

MIX BELL'S WHISKY with Bols Kummel, Red Heart Rum and Tio Pepe. Now bring in Danish Schnapps, Gordon's Gin, Charles Heidsieck and Limosin Brandy. The result is not a recipe for a hangover the size of an atomic cloud but an essay into terror. Bell's Whisky, Bols Kummel and the rest are not drinks but dogs — Dobermann Pinschers. Singly they are friendly enough to be content with snarling and growling at you — provided you agree to stay penned in your car. Together, and with parents Nasser and Frieda to swell their numbers to ten, they are terrifying.

At Isanya Farm, Abercorn, where they live, the labourers and gardeners call them "the leopards". To understand the reason you have only to see the Dobermanns outside their enclosure. First, their owner, Mr. Derrick Peachey, warns the staff that the dogs are to be let out. The cry is taken up and fades into the distance. "The leopards are coming . . . the leopards are coming . . ."

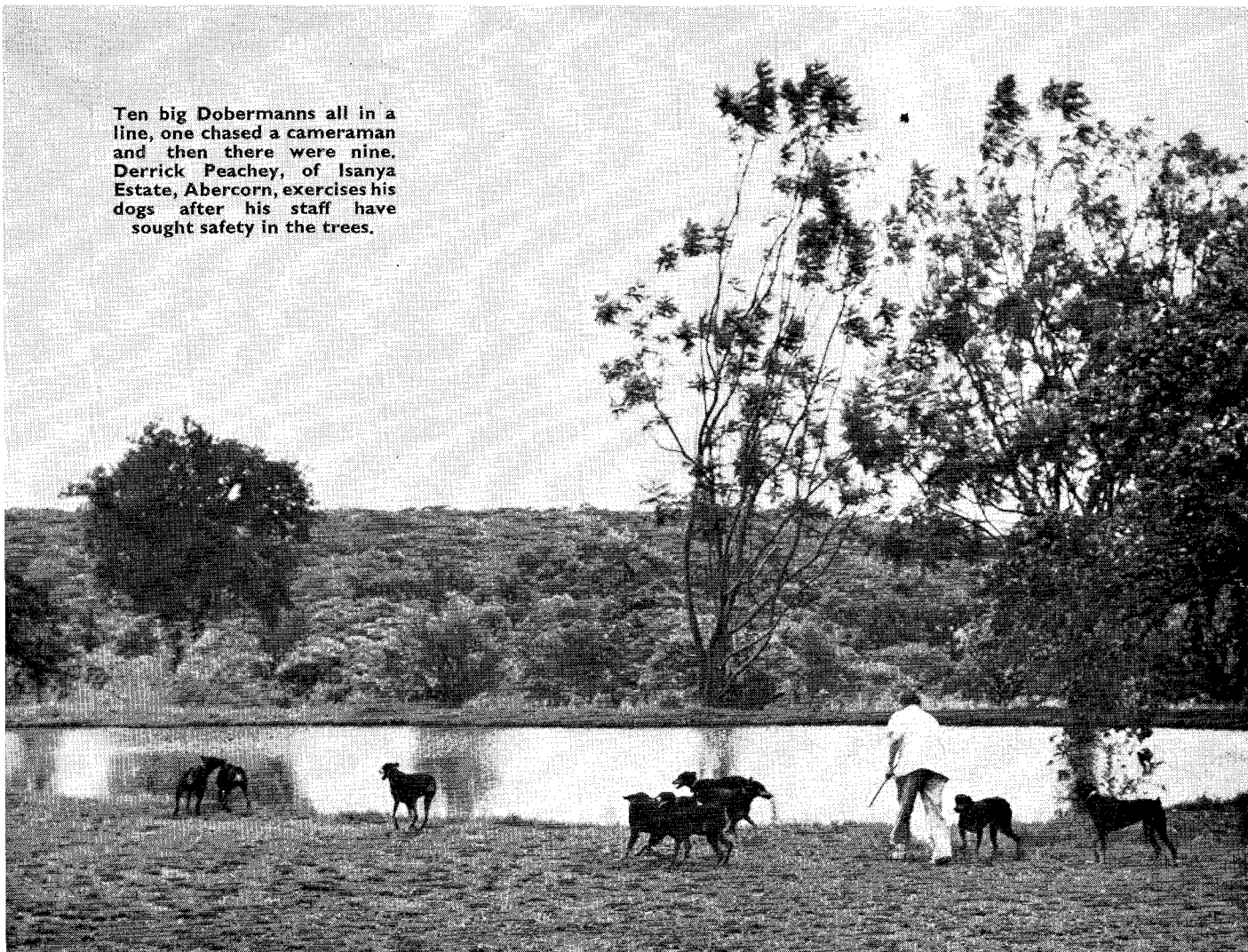
As they shout the farm workers and gardeners climb trees to places of safety. If you are a newcomer you may watch amused at these antics. Moments later, reasonably safe behind a 4-ft. wire mesh fence, you will not be smiling.

A fully-grown Dobermann is a large, impressive dog. Ten of them together, racing towards you in full cry, can be blood chilling. You step back a pace from the fence. Limosin Brandy and Red Heart Rum, jaws snapping, are competing to see which can get nearest to your throat. The setting is pure James Bond. But 007 is far away and you are there, listening as Derrick Peachey's wife, Elaine, speaks softly to the dogs: "Be good now and tomorrow you can have him for a bone . . ."

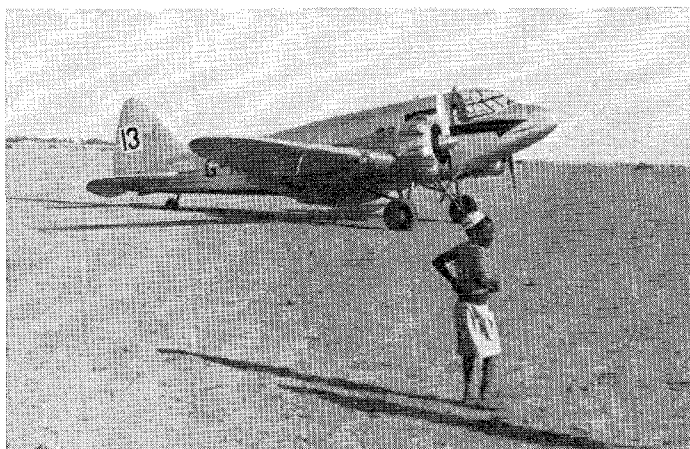
You recall what John Carlin, proprietor of the Lake Press, said

Book yourself a tree when 'the leopards' take a stroll

Ten big Dobermanns all in a line, one chased a cameraman and then there were nine. Derrick Peachey, of Isanya Estate, Abercorn, exercises his dogs after his staff have sought safety in the trees.



Seconds earlier she was roaring along the landing strip at Abercorn. Now Gabrielle, a twin-engined Airspeed Envoy, is a tangled mass of wreckage. Crashing, she has killed two of her crew and injured the other two. For them this was the end of the 1936 Schlesinger Air Race from Portsmouth to Johannesburg. Derrick Peachey, one of Gabrielle's passengers, took these photographs.



to you a few hours earlier: "Abercorn is essentially a humorous place." But right now the sweat is running cold down your back.

On the other side of the fence — built to stop wandering water-buck from chewing up the geraniums — Derrick Peachey, ex-Winchester and Life Guards, has the situation well in hand. The dogs respond to his shouted commands and the whole party moves off in the direction of a tree-fringed pond which looks for all the world as if it had been picked up from a farm in Kent or Sussex and dropped here only yesterday. With a backdrop of African bush the pond adds its own touch of unreality to the dreamlike quality of the scene.

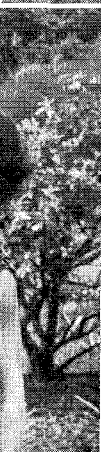
Playfully the dogs tumble each other over. Mock fights continue as the party circles the pond; the noise is unremitting as the dogs return across the lawn, a few of them pausing at the fence to give a last warning. They pass from view and there is silence. You emerge from the protection of your fence and walk in the direction the dogs have taken . . . not too quickly. The gardeners begin to slide down from their trees. Work resumes. Reality returns.

"No, I can't say we have much trouble from trespassers," says Elaine Peachey. "We have 3,500 acres and part of it is a private game area — hence the fences to guard my flowers from the buck — so we need adequate protection. The dogs provide it."

Feeding ten Dobermanns is simple, if you don't need to worry about the cost: a standing order with a Copperbelt butcher brings

Gabrielle at an earlier stage in the race. Despite the fact that the ill-fated Gabrielle was No. 13 in the race Derrick Peachey insists the number is lucky for him. His address is Box 13, Abercorn, his car number is ED 13 and his farm's aerial recognition number is A13.

Derrick Peachey inspects the pineapple bed while (below) his wife examines citrus fruit.



them 120 lb. of meat a week by plane to Abercorn.

There is much more at Isanya than wandering waterbuck and fierce Dobermanns. There is a garden which is like a piece of England and a house where time seems to stand still. And most important there are the Peacheys themselves: gentle, kindly, humorous people living quietly and graciously on their remote estate as they have done for nearly 20 years.

The manner of Derrick Peachey's coming to Abercorn in the '30s was so unusual that people still talk about it and he himself can split his life into two parts: before and after the crash. Derrick Peachey first saw Abercorn on Thursday, October 1, 1936, from a passenger's seat in a twin-engined Airspeed Envoy taking part in the Schlesinger Air Race from Portsmouth to Johannesburg.

The Envoy — first cousin of the better-known wartime Airspeed Oxford — was well placed in the race with more than half the distance covered. Ahead of it was just one plane, the eventual winner, flown by the famous Charles Scott. Derrick Peachey, a 33-year-old former Life Guards officer with time on his hands, had welcomed the opportunity of a passenger's seat in the Envoy and took with him his expensive German camera. The race, and particularly events at Abercorn where the plane landed to refuel, are as fresh in Derrick Peachey's mind today as they were almost 30 years ago. And should his memory fade there is his magnificent collection of photographic albums. With him aboard the Envoy were the pilot, Max Findlay, second pilot Ken Waller and wireless operator Arthur Morgan.

"The Envoy's name was Gabrielle; it was the most comfortable plane I've ever been in," recalls Derrick Peachey. "We knew we were lying second but we didn't know how far ahead Charles Scott was." (Later they learned that Scott was six hours ahead of them). Gabrielle was due to over-fly Abercorn and land at Mpika, stopping place for the old Imperial Airways aircraft. "But another competitor had advised us to use Abercorn instead," says Derrick Peachey. "It wasn't a first-class aerodrome but it was a good landing strip, with a cleared area about 500 yards wide. We took

on petrol in four-gallon cans; we had auxiliary tanks inside the aircraft and planned to refuel in the air.

"About half the European population of Abercorn — seven or eight people — were there to see us take off. There was a gusty wind blowing downhill; we were taking off uphill — into the wind. It was the middle of the day, at over 5,000 feet, and the air was thin.

"We took on a normal load and taxied to the end of the landing strip. To take off we had to bump our way over a triple crossroads. It was like trying to ride a bike over a trench.

"Then we were airborne and climbing. We were up about 50 feet; suddenly we dropped to about 20 feet. The tip of a wing hit a tree, the plane listed and hit a second tree, just outside the starboard engine. The wing snapped off. The nose came down and ploughed into the ground.

"Max Findlay, who was at the controls, and Morgan, the wireless operator, were hurled through the front of the cabin window and an engine rolled over each of them. Both were killed. Ken Waller was thrown out through a hole in the fuselage; he hit a tree and was so badly hurt that he was paralysed all down his right side for six months."

A jagged tree stump ripped the fuselage and Derrick Peachey suffered internal injuries. "My first recollection was of being alone in the upside-down fuselage," he says, "with petrol dripping into my hair from one of the floor tanks which was now overhead. I was hoping hard that we would not catch fire." Later, when taking photographs, he scratched himself on a piece of metal and for two years afterwards was in and out of hospital suffering from the effects of blood poisoning.

When Ken Waller was fit enough to travel he and Derrick Peachey went together to the Cape. Later Derrick Peachey returned to England, spent some time in a nursing home, then took a flat, and eventually went to the south of France on holiday. The following year, 1937, saw him back in Abercorn to find out whether anything could be saved from the wreckage.

"I met a man named Jim Kitchin," he says, "a partner, in the transport firm of Smith and Kitchin. It seemed there was a man called Maxwell who had a very pleasant house. He didn't want to sell it and I didn't want to buy, but Jim Kitchin talked us both into the deal. I went back to England in January, 1938, and finally returned to Abercorn in the December."

The year 1938 was important for another reason — it was the year that Derrick Peachey met his wife, Elaine. She had come north from South Africa, where her family was of 1820 settler stock, four years earlier. Both Derrick and Elaine Peachey have a well-developed sense of humour and each finds amusement in a barrage of banter. "We hated each other on sight," she says (and he affects to agree wholeheartedly), "but we went on playing golf and tennis together and seeing more and more of each other. We were married in England in 1946."

Most of Derrick and Elaine Peachey's courtship took place in Kasama. He had been called to service as a wartime clerk; she was a nurse at the hospital. Before taking up his clerical job to release a younger man for the Forces, Derrick Peachey had a short spell as a special constable at Abercorn. He was sworn in on the first day of war and promptly arrested three Germans, from Tanganyika, on the Mpulungu road.

"I stayed overnight at the hospital and while there reached a major decision: to shave off my beard. It was reddish brown and when I had removed it and placed it neatly on the dressing table it looked rather like a Christmas pudding. Unfortunately the doctor in charge was not impressed or amused. He accused me of tampering with the insides of the mattresses."

Today Derrick and Elaine Peachey live quietly at Isanya and look forward to holiday visits from their son and daughter at school in England. They grow pineapples, citrus fruit and the plant from which the essential oil "ninde" is obtained. "And we devote 20 minutes a week to the future development of this place," says Derrick Peachey. "My wife does Vernons and I do Littlewoods."