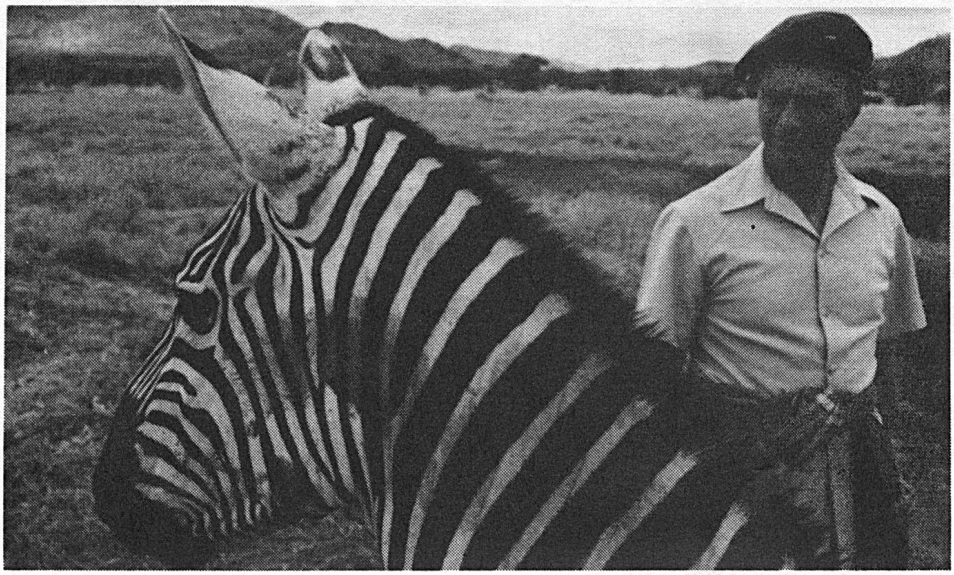
DAVID SHELDRICK DIES

AND KENYA LOSES A MAN OF RARE COURAGE AND INTEGRITY





TWO photographs which define David Sheldrick's achievements—wildlife conservation and effective anti-poaching operations in Tsavo (East) National Park—pictures: John Sutton.

A tribute by PETER JENKINS, Warden, Meru National Park.

WITH the sudden death of David Sheldrick in Nairobi on the night of June 13th 1977, one of the most respected and outstanding figures in the field of wildlife conservation in East Africa has passed—a loss that can be ill-afforded at this present time. For over a quarter of a century David and the Tsavo National Park have been synonymous, and his going marks, in a very tragic way, the end of an epoch.

David Sheldrick was born in Alexandria, Egypt, under shell fire, when his father was serving with the British Re-Mounts in the First World War. He came to Kenya as an infant when his father took up a Soldier Settler Scheme and became a coffee farmer at Mweiga.

Having completed his education at Canford School in England, where he excelled in the field of sport, and especially as a light weight boxer and a fine horseman, he returned to Kenya in 1930, and worked as a Farm Manager on the Kinangop. He was an outstanding polo player and would undoubtedly have held a place in a Kenya team had World War II not intervened.

David served with the Kings African Rifles (KAR) throughout the war on active service in Abyssinia, Somalia and finally Burma. At the age of 24 he had attained the rank of Major in the 5th Bn. of the K.A.R., and was one of the officers selected to represent the East African contingent at the Victory Parade in London.

On being demobilised in 1946, he took up professional hunting briefly with the old established firm of Safariland, and rapidly became acknowledged as one of the top professionals in this field. Then soon after the Kenya National Parks were formed, David joined the cause closest to his heart—conservation. In 1949 he was posted to Tsavo East which, at that time, was a vast, largely unknown and totally undeveloped expanse of arid bush country.

The immense and formidable task of planning and developing what has now become one of the world's greatest National Parks fell to him, and the complex organisation we see today is a living testimony of his foresight and planning ability.

At that time few guide lines existed in this field, and it is perhaps difficult in these days of established National Parks to appreciate the immensity of the task with which he was confronted with very limited means.

His achievements—1,000 miles of road network alone—are an eloquent tribute to the tireless courage and endurance of this man, who battled on through many adversities and obstacles to transform that immense wasteland; years of utterly selfless and dedicated service to the preservation of nature and wild places. David pioneered the field of Parks management and many of the systems he initiated

continued overleaf

Ban export for the pet trade

THE pet trade in live animals and birds has risen in recent years to alarming proportions so that many species are becoming threatened with total extinction.

An equally high demand for animals comes from the world's medical centres, which require a constant supply of primates for research.

"Much of this human consumption of wild animals is totally unnecessary and meaningless", says Professor Kai Curry-Lindhal, U.N.E.P.'s Senior Adviser on Ecology and Conservation in Nairobi.

The trade in live animals from Kenya is confined, mainly, to supplying Zoos and Safari Parks. Then, there is a trade in reptiles and amphibians together with birds.

We would strongly advocate there be another ban imposed on the export of all species of animal and birds intended for the pet trade. This should also be extended to disallowing any imports into Kenya or, movements in transit through Kenya of any species intended for the pet trade.

DAVID SHELDRICK

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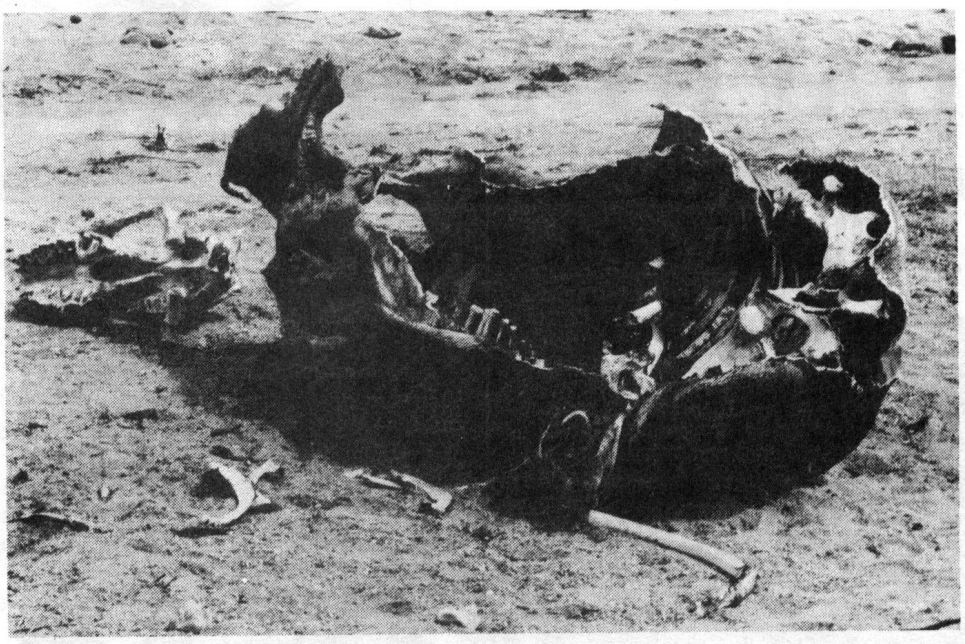
in Tsavo have since been adopted by other National Parks in East Africa and indeed beyond.

To his many friends and foes alike, David will be remembered and respected always for outstanding integrity, his enormous capacity for sheer hard work and an inflexible pursuit of what he believed to be right; even at the expense of personal relationships and expediency.

A versatile perfectionist and a born leader, nothing but the best would ever do, and "Saa Nane," as he was affectionately known by the subordinate staff, led the way by never expecting anyone to do anything he could not do himself. As a result he commanded immense respect from people in all walks of life. His outstanding contribution to the conservation effort has had world wide recognition, and he was awarded the M.B.E. by the British Government in 1964.

It was typical of David that although he had to leave his beloved Tsavo and a lifetime's work a few months prior to his death, he threw himself into the new task set him with the same vigour and zest that had marked all he ever undertook. An aloof and quiet man, David never spared himself, and shouldered formidable responsibilities from a very early age. He put heavy demands on himself, but he was always assisted in all he did by the loyalty, love and constant encouragement of his wife, Daphne.

Tsavo is a living testimony to this man, and if future Wardens and conservationists can learn from him, even in a small way, the future of wildlife in Kenya and elsewhere would be secured.



Poached rhino—

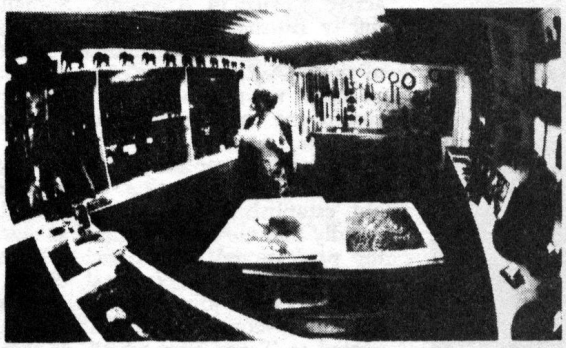
Rhino tragedy at Amboseli

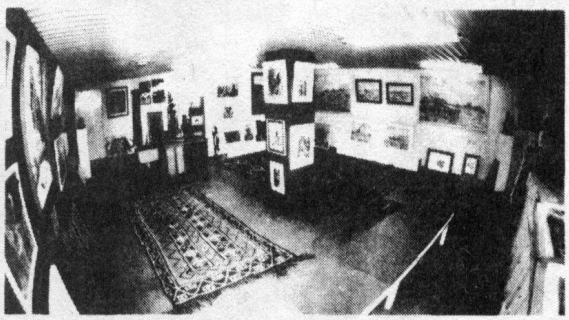
In January, we mentioned some of the ills with which Amboseli is inflicted; we did not, however, say anything about the tragedy of the rhinoceros.

We spent a week in March camped in Amboseli and during this time, found only one live rhino after much hunting in every known place. But we also came upon a carcass which had been speared; inevitably the horn had been removed and strips of skin had been cut from the back to fashion "kibokos".

Not so very long ago there was a population of some 60 rhino in the Amboseli basin. They were fairly tame, approachable and obviously very popular with tourists. Many were known by name, such as "Gladys" and her daughter "Gertie" who gave birth to an earless son known as "Pixie". But most of these famous animals have suffered the same fate—speared by poachers!

So again, we ask: *When will this wanton killing be stopped?*





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