

ED FOR USE  
001

EAST AFR. PROT.

C O  
8006  
NOV 12

8006

rd 97

Date  
912

Previous Paper.

#92  
701

MASAI

Trs Mr Ross's report and enclosures on the Trans-Nara or Trans-Mala country. Explains delay. It will be observed that he considers the area it is proposed to add to the Southern Reserve is superior to Laikipia and that he considers that the Masai would be well advised to move.

Mr G. Fiddes

This is the Report referred to in the 3rd para of our despatch of <sup>the</sup> 20/7/01.

I annex a general map showing the boundaries of the trans-Mala district, & comparing this map with map B. Mr Ross seems to have made as good a survey as was possible during the time at his disposal. He says that, unfortunately, he & his colleagues saw the district almost in its best condition, & I think that it would be a good thing to instruct the local authorities to take the first opportunity of having the country further surveyed during the

re number 686 25 Oct 1902

524  
Subsequent Paper  
10028

C.O. 522  
112  
ALYMERHOUL PRINCESS OF THE  
PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

bad season.

H. J. R.

23/III

Ms. 25

Ms. 25.3

© 25.3

Is this the "Garden of Eden" or  
the new S. E. addition to the  
old Southern Masai Reserve?

H. 26.3.17

Dr. G. Zoller

This is the "Garden of Eden"

H. J. R.

27/III

Mr Harcourt P.M. 27

H. 2.3.12

bad season.

H. J. R.

23/III

W. 25

W. 25.3

£ 25.3

Is this the "Garden of Eden" or  
the new S. E. addition to the  
old Southern Masai Reserve?

H. 26.3.12

Mr. G. Hodes

This is the "Garden of Eden"

H. J. R.

27/III

Mr. Hancock W. 27

H. 2.3.12

06

C 9173  
8806  
MAR 12

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

February 13th 1912.

NO. 97

Sir,

With reference to paragraph 3 of my despatch No. 624 of November 3rd,\* I have the honour to forward herewith Mr. Ross's report with enclosures on the Trans-Amala or Trans-Mara country. The delay in submitting this report is due first to pressure of work caused by Mr. Ross's long absence from headquarters and then to a serious illness from which Mr. Ross has recently suffered.

2. You will observe that in Mr. Ross's opinion the area which it is proposed to add to the extended Southern Reserve is superior to Laikipia and that he considers that the Masai would be well advised to move.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,

*[Signature]*  
GOVERNOR.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
LEWIS HARCOURT, F.C., M.P.,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,  
DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.

\* No 35730

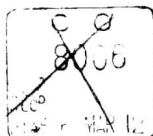
- 14864-12.

Encl in No.

171  
INCLOSURE

In Despatch No. 97 of 18.2.1912

REPORT ON THE REGION  
SOUTHWARD FROM KISII TOWARDS  
THE GERMAN BORDER



I have the honour to report that on Sunday, October 1st, I reached Lumbwa Station in company with the Hon. Mr. Macdonald and Messrs. J. K. Hill and Chaplin. We then marched through Kericho to Kisii (70 miles), fording the Sondo River, 230 feet wide, at 22 miles beyond Kericho, and reaching Kisii Station on the morning of October 5th.

2. Leaving Kisii next morning in company with District Commissioner Mr. R. W. Hemsted, we completed a circuit of 128 miles along the route shown in red on the attached plan and reached Kisii again on October 17th. The Hon. Mr. Macdonald with Messrs. Hill and Chaplin next day set out for Lumbwa, while Mr. Hemsted and myself proceeded south eastward across the plateau, down the Siria Escarpment, across the Mara (or Amala) River, past the Naitong Hills and across the Loita Plains and Rift Valley to Escarpment Station which we reached on November 2nd after a total march (from Lumbwa) of 457 miles.

3. I enclose two plans herewith - one marked A, compiled map supplied by the Director of Surveys showing the region South of Kisii as practically a blank, and the other marked B, a slightly altered

copy

- 2 -

copy of the map with our route shown on it, together with some information as to the water that we met on route.

4. The region may be described as an elevated tableland at an average height of some 6,000 feet with a long central range of hills running up it from South to North and then merging into a still higher plateau of an undulating surface, many of the eminences on which attain an altitude of about 7,000 feet. Conversely it may be described, with perhaps greater clearness, as an elevated grass covered hilly tableland just South of Kisi, sending out a long promontory of hills Southward centrally down the less elevated plateau, which is terminated abruptly along the Eastern side by the Siria Escarpment, leading down almost a thousand feet to the Mara or Anala River which flows along its base in a Southerly direction.

5. This low promontory of hills, as seen looking westward from the edge of the Siria Escarpment, is clearly shown in the panoramic photograph (Nos. 2412, 2413, 2414) accompanying this report. The smaller panorama (Nos. 2393, 2394) also shows it. The character of the more elevated Northernly plateau is shown in photographs Nos. 2396, 2398, 2400. The Mara River which is a fine stream, delivering about 860 cubic feet a second when we saw it, is shown in photograph 2415. It is said to rise in flood some 15 feet above the level we saw it at. I may here say that the name "Anala" appears to be known to no

one

- 3 -

one in its vicinity. It is probably a Kikembized form of the name Mara, which is recognised by the Masai, though "Ngard Dabash" and other names are more commonly used. I suggest that the name "Amala" should be disused and that before any maps of this region are lithographed, the most widely accepted name of the river should be carefully investigated by the resident Political Officer and adopted.

6. The streams we met with on our circular tour below Kisii are indicated on the attached plan. The most important points established were that the stream shown as the Magorro issuing from the Chepalungu forest in Map A is one of the headwaters of the Gori, but that the more important branch of the Gori is one rising to the west of the hill called Gelegele, and flowing almost directly Southwards until it passes the long flat hill or ridge (some three or four miles in length) known as Ol doenyo Langapone. It then turns west as the "Gori" river of the maps or the Magorro as the Masai term it. The first mentioned branch, although issuing from a really extensive swamp some three miles long and quarter of a mile wide, is probably not permanent throughout the whole of its length, as Mr. Hemsted has previously seen it nearly dry in very hot weather. Unfortunately we saw the district almost in its best condition. It is certain that many of the streamlets that we met cannot be permanent ones. I have marked such with an edging of brown. I consider that those which have been given a blue edging are probably permanent, but, of course, only actual observation in periods of drought

drought can finally settle that point. Time did not permit us to see anything of the region in the North West quarter of the blank area on map.A. It is commonly believed however that the river Gwetta which traverses it is permanent. There is an abundance of water on the high tableland just South of Kisii.

Most of the hollows are swampy, and many of them present springs and vigorous streams. It is the watershed from which apparently four river systems emerge - the Gori or Magori going South, the Gwetta going West, the Kuja on the North side, and the Sondo towards the East. In most of these hollows the streams do not present themselves in a form suitable for the watering of numerous cattle. They would probably be trodden into a wide stretch of mud immediately. I consider that it would be necessary to form "tanks" of some slight capacity by carrying low earthen dams across suitable stretches of valley.

7. The fringe of the Chepalungu forest encroaches, in the form of bush, further on to the East side of the blank area in map A than is there indicated. This bush varies from scattered clumps covering about 25% of the land surface (photograph 2387) to solid wood-bush even denser than is shown in photograph 2411, and difficult to get through even for pedestrians with a party of jungle-clearers ahead. We only travelled about seven miles here in the whole of the one long day. Of this type of bush there is perhaps an area of 20,000 acres South and South-East of Gelegele. For the rest, although the country seen from any eminence (vide panoramas above mentioned and also photo. 2395)

appears



appears only as a black sea of bush, with no grass in sight at all, yet an area of one half or two thirds of the whole is excellent grass land which is all within reach of one branch or other of the Magori river. This as stated in my cypher telegram from Kisii on October 18th was, when we saw it, a stream presenting the very satisfactory discharge of about 100 cubic feet a second (54 million gallons a day).

8. The Northern elevated plateau, just below Kisii, is what I should call typical Masai country. The only doubt that arises in my mind is as to whether enough cattle could be got on to it to keep the grass down. As we saw it, the whole area was under rough straw grass of the type shown in photograph 2400. This was ordinarily more than shoulder high. Later in the year I believe much of it goes up to a height of ten or 12 feet, when it is most difficult to get through. The procedure as to occupying such territory would presumably be to burn the whole country ~~as~~ at the end of dry weather and move cattle on after the rains, as new grass was coming up. The lawn in front of the District Commissioner's house at Kisii (photograph 2378, 2379, 2380) which is quite the finest one that I have seen anywhere in this country, was evolved from just <sup>such</sup> sort of country, and with cattle in sufficient numbers performing on a broad scale the operations, on this small area, of Mr. Hemsted's mowing machine, there seems no doubt that these elevated grass lands would be converted to astonishingly good pasture.

- 6 -

9. My last visits to Laikipia were in 1906 and 1908. I consider the area now under remark to be superior country to Laikipia, notwithstanding that the East side is rather heavily bush-covered and that there is an unwatered strip along the top of the Siria Escarpment. No part of this dry strip is more than four miles from permanent water, so it is certain that the work of it could be grazed with ease. When we crossed the Mara River, Masai cattle were being sent across the river daily (photograph 2419) to graze on the top of the Escarpment, returning at night to the Masai villages at its foot. As to the stock capacity of the whole area, I am not competent to express an opinion, but as to the availability of water, I have no apprehension as to any difficulty arising in utilizing practically the whole area as a grazing ground. Much of the area would (on the statement of my porter porters who were Wakisuyu and keen agriculturists) make really first class arable land. So if future residents on this area, either Masai or others, wish to indulge to some extent in mixed farming, there would be every opportunity for them to do so. I understand that it would be regarded as a triumph of administration if resident Political Officers could induce the Masai to grow agricultural produce. Efforts in that direction would receive a maximum of support from the natural features of this attractive region. It is my belief that the Masai would be well advised to go there and <sup>are</sup> fortunate to obtain that area.

10. Directions along the line of march were taken

with

- 7 -

with pocket compass, and distances were measured by perambulators. The minimum temperature at night on the plateau above the Siria Escarpment varied from 41° F. to 60° F. with an average of 50° F.

Nairobi,  
February 2nd 1912.

~~Sd/-~~ W. McGregor Ross  
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

006

~~For 2 A.P.~~  
8006

181

O.D.  
29 MAR  
1912

22<sup>nd</sup> 30 March /12

DRAFT.

~~2 A.P. (No. 177)~~  
~~O.A.G.~~

MINUTE.

- Mr. Read. 29 March
- Mr.
- Mr. Fiddes.
- Sir H. Just.
- Sir J. Anderson.
- Lord Emmott.
- Mr. Harcourt.

Sir, I have the honour  
to ask: the note of  
Sir P. Fremantle's despatch P.  
97 of the 13<sup>th</sup> of Feb.  
enclosing Mr. Ross's report  
on the Trans-Amulua  
country.

X No 8006

2. I have read the  
report with interest &  
attention.