

WHERE LIONS ARE THE PASSENGERS

Trains on the Uganda Railway in the Wilds of Africa, Race With Zebras, Gnus and Antelopes



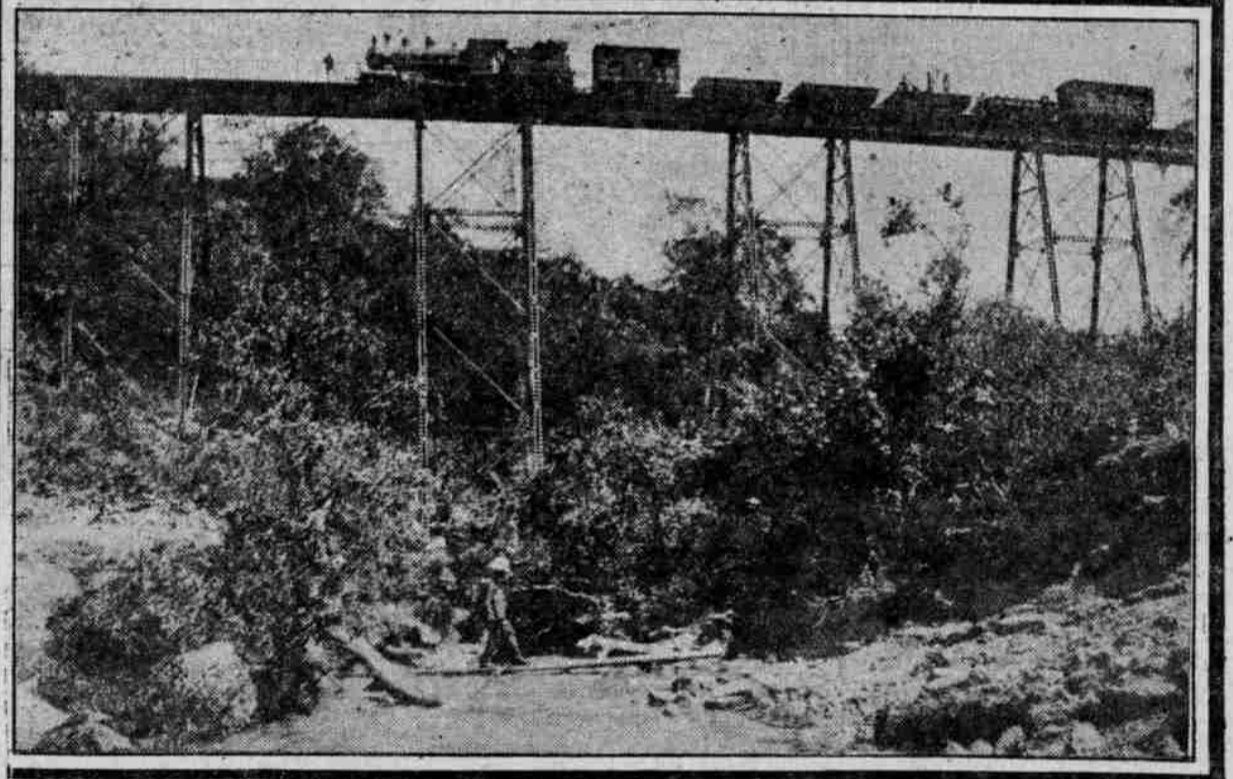
MOMBASA STATION. THE BEGINNING OF THE UGANDA ROAD



THIS MAN IS CARRYING A JAMPOTI IN THE HOLE THRO' THE LOBE OF HIS EAR. THE POT IS FULLY 3 INCHES IN DIAMETER AND THE SKIN OF THE EAR IS UNBROKEN



SOME THIRD-CLASS PASSENGERS. NOTICE THE TELEGRAPH WIRE ABOUT THE NECK OF THE WOMAN



AMERICAN BUILT VIADUCT, BRITISH EAST AFRICA

BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.
TRAVELING by railway through the wilds of Central Africa! Steaming for hundreds of miles among zebras, gnus, ostriches and giraffes.

Rolling along through jungles which the hippocross hants and where the lion and leopard wait for their prey! These are some of my experiences during a trip I have just taken over the Uganda railway from Mombasa to Nairobi!

Ten years ago it took a month to cover the distance between the two points, and the whole way was on foot. I made it in less than 24 hours, and that in a comfortable car. The railway fare was \$22, and I had fairly good meals on the way. The distance is over 3000 miles and it is just about half the length of the railroad. Leaving here I shall continue my journey over it on Lake Victoria, and shall land on that lake not far from the source of the Nile.

The Uganda Railway.

This gives you some idea of the Uganda railway, which the British completed only about five years ago. The road begins at the Indian Ocean and it climbs over some of the roughest parts of the African continent before it ends at Victoria, the greatest fresh water lake of the world. Leaving the sea coast, the rise of the road is almost continuous until it reaches the high plain of British East Africa. Here at Nairobi I am more than a mile above the sea, and about 15 miles farther on at the station of Kikuyu, the road reaches an altitude of 760 feet above that of Mount Washington. From there the climb is steady to a point a mile and a half above the sea, and then there is a great drop into a wide ditch-like valley 2000 feet deep. Crossing this valley the road again rises until it is far higher than any mountain in the United States east of the Rockies. It attains an elevation of 5200 feet, and then falls down to Lake Victoria, which is just about as high as the highest of the Alleghenies. The road was built by the British, and cost almost a less than five years and has cost altogether over \$25,000,000. It has a gauge of 48 inches, rails which weigh 60 pounds to the yard, and the tracks are well laid and ballasted. Last year something like 40,000 tons of goods and 150,000 passengers were carried over it, and its earnings were about \$5,000,000 more than its operating expenses. It does not yet pay any interest on the capital invested, but it is of enormous value in the way of opening up, developing and protecting the country.

Twenty-seven American Bridges.

Among the most interesting features of the road are its American bridges. They cross all the great ravines between here and Lake Victoria, and every steel bar and every bolt and rivet in them were made by American workmen in American factories and taken out here and put up under the superintendence of American workmen. The way it happened was owing to John Bull's desire to have the work done quickly and cheaply and at the same time substantially. While he had been laying the tracks from here to the sea, our bridge companies had surprised the English by putting up the steel viaduct across the Atbara River in the Egyptian Sudan within a much

shorter time and far more cheaply than the best British builders could possibly do. Therefore, when the British government asked for bids for these Uganda bridges they sent the plans and specifications to the British and to some of our American firms as well. The best British bids provided that the spans should have two or three years to make the steel work, and longer still to erect it in Africa. The American Bridge Company offered to complete the whole job within seven months after the foundations were laid, and that at a charge of \$90 per ton, to be paid when all were in place and in working order. This price was about half that of the British estimates and the time was less than one-third that in which the eight bridges already constructed had been built, so the British contractors asked to get their goods ready for shipment.

How They Were Built.

The British were surprised at how easily and quickly the American carried out their contract and how little they seemed to make of it. The civil engineer who was sent out to take charge of the construction was little more than a boy. His name was A. B. Lueder, and he had graduated from Cornell University only a year or so before. In addition to him there was a Pennsylvania man named Jarrett, who acted as superintendent of the work, and foremen from different parts of the United States. These men arrived at Mombasa in December, 1900, and they had completed their work before the following Christmas. They acted merely as superintendents and fancy workmen. All the rough labor was done by the East Indians and native Africans, furnished by the British. When the road was started the government planned to use only Africans, but they found this impossible, and therefore imported 20,000 coolies from India. These men came on contracts of from two to five years and their wages were from \$4 to \$15 a month and rations. The native laborers were paid about 10 cents a day.

Before the American workmen arrived here a large part of the bridge material was already in Mombasa. They left one man there to see that additional materials were forwarded promptly and came at once to the seat of action. They put up the bridges at the rate of some three a week and constructed the longest viaduct in 8 1/2 working hours. Had it not been for the enforced delays on the part of the government, they would undoubtedly have completed their work in seven months.

As it was, what they did forms one of the wonders of civil and mechanical engineering. The bridge material was so made that its pieces fitted together like clockwork, and that notwithstanding it was put into shape away off here, thousands of miles from the place of construction and in one of the most savage parts of the world. The materials in the stacks included about half a million feet of southern pine lumber and more than 15,000,000 pounds of steel. The steel was in more than 100,000 pieces and the heaviest piece weighed five tons. The average weight was about 100 pounds per piece. The greatest care had to be taken to keep the parts together and in their own places. Every piece was numbered, and those different bridges were

painted in different colors. Most of the natives here look upon steel as so much jewelry, and it was impossible to keep them from filching some pieces for ear bobs and bracelets.

Where Lions Eat the Passengers.

It was difficult to build this road on account of wild beasts. There are a hundred places along it where one might get off and start up a lion. Rhinoceroses have butted the freight cars along the track, and they infest much of the country through which it goes. I was shown a station yesterday where 25 Hindoos were carried off by two man-eating lions. The man-eaters came night after night, and took away one or two of the workmen from the construction camp. They were finally killed by an English overseer, who sat up with his gun and watched for them.

It was not far from this station of Nairobi that a man was taken out of a special car by a lion, while it stopped over night on the side track. The windows and doors of the car had been left open for air, and the three men who formed its only inmates had gone to sleep. Two were in the berths and the other who had sat up to watch, was on the floor with his gun on his knees. As the night went on he fell asleep, and woke to find himself under the belly of the lion. The beast had slipped in through the door. He seized the man in the lower berth, and jumped out of the window carrying him with him. The other two men followed; but they failed to discover the beast that night. The bones of the man picked clean, were found the next day.

Through Africa by Rail.

But come with me and take a trip on that part of the Uganda railroad over which I have been traveling. We start at Mombasa, a little coral island in the Indian ocean. Our train carries us across a great steel bridge to the mainland, and we climb through a jungle up to the plateau. We pass baobab trees, with trunks like hogshades, bursting out at the top into branches. They make one think of the frog who tried to blow himself to the size of a bull and exploded in the attempt. We go through cocconut groves, by mango trees loaded with fruit and through plantations of bananas, whose long green leaves quiver in the breeze made by the train as it passes. Now we see a gingerbread palm, and now strange flowers and plants, the names of which we do not know. As we rise we can see the straits which separate Mombasa from the mainland, and higher still the broad expanse of the Indian ocean comes into view.

For the first 100 miles the climb is almost steady, and we are about one-third of a mile above the sea when we reach the station at Voi. Here in the country is more open; and far off in the distance one can see a patch of snow floating like a cloud. That patch is the mountain of Kilimanjaro, and its top is more than 19,000 feet above the sea. It is about the highest mountain on the continent, and still is not much higher than Mount Kenya, that other giant of British East Africa which rises out of the plateau some distance north of Nairobi.

After the jungle of the coast line, the country becomes comparatively open; and it soon begins to look like parts of America where the woods have been cut away and the brush allowed to grow up in the fields. Here the land is carpeted with grass about a foot or so high, and thousands of square miles of such grass are going to waste, I saw no stock to speak of, and at that place but little wild game. Without knowing anything about the tsetse fly and other

cattle pests, I should say that the pastures just back of the coast might feed many thousand cattle and hogs. The soil seems rich. It is a flat clay, of the color of well burnt brick, which turns everything red. This dust filled our car, it coated our faces, and crept through our clothes. When we attempted to wash, the water soon became a bright vermilion, and the towels upon which we dried were brick-red. My pillow, after riding all night through such dust, had changed from white to terra-cotta; and there was a venetian red spot where my head had lain.

Among the Antelopes and Zebras.

It is a stranger thing to go to sleep in the woods and to awake finding yourself traveling over a high, treeless country, with game by the thousand gamboling along the car tracks. We awoke on the Kapiti plains, which are about a mile above the sea, and 268 miles from Mombasa. These plains are of a black sandy loam and they are covered with a thick grass. They look much like Iowa, Kansas or Nebraska did when the railroads were first built through them and when the buffaloes galloped along with the cars. The same conditions prevail here, save that the game is of a half-dozen big kinds, and most of it is such as you can see only in our zoological gardens at home. According to law no shooting may be done for a mile on each side of the track, and the road has become a great game preserve, two miles in width and about 600 miles long. The animals seem to know that they are safe when they are near the railroad and most of them are as quiet as our domestic beasts when in the fields.

Let me give you some notes which I made with these wild animals on all sides of me. These Kapiti plains are flat and I am riding through vast herds of antelopes and zebras. Some of them are within pistol shot of the cars. There are zowad zebras feeding on the grass not 100 feet away. Their black and white stripes shine in the sunlight, and they are round, plump, and beautiful. They raise their heads as the train goes by and then continue their grazing. Further on we see antelopes, some as big as a 2-year-old calf, and others the size of a goat. The little ones have horns almost as long as their bodies. There is one variety which has a white patch on its rump. This antelope looks as though it had a baby's bib tied to its stubby tail or had been splashed with a whitewash brush. Many of the antelopes are yellow or fawn colored; and some of the smaller ones are beautifully striped.

Wild Gnus and Ostriches.

Among the most curious animals to be seen are the gnus. As I write this there are some galloping along with the train. They are great beasts as big as a moose, with the humps of a cow and the mane and tail of a horse. They are sometimes called wilde-beeste; they make very good hunting.

But look, there are some ostriches. The flock contains a dozen or more birds, which stand like interrogation points away off there on the plain. They turn toward the cars as we approach and then spread their wings and skim away at great speed. Giraffes are frequently seen. They are more timid than the antelope, however, and are by no means so brave as the zebras.

We see more and more wild animals as we go onward. The whole region is a zoological garden; and the beasts are so protected that they are fast increasing in number. All hunting here must be done by license, and, as I shall show later, it

Telegraph Wire as Jewelry.

One of the great troubles that the British government had while building the Uganda railroad was to keep the natives from stealing the telegraph wires. The women use such wire as jewelry. They bind it around the legs from the ankle to the knee. They wrap it in great coils around their necks, and they make it into round disks, which they tie to the lobes of their ears. They steal all sorts of railroad bolts and nuts for personal ornamentation, and brass wire and pieces of bronze are so much in demand that they

Some Queer Jewelry.

It is wonderful how these people mutilate themselves in order to be what they consider beautiful. The ears of many of the women are punched like sieves, in order that they may hold rings of various kinds. At Voi I saw a girl with corks, each about as big around as

One Thousand Patents to Thomas A. Edison

More Than Fifty Thousand Patents Issued at Washington Last Year.

THE greatest patentee in this country—and that probably means the greatest in the world—is Thomas A. Edison. He has rolled up the enormous total of almost 1000 patents and shows no inclination to quit.

Ask the Patent Office people who come next to Edison, and they will tell you that nobody is within hailing distance of the wizard. A good many men can count their patents by the score, and as some of them are much younger than Edison they may beat him out in time.

Up to the present, however, he deserves the title of the Great American Patentee. That means a good deal, for it is undoubtedly a fact that an American will take out a patent on less provocation than any other man or woman in the world.

As I write I can see an abony African with a brass collar around his neck and anklets on his legs. His only other garment is a strip of calico about the loins. With him is a man with a nose ring not unlike that we use to keep pigs from rooting, and further over is a giddy naked dandy who has three coils of galvanized telephone wire in each of his ears.

Costs \$20 for the Right to Shoot a Certain Number of Elephants and Other Big Game.

The only animals which one can kill without government permission are lions and leopards, and the danger is that the lion or leopard and not the man will do the killing.

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will pass current as money. All the way here I have seen natives loaded with wire of one kind or another. Some had little more than the wire on them, and the clothes of most were conspicuous by their absence. About the only cloth worn along the Uganda road is small pieces of cotton. Some of the men wear breech cloths, and some of the women have short skirts. Farther up the line I understand they wear nothing, and at the terminal stations both men and women go about as naked as when they were born.

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