

PRESENTATION  
OF THE  
**ROYAL AWARDS**

TO CAPTAIN R. F. BURTON AND CAPTAIN JOHN PALLISER.

---

THE President read the following statements explanatory of the grounds on which the Council had awarded the Royal Medals respectively :—

The Founder's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society has been adjudicated to Captain R. F. Burton, of the Bombay Army, who has explored a vast region of Eastern and Central Africa never before traversed by any geographer ; and for the discovery of the great internal lake of Tanganyika—the more northern lake of Nyanza being discovered by his coadjutor, Captain Speke.

Captain Burton is well known for his most interesting journey, under the auspices of this Society, as an Afghan pilgrim, to the Holy places in Arabia in the autumn of 1853, as recorded in our Journal, vols. xxiv. and xxv., and in the popular account of it published by himself. These volumes showed Captain Burton to be an accomplished Orientalist, and admirably fitted for a traveller among the difficulties of Eastern countries.

In the ensuing year he volunteered to explore Eastern Africa from Berbera to Zanzibar, accompanied by Lieutenant Stroyan and Lieutenant Speke, the latter of whom had been for several years collecting the fauna of Little Tibet and the Himálaya Mountains. In a preliminary journey, Captain Burton, alone, succeeded in reaching and describing Harar, never before visited by Europeans. Lieutenant Speke, on his part, also alone, explored the interior of the Somali country, made extensive collections and many observations, and produced a map of those tracts. The farther prosecution of that expedition, when these officers were united with Stroyan and Herne, was frustrated by an attack of the Somalis, in which Lieutenant Stroyan was killed, and Lieutenants Burton and Speke were both severely wounded. These occurrences are recorded in

our Journal, vol. xxv., and also in the work 'First Footsteps in Eastern Africa.'

In 1856 Captain Burton proceeded with Captain Speke, under the auspices of our Society, and assisted by the Foreign Office and the Hon. East India Company, to Zanzibar; and in January, 1857, made a tentative journey to Fuga, the account of which, by Captain Burton, with a map constructed from Captain Speke's field-book, is given in our Proceedings, and will appear in a more extended form in the next volume of the Journal.

On June 26th, 1857, Captains Burton and Speke started from Zanzibar for the interior, and succeeded in reaching the great Lake Tanganyika, 300 miles long and 30 broad, and about 700 miles from the coast; having travelled, at a rough estimate, from 1200 to 1500 miles. Their very careful and complete itineraries, maps and field-books, have been received; Captain Speke having made astronomical observations which determine the latitude and longitude of the places they visited. These results, as well as the determination of the principal altitudes, were obtained in spite of severe hardships, privations, and illnesses.

A marked feature of the expedition is the journey of Captain Speke from Unyanyembé to the vast inland fresh-water lake called Nyanza, the south end of which was fixed by him at  $2^{\circ} 30'$  S. lat. and  $33^{\circ} 30'$  E. long., which, being estimated to have a width of about 90 miles, is said to extend northwards for upwards of 300 miles.

For the very important results of the expedition—of which Captain Burton was the leader—as well as for his former bold and adventurous researches, the Council have considered him to be highly entitled to the honour conferred on him.

The President then addressed Captain Burton in these words:—

"Captain Burton,—I have now to request you to accept this Medal, with the assurance that, as the geographers of England have watched your various and most adventurous explorations with the deepest interest, so I rejoice that the Council of this Society has had it in their power thus to recompense your highly distinguished services.

"I must also take this opportunity of expressing to you my hearty approbation of the very important part which your colleague, Captain Speke, has played in the course of the African expedition headed by yourself. In the Address to the Society, which is to follow, when I further advert to your meritorious services, I shall dwell upon the discovery of the vast interior Lake of Nyanza, made by your associate when you were prostrated by

illness,—a discovery which in itself is also, in my opinion, well worthy of the highest honour this Society can bestow.”

Captain Burton replied:—

“Mr. President,—I thank you, Sir, most sincerely for this honour, and for the kind and flattering expressions by which you have enhanced its value. Allow me, at the same time, to embrace the opportunity of expressing my gratitude to this powerful and influential Society for the favours of past years. When comparatively unknown I was enabled, by the generous support of the Royal Geographical Society, to enter upon the field of Arabian exploration. At a subsequent period their interest forwarded me into the Somali country; and, on the present occasion, to them—and to them only—do I ascribe the success which has attended my last expedition. This valuable gift will remain with me a lasting memorial of my debt of gratitude.

“You have alluded, Sir, to the success of the last expedition. Justice compels me to state the circumstances under which it attained that success. To Captain J. H. Speke are due those geographical results to which you have alluded in such flattering terms. Whilst I undertook the history and ethnography, the languages and the peculiarities of the people, to Captain Speke fell the arduous task of delineating an exact topography, and of laying down our positions by astronomical observations—a labour to which at times even the undaunted Livingstone found himself unequal. I conclude with the warmest wishes for the prosperity of the Royal Geographical Society, and with expressing my desire that we may have a further opportunity of prosecuting our labours in this good cause.”

---

The Patron's or Victoria Gold Medal has been awarded to Captain John Palliser, for the successful results of the exploration of large tracts in British North America by the expedition under his command during the years 1857–8; and more particularly for the determination of the existence of practicable passes across the Rocky Mountains within the British territories.

This expedition—as is well known—originated in the pressing recommendation of the Royal Geographical Society; and the officers appointed by Her Majesty's Government to serve under Captain Palliser were, Dr. Hector, naturalist and geologist; Lieutenant Blakiston, magnetician; Mr. Sullivan, secretary; and M. Bourgeau, botanist.

One of the chief geographical features of the first year's survey was the discovery of a low waterparting, hitherto unknown to us, near the “Qui Appelle Lakes,” where the water flows eastwards into the Assiniboine River, and westwards into the Saskatchewan.