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Dear Ian,

Thank you for your long letter of the 30th Oct. I note what you say in your suggestion that we might sort of combine forces in trying to set down some of the relative history of N.Rhodesia for the benefit (?) of posterity, does any of the present day generation read such records? do they read Selous, Gordon-Cumming, W.D.M. Bell, and so on? Sanders of the River, Haggard's King Solomon's mines, and a hundred others of the type that perhaps brought us to Africa? You know so many people have urged me to write of my life and experiences, but I have always stated that my own idea of a lot of modern books is that they contain so much "Bull" in order to get them to sell, that I have always felt that what were to me just every day experiences could hardly be of much interest, I don't know if I am right! it's just my idea! However Ian I will try and send you a succession of accounts of a rather chequered career and even this I feel will only be my own thoughts and remembrances as I go along and you will have to digest the probable jumble and sort out anything that you think of interest or worthy of insertion for publication, I trust you will understand what I mean. I don't really know why I came to Africa, I think it was the type of Books mentioned above that drew me.

I was brought up in Somerset and Devon (altho I was actually born in Wellington New Zealand but don't remember much about it) I was at school at Blundell's in Devon, a grand school in the country where as boys we had absolute freedom and no bounds at all except the nearby town of Tiverton, with the result that one roamed the countryside quite freely and became observant of wild life in general and with one or two kindred spirits became adept at poaching rabbits and pheasants in the surrounding woodlands and Trout in the rivers! all of which made a most welcome ~~addit~~ addition to our grub in war-time England. My home too was on a farm in Somerset and one had much shooting in the winter over a large area so that I was literally born with a gun in my hand and a rod as well!

Well the chance came to go to N.Rhodesia to join two friends in a soldier-settler farm venture, and at twenty years of age I landed in Mazabuka on Boxing Day 1920 having come out in the old "Norman" (Union Castle) and then six days on the train from Cape town. Well farming was completely hopeless in those days the one and only market for produce was the Belgian Congo, everything went up there, the Copper Mines in the North had not then been started, Maizewas the staple crop and we got four shillings a two hundred pound bag!! cattle sold for anything from thirty shillings to four pounds each and so on and there was literally no money to be made and much misrepresentation on the part of the Government and Colonial Office in their over-enthusiastic plans for colonisation. However one was young and living cost next to nothing. There were no motor cars, actually there were two cars owned at that time in the Mazabuka district, otherwise one went about on a bicycle or donkey cart, horses would not live in those days of course there being no vaccine to combat horse sickness. However one lived cheaply and there was the Game!

You will appreciate that in those earlier days the country was run by the ~~Shankarans~~

Chartered company under an Administrator, capital was Kalomo but afterwards shifted to Livingstone, the Colonial Office took over the Government of the country in 1922 and from then onwards we had a succession of Governors, of whom I seem to remember the first was Sir Herbert Stanley, a benign Jewish Gentleman and I think a benevolent and capable Governor, well farming for me at any rate proved a failure, lack of sufficient capital and so on and my ideas turned more and more to professional hunting Safaris and here again Ian I do stress that my writings are probably considerably jumbled up as I write just as thoughts come and you would have to if possible co-ordinate the whole thing if it ever eventuates you will understand me. Safari is a word coined long since but it will do for use in our ventures, my name did become known in this connection and I started getting the odd enquiries through Rowland Ward and so on, I took out some interesting people, one of the first was quite elaborate consisting of Prince Yussouf Kamal of Egypt, a brother of the old King Fuad and Prince Omar Halim of Turkey, a quite large entourage A.D.C and Doctor cooks servants etc five cars and even their own drinking water in containers brought from Egypt. They came mainly for Red Lechwe, the excellent Sable and Eland heads obtainable in N.Rhodesia, Lichtenstein Hartebeeste and Situtunga, I remember them all as delightful people and most considerate in any strenuous problems such as taking a ~~very~~ car across the Kafue on dugouts and so on. However it was not easy to get the ~~support~~

the support of the Government for the support of any ~~entrepreneurism~~ entrepreneurship which involved the entry into the already sacred Native Reserves by Europeans and one found the Provincial Administration increasingly obstructive, possibly you yourself have found how extremely obstructive they COULD be, you see even towards the end of the 20's the die was already cast for the distant future of the Territory and became more and more noticeable as time went on, one's thoughts turned to Kenya and I then planned a journey to Nairobi to explore prospects however this did not turn out quite as planned as my brother in law who had joined me in the hunting venture and was as keen and capable as myself was most unfortunately killed by a Crocodile just before the plan was finalised, it was a dreadful blow to me. However I did make the trip to Nairobi and Kenya later but first let me digress to give you a little information about Lochinvar.

This huge Ranch a hundred and ten thousand acres 28 miles from Monze and bounded on the North side by the Kafue River ( well you know it ) was originally taken up by a company known as the Rhodesia Cattle and Land Company (Bulawayo). The Guiding light in the enterprise was one Major Gordon, a pioneer I think of "The Column". The floatation started ( I think ) about perhaps 1912 or 14. They built a most elaborate house (for those times) all with narrow board floors for dancing ! all lit by an acetalline gas lighting system, hot water laid on to the house from the boiling mineral springs about a quarter of a mile from the house and every luxury you can imagine available in those times, the place was heavily stocked with cattle, an attempt was made to fence the WHOLE area ! quite impractical of course because the Game was in such quantities that I would say that before you had erected as much as a few hundred ~~yards~~ yards it was all torn down again by herds of Zebra or Wildebeeste ! The Directors had Season Tickets on the railway to and from Bulawayo ( imagine the cost ) and the Ranch became a fashionable resort from Bulawayo and was I was credibly informed known as " The Regent's Palace " !! However it was all doomed to failure, the War came and I suspect bad management and other reasons judging by much of the paper I destroyed when I took over the Ranch, nor could I believe that the astronomical numbers of cattle detailed as killed by Lions could have been correct , however all that is by the way, when I was first acquainted with Lochinvar there was only an old man living there as caretaker by the name of Durrheim an extraordinary old character from the Cape Mounted Rifles, who if he could get hold of it lived mainly on alcohol I should have said ! and when inebriated spoke only Xosa ( spelling ? ) the cattle had all gone and the days of high living and Parties and so on had gone, and later the place was purchased by a Belgian concern in Katanga who also only kept a caretaker there and everything fell into disrepair as I could see when I passed through there on occasions, the masses of Game remained however in spite of the " Chila " hunting by the Ba-Ila, These " Chilas " were as you may know conducted by the encirclement of large masses of Game by hundreds of Ba-Ila and walking inwards Spear the Game as bunches broke through the ring , this was of course the origin of the Mpumpe which was topped by a long reed with a tuft at the tip so as to make it visible to other hunters when in long six foot grass so that they did not ~~see~~ see each other, did you know that ? Well anyway more of Lochinvar later. Well anyway in 1932 we did the trip to Nairobi in an A Model Ford, quite an undertaking in those days, up through Kanona where there was Anzac Mills did you ever know him ? he also was a Hunter, also Ross who was killed by an Elephant, Mpika, Dodoma, Iringa, Arusha, Athi Plains , Kilimanjaro to Nairobi, where I found once again my friend Prince Yusouf Kamal and incidentally managed to get him a couple of Cheetah cubs which he badly wanted. Also while in Nairobi I happened to meet the Director of the ~~Belgian~~ Belgian Company who who owned Lochinvar, it was just a chance meeting and speaking about N.Rhodesia he asked if I knew the place and so it came about that he said to me " Come now I sell y ou the Ranch ", I was completely taken aback as you may imagine but it transpired that they actually did want to get rid of it, you will appreciate that it was at the time of the great world depression, and at that time in N.Rhodesia do you know that scores of European employees at the Copper Mines were actually WALKING back to S.Africa without any money and begging their way along the railway line, thats how bad it was Ian, I so well remember it, well the outcome of this meeting was that I purchased Lochinvar and took it over, did some repairs and so on and turned it into the most Fantastic private Game Reserve you can possibly imagine, Quite truly the Game increased under my protection in the most incredible way and in a few years I could have shown you any day as many as twenty to thirty thousand head of Game in the day, Buffalo, Eland, Sable Kudu, Hartebeeste, Lechwe (the place was just Red with them) Reedbuck Oribi and so on.

1936  
1942  
1949

I felt that I had only to wait and I would find a wealthy buyer and make myself a fortune as I am sure anybody would have, I tried to get the N. Rhodesian Government to purchase it but only found opposition to such a scheme even tho the foundation of a Game Dept. was already in the offing. It became quite well known and Visitors started coming to view the masses of Game. I had considerable trouble with poaching as you may imagine and could get no redress from the Police or Provincial Administration and only succeeded in making myself unpopular. However in the end I sent a telegram one day to the Governor ( Sir Hubert Young ) asking for his assistance THAT SHOOK THEM UP, and within hours I had Police Officers there and so on, and also a visit from the Governor and his Lady themselves to have a look at the place, but by and large and in the end it all lapsed again and never did any real good, and one could see that the die was cast as I said before as to the future of N. Rhodesia, ~~xxxx~~ also you know as the 30's went on the world drifted into War and there was simply knowing ( or hope ) of which way it was going and I was heart broken and decided to sell it which I did to two joint buyers in Johannesburg who never did anything with it and I went back and looked after it for them and ran some cattle for the Copperfield cold storage company there. Meanwhile the Game and Tsetse Dept came into being and I was offered a post as Game Ranger for the Southern Province, a pretty wide area and I had to do the elephant control in the Zambezi Valley from Chirundu up river to Livingstone, and at last felt that I had a foot into active Game Preservation. But you know once again every man's hand seemed to be against the unfortunate, increased population and developments raised an outcry against the Tsetse Fly, and campaigns were launched to shoot off the already sufficiently harassed Game in various areas, I so well remember my days in the ~~xxx~~ Zambezi Valley ( this was of course before Kariba was thought of ) they started to shoot Game across the river in S. Rhodesia and almost every minute or two one could hear a shot across the river, do you know Ian they killed over six hundred thousand head of Game on the S. Rhodesia side before it was ~~xxxx~~ stopped and it did not reduce the area of Fly by one iota ! I wrote to "THE FIELD" about this and they published a full page letter about it captioned with the one word "SLAUGHTER". Also on the road through Chirundu to Salisbury they ~~xxxx~~ erected " Fly Gates " and decontamination sheds where all cars had to be sprayed on each ~~xxx~~ side of the river, now at sunset the gates were thrown wide open and cars were allowed through during the hours of darkness as it was held that the Fly was not active at night and would not be carried, ... what abysmal ignorance, to anybody like myself who has lived for years in heavy Fly, it should be known that in warm weather the Fly is MORE active at night than in the daytime due to Tsetse being very subject to dehydration, dear God the ignorance of the Office Wallah !

Well in 1949 it was suggested that I do a survey of the Western area of the Namwala district in what was known as the " Cattle Cordon Area " ( this was the area traversed by the old Barotse Cattle Cordon which had been brought into being to prevent to spread of East Coast Fever ) with a view to ~~xxxxxxx~~ forming ~~xxxxxx~~ it into a National Park, I knew the area well and readily accepted this commission

More of the above later, I am going to digress a little, you mentioned Evans of the ~~Broke~~ one of the very greatest Englishmen I have always thought, you will have read his book " South with Scott " a classic of Scott's expedition to the Antarctic, Evans was in the expedition as a Naval Lieutenant and told me much of what they endured, well in 1935 the New Capital was opened with much pomp and ceremony at ~~Lusaka~~ Lusaka and numerous Dignitaries had of course been invited to attend among them Admiral Sir Edward Evans who was High Commissioner for S. Africa and also Commander in Chief at Simonstown, also invited was Oswald Pirow K.C. who was then Minister of Defence at Pretoria, they flew up to Lusaka in a Gloucester quite a mighty aircraft in those days, and Evans must have expressed a wish to see some Central African Game and the Governor ( Sir Hubert Young ) whom I had entertained at Lochinvar suggested to him that he might like to visit the Ranch and see the Game, so the Gloucester was flown down to Monze with Evans and his Flag Captain and one of the Govt House A.D.C's. at Monze there was a very nondescript landing ground full of thorn bushes of which more anon, they then commandeered a couple of L.D.V. vehicles from the Veterinary Dept. and came out to the Ranch about mid day, I of course had no reason to be expecting them and was lying under my car filthily dirty and unshaven having just put in a new spring when the party arrived we were duly introduced and they came into the house and started to have a cup of Tea while I had a wash and brush up when an old truck arrived driven by an old Afrikaaner by name Ben



Vermaak, a real tough old ~~old~~ creature, however I said well Ben come in and have a cup of Tea, these people have just arrived this is Admiral Sir Edward Evans, Commander in Chief at Simonstown but I have not got the other peoples names yet but sit down anyway, so Ben Vermaak then says to the Admiral well Mister, pleased to meet you do you reside in these parts? well Ian I shall never ever forget the Flag Captain's face I thought he might have a stroke! at anybody addressing the Admiral like that! it was a picture! Evans of course was quite equal to the occasion because he replied "Nee Mynheer ek is van Kaapstadt" and with that a Torrent of Afrikaanse was showered on him by old Ben, of course Evans could not speak a word of Afrikaanse really, it was so amusing.

Well anyway Evans said he had been sent down by H.E. to see the Game but he had to be in Lusaka by Mid Day tomorrow in full Dress Uniform for the opening of the Capital, so I said right well I will take you out now and show you something of it and my wife will take you out in the early morning and I will go in to Monze at four in the morning and bring the Gloucester out here you can land in front of the house and then you can be off to Lusaka. So that was fine. Well I went in with the Pilot at four in the morning to Monze and found the Gloucester with both tyres flat as pancakes, and the Pilot said well I will never get this aircraft off the ground before this evening so you will have to go back and bring them in, however I went to the station and got through to Govt House and asked for another aircraft to come down and fetch them, then back to the Ranch found them all waiting on the Air strip in front of the house Evans said where is the Gloucester and I said its dead with both tyres flat, Thank God Says Evans I dont want to go to ~~Lusaka~~ Lusaka now you can take me out shooting! I said well I have sent word for ~~another~~ another aircraft to fetch you however we went out and saw plenty of Game again and then in to Monze and they got off the ground about 5 pm having missed the Ceremony and no other plane had come for them, however before he left Evans said look can we all come back here on the way home? I will bring Pirow and we'll spend a couple of days with you and may I shoot some trophies? Well you know Ian I never allowed a shot to be fired there but I thought well I'm a poor sort if I cannot let him have a shot or two and it does not do any harm so I said yes of course you can Sir. Well two days later they sailed inland landed in front of the house and I may tell you we spent the most marvelous couple of days together. They were the most marvelous company Evans shot a Lechwe, a Wildebeeste, an Oribi and something else I dont remember what, and the evening before they left we all went out and shot Guinea Fowl, Sandgrouse and pheasants, Evans saying that every time anybody missed a bird he paid a shilling into the Kitty, well I assure you I won a handsome

Kitty! In the evening I asked the Admiral to tell me about the Tshekedi affair, well you probably know nothing about it, what happened was that about 1933 Tshekedi had two Europeans flogged for some Misdemeanor, and there were reactions of course, and Evans in his capacity of High Commissioner was sent up to investigate the matter, mind you very likely the culprits richly deserved the punishment BUT you will appreciate that it had to be looked into (in those days!) Well this was just up Evans's street, he took up two naval guns and a detachment of Bluejackets, and pictures were published in the Illustrated London News of the open air enquiry, Evans sitting at the Centre of a half-Moon of Blue Jackets with fixed Bayonets and the ~~xx~~ two Naval Guns facing about five thousand assembled Bamangwato, and much writing by Exeter Hall about oppression of the Native peoples etc etc. So I said did you get a raspberry about this? and he said not at all I was given a free hand and it was an outing for the "boys" and I thought it good for the people to see something of the British Navy, which again of course is the Spirit that won the Empire. His tales of duty on the China Station were marvelous and finally the evening before they left he asked me if I had any Assegais, you know those long Ba-Ila hunting spears to let him have, I said certainly Admiral help yourself there are plenty taken from poachers, help yourself, they may come in useful in the next War! He said well you say that let me tell you of the action with Broke in the Channel, so he told us the enthralling story, he was then in command of The Dover Patrol which were Destroyers and this particular night at midnight they ran into the German Patrol, Evans put on his searchlight and found a German close to him, put his helm hard over and rammed her so there they were locked together they boarded and fought it out hand to hand in the good old style the first man on board the German was a Midshipman from Broke and two hefty Bluejackets grabbed him and put him back onto the Broke saying get back Sonny this is not for you, and Ian do you know who that Midshipman was? it was Mountbatten! anyway Evans said it was a remarkable scrap, he had fifty two killed and wounded on his own deck and he said he had vivid memories of a big German with an axe, he said he killed a lot of my men, he said a tragic thing was that the impact of the ramming killed ~~xxx~~



(Demarcated)

every man in the engine room of Broke except one, steam pipes broken, thrown into the fire boxes and so on.

They drifted about in channell after the German sank until dawn when another Vessel came out from Dover and towed them in.

Returning to the origin of the Kafue National Park, I started off by doing an inspection of the whole area from Meshi Teshi southwards and after this had a look at it from the Air and found it entirely uninhabited south of Meshi Teshi, there was however a Native settlement on the West Bank of the Kafue about ten or twelve miles about Meshi Teshi which I hoped might be moved ( Katinti ) however I was not successful in getting these people moved. However I put in a report that I regarded the area as ideal for the formation of such a Park as it is a heavily Tsetse Fly infested area and unlikely ever to be developed for any other purpose, also there was a good distribution of Game which would with protection increase rapidly, and in fact I was proved so right, as the increase in Game was simply dramatic. I was then instructed to go to Namwala, arrange for a house to be built for me there, take on staff and establish the Kafue National Park, so a dream came true. Altho as you know the Park was demarcated to extend right up the West Bank of the Kafue and to the Busanga you will appreciate I was unable to give attention to that Northern part and devoted my attention to the Southern half. Well I can tell you that by intensive Policing and ~~subscribing~~ patrolling the Boundary road I put in on the Eastern side I was able to check poaching from those nearby inhabited areas and the Game ~~rapidly~~ rapidly increased beyond my wildest hopes, and within three Years I had a visit of several days from the Governor and his family who proved extremely enthusiastic at the large amount of Game so readily visible and a permanent Tourist Camp was put under way. I was always extremely grateful to the Governor Sir Gilbert Rennie for the support he gave me and this was due in no small part to the fact that every year in August when his children came out from England for their long summer holidays they always spent a couple of weeks with me in the Bush and when returning them to Government House I always took full advantage of the Governor's enquiry as to how things were going and did I require him to put in a few words in the right quarter for help, it was a wonderful asset !

Game Reserves. It is my considered opinion that when starting a Game Reserve you MUST keep it in an entirely natural state and one absolute essential is that you MUST burn the grass as early as possible each year, the natural state of the veldt in N. Rhodesia at any rate is that from time immemorial the whole country is burnt, fire starts about mid-June and continues throughout the dry season, if you try to retain your grass you will lose your Game as they move immediately to burnt areas where young grass emerges immediately after the fires, if you also get late fires in tinder dry areas you do irreparable damage to your ~~dx~~ ~~streets~~ to the detriment of your browsers, burning is absolutely essential, I know all

scientists biologists will throw up their hands in horror at such a suggestion, BUT how many arm chair scientists have spent their years in the field ? Wild animals are very quick to recognise protection and this becomes a problem, in that they congregate in the always much reduced area, they to much extent lose their migratory instincts and as a result we have over population and the resultant necessity to cull, all wrong you know. Also remember this in depriving human beings of the hunting of the animals you are upsetting a balance, Man is a natural predator and by stopping his hunting you are very definitely upsetting a balance, also I think it is in some way essential to keep your Game WILD, man is the only thing wild animals fear they care nothing for the other predators, Lions, Leopards and so forth you will see plenty of Game grazing peacefully within a stone's throw of some Lions, they know perfectly well when the Lions are dangerous. Poaching under natural conditions does almost no damage, for instance killing Game by digging Game Pits, has been going on for thousands of years and still there was Game, if you take a spear and a dog and run for hours after a buck you are welcome to have him, this is why a huge Game Reserve say the size of Botswana in which natural hunting of Game went on would be ideal all balances would remain the same, it is THE GUN which has to be avoided and the wire snare which is another deadly thing, but natural and primitive forms of hunting do no damage at all. It is the greatest mistake to provide artificial water supplies for Game, as the pans dry up the Game moves to other natural ~~xxxx~~ sources of water, if you supply pans with artificial water such a bore holes near by to keep water in a pan you are in for trouble in that intestinal worms will thrive in the water, at Robins in Wankie Park I had to destroy large numbers of animals mainly Sable so weak with worms as to be mere skeletons. Game Reserves today seem to be run more for the comfort of the Tourist than with regard to the welfare of the Game.

Tsetse Fly. The Kafue National Park is heavily infested with Tsetse Fly and an interesting fact is that I found I got very thin with being ~~continually~~ constantly bitten by the Fly, if you have read Selous "Hunter's Wanderings" you will notice that he says he became "excessively thin" as a result of continued bites from Fly. An interesting thing is that I kept my Labrador Dog Jet with me for ten years in the Kafue Park but he never contracted Trypanosomiasis and yet was bitten all the time by

Fly, for the first two years I gave him each month a small injection of Antricide but after those first two years I discontinued it and he appeared thereafter to be immune. There is Sleeping sickness there and I had two cases among the Native staff, one died and the other appeared to recover. The ~~best~~ prophylactic for this is Antripol BUT it is ~~said~~ said not to be a hundred per cent effective and IF having taken Antripol one contracts sleeping sickness it is said to be surely fatal, so we did not attempt any preventive. You will probably know of ~~Johnny Uys~~ Johnny Uys who was a member of our Game Dept in N. Rhodesia, he was exceptionally good in the veldt and was my devoted assistant there for over a year and I was extremely sorry when he was called to other duties, he was later killed by an elephant at Dett in S. Rhodesia while taking a group of Tourists to photograph elephant, he had absolutely no fear of anything and was frequently very incautious and I had many times felt that this could be his undoing and it was so, I well remember a brave thing he did, he was following a lioness that had killed some cattle, it was pouring with rain and having for the moment lost her spoor he was standing still and looking around when almost at his feet he saw three tiny cubs huddled together in the cold rain, and at that moment the Lioness charged him but the bush was thick and he could not see to shoot her nor did she come right through in her charge, Johnny bent down and scooped up the cubs putting them inside his shirt and backed away, that night he took them back in a box and shot her as she came to them. He gave me one a Lioness and kept the other two. The one I took was quite remarkable, without her eyes open even she took to a bottle at once and reared very easily on milk and raw eggs and later on Marie biscuits until she could take meat, she slept in our bathroom on a cushion and grew fast and when she was too big to be allowed freedom I sent her by Air to Edinburg Zoo in Scotland as they were anxious to get truly wild blood, Dear Kali she grew into a huge Lioness I have a photo of her taken later in the Zoo. I have had at times almost all wild animals as pets it is most interesting to see how soon they will acclimatise themselves to living with human beings. At Lochinvar we had Zebra, Wildebeest, Lechwe, Sable, and so on all perfectly tame and free to wander. I have had many Cheetahs which one becomes very fond of they are good watch dogs and can recognise a strange footstep outside the house long before seeing the person. One which I had for several years used to jump up onto the truck and sit onto of all the Katundu with the Natives and the

dog quite happily for even two hundred miles, he was once nearly killed by a Lion down near Machili, my wife and I were sleeping on top of the lorry and I had tied the cheetah with his chain round the shaft of the lorry for the night because of the dogs in a nearby village, I woke up as I felt him hit the end of his chain and shining a torch I saw a fine male Lion lying flat by the side of the lorry and looking at the Cheetah, he would have

killed him without any doubt; however he quickly cleared out when I shouted at him.

I had at one time a Hippo as a pet, I happened to have shot a Hippo in the river and in the morning on going down to skin and cut it up there must have been fifteen or twenty hippo in the pool and close against the bank there was a baby hippo which all of a sudden started to squeal and I realised it had been grabbed by a Crocodile, I ran into the water with one of the staff who drove a spear into the Croc which let go and we hauled the little Hippo ashore about the size of a small pig. badly gashed by the Croc's teeth but I bound it up and applied some pounded up roots brought by an Ila boy who said this would heal the wounds and indeed it did, and the Hippo thrived and grew and grew on a doze eggs a day in a gallon of milk! and was always unhappy if it was out of our sight. When it weighed about four hundred pounds I managed to take it to Pretoria Zoo where it lived for thirty five years!

I have been so often asked about the danger of living and being so much among wild and dangerous animals, and having had frightening experiences, but you know I am nothing

much ever happens really, fear is a thing to be avoided at all times, have you ever read a book called "Fear and be Slain" there was so much truth in it, I think there is something in doing your best to become a wild animal yourself and see every thing from that point of view? each and every animal is an individual you know and

they cannot be classed as one entity, they differ in temperament as much as human beings some are never able to relax the same as some of our ~~kind~~ kind are never able to !

Fear as you know is associated with an increased flow of adrenalin in the ~~kind~~ blood and this can be detected by animals with their keen sense of smell and I think is responsible for a large number of accidents with animals, I have shot in the course of my duties and hunting a matter of some hundred and thirty or more Lions, and I cannot remember more than perhaps three or four occasions when I was in and real danger, and incidentally you know I have always found that danger is always more apparent ~~than~~ real, if you can understand me, much of what I may call aggressiveness in animals is a protective demonstration, wounded animals are different of course but except in exceptional circumstances it takes tremendous provocation before an animal will attack you, and then only from extremely close quarters which might be measured in yards or even feet, THAT is the animal that probably has the advantage and kills you, I so well remember one occasion when I was following a lion that had killed one of my donkeys, I had wounded him during the night and was following him in grass perhaps waist high the dog literally fell over him ~~lying~~ lying in the grass and without a grunt or anything he came straight at me in a low rush ~~lightning~~ like lightening, I shot him straight in the face and as he fell beside me his tail struck me a ~~sh~~ sharp blow across the legs, it is something I have always remembered as showing how incredibly quickly these things can happen, and that is as I said before an occasion of extreme provocation. People have so often asked me about deliberate man-eating by Lions, I consider this to have been very rare in N. Rhodesia, I remember a Civil Servant by the name of Goddard being killed and eaten by a Lion at a forest hut on the road up to Mpika, and a District Officer named Jelf being badly injured by a Lion which entered through the window of his house also in the N. Eastern district and he only escaped because a Messenger came to his rescue and in the Melee managed to shoot Jelf through the leg and the Lion escaped ! The only case I have ever personally had was at Ngoma and a woman was killed and eaten at Katinti village some miles up the river, I got the message early the next morning and I still feel that what happened was this... it was dusk and the old woman was sitting outside her hut out in the gardens cooking over a small fire, three youngish lions came wandering along the path in the gardens and as they came round the corner of the hut they were so close to her that I feel that they may have thought she was a Baboon (with her back to them and without a thought they pounced on her and then ate her, I may be wrong, but events at any rate did not prove me right, I told the people this was my idea and that I doubted it would happen again, I was never more wrong, because every night for a week afterwards those three Lions came to the Village and scratched around trying to get into the huts, well I realised this could not go on so I shot a Wildebeeste and tied it to a tree in the village, they came that night and ate some of it, so the next night I went <sup>and</sup> sat there and they returned about 8 pm when it was dark and I shone the light on them and shot one she only went about a hundred yards and I found her dead in the morning, the other two came back presently and started feeding, I switched the light on again and they were lying broadside on to me feeding and I killed them both with one shot, a curious and most unusual thing but they were so close to me and the .404 is fairly powerful. Now one must remember that it was wild country and these Lions Might possibly have killed somebody before and it had not been heard of, one can never know.

I consider the most dangerous creature is a crocodile, as I said before my brother in law was killed by one and while I was at Ngoma Peter McClaren of the fisheries Dept was killed by one just above Meshi Teshi, he had stayed the night with us at Ngoma the night before and I said to him look Peter if you are going up river do be careful of crocs as they are so numerous up there, don't get upset in the dugout, but I did not say don't walk into the river ! anyway it was blistering hot in October and he walked into shallow water to cool himself and a big croc grabbed him, his boys pluckily got him away from the croc but he bled to death almost immediately (femoral artery). Also at Lochinvar one of my boys was actually taken out of the dugout in a lagoon as he dipped his hand in the water, the water was only waist deep and he got away from the croc but when he came to me one could see the bone of his arm laid bare and he was never able to straighten his arm again. Likewise in the Zambezi Valley I remember my friend Colin Hensman sitting on a sandbank fishing and he went to sleep and a croc came out of the water and grabbed him, he got away from it but had to have his foot amputated, they are dreadful creatures, and the losses of cattle at the Ba-Ila cattle posts on the Kafue were enormous. I also remember a Lion killing a beast at a village on the river and on being chased off by the Village people he jumped into the lagoon and was swimming across when a Croc took him. I found ~~th~~



at Namwala that the Lions thought nothing of swimming across the river, one learns all kinds of things ! On another occasion far down in the Park I was driving my Landrover along a small stream and there was a large male lion lying by a pool eating a pile of small fish which he had scooped out of it, also at Ngoma we used to a lot of fishing in the river ~~above~~ above Meshi Teshi and coming home we often ran into some Lions on the road and I used to stop and throw them some fish and they always picked them up and ate them. Another time I was driving along in the Landrover with some fowls in a basket and meeting my friend Boykie ( a big male Lion ) on the road I threw him out a white Cockerel, which immediately ran back and took cover under the Landrover, no trouble to my friend he tried to scramble under the Landrover to get hold of it and nearly upset us ~~into~~ into the bargain as he lifted the Landrover off the ground as he pushed underneath, what mad things we did. Amazing the things one can do with wild animals when you have no fear of them and they get to know you, I used to drive among these ~~in~~ Lions and stop amongst them, no doors or anything on the open Landrover, so close I could feel their hot breath on my bare knee, I would take a short piece of stick, put a lump of meat on the end and try to get them to take it from me but they would never make ~~that~~ that actual contact with me, if I then dropped it off the stick they would then eat it, you must remember these were actually wild Lions which had got to know me personally so well that I could do this with them. The herd of Buffalo that lived around Ngoma and numbered eventually about a thousand was also so remarkably tame that I used to drive among them and they would come rushing up in play, just like cattle shaking their heads at me and prancing around, nobody else could have done it of course because they knew me and knew my car as distinct from any others. I have heard it said that animals are colour blind, I do not believe it, why should they ! why should they not see everything equally as we do ? Also I deny that there ~~is~~ is any such thing as protective colouring in the animal world ( as distinct from birds and insects which obviously have it ) here you have dozens of different animals with fantastically different colouring, the Zebra, the Lechwe, the Buffalo etc, all with a common enemy the Lion, who certainly takes no note of colouration, he doesn't have to ! If there is any protection it is in a completely stationary object, if you keep still you are often invisible, and the only to the untrained eye ? Lions and Leopards have I will admit strategic ~~colouring~~ colouration they need it, another interesting thing I noticed is the way these carnivora do their killing, I noticed how cleanly all their ~~killing~~ killing is done, they make their final rush at incredible speed along side the animal and strike his front legs which almost certainly brings him down and then as quick as lightning they have him by the throat and keep on dragging him round backwards away from his kicking legs and in no time he is throttled and dead, occasionally of course an animal will get away from them and have some bad gashes but mainly the killing is quick and clean just like that. I once found a Buffalo cow hanging by the neck in the fork of a low tree, killed by an elephant and put there for some reason who would know ? At Ngoma also I found a Lion just trampled into the ground and killed by some Buffalo. At Ngoma also I came on a Buffalo freshly shot by a native poached with a muzzle loader, you know these old tower muskets they had, I cut the bullet out to see what had killed the Buffalo, it was a battery terminal ! it still had the "plus mark" stamped on it ! The Vultures are often a sure sign of a poacher, often of course its a lion kill, but I found a number of poachers by watching the vultures there is little escape from the eyes of vultures, and I may tell you that on occasions on the Flats I have shot a Lechwe at say 250)300 yards and before I had got to him there were Vultures there ! ~~Hippo~~ Hippo..you had to be careful of these in the river, they were numerous and many of them extremely cheeky due perhaps to the dreadful wounds many of them had through fighting, I had an extremely narrow escape from one which tried to upset my boat when I had the Governor's children in it with me, it was a very nasty moment. I did have the boat holed on another occasion by a Hippo with nine boys in it but nobody was hurt, but its not funny I can tell you. I think I told you elsewhere about the Hunter Chris Walker being killed by that well known elephant Siachitema, this was way back in 1926, he was hunting in that Cordon area and two young men from Choma keen to shoot a Buffalo, Geoff Beckett and Dave McArthur had managed to go out to his camp on a motor cycle and asked him to help them, he said yes easy tomorrow morning we'll get a Buffalo so in the morning they were on the spoor of some Buffalo when they crossed the track of this mighty Siachitema who had a very significant footprint which I later saw myself, so of course Chris at once followed it and they came up with the elephant following him through thick

forest just on the edge of the open Mopani, well of course the elephant broke back onto them and what happened was never clear but he hit Chris across the back of his neck with his trunk and killed him, the two youngsters ran screaming as you may imagine and had to be collected by the Natives who were with them, ~~they got down to Mulunga~~ they got down to Mulunga to the Policeman who was in charge of the cordon in those days ( Lancaster who I knew ) and he took Chris's body back and buried him at Mulunga I often in later years had a look at the Gravestone which was later trampled into the ground by an elephant, you can imagine what the Natives said about that ! but it only MIGHT have been true.

You Ian in your occupation will have realised the terrible destruction man has been responsible for in the commercialisation of Nature's resources, the dreadful destruction of Game was due almost entirely to the fact that the meat could be readily sold, the same with the fish in the Kafue which were completely decimated by the netting, every half mile of river from Kafue to Namwala ( some 250 miles ) had its fishing camp with day long fishing, no wonder there were no fish left even before I left N.Rhodesia. Bangweulo and parts of the N.Eastern district were plagued by killers from the Copper Belt and so on early in the 20's the Flats on the north bank of the Kafue as far as Blue Lagoon were becoming denuded of Game by the Afrikaanse hunters among the Lusaka district farmers who as soon as the dry season started were out there in force with their wagons and horses harassing the Game from the Mwembeshi westwards.

After I retired from the N.Rhodesia Game Dept, I worked as a temporary Warden at Robins Camp at the top end of Wankie Game Reserve, I don't know if you know it but except you must, I lived in the "Tower", my impressions of Wankie Game Reserve I am afraid were not very favourable, it is a very excellent Game Reserve BUT the methods of running it in those days left much to be desired, for instance at Robins Camp I regarded it as a complete shambles, there was of course a large Native Compound where the African staff lived in the most unbelievable squalor, just grass and dagga huts, no latrines, or proper cleanliness facilities, not Uniforms or anything, and this mind you in a Tourist Camp that was fully booked for most of the dry season, one was given no responsibility, not even trusted with the money to pay the staff wages at the end of every month, this was done by a special journey from the Officer in charge of the ~~Park~~ Park at Main Camp a hundred miles away XXX ! For instance if one of the Vehicles needed even a new Fanbelt one was not even allowed to purchase one on Govt Behalf from a local source, but a man had to come right up from Wankie to fit it and so on, one could not credit it. You know under the Smith Government the graft and centralisation of everything had to be seen to be believed, when I left there they owed me a hundred pounds which I just could not get out of them, there appeared to be no appeal well yes there was an appeal to the Civil Service Commission but my repeated letters in this respect were all suppressed, and a senior officer who shall be nameless said to me " you are foolish to keep on about this, you will never get the money you have not got the right connections !!! this was quite typical of it all, however it just happened that three months after I left I was staying with some friends and Welensky came in for supper, he was introduced to me and we got talking and he asked me what I did and so on, I said well I have just finished a course of work for your Government and I simply regard the system as completely lacking in integrity etc etc, he said what's the trouble ? so I told him, and he said please send me copies of the correspondence if you still have them, which I did and received a letter back to say that the Treasury had been instructed to pay me the sum of £110 !! so you see I DID have a connection after all, but that was typical of the shameful system as I saw it. Since then I am sure conditions have improved. One of the most remarkable things occurred while I was at Robins, ...at a neighbouring farm two big male lions got into an almost impregnable cattle kraal in which were 100 lovely two year old Afrikaander heifers, and I was called over in the morning to see the destruction, it was staggering, these two lions had killed 62 of these cattle, they paid the penalty the following night, but it was small compensation for the damage ! I could not have ~~believed~~ believed it had I not personally seen it.

Major W.E.Poles. M.C. joined the N.Rhodesia Game Dept. approximately at the same time that I did, and we were close friends, he was allotted the N.Eastern area and his days in the Luangwa Valley should make enthralling reading when he has collected all his writings into an entity, he is a most accomplished authority on Wild Life and I am sure put together a valuable record of the N.Eastern Areas. He now as you know lives in the area where I roamed as a boy and we have everything in common in our love of the Wild. He is the same age as myself, and when he left the Game Dept. he went to Blue Lagoon and looked after it for Ronnie and Erica Critchley, he decided to leave after six months and went back to England,

and I went out there and took his place with the Critchleys, of whom we were both very fond, however it was difficult to reconcile the well being of some two thousand head of cattle with the preservation of the Game for various reasons and after six months I left there and went to Matetsi in S.Rhodesia to look after a cattle Ranch there. Again there was the conflict of abundance of Game and the welfare of the cattle, it was poor cattle country and the constant depredations of Lion and Leopard were heartbreaking, there was an unending supply of Lions ! no matter how many I shot, and the Leopards used to roam the paddocks at night devouring the newly born calves.

Then the Terrorist activities started. It was uninhabited country right away to the Botswana border and the old "Hunters Road", what memories of Selous' Books used to ~~run~~ cross my mind as I explored this country, it was wild and desolate and sandy wastes but there was water enough for Game, Tsetse Fly was still there in parts, I began to notice about 1965 ~~about~~ that on some of the elephant and Game paths there were footprints, and I also started to come upon places where Natives had obviously camped for a night or so, nothing permanent, but they were obviously not poachers because there were no signs of Game having been killed, once or twice I came upon a fresh camp with pots still on a fire and evidence that the people must have just left, perhaps had heard me and my African coming or seen us, you will know what I mean, once I found a camp hidden in the bed of a steep river bed, and my Masawa Bushman who was always with me laid his hand on my arm as I started to go down the steep bank to have a look, and said " No Bwana dont go down there ", however we did go down and found nobody as usual, they had melted away ! but I could get nothing out of my Bushman, if you know these people you will know that they have many secrets that they will never ever tell you, of course he knew who they were, but once again I found that these Terrorists were coming into our little farm store to buy things, dressed as Women, I said to the store-boy " who are these people "? and his only reply was " Bwana these are bad people ". Then I knew who they were, the sort of advance-guard of what was coming, and what was already astir in other parts of S.Rhodesia.

I went up to the Victoria Falls and saw the Police there and told them of what I was constantly finding and what my suspicions were but they just laughed me to scorn and said I was ~~imagining things~~ imagining things, ( can you believe it ? ) but this was typical of the S.Rhodesia Government arrogance and intolerance and overbearingness that was to be their downfall later on. I must mention for a moment what a simply wonderful creature that Masawa Bushman was, he was literally a wild animal in his knowledge of everything in that wild country, following the spoor of animals not so much as by the spoor itself but by his knowledge of where they were going and what they were actually going to do long before one had actual evidence of it, I cannot explain it, just too wonderful, in my long life in the bush I have never had such a fantastic companion in that he could tell you exactly what the animal you were following was going to do and when and where he would stop, he actually did not need to follow the visual spoor but knew exactly where it was going and sure enough you would pick up the spoor again, fantastic.

Well anyway I had to leave Matetsi because Smith's declaration of U.D.I. was too much for me, what little money we had was in Britain, and as you know everything was blocked and one could get no income, so we just had to pack up and come to S.Africa. However Smith got his deserts, it was a rebellion against the Crown, and in my opinion if Churchill had been in power at the time he would have sent out a Division to take over the country and taken Smith back for Trial. That Wilson should have put up with such impertinence I have never been able to understand, it was a rebellion against the Crown and punishable as such.

You have mentioned your Lechwe Head, what did you do with it ? it is obviously very well worth recording, you ask what did I do with mine, it is shown in Rowland Wards Records 1971 edition as the World Record 36 1/2 ins. . Well I shot it at Lochinvar in 1942, and subsequently had it mounted by J.R.Ivy in Pretoria, it was my ambition to give it to the H.C.Maydon collection in the British Museum ( H.C.Maydon one of the great hunters of ~~all time~~ all time and whom I had met several times and had very much regard for him ) however after the War shipping space was impossible for years and I eventually gave it to Reay Smithers who was a great friend and in charge of the Museum in Rhodesia, I saw the head a couple of times afterwards, it hangs in the Bulawayo Museum, but where it might be now is anybody's guess !!!!! I knew the Lechwe so well, and by looking at any heads or rather I think I should say skins I could have told you what area of the Kafue they came from, each area skins differed quite distinctly to anybody who had lived among them as I had for so long. And now for one of my usual sarcastic criticisms ! Rowland Ward WAS as you know regarded as the authority on Big Game etc. Well now look at your edition and just



see some of their writings, Black Lechwe quoted as coming from the Kafue Flats, what stark rubbish, the Black Lechwe comes from the Bangweulu area ONLY.... and you know I am it is just a local variety not a different species. .... Again Rowland Ward on The Lion Page 172. The tuft of a Lions Tail conceals a curious claw.... did you ever hear or read such Balderdash ?.... Again page 122 on the Kudu, quotes the Kudu as being extinct in the Kruger National Park... can you believe such tripe Kudu still exist widely in S.Africa as you know. This is the sort of thing that always infuriates me crass ignorance on the part of writers. By the way I had a letter from Eustace Poles this morning he has recently had a bad accident with a Gas Lamp, and fortunate not to have lost his life by the sound of it. I think I have mentioned somewhere else that if you took me blindfold up to any wild animal and let me rub my hand on it I could tell you by smelling my hand what any animal was, this sort of knowledge I am only the result of a lifetime spent among them. Did you know for instance that a Duiker has no gall on its liver ? please tell me why this is, I should be most interested to know. Do you know that any of the smaller buck can be called up to within a few yards of you ( always provided they don't see you ) I must have used this ruse to get some meat many hundreds of times, it never fails, you might not think there was anything around but one can conjure up a Duiker and on on from the most unlikely places, I cannot get the necessary ingredients here but there are so many small buck in this thickly bushed area I know it would work like a charm here! Have you read " Survival of the Free " by Wolfgang Englehardt, or else Erhardt, but I think the first is correct, a wonderful photographic book on Game and incidentally the only photographs of any person in it are of ME taken at Ngoma by the N.Rhodesian Govt ~~Photographer~~ Photographer Nigel Watt, on an expedition to take a wonderful collection of photos in the Kafue National Park. Incidentally also let me tell you a story about that, I went up to Lusaka to arrange this expedition with him ( I had never met him before ). Well he came and stayed with us at Ngoma for ten days on this exercise . And when he left he said to me " You know Len I owe you an apology, when you came up to Lusaka to arrange this visit to Ngoma and after you had left the office I said to my Secretary You know I think that chap is a bit of a Playboy ! and now I want to tell you Len that I Take it all back in Capital Letters ! its been just wonderful " I thought it was so nice of him, well after all in Lusaka I had just come from Government House and did not look exactly like a Bush Wallah !

I have just got your letter ( undated ) but postmarked 21/II/86. You will not find my writings anything like as good as Eustace Poles 's, because I never had any interest in writing, took it all too much for granted I expect, YOU I am will have to sort out all I have written. And I have literally no photographs except relatively unimportant ones but I will send you a few ancient ones which you can throw away if uninteresting.

Have you read "Rhodesian Rhymes " by Cullen Gouldsbury ? Long out of print of course but you MIGHT be able to get a copy they are just fantastic, my copy is a reprint of course ~~by Philpott & Collins~~ by Philpott & Collins of Bulawayo 1932. The originals must have been written early this century ! If you are addicted to Poetry they are an absolute MUST for you, and do let me know.

You have mentioned Kidson ( Ron Kidson at Empangeni ? ? ) no I have not met him but just know of him, perhaps his father was Reuben Kidson of the Veterinary Dept in N.Rhodesia yes I knew him.

Have you read "The Long Grass" by Tony Lawman he was a District Officer at Namwala and a friend of mine, in that book you will find a chapter entitled " Vaughan of the Kafue " and I think a photograph ~~or two~~ or two taken at Ngoma but I cannot remember as I think my Granddaughter in Paris has the book but it does give an outline of my life to some extent.

Have you read "White Mischief" by James Fox ( Jonathan Cape. London ) this I only mention as it happens I knew most of the principal characters in it. It is a true investigation of the murder of the Earl of Erroll in Kenya, and I knew most of the people involved and I assure you that once you have started it you will not put it down till finished. This murder was never solved altho Broughton stood trial but was acquitted, I knew them so well and have my own opinion, and other shooting episodes in it absolutely true and I knew the people concerned personally, do get it and tell me.

I notice that I have never said anything about Rifles, not that it matters much now because all the beautiful guns made by British Makers are a thing of the past. of course in one's youth one started out with a ~~.303~~ .303. a completely worthless rifle for Game but one shot a lot of Game all the same, then we graduated to the Mauser rifles say from 6.5mm upwards all far too small of course, the best of all the Mausers was and perhaps still is the 9.3 but no experienced Hunter would ever use them and I mean this. MY first classy rifle was a Rigby three fifty magnum which he built for me and which I thought was so wonderful ! and it certainly killed well but still too light. there were many in that class but all too light. Then came the .404 an excellent Medium rifle but only Medium remember then the Rigby .416 excellent but still on the light side. and I consider all too light until you come to the .450's and over, these are the ideals. I had the most beautiful Rigby .470 what a lovely thing if I had it today it would be worth perhaps £30,000 and perhaps priceless, from there upwards all the heavy English rifles by best makers were wonderful, however the rifle I considered to have been my absolute favourite was the .450 No.2 it had a slightly heavier charge than the .470's and a 485 grain bullet instead of the usual 500 grain, in fact perhaps one might call it a magnum .450 Low chamber pressure and recoil, what a lovely rifle. Much controversy as you know about the merits of magazine or double rifles. Once you have used a double you will NEVER use anything else, much controversy as you know about a double or single in a dangerous situation BUT I assure you that if you are REALLY in danger you will have time for only one shot, think that one out and you will know I am right, if you have time for more than one shot the danger ( as I have said elsewhere ) is more apparent than real ! The larger calibres in the Mauser range are worthless.

The .375 Magnum. I have never understood the popularity that this rifle achieved, I could not KILL with it and the claim that it would fire three different bullet weights with equal accuracy was of course nonsense.

The joy of using a top class shotgun or rifle by a top class British maker is something nobody but a connoisseur can understand, the handling and ballance and finish is all and everything but of course not understood in this country, where nobody but NOBODY takes any care of anything ! their motor cars or anything else.