

OUTDOORS



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**Baron Takes Look
At Texas Hunters**
By **Kenneth Fores**
Outdoor Editor at The News

HE WAS TALL enough to have been a basketball player, he had a scar on the left side of his face that ran from his mouth to his ear and about which he volunteered nothing, but he furnished a view of American hunters from the other side of the fence.

From the white hunter's side of the fence that is, the men who take the Americans hunting, who live with them for weeks, who often face death with them when they go up against mighty beasts.

He was Baron Werner von Alvensleben and although he used the broad A of the English and last was lost and grass was gross, that von indicated Prussian descent and that long wicked scar could have come from a saber in a schoolboy fight. "Did that scar come from an African spear?" he was asked by this columnist.

"NO," HE ANSWERED and began talking about American hunters. And the man was qualified for such, for Baron von Alvensleben ("Just call me Werner," he said when Col. D. Harold Byrd introduced him) arranged Byrd's recent African safari as director of Safarilandia, had arranged many more and had watched many an American hunter.

From a distant little or big corner, depending upon how you look at it, of the world he came, from Portuguese East Africa, also curiously named Mozambique and from a beautiful and very modern city with the intriguing name of Lourenco Marques (LO RAN soo Mer KASH in case your Portuguese ain't grade A).

MOZAMBIQUE ISN'T a little corner of the world, being longer than Texas, 1,200 miles, though only 400 miles wide, and in it there is an area, the Save Hunting Concession leased to Mozambique Safarilandia, Ltd., of 34,000 square miles, or as big as Switzerland, said red-faced, sandy-haired Baron Just-Call-me-Werner. To spot Mozambique it is that eastern coast of Africa just opposite the island of Madagascar, which is longer than Texas, too.

In that Save Hunting Concession, where less than 10 per cent of the game is shot annually, being considerably under the natural increase and all meat must be given the natives, Colonel Byrd and Dr. V. A. Davidson of Dallas shot 21 different species in a couple of weeks.

Dr. Davidson got a 42-inch kudu, near the world's record, and Byrd a 68-incher, which is quite high, plus a 40-inch buffalo and a 41-inch sable, which is in the record class.

Most of Mozambique Hunters Texans

BUT DOWN TO the interesting comments on how the tall Mozambique Baron, who married a Portuguese lady of the first family, sees the men from this country who come wagging cannons.

Firstly, the Baron seemed quite qualified to speak of the Texas variety of Americans, for, he said, "10 per cent of our hunters are Texans. Fifteen per cent come from California and five per cent from the rest of the world."

Then the Baron added a slant. "One of my hunters, George Gedeck, speaks with a Texan drawl. He doesn't know anything else. He's only hunted with Texans, you see."

Then he got onto the Americans: "Americans who come to our place are all sportsmen. All save one mon. There must be one bad egg everywhere, it seems. But the great majority of Americans are good sportsmen."

"THEN THEY ARE different from the hunters of other nations. They are much tougher. Most are used to rugged conditions. They have hunted Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, British Columbia, Alaska, where you have got to be able to take it. Such people find Africa comparatively easy."

Then the man from Mozam-

bique, where a three-week safari costs \$3,500 and a 4-week safari \$4,100 in addition to transportation there, got onto guns.

"Americans believe in high-powered rifles. Your American rifle, the Weatherby and the Winchester, are fine rifles. Europeans can't do as well. They don't have the rifles, they don't have time or opportunity to practice. So Americans are much better shots. Your Herb Kleis is a grand example."

And what do these American hunters want to shoot? "Texans want a lion and leopard first," replied the Baron. "Then they want a buffalo, then a kudu, lastly the elephant."

"THERE IS A tremendous argument as to the most dangerous animal in Africa. No, not the kudu," he said to Byrd. "You can see him. The wounded lion or leopard is on you like lightning. The wounded leopard is the more dangerous of the two. Invariably it will attack."

"But I count the elephant as the most dangerous. An elephant is able to reason. My greatest friend and co-hunter Horst Rohs was killed by an elephant in 1952. Quite a few of my friends have been killed by them. Mechanized man is the only enemy the elephant has."

"Wally Johnson, Harold's white hunter, who has killed over 1,000 elephants, shot one six times last year and it escaped into the bush. He was back there six months ago. That elephant attacked him. The wound scars proved it."

It was but natural to ask a man who has lived in Mozambique for 17 years, or since World War II, what his closest call has been.

"MY NARROWEST escape," he replied, "was at Elm and St. Paul yesterday in front of the Athletic Club. This town is much more dangerous than the bush. Animals don't do you any harm unless you or someone has wounded them. You caw'd'nt say that for Dallas drivers."

Then he got back to American hunters. "American women are great sports and good shots. Mrs. Marty Gose of Wichita Falls killed everything with one shot. Mrs. Jack O'Connor, wife of the Outdoor Life gun editor, mostly did the same. I have seen American women outshoot their husbands."

"But there is one thing we do note. The only things Americans are afraid of are bugs. But by God they disinfect themselves with the amount of whisky they drink. No mosquito would have a chance with them. They swerve off from them."

EXHIBIT 2