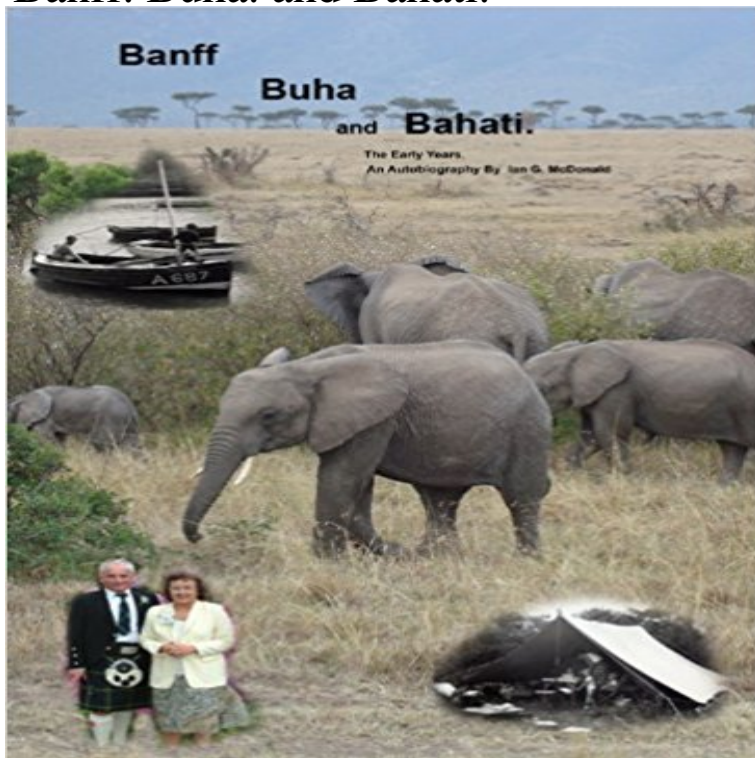


Banff, Buha, and Bahati.



FOREWORD The lives and work of District administrative officers in colonial Africa are quite well documented. Not so those of the engineers, doctors, vets and agricultural specialists who made up the majority of overseas civil servants and whose lives could be every bit as colourful and adventurous. Ian McDonald demonstrates this point most strikingly in his Banff, Buha and Bahati an account of his life as an agricultural and fisheries officer, often working on his own, in remote areas of Tanzania in the late fifties and early sixties. And what a story he has to tell! Here he describes his safaris, often in extreme conditions on foot and afloat, the richly diverse characters he worked with and his extraordinary encounters with animals. All is told with quick paced directness, vitality [and humour] rare in written memoirs ; and his narrative has the impact of the best direct speech. As a friend and close colleague of Ian, who shared at least one of the adventures he describes, I can vouch for the authenticity of his account. Banff, Buha and Bahati deserves to be read and enjoyed and preserved, not only for its intrinsic interest and novelty, but as an important contribution to our nations overseas history. Sir David Gordon Bannerman of Elswick. OBE. An Introduction. God doesn't recognize international boundaries and neither do we, the White Fathers would respond when accused of smuggling. In Africa in the colonial twilight of the late 1950s and early 1960s - a half demi-john of wine brought in secretly from the Congo only cost about 12 shillings and sixpence, about 62p nowadays. And, in the districts along the border between Tanganyika and the former Belgian and French territories, the White Fathers catholic missionary priests - were the principal suppliers of cigarette, cigars, wine, and spirits to all the Ex-pat population This led to some close shaves for the almost law-abiding. One day,

as Kibondos local Agricultural Field Officer, I needed to buy some bricks to build a secure store at a nursery. So as, in addition to smuggling, the White Fathers also controlled the local brick-producing businesses - I was obliged to visit Father Superior Dubblestone. His Mission was in Mabamba, a town which lay almost exactly on the border and was therefore particularly suitable for cross-border trade. I was sitting having a pint with Father Dubblestone when suddenly a young boy ran in. He was babbling wildly that the Governments police field force and customs officers were in town - raiding the shops and stores of the Indian and Arab traders. Father Dubblestone went into immediate over-drive. At the time, a small hospital was being built beside the convent in the mission grounds and a gigantic corrugated steel water tank had been placed at the end of this new building to collect rainwater off the roof. The Father Superior ran to set up a ladder. One of the novice nuns clambered into the water tank and Father Dubblestone now perched on top of the ladder precariously, excitedly barked orders. African labourers dragged or carried contraband teased out from every conceivable storage place. Box after box was thrown to the Father. He lowered each down to the novice sister in the tank where she carefully stowed them away. Then, when the last box was hidden, the novice sister climbed out of the tank and returned to convent. Father Dubblestone and I returned to our drinks in the happy belief that if the field force commander came to the mission, everything would be found to be in apparent order. My life and Im now in my seventies has been a rich procession of characters like Father Dubblestone. Ranging from the honest to the less than honest, these men and women have taught me tricks and skills Ive put to good use in my life time. Ive also had some first rate entertainment along the way. .

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