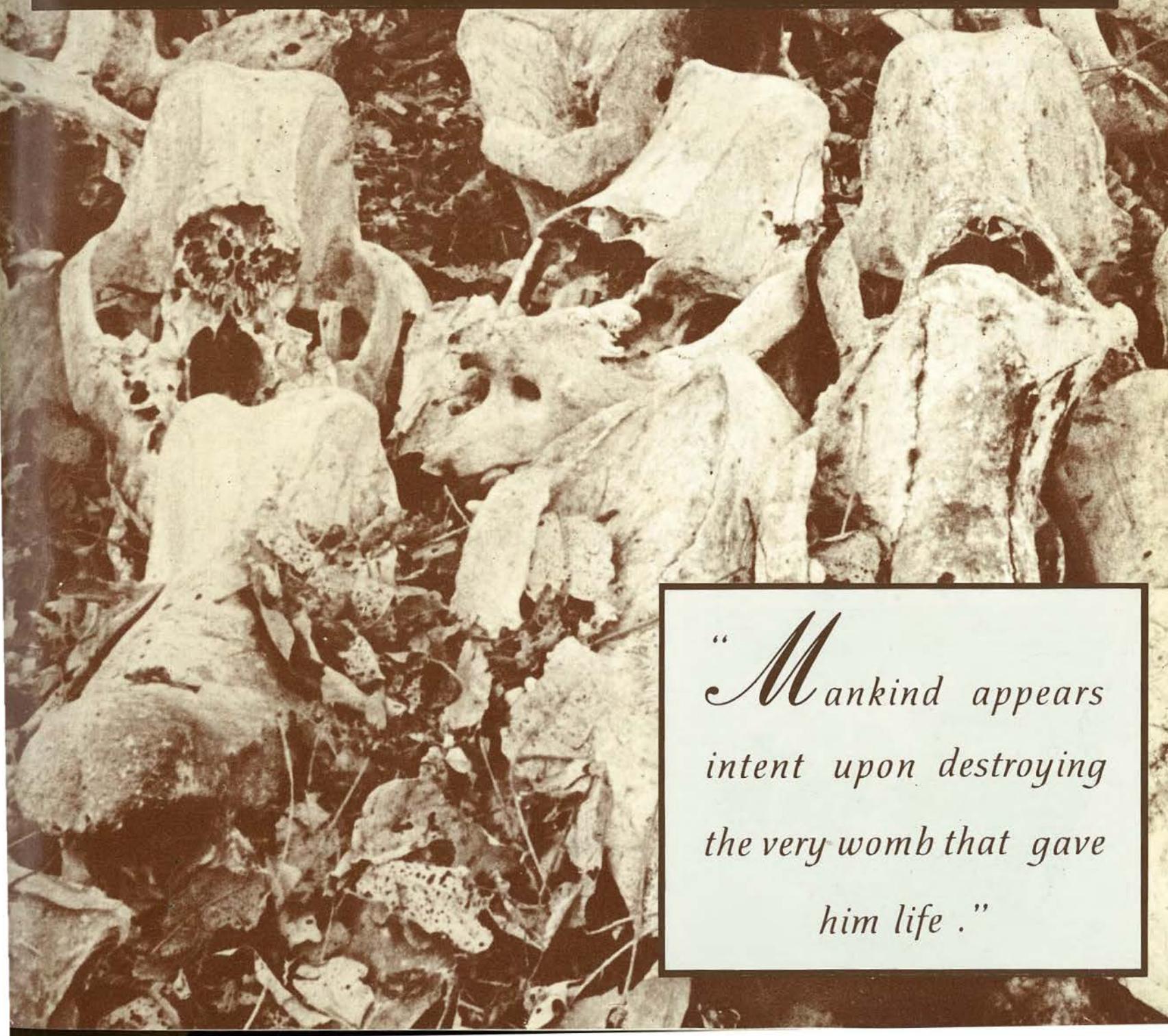


EXTINCTION IS FOREVER

The inspiration behind the Rhino Girls' story



“Mankind appears intent upon destroying the very womb that gave him life .”

EXTINCTION IS FOREVER

THE RHINO GIRLS' STORY

ORIGINAL CONCEPT:
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COMPILED BY:
Allan F. Munn

SUB-EDITOR
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(except where specified)

ARTWORK
Kate Grubb



EXCERPTS FROM
"The Killing"
Christine Frost



Zimbabwe First Edition published 1990

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Publishing sponsored by Munn Publishing (Pvt) Ltd.

Printed by City Printers

ISBN 0-7974-0942-4 (Limited Edition)

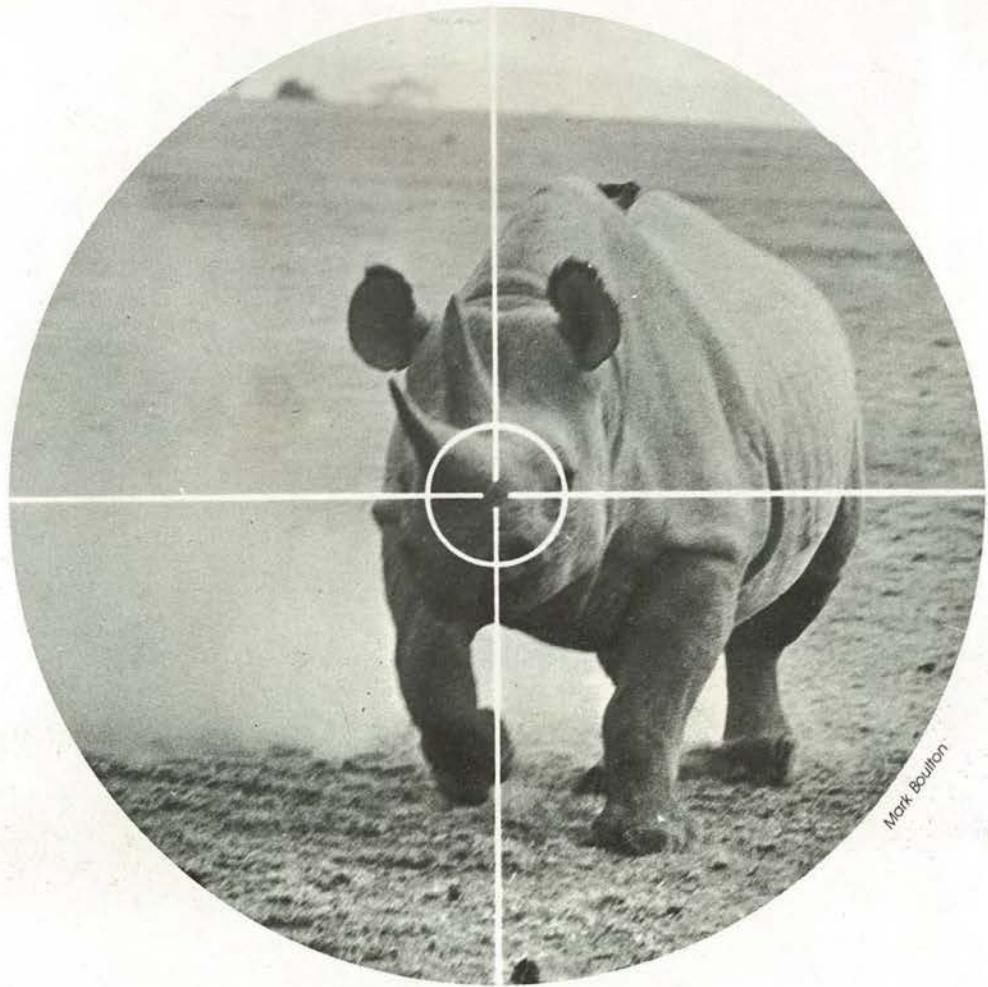
ISBN 0-7974-0941-6 (Hardback Edition)

ISBN 0-7974-0929-7 (Softback Edition)

*“B*en and the dead rhino now had
one thing in common
— a butchered face .”

Thomas Meikle Stores

having grown with Zimbabwe since 1892 are proud to support conservation of our country's wildlife heritage.

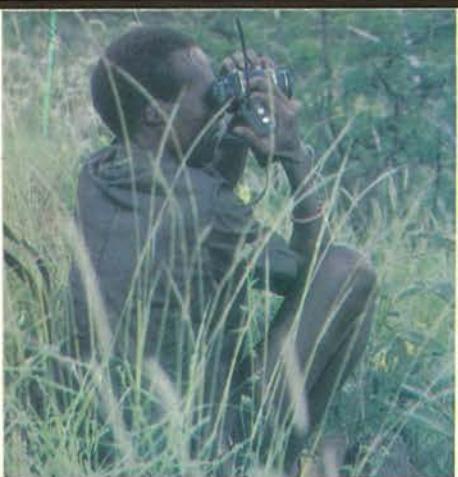


Mark Boult

2



The Killing





Three young men crouched in the shade of a rocky outcrop watching two rhino below browsing peacefully on the last of the summer thorns. One animal had a magnificent horn, which was now the centre of their attention. The other was a suckling which stumbled after its mother.

To any normal observer, it would have been a charming sight — every now and then the odd looking baby gave a hop, skip and a jump to express his joy of living, and each time the awkward little body suddenly became quite beautiful with the grace of youth.

To the trio sheltering from the hot afternoon sun, the little rhino was of no consequence at all. It may as well have been invisible.

"Fine horn, that, Sana," grunted the colonel, nudging his companion, their greedy eyes fixed on the mother rhino. He stood, tipped back his bush hat trimmed with leopard skin, and hitched up his shorts over a beer belly that was blurring a once muscular figure.

His olive skinned companion nodded, appraising him with secret abhorrence, his black eyes critical and his attitude arrogant.

"Yes, that's the one I've been waiting for," he whispered back.

At the sound of their voices, Phiri, the third man started nervously from his daydream. He snatched his rifle with such alarm that the others laughed.

"Twitchy, eh?" grinned his heavily tanned companion. "It's just first time nerves, Phiri. There are no game wardens for miles. We threw them off days ago."

Their African bearer slowly relaxed. It was true that this was his first poaching trip in the valley. He was there because he realised that those who dared defy the guns of the rangers to rip off the rhinos' horns would become rich. However, he was not enjoying the experience. He was only there because if they succeeded, he would be able to feed his family and buy wonderful luxuries like cars and radios.

Yet, were the national parks men on their trail? Would he ever live to see his home again, let alone all the luxuries he would be able to afford if their poaching hunt was successful.

It took all his willpower and pride as a man to hide his fear from these two rich and confident men who had brought him here. Perhaps they were right, maybe they had thrown off their pursuers, but he had been hired for his skill as a tracker, and he knew the rangers would pick up their trail again quite easily.

In their arrogance, the poacher and the stranger with the curious cloth headdress were leaving signs a child could follow.

For one thing, Phiri had felt it a mistake for them to have killed the great elephant Nzou — no local would have done that. He believed the spirits to be angered.

The hunter from the east who claimed noble blood was undoubtedly tingling with unhealthy excitement. For many years his people had prized the rhino horn, and now the demand was so great that it had become a status symbol in his country. Even at source, the horn was worth many thousands of dollars.

The eastern hunter thought himself educated, and therefore scorned the simple people back home who bought the powdered horn for a medicine to cure everything from impotence to plague. Such fools had made him rich. It was now his father's most successful business after drugs.

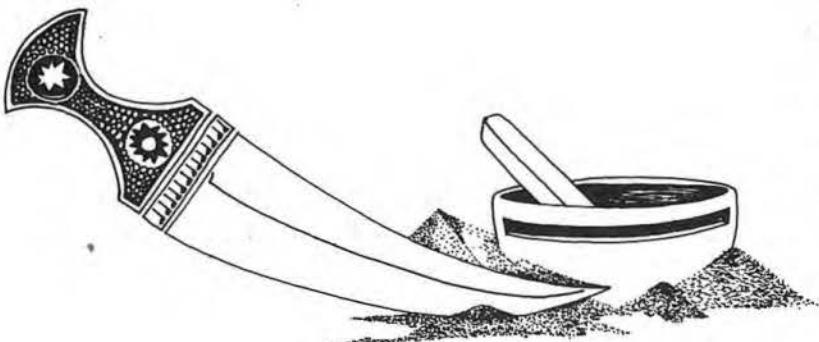
So he was here in Africa to impress the people back home. He would choose a whole and perfect horn that he could claim as his very own. It would be carefully polished and mounted in gold, silver and jewels until it was the most beautiful and spectacular dagger hilt in the east.

Now that their prey was in sight, the eastern hunter became impatient.

"Come on then, colonel!" he yelled, "let's get down there — I want that horn!"

"If that arrogant little fool had not shouted," the colonel commented afterwards, "we might have got away without any trouble."

The men from the national parks were dedicated and bushwise. For more than a week, through wild terrain, they had been following a trail of butchered elephant and game killed with blood lust rather than for the pot. Now that they had entered rhino country, they redoubled their efforts.



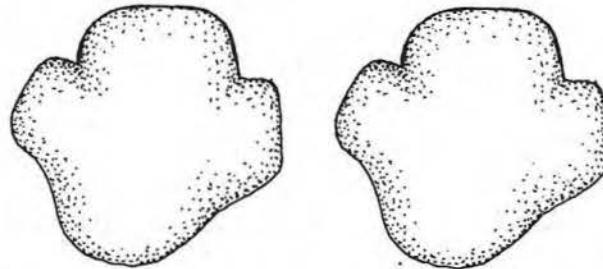
In the 1800s, thousands of rhino browsed peacefully in this part of Africa, as they had done since the dawn of history. Now in the late 1900s, they are threatened with extinction by brutish louts like the colonel and his gang. Only a pitiful few remain.

Although they had lost track of the three poachers a few days earlier, Sergeant Tendai Matamba and his assistant Ben Sibanda, with only limited equipment at their disposal, relentlessly followed their spoor.

It had been the shocking sight of the mutilated elephant that spurred them on. Viewed from a safe distance, they had seen the fallen giant and the gaping wounds where once great tusks had been. They had witnessed the distressed herd, aimlessly milling around their butchered companions.

The dead elephant had been the leader of the herd for many years and to Ben and Tendai, she was an old friend. The sight of the bewildered and helpless mourners had filled the rangers with rage, and an even stronger resolve to revenge this pointless massacre.

These two weary men were running out of petrol and other provisions, and perhaps could not continue much longer. Even though they were tired and dispirited, they were not about to abandon the chase. Suddenly they heard the eastern hunter's excited yell.



The small hill from where the yell emanated was approximately a kilometre away, but the rangers were able to see the poachers. Tendai lowered his binoculars. He looked grim.

"Three of them, two heavily armed and one with just a rifle," he whispered. "They're almost certainly after a rhino right now. I don't think we'll get there in time. We'll have to move in on foot."

"Well, we can only try," replied Ben, beginning to scramble with conviction down the steep rock-strewn slope.

Without warning, they heard a burst of automatic fire, and Tendai groaned. "They will have ripped the rhino to pieces, Ben — we're too late, but let's see if we can get the men themselves." The two men could feel the adrenalin pumping furiously in their veins.



Where does the poached rhino horn end up? Ask this North Yemeni craftsman filing a piece of rhinoceros horn into the shape of a dagger handle.

The rangers came upon the poachers just as they had finished their kill. The great body of the mother rhino lay twitching, but the three men were so deeply intent on their grisly work, that the rangers were able to creep in fairly close. Covered with blood up to their armpits, the killers were still hacking the horn from her dying body, while the baby stood back, terrified, uncertain, and making small mewling sounds of distress. It was a pitiful sight.

"How can those men call themselves human?" thought Ben.

For the moment, the rangers were safe, their approach undetected. Between the two groups was low scrubland with little cover. The poachers' guns lay nearby, black and ugly, ready to spit death more efficiently than those carried by Ben and Tendai.

It was then that the poacher, Phiri, looked up, perhaps more sensitive to the sounds of the bush than his companions. His shout of fear sent the others scrambling desperately for their weapons.

The first shots were almost simultaneous, though those that followed sounded like ghastly faraway echoes to Ben. He lay barely conscious, bleeding, wounded and shocked while the poachers shouted and swore around him, certain that both he and Tendai were dead.

Hours later, Ben slowly came to his senses, weak from loss of blood. His first thought was to look for Tendai. He heaved himself painfully onto one elbow and turned his head. He was relieved to see that the poachers had gone, but his feelings were shortlived.

The scene that met his eyes was not a pretty one. Sergeant Tendai Matamba lay dead, his uniform soaked in blood. Close by was the body of the poacher Phiri, who had left yet another widow to mourn the foolishness of simple men.

Yet even worse, from Ben's point of view, was the frightening sight of a scavenging hyaena, stealthily moving towards him.

A hyaena has powerful jaws and exceedingly sharp teeth, and though many people believe they feed mainly on small dead animals, this is not entirely true. The hyaena is certainly able to hunt effectively and also despatch the weak, sick or dying. This beast had decided that the defenceless baby rhino was the tastiest meal around and had already chewed the little creature's ears, the remains of which hung in pathetic bloody rags from its head. The feeble animal was still alive, helplessly seeking protection from its dead mother.

Ben lay as still as possible, petrified that he would be the hyaena's next victim. His dazed eyes frantically searched for his weapon, but in vain.

The ranger scarcely remembered the next despairing hours, during which he tried to defend himself and the baby rhino. Finally poor Ben fainted from pain and exhaustion. His last memory of the nightmare was the sharp fangs of the hyaena poised like daggers inches from his face. He could smell the foul breath of the beast as it panted in eager anticipation of the kill. Ben was easy meat. The rescue party are never likely to forget what they found.



"I still have horrific dreams about it," confessed one of the rangers when later making his report to headquarters. "We actually saw it happen!"

Back at the base camp from which Ben and Tendai had been operating, the remaining game rangers had become worried. Over fifty poachers had been shot during clashes, and now the gangs were spending their bloody and ill-gotten gains on superior weapons which gave them a powerful advantage.

The rangers' out-dated and unreliable radio equipment made it difficult to keep in touch with base, but in this case it saved Ben's life. Three days without a report meant trouble, so a rescue team headed for the last point of contact. As luck would have it, this location was correct.

"They say that two wrongs don't make a right," said the chief ranger, but in this instance it certainly did. "Our men were somewhat off beam, so they headed towards the small hill which they used as a look-out point." On the way they found the abandoned landrover Ben and Tendai had been using, so in anticipation, they increased their speed. Below them the rescuers saw the senseless carnage. The dead rhino lay butchered, its horn savagely hacked from its head. The bewildered calf frightened and uncertain, blood pouring from the sides of its head, stood pathetically over its dead mother nudging her occasionally in the vain hope that life would return to its only protector.

Then they saw the hyaena. It straddled a motionless Ben. They heard the crunch of bone as the animal

tore off half Ben's face. Like a burst waterpipe, blood spouted from a red hole where Ben's nose had been. The greedy hyaena ravenously devoured the man's inner flesh.

"My God," cried the ranger, paling at the memory. "The scream he gave will live with me forever."

Ben and the dead rhino now had one thing in common — a butchered face. The rhino's pain and death was caused by avaricious greed instigated by so-called superior beings, man, over a senseless animal. On the other hand, Ben's disfigured face was occasioned by an animal's instinct for survival. Both were acts of aggression, but the first one was inflicted by greed, stupidity and selfishness and was completely unfounded.

Ben's life was saved by the prompt action of one of his friends. With nothing else to hand, and the ranger's face a crimson fountain gushing his life blood, they packed the wound with grass and mud. Today, even after plastic surgery, he bears the terrible scars. He blames the poachers, not the hyaena for his unnecessary disfigurement.

"I think of Ben whenever I see a dead rhino, and look at the bloody marks where the poachers have sawn off the horn from the living animal," said one of Ben's embittered friends.

The baby rhino was rescued by the rangers and christened "Big Ears." Today, he lives peacefully in a private game sanctuary amongst other orphaned rhino.

The colonel and the eastern trader returned to their territory the next day with their loot, avoiding the village where the unfortunate Phiri had once lived.

The eastern hunter's eyes were shining with the excitement of the greatest kill of all — the hunting of man, by man.

"What a story I shall have to tell my friends," he said with satisfaction as he took his leave of the colonel. "My father will be relieved to know that the rangers on the other side are not very well equipped. I'm certain I shall be back."

The colonel nodded. He was no longer amused by the man. He lived closer to the valley and was feeling slight pains of remorse and disillusionment.

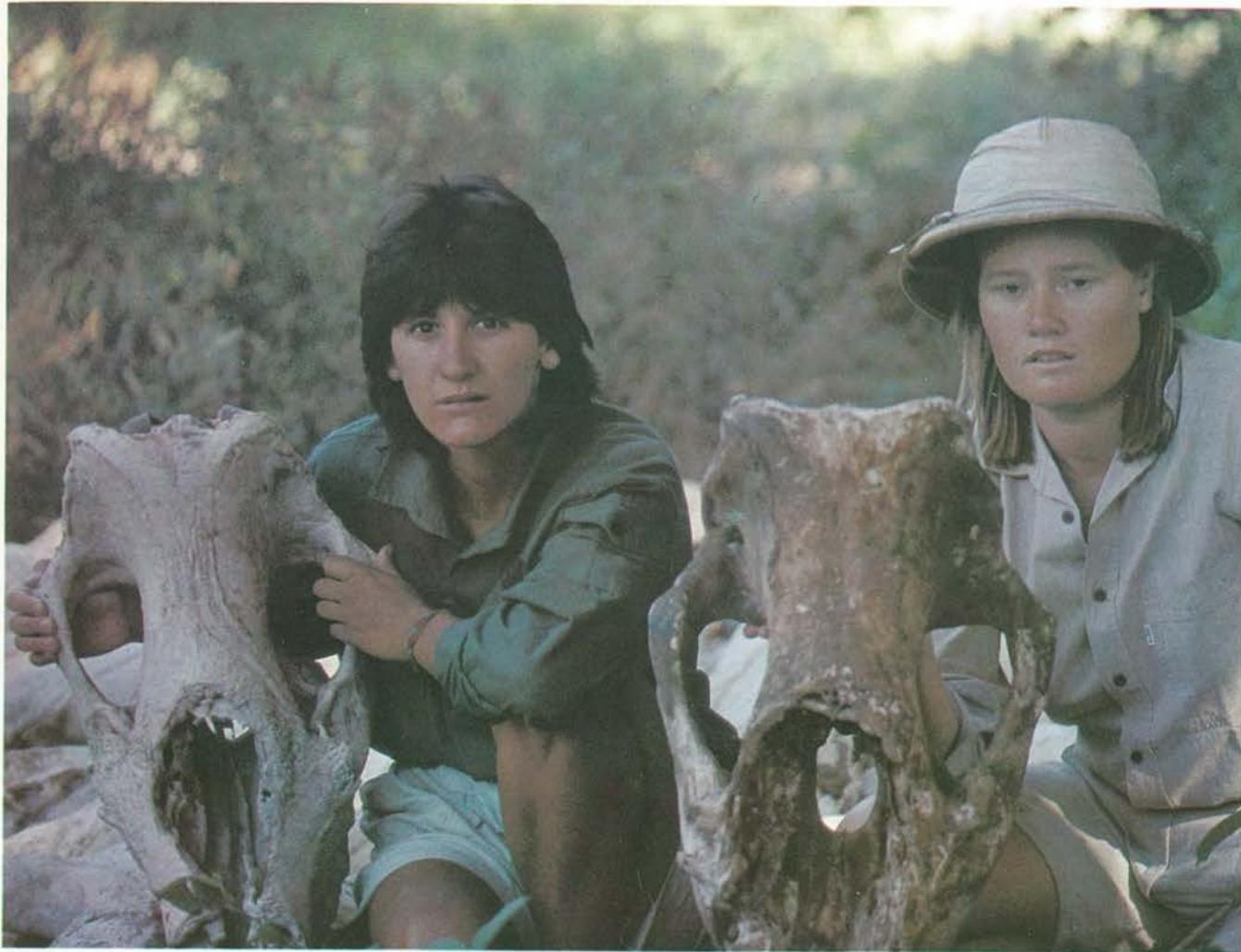
"It was a close thing," he admitted to a friend, much later. "Those rangers were very brave and they took an enormous risk. If the day ever comes that they are provided with more units and back up, then that's the day I quit."

● Although in reality, these sort of incidences do occur, this particular story is fictitious. However, Big Ears is real and you can see a photograph of him on the next page.



Derek Fry

THIS IS BIG EARS, and you can see how his ears were chewed off by a hyaena. Big Ears now lives in harmony with other rhino in a sanctuary in Zimbabwe.



3



The Turning Point



ZIMBABWE NATIONAL CONSERVATION TRUST

P.O. Box 8575, Causeway, Zimbabwe
18 Mitchell Road (entrance Rossal Road),
Greendale, Harare.
Telephone: 46105 Cables: SABLES
Telex: 26633 Sables Zw

WO 4/88



Tessa Colvin

Miss Charlene Hewat and Miss Julia Edwards

Dear Miss Hewat and Miss Edwards,

"RIDE FOR RHINO"

I thank you for letting me know all about your exciting plans to ride on bicycles from London through the Scandinavian countries of Europe and back across to Africa and home to Zimbabwe, to raise funds for our Rhino Survival Campaign.

Your actions epitomize your spirit of the youth of Zimbabwe and I take this opportunity of wishing you every success in your endeavour and will follow your progress with great interest.

Yours sincerely,

The Hon. Mrs. V. F. Chitepo
MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND TOURISM
PRESIDENT OF THE ZIMBABWE NATIONAL CONSERVATION TRUST





Our ardent interest in the welfare of endangered species and the vulnerability they continually face, prompted us into action. Recent statistics showed that in the 1800s, there were over a million rhino in existence. Today, a mere 3 800 inhabit areas where they are at risk of extinction.

We considered just how precious our wildlife and

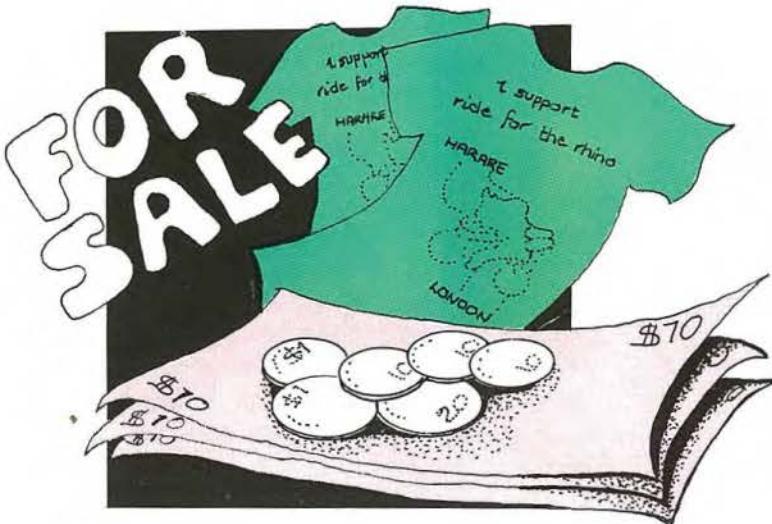
natural resources are to our wellbeing. Then we asked ourselves the inevitable question: what about generations that follow? Would they be privileged to see nature and animals in abundance? For us, the answer was and still is an emphatic 'no', unless something is done to stop mankind's destruction of the earth.

It was this thought that gave us an idea. We wanted to be part of the movement — that of saving endangered species; in our case, the black rhino, an impressive creature and one of the most endangered in Africa. As we are both sports enthusiasts, we decided to embark on a cycle ride from the United Kingdom to Africa in a bid to raise money to help save the rhino. We christened our project, "Ride for the Rhino"



To start a project is always the hardest part. You have to really believe in what you are going to do for it to take shape — that is what we have found in life. Believing in something and being positive about it is the key to success and fulfilment.

Much to our families' initial disappointment, we resigned from our jobs. Our bosses said we were crazy, but we realised they had our best interests at heart.



We became T-shirt sellers in Harare's First Street Mall. This was our first attempt to raise money for our ride.

Already, we had made many friends. Tremendous encouragement was derived from John Pile, the Executive Director of the Zimbabwe National Conservation Trust. Two other sincere supporters were the Minister of Tourism and Natural Resources of Zimbabwe, the Honourable Victoria Chitepo, and the former President of Zimbabwe, the Reverend Canaan Banana.

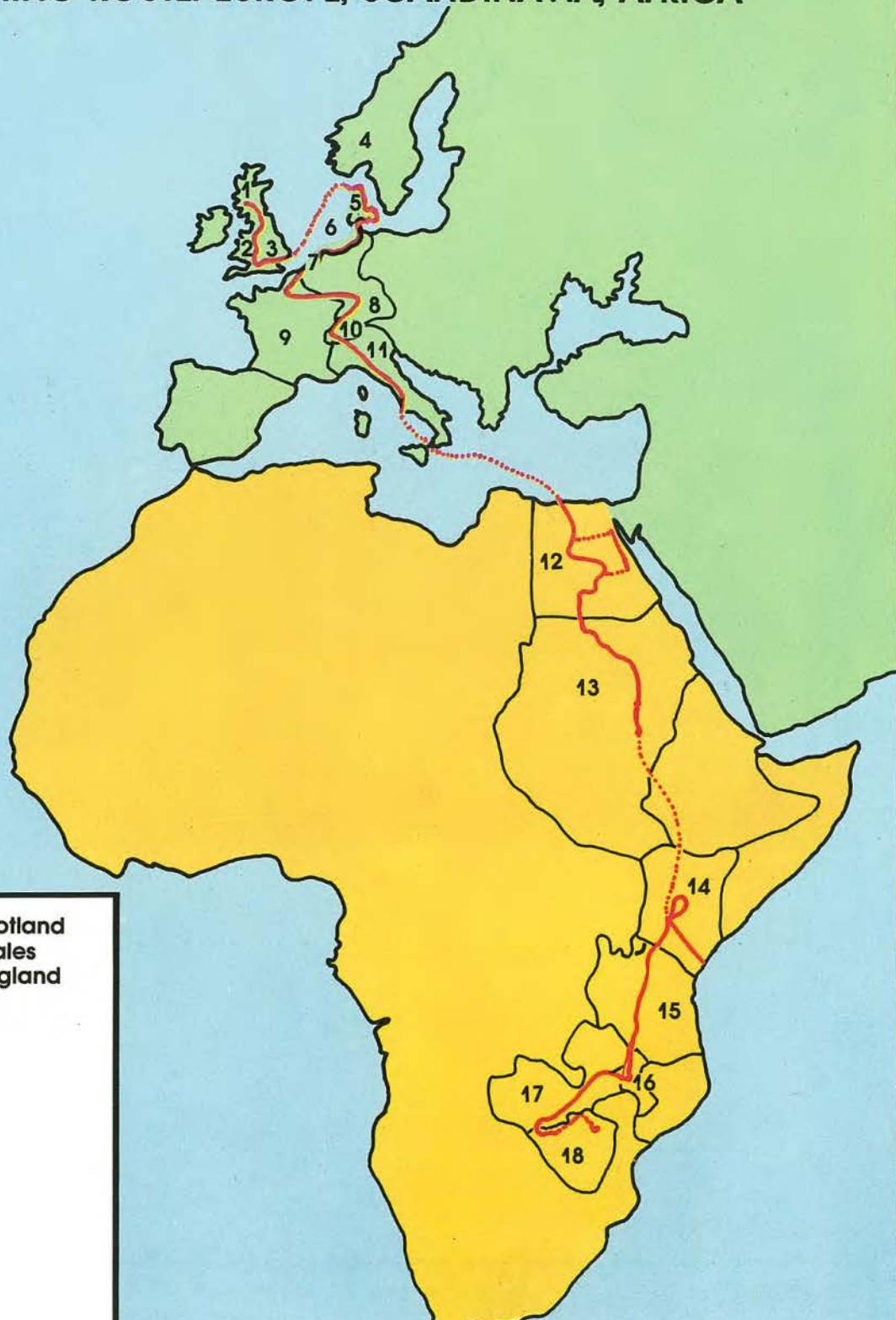
Much more had to be accomplished prior to our departure, but eventually we left with hearts full of hope and trepidation on a cargo plane, surrounded by refrigerated flowers which were being exported to Holland from Zimbabwe! A packet of sandwiches made by our parents and a trunk full of Zimbabwean goodies for sale to help us when we arrived represented the sum total of our worldly goods!

The most vivid memory we have of this part of our journey was when we were flying over the Sahara Desert on our way to Europe. Looking down upon the arid and vast emptiness, we wondered how on earth two girls could ride bicycles across such a seemingly impossible terrain. What had we let ourselves in for?



Although our 'business class' flight booking was cool, we had to provide our own food!

RIDE FOR RHINO ROUTE: EUROPE, SCANDINAVIA, AFRICA



1	UNITED KINGDOM	Scotland
2		Wales
3		England
4	Norway	
5	Denmark	
6	The Netherlands	
7	Belgium	
8	West Germany	
9	France	
10	Switzerland	
11	Italy	
12	Egypt	
13	Sudan	
14	Kenya	
15	Tanzania	
16	Malawi	
17	Zambia	
18	ZIMBABWE	

START — GLASGOW, SCOTLAND
FINISH — HARARE, ZIMBABWE

RIDE FOR RHINO

British Eagle Cycle Ltd.

Newton

Powys SY16 4LD

United Kingdom

Att Mr B Holburn



Dear Sir

We are two Zimbabwean girls who plan to ride bicycles from UK through Scandinavia, Europe, Africa and home to Zimbabwe, a distance of 22 000 kms. in an effort to raise money for the rhino.

Rhino are being brutally killed, all because of their horn, which is used to make dagger handles in the Yemen and medicine in the East.

Due to man's greed, the rhino are nearing extinction and if nothing is done about it, by 1995 we will only see rhino in picture books as an animal of the past.

You must be approached by millions of people requesting sponsorship, but this is a special request from two African girls who have given up their jobs and are determined to help towards the plight of the rhino.

Without bicycles, we are unable to carry out this venture, which we assure you will have a great deal of publicity.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Rhinocerely yours

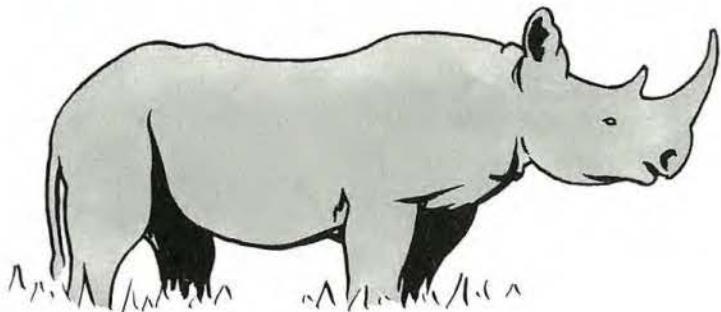
Charlie Hewat

Julie Edwards

• Miss Charlie Hewat and Miss Julie Edwards

This introductory letter was successful and the British Eagle cycle company kindly provided us with our bikes — a major breakthrough in the initial challenge.

SAVE THE RHINO



**YOU ARE INVITED TO SEE A
SLIDE SHOW ON THE PLIGHT
OF THE BLACK RHINO —
100,000 IN 1960
1995 EXTINCTION!**

This was the first poster to advertise our slide shows which helped publicise our campaign, but at times Derek Fry had to entice the local people off the streets to attend. It was amazing how quickly these people became interested in our project.

Arriving at Heathrow was almost an anti-climax. On the one hand we had achieved our first goal, but on the other the daunting task lay ahead. Cycle routes had to be planned and mapped out, programmes for our slide shows — vital for the pre-promotion of our ride in the UK — had to be prepared. Where should we begin?

We made many enquiries with wildlife and conservation organisations throughout the UK, but generally their responses, although polite, were not very constructive.

We thought that starting at the top was the best way of going about things, so who else but H.R.H. The

Prince Philip should spring to mind? He is the Patron of the World Wildlife Fund!

Eventually, we compiled a small portfolio describing our objectives and posted this file to Prince Philip. We received a favourable reply which graciously invited us to meet him at the Royal Windsor Horse Show. Our meeting with him engendered great inspiration and encouragement.

It was at this juncture in our adventure that a true conservationist, a man, whom we later discovered would become such a motivational force in our future work, entered our lives. His name is Derek Fry, a pursuer with British Airways, and we are proud to have him as a genuine friend.

From: Major Rowan Jackson, Royal Marines



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Dear Charlie and Julie,

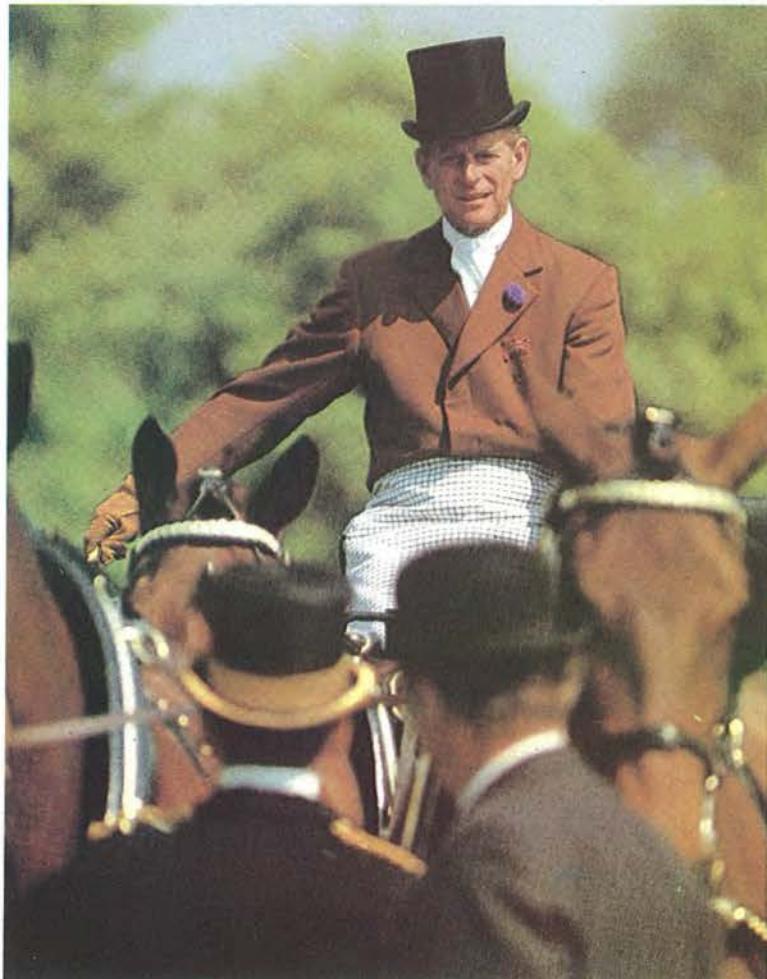
The Duke of Edinburgh has asked me to reply to your letter of 4th April concerning your ride for the Rhino.

Luckily enough, His Royal Highness will be at Windsor on Sunday, 17th May and it may be possible for you to meet Prince Philip sometime on that day. Please could you let me know what time would meet your programme so that I can then try to fit it in with The Duke of Edinburgh's. His Royal Highness will be at the Windsor Horse Show on that day and so it will be a matter of somehow fitting into that programme.

For the time being, I will keep your folder "Extinction is Forever" but am happy to send it back to you after you have met Prince Philip.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,
Rowan Jackson



MAIDENHEAD ADVERTISER

MARLOW RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

SLIDE SHOW 'DISAPPOINTING'

Duo to ride 22,000km. to help threatened rhino

"We had a very enthusiastic audience of more than 30 at Pinder Hall, Cookham though," said Mr. Fry. "Nobody wanted to leave and we sold a lot of the girls' rhino souvenirs, like T-shirts."

And a major sponsorship break with a large company could have resulted from the meeting said Mr. Fry.

Charlie and Julie have also been invited to give their slide-show every afternoon

next week at 3 p.m. at Windsor Safari Park and to make an evening appearance on Thursday at 7.30 p.m.

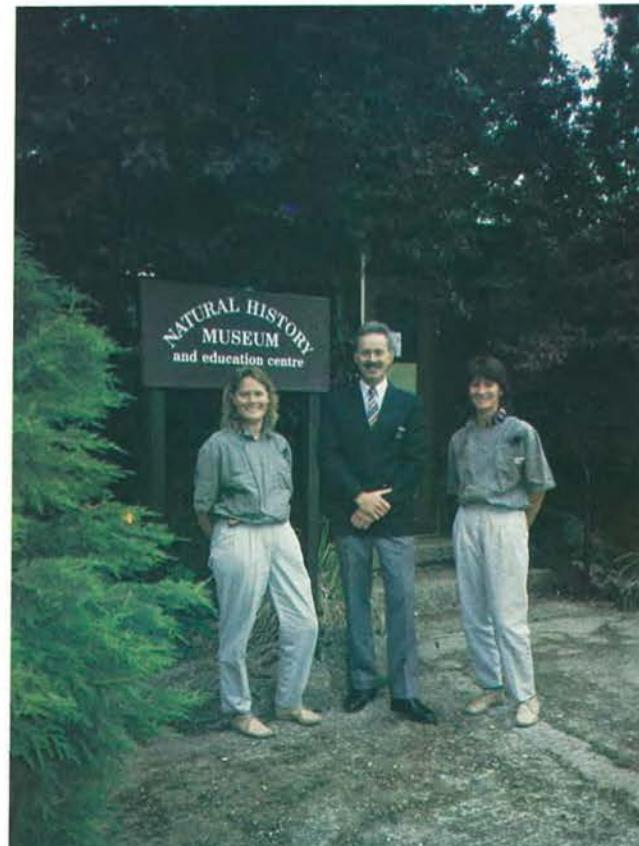
The girls begin their bike ride from Big Ben in London.

"We are hoping to attract attention to back our ride," says Charlie, who was born on a farm in Zimbabwe and has represented her country as a hockey international. "But if we can alert people to what is happening, it will be

something."

At the beginning of this century Africa had a population of around a million rhino. Today there are fewer than 4,000 left in the whole of the continent.

Zimbabwe has the largest concentration — around 2,000 — but the creatures are being slaughtered at the rate of almost one a day by poachers. Powdered rhino horn has been used for centuries in



Derek Fry — an inspiring and genuine friend.

Asia and the Far East as a cure for anything from insanity to malaria. Today it changes hands at around £30,000 for just one rhino horn.

And a new threat to the creature has emerged from the oil-rich Arab countries. There, a dagger with a rhino horn handle is rated a top status symbol and prices in the five figure price range are little more than pocket money.

The stakes are high and the poachers are armed with sophisticated weaponry — Russian rifles and machine guns. They are making their way by canoe across the river into Zimbabwe's Zambezi Valley where Africa's largest native population of black rhino is still living in the wild.

"The poachers are like an army," says Julie bitterly. "They come across the river by night by canoe, in gangs. Our anti-poaching teams are fighting a war, some of them are being killed.

"The men have made up a song in the Shona language — 'Mother and Father don't cry for me, I am going to fight for the rhino, for my country'."

Julie, who was born in a Zimbabwean village surrounded by bush and wildlife, is an athlete too. As a sprinter, she was on her country's selection list for the '84 Olympics.

Both girls have given up their jobs to take the news of what is happening to Zimbabwe's rhino to Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Egypt and Northern African countries.



Chris Gillies

What a sensitive man Prince Bernhardt is. We were touched to see him sporting a tie with a rhino emblem design, especially for our meeting. This incredible Royal has contributed so much to the cause of conservation worldwide.

PRINCE BERNHARDT — THE CARING PRINCE

Standing at the steps of Prince Bernhardt's majestic palace was awe inspiring. The palace estate is an excellent example of a well managed woodland forest. We really enjoyed the time shared with Prince Bernhardt, but only experienced one problem — a puncture on our way out!



A picture paints a thousand words...

Naples was our final big city in Europe and as we left, a strange feeling enveloped us. "In effect we are all 'black rhinos,'" we thought, "everyone of us is a potential Dodo!"

As we rode on, this depressing feeling of hopelessness increased. We were endeavouring to play our part, albeit small, in the race against time. However, Europe was such a busy place where so much energy was devoted to living for today. Yet, what of tomorrow? That was the burning question in our minds.

So far our ride had taken us through many countries in Europe and now Africa lay just ahead. We realised how many differing points of view people in each country had, but nonetheless, we were certain of one thing. Conservation was not part of the 'ism'

syndrome. No matter what 'ism' you belonged to, conservation simply meant survival.

In this age of nuclear power, ozone destruction and unprecedented starvation, can the developed world afford to sit back and watch the Third World countries slip into the dark abyss of self annihilation, impervious as it were to their troubles? Are the effects too far away for them to comprehend, despite their modern technology of communication satellites, computers and specialised equipment?

Sophisticated people watch the world at the push of a button on television. They often witness the devastation of virgin jungles and savannah lands, leaving areas void of trees, where wasteland, erosion, and desolation are now the order of the day. Is this wanton destruction of our planet still too remote for them to comprehend?

MARKT

Bezirks- und Informationsblatt für Glind, Reinbek, Barsbüttel, Stellte, Gemeinde, Wentorf, Wohltorf und Umgebung

Für Rhinozerosse um die Welt

Zwei junge Afrikanerinnen nutzen eine Radtour zum Sammeln

(h) Hittfeld. „Es ist doch anstrengender als wir dachten“, gibt Juli Edwards zu. Doch das strapaziöse Vorhaben stellt sich den beiden Schwestern in Frage. Für die Rettung der Rhinozerosse kommen wir gerne mal aus der Puste und strampeln - auch um die ganze Welt.

Und genau das tun sie: Als Juli Edwards und Charlie Hewat in Hittfeld ankommen, hatten sie bereits 2500 Kilometer per Rad zurückgelegt, als sie in Zimbabwe startete das Jungengesellen-Duo zu einer außergewöhnlichen Rettungsaktion: Auf einer 15.000 Kilometer langen Radtour durch Europa an den beiden Mädchen zwei Millionen DM für die Rettung der Tiere sammeln.

Nach Stopps in England und Schottland, Irland und Irland als drittes von zehn europäischen und sechs afrikanischen Ländern auf der Reiseroute. In Norddeutschland wurden die 22- und 24-jährige unter anderem in Flensburg, Rettberg empfangen. Die englische Belieferungsfirma des Hittfelder Unternehmens ist - was berichtet - neben der Lufthansa einer der Haupt-Sponsoren der Veranstaltung. Mithin erkennen sich die Hittfelder zur Unterstützerin bereit und luden Kunden zum Empfang ein. Von Gründen aus Rettungsfahrt ausgingen die beiden Mädchen nicht. Geschäftsführer Dieter Schrage: „Ich hatte eigentlich mehr Leute erwartet.“

Als Empfang waren die beiden Damen vor allem aus England „anderes Kaliber“ gewohnt. Dort war die Werbetrommel für ihr Vorhaben so laut geschlagen worden, daß sich gar die britische Premierministerin Margaret Thatcher, öffnete. „Das war ein wunderbares Erlebnis“, erinnert sich Juli Edwards. „Vorher dachte ich, stellte Charlie Hewat, war auch das Sammelergebnis: Auf dem britischen Eiland kamen fast 100.000 DM an Spenden zusammen.“



Juli Edwards und Charlie Hewat hatten bereits 2500 Kilometer per Fahrrad zurückgelegt, als sie in Hittfeld ankommen. (h)

Zahlen stehen für das Duo bei seiner Reise im Vordergrund, für die Idee der Tierrettung jedoch nie. Al M. Maitland, National Conservation Trust Zimbabwe“ wünschen die beiden mit den Problemen des Tierschutzes, speziell der Rhinozerosse, konfrontiert. Für ihre Idee gaben die beiden jungen Damen ihr bisheriges Leben auf. Die Jobs als Mechanikerin und Angestellte hängten sie an den Nagel.

„Es war eine furchtbare Erfahrung, um Geldgeber zu finden“, erinnert sich Charlie Hewat. Diese fanden sich schließlich, eben bei der englischen Ausrüstung und der Reiseroute. Für ihre Idee gaben die beiden jungen Damen ihr bisheriges Leben auf. Die Jobs als Mechanikerin und Angestellte hängten sie an den Nagel.

Wiederum kommen vor allem aus dem Ausland, denn die Beute bringt einiges ein: Bis zu 100.000 DM kostet ein Schwarzer-Rhino-Horn auf dem Schwarzmarkt. Vorwiegend in afrikanischen Ländern wird das Horn als Statussymbol für Männlichkeit, zermalmt es medizinisches Allheilmittel.

Angesichts dieser Tatsachen entstand die Idee der Radtour. Und für die Mädchen lag sportliches Engagement auf der Hand: Als Hockeyspieler und Springreiter stand sie in ihrer Jugend, und nun schafften sie es schließlich. Über ein Jahr dauerten dann die Vorberichtigungen für die Mammuttour, die im Juli 1988 mit der Rückkehr nach Zimbabwe beendet sein soll.

Zum Hintergrund: Die Zahl der Rhinozerosse hat seit 1960 drastisch abgenommen. Leben vor 25 Jahren noch über 100.000 Dickhäuter in den Savannen von Afrika, so sind es heute nur noch 10.000. „Die einzige Möglichkeit, das Horn zu erhalten, stellen die jungen Damen dem „Zimbabwe National Conservation Trust“ zur Verfügung, der ein umfangreiches Hilfsprogramm startet.“

Cykler for næsehorn

Siden 1977 er antallet af sorte næsehorn i Afrika faldet fra 45.000 til under 4.000. Hvis ikke der bliver gjort noget for at redde dyrene, vil arten være udryddet i 1995.

De mørke udsgående har fået to unge piger fra Zimbabwe til at forlade deres job for at tale en 15.000 km lang cykeltur til det østlige Europa. I lønningen og et lyshorn, som er tænkt til at tages tagt til England for at fortælle næsehornenes historie, og de helmede ikke, selv om deres arrangementer med lyhjelmedførtog kun kunne samle en tilhørerskab på 2-3 personer. Men i sidste ende gav stadigheden ”hov“, da sponsorerne betalte.

Nu cykler den 24-årige Charlie Hewat og hendes 23-årige veninde, Juli Edwards, rundt i en række lande for at gøre opmærksom på næsehornenes problemer. 16.000 kilometer med pedalvæld vil det være brugt til farde - forhåbentlig med en million dollars på Verdensmønsterfundusen givkonto - til august er hjemme i Zimbabwe igen.

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In the Amazon forest, there are more than a million species yet undiscovered. Man is destroying these forests at such a rate that scientists will probably never catalogue many of these unknown species before the forests are destroyed.

Are the remaining recesses like the Amazon Basin, the Zambezi Valley, and other precious areas so essential to the future of man, soon to disappear forever, even though technically the developed world knows that they are endangered?

It is not only the plight of the black rhino with which we need to concern ourselves. If the world continues as it is at present, it will only be a matter of time before some other beast, bird or species of our inheritance succumbs to the basic avaricious and thoughtless actions of man. His uncontrolled birth rate is mirrored not only in starvation, unemployment, crime and overcrowded cities, but also in the real threat of the total eradication of earth.

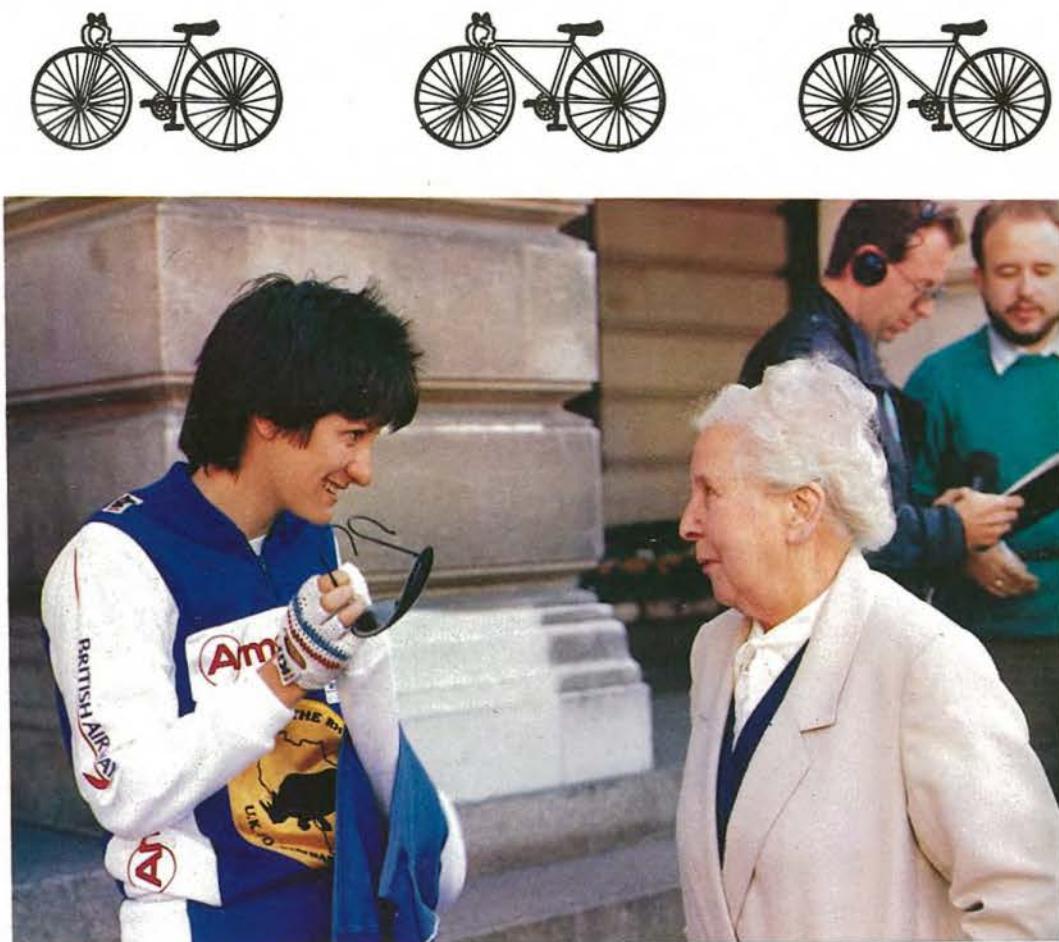
Mega cities throughout the world bare witness to the massive destruction of the environment — pollution, overcrowding, stress and the covetous need of man to intrude deeper into the remaining habitat once the preserve of nature's balance.

We need to stop, think a while and assess the prediction of the black rhino and all other endangered species and begin to defend them with all the power and energy available to us.

Now is the time to preserve for mankind all the wonderful gifts of nature, as once we lose them, they will be gone forever.

*Thus in defending the undefended
we secure for the vulnerable invulnerability.*

These were the thoughts racing through our minds as we rode out of Europe and entered Africa.



Experience and wisdom are essential ingredients for environmental success. Listening is as important as talking, as our informal discussions with this wise woman in a Nottingham street in England proved. Conservation is a feeling dear to the hearts of both young and old.



Our support came in all shapes and sizes.



This was the only rhino we could find on the continent of Europe.



The amazing contrast that Kenya was over the parched desert we had recently crossed brought joy to our hearts. Our approach to the airport took us over the Nairobi National Park. From our elevated position, we looked down on herds of wildebeeste, impala and the graceful giraffe.

We were met at the airport by a most lovable and eccentric Russian gentleman who had escaped from behind the Iron Curtain years ago. Rurick Ronsky immediately made us feel welcome and spontaneously invited us to his Nairobi home, showering us with hospitality.

True to life, seldom are plans achieved without hitches. At last, here we were in Kenya, but alas, the same could not be said for our backup landrovers. These vehicles, which were provided from funds raised were apparently routed in a most round-about fashion, so there was a considerable delay before they arrived.

We were keen to resume our ride, but until we recovered the landrovers, were unable to continue. This dilemma motivated us to seek information on the plight of the rhino in Kenya. We decided that there would surely be some productive work we could undertake here for this endangered species. What started off as a problem for us actually ended

as a great advantage, because this forced delay provided us with an incredible opportunity to get to know Kenya and its people. We decided to arrange a Ride For The Rhino within Kenya itself.

One of the first people to sponsor our Kenya rhino ride was Phillip Leakey, the Assistant Minister of Tourism, and brother of the famous anthropologist, Richard Leakey, who is now head of the Wildlife Department in Kenya. He generously donated K.Sh 2000 which provided us with an excellent start.

The dearest friend we made in Kenya was the late George Adamson. We gained an immense insight into the world of conservation from this wonderful man, and have dedicated the next chapter in this book to him.

Another surprise was in store for us. We had always been great admirers of Daphne Sheldrick, the foster mother of so many orphaned baby elephant and rhino. We had read most of her books and followed her amazing achievements with sincere interest.

How thrilled we were to meet her and experience first hand her unique ability to be able to communicate with and raise orphan elephant, rhino and other wild animals. Her devotion and talent are surely God given.