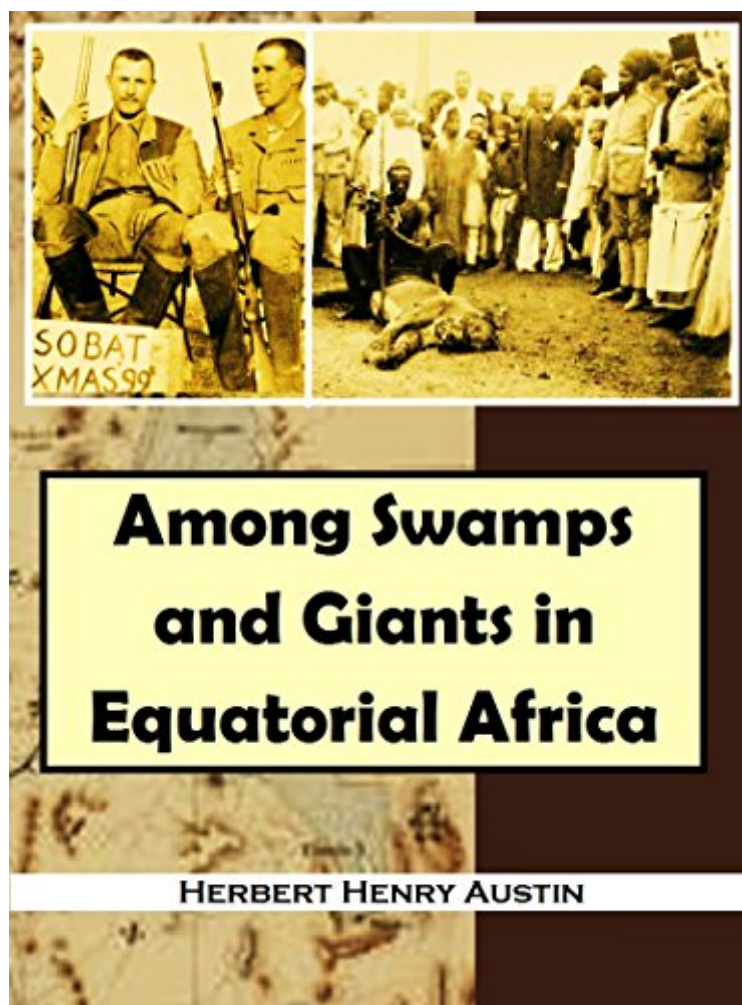




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Among Swamps And Giants In Equatorial Africa: An Account Of Surveys And Adventures In The Southern Sudan And British East Africa (1902)





Synopsis

Major H. H. Austin, 1868 was a British military officer who served in India and Uganda and conducted two survey expeditions along the western borders of Abyssinia during 1899-1901. This book is the author's narrative of these two expeditions in which the author engaged in much big game hunting which he describes (including bagging the lion, elephant, cranes, hippo, antelope, crocodile, python, kob, turkey, duck, pelican, waterbuck, geese, buffalo, hartebeeste, Omdurman mules, zebra, oryx, gazelle, vulture and others). The first expedition which occupies five chapters, is about a survey of the Sabat region. Accompanied by another Engineer Officer, Major Bright, the expedition left Omdurman on December 2, 1899, by steamer up the Blue Nile and the Sabat River, landing at Dom Palm Tree Camp, between Sabat and Nasser forts. Here the expedition commenced its journey through forests full of game of every description, fording streams teeming with hippos, and amongst the Nuers and the Anuaks—whose habits, customs, and industries are fully described. Later it found itself among the Gallas and Abyssinians. The steep climb to the plateau proved very fatal to the transport animals; but abundance of food was obtainable. Continuing along the Gelo, the country round which is barren and inhospitable, with no animal life but the loathsome crocodiles, they reached the Pibor on May 22, and got back to Omdurman on July 7, where the party broke up. Austin was a strict disciplinarian, having one of his men executed for butchering a mule to eat. The second part, consisting of 18 chapters, deals with another expedition through the Sudan to Mombasa via Lake Rudolf. This was on a greater scale than the previous one, had an escort of 20 non-commissioned officers of the 10th Sudanese under a native officer, Mabruk Effendi, Major Bright, and Dr. John Garner, with 4 personal servants, 32 Jehadia, 15 camels, 12 mules, and 125 donkeys, and reached Nasser Post on January 12. After leaving which, they were cut off from all communication with the outer world until they reached Baringo Post in East Africa in August, 1901, after undergoing most horrible and distressing experience, especially among hordes of hostile Turkana, who are veritable giants in stature. The author says: "I have toned down several harrowing details which found a place in my diary during periods of hazard and anxiety, when our prospects seemed hopeless. ... I and my two comrades barely escaped with our lives, and of the fifty-nine Sudanese only fourteen reached safety with us." This volume can be cordially recommended to the attention of African safari readers. About the author: Entered army, 1887; Captain, 1897; in India on trans-frontier surveys on Kabul River and Zhob Valley Railway surveys, 1890-91; assisted in preliminary survey for Uganda Railway, 1891-92; served Waziristan Expedition, 1894-95 (medal with clasp); Uganda, 1897-98 (brevet of Major, 3rd class Brilliant Star Zanzibar, D.S.O., medal with two clasps); conducted two survey expeditions along the western

borders of Abyssinia during 1899-1901. CONTENTS PART I SURVEY OF THE SOBAT REGION
OCTOBER 1899 – JULY 1900 I. From Cairo To The Pibor II. A Tramp Through Ashes III.
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MOMBASA VIA LAKE RUDOLF NOVEMBER 1900 – OCTOBER 1901 The Uganda Railway I.
Where Gordon Died II. By Double Stages III. Among Mosquitoes IV. In Pleasant Paths V. Dry Wells
And Drought VI. Elephants And Locusts VII. Familiar Landmarks VIII In Quest Of Food IX. Dogged
By Giant Natives X. The Hostile Turkana XI. On Donkey Diet XII. Thieves In The Camp XIII. No
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Customer Reviews

Not much hunting in it. Mostly a fight against hunger, thirst and sickness.

Interesting , diary type of reading.

First off a comment on the Kessinger Library Reprint edition of this book. Several pages were missed and replaced with duplicate pages, namely page 171 transitions into repeat of pages 164-167 before jumping suddenly to page 177, entirely omitting pages 172-176. I had to find a digital online scan of the book to be able to read these pages. Furthermore, as expected, the quality of the scanned photos left something to be desired. so my rating of the KLR edition is 2/5 for these reasons. Speaking of the work itself it was somewhat of a slow read, with long stretches of mundane details interspersed with occasional exciting adventures. Still, amongst similar works I have read this one stands out for the amount of death amongst the party which testifies to the hardships they endured. 3.5/5 stars.

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