



PROOF THAT GIRAFFES DO LIE DOWN  
(See Letter "A 'Close-Up' of Giraffes")

#### A "CLOSE-UP" OF GIRAFFES

SIR,—I have pleasure in sending you herewith a photograph of giraffe. This picture was taken a few miles from Nairobi. A short time ago there appeared in one of the leading English papers a statement to the effect that giraffe never lie down. This picture, you will see, disproves the contention.

Yours faithfully,  
Nairobi, Kenya Colony. H. A. VILLIERS.

#### COLOUR CHANGES AND WEATHER

SIR,—The colour changes of 1933-34 showed how these depend on the weather, for neither old nor young hares or stoats had changed completely from blue or red to white in January. The accompanying photograph shows, on the right, a young hare which had only partially changed to white on January 15th. The skin on the left (hare) is also that of a leveret which, assuming its winter coat of white in a brief cold spell this February, was shot towards the end of that month. It can be seen that its coat is not only whiter but longer than that of its neighbour. The stoat-skin is that of an old female, which, having held long to russet-colour in the early winter of 1933, changed partially to white in January, 1934. It also, like the right-hand hare, has very short white fur, and its head is the only brown part.

A hard frost following on a heavy fall of snow in October, 1926, caused the bulk of Arctic hares and stoats to become white at an unusually early date in autumn. The exceptions were such leverets or young stoats as had not carried their "puppy" coats long enough to cast them in favour of white when the premature cold snap came along. The sight of a blue hare speeding over the snow in the company of a score of white ones made me, on one occasion, reserve a shot for it, when I found it to be a leveret, hardly more than half-grown. That was in the month of January, and had that leveret lived,



THE SKINS OF TWO HARES AND A STOAT  
(See Letter "Colour Changes and Weather")

and changed its coat to white in February, it would have again been singular in April, as the only white hare among many blue ones. It is not unusual—indeed, it is general—for an Arctic hare to rear two litters in a season, and the young from both are usually full-grown and ready to moult from mid-October onward, but late leverets, carrying coats which are only half-worn, find the change to white difficult.

There is a peculiarity in the hide of the Arctic

hare which I have not seen mentioned—that is, its thin and easily torn nature. The hide of the red hare thickens and toughens greatly in hard winters, and so does that of a rabbit, but if the skin of a winter-killed Arctic hare is tested for toughness and weight it is found to tear like paper, and to weigh only slightly more than it did in summer. For all that, it can withstand more cold than either rabbit or red hare, and this although its skin is thinner than theirs, and its fur rather coarse and without under-fur. Perhaps the hide of the Arctic is "insulatory" in winter, for otherwise it is hard to understand how a creature so frail, and with no "blubber," withstands the cold as it does.

Yours faithfully,  
12, Murray Road, DUGALD MACINTYRE.  
Invergordon.

#### SHOW BENCH TERRIERS

SIR,—I did not miss Major Harding Cox's first letter under this heading, but it appeared in print after mine had been forwarded.

I would like to make it clear that, far from being in opposition to Major Harding Cox's views on the shape of foxterriers (of either variety), I find myself in complete agreement with them.

I wrote in reply only to the letter of Colonel Campbell Colquhoun, which I still regard from its wording, as an attack on the character of the modern show bench foxterrier.

There is a very widespread opinion that all show bench dogs, irrespective of breed, are fools devoid of intelligence and deprived in some mysterious way of all the characteristics of their breed. It is against this charge that I protest.

It is easily answered in the case of gundogs and Alsatians, where champions on the show bench are seen to be equally successful in their respective trials; but in the case of terriers (and I do not confine myself solely to foxterriers) it is a very different thing.

Many exhibitors, with a show in view, are naturally reluctant to expose their terriers to the risk of damage from fox or badger.

But it is difficult to believe that an inch one way or another, on either end of a dog, can alter his character, though it may spoil his looks.

Yours faithfully,  
White Cottage, T. R. BLAIN  
Worboys Road, Kingston Hill. (Major).

#### CAPTURING A NEPAL RHINO

SIR,—With reference to my article under the above heading, published in your issue of September 23rd, 1933, owing to a misprint the price of a rhino horn is therein given as "150/- downwards."

This is quite incorrect and should read "£150 (one hundred and fifty pounds) downwards." The actual price is calculated on the weight and is subject to considerable fluctuation, but a rate as high as Rs. 10 (rupees ten) per "tola" is freely offered. This works out at approximately £60 for a horn of moderate size.

It is this high price which is directly responsible for the existence of well-armed poaching gangs, whose depredations are largely the cause of the disappearance of the great Indian rhinoceros.

One hundred and fifty shillings would certainly not cover the cost of arming such gangs, nor the risk of encounters with forest guards and other dangers inseparable from such enterprises.

The hide of the rhinoceros has also a certain value, but its removal is a long process which cannot be undertaken by poachers whose primary objective is the horn alone.

I would like to point out also that the offered "rate" for rhino horn is probably less than half that demanded from the purchaser of the powdered horn.

At the present moment the price of gold is in the neighbourhood of Rs. 33 per tola, and it will be

seen therefore that the price of rhino horn powder is probably in the same category!

It is this extraordinary trade which is largely—not entirely—responsible for poaching activity and in part, at least, for the gradual extinction of the rhinoceros in India. It is probably centuries old. At the time of writing I have before me the record of a case of rhinoceros poaching on the Nepal border in which at least two men lost their lives.

There has been some delay in pointing out this error, but the earthquake upset matters. It came like a bolt from the blue and in three minutes caused a loss of over 3,500 lives in the valley alone, while figures from outer Eastern Nepal, which are not complete, will probably number as many again.

Yours faithfully,  
British Legation, C. DAUKES  
Nepal. (Lieut.-Colonel).

#### THE ORIGIN OF JORROCKS

SIR,—I heard my father, the late Major E. N. Heygate, R.E., of Buckland, Leominster, tell the following story on various occasions.

For over ten years he was on the Ordnance Survey of Co. Durham, and was generally quartered at Darlington.

Being a keen hunting man, he found time to get a good bit of hunting, and it was when out with the Hurworth that he first met Mr. Surtees. Mr. Surtees was a peculiar man—very reserved, scarcely spoke to anyone, scarcely answered when addressed. Consequently people got in the habit of chaffing him—questioning him in order to draw him. On one occasion, being perhaps rather more hunted than usual, he suddenly burst out: "I will bet any man fifty sovereigns that within one year from this day I will write a book that will make all England laugh."

Three or four men at once took up the bet, my father amongst them, but Mr. Surtees declined more than the one £50 bet.

Time went on and the book appeared, and everyone read it, and was genuinely astonished.

Within the year at a meet of the hounds, the Master proposed a resolution, and someone seconded it, "That in the opinion of this Hunt Mr. Surtees has won his bet."

The resolution was carried with acclamation, and Mr. Surtees was paid his £50. Mr. Surtees certainly turned the tables on his critics.

The Chantry, Yours faithfully,  
Slapton, South Devon. W. B. HEYGATE.



STILL A GOOD HUNTER AT 26  
(See Letter "A War Veteran")

#### A WAR VETERAN

SIR,—The enclosed photograph depicts "Greybird," whose history is interesting. Greybird belonged before the war to Miss Bagshawe, who was then living in Dorset. On mobilisation, she was brought by her groom, Trooper Routledge, to my squadron of the Dorset Yeomanry, and with us she remained for the duration of the war.

Early in 1915 the mare produced a foal at Harply, Norfolk; it was born dead, which was hardly a matter of surprise, as Routledge was under the impression she was barren, and she was in regular work.

In Egypt Greybird took part in the charge of Ajajia, and she subsequently went through the whole of the Palestine campaign. Trooper Routledge was, I regret to say, sniped when scouting. He loved Greybird, but the mare was never sick or sorry, or she might have been drafted out of the regiment.

When peace was declared, her former owner at considerable expense had her brought back to England. At first she was given a rest, and bred two foals, one by Lord Hilary, the other by Tidal Wave. They are both now good hunters. Later on Miss Bagshawe took to hunting and riding Greybird again, and this photograph showing how wonderfully fit and well she is was taken only a month ago. Miss Bagshawe resides now in Derbyshire. Greybird is 26 years of age.

Yours faithfully,  
Chettle, Blandford, E. W. F. CASTLEMAN.  
Dorset.