

MEMBER LIBRARY

EDWARD NORTH BUXTON: British Sportsman, Conservationist, Friend of TR



Theodore J. Holsten
EMERITUS MEMBER
Boone and Crockett Club

Born into a prominent aristocratic family in 1840, Edward North Buxton grew up loving nature. He became an authority on forestry and dedicated much

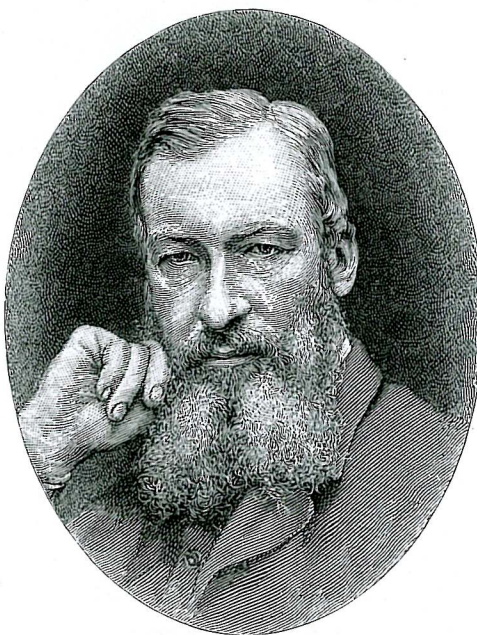
of his life to the preservation of the forest areas of England that were fast dwindling in the face of increasing housing and industrial development. Elected to Parliament in 1885 as a Liberal, he fought to preserve open, accessible land, particularly near cities. For these views he was considered by many to be a "dangerous radical." Through his efforts and philanthropy, he played a major role in saving several forest areas for public use.

It is probably the common interests in the preservation of natural treasures that led to his association with Theodore Roosevelt. Buxton became one of the earliest members of the Boone and Crockett Club, and as a dedicated big-game hunter, he also shared this interest with Roosevelt. His hunting adventures took him to many parts of the world, including the American Rocky Mountains and to Africa. Continuing his concern with conservation, one of his books on hunting includes a major section titled "Notes and Suggestions on Big Game Preservation in Africa."

Buxton was also instrumental in acquiring and presenting to Roosevelt the Royal grade double-barreled rifle that

Roosevelt took on his famous African Hunting expedition. The following is taken from a feature by the Frazier International History Museum.

By the late 19th century, Holland and Holland rifles became the standard for big-game hunters, and H&H's double-barreled rifle was the best-known weapon made by the company. This was the most powerful gun ever owned by one of history's most famous sportsmen, Theodore Roosevelt.



Engraving of Edward North Buxton
by Edward Whymper

Roosevelt wrote to Kermit, "I think I shall get a .450 double-barreled cordite... it is no child's play going after lion, elephant, rhino and buffalo." Perhaps acting on this knowledge, this rifle was built in 1908, and

in January, 1909, Edward North Buxton, a personal friend of Roosevelt and a well-known hunter, together with a group of 55 British zoologists and sporting enthusiasts, presented the rifle as a gift.

In a note of thanks to Buxton, Roosevelt called the rifle "a perfect beauty." The workmanship is like that of a watch. I cannot say how delighted I am with it."

Kermit Roosevelt recalled, "It shoots very accurately, but of course the recoil is tremendous... so severe that it became a standing joke as to whether we did not fear it more than a charging elephant!" This monster of a rifle later acquired the unofficial nickname of "The Big Stick," derived from Roosevelt's famous quotation "speak softly and carry a big stick," itself from a West African proverb.

His health failing in 1924, Edward North Buxton made his final effort as a preserver of forests. Credited with saving much of Epping Forest and what was left of Hainault Forest, Buxton rescued Hatfield Forest from developers, completing the purchase of most of it for the National Trust while on his deathbed. It is no wonder that he was a kindred soul with Theodore Roosevelt. ■

Books by Edward North Buxton

The ABC of Free Trade (1882)

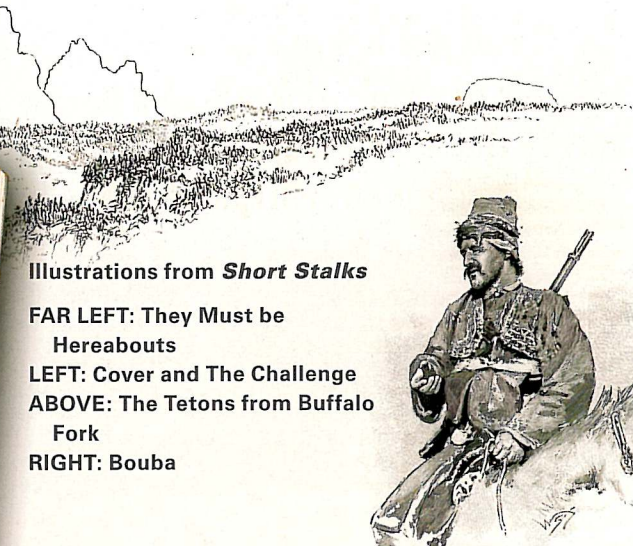
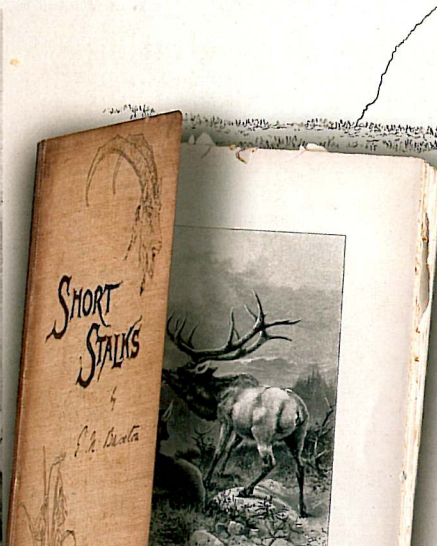
Epping Forest (1884)

Short Stalks or Hunting Camps, North, South, East, and West (1892)

Short Stalks, Second Series (1898)

Two African Trips with Notes &

Suggestions on Big Game Preservation in Africa (1902)



Illustrations from *Short Stalks*

FAR LEFT: They Must be Hereabouts

LEFT: Cover and The Challenge ABOVE: The Tetons from Buffalo Fork

RIGHT: Bouba