

1844-1959 -- EARLY HUNTING AND EXPLORATION REPORTS

Christopher, W 1844 *Extract from a journal by Lieut. W. Christopher, commanding the H.C. Brig of War 'Tigris,' on the E. Coast of Africa. Dated 8th May, 1843.* J. Roy. Geog. Soc. 14: 76-103.

Lands at Merkah (Marka), then a party walks inland to the Shabelle River (he doesn't name it; later christens it as Haines River), natives are friendly. Then Makadishó (Magadoxó acc to Portuguese spelling). The coast looks barren from the sea but beyond the sandhills is covered with luxuriant vegetation. Mogadishu, "once the capital of a kingdom, is now half in ruins." It had 3-4000 Somalis and perhaps 30 Arab families. "The town has a ruinous neglected appearance from the offing, and on entering it, the filth and poverty which present themselves are both distressing and offensive."

The pastoral interior is wholly unknown, from Mogadishu to Hafun (the Horn proper) 600 miles with no record of any European having visited the shore.

In N Somalia a young man tells him about his activities. He says the northern region is peaceful, there is no danger except when there is a blood-feud. "Sómálís murder each other, not strangers, or people with whom they have no quarrel." But see James 1888 for a contrary picture.

Cruttenden, CJ 1846 *Report on the Mijjertheyn Tribe of Somallies, inhabiting the district forming the North-East point of Africa.* Trans. Bombay Geog. Soc. 7: 111-126. The land is continuous limestone ranges, 1500-6000 ft. Valleys well wooded with mimosas (is that acacias?) and acacias. On extreme E point of Africa, a tract of sandy country extending c9 miles N of Guardafui. A few stunted bushes, annual grass.

Two classes, the traders (like worse specimens of Arabs) and the Bedouins (shepherds). These live almost entirely on milk. They pride themselves on being a peaceful people – compared to the Hebrawul and Esa [Issa?] Somalis. They carry light spears, a shield, dagger, and numbers of the lower class carry a bow and quiver of poisoned arrows. They thus supply themselves with meat. Frankincense is collected and sold. Myrrh brought from Wadi Nogal and Murreyhan (Merehan?).

Lots of camels, cattle, horses. Riders do not spare abusing their horses with a heavy bit and abrupt stops and bloody mouth. "The affection of the true Arab for his horse is proverbial: the cruelty of the Somali to his, may, I think, be considered equally so."

Cruttenden, CJ 1849 *Memoir of the Western or Edoor tribes, inhabiting the Somali coast of N.-E. Africa, with the southern branches of the family of Darrood, resident on the banks of the Webbe Shebeyli, commonly called the River Webbe.* J. Roy. Geog. Soc. 19: 46-76.

Describes Harrar (2nd-hand), Zeyla, Berbera. During the summer, when Berbera is deserted, lions are commonly seen at the town well. Wild ass and ostrich on the plain, which is "infested with lions, hyenas, and leopards." Numerous traces of elephant in the valleys.

A case history of intertribal conflict in N Somalia, remarkable for its 'take no prisoners' brutal mentality: "In February last year [1847], a feud between two tribes near Berbera induced one – the Aial Yunus – to settle inland from a small roadstead called Bou'l Harr. Here a few traders joined them, and having left their women with the old men and children at the encampment inland, the men descended to the beach, to carry on their trade; whilst thus employed, and unsuspecting of any danger, a foraging party of 'Ghuzoo' of about 2500 Esa [Issa] Somals attacked the camp inland and put every one to the sword; men, women, and children were indiscriminately massacred. The Aial Yunus, paralysed by this catastrophe, were fain to send for assistance to their brethren at Berbera, and marching shortly after inland, met with a fresh body of the Esa, preparing to make a second descent, of whom they slew above 650 men."

Among the Somali tribes "there exists a class of men who never carry the spear and shield, but whose sole arms are the bow and poisoned arrow. With a couple of arrows in his mouth, and half a dozen more dangling from his long tangled hair, the 'Rahnu' is feared alike by man and beast, and in all forays is looked upon as an invaluable ally. Inferior in caste, and not ranking with the gentle blood of the Somali aristocracy, the 'Rahnu' approaches in every respect to the freedman of the Roman. They are expert and daring hunters, crippling the elephant by a blow on the back sinew with a heavy knife, and attacking even the stately African lion with no better arms than the tiny, though unerring, 'nishab' or arrow."

Among the Mijertein of Ras Hafun area, "Elephant hunting is followed by those who have guns; and last year upwards of 35 were killed by a party of gun-men brought by a speculating Somali from Brava on the coast." (*So there was organized hunting before the influx of white hunters in late 19th century.*)

Miles, SB 1872 *On the neighbourhood of Bunder Marayah.* J. Roy. Geog. Soc. 42: 61-76.

The Somali divide gums into two classes, sweet and bitter; to the former belong gum arabic, mastic, *luban*, *mareti*, etc., and to the latter myrrh, *hodthai*, and others.

"Numbers of the Somal go across to Hadramaut [now part of Yemen] for the purpose of gathering the frankincense, paying the Arab tribes there for the privilege, the latter never attempting to collect it themselves." (*This is surprising, since N Somalia has its own frankincense production, and it includes 2 species, one of which is considered to have the best product.*)

Dundas, FG 1893 *Expedition up the Jub River through Somali-land, East Africa.* Geogr. J. 1(3): 209-223.

In 1865 the ill-fated expedition of Baron von der Decken, he ascended the River Jub [Jubba] with his steamer Guelph. The vessel was wrecked near rapids above Bardera, and the Baron and five colleagues murdered by Somalis, only 2 escaping.

Dundas ascended the river with the steamer Kenia, belonging to the British East Africa Company. He starts up and eventually encounters masses of Somali war parties, men typically with a shield, long spear and short stabbing knife. He parleys, at last concludes a peace. Somalis

“are a very fine handsome race, of good physique, with excellent features...” They have numbers of Galla girls who are slaves, and lighter than the very black Somalis.

Enters Gusha district, populated by runaway slaves in small towns, they are cultivators. Reaches Jelib (so he’s not yet very far up the river from Kismayo). Continues on. Gets to Mfudo. The forest on either side extends about a mile, then thick thorn woods another $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, then vast grass plains (*emphasis added*). Vast herds of game.

Melliss, CJ 1895 *Lion-hunting in Somali-land*. Chapman & Hall, London, 186p.

Traveled from India (as did many British officers; he’s a Captain) on a shooting trip c200 miles into the interior of Somali-land. Aden, Zaila, Bulhar (a Somali trading settlement) where in the past “the bloodthirsty Eesa [Issa] one night slaughtered its inhabitants wholesale;” Finally Berbera, 10 camels, a pony, 2 donkeys as lion bait, 12 Somalis. Intends to hunt in the waterless plateau called the Haud, its nearest edge c150 miles distant.

“The hearty way a Somali works is most refreshing. No matter how hot or long the day’s march, or the thunderstorms at sunset that often drenched us before we could get up our encampment, soaking the camels’ saddle-mats, which were their only bedding, yet there was always a laugh in them, and they would set to work with a will, usually singing in chorus to some chant set up by one of them. In a wonderfully short time we have settled down for the night.”

At Pass Naso Hablod, his head shikari [hunting guide] Jama says here was in one of the wadis where Mr. Ingram was killed by an elephant. Quite recently herds roamed in the broad valleys but had been driven westward by sportsmen. Abundant here were aloes, red and yellow blossoms, the leaf a favorite food of elephant. Soon reach Hargeisa. After a day (I think) camp at Faff, a grassy ban or plain, next morning pass into the Haud. “All about us rose a wall of apparently interminable high bush jungle.”

He marvels how Somalis can find their way through the bush labyrinth without a track or apparent landmarks.

Parkinson, FB, Lieut Brander-Dunbar & G Percy V Aylmer 1898 *Two recent journeys in northern Somaliland*. Geog. J. 11(1): 15-48.

“The big-game shooting of the country year by year grows less, and I greatly fear that its fate is sealed,” says Aylmer. Parkinson says, “The preservation of the game by the proper regulation of the hunting-parties who go into the country should form one of the leading objects of the government, so that the stock may be kept up indefinitely, and all may find something worthy of their steel.” What he’s asking for is sustainable management so that white hunters may continue to enjoy their sport.

Blundell, Herbert Weld 1900 *A journey through Abyssinia to the Nile*. Geog. J. 15: 97-121.

Starts late 1898 from Berbera. They do some shooting en route, oryx, awwal (Sømmering’s gazelle), hartebeest, miss out on lion. “Somaliland – now almost as well known as Scotland as a

country of sport.” The point being, at the turn of the century (N) Somalia was where to go for sport shooting if you were British.

Vivian, Herbert 1901 *Abyssinia: through the lion-land to the court of the Lion of Judah*. C. Arthur Pearson, London, 342p.

The whole of British Somaliland is administered by 4 Englishmen, whereas the little settlement of Jibuti “is swamped by whole armies of officials and camp-followers.”

For the most adventurous he recommends a trip to the Ogaden. “All the best beasts teem there.” In Addis Ababa talks with the British rep Capt Harrington, who remarks that “Somaliland, the best sporting country in the world, is practically a preserve for Englishmen.”

Jennings, J Willes & Christopher Addison 1905 *With the Abyssinians in Somaliland*. Hodder & Stoughton, London, 265p.

The interior of the Horn of Africa: “It is a dry land; a land of thorn trees, of desert and of prairie.” It includes “the immense waterless plateau of the Haud.” SW [I’d say S] of the Haud is Mudug district. “Throughout the whole of Somaliland [sensu lato], as in other lands, it has apparently been the custom from time immemorial for the strong to dispossess the weak of whatsoever goods the strong desire. Camels, cattle and sheep are the Somali’s possessions, and raiding is his pastime.” Later, in the S Ogaden, he says something that makes me laugh, it is so antithetic to my feelings about bushland: “As we emerged from the thickets at Adeleh and entered upon an open plain, our feeling was one of intense relief at being in the fresh air again, and able to breathe freely, for the thick dark bush round about, every day and all day, oppresses one like a nightmare. Imagine yourself, in some horrible dream, dropped into a maze, and left there: the maze is of thick thorn bushes, and every tree becomes transformed into a half-starved and parched octopus, every branch into a tentacle, and every thorn into a sucker, and you, gripped tight, are in the midst of it... The country is truly a dismal, hopeless wilderness.” What a febrile imagination. The obvious solution to wait-a-bit and other thorn trees is to avoid touching them, not brush against them. I always found such bushland an exhilarating experience, dense with plant life that had evolved to thrive in these arid lands.

Camels have an aversion to shoats and are therefore not grazed together. Camel milk is lower in fat than cow’s milk and does not yield cream or butter. The breath of a camel “is overpoweringly offensive.”

“The Abyssinian thoroughly hates the Somali, and especially one in the service of a white man.” And there is an “intense hatred of the Somalis for the Abyssinians.”

“A good Somali shikari [hunting guide], when you find one, is said to be a splendid fellow, faithful, intelligent, and reliable, and in his special work, tracking, he has probably no superiors and few equals. The wilderness and the solitary there are an open book to him, and he finds his way through the tangle of the bush with an ease and accuracy that are truly wonderful.”

Note that Lord Delamere had a shooting lodge near Hargeisa (*which speaks highly for the quality of the hunter's experience in Somalia compared even to Kenya*).

Swayne, Frances 1907 *A woman's pleasure trip in Somaliland*. John Wright, London, 172p.

The many photos significantly shorten the narrative.

For many years Somaliland was famous for big game shooting. Never as a holiday resort, which the author hopes to amend with this book. For 20 years or more she has been intensely interested in the Protectorate owing to constant visits by her first cousins, brothers Lieut-Col. HGC Swayne and Brig.-Gen. EJE Swayne.

A lucid, matter-of-fact account, good descriptions of who and what and where though gets drony in places, mundane detail on goings-on in and out of camp. A map shows they went S to Sheikh and then E to Waggar of Golis Range. The whole time she never saw a 'savage' (as such). A refreshing change from those books of shooting.

Starts at Aden, to Berbera, a white-walled town. Details of Berbera. "I was not then aware, as I am now, how perfectly Somalis can help you when once you have made them understand what you want..." Overexposed photo of Aden. Lots more photos, of places, people, some have character and the romance of distant places. A photo of the Commissioner's Mail Camel, which is quaint. It takes 9½ h to do the 45 miles to Sheikh – which is the plateau at the top of the pass.

They start off with servants and escort of 20 of the Camel Corps – with some useful photos. They also have ponies and mules. A cow travels with them everywhere for dairy products. They have plenty of tinned supplies, even Bombay butter. Some provisions from the Army & Navy Stores. Somalis won't touch pig so a Midgan cut up the breakfast bacon every morning.

A steep difficult patch of trail up to the pass. How had the Commissioner gotten his guns up there? Under the direction of Captain Cordeaux [of later fame for *Cordeauxia*, yeheb], the present Commissioner, with Somalis dragging them.

Camp is zaribas (stockades) within zaribas, also dense shade of a very big euphorbia, its drawback is its milky sap and caustic, poisonous nature. Photo suggests *E. candelabrum*. A quiet time during the heat of the day. Polo is played 3x/week. Also cricket and tennis.

A tribal dispute concerning a woman's dowry is the most fruitful source of disputes, in one instance 6 men had been killed and 22 wounded. Some discourse on the Mad Mulla (a thorn in the side of the British).

The most extraordinary plant she saw was boulder-like with a creeper on top. Is that *Adenia ballyi*? The shrub 'waba' (*Acokanthera schimperi* certainly) has scented flowers, the root makes a deadly poison. Later, 'ergin' which may be *Euphorbia nubica* which is poisonous. She is not good with biota, and she has a dog that regularly makes or gets into trouble, and whenever he sees other dogs he has to fight, occasionally to his detriment. What a nuisance. The plight of the poor. Lots of poor children are eaten by hyenas.

Int'l Game Laws were passed 2 or 3 yrs ago for the preservation of game in the African Protectorates. Closed season at this time. "During the last twenty years there has been such an enormous decrease in the number of antelopes, etc., that had nothing been done many species would, in a few years, have become extinct. Twenty years ago large herds of various sorts of antelopes were roaming all over the plateau at Sheikh, but now it is the rarest thing to see two, or at most three, individuals together, and the same remark applies to many other districts of Somaliland." *So it's been pretty much shot out.*

A lot of fuss and bother about scrambling up on difficult slopes to find the perfect campsite. But also frequent mention of lovely spots and views. Cedars (*Juniperus procera*), but also mists and rain, sometimes strong winds. Termitaria to 12 feet. Says in the haud they run to 50 or 60 feet high which I find impossible to believe.

"Somalis have always been believers in the theory that mosquitoes give fever." *Is that so? Clearly they were onto something!*

Time to go home. They hear they have berths on the P.&O. Moldavia. She has very fine sentiments for the Somalis for their kindness and consideration.

Herbert, Agnes 1908 *Two Dianas in Somaliland*. John Lane, London & New York, 306p.

"the waterless Haud", in places >200 mi across. "Haud is a Somali word signifying the kind of country so named, and may mean jungly ground or prairie-like plains."

"We had known before we started that Somaliland is no longer the old time sportsman's paradise... The truth is the country is fairly shot out. [*compare that with the evident ubiquity of game...*] Fifteen years ago the most excellent shooting was to be had all over; now, unless one penetrates right into the interior where a certain amount of danger from warlike tribes must be looked for [*perhaps the reason for its better state*], there is not much hope of a truly great and representative bag." "The Ogaden country, in parts,...still possesses potentialities not to be sneered at..."

P.244-5 discussion of 'wholesale slaughter' of Somali fauna, especially elephant. Disused elephant pit traps "are still to be found in parts of the Ogaden."

Drake-Brockman, RE 1910 *Mammals of Somaliland*. Hurst & Blackett, London, 201p.

Lion used to be found all over Somalia.

"The Somali has little or no fear of the leopard," though the occasional one becomes a maneater.

Rhino: exterminated N of Burao, said to be plentiful in Ogaden.

Gerenuk: found wherever acacias abound and in Somalia nearly everywhere.

Oryx: the commonest of the larger antelopes in Somalia, with a wider distribution than perhaps gerenuk. It is perhaps surprising that there are so many oryx herds in Somali country, considering how keenly the Midgan hunters prize the male for the thick skin used for making Somali shields. "The presence in Somaliland of so many of this species I consider a good argument against those who are inclined to blame the natives for the disappearance of the game." *Right! The suspicion should fall on the white hunter.*

Hamilton, Angus 1911 *Somaliland*. Hutchinson, London, 366p.

The book's centerpiece, carefully built up in great detail, is the Brit.Gov. campaign against the 'Mad Mullah' that ends in disaster on 15-17 April 1903 at Gumburu (between Wardher and Galadi) in the southern Ogaden.

"Few countries in the world for the true traveller and sportsman are possessed of a more subtle charm than Somaliland." Physiography of British Somaliland:

Guban – the Maritime Plain and Ridges, extending inland 35 miles in the W and <2 mi in the E.

Golis [Range] – wooded northern crest, c6 miles broad

Ogo-Guban – from Hargeisa W

Ogo – S slope of N crest behind Guban: a strip 10-30 miles wide of grass or thorn, its E counterpart being the Warsangli Plateau

Darror Valley

Nogal Valley

The Haud – "The Haud, a belt of thorn wilderness and pasturages (waterless in the Jilal=dry season), runs, with a breadth of 150 to 200 miles from the neighbourhood of Jog-Jiga [Jijiga] in a direction somewhat south of east to the Maritime Ridges of Italian Somaliland, and separates Ogaden and the Harrar Highlands from Ogo, Guban, and the Nogal Plateau on the north." Much geophysical detail. It is "a great elevated undulating plateau, waterless in the dry season, which includes large strips of open rolling grass plains or *bans*, or to the south-east semi-desert country called *aror*. It is probably the most valuable part of Somaliland, for on its pasturages the surrounding tribes are dependent for the summer grazing of their flocks, the source of their food and their wealth. Its importance is recognized in the Anglo-Abyssinian treaty, which maintains, without distinction of tribes, freedom of access to all the portions in which the two nations are concerned." Has thick, sometimes impenetrable thorn jungle with an undergrowth of hig (*Sansevieria*) and dar [dacar] (*Aloe*). Runs at first SE between Somaliland and Ogaden, as far as 46° E, then widens and takes in the eastern Maritime ranges but not Nogal Valley, and south to a line from Galkaya to the sandhills behind Obbia [Hobyo]. Red clay or red sandy soil are characteristic of the W and S Haud. The Marar Prairie, nearly 1000 mi², includes the best grasses viz. durr [*Andropogon kelleri*], daremo [*Chrysopogon plumulosus*] and dihe [*Sporobolus somalensis*?]. Many similar prairies said to exist in the north as well as throughout the Haud.

Wooded portions are dense thorn jungle and scattered trees alternating with small glades of durr, and termitaria often to 25 ft appearing every 100 yds in the more open portions. The southern Haud is as a rule covered with thorn bush, $\pm$ thick.

Elliott, F 1913 *Jubaland and its inhabitants*. Geog. J. 41: 554-561.

Lots on tribal distinctions, some history, and character studies of the various groups. Mostly on the Somalis, viz. the Marehan, Ogaden and Herti Somali are all well represented. Also describes others e.g. Boni, fugitive slave tribes. The Dirr and Haweyeh, mostly in S Italian Somalia and slightly into Jubaland, may be called Somali but are really the aborigines of the region, they are in no way co-tribal with Somalis with whom they seldom intermarry. The Somalis consider them inferior races.

Mosse, AHE 1913 *My Somali book – a record of two shooting trips*. Sampson Low, Marston, London, 314p.

He's titled Capt, Indian Army. You know what to expect when the frontispiece shows a stretched-out dead lion. The ample intro (by HGC Swayne) brings to my attention a partial explanation or excuse for all those India-stationed Brit army officers coming to Somaliland for recreational shooting. At that time (starting 1884) Somaliland was taken over from Egypt by Gov. of India (actually Brit Gov but in a legal way Queen Victoria also ruled over India). As he says, "From then onwards Somaliland was peacefully developed by the Indian Government." It was "directly under India, with occasional interventions from Home." Maybe they got a discount when they came.

But in 1899 turmoil in the Ogaden due to Abyssinia's activities plus the preaching of a jihad by the Mad Mullah meant that the affairs of Somaliland passed wholly into the hands of the Home Authorities.

Note the all-embracing use of 'jungle', e.g. the Haud "is covered with jungle, sometimes very thick, sometimes fairly open."

Swayne writes, "Somaliland has been an ideal hunting ground. It is one great wilderness, practically without cultivation or villages...The people have an intense love of sport, not merely for meat, and in this they differ from most African races...I think that many men...will look back to their association with these plucky, sociable, and intelligent Somali hunters and camel-men, as among their pleasantest memories."

Mosse states that Somaliland "still provides, though without such an extensive fauna as that of East Africa for instance, one of the finest hunting-grounds in the world." However, it is clear that animals have been declining. Elephant has grown scarce and now prohibited. Rhino not uncommon in Ogaden but almost absent in Somaliland. "The lion is no longer abundant." Cheetah not often met with. Farther inland in S Ogaden is giraffe and grevy zebra. On the Shabelle R is bushbuck, waterbuck, hippo.

Then disingenuously states that “the great diminution of large game in various parts of the world has been due, not to the men who have shot for sport (*such as himself, quite pure and blameless*), but to those who have killed for profit, as well as to the introduction of fire-arms among native races.” Wasn’t that the fake orthodoxy in E & S Africa, scapegoating Africans. He concludes that except for lion and elephant, it is absolutely false that Somaliland has been shot out. He then points out a scapegoat: many animals are killed by Somalis for export of hide and horn.

Blaming Africans for the demise of game is a common motif in the history of African colonization. For example, the first sentence in Stigand (CH Stigand 1909 *The game of British East Africa*. Horace Cox, London, 310p.) has got it right that guns are the cause of diminishing game in E.A., but it blames Africans: “It is civilised weapons alone, especially when in the hands of irresponsible black men, that irreparably upset the balance of Nature.” Witness all those volumes of hunters’ reminiscences, the orgies of shooting with no heed to number or rarity. That’s not Africans.

Stockley, VM 1913 *Big game shooting in India, Burma, and Somaliland*. Horace Cox, London, 282p.

That’s Col. Stockley of Indian Army.

South of the Golis Mts in Somaliland lies the Haud, a great waterless rolling plateau, alternate bush and open plain, generally c3500 ft, stretching southward some 150 miles to Ogaden. Featured are the red anthills (termitaria) over parts of it.

Lion gets pride (*haha*) of place in the book. “There are two general methods of shooting lions in Somaliland. One is to sit up at night over a ‘kill’; the other, to follow up the tracks from a kill and hunt the lion by day.” At night baiting, in daytime following and tracking. In thick bush country baiting is the only way that works. Stockley prefers daytime hunting, it is exciting and sporting. In Somaliland, “where the powdery [*is that sandy?*] red soil and open bush, favourable for tracking and riding, found in many parts of the Haud, render it practicable. Where the bush is thick or the ground very difficult, as when cut up by ravines, it is impossible.” (*Conclusion: method of lion hunting is a function of terrain especially vegetation which is mostly acacia-commiphora bushlands.*)

Borradaile, JW 1927 *A sporting trip to British Somaliland, 1926*. J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. 32: 299-310.

“The Somali bush on a dull [*i.e. sunless*] day is most dangerous as it is completely featureless, the field of view is rarely more than a hundred yards and above all it is waterless.” *This is doubtless in reference to getting lost in the haud.*

Stafford, JH & CL Collenette 1931 *The Anglo-Italian Somaliland boundary*. Geog. J. 78(2): 102-121.

The vegetation of British Somaliland is thorn scrub. Sorl Haud is near the SE end of British Somaliland. It is a plateau sloping gently S for 100 miles till reaching the valley of the Nogal. S

of Nogal is the Haud proper, also red soil like the Sorl and appears to be a continuation of the Sorl, with frequent limestone outcrops. Thick thornbush 10-15 ft high and sections of tall grass with scattered trees.

“While all the Somali tribes speak the same language, plant names in use by one tribe may vary considerably from those of another.” Generally the plant names may be separated into 2 classes, those used by the Darod tribes (Warsangeli, Mijertain, Dolbahanta, etc.) and the Ishaak (Habr Yunis, Habr Awal, Habr Toljalla, etc.). Some individuals are acquainted with both sets of names and appear to use them indiscriminately.

Gilliland, HB 1947 *An approach to the problem of the government of nomadic peoples.* S. Afr. Geogr. J. 29(1): 43-58.

Eastern British Somaliland highlighted. Between wars the British Army established a military gov in Somaliland, and a dept of General Survey was established to get social and environmental data. Soon enough it was recognized that the problem of pastoralists “was inescapably linked with the problems of pasture” and a pasture survey was done: Edwards 1942. The report established that unwise management was causing damage. Further investigation was needed, thus PE Glover and HB Gilliland carried out a preliminary joint recce, followed by further work, the western and eastern half of the territory by Glover and Gilliland, respectively. See also map p.56.

“The area with which the writer was more particularly concerned is the area bounded in the west by the ‘Asseh gap’ – an interesting breach of the coastal escarpment between the Wagir range and the Surud of the Al Hills, by which names the escarpment is here known. This gap leads in the south to a series of minor hill ranges of which the best known is the Bur Dab range. This range forms the northern rim of the very important Ain valley, a western tributary of the Nogal. South of the Ain and the Nogal valleys is a series of hill ranges which separate them from the Haud. The Surud and the Al hills form the major watershed and from this range flow streams to north and south. The north-flowing streams are short, precipitous and steep-sided until the coastal plain is reached. If this occurs some distance from the sea they tend to be perennial in places. The stream rising in the Wirig plain and round El Dur Elan and forming the Hudma Tug which flows into the sea at Ankhör, as likewise the Raguda Tug and the Diddin Tug, carry freshwater fish, in the portions which are perennial above the general sand level. There is some reason to believe that in the other portions water does flow below the sandy bed. The same applies to the other small north-flowing tugs where the bed is flattened out on approach to the coast and the well-known phenomenon of freshwater wells just above high tide mark is frequently recorded.

“From the southern side of the watershed two main drainage systems discharge towards the Indian Ocean. The Darror valley system starts in the Al Hills roughly behind Las Khoreh and draining first south, turns east to reach the Indian Ocean on the coast at Ascira. The great Nogal system can be traced from the region of Sheik in the Wagir range in western Somaliland where, as Tug Der it rises it flows initially to the south and then turns south-east along the north of the Bur Dab range to bend slightly south again to join the drainage of the Ain valley. At about this point the southern drainage of the Surud and the adjacent Al Hills in the form of the Jidali Tug

joins the system. Thereafter with a series of minor tributaries from the north and south hill boundaries it becomes the Nogal proper, a huge valley leading south-east to the coast in the region of Eil in Somalla.

“Both these drainage lines, with a few short exceptional portions as for example, the peculiar underground waters at Taleh with again a freshwater fish are characterised by the absence of perennially flowing water and also by the fact that, even in times of heaviest rainfall, neither of them is filled completely by a stream. Any accumulation of water in one area soon flows and stops.”

Geology: The main drainage channels are carved out of anhydrite (gypsum) and are limited to N and S by hills of overlying limestone. In the S where the red Haud sands tend to obscure the geology, calcareous sands from sandstone sands. A small lava flow constitutes the Jau Hills of the NE coast at Elayu. Three soil types. Most widespread is the residual type developed in situ by weathering, it is the rendzina pattern on both limestone and gypsum. On limestone the soil is poorly developed and commonly met with as gravel covering vast areas. As a relic of limestone in gypsum country it is known as a ‘sol’ (e.g. the Sol Haud of the Haded Plains).

A sub-desert climate merging into desert in the E and S. Two major climatic types, (1) subdesert/desert climate, (2) montane climate of the escarpment ridge which receives rain from both monsoons and often enjoys a ‘mist-belt’.

Game is plentiful though elephant and rhino are no longer as easily found as the earlier (late 19th century) records. Wild ass still occurs, gerenuk and dibatag are still easily found. Kudu present but not common in the east. Oryx, Soemmerling’s gazelle (‘Aul’) and Speke’s gazelle (‘Dero’) abound, with Aul often in herds of several hundred. Klipspringer in the montane region. Also notable are wild pig [warthog], porcupine and antbear [aardvark].

Two main peoples, the Isahaak and Darrod (2 main subtribes, the Warsengeli in the N and E, and Dolbahanta in the south viz. Nogal and Ain valley and adjacent Haud), with outcast Mitgans well distributed amongst them as servants and slaves. Also Yebirs, connected to the function of ‘medicine men’ among Bantu. On rocky slopes and cliffs of the Al Hills the Warsengeli collect frankincense for export. The trees of the ‘gum plantations’ are owned. The Dolbahanta are by far the largest group of tribes in British Somaliland.

The Habr Toljaala is a very active tribe on the increase, feuding with the Dolbahanta who are their southern and eastern neighbors. Those with coastal connections have access to the forests of the coastal ranges with abundant frankincense (*Boswellia*), gum of heis (*Pistacia lentiscus*) providing the mastix of the Medit. and the local murkud (*Pistacia aethiopica*), a gum highly prized in midwifery. In the El Afwein area, access to the gum haddak haddi (*Commiphora guidottii?*).

All the Somali are fundamentally pastoralists of migratory habit with their camels and shoats, which is conditioned by the existence of permanent wells. There are also cattle, horse and donkey. The camel is doubtless the backbone of the country’s economy. With green grazing it can do without water for 2-3 months, and survive up to 13 days with dry grazing. The camel

mainly browses but likes a good grass when available; has an amazing ability to eat thorny material. Sheep is primarily a grass feeder. Goat, in smaller numbers, browses and grazes. Its role in suppressing tree regeneration makes it an animal to control rigidly where tree growth is to be encouraged, e.g. on the Surud area. Cattle are few. Horses are used for transport, mostly eat grass, and can survive only 1-2 days without water. The donkey can so survive for 2-4 days, catholic in taste like goat, and is used for human and freight transport.

Within the general deciduous semi-desert vegetation, sites especially favored in relation to water are dohos, with grassland or very open woodland. Also bullehs, natural drainage basins with water in the wet season.

J. Desmond Clark of the Rhodes-Livingstone Museum carried out an archeological survey in Somalia, and his collections conform to the cultural types described by Leakey 1936 (Stone Age Africa) for eastern Africa.

Recommended to avoid the complete grazing out of any one site. Development of conservation areas, in conjunction with local development committees.

Buchholzer, John 1959 *The Horn of Africa*. Adventurers Book Club, London, 199p.

To sum up his politics, to him it's clear that Somalis have no vision, no idea of their political destiny except the dream of a Greater Somaliland. This would be gained through a war funded by oil discoveries (*and in Hiiraan I've been dubious that despite being crisscrossed by cutlines, no oil was discovered – or suppressed?*). But they agree that after independence will come a struggle for supremacy among all tribes.

The Brits here told him all political activity was encouraged in Somalis, it might promote a sense of responsibility, taking an interest in the future of their country. They might progress from tribalism to nationhood and no longer fight over waterholes. Clearly tribalism, clannishness is so important that it has prevented nation-building, unlike in most of Africa.

His two companions sing a long song. It's about war, camels and love, all 3 essential to being what we could call a well-adjusted Somali. They are a nation of poets. "As the women did all the rough work, the men had plenty of leisure in which to tell stories and sing their songs."