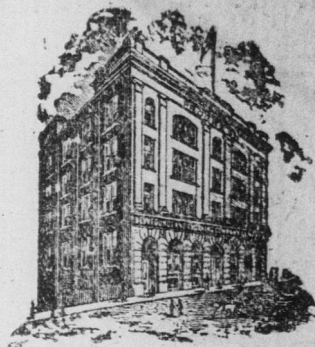


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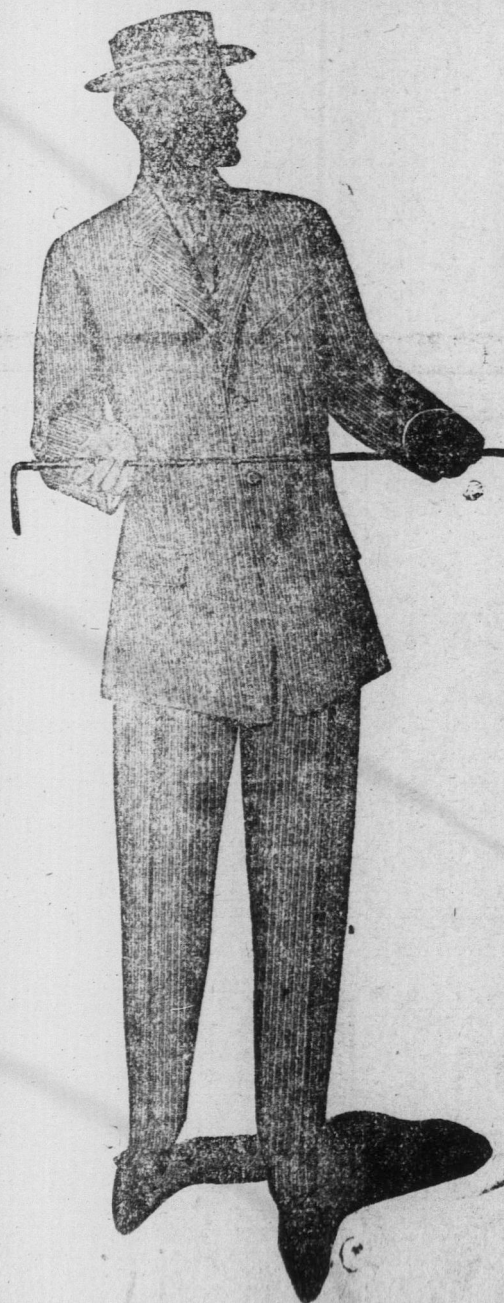
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Colonel "Buffalo" Jones is a new kind of big-game hunter. Instead of shooting the animals he captures them alive with a lasso. Lions, rhinos, hippos, leopards, and panthers have all been caught in this manner, and he is now embarking on an expedition to the French Congo to obtain gorillas by the same method.

In my experience, lions are the most dangerous animals to hunt. They are after you like a flash, and unless you are well mounted they'll get you. If you have a gun, of course the lion stands no chance; but, personally, I don't approve of taking life. On my last expedition we released many of the animals after we had roped them. What's the use of killing them? If everybody were to kill, there would be no wild animals left for posterity. Once you have roped a lion he is at your mercy. You could pull him to pieces if you wished.

Lions and Rhinos.

One of the lions we captured last trip was pretty wild when we first saw him, but he soon realized that we meant to get him, and before the rope was actually round him he was almost begging like a cat. He hid in the long grass, scared out of his wits. We threw the rope round his head first, but it is a peculiarity of lions that their heads are smaller than their necks, and the rope came off. Or it may have been that he swelled the muscles of his neck and jerked the rope off. We got him round the neck again, and the same thing happened. Then, as I said, he knew we were determined to have him, and he hid in the grass under a hillock. I dropped down on top of the hillock and threw the lasso round one of his feet.

Rhinos are tough creatures to catch. They possess such enormous strength. One I caught weighed about 6,000 lb. When you've caught a rhino you can hardly do anything with him. Strain your horse as much as you will, you can't make Mr. Rhino budge an inch.

We catch rhinos in a different way from other animals. Instead of chasing them you must let them come after you. A rhino will bolt away right enough, but directly he finds his pursuers drawing uncomfortably near, he jumps in the air and charges back. It is a close call then, unless the hunter's horse is nippy.

Braver than their Husbands.

My practice is to let the rhino chase me, and, at the right moment, when one of his thundering hoofs is off the ground, I throw the lasso behind me and catch him round the hoof. Mind you, I've been handling a lasso for fifty years.

When I said that lions were most dangerous just now I meant the female of the species. Lionesses are more plucky and more vindictive than their husbands. If you kill or wound a lion, his wife promptly comes on your track and tries for vengeance. But should you injure a lioness you need not expect trouble from her hubby. He will be only too ready to slink away lest a similar fate befalls him. At the headquarters of our last expedition nineteen deaths were attributable to lionesses, and four to lions. These figures speak for themselves.

I have had some close calls in my time, many of them, I suppose, but I forget them. One of the nearest was when a buffalo had me at his mercy on the ground. He would have tossed me up in the air and put flims to my career, or he might have done it by stamping on me, if I hadn't had the presence of mind to lie perfectly still and pretend to be dead. He sniffed at me, walked round me and then ambled off. I have saved my skin several times by shamming death. A wild animal prefers to tackle something alive. If it has a hunter on the ground, and he doesn't move, and other people in the vicinity are moving, it will leave the prostrate body and attack the moving object. I don't know if lying perfectly rigid would save you if you happened to be alone with a lion. I have never tried it!

Hunting for Gorillas.

It is this preference for animation on the wild animals' part that permits a cinematographer to take pictures in the jungle. The camera man is rigid, all around him native boys and hunters move and make a noise. Naturally the animal goes after one of them and permits the photographer to get the cinema films in comparative peace.

A cinematographer accompanies us on this new expedition, and, besides operating a camera, he will work a graphophone in order to get voice records of a gorilla. A gorilla's roar is far louder than that of a lion, and he is harder to catch. A fully-grown gorilla has never been seen alive in captivity, though young ones have been brought to civilization. I don't know how we shall hunt them; per-

haps climb trees. Other wild animals defend themselves with teeth, tusks, or claws, but the gorilla arms himself with a club. We are taking twenty "nigger dogs"—bloodhounds from New Mexico—to put us on the scent of the gorillas, who raid the villages at night, looking for bananas. Once our dogs get their smell we shall be up to them in half an hour.

Billy the Kid.

You want to hear some of my American adventures? Well, I have had plenty. A cautious headpiece has saved me from being snuffed out many times when Indian fighting on the plains. I can remember the days when the redskins hated us white men, because they said we interfered with their cattle. Perhaps we did! Once when I was busily skinning a buffalo I had just killed, and happening to look under my arm, I saw an Indian preparing to cover me with his rifle. Had I made the slightest sign that I was conscious of danger he would have put paid to my account right away, for my rifle was lying on the other side of the dead animal. I walked around the carcass as if continuing the skinning operation, then grabbed my gun and had the drop on the redskin before he could wink. Perhaps this doesn't seem very exciting to read, but it was a near moment for me. Anyway, I was everlastingly getting into trouble with Indians.

Now, here is something that really will interest you. I am the only man alive who ever held the drop on Billy the Kid. Probably you have never heard of this young fellow, but he was the most outrageous bad man who ever lived in the West. He didn't care a scrap for human life, and when killed at twenty-two years of age had altogether slaughtered twenty-three men. I have never seen a more handsome chap. Tall, perfectly shaped, with a complexion that a beauty queen would envy, it seemed incredible that he could have committed the cold-blooded shootings he did.

His One Last Wish.

As a deputy-sheriff I went after him with the sheriff and another deputy. We captured him, and with me pressing a revolver muzzle right against his heart we marched him to the blacksmith's shanty to have some temporary irons put on his wrists. As the smith fitted on the irons, he said, "Are they tight, Billy?" "They'll cut my wrists to blazes," answered the desperado. "Never mind," said the sheriff, "fasten them up." Billy the Kid flushed crimson, and blue veins stood out on his forehead. He changed from an angel to a devil, but he didn't start anything, for my gun was against his shirt.

We got him to the rough prison safely, and he was tried and sentenced to be hanged. The morning of the execution he broke down and cried like a child. When a deputy came he found him with his head in his arms rocking in anguish. "I have got one last wish," he said. "Let me drink a cup of coffee like a free man before I die. And don't let my mother know that I died in irons."

Where His Sweetheart Lived.

Billy had strong regulation handcuffs on his wrists and shackles on his legs, whilst the deputy held two loaded revolvers. He was touched by the outlaw's pleading, and, as there seemed no risk, unlocked one of the cuffs. This was just what the handsome young scoundrel had schemed for.

"Did the sheriff come home last night?" he inquired. The sheriff's house was directly opposite the prison, and the deputy turned his head to see if any smoke was coming from the chimney, in order to answer the outlaw's question. Quick as thought Billy the Kid had raised his manacled wrists and brought them down on the unsuspecting deputy's head. He dropped like a stone.

Billy then picked up his two guns and deliberately shot him dead. Hearing the reports, the sheriff and the deputy who had assisted in Billy's capture came running across to the prison. They thus played into the outlaw's hands for he shot them as they ran.

His next move was to visit the blacksmith and force him at the revolver's point, to break his shackles. He acquired a horse by the same determined means, and then made for a wild part of New Mexico, where his sweetheart lived. If I had been in the vicinity when he broke loose he would have got me for sure, for it was one of his boasts that he had killed every man who had held a gun up to him.

Ultimately he was shot dead by a Santa Fe railway detective, who obtained special leave and tracked him down. The detective was himself shot dead shortly afterwards, so I am the only man alive who has held the drop on Billy the Kid.

Reads like a film story, doesn't it?—T.T. Bits.

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