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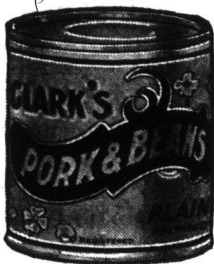
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The White Stag of Glencoe

Written for The Western Home Monthly by W. R. Gilbert

There is something about a white stag which arouses the interest and appeals to the imagination of everyone. He is a beast part and seems marked out by nature for some high fate; his fame soon spreads in the district, and, by general consent, he is left in peace—at any rate, until he has reached his prime, and often later.

The real interest of a white stag lies in the fact that he is distinguishable from his fellows beyond any chance of mistake. His growth can be watched, and his stature and antlers compared with the memory of those of the year before. Nothing adds so much to the interest of a day's stalking as the recognition of old acquaintances, and so well understood is this by most stalkers that they rarely fail to recognise any good beast they see.

It is peculiarly satisfactory when one has secured a good stag to be assured that he is the very same as your friend, Major Whackthorn, missed last year; or, when you have yourself missed one, to be informed that yon beast bears

There can be no doubt that the stag was at that time as painted by Mr. Ross, who was a highly trained and most careful observer. He really did know every good stag at Glencoe, and used to stalk and sketch them season after season, never firing a shot except at a beast which he considered had reached its prime. When he did fire, there was not much doubt about the result.

The white stag was born in Glen Brayne, a steep heather-covered glen, with its feet in the low ground above Whitebridge and its head far up in the mists of the Monadiadhs. High in the glen lies a big stone, and behind this the white stag was dropped one day in June by his milk-white mother. So said Rory, the old stalker, and there is, apparently, no doubt about the white hind. The father never disclosed himself, and we must follow the French law which forbids all search for the father in such a case. At any rate, he must have been of normal color or he would have been quickly detected.



From Far Away Fiji Come the Patriots of Britain.

About 200 Fiji colonists have just arrived in London in order to participate in active service. They are all well-to-do men and have fitted themselves out with khaki uniforms and equipment. Some of them are government servants and others farmers earning from \$5,000 to \$15,000 a year. The picture shows them lined up on their arrival at Euston station. One of them is carrying the mascot monkey on his shoulder. (Photo Underwood).

a charmed life; he was missed last week by the Captain and at the end of the preceding season by your host. An astonishing wealth of detail convinces you that these encounters are authentic. You hear how blown the Major was at the top of the brae when he took his shot, being too impatient to listen to Dan's advice to wait a bit, and the language he used when he rolled into a peat bog later in the day; how the Captain's first bullet took a tuft out of the beast's back, while his second went between the forelegs, and how your host, by some strange mistake, put up his 300 yards' sight when the distance was barely a hundred, and his bullet only just missed an old hind standing on a knobble behind.

Unfortunately, experience does not warrant an implicit faith in these recognitions. In the course of a long stalk, it is not uncommon for the quarry to change his identity more than once, and only this year a friend of mine bought the same stag to the larder on two consecutive days, only to hear that he had been seen on another beat the week following. But a white stag beyond suspicion.

Perhaps the best known stag of bygone years was that of Glencoe. He owes his fame largely to the fact that the forest of Glencoe was, for some years after he first made his appearance, tenanted by that first-rate sportsman and talented artist, the late Mr. Edward Ross. There is a sketch of the beast by Mr. Ross, dated 1873, in which he is described as being then four years old. It is a water color sketch, and the stag is depicted as being white, with perhaps the least tinge of cream color, with a nice little head of eight points.

One fateful day in October I was sent out with Sandy on the east beat. It was a glorious, fine day, with all the sharpness of October in the air; the end of a long spell of splendid weather, during which the surface of even the soaking peat of the Monadiadhs became quite dusty, a thing I never saw there before or since in the stalking season. It was not long before we got on to the high ground, and spied a lot of deer in Glen Brayne. The glen was both deep and steep, and when we got above the deer we saw there was a good beast lying in the long heather below us. Flat as flounders, we crossed the skyline and began one of those long slides in full view of the deer, which are such a fascinating manner of approach. It seemed incredible that the animals we saw so plainly should not pick us up, but they rarely did so if one could see them all sufficiently clearly to make out when any one of them looked up, and to cease all movement until his attention was directed elsewhere. Foot by foot we slipped down until we were not more than a hundred yards above them. The stag was still lying down chewing the cud, but he was in a good position and showed all his neck, his body being almost entirely hidden in the long heather. He was a rattling ten-pointer, and both Sandy and I were in a state of nervous keenness as he handed me the rifle, which I slowly got into position for the shot.

As my finger was on the trigger I felt a gentle pluck at my coat, and Sandy whispered that he believed it was the white stag. I could hardly believe my ears, and there was something altogether absurd in the suppressed altercation which followed as to the color of a