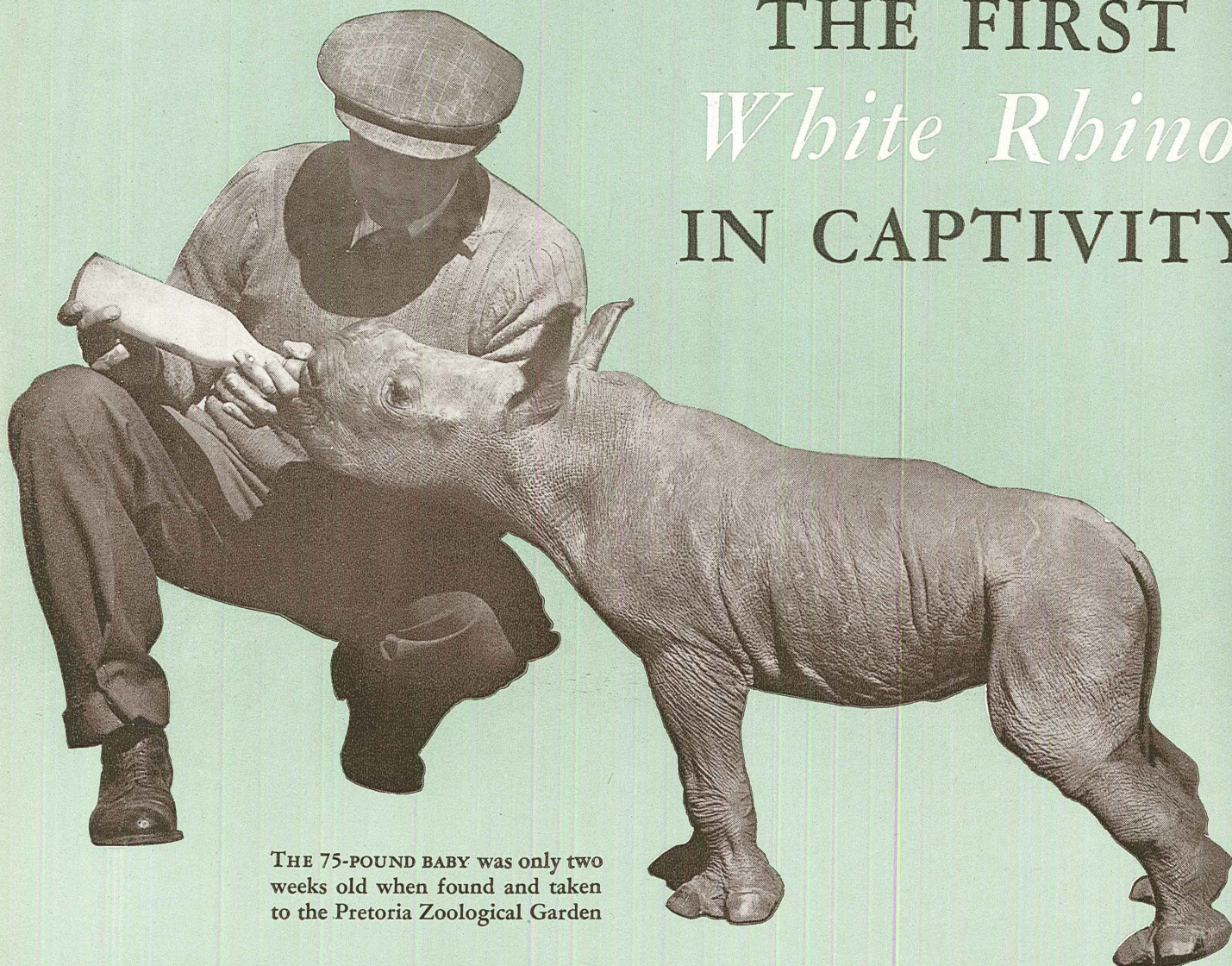


THE FIRST *White Rhino* IN CAPTIVITY



THE 75-POUND BABY was only two weeks old when found and taken to the Pretoria Zoological Garden

Martin Gibbs photograph

By ROBERT BROOM

Transvaal Museum

THE so-called White Rhinoceros or, as it had better be called, the Square-lipped Rhinoceros, was discovered by William John Burchell in 1812 in the region to the north of the Orange River in what is now called Bechuanaland.

Large numbers of this huge rhinoceros lived in this section during the middle of the last century. It differed from the Black Rhinoceros in being considerably larger and having a square upper lip instead of a pointed prehensile lip such as is seen in the Black Rhino. Why the early Boers called it the White Rhinoceros might seem difficult to

understand, as there is really little difference in color. The true reason appears to be that the White Rhinoceros lived on the plains and was fond of wallowing in any river or muddy swamp, so that its skin was often covered with mud. When the mud dried, the skin appeared from a distance to be a light fawn color.

As civilization advanced, the number of White Rhinos was rapidly reduced, so that by the end of the century fears were expressed concerning its survival. Fortunately it was learned in 1894 that a few had still survived in Zululand. Then in 1899, small herds of a variety of the White Rhino were found in the Lado district of the Upper Nile. These northern herds con-

tained an estimated 150-200 individuals, and it is thought probable that about this number still exist.

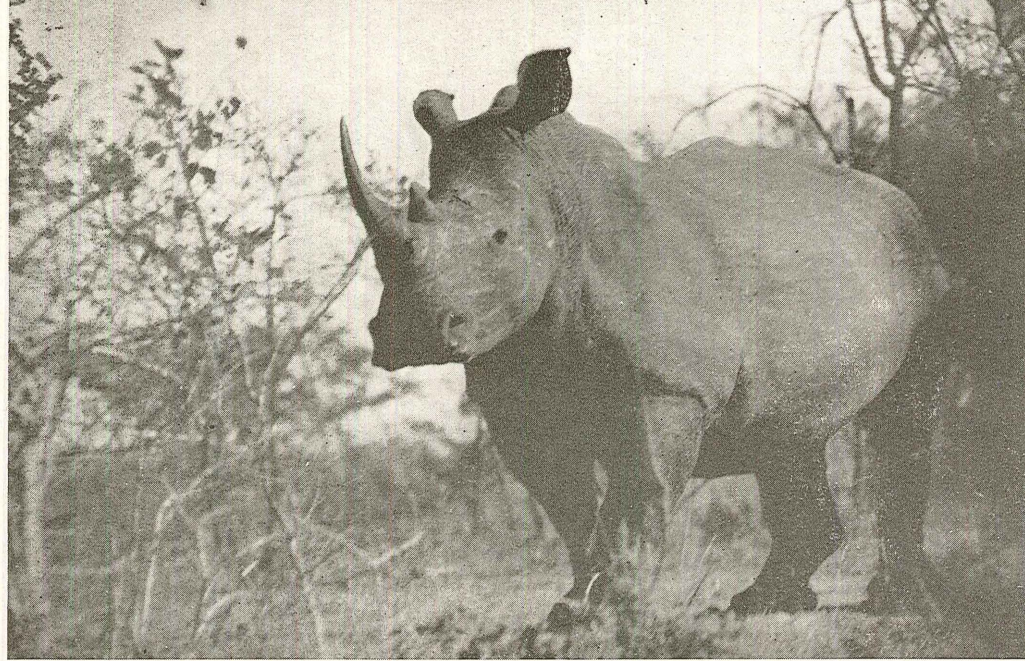
In South Africa, the White Rhinoceros ceased to exist in Bechuanaland some time ago, and possibly in Southern Rhodesia. In Zululand it was thought that only about a dozen head were left. Richard Lydekker, in a book published in 1917, did not seem to think there was any hope of the Zululand herd surviving. Fortunately with strict governmental protection the small herd has steadily and rapidly increased, and about 200 White Rhinos are believed to be living now in Zululand.

Just recently it was resolved to make a rearrangement of the reserves, one being reduced in size

and the other enlarged. When part of the herd of rhinos was shifted from one reserve to the other, a recently born young one was left behind. It was guarded from the hyenas in the hope that the mother might return, but as she did not come back, Dr. Bigalke of the Pretoria Zoological Gardens was notified. He acted with the greatest promptness and sent a motor lorry with a well-padded crate through the night 400 miles to Zululand.

The little rhino, a female, was rescued and brought safely to Pretoria. She is quite strong on her legs and goes about actively. At present she has only one wish—milk, milk, and more milk. She consumes a gallon a day. Her height is two feet six inches, and her weight 75 pounds. There is practically no hair on her except for a nice little tuft on the tip of her tail. She has, as yet, no teeth. The base of the forward horn is a smooth, rounded, hard boss; there is no trace of the other horn, though two little crescentic hollows on the sides of the brow show where it will grow. Behind her eyes are two little knobs on the cheek bones; and on the top of the neck just behind the back of the head is a curious little patch of thickened skin.

As will be seen in the photograph the head is relatively large and the legs well developed. When standing drinking out of her bottle, she holds much of the weight of the



Herbert Lang photo

▲ WHITE RHINOS are rare today. Two hundred are estimated to be living in Zululand, with perhaps the same number of the upper Nile variety in the Lado District

body on the front toes, the lateral toes being off the ground.

Young as the rhino is (and it can't be more than two weeks old), it is full of fight; and if it thinks it is being petted too much, it runs back a step or two and charges with a snort.

The two photographs of adult White Rhinos shown here were taken nearly 20 years ago in the Umfolosi Reserve, Zululand, by Dr. Herbert Lang. They are probably the best pictures ever taken of adults in their native wilds. The square lip is well shown, likewise

the peculiar pad on the top of the neck behind the head.

When Dr. Lang took these photographs, he estimated that only about 25 head survived. It is thus gratifying to know that the herd, with careful protection, has now increased to about 200, and there is some hope that we shall be able to re-establish the White Rhino as successfully as the United States has re-established the Bison.

[A late report indicates that the baby White Rhino is thriving nicely. At two months it weighed 105 pounds.—Ed.]

▼ THE WHITE RHINO is considerably larger than the Black Rhino, but its whitish skin is the result of mud-wallowing. The two are actually very similar in color

Herbert Lang photo

