

A  
CABINET  
OF  
QUADRUPEDS,

*with Historical and Scientific*

*Descriptions*

BY JOHN CHURCH. F.M.S.

VOL. 1.

*Drawn by J. Abelson.*

*Engraved by J. Tookey.*



LONDON.

Printed for *Darton & Harvey,*

1805.

A

# Cabinet of Quadrupeds;

CONSISTING OF

HIGHLY-FINISHED ENGRAVINGS,

BY JAMES TOOKEY;

FROM

DRAWINGS, BY JULIUS IBBETSON;

WITH

*HISTORICAL AND SCIENTIFIC DESCRIPTIONS,*

BY JOHN CHURCH,

FELLOW OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

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RHINOCEROS.

## THE RHINOCEROS (A).

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### GENERIC CHARACTERS.

Two obtuse, incisive teeth in each jaw, placed remote from each other.

Each hoof divided into three parts.

One solid, conic horn on the nose.

There is a variety found with two horns, which differs also from this in other particulars.

### SYNONIMS.

RHINOCEROS, *Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. viii. c. 20. Raii Syn. Quad. 122. Klein Quad. 26. Briffon Quad. 78. Buffon, xi. 174. tab. vii.*

RHINOCEROS, OR ABBADOS, *Bontius Ind. 50. Du Halde China, i. 120.*

THIS animal is next in size to the Elephant; it is six feet high, and twelve long, and bulky in proportion; its legs are comparatively much shorter than those of the Elephant. It is found in the deserts of Africa, and some parts of the East Indies, and in general wherever the Elephant is found.

Many authors consider this as the Rem or Reem, often mentioned in the Scriptures, particularly Numb. 23, v. 22. Deut. 23, v. 17. Job 29, v. 12. Psalm 22, v. 22. Psalm 29, v. 6, and elsewhere. The translators have there called it the Unicorn; however, the fact is, the animal there described is said to possess many of the known qualities of the Rhinoceros; as swiftness, great strength, rage, and untractableness.

It was early known to the Romans, as appears from a figure of it on the Prænestine pavement, which represents the variety with two horns.

(A) The name is derived from the Greek *ῥίς, ῥίνος*, the nose, and *κέρας* a horn.

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According to M. Ladvocat<sup>(A)</sup>, Agatarchides was the first who described the Rhinoceros. He lived in the reign of Ptolemy Philometer, about 480 years before the birth of our blessed Saviour. Afterwards Diodorus Siculus, Pliny, Artemidorus, Strabo, Elian, Oppian, Martial, and many others make mention of it. Artemidorus<sup>(B)</sup> professes to have seen one, and accordingly his description is the most exact of any. This seems to be the animal which Aristotle<sup>(C)</sup> calls the Oryx and the Indian Afs. Mr. Pennant judiciously observes, that “his informers might well compare the clumsy shape of the Rhinoceros to that of an Afs, so that the philosopher might easily be induced to pronounce it a whole-footed animal.” It is likewise the Bos Unicornis and Fera Rhinoceros of Pliny<sup>(D)</sup>, who exactly describes the large black horn on the fore-head and the hog-like tail. Other writers of later date have also described it; as Bontius, Aldrovandus, Chardin, and Ruysh; but their accounts are very inaccurate and full of fabulous stories, such as that related by Alkazuin, an Arabian writer, who says that, when the Rhinoceros drinks at a river, all other animals keep at a respectful distance till he has done; and that, when it has taken possession of any place, no other animal dares approach within many miles of it, and many other such absurdities.

Dion<sup>(E)</sup> says, that the Emperor Augustus was the first who introduced this animal into the shows at Rome, on his triumph over Cleopatra. But Pliny<sup>(F)</sup>, who was better acquainted with the Roman history, assures us, that Pompey the Great exhibited this spectacle first; and this is confirmed by Solinus, according to Polybius<sup>(G)</sup>. Pliny<sup>(H)</sup> says, further, that it at length became a favourite exhibition. In the reign of Domitian it was frequently exhibited, and made to combat the Bull. And Martial the poet, who was an eye witness, says, that no animal fights fiercer or stronger. He says, the Rhinoceros will lift up a Bull with his horn like a football. The same poet remarks, that he is not easily provoked, but when he is once enraged, nothing

(A) Lettre sur le Rhinoceros.

(B) Strabo, lib. xvi.

(C) Hist. Anim. lib. ii. c. 1.

(D) Hist. Nat. lib. viii. c. 21.

(E) Dion. Caf. i. 51.

(F) Hist. Nat. lib. viii. c. 20.

(G) Polyb. c. 43.

(H) Hist. Nat. lib. vii. c. 20.

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can be more terrible. He says likewise, that a Rhinoceros lifted up a Bear, with his two horns(A), as easily as a Bull would a football.

The Rhinoceros is likewise mentioned during the reigns of Antoninus Pius, and Heliogabulus; but, after the decline of the Roman Empire, no more mention is made of it, till the year 1515, when one is said to have combated an Elephant at Lisbon, under the reign of King Emmanuel, and to have killed the Elephant. Some were afterwards brought to Portugal and Spain, and one at length made its appearance in London, in the years 1684 and 1685, and another some years after; but there is no mention of any having reached either Germany or France till the year 1748, when one was exhibited at Paris; it was brought from the province of Acham, in the dominions of the King of Ava(B), was very tame, gentle, and even caressing. It was continually eating hay, bread, fruit, peas, and beans, and in short every thing that was given it, except fish and flesh, which it would not touch. The keeper said it consumed daily sixty pounds of hay and twenty pounds of bread, and drank fourteen pails of water; but this account seems rather exaggerated. It was very fond of the smoke of tobacco, and appeared much pleased when it was blown into its nose and mouth. It was much delighted with sharp prickly plants and thorny branches of trees. "I have often given it," says father Le Compte, "branches with very sharp and strong thorns on them, and have been surpris'd at the address with which it bent and broke them in its mouth, without seeming to be in the least incommoded by them: it is true they sometimes drew blood from the mouth and tongue; but perhaps that even rendered them more palatable, and those little wounds served only to cause a sensation similar to what is excited by salt, pepper, &c. on ours." This circumstance has probably given rise to the fabulous story, that the tongue is as rough as a file; whereas, on the contrary, it resembles much the tongue of a Hog, and is as soft as velvet to the touch.

(A) Commentators have been much perplexed to explain this passage in Martial, and have even suspected some error in the text; whereas it is evident the poet means the two-horned Rhinoceros, one of which was probably then at Rome, as it is represented on a coin of Domitian, under whose reign Martial lived. *Phil. Tran.* xi. 913.

(B) Blomart. *Dict. Rais. des Anim.*



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The ingenious and accurate Dr. Parsons published a history of the Rhinoceros in 1743, an abstract from which cannot but prove acceptable, on account of its undoubted authenticity. The individual described by him was brought from Bengal, and although only two years old, the expence of the food and journey amounted to near one thousand pounds sterling; his daily food was seven pounds of rice, mixed with three pounds of sugar: and given him at three meals; besides which he had hay and green herbs, which last he preferred: he drank large quantities of water. His disposition appeared to be peaceable, and he readily suffered all parts of his body to be touched. When hungry, or struck by any one, he became mischievous, and in both cases nothing appeased him but food. When enraged, he sprang forward, and nimbly raised himself to a considerable height, pushing at the same time his head furiously against the walls, which he performed with amazing quickness, notwithstanding his heavy aspect and unwieldy mass. "I often observed," says Dr. Parsons, "these movements produced by rage or impatience, especially in the mornings before his rice and sugar were brought him. The vivacity and promptitude of his motions, induced me to think, that he was altogether unconquerable, and that he could easily overtake any man who should offend him.

"This Rhinoceros, at the age of two years, was not taller than a young Cow that has never produced; but his body was very long and very thick. His head was disproportionably large. From the ears to the horn there was a concavity, the two extremities of which, namely, the upper end of the muzzle and the upper part near the ears were considerably raised. The horn, which was not yet above an inch high, was black, smooth at the top, but full of wrinkles directed backwards at the base. The nostrils were situated very low, being not above an inch distant from the opening of the mouth. The under lip was pretty similar to that of an Ox; but the upper lip had a great resemblance to that of a Horse, with this advantageous difference, that the Rhinoceros can lengthen his, move it from side to side, roll it about a staff, and seize with it any object he wishes to carry to his mouth. The tongue of this young Rhinoceros was soft like that of a Calf; his eyes were without any vivacity, in figure resembling those of a Hog, and were situated lower or

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nearest the nostrils than in any other quadruped. His ears were large, thin at the extremities, and contracted at their origin by a kind of annular rugosity. The neck was very short, and surrounded by two thick folds of skin. The shoulders were very thick; and at their juncture there was another fold of skin which descended on the fore-legs. The body of this young Rhinoceros was very thick, and pretty much resembled that of a Cow near the end of her gestation. Between the body and the crupper there was another fold which descended on the hind-legs; and lastly, another fold transversely surrounded the lower part of the crupper, at some distance from the tail. The belly was large, and hung near the ground, particularly its middle part. The legs were short, thick, round, and strong, and their joint bended backwards: this joint, which, when the animal lay down, was covered with a remarkable fold of the skin, became apparent when he stood. The tail, which was thin, and proportionably short, grew a little thicker at the extremity, which was garnished with some short, thick, hard hairs. The skin was impenetrable, and so thick, that when a man laid hold of any of the folds, he would imagine he was handling a wooden plank of half an inch thick. Dr. Grew remarks that, when tanned, it is excessively hard, and thicker than that of any other terrestrial animal. It is every where covered, more or less, with incrustations, in the form of galls or tuberosities, which are small on the top of the neck and back, but become larger on the sides: the largest are on the shoulders and crupper: they extend along the thighs and legs, and even on the feet; but between the folds the skin is penetrable, delicate, and as soft as silk to the touch, while the external part of the fold is equally hard with the rest. This tender skin between the folds is of a light flesh-colour; and the skin of the belly is nearly of the same colour and consistence. The galls or tuberosities on the skin should not be compared to scales; they are simple indurations only, without any regularity in their figure, or symmetry in their respective positions. The flexibility of the skin in the folds enables the Rhinoceros to move his head, neck, and members, with facility. The whole body, except at the joints, is inflexible, and resembles a coat of mail."

The horn of the Rhinoceros is entirely solid, and formed of the hardest bony substance, growing from the upper maxillary bone by so strong an

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apophyse as seemingly to make but one part with it. In a full-grown animal it is sometimes near four feet long, and six or seven inches in diameter at the base. Its general colour is brown; though some have been seen grey, and even white, and these are held in greatest esteem. Martial informs us (A) that the horn was much valued by the Romans, and bore a high price, and that the ladies of fashion used them in the baths to hold their essence-bottles and oils. It is likewise much valued in India, and Pope Clement VII. presented one to the King of France as a very choice rarity. The Venetians purchased one at a high price of a Jew; and it is related (B) that when the French plundered the palace of Peter de Medicis, they found the horn of a Rhinoceros, which they considered as a great treasure. The ideal value is however now much lessened, and it is only preserved in the cabinets of the curious. Many medicinal virtues have been ascribed to it, but without foundation.

The age of this animal is not ascertained with any degree of certainty. The female produces but one young one at a time, and at considerable periods. If it is true, as some say, that they bring forth at three years, it is probable, from analogy, that they do not outlive twenty.

The Rhinoceros delights in marshy and luxuriant pastures, and grazes as the Ox does; but its favourite food is the stinking stapelia (c). It is fond of wallowing in the mud like a Hog, and will plunge into the water like a Duck to cool itself.

As the Rhinoceros is naturally of a pacific temper, it is probable that the account Pliny gives of its engaging the Elephant is without foundation. It is a solitary animal, and never attacks man but when provoked: it then becomes very furious and formidable. Mr. Pennant mentions a Shropshire gentleman whose belly was ripped open by the horn of one of these animals while in India, and he was so fortunate as to survive it.

The usual method of taking this animal, is in pits dug in the paths by which they go to drink, and covered over dexterously with branches, grass, &c. It is also sometimes shot in the belly as it lies sleeping on one

(A) Martial, lib. xiv. Epig. 53. (B) Paul Jov. Hist. Anim. lib. xviii. (C) Botanic Mag. vol. i.

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side, but this is not easy to accomplish, on account of the acuteness of its smell and hearing, which two senses it is said to possess in very high perfection.

Buffon says, there is a foetus of a Rhinoceros in the Royal Cabinet, which was taken from the mother in the Island of Java. By the memoir accompanying this foetus we are informed, that twenty-eight hunters having assembled to attack the dam, they followed her at a distance for some days, detaching one or two of their number from time to time to reconnoitre her situation; that by this means they surpris'd her while asleep; and silently approached so near, that the twenty-eight muskets were discharged at once into the lower part of her belly.

The Asiatics sometimes tame these animals, and bring them into the field of battle, to strike terror into their enemies; but they are in general so unmanageable, that they do more harm than good, and frequently turn on their masters.

Bontius and others say, that the Indians eat the flesh of the Rhinoceros, and that it is very well flavoured: it is however very coarse and hard.