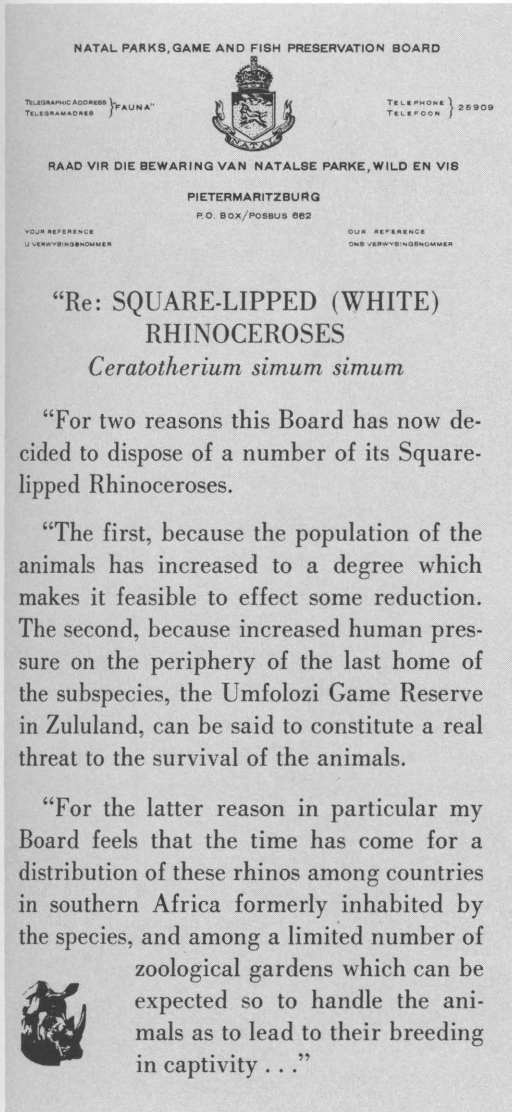


# RHINOS... *Big News in a Brief Letter*

By George H. Pournelle  
CURATOR OF MAMMALS



Zoo's "want" list as this almost extinct South African race of the spectacular Square-lipped Rhinoceros. According to recent census count they number only about six hundred individuals.

Letters, cables and even transoceanic telephone calls were exchanged between the Zoo and various people in South Africa within the next few days. It was highly imperative that a reputable agent be on hand to take charge and coordinate the thousand and one details necessary to move these coveted rarities from the Umfolozi Reserve to San Diego. Sturdy crates had to be constructed that would comfortably and safely contain the animals during their journey! A large truck had to be engaged to convey them from the Reserve to the seaport of Durban. Arrangements for passage to New York had to be effected well in advance of the departure date.

Other details were concerned with the tremendous volume of paper work: health certificates, export permits and other documents necessary to export the animals. At the suggestion of Roland Lindemann, who also was planning to export a pair of rhinos for the Catskill Game Farm which he directs in New York State, the services of Walter C. Schulz were obtained to act as the Zoo's agent. We knew that Mr. Schulz of Okahandja, South West Africa, was a competent animal exporter. He operated one of the few overseas stations recognized by our United States Department of Agriculture for quarantine of hoofed animals awaiting import into the United States and was thoroughly familiar with the problems involved in shipping all types of animals.

#### ON THE SCENE

Mr. Schulz spent several weeks working with officials of the Umfolozi Reserve. He was present during capture operations and subsequent transportation of the rhinos to Durban for shipment aboard the *S.S. African Star*, sailing from that East Natal port on August 12. Capture of these beasts was accomplished by use of a tranquilizer fired from a gun. The following excerpt from the

**S**O READ the opening paragraphs of a totally unexpected letter from Colonel Jack Vincent, Director of the Natal Parks Game and Fish Preservation Board. The communication arrived in February, 1962, and offered the San Diego Zoo a pair of these rare rhinoceroses.

Excitement ran high in the Zoo! Few species have been so perennially high on the San Diego



Mandhla, left, was testing the mud wallow in his new home just before Tombasan drew his attention.

newspaper *Star Johannesburg*, April 24, 1962, describes this method of capture:

"The team consists of a gunner who fires the anaesthetizing dart, two rangers on horseback who follow the darted rhino, and a ranger in charge of the loading gang and operations.

"In addition there is one African game guard used as a scout and another eight labourers to handle the heavy crates.

"The man with the gun has to get within fifteen paces of the target before firing and once he fires, the horsemen swing into action, following the rhino through Umfolozi's thick bush country so that it does not get lost when the dart takes effect."

After immobilization of the ponderous animal a special truck and crate move in to transport the rhino to an enclosure. There it soon recovers and begins a period of adjustment to captive life.

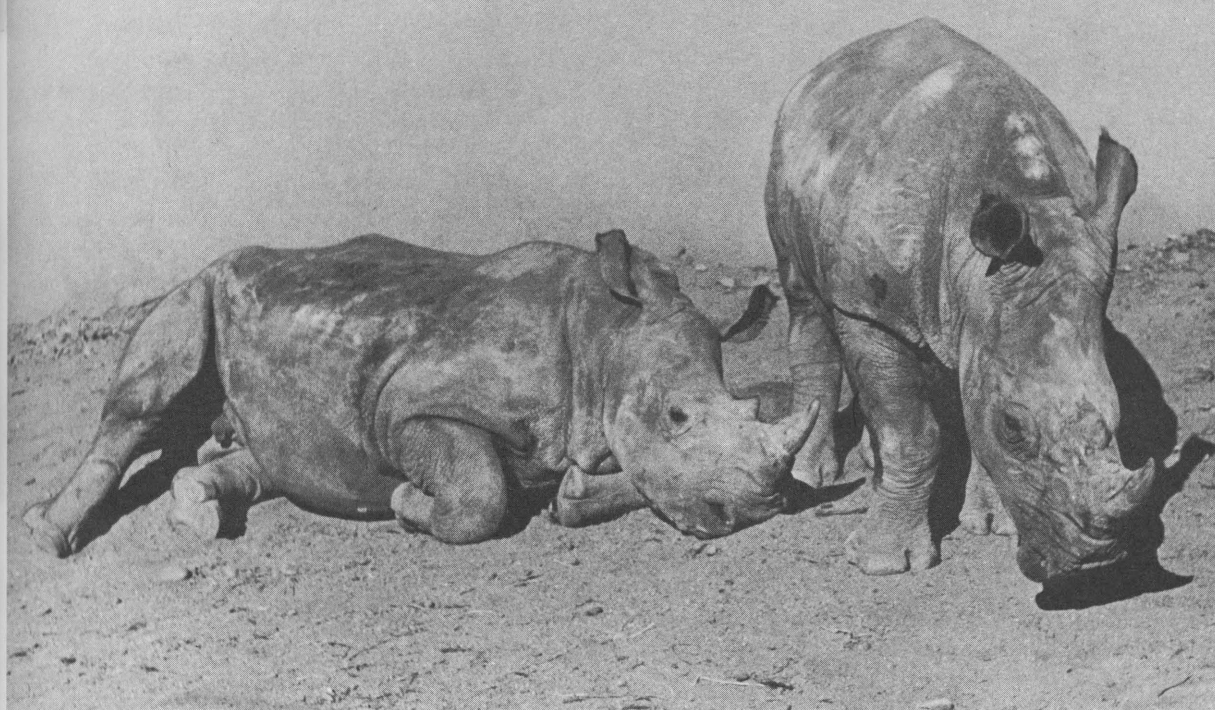
#### **ABOARD THE S.S. AFRICAN STAR**

Accompanying the San Diego Zoo's rhinos on their ocean voyage from Durban to New York was Harry Overbaugh of the Catskill Game Farm. Mr. Overbaugh had been in the Umfolozi

Reserve to arrange transportation for a pair of these rhinos for the Catskill Game Farm, and a pair for New York's Bronx Zoo. Previous arrangements had been made with Roland Lindemann to include the San Diego Zoo's animals among Mr. Overbaugh's charges. It was learned later that the *African Star* had missed by one day a violent hurricane that lashed the South African coast with winds reported at 90 miles an hour.

The shipment arrived safely in New York on September 4, and was met by Ralph Davis, our Zoo's principal mammal keeper, who accompanied the animals to San Diego via a special end-opening express car. Our new arrivals, *Mandhla* (the strong one) and *Tombasan* (nice girl, teenager), both named from the Zulu language, took up residence in their new moated enclosure on our Large Mammal Mesa on September 8, 1962. Mandhla weighed 1,655 pounds, and Tombasan, 1,456 pounds.

There is a good possibility that within a few years we will be able to tell Colonel Vincent that his hopes have been realized with the birth of a Square-lipped Rhinoceros in the San Diego Zoo.



Despite the bulk of these young animals, approximately two years of age and already approaching a ton in weight, they handle themselves with remarkable grace.

A well acclimated pair.

