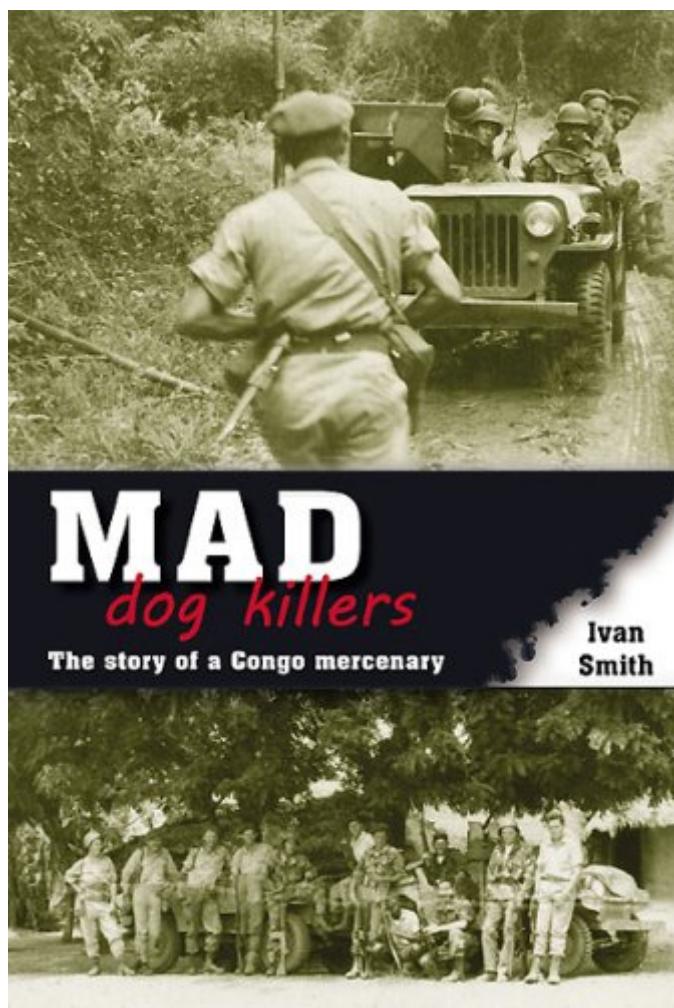


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# Mad Dog Killers: The Story Of A Congo Mercenary



## **Synopsis**

During that long, hot summer of 1964, Ivan Smith, a mercenary volunteer in the Armée Nationale Congolais, came to witness and understand fear, the law of the jungle and the lust for killing that permeates Africa. A member of 'Mad Mike' Hoare's 5 Commando Group he and his companions were nominally soldiers but there was little in the way of campaigns, tactics and discipline. Of conventional warfare there was none. Loyalty to country or unit did not exist and the fear of death was the only commander. Many more mercenaries died from an accidental discharge, in a drunken shoot-out or from a bullet in the back than were ever killed in action by Simba rebels. Nearly half a century later, Ivan Smith re-lives the nightmare that was the Congo.

## **Book Information**

File Size: 9989 KB

Print Length: 160 pages

Publisher: Helion and Company (May 19, 2012)

Publication Date: May 19, 2012

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00AJ2QG02

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #104,846 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #19 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Military & Wars > American Civil War #26 in Books > History > Africa > Central Africa #69 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > World > Modern

## **Customer Reviews**

In Action with 5 Commando Group! This book "Mad Dog killers: The Story of a Congo Mercenary" by Ivan Smith is a superb action packed memoir that covers the turbulent period in the Congo in the 1960s. In 1964 the Congolese Prime Minister Moise Tshombe hired "Major" Mike Hoare to lead a military unit called 5 Commando Group made up of approximately 300 mercenaries from all over the

place with the majority coming out of South Africa. The unit's mission was to fight a revolt known as the Simba Rebellion, which began as a result of alleged abuses by the Congolese central government. It formed part of the turbulent history of the country in the first half of the 1960s. Later Hoare and his mercenaries worked in concert with Belgian paratroopers, Cuban exile pilots, and CIA-hired mercenaries who attempted to save 1,600 civilians (mostly Europeans and missionaries) in Stanleyville from the Simba rebels in Operation Dragon Rouge. This operation saved many lives. Despite the success of the raid, Tshombe's prestige was damaged by the operation which saw white mercenaries and western forces intervene once again in the Congo. This book also covers some pretty good detail of the Rhodesian Bush War, covering the authors' service with the elite Police Anti-Terrorist Unit (PATU) of the British South Africa Police. Overall, this book is a pretty honest look at the realities of combat.

Its kind of an odd fascination to have, but this part of African history entwined with mercenary lore is addictive. This book is excellent: well written and researched, it is impossible to put down. The political mess in the Congo at the time is well explained and heart breaking. The cruelty of the Africans and the mercenaries are laid bare. I would be happy to read a continuation of the mercenary story in the Congo by this same author.

First, what I didn't like about the book- poor quality photos, I'd rather pay a few \$ more and get decent glossy printed photos, after all, a picture tells a 1000 words! To the book- what a great story, surprisingly well written and very insightful about a time in Africa that is almost forgotten, but is a lesson for all living on the dark continent today. God bless Africa because no one else will- the place is going back to what it was 50 years ago. Don't expect the SAS or the Royal Marines, this is the story of a young man in a place no man should have to be, and the tragedy of the people he was fighting for and against. It highlights the perpetuation of the madness that is Africa. As a white South African (sorry, here's the race bit again) it's essential reading, and there are no holds barred. Sad but seemingly true.

I read this book right after finishing Mike Hoare's "Congo Mercenary" (excellent book by the way). I mention this because I really enjoyed how well Ivan Smith's "Mad Dog Killers" seemed to compliment Hoare's book. Whereas Hoare paints this vivid picture of grand strategy, leading his men in a fight against ruthless rebels, a fight wherein the Commandos are always on the brink of failure, Smith paints a picture of chaos, brutality, violence; a place where one's own survival is the

law of the land. The comparison of the two books shows one how different a view of war can be; the perspective of the officer(s) is one of struggle and tactics, that of the low ranking soldier is one of violence and fear. If you enjoyed reading Mike Hoare's books, you will surely enjoy this one as well. Highly recommended.

If you want a p/c book of Africa, you really should choose another book. A lot of the dillusions of what it was like to work under the famous Mike Hoare are also popped. This is not the book that makes you want to go join a bunch of semi educated thugs go off & wage war in someone else country. The stories told are harsh reality that doesn't make the evening news. Stories of creulty of man against man, & what they do to each other simply due to being born to another tribe. If knowledge is power then some of the tree hugging crowd should read this, maybe then they will understand why nobody wants to stick their hand in the hornets nest known as Africa.

Having had a friend (now deceased) who was in "the business" and served in more than one country in Africa, during the 70's, I could relate to Ivan's experience in the Congo during the 60's. An interesting read, written by a regular soldier, dealing with trying times. Ivan did confirm things I had heard about Col. Mike Hoare.....I'll just leave it at that.

The author has seen it and he has lived it. This book does not paint a pretty picture. But he tells it as it is. If you believe in modern PC hysteria, this book is not for you.

Read it, couldn't stop reading. I've been interested in the subject for years. I've read all of Mockler's stuff and Hoare's stuff and found this tretis to be accurate and enlightening. Hoare is considered to be a great counter guerrilla expert and is touted as defeating Che Guevera in the Congo. It seems this is tripe, he organized, made money, exploited the 5 Commando and did his leading from his speeches. He was a staff guy in Burma so he made coffee for Mountbatten?? looks like he spent his time greeasing the Congolese, strutting around in pressed uniforms and getting rich! Mercenaries work for pay/loot, in Italy, a Conditorrie leader who didn't pay up , got killed! If the individual commandos were on missions all over the Congo, only his well paid loyal staff who whouldn't kill the "Golden Geese" instead of Wild Geese! Mockler mentions the lack of fast action that cost the white hostages their lives and this book confirms it! Great read very enlightening especially about the early 5 Commando lack of training, weapons, uniforms and support that a good staffer should have had in hand before the first trooper landed! Musta missed that in Burma! Hoare

is famous or infamous and the ones who helped him are dead poor and exploited! Let slip the Dogs of War!

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