

GETTING THE POINT IN THE CONGO...

"THE Pigmy's arrow missed me by a foot — my foot," Peter Ogden, 33, related to me over coffee at the Norfolk.

He's the leader of a private party of students and grads — all in their twenties — who've chosen to see Africa from north to south, aboard what must be the most rugged vehicle (barring tanks) to have ever carried tourists to East Africa.

"We learned that the vehicle accompanying us had broken down 175 miles back, and calculating the fuel against refills in the Congo, I chose to leave the party and hitchhike back alone to the 'Rover and those stranded with it. My first lift came from a huge Isuzu lorry, with already four people in the

cab, three on the roof, 12 cows, six goats, a 44-gal. drum of diesel fuel, and numerous vegetables stacked within. That was OK but the driver I found was something less than a teetotaler, a fact which became more evident as the sun set over the potholes.

"I couldn't stand the strain of looking death in the face with every bend in the road, as the driver's speed increased in proportion to his ability to control the truck, so, still 75 miles from my goal, I 'deplaned'.

"Arriving at a sleeping village 10 miles later with very painful feet, I sat down in what I hoped was the relative safety of the village, waiting for the sun to rise.

"All I had with me were the few tools I had brought to repair the disabled vehicle. Then came the arrow reception, fired by a villager who apparently wasn't asleep. Something like pandemonium broke loose among them, when they discovered a man of my hue in their midst in the darkness before the light.

This is Peter's second trip to Africa and the first for all his passengers, 12 gals and eight guys, composed of Americans, New Zealanders, Canadians and Australians in equal proportions, with half a dozen Britons being the balance.

They've covered 10,000 miles in their 12-week safari so far, which had its African starting point really in Algeria. Their longest non-water/fuel stop was across the Sahara to Tamarisit — 800 miles. "You drive as if your life depended on it," Ogden reflects.

Before taking to the tours with a small but dynamic London-based company, "Encounter Overland," Peter was in advertising photography.

They rolled into Nairobi last week, to round off their Eastern Africa trip, having already covered a good deal of Central and West Africa.

The Bedford's huge petrol tank was "very dry" allowed Peter, so they approached Mobil Oil Kenya Ltd, who listened. Now they're on their way again, with 1,000 litres plus of just what their goliath needs to pull them and their trailer around to see the wonders of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.



ONE of the most spirited groups of youngsters to arrive in Kenya for a long

time have come specially to see the attractions of East Africa. Kneeling and

standing in front of their Bedford 5800cc flagship are some of the members of the "Encounter Overland" touring group, led by Peter Ogden (extreme the Pigmy bow) who holds the pigmy bow and arrow with which he had a personal encounter at the receiving end.