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ANNE STODDARD · EDITOR

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An interview with FRANK BUCK, the famous game hunter

LIVE TIGERS PREFERRED

I'M no hero—just a business man." The speaker was Frank Buck, who has caught more animals in strange parts of the world, and brought them back alive and kicking to this country than any one else.

Mr. Buck was taking some time off in his office, or rather, I should say, his New York office. For such is the nature of his business, that any place in the world must become his office at a minute's notice, whether it is a native hut in the tiger-infested Malayan jungle, or a hotel room in Singapore, that famous town at the other end of civilization.

At this particular time, I had trailed the famous animal collector to his lair atop Radio City, a huge and roomy office with a twilight New York sun finding its last golden rays reflected on the great mahogany desk.

When in Rome, do as the Romans do. The white sun helmet, the khaki shorts, and the pistol had given way to a regular business suit. And, rather than talking to Ali, his Number One Boy on the animal expeditions, Frank Buck was calmly giving dictation to a stenographer who might have been making her pothooks in any New York office. There was nothing which seemed appropriate to the strange letter he was writing.

Yet, when I entered, he was dictating, "*Dear Sir: In regard to the royal Bengal tiger and the tapir which you ordered—*"

There were only two things, I thought, that branded Frank Buck as different from any one of a thousand well-to-do business men in New York. One was the nature of that letter, and the other was his face. It is an outdoor face, tanned and weather-



FRANK BUCK WITH A CUDDLY HONEY BEAR

By
DEE LOWRANCE

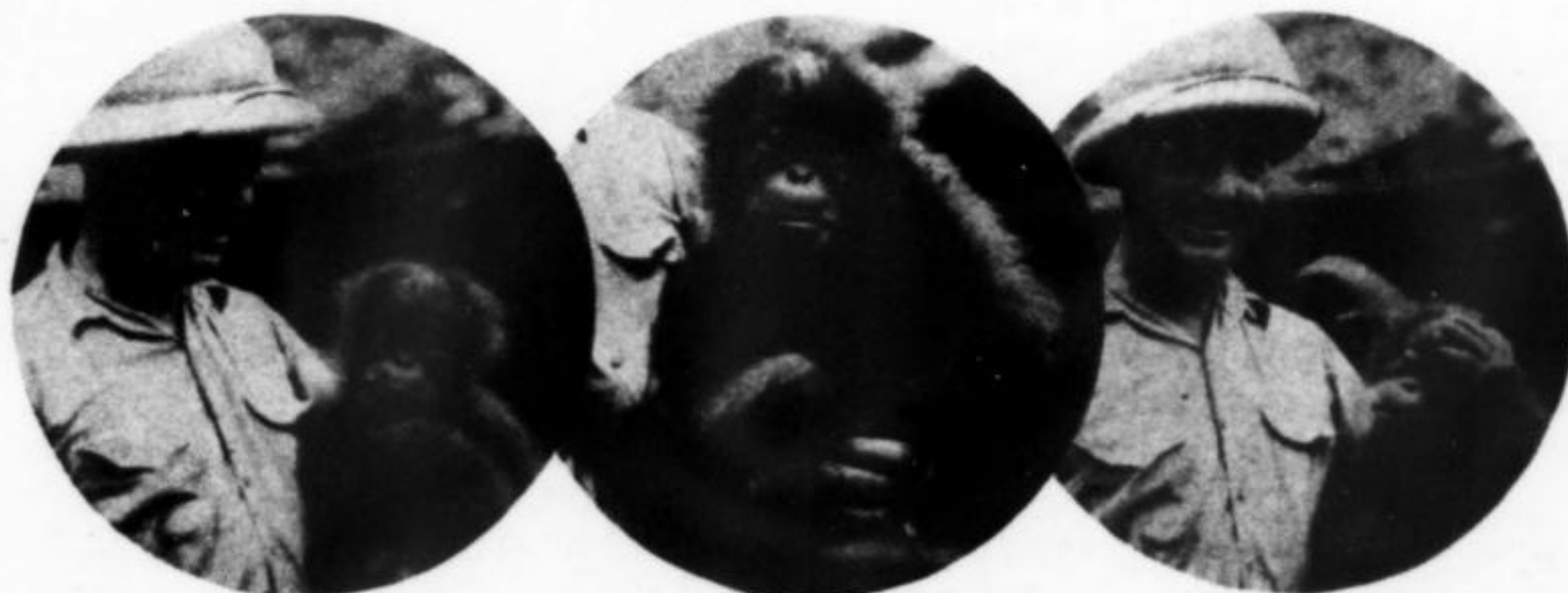
and I had a hard time convincing the natives they must not kill it. Their motives were very much the same as yours would be—a dead carpet was simpler! They finally agreed to help me bring him out alive. It was just a question of knowing how to handle the animal. As a matter of fact, in demonstrating this to the natives, I nearly lost my life."

"What happened?" I asked.

"The tiger was in a deep pit, and I had to get him roped up and a cage dropped over his head. Then I had to go down and hammer the door of the cage shut. I jumped in and called for the hammer and nails. They had been misplaced, so I had the experience of being ten feet below the surface

of the earth, with a man-eater plunging at the small wooden door that separated us. My hopes were as flimsy as the door. Ali, my Number One Boy, finally found the hammer and nails and slid down to help me, but the intervening two minutes were like hours."

MR. BUCK MAKES FRIENDS WITH A PRIMA DONNA AMONG MONKS





READY TO START ON A SAFARI INTO THE JUNGLE

"And still," I remarked, "you say your work is just a business."

Frank Buck shrugged. "Sure."

If we take him at his word and consider his work a business, the fact remains that it's a unique industry. The product to be sold consists of every form of wild life known, whether a great lumbering elephant, a brilliantly plumaged bird, or a savagely hissing snake. The buyers are the zoos, circus owners, and movie magnates. This business isn't centralized in any particular spot. It's wherever Frank Buck happens to be, whether in a market place in Calcutta, or aboard a liner bound for the United States.

It's hard to say how Frank Buck found himself in this sort of work. It just seemed natural that he should drift in that direction; that every step he took, from the time he was born in Gainesville, Texas, should lead him closer to the colorful position he holds to-day.

In the first place, he was born of pioneer parents, still hale and hearty, and this might account for his restless energy. He himself might be called a pioneer as he has crossed the Pacific forty times, and circumnavigated the entire world five times.

When young Frank was still a boy, the family moved to the suburbs of Dallas, and they built a home not far from a densely wooded area. Theodore Roosevelt began his big game hunting when, as a boy, he was tremendously interested in collecting specimens of nature, and, in the same way, Buck's interest started in this little Texas outpost, where he made daily trips through his first "jungles." He had heard of a man in Rochester, New York who actually paid fifty cents for each rattlesnake delivered alive, from which he manufactured a snake-oil remedy for rheumatism, and also did a thriving business in supplying medicine shows with live snakes.

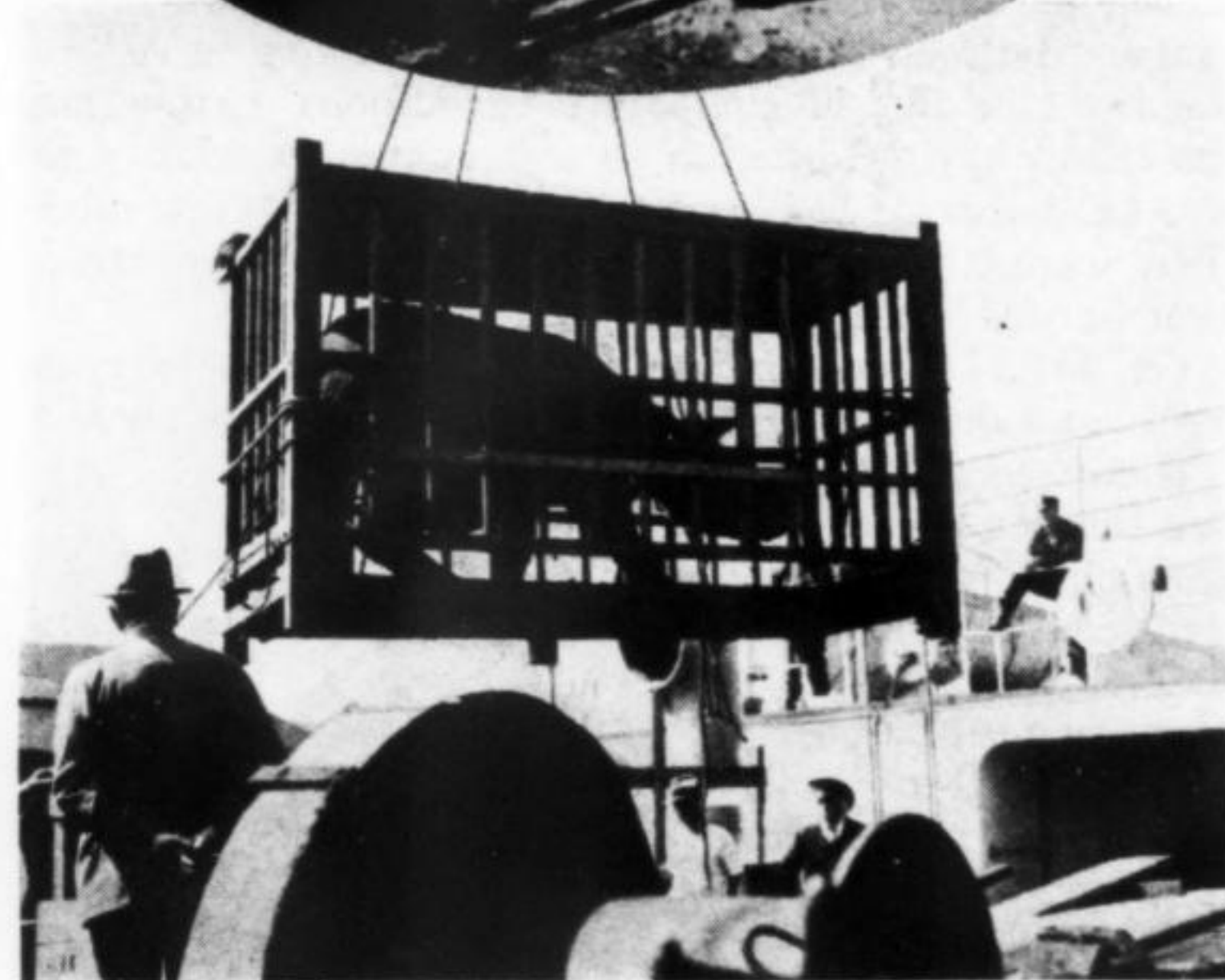
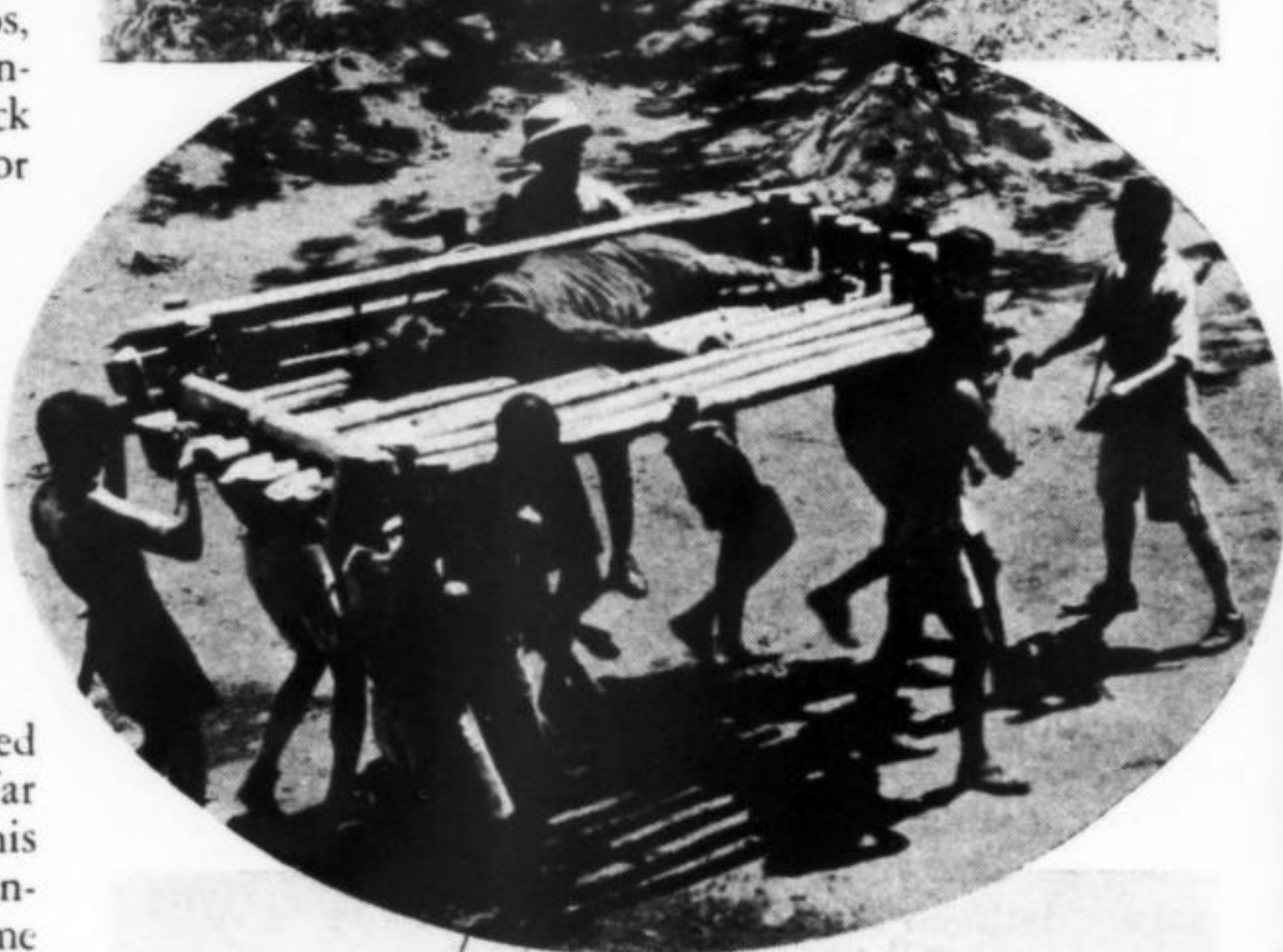
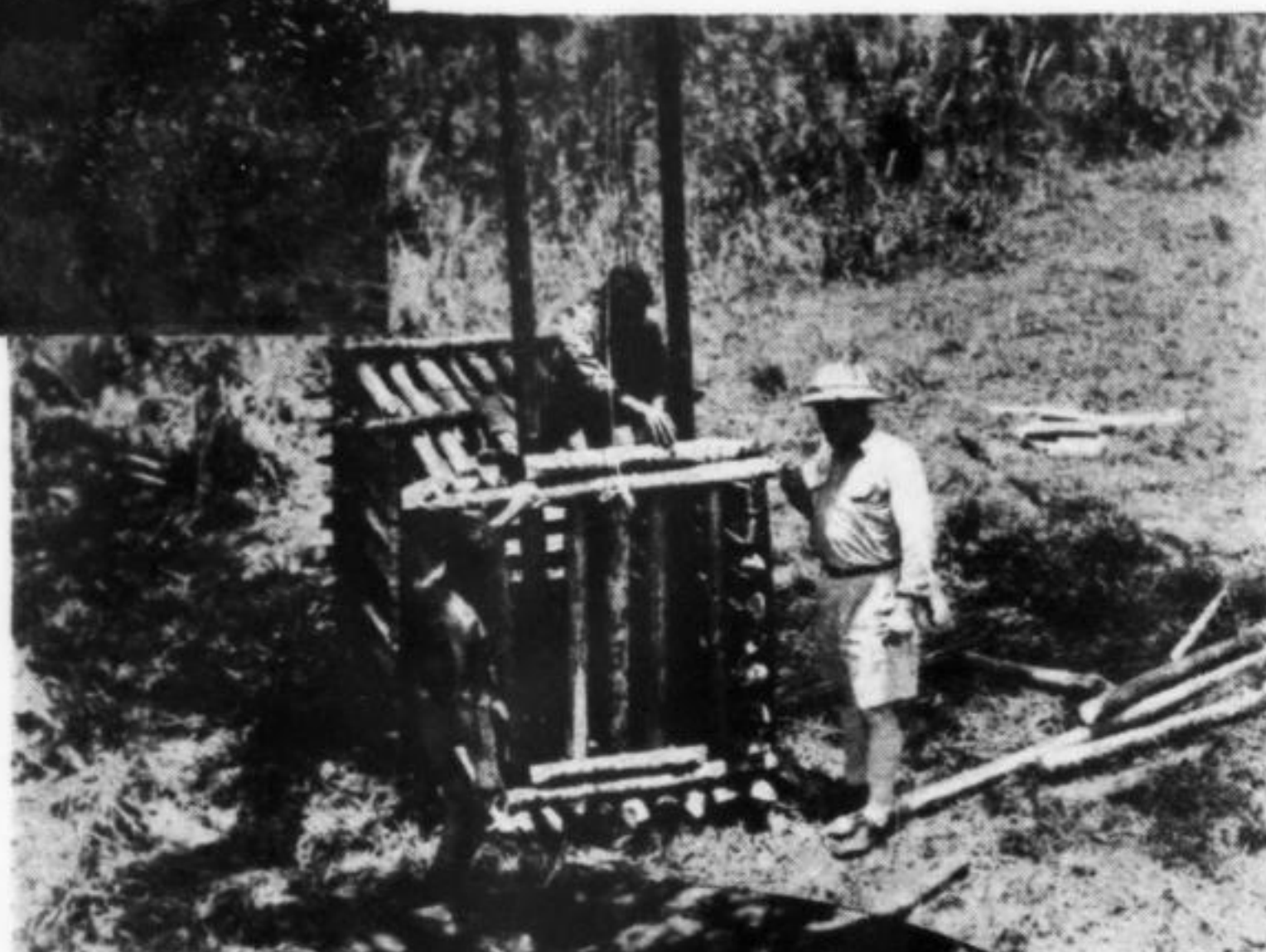
To a small boy in Texas it seemed incredible that anyone would pay a whole silver "cartwheel" for two rattlers, but he found it to be happily true, and thereafter young Frank was always in funds, to the envy of his mystified schoolmates.

The next business venture which the boy conducted marked one of the few departures of his career from the practice of capturing animals alive, that later he was to adopt formally. Tom Green County, Texas offered a bounty of two dollars and a half for every coyote scalp delivered at the courthouse. The coyotes had grown bolder and bolder, entering chicken yards in ranch enclosures, and had even gone so far as to bring down several calves. Hence the high bounty.

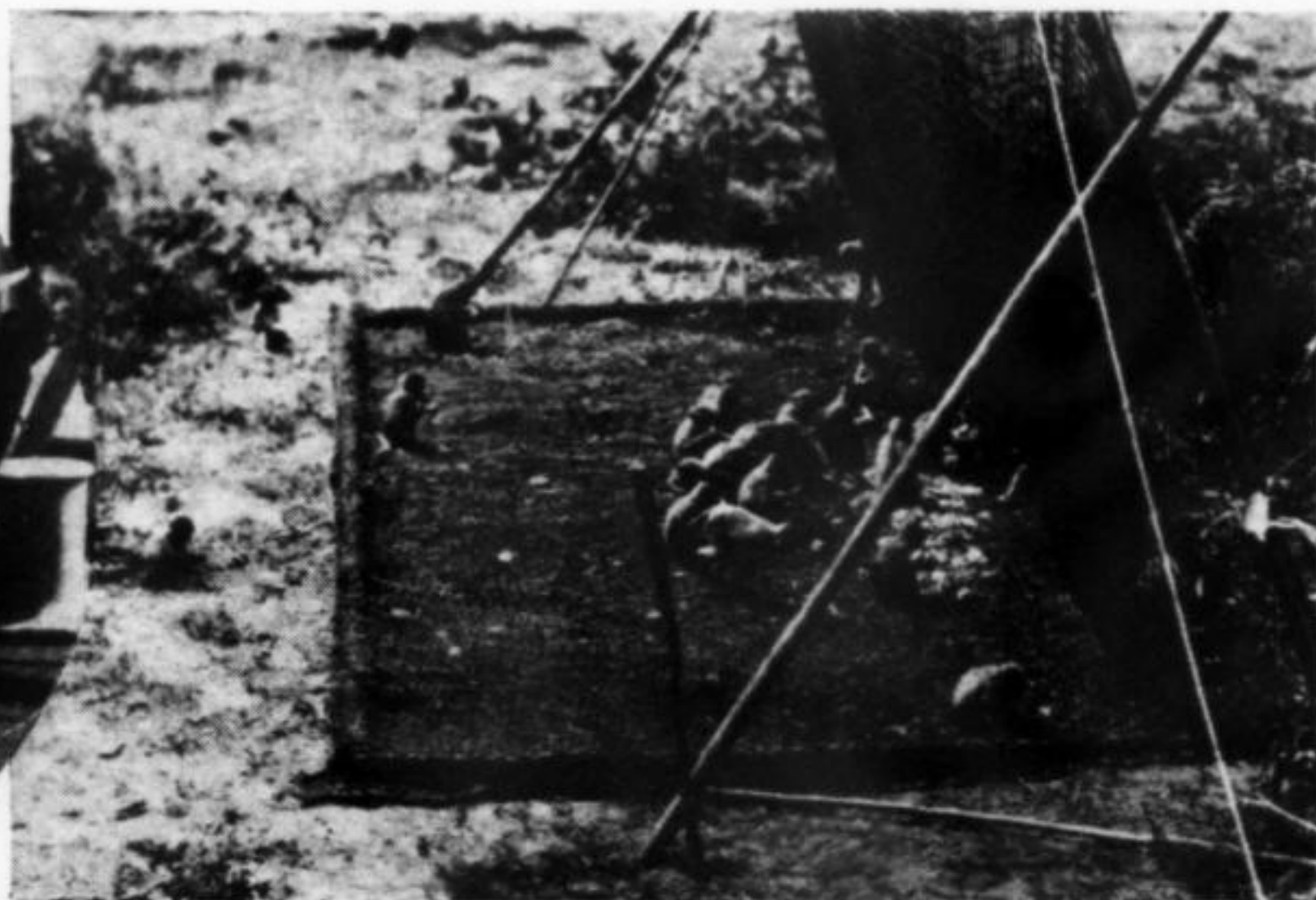
There wasn't any system in catching those coyotes. It was just a matter of hit or miss. But young Buck devised a plan.

FIRST BELOW: FRANK BUCK INSPECTS THE RUDE, BUT SKILLFULLY MADE, LOG TRAP IN WHICH HE EXPECTS TO SNARE A TIGER AND BRING IT BACK ALIVE

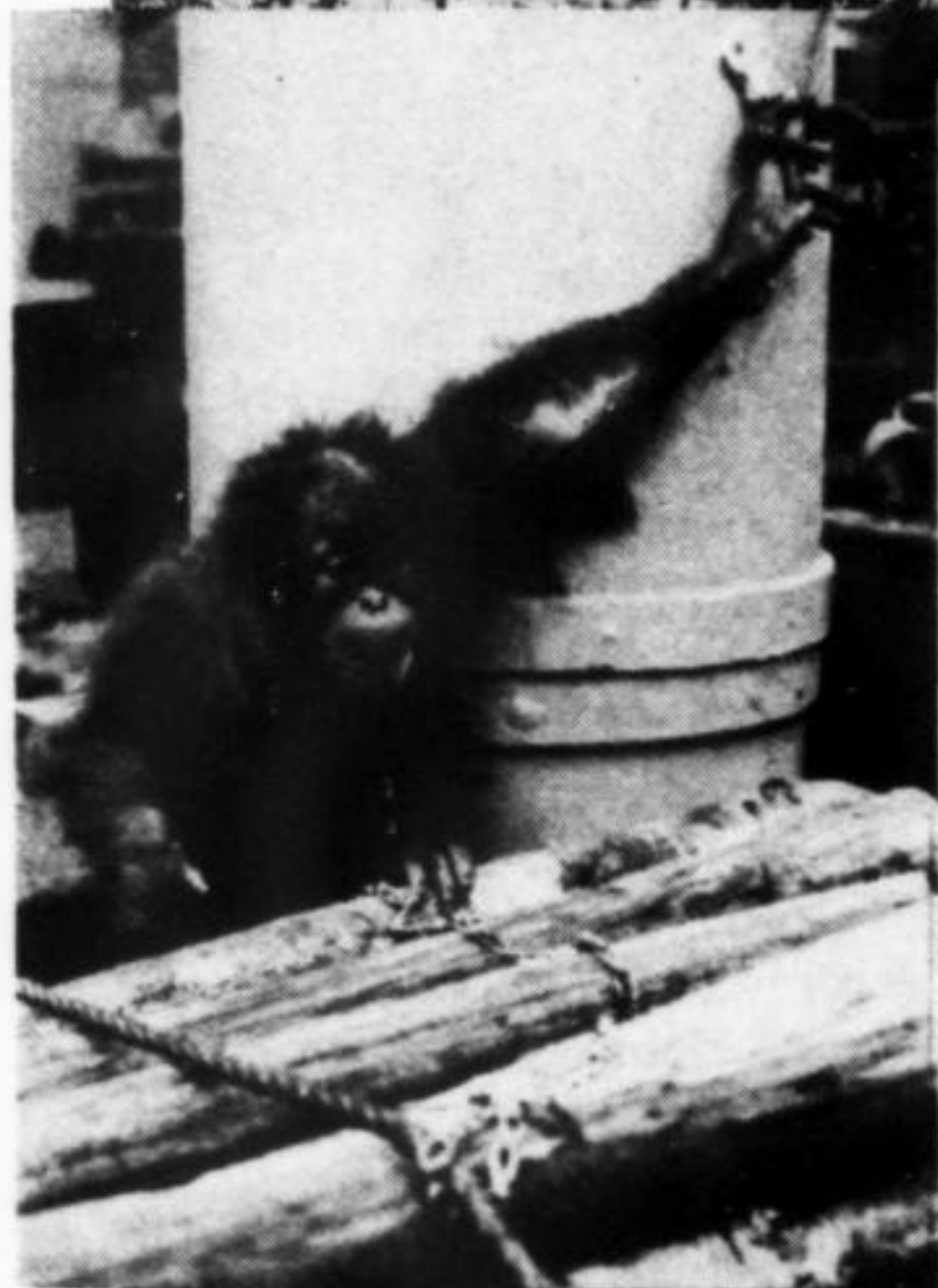
SECOND BELOW: AFTER THE TIGER IS CAUGHT, HE IS LASHED TO THE FLOOR OF HIS TRAP, THE TOP AND SIDES ARE CUT AWAY, AND NATIVE BEARERS CARRY HIS FALLEN MAJESTY BACK TO CAMP



LOADING A RHINO ABOARD THE SHIP THAT WILL BRING HIM TO AMERICA. INTERESTED SPECTATORS WATCH HIS ADVENT THROUGH THE AIR, BUT HE IS DISDAINFULLY INDIFFERENT



WHEN THIS TRAP IS SPRUNG, THERE'LL BE A BAGFUL OF MONKEYS



IN OVAL ABOVE: AN ELEPHANT AT THE END OF HIS ROPE! THE SMALLEST ONE EVER BROUGHT BACK TO AMERICA IS CAREFULLY UNLOADED ON THE PIER

ABOVE: A FEROCIOUS MAN-EATING CROCODILE, ROPED AND TIED TO A POLE, IS STARTED OFF TO THE ZOO

LEFT: A GIBBON MONKEY FROM THE MALAY STATES IN A CONTEMPLATIVE MOOD

FRANK BUCK WITH A RARE ARGUS PHEASANT FROM THE MALAY PENINSULA



When a calf had been butchered, Frank would tie the freshly removed skin to one end of a lariat, and fasten the other end to his saddle pommel. He then rode over a considerable area, ending his trip at a pitfall which he had previously dug. The coyotes would pick up the scent and follow it to the ditch. Frank would be waiting for them, pick them off, and present the scalps at the courthouse.

Although Buck is known chiefly as a collector of animals, it is important to remember that this represents only a portion of the business that he transacts. He is tremendously interested in birds. Feathered creatures were one of his earliest boyhood fancies, and he used to make comfortable little sums by selling the bright plumaged cardinals in his aviary. It was the birds, in fact, that induced him to make his first expedition to the tropics. The trip proved so profitable that he decided to go in for collecting on a large scale.

Some of the experiments that he has conducted with his birds have been fascinating. Parrots, once they have been taught to speak, always "bring home the crackers." Why not, thought Buck, teach another bird to talk like a parrot? He answered his question in all seriousness by trying to make a magnificent paradise bird talk—and he nearly succeeded.

The paradise bird had been named "The Earl of Dobo," his birthplace having been the forest near Dobo, capital of the Aru islands. Buck decided that the bird needed another teacher beside himself, so he procured a hill mina, which is a coal black bird, an inveterate mimic and a more adept talker than any parrot. He decided to give the Earl a vocabulary capable of expressing the friendly phrase, "Hello, how's business?" But let Frank Buck tell the story himself!

"Without much difficulty I got the mina, which I dubbed 'Gabby,' to repeat this phrase over and over. Whenever anybody came near Gabby's cage, the mina would flutter against the wire and fix its beady eyes on the visitor, shrieking in an unending repetition its call: 'Hello, hello, hello! How's business? How's business?'"

"Each time Gabby would be rewarded by a bit of banana. When Gabby was satisfactorily schooled, I brought in the Earl of Dobo. Side by side hung the two cages for weeks. Gabby chattered volubly all day long, and the Earl could not fail to be impressed with the fact that, every time anybody came into the room, Gabby's vocal effort was rewarded with a tasty gift of some enticing dainty. All visitors were instructed to go to the Earl's cage and repeat the phrase, 'Hello, how's business?' At the same time, each one would hold out a tiny piece of rambutan, a jungle fruit which the paradise bird craves beyond any other delicacy. But so long as the bird remained unresponsive, he got nothing but a look at the morsel.

"It was a month or so before the Earl showed that the idea had penetrated his conceited (Continued on page 42)

CATTLE IN THE DRAGON SHIP

the cheese that had been made from milk.

As soon as the red men tasted the milk, they drank it down with great gulps. They thrust handfuls of the curd cheese into their mouths, and they liked that so much that they threw down pelt after pelt for more.

When the trading was over, the Vikings had all the fur pelts, and all the iron pots and the wooden cheese dishes were empty. But the cows from Greenland would soon fill them again, thought the bull with satisfaction. He looked quietly after the red men as they got into their skin canoes and sailed down the river.

The white settlers of Vinland called these strangers *Skraellings*.

THE next year the bull watched while the *Skraellings* came again. Once more, the settlers exchanged milk and cheese for furs. They gave the visitors pieces of red cloth, too, cloth which the women had woven from sheep's wool they had brought with them from Greenland, and dyed with the juice of the pokeberry.

The bull could not understand the delight of the strangers at the red cloth. He himself hated red. But he stood solemnly by, watching them, brushing a fly off his back now and then with his tail.

The *Skraellings* wound the cloth pieces about their heads, and when the cloth began

to run short, Karlsefni and his men cut it in narrower and narrower strips. The red men were so anxious to get it that it did not seem to matter to them how narrow the strips were. They gave good furs for pieces no wider than one's finger.

The bull grew accustomed to the coming of the *Skraellings* to trade with the white men. He did not even notice, one day, when a red man tried to seize a sword which had been left against the side of a log house. But he did start at the yell of a Viking who killed the one who had stolen the weapon. All the other red men ran away and departed swiftly in their canoes.

The bull shook his head angrily, and drew close to the cabin where Gudrid's small son was playing with some white stones.

He heard Karlsefni speaking. "I fear they will come again, and not be friendly."

Karlsefni was right. For the *Skraellings* did come again, yelling, and with war paint on their faces. Some of the men then drove the cattle deep into the woods where there was a little glade, and some of the women stayed with them. The bull seemed to understand they were hiding, and he kept very quiet all that day.

"It is not safe to live longer in Vinland," said Karlsefni, as he came to the glade that evening and walked, with Gudrid on one side and the bull on the other, home through

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the dusk. He carried Snorri on his broad shoulders. "To-day we were forced to display the red shield, the old signal of the Vikings for battle. We fought long with the *Skraellings*, but at last they fled. We must make ready to return to Greenland."

ONCE again, the bull watched preparations for a journey. The dragon ships were rolled down to the water's edge, and loaded with the furs which the *Skraellings* had traded to the white settlers. Trees were cut down and the logs carried to the ships, also, for there was little wood in Greenland and this came from very small trees. Seeds of the new plants they had found, the colonists gathered, and they dried grapes to take with them. Many bundles of green grass were cut for the cattle, and when it dried, it was fragrant. The three-year-old Snorri kept putting flowers and ferns on the pile.

The bull thought it would be nice to see Greenland again, and talk over his travels with those bulls who had never seen another country. Not even the greatest of his grandfathers had journeyed more than he.

The day for departure arrived. The cows and calves were driven on board, but no one drove the bull. He followed of his own accord. As the dragon ships sailed down the river and out once more to the sea, he gave bellow after bellow, as a farewell to Vinland.

LIVE TIGERS PREFERRED

skull. He indicated plainly enough that he wanted the rambutan, and gradually he seemed to be learning that the way to get it was to make a noise like Gabby's refrain. Then I moved the Earl and the mina into the same cage. Once I got the Earl used to the idea of living with the mina, I busied myself with the job of trying to show him how to get an occasional morsel of rambutan. I started with the word hello, and it took me two months to get him to say it. Finally his hello was genuine.

"And then it was Gabby's turn to be jealous. He began to poach on the rambutan which the Earl's vocal cords had finally won for him. So the Earl went for Gabby with murder in his heart. I had to place the mina in a separate cage on the porch where he soon recovered from his shock and could again be heard yelling, 'Hello, how's business?'"

"But the Earl declined to forget the incident, and I resumed what proved to be a hopeless task. Standing in front of the Earl's cage, I would utter the word, 'hello,' but its only effect was to send the bird into a blind fury. So far as the hello situation was concerned, the Earl of Dobo had definitely said good-bye to all that."

UNFORTUNATELY, however, Frank Buck has not had time to conduct any more experiments similar to that one; he has been far too occupied in the transportation of his never-before-seen-in-this-country specimens. There are hosts of them. Nothing gives him such delight as watching a zoo manager's unbounded glee upon receiving a new species of animal, or sharing an animal trainer's excitement in his first sight of a promising team of wild jungle beasts.

Nor does his interest in animals end when

they have been delivered, admiringly praised, and paid for. He has made a close friend of Louis Roth, the famous head animal trainer of the Al G. Barnes circus. Buck delivered the tiger for one of Roth's most famous acts. In this, the king of the jungle mounts on the back of a horse. The horse dashes under a flaming hoop, held by a property man. The tiger abandons his perch, a second before the horse passes beneath the hoop, jumping through the fiery circle and landing once more on the horse's back. And a few years before, this very tiger had been a snarling, intractable beast, whom Buck came upon, trapped in a heavy log cage outside a Malay village.

WHEN Buck is in New York he visits Dr. Raymond L. Ditmars at the New York zoo, ostensibly to see Dr. Ditmars who is another good friend of his, but none the less, we suspect, to check up on the Indian rhino that he delivered there a few years back. "I've often wondered," he says, "if the visitors to this famous park who stand daily before the rhinoceros paddock realize what it meant in work, risk, worry, and expense to place that animal there."

For that rhino trip was one of the most strenuous in Buck's entire career. He had bought two rhino calves from a maharajah in India. The method of catching these calves had been comparatively simple—much more so than the final transportation arrangements. About one hundred Gurkhas, or Indian soldiers, had shot a female rhino, and captured the calves by closing in on them as they were standing by the body of their mother. But the trouble came when the two young mountains of flesh, both having been caught in a similar manner, were handed over to Buck. First there was the danger of

carrying the cash payment, thirty-five thousand rupees, through a large section of out-of-the-way India, in which more than one man's throat had been cut for less than a hundred rupees.

"In fact," remarked Buck, "in many of these districts they cheerfully cut your throat for nothing! There are Hindu knifesters who seem to be striving to preserve their amateur standing. All the inspiration they need is a dislike for you and a lonely road."

When the deal was finally closed, the rhinos were put in heavy crates that had been made of logs and branches. The jungle saw an odd pageant wending its way back to civilization that afternoon, a parade that could only be headed by a man like Frank Buck. Never did two prisoners receive such an escort as did those baby rhinos—not since the old Roman triumphal processions! Forty or fifty Gurkha soldiers marched alongside the great crates, to steady the load and help push the bullock carts out of mud holes. Indian highways through the jungles were not built for streamlined cars. Directly behind the rhinos came three elephants, each carrying fodder for the two captives. Following the elephants were a couple more bullock carts with supplies for the men, while Frank Buck and the major of the troop, mounted on ponies, acted as marshals of the strange parade, riding up and down the line, keeping everything in order.

WHEN Buck and his prize rhinos and numerous other specimens finally boarded the *President Wilson* for the trip back to the States, Buck found that he weighed twenty pounds less than when he had originally set out for Nepal—so strenuous had the journey been. Nor were his troubles over yet. Outside Hong Kong there was a first-

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

class, hundred per cent Eastern typhoon! The seas, lashed by murderous winds, mounted higher and higher, and finally broke in hissing waves of spray over the bow. And with the terrific pounding from the waters, one of the great crates had worked itself loose. One more big wave, and it would break away entirely and go over the side. Buck scrambled out to the bow and, with waves crashing over him, managed to lash the cage safely. It was dangerous work, but he couldn't quite see letting those rhinos go after all the trouble, worry, and expense they had caused.

There is lots of danger in trapping wild animals, and it comes from the most unexpected sources. Once Buck was attacked by a tapir, while giving that animal a bath. Tapirs look like hogs, weighing about three hundred pounds, but generally they are no more harmful than little pigs in a barnyard. This one, however, had gotten up on the wrong side of his hay that morning, and, before Buck knew it, he was pinned down under the angry animal with the prospect of having his head bitten. Help came just in time, and a stick was put between the tapir's teeth.

On another occasion a spotted leopard, one of the most formidable of the jungle cat tribe, escaped from his crate on board an America-bound boat. In a hectic chase, the leopard after the passengers and Buck after the leopard, the animal was trapped in the officers' mess room, though Buck had to lasso him first. With the help of a dozen or so sailors, he was brought back to his cage. More than once Buck's rope, a reminder of the days in Texas, has come in handy with his animals. Once he used it to capture a valuable crane whom he noticed, in the nick of time, on the wing, with the cage door behind him swinging open.

Buck remembers another vivid experience on board ship, this time concerning a black

panther that escaped from his cage on the foredeck and deliberately jumped into the water. As Spitfire, the panther, headed for shore he was attacked by a shark, and a terrific if unequal fight followed, possibly one of the most unusual combats that has ever taken place in the water.

THE people whom Frank Buck meets constitute a fascinating aspect of his life. Not only does he know every important zoo man and wild animal trainer in this country, but he boasts a host of acquaintances on the seas, and in the distant East. He comes across soldiers and hunters, bad men and good. Many a skipper has transported one of Buck's strange wild cargoes; many a native has accompanied him and guarded his life on his expeditions. His Number One Boys, Lal and Ali, are faithful and colorful servants.

One of this mighty hunter's best friends is the Sultan of Johore, in India, one of the most interesting potentates alive. As rich as any maharajah, he still likes his jokes and his hosts of pets. Frank Buck always comes in for a "kidding" when he stages a reunion with the Sultan. Once this Oriental monarch with the Occidental personality heard that he wanted a man-eating tiger, and his remarks were graphic.

"The next time I have a tiger which eats man," he promised, "I send for you. You go up to tiger, say, 'Boo!' Tiger say, 'All is lost, it is Buck,' and lie down on back and cry like baby. You throw him over shoulder and swim back to America with him. In America everybody clap hands, and you become big hero."

Well that, as we have seen, isn't exactly the way it's done, but there is little doubt that this sunburned, practical, unfazed animal collector has indeed become something of "big hero," whether a business man or not.

QUARRY HILL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

silence, the loneliness, the stark masses of rock.

"Some way, it's more desolate than a desert," said Pauline thoughtfully. "So many men have been here and have gone." Suddenly she stopped short, a startled look on her face. "I just saw a cat!" she cried.

Madeleine began to laugh. "Well, that's nothing extraordinary."

"Yes, but up here!" exclaimed Paul. "I wouldn't have been surprised at a rabbit, but a cat seems so queer in this forsaken place."

They moved forward together and just around a bend was the cat, a lanky striped tiger, picking his way daintily across a flat rock. A few steps beyond, his presence was explained.

They came upon another of the old quarry buildings, but this house was in slightly better repair than the others. The roof had been mended with tar paper, and a calico curtain sagged at the window. A patch of ground had been cleared for a garden, and smoke curled from an iron stove-pipe. A second cat lay in a rickety rocking-chair on the porch.

As they approached, a woman came out with a tin basin in her hand. "Here, Puss, Puss, Puss!" she called, placing the basin on the ground. The cat leaped from the chair; a

couple of scrawny kittens scampered across the road, mewing as they ran; the tiger cat on the rock rose and stretched himself.

"Do you see, Paul? It's that awful woman!" whispered Madeleine.

"Yes," answered Paul. "I don't wonder she goes begging for fish, with that bunch to feed."

They quickened their steps and were soon out of sight of the old woman's squalid dwelling.

"I can hear automobiles," said Madeleine suddenly. "The road must be near!" They were passing another quarry pit, wide and deep. A bridge spanned a cut at the farther end. A moment later they caught sight of the blue horizon, and then the length of the coast spread out below them. The State road went over the bridge and curved to the village, a mile or so along the shore.

"Maybe it was around here that the Jewetts lived," said Madeleine. Then she gave a little shriek. "Paul, see! That long point, with all those derricks and things, and that wharf—"

"And that house!" said Pauline.

"It's built of stone out of the quarries," cried Madeleine excitedly. "Paul, it's the Jewett house!"

It stood close to the road, a large granite building, once a (Continued on page 49)



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