for the animal was bleeding about the head and seemed half-silly. I went on hitting it with the barrels until it let go of Festing, got up, pulled itself together, and came for me. It reared up, and got hold of my right arm at the elbow-joint with its mouth, causing me to fall over against a bank in the path and I lay there on my back while the bear, lying on its left side at my right side, firmly holding my arm in its teeth, kicked feebly at my legs with its back feet—I say 'feebly' because, although I had shorts on, it made only three scratches on my right knee none deeper than a quarter to half an inch. Had it been in full possession of its strength and faculties it could have stripped my leg to the bone with its powerful claws.

Festing, all bleeding and wounded as he was, got up, promptly came to my rescue, and, seeing the gun barrels beneath me, pulled them out and gave the bear such a terrific thrashing that it let go my arm, whereupon I got up and we both 'cleared.' When we turned to look at the bear we found it had vanished—like us, it had had enough.

Our native retinue returned when the bear had quite disappeared. One of them, who had carried a species of jungle-cutting knife from the start, mentioned that he had run very fast into the jungle to cut sticks with which to kill the bear. I can vouch for it that his statement about running very fast was perfectly true! As he did not appear

laden with sticks on his return I could not help regretting that he had not left his knife with us, as it would have been more efficacious than the broken gun.

We then examined damages. Festing had two deep wounds in his thigh, and I had a deep lacerated wound down to the bone in the hollow of my right elbow joint, with two other deep punctures, probably caused by the big canine teeth, on each side of the elbow. We were both bleeding profusely. We bandaged up our wounds as best we could, and pushed on to the village of Pettéwe, where we got a bullock cart to take us the thirteen miles to the Anuradhapura road, from whence we had another seventeen miles to motor to Trincomalee—consequently it was not until about 3 p.m. that we got our wounds properly dressed. Fortunately a bear's bite, unlike a leopard's, is rarely septic, so my wounds healed cleanly, though I could not use my right hand for six months owing to damaged nerves which necessitated constant massage and electric battery treatment before I regained the full use of my arm.

Festing's wounds caused him considerable inconvenience, owing to the fact of their being in the thigh in such a position that it was impossible to put in stitches that did not break with any movement.

Consequently the process of healing was a slow and painful business. All things considered, however, we were both lucky to get off as we did. Had we been prepared for the encounter the result might have been very different but to run up against

a couple of bears when on a peaceful circuit is more than one bargains for.

I only hope that when the bear got back home it had something to make it feel no desire to repeat the encounter !”

[Note by the Editor]. One cannot help admiring the way in which these two went to each other's assistance with no better weapon than a pair of light gun barrels. Mr. Festing is an experienced sportsman, but, so far as I know, Mr. Wodeman does not do much shooting, so that his pluck in standing up to the bear is all the more to be commended.

The unexpected sight, and sound, of a bear charging down on one, with terrific hullabaloo of roars and yells, is enough to shake the nerves of an old shikari let alone a novice ! All honour to both men for their thoroughly English pluck.

I am inclined to think the bears were a mother and almost full-grown cub, and it was the cub that bolted at the shot whilst the mother, with desperate courage, came on in face of the discharge. It is on a par with the experience that happened to myself as related in chapter VI, but, in my case, I was armed with a repeating rifle and was able to account for both bears. Personally, however, I would never walk anywhere in a low-country jungle path without a rifle, or at least a ball-and-shot gun, and would certainly not neglect such a precaution in a dry month like August when the bears are hard put to it to find food, and wander about in parts not usually frequented by them.

Mr. E. L. Walker contributes the following

exciting account of his first experience as an elephant shooter :—

“ It was my first elephant and coupled with an ignorance of the game that nearly deprived Ceylon of one of its most promising young men.

Though I have killed a number of ‘ rogues ’ since then I have never felt the terror as in the following adventure because I have learned by experience to avoid my initial mistakes. I do not quite recollect why I was so keen on shooting an elephant, but I do know that the feeling became an obsession, and, instead of seeing a doctor about it, I rather encouraged the sensation. The fact that ‘ elephant country ’ was easily accessible from the estate I was in charge of may have had something to do with it. About this period a paragraph in the ‘ Times of Ceylon ’ advertising a ‘ proclaimed ’ rogue to be shot, for which a free license would be issued, caught my eye and attention. The animal was said to be frequenting some village lands near Nikeweretiya in the North-Western Province, and within thirty miles of the estate. So, in due course, with mixed feelings of hope and fear, I sallied forth one week-end armed with a license to shoot the said rogue and a weapon which I fondly thought to be a good elephant rifle. Arrived at my destination it was not very difficult to sift the information given and locate the elephant which had apparently been paying visits to the local paddy-fields for some time. Very early the next morning I came in sight of him, standing in a paddy-field waving a wisp of paddy about in his trunk, so advancing to within about 100 yards I fired a shot at his head with

the .405 'Winchester' I had dared to hope to kill an elephant with!

The effect of my shot was to galvanize him into an active amble towards the near-by jungle, into which he disappeared considerably to my surprise. Not realizing that I was under-weaponed I tore after him exhorting my retinue of four trackers to follow me, but, though we stuck to it all day, we never saw him again.

Having to return to the estate, however, I made a further arrangement to go for the elephant again the following week-end.

During the week's interval I awoke to the fact that my rifle was not powerful enough and managed to secure a single-barrelled .500 rifle by Westley-Richards with plenty of solid cordite-loaded cartridges. Armed thus, and once more full of hope, I set forth, and, in due course, came up with my friend the rogue again. This time, though he was in thick scrub, being able to see his head, I let him have it, confidently expecting to see him fall, but was again doomed to disappointment for off he went 'h—l for leather.' I and my trackers followed for a long time until, when we were about fagged out, we heard him close ahead but still in very thick scrub. By lying down and peering under the bushes I could just distinguish part of his four legs looking like coconut tree stems in the undergrowth.

I then was tempted into "doing" a thing that was very nearly my 'undoing,' for, being fed-up and weary, fearing I might not be able to bag him at all, I fired at one of his forelegs just above the

foot in the hope of 'disabling' him. The result was as startling to me as it must have been to the elephant. I had risen ready to run in and finish off the 'disabled' animal, when, to my consternation, I found he was coming straight at me and had covered about fifteen of the intervening twenty yards, which had been the original distance between us, before I fully realized his fell intent. The trackers disappeared like a flash, and I, thoroughly panic-stricken, turned and fled by the elephant track by which we had come in—the only possible bit of going in that horrible scrub. The elephant followed, crashing, smashing through the bush, at my very heels, sending horrible creepy sensations up my back, and I had almost given up hope when a thought flashed into my mind of something I had read in a book about such an adventure, and I at once turned round and doubled on my track a few feet to one side, the elephant passing me like a huge nightmare the next moment. I dared not stop, but fled on until about done, when, to my relief, I heard the elephant still going crashing away without having turned on me again. I sat down to recover. Collected my 'happy band of pilgrims' found my rifle and crept home a sadder and a wiser man. However, I did not like to be beaten, and, guessing that he would have at least a lame leg, I arranged to have another go at him the next week-end.

This time we all 'had the wind up,' and, I must admit, I did not feel nearly so happy and full of hope as on my first occasion. We soon picked up his track, still in the same locality, and found

he was dragging his lame leg unmistakably. A comparatively short bit of tracking brought us within sight of him standing quite still near a big tree, and a careful approach enabled me to put in the ear shot which dropped him dead in his tracks, much to the relief of myself and my followers. I learnt from this, and subsequent experiences, that when approaching an elephant, up-wind of course—no other way being possible—one should take note of a possible line of retreat in case of accident. I do not mean a game of 'hide and seek' but note should be taken of any likely near-by tree, or even thick bush, to nip behind in case of a charge. To run away in front of a charging elephant is sheer folly. The probabilities are he has not seen you but is merely running 'at' the danger, so, if you slip aside out of sight and stand still, the chances are the elephant will rush blindly on and not stop to look for you.

My experience is that an elephant as a rule will only charge after considerable provocation in the shape of two or three shots. Out of fourteen elephants I have killed only three have charged me—the adventure just related being one, and the other two were merely short mad rushes at nothing in particular followed by a hurried move away. In one case I killed the elephant by the ear shot as it turned, but, in the other case, I had not reloaded in time so kept perfectly still behind a bush getting in a body-raking shot as he cleared off.

Elephant shooting is fascinating sport but entails some very hard going in the thick, or scrubby, jungle met with in Ceylon low-country—not to mention the intense heat."

Mr. W. L. Murphy (Ceylon Civil Service), relates a remarkably narrow escape when tackling his first elephant. His narrative is as follows :—

“ Many people who have not indulged in it and a few of the more fortunate amongst those who have, seem to regard elephant shooting in Ceylon as a rather tame form of sport. Such, no doubt, it is when confined to the slaying of ordinary herd-elephants, but the solitary marauding ‘rogue’ whose temper has been soured by being constantly fusilladed by ‘gas-pipe’ guns, and liberally plastered with soft-lead bullets and slugs of a rankling description, by the villagers in defence of their crops, is a very different proposition and requires to be attacked with skill and caution.

Towards the end of my time as chief Revenue Officer of the Mullaitivu District, Northern Province, I had an encounter with a rogue elephant of the afore-mentioned type from which I was undoubtedly lucky to have escaped with my life. Complaints had reached me from the villagers of Vavuniya and outlying hamlets about the damage they were suffering to their rice crops and coconut plantations owing to the depredations of this ‘solitary,’ which he had carried on with more or less impunity for some time. One Sunday morning during one of my monthly visits to Vavuniya the headman of a small settlement, situated some three miles distant along the main north road, came to my bungalow with some other villagers in a great state of excitement to say that the ‘rogue’ had paid a visit during the previous night to their village, had pulled down a coconut tree and was now not far



away in the adjacent jungle. I sent the men ahead to await my arrival and followed later on my motor-cycle armed with a d.b. .450 cordite rifle and solid bullets. Turning off the main road towards the village we passed through a belt of high forest adjoining a field and tank-bed, and, following the track of the elephant, entered some fairly open jungle east of the tank. We had little difficulty in following the track which was marked by recent foot-prints and broken branches. After some time we heard loud snores from some distance ahead, and, having continued to follow up the trail, we presently came on the elephant sound asleep in a patch of thick thorn scrub. He presented an extraordinary spectacle extended at full length on the ground, his hind quarters in our direction and legs crossed. As I debated how I should get into position for a favourable shot he suddenly wined us and stood up. He was then about fifteen yards away presenting an imperfect view of the side of his head, so that, in order to obtain a clear shot, I had to bend slightly to the right to avoid some tree stems which intervened. At this stage in the proceedings my trusty followers sought refuge in adjacent trees, and, in view of what ensued, I feel I can scarcely blame them. Taking careful aim for the ear-shot, I fired. For an instant nothing happened—then, with a sudden movement, he turned and charged in my direction. As his head cleared the tree stems which had previously been in my way I endeavoured to give him the contents of my second barrel but found, to my annoyance, that I had omitted to cock the left hammer. I





LARGE ELEPHANT SHOT BY MR. CHAS. NORTHWAY.

lost little time in repairing this omission, and fired straight into the elephant's face at something less than ten yards distance.

The shot failed to stop him and I was unable to beat a retreat owing to the dense scrub which prevented free movement, so judged that my only chance was to dive sideways into the undergrowth in the hope that the brute might rush past me.

I dropped my rifle and crawled on hands and knees into the bush, the elephant actually stepping over my legs with his forefeet, but, the next instant, he fell on his knees, blood pouring from his ear, and down the front of his face. Meanwhile I crawled further into the bush towards his rear, and, as the elephant was struggling to his feet, I lost no time in taking refuge in the nearest tree. The brute succeeded in getting up, and after a look round, made off into the jungle, falling again twice in the effort. On descending from the tree I found my rifle broken in two across the grip of the stock. The elephant made good his escape, and, though his body was never found, I was subsequently informed that he was never again seen in that locality. My first shot should have been fatal and I have since killed another elephant outright with the same rifle and by the same class of shot in the ear. On the whole I bought my experience cheap at the cost of a new rifle-stock."

Mr. Chas. Northway, who has shot a considerable number of "rogue" elephants, had a curious experience, combined with a very narrow escape, when after a "rogue" some little time ago.

He writes: "I secured two licenses in Novem-

ber, 1917, accompanied by the following official letter from the Hambantota Kachcheri :—‘ I have the honour to enclose two licenses in your favour for the destruction of the rogue elephant at Ranna and Migahajandura. The description of the animal at Ranna is chocolate, drags a hind-leg, there are white spots under the armpits. The Police officer, Ranna, could point out this elephant.

2. The description of the rogue at Migahajandura is as follows :—In stature is short at the back and unusually high at the front and is known as ‘ Kurualiya ’ (‘ guru ’=brownish). Foot long and narrow, tail heavy. The animal is said to chase after people. Jayawardana Paterange Malhami of Welewewa could point out the animal.’ ” (The above letter is very evidently written by a native clerk in the Kachcheri.—Ed.)

Having duly advised the local headman of the intended date of my arrival, E. F. Hawke and I set off on the morning of the 7th November with the intention of shooting the two “ proclaimed ” rogues. H. was armed with a .404 repeater, whilst I had a d.b. non-ejector .400-bore rifle by Jeffery. We motored as far as Hunugama, and thence walked four miles to Mukana, with the intention of tackling the Ranna rogue. Halting at the latter place, we sent out scouts to gather information as to the previous night’s movements of the elephant. The scouts returned at about 9-30, having duly located the animal’s track, which we at once proceeded to follow up and this kept us on the move until about 1 p.m. when we suddenly heard the breaking of branches and trumpeting of two

elephants not more than fifty yards distant.

The animals were some thirty or forty yards apart, and, after we had tested the wind, my tracker signed to me to go for the one on my right. We fixed on a convenient place for H. to take his stand and I then went forward with the tracker until I was within about fifteen yards of the elephant which was moving slowly along across my front but, owing to undergrowth, I could not get a sight on a fatal spot for the shot. I followed on his track and came on him again, in a small opening in the jungle, about twenty yards away standing at a slight angle, trunk low feeling the wind, but otherwise he was immovable. I kept my rifle at the "present" waiting for a movement of his head to permit of the ear-shot which opportunity occurred a moment later and I fired at once. The shot failed to down him, and, in a moment, with a scream of rage, he swung round and came at me. I rushed back to a cross-track by which I had approached, and fired at him again as he came in view which checked him for a moment, but he once more came on full of rage. I threw open the breach of my rifle but had not time to reload when he was practically on me and I felt it was "all up." Just then, however, an extraordinary thing happened—my tracker, who had been behind me at first, was now, consequent on my last movement, standing just in front, and a little to one side, of me, apparently spell-bound, but he waved his arms violently and screamed some words (*mantra* (charm) he told me afterwards) with the amazing result that the elephant stopped short, gazed at him for a moment, and then

turned and bolted ! This final performance took place close to Hawke, who told me afterwards than he dare not fire as the man was between him and the elephant.

We followed the track for about half-an-hour but, though there was a good deal of blood about, the animal had not stopped, so we gave up and returned to the road. After this experience I at once ordered an ejector rifle, not caring to trust to a non-ejector again. The tracker will now to his dying day have firm faith in the native "elephant stopping" charm.

[Note by the Editor]. Though natives believe implicitly in the ability to stop a charging elephant by uttering a certain charm it does not always come off, and, in any case, there are few records of its being tried. Major Forbes, in his "Eleven Years in Ceylon" written in the 1830's states that in 1835 the Kapurála priest of Vishnu at Dambulla met his death whilst endeavouring to sustain his character of elephant charmer. He had accompanied some gentlemen deer-shooting and they had happened upon an elephant at which they fired whereupon it charged the party. The Kapurála stood forward, and, while holding up his hand in an imposing manner, was seized by the uplifted arm which was torn from the body and the elephant passed on leaving him a mangled corpse.

Thanks are due to Mr. Northway for a photograph of a fine spotted buck (herewith reproduced) carrying  $33\frac{1}{4}$  inch antlers.

Messrs. W. and B., two Colombo sportsmen, had an exciting experience with two elephants,



FINE SPOTTED BUCK SHOT BY MR. CHAS. NORTHWAY.





not long ago, in the course of which Mr. B. had a very narrow escape.

They had secured free licenses to shoot three "proclaimed" rogues in the North-Central Province not far from Horówapotána and were thus able to use that resthouse as a centre, instead of having to form a camp. They had no luck for the first two or three days, but, a morning later, they struck the fresh spoor of a big bull which they promptly followed. At the end of about an hour-and-a-half of tracking they found that the bull had been joined by a cow elephant, which rather complicated matters especially as the wind was very fitful, and variable in direction. The two elephants kept to nasty scrubby jungle in which it was almost impossible to approach them, and finally halted in a practically impenetrable thorny thicket surrounded by fairly good open jungle. W. and B. then waited in the forest outside this block of scrub in the hope that the elephants would move out into the more open jungle, which they eventually did at about 4-30 p.m. The two sportsmen were then able to make an approach and it was arranged that W. should take the first shot, whilst B. and the trackers remained behind in reserve. W. went forward about twenty yards and soon met the two elephants coming slowly towards him. A moment or two later the bull stopped and seemed rather suspicious, testing the wind in various directions, so W. decided to risk a shot though the position was anything but good. He was using a d.b. .470 cordite rifle and B. had a 12-bore heavy elephant gun. The cow was, in the meantime, unsuspectingly strolling towards W.'s

left and the bull was about fifteen yards away, to the front, considerably hidden by intervening undergrowth which made the shot for the ear, which W. then proceeded to try for, very uncertain.

For a second or two after the shot nothing happened but, the next moment, the bull collapsed in his tracks. W. then turned to B. ejaculating "got him!" and B. strolled up to look at it, but, at that moment, W. saw signs of movement on the part of the apparently dead elephant, which proceeded to come to life again, so W. gave it his second barrel between the eye and the ear which caused it to collapse once more.

It was obviously not dead, however, so W. called to B. to give it another shot whilst he fell back a little to reload.

The next moment he was considerably startled by seeing the cow come charging out of some undergrowth on his left straight towards B., who fired two rapid shots almost instantly whilst W. dodged to one side as the elephant rushed on trunk and tail in the air. W. then ran towards B. and met him staggering towards him apparently hurt and very pale. It appeared that directly W. called to him to give the bull another shot, B. had knelt down to make sure, and the next instant he saw the cow charging down on him. He fired both barrels quickly, but, failing to stop her, he jumped up to get out of the way, and, tripping over something, fell right in her track.

The animal ran clean over him, one of her feet scraping his leg and knee, badly tearing a large piece out of his trousers and causing a tremendous bruise.

Though much shaken and upset no bones were broken, and the two were pulling themselves together when they heard considerable noise in the bush which made them think the cow was coming on again. Nothing happened however, but shortly afterwards, going towards where the bull had fallen they found he had got up and departed. Fortunately they were not far from the main road, where their car was waiting, and got back there with some trouble. Once back at the resthouse B. was able to get some relieving lotion at the local dispensary. W. went off again the next morning and tracked the two elephants for some miles, but failed to come up with them again, though the bull had bled freely.

It was noticeable that they had traversed good open jungle only, avoiding thick scrub, and had not halted anywhere. Messrs. W. and B. had to leave next day so were unable to do anything more.

The following account of the killing of a leopard in the jungle bordering a tea estate well up in the mountain zone is of some interest. It is not at all an uncommon event for leopards to prowl around the neighbourhood of high-elevation tea estates which may happen to have a jungle boundary and where the coolies keep cattle and goats. The estate where the incident occurred was of the type referred to, and at 4 p.m. one day information was brought to W., the superintendent, that a cow belonging to a cooly in the upper division had been killed by a leopard. He proceeded to the spot at once and found the dead animal partly hidden in the jungle on the edge of one of the tea fields, so pro-

ceeded to make a "hide" in the tea near by. The evening was wet and misty, however, so, as the leopard did not put in an appearance, W. at dusk fixed up a "spring" gun covering the carcass, and left word at the cooly lines that nobody was to go near the spot. W. was anxious to kill the animal because he kept a few hounds for hunting the neighbouring jungles and was afraid the leopard would take toll of them if not destroyed.

Report was received at daybreak that the gun had been fired, so W. proceeded to the spot accompanied by his dog-boy with the hounds. The latter soon got on the track of the leopard, finding it in thick scrub in the vicinity of the kill, and bayed it, to which it responded with loud roars and grunts. W. could not get a sight of the animal, however, so, with a view to driving it out into better jungle, he fired some shots in the direction indicated by the noise which caused a shift of ground as intended. These tactics were repeated several times, until what seemed to be a final stand was made at the foot of a low cliff in thinner jungle. W. came up to his hounds there and found them full of excitement but, look where he would, he could not see the leopard. Eventually a sound caused him to look up and he at once saw the animal lying extended on a tree jutting out from the cliff immediately above him. A shot from a d.b. cordite .400 rifle finished it off, and the dogs, instinctively knowing the animal was dead, rushed in for a worry. The shot from the spring gun had shattered a hind leg high up, otherwise the tale might have had a different ending. It was a fine big male over

seven feet in length from nose to tip of tail by the usual measurement.

As a final incident, to close this chapter, the occurrence related below very considerably upset the peaceful atmosphere of a lady's bungalow by its utter unexpectedness.

In this case the bungalow is situated on a small spur, jutting out from the hillside on the slope of a high range of mountains, the land around and above the bungalow consisting of several hundred acres of long coarse grass, known as *mána* grass, the aftergrowth on old abandoned coffee land. This grass land extended right up to the edge of the forest on the higher slopes and summits. The only occupants of the bungalow were Mrs. W. and a son aged about nineteen or twenty, but two or three dogs also slept inside the bungalow in a room adjoining Mrs. W.'s bedroom with an open connecting door between. That night the dogs seemed rather excited, growling and barking at intervals, but no particular notice was taken of them until bedtime when they refused to enter their room. Mrs. W. tried to kennel them up but they would not go in, so she got a candle, entered the room, and, as the dogs seemed to point towards the bedstead, she looked underneath and at once perceived a leopard crouching there. The servants were called, and the son armed himself with the only weapon in the house—a very ancient revolver that had belonged to an uncle, a General W., who had fought in the Crimea! Two candles were placed in the bedroom doorway and young W. fired a shot under the bed. The result was a fearful uproar. The leopard

charged out, everybody stampeded, the dogs barked wildly, servants yelled and shouted, the candles went out and all was chaos! Luckily the leopard did not charge home and the probabilities are that his rush knocked out the candles, for he retreated under the bed again. When all seemed quiet once more the household advanced to the attack—more candles were placed and young W. proceeded to empty the revolver in the direction of the bed. As nothing further occurred more lights were brought and the leopard was seen to be lying apparently dead, and dead it proved to be. One bullet had got it in the neck—the others having successfully perforated a bath which also lay under the bed! It came to light afterwards that a cooly had said he had seen an animal like a big cat chasing the fowls that evening, but nobody took any notice of him.

The probabilities are that the leopard entered the bungalow by a back door and was shut in when the servants locked up. Its novel situation cowed it completely, as it did not attack with the usual boldness of a leopard—inexperience also may have had something to do with it as it was a young animal not quite full-grown, but nevertheless the occurrence was most extraordinary and unusual in every way.







*Photo by G. M. Crabbe, Esq.*

A GOOD BUCK.



*Photo by G. M. Crabbe, Esq.*

SPOTTED DOES DRINKING.

## Chapter XII.

### GAME SANCTUARIES.

MR. G. M. CRABBE (Honorary Secretary of the Ceylon Game Protection Society at the time of writing—1920), has been kind enough to furnish the following account of, and photographs of game in, the sanctuary in the Southern Province:—

This sanctuary, commonly known as the “Yala” sanctuary from the name of the place where the guardian and some of the watchers live, was proclaimed by Government in 1899, in consequence of the very conclusive evidence brought forward as to the tremendous destruction of game for trade purposes going on indiscriminately in almost every part of Ceylon. Mr. B. Horsburgh, at that time Assistant Government Agent at Hambantota, was the principal originator of the scheme and selected a suitable block of country for the purpose lying between the Menikganga and the Kumbukkan river, having the sea as its eastern boundary, the two rivers as two side boundaries, whilst the fourth boundary is the line of boundary between the Southern Province and Uva Province.

Roughly speaking the area proclaimed covers approximately 120 square miles, being about fourteen miles long, between the rivers, by about nine miles wide from the sea coast to the province boundary. Within the sanctuary all shooting is, of

course, forbidden, except by special permission given occasionally for the purpose of shooting leopards when they become too numerous. There are no villages in the immediate vicinity of any of the boundaries, the only residences anywhere near being the houses of the watchers, so that the whole block is absolutely wild country inhabited only by the denizens of the jungle. Generally speaking the land inside the sanctuary is flat, consisting in parts of fine open plains, grass-covered in the wet seasons, whilst other parts are mainly rather scrubby jungle full of thorny bushes of all sorts, the only good jungle being found in the immediate vicinity of the two bordering rivers. Sixty or more years ago this block of country was very thoroughly exploited for sport by the late Sir Samuel Baker. The two rivers mentioned flow during about nine months of the year, but in July, August, and September, there is seldom any flow—merely standing pools here and there in the sandy river bed. At this dry season the grass of the plains all dries up, so that the deer and buffaloes have to browse in the jungle or graze the grass to be found bordering the rivers.

At all times the amount of bird life to be met with is amazing, especially in the vicinity of water during the dry season, when the strong desiccating south-west wind drives them to the cover of the jungle and the fine forest shade along the river banks. During the wet season innumerable herds of spotted deer can be seen all over the great plains, often as many as 200 head or more in one herd, and such a herd will contain many fine bucks.



*Photo by G. M. Crabbe, Esq.*

SPOTTED BUCK DRINKING



*Photo by G. M. Crabbe, Esq.*

SPOTTED DOES DRINKING.



*Photo by G. M. Crabbe, Esq.*

A FINE BUCK.



*Photo by Chas. Northway, Esq.*

ELEPHANTS COMING TO A ROCK-HOLE.

Buffalo, although nearly decimated by rinderpest some years ago, are now very plentiful, and herds of them may be seen in all directions grazing or wallowing in any convenient pool of water. Pigs, also of all sizes may be seen grubbing about in any moist place or bit of soft ground, and all these animals have become so confident of their security that their enemy, man, may approach to within as near as fifty yards so long as the animals do not get the intruder's wind. Jackals are frequently seen wandering about, and no doubt kill fawns whenever they get a chance. The only enemy the deer now have is the leopard and there are, of course, many of them in the sanctuary, attracted thither by the great numbers of deer, which form their principal, and certainly favourite, prey. The guardian shoots leopards wherever he gets a chance, but their presence certainly helps towards keeping the balance required by nature. Three miles in from the Menikganga is to be found one of the largest of the open plains, known as Pillanáwa, and even in the driest season some of the pools in this plain manage to retain a certain amount of muddy water. This part of the sanctuary is a favourite resort of elephants, and they may be seen there up to some hours after daylight wandering about, or standing in the muddy pools, or feeding on trees and herbage. Further into the sanctuary, some miles beyond Pillanáwa, there is still another large plain known as Potána, and anyone camping on the edge of this great open space may see in the early morning herds of elephants, buffaloes, sambhur, spotted deer and pigs scattered about

as far as the eye can reach. Magnificent peacocks are strutting about amongst their "women-folk" showing themselves off, jackals may be seen slinking about, here and there, whilst cranes of all species stand or stalk about round the edges of the pools of water. The whole panorama forms an amazing and intensely interesting view of undisturbed wild animal and bird life worth travelling many miles to see. As the sun gets up the animals gradually retire to the jungle, but buffaloes, curiously enough, if undisturbed, remain out practically all day long.

In camp at night one hears the shrill alarm call of the spotted deer, or the deep resonant call of the sambhur, disturbed by the near presence of a leopard prowling around in search of his supper. The curious metallic call of the night-jar is heard in all directions, the shrill chirp of crickets and cicadas make the air resound, and, added to the hum of innumerable beetles flying swiftly about, form a din absolutely indescribable. Approaching dawn is heralded by the booming call of the wanderoo monkeys, and the *miau* of many peafowl taking the place of the domestic cock as an early awakener, whilst the daylight is ushered in by the chirping, singing and calling of innumerable birds, doves and pigeons.

A visit to the sanctuary is a truly wonderful experience, and well repays any nature lover, whilst it offers unique chances for work with a telephoto camera.

#### NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

Mr. Crabbe is of opinion that, in proportion to the comparatively limited area of the sanctuary,



*Photo by G. M. Crabbe, Esq.*

A BUFFALO.

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there are too many animals to be found there, particularly as regards spotted deer. From careful study in the course of several visits he has come to the conclusion that there are about forty per cent. of bucks and sixty per cent. of does to be seen in any considerable-sized herd, and is of opinion that this large proportion of bucks leads to deterioration. I am not sure that I agree with him entirely on that point, as all the bucks in a herd are not allowed promiscuous intercourse with the does—the master buck sees to that, though, in a very big herd, there will probably be several master bucks. Wherever I have met with small herds of does—ten or fifteen in number—with only one buck in attendance on them that buck, in my experience, has invariably been one with a poor head. I have never seen a really good buck in charge of such a herd. I will not go so far as to say that such instances are a proof of deterioration, however, and I am not at all sure that Ceylon heads are deteriorating.

In my opinion the shortage of good heads in Ceylon is principally due to the fact, that, for untold generations, the finest bucks have been consistently killed off, principally by the natives for trade purposes, and it is very certain that European sportsmen go for the best bucks they see when on a shooting trip. I am presupposing that a fine buck could reproduce a fair number of equally good bucks in the course of propagation, and, if that may be accepted as an axiom, it would be a most excellent thing if sportsmen for a few years, would confine their attention to shooting "poor

head " bucks so as to give the good heads a chance.

However, as the Game Protection Society has no control whatever over the shooting in any part of Ceylon, and as visiting sportsmen are out for trophies, it seems hopeless to expect any such procedure !

Returning to the question of sanctuaries I was interested to note lately in a newly-published book on Indian sport entitled " The Diary of a Sportsman-Naturalist in India " by E. P. Stebbing, F.Z.S., F.R.G.S., that the question of the management of sanctuaries has considerably exercised the minds of Indian officials and sportsmen.

Without going into full particulars opinion seems to be held that :—

1. Sanctuaries should be closed for a definite period of years and then reopened, or
2. The area is closed until the head of game has become satisfactory and the shooting in the area is then regulated, or
3. The ground of a sanctuary should be changed every two or three years.

In any event the opinion seems to be that, before opening a sanctuary for shooting, it should be *beaten through* so as to distribute and disperse the game and not have them bunched up together in one place to make for too easy shooting.

Our sanctuaries have been in existence for twenty years, and during that time the game has been entirely undisturbed and allowed to increase their species without let or hindrance. It seems rather surprising that there has been no visitation of rinderpest or some other type of murrain !

It is doubtful if Ceylon could find other equally satisfactory blocks of country in which to relocate the sanctuaries, and it is also doubtful if our Government will ever periodically throw open the sanctuaries for shooting. However, so far as concerns the Southern Province sanctuary, seeing that it is surrounded on the three land sides by a broad belt of country reserved for Ceylon residents' shooting, and watched by the Game Protection Society's watchers, it seems to me it would be a most excellent thing to *beat through* at least half of the sanctuary once in two or three years and drive the game far over the boundary into the reserve. The animals within the sanctuary, according to visitors' reports, are far too tame and they most certainly do not wander in any numbers beyond the boundaries, so that a beat through would be an excellent proceeding. Our other sanctuary situated partly in the North-Central Province and partly in the North-Western Province, is very little visited except by an occasional official, and is therefore comparatively unknown. There are, unfortunately, a fair number of populous villages of Moors, Tamils and Sinhalese, within comparatively easy reach of some of the boundaries, especially near the sea coast, to which that side boundary does not quite extend, and there is strong reason to believe that a considerable amount of poaching goes on. The included country is fairly similar to that in the south—open plains with water-pools, or lagoons, towards the coast, but with probably much better jungle further inland than that to be seen in the southern sanctuary. These preserves have served their pur-

pose satisfactorily, but not particularly usefully, as the animals have been simply bottled up inside the boundaries, and so rendered entirely unavailable to sportsmen.

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## APPENDIX I.

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### GAME LICENSES AND CLOSE SEASONS.

LICENSES must be applied for at the headquarters of the province, or the district of the province in which a sportsman desires to hunt or shoot—there is no such thing as a general license available for all Ceylon.

“ Game ” means and includes :—

Sambur (*Cervus Unicolor*) commonly known as Elk.

Spotted deer (*Cervus axis*).

Red or barking deer (*Cervulus muntjac*).

Paddy-field deer, or hog deer (*Cervus porcinus*).

Peafowl.

Grey Partridge (*Francolinus pondicerianus*).

Painted Partridge (*Francolinus pictus*).

Ceylon spur fowl (*Galloperdix bicalcarata*).

The cost of a game license is Rs. 5 for Ceylon residents and Rs. 45 for visitors.

A license permits of three head of deer, only, being shot, but as many as three licenses may be issued to an applicant in any one province, for the season, at the discretion of the issuing official.

There is no limit of number as regards peafowl, and the other game birds named, but the latter may be ruled out, being seldom met with and not likely to be sought by sportsmen as they are strictly local in habitat.

Licenses are required to shoot elephants and buffaloes, but there is no close season for these animals. Residents have to pay Rs. 100 for an

elephant license and Rs. 20 for a buffalo, whereas visitors are called upon to pay Rs. 300 for the former and Rs. 75 for the latter. Free licenses are issued, on application, for the shooting of proclaimed rogue elephants and, occasionally, in the case of dangerous buffaloes.

A number of birds (see schedule IV in Game Ordinance 1 of 1909) are absolutely protected, but it is very doubtful if one man in a hundred is aware of the fact!

Whistling teal and cotton teal are protected during the close season.

Game Ordinance 1 of 1909 came into being consequent on the strenuous exertions, for many years, of the Game Protection Society.

This Ordinance brought all game in Ceylon under one close season, namely, from 1st June to 31st October, which, in the opinion of the writer, with nearly thirty years of shooting experience behind him, is as it should be, seeing that that period is one of intense drought, reducing available water in the low-country to a minimum.

This means that during that period both animals and birds are at the mercy of any poacher who watches over a water-hole.

During the wetter parts of the year, quite irrespective of breeding seasons, both animals and birds can take care of themselves, but they *must*, one and all, be protected during the season of drought.

Nevertheless, since the introduction of Ordinance 1 of 1909, a change has been made in the North-Central Province as regards peafowl and teal owing to the representations of an official with a bent for natural history, or, more particularly, ornithology.

The close season for peafowl in that province now is from 1st November to 31st March following,

thus making it permissible to shoot these grand birds throughout the dry season—an unpardonable state of things.

The close season for teal, in the same province, is now from 1st February to 30th April, thus precluding the shooting of these birds during the best part of the snipe season and also in their case permitting shooting throughout the season of drought.

This condition is clearly wrong, and it is to be hoped that the Game Protection Society can get the original close season restored as regards these birds in the North-Central Province.

The writer cannot too strongly emphasize the importance of making the drought season the close season for all game throughout Ceylon. This had been accomplished by Ordinance 1 of 1909, so why alter it ?

The alteration as regards peafowl causes somewhat of an anomaly in the matter of the game license, date of which runs from 1st November to 31st May. On the license, therefore, peafowl can only be shot during April and May.

For further information *re* the Game Ordinances the reader is recommended to procure a copy of Ordinance 1 of 1909 at the Government Record Office in Colombo.

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## APPENDIX II.

### CAMP EQUIPMENT.

THE following is a fairly complete list of articles required for a regular jungle-camping trip. They may, of course, be varied at discretion with due regard to transport facilities. Where carts can be used there is no special need to do much cutting-down, but, where carriers only are concerned, baggage must be reduced to the absolute minimum.

Tent, or tents according to the party.

Single-sheet tents, about 18 feet by 12 feet  
for servants and men.

Folding camp beds.

Folding chairs.

Folding tables.

Uniform case for clothing.

Boots for stalking—cheap canvas hemp-soled  
are as good as anything.

Blankets.

Air pillows, to reduce bulk.

Mosquito curtains a necessity.

Towels.

Canvas, or rubber, bath if luxuriously inclined,  
but nearest water-hole recommended.

Medical wants such as Bandages, lint, lancet,  
tweezers, chlorodyne, quinine tabloids,  
aspirin, pot.-permang. crystals, carbolic  
oint, brandy, citronella oil for mos-  
quitoes, etc.

Sacking needle and twine.

Cleaning tackle for guns.

- Cartridge belts and bags.  
 Skinning knives.  
 Hunting knife.  
 Skin preservatives.  
 Common salt for skins if tanning is intended.  
 Pocket steel tape, 6 feet.  
 Topographical map of district, 1" to a mile.  
 Saucepans, nesting, aluminium.  
 Kettle (large saucepan will do).  
 Teapot (can use a special deep saucepan with  
 a strainer).  
 Plates and cups, aluminium or enamelled ware.  
 Knives, forks, spoons, corkscrew, tin-opener.  
 Kitchen knives.  
 Buckets, large and small.  
 Hatchet and chopping knife.  
 Mamoty.  
 Terda rope (coir) about 6 coils.  
 Matches, wooden.  
 Candles and candle-holders, the latter being  
 those with cylindrical glass shades for  
 preference as much better than the spring-  
 actuated globe type.  
 Travellers' pump filter (Berkefeld).  
 Grass mats for tent floor and for servants and  
 men to sleep on.  
 Dubbin for boots, belts, straps, gun-cases.  
 Water bottles.

### FOODSTUFFS.

- Rice, advisable to take from "town"—can  
 seldom be sure of getting any locally.  
 Currystuffs for the men.  
 Kitchen salt for men.  
 Bar soap for men and kitchen.  
 Bottle of table salt or tin of "Cerebos."  
 Pepper, mustard.

Potatoes, onions, etc.

Sauces.

Flour if cook can make scones.

Biscuits such as plain Plasmon, Milk, Water, etc.

Cheese.

A small ham.

Tinned meats, a few, for non-shooting days.

Tinned soups, or soup squares.

Tinned vegetables.

Dried apple rings.

Tinned dripping.

Tinned cakes.

Prunes or tinned, or bottled, fruit.

Tea, or coffee, or cocoa, or malted milk.

Milk, sterilized, or condensed.

Sugar.

Two or three empty sacks.

Anything else you may fancy with due regard to transport.

Soda-water means bulky heavy transport and can only be considered where carts are used. Would be very difficult to transport for a whole party, or even for two persons only, for a week's camping. The writer has always contented himself with filtered water, tea, cocoa, or malted milk. Hard jungle work cannot be done on whisky-and-soda or beer.

Tents are heavy articles and the writer has cut his down to one large sheet tent with light-material sides which can be tied or buttoned on if required. The ends are left open. Tent poles are advisable, but holding-down pegs can be cut on the spot. Poles can be dispensed with at a pinch and jungle poles used instead, tying two together X fashion for the uprights.

CAMP BEDS. The writer has always found the X pattern the most convenient and comfortable.

CHAIRS. Can recommend the "Roorkee"

pattern as very comfortable—rather tricky, however, to assemble.

**CLOTHING.** Two changes of clothing are ample, as wet clothes can be easily dried in the sun if weather is not too wet. Take plenty of socks and shirts.

The writer always uses clothes made of a light-texture darkish green cloth, having found by experience that this colour is the least conspicuous in an "all green" jungle country. Khaki or any light coloured cloth is not advisable, as you will soon find when it comes to stalking.

The low-country is very hot, humid, and enervating, so everything you wear should be light-weight and loose. Do not turn out in clump-soled leather boots and leggings or thick cord riding breeches—you won't last long if you do.

**SHIRTS.** The writer uses khaki coloured "Aer-tex" cellular cotton shirts—light, cool, admirable. In combination with a green coat they are not conspicuous as their colour is darkish.

**HEAD COVERING.** The writer uses a dark-green "Stetson"—any hat of that or "Terai" type will be ample protection for the hunting work.

If weather is dry ticks will be a nuisance, and, on coming back to camp, you should change and have your clothes put into a bucket of boiling water for a few minutes. Pick ticks off your legs, if any have so located themselves, and "crack" them.

Telescope, or binocular, not necessary for our short distances.

Candles are infinitely preferable to oil lamps as oil is a nuisance to transport. The writer has seen, however, an excellent small open-burner acetylene lamp which would be very useful if not too much wind.

Boxes, gun-cases, provision boxes, bags of rice, boots, etc., etc., should not be placed on the ground. Put down stones or short logs for them to

stand on, or have small jungle-stick tables or platforms built.

Put your tents up under shade if possible. If out in the open, fully exposed to the sun, the heat during the day will be unbearable even in a double fly tent.

Cut drains round your tents and always *expect* rain—do not trust the weather.

## APPENDIX III.

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### PRESERVATION OF TROPHIES.

ANY sportsman out for trophies will naturally know something about skinning and preserving, or will have a "skinner" with him for that purpose, so that the writer does not propose to enter on a dissertation concerning the art of taxidermy.

Some sort of good skinning knives will be required for both animals and birds, and, of course, skin preservatives. The writer has found by experience that Montagu Browne's preservative powder, four parts of burnt alum to one part of saltpetre, pre-eminently the best for all animals' skins, but if you intend to get your skins tanned, which is far the most satisfactory way of preserving them, a dressing of plain salt will be all that is required. Skins merely preserved and cured taxidermist's fashion are always rather stiff and crackly; but, if well tanned, to natural colour, which can be done in Colombo, skins come out beautifully soft and remain soft. When taking off the skins, however, intended for tanning, great care should be observed to scrape off every atom of fat, or blood; otherwise, in such places, the preliminary lime treatment will burn holes through the skin. Salted skins will keep for some time, undried, if the salt is well rubbed in, but the quicker they get to the tanner's the better.

Another excellent preservative is the liquid known as "Atlas S," which merely requires to be applied to the skin by means of a brush.

In case of all preservatives the skins, after

application, should be folded and put away in the shade for some hours before being pegged out to dry.

With regard to skinning out of heads, for future mounting purposes, there again it is to be expected that the sportsman will know what is required or will have a man with him who knows. Apart from that the trackers can, of course, one and all, do any skinning work, but will not be up to the fine work necessary on heads required for mounting.

The writer, for many years past, has not gone in for mounted trophies beyond one or two leopard, and bear, skins with the heads attached.

His practice, in the case of all heads he desires to keep such as bucks, boars, leopards and bears, is to have the heads skinned, flesh all boiled off in a big bucket, and the skulls then scraped, cleaned inside and out, and carefully dried in the sun. When home again the skulls are gone over once more, internal cellular bone cleaned out, record of name of locality, date, and measurement of antlers or any other detail duly inscribed in Indian ink, varnish two or three coats with pale oak or any other good varnish, and then mounted on teak shields to fix on the wall. In the case of stags the skull is kept carefully complete, all but the lower jaw bone, as the writer prefers that method rather than cutting everything away but the frontlet.

There are two very convenient tiny orifices between the two eye sockets that can be easily enlarged for the fixing screws.

Bear, leopard and pig skulls can be kept complete and attached in any convenient manner to shields. Skull trophies are not things of beauty but are interesting as records of shooting trips and incidents.

As regards elephants most men, of course,

will desire to preserve the feet, but the cleaning out of same is a most laborious process and the skin surface is likely to rot off if not quickly cured and dried. The writer, for some years past, when shooting an occasional elephant, has contented himself with taking the best toe-nails from the fore-feet. These cleaned, polished, lined with silver, and fitted with neat feet at the curved side, make beautiful bon-bon dishes or receptacles for a lady's dressing table.

Concerning birds' and small animals' skins, the writer will not attempt to discourse—whoever goes in for such collections will probably know whatever is required to be done.

Mounted trophies are not easily kept in good order in Ceylon, and, unfortunately, the island is not well off as regards really competent taxidermists.

Anyone, therefore, wishing to have his trophies well set up must send them Home for the purpose.

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