

I captured Barnum's first rhinoceros and that animal cost him more than any four lions or tigers he ever owned. I was the first animal hunter sent over to Africa by an American, and I had it all to learn. I sent home lions, giraffes, elephants, buffaloes and hyenas without any great trouble, but it was a whole year before I got my first rhinoceros. The natives had killed one occasionally, but such a thing as capturing one alive had never been heard of. It seemed that the easiest way was to noose him. There are well-defined paths all through the forests of Africa, and these are used more or less by all animals, especially where they lead to water. I made a noose in a new two-inch rope big enough to take in a rhinoceros, and then climbed into a tree to manage it. I spent the best part of three days up there before a victim came along. He scented me and was suspicious, but nevertheless came on and was neatly noosed. I believe that rope would have held a schooner at anchor off Montauk Point, but that rhinoceros made one plunge and broke it like a thread.

My next move was to seek a point on a path several miles from camp and erect a barricade. This barricade ran to a V-shaped point, and was made strong enough to hold an elephant. If a rhinoceros took that path he would follow it to the last inch, and when he was in close quarters he would be on hand to tangle him up. We had a visitor almost before we were ready. When the rhinoceros got along to the barricade he halted for a minute to sniff the air. Then he lowered his head and went charging down the path; striking the logs and rocks at the point of the V with the power of a wild locomotive he battered his way through.

My third move was to dig a pit twenty feet long, ten feet wide and seven feet deep, which was covered with poles, branches and dirt. When the pit was ready I went up the path about half a mile to an opening and hung a red shirt on a bush. I knew that if a rhinoceros sighted that shirt he would charge the bush. I climbed a tree and waited, and in less than an hour I heard an old fellow coming full tilt. He went through the bush like an avalanche, and on the path he found a red handkerchief. He picked it up on his horn and charged down the path. On the far side of the pit was another red shirt, and in his anger the beast didn't look for a

trap. He was dusting along at twenty miles an hour when the earth gave way and he landed on his head at the bottom of the pit. We had a time getting him out and into a cage, and I don't believe he ever got over being mad.

All my subsequent captures, with one exception, were made in the same way, but we dug ten different pits for every capture and it was weeks between them. The exception was a curious case. With seven or eight natives following me in Indian file, I was walking in a path through the woods. Of a sudden there was a cry of alarm from the rearmost native. A rhinoceros had entered the path, caught sight of us and was charging. We sprang into the bushes right and left, and he wasn't ten feet away when I left the path. Being under full headway, he kept on for 100 feet and then left the path himself. As he did so he ran between two trees growing close together. His weight and impetus bent them aside for the moment, but as they came back they caught him just forward of the hips and he was held fast. There was fun around there for a time. The old fellow dug up the earth in great shape as he snorted and bellowed, and if his hindquarters hadn't been held up in the air the trees could not have held him. Half his power was gone, and when we realized the fix he was in we roped his legs and had him secure before we cut one of the trees down.