

===== TRAILS =====
OF THE HUNTED

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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Photograph by A. Radcliffe Dugmore

**THIS CHARGING RHINOCEROS WAS TURNED BY
MR. CLARK AFTER MR. DUGMORE HAD LET
HIM COME TO FIFTEEN YARDS FOR A
CLOSE-UP PICTURE**

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| <i>Foreword</i> | vii |
| I <i>The Vanishing Animals</i> | 3 |
| II <i>Rhinos</i> | 16 |
| III <i>Lions!</i> | 47 |
| IV <i>Elephants</i> | 78 |
| V <i>Some Observations in the Field</i> | 111 |
| VI <i>Sculpturing and Taxidermy</i> | 128 |
| VII <i>The Crater of Ngorongoro</i> | 145 |
| VIII <i>African Natives and Safaris</i> | 165 |
| IX <i>Buffaloes</i> | 185 |
| X <i>American Game</i> | 203 |
| XI <i>Central Asia</i> | 223 |
| XII <i>Yaks, Ibex, Poli</i> | 239 |
| XIII <i>Captured by Mongols</i> | 264 |
| XIV <i>Tortured</i> | 280 |
| XV <i>Permanent Records of the Animal World</i> | 298 |

ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|--|--------------|
| <i>This Charging Rhinoceros Was Turned by Mr. Clark after Mr. Dugmore Had Let Him Come to Fifteen Yards for a Close-Up Picture</i> | FRONTISPIECE |
| <i>The Author with a Very Good Rhino Shot while Following Him in the Bush</i> | 22 |
| <i>Hartebeest at a Water Hole</i> | 50 |
| <i>King of Beasts and His Prey, a Dead Zebra</i> | 60 |
| <i>An African Lioness Taken from a Boma, or Blind, at Ten Yards</i> | 64 |
| <i>A Charging Cow Elephant</i> | 84 |
| <i>The First Elephant the Author Encountered in a Charge</i> | 86 |
| <i>The Author and Native Guides with Big Bull Elephant Shot from a Detached Group of the Herd that Treed the Author</i> | 90 |
| <i>The Author with a Small Giraffe Collected for a Museum Specimen</i> | 118 |
| <i>A Water Buck of the East African Plains</i> | 124 |
| <i>African Black Rhino with Tick Birds</i> | 130 |
| <i>African Buffalo</i> | 130 |
| <i>White Rhino Group</i> | 134 |
| <i>The Roosevelt Ostrich Group</i> | 136 |
| <i>The Roosevelt Hartebeest Group in the National Museum, Washington</i> | 140 |

CHAPTER II

RHINOS

AFRICA is changing. To the newcomer, it is true, the herds of game still seem huge. Lions and rhinos and elephants still seem plentiful enough. But to those of us who first went out to British East Africa before advancing civilization and the numerous hunters had made such fearful inroads among Nature's original inhabitants of the plains and jungles, it seems like hardly more than a shadow of its former self.

I have played my part, certainly, and I often wish that I had been able to shoot less. But I have shot more often for a purpose than for "pleasure", and have hunted principally for specimens and the purposes of information.

Dugmore wanted no trophies save those he planned to record on his negatives, and we decided, on that expedition, never to shoot save in self-defense, except when meat was required. Our task was to photograph the animals in their native haunts, in order that a serious and interesting record might be made before civilization had changed the face of Africa — before the game had been driven out or killed. Most of the shooting that was done fell to me, for Dugmore was the photog-

RHINOS

rapher, with his head buried in a huge camera, while I, with my gun, stood beside him in order to protect him — and myself — from the charges of those animals which took exception to our impertinence.

Neither of us had been in Africa before, and I had never shot anything more than a few elk, mountain sheep, and other similarly inoffensive American animals. But now I was to act as guard over Dugmore, who was decidedly at a disadvantage when he was operating his huge reflex camera, with his face buried in the hood. I must say that I admired his nerve as he kept focusing his lens on charging rhinos, without raising his head in order to check up on what his ground glass told him. It was strain enough to stand there with a gun in my hands, without having to depend on some one else to stop the beasts or turn them before they came too close. And, of course, it was Dugmore's desire to let them get as close as possible before he snapped the camera, while I had agreed not to fire until I heard the shutter as it was released. I must say that once I heard it go and knew that another picture of some charging animal had been made, I rarely waited long before I fired, for many times we had rhinos come pounding and snorting up to within fifteen or twenty yards of us before Dugmore's shutter clicked. After that there was very little time left, and on at least one occasion there was far too little for either peace of mind or safety.

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

We had outfitted at Nairobi, having reached that town late in January, 1909, and obtained permission from the authorities to photograph in the Southern Game Reserve — a ten thousand square mile district lying southeast of Nairobi, with the Uganda Railroad as its northern boundary. Hunting in that district was prohibited, but we were not going to hunt, although, naturally enough, we were forced to take guns in order to protect ourselves.

It was on the third of February that we left the railroad at Kiu, and made camp within a stone's throw of the station. I had often been in camp before, but that first night on the Kiu plain seemed very different to me. Already, from the train, we had seen many animals, and we knew that there were more than antelopes and zebras about. It was wonderful lion country, and while we had as yet seen no rhino, the natives we had hired assured us they were plentiful. In that, by the way, they almost understated the case. In the days that followed we often found that they were far too plentiful.

I remember distinctly that I did not sleep well that night (I suspect that it was not entirely because I had not yet become accustomed to my cot), and the next morning both Dugmore and I were up bright and early in order to be about our work. It must be remembered that we were among the earliest of the photographers to enter Africa. Schilling, it is true, had preceded us, and no doubt

RHINOS

a few snapshots had been taken by others, but the experience of these others had not been compiled so as to help us to follow in their footsteps, and it was up to us to learn as we went. That meant that our equipment was largely theoretical, and our methods, of course, were those that Dugmore had developed while photographing the totally different wild life of North America. On top of that, I was not at all certain of what I would do when a rhino or a lion charged. Of course, I didn't tell Dugmore, but the truth of the matter is that I wondered more than a little about my ability as a marksman, and was not at all reassured when I took my elephant gun and tried, very unsuccessfully, to hit a tin can that I set up as a target.

However, otherwise we were ready, and bright and early on the morning after our arrival at Kiu, we started to march at the first sign of daylight, while the plain lay cool and inviting before us. But though we traveled for half the day, and for a part of the day following, we saw nothing in the way of game save the usual antelopes and zebras.

It was during our third night out that I heard my first lion. It was late in the evening that he roared — twice — and I shall never forget the thrill that awesome sound gave me. Never before had I heard a lion roar in the open, and the roar of a caged lion is not to be compared with it. Iron bars give one a far greater sense of security than

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

one is likely to imagine. But out there on the Kiu plain I knew that there were no iron bars between the lion and me. It was all very well to assure myself that lions rarely enter camps — when the fires are burning. I knew enough about animals even then to realize that there is no animal Hoyle. Lions are individuals, and quite regardless of what any given one hundred lions might have done in the past, the one hundred and first might decide to act differently. It is no wonder that I had some difficulty going to sleep.

But the lion turned out to be quite respectful, and nothing except our imaginations disturbed us that night. Nor did we have any luck on the day following. We had set a number of flashlights by a water hole, but they had evidently been set off by night-flying birds, for the developed films showed nothing, and then, a day or two later, we had our first experience with rhinos.

We located two rhinos half a mile or so away, and decided to try for a photograph or two. In working our way around so as to have the wind blow from them to us, we suddenly found that we had somehow gotten in between the ones we had seen and another old fellow. That necessitated a change in our tactics, and after a very careful bit of dodging, we managed to get around down wind from him also. Dugmore, from a distance of a hundred yards, succeeded in taking two telephoto pictures of him, while the old fellow still was utterly undisturbed. Even the tick birds were still

RHINOS

sitting on his back. With two pictures taken, we were trying to plan our next move when we saw the object of our interest preparing for his noon-day siesta. He poked about a bit near a small bush, smelled it thoroughly, decided that it offered shade enough, although it offered almost none at all, and then lay down.

We waited for a few minutes while the rhino went to sleep, and then Dugmore, with me following him, began a careful stalk in order to get a close-up of the ugly old beast. Having approached to within about thirty yards Dugmore made his camera ready. I stepped out beside him with my rifle, and Dugmore made a little noise.

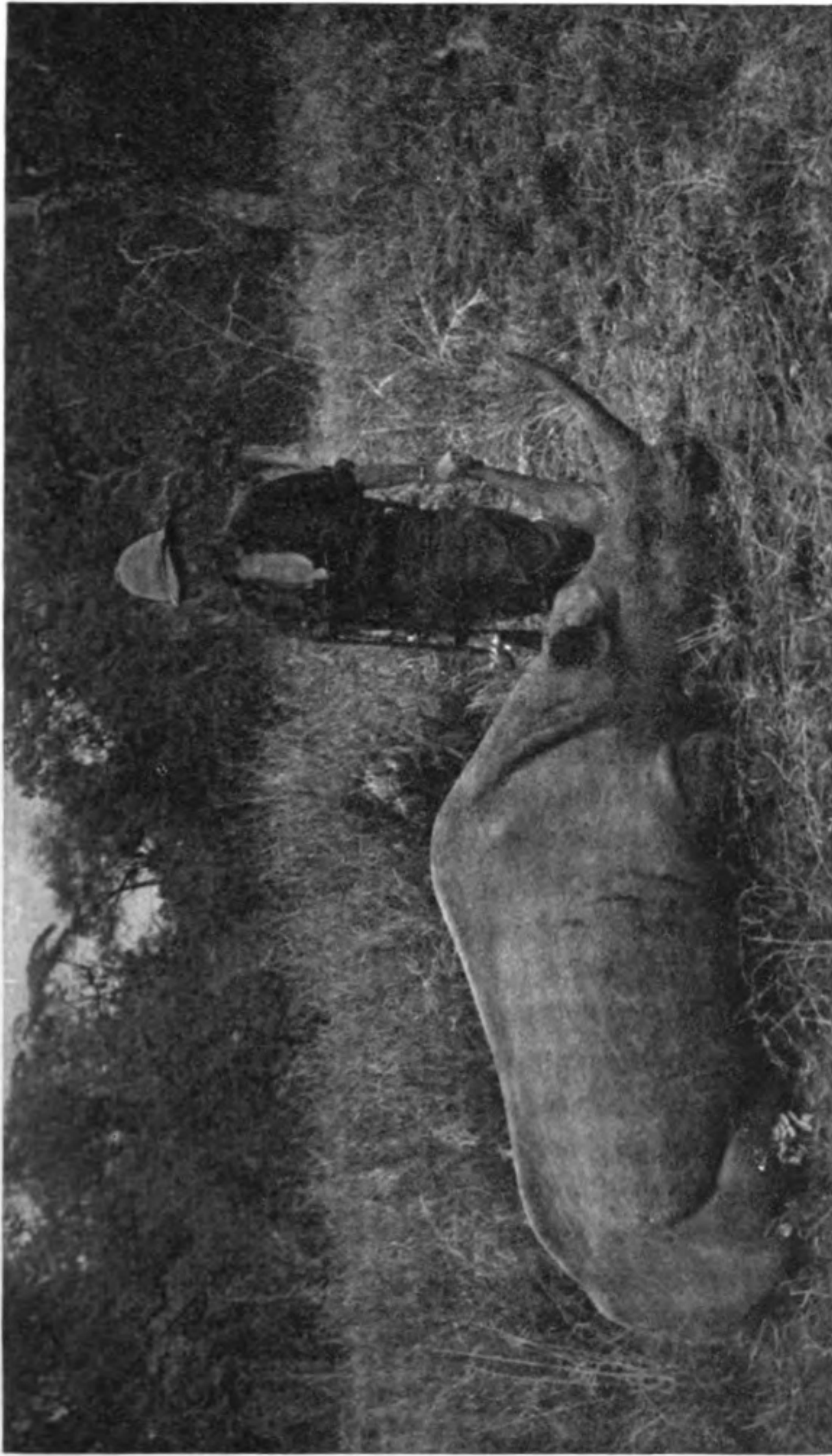
It was extraordinary how quickly that rhino was on his feet. More than that, he no sooner was up than he was charging. I can see him yet. His head was down and he snorted like a switch engine. His tail was up and his short, heavy legs were pounding along furiously. I aimed at once, and listened for the camera, for to play my part successfully I dared not fire until the picture was taken. It certainly took that rhino a very few seconds to cover half the distance to us, but it seemed more than long enough to me. He seemed to be the size of a freight car, and his snorts were actually terrifying. Then, to my relief, I heard the camera snap. I fired immediately, at his shoulder, and he turned at once. Theoretically, I was trying merely to turn him, but I cannot be sure just what I was thinking at the moment. I suspect that I

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

actually fired to kill him, and that turning him was mere accident, for one is not likely to have complete control over himself during his first rhino charge, nor some of his later ones, either.

However, it was his shoulder I hit, and he turned, which was quite satisfactory. And once he turned, I was in no mood to do anything more. The truth is that he was not seriously hit, and I have always since been glad that he got away. Had he been hard hit I would have gone after him, but from the way he galloped off one could see that he would recover from that shot within a few days. So we sat down and wiped the perspiration from our foreheads. It had been even more exciting than I had anticipated, and we found, when we had recovered ourselves, that the old fellow had turned when he was exactly fifteen yards from us.

Now that is a particular point that I'd like to make. Fifteen yards is forty-five feet, and forty-five feet seems like a goodly distance if one measures it out on his lawn. If one stood forty-five feet from a cage in which a rhino was confined, the distance would be far too great. Any one, most certainly, would be likely to approach to within two yards, or even less. But forty-five feet of African plain seems like an absurdly small distance when a rhino is bearing down at you. He seems, by that time, to have blotted out almost the entire landscape. There is apparently nothing else to be seen, for he has seemingly grown to



**THE AUTHOR WITH A VERY GOOD RHINO SHOT WHILE FOLLOWING HIM
IN THE BUSH**

RHINOS

enormous dimensions. I suppose that a person who has never faced a charging rhino at such a distance can understand the psychology of that, but I suspect that imaginations rarely are sufficiently strong to make it possible for one who has n't actually been there to realize the sensation.

After that charge I was more than willing to rest for a time, even at the risk of losing the rhinos we had first started to stalk. But Dugmore had his eyes on them and presently started his stalk. They were a male and a female and were making their way slowly in the opposite direction, while we followed at a quick walk. They did not seem particularly disturbed, but just before we had gotten into a position from which Dugmore could photograph them to good advantage, the tick birds flew from their backs, and at that warning they turned about. We were down wind from them, and at least a hundred and fifty yards away, so we expected no trouble, but we planned without the rhinos, for after a few snorts and a little running about, both of them came pounding straight for us.

Dugmore was busily changing his plates and adjusting his shorter focus lens for close action. I was intent on my part, wondering which one I would shoot first and hoping Dugmore would get his picture quickly without letting them come too close.

At first they started in a quick walk, gradually increasing their speed as they came. This increased

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

to a slow trot and then a fast trot, as they shortened the distance and dropped their heads lower and lower, which is always the sign of business. They were charging now, and cold chills crept up my back while I wondered in silence why on earth Dugmore was waiting so long. At fifty yards I took the initiative, having but two shots in my express rifle, as it was my duty to protect Dugmore as well as myself, and fired at the cow which was a little to the left, leaving the big bull for the picture. She dropped to her knees — down for good, I thought. Then I swung the gun over and put the bead on the brain of the bull and held my finger on the trigger, awaiting breathlessly the click of the shutter. He was almost upon us before that welcome sound came, and I immediately fired. Down he went in a cloud of dust, as his nose plowed into the ground; and his speed was so great I saw his hind quarter rise in the air and fall to the side.

Sighting along the gun barrel I could not see the cow, but my boys told me she had gotten up and continued her charge and did not turn until the second shot. It was well I did not know this, as I might have funked it, with the two charging rhinos and but one shot to stop them. When we stepped off the distance where the bull fell, it was just eleven yards.

That was enough hunting for one day, and we decided to look for no more trouble. Instead, we measured the fallen rhino, cut off his horn in order

RHINOS

that it might be turned over to the Game Ranger's department — for trophies taken in the Reserve are all demanded by the government in order to discourage sportsmen — and permitted the natives to cut the animal up for meat.

It was then that I got my first close view of a rhino's structure. He looks to be, and really is, a species that has descended to us from earlier times. His brain is small, and perhaps because of that he is not extraordinarily clever. As a matter of fact, he seems to learn nothing from experience. His eyesight is notoriously bad, and his strength is tremendous. The result is that when his ears or his nose tell him that something unusual is in the neighborhood — and his nose and ears are very keen — he promptly proceeds to investigate. It is this investigating process that is sometimes called a charge.

I am the last person to wish to generalize unduly over an animal's habits. I have seen them do too many things that were not on the calendar to permit myself to draw unreserved conclusions. But I do believe that the rhino, because he has no enemies except man, has developed this method of investigating because he could do so, except with man, with the utmost impunity. The only things that he might run across that might do him any harm are elephants, buffaloes, and other rhinos, but even his half-blind eyes can make out such huge antagonists before he has come into abrupt collision with them. Any other animal is likely

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

to get out of the way, and even if it did n't, very little harm could come to the rhino.

But with man it is different, particularly with the white man, for the rifle carries just as much power as a rhino does, and it can be used much more effectively. It is likely that the result will be that the dumb old fellows will never learn before it is too late, and hunters will go on shooting them until there are none left to kill, merely because they are so incurably inquisitive.

But it is not entirely fair to lay all the rhino's rushes to mere inquisitiveness. When such an animal comes storming along with his head down and his tail up, with you as his goal, it matters little whether he intends merely to find out what you are or whether his desire is to eliminate you at once, for the result of such a rush is likely to be the same in either case. Consequently, it seems to me that if the hunter happens to be in the line of a rhino's rush, he may most legitimately say that he has been charged, though fortunately for both the hunters and the rhinos, every rhino seems subject to sudden and abrupt changes of mind, and very often he will change his course when he has almost succeeded in running the hunter down. But that is not invariable, and more than a few hunters have been killed by the powerful beasts.

That first day with the rhinos gave me something to think about. I realized that we had been exceedingly foolish to go out and face the beasts with no more understanding of their natures than

RHINOS

we had, and I determined then and there to make a study of them. The result was that I spent many days watching them with my glasses, in order that I might get some idea of their idiosyncrasies.

It did n't take me long to learn that a hunter of rhinos can tell a good deal by watching their ears and tails. Just as a horse puts a lot of expression in his ears, so does a rhino. To see one of the old fellows half asleep in the shade of a tree is an interesting sight. Half a dozen tick birds may be perched on his back, picking the ticks from the folds of his heavy hide. His head will be drooped, and his half-blind eyes apparently almost closed, while his ears will have no rigidity whatever. They seem almost to droop. His tail, too, is motionless, or nearly so.

But at the faintest sound — or at the merest trace of scent — his whole attitude changes. If the sound or the scent is very faint and does not suggest any particular danger, his appearance will change very slightly indeed, so slightly, in fact, that to an inexperienced observer there has been no change. Yet if one looks closely, he will see that the ears are no longer listless. They are alert, and probably they are moving. First one and then the other will turn, as if he were listening carefully. If the sound is repeated so that he gets a definite idea of its direction, both ears will turn toward it, and through one's glasses one can see his ugly old nose wrinkle as he dilates his nostrils in his attempts to catch or interpret the scent.

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

If he becomes suspicious, his tail will begin to twist and he will snort strenuously. Then he is likely to move — running a little this way and then that. His snorts become louder, and obviously he is becoming more and more disturbed. When he catches a particularly clear scent, he is likely to start in real earnest. His absurd little tail will go up, like a battle flag being raised. His head will go down, his snorts become real threats, and his short, sturdy legs will carry him along at an amazing speed.

Now is the time. He is charging, and nothing can successfully stand in his way. His ungainly body is one solid mass of bone and muscle and sinew. He goes through tall grass and bushes as if they did not exist. He is determined to make his way straight toward whatever it is that has disturbed him. He does not go as fast as a horse can trot, but he goes far faster than a man can run. It would be simple for him to catch any man on foot, were it not for the fact that his brain is so slow. I have actually dodged the old fellows, although I must admit that it is exciting sport and I have never done it for pleasure.

The first one I ever dodged nearly got Dugmore and me, and almost got one of our natives as well. It all came about because prior to that time I had successfully turned one with a charge of buckshot from a shotgun, which gave me undue confidence in the efficacy of that method of driving them off.

RHINOS

As I have explained, we did not desire to kill any more animals than was absolutely necessary. So I was forever trying to figure out what I could do to turn the charges of rhinos without doing them any serious harm. One result of my cogitations was that I figured out that a good load of buckshot would sting a rhino pretty smartly, but that it could not injure him more than very superficially. After a successful trial of this new method, in which it worked perfectly and turned a charging rhino at about sixteen or eighteen yards, I determined to use it exclusively in the future.

However, I wanted a little insurance in addition to what the buckshot could offer, so I loaded one barrel with buckshot, and the other with a ball cartridge. So armed, we started off one day, after we had been in the field something less than three weeks.

We had been fairly successful in the Game Reserve, and were on our way back toward the railroad station at Kiu, traveling through the high grass with a Masai *askari*, or fighting man, in the lead. This *askari* was a handsome specimen of humanity, as many of the Masai are, and he was a fine sight as he strode along with his blanket draped over one shoulder, with his head covered with a tight-fitting cap, made of the stomach of some animal, with his shining black shoulders glistening in the sun, and with his long spear tipped with its three-foot point.

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

Dugmore was following the *askari*, and I came third, with the twenty native members of our *safari* strung out behind, burdened with all our boxes and bales and packages. We had progressed for a mile or so in this manner when the *askari* in the lead stopped suddenly and held up his hand.

"*Kifaru!*" he whispered, and there ahead of us, not twenty yards away, and directly in our path, lay a huge *kifaru* — a rhino — sound asleep in the grass.

Instantly we were as busy as kangaroo mice in a grass fire. Our porters precipitately dropped their loads and took to their heels. Dugmore reached for his camera and edged around to where he might snap the rhino if he charged. And I, having unloaded my gun for fear my inexperienced gun bearer might shoot some one accidentally, grabbed it from him and loaded one barrel with buckshot and the other with ball. I felt at my side too, and loosened my revolver in its holster, though why I thought of my revolver at such a time I do not know.

Of course, with all that activity about, there must have been some sound, which the rhino instantly caught. He was on his feet in a flash, and there was not the faintest movement that I could detect between the time he got up and the time he got under way. Dugmore was focusing his camera, and the Masai *askari* had his spear ready for action, though I remember thinking at the time

RHINOS

that such an antagonist was not to be stopped by a spear.

This time I did not wait for the sound of Dugmore's camera, but let go with the charge of buckshot, hoping to turn the infuriated animal. But he was no more affected by the shot than he was by the sound of the gun. There was not the faintest sign of hesitation, and he was getting far too close. I fired the ball cartridge, and still he charged. I seized my revolver and leaped to one side as he came, firing into his face as he passed within six feet of me.

His momentum carried him by as I turned to face him, but he instantly wheeled and rushed at me. Again I side-stepped and fired into his face, and again he went by with a rush and wheeled. A real battle was on, and for a few quick moments it was nip and tuck. Each time he rushed I side-stepped and pulled the trigger until six shots from my revolver were fired into his head, but with no more effect than to make him shake his head as if a bee had stung him. At the last rush, with my revolver empty, I dashed clear to one side, wondering as I went what was next to happen.

The *askari* was directly in the line of charge this time, and I fully expected to see him killed. He waited until it almost seemed that the big horn had him, and then leaped lightly aside. The rhino turned and went for Dugmore, who had snapped one picture and was vainly endeavoring to change his plate. He was weighted down with

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

the huge camera he always used, and for a moment things looked decidedly bad.

Then it was that the *askari* went into action. He leaped through the tall grass, and drove his spear into the rhino's side. The wound was quite deep enough to attract the brute's attention, and Dugmore skipped aside. The rhino was bewildered by now, and turned again, charging off directly after the rapidly scattering *safari*, and after him scurried the *askari*, armed, now, only with his long knife. The rhino changed his direction once, and evidently caught a glimpse of the pursuing native from the corner of his eye. That, apparently, decided him. Certainly he was unaccustomed to being chased. Theretofore, undoubtedly, he had done what chasing there had been to do, and it may be that he did n't like having some one chasing him. Furthermore, he was wounded by eight different shots and by the spear thrust. He shook his huge old head and snorted, and then, with more speed than the *askari* could muster the old fellow blundered away. Nor did we try to stop him.

We paused for breath and to permit the porters to collect their loads. The *askari* found his badly bent spear in the grass, and for a few minutes we were busy bringing order out of chaos. But hardly had we gotten the *safari* straightened out again before we saw another rhino hardly four hundred yards away. I looked narrowly at Dugmore, but he, apparently, felt as I did — that we had had

RHINOS

quite enough rhino for one day. I doubt if any rhino was ever treated with more consideration than was that new one we sighted. It was not our purpose to interfere with his repose, and we crept away from him as a tired father might creep away from the crib of a wakeful infant who, at three A.M., has momentarily fallen asleep.

Since those first few weeks, when Dugmore and I hunted rhino in the vicinity of Kiu, I have seen scores of the homely beasts, and feel that I have gotten fairly well acquainted with them. Naturally, we were convinced, after being charged so many times near Kiu, that all rhinos were cantankerous beasts, always hunting trouble. But never have I seen, in other parts of East Africa, such unnecessarily troublesome rhinos as we first met. It seemed that every rhino we encountered during our first month in the field, was certain to make trouble for us. On several occasions we faced two or three charges in a day, and on one occasion had to stand three charges before ten o'clock in the morning. It may be, too, that others would have charged us that day, except for the fact that we decided to give it up and go back to camp.

Rhinos were thick in the neighborhood and I have no theory at all to account for their disagreeable dispositions, for they were in the Reserve, where they were seldom hunted. Elsewhere I have seen almost as many rhinos, and on one occasion I saw twenty-two between noon of one day and noon of the next while we were on the

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

march. Yet, in that case, not one charged, although we passed so close to some of them that we attracted their attention. On the other hand, sometimes they do not need anything more than a scent to set them off.

On one occasion we saw a rhino that we very carefully avoided. He had not seen us, I am certain, but as he was slouching along he came across our trail. Instantly he caught our scent, and his lack of concern disappeared. Up went his head. Up went his tail. He snorted and pawed around. He trotted this way and then that. He charged off down our trail until he was tired of that, and then turned about and charged back with the utmost energy. But, at last, he blundered off to one side, and then, apparently, promptly proceeded to forget all about the scent that had upset him. Two minutes later he was drowsing in the sun again, as if he had never been disturbed.

There are, of course, two species of African rhinos. They are popularly called the "white" and the "black", though how they ever got such names I cannot tell. Rhinos, of course, like to wallow in mudholes, and it may be that the first "white" rhinos seen by white men had been wallowing in white mud. I have seen "red" rhinos and "white" ones and "black" ones too, but each of them got his color from his last mud bath. As a matter of fact, all rhinos are a kind of elephant gray in color. The differences between

RHINOS

the "white" and the "black" are not in color, and to the untrained eye there might seem to be little difference at all. The differences, though, are sharp.

The white rhinos are fast approaching extinction. They never were numerous, and because they are usually somewhat larger than the black variety, sportsmen have been most desirous of getting them. The major difference between the two varieties is in the head. The white rhino is a grass-eating animal, and has a broad, square lip, which makes a very efficient mowing machine. The black rhino, on the other hand, has a short, prehensile upper lip unfitted for short grass, but admirably designed for browsing on bushes and plucking tufts of grass. There are other differences between the two, but they are not numerous or great. The white rhino's head is longer, and more massive. Both are armed with double horns, which are radically different from the horns on most other animals. In reality the horns of a rhino are not horns at all, and are not connected directly with the skull. Instead they are highly compressed masses of hair or bristles, and are attached to the flesh very much as are the nails of a man's fingers. Bony knobs on the skull underlie the bases of these horns, but the connection between the skull and the horn is not direct.

There seems to be a popular idea, too, that the animal is plated. This belief has apparently grown up because the heavy hide is marked by deep

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

wrinkles, permitting the animal to move without stretching and flexing the heavy sections of the hide. In reality the hide is less tough than it appears. It can readily be cut, for instance, with a sharp pocketknife, and presents no particular opposition to a bullet. It is thick, of course, sometimes as much as an inch, but it is far from being armor, although it is sufficiently tough to keep hyenas and jackals, when they find a dead rhino, from making their way through it, except beneath the belly where the skin is thinner, or in a few portions of the body where the thinner skin of the deep wrinkles presents less resistance. This fact alone has served to set the stage for more than one harmless near-adventure.

On one occasion, early in my first visit to Africa, I saw, while making my way across the grass-covered plains of Kiu, a sleeping rhino. As yet I had not learned to let sleeping rhinos lie, and so I crept up toward him. I was exceptionally successful in my stalk, and finally approached to within about twenty yards without disturbing the beast in the least. I could not see him so clearly as I might have wished, but his big, bulky, dark gray back stuck up well above the grass, and I began to wonder what I might do next. I did not care to approach any closer, and now that I had come so close I had no particular desire to turn about and try to make my way off. So, for a moment, I stood there, trying to figure out some plan to awaken him gently.

RHINOS

I was able to see, now that I was so close, that for a wonder there were no tick birds about him. Had there been they would have flown up long before now, screaming like mad. I did n't want to shout at him, for I was perfectly willing to awaken him gently in order, if possible, to keep him from developing a temper. So I whistled — very softly. There was no movement, and I repeated the whistle, a little louder this time. Still no move. So I whistled with considerably more energy, fearful now that the old codger would leap to his feet and charge me at once. Still no move. I shouted, and still he slept, and then, seeing a small stone at my feet, I stooped quickly and picked it up. I hesitated at first as to whether to throw it or not, but my courage was growing, and I tossed it in a high arc so that it lit on his ribs. Before the stone had reached its mark, I was alert, with my gun aimed, expecting certain action, but to my amazement I heard a strange hollow sound when the stone struck, and still there was not the faintest sign of movement.

Still I did not understand it, but I circled about, and edged a bit closer, until I made out, through a place where the grass had thinned, that there was a hole in his stomach and that he was nothing but a shell. Having convinced myself that he was very dead, I approached him, and found to my amazement that he had been dead for weeks — perhaps for months. The jackals and hyenas and vultures and ants had long since eaten everything

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

that they could make an impression on, leaving nothing but the skeleton, over which was still stretched the semi-mummified hide. They had been unable to penetrate the thicker portions of the hide, and so had wisely entered the cavernous body through holes that they had made in the throat and the belly. But the dryness of the season and the heat of the sun had more or less mummified the remains, and I had come upon a shell that had all the appearance — even at a distance of a dozen feet — of a living rhino peacefully napping there in the grass, especially as the dead rhino had fallen, as they usually do, into exactly the same position that a sleeping rhino takes.

We saw several of these mummies later, and, as a matter of fact, felt sure that the rhino that charged us so energetically only to be driven off with shotgun, revolver, and spear, was one of these shells. Luckily we had made enough noise to awaken him and to discover our mistake in time, for we might have blundered even closer in the belief that we were perfectly safe.

It seems strange that Dugmore and I should have been charged so often while we were in the Kiu district, and that of all the scores of rhinos I have seen elsewhere I have never been charged but once or twice, but it only goes to prove that animals do not follow rules. Most animals of Africa are far more intelligent than rhinos, yet even these old dunderheads have more or less individuality.

RHINOS

I have often been asked what this or that animal will do under certain conditions, and while I find that I am likely to generalize (it seems a natural human weakness), I do try to point out that there is no telling. If one should ask what a business man or a scientist or a doctor would do under certain circumstances, the question to ask in return is obviously, "What particular business man or scientist or doctor?" With that answered, one might be able to prognosticate. To a certain extent that applies to animals. If one asks what a rhino would do under certain circumstances it is not accurate to generalize very far. A particular rhino might be perfectly happy and contented, or he might have a toothache or be troubled with nervous indigestion — although I suspect that such a disease is not for rhinos. Now obviously a contented rhino is less likely to react unfavorably than a rhino with the toothache. Following this line of reasoning I have always been tempted to suspect that the rhinos of the Kiu district were all either suffering from some painful or trying ailment while we were there, or were the scattered members of some family whose forbears had specialized in bad dispositions.

But to be somewhat more serious: There is one rule that one should invariably follow when rhinos are about, and that is to expect the worst. Play safe with rhinos, as with other game, and one need not be surprised when, as is certain to happen if one keeps at it long enough, some old

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

fellow proceeds to attempt a charge that necessitates some defensive action. But that does not mean that all hunters should do as one man I met admitted that he did.

The very first rhino he ever met charged him — and, what is more, nearly got him. The result was that that hunter developed a peculiar antipathy to the clumsy beasts, and told me that he had killed every rhino that he had seen since. He had twenty-five to his credit, or discredit, and did not seem to realize that he was guilty of inexcusable conduct. To snuff out the life of those huge beasts, with no more reason than he had, when Nature has made their growth so slow a process is, to my way of thinking, downright criminal. I have admitted that I have shot my share, and I am sorry, but I have never shot them save in defense of myself and others.

I doubt if any one can be sufficiently careful in the rhino country to be able to steer clear of dangerous situations in which these animals play a prominent part. For instance, Dugmore and I, after we had left the Reserve, were trying our best to take flashlight photographs of lions at night. Nowadays one can obtain excellent flashlight apparatus that will almost invariably work when the bait is touched, but the apparatus we had seldom worked automatically. On two occasions we actually had animals roll on the string that was supposed to set off the flash, without obtaining any results at all. After an endless

RHINOS

number of failures we decided to build sturdy thorn *bomas* — or blinds — so that we could operate the cameras with electric wire running to them from where we sat protected from the lions by our heavy tentlike structure of thorns.

The idea was excellent, but because we had seen no rhinos for some time, we completely left rhinos out of our calculations. The result was that we built an excellent *boma* in which we would be fairly safe from lions. We utterly neglected, however, to think of the fact that a rhino, with one toss of his head, could hook the blind from above us, or, if he cared to, could charge through it with the utmost ease and without even any discomfort, for thorns make mighty little impression on his heavy hide.

With our *boma* complete, and with our cameras set up, we waited for dusk, and then entered the *boma*, sent the natives back to camp, and began to hope that lions would come about and tackle the zebra we had killed for bait. The night grew darker and darker, until, at last, not the faintest thing was visible against the background of water hole and trees. Had some animal appeared against the sky line we might have made him out through the small opening in the front of our *boma*, but in any other direction we were absolutely blinded, not only by the darkness, but also by the fact that we had been very careful to make our *boma* very, very thick.

The hours passed uneventfully, save for a lion's

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

roar in the distance now and then, and for the other night sounds that are common on the African plains. Then, without the slightest warning, we heard the rush and the snorts of a rhino. There was no doubt about his being close to us, even though we could n't see him. And he had our scent. We grabbed our rifles and turned about, realizing all too suddenly what a hopeless position we were in. In front of the *boma* was our lion bait, and a lion might even at that moment be stalking it. Now, behind our *boma*, through which we could not make out a thing, there was a rhino, snorting and running up and down, wondering whether or not to charge us. We dared not leave the place for fear of bumping into a lion. We had no means of seeing the rhino and consequently could not shoot him in order to prevent his attack. So there we sat, with our backs toward the lion bait, caring less than nothing whether or not lions should approach the zebra, but holding our rifles ready and expecting every moment to hear the rhino coming even closer. It seemed as we sat there that he was too close as it was, and the next morning we found innumerable footsteps within thirty yards. But what we fully expected was to see the tip of his horn come at us through the thin protection of thorns, to see him toss the *boma* to one side and trample us or toss us to death.

I do not recall ever having been in a more terrifying situation. For half an hour we listened to

RHINOS

that old fellow snorting and rushing up and down, sometimes closer and sometimes a little farther away, but never far enough away to relieve the strain. For half an hour we sat there with our guns cocked and ready, with our backs up against the thorn front of our shelter, hoping to be able to kill the old fellow instantly if he should charge, but far from certain that we could place our shots properly if he did.

Certainly we had no means of knowing what to expect, and rarely have there been two more relieved hunters than we, when finally the old fellow gave it up and wandered away. Just how dangerous the situation actually was I have no means of knowing. But there is no doubt that at the time we had all the sensations that extreme danger could give us.

On another occasion when Dugmore had left Africa and I was protecting Cherrie Kearton on what was probably the first motion-picture expedition that ever made cinema records of African game, I had a demonstration of how suddenly and unexpectedly these blundering beasts can appear.

I had been fortunate, on one occasion, to see a band of fourteen lions while I was hunting not far from the Kiu district, and having joined Kearton I told him of it. It was sufficiently unusual to be decidedly interesting, and one day, while we were passing the spot at which I had seen them, I pointed it out.

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

We were making our way along the bank of a dry stream bed, beyond which, about thirty yards away, lay the bushes, on the other side of which the fourteen lions had been. Kearton and I were in the lead, two *askaris* were following us, and after them came our camera boy, our gun bearers, and our water boy.

"There's the place where the lions were, Kearton," I remarked casually, pointing toward the clump of brush across the stream bed.

And even while I had my hand raised, I heard a commotion among the brush.

"Good Lord, they're there now!" cried Kearton.

At the same moment our camera boy dashed up from behind, trying to shout something. But if he ever got it out I did n't understand him, and then he was gone, at top speed, for the protection of a thorn tree twenty yards away.

Instantly two rhinos appeared from the brush, charging with all their speed. Every one of us turned to run, for they had come so quickly that we had no time to think. But after two or three yards I realized that I could n't outrun them, and furthermore, the tree nearest which we were was already sheltering the two *askaris*, the water boy, and Kearton. The result was that I turned to fire. But by then the two ungainly animals were down in the dry stream bed, and I could see only the tips of their horns and the tops of their backs. There was no target, and I had to wait. In a

RHINOS

moment they were climbing the bank, and I pulled one trigger. To my horror the gun did not go off! I pulled again! Another misfire! And by now both those rhinos were within five yards of me. I turned and ran, passing close beside the tree. I remember seeing Kearton kneeling and aiming.

"Fire, Kearton!" I cried as I passed, and I heard his gun go off. One of the rhinos was close behind me, I knew. How close, I could not tell, but hoping to throw him off his charge I changed my course to the right, to bring me behind the tree, past which, by this time, I had gone about three or four yards. As I turned I was reloading, and out of the corner of my eye I saw a fearful situation. Kearton had fired at the rhino that was after me, while the tree obscured the other. The rhino he hit hesitated for just the fraction of a second that made my get-away possible and then came on, while Kearton, thinking to dodge him, darted around the tree and almost ran squarely on to the other's horn. He saw his danger in time and stopped, just as the rhino went past not more than three feet away. Then, to their everlasting credit, the two Masai spearmen went into action. One was facing each way, and as the rhinos went past the tree each thrust with his spear. The attack was too painful and sudden to be resisted, and by great good fortune, the two rhinos parted, one going in each direction. The native who had thrust at the wounded rhino had merely struck the beast's horn, but the man had thrown all his

TRAILS OF THE HUNTED

power into the thrust and had bent fully three inches of the heavy spear until it formed a semi-circle. The other man had done even better, and his rhino galloped off with twelve inches of spear in his neck. After half a dozen jumps the spear fell out, badly bent, and all of us, once we were certain that the animals were not coming back, sat down exhausted in order to recover our composure.

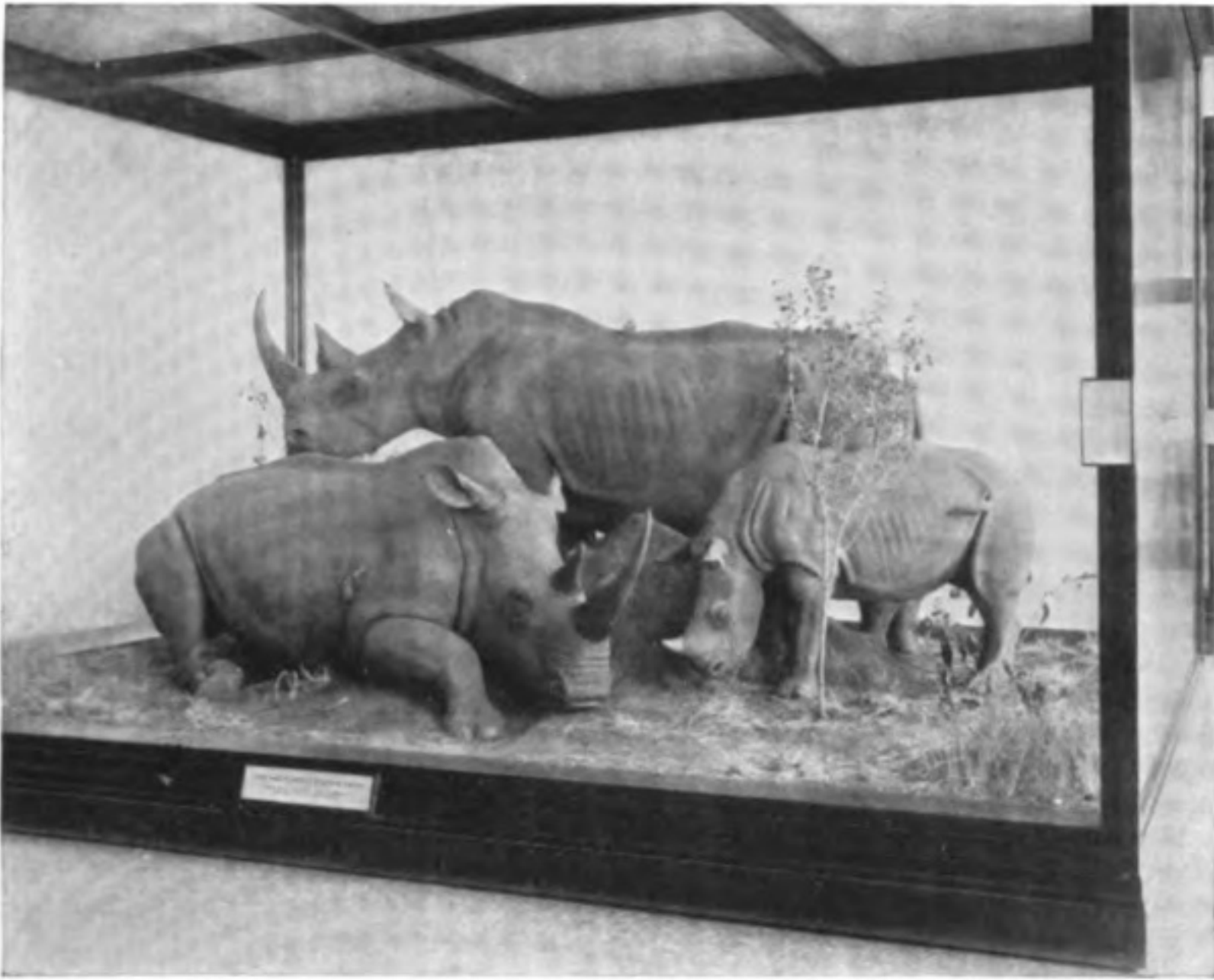
It is such experiences that make one decide, in time, that rhinos are beasts it is best to let alone.



AFRICAN BLACK RHINO WITH TICK BIRDS
Bronze Sculptured by the Author. Owned by Colonel Roosevelt



AFRICAN BUFFALO
*Bronze Sculptured by the Author. The African Big Game Club's
Memorial to Captain Selous*



WHITE RHINO GROUP

*Collected by Colonel Roosevelt and Designed and Mounted by the
Author. Now in the National Museum, Washington*