



# Rowland Ward Ltd. and **THE MODERN HUNTER**

BY LUDO WURFBAIN

HUNTERS PLAY AN **ABSOLUTELY  
VITAL AND OFTEN COMPLETELY  
MISUNDERSTOOD**, ROLE IN THE  
PRESERVATION OF HABITAT AND SPECIES.



*Ernest Hemingway on safari in East Africa*

In 1870 when Rowland Ward Ltd. was first founded in Piccadilly, London, hunting in Africa and Asia was for the “billionaires” of their day. In that far-off time, hunters like Prince Anatole Demidoff and Count Joseph Potocki would take five- to nine-months-long hunting trips after exotic animals found thousands of miles from their homes. They would walk for weeks on end, searching for a perfect trophy. All hunts were on foot or on horseback, and all hunts were fair chase. These hunters embodied the best tradition of sportsmanlike behavior.

## ROWLAND WARD LTD. AND THE MODERN HUNTER

There can be no doubt that today, in this modern era, the world's wilderness areas and its wild inhabitants are under unprecedented pressure from a world dominated by humans. Hunters play an absolutely vital, and often completely misunderstood, role in the preservation of habitat and species, whether they be game animals or otherwise. To fulfill that role, it is crucial for hunters to ensure the survival of hunting, not only for conservation purposes but also so that we can pass our traditions on to the generations that will follow us. Without a doubt, for hunting to endure, we need to promote fair chase, sportsmanlike conduct similar to the standard exhibited by the hunters of the Victorian era.

As hunters we must actively seek the best possible image for our sport, and we must always act in a manner that will further the principles of sound conservation. These include the protection of habitat and the promotion of an understanding between the local indigenous people and the animals and fauna that they live in proximity with. Encouraging our fellow hunters to behave in a similar manner will go a long way in burnishing the image of big game hunting.

In this world of international big game hunting, one name shines like a beacon of traditional sportsmanlike behavior and sound conservation practices: the venerable Rowland Ward Ltd. It was to Rowland Ward that Prince Demidoff, Count Potocki, King George V, and the other titans of the Victorian hunting era entrusted their special, one-of-a-kind trophies. Just as these hunters embodied the spirit of sportsmanlike behavior, so, too, has Rowland Ward Ltd. always exemplified the best traditions in the hunting industry. This long, rich, and storied company has always stood for fair chase hunting and sound ethical principles, and now headquartered in the USA, Rowland Ward Ltd. is more determined than ever to be a beacon of fair chase hunting. In keeping with its history of maintaining the highest standards in the hunting industry, Rowland Ward Ltd. has defined a set of guiding principles for accepting trophies into its 125-year-old series of *Records of Big Game*.



*“The Jungle,” Rowland Ward’s shop in Piccadilly, London, circa 1900*

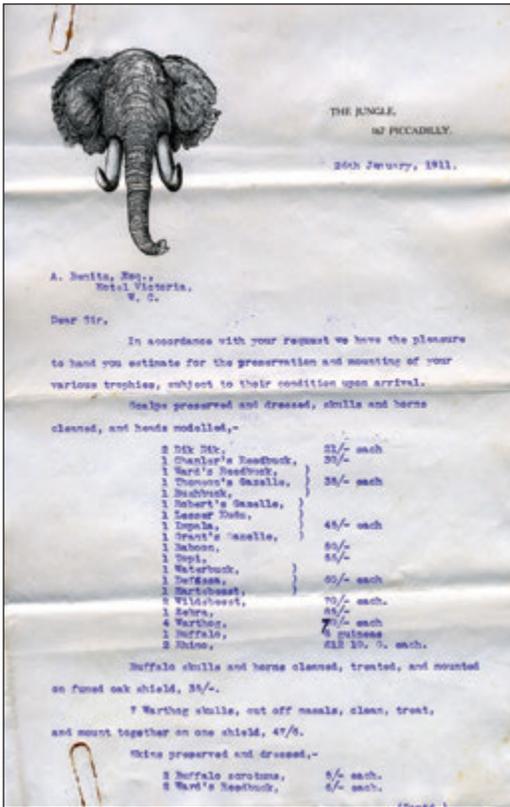
### GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF ROWLAND WARD LTD.

Rowland Ward Ltd. encourages and promotes sound conservation practices and fair chase hunting, especially in regards to the management of animals and their habitat. Fair chase hunting has different meanings in various regions of the world. However, Rowland Ward Ltd. believes that sound game management and fair chase hunting are very closely interrelated, and Rowland Ward Ltd. will do its utmost to promote both equally wherever possible. Rowland Ward Ltd. realizes that to promote sound conservation practices it is imperative to involve local communities. The following highlights a few of the guiding principles:

- Game-proof fencing. Hunting within game-proof fences is acceptable if it promotes the general well-being and conservation of the species enclosed. Enclosures shall promote self-sustaining, breeding populations that can feed themselves from the naturally occurring vegetation without permanent supplemental feeding by humans.
- Color variations of species. Rowland Ward Ltd. will not create categories for animals that are specifically bred to emphasize their color tendencies with the major intent that such breeding will result in the animals being hunted.
- Darting. Rowland Ward’s *Records of Big Game* does not accept darted animals.



*The Rowland Ward No. 5 buffalo was shot in Tanzania in 1951 by A. T. Holmberg. It has an outside spread of 58 inches, and inside spread of 53 5/8 inches, and a boss width of 14 inches.*



Rowland Ward invoice from 1911

- Fair chase hunting. Rowland Ward Ltd. will not accept animals that have been chased by mechanical vehicles – either land or air – and from which subsequent shots were taken. The one and only exception is for those hunters who are handicapped.

To see a full list of the Guiding Principles, go to [rowlandward.com](http://rowlandward.com)

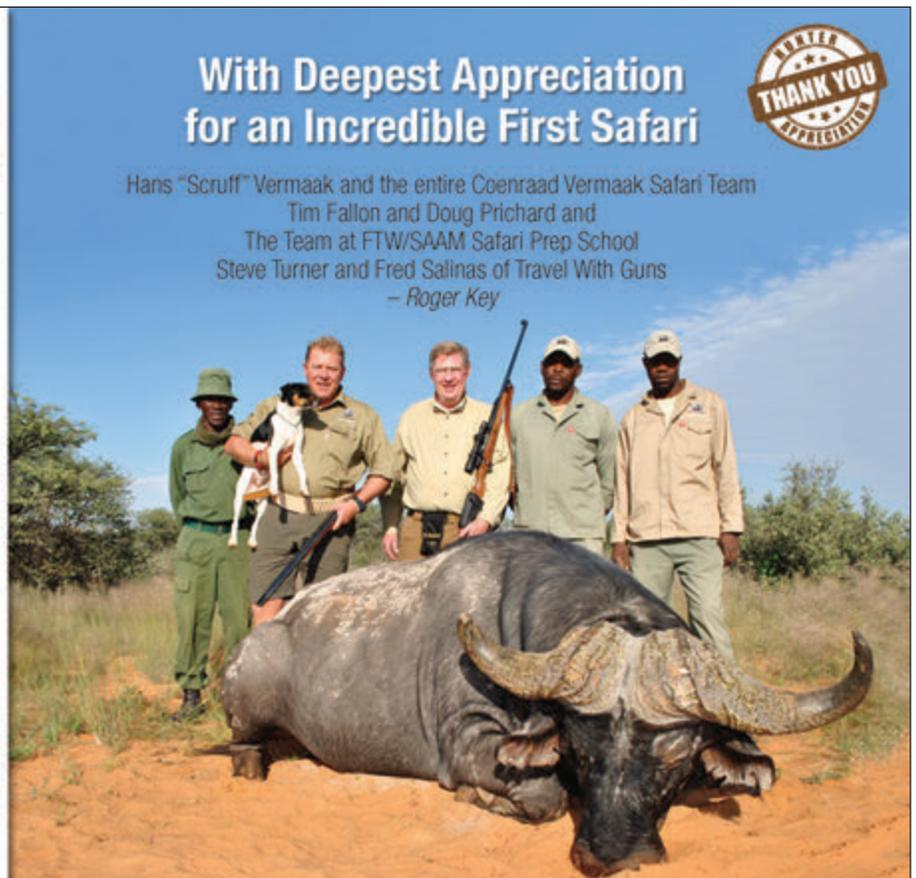
### THE ROWLAND WARD FAIR CHASE OUTFITTERS PROGRAM

In order to promote fair chase hunting in the industry, Rowland Ward Ltd. has initiated a new program, the Rowland Ward Fair Chase Outfitters Program. To become a Fair Chase Outfitter, only those with impeccable reputations will be considered. Initially, the program will feature the finest outfitters in Africa; later we will expand the program to outfitters on other continents.

A Rowland Ward Ltd. Fair Chase Outfitter must believe in and stand behind the concept of fair chase hunting, be ethical at all times, obey the game laws of the country he/she outfits/hunts in, and be actively involved with local communities in the support of conservation and wildlife management. In order for a safari company to qualify, it must have a spotless record with IPHA and/or its local outfitter organization such as PHASA, NAPHA, etc. Such an outfitter must not have been banned from any of the major international hunting organizations for inappropriate conduct and, where applicable, must be fully licensed with the local authorities.

### HISTORY OF ROWLAND WARD'S RECORDS OF BIG GAME

Rowland Ward Ltd. has been a world-renowned brand in the sporting and outdoor market since 1870. James Rowland Ward (1848–1912), a British taxidermist, founded the firm Rowland Ward Ltd. in Piccadilly, London, in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The company specialized in and was renowned for its taxidermy work on birds and big game trophies, but it did other types of work as



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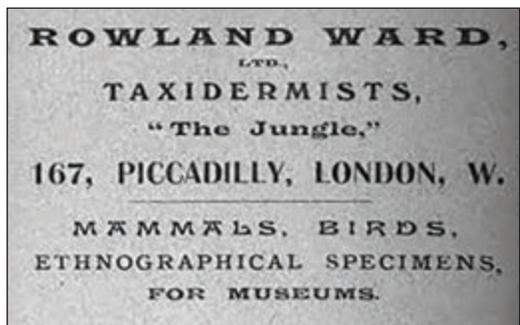


Hans "Scruff" Vermaak and the entire Coenraad Vermaak Safari Team  
Tim Fallon and Doug Prichard and  
The Team at FTW/SAAM Safari Prep School  
Steve Turner and Fred Salinas of Travel With Guns  
— Roger Key

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*Austrian hunter Rudolf Grauer's tusks were entered in the 1914 edition of Rowland Ward's Records of Big Game: at 156 1/2 and 168 1/2 pounds, the longest tusk is 9 feet, 1 inch. They were recently rediscovered by Christian Winkler who stands beside the tusks in the attic of the Natural History Museum in Salzburg. Winkler is six feet tall.*



*Rowland Ward advertisement*

well. Rowland Ward was also a well-known publisher of natural history books and big game hunting narratives. The most famous and enduring Rowland Ward Ltd. product is the *Rowland Ward's Records of Big Game* series of books, which started in 1892 and is now in its 29th edition (2014).

By the turn of the 20th century, Rowland Ward Ltd. was "the place" to go for information on hunting in foreign lands and to record hunting trophies. Hunters and naturalists from all over the world came to Rowland Ward for advice on equipment and destinations. In 1907 American Percy Madeira wrote, "When in 1907 I saw the possibility of making this hunting trip – a long desired wish – I wrote to Rowland Ward, the naturalist-taxidermist, in London, inquiring where the best bag of African game had been secured that year." Madeira proceeded to take a steamer to London where he picked up supplies deemed necessary for an extended safari before continuing on to East Africa.

Two forces in the 19th century came together to make Rowland Ward Ltd. an international powerhouse of taxidermy, hunting advice, and book publishing: the global reach of the British Empire and the Industrial Revolution. At its height, the British Empire was the largest in history and, for over a century it was the foremost global power. Ward's shop became the hunting/natural history hub of the British Empire, the meeting place of nimrods from all parts of the world, and Rowland Ward Ltd. became the only organization to keep extensive records of the trophies of the Empire's elites as well as dignitaries from other nations.

It is from these extensive records of his taxidermy work that Rowland Ward developed the idea of publishing a series of books that would list the measurements of the trophies he had mounted. As time went by, *Rowland Ward's Records of Big Game* became a who's who of the international big game hunting world. The most famous people in the hunting world had/have their trophies listed in *Rowland Ward's Records of Big Game*: King George V of England and his granddaughter Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Demidoff, Prince Abdorreza, Prince Bernard of the Netherlands, HRH Aga Kahn, numerous maharajas, Major Powell-Cotton, Frederick Selous, Herb Klein, Elgin Gates, James Mellon, Walter Bell, Robert Ruark, and Watson Yoshimoto, as well as the British Museum of Natural History, numerous national parks, and natural history collections from all over the world. "The Book," as it was known



*PH Werner Brach guided Bernard Dumon to this 54-inch sable in Zambia, it is currently number 3 in the Rowland Ward's Records of Big Game.*

in Rowland Ward's day, has since become the oldest and most respected record book in existence for African and Asian trophies.

In 2018 the 30th edition of *Rowland Ward's Records of Big Game* will be published and several changes are forthcoming:

- The 30th edition will feature only African records. Plans to publish records from other continents are also in the works, but those will come out later.
- Next, and possibly the most exciting news is that *Rowland Ward's Records of Big Game* shall start publishing photos of the highest scoring heads, just like it did up to 1935. There will be a strict photo policy in regards to ethics and esthetics, but for now it is sufficient to say that a photo of any head in the top twenty will be eligible for publication in the book.
- Third, the layout of the book will be totally redone. Animals will be organized according to traditional methods used by naturalists and hunters as well as by biological kinship. In short, a buffalo will come before an impala, and a greater kudu will be lumped together with the other spiral-horned antelopes. **GT**

If you have field photos of what you believe to be a top trophy and you wish to have them published in the 30th edition of *Rowland Ward's Records of Big Game*, please contact Rowland Ward Ltd. We will instruct you on how to send us your images. To learn more, go to [rowlandward.com](http://rowlandward.com).



*Dewald Joubert took this incredible old kudu in the Limpopo province of South Africa in October 2010. The left horn measures over 57 inches while the right one is a little over 72 inches.*



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