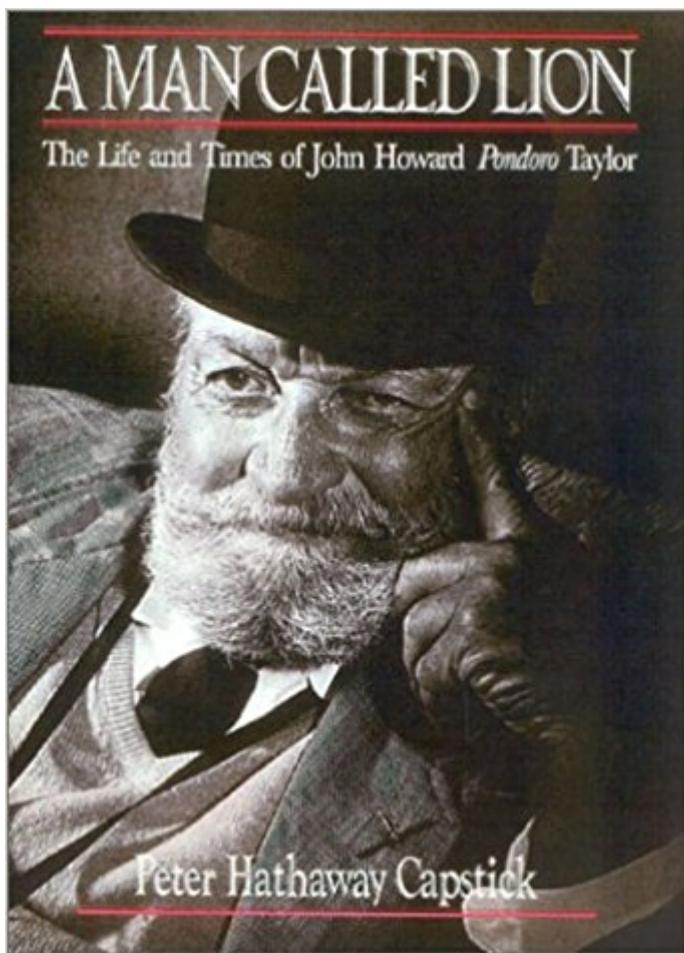


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A Man Called Lion: The Life And Times Of John Howard Pondo Taylor



Synopsis

This is the story of one of Africa's most intriguing characters, John Taylor. Taylor was well known for his incredible knowledge of large-caliber African ammunition and rifles, and his entire story is told in fascinating detail. A black sheep born into a wealthy Irish family, he ended up one of the most notorious South African ivory poachers. This book is a culmination of over ten years of research into the life of this mysterious man.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

John Taylor is well known to just about anybody interested in firearms or African hunting. This is the first complete biography of this very controversial character, written by Peter H. Capstick with research by Brian Marsh, an old Taylor acquaintance. Capstick tracks the life of this enigmatic figure from his early days in Ireland to the day he left Nyasaland in disgrace and in fear of arrest some forty years later. Also included are his wretched, depressing final years in London. Nothing is held back-whether it be his smuggling affair in Canada, ivory poaching, refusal to pay his bills, his tall tales and impressive escapes, or his homosexuality. This is Capstick at his very best on one of Africa's most intriguing characters. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

After giving up a career on Wall Street, Peter Hathaway Capstick moved to South Africa, where he became a professional game hunter and acclaimed writer of books including "Death in the Long Grass". He lived there with his wife Fiona, until his death in 1996.

John Pondoro Taylor and my father met each other in World War II and continued to maintain contact later. (Taylor was based for a while in India during the War.) Both were intelligence officers and both were avid hunters though my father was a sportman who hunted tigers in India and never in Africa. I met Pondoro only once at our home in India, shortly before he died but kept in touch through letters. My memory is that he was returning from Australia and stopped in India on the way to England. This was shortly before his death. He was then in his sixties. Capstick exaggerates the misery of his final years in London. Pondoro had close association with the great British gunmakers, especially John Rigby and Holland & Holland, but I don't know if he had any business dealings with them. He inherited his father's title and was known in later life as Sir John Taylor. His father Sir William Taylor was a famous surgeon who knew my father as a medical student in London. In person and in letters, Pondoro didn't come across as a teller of tall tales. He had the British reserve though Irish in his attitude towards what he regarded as British hypocrisy. As far as Pondoro's homosexuality is concerned, it is pure conjecture on Capstick's part and probably untrue. I say this based on the fact that some years after his death, at Cambridge University, I met a striking looking African woman from Angola who told me she was Pondoro's daughter. She didn't look like him but had some of his mannerisms down to an Irish accent. None of this matters. As far as I am concerned Pondoro was a wonderful man and a wonderful writer, whose writing is much better than anything Capstick ever wrote. I feel that Capstick's book is unfair to Pondoro's memory.

Very interesting story of this unusual man. Classic Capstick.

I have enjoyed Capstick other stories in the past, but this one bored me to tears. It is nought but a rehash of "Pondoro" with some extra information from casual acquaintances of the Irish writer/hunter. The fact that Taylor was a homosexual didn't deserve chapter after chapter since, despite Capstick's analysis, his more serious failings were a total disregard for the Law and an inability to hold on to his pennies. That brought about his downfall, not his preference for the same sex. John Taylor deserved a better epitaph than this book.

I bought this book for my partner several years ago. He liked it so much that this year he had me order another copy for a friend of his as a birthday gift.

I bought this book for my husband. He has really enjoyed reading it.

The Lion is a friend to the big brown eye.

This book is very special.

A well written enjoyable read about a man who marched to his own drummer.

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