

sometimes tying up to the bank at nightfall, sometimes steaming steadily through the night. We reached the Sud, the vast papyrus marsh once so formidable a barrier to all who would journey along the river; and sunrise and sunset were beautiful over the endless, melancholy stretches of water reeds.

In the Sud the only tree seen was the water-loving ambatch, light as cork. Occasionally we saw hippos and crocodiles and a few water birds; and now and then passed native villages, the tall, lean men and women stark naked, and their bodies daubed with mud, grease and ashes to keep off the mosquitoes.

On March 4 we were steaming slowly along the reedy, water-soaked shores of Lake No, keeping a sharp lookout for the white-eared kob and especially for the handsome saddle-marked lechwe kob—which has been cursed with the foolishly inappropriate name of "Mrs. Gray's waterbuck."

Early in the morning we saw a herd of these saddle-marked lechwe in the long marsh grass and pushed the steamer's nose as near to the shore as possible. Then Cuninghame, keen-eyed Kongoni, and I started for what proved to be a five hours' tramp.

The walking was hard; sometimes we were on dry land, but more often in water up to our ankles or knees, and occasionally floundering and wallowing up to our hips through stretches of reeds, water lilies, green water, and foul black slime. Yet there were ant-hills in the marsh.

Once or twice we caught a glimpse of the game in small patches of open ground covered with short grass; but almost always they kept to the high grass and reeds. There were with the herd two very old bucks, with a white saddle-shaped patch on the withers, the white extending up the back of the neck to the head; a mark of their being in full maturity, or past it, for on some of the males, at least, this coloration only begins to appear when they seem already to have attained their growth of horn and body, their teeth showing them to be five or six years old, while they are obviously in the prime of vigor and breeding capacity. Unfortunately, in the long grass it was impossible to single out these old bucks.

Marking as well as we could the general direction of the herd we would steal toward it until we thought we were in the neighborhood, and then cautiously climb an ant-hill to look about. Nothing would be in sight. We would scan the ground in every direc-

tion; still nothing. Suddenly a dozen heads would pop up, just above the grass, two or three hundred yards off, and after a steady gaze would disappear, and some minutes later would again appear a quarter of a mile farther on.

Usually they skulked off at a trot or canter, necks stretched level with the back; for they were great skulkers, and trusted chiefly to escaping observation and stealing away from danger unperceived. But occasionally they would break into a gallop, making lofty bounds, clear above the tops of the grass; and then they might go a long way before stopping.

At last, from an ant-hill, I saw dim outlines of two or three animals moving past a little over a hundred yards ahead. There was nothing to shoot at; but a moment afterward I saw a pair of horns through the grass tops, in such a position that it was evident the owner was looking at me. I guessed that he had been moving in the direction in which the others had gone, and I guessed at the position of the shoulder, and fired. The horns disappeared. Then I caught a glimpse, first of a doe, next of a buck, in full flight, each occasionally appearing for an instant in a great bound over the grass tops.

I had no idea whether or not I had hit my buck; so Cuninghame stayed on the ant-heap to guide us, while Kongoni and I plunged into the long grass, as high as our heads. Sure enough, there was the buck, a youngish one, about four years old; my bullet had gone true. While we were looking at him we suddenly caught a momentary glimpse of two more of the herd rushing off to our right, and we heard another grunting and sneaking away, invisible, 30 yards or so to our left.

Half an hour afterward I shot another buck, at over 150 yards, after much the same kind of experience. At this one I fired four times, hitting him with three bullets; three of the shots were taken when I could only see his horns and had to guess at the position of the body. This was a very big buck, with horns over 29 inches long, but the saddle mark was yellow, with many whitish hairs, showing that he was about to assume the white saddle of advanced maturity. His stomach was full of the fine swamp grass.

That afternoon Dr. Mearns killed with his Winchester 30-40, on the wing, one of the most interesting birds we obtained on our whole trip, the whale-billed stork. It was

an old male and its gizzard was full of the remains of small fish.

The whalebill is a large wader, blackish-gray in color, slightly crested, with big feet and a huge, swollen bill; a queer-looking bird, with no near kinsfolk, and so interesting that nothing would have persuaded me to try to kill more than the four actually needed for the public (not private) museum to which our collections were going. It is of solitary habits and is found only in certain vast, lonely marshes of tropical Africa, where it is conspicuous by its extraordinary bill, dark coloration, and sluggishness of conduct, hunting sedately in the muddy shallows, or standing motionless for hours, surrounded by reedbeds or by long reaches of quaking and treacherous ooze.

Next morning while at breakfast on the breezy deck we spied another herd of the saddle-marked lechwe, in the marsh alongside; and Kermit landed and killed one, after deep wading, up to his chin in some places, and much hard work in the rank grass.

That afternoon, near the mouth of the Rohr, which runs into the Bahr el Ghazal, I landed and shot a good buck, of the Vaughn's kob; which is perhaps merely a subspecies of the white-eared kob. It is a handsome animal, handsomer than its close kinsman, the common or Uganda kob; although much less so than its associate, the saddle-marked lechwe. The one I shot was an old ram, accompanied by several ewes. We saw them from the boat, but they ran.

Cuninghame and I, with Kongoni and Gouvimali, hunted for them in vain for a couple of hours. Then we met a savage, a very tall, lean Nuer. He was clad in a fawn skin, and carried two spears, one with a bright, sharp, broad-bladed head, the other narrow-headed with villainous barbs. His hair, much longer than that of a west coast negro, was tied back.

As we came toward him he stood on one leg with the other foot resting against it, and raising his hand, with fingers extended, he motioned to us with what in civilized regions would be regarded as a gesture bidding us halt. But he meant it as a friendly greeting, and solemnly shook hands with all four of us, including the gun-bearers.

By signs we made him understand that we were after game; so was he; and he led us to the little herd of kob Kongoni, as usual, saw them before any one else. From an ant-hill I could make out the buck's horns and his white ears, which he was continually flapping at the biting flies that worried him;

when he lowered his head I could see nothing.

Finally, he looked fixedly at us; he was 150 yards off and I had to shoot standing on the peak of the ant-heap, and aim through the grass, guessing where his hidden body might be; and I missed him. At the shot the does went off to the left, but he ran to the right, once or twice leaping high; and when he halted, at less than 200 yards, although I could still only see his horns, I knew where his body was; and this time I killed him.

We gave most of the meat to the Nuer. He was an utterly wild savage, and when Cuninghame suddenly lit a match he was so frightened that it was all we could do to keep him from bolting.

**At the Mouth of a Nile Tributary.**

The following day we were in the mouth of the Bahr el Ghazal. It ran sluggishly through immense marshes, which stretched back from the river for miles on either hand, broken here and there by flats of slightly higher land with thorn-trees. The whale-billed storks were fairly common, and were very conspicuous as they stood on the quaking surface of the marsh, supported by their long-toed feet. After several fruitless stalks and much following through the thick marsh grass, sometimes up to our necks in water, I killed one with the Springfield at a distance of 130 yards, and Kermit, after missing one standing, cut it down as it rose with his Winchester 30-40.

Next morning we were up at the Bahr el Zeraf. We had now finished our hunting, save that once or twice we landed to shoot a buck or some birds for the table.

We steamed steadily down the Nile. Where the great river bent to the east we would sit in the shade on the forward deck during the late afternoon and look down the long glistening water-street in front of us, with its fringe of reedbed and marshy grass-land and papyrus swamp, and the slightly higher dry land on which grew acacias and scattered palms. Along the river banks and inland were villages of Shilluks and other tribes, mostly cattle owners; some showing slight traces of improvement, others utter savages, tall, naked men, bearing bows and arrows.

**The Final Stage of the Journey.**

At night we sat on deck and watched the stars and the dark, lonely river. The swimming crocodiles and plunging hippos made whirls and wakes of feeble light that glimmered for a moment against the black water.

The unseen birds of the marsh and the night called to one another in strange voices. Often there were grass fires, burning, leaping lines of red, the lurid glare in the sky above them making even more somber the surrounding gloom.

As we steamed northward down the long stretch of the Nile which ends at Khartoum, the wind blew in our faces, day after day, hard and steadily. Narrow reedbeds bordered the shore; there were grass flats and groves of acacias and palms, and farther down reaches of sandy desert. The health of our companions who had been suffering from fever and dysentery gradually improved; but the case of champagne, which we had first opened at Gondokoro, was a real service, for two members of the party were at times so sick that their situation was critical.

We reached Khartoum on the afternoon of March 14, 1910, and Kermit and I parted from our comrades of the trip with real regret; during the year we spent together there had not been a jar, and my respect and liking for them had grown steadily. Moreover, it was a sad parting from our faithful black followers, whom we knew we should never see again. It had been an interesting and a happy year; though I was very glad to be once more with those who were dear to me, and to turn my face toward my own home and my own people.

**An Inopportune Attack of Fever.**

Kermit's and my health throughout the trip had been excellent. He had been laid up for three days all told, and I for five. Kermit's three days were due, two to tick fever on the Kapiti plains, one probably to the sun.

Mine were all due to fever; but I think my fever had nothing to do with Africa at all, and was simply a recurrence of the fever I caught in the Santiago campaign, and which ever since has come on at long and irregular intervals for a day or two at a time. The couple of attacks I had in Africa were very slight; by no means as severe as one I had while bear hunting early one spring in the Rocky mountains.

One of these attacks came on under rather funny circumstances. It was at Lake Naivasha on the day I killed the hippo which charged the boat. We were in the steam launch and I began to feel badly, and knew I was in for a bout of fever.

Just then we spied the hippo and went after it in the row-boat. I was anxious to hold back the attack until I got the hippo, as when shaking with a chill it is of course very difficult to take aim. I just succeeded, the excitement keeping me steady; and as soon as the hippo was dead I curled up in the boat and had my chill in peace and comfort.

The story of a night in a haunted house with wild noises all about, high words and pistol shots

# THE IMPRISONED GHOSTS

By ELEANOR VAN HORN

LOCAL historians used to call it Whitehall. That was in the days when one of Washington's officers lived there. Then, for immemorial years, the village folk called it the Haunted House. It was a mansion of stately build, approached from the main road by a sweep of imposing driveway. It was large and square, with a pillared porch. Its lofty front windows looked out across a once-beautiful garden, laid out like the gardens of Italy and France. But in the years of mystery and desertion, the garden, like the house, had fallen from grand magnificence into gentle decay. There were tangled masses of exotic flowers run wild. The box borders had been bitten out at intervals by the hungry winters of the past. There was a battered sun-dial, a dead fountain, a moss-covered marble seat, and mysterious paths.

It was here that the village boys and I used to play when the sun shone cheerfully and the day was young. The house exerted its spell upon us. We peered fearfully in at the windows and shook the strong old doors, then scurried away with shrieks of half-frightened ecstasy. The house seemed to submit to these familiarities patiently. But it never lost, not even in the sunshine, that aspect of cheerless, unholly sorrow that made it awful.

Perhaps even then, subconsciously, I knew that I should spend a night of horror behind those white, unsmiling walls when I should have become a man.

## II.

Here let me tell you something about the tragedy enacted there.

A quarter of a century before my birth, a wealthy bachelor, a grandson of that officer of Washington's already referred to, came to live at Whitehall, with an old housekeeper as his only attendant. He was not well known in the village, for his youth had been spent in foreign lands, and only till he came to live at Whitehall had the village people ever seen him.

He was tall and imposing, but his handsome face bore clearly the marks of a dissipated and tumultuous life. A scar marked his cheek. He walked with a slight limp from some old wound. He dressed carefully, and bore the aspect of a great gentleman—a man of the world, with an intangible something about him that baffled my

youthful analysis, but which marked him with distinction in sharp contrast to the gentle village folk.

Vague rumors filtered into the village as time went on, which gradually revealed the inhabitant of Whitehall to have been a man of much adventure. He had roamed the wide world over; been in wars as a soldier of fortune; had been imprisoned, and had made his escape; was once an ornamental figure at the court of France, and a destroyer of many a woman's happiness.

His manners were those of a Chesterfield, although he was reserved and taciturn to the last degree, and made no man his friend. He lived entirely within himself. He came and went about the village in that isolation of spirit that some are capable of building up for themselves, and which is as impenetrable as the heart of a Sahara. He received no letters, but many books and magazines and papers. He spent long days in his library. Occasionally he walked in his great garden, gathering the flowers as if he loved them.

Thus he lived until the day of a tragic visit.

In those days a stage-coach carried mails and passengers to and from the village. People came and went every day, and the coach was always sure to be well filled; so that when a mysterious stranger, with a striking face and a foreign accent, was a passenger alighting at the village there were many to carry the news. The stranger's fine, erect figure was set off by a military coat. His beard was cut after a foreign fashion. When he asked at the inn how he might reach Whitehall, the word swiftly passed about that the lonely bachelor was to have a distinguished visitor.

The stranger gave the innkeeper a princely fee and was, in consequence, driven out to Whitehall in the innkeeper's own private chaise by the innkeeper's son. The great door of Whitehall was opened by the old housekeeper, and the mysterious and attractive stranger swallowed from the sight of the youth, who looked longingly after him as he fingered the large silver coin in his hand.

And that night was a night of terror in the village. The old housekeeper had come running wildly to the nearest house in her nightgown, with her eyes starting from her head and her nightcap awry. She was incoherent with terror and exhaustion, but it was gained from her broken speech that a tragedy had taken place at Whitehall, and that the master and his visitor lay dead.

Some of the village men ran to the house, entered the door that had been left wide open by the frightened housekeeper, and went up the stairs to the room the master had converted into a library, led by a light that was still burning.

The room was in great disorder. Sure enough, both men lay dead, their faces bruised and marked. One, the stranger, had been strangled. As for the master, he had evidently shot himself. He lay within a large closet, the door of which stood wide open, and across the sill trickled a stream of crimson. Upon each victim was found a miniature of a woman of extraordinary beauty, her lovely face smiling out coquettishly—from within a frame of pearls in one case and a plain gold ring in the other.

Whitehall, after the tragedy, fell to some distant cousins, and they came to live there. They stayed but a short time, however, departing suddenly and leaving a caretaker in charge of the place. The caretaker, in turn, left hastily, declaring that he had heard weird sounds at night, accompanied by two pistol-shots, and that he knew that the ghosts of the two dead men enacted the tragedy every night in the old library.

Then the house was closed. The weeds sprang up in the garden and sprang into the trim walks, and Whitehall had, within a year, become that strange very thing—a haunted house.

## III.

When my childhood had passed, and I had traveled about a good deal in foreign lands and learned what fine architecture really was, I realized that

the Haunted House was of rare beauty and excellence, a gem of architecture such as one does not often chance upon in our good land, and so I looked upon its imposing frontage with longing, loving eyes.

I spent several summers in its vicinity in my early thirties, and each day I made it the object of a pilgrimage. I walked about its choked and neglected gardens, and examined its poor, weather-worn door-carvings with a pity that would have penetrated to its heart—had it had one. For Whitehall seemed to me to be weighted down with mortification and despair. The sun might shine its brightest upon its windows, but they never could be made to have that smiling look that the windows of happier houses have.

The spring of the year that I became engaged to Lydia, I paid a visit of a week to the old town, and, of course, to Whitehall. It was a lush season; Nature was doing her very bravest, and the old gardens of Whitehall were struggling to assert themselves. There were surprising clumps of fine, old-fashioned flowers here and there, holding up their beautiful heads, not proudly, but rather triumphantly, after all the years of neglect. I grew more and more fascinated with the place; it appealed to me as never before. My being in love may have had a good deal to do with this; but each day I was drawn to the old house, and spent hours about it, and even ob-

tained the keys and wandered into all its rooms, gazing over the rare woodwork and the strong, firm frame; and before I went away I had responded to a sudden inspiration, and had rented the place for a year, with the privilege of purchasing. The price was ridiculously low, the haunting spirits that one was obliged to take with it being considered detrimental to the real-estate value.

I was to be married in July, and here I would bring my bride. I knew what a wonderful and joyful surprise it would be to Lydia—for she regarded all superstition with fine scorn. And what a place for a honeymoon! What romance that garden offered, what delight was promised in those grand old rooms, still stocked with gems of antique furniture, moth-eaten and dust-laden to be sure, but not beyond restoration. I left directions for its setting in order, and hired a brave man to make trim the gardens.

At last, we came to our own. The joy of those first weeks will remain a honeyed memory forever. We arranged and admired and recovered and re-polished to our own particular taste until our artistic sense was completely satisfied. We worked and dreamed away the hours and talked much of the history of the place, laughing at the absurdity of the haunted idea and pitying the narrow beliefs of the simple people; but, at the same time, rejoicing over them because of the wealth of beauty they had contributed to our lives.

In September, Lydia was called to the bedside of her sister. She took the maid with her. The cook, who was left to take care of me, went to her own little home each night, so that I was quite alone in the house after nine o'clock. I was lonely, as a new bridegroom would be sure to be during such a separation, but I was happy enough in my own way.

The day before Lydia returned I received a call from one of the old residents of the town—the oldest inhabitant, I fancied, from his shriveled and faded condition. I welcomed him as a character. He came in the bright afternoon, but seemed wary about entering the house, even with the glorious sunshine pouring in at the windows in a flood, and said he preferred a seat in the garden. He walked feebly, leaning heavily on a stout stick, and breathlessly assured me that he would not have made so great an effort had he not been impelled by an overpowering curiosity as to whether he had been troubled by ghostly noises, and also by the desire to tell me that this was the anniversary of the tragedy. It was a windy September night that it happened, he said, and he quite remembered how Aunt Sally Walte shivered and shook in her nightgown when she brought the horrible news.

I cheerfully assured him that we had not seen or heard anything of a disquieting nature, and had no fear whatever.

He waved his palsied fingers warningly, and feebly shook his head as he said impressively: "You will yet, young man, you will. It's never failed to come on the night of the anniversary. You'll hear and see things to-night. This house has been haunted for nigh onto fifty year, and them that's lived here has always heard wild noises—groans and curses, high words, struggling, pistol-shots—two pistol-shots!"

Then, with a dramatic fervor that seemed like the good old man's last effort on this earth, he graphically rehearsed every detail of the ancient tragedy. In spite of myself, I felt all its horror and its reality.

When he had finished, he departed, creeping slowly away with many a backward look and ominous shakings of the head. I have to confess that he left a depressing effect, and I felt very lonely without Lydia. The golden days that we had revelled in seemed very far away; and much as I disliked to think of the gruesome past, I could not refrain from dwelling upon it with an awful fascination.

As night came, I found myself a prey to all the terrors of my youthful imaginings. Whitehall again became the Haunted House; and in spite of all of my efforts to stave it off, I was fast falling into a fit of the blues. By the time that the clock struck I was genuinely depressed. The wind sprang up and moaned and sobbed dolefully about the house, sighing in the chimney and shrieking wildly under the eaves. I read very late, plunging into the lively action of the spirited *Comte de Bragelonne*, and hoped, like Stevenson, to carry the thread of that epic into my slumbers.

When midnight struck, the brands of the fire flashed up. Then went out. I laid down my stirring romance, stretched and yawned, and decided to go to bed and sleep off my hapless mood.

I got up and moved about the room noisily, whistled and sang, swept up the hearth, locked the doors and windows, and tried not to hear the fiendish wind. But I could not deny it. I was the victim of such a disquieting nervous tension as I had never before experienced in all my life.

When I got to bed I huddled under the blankets and watched the cold moonlight flooding across the floor—the very floor, I thought, upon which the tragedy took place; for my bed-room had been the unfortunate man's library. I was happy to find myself really growing drowsy, and was just on the verge of slumber when I was suddenly shocked wide-awake by a sharp report near at hand.

"A pistol-shot!" I whispered, my flesh creeping with an anomalous species of terror; for the sound came from the large closet in which the unfortunate inhabitant of Whitehall had died. It was now used as a storage-closet.

I had half decided that my over-stimulated fancy had been playing me a trick, and was about to settle back upon my pillow, when another report, louder, clearer, sharper, came from the region of the closet, and made me jerk back to my sitting position.

"Two pistol-shots," I said to myself in an ominous whisper, recalling the old man's words.

All of a sudden I grasped hold of my senses and got back my manhood, a keen disgust of myself hastening my actions. I jumped out of bed, lighted the lamp, and made my way toward the closed door of the closet, and I held the lamp rather high, and its light shed itself sharply downward upon the floor where my eyes were attracted to something within its rays. I stooped—spreading slowly out across the sill from beneath the door was a crimson stain.

"Blood!" I whispered hoarsely, and my own raw cold. My terror returned. I felt a sudden ghastly faintness, and I nervously moistened my dry lips with my tongue. The hand holding the lamp shook as with an ague, and this seemed to arouse me to a sense of my weakness. I felt as if I had disgraced myself by the weak fears and nervous vacillations of this night, and, suddenly stung back into strength and courage by shame, I put out a steady hand and turned the knob. The door was locked. I shook it loudly and peered into the keyhole. There was no key within.

However, I was now determined to fathom the mystery, and, shivering in my thin nightclothes, I gathered keys from various doors up-stairs and tried them in the lock. The last one grated a little and then slid back, and the door was unlocked. I set my teeth a little and held my breath with excitement as I swung back the door, holding the light well forward and peering within. For a moment I could see nothing, and then, meeting my eager gaze was—a row of preserve-jars, two of which had broken from fermentation and sent forth a crimson stream of fruit-juice!

"Lydia's preserves!" I said, and, setting the lamp down on the shelf, I gave myself up to a fit of uproarious laughter.

It is Lydia's chief story. She reveals in the telling of it, but I do not mind. It gave me an interesting night, and we pride ourselves upon being the owners of one of the most beautiful old houses in the land.

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