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## The right man for East Africa

Richard B. Stolley, our bureau chief for Europe, went to East Africa to work with Photographer John Reader on this issue's story about Kenyan museum director Richard Leakey. He cabled this description of his colleague.

"We sent John Reader to Nairobi early this year, and it is evident that East Africa is the ideal spot for him. For one, he bears an uncanny resemblance to those giraffes which populate its plains and forests by the thousands—he is tall, long-legged, stretch-necked, lovably awkward and often has the same expression of benign placidity. That look, in Reader's case, can be misleading. He is an exacting, painstaking photographic practitioner. He shoots sparingly, in itself a rarity among professional photographers, and often has granitelike ideas on how a story ought to be photographed, which pictures contribute and which do not.

"Perhaps a better reason for sending Reader to Africa was his experience, much of it on that vast and diverse continent. He was born in England, a taxi driver's son, evacuated from London along with other kids during the World War II blitz, and quit school at 16 to mix chemicals in the post office's photographic department for 18 months. It was excruciatingly dull work, so he decided to emigrate to South Africa. He took a tramp steamer, celebrated his 18th birthday abroad by getting drunk for the first time and arrived in July 1955, scared, lonely and with about \$65 in his pocket.

"In many respects, South Africa at that time was the supreme adventure for this city boy who had never been out of England. He climbed mountains, snorkeled in the Atlantic, flew in small planes, learned to catch trout on a dry fly—and all the time he was making pictures, learning his trade. By 1963, he had acquired a wife and two children, a photographic studio and a growing abhorrence of that country's repression of the blacks. He sold his business and the Readers snuck off to Connemara, in the remote west of Ireland. He had become a successful free lance in London when we asked him to go to Nairobi.

"Reader and Leakey treated each other with cool respect, which is to say, for men of British blood they got on well. Each man obviously knew he was in the presence of a first-rate professional, and they studied each other's working methods with a furtive fascination.

"Reader celebrated his 32nd birthday at Lake Rudolf, trudging along, picking up a fossil here and there or an arrowhead. 'I had the odd feeling,' he says, 'that I'd lived 32 years just to be there and do that.' John is back in Nairobi now, living in a cottage in the lush green hills outside the city, educating himself in the complex tribal system of Kenya and putting some finishing touches on a children's book which, strangely for a photographer, is all words and no pictures."




STOLLEY AND READER

*Ralph Graves*

RALPH GRAVES  
Managing Editor

# LIFE

**GORETTA KING'S MOVING  
ACCOUNT OF LIFE WITH  
HER MARTYRED HUSBAND  
He Had a Dream**

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