

months of waiting and watching to film. The production grew naturally out of many hunting experiences in many parts of Africa; a film giving my true life in the bush as I have known and enjoyed it.

On these photographic expeditions, I instructed my photographer, John Kennard, to keep within thirty yards of me, so that he would be able to photograph the whole scene with the animals and me in the same frame of the picture, which would prove that it was not faked. Kennard is an amateur photographer above the average: a 'Jack of all trades and master of most.'

I became friendly with him under peculiar circumstances. We were in the same geometry class at college, and one morning for some reason he hit a lad with a T-square, who was sitting in front of him. I saw red, jumped over my bench and got stuck into Kennard. In those days, he weighed about 175 lb. against my 135, but it took the teacher five minutes to part us. We both got a caning, after which I threatened to get even with Kennard during the tea interval.

The tea interval there lasted for ten minutes, and so for three days running Kennard and I, with the whole college standing round us, tried to hammer the daylight out of each other during the morning break.

After that, we became friendly and have been so ever since.

When he left school he chopped and changed around from one job to another until I employed him as foreman of my fishing-tackle and gun-repair factory, and there he has been for quite a few years.

Kennard understands me and knows how I may make up my mind suddenly to do anything, and is never surprised when I 'phone him at midnight and tell him to be ready in two hours because we are going to Mozambique, Bechuanaland or some equally remote place to shoot or take films. He has always been ready and has never complained.

In making the film we had some lucky escapes. Once, a ten-foot python dropped out of a tree and twisted itself round one of the bearers' necks, almost throttling him, before I

could reach him and kill it. If John had not been thirty yards behind us, we would never have screened the shot.

On another occasion, a huge black-maned lion came charging straight at us. I waited until he was within five yards before I shot him between the eyes, and John managed to take a perfect picture from the time the lion charged until he dropped dead at my feet.

Equally, we ruined some shots that would have been superb. Once, for instance, a lioness leapt straight out of a bush at us. She came so close to me before I fired that John thought something had gone wrong with my rifle and stopped his camera, not wanting to film what he thought would be my awful end. The result was that he did not get the actual shooting of the lioness, but caught her a split second after I had shot, as she took a complete somersault-and-a-half when my bullet hit her.

Again, we waited for days to take a picture of an eagle making a kill. We were well rewarded by a perfect shot of an eagle dropping out of the sky and snatching a rabbit—almost from under the nose of an astonished native hunter who was hiding behind a rock, hunting the same rabbit.

Another time, we were travelling through Southern Rhodesia where the shooting of rhino is prohibited. Two rhino were spotted in a bush about a hundred yards away from us.

'Now you get your camera set up,' I said to John. 'I'm going to walk up to these chaps and see if they will charge me. If they do, you just keep that camera rolling. Don't stop under any circumstances.'

'O.K. boss,' said John—his favourite way of addressing me.

I told the two boys to stick close to my left, and made a quick calculation. If the two rhino charged when I was within twenty yards of them, I would be able to reach a tree I had my eye on before they got me.

I began to walk slowly up to them. I held my pipe in my hand and kept tapping it against my gun-stock. The rhino were now facing us, with their super-sensitive ears nervously twitching in the direction of the slightest sound. They would

run round us in an arc, and then smartly turn and face us, their ears twitching with the sound of the grass softly rubbing against my trousers as I walked. I kept on tapping my pipe against the gun-stock.

The boys were now nervously looking towards the tree. We were coming closer and closer to the beasts, and the tree seemed to be retreating farther and farther away. The rhino now could not only hear us and scent us, I think they could also vaguely see us. Their eyes are naturally weak and they cannot define a stationary object that is more than twenty or thirty yards away.

They snorted once or twice and began to run round each other. Suddenly one put its head down and, snorting like a winded horse, came straight at us.

The boys let out a yell and ran for the tree. All three of us reached it just before the rhino came thundering past. He ran round in a semi-circle and rejoined his mate, and they both disappeared into the acacia bush which they love so much.

I turned round to Kennard, who was about sixty yards away shooting with a telephoto lens, and shouted excitedly: 'Did you get that, John?'

He put both his thumbs up in the air.

'Ja, boss. Every bit of it!'

Boy, that was going to make a picture, I thought as I walked back to him. The natives came behind me, chattering and laughing and saying, 'Ow, the baas will not live long if he do things like that.'

I took one look at the camera and nearly fainted. I must have looked terrible, because John said, 'What's wrong, Boss?'

'The bloody lens, man! Look, *you've left the lens cap on!*'

Poor old John! He felt as terrible as I did—only in a different way. I had twisted my ankle rather badly, and sat on the grass rubbing it, and at the same time calling John all the names I could think of.

'The only thing to do,' I decided at last, 'is to try and entice



Shooting a charging elephant



those two beauties into the open again and persuade them to repeat their charge, and this time see that everything is O.K.'

It took quite a lot of persuasion to induce the boys to come with me for the second time, and the only way I finally swayed them was with the assurance that this time I was really going to kill the rhino. I particularly wanted to have the boys in the sequence, because they had been in most of the other action pictures with me. Also, they were some sort of company.

I walked for quite a long way into the bush before I saw the two rhino again. I started the same technique with my pipe.

They would make short charges towards us, and then stop. The boys were now on the point of running away at the slightest move the rhino made. Gradually I got the beasts out into the open, where John would be able to make good shots with his telephoto lens. I took a quick glance at him to see if all was well; he waved back reassuringly, and I continued with the tapping.

The rhino were now really getting mad: they started running round one another again, all the while coming closer and closer to us. They would make false charges and set us off in the direction of the tree, which was further away than ever. By now they were right out of the bush, and I was so close I could clearly see the chafings between the folds of their armour-like skin. Their tiny eyes looked bloodshot and fierce.

Then, unexpectedly, they got our wind and came thundering towards us. We ran for the tree as fast as our legs would take us. I had completely forgotten about my half-turned ankle!

I heard the thundering hooves and the snorting getting dangerously near. The boys were well ahead of me, and were up in a tree in one leap. I reached another tree just a few seconds before the rhino suddenly decided to give up the chase, and turned round and trotted back into the acacia bush.

The boys came up and joined me as I laughingly walked up to Kennard.

'I'm damned if I'm going to do that again, John,' I told him. 'Those pictures had better be good.'

He grinned. 'They will be,' he said confidently. 'Hell, boss. I thought they'd got you that time. I would have hated to take a picture of you impaled on one of those horns.'

The natives didn't think that it was a joking matter at all, but soon they relaxed and started making faces and childish antics in the direction in which the rhino had disappeared. It so happens that the pictures turned out very well.

I must tell a rather amusing story against John Kennard, an incident which took place late one afternoon as we were walking back to camp after spending a whole day in the bush looking for something to film.

It was too dark to take pictures, so John had given his camera to one of the boys to carry. I handed him my rifle and said casually, 'We're short of meat in camp. If you see anything, shoot it.'

We walked along, dragging our weary feet. Camp seemed a long way off that night.

Suddenly John put up his hand and said, 'Ssh!' He bent forward in a crouch and slowly started stalking into the bush on our right. I looked where he was looking, but couldn't see anything. Then I looked enquiringly at the boys, but they shrugged their shoulders and shook their heads. So I started following John, and pretty soon was right behind him. He was still going ahead, slowly and carefully, half doubled-up. I followed, adopting the same crouching walk.

John stopped behind a large tree, and, resting his rifle in the fork, took careful aim. I looked over his shoulder.

'What on earth is the man shooting at?' I thought—for still I couldn't see a thing. He fired, and I saw a puff of dust fly out from a grey ant-heap about fifty yards in front of us.

'You hit it all right, John,' I said, laughing. 'But I prefer to eat meat to-night and not roasted ants!' He has never lived it down.

One very disappointing experience I had was on the Nuanetse Ranch in Southern Rhodesia. I had been out all day filming game from my Jeep, and I returned to the ranch-house on the farm at about three in the afternoon.

I took all my gear out of the Jeep and went inside for something to eat. Then I said to Brian Wegner, who had come with me from Pretoria: 'Let's take another run around. Maybe we'll see something worth while.'

We were driving around through the bush, when Brian said suddenly, 'Look!'

I looked where he was pointing and saw two huge impala rams fighting together. They had their long twisted horns interlocked, and were pushing one another around madly. One had a deep gash in his side, and was bleeding rather badly.

'I think those horns are locked and they can't get loose,' I said to Brian, at the same time looking for my camera. Then I nearly went berserk—we had left the camera at the ranch-house.

'That's hard luck,' I said. 'Let's see if we can catch them, anyhow.'

We jumped out of the Jeep and ran towards them. When they saw us coming they tried to run away, but with their horns locked they just fell over; then they struggled up and fell over again, each one trying desperately to go in an opposite direction.

'Grab the back legs,' I said to Brian, 'and watch out for your face.'

We struggled with the two powerful animals for fully ten minutes before we could bring them down and hold them still by kneeling on them. Their horns were so tightly locked that they would never have been able to free themselves, and would have died in that position, or been easy prey for any of the carnivorous animals that would start tearing them to pieces and eating them while they were still alive and helpless. We sat panting on top of the impala, who were looking at us with their beautiful big brown eyes filled with terror.

'I have an idea,' I said to Brian. 'Let's tear off our shirt-sleeves and tie these two battling beauties up, then loosen their horns and take them back to the ranch-house in the Jeep.'

'But what for?' he asked.

'I'll give them a dose of brandy and a few aspirins to

Elephants climb up steep embankments and then slide down the other side as if they enjoyed doing it, just as children would rather slide down the banisters than walk down the stairs. They love water, and wallow in shallow pools, encasing themselves in a protective layer of mud which cools them, and also protects them from the parasites and insects to which they are very sensitive.

I have heard stories of hunters who have shattered an elephant's kneecap and then killed him at no great danger to themselves, for an elephant cannot run on three legs; but I have never actually seen this done, or met anyone who has done it.

The hide of an elephant is slate-grey, and has a few scattered black bristles on it. The ears are about four feet wide and five feet long, and their edges are usually jagged and torn from fighting or from sharp branches. The elephant is the heaviest beast that walks, and by his size and weight alone he commands respect. Add to these superiorities his immense wisdom and guile, and the elephant, as well as being the largest wild animal, can also be one of the most dangerous.

Next in size to the elephant is the rhinoceros, an animal that also has a wonderful sense of smell, and very good hearing, but very poor eyesight. He cannot distinguish a stationary object at more than forty yards.

Rhino always appear to be bad-tempered, and will charge a stranger without any provocation. In many cases I think that these charges are false, and more out of curiosity or fear than bad temper; but that does not make these sharp, angry rushes any less terrifying!

A full-grown rhino weighs approximately two tons. He has a very thick, greyish, armour-like skin, and despite his size he is very nimble and can swing round in a flash. Rhinos are usually found in pairs, and they are very fond of the thick acacia bush which gives them cover from the prying eyes of enemies. The upright horn on top of the nose is usually larger on the cows than on the bulls. Sometimes it is a yard long. The cows are particularly dangerous when they have young

to protect. When they run away, their small tails stick straight up in the air like the tails of pigs.

They are in every way a rare and anachronistic animal, and are protected by the Government in most parts of Africa.

So much for the more dangerous animals of the jungle. But there are other dangerous species which must not pass without a note, and I mean game that never knows the jungle.

This animal knows nothing about the forest marches or the scent of blood in the evening air; he lives far from the world God made, in a jungle he has made for himself; the jungle of tall buildings and tarmac streets; the jungle of his own mind and heart. He is the Rogue Male, although he has many names, and some of them famous and of high account.

Looked at dispassionately, the Rogue Male is without doubt the most dangerous animal of all, in city or veld. He lives in the remote depths of his carpeted den, guarded by secretaries and leg-men and front-of-the-house stooges. In his own silent lair he is out of the reach of almost everyone who could do him harm, and from this safe seclusion he strikes silently and with cruelty.

He strikes and leaves no visible marks on the body, no honest wound that bleeds and heals.

He strikes and scars the souls, the minds and dreams and the hopes of men.

He can bleed you to death and never take a drop of your blood; he can break you and yet not touch your body.

He warns his friends a thousand miles away of your approach, and before you arrive the trap is set and ready to be sprung.

The Rogue Male crosses your path a dozen times and never leaves a spoor; but he and his like decide in secret who will prosper and who will die.

Ah, if only these Rogue Males who batten on the lives and works of honest, simpler men could be tracked down and shot as we shoot the Rogue that walks on four legs! What a roaring trade the taxidermist would do, stuffing the heads of these sharks and financiers, these in-between men, these pimps and procurers!

I know quite a few whose heads I would like to see hanging in my trophy room, and I would rather face the charge of a wounded lion, or the mighty buffalo in the midst of the thickest bush, than some of these masks of wickedness.

But then I am a simple man, and prefer an enemy I can see and know, who has venom in his claws rather than in his brain.

Have you ever heard it remarked, as a term of disparagement: 'Oh, So-and-So behaves like an animal?'

How wrong this is—for there are no instances of animals behaving with the calculated cruelty and deception with which men and women too often treat each other. And there is no lust among the beasts, though there may be plenty among those who claim to be their betters. Yes, the more I have seen of some of my fellow-men, the more I like the animals. . . .

But then, perhaps I have lived too long in the open places; perhaps my opinions are too narrow for the cities. I do not know; I only know what to me is worth fighting for, and like Cromwell's Ironsides, I love what I know.

Eight years is said to be the average life of the hunter who goes on regular safaris; eight years, the age of my youngest daughter. Then his luck changes, or he loses his nerve, or he miscalculates, and he has made his last safari.

I have been a hunter for sixteen years, twice the span that some call good, and I have often been told that I am living on borrowed time.

I used to laugh at this, for I knew my own strength and my guns and my Africa; but sometimes I have thought that maybe they were right after all, that my day *was* waning, for though I am still young, my reactions are perhaps just that fraction slower than they were. The beasts, though—they are as young and as fierce as ever; there are beasts in the forest that are always young. Only the hunters grow old.

I used to wonder, was my day over? Was it not now time for the younger men, who had been but boys when I began to hunt?

I have lain awake at night by the camp-fire watching the