

# James Ward Rogers Uncrowned King

## The Tragic End of the Famous American Ivory Poacher

by W. Robert Foran

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EVERY one will remember the dramatic story, recently given to the world through the daily press, of the death of James Ward Rogers, the American elephant-poacher, in the Congo. The name Rogers probably conveyed nothing to many millions all over the world until the story of his tragic end was published broadcast. Yet so many who have traveled in Stanley's "Darkest Africa"—the territory which witnessed the end of an adventurous career—the details of the dramatic chase through the jungles and its still more dramatic conclusion will not be a mere pipe-dream.

There must be many others in America besides myself who have been through this section of Central Africa and to whom Rogers was known personally. And to us the story brings regrets, for Rogers was a fine type of man, even though his latter days were spent in outlawry and defiance of lawfully constituted authority.

In order that the causes which led up to the tragedy may be better understood, it is necessary to touch lightly upon history and political facts. Many may recall that the British government leased the strip of the Congo territory known as the Lado Enclave—a long strip stretching along the banks of the Nile from the southernmost extremity of Lake Albert to Kiro, on the edge of Sudan—to the late King Leopold of the Belgians, for the duration of his lifetime. On his death, it passed back into British hands and, incidentally, under the control of the Sudan officials.

Prior to this—that is to say, under Leopold's rule—the Lado Enclave was the happy hunting-ground of a band of British and foreign ivory-poachers. The Belgian administration of the Lado was a mere farce. Officials were few and far between and the natives did as they willed, without fear of let or hindrance. It must be remembered, however, that if any of the poachers were caught red-handed with the poached ivory, they were sent to the Belgian Congo capital, Leopoldville, on the Congo river, to undergo ten years' hard labor in a chain-gang.

This little pleasantry of punishment was the worst imaginable. They were chained round the neck and fastened to a long string of the worst native mallefactors. Their legs were riveted into chains and round their middles were other heavy chains, supporting the enormous leg-irons. All day these poor wretches worked in the forests or in the open, under a blazing sun, goaded on to further labor by the extreme brutalities of their hard-hearted guards.

White man and negro were treated alike. No favors were shown to any of them.

It may be safely stated that the death of Rogers closes the long chapter of lawless ivory-poaching in the Congo. For years the Lado Enclave was known as "No Man's Land," but it is not so now, for the Sudan government assumed control in June, 1910, and set about exterminating the poaching industry.

On my arrival at Mongalla, the southernmost post of the Sudan on the Nile in those days, I had the good fortune to meet my old comrade in arms, Capt. C. V. Fox of the Egyptian army, and discussed at length with him the prospects of routing out the ivory-poachers.

At the time I little thought that, a trifle over two years later, Captain Fox would be the central figure with Rogers in one of the most dramatic and exciting stories of real adventure which has ever come out of the Congo, or, for that matter, Africa. But we who know our Africa have learned to be surprised at nothing.

Part of this remarkable story comes to me direct from my old friend Captain Fox and part from other friends in Africa. Captain Fox's story lacks a good many details, for the modesty of the British soldier is reflected throughout his narrative. There are many points won and I would like to have cleared up, but either Fox's modesty or his sense of what is due to a dying man's last request prevent the elucidation of the blank spaces.

For instance, we would like to know who is the doctor referred to by Rogers and Captain Fox. Maybe we shall never know! Rogers' lips are sealed by death and the lips of Captain Fox are sealed by a dying man's last charge. The "doctor" must go down to posterity as a figure of mystery, unless the Belgians disclose his name. We know that he was the boon companion of Rogers and we have the latter's statement that he was innocent of poaching.

One must sympathize with Rogers, even if one disapproves of his breaches of the law. He is a picturesque figure and he died as, no doubt, he would have wished to have died—with his face to the front and shielding his comrade, the mysterious doctor.

Rogers was an American who, at different times, was a resident of many cities in California. He has spent many years of his life in an unquenchable search after adventure—with a big A—until he found his heart's desire in Central Africa. He joined in the rush to the Klondike in the late nineties and after his return he entirely disappeared until the news came of his death in Africa.

down the good herds of elephants in his vicinity. Information of the approach of a good herd. No sooner did he get news of some big tuskers than he set forth through the thorn scrub, under a blazing tropical sun, to track them.

Creeping on all-fours through the bushes and fifteen-foot-high grass, he made his way into the center of the herd and selected his bulls. He would follow them up until he had killed off all the best tuskers in the herd. Then would come the cutting up of the elephants and the heaving out of their giant ivory teeth.

At last the Sudan government determined to stand this brazen lawlessness no longer. A messenger was dispatched to Rogers warning him to come in and surrender, or else, declared the officials, he would not be spared.

His answer was typical of the man: "If you want me, come and get me." Now Captain Fox, inspector of the Mongalla province in the Sudan, did want Rogers and, moreover, wanted him badly. He accepted the challenge, after first sending word to Rogers that he proposed to bring him into Mongalla, "dead or alive."

Rogers laughed when he read the message. Back came the answer, on the foot of the same official note: "I am waiting. Come and get me." Captain Fox set forth from Mongalla in pursuit of this daring outlaw with the meager force of a Sudanese non-commissioned officer and six Sudanese soldiers and a few native carriers and mules for the conveyance of supplies.

Up the banks of the Nile went the little party of soldiers and their white leader and ever in advance of them was the fearless Rogers, laughing in his sleeve and content in the belief that he could outwit the most determined pursuit.

But he had misjudged the caliber of the man who had been sent after him.

Day by day the little party kept on down the Nile, up the Nile, across the Nile, first in the Congo territory and then in Uganda territory. Doubling and redoubling on their tracks, they never gave up hope.

Something of the spirit which must have possessed both pursuer and pursued can be gleaned from the story of the final meeting between these two men.

Worn out, wet and hungry, Fox and his party reached a village late one night. Here they learned that the poachers had shot a native for disobeying an order given by Rogers. This had happened only that morning, so now they were hot on the trail of Rogers.

Despite their pitiable condition, on learning of this murder Captain Fox and his weary men at once set out in the dark in pursuit. They traveled all that night and the greater part of the next day. Toward sunset they came in sight of an immense village square, around which were posted a hundred of the armed native followers of the poacher.

Slowly Captain Fox advanced until he stood in the center of the armed men.

"Where is the white man, your master?" he asked authoritatively.

The armed natives watched him sullenly, without vouchsafing reply. At last, after what seemed like hours to the captain, one of the natives pointed silently toward a large house in the center of the village.

Fox approached the house indicated, with his rifle cocked and ready for instant use in case of need. He halted a few paces from the house and summoned Rogers to come out and surrender. No reply came to the first summons and so he repeated it twice more.

All remained as silent as the grave and Fox began to suspect treachery. But he kept his eyes on the door.

Suddenly it opened; and a native servant came out and saluted Fox.

"The commandant wants you to come in," he said, in his native dialect. "He is sick, and can not come out to you."

At first it looked suspicious, but Fox decided to risk any trap. He walked toward the house and left his rifle outside leaning against the wall.

"Enter he called to his soldiers to remain on guard and allow no one to leave the house while he was in it.

Then he passed in through the doorway.

"He found himself in a large dark room, lighted by a single flickering candle. For a moment his eyes failed to see anything, but gradually he became accustomed to the dark light and made out the figure of a white man lying on a camp cot.

Beside him sat another white man, who was unknown to Fox. He had heard that there was another white man with Rogers, whom the natives called "Doctor," but his identity had never been learned by the government.

Surrounding the bed were ten armed native followers of Rogers, who eyed the soldier with sullen suspicion.

Fox stood inside the door and looked from one white man to the other.

"Which is Mr. Rogers?" he asked, breaking the strained silence.

"Mr. Rogers has been shot," replied the white man sitting beside the cot, with a growl of anger.

"Yes, and by your men."

The man on the bed spoke thickly and as if in great pain.

"I am sorry, very sorry, indeed, that you have been wounded, Mr. Rogers," Fox walked slowly forward to the bed. "I hope it is not serious, but certainly you are mistaken in thinking my soldiers did it."

"No," Rogers thundered at him, partly rising in bed and falling back with a groan. The other white man tried to soothe him. "It was by the soldiers you sent here to arrest me," he continued, with bitter hate.

"There were three of my men on ahead of me, it is true," Fox replied, "but I am convinced they would not have shot at you or interfered with you."

"Well, you're a cool one," Rogers admitted grudgingly. "Do you know I have you covered with my Colt?"

"Yes, but you won't dare to shoot," Fox laughed quietly.

"Won't dare! Why not, I should like to know?" Rogers answered back. "I have over a hundred armed men outside and you only have four men with you, so my men tell me."

"Nevertheless, you won't dare shoot me or molest my men. You are under arrest, Mr. Rogers, for illicit ivory-poaching, murder, entering a closed district without a permit, and carrying a gun without a license."

"So that is what I am charged with, is it?" Rogers smiled grimly. "Have you no other charges to prefer?"

"You're wounded now. Let all that rest until you are better."

"No, I'm a dying man, I guess. Do you know you're in the Belgian territory, that you are surrounded by my men, and that you stand more chance of arrest than I do?"

"You are mistaken. I am not in Belgian territory and we need not discuss the chances of my arrest."

Captain Fox deemed it wise not to excite the man any more and silently withdrew from the room. Once outside, he set to work to disarm the followers of the dying Rogers. This was soon accomplished, for they were cowed, now that their leader was helpless.

In the middle of the night a native servant came to Captain Fox to say that Rogers was dying, and that he wished to speak to the officer. The soldiers did not want him to go into the house again. But Captain Fox was not to be deterred.

As he entered the house, Rogers turned to his white companion, saying:

"Doctor, I wish you to hear and be a witness to what I am going to say to Captain Fox. I surrender myself voluntarily to the Sudan government. I want you to see that the doctor gets into no trouble over this affair, captain. I believe I am a dying man, so that I am not going to lie about it. This was my show and all my work. The doctor is blameless."

On the following afternoon the three soldiers who had been sent on ahead arrived at the village and gave Captain Fox an account of their experience.

They stated that on arriving in the poacher's stronghold Rogers ordered them to give up their arms. He seized his Mauser rifle and opened fire with it and a revolver. His companion, the doctor, also fired on the soldiers with a Winchester. Others attacked them with Winchester and arrows. Had it not been almost dark, the soldiers would have been killed and, as it was, they all had narrow escapes, all of them being hit.

In the fighting, Rogers was struck by a soldier's bullet, which lodged near the hip, but he walked to his house and sat down in a chair.

By this time Captain Fox was satisfied that he was on Belgian territory, and wrote to the Belgian commandant to explain the occurrence. Two days later the Belgian officer arrived on the scene with a large escort of troops.

The day after the arrival of the Belgians, Rogers was obviously dying, and sent for Fox. He was conscious to the end, and described his symptoms.

"Say, captain, you are a big fellow and strong. Lift me up once more—for the last time," he muttered. "I shall not be here tomorrow. I'm still pretty heavy, ain't I?"

Fox leaned over him and gently raised him on the bed, with his arms under the dying man's shoulders.

"I'm sorry, Rogers," he said. "But you brought this on yourself."

"I know, old man. You're all right. I would rather have surrendered to you than any one. Good-bye, Doc. Good-bye, captain. Remember, the doctor is innocent, all my sh—"

His head dropped back as his spirit went to render its last account to its Maker. Gently Fox laid the body of the poacher on the bed and then turned away to escape the sorrow of the doctor, who was deeply unstrung by his friend's death.

And so this man died, far away from his friends and country. Full of courage and grit to the end, his fate was worthy of a better cause. So did the curtain fall upon the most dramatic tragedy in the history of the Congo elephant-poachers.

### HABAKKUK, THE NEGLECTED.

Short Chapter of the Bible That is Little Read.

One of the disappointed statesmen of the country on election night found solace in reading Habakkuk, eighth of the minor prophets, as found in the old testament. We doubt if many persons, even such as are fairly familiar with the Bible, frequently read this little work of three chapters, says the Philadelphia Inquirer. It is seldom one hears texts from this book preached upon.

As a fact, nothing is known whatever of Habakkuk unless he is identified with one of the same name who is mentioned in the apocryphal works as having ministered to Daniel in the lion's den. The name is not Hebrew, but may have been assumed for literary purposes, as was not uncommon in those days.

The gist of the first two chapters of the book is the grief of the prophet over the approaching Chaldeans. The last chapter is a poem with musical directions, which some persons think was written by another of the same name or title. Perhaps not many persons know that in this book is found the familiar quotation: "But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."

### Cause and Effect.

"You've got an awful grouch this morning." "I know it."

"What's the matter—didn't you have a good breakfast?" "Naw!"

"What was the trouble?" "The boy didn't deliver the morning paper and there was nothing for me to do but to talk to my wife during the whole meal."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

### Most Painful Part.

"Here's an interesting article in a periodical about making surgery painless." "Is there anything in that article about doing away with the surgeon's bill?"

### NEWS OF SOUTH DAKOTA.

Jacob Hoffman sued the Long Lake school district, in McPherson county, to recover 10 cents a mile for the transportation of his children to and from school under a provision of the South Dakota school law providing for such transportation when the pupils reside more than two and a half miles from the school, and received the full amount asked for.

A serious fire at the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. Luther McMahan, near Elk Point, was averted by the fact that a barrel and a tub of water were sitting on the porch in preparation for wash day. Some damage was done to the furnishings and interior of the house, but the building was saved from destruction by the use of the water in the barrel and tub.

The fact that the recent legislature appropriated \$143,500 for the state normal school at Spearfish proves that it is one of the most important institutions in the state. Of the sum appropriated, \$25,000 was for land and equipment, \$22,500 for a new central heating plant and \$4,000 for furnishing a new dormitory.

Cattle buyers from the railroad towns are fine combing Meade county in an effort to pick up more cattle for their feed yards. The prices they are paying are good stiff ones, but at that they are not getting many cattle. One buyer paid \$280 for four old cows and 16 years in the Sioux Falls penitentiary for robbery in the first degree. At its next meeting the state pardon board is expected to take action on the petitions.

Van Metre township, in the north-west corner of Lyman county, at its annual town election voted to sink three artesian wells in that township this spring, putting them down at the heads of different draws so as to distribute the water generally over the township.

The women's club of Fort Pierre has voted \$10 to be distributed in prizes among the children of Fort Pierre who have the best flower and vegetable gardens during the summer. All vacant lots that can be irrigated will be parceled out among the children and planted with vegetables.

The ranks of the old veterans of the Civil War at Doland have been sadly depleted by death. L. A. Drake, who died a few days ago, is the third veteran to pass away since last Memorial day. This leaves the post with only four members, whereas a few years ago it was numerically strong.

A recent fire in the business section of Castlewood, the second bad fire within a year or two, has aroused the business men to the importance of a waterworks system, and it is expected the question of voting bonds will come before the voters soon.

A movement has been started to construct a model highway from Milesville westward across the country traversed by Spotted Bear, Council Bear, Bridges and Ash creeks. It is planned to have the county stand part of the expense.

The three-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kost of Wittenberg was badly burned as the result of getting possession of some matches, his clothing being set on fire. The mother extinguished the fire by dashing a pail of water over the boy.

The space in the business district at Doland which in January was burned over by a disastrous fire has been cleared of all debris and as soon as spring opens the work of rebuilding the burned district will commence.

Steps have been taken to have a mail service established from Fort Pierre to Hayes and Bunker three times per week. Numerous homesteaders and ranches would be benefited.

Meetings for farmers have been held in several townships in Day county to consider the plans of Promoter H. F. Hart, who wants to build a "farmers'" railroad from Clear Lake to Watertown.

An agitation has commenced at Bryant for the reorganization of the local baseball association and the placing of a team in the field during the coming season. Bryant has one of the best ball parks in the state.

Work has been started on the well for the creamery at Marcus. The plans for the creamery call for a structure 24x36 feet in size, and estimates are now being made on the material.

Large quantities of ties are being distributed along the railway in the vicinity of Bancroft preparatory to the line being brought up to date.

Prof. Ireland of Madison has been engaged as instructor of the Bryant band, which will be made one of the best in the state.

Mitchell-Mitchell's corn palace committee has been organized for this year, comprising F. H. Winsor as president; W. A. Wheeler, secretary; John Nichols, vice president; M. E. Patton, treasurer, and L. J. Delch, H. E. Hitchcock and N. H. Jensen as the balance of the committee. The dates named for the corn palace this year were chosen as the last week in September. The financial committee has already commenced to raise the fund of \$6,000 to pay the preliminary expenses of decorating the palace building, and to arrange for the attractions early in the season.

Rich Farmer Is Fined. Groton—Ole Belden, a wealthy farmer residing northeast of here, was fined \$50 and costs for excess cruelty to animals. Belden is alleged to have beaten a horse about the head, knocking out both eyes and inflicting other severe wounds, after which he turned it loose. The animal was found the next morning and shot by the town marshal, after which Belden was brought before Justice Ashley and fined.

Proves Antiquity of Humanity. Prehistoric human footprints have been discovered in slabs of sandstone in a quarry at Warrnambool, Australia. Their age is estimated at 50,000 years.

### CAMP FIRE STORIES



### TALES OF FAMOUS BATTLES

Aged Woman Recalls Stories of Death and Disaster Witnessed During Civil War.

Mrs. Jennie Thompson Long, who lives at 523 Oak street, Wheaton, Ill., is 75 years old, and for nearly half a century she has told to wondering listeners her stories of death and disaster that came under her eyes on famous battlefields of the Civil war, where she acted as nurse for three years. Here are incidents from among the many in her store of recollection:

"I was one of thirty nurses that Gov. Morton of Indiana sent out at the beginning of the war. I was assistant matron of the corps. Our first service on the battlefield was at the first battle of Bull Run. It was a terrible place, and the day was like the night. Trees were cut off by the shot and shells, buildings were knocked down and everywhere were the dead and the dying.

"One man was brought in shot through the head, and he was calling, not for water, as most of them were, but only, 'My son! My son!'

"I asked him his son's name, and then I went out among the wounded through the dust and mud and the blood. Canteens of water were slung over my shoulders and I gave drinks to union and rebel alike. I had not come to work for God. And I found the man's son, with his legs shot off, and I had him carried to where his father lay. They couldn't live, but I cut the bullet from his father's head, and he said he felt better.

"At the second battle of Bull Run I saw forty soldiers buried in one trench. One in a gray uniform was still living, and I told the men that they were burying the bodies, but they said, 'Do you think we can stay here until he dies, little nurse?' 'I'd not do such a thing as this,' I said, and I had him carried to where his father lay. They couldn't live, but I cut the bullet from his father's head, and he said he felt better.

"I was at the battles where the big generals were. I sewed a button on for Gen. McClellan and he gave me a quarter. At one camp an old colored woman made big corn pone and sold them for \$1. I got one and I was going past Gen. McClellan's tent with it when the general stopped me. 'What are you going with that corn pone, little nurse?' he asked—they all called me that—and I told him, and he said, 'Can't I have some?' I let him cut off a piece of the pone and he gave me a dollar and told me to get another pone, so that we could all have some.

"At Vicksburg the nurses were on the hospital boat, and Gen. W. T. Sherman came down there with his big horse and asked the nurses to love the boat and get some air. He said he would give them a guard so they could go around on land, but every one was afraid. 'Isn't there any one that's brave enough to come?' he asked. My heart was pounding away, but I spoke up and said, 'I'm not afraid, general.' He laughed and said, 'Good for you, little nurse,' and he held his great, freckled hand so that I could step from it into the saddle of his horse. He led the horse about, and in one place he got some air. A drogue was working below, digging a place for a gun. Then I had a premonition of evil. 'We'd better get out of here,' I said. 'Something's going to happen.' 'All right,' said the general and laughed and led the horse back, and we had scarcely got away when the land where we had been standing all caved in. The general turned and looked at me. 'Are you a prophet, little nurse?' he asked. I knew that something was going to happen. I was born with a veil over my face.

"I served as an army nurse three years. After the war I was married to a soldier and for fifty years I lived in Chicago and worked as a city missionary."

A Sure Thing. On a pleasant Sunday afternoon at Savannah the colonel of a Pennsylvania regiment, who had partaken liberally of the corn product, was warning a young lieutenant against the evils of intemperance.

"Never drunk too much, my son. A gentleman stops when he has enough. To be drunk is a disgrace."

"How can I tell when I have enough or am drunk?" asked the lieutenant.

The colonel pointed his finger: "Do you see those two men sitting in the corner? If you should see four men there you would be drunk."

The lieutenant looked long and earnestly. "Yes, colonel, but—there is only one man in that corner."

Didn't Concern Him. The guard at the wharf at City Point, where much powder was stored, yelled at a Second corps boy:

"Don't you see that sign? 'No smoking allowed here?'"

"Yes, but he powers that doesn't concern me a mite. I never smoked a pound in my life."

Beauty Alone Not Enough. "We do love beauty at first sight; and we do cease to love it, if it is not accompanied by amiable qualities."—Lydia Maria Child.

### VERY TRUE.



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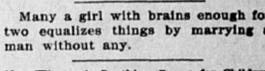
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### WHERE HORSES HOLD OWN

Notwithstanding Immense Growth of Automobile Industry, Horse is Not on Decline.

It is curious to observe that with all the immense growth of the automobile industry, the horse is not on the decline. Uncle Sam's latest count shows that there are 29,500,000 horses within the confines of this republic. Where are they?

In rural places and on the farms the horse continues to keep in the front rank of all power producers. Farmers employ more than they used to do to cultivate the same number of acres. On the farm the horse has supplanted man labor to a considerable degree. Improved machinery of every kind has greatly lessened the number of men required to produce a given amount of farm produce, but horses are required to draw this machinery. And that is the real why-fore and wherefore of the growing number of horses. They are decreasing in the cities and increasing on the farms. And the price? Well, if you don't believe that is also going up just go out and try to buy a good team of horses.—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Far-Fetched Joke. "Half a dozen deaf-mutes were gesticulating on a street corner the other day and Dibbs said they reminded him of an automobile." "An automobile? Yes, a 'silent six.'"

More Work for Sir William. Sir William Ramsay, the English scientist, makes the announcement