

The little bushman came to our fire - he had come over to ask for some tobacco. We gave him a few cigarettes and told him to smoke them then as we wanted to see his performance. He lit first one and then another and inhaled all the smoke, not a sign of any exhaling. These chaps draw the smoke right down into the stomach. When he had finished a couple then only did he start. He coughed, spat and rolled on the ground in great enjoyment. He seemed to have really enjoyed the smoke but the only complaint he had was that the tobacco was not strong enough. I therefor gave him a cigar. That he said was good when he had finished and went away coughing. He was used to smoking their home brew. I have mentioned that when in East Africa in 1916 when we were short of tobacco we managed to get some from the natives. It looked like great ox droppings and it was strong. Took your breath away with the first draw. But we got used to it. Our little bushman would have enjoyed it.

The next morning I started out early taking with me Joosia as gun bearer. I carried the rifle in the hopes of getting a koodoo bull - I wanted something with a fine pair of horns - and Joosia carried the shotgun as I also wanted to get a couple of pheasant. Unfortunately we saw nothing worth shooting and so after a couple of hours walking through the thick bush with occasional open glades we decided to return to the camp. As we got near the camp I took the shotgun and loaded with bird shot as I was anxious to get a pheasant or two for lunch. For what better lunch than a nice juicy pheasant split down the middle, opened out and grilled on the coals - makes my mouth water even now after so many years.

As we got near the camp a Stembuck got up and though a bit far for the small shot I had in the gun I decided to have a go as it would mean meat for the staff. Anyway, after I had fired both barrels it disappeared and I thought that was that and good luck to it.

We arrived back in camp with one pheasant and later after lunch, while sitting in an easy chair having thoroughly enjoyed the grilled bird, I noticed two hawks sitting in a tree a few hundred yards away. I said to young Andrew who was a fair shot with an airgun, "See those two hawks. Let us see what a good shot you are. Walk quietly towards them". Just then I noticed the one fly down from the tree onto the ground and so out of curiosity I decided to go along with young Andrew and see what they were after.

Probably a baby hare or young pheasant. Anyway, as we approached the tree, both flew off and there lying under the tree was the stembuck which must have died shortly after I fired at it. Fortunately the hawks had done very little damage.

This was in April 1929. That afternoon I had to go to a small siding about ten miles away to meet a Mrs Garret, a friend of my sister Madge as, although she was driving from Palapye Road in her big tented Austin, she did know where we were camped. I had to meet and show her the way. She was rather late in arriving at the siding and soon after we started it got dark and we had to put on the car lights. Unfortunately within the next mile or so the Whippet's lights gave in. Now being on the right road for the camp which she could not miss I asked her to drive on with the young man with her. The road is very twisty - as all the roads are in the bush - turning every few yards to avoid trees etc. I got Joosia who had accompanied me to sit on the bonnet of the car and his voice was my guide - or is it lights for the last few miles. It was a treat to get back to camp, settle in a nice deck chair and enjoy the fire and a sundowner.

I must say one sleeps very well in the veld. After a long day of walking one just dozes off listening to the various bush noises of jackals, leopards, night jars etc. A wonderful life. I should have been a game warden or professional hunter.