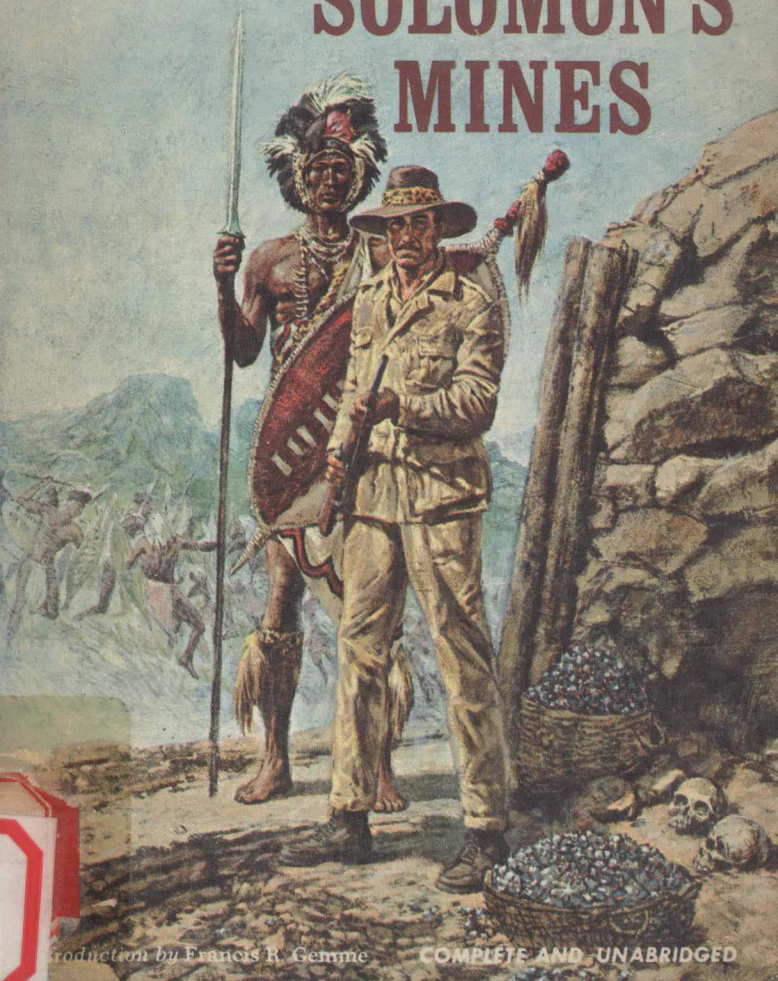


H. RIDER HAGGARD*A Classic Tale of Adventure*

KING SOLOMON'S MINES



Production by Francis R. Gemme

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

KING SOLOMON'S MINES

H. RIDER HAGGARD



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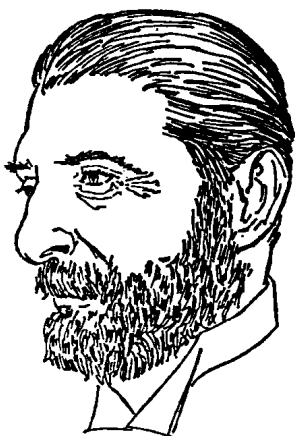
THE SPECIAL CONTENTS OF THIS EDITION

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King Solomon's Mines



H. RIDER HAGGARD

Introduction

The name of H. Rider Haggard has remained alive in English letters because of two novels—*King Solomon's Mines* (1885) and *She* (1887). Some of Haggard's literary philosophy is expressed in the early words of his character Allan Quatermain, the first-person narrator of *King Solomon's Mines*:

. . . it only remains for me to offer my apologies for my blunt way of writing. I can only say in excuse for it that I am more accustomed to handle a rifle than a pen, and cannot make any pretense to the grand literary flights and flourishes which I see in novels—for I sometimes read novels. I suppose they—the flights and flourishes—are desirable, and I regret not being able to supply them; but I cannot help thinking that simple things are always the most impressive, and books are easier to understand when they are written in plain language, though I have perhaps no right to set up an opinion on such a matter. "A sharp spear," runs the Kukuana saying, "needs no polish," and on the same principle I venture to hope that a true story, however strange it might be, does not require to be decked out in fine words.

From the simplicity and clarity of the language to the intellectual reservations and sincerity of the narrator and the

use of an African proverb, this selection is quite representative of Haggard's fictional style. "The sharp spear" of Haggard's literary success is *action* and adventure. Indeed his characters are more familiar with rifles than pens, more men of action than men of thought, always dramatic rather than meditative, and finally, always more at home in the wilds of the African Zululand or on the fields of combat rather than the drawing rooms of English manor houses or the playing fields of Eton. The *action* in *King Solomon's Mines* is as vivid today as when it was written more than eighty years ago and the novel's appeal has not been diminished by several movie versions. In all, H. Rider Haggard wrote nearly sixty novels, as well as several works of political, economic, and social history. The novels made the author famous and wealthy and allowed him the time and financial security to dedicate his life to public service. It was for this public spirit that Sir Henry Rider Haggard was knighted in 1912.

During the past eighty years, *King Solomon's Mines* has been read in every corner of the globe. It was dedicated "To the Big and Little Boys Who Read It," a fact which points up Haggard's original intention to write a boy's book. However, like its predecessor in popularity, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883), and two American adventures of the same vintage, Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *Huckleberry Finn* (1884), *King Solomon's Mines* captivated adults as well as adolescents. While Haggard's work lacks the literary merits of Stevenson and Twain, it can easily compete with those works in terms of sheer romance. Haggard was one of five British authors who led the revival of "romance" in the 1880's and 1890's. The others included Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894), William Ernest Henley (1849-1903), Andrew Lang (1844-1912), and Rudyard Kipling (1865-1935). Haggard formed lifelong friendships with Lang and Kipling. Henley, a poet and editor, was responsible for finding publishers for *Treasure Island*, *King Solomon's Mines*, and *She*; later, he himself published Kipling's *Barrack-Room Ballads* (1892). The reading public of the late nineteenth century found the romances of Stevenson, Haggard, and Kipling a welcome change of pace from the heavier tomes of Charles Dickens, Anthony Trollope, and the other prevailing realists of the times.

Henry Rider Haggard was born in Norfolk, England, on

June 22, 1856. Norfolk is in the agricultural heart of England, and the environment provided the boy with his lifelong interest in farming and land. He was the eighth of ten children, seven boys and three girls. The Haggards were prosperous farmers who spent some time in London each year and visited the continent almost as frequently. In addition, Haggard's father was a barrister. Haggard did little to distinguish himself academically, and his father denied him the private school and university educations afforded his six brothers. Haggard's formal education ended after three years at Ipswich Grammar School. Many years later he listed *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Arabian Nights*, and *The Three Musketeers* as the three favorite readings of his youth.

At nineteen, through his father's influence, he became secretary to Sir Henry Bulwer, nephew of the novelist Bulwer-Lytton, a Norfolk neighbor, and recently appointed Lieutenant Governor of Natal. The experience in the African colonies marked the turning point in young Haggard's life. With the exception of one journey back to England in 1880, during which he married Mariana Margitson, Haggard spent the next several years in Africa. For two of these years he held the secretarial post in Natal; then for two years he served on the staff of the special commissioner, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, during the first annexation of the Transvaal; finally, his last years in Africa were spent as an ostrich farmer. When the Boers were successful in their rebellion in 1881, the Haggards returned to England. Haggard's knowledge of Africa, gained at an early age, became, like Herman Melville's knowledge of the sea, at a later time the watershed for a score of African novels, the first of which was *King Solomon's Mines*. However, Haggard's first publications were magazine articles about Africa, and his first book, *Cetywayo and His White Neighbors; or Remarks on Recent Events in Zululand Natal, and the Transvaal* (1882), was a work of nonfiction in which he upheld the colonial policies of Sir Shepstone and revealed his affirmation of imperialism and empire. The next few years, Haggard followed his father's vocation and read for the bar; in 1884, he was admitted to the bar, but he never became active as a barrister because of the instant success of *King Solomon's Mines*, his first popular work of fiction.

Haggard's life pattern was now fixed; his three main interests—agriculture, empire, and the writing of romance—

a mixture of vocation and avocation, were pursued with little interruption for the next forty years. One such hiatus was the death of his only son and heir at the age of nine; Haggard withdrew from all activity for nearly two years. Another interruption was World War I, which came in the declining years of his life. Among his best works of nonfiction are *The Farmer's Yearbook* (1899) and *Rural England* (1902); his survey of the Salvation Army in America resulted in *The Land and the Poor* (1905), a work which not only proclaimed the back-to-the-land solution for the abuses and evils of urbanism and industrialism but also suggested a domestic peace corps to aid the poor and underprivileged of English society. In 1910, he wrote *Regeneration*, a history of the social work of the Salvation Army. Other nonfiction works grew out of his worldwide travels as a member of the Dominion Royal Commission from 1912 to 1917. He traveled as Sir Henry Rider Haggard, having been knighted in 1912 as a reward for his humanitarian endeavors and dedicated public service. Before departing on this extensive journey, Haggard visited Egypt, where he completed his two-volume autobiography, *The Days of My Life* (1926). At his wish, the manuscript was sealed and held by his publisher until his death fourteen years later. Haggard died in London on May 14, 1925, at the age of sixty-eight.

The scope of Haggard's fiction never went far beyond his two early and famous novels. He wrote sequels like *Ayesha, the Return of She* (1905), or elaborated on his hero, Allan Quatermain, in such works as *Allan Quatermain* (1887), *Allan's Wife* (1889), *Allan and the Holy Flower* (1915), *The Ancient Allan* (1920), and *Allan and She* (1921), or occasionally turned to new lands in works like *Cleopatra* (1889) and *Montezuma's Daughter* (1894). Finally, there is his sequence about the Zulu nation, *Nada and the Lily* (1892), and the trilogy, *Marie* (1912), *Child of Storm* (1913), and *Finished* (1917). These works can be considered representative of Haggard's fifty-eight novels.

King Solomon's Mines is narrated by Allan Quatermain, an adventurer who has been "trading, hunting, fighting, or mining" for the greater part of his fifty-five years. At the beginning of the story he lists four reasons why this "history" has been written. The first reason is because Sir Henry Curtis and Captain John Good asked him to write an

account of the adventure the three had experienced in their search for Sir Henry's brother. The search is the external motivating force of the story as these three Englishmen, in the highest traditions of heroism and empire building, accompanied by Umbopa, the embodiment of the noble savage, endure the heat of the desert, the cold of the mountains, and the strange customs and unabated violence of a primitive people. The familiar trappings of the romance are all here: the savage as sojourner in civilization, the westerner as subduer of the wilderness, an exotic and distant land, bountiful and beautiful, a legend of treasure, a treasure map, the diversions of an elephant hunt and a native revolution, and even the two extremes of romantic womanhood, the lovely and fated Foulata and the crafty and evil old witch, Gagool. The internal motivation of the novel is the treasure hunt.

Allan Quatermain's other reasons for telling the story are that he is currently convalescing from a leg injury sustained in shooting a lion (his sixty-sixth), that it is the strangest story he knows, and that it will amuse his son who might welcome relief from his dull medical studies. The leg injury, since it happened after the events depicted in the novel, reveals the narrator as an incurable man of action. It also implies that novels are only written by men who cannot take part in the action, either by inclination or by handicap. However, the latter two reasons are perhaps the most important of the four; the fact that it is a "strange" story immediately arouses our interest and, finally, who can resist a good yarn and not yield to the temptation of a diversion from the routine and rigors of labor? The reader will not be disappointed as he treks along the 3000-year-old King Solomon road, sees strange sights and customs, learns the true identity of Umbopa, laughs at the scenes where Captain Good's bare legs, monocle, and half-shaved face are interpreted as divine by the tribesmen, witnesses the battles and heroes of a Zulu *Iliad* where "Death has no terrors . . . when it is incurred in the course of duty," and finally gains admission to the great treasure vault of King Solomon's mines.

H. Rider Haggard described his ideas about writing in his autobiography: ". . . the story is the thing and every word in the book should be a brick to build its edifice . . . Tricks of style and dark allusions may please the superior critic; they do not please the average reader, and . . . a book

is written to be read. The first duty of a story is to keep him who peruses it awake . . ." There are no dull parts in *King Solomon's Mines*; the reader remains awake and yearns to grasp each successive brick in the author's edifice.

FRANCIS R. GEMME

Amherst, Massachusetts
December, 1960

Introduction

Now that this book is printed, and about to be given to the world, the sense of its shortcomings, both in style and contents, weighs very heavily upon me. As regards the latter, I can only say that it does not pretend to be a full account of everything we did and saw. There are many things connected with our journey into Kukuanaland which I should have liked to dwell upon at length, and which have, as it is, been scarcely alluded to. Among these are the curious legends which I collected about the chain armor that saved us from destruction in the great battle of Loo, and also about the "silent ones" or colossi at the mouth of the stalactite cave. Again, if I had given way to my own impulses I should have liked to go into the differences, some of which are to my mind very suggestive, between the Zulu and Kukuana dialects. Also a few pages might profitably have been given up to the consideration of the indigenous flora and fauna of Kukuanaland.* Then there remains the most interesting subject—that, as it is, has only been incidentally alluded to—of the magnificent system of military organization in force in that country, which is, in my opinion, much superior to that inaugurated by Chaka in Zululand, inasmuch as it permits of even more rapid mobilization and does not necessitate the employment of the pernicious system of forced celibacy. And, lastly, I have scarcely touched on the domestic and family customs of the Kukuanas, many of which are exceedingly quaint, or on their proficiency in the art of smelting and welding metals. This last they carry to considerable perfection, of which a good example is to be seen in their "tollas," or heavy throwing-knives, the backs of these knives being made of hammered iron, and the edges of beautiful steel welded with great skill on to the iron backs.

* I discovered eight varieties of antelope with which I was previously totally unacquainted, and many new species of plants, for the most part of the bulbous tribe.—A. Q.

The fact of the matter is that I thought (and so did Sir Henry Curtis and Captain Good) that the best plan would be to tell the story in a plain, straightforward manner, and leave these matters to be dealt with subsequently in whatever way may ultimately appear to be desirable. In the meanwhile I shall, of course, be delighted to give any information in my power to anybody interested in such things.

And now it only remains for me to offer my apologies for my blunt way of writing. I can only say in excuse for it that I am more accustomed to handle a rifle than a pen, and cannot make any pretence to the grand literary flights and flourishes which I see in novels—for I sometimes like to read a novel. I suppose they—the flights and flourishes—are desirable, and I regret not being able to supply them; but at the same time I cannot help thinking that simple things are always the most impressive, and books are easier to understand when they are written in plain language, though I have perhaps no right to set up an opinion on such a matter. "A sharp spear," runs the Kukuana saying, "needs no polish"; and on the same principle I venture to hope that a true story, however strange it may be, does not require to be decked out in fine words.

ALLAN QUATERMAIN.

I † I meet Sir Henry Curtis

It is a curious thing that at my age—fifty-five last birthday—I should find myself taking up a pen to try and write a history. I wonder what sort of a history it will be when I have done it, if I ever come to the end of the trip! I have done a good many things in my life, which seems a long one to me, owing to my having begun so young, perhaps. At an age when other boys are at school I was earning my living as a trader in the old Colony. I have been trading, hunting, fighting, or mining ever since. And yet it is only eight months ago that I made my pile. It is a big pile now I have got it—I don't yet know how big—but I don't think I would go through the last fifteen or sixteen months again for it; no, not if I knew that I should come out safe at the end, pile and all. But then, I am a timid man, and don't like violence, and am pretty sick of adventure. I wonder why I am going to write this book; it is not in my line. I am not a literary man, though very devoted to the Old Testament and also to the "Ingoldsby Legends." Let me try and set down my reasons, just to see if I have any.

First reason: Because Sir Henry Curtis and Captain John Good asked me to.

Second reason: Because I am laid up here at Durban with the pain and trouble in my left leg. Ever since that confounded lion got hold of me I have been liable to it, and its being rather bad just now makes me limp more than ever. There must be some poison in a lion's teeth, otherwise how is it that when your wounds are healed they break out again, generally, mark you, at the same time of year that you got your mauling? It is a hard thing that when one has shot sixty-five lions, as I have in the course of my life, the sixty-sixth should chew your leg like a quid of tobacco. It breaks the routine of the thing, and, putting other considerations aside, I am an orderly man and don't like that. This is by the way.

Third reason: Because I want my boy Harry, who is over

there at the hospital in London studying to become a doctor, to have something to amuse him and keep him out of mischief for a week or so. Hospital work must sometimes pall and get rather dull, for even of cutting-up dead bodies there must come satiety, and as this history won't be dull whatever else it may be, it may put a little life into things for a day or two while he is reading it.

Fourth reason and last: Because I am going to tell the strangest story that I know of. It may seem a queer thing to say that, expecially considering that there is no woman in it—except Foulata. Stop, though! there is Gagoola, if she was a woman and not a fiend. But she was a hundred at least, and therefore not marriageable, so I don't count her. At any rate, I can safely say that there is not a *petticoat* in the whole history. Well, I had better come to the yoke. It's a stiff place, and I feel as though I were bogged up to the axle. But "sutjes, sutjes," as the Boers say (I'm sure I don't know how they spell it), softly does it. A strong team will come through at last, that is if they ain't too poor. You will never do anything with poor oxen. Now, to begin.

I, Allan Quatermain, of Durban, Natal, Gentleman, make oath and say—That's how I began my deposition before the magistrate about poor Khiva's and Ventvögel's sad deaths; but somehow it doesn't seem quite the right way to begin a book. And, besides, am I a gentleman? What is a gentleman? I don't quite know, and yet I have had to do with niggers—no, I'll scratch that word "niggers" out, for I don't like it. I've known natives who *are*, and so you'll say, Harry, my boy, before you're done with this tale, and I have known mean whites with lots of money and fresh out from home, too, who *ain't*. Well, at any rate I was born a gentleman, though I've been nothing but a poor travelling trader and hunter all my life. Whether I have remained so I know not; you must judge of that. Heaven knows I've tried. I've killed many men in my time, but I have never slain wantonly or stained my hand in innocent blood, only in self-defense. The Almighty gave us our lives, and I suppose He meant us to defend them; at least I have always acted on that, and I hope it won't be brought up against me when my clock strikes. There, there; it is a cruel and a wicked world, and,

for a timid man, I have been mixed up in a deal of slaughter. I can't tell the rights of it, but at any rate I have never stolen, though I once cheated a Kaffir out of a herd of cattle. But, then, he had done me a dirty turn, and it has troubled me ever since into the bargain.

Well, it's eighteen months or so ago since I first met Sir Henry Curtis and Captain Good, and it was in this way. I had been up elephant hunting beyond Bamangwato, and had had bad luck. Everything went wrong that trip and to top up with I got the fever badly. So soon as I was well enough I trekked down to the Diamond Fields, sold such ivory as I had, and also my wagon and oxen, discharged my hunters, and took the post-cart to the Cape. After spending a week in Cape Town, finding that they overcharged me at the hotel, and having seen everything there was to see, including the botanical gardens, which seem to me likely to confer a great benefit on the country, and the new Houses of Parliament, which I expect will do nothing of the sort, I determined to go on back to Natal by the *Dunkeld*, then lying in the docks waiting for the *Edinburgh Castle* due in from England. I took my berth and went aboard, and that afternoon the Natal passengers from the *Edinburgh Castle* transshipped, and we weighed anchor and put out to sea.

Among the passengers who came on board there were two who excited my curiosity. One, a man of about thirty, was one of the biggest-chested and longest-armed men I ever saw. He had yellow hair, a big yellow beard, clear-cut features, and large gray eyes set deep into his head. I never saw a finer-looking man, and somehow he reminded me of an ancient Dane. Not that I know much of ancient Danes, though I remember a modern Dane who did me out of ten pounds; but I remember once seeing a picture of some of those gentry, who, I take it, were a kind of white Zulus. They were drinking out of big horns, and their long hair hung down their backs, and as I looked at my friend standing there by the companion-ladder, I thought that if one only let his hair grow a bit, put one of those chain shirts on to those great shoulders of his, and gave him a big battle-axe and a horn mug, he might have sat as a model for that picture. And, by the way, it is a curious thing, and just

shows how the blood will show out, I found out afterwards that Sir Henry Curtis, for that was the big man's name, was of Danish blood.* He also reminded me strongly of somebody else, but at the time I could not remember who it was.

The other man, who stood talking to Sir Henry, was short, stout, and dark, and of quite a different cut. I suspected at once that he was a naval officer. I don't know why, but it is difficult to mistake a navy man. I have gone on shooting trips with several of them in the course of my life, and they have always been just the best and bravest and nicest fellows I ever met, though given to the use of profane language.

I asked, a page or two back, what is a gentleman? I'll answer it now: a royal naval officer is, in a general sort of a way, though, of course there may be a black sheep among them here and there. I fancy it is just the wide sea and the breath of God's winds that washes their hearts and blows the bitterness out of their minds and makes them what men ought to be. Well, to return, I was right again; I found out that he *was* a naval officer, a lieutenant of thirty-one, who, after seventeen years' service, had been turned out of her majesty's employ with the barren honor of a commander's rank, because it was impossible that he should be promoted. This is what people who serve the queen have to expect: to be shot out into the cold world to find a living just when they are beginning to really understand their work, and to get to the prime of life. Well, I suppose they don't mind it, but for my part I had rather earn my bread as a hunter. One's half-pence are as scarce, perhaps, but you don't get so many kicks. His name I found out—by referring to the passengers' list—was Good—Captain John Good. He was broad, of medium height, dark, stout, and rather a curious man to look at. He was so very neat and so very clean shaved, and he always wore an eye-glass in his right eye. It seemed to grow there, for it had no string, and he never took it out except to wipe it. At first I thought he used

* Mr. Quatermain's ideas about ancient Danes seem to be rather confused; we have always understood that they were dark-haired people. Probably he was thinking of Saxons.—*Editor.*