

THE PASSING OF TWO

Peggy, the Indian Rhinoceros

The Philadelphia Zoo's Indian rhinoceros, Peggy, died of renal failure on April 14, 1943, after an illness of only a few days. She was about twenty-two years of age and had been in the Garden for nearly twenty years.

Peggy enjoyed several distinctions. She was brought from Nepal to the Zoo by Frank (Bring 'Em Back Alive) Buck; she cost the Society \$8,000 cash (more than any other specimen in the collection); and it is very probable that she may never be replaced, because her species is nearly extinct.

Peggy was only a baby when she arrived at the Zoo and the friendship which developed between her and the keepers, during her early years, never changed. To the day of her fatal illness she permitted the men to ride on her back and, when opportunity offered, she tried to steal food from their pockets. In spite of her great bulk—she weighed close to two tons—she was extremely light on her feet, and the speed and grace with which she could move about were almost unbelievable.

Peggy's complete trustworthiness was exhibited one day when photographers from one of the major newsreels came to the Zoo to take pictures of her having a noonday snack with an attendant. The man sat on the very edge of the moat surrounding the rhino yard and opened his lunch box. Spectators gasped as Peggy ambled swiftly toward him, but he awaited her approach with perfect confidence. Less than a foot from the moat she halted and took the

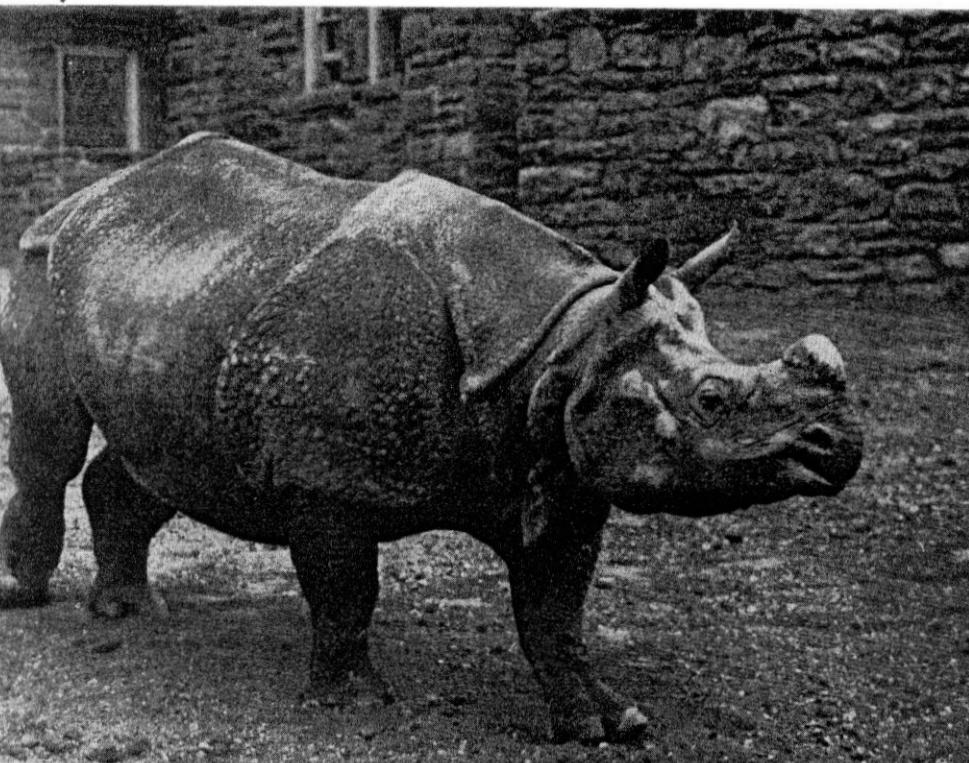
food from the keeper's hand. Apparently she liked it, for, without more ado, she helped herself to the sandwiches remaining in the box, engulfing them—wax-paper wrappings and all—with evident relish.

Peggy was jealous of any attention given to the other animals in the building. Frequently, when photographers try to secure special poses, food is given to the animal actors in order to win cooperation. Peggy was quick to sense such occasions, even though the proceedings were outside her range of vision. Hooking her single horn on one of the bars, she would rattle the cage door with such vehemence that, to restore peace, she would have to be fed also.

Outside the pachyderm building, the yards for the rhinos and the elephants, respectively, are separated by a thick stone wall. This barrier ends a short distance from the wall of the house, leaving an opening just wide enough for a keeper to pass through from one yard to the other. Sometimes Peggy would stand on her side of this aperture and Josephine, the African elephant, would stand on the other side, and the two huge beasts would survey each other. Their wide shoulders, fortunately, prevented them from going through the passageway, but Josephine had the advantage, for her long trunk allowed her to enroach several feet into the rhino's domain. This seemed to anger Peggy and, on several occasions, she tried to charge the intruder. Her non-streamlined figure was her undoing, however. After she became wedged between the walls a few times, a post was erected in the middle of the passageway, thus effectually putting an end to the hostilities. Possibly neither of the big animals might have been harmed, but there was no sense in taking any chances.

Almost three years ago the Society placed an order for an African rhinoceros, hoping to have it for the opening of the new pachyderm house. A young specimen was in Johannesburg, awaiting a boat which would bring it to the United States, but then the war began. Transportation of all but the most essential items immediately ceased, of course, and no more rhinos will be imported for some time.

Peggy's twenty-two years did not set a record for longevity. An Indian rhinoceros lived in the London Zoo for forty-seven years. But twenty-two years is the average life-expectancy for captive rhinos.



0 FAVORITES

Josephine, the Forest Elephant

Josephine, the trained forest elephant, who died on March 12, 1943, was one of the most colorful animals in the Philadelphia Zoo's entire collection. She was known to thousands of visitors (175,000 persons had ridden on her back) and her amusing exploits made front-page news on numerous occasions. In spite of her ability to get into trouble she was held in affectionate esteem by those who knew her.

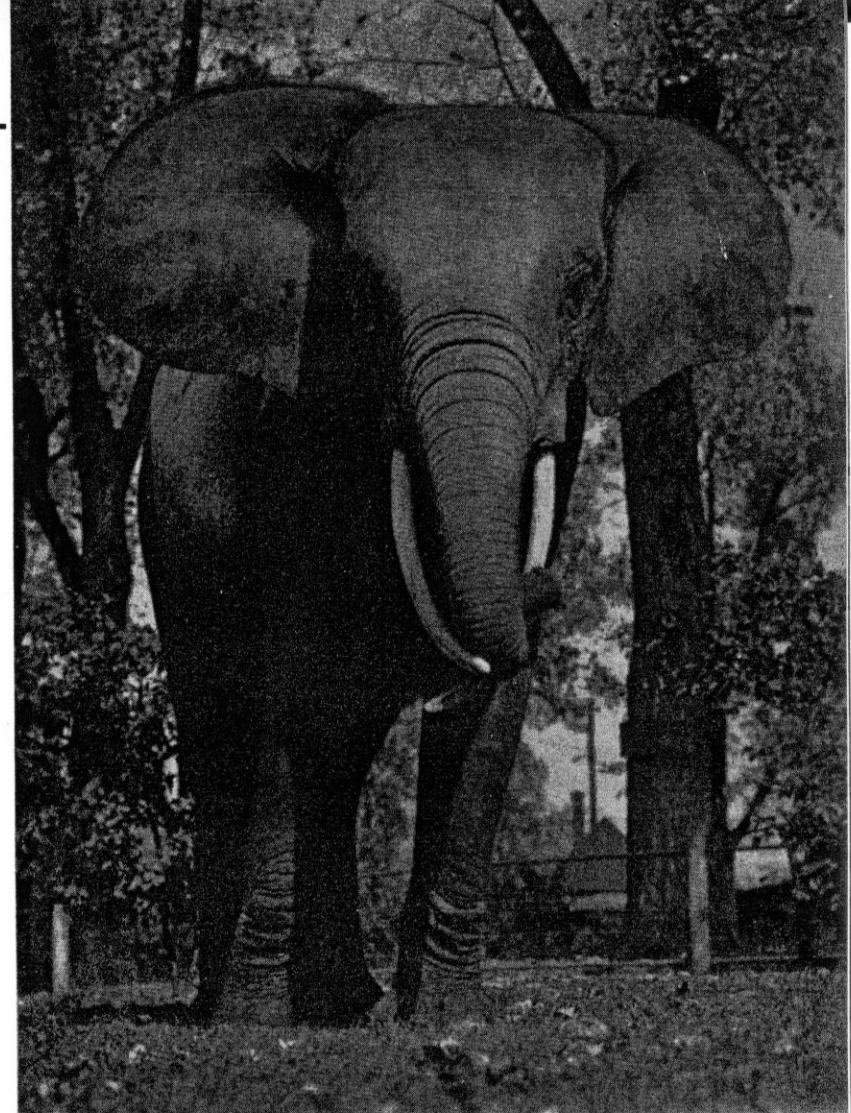
When she arrived at the Garden on April 4, 1925, Josephine was believed to belong to the fabled pygmy race. Scientists now generally agree that the existence of such a novelty is extremely doubtful, but it was some time before the newcomer was classified correctly as an African forest elephant.

In her youth Josie evidenced none of the surly, truculent disposition generally accredited to her species. On the contrary, she was docile, well-behaved, and intelligent. Keepers were fond of her and — although none would admit it — they made quite a pet of her. She was trained to do a few simple tricks and to wear a saddle capable of carrying a dozen youngsters at a time.

In 1935, Josie began to earn her daily hay (and apples and peanuts, as well as an occasional ice cream cone). On her way back to the elephant house, when the day's work was done, she would insist upon stopping at the Zoo's restaurant. Thrusting her head through the doorway, she would feast upon a basket of bread left from the previous day. Sometimes the keeper would pretend to forget this routine, but when he did Josephine would stop dead in her tracks and refuse to move until she had received the handout she regarded as her due.

The distrust of everything new or strange, which is characteristic of elephantine behavior, was developed to an extraordinary degree in Josephine. When Lizzie, an aged Indian elephant, died in 1940, Josie was "promoted" to the larger cage. During the day she seemed contented, but at night she raised such a rumpus that it was necessary to return her to her old pen. Several weeks passed before she felt sufficiently safe in her new quarters to remain there over night.

In 1941, when she and the other big animals were moved into the Zoo's new modern pachyderm house, Josie refused to cross the threshold. For four



months she lived (when not working) in a roughly constructed corral just outside her new home. And then, without any apparent reason, Josie capitulated —but in her own way. At about three o'clock one morning in August she was missing from the corral. Investigation revealed that she had pushed over the fence and simply had taken a walk down to her riding ring. She was calmly pulling down branches of trees and feasting upon the leaves when the keepers found her. She made no objection to being led back to the pachyderm house and, once there, she walked right into her indoor cage without the slightest hesitation.

Early in 1942, Josephine developed a somewhat uncertain temper, and, in the interest of safety, she was withdrawn from service. When she died she was about twenty-two years of age — just in her prime, as elephants go. Autopsy revealed that she had suffered a heart attack, similar to that which so frequently is fatal to man. In her short life she provided a great deal of pleasure for Zoo visitors. It will be a long time before this sometimes bewildering, often exasperating, but always amusing and lovable animal is forgotten.