



PELICANS AT LAKE NYIBOR.

The Lake itself is remarkable. Geese are in thousands and pelicans (I do not exaggerate) in tens of thousands. The water in early May is dead low, being perhaps 5 feet in the centre and there some 40 hippo were concentrated. The Dinka (who like them there, believing that they ensure water and good fishing) were going right in among them. When several hippo, lying in a lump, were in the way of a fishing party half a dozen youths would go shoulder to shoulder and, with their long thin fishing harpoons, actually prod them in the backside until the hippo, protesting and reluctant, floundered a few paces and allowed them to jostle past. I fancy about one Dinka year gets bitten in half, but casualties both sides are rare. It is a surprising sight, and now that there is a road to Lake Nyibor one that can be available to many.

The Carr Hartley Expedition

By K. S. FERGUSON.

In the following article Mr. K. S. Ferguson, Assistant District Commissioner, Yirrol, describes in a graphic way how a well-known Kenya animal trapper, Mr. Carr Hartley captured 4 rhino near Shambe, Bar el Ghazal. This account has been specially written for readers in the Sudan. Mr. Ferguson writes:

'I had heard with some interest that Carr Hartley a Kenya animal trapper, who has successfully captured and raised many black rhino had agreed to a contract with the Game Department by which he was granted permission to capture four white rhino calves, of which two were to be the property of the Sudan Government, and two were to be his. He was said to capture his rhino from a car with ropes and I think that most people who knew the terrain over which he proposed to operate did not fancy his chances of success. The Game Warden consulted various District Commissioners and decided that the Aliab valley, Lake Nyibor, or Kareir, near Shambe, offered the best chances of success. When Carr Hartley arrived in Yirrol, I advised the Shambe area as a headquarters and the party, consisting of Sheikh Mekki El Nur of Juba, six Kenya boys and two Sudan Government Game Scouts, made its base there. Mekki Nur, who had given much assistance in the early stages of the expedition, had to return to Juba on April 1st to accompany an American party to the Boma plateau.

Reconnaisances during the first three days showed that there were rhino in the area, but that the country was extremely bumpy, and was also covered in tree stumps left by the wood-cutters collecting steamer fuel. The question was whether Carr Hartley's Dodge Power Wagon could travel as fast as white rhino under these conditions.

On April 2nd a party consisting of Carr Hartley, Howell and Bristow of the Jonglei Investigation Team, who chanced to be at Shambe, four Kenya boys, and myself set out to try for a rhino reported to be some four miles from Shambe. Sure enough, a rhino cow and calf were found, the calf resting under its mother's belly. Carr Hartley made a quick reconnaissance and decided to go after it. Howell and Bristow were on the back of the lorry, Hartley was driving and I was beside him in front. A Kenya boy on each side of the back of the lorry stood ready with nooses of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch hemp rope fixed into a notch on the end of a stout bamboo pole. The lorry bumped slowly towards the rhinos which waited until it was about seventy yards away before breaking into a shambling trot. Hartley then put his foot on the accelerator and was alongside after not more than two hundred yards, having had to pull up once after a crash into a hole which very nearly threw Bristow off the lorry.

Joseph, one the noose boys, was now fumbling with his bamboo and rope, trying to get it over the calf's neck. After swerving precariously alongside for another fifty yards he succeeded, and we all grabbed the rope and held on to it, falling over backwards as the lorry jolted to a stop. Mother rhino turned when the calf squealed and came



THE WHITE RHINO

towards the lorry. We shouted, Hartley blew the horn, and she finally turned and trotted away. It was a nasty moment, as her horn was thirty to forty inches long, and the party had enough of a handful with the calf. We all now fell on the calf. Its hind legs were first secured with special shackles, and then the fore-legs, and snout. A stout pole was cut and "Gus", as it was named, was hoisted after some trouble on to the back of the lorry and driven back to Shambe. Gus is a young male about three feet high at the shoulder and just over a year old. After this my wife and I had to leave the party.

On the 3rd, the lorry would not start and a mechanic was ordered from Juba. He arrived on the 8th and managed to find the fault. Meanwhile Hartley's Kenya boys had been out each day and had a good idea of the most likely places. The local Dinka are by no means keen on approaching close to the rhino, though they quote no cases of aggression by them except one which charged a car some years ago. The Kenya boys were impressed by the docility of the white rhino compared with the black of Kenya. No doubt the Sudan white rhino would become more aggressive if it was hunted.

On the 9th Hartley was out again, and saw no less than twenty one rhino in an area of about two square miles. They were in four groups: the biggest of nine rhino of which three were calves; and another of seven with two calves. He chased and separated a calf from the herd of seven but Joseph had an off-day. His noose was too small and after four unsuccessful attempts to rope the calf, the lorry broke a spring and the attempt had to be given up. Hartley drove into Yirrol on the 10th and managed to get the springs repaired. On the 11th he went out again to the area where he had seen the twenty one, and found "Paul" and his mother asleep. An easier chase on better ground and Paul joined Gus at Shambe. Eleven rhino, including three calves were seen that day. On the 13th another spring broke and was repaired, and on the 14th nineteen rhino, including five calves, were seen, but none captured as the ground was too rough.

My wife and I came back on the 14th to spend Easter at Shambe. The 15th was reserved for elephant, and I shot two bulls from a herd of six. They were remarkably tame, and the only trouble was to drive them out of the papyrus, where they were resting, into more open country where their ivory could be seen.

On the 16th we set out with Hartley in the hope of capturing a sister for Gus and Paul. Five miles from Shambe on a wood cutting track, a bull and cow and calf were sighted. The calf was lying down and the parents standing. The calf appeared to be large. After a chase of some three hundred yards, with some exciting moments with Hartley swerving to separate the calf from its parents, who dislike being jostled intensely, Joseph got the rope around it, a fat, four feet high female. Father rhino rushed the lorry from the rear but was driven off by a volley of sticks. He turned when he was a yard from the lorry. Both adults were reluctant to leave and were eventually frightened off by a shot over their heads. "Mit" was a heavy beast. Luckily the chase ended with the lorry on top of an ant-hill, and Mit was rolled on this

and from there on to the lorry. She was in Shambe within the hour. Hartley thought that it would be expecting too much from Providence to hope for another that day but was persuaded to try. My wife was tempted to go out again but was dissuaded, and we set out again for the same area. The lorry was stopped under a large tree and Joseph climbed up with the binoculars. He reported first a herd of eighty to a hundred buffalo and the rhino about a quarter of a mile away—he could see seven. The ground was rough and merged with long grass, but Hartley decided to risk his springs and set off. A group of seven rhino, including two large calves set off on the left, and he decided that the calves were too big and concentrated on a cow with a small calf on the right. This was the smallest calf he had chased but was to be the most difficult one of all.

Hartley drove over stumps, around trees, into holes, through grass higher than the cab of the lorry, but could not separate the calf from the cow. Eventually after a chase of over half a mile, Joseph, after three or four infuriating misses with his noose, managed to rope 'Chloe.' Mother was still disinclined to leave and turned to charge the lorry. She nosed the front bumper and was promptly hit on the head with a shovel and turned away. I tried to photograph her, but my camera tangled up with the rope and the shovel.

Chloe was the smallest of the four captured, and was soon on the back of the lorry. Hartley had refused to be optimistic enough to build four cages at Shambe, so Chloe had to bed down with Gus. She proved to be a crusty young female and gave little peace to Gus who by now, after a fortnight, had become tame enough to be petted in his cage.

This account of the capture of the rhino may make the operation seem rather simple. But the Dodge Power Wagon is a sturdy vehicle, rather on the lines of a big jeep, with a four wheel drive, and strong shock absorbers. Carr Hartley is a driver of consummate skill, and his Kenya boys have had a deal of experience in roping black rhino. Hartley has no objection to his methods of capturing the animals being described, but he does not wish his rearing secrets revealed. Suffice it to say that he considers that a big frame requires a lot of food, and that his skill and sympathy in treating the animals is obvious.

Hartley saw a lot of other game during his trip. On his last evening we went out with Ali, the Hausa crocodile hunter who entices the crocodiles by imitating their call, and returned with a nine-footer trussed up alive in the boat. But that is another story.

It is to be hoped that these Shambe rhinos will survive to give pleasure and interest to many people in far away countries, perhaps in the Zoos of Great Britain and America. It will not be Hartley's fault if they do not.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

The white rhinoceros does not exist in any great numbers except in the Sudan and was considered sufficiently rare to be placed in the Schedule I Group of animals at the International Fauna Convention.

This means in effect that it is completely protected, the permission of the Governor-General being required to kill or capture it.

White rhino have been brought in by natives at various times but have always died and their capture has always been discouraged. The collection of poor Algernon who died after arrival in Khartoum was strictly against Province and Game Department orders.

Last year Mr. Carr Hartley, a Kenya trapper, who was well recommended by the Kenya Game Department, asked permission to try and catch some rhino here and the Governor-General agreed to his attempting to capture four, two for himself and two for the Sudan. He was successful and Mr. Ferguson, Assistant District Commissioner Yirrol, has written an account of the adventure.

From the evidence of Mr. Hartley's expedition, from a census taken in Yei and Nimule areas by Major Anderson, and from reports from Tonj district, it seems certain that as a result of protection the white rhino are in far greater numbers than was previously supposed. As soon as there is time the Game Department will carry out a more complete census.

Meanwhile the rhino, two of which have gone to Kenya with Mr. Hartley are in excellent health and await export to America.

We hope that the Revenue from the sale of our two will help to keep up the Khartoum Zoo, which is doing good work in interesting the people of the Sudan in natural history and in the wild life of the country, which is one of its most valuable heritages.