



# BETWEEN THE COVERS RARE BOOKS

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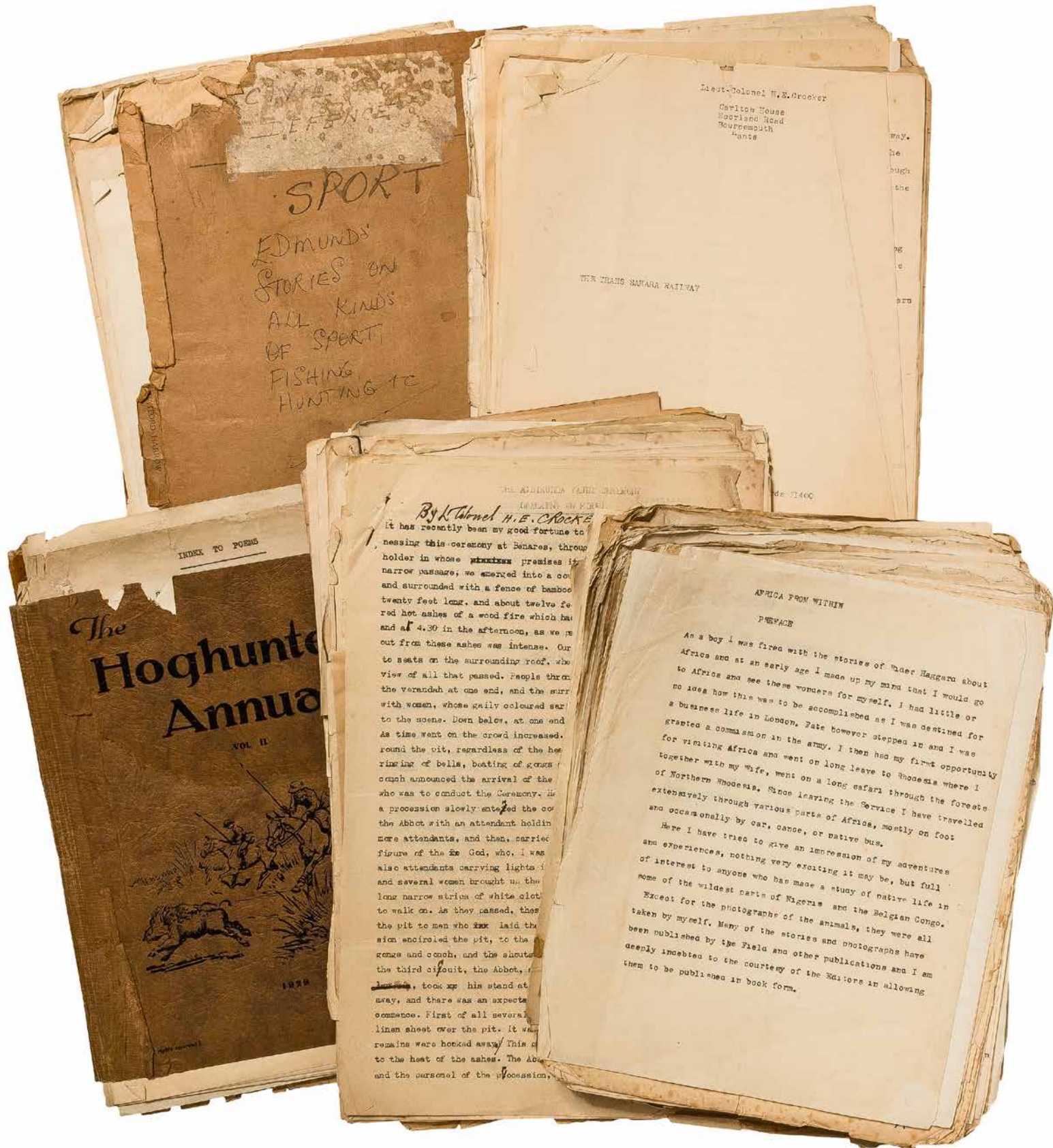


## Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Edmund (H.E.) Crocker

[Archive]: Sport Hunting and Travel

Africa, India, Asia: 1900-1960

\$5000



An archive of typescript works by the author, renowned hunter, and British soldier Lieutenant Colonel H. E. Crocker. A substantial lot of documents neatly organized in five folders including a 500 page typed manuscript, 56 page typed manuscript of *The Hoghunter's Annual Volume II*, 31 typed manuscripts essays, letters from editors, and agendas for organizations he was involved in. Very good with some small chips and tears and age-toning.

The papers mirror Crocker's career and feature his game hunting and travel accounts, some of which were printed as articles, and others which remain unpublished, many of which were intended to be released collectively as a yet unpublished book. These largely recollect his experiences in Rhodesia, Tanganyika, the Congo, and Nigeria, as well as recounting his game hunting adventures around the world, including Australia, India, and Africa, and finally, his post-war interest in international affairs. One of the folders contains a 500-plus page unpublished book manuscript titled, *Africa from Within* written by Crocker circa 1960-1962. Some of his hunting adventures were previously published in poetic form, in a 1930s sport hunting magazine called *The Field: Hoghunter's Annual*. Other articles pertaining to Africa were published in the *Army Quarterly Magazine*. Some of the accounts and observations described within the archive were not published and according to the preface leaf, the writer was intending to put the latter together as a complete and detailed illustrated book. It seems that he was working with an editor at the time of Crocker's death, and fate would be such that the book was not published due to his untimely passing.

A comprehensive autobiographical archive, Lieutenant-Colonel Crocker kept numerous well written recollections of his hunting expeditions in Africa, some of his prizes including lions in Tanganyika, a black rhinoceros in East Africa, hippopotamus and elephant hunting in the Belgian Congo, and duck on the Zambesi. He further mentions meeting Sir Julian Huxley, secretary of the Zoological Society of London and founding member of the World Wildlife Fund. Chasing the thrill of a good hunt elsewhere around the world, he pursues wild boar and jackals in Cawnpore and the Kadir plains of India, but deems Queensland, Australia to be the "hoghunter's paradise." He also describes crocodile hunting in the great Down Under. A captivating account describes a hunt for black partridge near Baghdad, Iraq, during his service in the Mesopotamia Campaign. In Germany, he partook in a "pig-sticking festival," his account digressing into the event's ancient tradition and exuberant female participants. Closer to home, in Scotland's Highland lochs and rivers, in east Central Ireland, and in Hertfordshire in England, he takes up fly fishing.

Crocker also takes an interest in the unique tribes dispersed across the African continent, making note of both lively and somber customs as he travels. He describes and contemplates without bias subjects such as cannibalism among the leopard society, superstition and witchcraft, juju and amulets and venerated objects, lycanthropy, serpent totems for worship, male initiation rites and excessive whipping, ancient dugouts in Rhodesia once believed to be slave pits, rain dances and festivities, marriage customs, tribal dress, communications and industry, as well as, the discovery of the bronze head and other copper alloy sculptures in 1938 at Ife, in Nigeria. Not simply an observer, Crocker was a member of the Conservative Commonwealth Council for East and Central Africa, among other groups, and according to meeting minutes herein, was involved in the rehabilitation of the Mau Mau during the 1950s uprisings, in hopes of improving living standards and conditions. Shortly after World War II he reported on a munitions area in East Africa.

The archive also details Crocker's travels to other countries with the British Army and on his own accord. In a signed firsthand witness account Crocker describes a fire walking ceremony in Benares. He also possessed a keen interest in global advancement and world events, rendering here numerous unpublished expositions and personal observations of politics, education, industrialization, and campaigns of war, starting with his own participation in the Fall of Baghdad in 1917 with the Thirteenth Division under General Maude. A 14-page account of the Northern States of India deals with border disputes, Chinese claims, and railways in Nepal, Kashmir-Tibet, Assam. Also pertaining to India he discusses the announcement of an important Russian steel plant, Bhilai Steel Plant, located in Bhilai, Chhattisgarh, which in 1955 became India's first and main producer of steel rails. Education is his area of focus in Pakistan. A seventeen page report examines the reformation of Taiwan during the 1950s under KMT (Chinese Nationalist Party) rule, including the highly successful land reform program, mining exports, freedom of speech, and social conditions according to a Saigon civilian.

Lieutenant-Colonel Herbert Crocker (1877-1962) obtained a commission as Lieutenant in the Essex Regiment in 1900, and served in the Second Boer War. After sustaining an injury during his regimental service in Belfast, South Africa, in 1901 he was seconded to the North Nigerian Regiment, remaining at this post until the end of the war. During the First World War, Crocker commanded the 13th Signal Company at Gallipolo, where he was wounded. He was appointed second-in-command of the 8th Battalion, Chinese Regiment, which arrived in Mesopotamia in late February 1916, and became battalion commander during the capture of Hai Salient on 15 February 1917, retaining this position until the end of the war. Crocker retired from the army in 1929 after some years in India, and subsequently decided to travel, hunt, and write, exploring extensively in Africa with his wife. He died on 13 May 1962.

Yielding numerous engaging adventures, this substantial archive of firsthand accounts embodies the life of an all-but-forgotten gallant British soldier, skilled game hunter, and writer. A voluminous and extensive collection that forms the most complete account of Crocker's life and career. [BTC#409911]



## AFRICA FROM WITHIN

### PREFACE

As a boy I was fired with the stories of Rider Haggard about Africa and at an early age I made up my mind that I would go to Africa and see these wonders for myself. I had little or no idea how this was to be accomplished as I was destined for a business life in London. Fate however stepped in and I was granted a commission in the army. I then had my first opportunity for visiting Africa and went on long leave to Rhodesia where I together with my Wife, went on a long safari through the forests of Northern Rhodesia. Since leaving the Service I have travelled extensively through various parts of Africa, mostly on foot and occasionally by car, canoe, or native bus.

Here I have tried to give an impression of my adventures and experiences, nothing very exciting it may be, but full of interest to anyone who has made a study of native life in some of the wildest parts of Nigeria and the Belgian Congo.

Except for the photographs of the animals, they were all taken by myself. Many of the stories and photographs have been published by the Field and other publications and I am deeply indebted to the courtesy of the Editors in allowing them to be published in book form.



Wayfarers were numerous and I was surprised to see the husband occasionally carrying the baby while his wife trudged along with an enormous load. The women are trained to carry loads and I saw women carrying at least 130 pounds of forewood on their back with ease and the baby perched up on top. The men do not as a rule carry loads, for their job is to hunt and fight, till the ground, make the huts and keep them in repair, and, if near a river, ~~as they~~ <sup>and fish</sup> ~~has to~~ cut down a tree, and hollow out a canoe, ~~and fish~~. They each have their own tasks appointed by immemorial custom.

We crossed several rivers on solidly built log bridges or sometimes crazy looking contraptions made of bundles of sticks suspended on long creepers hanging down from the trees. They swayed to and fro as we crossed over, but they were really strong enough --- a good deal stronger than they looked, in fact.

There were numerous snakes in the forest and I often met one crawling along the <sup>T</sup> path or coiled by the side. They would always get out of our way and never threatened to attack us. The boys chased them and took them to the village where they were cooked and eaten. There is a particularly dangerous snake in the Congo, the "Crowing Cobra" which is supposed to crow like a cock! They hang head downwards over the path ready to drop on anything that passes underneath. They kill it with their poisoned fangs and wait till the carcass is rotten and full of maggots and then they descend to feed on the maggots. I only saw one of these snakes, or what I took for one. It was a snake about twelve feet long hanging from a tree over ~~the~~ a small game path but it certainly not crow like a cock. It may have been a small python.



Cannibalism is rife through many parts of Africa, sometimes for the sake of food but more often perhaps as a ceremonial, the idea being that on eating parts of a great Chief or brave warrior the attributes of the person thus eaten are assimilated by the eater. The origin of the word "cannibal" is interesting. It is derived from the ancient Chaldean word "Kahn-l-Baal" or Priest of Baal. The priests of Baal received the meat for burnt offerings and were compelled to eat all that remained over similarly to the clergy today after the Holy Communion service. In time of great national stress and danger the people offered their children as burnt sacrifices as being the most precious offerings they could offer and here also the priests had to consume all that remained of the children after they had "passed through the fire" to Moloch. The word "Moloch" can be written "Malech" which means a King. Thus the word has come down to us through the ages as the "eater of human flesh" and so we get the word "cannibal".

Though nowadays prohibited, the practice is still carried on in remote districts and I often noticed that many of the men and even of the women had their front teeth filed to sharp points which is supposed to denote a cannibal. During my travels through the Belgian Congo I met several Chiefs and elder men who told me they had eaten human flesh on special occasions, such as, for instance, the new moon or the death of a Chief as a rite and not for food. Strangers and prisoners of war were, in former times, killed and eaten as a matter of course. Among certain tribes slaves were fattened like Christmas oxen and sold for food. They were, as a rule soaked in a stream for a day or two before being killed to make



## AFRICAN SUPERSTITIONS

One could write a complete book on the superstitions that prevail in various parts of Africa. I have come across a great many curious beliefs and have seen witch doctors at work, and many of the forms of Juju that the people go through. As far as I could ascertain, there is no form of religion or worship of any deity as we understand the meaning of the word. The entire idea is the propitiation of evil spirits who are the direct agents of every evil that happens. There are apparently no good spirits: they are all evil, and ever seeking to bring about misfortune and disaster to the unfortunate people. This belief in the appalling power of evil, and its complete domination over the power for good, is curious, and can be traced through the ages to prehistoric times. Surrounded, as they believe themselves to be, with herds of devils, the people naturally turn for assistance and relief to the witch doctors who claim the sole power of dealing with these devils, of course at a price. Various ceremonies must be performed to drive them away when they become troublesome, just as the Maltese peasants let off fireworks and bombs to scare away the Devil. But there are so many and so diverse forms of devils that one witch doctor cannot deal with all of them. The aid of a deviner must be sought to find out which particular class of devil is causing the mischief, and one has to appeal to the witch doctor who deals with that particular class.

Both the deviner and witch doctor <sup>must</sup> have, of course, to be paid. The witch doctor comes to the hut of the afflicted person and performs certain rites, and collects his payment in goats or cattle, and departs leaving the person convinced that the devils have been driven away.



## THE AINIKUNDA YAJNA CEREMONY

(WALKING ON FIRE)

By Lt Colonel H. E. CROCKER CMG DSO

It has recently been my good fortune to have an opportunity of witnessing this ceremony at Benares, through the courtesy of the householder in whose ~~premises~~ premises it took place. Passing through a narrow passage, we emerged into a courtyard, in the centre of which, and surrounded with a fence of bamboo poles, was a shallow pit, some twenty feet long, and about twelve feet wide. This pit contained the red hot ashes of a wood fire which had been burning there all day, and at 4.30 in the afternoon, as we passed close by, the heat given out from these ashes was intense. Our host met us, and conducted us to seats on the surrounding roof, where we would obtain an excellent view of all that passed. People thronged into the courtyard, while the verandah at one end, and the surrounding balconies, were crowded with women, whose gaily coloured saris lent a most picturesque tone to the scene. Down below, at one end, a brass band played continuously. As time went on the crowd increased. More and more pressed in closely round the pit, regardless of the heat. Presently the ~~clashing~~ ringing of bells, beating of gongs and the shrill hoarse cries of a conch announced the arrival of the Abbot of the adjacent monastery, who was to conduct the Ceremony. Headed by attendants with drawn <sup>swords</sup> ~~swords~~ a procession slowly entered the courtyard. Behind the swordsmen came the Abbot with an attendant holding an umbrella over his head, several more attendants, and then, carried in a ~~palanquin~~ palanquin, came a small figure of the ~~De~~ God, who, I was informed, was Mahedao. There were also attendants carrying lights in large bowls, and silver spears, and several women brought up the rear. As the procession advanced, long narrow strips of white cloth were spread on the ground for them to walk on. As they passed, these strips were picked and thrown across the pit to men who ~~laid~~ laid them down again. Three times the procession encircled the pit, to the accompaniment of the brass band, bells, gongs and conch, and the shouts of the people. On the conclusion of the third circuit, the Abbot, surrounded by his attendants ~~and the palanquin~~, took ~~up~~ his stand at one end of the pit. The shouts died away, and there was an expectant hush. The real Ceremony was about to commence. First of all several men carefully spread a large white ~~linen~~ linen sheet over the pit. It was at once burnt by the ashes, and the remains were hooked away. This gave clear proof if any was needed as to the heat of the ashes. The Abbot now made <sup>a</sup> sign with his hand, and the personnel of the <sup>p</sup>rocession, led by a man with drawn sword