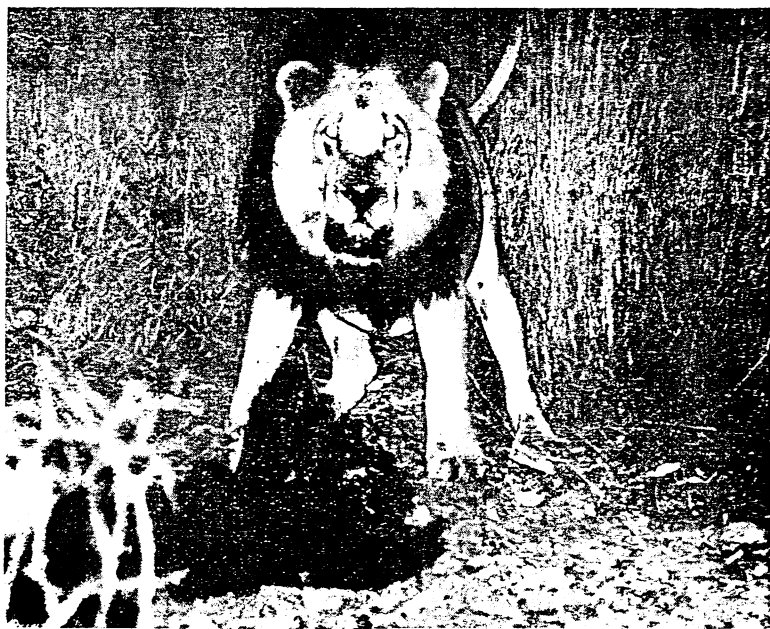


but with the many strange and sometimes treacherous tribes with which he had to deal. Even W. D. M. Bell, generally regarded as the most successful elephant hunter of all time, and who certainly knew how to handle savages, can hardly have been held in higher esteem.

Neumann appears to have been of an extremely shy, hyper-sensitive nature, and subject to alternate fits of gaiety and depression, but when happy was of such a charming, lovable temperament to all who knew him intimately that his society was a continuous pleasure. "In crowds he was like a hunted fox," wrote one of his friends, "and it was strange to see a man who would cheerfully face a wounded lion or elephant thrown into a very panic of nervousness by the traffic of Piccadilly."

Like many more before and since his time Neumann found the call of Africa irresistible and in 1902 he returned to hunt in the Mt. Kenya district, taking to Mombasa over one ton of ivory. After refitting he continued hunting in Turkhana, on the Northern Uaso Nyiro and in the Lorian Swamp until July, 1906. Meanwhile (early in 1905) a big move in the direction of game preservation in East Africa took place, and Neumann's life as an elephant hunter was at an end. His intention was to build a small house on the slopes of Mt. Kenya, but on May 29, 1907, he died suddenly in London.



Surprised over his meal!
A lion on the Etosha Pan glares at the photographer, whose flashlight, from a distance of ten yards, startles him.

(Photo: Lutz Heck.)

My First Encounter With A Black Rhino

Written and Illustrated by

Dr. P. D. Swanepoel

3400

BEING a regular visitor to the Kruger National Park, it was with great excitement and anticipation that we set out on our first trip to the Hluhluwe Game Reserve to "shoot" that prehistoric pachyderm, the rhino, particularly the so-called black variety. But that same afternoon might easily have been my last . . .

Having arrived at the rest camp, we hurriedly swallowed some lunch while our guide was being summoned. This was going to be thrilling. Imagine being able to get out of one's car and even stalking the game on foot.

In due course our guide arrived and we set out. We had already reached the boundary of the park and had turned back when we spotted a black rhino settling down under a bush for some shade. We pulled up and our guide suggested we walk closer, leaving my wife and baby in the car.

The rhino was lying about a hundred yards off the road and the guide approached at an angle, taking me to a tree which he suggested I climb in case of a charge. I set up my tripod and camera while he proceeded towards a tree about twenty yards off and even a little closer to the sleeping beauty. He then lit a cigarette, walked a few paces towards the rhino and started whistling. Abruptly the rhino rose. He was not going to have his siesta so rudely interrupted without retaliating. I was still thinking of focussing when he charged straight at the boy. In a flash the guide was at his tree, but his feet had not cleared the ground by more than two or three feet when the rhino, with a satisfied grunt, thrust his razor-like horn into the unfortunate victim. He must have stood next to the tree for only a few seconds but to me it seemed like many minutes, while he had the boy's leg trapped between his body and the tree, and with each movement, I could see the guide's grip gradually slipping . . . It was only a matter of seconds now before he would fall to the ground, as by now there was a free flow of blood down the tree stem . . . But, fortunately, the rhino gave a triumphant snort and, with tail curled in the air, trotted off directly away from us.

I was simply awe-struck and paralysed while this tragedy was taking place within twenty yards of me. The rhino might just as well have come for me, in which case I would most certainly not have been the narrator of this incident, as I was taken completely by surprise. It happened so suddenly and the beast had travelled at such speed that it never even dawned on me to climb the tree.

9(3) 1955

The Oribi Expedition - April, 1955

by

Zulu Observer



Concentrated Aggression!
A black Rhino in the Hluhluwe Game Reserve debating whether to charge.

The guide could hardly walk, blood streaming down his leg. After I had assisted him back to the car, I dressed his wound and made him as comfortable as possible.

We dashed back to camp where, after reporting the accident, I dressed the wound properly and gave the boy an injection for pain and shock. The horn had penetrated the thigh posteriorly, immediately below the buttock, for a distance of at least five inches, but fortunately had not broken the bone or severed any important vessels or nerves.

This incident was such a shock to us that we were all for going home, but the Conservator very kindly gave us another guide and advised us to go and see the square-lipped, peace-loving type.

A few days later we returned to the scene of the accident. The distance covered by the rhino had been thirty-five yards!

Note: (i) The guide, I believe, has recovered completely.

(ii) I was informed by the Zulu guides that there is a smaller type of black rhino, called by them Ipunyani, as opposed to the ordinary one, Ipetshani. This smaller type does not develop the red marks on the sides and is very much the more aggressive of the two, according to my informants.

IT was the privilege and fortune of the Society's April Expedition to be the guests of the Natal Parks Board at the Oribi Gorge Nature Reserve. We are indebted to the Director for this privilege and our thanks are due to Ranger Tony Drower for the considerable hospitality shown to us.

The scenery in the Gorge is, of course, spectacular. Through the ages the Umzimkulwana River has worn through the 300 feet of Table Mountain sandstone and has eventually reached the very hard red and black granite. From the banks of the river, on both sides, there are steep slopes that rise some distance to the foot of the precipitous krantzies, that are in themselves well over a hundred feet high. A glance at the vegetation showed that the rain-bearing winds came from the south; consequently the northern banks of the Gorge were covered in a dense luxuriant forest, whilst on the southern banks Euphorbias and trees preferred the drier conditions.

It is uncertain how long ago the Bushmen inhabited the Oribi Gorge. Experts say that it was many hundreds of years ago, whilst other authorities consider that the paintings in the caves are over a thousand years old. Suffice it to say that it was a moving experience to enter into one of the larger caves that they had sensibly chosen on the dry side of the gorge. One could not help feeling the strong atmosphere that pervades these caves. How easy it was to transcend time and to imagine a group of 'fat-tailed' Bushmen sitting on their haunches, selecting their 'imported' flints and shaping arrow-heads that would soon be whizzing through the air, carrying the deadly poison to some unsuspecting creature. In the far corner of this expansive cave the ceiling had become black with smoke.

Outside the sheltered cave, down in the valley, the Umzimkulwana River slithered its way like a silvery snake, through the dense forests of yellow-woods, sneeze-woods, umkuhlus, umsimbitis and giant white stinkwoods.

Camping in the Shade of an Umvumvu Tree

We arrived at our camping-site after dark but fortunately the moon had already risen and the pale moonlight showed up in dramatic relief the towering rock-faces and the ghostly white trunks of the forest of Euphorbias. We did not pitch our tents that night but slept out under the stars, to be awakened in the morning by a chorus from Hadedas, Knysna Louries and Natal Francolins.

It was not long before we were wandering down the road or along the paths lined with pale blue Plumbago and the orange Cape Honeysuckle (*Tecomaria capensis*). Our necks were