

A TRIP TO NEPAL

By LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR FREDERICK GUNSON,

with illustrations from photographs by the DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND

Sir Frederick Gunson, C.B.I., C.I.E., C.V.D., was British Resident and, later, British Envoy in Nepal from 1895 to 1912, and negotiated and signed the Anglo-Nepalese Treaty of December, 1911. He was the first of the Prince of Wales' camp when H.R.H. died in Nepal in December, 1911.

I suppose to be the most beautiful view from the Valley of Kathmandu. The hills are all green and the sky is blue. The air is fresh and the water is pure. The people are friendly and the food is good. The climate is just what I need. I am very glad to be here. I have been to many places, but this is the best. I have seen many things, but this is the most interesting. I have met many people, but these are the best. I have seen many things, but this is the most interesting. I have met many people, but these are the best. I have seen many things, but this is the most interesting. I have met many people, but these are the best.



THE SQUARE AT KATMANDU

The city suffered terribly in the earthquake of 1934

The road is to the left of the mountain, and we travelled upwards to meet cars at the top of the pass. The road is very narrow and winding, and we had to be very careful. The view is very beautiful, and we saw many things. The people are very friendly, and we were very well received. The food is very good, and the climate is very pleasant. I am very glad to be here. I have been to many places, but this is the best. I have seen many things, but this is the most interesting. I have met many people, but these are the best.

Leaving the cars, we mounted the pack-sets into the pass which had been sent to meet us and rode slowly up the mountain-side to our resting place, the temple at Bhaktapur. The air was very fresh, and we were very well received. The food is very good, and the climate is very pleasant. I am very glad to be here. I have been to many places, but this is the best. I have seen many things, but this is the most interesting. I have met many people, but these are the best.

welcome refreshments sent by the British Envoy ensured our comfort.

Next morning we continued the climb to the top of the pass and walked (it is much too steep to ride) to the valley below, whence a winding, undulating road led us to the foot of the next pass. Another stiff climb brought us to the top (8,000ft.), whence we overlooked the valley of Kathmandu, spread like a map below us and bounded in the far distance by the snowy peaks of the great Himalayan ranges. Another steep descent brought us to the valley itself, and motor cars sent by the Prime Minister carried



THE KING'S DURBAR HALL, AT KATMANDU



H.H. THE MAHARAJA, PRIME MINISTER OF NEPAL.

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Jan 15th, 1935

COUNTRY LIFE.

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By **LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR FREDERICK O'CONNOR,**
with illustrations from photographs by the **DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND**

Sir Frederick O'Connor, C.S.I., C.I.E., C.V.O., was British Resident and, later, British Envoy in Nepal from December, 1918 to April, 1923, and negotiated and signed the Anglo-Nepal Treaty of December, 1923. He was in charge of the Prince of Wales' camp when H.R.H. died in Nepal in December, 1921

In response to an invitation from the Prime Minister of Nepal (H.H. Maharaja Sir Juddha Shum Shere Jung), a small party, which included the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, Commandant Gammage and myself, paid a visit to Nepal last January.

We first proceeded to the capital, Kathmandu, by the picturesque and difficult route which has so often been described by various travellers, and which has been so greatly improved during recent years. Leaving Calcutta in British India at the junction of Ranchal in Northern Bihar, we travelled the last third of the journey—twenty-five miles—on the Nepal Railway, two-foot gauge, and then through level rice fields for about eight miles of road, the home of many



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 SIR FREDERICK O'CONNOR, C.S.I., C.I.E., C.V.O., was British Resident
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This took us to the foot of the mountains, and we transferred ourselves to motor cars and travelled the next twenty-five miles through lovely mountain scenery, rising gradually along the courses of the hill streams and winding in and out as the well graded road rose to its terminus, where the real climbing begins.

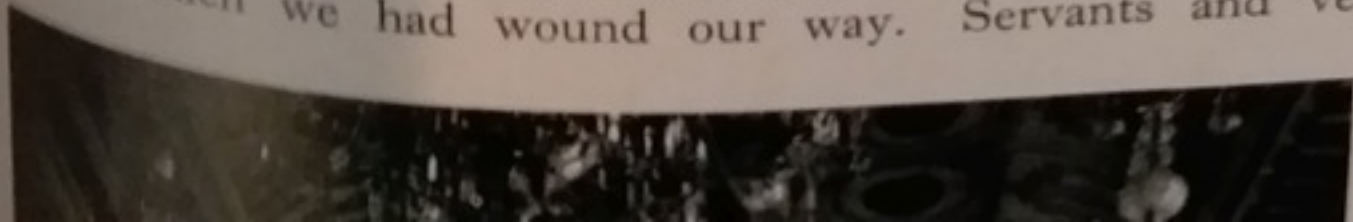
Leaving the cars, we mounted the thick-set little Tibetan ponies which had been sent to meet us and rode slowly up the steep mountain path to our resting place, the bungalow at Sisagarhi, 6,000ft. above sea level. The air was cold, but we were rewarded by the wonderful view to the southward of the hills and valleys through which we had wound our way. Servants and very



THE SQUARE
 The city suffered terribly

welcome refreshment and comfort.

Next morning I and walked (it is a winding path) whence a winding pass. Another steep pass we overlooked the valley and bounded us and bounded the great Himalayan range the valley itself, and





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H.H. THE MAHARAJA, PRIME MINISTER OF NEPAL

in its vicinity to the capital. Here, during our four days' stay, we lived at the British Legation as the guests of the British Minister, Sir Charles Dukes.

I had just visited the Kammunda valley in December, 1933, just before the disastrous earthquake which caused such fearful damage and loss of life in Behar in January, 1934. Kammunda was right in the track of the earthquake and suffered terribly. Hardly a house in the whole valley escaped damage, and the death toll was estimated at some 4,000. During the twelve months which had elapsed between the earthquake and our visit an immense amount of reconstruction had been effected, but even so its traces were everywhere apparent. Most of the larger houses and palaces were still uninhabitable, and the wonderful Hindu temples, of which there are such numbers in Kammunda and its sister cities, Patan and Bhadgaon, had nearly all suffered more or less. One notable exception was the most sacred temple of all, Pashupati, which had, by an apparent miracle, escaped uninjured; and the two great Buddhist temples of Bodhi and Shwamburath are

well governed and happy little country, and the improvements in the internal administration of the country have been effected during Sir Joodha Shum Shere Jung's reign, and he has maintained the long-standing relations of friendship with the sphere of foreign policy—namely, the friendship with Britain. It is interesting to note, too, that the first Nepalese Minister to the Court of St. James's is his eldest son, General Sir Bahadur Shum Shere Jung, whose picturesque uniform and appearance attracted much notice during the recent Jubilee ceremonies. Sir Joodha is a very keen and energetic sportsman, and his predecessors, is a fine specimen of a ruler.

During our short stay at Kammunda, we attended a function on the *maidan* (the great public ground in the centre of the city) on the occasion of the official opening of a new light installation, an addition to the old *maidan* which



THE HUNTING PARTY: INCLUDING THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND
SIR FREDERICK O'CONNOR AND COMMANDER EDMUNSTINE

also intact. One of the accompanying photographs shows the square at Kammunda.

During our four days' stay at Kammunda, the Prime Minister gave us every facility for visiting the three cities and for examining and photographing temples and other objects of interest, and we were able also to observe at close range the working of the remarkable system of government which prevails in Nepal. As it (or should be) now well known, Nepal does not form a portion of the Indian Empire, but is an absolutely independent Hindu kingdom occupying a section of the Himalayan Mountains roughly five hundred miles long by one hundred miles wide, with a population of 3,000,000 to 4,000,000.

The head of the Government is the King, who, however, rules through the medium of an hereditary Prime Minister in whose hands are concentrated all administrative and executive powers. The method of succession to the Prime Ministership is also peculiar, as it passes not from father to son but, where there are brothers, from brother to brother, and then to the eldest born in the next generation; and so, by right of primogeniture, through that generation.

Sir Joodha Shum Shere Jung, the present Prime Minister, is actually the fifth brother to hold this office, and he is the third whom I have known personally. Under the rule and guidance of this remarkable dynasty, Nepal has prospered and has advanced continuously in every aspect of the administration. She is a

inaugurated by Sir Chandu Shum Shere Jung, who, before his Majesty the King passed away, was supported by the Prime Minister, the Commander and their numerous relatives, all dressed in their formal uniforms and the jewelled headpieces worn by the families of Nepal, and we were introduced to the King by His Highness the Prime Minister.

While in the valley, a change of weather rendered our stay very heavy rain at Kammunda, and we were obliged to make our return journey to the hills—one of the heaviest snowfalls in the valley since we made our return journey, and the snow was so deep that we were obliged to start our journey by the motor road by the hills, and by the night we were at Raxauli and a night's journey to Bhadgaon, Thabos, and our starting point.

Bhadgaon Thabos is a tiny village, the only line to the Nepal frontier, and we were met by Colonel Dundas Shum Shere Jung, the Prime Minister to look after us. We were very courteous at once on the ground of the camp already pitched and ready for us at the same site where the British had pitched their camp in Nepal in December, 1933. The camp was a pleasant dinner with stables. The camp was situated below, and looking towards the

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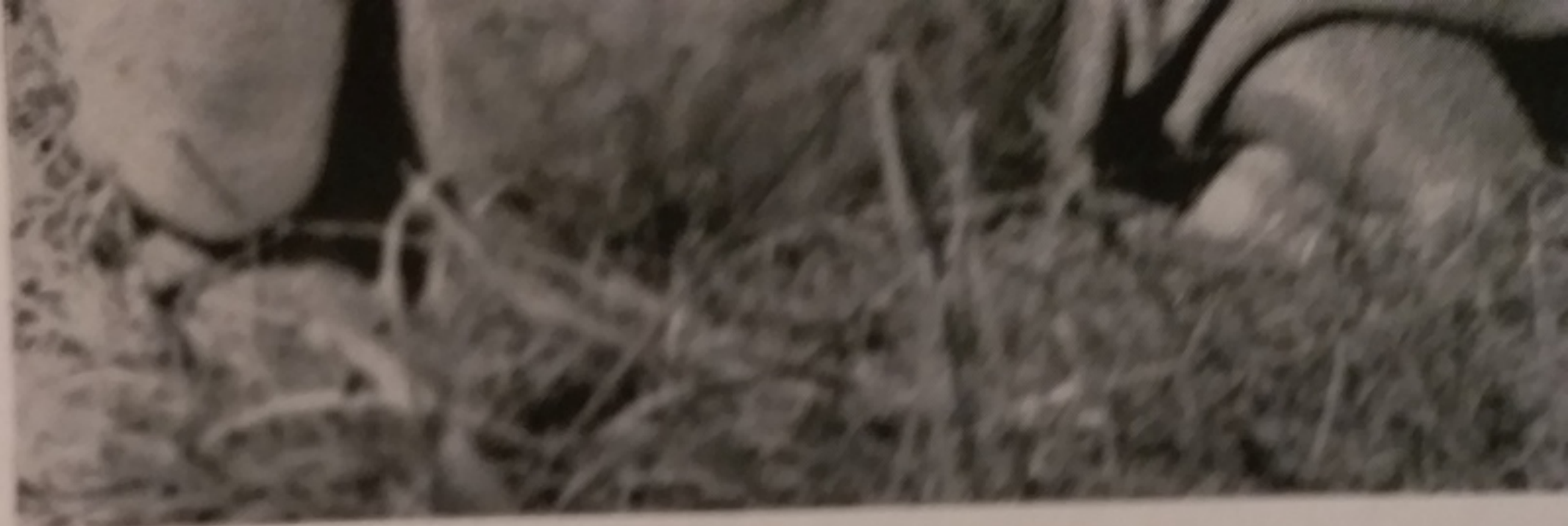
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THE HINDU

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THE HUNTING PARTY: INCLUDING THE SIR FREDERICK O'CONNOR

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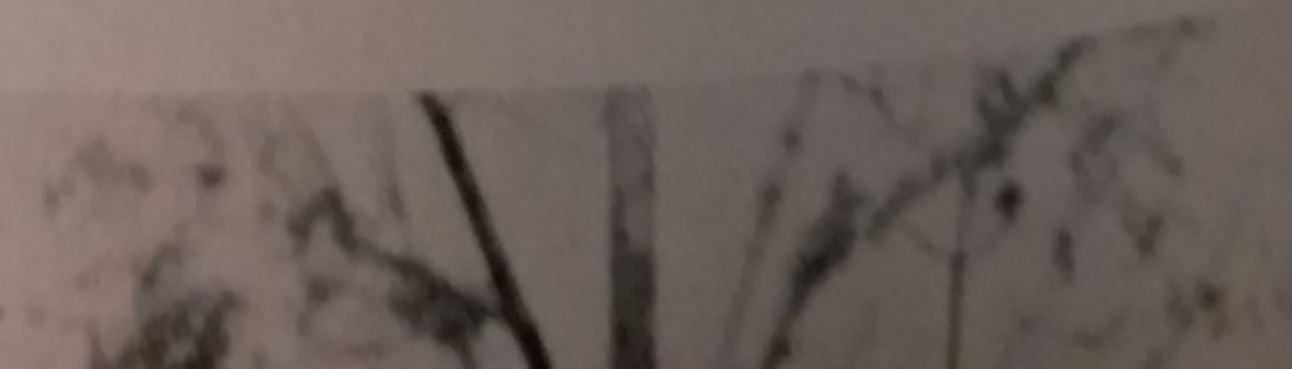
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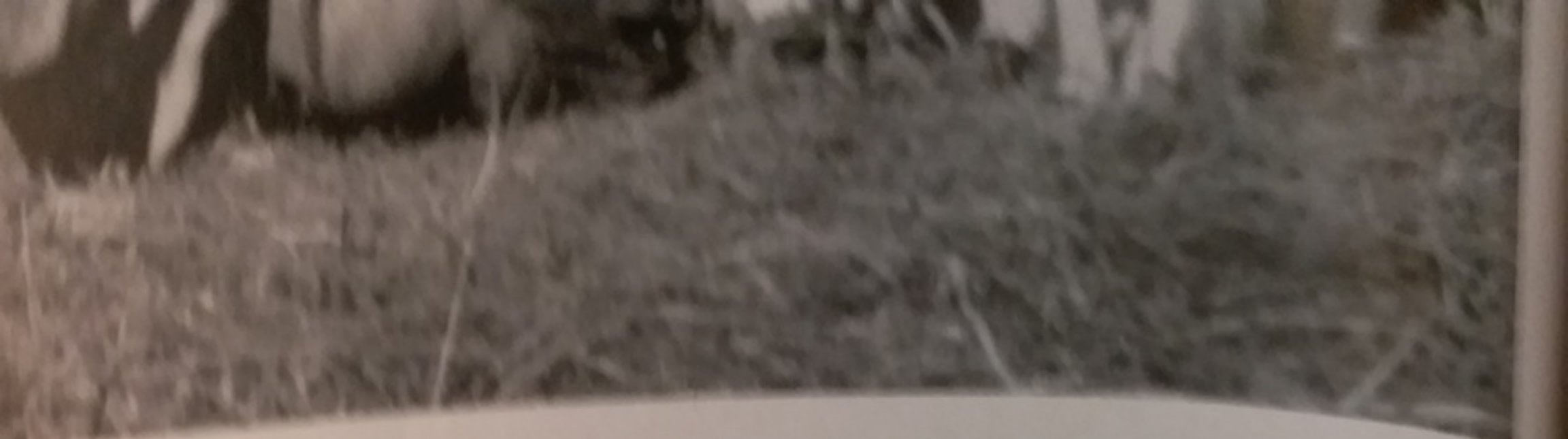
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well governed and happy little country, and an outstanding example of the suitability of personal rule for an Oriental people. Great improvements in the internal administration of the country have been effected during Sir Joodha Shum Shere Jung's term of office, and he has maintained the long-standing tradition of Nepal in the sphere of foreign policy—namely, close friendship with Great Britain. It is interesting to note, too, that it is only since his accession to office that Nepal has established a Legation in London, and that the first Nepalese Minister to the Court of St. James is his eldest son, General Sir Bahadur Shum Shere Jung, whose picturesque uniform and appearance attracted so much public notice during the recent Jubilee ceremonies. I may add that Sir Joodha is a very keen and energetic sportsman, and like his predecessors, is a fine specimen of manhood.

During our short stay at Katmandu, we attended an interesting function on the *maidan* (the great parade ground on the outskirts of the city) on the occasion of the official opening of a new electric light installation, an addition to the old installation which had been





THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND, AND COMMANDER EDMONSTONE

inaugurated by Sir Chandra Shum Shere Jung some thirty years before. His Majesty the King presided over the ceremony, supported by the Prime Minister, the Commander-in-Chief and their numerous relatives, all decked out in magnificent uniforms and the jewelled headdresses worn by the Royal and Bar families of Nepal, and we were entertained at a garden party by His Highness the Prime Minister.

While in the valley, a change of weather occurred, and there was heavy rain at Katmandu, and snow fell on the surrounding hills—one of the heaviest snowfalls known for many years. This made our return journey over the passes rather difficult, but nevertheless by starting early we were able to reach the head of the motor road by five p.m., and by eight o'clock we were back at Raxaul, and a night's journey westwards by rail brought us to Bhikna Thoree, and our shooting camp.

Bhikna Thoree is a tiny station, the terminus of a branch line to the Nepal frontier, and here we were met by the officer (Colonel Dumber Shum Shere Thapa) deputed by the Prime Minister to look after us. Crossing a stony river bed, we found ourselves at once on the fringes of the great Terai Forest, with our camp already pitched and ready for us on a small plateau—the same site where the Prince of Wales camped during his shoot in Nepal in December, 1921. This is a perfect camping place—a plateau dotted with stately *Sal* trees, shelving steeply to the streams below, and, looking northward, range after range of the



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THE TWO BLACK BEARS, THE LEOPARD AND HER CUB

of the water handcart, substituting in the great
 the Dugai? That's better. I had not caught here
 and the glass recalled many happy memories of
 and of the shooting and our early morning
 experience. I think in a tiger camp? Several
 provided for our shoot by the Prince's
 and the equipment of animals and accessories. Indeed,
 all a great knowledge from one of the most Dugai
 and was not to be given in all—under the charge and
 of Colonel Hunter from these things.

has to stand for ten days in our very comfortable camp,
 the customary routine of a shoot in the Dugai. For
 a number of buffalo calves were set up in the
 and reports would be brought in
 the morning of our hunt made by tigers during the night
 would then be marched off to "ring" the tiger
 in water runs as far as they could be driven
 to get elephants to the ring, where we climbed on
 and when the ring was complete and the heads
 placed, the tiger would be driven out by
 and shot as the case might be.

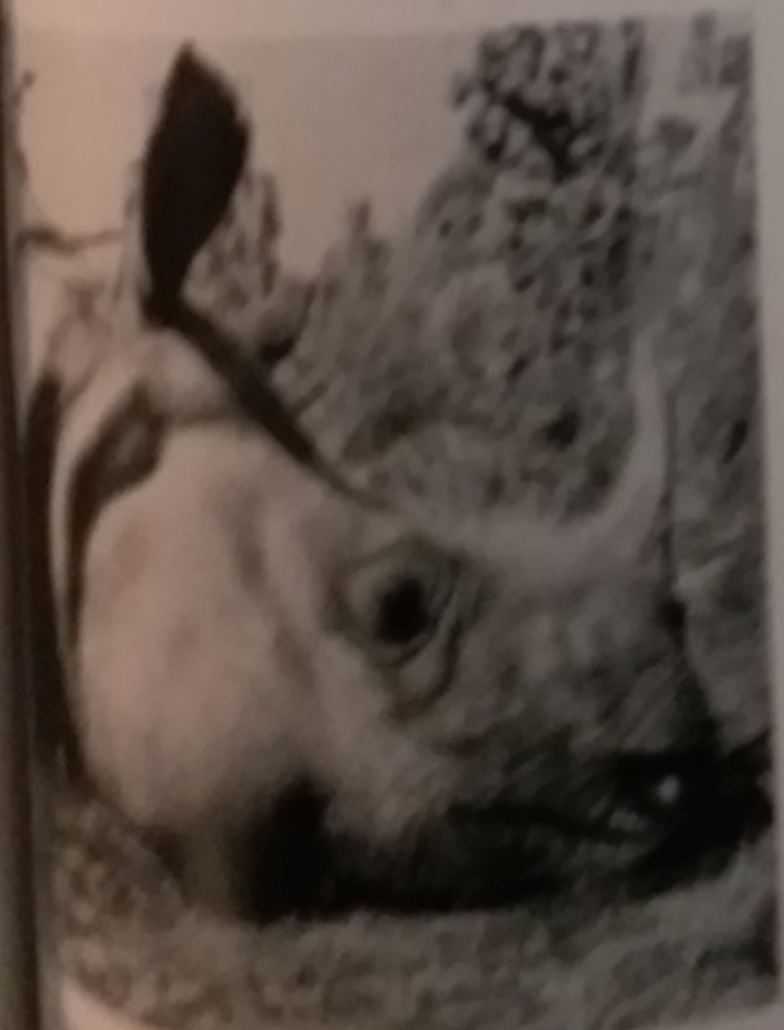
the ten days, the elephants were moved into
 in three miles further west into the heart of the
 and we had a long drive over a rough
 to this camp every morning to hunt the water.

in all these tigers and tiger cubs of good specimens.
 The tiger averaged 40 lbs (the largest one with 50 lbs) and
 the leopard 30 lbs (the largest specimen 40 lbs) all
 measured along the spine from tip of nose to end of tail, and
 one stone with a rain belt—plus as good a specimen as I have
 found elsewhere—intended for the Indian Museum at Liverpool.

by these days of the shooting our tiger, we could make a
 line of elephants and march across country and through the
 from one another of forest and open jungle, and have a good
 those "happy product" jungle but their particular, and an
 occasional wild pig or small lion. In our opinion, also, every
 for a leopard, we were better enough to get a couple of these
 lions as well as the tiger and her cub.

We would be moving down to our elephants all day, and
 gradually get back to our camp long after dark, to find a good
 number waiting in the camp of the camp, around which we
 hunted and found the forest all looking. A dinner and
 was in the delightful old-world style of a perfect table with
 no larger every day and with water, and in the early hours
 of the Dugai. For

The part of Dugai, which contains a wonderful game
 and is partly governed by the Dugai Government,
 is a one of the best parts of the Indian Government and
 makes with tigers. It is a new province to be added to that
 but, and we think as all are thoroughly appreciated.



A DEAD TIGER FOUND ON ONE OF THE ELEPHANTS

IRLAND.

THE TWO BLACK BEARS, THE LEOPA

forest-clad slopes of the outer Himalayas, culminating in the great snowy peaks on the Nepal-Tibet border. I had not camped here myself since 1921, and the place recalled many happy memories of the Prince's visit and of the shooting and our early morning polo practice—a unique experience, I think, in a tiger camp! Seventy elephants had been provided for our shoot by the Prime Minister, with the usual complement of *mahouts* and attendants, *shikaris*, etc., and a guard furnished from one of the crack Nepalese regiments—some 500 to 600 persons in all—all under the charge and supervision of Colonel Dumber Shum Shere Thapa.

Here we stayed for ten days in our very comfortable camp, following the customary routine of a shoot in the Nepal Terai. Every evening a number of buffalo calves were tied up in the jungle round about our camp, and reports would be brought in during the morning of any kill made by tigers during the night. The elephants would then be marched off to "ring" the tiger, and we followed in motor cars as far as they could be driven, and then rode on pad elephants to the ring, where we climbed into our *howdahs*; and when the ring was complete and the *howdah* elephants in their allotted places, the tiger would be driven out by one or more tuskers and shot (or missed as the case might be).

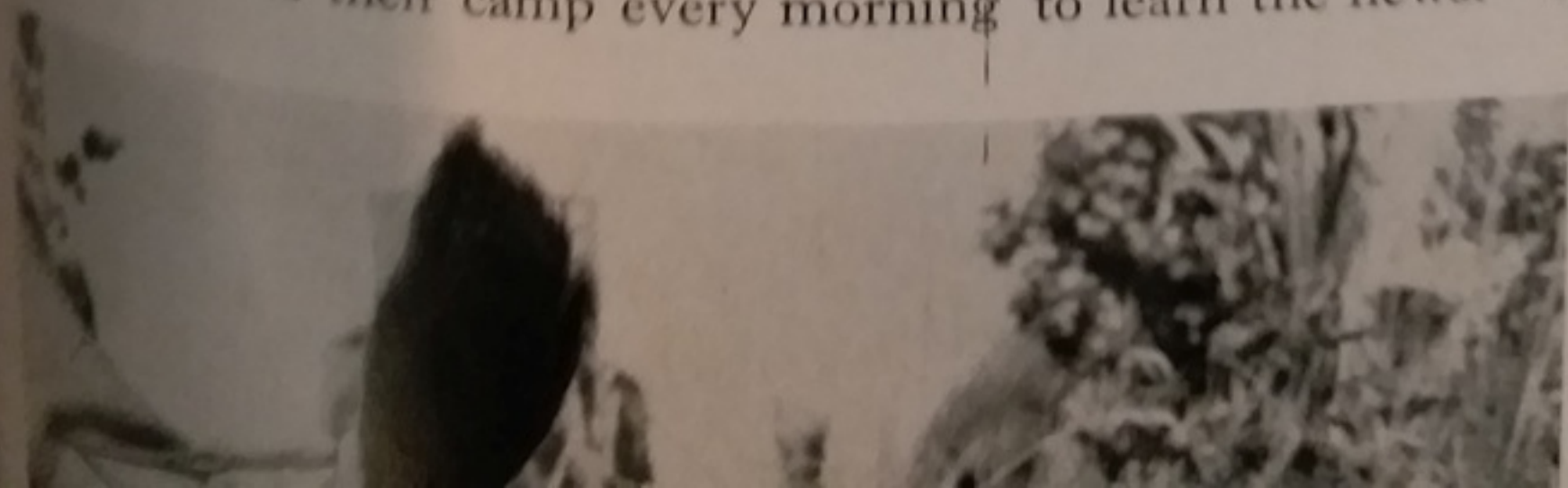
After the first few days, the elephants were moved some twelve or fifteen miles farther west into the heart of this wonderful game preserve, and we had a long drive over a rough forest track to their camp every morning to learn the news. We

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THE LEOPARDESS AND HER CUBS

bagged in all three tigers and three tigresses, all good specimens. The tigers averaged 9ft. 11ins. (the biggest was 10ft. 2ins.), and the tigresses 8ft. 11ins., the largest measuring 9ft. 7ins. (all measured along the curves from tip of nose to end of tail), and one rhino with a 12in. horn—about as good a specimen as is to be found nowadays—intended for the Duke's museum at Dunrobin.

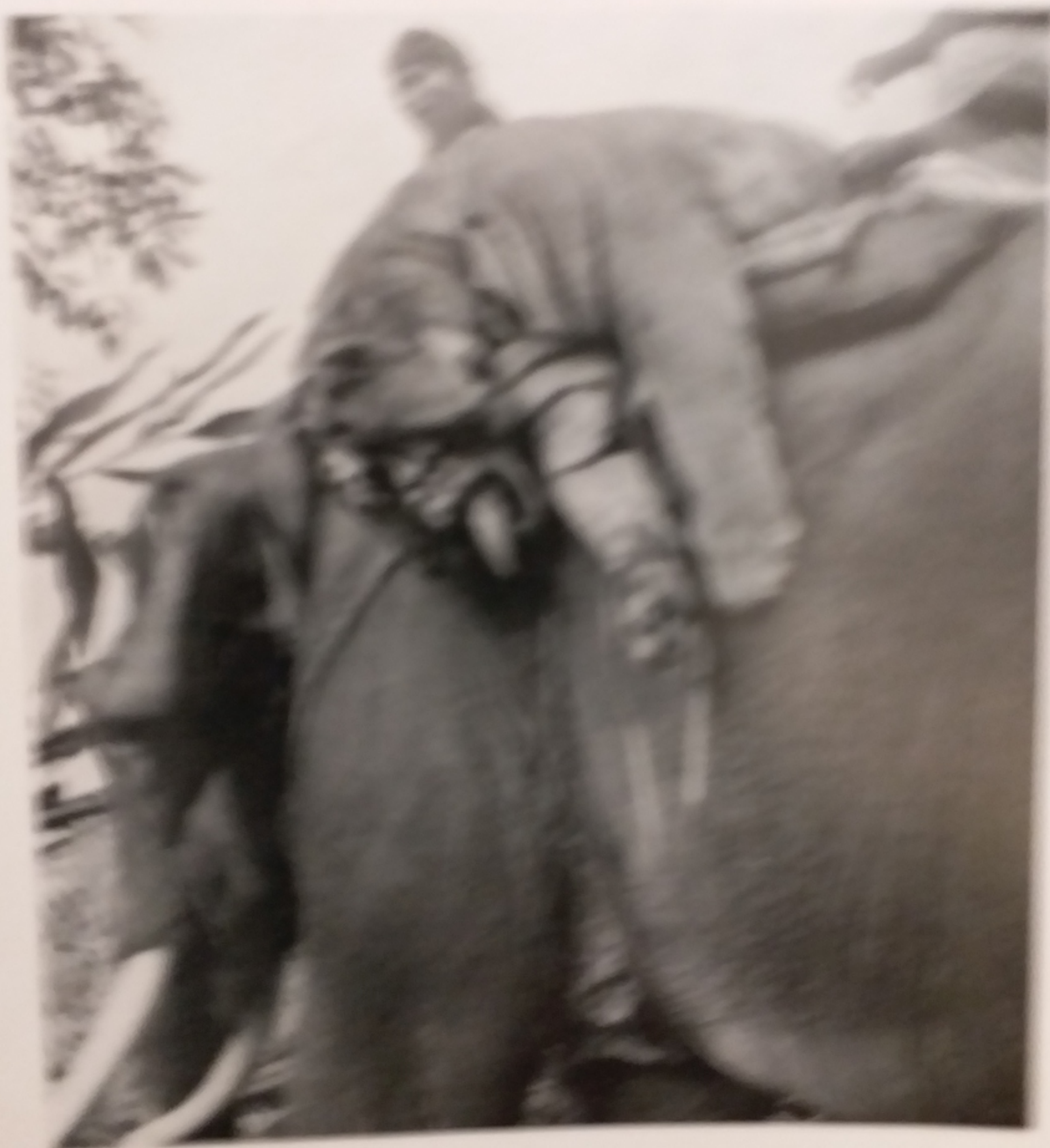
On blank days, or after shooting our tiger, we would make a line of elephants and march across country and through the more open stretches of forest and grass jungle, and have a general shoot—bagging peafowl, jungle fowl, black partridges, and an occasional wild pig or small deer. On one occasion, when ringing for a leopard, we were lucky enough to get a couple of black bears as well as the leopardess and her two cubs.

We would be moving about on our elephants all day, and generally got back to our camp long after dark, to find a great bonfire blazing in the centre of the camp, around which we chatted and dozed after dinner till bedtime. A pleasant existence in the delightful cold-weather climate of northern India, with its bright sunny days and cold nights, and in the lovely forest scenery of the Nepal Terai.

This part of Nepal, indeed, constitutes a wonderful game enclave and is strictly preserved by the Nepalese Government. It is one of the last homes of the Indian rhinoceros, and swarms with tigers. It is a rare privilege to be allowed to shoot here, and one which we all very thoroughly appreciated.

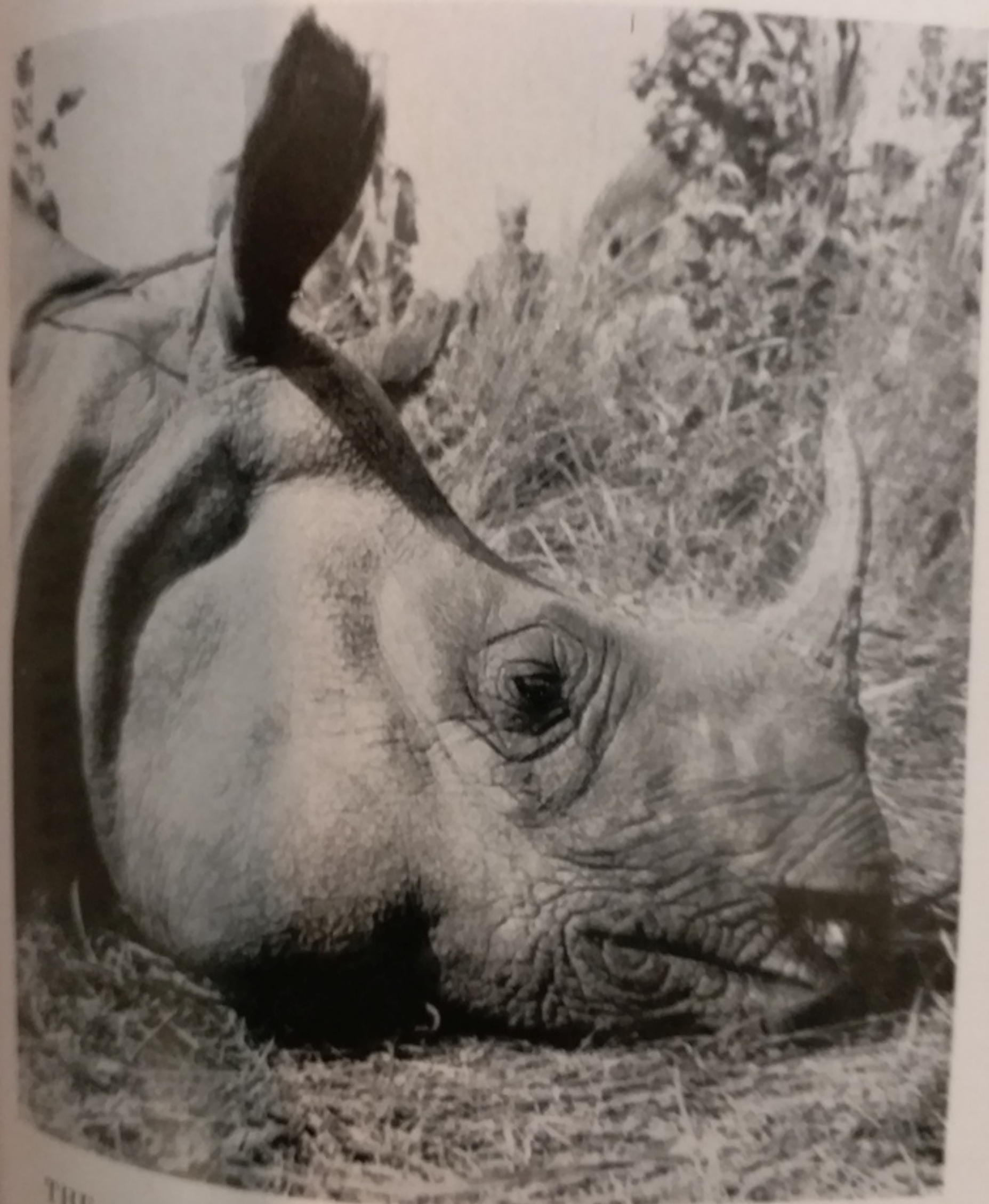


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