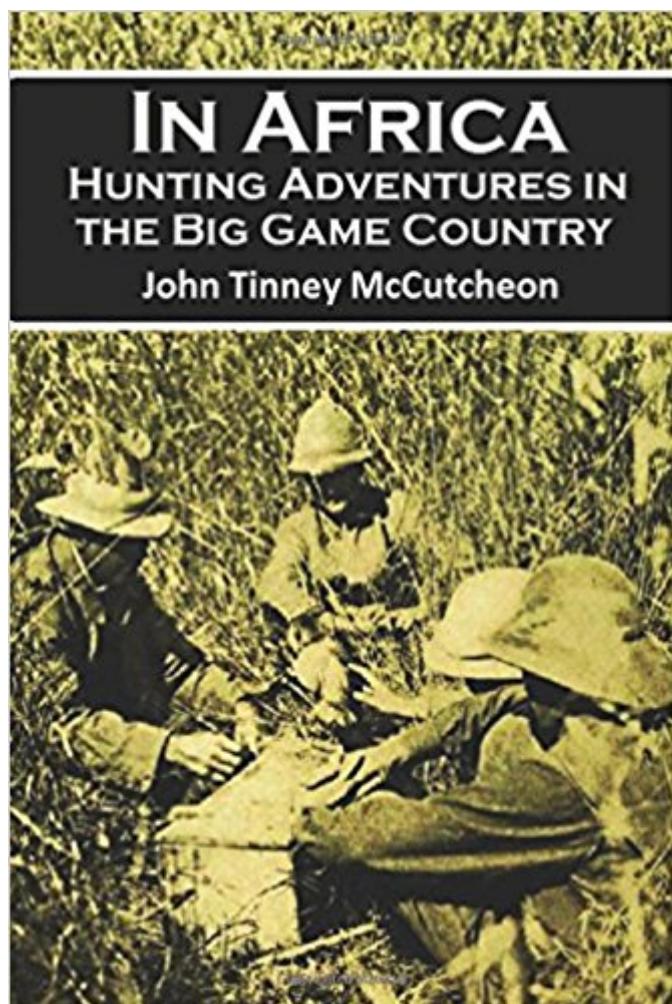


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In Africa; Hunting Adventures In The Big Game Country



Synopsis

John Tinney McCutcheon (1870 – 1949) was an American newspaper political cartoonist who was known as the "Dean of American Cartoonists". At the turn of the century he went on a 4 month African safari hunting African big game. Along the way in addition to getting his full share of African big game, he also adopted an orphan baby rhino and met up and hunted with Theodore Roosevelt who was on his famous big game hunting trip. From inside the book: This collection of African stories is a record of a most delightful hunting trip into those fascinating regions along the Equator, where one may still have "thrilling adventures" and live in a story-book atmosphere, where the "roar of the lion" and the "crack of the rifle" are part of the every-day life, and where in a few months one may store up enough material to keep the memory pleasantly occupied all the rest of a lifetime. The stories are descriptive of a four-and-a-half months' trip in the big game country and pretend to no more serious purpose than merely to relate the experiences of a self-confessed amateur under such conditions.

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Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Some of the best things about In Africa Hunting Adventures in the Big Game Country aren't just what McCutcheon writes, but the pictures that he formed in my mind about what it was really like to go on such an adventure in the early days of the 20th century. It is so easy to get trapped in our present view where travel involves packing a bag and getting on an airplane, only to arrive anywhere in the world within 24 hours. During the flight, we use our vast electronic resources to learn (we think) everything about our destination. This wasn't the Africa that John McCutcheon knew. His Africa was largely un-mapped, the game species were only loosely documented, and even getting there was an adventure. What a joy it was to ready McCutcheon's description as he opens the book with a the description of the massive logistical effort that needed to be undertaken just to get to Africa in the early 1900s. Add to that, his fantastic description of going to the British Museum during his stop in London with his safari companions so that they could review the appearance and anatomy of animals that they had never seen before, but intended to hunt. It's fascinating to think

about a time that really wasn't all that long ago, yet many species of animals in Africa had yet to be photographed. History buffs will also be held captive by his descriptions of the unease that existed on the final leg of his voyage from Italy to Africa. His descriptions of the tension that existed on-board ship between the British and German passengers sent a chill up my spine. It was almost although there was a sense of foreboding borne by the sea air on that voyage. They seemed already resigned the inevitability of a Great War that was still hidden over the horizon. Once in Africa, the danger was very real. Not just the obvious danger, from the animals. McCutcheon references several times the pains they took to avoid areas that were thought to harbor "fevers". Again, from our modern world that keeps us wrapped in an antibiotic safety blanket, it's startling to think of just how big of a risk a safari was in terms of dying from illnesses that are now easily preventable and curable. It's with this danger factor in mind that I found parts of the story became even more thrilling. For example, when McCutcheon attempted to head off a giraffe on horseback by running at a full gallop across a grassy plain. On any stride, the horses hooves could have found a hole and McCutcheon would be seriously injured or (if lucky) killed outright. It seems fashionable for some readers of these accounts of safaris to preface their comments with the fact that they are against shooting animals. Especially in Africa. John McCutcheon explains in detail his views on why it is justifiable. If you read his accounts of the extreme danger and utter fairness involved in hunting elephants they way they did it--on foot and on the ground, up close and personal--it's hard to see McCutcheon in unfavorable terms. He was a sportsman of his day and of a time when the vast numbers of animals in Africa meant that the sportsman had no impact whatsoever on the health of the species. Except, perhaps, that it was the sportsmen that were increasingly raising the alarm as settlers increasingly killed off game in order to protect crops and cattle. A very entertaining, sometimes thrilling, and often thought-provoking read that shows the modern reader the details of what it was really like to go there. It was interesting for me to think about the concept of courage. Would any of us these days have the courage to travel and then to hunt dangerous game in the time, place and in the world that McCutcheon lived in?

Great book on our hunting. If you like this book you will also want to read the following 99 cent book on hunting:
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Most reviewers have given this book four stars; I'll go five. The author is a gifted writer and story teller, as well as a keen observer of life in general, and safari life and hunting big game in particular. Interestingly enough, the author was also a famous political cartoonist in his day, I hope to see an online illustrated version of this book in the near future. Unfortunately, the free version on Kindle does not have illustrations.What is in this book? Please allow me to plagiarize the following from a Google Books web site:Copyright 1910 The Bobbs Merrill CompanyPress of Braunworth & Co. Bookbinders and Printers Brooklyn, N.Y. TO THOSE ADVENTUROUS SOULS WHO RESENT THE RESTRAINT OF THE BEATEN PATH THESE OBSERVATIONS OF AN AMATEUR ARE DEDICATEDPREFATORY NOTEThis collection of African stories has no pretentious purpose. It is merely the record of a most delightful hunting trip into those fascinating regions along the Equator, where one may still have "thrilling adventures" and live in a story book atmosphere, where the "roar of the lion" and the "crack of the rifle" are part of the every day life, and where in a few months one may store up enough material to keep the memory pleasantly occupied all the rest of a lifetime. The stories are descriptive of a four and a half months' trip in the big game country and pretend to no more serious purpose than merely to relate the experiences of a self confessed amateur under such conditions.

Enjoyed reading this book. This was my first African hunting book I've ever read and found it relaxing and enjoyable first-person account of hunting "back-in-the-day". While it certainly isn't as exciting or a page-turner as modern writing goes, it was still an enjoyable read to give the reader a perspective on a type of hunting that is not conducted anymore. The author was able to bring you into his story and describes the wide variety of animals his party hunted and the methods involved. I learned about the type of hunting in Africa, that I don't imagine, is much different today as it was then. The animals are the same but techniques are a bit different. If you download this book, be sure you are a patient kind of reader and don't expect a high-adventure page turner because this is not it, though it is still a relaxing and enjoyable read.

A very entertaining and historically interesting African hunting book circa 1910. Different because it is by a writer who hunts instead of a hunter who writes. The only disappointment is that the many illustrations referred to in the text are not shown.

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