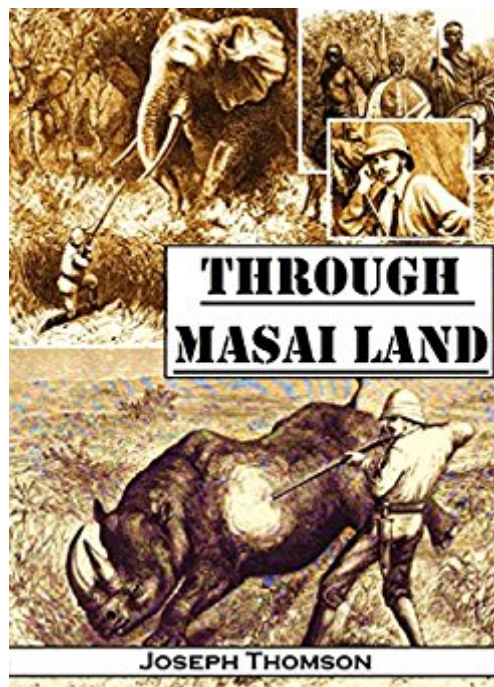


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# Through Masai Land: A Journey Of Exploration Among The Snowclad Volcanic Mountains And Strange Tribes Of Eastern Equatorial Africa (1887)



## Synopsis

Joseph Thomson (1858 – 1895) was a Scottish geologist and explorer who played an important part in the Scramble for Africa. Thomson's Gazelle is named for him. Excelling as an explorer rather than an exact scientist, he avoided confrontations among his porters or with indigenous peoples, neither killing any native nor losing any of his men to violence. His motto is often quoted to be "He who goes gently, goes safely; he who goes safely, goes far." In 1883, he embarked on a Royal Geographical Society expedition, to explore a route from the eastern coast of Africa to the northern shores of Lake Victoria. British Empire traders wanted a route that would avoid potentially hostile Maasai and German traders who were competing in the area. The expedition set out a few months behind the rival German expedition of Gustav A. Fischer. Thomson's leadership was again a success, demonstrating the feasibility of the route and making many important biological, geological and ethnographic observations, though Thomson's attempt to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in a day failed. However, on the return journey, Thomson was gored by a buffalo and subsequently suffered from malaria and dysentery. Thomson devotes much to big game hunting stating: "I would here have the reader clearly, understand that while to some extent I enjoyed the excitement and adventure arising from hunting, the whole tenor of my thoughts revolted from the idea of shooting game from mere love of sport. I can conscientiously say that except in the case of buffaloes, rhinoceroses, and elephants, I never shot a head of game for anything but the prosaic requirements of the pot, although by this means I frequently kept my men in food for days, "

His efforts resulted in bagging multiple rhinoceroses, hartebeests, giraffes, zebras, waterbucks, antelope, , wildebeest, jackals, pallahs, guinea fowl, hippopotamus, and buffalo. Mr. Thomson's explorations, conducted on behalf of the Royal Geographical Society, led him through a region hitherto little traversed by travellers and traders. Its inhabitants, the Masai warriors, are the terror and scourge of Eastern Africa, which is desolated by their forays from the water-shed of the Victoria Nyanza to the coast. Mr. Thomson, in attempting to penetrate their country with an insufficient force, had to beat a hasty retreat, and only saved himself and party from an impending massacre by decamping secretly during the night. He was finally enabled to enter the country by joining a caravan of traders from the coast, too strong in numbers and armament to be lightly attacked. His book *Through Masai Land* followed in January 1885 and was a best-seller. One of the first to read it was the young Henry Rider Haggard. His imagination fired by Thomson's expedition, Haggard promptly wrote a book of his own, *King Solomon's Mines*. Thomson had provided the first credible reports of snow-capped mountains on the Equator and had terrified the Maasai warriors by removing his false teeth and claiming to be a magician. The most valuable chapters are those which

treat of the character and manners of the natives, of whom the author speaks much more favourably than more superficial writers. This book originally published by Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, in 1887 has been reformatted for the Kindle and may contain an occasional defect from the original publication or from the reformatting.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The content, writing style and amazing adventures are first rate! However, the editing of the digital format scanned from print is virtually non-existent; it requires frequent deciphering of words to get the full context of the events. Once one becomes adept with their "de-coder ring" reading, it is quite entertaining. Definitely worth a read...Cheers!

"THROUGH MASAI LAND" is a classic book, but unfortunately incredibly badly reproduced in this edition. PAGES 250 ONWARDS ARE DUPLICATED, AND IN SOME CASES TRIPLED, THEN THE LAST 50 PAGES, INCLUDING THE MAP ARE TOTALLY MISSING! HOW CAN A PUBLISHER GET AWAY WITH THIS SHODDY AMATEURISH PRODUCTION AND THEN CHARGE \$27?

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