

AMONG THE WILD ANIMALS OF EAST AFRICA

True Experiences Related by a Young Traveler

III. ATTACKED BY LIONS

STORIES have been told many times of lions attacking natives of East Africa and their cattle herds, but stories of lions attacking an automobile are not so common. I am going to tell you such a story. A lion is usually afraid of an auto which passes by him so quickly that he cannot follow it.

A friend and I once made a trip from Nairobi in Kenya, East Africa, to Tanganyika. While enroute, we staid a while at Moshi. Moshi is situated on the foothills of the highest African mountain, Kilimanjaro. (See the map on page 96.)

"Mystic mountain" is the correct translation

of the native African name Kilimanjaro. This mountain is more than 19,000 feet high, and the top is always covered with snow. The natives of East Africa are not familiar with ice

and snow, and so they call the mountain Kilimanjaro (Mystic Mountain).

My friend and I had chosen the nearest way back to Nairobi over the "desert" to Longido at Tanganyika in the Kenya border. That drive over the "desert" was one of the hottest I have ever experienced. The white dust-like sand lay for miles before us, and was interrupted only occasionally by a few thorn thickets. The wind was blowing and clouds of white dust were rolling before us.

The road was not good. There were holes in the sand, and when our auto struck one of these, it made the car jump and bump and send up clouds of white dust into the air. We were soon covered with this dust, which came into the car from all sides. Fortunately the engine in our Ford worked perfectly. We were glad of that, for had something gone wrong with our engine, it would have been impossible to secure help within one hundred miles.

Ostriches were the only birds we saw on that dry "desert." They were so shy that they ran away as fast as their long legs would carry them whenever they saw our auto.

Once we approached an ostrich that had not heard us. He was busy picking at some dry grass. His long, bare neck and head were stretched forward, and his short, queer wings waved a little at his sides. When he suddenly became aware that we were near him, he put his head into the sand. After we had passed him, we looked back, and he still had his head down and covered. That is the typical behavior of the ostrich when he feels himself in danger. He has been caught many times in just that position.

Longido is situated at the edge of the



The Lion, King of the Jungle



On this map of Kenya and Tanganyika in East Africa locate Nairobi, Moshi, and Kilimanjaro.

“desert” in a mountainous country which leads over into Kenya. Ravines, overgrown by bushes, extend from the Longido hills. This place is covered with thorn thickets and high grass. It is an ideal country for lions, leopards, antelopes, and elephants.

In the Longido hills there was bitter fighting between the British and the German soldiers during the first World War, but when we were there, more than twenty years later, no rifle shots or machine guns were heard. The country belonged again to its ancient inhabitants, the wild animals of East Africa.

A river camp, called Mananga river camp, had been built in this wild place by an old Danish man who liked this country in which he had lived for many years. We arrived at camp at about five o'clock in the afternoon and stopped there for the night.

Petersen, the old Dane, suggested that my friend and I should go with his native guide and take a look at the grounds where the elephants were grazing.

Our guide, who had only a spear and a shield with him, led us through a narrow jungle path. Twice he stopped and

climbed a tree to locate the elephants. Finally he made a sign that we should be very quiet, because some of the great elephants were just before us.

We came to a clear space, and saw in front of us a herd of about twenty elephants. They were pulling great bunches of the broad green elephant grass with their trunks and stuffing it into their mouths. This grazing was a picture of peace, and is seldom seen in the African jungles. The elephants have no enemies in the animal world; they fear only men who fight them with their firearms.

We had a wonderful view of those grazing elephants, but could not stay long, as darkness was coming quickly and we had to be back at the river camp before the wild animals would come out of the jungle and pass our way.

It took us a long time to go to sleep that night, because the sounds of the jungle, which were distinctly heard at the house, kept us awake. The coughing of the leopard, the growling and roaring of the lion, and the snarling of the hyena continued throughout the whole night.

Early the next morning we left Mananga river camp. We had been told that the best time to see wild animals, especially lions, was in the morning hours. Later in the day trucks would pass through this country, and they would drive the animals away by the blowing of their horns and the noise of their engines. We were now in the lion country, and might see some lions any time.

More stories have been written about the lion than about any other animal in the world. There is something fascinating about these great yellow cats, but they are not treacherous or looking for trouble as many people believe. The

king of the jungle will keep away from trouble if he can, but if he feels himself endangered, bravery and dignity will awake in him, and he will fight openly. He does not allow anybody to hurt him or his family, and will attack when he cannot find another way out.

The lion is not bloodthirsty like the leopard, although most people live under the impression that a lion will kill for the sake of killing. People have been killed by lions, but usually because they had first challenged the great *simba*, as the lion is called in the native African language of Kenya. If a man shoots at a lion and hurts him, the animal will use all his power to kill the man.

Man-eating lions are very seldom found, and if some become man-eaters, they are despised by their lion families. Lions have attacked native women when the women were working alone in the field or when they were on their way through the lonely country, but these lions are usually old animals which could not kill bucks or zebras because the latter could run faster than the old lions.

The road over which my friend and I were driving was crossed many times by small ravines through which rapid streams flowed. No bridges had been built over these streams, and our auto

had to go through the water. Driving an auto in this country was difficult and tiring.

We estimated that we had passed nearly thirty-five of these ravines. When we came to the edge of a deep one, we saw three giraffes drinking. I made a quick stop in order to watch them.

It was a strange sight to see these ungainly giraffes drink. They had their long fore legs stretched wide apart; otherwise they would not have been able to reach down to the water with their

long necks. These giraffes which we saw were in such a helpless position that it would have been easy for a lion to attack them just at that moment. When the animal is in this position, he is frequently attacked by a lion; therefore these long-

necked animals drink very seldom during the lion's hunting hours.

We watched the three giraffes in front of us for a short while. They had not noticed us. When I finally sounded my horn, they raised their heads from the water and looked at us by turning their long necks, but it took them at least half a minute to get ready to move. That would be a fatal half minute in case of an attack by lions. We watched them canter away. Then we continued on our

(Please turn to page 114.)



A Fight at Close Quarters

The natives of the African interior frequently hunt lions on foot armed with only spears.

With your ruler and penknife cut the pasteboard so that it is the exact size of the glass.

The binding tape will hold everything together—with the picture between the glass and the pasteboard.

Now take your little picture and put a small dab of paste on each corner at the back. Then lay it down on the pasteboard back; be careful that it is straight.

The next thing to do is to make a mount—that is, a little border which shows in between a picture and its frame. For this we cut a piece of unruled white or cream colored paper the same size as the glass.

We place this paper on the table and carefully rule, in faint pencil lines, a small border all around, about three quarters of an inch away from the edge. This leaves a square in the middle; we cut this out very carefully with a penknife and a ruler, and then the mount is ready to lay over the picture which is stuck to the cardboard back. If we look at Figure No. 1 this will be quite clear.

The mount is attached to the picture by small dabs of paste on the back of the mount. Then lay the glass on the top of all. The frame is put on next. For this cut

four pieces of the paper binding tape, each a little longer than the sides of the glass. Cover one side of the paper binding tape with paste. If you buy *pass-partout* binding tape it is already gummed on one side. Then stick the binding tape on evenly around the edge of the glass and the pasteboard back, letting half of the width show in front.

Be careful to put binding tape on the top and bottom first, and then cut off quite evenly the pieces which are left sticking out. Then put the binding tape on the two sides or ends. Cut off the extra tape and smooth it all down very carefully, pressing firmly with the finger which must be quite clean.

When the four sides of binding tape are on, place the entire framed picture under a large book or other weight and leave it there for several hours. Next attach to the back two rings by which the picture is hung on the wall.

Through each ring put a piece of narrow binding tape, each about two inches long. We then paste the two ends firmly behind the picture as shown in Figure No. 2. The framed picture is then complete, ready to be hung on the wall.

ATTACKED BY LIONS

(Continued from page 97)

way, always on the watch for wild animals of East Africa, especially the great tawny king of the jungle, *simba*, the African lion.

Presently we crossed another ravine and turned a sharp curve. There, on the road just in front of us, lay, by actual count, fifteen great, full-grown lions. I stopped the auto about three hundred feet from the nearest animal. They did not move, and all seemed to be asleep.

What a sight! What a situation! Fifteen savage, full-grown African lions, loose and in our way! Nothing but the sides of that little Ford sedan between us and certain death!

In the herd were several females, but most of them were males with great yellow and brown manes. At first none of them took any particular notice of us. Presently one raised his head, watched us for a second, and then lay down again.

This was a good chance to get a picture of those great cats. My friend turned in the auto to get the camera, while I watched the lions before us. They were beautiful—magnificent—as they lay there sleeping, as peaceful as cats

at a fireside.

My friend began getting the camera ready for taking the picture, but it was impossible to do this through the front window which was obscured by the morning dew. I suggested that he lower the side window and take the picture from the outside. He did not wish to do this, because he thought he could not get a good picture in that position. He decided to get out of the auto. He opened the door of the car slowly and quietly; we thought that the lions were sleeping and would take no notice of us.

The door was open and the window lowered. The camera was ready for action. My friend slid from his seat as quietly as possible. Soon his whole body was outside, and only the lower part of the door was between him and the lions. He looked into the viewfinder of the camera in order to get his picture. We hardly dared breathe, lest we awaken the sleeping beasts.

Suddenly one of the largest male lions jumped to his feet and leaped for my friend with a roar that made my blood freeze. My friend made one jump, and was at my side, while the lion landed outside the auto door and struck at it with

terrific force. The roar of the great lion awakened all the others. With immense leaps, they came right at our auto. We were attacked by fifteen lions all at once!

The enormous brutes circled round our Ford, growling and roaring and lashing their tails from side to side in excitement and anger. Can you imagine such a situation? It was enough to congeal one's blood in his veins!

Both my friend and I were terrified at the suddenness of the attack; we sat stock still for a few seconds, not daring to move. One of the great lions put his huge paws up on one of the doors and clawed at the metal. We quickly lowered the windows of the car with trembling hands while we watched the furious animals outside. Their teeth looked sharp and wicked. How glad we were that our car had steel sides and roof, and that the windows were so small that no lion's head could pass through.

Once one of the brutes tried to stand on his hind legs on the side next to me and look through the window. But the space was so small that he had to give up the attempt and take a look at me from a distance.

Then one of them tried to

leap up on the hood of the engine. I did not like that, so I sounded the horn. All the lions answered with terrific roars, but the animal at the front of the engine disappeared quickly.

The others walked around our car, lashing their tails and striking with their paws at the wheels and the tires. They opened their great mouths, and roared at us angrily. Several times one of them leaped at our car, but he always landed with a bump outside the door on the fenders.

This hullabaloo went on for about fifteen minutes, during which time we hardly knew what to do. Then I started the engine. The lions did not like the smell of the gasoline; they ran away from the exhaust of the engine to the front of the auto. I started to drive the car slowly. I pushed against one of the lions several times until he finally jumped to the side. But at once another took his place. This happened three times, but finally I got ahead of them. I began to drive the auto faster and faster. The lions followed us, roaring and jumping at the sides of the car.

But gradually our good little Ford outdistanced them. Several of the strong-

(Please turn to page 119.)

ATTACKED BY LIONS

(Continued from page 115)

er beasts followed us for a mile or two. I drove as fast as the poor road would permit.

When there was only one lion following us, I asked my friend if he would like to stop and get a photograph of that animal. He told me to keep right on driving—that he was not interested in photography just at that moment. Sorry to say, he had not succeeded in taking a single picture of our adventure. That is why I have no photographs of the attacking lions with which to illustrate this story, which, I assure you, is quite true.

But to continue our story: I stepped on the gas, and we drove away as fast as possible. Soon we left behind us the last *simba*, the great African lion, the king of the jungle—the last of the fifteen savage lions which had attacked our little Ford sedan. Then we breathed a sigh of relief. My friend said, "Attacked by fifteen lions—all at once! What an adventure! And I didn't get one picture."

A REVIEW

1. Have you read the previous stories of adventures among the wild animals of East Africa?

EAST AFRICAN CLUB

(Continued from page 110)

and read about each one in the encyclopedia. We found other information also in several animal books in our library.

Our club was interested in the battles between the Italian and British troops in northeastern Africa. So we found out about those places, too. Our teacher says she is very glad about our interest in studying Africa. She says it is all due to the animal stories now being published in THE YOUNG CITIZEN. We liked the first two of those stories very much, and hope they will continue for a long time. They have aroused great interest in our class at school, and our East African Study Club has learned a great deal from them.

TURNING PLEASURE

(Continued from page 110)

dence.

If I secure a good photograph, I take it back to the owner of the house, show it to him, and ask for orders for copies of the picture. Almost always I receive orders for a number of copies. From each of these orders I make a neat profit.

Gradually I am building up a nice little business. I am turning pleasure into profit.

A HIKING CLUB

(Continued from page 110)

rivers; a very enjoyable hike to places on Laguna de Bay, the great inland sea of Luzon; and finally an extended trip to Naga, Legazpi, and the famous Mayon volcano.

Although our club was a hiking club, we did not walk to all of these places. Sometimes we went by bus, sometimes we found a friendly truck driver who let us ride in his empty truck, and often we walked at least a part of the way to our destination. Perhaps a better name for our club would be the Luzon Boys Travel Club.

We saw a lot of interesting and historical places of Luzon, and we had plenty of healthful exercise. I would not take anything for the experience I had, nor for the information I learned from actually seeing things.

Our expenses were not very great and we had a good deal of fun as we travelled together. We ate anywhere—there were always eating places along the way—and we slept wherever we could find a suitable place when night overtook us.

It was a rather daring vacation venture, and we found it strenuous, too, but I think it did us good.