



Illustrated true stories about any kind of animal are welcomed for this feature. There are only two rules—you must give the animal's name and you must send at least one photograph of it. Lengths: from 200 to 1,000 words. Payments: from £2 2s. to £6 6s., according to the number and merit of your pictures.

IN the Zambesi Valley I met a well-known hunter and trapper of big game who had obtained permission to capture a young rhino for zoological purposes, and to shoot its parent, should it be necessary.

Unfortunately we did have to kill the mother in self-defence while trying to separate her from her calf. The youngster was nearly two years old and no mean antagonist, as he had already developed a small horn.

After dodging all our attempts to catch him as he stood at bay beside his hapless mother, he rushed off snorting into the bushes, having first forced more than one of his opponents to swarm up trees.

The hunter, knowing that the orphan would return to seek his mother when darkness fell, set a number of snares around her body, and the snorting which greeted our ears in the stillness of the night announced that the most arduous part of our task was accomplished.

A young elephant becomes reasonably docile after a short period of captivity, but a young rhino takes much longer to settle down. The hunter, therefore, had to decide on the best way to move the obstinate youngster, who has since been dubbed Ronald.

Ronald's natural pugnacity and dullness of wit was used against himself. A strong riem was attached to one of his hind legs and a native was given the other end with instructions to hold on like grim death. And he had his work cut out.

While the young rhino was still held by the trap a headstall to which another strong riem was attached had been securely fastened to his head. The end of the riem was given to a second unfortunate native who was to play the part of a decoy.

This proved to be anything but an enviable post, as more than once the "brake" failed to grip, owing to the strain put upon him by the powerful young rhino doing its utmost to catch up the decoy to do him some grievous bodily harm.

On these occasions the decoy's language, directed towards the unfortunate "brake," was fluent in the extreme. He, in turn, was subjected to fervent abuse when the decoy, to escape with a whole skin, nearly dropped his riem, allowing Ronald to concentrate his attack on his captors behind.

THE STORY OF Ronald

the shade the blazing sun would have been bad for the baby.

Besides keeping Ronald supplied with the vegetation to which he was accustomed and plenty of water to drink, an occasional sousing was also given to keep him cool.

In addition to his natural foods, gruel containing a large quantity of crushed maize had to be administered at regular intervals. A hole was drilled in the side of a large bottle. The flow of gruel was regulated by placing a finger over the hole to prevent the air entering too rapidly.

But Ronald was far from a model child. As he consumed about four large bottlesful at approximately eight-hour intervals, and as each occasion demanded that the protesting and virile infant should first be firmly secured, the "nurses" had a trying time, which included the necessity of being roused during the night to give him his gruel.

However, his obstinacy decreased and he began to enjoy his bottles. Even then he sometimes had refractory moods and during one of these he managed, no doubt to his intense satisfaction, to pin the hand of one of the natives against a wall, inflicting a painful injury.

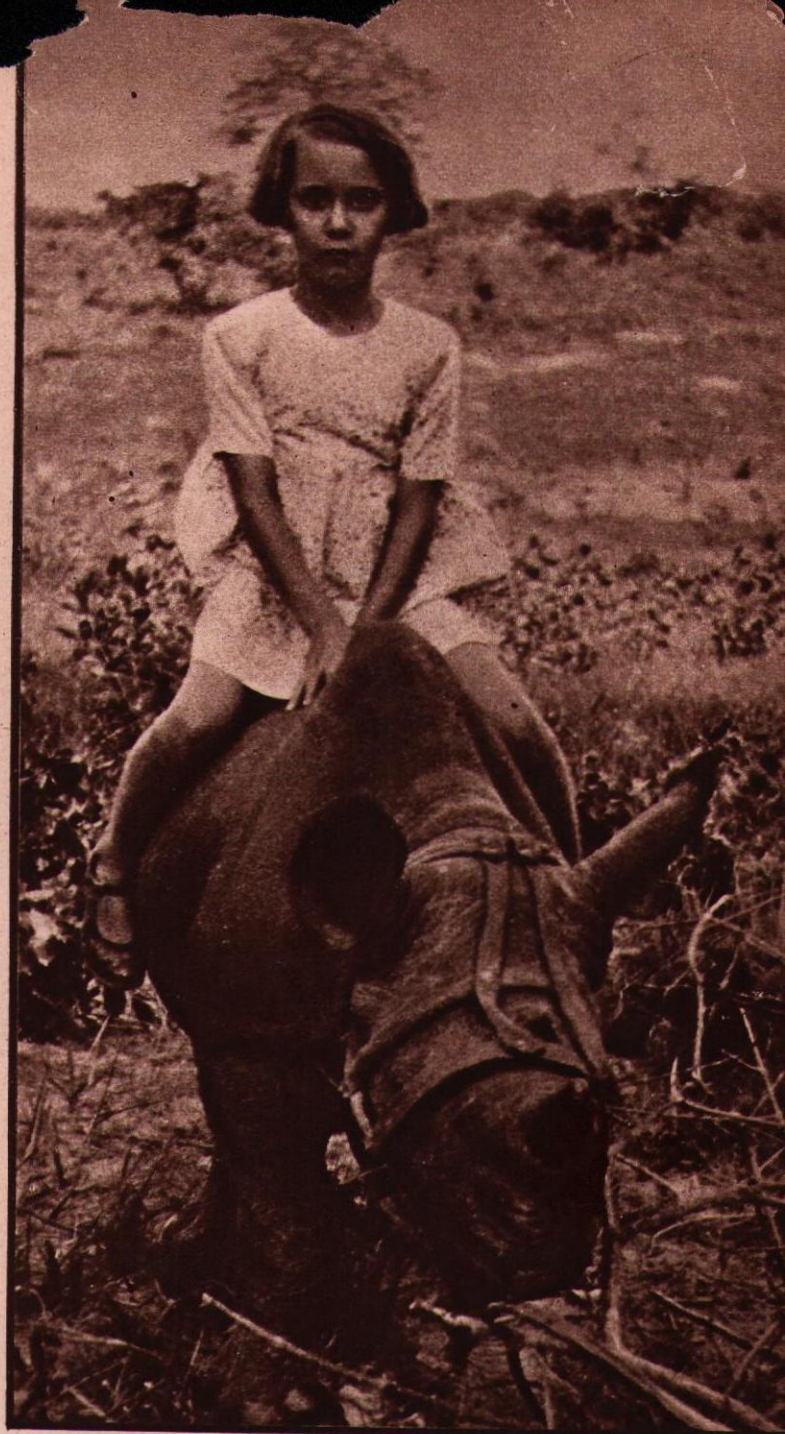
We were able to study him closely and observe how keen were his ears and how acute his sense of smell. Even while resting his ears continually twitched, listening for any unusual sound.

Whenever he scented something peculiar he would get up immediately, charging the poles of his hut and snorting furiously, with desire to reach the cause of annoyance.

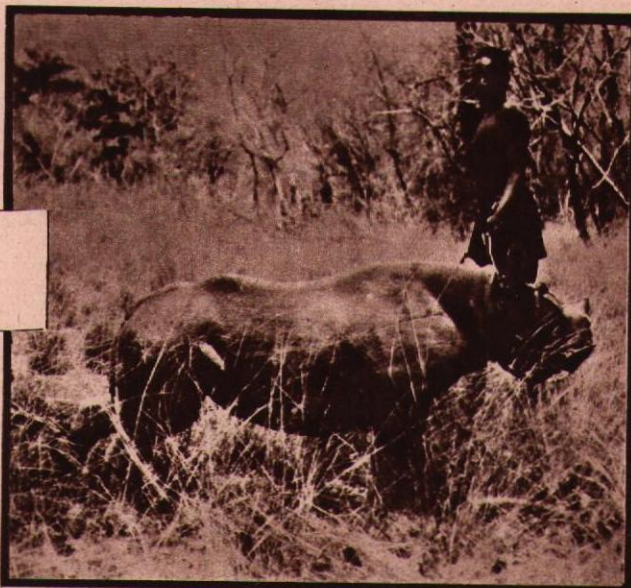
No watch-dog could have been more alert and more than once he roused the camp by furious snorts caused by a prowling hyena or a strange native. No matter who or what it was, the rhino detected it before anyone else.

Gradually he became more tame and by the time another captive joined him several weeks later he was reconciled and could be allowed out for airings, tied to a tree. Later he was transported in a crate to the first outposts of civilization, and there allowed to roam about, with several others, never showing any inclination to run away. No doubt he was beginning to enjoy life with plenty to eat and no worries of any description.

If he had a sense of humour it was of the robust type, for he once flattened



Ronald became so docile that my friend's little girl could ride him like a pony.



Just after Ronald's capture—with a native ready to leap for safety.

ANIMAL STORIES

At the same time care had to be taken that no injury befell the captive. Finally, when the decoy had been charged for a mile or so and had successfully evaded all attempts on his life, camp was reached.

Followed the task of nursing Ronald until he became sufficiently tractable to be moved. A thatched hut of poles was built for him. Rhinos prefer to avoid the mid-day heat, and as the temperature was well over 110 degrees in

an unsuspecting kaffir while the latter was bending down.

He loved his back being scratched with a stout stick and the more vigorously this was applied the more he seemed to enjoy it. Finally, he became so tame that he would even allow the hunter's young daughter to ride on his broad back.

In due course he was transported abroad. I believe he went to a zoological gardens in Australia.

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